

**Hastings Museum and Art Gallery
Old Town Hall Museum
(Hastings Borough Council)**

**Access Policy Statement
2015**

Date on which this statement was approved by governing body:

January 2015

Policy Review procedure:

We will review the access statement at least every three years to ensure that it is line with national guidelines and standards.

The Museum will incorporate actions that arise from this policy in its Forward Plan.

Date at which this policy is due for review:

January 2018

1. Introduction

The Access Policy statement will guide the Museum's approach to providing access to the Museum's collections and associated information.

Hastings Museum and Art Gallery aims to provide the widest possible access to its museums, collections and services for the purposes of education, research and enjoyment by all within the reasonable constraints of resources, conservation and security.

Our aim is to build accessibility into everything we do to develop and improve the service. Our commitment is long-term and our policy is to make continuous improvements as our resources permit.

2. Ethics and Legislation

HMAG will work to the relevant ethical guidelines and legislation that govern accessibility eg:

Equality Act 2010

Disability Discrimination Act 2005

Fire Safety Orders

3. Our Commitment to Accessibility

We understand that users of the Museum and its services have different needs and to eliminate barriers and ensure quality of access we will consider the following forms of accessibility:

- **Physical** – to enable people with physical disabilities to reach and appreciate every part of the museum service. To take into account the needs of the elderly and of people caring for young people.
- **Sensory** – to enable visitors with impaired vision or hearing to enjoy the museum's building and collections. Events can include the provision of British Sign Language if requested.
- **Intellectual** – we recognise that people have different learning styles and we will provide interpretation in a range of learning styles. We also aim to ensure people with learning difficulties can engage with and enjoy the museum and the collections.
- **Cultural** – to consider the needs of people for whom English is not a first language, or whose knowledge of English history and culture may be limited.

HMAG is committed to assessing, identifying and addressing access issues by means of access audits, internal checklists and working with local advocacy groups.

4. Reference to other policies

In writing this statement we acknowledge the need to balance care for the collections with access (see Collections management Policy).

This statement is to be read alongside the Museums Access and Learning Policy.

Hastings Borough Council's Corporate Priorities 2014-15

Priority 1: Fairness and Equality

To provide high quality services that meet the needs and improve the quality of life of all our citizens, promoting equality of opportunity through a culture of openness, fairness and transparency, enabling local people to hold us to account.