

# Staithes Museum Access Policy

Status	<i>Finished! Changed the parts of the policy that were more like plans, so that it's a more policy-like policy. Submitted for comments. Last edited by Rosie 7/06/2024</i>
Spectrum Guidance	Your museum must have an access policy or statement approved by your governing body. It should cover how people can see, use, and reference your collection, gain access to your museum buildings and sites, and how you share information about the collection with people. This should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ using a variety of interpretative methods to exhibit the collections</li> <li>○ enabling public access to the collections, buildings and sites, and associated information</li> <li>○ the date you'll next review the policy'</li> </ul> (Accreditation standard, November 2018)
Example	This whole document started as copy pasted from Leeds Museum's accessibility policy, edited for relevance, and new ideas and examples added.

<b>Staithes Museum's Commitment to Accessibility.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Our interpretive methods.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Public access to our collections.....</b>	<b>2</b>
Financial Access.....	3
Physical Access.....	3
Online Access.....	3
Welcoming Environment and Learning Opportunities.....	3
Compliance with Legal Standards.....	3
Intellectual Access.....	3
Cultural Access.....	4
Ongoing Consultation.....	4
<b>Staff Training and Development.....</b>	<b>4</b>
Staff Training.....	4
Professional Development.....	4
<b>Emergency Procedures.....</b>	<b>4</b>
Inclusive Emergency Plans.....	4
Regular Drills.....	4
<b>Communication and Outreach.....</b>	<b>5</b>
Accessible Communication.....	5
Outreach Programs.....	5
<b>Evaluation and Feedback.....</b>	<b>5</b>
Regular Evaluation.....	5
Feedback Mechanisms.....	5
<b>Accessibility Statement and Transparency.....</b>	<b>5</b>
Public Accessibility Statement.....	5
Transparency in Reporting.....	6
<b>Collaboration and Partnerships.....</b>	<b>6</b>
Community Partnerships.....	6
Industry Collaboration.....	6

# Staites Museum's Commitment to Accessibility.

At Staites Museum, we believe that everyone in our community has the fundamental right to engage with, utilise, and enjoy our collections and services.

We acknowledge that there are many barriers to accessing our museum and its resources, but we are dedicated to making all aspects of our museum as accessible as possible within our available resources. This includes ensuring accessibility to our buildings, collections, events, exhibitions, educational programs, and online resources.

We believe that accessibility is not only for our visitors, but also for our staff. We pride ourselves on our efforts to improve the accessibility of the museum, and to create an inclusive environment where everyone can thrive and contribute to our mission.

Staites Museum is also committed to enhancing public access to our collections and the information associated with them. By doing so, we aim to foster a deeper understanding and appreciation of the items we hold and the cultural heritage of Staites.

## Our interpretive methods

At Staites Museum, we strive to ensure that our interpretive methods are accessible to all visitors. We offer an audio guide that reads exhibition labels aloud, providing an inclusive experience for visitors who are blind or visually impaired. Additionally our interpretation policy requires signage to use language accessible to individuals with lower reading abilities, making our exhibits more inclusive for all literacy levels. Finally, we ensure that video content at the museum is subtitled to assist visitors who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Going forward, we are in the process of developing a publicly accessible database of our museum collection. This initiative aims to provide comprehensive and easy access to information about our collections, allowing for greater exploration and understanding of our exhibits, even for those who are unable to physically access the museum. We have also designed and requested a grant for some tactile, hands-on interactives for diverse learning styles.

We continuously seek innovative ways to improve our interpretive methods, ensuring that every visitor can fully engage with and appreciate the rich cultural heritage that Staites Museum has to offer.

# Public access to our collections

*At Staithes Museum, we are committed to ensuring public access to our collections through various means:*

## Financial Access

Staithes Museum offers free admission to ensure that financial barriers do not prevent anyone from experiencing our collections and services. This policy allows the broadest possible audience to engage with our exhibits, regardless of economic status.

## Physical Access

We acknowledge the challenges posed by our building's physical inaccessibility and the difficulty of reaching Staithes. To address this, our audience development and diversification plan includes programs outside the museum to bring our collections and educational activities to the wider community, as well as loans boxes to bring our museum objects to those unable to come to us.

## Online Access

Our online presence is designed following the PAS78 Guide to good practice in commissioning accessible websites. This ensures that our digital content is accessible to all users, including those with disabilities, providing a comprehensive online experience of our collections and services.

## Welcoming Environment and Learning Opportunities

*We strive to create a welcoming environment with friendly staff and tailored learning opportunities that cater to different audiences and abilities. Our programs are designed to meet the needs of specific groups, ensuring that everyone can benefit from our educational offerings. We promote our activities and collections through accessible communication methods to reach a diverse audience.*

## Compliance with Legal Standards

*Staithes Museum adheres to all national and international statutes related to access, including the Equality Act 2010, Freedom of Information Act 2000, Data Protection Act 1998, and the Disability Discrimination Act 2005. Our commitment to these laws ensures that we provide an inclusive and legally compliant environment for all visitors.*

## Intellectual Access

*We recognize that people have diverse learning styles and we adopt clear interpretive guidance to accommodate these differences. By following best practices for interpretation, including well-crafted exhibition texts and interactive displays, we ensure that our programs cater to various audience needs and learning preferences, both onsite and across our services.*

## Cultural Access

*We acknowledge and respect cultural differences, striving to represent a variety of cultural experiences and issues through our programs and exhibitions. Our aim is to create an inclusive space that reflects and celebrates the diversity of our community.*

## Ongoing Consultation

*To ensure we provide the broadest possible access to our facilities, services, and collections, we regularly consult with both our audiences and non-users. This feedback helps us continually improve and adapt our offerings to meet the needs of the community effectively.*

*Staithe Museum is dedicated to making our collections and services accessible to all, fostering an inclusive environment where everyone can engage with and appreciate our rich cultural heritage.*

## Staff Training and Development

### Staff Training

We are committed to providing ongoing training for our staff and volunteers to ensure they are equipped with the knowledge and skills needed to support accessibility. This includes training on disability awareness, customer service, and the use of assistive technologies.

### Professional Development

We encourage continuous professional development by providing opportunities for staff to attend workshops, conferences, and courses on best practices in museum accessibility.

## Emergency Procedures

### Inclusive Emergency Plans

We have developed inclusive emergency procedures to ensure the safety of all visitors, including those with disabilities. This includes clear signage, trained staff, and accessible evacuation routes.

## Regular Drills

We conduct regular emergency drills to ensure staff are prepared to assist all visitors in the event of an emergency. These drills are designed to accommodate individuals with various disabilities.

# Communication and Outreach

## Accessible Communication

We strive to communicate with our visitors in accessible ways. This includes using clear, simple language in our written materials, providing information in alternative formats (e.g. plaintext and audio), and ensuring our website meets accessibility standards.

## Outreach Programs

We actively reach out to underrepresented and marginalised communities to ensure they are aware of and can access our resources. We collaborate with local organisations to tailor our programs and services to meet the specific needs of these communities. These are documented in our Audience Development and Diversification Plan.

# Evaluation and Feedback

## Regular Evaluation

We regularly evaluate our accessibility initiatives to ensure they meet the needs of our visitors. This includes collecting and analysing visitor feedback, conducting accessibility audits, and benchmarking against industry standards.

Our audience development plan contains strategies for identifying non-users, and the reasons why they were unable to access our museum, and what accommodations we are able to make to allow them to access our museum collection.

## Feedback Mechanisms

We provide multiple ways for visitors to give feedback on their experience, including online forms, in-person surveys, and suggestion boxes. This feedback is used to inform and improve our accessibility practices.

# Accessibility Statement and Transparency

## Public Accessibility Statement

We maintain a public accessibility statement on our website that outlines our commitment to accessibility, the measures we have taken, and our future plans. This statement is regularly updated to reflect our ongoing efforts.

## Transparency in Reporting

We commit to transparent reporting on our accessibility initiatives and progress. This includes publishing annual reports that highlight our achievements and areas for improvement.

## Collaboration and Partnerships

### Community Partnerships

We collaborate with disability advocacy groups and other community organisations to enhance our accessibility. These partnerships help us stay informed about the latest best practices and ensure our initiatives are relevant and effective.

### Industry Collaboration

We actively participate in industry networks and forums focused on museum accessibility to share knowledge and learn from other institutions.