

# NATIONAL CIVIL WAR CENTRE - NEWARK MUSEUM

## **Access Policy**

Amended October 2017

### **Policy review procedure:**

We will review the access policy every four years to ensure it is in line with national guidelines and standards.

The museum will incorporate actions that arise from this policy in its four year forward plan.

Approved by Newark & Sherwood District Council    Date: tbc

**Date at which this policy is due for review:** November 2019

## 1. MISSION STATEMENT

The National Civil War Centre - Newark Museum has a dual purpose. The National Civil War Centre will provide a national focus on the key events of the British Civil Wars of the 17<sup>th</sup> century and their consequences for the nation and the wider world. The Newark Museum aims to tell the story of the district of Newark and its residents.

Our vision is that the National Civil War Centre - Newark Museum becomes fundamental to the identity of the nation and local residents by providing unique and inspiring cultural heritage experiences for all.

## 2. OUR DEFINITION OF ACCESS

The National Civil War Centre – Newark Museum recognises there are many barriers to access at all levels of the museum service. However we believe that all people have a fundamental right to engage with, use and enjoy the collection and facilities.

We define access as something that is made possible when physical, cultural, social, financial, intellectual, psychological and emotional barriers are removed or reduced.

## 3. OUR COMMITMENT TO ACCESSIBILITY

The National Civil War Centre – Newark Museum aims to provide the widest possible access to its museum, collections and services to enable audiences from all sections of the community to enjoy use of the collection and facilities. We will provide access to services in the wider community and within the museum we will aim to provide independent use wherever possible.

Our policy 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.

Our commitment to accessibility extends to our staff, volunteers and work placements as well as visitors.

We are committed to ongoing training in access issues for staff and volunteers.

To eliminate barriers and ensure equality 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 buildings and collections.
- **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 collections and facilities.

- **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.
- **Attitudinal / Emotional** – to ensure the museum environment and museum staff are welcoming to visitors from all sections of the community.
- **Financial** – we will take into account that ability to pay can be a barrier to access and offer opportunities for those on lower incomes to access the service.

#### **4. MUSEUM BUILDING**

We aim to provide equal access to the National Civil War Centre – Newark Museum (NCWC) and the Resource Centre for all visitors. There is lift access to all floors at NCWC and level access to all facilities. Subtitles and signed versions of our Civil War films are available. Audio guides for the visually impaired will shortly be available on entry.

At the Resource Centre disabled access is available only on the ground floor; however objects from the collection can be brought to enquirers/researchers in the research room

#### **5. ACCESS TO COLLECTIONS**

Our staff are committed to increasing public access to the collections and information and to increasing knowledge and understanding of the British Civil Wars and the history of Newark.

We will provide varied means of access to the collections, including displays, handling sessions, outreach sessions, publications and events.

To increase access to the collections not on display we offer behind the scenes tours and access to staff and we will soon have web-based resources.

We will provide levels of information and interpretation to suit a range of audiences and abilities. We will ensure that the presentation and labelling of displays respects a diversity of background.

We will develop our handling collections and loans.

## **6. ACCESS TO LEARNING**

The National Civil War Centre – Newark Museum will provide learning opportunities for different audiences and levels of ability and tailor our programme to the needs of specific groups. We will provide education programmes for all our temporary and permanent displays to interpret the collections for people from a range of backgrounds and abilities. We will identify and develop partnerships with a range of educational and community organisations to ensure that our activities continue to cater for the widest possible audiences.

## **7. ACCESS TO VISITOR SERVICES**

Our staff and volunteers will assist and welcome all visitors.

We will consider the comfort of our visitors by providing accessible toilets, baby changing facilities, access for pushchairs, seating in galleries and on-site wheelchairs.

We will develop appropriate signage and navigation tools to suit a range of audiences, including a range of sensory formats and languages.

## **8. ACCESS TO COMMUNICATION**

We will promote our activities and events using accessible means of communication.

We will develop publicity material on request in alternative formats for a range of needs and languages.

We will provide a range of ways that people can communicate with us.

We will evaluate all our services and projects to ensure they meet the provision of this policy and we will consult users and non-users on all new developments.