

Disability Directory for Museums and Galleries



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## FOREWORD

The Disability Directory is intended as guidance for all museums and galleries in improving their services to disabled people. It builds on the Disability Resource Directory, published by The Museums and Galleries Commission in 1993, and updated in 1997.

With the wider implementation of the Disability Discrimination Act a legal duty is added to the obligation that in any case exists for all museums and galleries to have appropriate policies and plans in place to ensure access to their collections and services for all.

The Directory outlines the principles that should underpin best practice, emphasising the need for consultation with existing and potential users, the promotion of inclusive thinking across all of the museum's or gallery's activities and the effective use of ICT to improve access. It also provides practical advice and contacts for museums and galleries to use when reviewing and developing their policies and delivering services to disabled people.

The Directory addresses the particular requirements of people with physical, sensory, speech and language impairments, people with learning difficulties, mental health service users and survivors and those with many different hidden impairments, within a context of promoting the widest possible access for everyone. Many of the barriers to access that are experienced by disabled people are shared by others in society. The Directory shows that by dismantling these barriers museums and galleries can help to tackle social exclusion and become places of enjoyment, learning and inspiration for all. It also demonstrates that the process will promote a more positive and creative culture which, by recognising and valuing diversity, will benefit employees, volunteers, visitors and everyone involved with museums and galleries.

Compiling the Directory has been a collaborative project drawing on the expertise of many practitioners in museums, galleries and related organisations and the views of disabled people.

I am delighted to commend the Directory as a practical tool for museums and galleries. I hope you will find it useful in assessing, reviewing and developing provision for disabled people.



**Alan Howarth**  
Minister for the Arts

## INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The Disability Resource Directory was first published in 1993, and updated in 1997. Several important changes have affected this new edition. New duties relating to service providers under the Disability Discrimination Act, 1995 (DDA) came into force in October 1999. The Disability Rights Commission (DRC) began its work in April 2000 and from October 2000 the UK has had a Human Rights Act; both will further support civil rights for disabled people. The Government announced in January 2000 that the DDA will be extended to cover the education sector in a Disability in Education Bill. Also, Resource: The Council for Museums, Archives and Libraries, was set up in April 2000. These changes in the wider environment, the Government's social exclusion agenda and its support for the development of new technologies will affect the way museums and galleries respond to the challenge of improving their services to disabled users.

***“Government...must lead on promoting diversity and equality of opportunity... Further initiatives will continue the campaign to address lack of knowledge of disability issues and raise awareness of duties to improve access for disabled people...”***

(Cabinet Office Press Release, 27/4/99)

The *Disability Directory for Museums and Galleries* will be available on the Resource website and will be updated to reflect new developments in this rapidly developing field. This directory is intended mainly for museums and galleries, although other organisations will find much that is relevant to them. Resource will be developing cross-sectorial guidance for museums, archives and libraries in due course.

The Directory is divided into three sections, Principles, Practice and Bibliography/Sources of information. The first section outlines the principles that should underpin practice for museums and galleries; it also includes statistics, advice on terminology and legislation. The second section provides practical guidance and examples of good practice for developing access for disabled people. The third section includes a bibliography and sources of up-to-date advice.

Sections 1.1 and 1.2 should be read first as they explain the considerable changes in approach, attitudes and response to disability that there have been in recent years. The Directory is intended to help museums and galleries to implement best or inclusive practice in relation to disabled people which will, in turn, benefit everyone who uses them. Attention to the spirit rather than the letter of the law will ensure DDA compliance and have a much broader and



more positive impact on museum practice.

The development of this Directory has been informed by consultation with the experts in disability issues, disabled people themselves. The advice and contributions from The Drawbridge Group from Nottingham Castle Museum have provided an essential check on the contents and approach. The Directory also benefits from and brings together advice from disability organisations, and many individual consultants and professionals working in the field.

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Edited by Caroline Lang

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Ann Rayner, Project Officer, The Intellectual Access Trust (INTACT)

All of these contributions have been invaluable and have demonstrated that consultation and partnerships are essential to inclusive practice.

## 1. APPROACHES AND ATTITUDES

***“Attitudes to disabled people have changed significantly in this century. From seeing disabled people as the passive recipients of charity, society has come to recognise the legitimate demands for disabled people to have equal rights. However traditional preconceptions and long held prejudice still prevail.”***

*(Exclusion to Inclusion: A Report of the Disability Rights Task Force on Civil Rights for Disabled People, DfEE, 1999)*

The Disability Discrimination Act has marked an important step forward in disabled people's rights, but legislation in itself cannot force a change in attitudes. It has however provided certain rights and laid down a framework that will encourage and hasten a change in culture. The Disability Rights Commission, established in April 2000, provides disabled people with an effective mechanism to enforce these rights.

Museums and galleries as employers and as service providers are required to ensure equal treatment for disabled people under the DDA. They should also take account of the Government's policies relating to Social Exclusion.

***“Museums enable people to explore collections for inspiration, learning and enjoyment. They are institutions that collect, safeguard and make accessible artefacts and specimens which they hold in trust for society.”***

*(Museums Association's definition, 1998).*

Museums and galleries exist for people. Those people include disabled people and their families and friends; one in four families has a disabled member. The advice and guidance in this Directory is based on a commitment to ***“making museums and galleries welcoming, accessible and positive places for disabled people to visit and to work in.”*** (Jeremy Guy, Drawbridge Group).

The Directory provides museums and galleries with an approach that will ensure compliance with the reasonable adjustments required by the DDA and enables them to work towards the full inclusion of disabled people, one of the most disadvantaged groups in society. It also underpins the good practice required to address Social Exclusion.

Jeremy Guy urges museums ***“not to see the DDA as lots of regulations and problems associated with disabled people but as an opportunity to increase audiences and make museums welcoming for the wider community”***. The inclusion of disabled people, as both staff and users, is less about looking for and delivering definitive solutions, much more about creative

and imaginative thinking and entering into a dialogue and partnership. Financial resources are not the only prerequisite for developing access and inclusion. ***“I think the concept of positive alternatives and imaginative thinking is more important.”*** (Jennie Lloyd, Drawbridge Group).

Such an approach creates opportunities for museums and galleries to build on what they already do to provide access to their collections and expertise more effectively for everyone. The internal culture of a museum or gallery impacts directly on the experience of all its users. The challenges entailed in actively and explicitly addressing the inclusion of disabled people in all areas of work will make for a much more productive, creative and positive institutional culture that benefits staff and public alike.

The key principles that should underpin practice, and which inform all the guidance and advice in this Directory, are given below.

## 1.1 Key Principles

- i. *Disabled people have a right to be included in all the activities of museums and galleries.*
- ii. *Museums and galleries should engage in a dialogue with disabled people to find out what they need and want, and how to deliver it (see Practice 3).*
- iii. *The use of the social model of disability should be adopted. This model is one in which disability is acknowledged as resulting from barriers created by society (see Principles 1.2).*
- iv. *These barriers to access for disabled people should be identified and dismantled to enable and empower them to participate (see Principles 1.3).*
- v. *Disability issues are clearly positioned within the broader agenda of human rights, equal opportunities and diversity. (see Principles 1.3).*
- vi. *Universal design principles should be the basis for inclusive practice in museums and galleries (see Practice 8).*
- vii. *The implementation of best, that is inclusive, practice should be implemented to ensure that disability issues are included in all areas of a museum or gallery’s activities (see Principles 1.3).*

- viii. *This process must be ongoing, long-term, achievable and sustainable. It should be reflected in the museum's policies and strategic planning, and implementation should be led by senior management (see Principles 1.3).*

## 1.2 Models of Disability

***“The achievement [of the social model] has been to break the link between our bodies and our social situation and to focus on the real cause of disability, i.e. discrimination and prejudice...”*** (Tom Shakespeare, Oliver, M, 1996:39, *Understanding Disability: From theory to practice*, Macmillan Press)

To include disabled people and to create the necessary partnership and dialogue, museums should adopt and understand the social model of disability. The social model of disability does not deny impairments or any medical needs that arise from an impairment, but positions the ‘problem’ within the social or physical environment, not with the person or the impairment. For example, a wheelchair user cannot get into a building because he/she is disabled by steps. The steps are the barrier. Put in a lift or ramp and the wheelchair user can get in, along with everyone else. (Under the older medical or tragedy models, it would be the wheelchair user’s inability to walk that would be seen as the problem). The social model is the one preferred by most disabled people and is promoted by Government and in the Disability Discrimination Act (although a medical/legal model is used to define ‘disability’ in the Act and many disabled people object to this). Both Resource and The Arts Council promote the social model in their guidance.

The outdated medical model emphasises the impairment as the problem that resides in the individual, which is then diagnosed or assessed in regard to treatment, care, cure and dependency. It neither enables nor recognises the positive contribution that disabled people make. It relies on a definition of ‘normal’ that renders other people abnormal and it fails to recognise the differences between people who have impairments as part of the diversity of society. For many disabled people their impairment is part of their identity and talk of a cure is offensive. The medical model causes disabled people to be seen as unequal or inferior, with non-disabled people retaining the power. It is individualistic and deficit-based, results in discrimination and prevents inclusion. Sadly, it continues to prevail in the non-disabled community and influences attitudes towards disabled people, although it is no longer acceptable to most disabled people.

In some places the medical model has given way to the tragedy/charity model. The tragedy model involves the use of emotive language that may seem

sympathetic but is patronising and disempowering. It neither recognises nor enables the positive contribution that disabled people make within the social environment. Disabled people do not want to be seen as brave victims or heroes and they want rights not charity (See: Oliver M, 1996).

### 1.3 Access Issues

***“Access is a cornerstone of all this Government’s cultural policies...we want to see access to our cultural treasures made available to the many, not just the few”*** (DCMS 155/97:1) The DCMS published guidelines on access and standards of service *Museums for the Many: standards for museums and galleries to use when developing access policies* in June 1999.

#### a) Barriers to Access

Access is now usually seen in terms of barriers which need to be identified and dismantled. This needs to be done in consultation with disabled people. Access should be considered in the broadest sense. It is not just about providing ramps or accessible toilets. The barriers may be physical, sensory, intellectual, emotional/attitudinal, financial, social, educational or cultural.

Access to information and decision making is also crucial as non-disabled people have for too long assumed that they know best. Improved access for disabled people will usually provide better access for many other people too.

Access audits in museums and galleries should address more than just the architectural concerns that are so often the focus for improvement. They should include reviewing policies, procedures and practices such as exhibitions, ‘house style’ and education programmes and should also include consultation with disabled people (see Practice 3 and 5).

Today writing an Access Policy that explicitly refers to disability issues, rather than a Disability Policy in isolation, is a more accurate reflection of the shared barriers to access, the broader diversity remit and the promotion of inclusive practice. (See Practice 2)

## Barriers to Access

| Type of access               | Some issues to consider  | Some possible approaches to audience development   |
|------------------------------|--|--|
| Physical access              | - Is our museum building physically accessible?  | - Install ramps, handrails and seats   |
| Sensory access               | - Can our exhibitions, events and facilities be used by people with hearing or sight impairments?                                      | - Offer objects which can be touched<br>- Use varied means of interpretation such as taped guides, subtitled audio-visual presentations etc.<br>- use hearing enhancement systems. |
| Intellectual access          | - Do our exhibitions exclude people with limited background knowledge?<br>- Can people with learning disabilities access our services? | - Consult and involve new audiences in the production of exhibitions<br>- Evaluate levels of understanding amongst a range of audiences when developing exhibitions                |
| Financial access             | - Does our admission charge deter people on low incomes?<br>- Do our shop and cafe sell items which families can afford?               | - Offer free admission on certain days and publicise it widely<br>- Take the museum into the community<br>- Provide free transport   |
| Emotional/attitudinal access | - Is our museum environment welcoming to new visitors?<br>- Do our staff have an open attitude to diversity?                           | - Train staff<br>- Organise special events and activities to build confidence amongst new audiences  |
| Access to decision-making    | - Does our museum consult potential new audiences and value the input of external stakeholders?  | - Develop projects in partnership with audiences<br>- Establish a consultative panel   |
| Access to information        | - Does our publicity effectively reach, and communicate with, new audiences?   | - Develop new, accessible marketing networks and methods of communication<br>- Produce publicity and orientation in large print, tape, Braille, different languages etc.           |
| Cultural access              | - Do our collections, displays and events reflect the interests and life experiences of our target audience?                           | - Implement new collecting policy<br>- Undertake re-displays with appropriate interpretation   |

Chart adapted from *Building Bridges*, Jocelyn Dodd and Richard Sandell , P14 Museums & Galleries Commission (1998).

## b) Diversity

Impairments are a fact of life and will be the experience of most people at some point in their lives particularly given the ageing of the population. Disability issues are now clearly positioned within the broader diversity agenda of human rights and equal opportunities. Disabled people share many of the same barriers, concerns and issues as those fighting racism, sexism, homophobia and other forms of discrimination.

***“Disabled people are fighting for a society which celebrates difference, a society which does not react to physical, sensory or intellectual impairments, or emotional distress, with fear and prejudice. We want a society that recognises the difficulties we face, but which values us for what we are. Our hopes for the future are based on the justice of our wish for control over our lives, the strength of our demands for equal participation, the passion of our belief in the value of our contribution to the communities in which we live.”*** (Disabled Lives, BBC Publications, 1992, p24).

The subtle but important differences between the concepts of equal opportunities and diversity are usefully summarised in the table below. These differences could also be characterised as the differences between the letter and the spirit of the DDA.

| Diversity  | Equal opportunities   |
|--|---|
| Ensures all employees maximise their potential and their contribution to the organisation                                  | Concentrates on issues of discrimination  |
| Embraces a broad range of people; no-one is excluded   | Perceived as an issue for women, ethnic minorities and people with disabilities |
| Concentrates on issues of movement within an organisation, the culture of the organisation and meeting business objectives | Less of an emphasis on culture change and the meeting of business objectives    |
| Is the concern of all employees, especially managers   | Seen as an issue to do with personnel and Human Resource practitioners          |
| Does not rely on positive action/affirmative action  | Relies on positive action   |

From Kandola and Fullerton, 1994 *Managing the Mosaic: Diversity in Action*, IPD, London



Approaching disability within a diversity remit **“means getting the most out of all your employees by recognising their individual needs and unique gifts and talents...it is rooted in a solid understanding of business objectives, based on a strong mission and fair culture.”**(*Disability Discrimination: A Practical Guide to The New Law*, J Brading and J Curtis, Kogan Page, 1996, p30).

It will also successfully challenge traditional preconceptions and prejudices, which create discrimination, and so many of the barriers faced by disabled people. Those same barriers can affect as many non-disabled people as staff and visitors, and often contribute significantly to internal problems within organisations such as high staff turnover, communication failures, inappropriate behaviour, lack of motivation, perceived lack of value and so on.

Both the Arts Council and MGC have published guidelines on Cultural Diversity: *Cultural Diversity Action Plan*, Arts Council of England, 1998 and *Responding to Cultural Diversity, Guidance for Museums and Galleries*, MGC 1998 (now available from Resource).

### **c) Inclusive Practice**

Best practice is inclusive practice and implementing it will ensure that disabled people and disability issues are included in all areas of a museum or gallery's activities and that museums and galleries meet both their ethical and legal obligations under the DDA.

Inclusive practice means viewing impairments as part of the diversity that exists in society, and as something that requires integrated rather than special, provision. It results in provision that may, to the greatest extent possible, be used by everyone throughout their lifespan. **“The ideal is inclusive, permanent provision which allows disabled people to have independent and integrated access...”** (*Museums for Everyone*, Alison Coles, Interpretation, February 1998, p4).

Most disabled people want to be independent, but sometimes need help with some things, very often as a result of a poorly designed environment. Inclusive practice would begin with the assumption that disabled people want to be independent and that if the environment is designed appropriately help is not required. Universal design and inclusive practice eliminate the need for the reasonable adjustments that are central to the DDA, and objected to by many disabled people.

Inclusive practice should be underpinned by solid research and scholarship based on the collections, it is not, in any sense, dumbing down. It will result in



these key activities being enriched, shared more effectively and understood more widely. Inclusive practice also provides opportunities to reflect on existing practice, evaluate what is on offer, plan effectively, promote fairness, justice and equity, value diversity and thus improve provision for everyone throughout their life.

**Examples of the benefits of inclusive practice:**

- i) Ian Jenkins, the Curator at the British Museum with responsibility for the Parthenon Frieze, discovered a new element in Phideas's frieze whilst 'deconstructing' the composition for tactile diagrams in his book *Second Sight of the Parthenon Frieze*, British Museum Press, 1998. This book was produced to include visually impaired visitors and assist a wider audience interpret the complexity of the frieze.
- ii) The sound enhancement system for gallery talks and guided tours introduced into the British Museum in 1997 for Deaf and hard of hearing visitors has proved hugely popular with all visitors.
- iii) The Smithsonian Institute produced a short introductory, well-illustrated plain English guide for people with learning disabilities - it proved to be extremely popular with families, many non-specialist adult visitors and non-English speaking visitors as well as those for whom it was originally intended.

## INCLUSIVITY

Being inclusive in museums means not excluding anyone. It means being accessible to people in general. Barriers to inclusivity lie in people's mindsets. Museums strive to be accessible to a general audience just as the mass media does. But we need to challenge the notion that aiming at that general audience - 'the man in the street' - is not being exclusive.

This non-existent audience is usually of 'average' intelligence, heterosexual, white, non-disabled and with a tabloid newspaper reading age. 'Average' is a tyranny. If you take school children and older adult museum visitors into account, the average age of visitors to museums is probably about 30 - but how useful is that statistic? 'Normal' doesn't exist. What was the age, sex, colour, height of normality - last time you saw it? And by the way, how tall are you? how were you educated and how good is your eyesight? You can't have an average age, so how can you have an average reading ability? By the same token, how is it possible to have average physical or sensory ability, skin colour or first language? How often did you see Asian, African or Chinese actors in adverts in the last decade? Only more recently, only a few, and usually stereotyped. How often do you see disabled people in adverts, unless these adverts are specifically about disability? Very rarely.

The opinion that all visitors to museums have a reading age of 13 and can read in English from a panel at 'normal' eye level is only a reflection of society's resistance to recognising the diversity of so-called 'normal' people. Museums are catering for people - and people have different cultural, educational and social backgrounds. They are of different ages, have different abilities and sexual orientations. All are part of a diverse society.

To be genuinely inclusive in museums we must acknowledge the mindset that distinguishes between 'us' and 'them'. It is not about asking ***"how can we cater for disabled people in our museums - what can 'We do for Them?'"*** IT IS WHAT THEY CAN DO FOR MUSEUMS. It is time we acknowledged the diversity of the real 'people in the street' who, of course, include museum staff themselves. Museums who do not acknowledge, and work with their community, will lose touch with us and we will take our expertise, our way of seeing the world, our talents, our knowledge, our abilities and our wealth of experience elsewhere.

I once had a conversation with a man doing research into people's attitudes to the human body. In an attempt to attract volunteers to be interviewed he had printed leaflets in Bengali, Somali and Urdu - yet only white middle class people came forward to take part. The fact that the research was conducted in a Western, analytical, traditional format, and that he did not employ anyone from these groups who spoke those languages to make contacts and do the research, did not seem to occur to him as possible contributory causes.

HELEN COXALL

#### d) Sustainability

***“An holistic and cross-disciplinary approach that informs everything from the director’s office, by way of the trustees, through the galleries to a warm welcome at the barrier-free front door” needs to be fostered.”***

*(BarrierFree, Issue 1)*

The aim should be to embed good and sustainable practice into everything the museum does. Plans for improving access for people with disabilities should be reflected in the museum’s policies and strategic planning. A clear definition of the institutional values, goals and mission that underpin operations are a first step. (see *Producing a Forward Plan*, MGC, 1997). The process of implementation should be led by senior management, with effective communication across the institution at all levels. As a result a more productive, creative and positive institutional culture, based on mutual respect, dignity and fairness, with appropriate support systems, training and equal opportunities can be achieved.

Improving access requires realistic planning with consultation, monitoring, evaluation and review at every stage. Small, well-managed changes, which are sustainable as part of a longer term strategy, are likely to be much more effective than major, one-off developments. It is important to ensure that adequate resources in terms of funding, staff and training are allocated to ensure that disabled people can rely on the museum to sustain facilities and services to meet their needs.

#### e) Social Inclusion

***“If disabled people are not able to represent themselves or see their experience validated by the society they live in, a cycle of exclusion is unwittingly promoted...”*** (Jennie Lloyd, Drawbridge Group)

The Government set up a Social Exclusion Unit in 1998 as part of the Cabinet Office, to ensure that its policies on the need to tackle poverty and social exclusion were addressed. The Unit published a report on neighbourhood renewal. It defined social exclusion as ***“a shorthand label for what can happen when individuals or areas suffer from a combination of linked problems such as unemployment, poor skills, low incomes, poor housing, high crime environments, bad health and family breakdown.”*** (see Resource fact sheet *“Social Inclusion”* at [www.resource.gov.uk](http://www.resource.gov.uk).)

As a result of the report 17 policy action teams were established in other government departments. Policy Action Team 10 (PAT 10) was established to

look at ways of maximising the impact of DCMS spending and policies in the arts, sport and leisure. (*Arts & Sport, Policy Action Team 10 A report to the Social Exclusion Unit*, 1999.)

Policy guidance for DCMS-funded and local authority museums, which specifically mentions people with disabilities as amongst those at risk of social exclusion, has been published (*Centres for Social Change: Museums, Galleries and Archives for All*, DCMS, 2000).

Social Exclusion is one of the overarching themes of Government policy and an important priority for DCMS. Exclusion can take many forms and is acknowledged to be the experience of many disabled people. Disabled people, like other excluded groups, are denied access to power, knowledge, services, facilities, choices and opportunities in many museums, as well as in other sectors. Museums and galleries have a responsibility to play their part in promoting social inclusion. An approach at institutional and individual levels that welcomes and values working WITH, not FOR disabled people, and acknowledges their expertise and individual experiences using good audience research, partnerships, consultation, planning and evaluation will promote social inclusion.

If museums implement best, that is inclusive, practice in regard to disabled people they are in a strong position to stay up-to-date with Social Inclusion initiatives.

#### **f) Accountability**

All organisations, whether small charities, voluntary organisations or large multi-nationals are subjected to new kinds of scrutiny and accountability today. Business managerialism, first introduced into public services by the 'Contract Culture' of the 1980s, has become accepted practice, in the museum and gallery sector as well as in other sectors (see *Museums and the Contract Culture*, Max Hebditch, *Museums Journal*, December 1992, p 32-34). All organisations are required to demonstrate a much clearer sense of purpose, policy structure, planning, monitoring and reviewing of performance and these factors are the basis of Best Value in local government. Museums and galleries are clearly positioned within the leisure and creative industries with duties to the public at large. They are in a market for visitors and funding. There is also greater attention paid to ethical standards, benchmarking and schemes such as 'Investors in People' (see *Ethical Guidelines on Access*, Museum Association 1999 and *Nine Principles of Public Service Delivery*, <http://www.servicefirst.gov.uk/1998/introduc/nine.htm>).

Museums have to demonstrate their public benefits more clearly today with

their educational and social roles being defined as core functions and promoted by the government.

**“Their willingness to embrace diversity and to remove barriers to access of whatever kind establishes norms of inclusion which can influence private behaviour.”** (*A Common Wealth: Museums in the Learning Age*, D. Anderson HMSO, 1999 p.33).

Monitoring, review and evaluation are essential strategic tools in any organisation; these strategies are crucial to any improvements for disabled people and are included in the DDA's Codes of Practice (see Resource fact sheet, *Evaluation*, [www.resource.gov.uk](http://www.resource.gov.uk)).

The Employers Forum on Disability is a particularly useful source of best-practice advice and support for museums and galleries (see Principles 3).

#### 1.4. Disability in Society

***“Every day disabled people face difficulties that most non-disabled people have no idea about. It’s not just about ramps, wide doorways and accessible toilets for wheelchair users. It’s about all disabled people and the way they are treated.”***

(*The Disability Discrimination Act 1995: What Service Providers Need To Know*, Disability on the Agenda, 1996)

The campaigns and activities of the Disability Movement have become increasingly influential and have long promoted the social model. Disabled people are effectively promoting their rights to participation and self-advocacy and their voices are being heard at Government level. The Movement includes many local and national groups of disabled people, led by The British Council of Disabled People (BCODP). The BCODP is the national umbrella for organisations controlled and run by disabled people. The movement is informed by Disability Studies, which is now firmly established as an academic discipline. The Open University was the pioneer of Disability Studies in the 1970s. Today, the University of Leeds and the University of Greenwich are also prominent in the field.

The Disability Arts Movement's increasing recognition and influence has been another important catalyst for change. There are active national and regional disability arts fora, and other organisations that specifically address access to the arts for disabled people. Museums and galleries can ensure they are aware of developments locally, regionally and nationally by networking effectively and developing partnerships with those organisations promoting disability arts or access to the arts for disabled people.

***“If the experience of disabled people is not validated in museums and galleries, disabled people can become more isolated because they may not see themselves as having worth within society. Society is deprived of good role models, making stereotyping more likely; stereotyping further distances individuals who experience disability. “*** (Jennie Lloyd, Drawbridge Group)

There are annual disability arts festivals in many places and many community arts spaces and local museums and galleries now exhibit work by disabled artists, employ disabled performers, and regularly engage disabled people in a variety of roles across the spectrum of their activities.

**For example:** Bruce Castle, a local authority museum in Haringey, North London has had exhibitions of local disabled artists' work, both professional and amateur; offers annual workshops and performances led by a Deaf theatre group for local children; offers in-house and outreach handling sessions to local groups of disabled people, including those who have severe and multiple impairments; and outreach reminiscence sessions for groups of elderly people. The Whitechapel Art Gallery in London has a diverse programme that includes disabled people and has recently employed dancers with learning disabilities in their galleries. In Nottingham, a major visual and performing arts festival that promotes the work of disabled artists took place in autumn 2000 across a number of venues in the city, including Nottingham Castle museum.

Much has been achieved in museums and galleries, as elsewhere. Nevertheless there is still work to be done to challenge the stereotypes, discrimination and prejudice that continue to surround disabled people and disability issues, before equality of opportunity and full civil rights are achieved.

Although disability issues now have a much higher profile in the media and attract more coverage than in the past, the way disability is portrayed often still reflects negative and discriminatory attitudes and assumptions. The media is the main source of information about disabled people and disability issues. The sensational headlines or so-called 'human-interest' stories are written to sell newspapers, magazines, films and so on. The tragedy model (see 1.2) that represents disabled people as heroic or brave victims prevails and it is still rare to find any reference that promotes the contribution disabled people make to society, or their expertise in various fields. Much of the advertising of the large establishment charities has supported this approach until recently.

It remains a common misconception that disabled people are a homogeneous group, often referred to as 'the disabled', or comprise only those with mobility



difficulties or sensory impairments. In reality people of all ages, interests, academic abilities and cultural backgrounds can have a very wide range of impairments or serious medical conditions that disable; these can be temporary or permanent, visible or invisible. Eighty-three per cent of disabled people were not born with their impairment and disabled people are as different from one another as non-disabled people.

Today, under the DDA, those recognised as disabled may include many people with hidden impairments and chronic illness or health conditions, which include ME, HIV and Aids, people who are identified as 'disfigured', people with dyslexia and people with speech and language impairments (see Principles 2.1). There are many older people, who may not consider themselves to be disabled, who share many of the same barriers to access. Disabled people have much to contribute to society if the barriers to participation are dismantled. Their perspectives and involvement can enrich the experience of museums and galleries for everyone.

(See: *Night Sight : What's on in the evening economy for people who are elderly and disabled*. Report, 1999 available from RNIB.)

### **Examples**

- Joshua Reynolds, founder of the Royal Academy of Arts was Deaf.
- Monet and Matisse were visually impaired for part of their lives as artists.
- Van Gogh and other artists experienced mental distress.
- The Gulbenkian Awards of 1999 recognised the work of the National Maritime Museum in celebrating the history and achievements of John Goodricke, a 17th century Deaf astronomer.

If disabled people are going to be fully included in the life of museums and galleries, the issues that have to be addressed go beyond those of access to those of representation in all areas of activity. Disability should be reflected in research into the collections and in acquisitions policies, as well as in exhibitions, programmes, and events. This can be achieved through exhibitions and performances of the work of disabled artists and crafts people; research and programmes that reflect the experience of disability; using the collections to address the histories of disabled people which have previously been hidden; reviewing and displaying or interpreting collections from disabled peoples' perspectives; involving disabled members of staff including disabled artists, teachers or academics in interpretative activities and labelling that shows different perspectives clearly.

Inclusion, integration, access, difference and diversity are not just buzzwords for museums and galleries; they are important underlying concepts in any consideration of their public role. Inclusive practice, rather than segregating

and separating services, 'adds value' to what is on offer, celebrates the differences and diversity in society and benefits many more than disabled people. For example, a young reader, one of the eight million adults in the UK with literacy difficulties, someone with dyslexia, a person with a learning disability, someone for whom English is a second language and an overseas tourist can all share the same barriers to information in a museum or gallery. Museum and gallery text is often written in specialist and complex language or assumes too high a level of background knowledge (see Practice 8.1).

Ethical Guidelines on access have been published by the Museums Association. They draw museums' and galleries' attention to the diversity in our society, the importance of the relationship between museums and the public, and the importance of audience development and strategic planning in addressing the issues involved. **"Museums need to have a generosity of spirit and be open to the views of their stakeholders, empowering and listening to them and valuing the contribution they can make."** (*Ethical Guidelines on Access, Museums Association, 1999*).



## Disability Organisations

There are many local, regional and national organisations of disabled people. Some organisations represent specific impairment groups or particular interests, others more general interests.

British Council of Disabled People  
Litchurch Plaza  
Litchurch Lane  
Derby  
DE24 8AA  
Telephone: 01332 295551  
Fax: 01332 295580  
Minicom: 01332 295581  
Email: [general@bcodp.org.uk](mailto:general@bcodp.org.uk)  
Website: [www.bcodp.org.uk](http://www.bcodp.org.uk)

RADAR - Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation  
12 City Forum  
250 City Road  
London  
EC1V 8AF  
Tel: 0207 250 3222  
Fax: 0207 250 0212,  
Minicom: 0207 250 4119  
Email: <http://www.radar.org.uk>

Disability Wales  
Llys Ifor  
Crescent Rd  
Caerphilly  
CF83 1XL  
Tel: 01222 887325  
Fax: 01222 888702  
Minicom: 01222 887325  
Email: [info@dwac.demon.uk](mailto:info@dwac.demon.uk)

Disability Scotland  
Princes House  
5 Shandwick Place  
Edinburgh  
EH1 2BE  
Tel: 01312 298632  
Email: [enquiries@disabilityscotland.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@disabilityscotland.org.uk)

Disability Action for Northern Ireland  
2 Annadale Avenue,  
Belfast  
BT7 3JH  
Tel: 01232 491011

The Disability Now website ([www.disabilitynow.org.uk](http://www.disabilitynow.org.uk)) has a link page that contains a useful regional list of general disability organisations. There are also lists of links by subjects such as 'Access', 'Education' and 'Arts'.

NDAF's free email newsletter, EtCetera, usefully documents a wide range of disability visual and performance arts.  
National Disability Arts Forum UK  
Mea House  
Ellison Place  
Newcastle upon Tyne  
NE1 8XS  
Tel/Minicom +44 (0)191 2611628  
Fax +44 (0)191 2220573  
Email [ndaf@ndaf.org](mailto:ndaf@ndaf.org)  
Website: [www.ndaf.org](http://www.ndaf.org)

The SHAPE Network was a federation of independent arts organisations working to increase access to the arts for excluded communities. It has now disbanded but some of the individual organisations that made up the network continue to exist.

Contact:

Anna Thornhill

ITHACA

Unit 1, St John Fisher School

Sandy Lane West

Oxford

OX4 5LD

Tel: 01865 714652

Disability Rights Commission

See: Principles 3.3

## 2. INFORMATION

### 2.1 Statistics

About 8.6 million people consider themselves to be disabled but about 1.5 million others are also included under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (see PRINCIPLES 3.4). Many older people do not consider themselves to be 'disabled' but share the same barriers to participation.

- 83% of disabled people were not born with their impairment.
- One in four families has a disabled member.
- It is estimated that about ten million people have mobility impairments.
- Less than 5% of disabled people are wheelchair users.
- About 1.97 million adults in the UK have a visual impairment. One million people could be registered blind or partially sighted, but most (82%) have some vision. 90% of visually impaired people are aged over 60. Approximately 75% of visually impaired people can read large print (over 14pt); about 19,000 people read Braille. At least six out of ten visually impaired people have an additional, often age-related, impairment.
- About 8.4 million people have a hearing impairment; about 60% are aged over 70. About two million people use a hearing aid; 420,000 people cannot use a voice telephone. British Sign Language is the preferred language of 70,000 people, making it one of the four most widely used language in Britain.
- About 1.2 million people have a learning disability. About 200,000 people have a severe learning disability.
- One in seven people in any given week experience a mental health issue.
- About eight million adults in the UK have lower than average literacy.
- By 2021 more than one third of the population will be aged over 65.
- In the school population, at least 20%, and up to 40%, of children have some form of learning barrier identified as a 'Special Educational Need'.

- Disabled people are three times more likely to be unemployed.
- It is estimated that 42% of disabled people never attend an arts event.

(Sources: RNIB, DSS 1999, DoH 1997, *Informability Manual*, Wendy Gregory, HMSO 1996, *From Exclusion to Inclusion*, DfEE, 1999, *BSL Campaign gesture*, London Disability News Nov 2000, p1, The latest Office of Population Census & Statistics (OPCS) survey was in 1988,)

## 2.2 Terminology and Definitions

An impairment is not a disability. Impairment is the functional limitation or loss that can be sensory, physical, intellectual, psychological/emotional, due to a chronic medical condition, or a combination of one or more of these on a long-term or permanent basis.

Disability is the loss or limitation of equal opportunities to participate in society (but defined in specific medical/legal terms under the DDA - see Principles 3.4). A person with an impairment is disabled if the social response to that impairment puts them at a disadvantage. It is no longer acceptable, neither is it useful, to talk about or try and assess a person's impairment, or to give them a medical label. Neither is it acceptable to try to find out, or need to know, the cause or condition which underlines the disability. It is much more useful and acceptable to identify and try to dismantle the barriers people face. Disability is a result of the way society is organised and the barriers that are created (see Key Principles 1.1. i). The term 'non-disabled people' is more accurate than able-bodied to describe people who currently do not have impairments. Able-bodied is an inaccurate stereotype that segregates and casts disabled people into a negative role.

The language used to refer to disabled people can often be offensive. There is an ongoing debate about terminology, often confused with political correctness. However, language reflects underlying assumptions and attitudes and many of the older terms portray disabled people as helpless, or powerless, reinforce negative stereotypes, and present barriers to equal status, choice and opportunity. It is important to see the person first, value that person as an individual, celebrate difference and find out which terms that person prefers.

**Do not use:**

cripple/invalid

mentally handicapped/retarded

spastic

mongol

deaf and dumb

dwarf/midget

suffering from/afflicted by/a victim of..

wheelchair bound

physically handicapped

deaf aid

the disabled/blind/deaf

disabled toilet

mental

‘special needs’

special facilities (this is patronising and vague)

**Do use:**disabled person  
person with a disabilityperson with a learning  
disability/difficultydisabled person with cerebral  
palsydisabled person with Down's  
Syndrome

deaf or Deaf

small person

person with...

wheelchair user

physical/mobility impairment

hearing aid

disabled people/blind or visually  
impaired people/deaf or  
hearing-impaired people

accessible toilet

mental health survivor/service user

disabled people/disability  
provision

describe what is on offer

‘Special needs’ is a term often used in a school context to describe pupils who need extra support in learning; disabled people do not like this term. After all what is special? In the school context this term is used very broadly and will often include pupils who are socially and economically disadvantaged, traveller or refugee children, gifted children as well as children with disabilities (see also Practice 9).

## 2.3. Good Practice Principles in Working with Disabled People

### a) Principles

- Develop a dialogue with disabled people, within your museum and outside it; invite their comments and suggestions. Research and get to know your local communities of disabled people (see Practice 2).
- Do not assume that your museum or gallery knows what is needed to provide access for disabled people; involve disabled people before you implement access improvements. Allow them to set the agenda and accept that there are many complex issues involved that do not always have straightforward answers.
- Disability Awareness and Equality Training should be available for ALL staff. Awareness of the differences and diversity within the disabled community is essential for all staff.
- Disabled people are diverse and all are individuals, different ages, social profile, ethnicity, tastes, interests and abilities need to be taken into consideration.
- The needs of disabled people can seem to conflict with one another. Such conflicts are most effectively resolved when disabled people discuss and resolve them between themselves.
- The DDA includes within its remit many people with a range of health or medical conditions that may result in people feeling unwell or in pain. The needs of some disabled people can change rapidly during or between visits. The medical or health consequences of these impairments should not be denied, but it is important not to assume that all disabled people are unhealthy or unwell. Try to identify the barriers which people face in your museum. Many other people will share the same barriers and everyone has a right to dignity and respect.
- When meeting a disabled person, as would be expected when meeting a non-disabled person, always talk to the person concerned. Think about the language you use. Language can present many barriers to many people. Introduce yourself - explain who you are and what your role is in the museum or gallery.
- Do not invade their personal space, e.g. lean on a wheelchair or take their

arm. Do not speak to any friends, family or others about the person as though they were not there. Give people time to answer and if you do not understand the reply say so.

- Keep an open mind, do not make assumptions about the person you meet. Many impairments are hidden. Assistive dogs for example are used by some people with hearing and/or mobility impairments today, as well as by some blind people.
- Ensure that you know what facilities and services are available in your museum, so you can respond accurately to any questions you are asked. Make sure all points of contact with the public, such as switchboard, know as well.
- Clear and appropriate signage, orientation and wayfinding strategies are needed. (Disabled people, like non-disabled people need to be able to find their way around and identify exit routes and basic facilities such as toilets, cafes and shops).
- Most disabled people can and wish to be independent, and nobody wants intrusive or personal questions asked about their impairments. However, disabled people may appreciate an opportunity to state any particular requirements they may have and today, under the DDA, can expect reasonable adjustments to be planned or made to include them.
- Ensure disabled people feel valued and welcomed, without being patronised. Remember that although disabled people have valuable experiences and expertise to offer, those are sometimes accompanied by low self-esteem and poor self-image as a result of their previous experiences of discrimination and prejudice in society. They will not necessarily all want to be involved in strategies to improve access.
- Do not forget about the psychological barriers to access. Positive messages of welcome are necessary. Disabled people need a sense of belonging, as much as anyone else.

## **b) Information about Different Impairments to Prompt Inclusive Thinking**

The following section is intended as an aid to initiate thinking about differences as a basis for inclusive practice. It is not exhaustive in its coverage of impairments and is intended only as a guide. It does not replace consultation with disabled people and the need for professional disability training, nor does it assume that all the barriers referred to can be dismantled immediately.

## ***1. Working with people with mobility impairments***

Many people who have mobility impairments do not use wheelchairs or other equipment such as walking sticks or crutches. Less than 5% of disabled people use wheelchairs, but moving around can be difficult for a variety of people for all sorts of reasons. There are an estimated 10 million people with mobility difficulties. The term mobility impairment or difficulty is used to refer to some limitation in physical functions such as walking, running, climbing, standing, sitting (particularly with back conditions), manual dexterity, co-ordination, strength or stamina.

Staff need training in mobility impairment issues. Physical barriers are not always easily identifiable. Do not assume that people with mobility impairments and wheelchair users do not move around at all. Also the population in general uses a variety of wheels to get around.

Steps, steep slopes, long distances, heavy doors, computer peripherals such as a mouse, computer interfaces, such as icons that are too small on touch screens, lack of accurate access information or accessible transport facilities are barriers to many people, particularly families with young children.

People with mobility impairments need accurate information about the physical environments in museums and galleries and the barriers that they are likely to encounter. For example: the distances to be covered, the basic layout of buildings, whether there are adequate resting places and seating, the means of changing levels, wheelchairs on loan, location of parking spaces, accessible toilets etc. Respect the mobility aids that people use and refer to and treat these aids appropriately. If someone indicates that they need assistance or a rest, respect their wishes and follow their instructions. Ensure that spaces designed to be accessible are not cluttered. The removal of one barrier can lead to the creation of another through lack of awareness. For example, where the transfer space for an accessible toilet is used to store materials or position waste bins, rendering the toilet inaccessible.

Good design of products and environments enables and empowers most people; there is a great deal of awareness and expertise about creating user-friendly environments and the products available. It is often in the details that access succeeds or fails.

## ***2. Working with people with visual impairments***

Nearly two million people have some form of visual impairment, but most blind people (82%) have some residual vision that they use to good effect, and many people who could register as blind do not do so. The term visually



impaired refers to people who are blind or partially sighted, but visual impairments are not always obvious. Every person with a visual impairment is different in terms of the nature of their visual limitation and their expectations and requirements. Many visually impaired people have visual memory and all use their residual vision. Do not make assumptions. A person who is blind or has very limited vision and no visual memory will make sense of the world using a combination of touch, smell, taste, hearing and imagination. Although museums and galleries essentially rely on visual stimulation, we all make sense of our world using more than just vision. There is increasing value and interest in creating multi-sensory learning opportunities in museums and galleries for everyone. Many people who have sight are not trained to look at objects. So that multi-sensory exploration of an object, information in large print, in an audio format or careful audio-description will enhance most people's experiences. Tactile diagrams, plans or pictures, are also useful to people other than visually impaired people.

Staff need training in visual impairment issues. Every visually impaired person is different and not all visual impairments are visible so do not assume that because one person has asked for something, e.g. guiding, another person will want it. If you are unsure what to do ask the person concerned whether there is anything they would like you to do. Tell people when you are going to move away. Guide dogs are working animals and should not be distracted while working (with harness on).

Art education for visually impaired children is receiving much greater attention today, and there are research projects looking at its ongoing development. Visually impaired people make and appreciate art.

**People with visual impairments need:**

- accessible information in a range of alternative formats. There are 16,000 Braille readers while other people, particularly visually impaired children, use Moon;
- tactile signs or diagrams, audio-information or computer disk;
- audio-description of buildings for orientation, and of the collections;
- new technologies are being developed to further empower visually impaired people. There are audible and personal wayfinding systems, a variety of magnification aids, speech-to-text computer software etc. Consult with the experts, individuals and organisations, locally and nationally.

### **3. Working with people with a hearing impairment**

About 20% of the population is identified as having some form of hearing loss, but trying to categorise hearing-impaired people into groups to identify the barriers they face is difficult as each individual's personal experience of hearing impairment is so different.

It is useful to distinguish between Deaf people - those who have, in the most part, been Deaf from an early age or birth, and use sign language, usually British Sign Language (BSL) as their first language - and those who have lost their hearing - acquired hearing loss - usually referred to as deafened or hard of hearing people. Many Deaf people would identify themselves as a linguistic and cultural minority, use a capital D for the adjective Deaf and "share a perception of the world through an emphasis on visual and kinesthetic input" (see [www.bda.org.uk/Deaf-Info/whatisde.htm](http://www.bda.org.uk/Deaf-Info/whatisde.htm)). There are at least 70,000 BSL users and 130,000 hearing-aid users of BSL, and these numbers are growing. The British Deaf Association (BDA) is a national organisation that represents their interests. Many Deaf children have been, and continue to be denied access to this Deaf culture until adulthood, as their education has been in schools which teach and communicate in spoken English, sometimes Signed Supported English (SSE), rather than in BSL. Moreover 90% of Deaf children have hearing parents. Today, increasing numbers of Deaf children are taught using BSL.

Signed Supported English (SSE) is based on English grammar and vocabulary and is very different from BSL - for many Deaf people it indicates the dominance of the hearing world rather than the cultural and linguistic distinctiveness of Deaf culture.

The approach to identifying or defining hearing impairment based on a medical assessment of the range and degree of hearing loss in its deviation from the general range is usually applied to someone who has an acquired hearing loss, often as part of the ageing process. Words such as deafened, profound, severe, partial-hearing loss are used, alongside hard of hearing, and in some cases deaf. As the population ages, more and more people will have some form of hearing impairment; 60% of hearing-impaired people are over 70 years of age.

### **Deaf and hearing-impaired people need:**

- staff trained to be aware of the diversity and different requirements of people in the Deaf and hearing-impaired community; and a knowledge of the equipment and other resources available and in use;
- a variety of strategies to communicate: sign language, both BSL and SSE, lip speakers and lip reading, use of hearing aids, palantypists, induction loops, infra-red systems, speech and writing;
- good eye contact; look directly at the person, do not turn away or cover your face or mouth. Do not stand with your back to a window or light source; your face needs to be in the light. Be responsive; use gestures and body language where appropriate. Speak clearly and quite slowly, but it is not necessary to shout or over enunciate. Be patient and if necessary write something down. Most hearing-impaired people find background noise a barrier to communication;
- visual rather than audible signals and alarms and clear signage, wayfinding and egress routes;
- many hearing-impaired and many Deaf people require access to a text phone, although e-mail and portable pagers are being used increasingly. make sure staff are trained in its use. Museums and galleries should also join BT's Typetalk service and train staff in its use;
- where audio-visual or multimedia resources are used, induction loops, closed captions or real-time captions are required for the audio output;
- clear written information on what is on offer at a museum is essential and a written synopsis or explanation of what is happening is very helpful for Deaf and hard of hearing people. Plain English should be used as many people who have been Deaf from childhood have been denied access to the educational opportunities of their hearing peers. Clear headings, simple limited text and an illustration will often communicate well. Do not rely on text alone as for some Deaf people and BSL users English is their second language.

There are also people with dual sensory impairments, often referred to as deaf/blind people. Contact SENSE, the national organisation of deaf/blind people for information and contacts for a local group.

## **Deaf Astronomers' Project – THE NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM**

The National Maritime Museum won the Best Provision for Visitors with Disabilities, 1999 Gulbenkian Award for Museums and Galleries, with the Deaf Astronomers' project 'Brightness Altered'. The project involved a partnership that included the Royal Observatory, Greenwich and Shape, a disability organisation with a Deaf arts group. The project linked two strands of previous interpretative strategies, actors in the galleries and sign-interpreted events, to present a Deaf theatre production that celebrated the life of John Goodricke, a 17th century astronomer who was himself profoundly Deaf. It has also resulted in the formation of a Deaf astronomers' group that meets regularly. The museum with whom much innovative work has been done has had a long-standing involvement with the Deaf community, and this project offers museums and galleries a model. The project exemplifies the benefits of a best practice approach to the full inclusion of disabled people into the life of museums and galleries and marks the transition from access for, to representation of, disabled people.

- Part of an ongoing and creative partnership with a Deaf arts organisation.
- Created a sense of ownership and real involvement for Deaf people.
- Offers a celebration of the participants' own Deaf history, which is usually excluded or ignored by the hearing world.
- Celebrates the contribution that Deaf people and Deaf culture make to society in general, and to museums in particular.

### **4. Working with people with learning difficulties/disabilities**

'Learning difficulty' is the term used and very broadly defined in the statutory education sector (*Education Acts 1981, 1989, 1993, 1996*). It is used in the identification of 'special educational needs' that require 'special educational provision'. However, the term 'learning difficulty' can be interpreted to locate the 'problem' in the individual rather than in the barriers that society creates. Learning disability is used by some people to clearly refer to the barriers to equal opportunities in learning experienced by those with intellectual, cognitive or other impairments. Many adults who could be described as having a learning disability continue to use the term learning difficulty to describe themselves, but emphasise that they are people first and that labels are not helpful.

People with learning difficulties are often the most marginalised in our society,

however if museums pay attention to their inclusion other visitors will benefit too.

Approximately 1.2 million people in the UK are identified as having learning difficulties or disabilities, of which about 200,000 have severe learning disabilities that are often associated with additional sensory, communication or mobility impairments. Today most people, including people with severe learning disabilities, are living in the community and actively seek leisure and learning opportunities. There are national and local organisations of people with learning difficulties and one of the Disability Rights Commissioners is a person with a learning difficulty.

People with learning disabilities or difficulties are very diverse and these terms are used to cover a wide range of people. Most children with learning difficulties attend mainstream schools and many adults are able to live independently or are in employment, while others require high levels of support. Some people with learning difficulties have additional impairments, multiple or complex impairments is the term often used and may have advocates that can speak for them. Terms such as mild, moderate, severe or profound are often used to describe children and adults with learning difficulties, nevertheless all can benefit from inclusion in the activities of museums and galleries. Learning difficulties are usually evident from early childhood, but can be acquired through illness or accident later in life. Learning difficulties should not be confused with mental distress.

A learning difficulty may affect one or more of the following: a person's vision, hearing, speech, literacy and numeracy competence, memory, expressive and receptive language, concentration span, fine motor skills, confidence, mobility, social awareness and responses, and thus create barriers for that person in those areas.

People with learning difficulties are all individuals, with different needs and wishes that must be respected. In some people the learning difficulty may not be obvious or visible but in others, it is immediately recognisable. Museums should consider the needs and wishes of people with learning difficulties and look to dismantle the barriers to participation in consultation with the people themselves or their advocates.

People First, a national organisation of people with learning difficulties states that its members would like:

***“To be treated the same as everyone else (i.e. not segregated); to speak for themselves and in their own language, museums should talk to***

***people with learning difficulties and the advocates for those with more complex impairments; to learn about their own culture and history.”***

**People with learning disabilities, like most other visitors to museums and galleries, need:**

- staff trained in disability awareness and equality that includes people with learning difficulties to ensure dignity, and respect for difference;
- to be able to control their own lives and be able to find their way around a building - using visual and tactile signs and easily understood symbols, clearly marked routes, toilets clearly identified for men or women, instructions on how lifts work, easy identification of what each space is for with clear ways in and out of each space, as well as ways in and out of the building as a whole, changes in level marked and steps with contrast nosing.
- purpose and motivation - museums have to be interesting, enjoyable and relevant. They need to relate to the person's real-life experience, leaps in the dark are difficult for most visitors. A short introduction to a museum or gallery, preferably in hard copy and audio, is essential;
- a variety of appropriate communication strategies and opportunities to 'have a go' in an environment where a person can feel safe, secure, valued and comfortable. Plain English, pictures to support text, and short sentences in clear print, availability in an audio format;
- clear and unambiguous learning opportunities, based on concrete experience. Step by step learning opportunities, structured at an appropriate pace. These steps should be small and manageable and offer progression. Reinforcement and repetition for successful learning;
- a variety of methods of engagement including multi-sensory ones; success and reward in any activity; prompting or cues - visual, verbal, physical or gestural;
- direct experience, interaction, interactives, hands-on experiences etc;
- children and adults with learning difficulties may have medical needs arising from epilepsy, diabetes, dialysis requirements etc. (as do many other disabled people). These may require a First Aid Room with changing facilities.
- For children and adults with emotional or behavioural difficulties, or behaviour that challenges, a quiet space may be needed to withdraw to during a visit.

## **5. Working with people who are mental health service users/survivors**

The terms used to describe people with mental distress, mental health service users, or survivors are many and various, and there is much stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination. Mental distress is too often equated with violence, dangerous behaviour and sensational headlines or reporting, and survivors and those with mental distress have a major barrier to face in the resulting stigma associated with the terms 'mentally ill' or 'psychiatric illness'. As with most labelling, the terms used do not reflect the diversity of people involved, the needs they have or the barriers they face. Nevertheless survivors, mental health service users and those with mental distress generally share some barriers; social isolation and marginalisation, financial hardship, lack of access to socially valued roles such as colleague, friend or student, frequent changes of accommodation, interrupted or missed educational opportunities and unemployment.

Mental distress must not be confused with learning disability/difficulty, although people with learning difficulties or any other impairment can have mental distress. One in seven people in any given week experiences a crisis in mental health, and that mental distress can be temporary, long-term or lifelong. (*DOH, Health of the Nation Briefing Pack, 1997, p. 13*).

### **People with mental distress, mental health service users or survivors need:**

- staff trained to differentiate between people with mental distress and people with learning difficulties;
- a non-threatening welcome, reassurance and time to make decisions, e.g. a personal trained guide on offer;
- short introductory printed or audio-guides that introduce the museums and outline any activities or events on offer;
- opportunities/activities that can build up commitment slowly and over time;
- a targeted education session designed to support confidence-building, self-esteem, concentration, decision-making and stamina;
- staff trained to have an awareness of possible mood changes and the physical side-effects of medication. Common side-effects can include: restlessness, lethargy, thirst, increased frequency of urination, muscle spasm.



## **6. Working with people with hidden impairments**

People may have a huge diversity of hidden impairments - these can range from impairments without medical implications, such as speech or language impairments or dyslexia, to impairments which have physical symptoms. Universal design and inclusive practice will ensure that basic facilities and institutional awareness are in place so that people with hidden impairments who may have particular requirements are not excluded. It is very important that museums and galleries seek the advice of disabled people themselves, their organisations, and disability consultants about hidden impairments.

People should be allowed to identify their own barriers. Museums should ensure that there are opportunities for people to identify any particular requirements and that if someone asks for something *they* are the expert. People also have very different energy levels or stamina. Large and unfamiliar buildings can be very stressful as well as exhausting for many people.

A person with a hidden impairment may have ongoing or occasional medical needs e.g. someone with epilepsy may need calm support during or after a seizure, a person with diabetes may need to eat regularly, a person with a bronchial condition such as asthma may need a smoke-free environment, other people may need quick access to toilets, seats or a rest area. Museums and galleries need to have a First Aid room or other suitable space and appropriately trained staff.

### **People with hidden impairments, like many other people, may require:**

- trained staff to respond if someone collapses, with understanding of possible causes such as epilepsy;
- staff that accept there are different ways of behaving and speaking, but who listen carefully to what people say and do not make assumptions e.g. someone who speaks unclearly is drunk;
- parking close to the museum;
- wheelchairs to borrow and seats in the entrance;
- alternatives to queuing;
- appropriate seating or space to lie down in or near the galleries;
- a facility to exit and re-enter an exhibition;



- a First Aid room for medical needs such as injections or dialysis;
- information about the types of lighting used e.g. contemporary art installations, or light-based interactives, are important for people with epilepsy;
- staff trained to deal with disabled visitors and accurate knowledge of facilities on offer;
- a quiet space to retire to.

### ***7. Working with people with speech or language impairments***

There is a huge diversity of people who may have speech or language impairments. Do not assume that someone who has difficulty expressing themselves using the spoken word or in writing cannot understand or participate fully. There are many augmentative and alternative communication systems in use. Be patient, listen to what is said rather than how it is said. Say if you do not understand, do not complete sentences or pretend to have understood, even if this means asking someone to repeat themselves more than once.

### 3. THE DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION ACT (DDA) 1995

(This section is based on advice written by Rebecca McGinnis for the MGC in 1997 and 1998 but updated to take account of more recent developments)

***“This Government is committed to supporting access for disabled people through the Disability Rights Commission and the implementation of the Disability Discrimination Act, 1995. We want Britain to become a fully inclusive society”*** (Janet Anderson MP, Minister for Tourism, Film and Broadcasting, *Opening Up: Access for deaf and hard of hearing people to arts, cultural and tourism venues*, Deafworks, 1999, p1)

#### 3.1. Introduction

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) aims to end discrimination against disabled people and improve access in several aspects of life, including employment, obtaining goods and services and using public buildings. It is the most comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation for disabled people in the UK to date and is being phased in over a period of ten years, beginning with the provisions governing employment (1996) and access to goods, services and facilities (October 1999) and premises (2004). The DDA included the setting up of the National Disability Council and the Northern Ireland Disability Council, which had an advisory role. These have been replaced with a Disability Rights Commission for England, Wales and Scotland, and an Equality Commission in Northern Ireland (see 3.3). All museums and galleries have responsibilities under the DDA as both employers and service providers.

The DDA is seen as only a first step in dismantling the many barriers that exist for disabled people, it is not the Civil Rights legislation promised by Government and deserved by disabled people but it has helped empower many disabled people to challenge the discrimination and prejudice that exists and move the debate about rights of access for disabled people forward. The Government is continuing to address the shortcomings of the DDA advised by the Disability Rights Commission which commenced work in April 2000; it has indicated its commitment to full civil rights for disabled people and the enforcement of existing legislation. The Human Rights Act 1998, implemented on October 2nd 2000, will further strengthen disabled peoples' rights.

Many disabled people remain hostile in their response to the Act as it lacks the comprehensive coverage and approach of the race and sex discrimination laws and allows discrimination to persist under certain conditions. ***“Much work***

***remains to be done before full access for disabled people is accepted into our culture as a norm.***" (Jennie Lloyd, Drawbridge Group). However, there is now a legal requirement for organisations to recognise the existence of the barriers faced by disabled people and to dismantle them. This requires advice from disabled people, appropriate training and an access audit to inform planning.

Museums and galleries should look to the 'spirit' rather than the 'letter' of the law and implement best, that is inclusive, practice. By looking beyond mere compliance, towards creating a culture of diversity that fully includes disabled people, everyone will benefit and museums and galleries will clearly demonstrate their value and role in our cultural life.

The DDA, whatever its shortcomings, does challenge many traditional, often stereotypical and discriminatory, assumptions. The response to this challenge has to be a carefully planned process. Although museums and galleries are now much more aware of the responsibilities involved in sharing rather than caring for their collections, many disabled people, as well as others in society, remain excluded. Dismantling the barriers faced by disabled people as staff or visitors in museums and galleries often involves changes of attitude and existing practice rather than significant financial resources.

The Code of Practice on Rights of Access warns ***"Discrimination is often unintentional or unwitting and may stem from a lack of awareness about disability. It may also result from mistaken assumptions or decisions based on speculation, generalisations or stereotypes."*** (Code of Practice - Rights of Access - Goods, Facilities, Services and Premises, 1999, 10.2).

For example in an art gallery, it may be assumed that blind people cannot see anything and therefore do not need to be accommodated. However blind people make and appreciate art, and art education is on the curriculum for blind and visually impaired children. There are exhibitions of the work of blind artists, for example at the Richard Attenborough Centre for Disability and the Arts, Leicester University, at the V&A in 1998, at the RNIB's Khaled Alvi exhibition, at the Diorama Arts Centre, London in 1999 (see also *Vision in Art Education*, Jane Pearson, Richard Attenborough Centre, Department of Adult Education, University of Leicester, 1995).

There are many different forms of visual impairment. Few blind people totally lack residual vision. Visually impaired people's ability to use their residual vision, with or without visual memory, and the contribution of their 'alternative' viewpoints in the making and appreciation of art, is now widely recognised. Gioya Steinke, who is visually impaired, has advised many museums and galleries, education departments, art colleges, mainstream schools and

hospitals, on her approach to art as a source of inspiration for both sighted and visually impaired people. ('*The Artistic Touch*', by Gioya Steinke, *Therapy Weekly*, 2.11.95 p 8).

The provision of audio-description, by a trained guide or using technology, with or without tactile plans or drawings, enables visually impaired people to utilise their residual vision and visual memory. Audio-description also often assists those who are sighted but are not trained to look at art. The sighted daughter of blind parents clearly articulated the benefits of growing up with and attending to the needs of her blind parents: “ ***it makes you become far more aware of your surroundings and forces you to find words for ideas and senses that might otherwise remain unsaid***”. ('Golden Silence', *The Guardian, Society*, p.7, 3.6.98).

Management have a responsibility, under the law, to inform their employees of the duties and responsibilities under the DDA. This requires effective communication systems within museums and galleries. There is also a legal responsibility for museums and galleries to draw the attention of disabled people to what provision is on offer. This requires effective publicity and marketing.

Although the Codes of Practice have no legal status, failure to follow the guidance given can be used in evidence at an employment tribunal or court. These Codes of Practice make it clear that DDA compliance must:

- be led by senior management;
- show evidence of appropriate policies, procedures and practices effectively communicated to all staff and monitored for effective implementation;
- include short- and long-term planning for disability issues;
- include the provision of Disability Awareness and Equality Training for all staff;
- establish mechanisms for consultation with disabled people;
- regularly review what is on offer (e.g. Access Audits of service provision);
- promote an accessible grievance and complaints procedure.

The following key principles underpin the duties to make reasonable adjustments under Part III of the DDA, implemented in October 1999:

- the duty is to disabled people at large, whether or not they are already users of a service;
- there is an anticipatory element; service providers are expected to plan ahead;
- it is a continuing duty, and adjustments should be constantly reviewed in the light of experience and changing circumstances;
- although it is a duty to disabled people at large, an individual, on the basis of his/her experience, can enforce the duty.

The DDA's Codes of Practice make it clear that employers and service providers, if challenged, will have to show that they have thought through the issues and considered solutions.

Job creation, work experience and apprenticeship schemes can all assist in the breaking down of employment barriers for disabled people and can provide museums and galleries with new perspectives and expertise. There are also funding sources available.

Public service providers can no longer use Health and Safety procedures as an excuse to exclude disabled people. There is an outdated argument that equates disability with risk. Health and Safety procedures are defined under the DDA as part of the service, and must take into account disabled peoples' needs (Chapter 5.8 *Code of Practice Rights of Access*, 1999). An updated code of practice from the British Standards Institution shows how to make public buildings escape-friendly for people with disabilities, it relates to the design and construction industry, BS 5588-8: 1999, and covers the measures that should be incorporated into new or existing buildings.

The Employers Forum on Disability is an excellent source of support, advice, training and networking for museums and galleries. The Forum has more than 350 members who, between them, employ almost 20% of the UK workforce and is highly regarded and influential at Government level. It offers a one-stop-shop for advice and information on employment and service provision issues. Membership offers networking opportunities with important potential and actual sponsors and other funding bodies. The Forum provides a range of useful services, a unique network of employers and best practice guidance for members. This includes a telephone helpline and information service, legal

advice, briefing sheets, a newsletter and case law updates. The Arts Council, Tate Gallery, British Museum, National Museum of Science and Industry, Imperial War Museum, Museum of London, London Transport Museum and Natural History Museum are members as well as many local authorities, major corporations and government departments. For large museums, individual membership can be very helpful, smaller museums should check whether their local authority is a member. The Forum has a fully accessible website which includes a members-only area and access to a range of invaluable support and advice services and up-to-date information. Guidance on recommended Access Auditors, Disability Consultants and Trainers is available free of charge to members and non-members.

Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (See: [www.disability.gov.uk](http://www.disability.gov.uk))

DDA Helpline - (formerly Disability on the Agenda)

Free up-to-date information about the Act and the Codes of Practice can be obtained by contacting:

The DDA Helpline

Telephone: 0345 622633

Faxback service: 0345 622611

Textphone: 0345 622644

Email: [ddahelp@stra.sitel.co.uk](mailto:ddahelp@stra.sitel.co.uk)

Recent free publications available on the DDA:

*Employing Disabled People: a Good Practice Guide for Managers and Employers* (DLE7), DfEE 1999.

*Disability Discrimination Act 1995: An Introduction for Small and Medium-sized Businesses, Rights of Access to Goods, Facilities, Services and Premises*, DfEE 1999.

Guidance on Part III of the DDA 2000:

Codes of Practice (there is a separate Code of Practice for Northern Ireland)  
*An Employment Code of Practice under the DDA* (Price £9.95) ISBN 0-11-270954-0

*Disability Discrimination Act 1995: Code of Practice; Rights of Access to Goods, Facilities, Services and Premises 1999* (Price £12.95) ISBN 0 11 271055 7

Both are published by The Stationery Office and available from:  
The Publications Centre

PO Box 276  
London SW8 5DT  
(Also from The Stationery Office Bookshops)  
Telephone orders/general enquiries: 0870 600 5522  
Fax orders: 0870 600 5533  
Also available in alternative formats or free from [www.disability.gov.uk](http://www.disability.gov.uk)

### **Northern Ireland**

A similar but separate Code applies to Northern Ireland.  
Published by The Stationery Office (ISBN 0 337 08453 X) and available from:  
The Stationery Office Bookshop  
16 Arthur Street  
Belfast BT1 4GD  
Tel: 01232 238451  
Fax: 01232 235401  
Also available in alternative formats or free from [www.dhssni.gov.uk](http://www.dhssni.gov.uk)

Employers Forum on Disability: Ian Hastie, Business Development Manager  
Nutmeg House  
60 Gainsford Street  
London SE1 2NY  
Tel/minicom: 020 7403 3020  
Fax: 020 7403 0404  
Email: [efd@employers-forum.co.uk](mailto:efd@employers-forum.co.uk)  
Website: [www.employers-forum.co.uk](http://www.employers-forum.co.uk)

## **3.2 The DDA 1995 Timetable**

- 8.11.95 Act passed by Parliament
- 2.12.96 Implementation of:  
Part I and Part II of DDA: disability was defined in law and it became unlawful to discriminate against disabled people in employment.  
First phase of Part III: it became unlawful to refuse to serve a disabled person, provide a lower standard of service or offer less favourable terms to a disabled person, because of their disability.
- 1.10.99 Second phase of Part III implemented:  
Service providers have to amend policies, procedures and practices which make it impossible or unreasonably difficult for disabled people to use their services. Service providers must make auxiliary aids and services available to allow disabled people access to their services e.g. textphones, large print etc.



If premises are inaccessible, service providers will have to take reasonable steps to provide their service by alternative means.

- 2004 service providers will have to make 'reasonable adjustments' to the physical features of their premises. The guidance suggests that service providers should take steps to comply with the remaining duties in relation to physical features before they come into force in 2004 if they are embarking on any refurbishments or new building projects.

(The DRC's proposed *Code of Practice and A Practical Guide for Smaller Service Providers*, together with the Government's proposed Supporting Regulations are available on [www.disability.gov.uk](http://www.disability.gov.uk))

### 3.3 The Disability Rights Commission

The Disability Rights Commission (DRC) began work in April 2000 with a remit to eliminate discrimination, promote equal opportunities and good practice and advise the Government on the operation and any changes necessary to enforce and strengthen the DDA on behalf of disabled people.

The DRC has a specific function:

- to supply assistance and support disabled litigants under the Act;
- to provide information and advice to anyone with rights or obligations under the Act;
- to carry out formal investigations and arrange independent conciliation of disputes under the legislation.

The DRC will also raise awareness of rights among disabled people and their advisers, and reduce the cost to an individual of taking a case to court.

Researchers at the Disability Access Rights Advisory Services (DARAS) found that these have been two of the most significant barriers preventing service cases under the DDA coming to court.

([www.employers-forum.co.uk/www/guests/news/story1.htm](http://www.employers-forum.co.uk/www/guests/news/story1.htm))

On the 1st October 1999 the functions of the Northern Ireland Disability Council (NIDC) transferred to the new Equality Commission. The Equality Commission is responsible for the functions currently exercised by the Commission for Racial Equality for Northern Ireland, Equal Opportunities Commission and the Fair Employment Commission. The Equality Commission will be the body responsible for enforcing equality issues, including disability rights in Northern Ireland, and will have a similar role and function to the Disability Rights Commission.

***“Above all we need to get to the stage where public awareness of disability discrimination is much higher and we all recognise our duty to remove the barriers which prevent disabled people from participating in a truly inclusive society.”*** (Harry McConnell, former Chairman of the Northern Ireland Disability Council)

### **3.4 How Disability is Defined under the DDA**

Under the terms of the DDA, disability is currently defined as ‘a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities’. Sensory impairments are included under the category of ‘physical’ in this definition. (This definition is under review and may be extended - see *From Exclusion to Inclusion*, DfEE, 1999 pp 23-40).

Factors which may determine whether or not the effects of an impairment are substantial include:

- time taken to carry out an activity;
- the way in which an activity is carried out;
- cumulative effects of an impairment;
- effect of the environment;
- effect of treatment.

A long-term effect is defined as one which:

- has lasted at least 12 months;
- is likely to last at least 12 months from onset;
- is likely to last for the rest of the person’s life;
- has recurring effects.

Normal day-to-day activities include:

- mobility, physical co-ordination, manual dexterity; ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects; speech, hearing or eyesight; memory or ability to concentrate or understand; continence; perception of the risk of physical danger.

People with progressive conditions such as cancer, HIV infection, multiple sclerosis and muscular dystrophy are covered under the Act only at the first sign of an adverse effect on normal day-to-day activities. They are not covered from the time of diagnosis, even though the psychological effects of diagnosis may cause difficulties in coping with day-to-day activities (this is under review).

People with severe disfigurements are included under the Act's definition of disability, even though this may not cause any physical adverse effects on ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Exclusions include red-green colour blindness and hayfever.

### **3.5 What is Discrimination?**

Discrimination can be deliberate or inadvertent, direct or indirect. The DDA aims to eliminate discrimination against disabled people. However, the Act does not make all forms of discrimination illegal. The implementation of the Act is divided into several phases, each of which tackles different forms and levels of discrimination. Based on the Act's phases of implementation, two levels of discrimination can be identified:

**Fairness:** It is discriminatory to treat a disabled person unfairly or less favourably for a reason related to the person's disability, or for a reason which is not justifiable under the conditions of the Act.

**Flexibility:** Failure to provide a reasonable adjustment where required to enable use of a service by a disabled person constitutes discrimination, if it is for a reason which is not justifiable under the conditions of the Act.

What is considered to be a reasonable adjustment will vary in each individual case. Factors determining the reasonableness of an adjustment include a museum's size, funding, building, number of staff and other resources. However, an appropriate internal culture and a dialogue and partnership with disabled people will ensure that museums and galleries are acting reasonably.

### **3.6 Working of the DDA**

Cases of suspected discrimination must be taken up by individual disabled people. From April 2000 they have had the DRC to assist and support them. Employment disputes can be taken to an industrial tribunal, there is no upper limit to compensation awards. Service provision disputes can be taken to the county court.

The Act does not specify exactly what is expected or will be seen as reasonable. However, there is a Code of Practice on Employment and a Code of Practice on Rights of Access to Goods, Facilities, Services and Premises, now revised in the light of experience gained since the first duties were implemented in December 1996. The Codes give practical advice and guidance, and are essential tools in establishing what is expected and

‘reasonable’; this is being determined by individual case law. (See 3.1).

The detailed working of this Act will become clearer over time. There are currently 200 cases per month being taken to employment tribunals. There have not been many cases as yet being taken to county courts on service provision, but this is expected to change dramatically now that Part III is more fully implemented and the DRC is established. Nevertheless, a number of cases against service providers have already been won by disabled people. These include a Deaf woman who was asked by a bank to come back at a quieter time to be served. Museums have already been mentioned in the disability press for not providing adequate services to Deaf visitors. (See: *Museum Journal*, October 1999 p21).

It is important that museums keep up-to-date with the Act as case law and guidance develop. For further information, refer to the list of DDA Resources and contact BCODP, DRC or your local disability organisation. Also join The Museums and Galleries Disability Association (MAGDA), their thrice yearly journal *BarrierFree* will report any new information relevant to museums and galleries.

### **3.7 Why Museums Should Comply**

Making museums accessible to everyone is part of the commitment to public access to collections, and also makes sense in business terms. There are over 10 million people who can be defined as disabled under the DDA in the UK, and many other people, who may not consider themselves to be disabled, share the same barriers to access. Museums which are accessible and welcoming to disabled people also attract their families and friends, and offer a more positive experience for everyone. A workforce which broadly reflects the community which it serves, enhances all aspects of the work of museums.

By not complying with the DDA, museums, as employers and service providers are breaking the law and may be taken to court.

### **3.8 DDA Employment Provisions (see also 3.10)**

These provisions apply to all employers with 15 or more employees and cover full-time and short-term or part-time employees as well as anyone contracted by the employer. The DDA prohibits discrimination against disabled applicants, as well as employees, and it may soon apply to volunteers. This requires examination of, and attention to, existing attitudes and personal interactions amongst staff; the promotion of fairness, respect and dignity in the workplace; and effective communication systems. The employment provisions of the DDA

cover all areas of working life.

This includes: recruitment, induction, retention, training, benefits, promotion, flexible working, training in disability issues and dismissal. The Act also makes it unlawful to victimise disabled people who make use of, or try to make use of, their rights under the Act (this includes bullying and harassment).

Employers may also have to make 'reasonable adjustments' if their premises or working arrangements place a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage compared to a non-disabled person. What precisely is required will vary according to a person's impairment and the nature of the environment. In many cases ***"all that will be required is a change of attitude - performing the job in a different way will not necessarily be more expensive"***. (*The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and the Arts*, The Arts Council of England, 1999 p.9).

There are an estimated three million disabled people in work in the UK, but more than one million disabled people not working who want to work. Disability Service Teams, (known as PACT before April 1999), are part of the Employment service and can be accessed through local job centres. The Government's *New Deal* initiative, alongside the *Access to Work* scheme, can offer substantial financial and practical help to support disabled people into work; this can include any necessary equipment, other resources and support to employers. There are also a number of graduate and undergraduate work experience schemes for disabled students. For example the *Fast-Track* programme run by Scope, *Workable*, run by Leonard Cheshire or *Pathway* run by Mencap. There is now a Lottery-funded scheme *Artsable*, that enables disabled students and graduates to find work placements in the arts sector (see: Bibliography.4).

Disabled people, through the experience of their impairments, have been shown to be committed, motivated, innovative and reliable employees. Disabled people are used to planning their lives carefully, they make sure they are well informed and invest carefully in training and support. The recent DRTF report makes the point that disabled people take less sick leave and have lower rates of staff turnover than non-disabled staff (*From Exclusion to Inclusion*, DfEE, December 1999, p.69).

See *Employing Disabled People: A Good Practice Guide for Managers and Employers*, Oct 99, DLE7 (Free leaflet from the DDA Helpline).

*Agenda on Employment and Forum Briefing Papers*, from the Employers Forum on Disability

*Code of Practice for Age Diversity in Employment*, DfEE publications.

### 3.9 Rights of Access to Goods, Facilities, Services and Premises (often referred to as 'DDA Service provision' - see 3.11)

***"Accessible services are attractive services. Changes which help people with disabilities also make services more convenient for everyone to use"*** Margaret Hodge, Minister for Disabled People speaking on the day the second phase of Part III of the DDA came into force, (*EtCetera*, Issue 30, 1.10.99).

From 2.12.96 it became unlawful for a service provider to:

- refuse or deliberately fail to provide any service to a disabled person which it offers to other members of the public;
- offer a lower standard of service to a disabled person;
- offer a service on worse terms to a disabled person unless this can be justified under the terms of the Act. (However the guidance makes it clear that organisations should not be looking for reasons to discriminate).

From 1.10.99 service providers have had new duties to make reasonable adjustments to the way they provide their services if it is 'impossible or unreasonably difficult' for a disabled person to use their goods, services and facilities. Those adjustments may require changes in policies, procedures and practices, the provision of auxiliary aids and services or an alternative method to overcome physical barriers. Museums and galleries are specifically mentioned in both the Act and the 1999 Codes of Practice.

From 2004 service providers will have to make reasonable adjustments to the physical features of their premises. The draft Code of Practice recommends that planning for this should begin now, a new Code of Practice for these responsibilities will be available in January 2001.

The Act itself states that the provision of sign interpreters for Deaf visitors would be expected and the Code of Practice confirms that ***"adjustments for disabled people may also benefit other customers [and staff]"***. (*Code of Practice Rights of Access Goods, Services, Facilities and Premises*, Chapter 10.1). For example, large print versions of gallery texts, when properly publicised, have proved to be extremely popular with many non-disabled visitors, as were magnifying glasses when introduced for visually impaired visitors to an exhibition of Cartier jewellery at the British Museum in 1997.



***“Labels are almost never large enough to read - and if you think changing that will only help me, you should see the number of people who ask to borrow my magnifying glass once they see me using it.”***

Gioya Steinke, (*‘True life stories - disabled people explain’*, *Guidelines for Marketing to Disabled Audiences*, The Arts Council of Great Britain, 1993).

Gioya Steinke has a severe visual impairment, but art is her major passion. She is a practising artist and advises many art galleries and museums on access for visually impaired people. (See p.36).

***“All that is required is imagination and a consciousness that procedures and facilities can sometimes discriminate unintentionally.... Perhaps the mostly cost-effective action that any service provider can take is to bring in good disability equality training.”*** (*News, Disability Wales*, October/November 1999).

Museums need to consider every aspect of their activities and operations to provide inclusion for disabled people: shops and their stock, cafes and their menus, libraries and the titles on offer and exhibition concepts and contents. Inclusive design items are quite widely available and could be stocked in shops, for example, pencils that are designed to accommodate children or adults with fine movement or co-ordination impairments. Menus can include special dietary items and can be available in alternative formats. Titles in libraries or shops should include alternative formats and relevant books on disability history and culture where possible. (See: Bibliography.1).

### **3.10. Some Commonly Asked Questions About Museums and DDA Compliance Regarding Employment**

**Q.** Does the DDA affect museums as employers?

**A.** The DDA affects any museum, or local authority which maintains a museum, employing 15 or more people. (The DRC want to reduce this to two people). Full-time and part-time employees are covered, as well as anyone contracted to carry out work for the museum, including self-employed people and freelance staff.

**Q.** What will museums be expected to do to become more inclusive in their recruitment, selection and employment practices?

**A.** Employers will be expected to make reasonable adjustments which reduce or remove substantial disadvantages to disabled employees or job applicants. These disadvantages could be caused by physical features of the work environment or by conditions of recruitment or employment. Failure to make reasonable adjustments without justification is discrimination.

All areas of employment must be assessed, including:



- recruitment;
- induction;
- training and development;
- flexible working;
- retention;
- provision of training in disability issues;
- dismissal;
- harassment, bullying and victimisation.

**Q.** How can museums encourage disabled people to apply for jobs?

**A.** There are a number of relatively simple steps which museums can follow which will help inform disabled people from a range of backgrounds about job opportunities. For example:

- review and revise recruitment and selection and other employment-related policies to ensure that they are not discriminatory, either directly or indirectly - the attitude of the organisation could be a barrier to disabled people applying;
- ensure that person specifications are accurate and include only the precise requirements of the post, for example, if the post requires travel, is it necessary for the person to have a driving licence, or would it be possible to use public transport?
- produce job advertisements in accessible formats, using clear, jargon-free language;
- advertise in your local Job Centre, in the disability press and other local sources;
- talk to the Disability Service Team at your local Job Centre. The Government's Access to Work scheme for disabled people can offer support, advice and resources to help disabled people into work;
- explore the possibility of employing a disabled person on a supported placement scheme;
- contact colleges regarding placements of disabled people who are studying in relevant fields;
- contact local groups of disabled people;
- find out if there are any local work experience schemes or employment services run by national or local voluntary organisations in your locality e.g. Mencap Pathway scheme, Leonard Cheshire's Workable, Scope's Fast-Track (see 3.8).

**Q.** What kinds of auxiliary aids might a museum provide to assist disabled employees or applicants?

**A.** Examples include:

- sign language interpreters at interview or on the job;

- altering the location or arrangement of the interview room;
- note-takers;
- induction loops;
- qualified lip speakers or readers;
- information, including instruction manuals and other induction material, in alternative formats such as Braille, large print, audio, computer disk, etc;
- specialised equipment such as text-readers or voice computer software - an increasing range of assistive technology is available.

The Employment Service's *Access to Work* Scheme may help to pay for some of these. Contact your local Job Centre. Also see *Userfit - A practical handbook on user-centred design for Assistive Technology*, Husat Research Institute, The Elms Grove, Loughborough, Leics LE11 1RG.

**Q.** Would a museum be expected to rearrange furniture or redecorate in staff areas to accommodate wheelchair users or others with mobility difficulties and visually impaired people?

**A.** Rearranging furniture to allow access for a wheelchair user, to reduce glare from windows or to improve lighting for lip-reading is a simple and inexpensive step which may improve the working environment for a person with a disability. Lowering fixture heights, adding Braille labels to lift controls, redecorating to incorporate colour contrast or installing handrails are examples of physical alterations which might be considered reasonable.

**Q.** What types of adjustments to employment policy might be considered reasonable?

**A.** Adjustments to working arrangements might include allowing flexible working hours, reallocating some of an employee's duties to another person, providing extra training, modifying formats of internal information, acquiring or modifying equipment or providing a reader or interpreter, restructuring meetings to allow for restbreaks and interpretation.

Monitoring, review and evaluation are essential (see Practice 1) and are two basics of the Business Excellence Model, produced by Government for the public and voluntary sector (see <http://www.servicefirst.gov.uk>, The Cabinet Office, London SW1P 3AL).

Policies: An Equal Opportunities Policy that explicitly refers to disability is an essential starting point (see Practice 4).

Recruitment: Be aware of disabled people's barriers regarding Access to Information (see Practice 6). If disabled people do not know that a job is on offer they cannot apply. Museums should also take account of the fact that

some disabled people's CVs may appear sketchy or incomplete. Many disabled people's work patterns are different from the established norm, as most experience some periods in their lives when they cannot work. This does not indicate unsuitability for work or a lack of experience, and should not exclude them from employment - work patterns, in any case, are shifting for everyone.

Retention: Many disabilities are invisible, guard against making assumptions. Retention policies and procedures to ensure that disabled people do not suffer discrimination benefit all your staff (see RNIB pack, *Get Back* available from RNIB Customer Services).

Dismissal and grievance procedures: Both procedures must be reviewed and implemented to be both accessible and fair. Take advice from the DDA Helpline and Employers Forum.

Harassment, bullying, victimisation: The Code of Practice on the DDA specifically mentions victimisation. A policy and set of procedures should be developed, again this will benefit the interpersonal relations of all staff. (see Practice 4).

Volunteers: There is now established good practice for recruiting and supporting volunteers. There are about three times as many volunteers in the museum and gallery sector as paid employees and volunteering is now acknowledged as a major route to employment. Museums and galleries should actively target disabled people as volunteers, if such a programme is managed appropriately. Museums should ensure that recruitment procedures do not exclude disabled volunteers. As many volunteers are already post-retirement age, it is probable that volunteers with age-related impairments are already involved.

See *Museums Journal* April 1999, p35 for checklist for supporting volunteers; *The Handbook for Heritage Volunteer Managers and Administrators*, British Association of Friends of Museums (BAfM), 1999; *Opening Up Volunteering Opportunities for Young People: an organisational toolkit*, Elaine Willis, National Youth Agency.

Work experience/work preparation: There are many schemes that museums can participate in, including school-based work experience, voluntary organisation-run schemes such as *Pathway* for people with learning disabilities and Government-sponsored schemes under the *Access to Work* programme. Lottery-funded schemes such as the *Millennium Skills Awards* include disabled people as staff or volunteers. (What is important is that a museum identifies

their workplace objectives clearly and provides appropriate support systems and monitoring procedures). *Workable* and *Fast Track* are schemes targeted at disabled graduates. *Artsable* is a scheme to place people in the arts sector (see 3.8 for details).

**Outsourcing responsibilities:** Museums and galleries have a clear responsibility under the DDA to ensure that any contractors working for them do not discriminate against disabled people. They are the service provider not the contractor.

**Use of technology:** technology can be very enabling for disabled people and can demolish many barriers in the workplace, many developments in both hardware and software that are now commonplace amongst non-disabled people originated within the disabled community e.g. trackerballs, touchscreens, interactive educational software. Access to Work can usually provide such support for disabled employees - ergonomic or adapted office furniture or equipment, telecommunications enhancement for people with sensory impairments, speech-to-text software, or vice versa.

Refer to *Employing disabled people: a good practice guide for managers and employers*, DLE7, DfEE, 1999, available free from the DDA Helpline. *The Employers Forum Briefing Papers* and *The Arts Council Apprentice Scheme Handbook* are also useful sources of guidance.

### 3.11 Some Commonly Asked Questions on Service Provision

**Q.** Does the DDA affect museums as service providers?

**A.** Yes. The DDA affects all businesses and organisations which provide goods, facilities or services to the public, whether free or paid. This includes public services such as museums, historic buildings and other places of interest, as well as libraries and local government services.

Museum services include:

- the display or other availability of collections for the public to view or otherwise experience;
- the interpretation of objects through display and labelling, exhibition guides, education programmes, publications and research;
- other provision such as information desks, shops, cafes, etc.

**Q.** Are listed buildings exempt?

**A.** No. Listed buildings are subject to the DDA, but must also comply with

current conservation legislation. The relevant conservation authorities must still approve proposals for access improvements to listed buildings, scheduled structures and buildings within conservation areas. However, many access improvements, particularly those concerning sensory and intellectual access, require little or no alteration to the fabric of a building. Signage, decor, colour schemes, lighting and clear language are examples of such access considerations.

A free leaflet on creating access to listed buildings is available from English Heritage, PO Box 9019, London W1A 0JA.

English Heritage  
23 Saville Row  
London W1X 1AB.  
Tel: 020 7973 3434

Northern Ireland:  
The Environment and Heritage Service  
5-33 Hill Street  
Belfast BT21 2LA  
Tel: 01232 543061

**Q.** What are museums required to do to make their services accessible?

**A.** From 2.12.96 service providers have been required to take 'reasonable steps' to ensure disabled people are not discriminated against.

From 1.10.99 service providers have been required to make reasonable adjustments, that is make changes, in order to make their services accessible to disabled people. The courts, taking into account such factors as a museum's size, finances and buildings, will determine exactly what is reasonable. Museums will need to demonstrate that they are working towards compliance through short and long-term planning.

Until October 1999, the provision of training for all staff in disability issues would have indicated that museums were taking steps to improve their quality of service to disabled people and would therefore be in compliance with the Act. The museum would be behaving reasonably. Since October 1999 there have not been sufficient cases through the courts to establish exactly what would be considered reasonable in each case. It is much more useful if museums and galleries implement inclusive practice, as outlined in this directory. Training is an important part of that, but not sufficient in itself.

Refer to Code of Practice, 1999 available from [www.disability.gov.uk](http://www.disability.gov.uk), or Factsheet DX19 free from the DDA helpline.

## Examples

### From December 1996:

- a museum would be acting illegally if any member of staff refused entry to a disabled person because of their disability, unless there was a justifiable reason for doing so.
- it would be illegal to tell a disabled person to go to the end of the queue in the museum shop because assisting them might take longer than normal.
- not maintaining equipment used by people with disabilities, such as a portable tape player for a taped touch tour, would be providing a service of a lower standard to disabled people, assuming that the museum maintains its equipment for general use.

### From October 1999:

- a museum must not only treat disabled people fairly, but also be flexible in their service provision to include disabled people.
- museums are now required to make reasonable adjustments to policies, practices and procedures; provision of auxiliary aids or services and buildings.

**Q.** How can museums make their policies, practices and procedures more inclusive of disabled people?

**A.** Museums need to review and evaluate their policies, practices and procedures in consultation with disabled people, commission an access audit, ensure disability training is ongoing and develop an Action Plan for improvements.

**Q.** What kind of changes to policies, procedures and practices can I make?

**A.** Policies, procedures and practices relate to the way in which a service provider operates and provides a service. Often, the meanings of these terms overlap and it is appropriate to consider them together:

- a policy is what a service provider intends to do;
- a procedure is how a service provider plans to go about it;
- a practice is what a service provider actually does.

Museums will need to look at all of these, especially since many do not have written policies covering all the areas which might have access implications. Policies, practice and procedures relating to service provision, which may need to be assessed, include:

- graphic or exhibition design house styles - how clear are your visual

messages?

- no touching policy - could some objects be made available for touching by people with visual or learning disabilities?
- no animals policy - are hearing, guide and other service animals allowed and catered for in the museum?
- communications or information policies or practices - are accessible formats such as Braille, tape or computer disk available? Do you have a telephone/minicom/email information line?
- interpretation policy or practices - do you use multi-sensory methods? If you use any new technologies, are these accessible?
- marketing methods - are you publicising effectively to disabled audiences?
- training policy - do all staff, particularly front of house staff, receive disability awareness or equality training, with regular refreshers?

**Q.** What does the Act mean by unreasonably difficult?

**A.** Overcoming unreasonable difficulties in using a service is a key aim of Part III of the Act. Although the Act does not define the term, the Code of Practice recommends that, when considering whether or not a service or facility is unreasonably difficult to use, providers should 'take account of whether the time, inconvenience, effort and discomfort entailed would be considered unreasonable by other people if they had to endure similar difficulties'.

For example, it may be considered unreasonably difficult for a museum visitor with arthritis, who finds standing for more than a few minutes painful and tiring, to have to stand in a gallery to view objects on display. By providing appropriate seating, the museum would be making an adequate adjustment. However, if the museum provided seating which the visitor could not use, because it was too low, for example, this would not be an adequate adjustment, even if some visitors could use the seating comfortably.

It may be considered unreasonably difficult for a visually impaired person to read a leaflet or guidebook which is in small type (less than 12 point) and printed over background images. The house style or design can make reading painful and time-consuming for a visually impaired visitor. In this case, the museum may need to reassess its house style and devise more accessible design practices.



**Q.** What kinds of auxiliary aids or services might a museum be expected to provide in order to make its collections and services accessible?

**A.** Museums now have to take reasonable steps to provide 'auxiliary aids or services', which will enable people with disabilities to use the museum.

Museums also have a responsibility under the DDA, as employer and service provider, to inform disabled people about their services and what is on offer.

Moreover it has been estimated that accessibility will be an issue for 35% of the population in the near future, given the demographic changes taking place (see RNIB, *Night Site*, 1999, p.7).

Depending on the museum's size, finances and other resources, it may be expected to provide a range of services and devices to support communication with visitors, such as:

**for a person with a physical mobility difficulty/impairment:**

- accurate basic access/welcome information on your museum or gallery;
- portable ramps;
- pre-booking or telephone information service;
- appropriate seating for use when waiting, reading, talking or looking at displays;
- alternatives such as photographs, video/CCTV for displays in inaccessible locations;
- 'evac chairs' to assist in getting a wheelchair user out of the building in case of fire.

**for a visually impaired person:**

- information in clear print, large print, Braille, audio tape and computer disk;
- audio description on videos;
- a personal guide to assist with reading labels, to provide audio-description or wayfinding;
- telephone information services to supplement other text-based information which may not be accessible;

- spoken announcements;
- a torch or other task lighting for use in galleries;
- a magnifying glass to borrow in the galleries;
- a tactile map;
- tactile pictures or touch opportunities.

**for a hearing-impaired person:**

- qualified sign language interpreters or lip-speakers;
- induction loops;
- communicating with pen and paper;
- minicomms;
- telephones with amplification;
- subtitles and/or closed captions;
- videos with sign language interpretation;
- appropriate printed information;
- information displayed on a computer screen;
- audio visual fire alarms;
- possibly sound enhancement systems in the larger museums and galleries.
- option to book by e-mail rather than telephone.

**for a person with a learning difficulty:**

- a printed guide, and/or available in an audio format, (see PRACTICE 6.4) using clear, simplified language to explain the museum and its services and displays;
- a personal guide to read and explain labels;

- an education session specifically for people with learning difficulties which would serve as an introduction to the museum.

**for a person with a hidden impairment (one or more of the aids and services listed above):**

- parking close to the museum/alternative parking/travel information (will depend on situation);
- wheelchairs to borrow/seats at entrance;
- alternatives to queuing;
- appropriate seating or space to lie down in the galleries;
- facility to exit and re-enter an exhibition;
- a First Aid room;
- staff with appropriate training and accurate knowledge of facilities on offer;
- a quiet space to retire to.

**for a mental health service user:**

- staff trained in mental health awareness to avoid discriminatory assumptions;
- an introductory printed or audio-guide that introduces the museums and outlines introductory activities or events on offer.

Remember that these examples do not replace the need for consultation with disabled people about your particular museum or gallery.

The Code of Practice includes the following museum example, illustrating appropriate auxiliary aids.

A small, private museum with *limited* resources provides a daily guided tour of its exhibits. It has considered providing a radio microphone system for hearing aid users to accompany the tour, but it has rejected that option as expensive and impracticable. Instead, with very little effort or cost, the museum decides to provide audio taped guides, with an option of plug-in neck loops which could be used by persons with hearing aids who wanted to follow the guided tour. This is likely to be a reasonable step for the museum to have to take.

**Q.** Are there limits to the modifications to policies, practices and procedures and the provision of auxiliary aids required to make a museum service accessible to a disabled person?

**A.** Museums will only be required to make *reasonable adjustments* to their facilities and services.

If museums and galleries implement inclusive practice this concept, which is very difficult to define in law, becomes irrelevant.

**Q.** How might front of house museum services be improved to comply with the DDA?

**A.** By developing consultation mechanisms with disabled people and providing all staff with training in disability issues, and front of house staff in customer care training, a museum is taking steps to improve their quality of service to disabled people and would therefore be in compliance with the Act.

Minicomms, induction loops at information counters, signage in large, clear print and information in accessible formats will also help.

All staff should have access to ongoing and relevant disability equality training. Attitudes towards disabled people are crucial. ***“You can have perfect access for disabled people, but if a disabled visitor’s first encounter with a museum or gallery involves a member of staff who displays an inappropriate attitude, that person (plus friends and family) will not return.”*** (Artsline)

**Q.** Where it is not considered reasonable to expect a museum to remove a physical barrier to a service due to financial or practical constraints, what kinds of alternative steps are required by the DDA? For example, if a museum building is inaccessible to wheelchair users above the ground level, and installing a lift or other means of access is not considered to be a reasonable option under the terms of the Act, whether in the short-term or the long-term, it still may be possible to offer the service in an alternative way.

**A.** Acceptable alternatives to services under the DDA until 2004 might include:

- photographs, a video or CCTV showing objects or areas of the museums which are inaccessible to people with mobility difficulties;
- providing an accessible area to which museum objects can be brought for viewing from an inaccessible store or gallery, to enable a person with a mobility difficulty to use the collection.

**Q.** Can a disabled person be denied access to a museum building or service because of their disability for any reason?

**A.** A museum would be acting illegally if any member of staff refused entry to

a disabled person because of their disability, unless there was a justifiable reason for doing so, such as particular requirements of health and safety legislation. Health and safety issues are now, however, expected to be part of the service on offer and cannot be used to exclude disabled people.

Less favourable treatment in the provision of services to disabled visitors is only justifiable in certain circumstances:

- if there is believed to be a health and safety risk, e.g. only allowing the number of wheelchair users on upper floors that can be provided with adequate means of escape in the event of an emergency would be acceptable;
- if it would make providing the service to other visitors impossible;
- if providing a special service for a disabled customer is more expensive than the standard service, e.g. it may not be financially viable for a museum offering walk-in public gallery talks, to retain a sign language interpreter for every talk - a Deaf person may instead be offered either a selection of talks which will be sign language interpreted, or may be asked to give the museum two weeks' notice if they plan to attend, so that an interpreter may be secured. A positive alternative would be the availability of pre-prepared notes on the planned talk;
- where a contract is involved, when a disabled person is unable to understand a contract.

**Q.** When will the requirement to make buildings physically accessible to people with mobility difficulties be phased in?

**A.** Museums and other service providers will not be required to make actual alterations to the physical features of their premises in order to create access until 2004. A museum or gallery would not be required to install a lift to facilitate access to upper floors, even though not doing so would mean people with a range of mobility impairments could not go above the ground floor. However, a temporary ramp to enable wheelchair users to get into a building with steps at the front entrance is likely to be considered a reasonable adjustment to be made, depending on resources. After 2004 changes to physical features will be expected. For example, a temporary ramp at the front entrance or lack of lift access to upper floors may no longer be considered adequate. Museums and galleries will need to plan ahead to include more permanent solutions in their maintenance and development schemes.

The guidance makes clear that if a service provider (a museum or gallery) is planning building or refurbishment works, such as extending existing premises or making structural alterations to an existing building, they should consider the following:

- the removal or alteration of physical features which create a barrier to access for disabled people;
- the provision of a reasonable means of avoiding the physical feature, even though the law does not yet require this;
- it will obviously be more cost effective to make these alterations before 2004, as work is undertaken, and the Act does not prevent service providers from doing so.

**Q.** Where do I get advice on how to remove or alter a feature of my premises?

**A.** Once you have decided which features you wish to change, a useful contact is your local authority or, in Northern Ireland, your District Council. Contact the Planning or Building Control Department to find out what advice is available and whether the council employs an Access Officer. The council should also be able to tell you whether there are local access groups in your area who you may wish to involve in the planning process. Consultation with disabled people must be part of the process.

### **Emergency egress advice:**

An updated code of practice from the British Standards Institution shows how to make public buildings escape-friendly for people with disabilities. Relevant to the design and construction industry, BS 5588-8: 1999 covers the measures that should be incorporated into new or existing building (see the *British Standards website*: <http://www.bsi.org.uk>).

The contacts below may prove useful in developing strategies and taking reasonable steps to overcome access issues. The list is far from exhaustive and it may be equally productive to contact your Town Hall information desk for disability groups in your immediate area. The organisations on the list have produced relevant publications. Many of the local and national organisations listed in the Sources section have also produced guidance.

British Standards Institution  
389 Chiswick High Road  
London W4 4AL  
Tel: 020 8996 9000

Centre for Accessible Environments  
Nutmeg House  
Gainsford St  
London SE1 2NY  
Tel: 020 7357 8182

Construction Industry Research and Information Association  
6 Storey's Gate  
Westminster  
London SW1A 3AU  
Tel: 020 7222 8891  
RADAR Access Advisory Committee  
12 City Forum  
250 City Road  
London EC1V 8AF  
Tel: 020 7250 3222

(Information from [www.disability.gov.uk](http://www.disability.gov.uk))

*Access by Design - Implementing the Disability Discrimination Act 1995* is a video (available with subtitles) produced by the Centre for Accessible Environments (CAE) with the support of the Department of Social Security on behalf of the Minister for Disabled People. The video is intended to help service providers plan for meeting the access provisions of the Act. It draws on the experiences of service providers who have already started to make their premises accessible. It aims to help viewers assess their premises and identify improvements needed, obtain access advice including an access audit and build access improvements into business planning. The video may be available on loan from your trade association (CAE, Nutmeg House, Gainsford Street, London SE1 2NY. Tel: 020 7357 8182).

### **Physical Access to Listed Buildings (see Practice 5.3)**

**Q.** What does the DDA require for new constructions?

**A.** The DDA Codes of Practice do not include any technical information such as is found in building regulations. There is considerable demand from access and disability organisations, for the re-assessment and extension of existing building regulations, which relate to access for disabled people. Some adjustments have been made recently, and there will be further developments. However, it should be remembered that building regulations only provide for minimum standards.

***“It would be prudent to combine advice from disabled customers with good technical advice. For example, conformity with building regulations does not necessarily indicate compliance with the DDA.”*** (DDA helpline).

In any new construction, the way the building is designed will affect the way the building can be used. By considering how the requirements of the DDA will be met once the proposed building is being used as a place of employment and of provision of services to the public, architects and designers will be able to create more accessible and user-friendly



environments from the outset. Getting access right as the building is being designed and built is much more effective than later conversions. This requires the involvement of a suitably qualified and experienced disability consultant, working with the architect and full access audit of any plans. Briefs for consultants or outside contractors should make it clear that liability under the DDA must be addressed.

*Designing for Accessibility: an essential guide for public buildings*, 1999, Andrew Lacy, CAE (new edition).

*BarrierFree Design*, James Holmes-Siedle, 1996, Butterworth-Heinemann.

*Designing for the disabled: the new paradigm*, Selwyn Goldsmith, 1997, Butterworth-Heinemann.

*Buildings for All to Use*, Sylvester Bone, Construction Industry Research and Information Association (good practice guidance for improving existing public buildings for people with disabilities).

*Access to Listed Buildings*, English Heritage (See p.53)

### 3.12 Other Legislation/Regulations

***“Not only will we continue to tackle discrimination in all institutions, we will champion equality in every sense and at every level...”*** (Ian McCartney, Cabinet Office Minister)

It is important that museums and galleries stay up-to-date with the developments promised by Government under their ‘Modernising Government’ agenda (see [www.open.gov.uk](http://www.open.gov.uk)) as well as any developments in the DDA (see [www.disability.gov.uk](http://www.disability.gov.uk)).

#### **Current relevant legislation in force or in process:**

##### **Discrimination:**

Human Rights Act 1998 (implemented 2.10.00)

Disability Discrimination Act 1995

Sex Discrimination Act 1975

Race Relations Act 1976

Race Relations (Amendment) Bill 2000

Children Act 1989

##### **Education:**

Education Reform Act 1988

Education Acts 1981, 1989, 1993, 1996

Education and Disability Bill, introduced January 2000 (extension of the DDA to education sector)

**Buildings:**

Contact the Centre for Accessible Environments for up-to-date information.

Website: [www.cae.org.uk](http://www.cae.org.uk), Tel: 020 7357 8182

The proposed Code of Practice, Supporting Regulations and Practical Guide for Small Service Providers for the DDA on physical features, is due to be published in January 2001 following consultation. Part M of the Building Regulations Access and Facilities for Disabled People requires the needs of disabled people to be taken into account in the construction of buildings in England and Wales, but only provides for minimum standards.

In Scotland, the standard is Part T of the Scottish Building Standard Regulations. There are now revised Building Standards in Scotland - Part T requirements are included as mainstream standards.

In Northern Ireland Part R of the Northern Ireland Building regulations applies.

Guidance on satisfying these requirements is contained in the Approved Document for Part M, Part T and Technical Booklet R respectively for England & Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. It is guidance, not mandatory therefore, interpretation of the regulations is a matter for local Building Control Departments in the first instance and ultimately for the Courts. Building Control approval is carried out either by local authority building control officers or approved inspectors who certify that building work complies with the Building Regulations.

**Fire and accessibility:**

The Building Regulations, Part B: Fire; BS: 5588 Part 8; BS 8300 (new and still under consultation)

The Fire Precautions Act 1971

The Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations 1997

The Building Act 1984

Local Acts of Parliament that are enforced by Local Authorities (some 30+)

The Construction Products Regulations 1991

The Gas Safety Regulations 1994



## Section 2. Practice

This section provides current good practice examples, practical guidance and indicates sources of advice and information to assist museums and galleries implement inclusive practice. It is underpinned by the Key Principles (see Principles 1) and is intended to assist museums and galleries develop a realistic and relevant plan of action to meet their ethical and legal responsibilities.

## 1. INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK AND STRUCTURES

### 1.1 An Institutional Framework to Promote the Inclusion of Disabled People

This section outlines the basic institutional framework needed to ensure the inclusion of disabled people and to comply with the DDA. These recommendations reflect good practice for any public service but should be adapted to reflect the individual requirements of your museum or gallery. They are based on MGC Guidelines for good practice: *Access to Museums and Galleries for People with Disabilities*, 1997. Updated to take account of new ethical and legal requirements.

#### **Every museum and gallery should:**

- ensure that the process of change is led by senior management from an informed perspective. (This is expected under the DDA - Code of Practice: Rights of Access, 1999, 9.8, 9.9, 9.10.);
- ensure that senior management fulfil their legal responsibility to inform all staff that it is now unlawful to discriminate against disabled people and that there are effective strategies and briefings to communicate this across all areas of museums and galleries;
- make disability awareness and equality training available for all staff (see guidance below);
- have a written policy on Access that explicitly includes disability, or a disability policy, endorsed by the governing body and communicated to all staff
- develop short and longer-term objectives to improve provision, endorsed and led by senior management as an integral part of developing the forward plan. An Access Audit is an essential strategic planning tool. (See Practice:5) Although an audit may seem costly, it is likely to result in savings in the long run and is best done at a very early stage in development plans. An Access Audit of physical and non-physical barriers to access in existing provision is recommended in the DDA Code of Practice;
- ensure that planning is informed by consultation with the experts - disabled people themselves, as well as Disability Consultants: “ **service providers [and employers] should ask disabled people...how best they can be served...Listen carefully and respond to what they really want**”. (DDA Code of Practice Rights of Access, 1999). (See Practice: 3);

- ensure that this planning results in a written, prioritised and phased Action Plan, that covers all aspects of access and informs the museum's Forward Plan.
- ensure an appropriate structure is in place to take account of the new responsibilities, such as a cross-departmental steering group or working party, clearly positioned in the management and decision-making process and representative of all the activities of a museum or gallery;
- ensure that disability issues are not the sole responsibility of individual staff such as those responsible for education or visitor services. A review of staff roles and responsibilities may involve a new post dedicated to diversity and audience development issues, or the allocation of a proportion of time across a number of staff.

## 1.2 Institutional Structures to Promote Inclusion

A structure which includes all areas of the museum's work is needed. In larger organisations, establishing a cross-departmental steering group or working party is recommended in order to progress issues relating to disability and inclusion.

### **Such a structure should:**

- be led by a member of senior management, who reports the group's recommendations and actions to the governing body;
- have its role, remit and terms of reference clearly identified;
- be informed by ongoing consultation with disabled people;
- include the regular review, evaluation and modification of improvements;
- include representation of all a museum or gallery's activities;
- be carefully and clearly positioned in the decision-making process;
- be open to representations from all members of staff;
- include an effective feedback mechanism to all staff;
- meet regularly, frequency will depend on the stage of development of disability provision it may be at least once a month while the policy making, and Disability Action Plan are being drawn up;

- first or early meetings of any newly formed group should include a disability awareness training session and feedback from disabled people.

**Benefits to the museum or gallery include:**

- improved communication and planning;
- promotion of collaborative working;
- utilisation of existing staff expertise and experience;
- maximum staff involvement;
- immediate practical improvements in museums and galleries;
- demonstration of a museum or gallery's commitment to inclusive practice.

Whatever structure and remit is appropriate, disability interests will need careful and explicit attention, in both the short and medium-term.

In the longer-term, as inclusive practice develops, such a structure may become unnecessary. Many museums have already developed a Disability Working Party but such a structure should now place disability issues within the broader context of access, social inclusion and diversity.

Museums and galleries need to consider how the expertise and time required to deliver the new responsibilities towards disabled people can be made available until inclusive practice becomes part of everyone's job description. For small or volunteer run museums, a member of staff should be identified as having a disability/diversity remit. Another option may be to appoint a member of staff for a fixed term of three to five years to progress disability/diversity issues and plan the way the new responsibilities are delivered across the museum. The job title, job description and positioning of such a post is crucial. It should have a cross-museum role and be sufficiently senior to influence decision-making. The appraisal and reporting structures would need to be carefully considered.

Many larger museums and galleries now have full-time Access Officers or other posts with an explicit responsibility for disability issues. In smaller museums a senior member of staff can be given overall responsibility for disability/diversity issues, with other staff in different departments allocated specific time and responsibilities. Volunteer-run museums should ensure that one volunteer takes a lead on these issues and keeps others informed.



The internal culture of a museum or gallery is very important. Even where dedicated staff have been appointed to develop disability provision, internal staffing issues have often prevented or hindered real progress and, more importantly, denied that institution access to the benefits of such practice. Such issues include lack of clarity and definition of roles, understanding and ownership of the institution's goals and how these relate to disabled people, a lack of senior management involvement and leadership, internal communication problems, poor interpersonal relationships, lack of appropriate training and support and an exclusive rather than inclusive organisational culture. (See *In Through the Front Door, Disabled People and the Visual Arts: Examples of Good Practice*, Jayne Earnscliffe, The Arts Council of Great Britain, 1992).

### **INCLUSIVE PRACTICE AT THE RAGGED SCHOOL MUSEUM**

***“The Ragged School museum is a small independent museum in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets and aims to be the community museum for that borough. In recent years, museum staff have been trying to develop projects which both involve and are accessible to all members of a highly diverse inner-city community.***

***The underlying ethos of these projects has been one of general inclusion rather than of specific targeting of single groups.”*** (Richard Dunn, Curator, Ragged School Museum)

The two warehouse buildings that are now the Ragged School Museum were used as a school for ‘ragged’ children by Dr Barnado in the 19th century. They were subsequently acquired by the Ragged School Museum Trust for use as a community museum, which opened to the public ten years ago. The buildings are gradually being refurbished as funds become available.

The Ragged School Museum runs a very popular programme for children who have physical, hearing, visual impairments and learning difficulties. Two hundred and eighty-one local children attended targeted sessions the year before last, and numbers have more than doubled over this last year. The museum worked closely with their teachers researching the children's needs. Museum staff also conducted research into provision that other galleries and museums make for pupils with special educational needs. The museum offers a regular schools programme, that served 9,500 children from all over London last year, and an adult education programme that includes a history club, guided tours, walks and workshops.

The work of the very small number of paid staff is considerably boosted by 38 local and part-time volunteers. The volunteers are all members of the local

community who have been given training by the museum, and who, in turn, bring a wealth of local knowledge and contacts with them.

Many people who live in Tower Hamlets speak English as a second language and 23% of the population are of Bangladeshi origin. Consequently information in the museum is provided in Bengali. The museum also accepts that outreach is essential and that they have to make an effort to go out to local audiences to bring them back into the museum. Recently, a photographic project, 'Common Ground', was displayed on buses in the area and in local centres such as supermarkets, hospitals and libraries. The photographer Rehan Jamil, a photojournalism student at Tower Hamlets college, worked with the museum in the community taking photographs of local people from a wide variety of backgrounds, and recording their thoughts for this very successful project. (It was a runner-up for the 1999 Gulbenkian Award for the 'Most valuable Community Work').

Summer workshops for families with children are promoted in local schools. Staff go to talk to children in their morning assemblies - and it works. Over 50% of people who attended last summer did so because of these talks. Activities organised during the school holidays greatly contribute to the feeling that the museum is a resource for the local community, and are remarkable for the number of people who attend from the ethnic minority populations in the borough. Last summer's programme attracted 5,238 people.

Local community contacts have been built up over the last ten years. Museum staff have found that although the museum draws on its formal links with community organisations, it is the individual and personal contacts – both of museum staff and local people working on their projects – that prove most successful.

Nevertheless it is not just the museum's inclusive way of working with its local community, but the choice of subject matter for exhibitions and workshops that ensure inclusivity is sustained.

The exhibition, 'Tower Hamlets: A Journey through Time', was especially important because it brought into use a previously unused space on the ground floor. This exhibition doubled the area which is accessible to wheelchairs. The museum presents many physical access barriers because it is a tall Victorian building with steep stairs and, of course, no lift.

The exhibition told the stories of people from the six different areas of the borough, and reflected the museum's aim of being a community museum for the whole borough. The project involved staff working closely within the

community - recording people's accounts of their experiences of living in the borough and taking photographs of the participants.

This exhibition was about the people themselves and their area, and resulted from a survey of over 600 local people. This research demonstrated that 44% of those questioned wanted a history of Tower Hamlets.

The many local people who contributed their voices and photographs to the story told in 'Tower Hamlets: A Journey through Time' come in to see themselves and their neighbours. They then find a history of how people like them came to be in the area, and a history of that area from early times. Thus the history is inclusive and the subject matter relevant to their lives – this is the Ragged School Museum's winning combination.

The inclusive practices of the museum are fuelled by a determination to fulfil its mission as a community museum for everyone in the local community, and an acceptance that this involves reaching as many people as possible. Organising special events to cater for children with special educational needs is one element of a wider programme. Most important is an awareness that such special events are not isolated occurrences but part of an ongoing programme of activities.

***“These projects should not be seen in isolation, nor as ends in themselves. They are part of what we hope is a consistent effort to work with our local community and other potential audiences in an inclusive way.”*** (Mary-Anne Edwards, Museum Manager)

**HELEN COXALL**

## 2. POLICIES

### 2.1 General issues

A policy framework which informs and guides the institution's operations and development, is an essential tool for museums and galleries who wish to develop better access and equal opportunities. It will encourage effective communication, help to establish priorities and make decisions which will guide them in achieving fairness and equity. However, a policy is the beginning of a process of inclusion, not the main outcome. There is no point in spending time devising a policy if it does not have the effect of changing behaviour and improving accessibility. The basis of this framework should be an access policy and an equal opportunities policy that specifically include disability. Both should be adopted by the governing body and be the responsibility of a senior member of staff which will help to ensure that they are implemented. They should also be reviewed regularly to monitor progress. Guidance for the DDA states that monitoring, review and resulting modifications in provision and policies for disabled people is an ongoing and continuing responsibility of service providers and employers.

All policies should inform one another, including policies for other areas of a museum's work such as exhibitions and interpretation, marketing, collecting and education. These will affect publicity and marketing strategies, pricing and concessions, house style used in information and displays, opportunities for interactive engagement with exhibits and new technologies, education programmes and events, opening hours, parking, consultation with users and many other areas which affect provision for people with disabilities. The DDA makes a distinction between policies, procedures and practices.

- a policy is what a museum intends to do
- a procedure is how a museum plans to go about it
- a practice is what a museum actually does

**All policies should cover:**

- what the institution means by the terms, access and equal opportunities
- what it hopes to achieve – its aims;
- how it proposes to realise these aims – its objectives;
- how it will know when these objectives have been reached - action plan and

performance indicators.

**Each policy should:**

- be an integral part of the museum's forward plan;
- include a commitment to consulting users and potential users;
- be endorsed by the governing body;
- have a senior member of staff with responsibility for it.

Every policy is different because every museum and gallery is different, but the process of writing them is very similar. They should provide the organisation with direction, cohesion and a sense of purpose which all staff can share. However they also need to be appropriate for the museum concerned. The aims and objectives of a large service with specialist staff will be very different from those of a smaller museum.

## **2.2 Equal Opportunities Policy**

An Equal Opportunities Policy will inform areas such as:

- recruitment, employment, dismissal, flexible working, retention and will affect how posts are advertised, what procedures are used for applications, selection and interviewing and for induction, training, staff development, appraisal, promotion and grievance;
- harassment, bullying and victimisation, which should be specifically addressed in relation to disabled people;
- grievance and accessible complaints procedures for both staff and museum users;
- Health and Safety, which includes emergency egress for staff and visitors.

## **2.3 Access Policy Development**

An access policy with specific reference to people with disabilities should usually be developed within the context of a broader view of access, which includes equal opportunities, cultural diversity and social inclusion, as well as disability. This reflects current approaches to inclusive practice and use of the social model of disability.

The emphasis should be on removing barriers to access which can be:

- physical and sensory;
- intellectual;
- cultural;
- attitudinal;
- financial.

Before writing an access policy it is useful to refer to:

- *Museums for the Many* – a DCMS paper which sets out standards for museums and galleries to use when developing access policies;
- DCMS Access Policy which states their aim of increasing access to and participation in the cultural and sporting life of the nation;
- Museums Association *Ethical Guidelines on Access*, which help to identify issues and state basic principles;
- *Centres for Social Change: Museums, Galleries and Archives for All. DCMS Policy Guidance on Social Inclusion* (see DCMS website at [www.culture.gov.uk](http://www.culture.gov.uk)).

To write a policy for any area of work research is needed. For an access policy this research will mean carrying out an access audit, audience research and consultation. You will need to find out about your buildings, your present and potential audiences and what they want from the museum and how the collections can relate to their interests. You will also need to identify the barriers which hinder access and strategies by which they can be overcome. Good policies are based on detailed research and consultation with users, potential users and staff.

When all this information is gathered, the museum will be able to identify the access issues which are most relevant to them, take decisions about how they will tackle them, in what order and what resources will be needed.

## 2.4 Action Planning

Everyone in the museum should be involved and contribute to an Action Plan.

It will include prioritised and phased actions and will be informed by budgetary factors, training, consultation, policy developments in other areas and future plans, including exhibition and education programmes. It should inform the museum's Forward Plan. An Action Plan should be based on the recommendations of an Access Audit. It should include reference to all aspects of access: physical, sensory, intellectual, financial, psychological, social and cultural as well as access to information and decision-making. The Action Plan should be underpinned by the Key Principles outlined earlier (see Principles 1).

(See Resource fact sheet *Developing an Access Policy* for more details on the process of writing a policy at [www.resource.gov.uk/advice/factsheets](http://www.resource.gov.uk/advice/factsheets). and *Producing a Forward Plan*, MGC. 1996).



### 3. CONSULTATION

***“User involvement and empowerment must become fundamental objectives in service planning and delivery... the present service-led mindset is a barrier...”*** (‘Focus on Equality’, *Disability News: A Positive Force* in Scotland, October 1999, p3)

Disabled people are the experts in their own requirements, and their advice is essential: ***“...the (Drawbridge Group) project had successes beyond anyone’s expectations, but also demonstrated the complexity of the whole area of access consultation”*** (Annie Delin, Drawbridge Group).

***“Inclusion is not about knowing the answers before disabled people can be included, which can be a form of exclusion, but about being prepared to get involved in a dialogue about a complex range of issues that don’t often have straightforward answers “*** (Jennie Lloyd, Drawbridge Group).

Consultation with disabled employees, users and non-users of your services are essential starting points. Audience research and effective networking in your local communities will provide the participants.

Museums must develop an ongoing and effective consultative mechanism with disabled people, that represents their different interests and impairment groups. ***“The combined expertise of consultants and museum staff can never be a substitute for a continuing dialogue with users...”*** (See ‘Ethics Q & A’, *Museums Journal*, November 1999, p 31. A cautionary tale of relying on a disability consultant’s access audit without consultation with users).

Audience research and effective networking in the local community can involve groups who may or may not be visitors; accessible suggestions and complaints procedures; focus groups; hosting discussion seminars with targeted groups; disabled and non-disabled professionals in relevant fields; and the use of specialised consultancy organisations. When using consultants, museums need to ensure that they have relevant expertise and experience of the museum and gallery sector.

Museums and galleries should not expect to get this expertise and experience free. Disabled people may feel exploited if increasing demands are made on them to participate in this, very necessary, consultative process. Not all disabled people will want to be involved, many do not have the time or interest, and it cannot be assumed that all disabled people have the skills and expertise to be effective consultants. There must be remuneration or other benefits on offer.

It is also important for museums and galleries to position any consultative mechanism used in the decision-making structures so that it can inform the development of policies and action plans and subsequent development. It is very frustrating for any consultation group to make suggestions only to find that they are not put into practice. Museums and galleries who use consultants or focus groups must be prepared to act on their advice.

**There are a number of consultative models in use:**

- engaging a local Access group on a voluntary or professional basis (if voluntary there should be costs and other benefits on offer, such as membership of a Friends' organisation, training and the opportunity to develop new skills);
- establishing a professional and representative group of disabled advisors with relevant interests and experience (costs will vary);
- engaging interested disabled visitors within a Focus Group format - with or without a particular impairment focus, with or without non-disabled people;
- using established disability organisations, local, regional, or national. Care should be taken to ensure that these organisations are composed of, rather than working for, disabled people, otherwise inappropriate attitudes and stereotypes can be perpetuated;
- some larger museums and galleries have separate consultative bodies whose composition is flexible, while others integrate disability consultants into an internal working party.

**The Drawbridge Group**

The Drawbridge Group was a five-year consultation project based at Nottingham Castle Museum. Instigated by the marketing department, the project brought together a group of disabled people inexperienced at being consultants, under the chairmanship of an experienced disability consultant. Moreover, it allowed the group to develop their own agenda for reviewing the museum to see where improvements could be suggested.

The project had successes beyond anyone's expectations, but also demonstrated the complexity of the whole area of access consultation. In our five years of work we considered areas that included: taped information, handling materials, disability representation, communication through art, archiving, IT, publicity materials, outreach projects, staff training, seating and gallery design. Few staff members are expected to be so flexible.

Now in a position to review such a consultative process, we would identify the following factors for successful future consultation:

1. Start with an open mind - let the group itself set the agenda, then the museum can learn far more about what is important to disabled people as visitors.
2. Give the responsibility for liaison with the group to someone senior in the institution - this gives the project status, and can help speed up suggested changes. The group feels valued if their champion is someone able to take decisions.
3. Allow time to develop skills - disabled people aren't expert consultants just because they are disabled. They need time to learn how to express their views assertively, to compromise without giving up on important aspects, and to understand each other's disabilities. We estimate we took a year to become fully effective as a group.
4. Ensure strong leadership - within the group there needs to be a leader who is able to tackle administrative tasks, people problems and clashing priorities - especially between access and traditional working practices. Both the group members and the museum have to trust this person, and it should be a disabled person.
5. Ensure democracy - the group will come up with their own house rules. Decisions must not be made unilaterally outside meetings - this ensures that every member of the group feels empowered.
6. Expect to pay - it shows that you value advice, and increases your motivation to make the most of the project. It also ensures that busy people continue to feel it important to attend. Some members won't want to be paid for benefit reasons – but find a way to thank them for their input.
7. Allow time for closed sessions - disabled people may say different things when non-disabled people aren't present. This is particularly necessary in the early days, they may want time to discuss concerns or frustrations without offending their hosts.
8. Don't expect the group to rubber-stamp decisions - once they become confident, the group may well disagree with what may appear to the museum to be uncontroversial plans. The group may well be right.
9. Don't overbalance the group with museum representation - non-disabled

people, officers and people who are already at home in museum surroundings will dominate the discussions, and you will get less from the inexperienced members of your group.

10. Meet access needs - not just ramps but proper breaks, drinks, guide dog loo areas, large-print meeting notes, minute-takers, extra hands to move furniture and serve people, comfortable chairs. Whatever people ask for is something they need - be sensitive to meeting new needs as people get more comfortable with asking.
11. Be prepared to implement suggestions - a group becomes demoralised when they can see nothing changing after their advice has been given. An implementation budget should be in place, or a plan to budget in changes.
12. Don't underestimate the skills already in the group - our members had skills including art, performance and playwriting, forensic science, cartooning, reading and re-drawing architects plans, marketing, public relations, caring, IT, page-design, volunteer co-ordination, training, consultancy, film-making, research and South-pacific languages.

The Drawbridge Group ran from July 1995 to March 2000. Members now provide freelance consultancy services to Nottingham Castle and are running Lottery-funded projects including an outreach project and an exhibition.

**ANNIE DELIN**

## 4. TRAINING

### 4.1 General Issues

***“Training in disability issues for all staff, not only front of house staff, is an essential step in improving provision. It can be a challenging experience, resulting in a fundamental change in the culture of an organisation and so providing a firm foundation for policies and plans...undertake it at the start of any access developments”.*** (‘Museums for Everyone’ Alison Coles, *Interpretation*, February 1998).

Disability Awareness Training or Disability Equality Training are different in their approach, although you cannot always tell which type of training is being offered by the name given. It is important to check this before commissioning any training provider and to take up references from similar institutions. ***“It is an advantage to talk to someone who has used a particular trainer before. It is also acceptable to ask potential trainers for a list of their previous clients so you can take up references. Interview the potential trainer before you commission them to discuss your needs and expected outcomes. It is important to establish a rapport and to have confidence in what they can deliver,”*** (People First: A report from North West Museums Service - see p.74)

a) Disability Awareness Training tends to work towards general awareness rather than challenging fundamental presuppositions or attitudes, and exploring the implications for work practices. It also tends to focus on the individual impairment or condition and thus can unintentionally reinforce the medical model of disability. It will often use simulation exercises, such as putting people in wheelchairs or blindfolding them to encourage non-disabled people to have an idea of what it may be like to have that disability. The trainer may discuss medical details which are connected with specific conditions, and issues such as etiquette and language. Ensure that the trainer has a personal experience of disability, check the methods to be used, and the trainer’s professional qualifications and experience.

Many disabled people feel simulation exercises should be avoided altogether (although such exercises are often considered helpful by non-disabled people) as they can promote stereotypical and inappropriate assumptions. Research has shown that these exercises have little positive effect on the attitudes of those who undertake them and many disabled people and their organisations consider them to be positively harmful. (See *Beyond Disability: Towards an Enabling Society*, Sage Publications for the Open University, 1996, Chapter 11).

**b) Disability Briefing Sessions**, which do not pretend to be training, have been developed successfully in a number of museums. These can be a useful way to inform staff of an institution's plans to promote the inclusion of disabled people, as required under the DDA, and act as a briefing for planned Disability Equality Training. Sessions should outline the social model of disability and the responsibilities employers and service providers now have under the DDA, distribute basic advice on disability language and etiquette, inform staff of the services and facilities that are currently available and indicate sources of advice and support within the museum.

**c) Disability Equality Training (DET)** explores the concept of people being disabled by society's barriers and attitudes, highlighting the role of the organisation in the removal of those barriers and in the changing of attitudes.

DET provides positive guidance in how discrimination against disabled people can be prevented or dismantled and aims to consider issues concerning service provision, and working alongside, disabled people in depth. The training may include an element of raising awareness - customer care, etiquette and appropriate language for instance - but it is unlikely to use simulation exercises. The training should always be provided by someone with personal experience of disability.

(See: 'Good Practice for Delivering In-house Training - Hints and Tips', in *People First: North West Museums Service*, and DX 25 available from DDA helpline).

## **4.2 Disability Training Guidance**

Training in disability issues is an essential step in improving provision and should be part of an overall training policy and plan. It gives an invaluable insight into service provision for and the employment of disabled people, and provides a firm foundation on which to develop policies and plans. Training relating to specific areas of museum work, such as exhibition design, customer care or employment, may be needed or specific museum projects may require training about particular impairments. The training should be provided by experienced specialists, who should ideally be disabled themselves.

MGC research into museums' experience of disability training showed an overwhelming consensus of opinion that the training was extremely worthwhile. 'Don't put it off - get on with it as soon as possible!'  
'It made us decide that training for all museum staff should be a priority before addressing other access issues.'  
'Senior management are all applying the principles covered.'

**The museums advised others to:**

- recognise disability training as an essential element in providing good visitor services, inclusive practice (and DDA compliance);
- provide training for all staff from the top downwards, including directors, curators, designers, marketing and front of house staff;
- undertake it at the start of any access developments;
- view it as an ongoing process, including it in induction training for new staff and providing it as refresher courses for existing staff; follow up the training with immediate action in order to keep the momentum going;
- back it up with consultation with disabled people.

(See Access to Museums and Galleries for People with Disabilities, MGC, 1997 and Choosing an Access Trainer / Auditor available from Resource).

**d) Choosing a disability trainer.**

Training often involves two or more trainers, to cover a range of disabilities and works best with groups of 15 people or less. When briefing a trainer or drawing up a contract the following points should be considered:

**a) Essential requirements of a disability trainer**

Your trainer needs:

- personal experience of disability;
- a knowledge of your particular field of work or a willingness to work alongside someone who has that knowledge;
- a proven track record as a trainer, including references which you should follow up;
- to offer a tailored training package rather than off-the-shelf training;
- to ask about your particular circumstances, e.g. your overall training and equal opportunities policies and the access needs of the group;
- to be using equal opportunities practices throughout their work and not only as it relates to disability;



- an approach which encompasses public services and employment issues;
- an ability to work and communicate with staff at all levels of the organisation;
- a willingness to begin the training from your base line - they should be asking questions about previous training and experience;
- a non-confrontational approach which is nevertheless challenging and uncompromising;
- a clear awareness of group dynamics, signified by a discussion on the size and composition of the group and agreement on an optimum number, generally about 15;
- to make clear what the evaluation process which follows the training will be, both from their point of view and yours, and to include suggestions for how the organisation will move forward;
- a professional approach: if they are not charging you very much you need to be asking why.

#### **b) Desirable qualities of a disability trainer**

Your trainer should have:

- some local knowledge or be asking questions to obtain it;
- other contacts supporting them in their work, for example, other people who may offer specialist support, help and knowledge;
- relevant arts, museums and galleries-based examples and case studies to inform discussions;
- an interactive, rather than a lecture-style approach, to their training;
- a willingness to meet you before the training begins to ascertain the details of the package.

Much can be inferred by the sort of questions your potential trainer asks and the kind of information they want before agreeing to accept the work. Any trainer who appears to believe they can simply come into your organisation and deliver an off-the-shelf package should be avoided.

You will need evidence of their willingness to be flexible throughout the process, from initial briefing to actual delivery.

(A list of trainers, with details of three recent, relevant projects, is available from Resource).

## 5. ACCESS AUDITS AND ACTION PLANS

### 5.1 General Issues

An access audit is an assessment or survey of physical and non-physical barriers to access. It will review and evaluate what is in place and prioritise actions to be taken to improve provision. It is an essential strategic planning tool, which is required under the DDA as part of an ongoing monitoring, review and evaluation process, for Lottery applications and to inform Disability Action Plans. Access to all aspects of the museum's work including policies for collections, exhibitions interpretation and marketing as well as public programmes, visitor services and employment should be included. An audit may well save a great deal of money in the long run.

Access Audits should not be seen as one-off exercises. This is particularly important when planning major new developments. Plans should be assessed at the earliest stage, but the auditor should be involved at regular stages throughout the development process and beyond. It is often in the details that access to a museum or gallery succeeds or fails. Attention to detail and consultation with users will help to make plans work effectively. In a museum or gallery, what goes on in the building is as important as the building itself. (See *Access Audits*, by Rebecca McGinnis, *Museum Practice* 7, Issue 7, Vol. 3, No. 1, 1998, pp 43-45).

### 5.2 Disability Access Audits

Museums and galleries are strongly advised to invest in a disability access audit to help evaluate and develop buildings, exhibitions and services. A disability access auditor assesses the barriers faced by disabled people and makes recommendations for improvements. An auditor can look at existing provision and at plans for new facilities. The auditor should consider the needs of people with visual and hearing impairments, hidden impairments such as epilepsy, and learning difficulties, as well as those with mobility impairments.

There is still no audit standard or recognised accreditation for access audits in the arts field. The Centre for Accessible Environments (CAE) has developed a National Register of Access Consultants (NRAC), which began operating in March 2000. However only Access Consultants who have passed through recent CAE courses will be eligible to register. This may affect some practitioners in the museums and galleries field, so inclusion on this Register should not be regarded as a requirement. It is best to seek references from previous clients to assess an auditor's suitability.

Consultation with local disabled people should not be seen as a substitute for an audit by a specialist consultant or vice-versa. Also, although it is possible to carry out an audit using an audit package, it is likely to be less effective than bringing in an experienced auditor who is also a disabled person.

Museums who have commissioned access audits have commented:

‘I cannot recommend the audit too highly’.

‘We value an authoritative document to back our case to other bodies.’

‘We will refer to the document repeatedly’.

‘Have the audit done at a very early stage in development plans, so that it can form an integral part of the programme from the start, for example by forming part of an architect’s brief’.

‘Maintaining a relationship with the auditor afterwards helps keep the work moving’.

‘Undertake training in disability issues first’.

(From: *Access to Museums and Galleries for People with Disabilities*, MGC, 1997).

When briefing an auditor or drawing up a contract the following points should be considered:

#### **a) Essential requirements of a disability access auditor**

Your auditor needs:

- personal experience of disability or to be working with a disabled partner who is taking the lead in the audit;
- to look beyond access for wheelchair users and examine access for people with all kinds of disabilities, as well as the museum’s policies, practices and procedures;
- a knowledge of the museum and gallery sector or a willingness to work alongside someone who has that knowledge;
- training and a proven track record as an auditor, references which you should follow up;
- an audit package which they are prepared to tailor;
- a hands-on approach, for example, they must work with a tape measure and spend time in every area they are auditing, pushing doors, trying handles

- etc - simply asking questions is not enough;
- to incorporate every area of your organisation's activity;
- a knowledge of egress issues (means of escape from the building) and ways of working within relevant regulations;
- a knowledge of current building regulations and their limitations; to understand the importance of travel to and from the venue, taking public transport and parking into account so that the audit does not begin at the front door;
- to understand the importance of communication with your organisation, for example, minicom/internet access facilities and information points;
- to ask the exact purpose of the audit, for example whether you need a report including recommendations following the audit;
- a non-confrontational approach which takes a realistic view of what your organisation can achieve and recognises that you are responsible for setting your priorities, but which is nevertheless challenging and uncompromising.

#### **b) Desirable qualities of a disability access auditor**

##### **Your auditor should:**

- have other contacts supporting them in their work (for example, other people who may offer specialist support, help and knowledge);
- be willing to meet you before the audit to discuss it;
- have a working knowledge of architectural language;
- be prepared to work with someone else, especially if their disability presents practical difficulties in auditing the whole building.

The report should be tailored to your requirements and include firm recommendations, the auditor should also be able to discuss a phased approach to improvements. It should draw attention to low-cost alterations and advise on the prioritisation of tasks. Any report an auditor submits should contain a significant amount of detailed quantifiable information, the exact widths of doorways, height of steps etc, and this should be presented in an accessible way.

Not all access auditors have knowledge of the particular constraints

associated with historic buildings. A briefing from an historic buildings inspector or other specialist, who might also take part in the audit, would be useful.

(A list of access auditors with details of three relevant recent projects is available from Resource).

### 5.3 Buildings

Any alterations or new developments must involve appropriate and ongoing technical and expert advice on access issues (see DDA, 2004 information Principles 3 and Practice 8.1). A disability consultant or your local access group should be involved from the earliest stages and continue their involvement throughout the building process. It is important to test out access features and details with users and not rely on consultancy alone. Do not rely on the architects to necessarily implement Universal Design or provide the necessary levels of access. The museum or gallery is the service provider and should specify to any contractor that the DDA should be taken into account.

*See: Keeping up with the past: making historic buildings accessible to everyone and Access by Design: Implementing the Disability Discrimination Act, 1995, Centre for Accessible Environments..*

*Open Sesame - The Magic of Access*, Adapt Trust, 1999. A CD Rom that examines building standards in relation to the DDA in designing access for disabled people. The Adapt Trust, 8 Hampton Terrace, Edinburgh EHJ12 5JD. Tel: 0131 346 1999, Fax: 0131 346 1991, Email: [adapt.trust@virgin.net](mailto:adapt.trust@virgin.net), Website: [www.adapttrust.co.uk](http://www.adapttrust.co.uk).

#### Using Access Consultants on Projects

Appointing an outside access consultant onto a project does not mean that the task of improving access is finished. It takes careful planning to get useful advice at the right time. It is also vital to actively manage the involvement of your access consultant so that their ideas and suggestions are merged successfully with the other ongoing work of the project.

The first stage is to ensure that all parties are clear about the nature and shape of the project. This includes the deadlines and milestones of each project stage, when the consultant's input will be needed and in what form. Time and input must also be related to your budget and the spread of the consultant's fees for work over the whole of the project.

As the access consultant starts work, they will need a defined management

structure. Who will be responsible for ensuring that they are sent the information, reports, drawings and designs that they will need to do their job? Who will chase responses? Who will be their main point of contact?

The management structure does not have to be linear, but it must be clear. As the V&A's British Galleries Project is so large, our access consultant is involved in two main areas. There is one line of communication on architectural and interior design matters, and another on visitor needs and interpretation issues. If an issue touches on both areas then both areas come together. For a project of this size, splitting the structure keeps the information and advice flowing to where it is needed.

Even with good planning, the work of an access consultant on a project will still need hands-on management. Effort will be needed to ensure that the consultant is fully integrated into the project.

- **Explaining the consultant's role**

The role of the consultant will need to be clear to appropriate project team members and other outside consultants. Many people will not have worked with an outside access consultant before, so it is important to explain how the consultant's advice will be considered alongside the views of others.

- **Involvement in decision-making**

In some instances the consultant will be highly involved in particular areas. However, it is unrealistic to expect every single project decision to involve the access consultant.

Careful thought will need to be given to when and where they should be involved, what meetings they should attend and how their thoughts will be fed into decision-making.

- **Dealing with different viewpoints**

It is possible that at some point in the project, the advice of your consultant will not match the views of those working in other areas. For example, a small change for certain visitors might need a major change in construction. This should not be viewed as a disaster, but as a feature of project work. The key is to focus on where the museum should target its limited resources. In most cases access issues will rightly be a priority, but in some instances a pragmatic and realistic compromise will be needed. When this happens, it will be necessary to work to move all parties closer together.

- **Active solution finding**

Part of the role of an access consultant is to flag up issues and problems. But the main aim is to encourage all those involved to work towards finding



solutions. Often this has to be managed by identifying what will help in finding answers and structuring the effort so that this happens.

Clarity, planning and active management all help to integrate an outside access consultant into a project. This not only makes their work more effective, but in the end will lead to a better experience for visitors.

**COLIN MULBERG**

## 6. FRONT OF HOUSE AND VISITOR CARE

### 6.1 General Guidance

Front of house and visitor care services should be informed by consultation with disabled people, alongside training in disability issues for all staff and effective communication mechanisms within the museum or gallery. All members of staff have responsibilities to members of the public, including disabled people, and their roles and attitudes will impact on front of house services.

Front of house staff and other frontline staff who are the points of contact with the public, for example the switchboard, must have customer care training. They also need accurate information on what services are and are not available and to know who to refer to for particular access enquiries.

To include disabled people, as both employees or visitors, they have first to know what is available and how to get to it, and what is not accessible or available. Disabled people need basic access information, effective marketing and publicity. The DDA requires that employers and service providers provide disabled people with this information. Forty-two per cent of disabled people never attend an arts event and it is estimated that accessibility will be an issue for 35% of the total population in future. (See: Principles 2 and National Lotteries Board Night site, 1999, p7).

#### Resources

*Providing Service for All - The Training Guide*, English Tourism Council 1997, (£5).

*Welcoming Disabled Travellers*, 1999, (Free), Fulfilment Centre, Thames Tower, Black's Road, Hammersmith, London W6 9EL.

*How to push a wheelchair*, Griffiths, D and David Wynne 1994, (90p), The Disabled Motorists Club. Available from RADAR, 12 City Forum, 250 City Road, London EC1V 8AF.

*Welcoming customers with learning disabilities: A training pack*, 1996, (£20 plus £1.50 p+p), Mencap National Centre, 123 Golden Lane, London EC1Y 0RT. Tel: 020 7454 0454.

*How to guide a blind person*, 1987, revised 1995, (50p), RNIB Customer Services, PO Box 173, Peterborough PE2 6WS. Tel: 0345 456457.

*Louder than words: Guide to customer care*, 1996. Free pack and further information on the Louder than Words campaign are available from Janet Simmons, Louder than Words Co-ordinator, RNID South East, 39 Store Street, London WC1E 7DB. Tel: 020 7916 4144.

*Access for Venues - a guide*, 1999, (free), Deafworks, 59 Banner Street, London EC1Y 8PX.

The Disability Communication Guide. Employers Forum on Disability, booklet covering disability etiquette awareness.

Conditions for Visitors, Dutch Museums Association. [www.museumvereniging.nl](http://www.museumvereniging.nl)

The Nine Principles of public service delivery [www.open.gov.uk](http://www.open.gov.uk).

Mencap have produced a free pamphlet *Making ourselves clear* minimum standards for accessible writing, and a free booklet *Am I making myself clear? Guidelines for accessible writing*. There is also an Accessibility Officer, Lynn Grieveson on 020 7696 5575 or Email: [lynn.grieveson@mencap.org.uk](mailto:lynn.grieveson@mencap.org.uk) who invites comments and ideas.

### **Principles for basic Access: Information from Artsline.**

Disabled people need accurate and concise information, preferably using easy to recognise symbols. Too much information defeats the object; it becomes inaccessible and creates barriers. This is true for most other visitors too.

There is an ongoing problem about symbols as there are a number of different systems in use and what they actually indicate is not consistent.

The Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation (RADAR) is reviewing the use of symbols and attempting to standardise form and meaning. For the time being consult with local access groups, local authorities and tourist boards to find symbols that mean the same thing as far as possible or use the symbols Artsline use in their access guides. (A disk is available from Artsline, for PC or Mac, that includes a basic range).

A telephone/minicom helpline is greatly valued, disabled people are making increasing use of email, but such a facility must provide a prompt response, and does not always replace personal contact. It can provide detailed and immediate information, but must be delivered by a suitably trained and informed person, who can communicate clearly what is and is not available. Whether or not museums and galleries have a minicom, they should join BT's TypeTalk service so that all members of staff can communicate by phone with a Deaf or hearing-impaired person who cannot use a voice telephone.

(Fax and E-mail are also realistic alternatives for Deaf people and should be offered).

**Disabled people need to know:**

- How to get to your museum or gallery and whether there is parking available, or alternative parking close by.
- Whether someone with a mobility impairment can use the main door, if there are heavy swing doors, access for wheelchairs, or an alternative entrance and, if so, where it is.
- The whereabouts of an information point once inside for specific enquiries.
- Where the toilet facilities are, whether there is an accessible toilet with baby change facilities.
- Where and what kind of refreshments are on offer.
- If the museum or gallery is very large and on different levels it is important to describe the access accurately, if access is limited or difficult, disabled people will need to be able to decide whether a visit is worthwhile given the specific circumstances; information should include a simple map of where the museum or gallery is located, local transport services, parking arrangements and be available in alternative and accessible formats: large print, Braille, audio-tape and disk.
- Remember that disabled people have to plan their outings more carefully than non-disabled people. However, most visitors will benefit from the guidance below, which also helps check that museums and galleries are not making assumptions that their disabled visitors are a homogenous group.
- Perfect physical, sensory or intellectual access can be completely spoiled by the inappropriate or negative attitudes of staff, which may mean that disabled people will not return.
- Disabled people need to feel respected and valued as visitors. The 'welcome' factor is crucial, in the shop, in the range of publications, merchandise, services and programmes on offer. Is what you offer, your total 'product', inclusive?
- If issues around disability are thought through, the chances are that many other diverse interests are included too.

Artsline, whose staff are all disabled people, provides an Information & Advice Service for Disabled People on access to the arts and entertainment across London, and runs a youth project to assist young people to access cultural activities and multicultural projects that address their needs. Artsline have many years of experience, both from providing a telephone helpline to disabled people wishing to visit museums and galleries in London, and from publishing Access Guides to a variety of arts venues in the city, including one for museums and another for art galleries. (Artsline, 54 Charlton St, London NW1 1HS. Tel: 020 7388 2227, Fax: 020 7383 2653).

### **Basic Access Information Using Symbols and Descriptions Produced with Guidance from Artsline by Bruce Castle Museum**



Level access through a double door into Reception area. If you require assistance, please ask Attendants.  
Ramp from the car park to side entrance.



Induction Loop at Reception and in Lecture Hall. Please ask for assistance.



Guide Dogs welcome.



Magnifying Glass and Torch available. Please ask. Touch Tours by prior arrangement. Large print information available on request.



Ground Floor fully accessible. Stair Lift to First Floor.



Seating around the Museum. Space for wheelchair or scooter storage.



Two toilets accessible to wheelchair users on the Ground Floor and one on the First Floor.



Picnic area and indoor seating. Cold drinks machine. Café open Sundays and school holidays.



Free Entrance



Car Park for cars and mini buses. Off Church Lane.



Seven Sisters, Wood Green and Turnpike Lane are all 1.5 km away. Then take 123 or 243 buses which stop outside the museum.



Bruce Grove overground 750 m away approx.

## 6.2 Separate Access Leaflets

(This section was contributed by Rebecca McGinnis).

A separate leaflet or brochure with comprehensive access information for disabled people is recommended. The leaflet should cover physical and sensory access as well as visitors with learning disabilities. Areas which present access difficulties should be described, as well as accessible features e.g. **“The museum is reached via a flight of steps, but a lift is available”** or **“the museum has very little seating, although wheelchairs are available to borrow”**. Provide the facts so that visitors can make their own decisions. This will help people to plan and prepare for their visit.

Items to be covered in an access leaflet include:

- how to get there;
- parking;
- location of accessible entrance;
- visitor assistance available;
- number of steps and handrails;
- length of visitor route;
- availability of seating;

- location of ramps and lifts;
- toilet, babychanging, cafe and shop facilities;
- audio guide availability;
- locations of induction loops and infra-red systems;
- availability of communication aids such as neck loops, sign language speakers, large print or Braille guidebooks, sound enhancement systems, audio tapes, etc.
- egress procedures.

Using graphic symbols for modes of transport and site facilities, for example, pictograms of a bus, a knife and fork, and standard access symbols, helps people with learning difficulties and those for whom English is not their first language. It also enables others to scan information more quickly. Symbols should always be as large as possible and should have explanations next to them.

There are two advantages to producing small quantities of an access leaflet. Information can then be adapted as changes are made, and print size can be enlarged to accommodate individuals' needs. If the leaflet is to be photocopied, high quality reproduction must be maintained. (However copies of a leaflet should be available on demand as the DDA part iii could be interpreted to mean that disabled people should not have to wait while information is reproduced).

CHANGE, a national organisation run by disabled people strongly recommend the use of photographs in information leaflets and has produced a Picture Bank CD-ROM and Pack to assist service providers make information accessible to people with learning disabilities. People First, a national organisation of people with learning difficulties that has local affiliated groups, has produced a pack *Making It Easy First: A guide to giving information to people with learning difficulties*.

### **6.3 Access Information in General Leaflets and Advertising**

(This section was contributed by Rebecca McGinnis).

The amount of access information needed in general publicity material requires careful consideration and the amount will vary depending on the type

of leaflet or advertisement being produced. Layering information is an effective and efficient way of advertising services and facilities.

Include as much basic access information (physical, sensory and intellectual) as possible on all publicity material. Standard symbols should be used together with text, but in the case of posters and other short, basic leaflets which do not provide much information at all, symbols and a telephone number are better than nothing. For events and other leaflets, use standard access symbols with brief explanations, and highlight any special features or services in the text. Always provide a contact address and telephone number for more detailed information. The telephone number is a very important and frequently used piece of information and should therefore be prominently placed in large, bold print, at least 3mm high lettering. A minicom number should also be included, if possible, as well as fax and email. Do not say, for example, 'no access for disabled people' or 'fully accessible' because 'access' and 'disabled' mean different things to different people, and encompass a huge range of possibilities. Be clear and do not be afraid to mention inaccessible features as well as accessible ones.

Review current practice regarding the inclusion of access information in leaflets and advertising information. Develop a policy on the type and level of access information to be included as a matter of course in different places. Provide some access information in guidebook entries if at all possible, no matter how brief. Where possible, include a telephone number and email address which people can use to find out more detailed information when planning a visit.

#### **6.4 Information in Alternative Formats**

Consultation and knowledge of your audience is crucial to the efficient and effective provision of information in alternative formats (which may include auxiliary services). These include large print, audio, disk, electronic media, Braille, British Sign Language (BSL), Signed Supported English (SSE), Lip-speaking, plain English, relevant foreign or community languages. (See *The Informability Manual*: by Wendy Gregory. An extremely useful resource for making information more accessible).

Ideally all information should be in multi-formats. The Informability Unit at the Central Office of Information suggests as priorities:

- 1) All information aimed at a general audience.
- 2) Any information directly applicable to a particular audience, e.g. relating to disability.

The production of alternative formats does not need to be expensive, for



example, large print and disks can be easily produced to RNIB guidelines on a computer. Local groups of visually impaired people or talking newspaper providers will be able to advise and often record audiotapes. (See Sources of advice below).

Audio information is extremely useful to many disabled and non-disabled people, but can be excluding for Deaf people even where there is an induction loop. Subtitles or captions should be made available when audio-visual equipment is used, or a short text version of any audio information, in Plain English, together with induction loop facilities for any audio equipment. New technologies are bringing the costs down for this kind of equipment, particularly computer chip and CD-ROM technology that provides random rather than linear access and so offers opportunities to provide layers of information and interpretation to meet different interests.

The Code of Practice for the DDA, (Ch 5.18), specifically mentions that museums would be expected to provide a short introductory guide for people with learning disabilities. An audio-guide is particularly useful, especially if it is developed in consultation with learning disabled visitors and any advocates such as teachers. Such a guide will also be useful for foreign visitors, young readers and any other visitor who may have literacy difficulties.

Orientation leaflets and guides should be available in accessible formats, and ideally in relevant foreign or community languages as well. Use clear print, at least 12 point, on all leaflets and guides for the general public, following RNIB's 'See It Right' Guidelines. Tactile diagrams or illustrations might also be considered where possible (see 6.g). For many visually impaired people, a clear simple line drawing is much more useful than a colour photograph.

Separate guidebooks for visually impaired people or for people with learning disabilities would provide an additional feature to attract these groups and make the museum visit more enjoyable and rewarding. Such guides are likely to be considered reasonable adjustments for large museums to have to make under the DDA. They could also function as a souvenir of the visit. Buying a small remembrance of an excursion is a simple ritual in which most of us participate. However, visually impaired people or people with learning disabilities often do not have this opportunity, as such guides are inaccessible or else accessible formats cannot be taken from the site.

Such guides must be developed in consultation with users, e.g. your local People First Group, ask National People First or CHANGE for contacts in your area.

Confederation of Tape Industry producers (COTIS)  
67 High Street  
Tarporely  
Cheshire CW6 0DP  
Tel: 01829 732115

RNIB Website [www.rnib.org.uk](http://www.rnib.org.uk) has a useful site index and a section to download free: Clear Print Guidelines, Large Print Guidelines, Advice on Braille and Moon, and tape information.

Braille transcription from the RNIB and the Inside Out Prison Trust Tel: 01273 833050, Fax: 01273 833744, Email: [oitrust@pavilion.co.uk](mailto:oitrust@pavilion.co.uk). A trust that supports community targeted activities for prisoners. There may be local providers of this service - contact local talking newspapers or community groups of visually impaired people).

### **Providing Information - Sources of Advice**

*The Informability Manual: Making information more accessible in the light of the Disability Discrimination Act*, Gregory W, 1996, HMSO. An excellent source of advice on providing information with an extensive and useful address list. It identifies barriers to access, offers solutions and includes reference to delivering information as signs, in print, alternative formats and through a variety of electronic media.

*How to Provide Information Well: A Good Practice Guide*, 1998, National Information Forum, Post Point 228, BT Proctor House, 100-110 High Holborn, London WC1V 6LD

Plain English Campaign, PO Box 3, New Mills, Stockport, SK12 4QP.

*Making Reading Easier* (useful free leaflet), 1999, Basic Skills Agency, Commonwealth House, 1-19 New Oxford Street, London WC1A 1NU.

*Making It Easy First: making information accessible for people with learning difficulties*, 1997, People First, Instrument House, 207/215 King's Cross Road, London WC1X 9DB. Tel: 020 7833 8399.

CHANGE, 1999, Picture Bank CD-ROM and Pack First Floor, 69-85 Old Street, London, EC1V 9HY. Tel: 020 7490 2668, Fax: 020 7490 3581.

*Access in Mind: Towards the Inclusive Museum*, 1998, Rayner A, INTACT, NMS Publishing, The first three chapters of this book provide excellent advice

relevant to all visitors, not only people with learning difficulties.

*Audio information and Visitors with Learning Disabilities*, Ann Rayner, in *BarrierFree*, Issue 3, Winter 99, p.12. *BarrierFree* is the journal of the Museums and Galleries Disability Association, (MAGDA).

### **A Checklist for Audio Information**

Museums and galleries should recognise that many visitors prefer to have information in audio form for a variety of reasons. These can include problems with reading arising from visual difficulties (including the use of bi-focal lenses, although people with more severe visual impairments need extra levels of orientation advice and audio description), dyslexia, lack of educational opportunity, problems in seeing written information if the area is crowded or has dim lighting, or simply labels which use small print. In art galleries audio guides are particularly helpful as they allow visitors access to information while allowing them to stand back and see the work of art as a whole.

- Information in audio form is particularly suitable for people with learning disabilities. In many cases it is essential if they are to be able to access information about the displays independently of accompanying family members or carers. It can also help visitors with some visual impairment, people with dyslexia or who are not confident readers and possibly some whose first language is not English.
- For the kind of multi-purpose use we advocate, user flexibility is important. While a cassette player can provide some information in audio form and is inexpensive for a small museum, the linear format is not ideal for someone with a learning disability who might get bored by descriptions of some displays and would be unable to skip sections. A random access system is better as it gives the user more control and can accommodate extra levels of information to provide for visitors with a special interest.
- The language register of the script is critical. It is important to address the visitor directly, using active verbs and avoiding complicated qualifying clauses, especially at the beginning of a sentence. A sentence which starts with 'Although' is a real turn off for many people. Try pointing out interesting details by saying something like 'If you look closely at.... you will see....'. Audio is an intimate medium, especially if the visitor is listening on a headset, so the tone of information provided in writing is, or should be, very different from that provided in an audio script. It is not acceptable just to read aloud what is presented on labels or information panels.
- It helps if an 'attention-grabbing' piece of information is given at the start of

a track to engage the visitor's attention at the outset. A question or provocative statement can have the same effect and make the visitor want to carry on listening. Where there is a 'human interest' story, this should be told early in the message, not placed after facts about where it was found or what it is made of.

- It is important, particularly for visitors with learning disabilities, that any music or sound effects which add to the atmosphere of an audio experience, are faded out as soon as the voice starts. Any background noise which could interfere with understanding must be avoided.
- Visitors must be able to identify easily the objects or works of art described. Symbols to do this must be large enough to be seen from a distance. Numbers and distinguishing colours, if used, must be clear and unambiguous. If there are talking labels they should be obvious, and the buttons or earpieces easily accessible to all, including wheelchair users. Consistent placing of these will help people with a visual impairment.
- Museums which provide any form of audio information must market this. They should tell visitors what they can offer in the same way that they mention lifts, ramps and tearooms in their leaflets and publicity materials.
- For small museums, the cost of providing audio information is often perceived as too expensive. However this cost is going down and the variety of equipment available is increasing. Particularly if equipment can be re-recorded and reused, the initial outlay may seem more reasonable.

## **Background**

The Intellectual Access Trust, INTACT, was established in 1995 to raise awareness of the social, educational, cultural and economic importance of making displays in museums, galleries and historic sites more accessible to people with learning or communication disabilities.

The research done by INTACT shows that information in audio form is very helpful for this group of visitors, many of whom do not read.

It can also help other visitors who are not confident readers, those with some visual impairment, anyone with dyslexia and possibly some whose first language is not English. This is highly relevant to the obligation, effective under the Disability Discrimination Act of October 1999, for museums as service providers to offer alternative forms of access. Our early research on audio equipment is described in the INTACT report, *Access in Mind - towards the inclusive museum*, NMS Publishing 1998.

ANN RAYNER

## 6.5 Signage

Take advice from your disability consultant or access auditor, disabled people, local access group and disabled visitors. Do not make assumptions. Ask your Area Museum Council, or local authority access group for advice. Contrast, font size and position are important. Raised letters or pictograms are better than incised ones. Make sure that toilets have clear and large raised signs for male, female, accessible (the wheelchair symbol) and babychange. Directional arrows should be simple and large. Signs should be lit to help people to see them, avoid back-lighting or badly directed spot lights. Updated advice on signs and symbols will be included in supplements to this publication. Refer to:

*The Informability Manual*, Wendy Gregory,  
*BarrierFree Design*, James Holmes Siedle  
For manufacturers contact Tactyle signs Tel. 01473 620 100).

## 6.6 Tactile Maps and Diagrams, as Orientation tools

It is very important to distinguish between tactile maps and diagrams used as orientation tools or wayfinding strategies and their use as interpretation aids (see 6).

Take advice from local groups of visually impaired people, or ask the National Federation of the Blind or RNIB for local contacts and local consultants who work in the field. Always take up references when employing a consultant. Tactile maps and diagrams should be as simple as possible and can be used as outdoor and indoor orientation aids. Too much information makes them impossible to interpret and most visually impaired people need an explanation and verbal description of what is included. Embossing film and a geometry unit can be used at an information point to produce one-off tactile diagrams (available from RNIB)

## 6.7 Tactile Diagrams or Pictures and Line Drawings

There is increasing interest in the production of tactile pictures and diagrams for interpretation. They are usually more use than thermoforms in interpretation. Such diagrams or pictures need to be drawn to careful guidelines, in consultation with visually impaired users. They have also been found to be useful for sighted children in special schools and for people with learning difficulties. For advice contact the RNIB, local groups or schools or colleges for visually impaired pupils.

The RNIB has a Minolta raised diagram copying service; Minolta systems are

now relatively inexpensive and would be a possible subject for a small grant, or could be purchased in a larger museum or service.

(See The National Centre for Tactile Diagrams project, *'Pictures at your fingertips'*).

National Centre for Tactile Diagrams  
University of Hertfordshire  
Hatfield  
Herts AL10 9AB  
Tel: 01707 286 348  
Fax: 01707 285 059  
Website: [www.nctd.org.uk](http://www.nctd.org.uk)

*A Guide to raised diagram copying service*, Brian Law, RNIB 1993.

*A Guide to the Production of tactile graphics on swell paper*, Yvonne Eriksson and Monica Strucel, Swedish Library of Talking Books and Braille, 1995 (ISBN 91-88143-14-5).

### **Tactile Pictures - A Checklist**

Tactile pictures can be an extremely useful aid to help visually impaired people understand an object, whether 2D or 3D. However, their purpose is not exactly the same as that of a visual image of an object - a drawing or photograph. A tactile picture, or diagram, is really closer to a map than a photograph. It can give an overall impression of the shape and topography of an object or the composition of a painting, but it requires a key, in the form of verbal description, to be understood.

Reading a tactile picture takes considerably longer than looking at a visual image, particularly if the person is not accustomed to them. Sighted people take in 80% of information through their eyes, and only 20% through all the other senses combined. Visually impaired people must learn to use the other senses to the fullest - contrary to popular belief, they do not have enhanced senses automatically to compensate for lack of sight. Using the tactile sense is a skill which must be learned.

Therefore, some visually impaired people, especially those who have been visually impaired since birth or from early age and have learned Braille, will often be more adept at using tactile pictures. For others, the museum is a place to learn or brush up on this skill.

Below are some basic guidelines for making drawings which will translate easily into tactile pictures. Many of the same principles can be applied to

making clear (not raised) line drawings for partially sighted people. If both tactile pictures and line drawings are to be produced, it makes sense to be consistent with the drawings as far as possible. Ideally, the 'visual' line drawings could, with only slight alterations, be made directly into tactile pictures.

- Simplify as much as possible without altering the content. The key elements must remain distinct - they may need to be emphasised or even enlarged.
- Do not include elements which are not necessary to the interpretation of the object - avoid superfluous detail.
- All lines and filled-in areas should be raised - the thicker the line, the thicker the raised line. Solid black areas should be raised. In other words, any pen mark should be raised - areas left clean should remain flat. Because of this, it may be more effective in some cases to make negative images, with 'holes' represented by white spaces rather than the filled in areas which normally denote voids. (Think of a skull, with the black sockets - in a tactile picture, it would feel more logical to have the sockets receding; if they are black, they will be raised and therefore sticking out from the bone surrounding them).
- Provide contrast in textures, if using any textures - this will attract attention, both visually and tactually. Tactile diagram readers will usually start by familiarising themselves with the picture by running their hands quickly over the whole image. This gives an overall impression and acquaints the user with landmarks, or key reference points (see next two points).
- Provide a point of reference, which will also be the starting point for exploring the tactile picture - two ways of doing this:
  1. Using an area or feature of the object which stands out naturally - ideally this would be a key element of the image
  2. Making a notch in the frame or a filled-in top right-hand corner (which aids orientation of the page), or other such device outside the image of the object itself. Be consistent with this device.
- Varying tactile textures can make it easier to distinguish different elements of an object. Textures can also provide clues which make verbal descriptions clearer and easier to follow. But be careful when using textures. It may be best to begin with lines and a few areas filled in black (which will produce a solid raised area). Other textures such as dots or stripes may be used, but these must be tested in the raised form before they are applied to drawings. This is because textures, which look very different, may be indistinguishable by touch. Each texture should have its own distinct feel -



and be very different from other textures used in the same picture. Do not use more than about three or four textures in a single drawing - i.e. no texture (white page), solid smooth raised black and one or perhaps two others. The form filled in by a texture can be more easily discerned if it is surrounded by a continuous line with a small space left between the pattern and the outline.

- Always refer to textures in verbal descriptions - they are useful clues, which will make navigation round the image quicker and clearer. Name the textures according to how they feel, not how they look (rough, smooth raised, etc).
- Lines may also be varied to aid identification of a particular area, or draw attention to a key element in a description. Dotted lines or broken lines, thick and thin lines, or double lines may all be useful.
- Avoid all types of perspective! Perspective is a visual concept, which distorts when translated into a two-dimensional line drawing. In other words, avoid producing an illusion of depth. This can be achieved by drawing the objects from full-frontal views, rather than from an angle. Sculptures are often photographed from three-quarter angles, because this shows (at least in part) two sides of the sculpture and is often more visually interesting. If tactile drawings are being made based on photographs, get full frontal or side views (see the point below which discusses how to provide several pictures of a sculpture in order to help build up a 3D concept of it).
- Sometimes an object or picture may be too detailed to fit all the information required into one tactile picture. There are a number of ways to deal with this, for example, by producing a drawing of an overall, simplified view as well as some drawings of blown up details. In this case, the details must be related back to the overall view in some way, either through tactile labelling or verbal description. Another method involves splitting up the object into sections and drawing them on separate pages.
- For sculpture, getting an idea of the three-dimensionality may require several drawings (see point above on perspective). A technique called orthogonal projection involves producing a tactile drawing for each angle, for example, a front view, a side view and an aerial view, equivalent to front and side elevations and a floor plan of a building. This enables the visually impaired person to build up a three-dimensional idea of the object. If the object can be touched, this may not be necessary. The tactile picture will then be used primarily to get an overall shape of the object or to pick out some detail, such as a face. The same basic principles apply for non-raised line drawings.

**Rebecca McGinnis**



## Line Drawings

Contributed by Rebecca McGinnis

- Most visually impaired people have some degree of sight. Therefore, simplified line drawings without too much detail will be a great help to many. Partially sighted people may use the drawings just as fully sighted people would use drawings or photographs in conjunction with text, but they might also use them to help find the objects in the galleries and to help them see all the elements in a sculpture or painting. They will also acquaint the person with the object before they touch it. Another reason why these illustrations are so important is that they may be the only illustrations of the objects, which are visually accessible to some partially sighted people. When provided as part of a large print guide, for example, they become invaluable, rare souvenirs and memory aids.
- Half-tones in non-raised line drawings would be one equivalent to tactile textures in tactile pictures. Textures such as cross-hatching and contour lines for shading can look muddy and make boundaries between areas difficult to distinguish. If any shading is to be done, keep to solid grey tones rather than individual pen strokes. However, it is recommended that half-tones be avoided as much as possible in the line drawings. In most cases, plain line drawings are clearer and starker, making them simpler to read visually by a partially sighted person. Where shadow must be shown to make sense of a drawing, apply half-tones economically.
- Non-raised line drawings will be clearer, if perhaps slightly less interesting visually, if perspective is avoided in the same way as with tactile pictures.
- For the most part, line drawings can be made following the same principles as those above for tactile pictures. Non-raised line drawings are discussed in this section where methods differ.

## 6.8 Models

Models can be used for wayfinding/orientation and interpretation.

Take advice, consult with local disabled people or groups of disabled people. Local heritage venues or education establishments may have models in use. Local colleges or schools for visually impaired pupils can also be helpful.

Contact The Dog Rose Trust which works in the heritage sector and with museums and galleries to explore the use of tactile models and plans for visually impaired people. 83 Greenacres, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1LZ. Tel: 01584 874567, Fax: 01584 874045, Email: [dogrose.trust@virgin.net](mailto:dogrose.trust@virgin.net)

## 7. MARKETING AND PUBLICITY

### 7.1 GENERAL GUIDANCE

(This section was contributed by Rebecca McGinnis)

Regardless of how accessible the museum is, disabled people will not come if they do not:

- a) know that it exists and
- b) know that it is accessible.

Traditional methods of marketing may not be as effective in reaching potential disabled audiences for a variety of reasons:

- Printed publicity will be useless to many visually impaired people. Over 72% of visually impaired people can read large print, but others rely on taped or Brailled information, or telephone information lines. Clear print, at least 12 point, and simple design and layout of information is easier for everyone to use.
- People with learning disabilities may find the layout and language used in publicity information difficult to understand. Again, clear layout, design and language are of vital importance in getting your message across.
- Radio and television advertising will be less effective in reaching people who are Deaf and hard of hearing.
- Many disabled people have lower than average incomes, and may not be able to afford the papers and magazines which feature museum advertising.
- Economic and physical barriers prevent many disabled people from travelling and going on holiday, or limit them considerably. Therefore, holidaymakers, a potential audience for the museum, will not be adequately representative of disabled people.

All of these factors suggest that in order to reach potential audiences of disabled people, museums will need to include in their marketing policies a strategy specifically targeting disabled people and other under-represented groups. For example, make potential disabled visitors aware of any multi-sensory opportunities available at the museum.

Advertise museum services and facilities regularly in the disability press and contact national and local disability organisations to find out how they can help.

Groups of and for disabled people in the local area and schools for disabled children are another source of advice.

In addition to a disability press mailing list, develop a mailing list of interested individuals with disabilities. This can be done through group visits, feedback received in comments books or questionnaires, through contacts with local societies who can provide mailing lists, by advertising services and asking disabled people to get in touch. A mailing list form could be produced. A separate form on an access leaflet would specifically target disabled people, would be likely to reach more disabled visitors and could be more easily put into accessible formats. Include a space on mailing list forms for people to indicate their preferred information format eg. print, large print, audio, Braille, disk, email.

Be aware of the individual information needs of people with disabilities; ask in what format information is required. See RNIB print legibility guidelines and how to produce other formats. Clear language will be appreciated by everyone, but particularly people with learning difficulties.

The service provided by the English National Opera (ENO) is a good example of the practice of developing a mailing list and providing regular information in preferred formats. ENO has an access leaflet with a registration form attached. It asks people with disabilities to provide proof of disability e.g. a copy of a Railcard or other documentation. Museums may not need to ask for this proof, if the form is only for a mailing list. The form asks for the individual's preferred format, e.g. large print, Braille, audio tape, so that accessible events information can be sent out on a regular basis.

In addition to advertising the general accessibility of the museum, encourage repeat visiting by offering an ongoing programme of accessible events and activities. Developing awareness of the museum amongst new groups of people with disabilities, particularly younger people, may be a relatively slow process, taking several years to establish. Provided the visitor experience is consistently positive and stimulating, a regular and ongoing marketing strategy targeting people with disabilities will help to build up audiences. Include questions about access and disability in general visitor surveys.

(See *Guidelines for Marketing to Disabled Audiences*, Annie Delin, Elspeth Morrison, 1995, The Arts Council of England).

## **7.2 Inclusive Strategies for Audience Development**

Audience development in museums and galleries should always include the

interests of disabled people as part of any target group. Consult with local providers, individuals and community groups (see *Building Bridges*, MGC, p30).

Strategies to target disabled people can include enhancing existing facilities, such as sound enhancement systems, large print guides, audio-guides, behind-the-scenes opportunities, handling sessions, targeted workshops or gallery talks, portable activity packs.

Partnerships with other providers, for example, Further Education Colleges, particular interest community groups and Social Services Departments' Day Centres are worth investigating. Activities may include: outreach, loan boxes, mobile museums, touring exhibitions and programmes in other venues such as local libraries or community centres, hospital outreach, prison outreach and reminiscence work.

Age Exchange, The Reminiscence Centre, 11 Blackheath Village,  
London SE3 9LA.

Tel: 020 8318 9105, Email: [age-exchange@lewisham.gov.uk](mailto:age-exchange@lewisham.gov.uk).

*Museum Practice* 11, Issue 11 Vol.4 No.2 1999

*Managing Museum and Gallery Education*, MGC, 1996.

*Positive Thinking*, Alison James, MGC, 1996.

*Building Bridges: Guidance for museums and galleries on developing new audiences*, Jocelyn Dodd and Richard Sandell, MGC, 1998.

See: Resource fact sheets: *Developing a Policy for an Education Service*, Post 16 learning and evaluation. [www.resource.gov.uk](http://www.resource.gov.uk)

## 8. DISPLAY AND INTERPRETATION

### 8.1 Universal Design

Universal design principles should be the basis for inclusive practice in museums and galleries. The concept of Inclusive/Universal Design (sometimes called Design for All) is gaining increasing recognition: ***“the diversity of our world and the rapidly growing ageing and disabled populations demand designs that provide opportunity, choice and personal empowerment”***.

(see [www.adaptenv.org](http://www.adaptenv.org)) It is an approach to the design of products and environments that sets out to include as many people as possible throughout their life. The movement started in the USA, but has quickly taken off in Europe. It does not look for the lowest common denominator, or for dumbing-down, nor does it attempt to reconcile the often-conflicting needs of every minority group in our society. Rather, by considering many varieties of needs it attempts to break down unnecessary barriers and exclusion. In so doing, it often facilitates more creative and superior design solutions. Universal/inclusive design principles and the benefits of such an approach are beginning to be recognised in museums and galleries.

The principles of Universal Design are:

1. Equitable use - the design does not disadvantage or stigmatise any group of users;
2. Flexibility in use - the design accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities;
3. Simple and intuitive use - use of the design is easy to understand, regardless of the user's experience, knowledge, language skills, or current concentration level;
4. Perceptible information - the design communicates necessary information effectively to the user, regardless of ambient conditions or the user's sensory abilities;
5. Tolerance for error - the design minimises hazards and the adverse consequences of accidental or unintended actions;
6. Low physical effort - the design can be used efficiently and comfortably and with a minimum of fatigue;
7. Size and space for approach and use - appropriate size and space for approach, reach, manipulation, and use regardless of user's body size,

posture or mobility.

(Developed by the Centre for Universal Design, North Carolina State University, USA. [www.adaptenv.org/universal/default.asp](http://www.adaptenv.org/universal/default.asp).)

See *Design a Label: Guidelines on labelling for museums*, The Campaign for Museums, 1999, available from the Museums Association;

*Designing exhibitions to include People with Disabilities*, Gail Nolan, National Museum of Scotland, 1997;

*Everyone's Welcome: The Americans with Disabilities Act and Museums*, American Association of Museums, Washington DC, 1998.)  
USA [www.adaptenv.org/universal/default.asp](http://www.adaptenv.org/universal/default.asp)

## **8.2 Museum Exhibitions: Issues to Consider**

(Contributed by Helen Coxall)

Consider all potential audiences - people of different ages, abilities, gender, educational and cultural background will read an exhibition's subject matter and approach to interpretation differently. Interpretative materials should be both accessible and relevant to those audiences. Do not restrict the voice of the exhibition to that of the museum staff. Wherever possible involve outside contributors in exhibition planning from the outset, and make this involvement clear in the final exhibition.

Be clear about the aims of the exhibition from the outset. Ask what am I trying to communicate? Why and how am I doing it? Is it appropriate for the target audiences? What have I left out or avoided - and why? The title is important - it should indicate the exhibition's aims. The final display should orientate the audience to the exhibition in the context of its subject, purpose and layout.

Be aware that people have different abilities - a multi-sensory approach to interpretation avoids exclusivity. Use hierarchies of written and spoken information with differing levels of complexity. Employ methods of communication that rely on visual, auditory, experiential or human interactive approaches.

Provide spoken or written information in languages other than English and in alternative formats, e.g. large print, Braille, disk, Audio, British Sign Language, Sign Supported English, European or other languages where there are significant numbers of foreign visitors, or local community languages such as

Urdu or Mandarin.

Place information points at levels easily accessed by all, children, small adults, and people in wheelchairs. It is easier to look down to read than to look up.

When writing text be aware that everyday language is more accessible than academic prose, try to avoid the formal, impersonal academic register often used by specialists. Direct address to the reader, as if speaking, is more welcoming. Use features of conversational language including shorter sentences, familiar instead of technical terms. If these are needed, explain them, use personal pronouns – we and you, and use other context-sensitive words or phrases such as ‘this object’, ‘the display on your left’, which relate the viewer directly to the exhibition environment. Do not write according to readability formulas - they assess only language style not the meaning. Try your text on appropriate audience representatives - this is much more reliable.

Content and presentation of written information should self consciously acknowledge:

- That this is not the definitive version, because there is no such thing and that there are many other possible ways of dealing with the same topic;
- That the museum does not have all the answers;
- That knowledge is being superseded and updated all the time
- That the exhibition has been curated by real live people; give their names.

The importance of avoiding monocentric viewpoints to social and industrial history, ethnography and art is obvious, but it is relevant to all subjects - science, technology and maritime collections are not exceptions to this, consider whose version of science it is, perhaps just a western perspective? What about inventors and scientists other than European ones?

Continue to work closely with audience advocates - different community groups who can advise you on the accessibility of the exhibition to those they represent. Consider whether there are any gaps in the story resulting from a limited collection that may distort the overall message. Fill these gaps wherever possible and if that fails then acknowledge the bias. Go back to the original aims and ask, *Does this exhibition exclude anybody?* If it does, re-examine your approach.

***“Exhibitions are complex presentations that convey concepts, showcase***



***objects, and excite the senses. However, as museums recognise the diversity within their audiences, they realise that exhibitions must do much more: exhibitions must teach to different learning styles, respond to issues of cultural and gender equity, and offer multiple levels of information.***” (Smithsonian Museum Guidelines for Accessible Exhibition Design, 1998 p iii)

*Based on Effective Exhibitions, Guidelines for good practice (MGC, 1998)*  
urges every museum and gallery to:

- Have a written framework for exhibitions (permanent, temporary and touring). To include disabled people, it should be accessible at multiple intellectual levels and include the experiences of disabled people in content and presentation;
- Have an exhibition plan with long and short-term objectives. This plan must include consultation with users at various stages and should include a disability consultant, access audit and consultation with disabled visitors. (Smaller museums could use a local access group and local access guidelines. (See Gateshead’s *Designing to Enable and Use*, AMC access advice such as NEMS *Active Access*).
- Draw on a range of expertise for exhibition work. Accessible, inclusive exhibition design depends on the exhibition concept, and effective partnerships and teamwork, curators, design, marketing, visitor services, education staff and audience advocates should be involved from the outset;
- Define the purpose and target audiences of exhibitions, planning content and design to suit the audience. (See Practice 8.1).
- Ensure the safety of objects and visitors in exhibitions. Be aware of physical access guidelines and make sure that emergency egress requirements include the needs of disabled people;
- Ensure that information is accurate and takes account of different viewpoints. (See Practice 6).
- Maximise access and opportunities for learning, for people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds.
- Evaluate exhibitions - this should include front-end evaluation, formative and summative evaluation that includes access considerations for disabled visitors.



See:

*Design a Label: Guidelines on labelling for museums*, The Campaign for Museums, 1999 available from the Museums Association;

*Designing Exhibitions to include People with Disabilities*, Gail Nolan, National Museum of Scotland, 1997;

*Everyone's Welcome: The Americans with Disabilities Act and Museums*, American Association of Museums, Washington DC, 1998;

*Developing Museum Exhibitions for Lifelong Learning*, Gail Durbin (ed), The Stationery Office, 1996.

*Barrier Free Design*, James Holmes Seidle, Butterworth,

*Interactive*, Frazer Swift, Museum Practice 4, Issue 4, vol. 2 vol, 1997 p22-24

*Resource Fact sheet: Evaluation*, [www.resource.gov.uk](http://www.resource.gov.uk)

### 8.3 General Guidance on Interpretation Systems

(Contributed by Rebecca McGinnis).

A number of interpretative methods other than soundguides, labels and text panels may be employed in galleries. A range of communication methods will enable information to be provided in a flexible, dynamic manner and will allow people to choose the one most comfortable and appropriate to them.

#### Low-tech solutions include:

- Hand lists of key objects with label copy information in large print. These could be collected from the reception, soundguide desk or a dispenser. Lamination prolongs their life;
- Labels outside the cases, as 'bats' or laminated sheets, or on panels;
- Bookable personal guides who could read labels and describe objects to people with visual or learning disabilities.

#### Guided tours

- Plan to develop signed or sign language interpreted tours in partnership with deaf people to ensure that you are providing what is wanted. Extensive and targeted publicity is needed in order to spread the word amongst Deaf people and attract sufficient numbers. This often takes time to establish, so a short pilot series would be recommended rather than a one-off tour;

- Verbal description tours - audio description, describing objects and environments using evocative and interesting but relatively objective language, benefits blind and partially sighted people as well as many people with learning difficulties. Reminiscence can also be incorporated into this type of session. Such tours require trained guides and appropriate publicity. Note that BSL interpreted tours are required for Deaf people, but there are other Deaf people who use SSE, others who require lip-speakers, others who would appreciate portable induction loops, as available on some sound enhancement systems, and others who require volume control and no background noise. For lectures, conferences or seminars a palantypist may be required.

It is essential to undertake audience research and consult with local hearing-impaired and Deaf people and, take advice from RNID, or Deafworks, when setting up a programme for Deaf and hearing-impaired people. A minicom or access to Tynetalk will be required to communicate by phone. Pilot projects that facilitates feedback and evaluation are highly effective.

The contribution that a visually impaired person's perspective has for non-disabled people is also exemplified by the response to Willem Boshoff's *Blind Alphabet B*.

This was first shown in the UK at Birmingham City Museum and Art Gallery as part of the Africa '95 celebrations.

Boshoff is sighted but has created a *Blind Alphabet* series of works to be shown only when interpreted by guides who are blind and trained in his methodology for using touch and words to appreciate sculpture. This first showing generated so much interest and enthusiasm from both visually impaired and sighted visitors that an organisation 'Artsense' was developed, which went on to apply successfully for a Lottery award to further their work. Artsense has now purchased *Blind Alphabet C* to tour in the UK and Europe and has developed training for visually impaired people with an appropriate arts background to become gallery guides.(See Artsense p43).

### **Resources useful for developing provision for Deaf and hard of hearing people:**

*Opening Up!.. Access for deaf and hard of hearing people to arts, cultural and tourism venues*, Deafworks, Conference Report, 1999. (There is a very useful guide to creating access for Deaf and hard of hearing people to arts venues in this report.)

*Picture This* - a video which explores issues of access and the use and development of BSL in museums and galleries. Available from Whitechapel Art Gallery.

*Signing Science* - a video designed to introduce Deaf children to the excitement of science and filmed at the Techniquest Science Centre, Cardiff. Tel: Nathalie Caplet on 0117 982 2052 or Eric Albone, Clifton Scientific Trust on 0117 924 7664.

Contact RNID for information on technological support for Deaf and hard of hearing people and local contacts.

Contact BDA for Deaf issues and advice and local contacts.

For sign interpreters contact your local Deaf community and Council for the Advancement of Communication with Deaf People (CACDP) who hold a register of sign interpreters. Council for the Advancement of Communication with Deaf People (CACDP), Durham University Science Park, Block 4, Stockton Road, Durham DH1 3UZ.

Tel: 0191 383 1155 (voice & minicom) Fax: 0191 383 7914.

There are too few sign interpreters to meet demand, and substantial notice is usually required. Your local Deaf community will probably have preferred interpreters, but interpreters themselves also have specialisms.

### **Resources useful for developing provision for visually impaired people:**

*What Colour is the Wind: Insights into art and visual impairment*, Sue Blagden and John Everett, NSEAD, 1992 ISBN 0 904684 12 1.

*Vision in Art Education*, Jane Pearson, Richard Attenborough Centre, Department of Adult Education, University of Leicester, 1995.

Artsense: Angela Faulke, Secretary  
45 Blenheim Road  
Moseley  
Birmingham B13 9TY  
Tel: 0121 4497705

## **8.4 Auxiliary Aids**

There is an enormous range of possible auxiliary aids that a museum or gallery may be expected to offer to improve access. (For examples of what

would be expected under the DDA, see Principles 3). Many aids do not have significant resource implications but rather mean a change of attitude or doing things in a different way. For example changing the house style for information provision or providing different layers of information. For aids that do have significant resource implications, planning and prioritising will be dependent on particular circumstances and the values and priorities of the institution. When refurbishing areas of the museum and changing furniture, fixtures and fittings in, for example, exhibition galleries, education spaces, shops and cafes, consult with disabled people, get advice from local Independent Living Centres, ask your disability consultant, research other local providers. There is an increasing number of products based on Universal or Inclusive design principles.

There is a range of sound enhancement systems available today - induction loops (fixed and portable), infra-red for lecture theatres and portable radio systems. Museums and galleries must take advice and use a consultant, such as Deafworks, RNID or a local service for Deaf people. Portable radio systems can have an induction loop option, have volume control and one, two or three channel options. With additional microphones these extra channels can provide audio-description, different levels of interpretation or simultaneous translation into other languages. The Sennheiser system (used by the British Museum and Barbican Art Gallery) is expensive, but has proved popular and reliable.

Hand-held wands and portable CD-ROM guides have become increasingly popular in larger museums and galleries. Whatever system is used it should have tactile controls and allow for various levels of interpretation. There is also the advantage of random access, but this does require clear numbering of objects. The number or symbol used is often too small. These guide systems can easily be used to provide audio-description and orientation advice (see Practice 6.4). It is important to consult with other museums and galleries and users.

Magnifying glasses, which can be extremely useful if available for loan, need to be chosen with care. Their size and focal length are important if they are to be of use in galleries. Combined Optical Industries Limited have produced a postcard size magnifying glass with handle and magnification of 1.5. This is of sufficient focal length to make it useful for viewing objects in cases or on walls, as well as labels.

The 'Khaled Alvi' Exhibition at the Diorama Arts Centre in London in September 1999 demonstrated a range of auxiliary aids and services: an audible wayfinding system, information on computer for independent access for deaf/blind people, CCTV with a split screen to view both picture and text

and to view and magnify text and pictures, audio description and guide communicators for deaf/blind visitors. Information was in large print, Braille and on tape. CCTV is also a method of providing alternative access when there is a physical barrier for people with mobility impairments. Contact the RNIB for information.

REMAP, a national voluntary organisation with local groups of people with a variety of engineering and electronics skills, will develop high-tech and low-tech aids for disabled people. Contact JJ Wright, National Organiser, Hazeldene, Igtham, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN15 9AD. Tel: 01732 883818.

## **8.5 New Technologies**

Information and communication technologies (ICT) are widely used within the disabled community. Such media can either be inclusive and empowering or excluding and alienating. The speed of change in this field is rapid, therefore it is imperative that museums take up-to-date advice from the specialist sources, and consult with potential and actual users.

### **a) Checklist for the Use of ICT in Museums**

(Contributed by Monika Kreeel)

#### **Electronic media**

Multimedia technology offers the opportunity to make information and entertainment available to people in the format which best suits their needs. Websites, videos, CD-ROMS and DVDs contain information in the form of text, pictures, graphics, sounds and speech. For an inclusive multimedia experience, these different elements should be used in conjunction to reinforce meaning. For a truly confusing experience, the different elements work against each other, simultaneously conveying different information. This can often exclude people who are relying on fewer elements because of their disability.

On-screen text should be as clear as possible. This can be achieved by ensuring that the font size is large enough to appear as large print from the distance at which the screen will be viewed. Text should appear on a background that offers a good colour contrast with the letters. A lively background can make text harder to see. Simple, rather than elaborate fonts are also generally easier to read.

Any on-screen text that is not vocalised will exclude people who are unable to see or read. As an alternative, speech labels can be recorded onto the medium or synthesised using text-to-speech software. There is also the low-tech option, whereby text can be read out by a guide.

### **Audio description**

This is an additional narration that conveys the look and context of images. With moving pictures on a video or DVD, it can be fitted in between the natural dialogue to convey body language, actions, scenery or facial expressions. On a website or CD-ROM it can be used to describe pictures or graphics. Audio description is generally pre-recorded, but can also be delivered as a live commentary.

### **Audio information**

Continuing with the multimedia approach, it is also desirable to support audio information with subtitles, captions or BSL as appropriate. Audio information should stand out above any background music or sound.

### **Layers of information**

Digital media has the advantage of a huge storage capacity. More information can be included, giving the designer the chance to provide something for everyone. For example, websites can provide information for people with a range of reading abilities, in different languages, at different academic levels, or as text only. DVDs can have different soundtracks recorded with and without audio description, or in different languages.

### **Standardisation of technology**

Personal computers have had a dramatic effect on the lives of many disabled people, giving them independent access to information. This is often achieved through hardware and software known as access technology. Examples of this are Braille displays, text-to-speech converters (synthetic speech) or hands-free systems for operating keyboards. It is always worth getting specialist advice about new IT systems or equipment installed in the museum to ensure that it has standard interfaces which will work with access technology.

### **Website design**

A well-designed website will make its content available to all users, whatever hardware or software they are using to browse. This has relevance to disabled people using access software, and to a wider audience who may be using a mobile phone or a voice browser. Design issues are also important, such as colour contrast, text size and style, clarity of audio clips and a clear, logical layout. Standards for accessible websites have now been laid down, and there are easily available guidelines on web design. It is also possible to get websites checked over the net, to ensure that they meet accessibility standards.

### **Being comfortable**

TV and computer areas need to be conducive to watching and listening.

Lighting which flickers or causes glare on the screen makes it harder to see the screen or to concentrate. The screen should not be behind another layer of glass. Background noise makes the audio coming from the computer or TV harder to follow. As well as good acoustics in the room, hearing loops plugged directly into televisions can improve things for hard-of-hearing people who use hearing aids. Physical issues such as seating, the height of the display and the ergonomics of any controls that visitors are likely to use should also be considered in the design of multimedia areas.

### **Further information**

(Compiled by Monica Kreeel)

British Educational Communications and Technology Agency (BECTA)  
[www.becta.org.uk](http://www.becta.org.uk)

RNIB ([www.rnib.org.uk](http://www.rnib.org.uk) - audio description, web design and clear print).

Web Accessibility Initiative ([www.w3.org/WAI/](http://www.w3.org/WAI/) - accessible websites).

Bobby ([www.cast.org/bobby/](http://www.cast.org/bobby/) - accessible websites).

Deaf Broadcasting Council (on-screen subtitling and signing - contact through the RNID).

RNID ([www.rnid.org.uk/](http://www.rnid.org.uk/)).

British Deaf Association ([www.bda.org.uk/](http://www.bda.org.uk/) - BSL).

COTIS, Confederation of Tape Information Services, 67 High St, Tarporley, Cheshire CW6 ODP. Tel: 01829 733351.

Ability Net ([www.abilitynet.co.uk](http://www.abilitynet.co.uk) - access technology for computers).

The Sensory Disabilities Research Unit at the University of Hertfordshire, under Professor Helen Petrie, is looking at the use of virtual reality and Internet access for people with sensory disabilities. Tel: 01707 284 629, Fax 01707 285 059, website: [www.psy.herts.ac.uk/sdru/](http://www.psy.herts.ac.uk/sdru/).

### **b) Website Accessibility**

The Internet is increasingly being used as a way of making information about museums and their collections accessible and as a means of engaging new audiences. Disabled people are particularly empowered by this medium as it is possible to personally adapt both the hardware and software interfaces to meet



an individual's needs. However disabled people can also easily be excluded from this medium of communication without appropriate guidance and advice.

For example: visually impaired people can use a range of keyboards or other tactile interfaces, and use software to translate text to speech; but such software cannot deal with graphical elements, if those remain they are excluded. It is now possible for Deaf users of sign language to access sign interpretation through video links or web cameras.

See: Andrew Downs new site for those who want to make their sites accessible but find the W3C's Web Accessibility Initiative's (WAI) guidelines and checkpoints daunting. He provides easy-start alternatives for accessible design, useful overviews on topics such as the DDA and references.  
[www.llemon.demon.co.uk/content/4226cw/w3access.htm](http://www.llemon.demon.co.uk/content/4226cw/w3access.htm).

Accessible web design 'EtCetera', No 47.

The Reviel Project: Brophy and Craven, 1999, The Integrated Accessible Library, British Library LIC Report no 168, ISBN 0 9535343. Project description and a resources page on the web at [www.mmu.ac.uk/h-ss/cerlim/projects/reviel.htm](http://www.mmu.ac.uk/h-ss/cerlim/projects/reviel.htm).

Disability In Higher Education, the clearing house for information technology for accessibility in higher education [www.disinhe.ac.uk](http://www.disinhe.ac.uk).

Resource Fact sheet *Creating Accessible Websites*, at [www.resource.gov.uk](http://www.resource.gov.uk)



## 9. THE EDUCATIONAL ROLE OF THE MUSEUM AND INCLUSION

### 9.1 General Guidance

Education and learning are core activities of museums and a growing emphasis is being placed on a planned and proactive approach: ***“They can support cultural literacy for individuals and cultural development for communities.”*** (A Common Wealth, Anderson, 1999: 2.) Educational policies should explicitly refer to disabled adults and children and pupils with special educational needs.(see 9.2).

Lifelong Learning can be used as part of a strategy to challenge the social and cultural exclusion experienced by so many disabled people. Museums have much to offer and much to gain from the inclusion of disabled people, and from their history and culture.

The Government has recently announced that it plans to extend the DDA to apply to the education sector in response to the recommendations of the Disability Rights Task Force’s (DRTF) Report, *From Exclusion to Inclusion*, DfEE, December 1999. Already there is a generation of disabled schoolchildren who have been educated alongside their non-disabled peers who have expectations, together with their families and friends, of continuing and full rights of access to what society offers. Museums and galleries will exclude many of their future visitors if barriers to access remain. The further and higher education sectors also have increasing numbers of disabled students included on mainstream courses. This process will be accelerated by the application of the DDA to schools, colleges and universities and will further increase the expectations of current and future audiences and staff for all museums and galleries.

Ever since The Education Act of 1981, there has been an increasing move towards inclusive education in mainstream schools for disabled children. This means that the number of visiting school groups, both from special schools and mainstream schools, whose classes include a disabled pupil, is increasing. The revised Curriculum 2000 has an even stronger emphasis on inclusion and the provision of appropriate learning activities. This, alongside the extension of the DDA to schools, means that museums and galleries need to seriously consider the issues involved in including disabled children.

Thinking inclusively about museum and gallery education requires attention to the following points; it is easy to make the wrong assumptions about the ‘average’ visitor or staff member, as well as about disabled people.

**What we all need to learn effectively:**

- To be comfortable, safe and secure (See Maslow's Theory of Motivation, in *Developing Exhibitions for Lifelong Learning*, Gail Durbin (Ed) p.27).
- Motivation - importance of relevance and/or meaning, building on previous and known experience (see G. Hein, *Learning in the Museum*, p.34-36).
- We all have different styles of learning and need a variety of methods of engagement (see Gardner's *Theory of Multiple Intelligences* in, Hein: p134-136).
- Multi-sensory, active, and participatory learning is usually the most successful and visual clues are important.
- Small steps or chunks - the human brain can only absorb seven (or two new) pieces of information at one time.
- Appropriate pace.
- Repetition and reinforcement.
- Success and appropriate challenge for the future.

Disabled people represent all levels of intellectual interest and age; they are part of every audience. It is now estimated that on average 21% of children will have a special educational need at some point in their school life, and one in eight adults are disabled. There are also increasing numbers of disabled students participating in mainstream courses. One in four families includes a disabled member. Developing family provision in museums should also take account of this. Families may include parents or other adult relatives who are disabled, and children with a range of visible and invisible impairments.

Research and scholarship in museums and galleries can promote and include disabled peoples' histories and cultures. Disability Studies is a recognised academic discipline. Collections can be researched, exhibited, supplemented and interpreted to include disability issues or the experience of disability. Just as womens' histories and issues have found a place in the academic research of collections, and excluded histories are taking their place in museum ethnography, so too must the histories and issues of disabled people. However, disabled people themselves must lead this process, and museums need to address the access issues for disabled people who wish to engage in research and curatorial activities.

Disabled people can be included when employing staff for interpretative activities, as visual and performance artists, lecturers, teachers, gallery guides and volunteers. (See the work of Artsense: Principles 3.1).

Lifelong Learning opportunities include a multitude of learning needs from the youngest to the oldest in our society. The youngest may include children with disabilities and it may be appropriate to provide, for example, sign interpretation for young Deaf users or enhanced tactile opportunities for visually impaired children. However, the demographic changes and the increase in impairment with age means that older audiences will increasingly include people who may not define themselves as being disabled, but will be disabled and excluded unless museums and galleries adopt more inclusive practice. 'Grey power' is recognised in the commercial, tourism and wider leisure sectors, and is beginning to be addressed in the arts sector.

Museum and gallery education staff need appropriate training for this work and should consult with disabled adults, children and their advocates or teachers, relevant disability organisations and education bodies. These include Skill, the National Bureau for Disabled Students, the various special education organisations and the DfEE website. Most disabled pupils or adults will prefer integrated and independent access to events, programmes etc, but some individuals, schools, colleges and special interest adult groups may require specialist targeted provision.

There will be a teacher identified in each school as a Special Educational Needs co-ordinator, (SENCO). Groups will also have enablers, carers, Special Needs Assistants (SNAs) or parents involved in museum or gallery visits. Targeted training days for them to introduce facilities and programmes being offered can be very useful, in the same way as INSET provision is offered to teachers.

Booking staff also require training and support to be able to provide accurate access information and details regarding auxiliary aids and services, and they need to ask for any particular access requirements. Arrangements for meeting groups needs careful consideration. Training for front of house staff is also essential.

## **Resources**

*What Colour is the Wind: Insights into art and visual impairment*, Sue Blagden and John Everett, NSEAD, 1992 ISBN 0 904684 12 1.

*Vision in Art Education*, Jane Pearson, Richard Attenborough Centre, Department of Adult Education, University of Leicester, 1995.

Deafworks, *Opening Up!..* Access for deaf and hard of hearing people to arts, cultural and tourism venues, Deafworks (Conference Report), 1999. (There is a very useful guide to creating access for Deaf and hard of hearing people to arts venues in this report).

*Picture This Video*, explores issues of access and the use and development of BSL in museums and galleries. Available from the Whit Chapel Art Gallery.

Video, *Signing Science*, designed to introduce Deaf children to the excitement of science and filmed at the Techniquest Science Centre, Cardiff. Tel Nathalie Caplet on 0117 982 2052 or Eric Albone, Clifton Scientific Trust on 0117 924 7664.

*Access in Mind: Towards the Inclusive Museum*, Rayner, A, INTACT, 1998, NMS.

*Images of Possibility: Creating learning opportunities for adults with mental health difficulties*, Wertheimer, A, NIACE, 1997, ISBN 1 86201 032 3.

*Changing days: Developing new opportunities with people who have learning difficulties*, Wertheimer, A (Ed), Kings Fund Publishing 1996, ISBN 1 85717 106 3.

*Person to Person: Establishing contact and communication with people with profound learning disabilities and extra special needs*, Caldwell P with Stevens P, Pavilion Publishing, 1998, ISBN 1 900600 43 9.

*Student Voices: The views of further education students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities*, FEFC/SKILL, SCPR, 1996.

*Developing Exhibitions for lifelong learning*; G.Durbin (eo), HMSO, 1996.

*A Common Wealth*, D.Anderson, HMSO, 1999.

*Learning in the Museum*, G.Hein, Routledge, 1998.

*Crossing the Line: Extending young people's access to cultural venues*, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, 1999, ISBN 0 903319 91 8.

*Sharing the Wisdom of Age: Museums and Older People*, MAGDA and Age Concern ISBN 0-86242-206-X, 1996.

*The Arts and Older People: A practical Introduction*, Frances F, Age Concern

England, 1999 ISBN 0 86242 222 1.

*Building Bridges*, Dodd, J and Sandell, R, MGC, 1998.

*Developing Exhibitions for Lifelong Learning*, Durbin, G (ed) HMSO for GEM, 1996.

*In Through The Front Door, Disabled People and the Visual Arts: Examples of Good Practice*, Earnscliffe, J, The Arts Council of Great Britain, 1992.

*Evaluation*, Resource fact sheet at [www.resource.gov.uk](http://www.resource.gov.uk).

*Post 16 Learning*, Resource fact sheet at [www.resource.gov.uk](http://www.resource.gov.uk)

## 9.2 The Statutory Education Sector and Special Educational Needs

(Note: this section uses the language of the statutory education sector and does not reflect the social model of disability)

It is now estimated that 21% of children will have Special Educational Needs (SEN) at some point in their school career that arise from a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made. Since the Education Reform Act 1988, which introduced the National Curriculum, all children, whether they have SEN or not, have had an entitlement to that curriculum. The revised National Curriculum from August 2000 has a stronger emphasis on inclusion and providing effective learning opportunities for all pupils.

The three key principles are:

- Setting suitable learning challenges;
- Responding to pupils' diverse needs;
- Overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals.

Museums and galleries need to respond by offering a variety of activities with differentiated learning outcomes, that meet a range of different learning styles and address the potential barriers.

## Some possible barriers to learning in Museums and suggested solutions

### Barriers may occur through an impairment in:

### Suggested Solutions:

|                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| 1. Confidence         | Welcome/to do plan/accessible plans and information    |
| 2. Concentration      | Variety of activities                                  |
| 3. Behaviour          | Firm but flexible guidelines                           |
| 4. Comprehension      | Plain English  |
| 5. Literacy           | Visual prompts/clues                                   |
| 6. Speech             | Alternative/augmentative communication                 |
| 7. Vision             | Tactile/auditory input                                 |
| 8. Hearing            | Visual input/BSL/SSE/lipspeaking/induction loops/print |
| 9. Mobility           | Awareness of barriers and different energy levels      |
| 10. Speed of response | Patience, change of pace                               |
| 11. Memory            | Repeat/reinforce                                       |
| 12. Reasoning skills  | Small steps, prompt, clues                             |

The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) actively promotes equal opportunities for all learners in all aspects of their work. Museums and galleries should review their intended learning outcomes for different curriculum areas, ensure there are opportunities for continuity and progression and a recognition of different levels of achievement. Consultation with schools and teachers and evaluation of education programmes will be crucial to this process. With the proposed application of the DDA to schools, museums and galleries will have to provide opportunities for all pupils.

A learning difficulty can result from cognitive, physical and sensory impairments, a medical or health issue, emotional and behavioural difficulties

or social and economic disadvantage.

The Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs (1994) identifies eight areas of difficulty and includes speech and language difficulties, such as dyslexia.

1. Learning difficulties which can also include one or more of the following.
2. Specific learning difficulties - such as dyslexia.
3. Emotional and behavioural difficulties.
4. Physical disabilities.
5. Sensory impairment - hearing difficulties.
6. Sensory impairment - visual difficulties.
7. Speech and language difficulties.
8. Medical conditions.

(This is included for information purposes and reflects the language and approach of the statutory education sector rather than the Social Model of disability).

The term Special Educational Needs was introduced in the Education Act of 1981, and used in subsequent Education Acts (1993, 1996). This term is often shortened to 'special needs'. Disabled people now find this term unacceptable, although in its time it was a major step forward from the term 'educationally sub-normal'. Special Educational Needs is the term applied to all children identified as having significantly greater difficulty in learning than their peers and who require support and special provision. For those with the greatest difficulties (estimated at 2% in 1981, now 3%) a statementing process was introduced in the 1981 Act, and refined in subsequent legislation.

(See *From Exclusion to Inclusion, Report of the Disability Rights Task Force*, DfEE, December 1999. p. 45). A Statement is a multi-disciplinary assessment of the child that identifies the support required and the type of school - the Special Educational Provision. There are now, on average, 3% of children with statements, many of them educated in mainstream schools.

The number of special schools is continuing to decline. Since 1978, a quarter of special schools have closed, with 1,200 remaining. There is a continuing campaign to promote and implement inclusive education.

A SEN action plan was implemented in 1998 (see *Meeting Special Educational Needs: A programme of action*, DfEE, November 1998) with targeted funding. The Action Plan promotes inclusive education and projects to raise the achievements of children with emotional and behavioural difficulties, and develop the knowledge and skills of staff working with children with SEN.



## Resources

*Altogether Better* (from 'Special Needs' to Equality in education), Micheline Mason and Richard Rieser, published by Comic Relief. ISBN 1 85324 919 X). This pack includes an excellent training video and booklet that explains and promotes inclusive education.

*Children First: A Guide to the needs of Disabled Children in School*, by Judith Male for RADAR 1997, ISBN 0 900270 09 8.

The RNIB publishes Curriculum support materials and can offer advice for visually impaired and blind children.

DfEE website: [www.dfes.gov.uk](http://www.dfes.gov.uk) and Disability Now website [www.disabilitynow.org.uk](http://www.disabilitynow.org.uk).

National Association for Special Educational Needs (NASEN)  
[www.nasen.org.uk](http://www.nasen.org.uk)

## 9.3 The Extension of the DDA to Education

A new Disability in Education Bill will extend The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) to the education sector as well as provide further measures on special educational needs by 2001.

This new legislation is intended to ensure that:

- Schools and local education authorities plan strategically and make progress in increasing accessibility for disabled pupils to school premises and the curriculum;
- New rights for disabled pupils ensure that they are treated fairly by schools and LEAs;
- Schools make reasonable adjustments to their policies, practices and procedures where they disadvantage disabled children;
- New rights to improve access to further, higher and adult education are backed by a statutory Code of Practice explaining the new rights and duties.

This will have an impact on museums and galleries. Schools will have to plan more strategically to improve disabled pupils' access to their buildings and curriculum, and make reasonable adjustments where necessary. ***"Schools will no longer be able to exclude disabled children from school trips"*** (TES, 17.12.99. p16). This may increase the already significant number of



mainstream school groups that include a number of disabled pupils, but could also mean that mainstream schools who have a child with particular access requirements may not visit if the museum or gallery cannot meet their needs.

#### 9.4 Post-school Education Provision

The Further and Higher education sectors already include disabled students in mainstream classes, and the application of the DDA to these sectors will further increase numbers. These students may require auxiliary aids and services, such as sign interpretation, large print text, tactile diagrams or plans and audio information.

In further education there is already well-developed specialist provision for students with a range of learning disabilities or difficulties. *Learning to Succeed: A framework for post-16 learning* DFEE, 1999 is clearly intended to challenge exclusion and promote **“equal opportunity in the mainstream of provision”**. Museums and galleries will need to work with their Local Skills and Learning Councils. There are existing models for sustainable and long-term partnerships with specialist courses in Further Education, for example, the British Museum Coins and Medals Department/Barnet College partnership for mental health survivors.

(See ‘Feedback’, *Museums Journal* October 1999;  
*Resource fact sheet Post 16 Learning* at [www.resource.gov.uk](http://www.resource.gov.uk)).

#### 9.5 New Technologies

There are ongoing developments in hardware, software and peripherals in the education sector for disabled children and adults that are relevant to museums and galleries. SEMERC and ABILITYNET are useful contacts, as are local education providers (see Practice 8.6). Special schools are making effective use of the Web and there are regular reports in the educational press.

see ‘Resources for Everyone’, *TES Online*, 10 March 2000, p22  
The Internet and Special Schools at [www.sed.kcl.ac.uk/special/](http://www.sed.kcl.ac.uk/special/) and The British Educational Communications and Technology Agency (BECTA) at [www.becta.org.uk](http://www.becta.org.uk).  
[www.disinhe.co.uk](http://www.disinhe.co.uk), Disability in Higher Education IT accessibility.

## 10. FUNDING

### 10.1 General Information

***“I think it is important to break the monetary equation, disability is not necessarily an expensive issue...spending to make places accessible is not a charity for a small number but a benefit for all...providing for disability can make the difference between a successful or unsuccessful funding application.”*** (Jennie Lloyd, Drawbridge Group).

Funding today for all museums and galleries is more diverse than in the past, and the competition for sponsorship is steadily increasing within the arts sector. Government, private and corporate sponsors, as well as foundations and trusts are increasingly setting funding criteria that demand attention to the inclusion of disabled people.

Lottery funding now has a major role in funding the arts sector and has further focused attention on the inclusion of disabled people. The Arts Council Lottery Fund led the way, followed by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), in setting funding criteria that includes access issues. The HLF Museums and Galleries Access Fund (MGAF) has a specific brief to support galleries that ***“are developing innovative, exciting and imaginative approaches in making their collections accessible to the widest possible audience”*** (HLF website: [www.hlf.org.uk](http://www.hlf.org.uk)).

Most sources of funding require a clear identification of objectives that take into account disability and disadvantage issues addressed within the context of an institution’s mission and strategic plan, with strategies for monitoring, review and evaluation.

***“By embracing social inclusion as a policy, museums and galleries can synchronise with the political mood and find their pool of funding options widening.”***

(*‘Embrace the socially excluded’*, Museums Journal, July 1999, p 14).

Within local authorities, Best Value now provides the benchmarking for continued funding support. Best Value ***“is about addressing and meeting the needs of diverse communities, and this requires an awareness of diversity and equality of opportunity”*** (From *Exclusion to Inclusion*, DRTF, DfEE December 1999, p182). From April 2000 all local authorities are required to consult local people, review all services periodically, measure performance against set standards and publish an annual performance plan outlining achievements and setting future targets.

Consultation with disabled people is an essential part of the funding application process, however museums must guard against tokenism and ensure that getting money for disability provision does not follow the charity model.

Disabled people have to be true partners in the process, their advice listened to and acted upon. This allows museums to be in the vanguard of challenging social exclusion. Advocacy for museums and galleries and the support of stakeholders has never been more important. Disabled people can be powerful allies in promoting, preserving and developing museum and gallery services, provided they are recognised as stakeholders and included as advocates in the first place.

Targeted audience development that includes local disabled communities must be needs-led by consultation with disabled people themselves or organisations of disabled people. Disabled people are always seeking new leisure, education and vocational opportunities. Museums can provide unique, cost-effective and relevant services (in partnerships with local businesses and other organisations in the education, social services or voluntary sectors) which are unavailable elsewhere if they address the inclusion of disabled people.

In museums and galleries, as elsewhere, partnerships are often a criterion for funding. Local groups of disabled people, the voluntary and education sector (schools and further/higher/adult education establishments), social services and leisure agencies are all potential partners. Museums and galleries may well find there is a project that these local agencies have in mind that they can contribute to. Because of ongoing cuts in services many disabled adults living in the community have very limited options for leisure and education.

Funding is time-consuming and hard work, and deadlines are often tight. However, changes are planned in simplifying application procedures for Lottery funding as well as the development of new resources for social exclusion and education projects. It is important that museums and galleries keep up-to-date with what is going on, by checking the Resource, DCMS and DfEE websites in particular.

Local authorities, many public and corporate bodies as well as several museums and galleries are members of the Employers' Forum on Disability. The Forum can provide new networking opportunities with actual or potential sponsors.

## 10.2 Practical Tips for Funding Applications

Funders want a project description, costs and outcomes - packaged in appropriate ways, which relate to their own guidelines, procedures and rules.

Museums and galleries should ensure:

- That good quality systems are in place: be clear about what is intended and how it will be measured, in other words have clear aims and objectives.
- That outputs are clearly identified; that all proposals have a demonstrable output and evaluative procedures built in.
- That progression and sustainability are considered. Applicants must know what they are aiming to achieve during the funding period, know the field they are working in, and have thought through the consequences of the grant coming to an end, developing an 'exit' strategy and longer term plans.
- Include advocacy and partnerships for their proposal whenever possible. These should involve disabled people, both as part of any core as well as target group;
- That they provide effective follow-up; evaluation and reporting back to the funder.

## 10.3 Best Value and other changes in Local Government Structures

***“Within six years every local authority museum, and most independent ones, will have come under the best value microscope.”*** (*‘Good, better, BEST’, Museums Journal, August 1999*)

Museums should research what local services are available to meet the education and leisure needs of their local disabled community. There are always major gaps in opportunities for disabled people, both adults and children, and filling those gaps effectively can help ensure a positive outcome under the Best Value regime. For example, weekend, school holiday and after-school activities that include disabled children or those with other Special Educational Needs. There may be specific sources of funding available (see: the Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education (CSIE) leaflet explaining the different sources of funding for inclusion, *‘Money for Inclusion’*. CSIE, 1 Redland Close, Elm Lane, Redland, Bristol BS6 6UE, Tel: 0117 923 8450). Community care providers of both adult day services and independent and supported living units will often have groups of residents looking for appropriate daytime educational or leisure opportunities. Supported housing

providers will often have funds from care packages to support relevant services for their residents and many local authority day services are looking for peripatetic opportunities for their users. Consultation with your local disabled community, community groups and local education providers can help the museum to provide cost-effective and relevant services which benefit the community. The new local authority Scrutiny processes also offer opportunities for museums and galleries to raise their profile within their community and campaign with their partners for improved local authority support. Museums should check when Scrutiny meetings, under Best Value, are planned and what their particular focus is.

### **Best Value**

- Best Value is a duty to deliver services to clear standards, covering both cost and quality, by the most economic and efficient means available; in the case of museums, individual councils will determine these standards;
- All council services are to be reviewed within five years;
- Reviews to be based on the 4 Cs - challenge purpose, compare performance, consult the community and compete with others;
- No service is ever good enough - continuous improvement is key to Best Value;
- The Audit Commission Best Value Inspectorate will monitor all Best Value work. It can recommend the Government send in a hit squad of external advisers if a service is failing.

*Best Value Basics*, Museums Journal, August 1999, p.43)

## **10.4 Funding Sources**

Lottery funding plays a major role in the arts sector. Both the Arts Council and Heritage Lottery Funds have special funds to increase access and participation in the arts and both are about to be subjected to a new review of their social exclusion criteria. The HLF Museums and Galleries Access fund has a specific brief to support “developing innovative, exciting and imaginative approach in making collections accessible to the widest possible audience.”

### **a) The Lottery**

Arts Council of England 0207 312 0123

Heritage Lottery Fund 0345 649649 [www.hlf.org.uk](http://www.hlf.org.uk)

Millennium Commission - contact Regional Advisors below.

National Lottery Charities Board Regional Offices:

|               |                |
|---------------|----------------|
| North West    | 01925 231 241  |
| North East    | 0191 255 1100  |
| East Midlands | 0115 934 9300  |
| Eastern       | 01223 449 0001 |
| West Midlands | 0121 200 3500  |
| South West    | 01392 849 7001 |
| South East    | 01483 568 764  |
| London        | 020 7292 8526  |

New Opportunities Fund

Dacre House

19 Dacre Street

London SW1H 0DH

Tel: 020 7222 3084

Fax: 020 7222 3085

Email: [new.opportunities.fund@dial.pipex-com](mailto:new.opportunities.fund@dial.pipex-com)

Check for current funding priorities at [www.nof.org.uk](http://www.nof.org.uk)

### **b) Other UK Sources**

Museums should refer to their Area Museum Councils, Regional Arts Boards and Arts & Business Offices for regional advice. (see also 11.16).

The Arts Councils of England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland are responsible for disseminating Government funds to the arts, media and crafts in the UK; some of these are available for museums and galleries. The Arts Council of England's website provides contact details for the other national Arts Councils and gives an overview of the UK funding scene. Arts & Business (formerly ABSA) are a valuable source of information and advice for museums. Their website has information on sponsorship seminars, their Board Bank, the Pairing Scheme and Creative and Development Fora. The Charities Aid Foundation and the Directory of Social Change both have extensive lists of publications on fundraising and charity management, and are sources of information on funding from UK charitable trusts. (See: Bibliography.16).

## Resources for Fundraising Online

Charitable giving over the Internet is still in its infancy, but with recent developments in e-commerce people are becoming more ready to donate online. The NDAF suggests that help and advice on how to use the Internet to raise money can be obtained from the following website:

[www.nonprofits.org/npofaq/misc/990804olfr.html](http://www.nonprofits.org/npofaq/misc/990804olfr.html). For a good overview of the different ways organisations can use websites to collect donations see [www.idealists.org/beth.html](http://www.idealists.org/beth.html).

### c) European Sources

EUCLID is appointed by the European Commission as the official UK Cultural Contact Point and is working to provide a broad range of European and international information services for the UK and also for other member countries of the European Union (see [www.euclid.co.uk](http://www.euclid.co.uk) for information on their services).

***“Part of our remit is to assist organisations in the arts, museums and heritage sectors to develop partnerships with colleagues in other countries - both for possible applications for European funding but also simply in order to develop links in other countries. To assist organisations in the UK, we are working to build up lists and databases of key contacts in the other European countries, which will be added to our website. As a first step, we are compiling a list of key agencies and similar organisations in the UK for inclusion on our website, with their email and website addresses.***

***Future plans include the translation of our website into several European languages, and the possible development of searchable online databases of specific individual museums, and arts and heritage organisations - where these do not already exist.”***

Geoffrey Brown, Director EUCLID

### Culture 2000

This is a new funding programme from the DGX of the European Commission and has replaced the Kaleidoscope, Raphael and Ariane programmes. Details are available directly from the DGX website but it may be easier and quicker to go to the excellent Euclid site at [www.euclid.co.uk/panfund/panfund1.html](http://www.euclid.co.uk/panfund/panfund1.html) for a summary of what to expect.

The National Disability Arts Forum (NDAF) suggests that applicants, when applying for European funding or looking for partners, may find the following databases useful: the European Database of disability arts organisations on NDAF's website [www.ndaf.org](http://www.ndaf.org), or the Yahoo 'European Partners in Culture Club' [www.clubs.yahoo.com/clubs/europeanpartnersinculture](http://www.clubs.yahoo.com/clubs/europeanpartnersinculture).

### **1 General disability equality**

#### 1.1 Disability Arts issues

### **2 DDA**

### **3 Universal Design**

### **4 Employment - general**

#### 4.1 Volunteers

### **5 Museums - general**

### **6 Cultural Diversity in museums and galleries**

### **7 DCMS**

### **8 Customer care**

### **9 Training**

### **10 Information provision**

#### 10.1 alternative formats

#### 10.2 tactile diagrams, pictures, models

### **11 Marketing**

### **12 Education/audience development**

### **13 Exhibitions**

### **14 New Technologies**

### **15 Buildings**

### **16 Funding**

### **17 Selected organisations, resources and contacts by impairment or age**

#### 17.1 General

#### 17.2 Children

#### 17.3 Mobility impairments

#### 17.4 Deaf/Blind



- 17.5 Hearing impairment
- 17.6 Mental Health Service Users
- 17.7 Learning difficulties
- 17.8 Older people

## **18 Web sites**

- 18.1 Disability general
- 18.2 Regional sites
- 18.3 Educational sites
- 18.4 Arts sites
- 18.5 ICT sites
- 18.6 Buildings/Access sites

## **19 Feedback Form**

# **1. General disability equality**

## **Disability Organisations**

There are many local, regional and national organisations of disabled people. Some organisations represent specific impairment groups or particular interests, others more general interests.

British Council of Disabled People  
Litchurch Plaza  
Litchurch Lane  
Derby  
DE24 8AA

Telephone: 01332 295551

Fax: 01332 295580

Minicom: 01332 295581

Email: [general@bcodp.org.uk](mailto:general@bcodp.org.uk)

Website: [www.bcodp.org.uk](http://www.bcodp.org.uk)

RADAR - Royal Association for  
Disability and Rehabilitation  
12 City Forum  
250 City Road  
London  
EC1V 8AF

Tel: 0207 250 3222

Fax: 0207 250 0212,

Minicom: 0207 250 4119

Email: <http://www.radar.org.uk>

Disability Wales

Llys Ifor

Crescent Rd

Caerphilly

CF83 1XL

Tel: 01222 887325

Fax: 01222 888702

Minicom: 01222 887325

Email: [info@dwac.demon.uk](mailto:info@dwac.demon.uk)

Disability Scotland  
Princes House  
5 Shandwick Place  
Edinburgh  
EH1 2BE  
Tel: 01312 298632  
Email:  
[enquiries@disabilityscotland.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@disabilityscotland.org.uk)

National Disability Arts Forum UK  
Mea House  
Ellison Place  
Newcastle upon Tyne  
NE1 8XS  
Tel/Minicom +44 (0)191 2611628  
Fax +44 (0)191 2220573  
Email [ndaf@ndaf.org](mailto:ndaf@ndaf.org)  
Website: [www.ndaf.org](http://www.ndaf.org)

Disability Action for Northern Ireland  
2 Annadale Avenue,  
Belfast  
BT7 3JH  
Tel: 01232 491011

The SHAPE Network was a federation of independent arts organisations working to increase access to the arts for excluded communities. It has now disbanded but some of the individual organisations that made up the network continue to exist.

Contact:

Anna Thornhill  
ITHACA  
Unit 1, St John Fisher School  
Sandy Lane West  
Oxford  
OX4 5LD  
Tel: 01865 714652

The Disability Now website ([www.disabilitynow.org.uk](http://www.disabilitynow.org.uk)) has a link page that contains a useful regional list of general disability organisations. There are also lists of links by subjects such as 'Access', 'Education' and 'Arts'. NDAF's free email newsletter, EtCetera, usefully documents a wide range of disability visual and performance arts.

The Disability Rights Commission has a useful website with a publication list and links pages. Website: <http://www.drc-gb.org>. The DRC Helpline provides information and advice about all aspects of the DDA, as well as signposting specialist organisations where necessary. In addition, it can offer good practice advice on the employment of disabled people.

Helpline open between 8.00 am and 8.00 pm Monday to Friday on:

Telephone 08457 622 633

Fax 08457 778 878

Textphone 08457 622 644

The Disability Rights Commission Helpline:

DRC Contacts Centre

Freepost

MID O2164

Stratford Upon Avon CV37 9BR

e-mail: [ddaahelp@stra.sitel.co.uk](mailto:ddaahelp@stra.sitel.co.uk)

*From Exclusion to Inclusion, A Report of the Disability Rights Task Force on Civil Rights for Disabled People*, December 1999, DfEE.

*Understanding Disability From Theory to Practice*, Oliver M, 1996, Macmillan Press Ltd.

*Beyond Disability*, Hales G, (ed), 1996, Sage.

*Disabling Barriers-Enabling Environments*, Swain J, Finkelstein V, French S, Oliver M, 1993, Sage.

*Developing Exhibitions for Lifelong Learning*, Brisenden S 1996 , 'Disability Culture', in G.Durbin (ed),p.92-95, HMSO.

*Disabled Lives*, BBC Publications, 1992.

*Update*, monthly journal of BCODP (British Council of Disabled People), Litchurch Plaza, Litchurch Lane, Derby DE24 8AA, Tel: 01332 295551, E-mail: [general@bcodp.org.uk](mailto:general@bcodp.org.uk) Website <http://www.bcodp.org.uk>

Disability Research Unit, University of Leeds, Leeds LS2 9JT, Telephone 0113 233 4426 Website: <http://www.leeds.ac.uk/sociology/dru/dru.htm>

*Access Action* Radar's monthly newsletter, RADAR - Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation, 12 City Forum, 250 City Road, London EC1V 8AF, Tel: 0207 250 3222, Fax: 0207 250 0212, Minicom: 0207 250 4119 E-mail: <http://www.radar.org.uk>

*News, Disability Wales* (newsletter), Disability Wales, Llys Ifor, Crescent Rd, Caerphilly CF83 1XL, Tel: 01222 887325, Fax: 01222 888702, Minicom: 01222 887325, e-mail: [info@dwac.demon.uk](mailto:info@dwac.demon.uk)

*Disability News: A Positive Force in Scotland*, Disability Scotland (newsletter), Disability Scotland; Princes House, 5 Shandwick Place, Edinburgh EH1 2BE, Tel: 01312 298632, e-mail: [enquiries@disabilityscotland.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@disabilityscotland.org.uk)

Disability Action for Northern Ireland, 2 Annadale Avenue, Belfast BT7 3JH. Tel: 01232 491011

*Disability Now*, A monthly newspaper published by Scope, 6 Market Road, London N7 9PW, Tel: 0207 636 5020. <http://www.disabilitynow.org.uk>

*Disability View*, a bi-monthly magazine published by M&S Publicity Ltd, Park

Lane House, 47 Broad Street, Glasgow G40 2QW  
<http://www.disabilityview.co.uk>

*Directory for Disabled People*: 8th edition (August 1998), Darnborough, A and Kinrade D, Prentice Hall 1996.

*A Practical Guide for Disabled People* – where to find information, services and equipment, Department of Health.

National Council for Voluntary Organisations Directory. Lists 2,500 organisations. Tel: 020 7713 6161.

*What Now?* Free information leaflet on services for disabled people. Tel: 020 7250 3222.

*Everyone's Welcome: The Americans with Disabilities Act and Museums*, 1998. Ed. J.P. Salmen. American Association of Museums.

*Access to Museums and Galleries for People with Disabilities*, 1997. MGC. Available from Resource.

List of Access Auditors. Available from Resource.

List of Disability Trainers. Available from Resource.

*London Disability News*, the monthly newsletter of GLAD (Greater London Action on Disability) 336, Brixton Road, London SW9 7AA, Tel: 020 7 346 5814, Fax: 020 7346 5811, E-mail: [glad@btinternet.com](mailto:glad@btinternet.com)

## **1.1 For Disability Arts issues start with:**

National Disability Arts Forum UK  
Mea House, Ellison Place, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 8XS  
Tel/Minicom +44 (0)191 2611628, Fax +44 (0)191 2220573  
E-mail [ndaf@ndaf.org](mailto:ndaf@ndaf.org)  
<http://www.ndaf.org>

*EtCetera*, is a free weekly e-mail newsletter from the National Disability Arts Forum

*In Through the Front Door. Disabled People and The Visual Arts*. Jayne Earnscliffe. 1992. The Arts Council of England.

*DAiL Magazine: Disability Arts in London*, DAIL Magazine, The Diorama Arts Centre, 34 Osnaburgh Street, London NW1 3ND, Tel: 020 7916 6351, Fax: 0207 916 5396, E-mail: [editorial@dail.dircon.co.uk](mailto:editorial@dail.dircon.co.uk) Website <http://www.dail.dircon.co.uk>

*Arts 365K* A new journal for Ireland. Introart, Abbey House, 15-17 Upper Abbey Street, Dublin 1, Email: [quigley@connect.ie](mailto:quigley@connect.ie)

Artsline, 54 Charlton St, London NW1 1HS. Tel: 020 7388 2227, Fax: 020 7383 2653) Email: [artsline@dircon.co.uk](mailto:artsline@dircon.co.uk) (Training, advice and information on access to arts venues).

Contact for the former SHAPE Network of regional and local disability arts organisations (now disbanded).

ITHACA, Unit 1, St John Fisher School, Sandy Lane West, Blackbird Leys, Oxford OX4 5LD, Tel: 01865 714652, Fax: 01865 714822

*Deaf Arts UK*, Shape London, 356 Holloway Road, London N7 6PA, tel: 0207-700 0100, fax: 0207 700 8143, minicom: 0207 700 8144. Covers events, listings, etc. of interest to Deaf people from all over the UK.

USA Arts and Disability Center, UCLA. A resource, information and training centre dedicated to the full inclusion of disabled people in the arts. On line technical assistance centre at <http://nadc.ucla.edu> . A bibliography on published information on access in museums at <http://www.nadc.ucla.edu/DesigningAccessiblePrograms.htm>

## 2. DDA

(See <http://www.disability.gov.uk>)

Recent FREE publications available on the DDA (note that there are a variety of free factsheets and booklets available from the Government's website and/or helpline):

*Employing Disabled People: a Good Practice Guide for managers and employers* (DLE7). DfEE 1999.

*Disability Discrimination Act 1995: An Introduction for Small and Medium-sized Businesses, Rights of Access to Goods, Facilities, Services and Premises.* DfEE 1999.

*Later Rights of access to Goods, Facilities & Services*, DX19.

DDA Helpline - (formerly Disability on the Agenda)

Telephone: 0345 622633

Faxback service: 0345 622611

Textphone: 0345 622644

e-mail: [ddahelp@stra.sitel.co.uk](mailto:ddahelp@stra.sitel.co.uk)

**DDA Codes of Practice (there is a separate Code of Practice for Northern Ireland)**

*An Employment Code of Practice Under The DDA* (Price £9.95) ISBN 0-11-270954-0

*Disability Discrimination Act 1995: Code of Practice; Rights of Access to Goods, Facilities, Services and Premises* 1999 (Price £12.95) ISBN 0 11 271055 7.

Both are published by The Stationery Office and available from The Publications Centre, PO Box 276, London SW8 5D, from The Stationery Office Bookshops.

Telephone orders/general enquiries: 0870 600 5522

Fax orders: 0870 600 5533

Also available in alternative formats or from <http://www.disability.gov.uk>

**Northern Ireland**

A similar but separate Code applies to Northern Ireland.

Published by The Stationery Office and available from

The Stationery Office Bookshop, 16 Arthur Street, Belfast BT1 4GD

Telephone: 01232 238451

Fax: 01232 235401

ISBN 0 337 08453 X

Also available in alternative formats or from <http://www.dhssni.gov.uk>

Gooding, C, *Blackstone's Guide to the Disability Discrimination Act 1995*, 1996, Blackstone (in collaboration with RADAR).

Brading, J., Curtis J., 1996, *Disability Discrimination A Practical Guide to the New Law*, Kogan Page (Employment issues).

Doyle, Brian (1996) *Disability Discrimination: law and practice*, Second edition. Bristol: Jordans. Includes text of the Act and of all regulations and codes of practice to date. £27.50. Available from Jordans Publishing Limited, 21 St. Thomas Street, Bristol BS1 6JS, telephone 0117-923 0600.

Museums Association (January 1997). *Museums Briefing: The Disability Discrimination Act*. Available from the Museums Association.

Stewart, Jill (1996). *In good company? Examining the provision of quality*

*services for disabled customers in light of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995*, London: Scope. 101pp. £10 plus 60p p+p. ISBN 0 946828 45 8.  
Available from The Campaigns Department, Scope.

'The Disability Discrimination Act: Questions and Answers', *BarrierFree*, Issue 2, 1999, p31 (The quarterly journal of The Museums and Galleries Disability Association [MAGDA]. Website: <<http://www.magda.org.uk>>  
MAGDA has an e-mail *listserve*, (e-mail [magdemail-subscribe@listbot.com](mailto:magdemail-subscribe@listbot.com) to join).

*The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and the Arts*, The Arts Council of England, 1999.

*Museums Journal*, Vol.99, No 2 (February), 'Access for all', Heather Falconer, pp28-29.

'The DDA: Duty or Opportunity?', Rebecca McGinnis, *Museum Practice* 5, 1997.

The Arts & Disability Forum, Belfast, have produced a report which deals with the duties placed by the act on arts organisations providing goods, facilities and services to the public. Cost: Arts/Organisations: £1.50 or send 6 x 1st class stamps. Individuals: £1 or 4 x 1st class stamps. Contact the Forum, Albany House, 73-75 Great Victoria Street, Belfast BT2 7AF, E-mail: [adf.dforum@dnet.co.uk](mailto:adf.dforum@dnet.co.uk) ,Fax: 02890 247770, Minicom: 02890 325744, Telephone: 02890 239450.

*Agenda on Employment, Agenda for Customers, Forum Briefing Papers* (guidance on employment adjustments for people with different impairments), *Legal Updates:DDA Trends* from The Employers Forum on Disability, (a regular briefing series.) Also booklets: *The Disability Communication Guide* (particularly useful), *Welcoming Disabled Customers*.

From The Employers Forum on Disability

Nutmeg House

60 Gainsford Street

London SE1 2NY.

Tel/minicom: 020 7403 3020

Fax: 020 7403 0404

e-mail: [efd@employers-forum.co.uk](mailto:efd@employers-forum.co.uk)

Website: <http://www.employers-forum.co.uk>

*Disabilities: Guidance for negotiators*, Council of Civil Service Unions (PCS, IPMS, FDA, POA, SPOA, NISPSA), 1999.

### 3. Universal Design

(See also Exhibitions).

*Everyone's Welcome: Universal Access to Museums*, 1996 available from American Association of Museums. Video.

*Universal Design: Planning and Design for All*, Fionn Asiaken, Steinar Bergh, Olav Rand Bringa, Edel Kristin Heggem, Norwegian State Council on Disability, 1997.

<http://www.universaldesign.com> Universal Design Newsletter

<http://www.adaptenv.org> ,Adaptive Environments Center, Inc.

<http://www.design.ncsu.edu/cud> North Carolina State University - Centre for Universal Design

<http://www.cast.org> Centre for Applied Special Technology (Universal design and learning).

<http://www.eidd.org> (European Institute for Design and Disability).

### 4. Employment - general

'Museums and the Contract Culture', Max Hebditch, *Museums Journal*, December 1992, p 32-34.

The Employers Forum on Disability, publications and briefings- see DDA above.

Service First Unit, Cabinet Office, Horse Guards Rd, London SW1P 3AL  
<http://www.servicefirst.gov.uk>.

Website: <http://www.open.gov.uk>

*Get Back Retention Pack*, RNIB Customer Services, 2000, £20 ( Advice and guidance on how best to support and retain employees who become disabled).

*Taking Care of Business*: Mencap advice on employing people with learning disabilities. Tel. 020 7454 0454.

Disability Employment Advisors (DEAs) at local Job Centres.

*Ready, Willing, Able* (R.W.A) recruitment bulletin for disabled people. See



[www.lineone.net/~rwa](http://www.lineone.net/~rwa).

*Code of Practice for Age Diversity in Employment*, DfEE publications

## **Work experience**

*Pathway scheme for people with learning difficulties* run by Mencap (Tel. 020 7454 0454).

*The Fast-Track programme* run by Scope (Tel. 0207 619 7299),  
*Workable*, run by Leonard Cheshire (Tel 0207 608 3161, website:  
<http://members.aol.com/workableuk>).

*Artsable*, a scheme that enables disabled students and graduates to find work placements in the arts sector. (Tel 0207 251 0901).

## **4.1 Volunteers**

*Museums Journal* April 1999, p 35 for checklist for supporting volunteers

*The Handbook for Heritage Volunteer Managers and Administrators*, British Association of Friends of Museums[BAfM], 1999 ISBN 0 9528787 1 2, Tel: 01458 850520, Email: [a.heeleybafm@btinternet.com](mailto:a.heeleybafm@btinternet.com).

*Opening Up Volunteering Opportunities for Young People: an organisational toolkit*, Elaine Willis, National Youth Agency, ISBN 0-86155-211-3

*A Route to Opportunity: Volunteering by people with disabilities*, 1996, Filiz Niyazi and Alan Dingle, The National Centre for Volunteering, Regents Wharf, All Saints Street, London N1 Tel: 020 7520 8900.

## **5. Museums - general**

*Museums Journal*, monthly magazine of the Museums Association  
*Museum Practice*, thrice yearly themed magazine illustrating good practice published by the Museums Association.

*The Accessible Museum*. 1993. American Association of Museums.  
(Examples of programs in 19 museums).

*Everyone's Welcome: Universal Access in museums*, 1996, American Association of Museums (Video 24 minutes).

*In Through The Front Door, Disabled People and the Visual Arts: Examples of*

*Good Practice*, Jayne Earnscliffe, The Arts Council of Great Britain, 1992.  
'Museums for Everyone', Alison Coles, *Interpretation*, February 1998.

*Access to Museums and Galleries for People with Disabilities*, 1997, MGC.  
*Producing a Forward Plan*, 1996, MGC. (Available from Resource).

*Ethical Guidelines - Access*, Museums Association, Number 4 1999.  
'Ethics Q & A', Museums Journal, November 1999.

'Developing an Access Policy', Resource website: [www.resource.goc.uk](http://www.resource.goc.uk)

Social Inclusion Resource website.

## 6. Cultural Diversity in museums and galleries:

*Responding to Cultural Diversity: Guidance for Museums and Galleries*,  
Naseem Khan for MGC 1998.

*Cultural Diversity Action Plan*, Arts Council of England 1998).

## 7. DCMS

*People taking Part: A handbook of good practice*, DNH, 1997.

*Museums for the many: Standards for Museums and Galleries to use when  
developing access policies*, DCMS, 1999.

*Policy Action Team 10: A Report to the Social Exclusion Unit*, DCMS, 1999  
*Social Inclusion Action Plan*, DCMS, 1999.

*Efficiency and Effectiveness of Government-sponsored Museums and  
Galleries*, DCMS, September 1999.

*Access Standards*, DCMS.

*Centres for Social Change: Museums, galleries and archives for all.* DCMS,  
2000.

## 8. Customer care

Dutch Museums service have produced a model 'Conditions for Visitors' under  
Publications on their website: <http://www.museumvereniging.nl>

*The Disability Communication Guide*, The Employers Forum on Disability useful booklet.

*How to push a wheelchair*, Griffiths, D. and David Wynne (1994), the Disabled Motorists Club. Available from RADAR, 12 City Forum, 250 City Road, London EC1V 8AF. Cost 90p.

*Welcoming customers with learning disabilities: A training pack*, Mencap (1996). Available from Mencap National Centre, 123 Golden Lane, London EC1Y 0RT, tel: 020 7454 0454. Price: £20 plus £1.50 p+p.

*How to guide a blind person*, RNIB (1987, revised 1995). (Available from RNIB Customer Services, PO Box 173, Peterborough PE2 6WS, tel: 0345 45 64 57. Cost 50p.).

*What museum guides need to know: Access for blind and visually impaired visitors*, 1989, Gerda Groff and Laura Gardner, American Association for the Blind, available from American Association of Museums.

*Louder than words: Guide to customer care*. RNID (1996). (This pack and further information on the Louder than Words campaign are available from Janet Simmons, Louder than Words Co-ordinator, RNID South East, 39 Store Street, London WC1E 7DB, Tel: 0207-916 4144. Price: free.).

*Providing Service for All - The Training Guide*, English Tourism Council (ETC), 1997, (Price £5).

*Welcoming Disabled Travellers* 1999 (Free). (Both from ETC, Fulfilment Centre, Thames Tower, Black's Road, Hammersmith, London W6 9EL).

*How to Provide Information Well: A Good Practice Guide*, National Information Forum, 1998. (National Information Forum, Post Point 228, BT Proctor House, 100-110 High Holborn, London WC1V 6LD. Website: <http://www.nif.org.uk> )

*Access for Venues - a guide*, Deafworks (1999) (free from Deafworks, 59 Banner Street, London EC1Y 8PX).

## 9. Training

*'Good Practice for Delivering In-house Training - Hints and Tips'*, in *People First: A report of disability equality training to improve access in museums and galleries in the North West*, (ed) Helen Thornton, Training Officer, North West Museums Service, DX 25 DDA helpline

*Beyond Disability: Towards an Enabling Society*, Sage Publications for the Open University, 1996, Chapter 11 (on the use of simulation)

*Developing and Training Staff in Museums and Galleries*, MGC, 1997. (Available from Resource).

*Part of Your General Public is Disabled!* 1987, Janice Majewski, Smithsonian Institution (Video and book) from the American Association of Museums. (Training package).

List of Disability Trainers. Available from Resource.

## 10. Information provision

*The Informability Manual: Making information more accessible in the light of the Disability Discrimination Act*, Gregory W, 1996, HMSO.

Plain English Campaign, PO Box 3, New Mills, Stockport, SK12 4QP

*Making Reading Easier*, Basic Skills Agency, 1999. (Useful free leaflet Basic Skills Agency, Commonwealth House, 1-19 New Oxford Street, London WC1A 1NU).

*Making It Easy First: making information accessible for people with learning difficulties*, People First 1997. People First also have a free leaflet describing how to make information accessible for people with learning difficulties and will assist everyone. (People First, Instrument House, 207/215 King's Cross Road, London WC1X 9DB, Tel: 020 7833 8399).

Mencap have produced a free pamphlet *Making ourselves clear* minimum standards for accessible writing, and a free booklet *Am i making myself clear? Guidelines for accessible writing*. There is also an accessibility Officer, Lynn Grieveson on 020 7696 5575 or Email: [lynn.grieveson@mencap.org.uk](mailto:lynn.grieveson@mencap.org.uk) who invites comments and ideas.

*Picture Bank CD Rom and Pack*. CHANGE. 1999 (First Floor, 69-85 Old Street, London EC1V 9HY, Tel: 020 7490 2668, Fax: 020 7490 3581).

*Access in Mind: Towards the Inclusive Museum*, Rayner A, INTACT, 1998, National Museums of Scotland (NMS) Publishing. The first three chapters of this book provide excellent advice relevant to all visitors, not only people with learning difficulties.

*How to provide information well: A Good Practice Guide*, 1996 ISBN 09517669 2 9 (National Information Forum, Post Point 228, BT Proctor House, 100-110 High Holborn, London WC1V 6LD, T. 0207 404 3846, F. 0207 404 3849. Website <http://www.nif.org.uk> )

## 10.1 Alternative Formats

*Audio Information and visitors with learning disabilities*, Rayner A, INTACT in *BarrierFree*, Issue 3, Winter 99, p.12. (*BarrierFree* is the journal of the Museums and Galleries Disability Association, MAGDA. See Section 2 for contact details).

*Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB)* Public Information Service. Website <<http://www.rnib.org.uk>> has a useful site index and a section to download: Clear Print Guidelines, Large Print Guidelines, Advice on Braille and Moon, and tape information. Tel: 020 7391 2397.

Braille transcription service from the RNIB and the Inside Out Prison Trust (IOPT) (Tel: 01273 833050, Fax: 01273 833744, E-mail: [oitrust@pavilion.co.uk](mailto:oitrust@pavilion.co.uk).) The IOPT supports community targeted activities for prisoners. There may be local providers of this service - contact local talking newspapers or community groups of visually impaired people.

Confederation of Tape Industry producers (COTIS)  
67 High Street  
Tarporely  
Cheshire CW6 0DB  
Tel: 01829 733351.

Talking Newspapers Association of the UK  
National Recording Centre  
10 Brownings Road  
Heathfield  
East Sussex TN21 8DB  
Tel: 01435 866102.

United Kingdom of Braille Producers (RNIB)  
PO Box 173  
Peterborough PE2 6WS  
Tel: 01733 370777.

## 10.2 Tactile diagrams/pictures/models

The National Centre for Tactile Diagrams project, 'Pictures at your fingertips'.  
National Centre for Tactile Diagrams,  
University of Hertfordshire  
Hatfield  
Herts AL10 9AB  
Tel. 01707 286 348  
Fax. 01707 285 059  
Web-site: <http://www.nctd.org.uk/>.

*A Guide to RNIB's raised diagram copying service*, Brian Law, RNIB 1993.  
*A Guide to the Production of tactile graphics on swell paper*, Yvonne Eriksson  
and Monica Strucel, Swedish Library of Talking Books and Braille,  
1995 ISBN 91-88143-14-5

The Dog Rose Trust work in the heritage sector, and with museums and galleries exploring the use of tactile models and plans for visually impaired people. (Contact: Julia Ionides, Administrator, 83 Greenacres, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1LZ. Tel: 01584 874567, Fax. 01584 874045, E-mail: [dogrose.trust@virgin.net](mailto:dogrose.trust@virgin.net))

## 11. Marketing

*Guidelines for Marketing to Disabled Audiences*, The Arts Council of Great Britain, 1995.

*Publicising leisure events for Visually Impaired People*, free from RNIB.

*How to provide information well: A Good Practice Guide*, 1996 ISBN 09517669 2 9, National Information Forum, Post Point 228, BT Proctor House, 100-110 High Holborn, London WC1V 6LD, T: 0207 404 3846, F: 0207 404 3849

Holiday Care Service, The UK Central Source of Holiday and Travel Information for disabled people. Tel: 01293 771500.

Tourism for All, supports accessible tourism, hospitality and leisure.  
Tel: 01352 740552.

Tripscope, The Courtyard, Evelyn Road, London W4 5JL, Tel: 0845 7585641, Fax: 020 8994 3618, Email: [tripscope@cableinet.co.uk](mailto:tripscope@cableinet.co.uk) (a travel service for disabled people).

## 12. Education/audience development

There are a number of free and relevant Factsheets available from Resource's website or by post. These include:

*Developing a Policy for an Education Service*,  
*Post 16 Learning*,  
*Evaluation*, Resource Fact Sheet,  
*Social Inclusion*, Resource Fact Sheet  
*Developing an Interpretation Strategy*,

Publications for Resource

*Managing Museum and Gallery Education* MGC.

*Positive Thinking* Alison James for MGC.

*Building Bridges: Guidance for museums and galleries on developing new audiences*, J Dodd, R Sandell, MGC 1998.

*Museum practice*, Vol 1, Issue 3, 1996, and Issue 11 (Vol.4, No.2.) 1999.  
Focus on outreach

*Developing Museum Exhibitions for Lifelong Learning*, Gail Durbin (ed), The Stationery Office for GEM, 1996

*A Commonwealth: Museums in the Learning Age*, David Anderson for DCMS, 1999.

*Learning in the Museum*, Hein G., Routledge, 1998, pp. 34-36, 134-136)

*Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences*, Gardner H. New York Basic Books, 1985).

*Access in Mind: Towards the Inclusive Museum*, Ann Rayner for INTACT, National Museums of Scotland, 1998.

*Opening Up!*, Access for deaf and hard of hearing people to arts, cultural and tourism venues, Deafworks, 1999.

*Crossing the Line: Extending young people's access to cultural venues*, Calouste Gulbekian Foundation, 1999, (also DfEE and DCMS websites).

*Altogether Better (from 'Special Needs' to Equality in education)*, Micheline



Mason and Richard Rieser, published by Comic relief. ISBN 1 85324 919 X. This pack includes an excellent training video and booklet that explains and promotes inclusive education.

*Children First: A Guide to the needs of Disabled Children in School*, by Judith Male for RADAR 1997, ISBN 0 900270 09 8. The RNIB publishes Curriculum support materials and can offer advice for visually impaired and blind children  
*Student Voices: The views of Further education Students with learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities*, FEFC/SKILL, SCPR, 1996. (Skill, the National Bureau for Disabled Students, 336, Brixton Road, London SW9 7AA, Tel: 020 7274 7840 Website: <http://www.skill.org.uk>).

*Into Higher Education 2000*. Skill. Tel: 020 7450 0650.

A variety of SEN organisations, can be found as links from the DfEE website: <http://www.dfes.gov.uk>, and the *Disability Now* website <http://www.disabilitynow.org.uk>

*Literacy Through Symbols: Improving access for children and adults*, Detheridge, Tina, Mike, David Fulton Publishers, 1997.

*Implementing the Whole Curriculum for Pupils with Learning Difficulties*, Rose, Fergusson, Coles, Byers, Barnes (Ed) David Fulton Publishers, 1996.

*Teaching Literacy Skills to Deaf Adults*, The City Literary Institute, (Stukeley Street, London WC2B 5LJ, 1996).

*Developing Exhibitions for Lifelong Learning*, Gardner H 1996, 'Multiple Intelligences' in G.Durbin (ed) p.35-37, HMSO  
Ham S 1994, 'Cognitive psychology and interpretation: synthesis and application', in E Greenhill (ed) *The Educational Role of the Museum*, p.107-117, Routledge.

Hein G., 1996 'Constructivist Learning Theory' in G Durbin (ed) *Developing Exhibitions for Lifelong Learning*, p 30-34, HMSO.

*Questioning Assumptions: An Introduction to Front-End Studies in Museums*, 1998, Lynn D. Dierking and Wendy Pollock, Association of Science-Technology Centers. (available from the American Association of Museums).

*Practical Evaluation Guide: Tools for Museums and other informal educational settings*, 1999, Judy Diamond, Altamira Press/American association of Museums.



National Association for Special Educational Needs. Tel: 01827 311 500.  
[www.nasen.org.uk](http://www.nasen.org.uk).

Makaton Development Project,  
31 Firwood Drive, Camberley, Surrey, GU15 3QD Tel. 01276 61390

ACE: Aids to Communication in Education, Ormerod School, Wayneflete Road,  
Headington, Oxford OX3 8DD Tel: 01865 63508

Council for Disabled Children, National Children's Bureau, 8 Wakley Street,  
London EC1V 7QE Tel: 020 7843 6000

Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education, 1 Redland Road, Elm Lane,  
Redland, Bristol BS6 6UE Tel: 0117 923 8450

RNIB Education Centre: West Whittington Road, Worcester, WR5 2JX,  
Tel: 01905 357635, Fax: 01905 764867.

## 13. Exhibitions

*Design a Label: Guidelines on labelling for museums*, The Campaign for  
Museums, 1999 (available from the Museums Association).

*Designing Exhibitions to include People with Disabilities*, Gail Nolan, National  
Museum of Scotland, 1997.

*Everyone's Welcome: The Americans with Disabilities Act and Museums*,  
American Association of Museums, Washington DC, 1998).

*Developing Museum Exhibitions for Lifelong Learning*, Gail Durbin (ed), The  
Stationery Office for GEM, 1996.

*Effective Exhibitions, Guidelines for good practice* MGC (1998). (Available from  
Resource).

*Smithsonian Guidelines for Accessible Exhibition Design*, 1996, Smithsonian  
Institutions, Washington.

*Museum Practice 4*, Issue 4 Vol.2 No.1, 1997 'Interactives' by Frazer Swift, pp  
22-24 for a useful evaluation and checklist.

*Developing an Interpretation Strategy*. [www.resource.gov.uk](http://www.resource.gov.uk)

*Reaching Out: A Creative Access Guide for Designing Exhibits and Cultural Programs for Persons Who Are Blind or Visually Impaired.* E.Joffee and M.Siller 1998. Available from American Association of Museums.

## 14. New Technologies

*Userfit - A practical handbook on user-centred design for Assistive Technology*, Hussat Research Institute, (The Elms Grove, Loughborough, Leics. LE11 1RG).

RNIB, [www.rnib.org.uk](http://www.rnib.org.uk), audio description, web design and clear print

Deaf Broadcasting Council, on-screen subtitling and signing, current contact through the RNID ([www.rnid.org.uk/](http://www.rnid.org.uk/)).

British Deaf Association [www.bda.org.uk/](http://www.bda.org.uk/) for BSL information.

Ability Net [www.abilitynet.co.uk](http://www.abilitynet.co.uk) access technology for computers.

<http://www.llemon.demon.co.uk/content/4226cw/w3access.htm> useful overviews on topics such as the DDA and easy-start alternatives for accessible design as well as links and references.

BECTa (British Educational Communications and Technology Agency) [www.becta.org.uk](http://www.becta.org.uk)  
Milburn High Road  
Science Park  
Coventry CV4 7JJ  
Tel: 01203 416994 Fax: 01203 411418

The Reviel Project  
Brophy and Craven, 1999, The Integrated Accessible Library, British Library  
RIC Report no 168, ISBN 0 9535343  
Project description and a resources page at:  
<http://www.mmu.ac.uk/h-ss/cerlim/projects/reviel.htm>

Disability In Higher Education  
The clearing house for information technology for accessibility in higher education  
[www.disinhe.ac.uk](http://www.disinhe.ac.uk)

Web Accessibility Initiative  
An initiative from the WWW Consortium <http://www.w3.org/WAI/>

Bobby

A free software tool from the Center for Applied Special Technology for checking the accessibility of web pages <http://www.cast.org/bobby/>

'Resources for Everyone', *TES Online*, 10.3.00, p22). Note the Internet and Special Schools at <http://www.sed.kcl.ac.uk/special/>

## 15. Buildings

*Access Audits*, Rebecca McGinnis, *Museum Practice*, Issue 7, Vol.3, No 1, 1998, pp. 43-45).

*Access Audits: a guide and checklists for appraising the accessibility of public buildings*. 1999 Centre for Accessible Environments.

*Perspectives on access to museums and galleries in historic buildings*, 1996. Lisa Foster and Alison Coles (Ed). Out of Print. Possibly available from AMC libraries.

*Designing for Accessibility: an essential guide for public buildings*, 1999, Andrew Lacy (new edition), Centre for Accessible Environments (CAE).

*BarrierFree Design*, James Holmes-Siedle, 1996, Butterworth

*Designing for the disabled: the new paradigm*, Selwyn Goldsmith, 1997, Butterworth-Heinemann.

*Buildings for All to Use*, Sylvester Bone, Construction Industry Research and Information Association (Good practice guidance for improving existing public buildings for people with disabilities)

*Design Insight*. Journal published 3 x per year. Available from JMU Access Partnership. Tel: 020 7391 2002.

*Access by Design*, quarterly magazine of the Centre for Accessible Environments (CAE).

*Reading and Using Plans*, 1994, Stephen Thorpe. (CAE).

"Open Sesame- The Magic of Access" **CD Rom** examines building standards in relation to the DDA in designing access for disabled people. The Adapt Trust (8 Hampton terrace, Edinburgh EHJ12 5JD, Tel: 0131 346 1999, Fax: 0131 346 1991, Email: [adapt.trust@virgin.net](mailto:adapt.trust@virgin.net) (Website: <http://www.adapttrust.co.uk>).

**Videos** from The Centre for Accessible Environments, (CAE, Nutmeg House, Gainsford Street, London SE1 2NY. Tel: 0120 7357 8182).

*Keeping up with the past: making historic Buildings accessible to everyone*, English Heritage, Centre for Accessible Environments

*Access by Design: Implementing the Disability Discrimination Act 1995*, (Also is available with subtitles).

*Approved Document M*, 1999 edition. DETR, The Stationery Office. (Part M of the Building Regulations covers access and facilities for disabled people).

*Buildings and Internal Environments*, JMU 1999, RNIB and GDBA.

*Guidance on the use of Tactile Paving Surfaces*, DETR 1999, DETR, London

English Heritage:

For a free leaflet on creating access to listed buildings from customers services department (020 7973 3434, English Heritage, PO Box 9019, London W1A 0JA).

*Building Sight*. P. Barker, J. Barrich, R. Wilson. The Stationery Office RNIB.

In Northern Ireland, guidance on listed buildings can be obtained by contacting:

The Environment and Heritage Service

5-33 Hill Street

Belfast BT21 2LA

Telephone: 01232 543061

The contacts below may prove useful in developing strategies and taking reasonable steps to overcome barriers to access. The list is far from exhaustive and it may be equally productive to contact your Town Hall information desk for disability groups in your immediate area. Many of the organisations on the list have produced publications which may inform all interested parties.

Centre for Accessible Environments

Nutmeg House, Gainsford St, London SE1 2NY

T: 020 7357 8182; E-mail: [info@cae.org.uk](mailto:info@cae.org.uk)

Website: <http://www.cae.org.uk>

British Standards Institution

389 Chiswick High Road, London W4 4AL

T: 020 8996 9000

<http://www.bsi.org.uk>

Construction Industry Research and Information Association  
6 Storey's Gate, Westminster, London SW1A 3AU  
T: 020 7222 8891

RADAR Access Advisory Committee  
250 City Road  
London EC1V 8AF  
T: 020 7250 3222

ADAPT Trust. Tel: 0131 346 1999. [www.adapttrust.co.uk](http://www.adapttrust.co.uk).

Tactyle signs Tel: 01473 620 100.

Local disability organisations should be approached and many national organisations listed in the Resources section have produced guidance.

## 16. Funding

South West Museums Council publish a compendium of funding sources:  
Hestercombe House, Cheddon Fitzpaine, Taunton TA2 8LQ,  
Tel: 01823 259 696 or [www.swmuseums.co.uk](http://www.swmuseums.co.uk)

'Embrace the socially excluded', *Museums Journal*, July 1999, p14.

'Good, Better, BEST', *Museums Journal*, August 1999, p39 article on Best value in museums.

*A Guide to Major Trusts*, Directory of Social Change ([www.d-s-c.demon.co.uk](http://www.d-s-c.demon.co.uk))

Charities Aid Foundation ([www.charitynet.org](http://www.charitynet.org))

### **Lottery Distributors**

Arts Council of England 0207.312 0123, Heritage Lottery Fund, 0345 649 649  
( HLF website: <http://www.hlf.org.uk>), Millennium Commission: contact Regional Advisors below

### **National Lottery Charities Board Regional Offices -**

North West 0192 5231241  
N East 01912 551100  
E Midlands 0115 934 9300

Eastern 01223 449 0001  
W Midlands 0121 200 3500  
S West 01392 849 7001  
S East 01483 568 764  
London 0207 292 8526

**New Opportunities Fund, (Check for current funding priorities)**

<<http://www.nof.org.uk>>

Dacre House, 19 Dacre St, London SW1H 0DH.

Tel 020 7222 3084, fax 020 7222 3085,

e-mail: [new.opportunities.fund@dial.pipex-com](mailto:new.opportunities.fund@dial.pipex-com) (re Healthy Living Centres)

**Charitable Trusts and Foundations (not exhaustive):**

The Baring Foundation:

The main programmes are: Strengthening the Voluntary Sector, which supports work to increase the effectiveness of voluntary organisations, and The Arts programme which supports arts projects in educational and community settings.

The Foundation now only support applications for work in England and Wales.

For further information contact: The Baring Foundation, 60 London Wall, London EC2M 5TQ, Tel 020 7767 1348,

Email: [baring.foundation@ing-barings.com](mailto:baring.foundation@ing-barings.com)

Comic Relief UK Grants Programme:

Supports voluntary organisations to tackle poverty and has social injustice. A Disabled People's Rights programme - Tel. 020 7346 1122 for an application pack.

The Nationwide Foundation:

For guidelines and application pack: The Nationwide Foundation, Nationwide House, Pipers Way, Swindon, SN38 1NW Tel: 01793 457183

The Allen Lane Foundation:

The Allen Lane Foundation is a grant-making trust which supports charitable causes in the UK and Ireland. The Trustees make grants to organisations whose work the Trustees believe to be unpopular, priority groups included refugees and asylum seekers, people from black and ethnic minority communities, those experiencing mental health problems, those experiencing violence or abuse, offenders and ex-offenders and travellers amongst others.

Contact: Executive Secretary, Heather Swailes, Suite 4, Parr House, Broadway, Bracknell RG12 1AG, Tel 01344 311866 or visit their website at <http://www.allenlane@demon.co.uk/>

#### Aspects of Life Fund:

This fund gives grants up to £5000 to charitable organisations for work in the area of disability. Improving quality of life for those who are economically disadvantaged-emphasising help to attain self-sufficiency; health and positive development for under 16s are target areas. Contact: Sheena Forbes, 2 The Square, Stockley Park, Uxbridge UB11 1AD, Tel: 020 8589 1000.

#### Bartle Family Charitable Trust:

This trust aims to improve the education and quality of life for disabled, ill or disadvantaged children. Charities in the UK can apply for grants of up to £5000 for buildings, capital or project costs.

Contact: J Bartle, Trustee, The Bartle Family Charitable Trust, 214 Amersham Road, Hazlemere, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire HP15 7QT, Tel: 01494 521704.

#### Granada Trust:

Grants up to £5000 are available to registered charities for: community development, tourism, arts and arts facilities, conservation and environment education training and job creation children and young adults. Contact: Mrs H. Tautz, Assistant Secretary, The Granada Trust, Stornoway House, 13 Cleveland Row, London SW1A 1GG. Or contact Tel: 020 7451 6425.

#### Adult and Community Learning Fund:

Basic Skills Agency, 7th Floor, Commonwealth House, 1-19 New Oxford St, London WC1 A1NU. Tel: 020 7405 4017, fax 020 7440 6626 or Widening Participation Team, NIACE (see Arts in Education for contact details)

Age Resource, 1268 London Rd, London SW16 4ER. Tel: 020 8679 2201, fax 020 8679 6069, e-mail: [ageres@ace.org.uk](mailto:ageres@ace.org.uk) (awards judged regionally and nationally).

Averil Osborn Fund, c/o Professor Tony Warnes, Department of Health Care for Elderly People, University of Sheffield, Northern General Hospital, Herries Road, Sheffield SS 7AU (small fund for older people's projects, not necessarily in the arts).

Camelot Foundation "Community Support Programme" Phase 11, One Derry Street, London W8 SHY. Tel: 020 7937 5594, fax: 020 7937 0574

Comic Relief, 74 New Oxford Street, London WC1 A1EF. Tel: 020 7436 1122, fax 020 7436 1541, e-mail [red@comicrelief.org.uk](mailto:red@comicrelief.org.uk)

Foundation for Sport and the Arts, PO Box 20, Liverpool LI 3 1 HB.



Tel: 0151 259 5505, fax 0151 230 0664

Rosebriars Trust, Civic Centre, High Street, Esher KT1 0 9SD.

Tel 01 372.474 566, fax 01 372 474 934 (provision of resources and facilities)

Tudor Trust, 7 Ladbroke Grove, London W1 1 3BD. Tel: 020 7727 8522 (has category for 'the elderly')

Esmee Fairburn Charitable Trust, 7 Cowley Street, London SW1P 3NP,  
tel: 020 7227 5400, Fax: 020 7227 5401

Lloyds TSB Foundation, PO Box 284, Portsmouth, PO2 0NU  
Tel: 01705 652791

Pilgrim Trust, Fielden House, Little College Street, London SW1P 3SH  
Tel: 020 7222 4723, Fax: 020 7976 0461.

## **17. Selected organisations, resources and contacts by impairment or age:**

### **17.1 General**

Disabled Living Foundation, offers advice on disability-related equipment, appliances etc. Tel: 020 7289 6111 Fax: 020 7289 2922.

REMAP, a National voluntary organisation that has local groups of people with a variety of engineering and electronics skills who will develop high-tech and low-tech aids for disabled people. Contact. JJ Wright, National Organiser, Hazeldene, Igtham, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN15 9AD Tel: 01732 883818.

The Adapt Trust (Grant aid, awards, training and consultancy services to improve access to the arts for disabled people) 8 Hampton Terrace, Edinburgh EH12 5JD Tel: 0131 346 1999 Fax: 0131 346 1991 Email: [adapt.trust@virgin.net](mailto:adapt.trust@virgin.net) Website: [www.adapttrust.co.uk](http://www.adapttrust.co.uk)

### **17.2 Children**

Council for Disabled Children. Council for Disabled Children, National Children's Bureau, 8 Wakley Street, London EC1V 7QE Tel: 020 7843 6000  
Website: <http://www.ncb.org.uk>

Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education, 1 Redland Road, Elm Lane,

Redland, Bristol BS6 6UE Tel: 0117 923 8450  
RNIB's Inclusive Education project, Tel: 01203 369500, Curriculum Information  
Service Tel: 01905 357635

National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS)  
*Head Office: 15 Dufferin Street, London W2 5AH*  
*TellMinicom: 020 7250 0123*  
*Fax. 020 7251 5020*

This has branches throughout the country, of parents of deaf children, who form self-support groups which meet and share information.

Head Office provides information for parents of deaf children, and monitors issues with deaf education.

Produces a newsletter "Talk".

Male, J., *Children First: A Guide to the needs of Disabled Children in School*  
Radar 1997 ISBN 0 900270 09 8

Detheridge, Tina, Mike, *Literacy Through Symbols: Improving access for children and adults*, David Fulton Publishers, 1997

Rose, Fergusson, Coles, Byers, Barnes (Ed) *Implementing the Whole Curriculum for Pupils with Learning Difficulties*, David Fulton Publishers, 1996.

*Meeting Special Educational Needs: A programme of action*, DfEE, November 1998.

### **Hidden impairments/ medical conditions:**

BACUP (British Association of Cancer United Patients Tel: 0800 181 199.  
[www.cancerbacup.org.uk](http://www.cancerbacup.org.uk).

British Diabetic Association. Tel: 0207 323 1531.

British Epilepsy Association. Tel: 0800 309 030. [www.epilepsy.org.uk](http://www.epilepsy.org.uk)

Cystic Fibrosis Trust. Tel: 020 8464 7211.

Haemophilia Society. Tel: 020 7380 0600.

HIV/AIDS: Terence Higgins Trust. Tel: 020 7242 1010.

### **Specific Learning Difficulties**

British Dyslexic Association. Tel: 0118 966 8271.

Dyslexia Institute. Tel: 01784 463857.

## **17.3 Mobility Impairments**

ASBAH (Association for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus). Tel: 07733 555 988. [www.asbah.demon.co.uk](http://www.asbah.demon.co.uk).

SCOPE for people with Cerebral Palsy  
6 Market Road  
London N7 9PW  
Tel: 020 7619 7254  
Website: <http://www.scope.org.uk>

Muscular Dystrophy Group. Tel: 020 7720 8055.

Thalidomide Society. Tel: 020 8868 5309.

Action for M.E. Support and advice about myalgic encephalomyelitis.  
Tel: 07749 670 799. [www.afme.org.uk](http://www.afme.org.uk)

Arthritis Care. Tel: 020 7916 1500.

### **Visual Impairment:**

*New Beacon* monthly journal of the RNIB

*Viewpoint* bi-monthly journal of the National Federation of the Blind  
*In Touch Publishing*, Tel: 01222 222403

*Finding out about blindness*, childrens and teachers packs and videos  
available from the RNIB Tel: 020 7391 2397.

*Second Sight of the Parthenon Frieze*, British Museum Press, 1998.

*Vision in Art Education*, Jane Pearson, Richard Attenborough Centre,  
Department of Adult Education, University of Leicester, 1995.

'The Artistic Touch', by Gioya Steinke *Therapy Weekly*, 2.11.95

*Night Site: What's on in the evening economy for people who are elderly and disabled*, A Report by CTRU and JMU, National Charities Lottery Board, 1999.

Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB): 224 Great Portland St, London  
W1N 6AA; Tel: 0207 388 1266 and  
Linenhall St, Belfast BT2 8GB, Tel: 01232 691351  
Tel: 0131 311 8500 Scotland  
Tel: 01222 668 606 Wales.

RNIB web-site <http://www.rnib.org.uk>

for Clear print, Large print Guidelines, Braille, Moon, audio-information  
guidance and sources of information about blindness and visual impairments.  
*What Colour is the Wind: Insights into art and visual impairment*, Sue Blagden

and John Everett, NSEAD, 1992 ISBN 0 904684 12 1

*Art-sense*, Angela Faulk, Secretary, 45 Blenheim Road, Moseley, Birmingham B13 9TY, Tel: 0121 4497705.

National Federation of the Blind, UK

Unity House

Smyth Street

Westgate

Wakefield

W Yorks. WF1 1ER

Tel: 0192 4291 313

National League of the Blind and Disabled

2 Tenterden Road

London N17 8BE

Tel: 0208 808 6030

Partially Sighted Society

PO Box 322

Queens Road

Doncaster

S Yorks. DN1 2NX

Tel: 0130 232 3132

The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association.

Tel: 0118 983 5555 England.

Tel: 01698 839 100 Scotland

Tel: 01232 471 453 N.Ireland

## 17.4 Deaf/Blind

SENSE

11-13 Clifton Terrace

London N4 3SR

Tel: 020 7272 7774

## 17.5 Hearing Impairment

*British Deaf News*, the monthly newsletter of the British Deaf Association (BDA) website to read newsletter <http://www.BritishDeafNews.com> . BDA website: <http://www.bda.org>

**Videos:**

*Picture This* explores issues of access and the use and development of BSL in museums and galleries. Whit Chapel Art Gallery

*Signing Science* Designed to introduce Deaf children to the excitement of science and filmed at the Techniquest Science Centre, Cardiff. Nathalie Caplet  
Tel. 0117 982 2052 or Eric Albone, Clifton Scientific Trust Tel. 0117 924 7664

British Deaf Association (BDA)  
1-3 Worship Street  
London EC2 2AB  
Tel: 0207 588 3520  
Fax: 0207 588 3527

RNID - Royal National Institute for Deaf People;  
Tel: 020 7296 8000 England.  
Tel: 01232 329 738 N.Ireland.  
Tel: 01222 333 034 Wales.  
Tel: 0141 332 0343 Scotland.

Breakthrough Trust  
*London Centre: The Hall, Peyton Place, Greenwich, London SE18 0RS*  
*Tel: 0181 853 5661 (minicom/voice)*  
Aims to develop innovative work with deaf and hearing people, enabling them to improve their quality of life through contact, information and training.  
Provides groups and accredited training as well as awareness and total communication courses.

British Deaf Association (BDA)  
*Head Office: 1-3 Worship Street, London EC2 2AB*  
*Tel: 020 7588 3520*  
*Fax: 020 7588 352 7*  
*Minicom: 020 7588 3529*  
The BDA has branches throughout the country for deaf people, mainly BSL users.  
Strong emphasis is placed on advocacy and the rights of Deaf people.  
Produces *British Deaf News*.

Council for the Advancement of Communication with Deaf People (CACDP)  
*Durham University Science Park, Block 4, Stockton Road, Durham DH1 3 UZ*  
*Tel: 0191 383 1155 (voice & minicom)*  
*Fax: 0191 383 7914*  
CACDP hold a register of Sign Language Interpreters. There is an assessment

procedure for interpreters and for people learning to communicate with deaf people e.g. Stages 1, 2 and NVQ Level 3.

They also provide curriculum and assessment training for deaf tutors and assessors.

#### Friends for Young Deaf People (FYD)

*Head Office: East College Mansion, College Lane, East Grinstead, West Sussex Tel: 01342 323444*

*(voice & minicom) 01342 312639*

Provides sports activities and other activities for deaf young people and works towards integration with hearing people.

'Leadership' courses for deaf young people are also available.

#### Hearing Concern

*Head Office: 7111 Armstrong Road, London W3 7JL*

*Tel: 020 8743 1110/1742 9043*

This supports people who have lost their hearing or are hard of hearing and there are local groups in various parts of the country.

Can give help and information. Arranges holidays and training courses.

Has Sympathetic Hearing Scheme based at its London premises. Also produces "Hearing Concern" magazine.

#### National Association of Deafened People

*Longacre, Horsleys Green, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire HP14 3UX*

*Tel: 01494 482355/1484993 (voice fax)*

People who have lost their hearing join this self-help group. They provide meetings and a chance for deafened people to meet.

#### Royal Association in Aid of Deaf People (RAD)

*Walsingham Road, Colchester C02 7BP*

*Tel. 01206 769911 Text: 01206 577090*

*Fax. 01206 769755*

A non-statutory organisation working directly with deaf people in Surrey, Kent, Essex and London which provide: interpreting, 'social work' support for profoundly deaf people, usually Deaf people who use BSL as a first language. Escorted holidays for deaf/blind people and those with special needs, premises for deaf clubs and churches (sign language Chaplains).

#### Royal National Institute for Deaf People (RNID)

*Head Office.. 19 - 23 Featherstone Street, London EC1 Y 8SL*

*Tel: 020 7296 8000*

*Fax: 020 7296 8199*

*Minicom: 020 7296 8001*

Provides information and help for people with all ranges of hearing impairment.

Researches and develops new technology for deaf people.

Provides some residential care for elderly, psychiatric, deaf/blind and mentally handicapped deaf people.

Produces *1 in 7* magazine.

United Kingdom Council on Deafness (UKCOD)

*Waltham Forest Business Centre, 5 Blackhorse Lane, London E1 7 6DS*

*Tel: 020 8527 6680*

Comprising 36 member organisations, this is primarily a forum for discussion and campaigning on agreed objectives.

Produces a quarterly "Newsletter".

University of Durham

University of Bristol

University of Wolverhampton

University of Central Lancashire

All these universities provide Deaf studies and a range of courses for those interested in either improving their knowledge of Deaf issues or becoming an interpreter.

Speech to Text Reporting Services (Palantypists). Tel: 020 7831 8472.

Typetalk (a BT service that provides for a voice phone user to communicate with a deaf, deafened, deaf-blind, hard of hearing or speech impaired person).

John Wood House, Glacier Building, Harrington Road, Brunswick Business Park, Liverpool L3 4DF, Tel: 0151 709 9494 Textphone 0800 500 888.

RNID Sound Advantage (product suppliers)

1 Metro Centre, Welbeck Way, Peterborough, PE2 7UH Tel: 01733 361199

## 17.6 Mental Health Service Users

*Images of Possibility: Creating learning opportunities for adults with mental health difficulties*, A. Wertheimer, NIACE, 1997.

**"Letting through Light"**: A Training Pack on Black people and mental health, Dutt R, Ferns P, REU for DoH, 1998, Tel: 0207 278 2331

*I am live*, a report on the arts and mental health, From mind the... gap arts  
Tel: 01274 544683, E-mail: [mind the... gap\\_arts@mind-the-gap.org.uk](mailto:mind-the-gap_arts@mind-the-gap.org.uk)

Survivors Speak Out  
34 Osnaburgh St  
London NW1 3ND  
Tel: 0207 916 5472

MIND  
Granta House  
15-19 Broadway, London E15 4BQ  
Tel: 0208 519 2122

National Schizophrenia Fellowship  
28 Castle Street  
Kingston upon Thames  
Surrey KT6 4NS  
Tel: 0208 547 3937

Mental Health Foundation  
27 Mortimer Street  
London W1N 8JU  
Tel: 0207 580 0145

Manic Depressive Fellowship  
8-10 High Street  
Kingston upon Thames  
Surrey KT1 1EY  
Tel: 0208 974 6550

African-Caribbean Mental Health Association  
35-37 Electric Avenue  
London SW9 8JP  
Tel: 0207 737 3603

## 17.7 Learning difficulties

*Access Initiatives: Working with people with learning disabilities*, 1996, Rachel Shaw, Museums North, available with A4SAE from Helen Sinclair, Sunderland Museum and Art Gallery, Borough Road, Sunderland SR1 1PP

*Access in Mind: Towards the Inclusive Museum*, Rayner A, INTACT, 1998, National Museums of Scotland (NMS).

*Changing days: Developing new opportunities with people who have learning difficulties*, Wertheimer, A (Ed), Kings Fund Publishing 1996, ISBN 1 85717 106 3.



Mencap have produced a free pamphlet *Making Ourselves Clear* minimum standards for accessible writing, and a free booklet *Am I making myself clear? Guidelines for accessible writing*. There is also an accessibility Officer, Lynn Grieveson on 020 7696 5575 or Email: [lynn.grieveson@mencap.org.uk](mailto:lynn.grieveson@mencap.org.uk) who invites comments and ideas.

*Person to Person: Establishing contact and communication with people with profound learning disabilities and extra special needs*, Caldwell P with Stevens P, Pavilion Publishing, 1998 ISBN 1 900600 43.

British Institute of Learning Disabilities has a useful publications list and information and resource service accessible from their website: <http://www.bild.org.uk> . BILD, Wolverhampton Road, Kidderminster, DY10 3PP, Tel: 01562 850251.

Down's Syndrome Association. Tel: 020 7682 4001.

People First, Instrument House, 207-215 Kings Cross Road, London WC1X 9DB Tel: 020 7713 6400. (Local groups have been set up - check in your area).

CHANGE, first floor, 68-85 Old Street, London EC1V 9HY, Tel: 020 7490 2668.

Mencap (various factsheets and reports available plus useful bookshop catalogue).

Mencap National Centre, 123 Golden Lane, London EC1Y 0RT; 0207 474 0454. Mencap also has regional offices.

Website: <http://www.mencap.org.uk>

The National Autistic Society. [www.oneworld.org/autism.uk/](http://www.oneworld.org/autism.uk/)

## 17.8 Older people

*Sharing the Wisdom of Age: Museums and Older People*, MAGDA and Age Concern ISBN 0-86242-206-X, 1996.

*The Arts and Older People: A practical Introduction*, Frances F, Age Concern England, 1999 ISBN 0 86242 222 1.

Age Exchange, The Reminiscence Centre, 11 Blackheath Village, London SE3 9LA Tel: 020 8318 9105, E-mail: [age-exchange@lewisham.gov.uk](mailto:age-exchange@lewisham.gov.uk)

*A Life Worth Living*, 1997, T Harding, Help the Aged.

*Lost Vision: Older visually impaired people in the UK*, 1998, M Baker and S Winyard, RNIB.

*The Successful Activity Coordinator*, 2000, R Hurley and J Wenborn, Age Concern.

*Health of the Nation Briefing Pack*, Department of Health (DOH), 1997, (for Statistics)

Age Concern England. Tel: 020 8679 8000.

Age Concern Northern Ireland. Tel: 01232 245 729.

Age Concern Scotland. Tel: 0131 220 3345.

Age Concern Wales. Tel: 01222 371 566.

Help the Aged, St James Walk, London EC1 Tel: 020 7253 0253

Fax: 020 7895 1407 Website: <http://www.helptheaged.org.uk>

## 18 Web sites

### 18.1 Disability - general

Government site <http://www.disability.gov.uk>

Dept. for Education and Employment [www.dfes.gov.uk](http://www.dfes.gov.uk)

Arts Council <http://www.artscouncil.org.uk>

Action for Blind People <http://www.demon.co.uk/afbp>

Age Concern England <http://www.ace.org.uk>

Association for Conductive Education <http://www.ieway.com/~ssweeney>

British Council of Disabled People <http://www.bcodp.org.uk>

British Dyslexia Association <http://www.bda-dyslexia.org.uk>

Deafblind Link <http://www.s55wilma.demon.co.uk>

Dial UK: <http://members.aol.com/dialuk/index.htm>

Direct Action Network (DAN):

<http://www.disabilitynet.co.uk/groups/dan/index.html>

Disabilities Information Resources (DINF): <http://www.dinf.org>

Disability Advice and Welfare Network: <http://www.disability-network.org.uk>

Disability Discrimination Act <http://www.disability.gov.uk>

Disability Information & Advice Centre: <http://www.interbd.com/diac>

Disability Net: <http://www.disabilitynet.co.uk>

Disability News (USA): <http://disabilitynews.com>

Disability Now: <http://www.disabilitynow.org.uk>

Disability Research Unit: <http://www.leeds.ac.uk/sociology/dru/dru.htm>

Disability Resources (USA): <http://www.geocities.com/~drm>

Disability Rights Commission: <http://www.drc-gb.org>.

Disability Social History Project (USA): <http://www.disabilityhistory.org>  
 Disabled Living Foundation: <http://www.atlas.co.uk/dlf>  
 Disaware: <http://dspace.dial.pipex.com/town/park/gdm17>  
 Employers Forum on Disability <http://www.employers-forum.co.uk>  
 Help the Aged <http://www.helptheaged.org.uk>  
 Leonard Cheshire Foundation <http://www.lcf.org.uk>  
 Marie Curie Cancer <http://www.mariecurie.org.uk>  
 Museums Association <http://www.museumsassociation.org>  
 National Arts and Disability Center (USA) <http://www.nadc.ucla.edu>  
 Plain English Campaign <http://www.plainenglish.co.uk>  
 RADAR: <http://www.radar.org.uk>  
 RNIB (for large print and clear print guidelines, introduction to tape, Braille and Moon information) <http://www.rnib.org.uk>  
 RNID (for Louder than Words Charter) <http://www.rnid.org.uk>  
 Scope (formerly the Spastics Society - for people with cerebral palsy) <http://www.scope.org.uk>  
 Sense (The National Deafblind and Rubella Association) <http://www.sense.org.uk>

## 18.2 Regional sites

Berkshire Disability Information Network: <http://www.azariah.org.uk/bdin>  
 Capability Scotland: <http://www.capability-scotland.org.uk>  
 CareLine Information Centre for Wandsworth: <http://www.careline.org.uk>  
 Disability Information Service Surrey: <http://www.diss.org.uk/diss>  
 Disability Nottinghamshire Online: <http://www.innotts.co.uk/disabilitynotts>  
 Disability North: <http://www.nagd.org.uk/dnorth/disnorth.htm>  
 Disability Scotland: [http://www.dis\\_scot.gcal.ac.uk](http://www.dis_scot.gcal.ac.uk)  
 Disability World: <http://www.disabilityworld.com>  
 Flintshire Disability Action Centre:  
<http://dspace.dial.pipex.com/town/parade/ni30>  
 Gateshead Council on Disability: <http://www.disabilitygateshead.org.uk>  
 Glasgow Centre for Independent Living: <http://cil.gcal.ac.uk/home.html>  
 Hackney Independent Living Team: <http://www.hilt.org.uk>  
 Havering Association for People with Disabilities:  
<http://www3.mistral.co.uk/had/index.html>  
 Ideas in Motion (Merseyside action group): <http://www.merseyworld.com/iim>  
 Newtonmore Information Site (includes disability information):  
<http://www.newtonmore.com>  
 North Dorset Disability Information Service:  
<http://members.aol.com/norddis4qx/default.htm>  
 Southwark Disablement Association: <http://www.sda.dircon.co.uk>

Stoke-on-Trent City Council's Access In Action:

<http://www.stoke.gov.uk/accessteam/index.html>

West Berkshire Liaison Group on Disability:

<http://www.berkshireliaison.freemove.co.uk>

## 18.3 Education sites

Ace Centre (Aids to Communication in Education):

<http://www.rmplc.co.uk/eduweb/sites/acecent>

Advisory Centre for Education: <http://www.ace-ed.org.uk>

Association for Conductive Education: <http://www.ieway.com/~ssweeney>

Basic Skills Agency: <http://www.basic-skills.co.uk>

Birtenshaw Hall School: <http://www.birtenshawhall.bolton.sch.uk>

Bridge School: <http://www.bridgeschool.org/main.html>

British Association of Teachers of the Deaf: <http://www.batod.org.uk>

Department of Education and Employment <http://www.dfee.gov.org>

Gridlink: <http://www.rmplc.co.uk/eduweb/sites/ctrh/home.htm>

Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education:

<http://inclusion.uwe.ac.uk/csie/csiehome.htm>

Exhall Grange School: <http://www.campus.bt.com/CampusWorld/orgs/org9304>.

Independent Panel for Special Education Advice:

<http://www.ipsea.org.uk/index.htm>

Meldreth Manor School: <http://www.meldrethmanor.com>

Melmark School (USA): <http://www.melmark.org>

National Association for Adult Learning (NIACE): <http://www.niace.org.uk>

National Association for Special Educational Needs:

<http://www.nasen.org.uk/mainpg.htm>

National Institute of Conductive Education: <http://www.conductive-education.org.uk>

Royal Schools for Deaf Manchester: <http://www.rsdmanchester.org>

Severndale School: <http://www.city2000.com/mp/severndale.html>

## 18.4 Arts sites

Resource [www.resource.gov.uk](http://www.resource.gov.uk)

Dept. of Culture Media and Sport <http://www.culture.gov.uk>

Access to the Arts: <http://www.artsconn.demon.co.uk/access.htm>.

Arts Council of England (ACE): <http://www.artscouncil.org.uk>.

Arts Disability Wales: <http://www.cf.ac.uk/ccin/main/suppsvs/adw/adw1.html>.

Artsline: <http://www.dircon.co.uk/artsline/artsintr.htm>.

Artshare: <http://www.eclipse.co.uk/artshare>.

Association of Mouth and Foot Painting Artists (AMFPA):

<http://www.amfpa.com>.

Criptology: <http://www.ndirect.co.uk/~plbaldwin/magic/index.htm>  
Disability Arts in London: <http://www.dail.dircon.co.uk>  
Diorama Arts Centre: <http://www.personal.u-net.com/~diorama>  
English Regional Arts Pages: <http://www.arts.org.uk>  
Heart 'n Soul Music Theatre: <http://www.heartnsoul.co.uk>  
National Disability Arts Forum: <http://www.ndaf.org>  
National Arts and Disability Center (USA) <http://nadc.ucla.edu>  
VSA Arts: <http://www.vsarts.org>  
West Midlands Disability Arts: <http://www.west-midlands.arts.org.uk>  
Working Title Writers: <http://www.workingtitle.demon.co.uk>

## 18.5 ICT sites

AbilityNet (making computer technology accessible to disabled people)  
<http://www.abilitynet.co.uk>  
ACE Centre-North: <http://dSPACE.dial.pipex.com/town/terrace/ac969>  
Aidis Trust (Computer Communication Systems): <http://www.aidis.org>  
British Computer Association of the Blind:  
<http://www.rnib.org.uk/bcab/welcome.htm>  
British Computer Society Disability Group: <http://www.becta.org.uk>  
British Educational and Communications Technology Agency:  
<http://www.becta.org.uk>  
Communication Aids for Language and Learning: <http://call-centre.cogsci.ed.ac.uk/CallHome>  
Computability: <http://www.bcs.org.uk/computab/index.htm>  
Computer Centre for People with Disabilities: <http://www.wmin.ac.uk/ccpd>  
Makaton: <http://www.makaton.mta.ca>  
Inclusive Technology: <http://www.inclusive.co.uk>  
SEMERC (can offer access audits of ICT in schools)<http://www.semerc.com>

## 18.6 Buildings/access sites

Access Ability: <http://www.Access-Ability.co.uk>  
Centre for Accessible Environments: <http://www.cae.org.uk>  
Centre for Housing Policy, University of York:  
<http://www.york.ac.uk/inst/chp/Welcome.htm>  
Centre for Universal Access in the Built Environment:  
<http://www.ulst.ac.uk/faculty/eng/SCOBEC/cua.html>  
Disability Access Rights Advice Service (DARAS): <http://www.daras.co.uk>  
Housing Corporation: <http://www.demon.co.uk/hcorp>  
Improving Accessibility ... Impaired Mobility (questionnaire):  
<http://www.newcastle.gov.uk/grasp.nsf/iaim/OpenForm>  
Institute on Independent Living: <http://www.independentliving.org/index.html>

National Housing Federation: <http://www.housing.org.uk>

Physical Activity & Disability: <http://info.lut.ac.uk/research/paad/home.html>

Sensory Trust (Environmental site): <http://www.sensorytrust.swinternet.co.uk>

Universal Design <http://www.universaldesign.com>

## 19. Feedback Form

### Disability Resource Directory 2000

New information will be sent out from time to time in the form of updates, which can be added to the ring binders. For example early in 2001 when the code of practice for the 2004 DDA regulations, at present under consultation, is available. We would also like to add up-to-date sources of advice, books, new websites and examples of good practice, as well as any omissions or corrections. Please use this form to let us know of anything you feel would be useful.

#### 1. Comments/Suggestions:

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## 2. Omissions/Corrections

| Page No/s | Omission/Correction |
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## 3. Additional sources of advice/books/organisations/websites

## 4. Case studies/Examples of good practice (Please give a brief description and your contact details)

**Name:**

**Organisation:**

**Address:**

**Tel:**