

## **D.H. Lawrence Birthplace Museum Access Policy**

**Name of museum:** *D.H. Lawrence Birthplace Museum*

**Name of governing body:** *Broxtowe Borough Council*

**Date on which this policy was approved:** 5 March 2024

**Date at which this policy is due for review:** 5 March 2029

### **Our commitment to Accessibility**

- This access policy reflects the commitment of the D.H. Lawrence Birthplace Museum and its governing body to providing the widest possible access, and to enable audiences from all sections of the community to enjoy the use of the museum, collections and services
- The D.H. Lawrence Birthplace Museum recognises there are many and varied barriers to access
- This policy will establish priorities and help to guide and shape the work of the D.H. Lawrence Birthplace Museum in considering access in all projects, services and management decisions. An access audit will be carried out every five years, and a subsequent Access Plan will be implemented and followed
- Our policy is to build accessibility into everything we do from services available at the museum, to the information and communication related to the services and to the staff providing them
- Improving access to services for disabled people improves access to services for everyone, including people who might not consider themselves being disabled but would appreciate easier access and friends/family of disabled users. If a property is accessible, it will be relevant to more people and valued by a wider community, which helps to ensure its survival
- Our commitment to accessibility encompasses staff and volunteers as well as visitors and users

### Definition of Access

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

### Barriers to Access

The emphasis of the policy is on the removal of barriers to access, which can be:

- **Physical:** to enable people with physical disabilities to reach and appreciate every part of the museum service. Physical barriers can also exist for the elderly and of people caring for young children
- **Sensory:** to enable those with impaired vision or hearing to enjoy and appreciate the museum's building, exhibitions and collections
- **Intellectual:** to enable people with learning disabilities to engage with and enjoy the museum and its collections. We also recognise that people learn in different ways and will provide interpretation in a range of learning styles
- **Cultural:** to consider the needs of people for whom English is not a first language, or whose knowledge of English history and culture may be limited
- **Emotional and attitudinal:** to ensure that the museum environment and workforce are welcoming to visitors from all sections of the community
- **Financial:** we will take into account that ability to pay can be a barrier to access for some people and we will offer such people opportunities to access the museum service

### Access to the Museum Building

- The D.H. Lawrence Birthplace Museum is a listed building and some physical adaptations, which would make it more accessible, are not possible or extremely difficult to undertake. Historic buildings regulations and Health and Safety laws must all be considered when considering changes. However, efforts will always be made to achieve as much reasonable accessibility as possible

## **Overview and Scrutiny Working Group**

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- Where physical access is not possible, alternative means of offering the service will be considered ensuring that solutions offer an equal degree of dignity at all times
- We will highlight access difficulties as well as access achievements to allow disabled people to make their own decisions about our service

### **Access to Collections and Learning**

- We will provide various means of access to the collections to visitors onsite, including displays, handling items, translation sheets, events and digital access tours
- We will provide access to our collection and the heritage and legacy of D.H. Lawrence offsite and beyond the museum's geographical reach through: outreach to various sites, organisations and events; loans of exhibitions to other sites; digital tours; loan boxes; other ways of engagement such as Arts Award and Writing Competitions
- We will promote the museum's offering through media coverage and on-line services such as social media
- We will provide learning opportunities for different audiences and levels of ability and tailor our tours to the needs of specific groups.
- We will ensure that exhibition information is written in clear language without unnecessary jargon or pretension and that any videos contain subtitles
- We will endeavour to make more collections items available for audience engagement with due regard to the Collections Care and Conservation Policy (for condition checking and technical assessment, to check the object can be safely used and to see if conservation is needed), the Collections Information Policy (for recording when, how and by whom the object is used), and the Collections Development Policy (which includes the museum's mission statement, aims and objectives)

### **Access to general services**

- Our front of house team will ensure that all visitors receive a warm and friendly welcome as well as appropriate and sensitive treatment
- We will train all staff in disability equality and awareness and ensure all staff are aware of the Access Policy and Access Plan

## **Overview and Scrutiny Working Group**

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- We will ensure that signage is appropriate and clear
- We will promote access availability for appropriate events
- The comfort of our visitors will be considered when planning interpretation, and exhibition layout, including in the historic rooms.

### **Access to Communication**

- We will make information on the service accessible to disabled people before and during their visit through an access statement available on-line or with relevant information on marketing material
- We will follow guidelines from the Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB) regarding clear print
- We will produce promotional material suitable for all or provide alternative formats
- We will provide a range of ways that people can communicate with us such as email, telephone, social media and in person
- We will work to ensure that our website is fully accessible
- We will promote the museum and its narrative using a range of media to maximise engagement with diverse audiences.
- We will evaluate our services and projects to ensure they meet the provision of this policy. We will consult users and non-users on new developments, and we will communicate our future plans to them when appropriate