

Sherborne Museum : Summary of Access Review

October 2016

1. Overview of Physical Access

1.1 Sherborne Museum is a relatively small building with no lift access to its first floor displays, a constrained entrance and limited circulation spaces. Despite these fundamental constraints, the team have worked hard to provide a decent level of physical access where feasible. The following pertains:

1.2 The museum is located within the town centre area with relatively level access across a streetscape; some uneven paving needs to be negotiated but is not prohibitive. The museum has no designated car park but public car parking is relatively close at hand and is clearly signposted.

1.3 The museum has a double entrance with two relatively heavy doors which are not power assisted. The main door to the Museum is 33 inches wide. However, there is good visibility as the doors have large glass panels and during open season the inner door is generally propped open wide to facilitate the free flow of visitors. There are good light levels within the entrance lobby.

1.4 Wheelchair access is limited to the ground floor; unfortunately listed building and spatial constraints prohibit the provision of a stair lift. There is, however, a DVD screen available for a 'virtual tour'. A Sensory Trail is also available to enhance the visits of all those who might benefit from tactile, sensorimotor and proprioceptive experience. Support dogs of all kinds are welcomed. Out of hours visits and personal tours can be arranged by appointment to accommodate all needs. There is an accessible WC.

1.5 For the ambulant disabled, there is a continuous handrail on the main flight of stairs and the steps have colour contrasting edges. All doors to public areas have vision panels. A hearing loop is provided in the reception area.

1.6 The museum is well lit, without compromising conservation standards, to facilitate ease of movement and maximum visibility. Seating is provided at suitable junctures.

2. Overview of Intellectual Access

2.1 Sherborne Museum has a good range of diverse interpretation to suit different learning styles. Graphics and text labels are written in plain English and are clear and succinct. Stronger room/banner panelling is currently being developed.

2.2 There is good provision for younger visitors in the Gardener Room and displays make good use of visual material and images, so are not unduly text heavy.

2.3 Sherborne excels in its provision of programming for visitors with particular needs, ranging from work with users with dementia (Memory Café) to an early birds scheme for visitors with autism and family programming in school holiday periods.

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