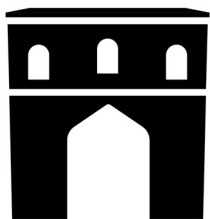


Sherborne Museum

Access Policy – July 2025



SHERBORNE museum

ACCESS POLICY

July 2025 – July 2028

Sherborne Museum

Access Policy – July 2025

Version Control		
Version 1.0	First version	
Version 2.0	Novated from SMA to CIO and updated	December 2018
Version 2.1	Addition to paragraph 5	December 2021
Version 2.2	Minor changes to wording (staff/volunteers; visitors/users)	July 2025

Review Procedure	
Name of governing body:	Sherborne Museum Board of Trustees
Date on which this policy was approved by governing body:	July 2025
Policy review procedure:	Published and reviewed from time to time, at least once every three years.
Date at which this policy is due for review:	July 2028

Mission Statement

Our mission is to increase public awareness, appreciation and understanding of Sherborne's natural, historic and cultural heritage through the acquisition, preservation and display of a unique collection of items that are particularly relevant to the area.

We will play an active role in the community, creating a centre of inspiration, education and enjoyment for all, while providing excellent standards of customer service. We will endeavour to reduce all physical, cultural, social, intellectual, financial and psychological barriers to access. Bearing in mind our commitment to future generations, our policies will be governed by the principles of resilience and sustainability and governed by the Museum Association's Code of Ethics.

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1. Introduction

We recognise access as something which is made possible when physical, cultural, social, financial, intellectual, psychological and emotional barriers to learning from and enjoyment of the Museum are removed, reduced or overcome.

2. Our commitment

This Policy supports our Mission Statement by providing a framework that strives to include all our users, potential users and volunteers. We will make our collections and building accessible by removing as many barriers to access as practical within the limits of budgetary, legal and planning considerations. We are committed to developing a programme of activities and events designed to involve, educate and engage groups from a wide range of backgrounds and all sectors of Sherborne's community.

- **Physical:** We aim to maintain buildings and facilities that are as physically accessible as possible within the confines of our Grade II listed building.
- **Intellectual:** We aim to provide information in a range of formats appropriate to the needs of a wide range of users.
- **Emotional:** We aim to provide a good standard of customer care to ensure all visitors feel welcome and comfortable in our museum. This is upheld by our Customer Care Policy.
- **Financial:** We aim to keep admission free and other charges as low as possible to ensure that as many people as possible are able to access our services.

3. Consultation and audiences

- We will regularly consult and evaluate our services with users and employ this information to ensure our services meet their needs.
- We will identify and consult with non-users to reduce barriers to participation.
- The museum is committed to developing and widening its audiences.

4. Community Links and Outreach

- We are committed to developing links to new and existing audiences, especially through partnership with other community and educational organisations.
- The museum will maintain outreach options for those unable to visit the museum, for example through the Loans and Memory Box scheme for audiences in schools, care homes and hospitals.
- The museum is committed to providing volunteer opportunities and seeks to recruit volunteers from diverse backgrounds and different abilities. The recruitment and management of volunteers is guided by our Volunteer Policy.

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5. Premises

- The museum is committed to providing full access to all areas of its buildings and facilities where appropriate. There are limitations due to the physical constraints of a Grade II listed building, particularly in the upper gallery and workroom areas, although measures have been taken to mitigate these. Public access is restricted, however, in the upper workrooms, in compliance with GDPR regulations, and individuals are only allowed by invitation and under supervision by museum personnel.
- The museum aims to fulfil all opening hours as stated in its publicity, subject to volunteer availability and the safety/security of the building.
- Information for potential visitors explaining opening times, services and access to collections is available in brochures, by telephone, via e-mail, social media and on our website.

6. Collections

- The museum is committed to increasing public access to the collections and associated information, while extending knowledge and understanding of our local heritage.
- Collections are continually being updated and developed to better reflect the diversity of the local area.
- We will provide varied means of access to the collections, via displays, temporary exhibitions, loans, object handling, events and activities.
- Members of the public are able to make relevant enquiries to the curator and other research volunteers via request forms available from the website and at the reception desk. We endeavour to answer these within 30 working days. The Curator is available to arrange mutually convenient appointments for the purposes of identification requests or the donation of artefacts. Private tours are available out of hours by appointment.
- Archival photos and photographs of objects in the collection may be viewed via the ground floor digital database. We are committed to making our collections available digitally as far as possible.
- The museum produces in-house media, articles and digital material to raise awareness of our collections and local interests.

7. Information and communications

- The needs of visitors are taken into account when preparing and presenting the collections' information and interpretation in the galleries and online. We will ensure all information and communications (including brochures, labels and website) follow good practice and the museum's guidelines for text and style.
- The museum website includes user-defined text size and colours for increased accessibility.

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- The museum will provide levels of information and interpretation to suit a range of audiences and abilities. Information on displays will be provided in a range of formats, e.g. text labels, large print, film, interactive and audio as resources allow.
- The museum aims to keep the public informed of its collections, temporary displays and events through appropriate publicity including social media.
- The museum aims to present labelling and marketing materials that respect diversity. Images or descriptions of the museum will reflect the diversity of the community.

8. Learning and programmes

- The museum will provide a range of suitable handling materials for different audiences and levels of ability.
- Educational materials will be made available for different audiences and abilities as required and as resources allow.
- Temporary exhibitions, events and activities will be programmed throughout the year for people with a wide range of abilities.

9. Customer Care

- Customer care is underpinned by a separate Customer Care Policy in which all volunteers are involved.
- All users will be treated with equal respect within an inclusive atmosphere and welcomed according to their needs.
- Where possible we will provide access for pushchairs and seating for the comfort and ease of visitors.
- Where possible we will provide adequate signage and navigation to suit a variety of needs.
- We provide facilities to meet visitors' needs including an accessible WC with baby-changing facilities.
- We are committed to providing a safe environment for all. We have procedures for the safe evacuation of visitors and volunteers in an emergency (see Emergency Plan). We have CCTV surveillance and a Safeguarding Policy in place.

10. Recruitment and Training

- The museum is committed to increasing the diversity of its workforce and all volunteers receive equal opportunities in recruitment and training.
- Volunteers undergo an appropriate induction process which includes training on equal opportunities, customer care, fire and security, and health and safety. Copies of the most relevant museum policies are contained in the Volunteer Handbook.

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11. Financial

- The museum is committed to keeping admission free for all.
- Events and activities are free of charge where possible to encourage families and so that all parts of the community can enjoy the museum's service.
- Small charges will be made for some events when it is deemed necessary to cover extra costs.