



**NATURAL  
HISTORY  
MUSEUM**

The duty to promote disability equality

# Disability Equality Scheme Report 2006

Natural History Museum, London  
Walter Rothschild Zoological Museum, Tring

# Disability Equality Scheme Report

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## The Directors' note

The Natural History Museum is a national body for scientific research and public engagement. We pride ourselves on being able to attract and engage with millions of people every year. As such, we are in the process of making sure we remove the barriers that prevent people from engaging with us and we welcome the focus the Disability Equality Scheme has brought. We recognise that while we have started our journey towards inclusivity, there is a lot still to be done, but our organisational commitment and individual enthusiasm will ensure we succeed.

The duty to promote disability equality is a statutory requirement, with the involvement of disabled people at the heart of the scheme. This will ensure our staff better understand disability issues.

We realise that leadership from the top of our organisation is essential for successful delivery of the Disability Equality Scheme. The Director of Human Resources (HR) is responsible for the delivery of the scheme, in collaboration with the various departments of the Museum.

Disability equality will develop to inform our corporate identity and responsibilities. Our revised funding agreement with the Department of Culture Media and Sport makes clear our commitment to involving disabled people. We have sought knowledge of best practice via local authorities and government agencies. We will ensure we demonstrate due regard to the requirements to promote disability equality alongside other competing requirements and that resources are well focused, for effective planning, action, monitoring and evaluation.

Given the ongoing nature of the duty, one of our key action points is to align the duty's requirements with Museum business and operations. This approach will utilise the Corporate Plan as a key mechanism. The formation of a Disability Equality Duty (DED) Forum and Disability Equality Duty (DED) representatives will engender collaboration across the organisation and address all areas of activity. Working with disabled users, the DED Forum and DED representatives will develop skills to support the evaluation process and increase staff understanding.



Dr Michael Dixon  
Director

“One in six people is disabled in some way. In Great Britain, approximately 10 million adults and 700,000 children are likely to be covered by the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act.”

## Purpose of the document

This document sets out the Natural History Museum's response to the revised Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995 (as amended 2005), which places a statutory requirement on the Museum to publish a Disability Equality Scheme by 4 December 2006.

We continue to address the DDA 1995 requirements as set out in Parts II Employment and III Goods, Facilities, Services and Premises. These new requirements as set out in the general and specific duties of the disability equality duty will not detract from our obligations to comply with other provisions of the DDA 1995.

This document is intended to make clear what plans we have in place towards meeting the duty's requirements and how those plans will be put into practice.

We acknowledge there is much work to do in addressing the duty's requirements and the importance of effectively involving disabled people in the development of the scheme from the earliest stages. This document sets out our progress to date.

### **Acknowledgements**

The production of the scheme is managed by Human Resources.

The draft copy for the report and its production was undertaken by the Public Engagement Group Access Advisor in collaboration with Museum staff and external agencies.

## Who we are

The Natural History Museum aims to maintain and develop its collections and use them to promote the discovery, understanding, responsible use and enjoyment of the natural world.

- We look after some 70 million specimens.
- We are the UK's premier institute for knowledge on the diversity of the natural world, conducting research of global impact and renown.
- We are the most visited attraction about the natural world in the UK. Between September 2005 and August 2006 we had a record 3.6 million visitors.
- Our latest count on staff members including science associates and volunteers was more than 1,500 people.
- Our latest count on volunteers was more than 300 people.
- Our latest count on scientific associates and scientific visitors from all over the world was more than 300 people.
- Learning is central to our mission. We provide expertise, collaboration and resources for learning, from school programmes to PhD education. Our learning programme reflects the needs and concerns of society and the government agenda for learning, particularly in science.
- The Darwin Centre is our new life sciences complex, built in two phases. It is a world first in science communication and highlights the important role the Museum plays in generating knowledge about the natural world.

## Challenges we face

There are significant examples throughout the Museum representing disabled people's interests, but as yet a coherent approach to addressing disability has not been in place. This is addressed currently by our diversity (workforce) policy and will be further addressed by the Diversity and Equality Strategy and its implementation, which covers age, disability, race, sexual orientation and religion/belief. This will also extend across the functions of the Museum addressing audience engagement, service provision, facilities and goods in order to fully represent the scope of our activity (see Actions).

Establishing and sustaining disability as a Museum priority as set out in the duty's requirements is now the new challenge for us. The Directors Group, the highest executive management board, has recently agreed commitment for disability equality and to actively ensure the agenda is adopted and embedded as part of how we do business. The Director of the Public Engagement Group has suggested the duty is an issue on which the Directors Group should report to the Trustees. A briefing for the Trustees on the duties and obligations of the new duty will take place in early 2007.

The Director of Human Resources is our new access champion for the Disability Equality Duty and will have overall responsibility for the effective strategic management of the duty's general and specific requirements. Delivery of the duty will take place across departments.

“The disability equality duty covers all functions and activities. Not just employment and service delivery, but budget setting, procurement, regulatory functions and setting the framework within which the organisation will deliver services.”

“If the Museum is to fulfil the duty's requirements, it must ensure the duty is adopted as a corporate responsibility by all departments.”

David Morris GLA 2006

The complexity of these requirements will call for considerable organisational ability, the identification of specialist staff skills, dedication and resources to ensure all areas of activity are addressed.

Implementation of the scheme's evaluation framework will demand top priority status for us in 2007. It will also need to be supported with relevant training for staff responsible for impact assessments and all that follows. Embarking on cultural change will also demand general and specific awareness training for all staff. Co-ordination of the duty's requirements, including training, has been tasked to senior management in HR. The role of other departments and their relevant contributions towards the production of the scheme is yet to be analysed. This will be a collaborative effort to engender Museum-wide support and ensure good co-ordination. The Communication Strategy, which has been formulated for internal communications, will commence with the publishing of the scheme.

The Museum is yet to engage thoroughly in the impact assessment process and therefore to identify the organisational changes and resources necessary to deliver disability equality. This means the information required for the three-year action plans cannot be presented at this stage. We know the methods by which we will activate the items identified for improvement have been identified, but they will require testing for feasibility and effectiveness.

We have a good track record of managing demanding requirements such as the new duty, by experience in centralising health and safety, pest control management and the environment ISO 14001:2004. These are examples where a corporate approach has been called for, co-ordinated and effectively implemented.

Involvement of disabled people has so far been focused on employees. A follow-up on staff contributions will be undertaken next year. Our plan to involve disabled people from a visitor's perspective and the identification of staff needs for involving disabled people is yet to be assessed and formulated by the new DED Forum and DED representatives.

In terms of the Museum gathering information and evidence, a mainstream and co-ordinated approach to disability equality has been identified as a responsibility of the DED Forum. Monitoring and evaluation measures will also need to be developed and established with the involvement of disabled people.

The priority items for development are the new training programme and establishing the DED Forum and representatives including disabled people externally. This will help us pilot the scheme's requirements.

## Seeking best practice

“It is vital the plan is not just aspirational, but has an achievable output.”

David Morris GLA 2006

The Museum will use the Disability Rights Commission's code of practice for the duty, including the related regulations, for implementing the duty's requirements. A compliance and engagement model for the scheme has been developed and was the basis for communicating the duty's requirements to Directors Group (see Appendices).

As an institution of international standing, we seek to reflect best practice in all our activities. We sought experience and advice on ways to effectively implement disability equality, from external agencies such as the Greater London Authority (GLA). The initial exercise to identify best practice examples was undertaken by our Access Adviser.

The GLA's Senior Disability Policy Adviser, David Morris, came to the Museum to debate the new duty's purpose and, by comparison with the authority's method of implementation, how we might demonstrate best practice in developing our scheme.

We also consulted with David, as a disabled person, on identifying meaningful ways to involve disabled people with us. It was suggested that by ensuring recognition of issues faced by disabled people in the workplace, this approach would act as a catalyst for change and by this process could re-monitor staff numbers.

The Equalities Unit at the GLA also collaborated with the Access Adviser to develop the template for our disability equality impact assessments.

### **Disability's identity**

The Head of Information and Research at the Disability Rights Commission has provided support and information explaining an effective methodology for collecting information and evidence. The Central Office of Information's disability communications expert came to the Museum at the request of the Head of Communications to look at our plans for helping us address our duty. The subsequent recommendations will be taken into account in the continued roll out of internal communications and later for external purposes to promote achievements, which involve disabled people, next year.

The Museum has been invited to collaborate in a research programme commissioned by the Department for Education and Skills, seeking data on disabled children and services. The proposed survey will concentrate on the development and evaluation of questions used to identify disabled children's needs, and in the process determine what service providers need to know. The potential collaboration will realise data for increasing understanding of disabled children and related services. The Museum currently attracts in excess of 150,000 school visits annually as part of our Formal Learning programme. The resource implications are yet to be discussed and formalised, but the project has great potential for progressing disability equality objectives, within the Museum.

The Office of Disability Issues has been consulted on a range of duty issues. Most recent correspondence expressed concerns the disability agenda could be lost under those of diversity particularly as disability is yet to establish its own identity within the organisation. Recognition of the Disability Rights Commission's position on single equality schemes was also raised as a suitable guide to best practice. The Victoria & Albert Museum, for instance, has recently allocated a new disability champion (Deputy Director of the Museum), to ensure disability is not the poor cousin under diversity. The issue of how organisations ensure their schemes cover the full range of their business, when responsibility is tasked to one area, was included in the discourse and suitable for later internal discussion at the Museum. The key message is creating shared ownership.



# Involving disabled people

To date, the Museum has involved disabled people from an employee perspective.

In order to make this process meaningful, we aim to set up a DED Forum including the trade unions, for disability equality issues.

The visitor perspective will involve an independent panel of disabled users from the local and wider community, to inform the decision-making process. To avoid duplication of effort and realise achievable outcomes, the focus will initially be aligned with project-based initiatives, which tie in with the Corporate Plan objectives. A number of suitable locations for 2007 have been identified, including an audit of permanent exhibitions and the Darwin Centre Two public offer programmes. Budgets for engaging with disabled people are yet to be formally agreed.

A key objective in devising the method of engagement is that the process is an enjoyable one and one that suits our corporate style. One of our key brand values is fun and advice has suggested we provide a reception event for the scheme, to attract disabled people into the Museum.

The DED Forum members will work closely with the DED representatives and disabled users on the impact assessments. Considering the diverse range of users required for involvement, it is suggested these groups are managed between Human Resources for work, Learning Department for audiences programming, Public Engagement Group for visitors (exhibition offer and service) and Science Group for collections.

The forum's remit for involving disabled users includes the following responsibilities:

- to represent an interest in how the Museum carries out its functions
- be involved at strategic stages of the scheme's development and production
- help identify the barriers faced by disabled people and potential unsatisfactory outcomes, to engender learning and understanding
- help determine what relevant information needs to be gathered
- help prioritise initiatives for the action plan by determining which have the greatest impact on disability equality
- monitor the key outcomes and success of the initiatives throughout the scheme

Engagement of disabled users will be as individuals, not to represent organisations, and by offering an area of expertise that has relevance to the project. Remuneration will be viewed as consultancy.

## Key actions for the scheme

- test suitability of the Corporate Plan for effectively aligning disability equality
- set-up Disability Equality Duty Forum
- design training programme for key members
- secure budgets for engaging with disabled people

“Involvement of disabled people should be smart, fit for purpose, relevant to the institution, so people can use it.”

David Morris GLA 2006

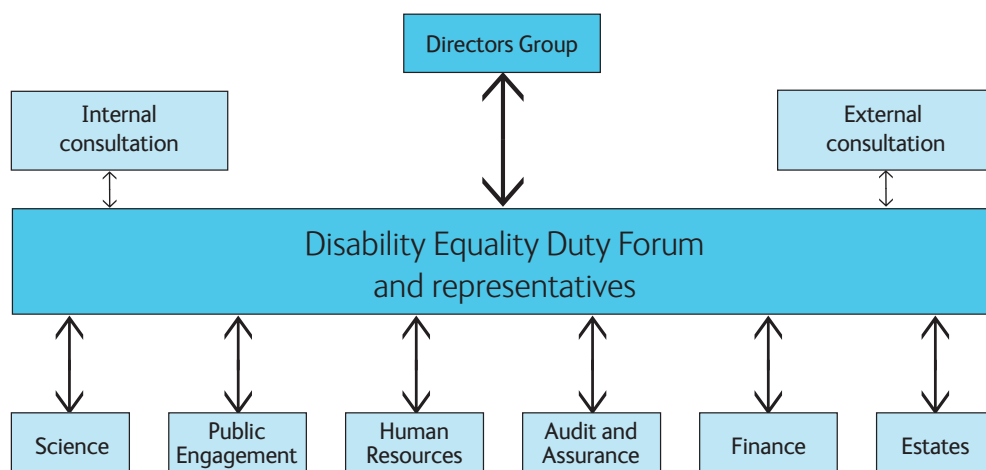
# Impact assessments

Pre-impact assessment and orientation of staff has been completed. This set in motion an engagement with staff members, including volunteers, and raised awareness of the new duty requirements across the Museum. The team involved six staff members from Human Resources and the Public Engagement Group. The team has already carried out an initial consultation with some 120 people across the Museum. The group discussions helped to identify Museum interest and the current level of involvement with disability-related activities via their work. Issues and barriers were documented and this exercise has prepared people for the full impact assessment process to be timetabled.

As a consequence of the pre-impact assessment consultation, Directors are nominating for the future DED representatives to cover all areas of Museum activity and the HR Director is setting up a DED Forum. All aspects of the disability duty are to be embedded in management processes, forward job plans and learning and development plans, hence making the link with the Corporate Plan. We will engage externally with the disability sector and comply with legislation to publish our scheme report, now in draft form, by 4 December 2006. Following a timetable to be agreed, objectives will be set to carry out impact assessments.

The DED Forum will co-ordinate disability equality issues. This is a Museum-wide initiative that will require shared ownership. To engender cross-department collaboration, which involves 27 departments, a self-auditing process developed by the Risk and Assurance Department is planned.

### Disability Equality Duty Forum relationships



“Wherever there are procedures to improve access, health and safety, rights and risks, there must be a system to test the results”

David Morris GLA 2006

“It is vital to have a good system to test what impact a policy or service might have.”

David Morris GLA 2006

### **The forum's remit includes the following responsibilities to:**

- involve disabled people in key aspects of the development of the scheme and agree terms of engagement
- be responsible for undertaking impact assessments on existing and proposed activities, policies and procedures on disabled equality
- undertake training and attend workshops to ensure contributions are effective
- realise duty requirements through projects and processes
- agree methodology and criteria for gathering of evidence and analysis of the information
- publish and promote a three-year action plan on how the information gathered will be put to use
- thereafter produce an annual report to review the effectiveness of the action plan, demonstrate appropriate outcomes and prepare subsequent schemes

### **Considerations on methodology**

The impact assessment template developed by the Public Engagement Group to date has been trialled with some departments, with an appraisal of the template to proceed prior to implementation in early 2007.

The impact assessment process is an outcome-based initiative and will require us to also identify acceptable mitigation measures and alternative approaches, where change is unfeasible. It is noted that the majority of changes will be realised via low-cost measures such as policy, practices and procedures. Identifying success indicators for proposed outcomes with disabled people and building in monitoring for future adverse impact(s) are key considerations.

### **In brief the process can be viewed as:**

- consideration of the available information
- criteria to determine full assessment or not ie where relevance is high, major scale or significant, or conversely minor [policy] which has a major impact on disabled people
- assessment of the effect the policy or decision would have on disabled people
- consider mitigation measures and alternative approaches
- identify success indicators for outcomes
- build in monitoring for future adverse impact(s)

### **Key actions for the scheme**

- introduce robust and rigorous methodology for the process
- enable impact assessment template developed in association with the Equalities Unit at the GLA, and we will consider the recommendations of the DRC when published
- identify input and skills required from disabled people participating
- identify training needs for DED Forum members and DED representatives and disabled people involved in the process
- secure budget and commitment to compiling, researching, monitoring and evaluating disability evidence and data

## Action plans

“We must think  
and act in an  
anticipatory way”

Public Engagement Group  
Access Adviser 2006

The action plan items arising from the impact assessments will be embedded within the Corporate Plan. In determining what is achievable, it is understood that linking items and initiatives to regular practices such as procedures and projects, is helpful. In addition it is in our interest that resources targeted to disability equality-related initiatives are well focused, for effective planning, action, monitoring and evaluation.

### **Aligning the impact assessment process with the Corporate Plan**

Our Corporate Plan sets out to inform all other planning activities in the Museum and to provide a context for all that we do. It is updated annually and provides a framework for making decisions about the allocation of resources. The plan reflects our 'one Museum' value and is at the heart of the revised system for forward job planning that requires individuals and managers to relate objectives to strands of the Corporate Plan (and our competency frameworks).

The plan includes lines of accountability, which will support the development and progression of the action plan items identified in the impact assessment process. The Corporate Plan needs to further evolve clearer priorities – projects, programmes, services and processes – that can be seen to directly deliver our disability commitment and facilitate better integration with the scheme. The proposed DED Forum and DED representatives will be tasked with the responsibility of undertaking the impact assessments and involving disabled users in the process.

### **Key actions for the scheme**

- embed ownership of the scheme across the Museum for Public Engagement, Science and Human Resources (HR), through group and departmental planning and in synergy with the Corporate Plan
- include the priorities of disabled people, as determined by the DED Forum
- integrate more effectively and clearly the priority work areas of the scheme into the overall Corporate Plan while indicating achievable items by timetable
- provide evidence of where the problems lie and put into effect measures for gathering information and acting on evidence
- embed a process of risk management in the planning, operational, monitoring and review activities

## Gathering information and evidence

Research and evaluation for visitors and staff currently focus on marketing, exhibitions, visitor experience and our website (See Appendix B – visitor research).

We recognise our current ways of capturing disabled visitor information realises only limited evidence of the experience and barriers faced. The extensive information available throughout the Museum, via the key interface areas, may be currently shared but not effectively utilised, at this stage.

The last ALVA Quality of Service benchmarking exercise, which compares our performance against other leisure attractions, revealed we are not responding well in terms of disabled visitor satisfaction and that we have a lower than average score in comparison to other leisure attractions.

The following data is taken from the survey period October 05 – July 06, as mentioned above.

Percentage of disabled visitors:

Natural History Museum 3%, heritage sector 6%, attractions sector as a whole 5%, leisure sector 5%, museum sector 4%

### How well does the site meet the needs of disabled visitors?

	NHM	All attractions	Museum & gallery	Heritage	Leisure
<b>Mean score</b>	0.54	0.68	0.84	0.6	0.64
<b>Excellent</b>	9%	15%	18%	14%	11%
<b>Good</b>	45%	50%	55%	47%	56%
<b>Just OK</b>	37%	22%	21%	23%	21%
<b>Poor</b>	9%	8%	6%	9%	9%
<b>Very poor</b>		3%		4%	3%
<b>Don't know</b>		1%		2%	

These findings highlight the need to initiate more qualitative research and information to understand why our site is poorly rated and how we might make improvements, that are meaningful to disabled visitors.

### Key actions for the scheme

- provide staff training (including external where appropriate) for information and evidence gatherers
- ensure disability equality is mainstreamed with existing and proposed museum visitor research initiatives
- establish a new research and evaluation facility to support focused, qualitative research on disability equality issues
- devise methods to capture information about disabled users at key interface areas
- review the disability question, its location and usefulness
- introduce monitoring and review mechanisms to identify barriers and to measure success, with the involvement of disabled people
- raise the profile of disabled visitors in the Mystery Visitor Programme when re-tendering in 2007

**The following section aims to set out the key strands for the disability equality agenda and some of the relevant areas of activity with examples to illustrate.**

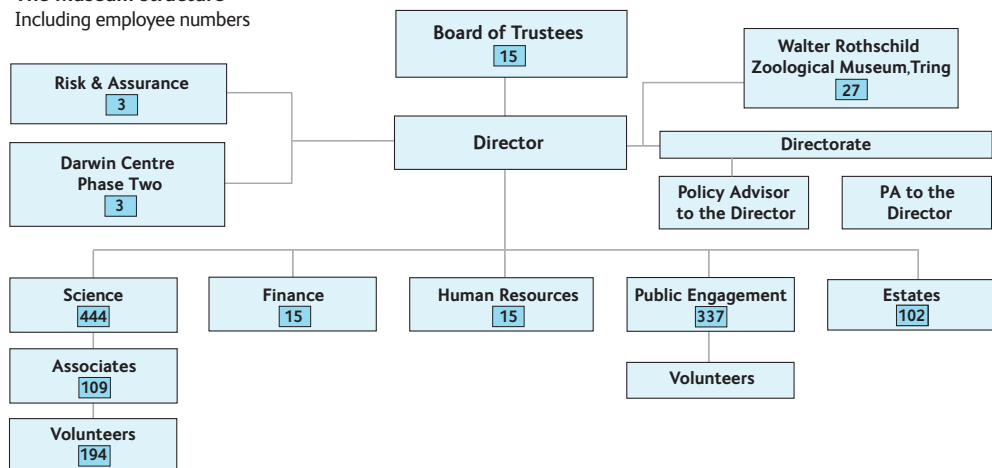
# Our people

## Employees and volunteers

**Museum case study 2006: all departments in the Museum have been contacted to further raise awareness of the disability duty and to prepare us for the process of making full impact assessments.**

More than 1,500 people work at the Museum. They may be paid as employees or engaged as workers via agencies (not included in the table), or welcomed as volunteers and voluntary scientific associates. The public, outward-facing jobs are mainly in Public Engagement Group. These are the people actively delivering and anticipating the disability equality duty for visitors. People in other areas are engaging to deliver the duty as they carry out their functions and deliver policies relevant to Science, Estates, Human Resources, Risk and Assurance, Finance and the Directorate.

**The Museum structure**  
Including employee numbers



## Diversity Strategy

HR is developing a Diversity Strategy and implementation plan in the context of the Museum’s existing commitment to its diversity (see Appendix C – diversity policy) and equal opportunities policies, including age, disability, race, sexual orientation and religion/belief. The strategy draws together in one diversity plan our existing and embedded best practice in: recruitment and selection, communications, performance management, learning and development, policy management, business diversity plans, diversity functions and measurement and reporting.

We are an accredited double tick disability symbol user and are positive about disability and making volunteering opportunities as accessible as possible. As part of our Management Development Programme and to reflect recent changes in the law, such as disability and age discrimination, our Learning and Development team is implementing recruitment and selection training. Managers are being specifically targeted because of the number of recruitment and selections they are involved in or the size of the teams they manage. Over the next 12 months this event will become compulsory for all managers involved in interview panels and it is one of our essential competencies for managers. We need to ensure all our managers, no matter how experienced, are using the same Museum recruitment procedures, are up to date with the latest legislation, including age and disability discrimination, and develop the skills and techniques needed to conduct effective selection interviews.

To ensure the framework is clearly and openly in place for disabled people to successfully participate both in the selection process and in the public body itself, HR will improve existing practice to introduce a simple and streamlined mechanism for putting in place reasonable adjustments. For existing disabled employees or employees who become disabled we can streamline this by using it at the annual review meetings they attend. HR has a 'get back' questionnaire developed by the RNIB that enables disabled people to communicate their requirements. We will seek to improve how we publicise our use of this process to gain information on reasonable adjustments during the recruitment process as well as during employment.

### **Raising awareness via staff involvement**

Twenty people who work for the Museum have a self-declared disability. All have been asked if they would like to be included in the initial or subsequent meetings to raise awareness and conduct impact assessments. This is the start of our action to involve people who have disabilities.

### **Steps forward**

We have agreed (i) to nominate DED representatives to cover all areas of the Museum's activities, (ii) to create a DED Forum, (iii) to commit to embed this duty into all project management processes, and (iv) to look to the DED Forum to advise the Museum on how best to engage with the disability sector. We will ensure authority and responsibility are invested in people to fulfil the duty by writing these into forward job plans, and where necessary into learning and development plans. All these plans link with the overall aims set out in our Corporate Plan.

### **Key actions for the scheme**

- establish staff forums for disability equality areas
- embed disability equality training requirements into the centralised HR training programme
- evaluate organisational and training requirements for the DED Forum and DED representatives
- ensure emergency evacuation procedures for disabled staff and visitors are reviewed and related training needs identified
- review our Diversity Policy relative to disability equality issues and requirements, involving disabled people
- introduce a simple and streamlined mechanism for putting in place reasonable adjustments
- consider introducing a positive recruitment campaign for disabled people
- ensure management establishes momentum for disability equality across the Museum, maintained with adequate and ongoing support and resources

## Our visitors and stakeholders

The Museum is committed to offering the widest possible access to our buildings, Learning events including exhibitions and the collections, broadening our audiences and developing electronic resources to improve access to the information that our collections contain.

Source: Museum Statement of Policy on Access and Social Inclusion 2004

### Implementing new policy for disability equality

In recent years, the Museum has gained considerable experience of demanding tasks equivalent to the implementation of the duty to promote disability equality. Examples include the Freedom of Information Act, health and safety programme, fire risk assessments, integrated pest management, environment management systems and the security review.

If based on these examples, the new Disability Equality Scheme will entail a management policy agreed by the Trustees and the implementation of local policies based on a centrally developed model. Procedural guidance on issues and advice on legal compliance and best practice would also be required.

A new policy for disability equality is scheduled for early 2007, replacing the summary statement of the new policy on access and social inclusion 2004 (see Appendices). Involvement of disabled people in the review process will be sought, to ensure the document has relevance and meaning.

#### Key action for the scheme

- review existing disability policy in line with disability equality agenda

### Interpretation and design in the project process

There are several staged approvals within our Project Process, which offer the opportunity to embed disability equality.

More specifically, in our interpretative exhibition programme a Design Review Group (focussed on the design aesthetic, brand identity, audience fit, materials, conservation, science communication needs) and also a Content Review Group (normally reviewing content interpretation and learning potential) are used. These processes and groups serve to act as not only a catalyst for inclusive design ideas but also a key design/content approval gateway.

A more detailed observance of access, health and safety and visitor circulation concerns is covered by one-to-one meetings between the project manager and members of the design and/or project team with the appropriate consultant. While this approach has delivered improvements to physical access for our exhibitions, there are further challenges to be addressed in addressing sensory and intellectual barriers.

#### Key actions for the scheme

- raise awareness of key disability equality considerations for project process managers (project managers, directors and champions) and procurement documentation
- embed disability awareness and commitment in content and design review groups and assess training needs

Project and process based initiatives will progress disability equality issues.

David Morris GLA 2006



## What is the risk of excluding some audiences by specifically targeting others?

Head of Interpretation, Natural History Museum 2006

### Social inclusion and Darwin Centre Phase Two

The following excerpt highlights some proposed actions to remedy current shortfalls in provision for disabled people.

'This document proposes a clearer path for incorporating social inclusion within the Darwin Centre Phase Two public offer. Our purpose is to clarify target audiences from underserved communities, assess the risks of excluding potential audiences, and most importantly set a framework from which the Interpretation Department can create successful exhibitions.

The working group includes members from Marketing, Interpretation, Interactive Media and Learning (Audience Advocacy and the New Audiences team). This paper intends to stimulate discussion that may also lead to wider discussion about inclusivity across the public offer. The aim is to provide a transparent assessment of the "costs" of inclusion.

In the longer term, the Museum desires a visitor profile which is more reflective of the London ethnic, social economic and disabled people demographic.

This means our interpretation needs to be vetted by community representatives who will assist us in actively shaping content. Involving disabled people is a key consideration'.

Source: Paper on Social Inclusion in Darwin Centre Phase Two, Head of Interpretation, Natural History Museum 2006

#### Key actions for the scheme

- create access/inclusion working group to discuss the issues and provide guidelines on the implementation of the Mathews Millman audience priority findings for exhibitions – in relation to disabled people, diverse ethnic backgrounds and social class
- create an access/inclusion statement of what the project team plans to do regarding potential visitors (especially disabled people, diverse ethnic backgrounds and social class) and include it in all exhibition development briefs

### Learning

The Learning Department is responsible for the daily events programme within the Museum, which supports our exhibition galleries in delivering effective science communication on natural diversity and evolution through a wide range of formal and informal activities.

There are real opportunities in this area to engage disabled people directly within our exhibitions. Our ethos in developing activities and products has to move beyond the New Audiences focus on black and minority ethnic and socio-economically excluded (C2DE or MS-SEC 5–8) audiences to include disability. There is clear commitment to reviewing and broadening the reach of existing events and activities programme in conjunction with disabled users, which is a positive start.

As the key deliverer of activities to the public and schools, Learning is well placed and influential in the effective delivery of disability equality. But resources and priorities need further development to fully realise these opportunities.

#### Key actions for the scheme

- review the current and future Learning offer to identify ways to increase engagement with disabled people
- identify training needs for Learning staff to build skills across the department
- identify resources for targeted marketing of exhibitions and learning events

Public perception of the Museum is that it is not accessible and that historic buildings traditionally do not enable actual engagement.

David Morris GLA 2006

### Website

**Museum case study 2006: disabled people were involved in the new site's design and will be involved for any future major design changes.**

The Museum's Interactive Media Department oversees our website and on-site interactives, either as information services (gallery information kiosks) or interactives that serve as part of the interpretation within exhibitions.

All Interactive Media projects follow the project process and meet Museum web design guidelines including specifications based on user testing, which involved disabled people. Disabled people were involved in the initial setup of the new website launched in 2006 and there remains an on-going commitment to this process for any project that requires a new service, major design paradigm change or where a product is previously untested.

#### Key action for the scheme

- involve disabled people in upcoming projects such as the redesign and update of the gallery kiosks

### Estates

**Museum case study 2006: to improve access and circulation widths in the public galleries, some display cabinets in the Museum's two main access routes have been relocated. The existing carpets have now been replaced with wooden flooring.**

The Masterplan for development of the Museum estate was drawn up three years ago. It will be revisited in February 2007 to assess the impact of access issues and to plan for better access and circulation routes into and around the Museum (including vertical access and exit), better facilities, including those in the back of house area, improved gallery development and public offer and improved facilities for retail and catering.

#### Key action for the scheme

- embed consideration of the disability equality duty within the management of the Museum's Masterplan known as The Museum Development Framework

### Commercial Department

**Museum case study 2004: the Museum Shop was developed with hard flooring and improved access to all product displays.**

**Museum case study 2005-06: access to the Ice Rink, opened for the first time in Christmas 2005, was improved before re-opening this season, by installing an enclosed platform lift as a result of a disabled access review.**

## Our Business and Commercial Strategy

As a major visitor attraction, the Museum is in a highly competitive market. In the longer term, dependence on government grant in aid will not be sufficient for us to compete adequately with private sector leisure and educational facilities that can charge for entry.

The aims of the Commercial Strategy are the basis of all our commercial development and are dependent on a close working relationship with Development, Marketing and Visitor Services. Implementation of the aims will be through business plans and business development cases for each operating area. The overall guardianship of the commercial activities rests with the Commercial Strategy Group.

Some of the key areas we include are optimising the space available for commercial activities and investing in key capital developments such as the development of our catering and retail facilities so as to maximise external opportunities eg the development of Exhibition Road and the Underground tunnel, and the Olympics, including the paralympic games, in 2012. The greatest opportunities for profit generation are Events and Retail business and a significant opportunity exists in establishing our Catering Plan in 2006.

Of the seven core strategic aims, two have particular relevance for disability equality and the involvement of disabled people. These are to expand customer reach and build customer loyalty. The delivery of this is bound up in work to create and develop a customer database using Microsoft CRM (Customer Relationship Management) software. The CRM will build up a transactional database offering us the chance to know our customers better and more effectively target their wants and needs. This improved information about our visitors will importantly inform our business analysis and planning.

### Key action for the scheme

- Consider integrating the Business Case for Disability, to help expand customer reach and boost income figures

## The Directorate

### The Department of Culture, Media and Sport DCMS funding agreement

The Museum realises the importance of the impact assessment in developing our public offer for disabled people.

Assessment of the effectiveness of projects that support Public Service Agreement PSA 3 are of particular relevance to disability equality as the requirement facilitates the development of staff skills focused on priority groups, which includes disabled people (See Appendix D – the Museum's corporate governance documents).

Qualitative information has been identified as an organisational shortfall for the Museum and the PSA3 segment should provide a means to address a number of aspects underlying disability equality principles (See Appendices, Statutory requirements – principles of the general duty).

### Key action for the scheme

- identify projects presently scheduled within the Corporate Plan, where this DCMS requirement can be developed and demonstrated as a best practice initiative

“The Department of Work and Pensions currently estimates that disabled people have £40BN disposable income per annum.”

DWP Press release –  
Information and Analysis  
Directorate 2005

“One recognised shortfall is that access to the collections relies largely on the user having visual access, in order to use the collections.”

Science Group Policy Advisor,  
Natural History Museum 2006

## Science Group

### **Collections management policies**

In Science terms, the understanding of access is generic in that the collections are open to the public. The actual means by which the user accesses the collection is not however explained within Science policy, practices or procedures.

Alternative arrangements such as specimen handling are in place, but are not formally promoted as part of the visitor offer.

Inherent barriers identified in the existing collections could, for example, usefully inform the development of new collections.

Electronic media allows us to develop access to the collections in different ways, for example a written description of a specimen. One to one contact between a visitor and staff member may be considered an optimum means of engaging and imparting knowledge and understanding, but requires resources.

### **Key actions for the scheme**

- complete the review of public tours (with/by Learning) which provide access to the collections
- ensure workplace arrangements do not exclude existing and potential disabled employees
- review emergency evacuation procedures for disabled visitors and staff
- review key areas and related procedures where the public interface with Science

# The Communication Strategy

The overarching aim of the communications campaign is to communicate the key milestones of the initiative. It also aims to engage people in the reasons behind the scheme and the benefits of it, and celebrate the achievements and progress that result\*.

\*It should be noted that the Disability Equality Scheme is not just about prescribed actions, but also about engendering involvement of disabled people and change. Internal communications language and tone will reflect this.

## Internal Communication Strategy

There are two ways in which internal communications are involved with the scheme.

First, communications about the scheme must reach internal audiences. Secondly, changes to established internal communications channels and methods must occur to ensure they satisfy the scheme. As part of the process we have sought expert communications advice and our action plan will contain both specific recommendations on improving communication with disabled people and a detailed strategy for engaging with, and communicating the efforts enshrined in, the scheme appropriately.

Given the nature of the scheme, there will be very specific information needs depending on the audience. Most of the effort and support will go to the primary audience, heads of department (the direct reports of Directors Group), given they hold the main responsibility.

For the secondary audiences, that is all staff, volunteers, science associates and the Directors Group, in the time up to 4 December 2006 deadline, the main goal will be to provide understanding and awareness. After the deadline, there will be a change in focus towards celebrating success, and marking progress. In the case of Directors Group, their key role will be as advocate, and communications activities will be tailored accordingly.

### Key actions for the scheme

- to focus energy on ideas for general awareness raising/training/perception challenging to be rolled out in 2007, which would reflect the greater progress and momentum of the Scheme
- undertake a dedicated photoshoot to improve the representation of disabled people in our corporate and promotional materials

# Compliance and engagement model

The minimum requirements of the general and specific duty as set out in the regulations are as follows. Recommendations to manage the duty are represented separately as new mechanisms and best practice. Note that Objectives represent the key elements of the evaluation framework.

## 1. Preparation and publication of the Disability Equality Scheme

Objective	Actions, outcomes and success indicators
<p><b>Publish a Disability Equality Scheme,</b> showing how we intend to fulfil the duty requirements</p> <p>Under section 49A(1) and duties under these regulations (Ref: 2–1)</p> <div data-bbox="159 2011 446 2132" style="background-color: #0070C0; color: white; padding: 5px; border-radius: 10px; display: inline-block;"> <b>Organisational change and raising awareness of duty</b> </div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• statement of corporate governance and management of duty requirements</li> <li>• statement of how disabled people have been involved in the development of the scheme</li> <li>• statement on what plans are in place to meet the duty's requirements and how those plans will be put into practice</li> <li>• Directors Group signs off minimum requirements and enters relevant items into the Risk Schedule for 2007/08</li> <li>• scheme report signed off by Director</li> <li>• publish first Disability Equality Scheme [report]</li> <li>• promote our achievements and plans for disability equality</li> <li>• publish a revised/subsequent scheme every three years minimum, review annually</li> </ul> <p><b>Management approach</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• statement of our level of commitment to disability equality</li> <li>• link duty outputs with Corporate Plan</li> <li>• Communications Strategy for duty</li> <li>• agree source/focus of disability expertise within Museum to advise and co-ordinate duty requirements</li> <li>• agree to a forum for co-ordinating disability equality issues for HR, Science and Public Engagement groups</li> <li>• disability equality training scheme to address duty requirements and to identify barriers from a social model perspective</li> </ul> <p><b>Best practice – commitment within the life of the first scheme</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• take the opportunity when revising the first scheme in three years time, to adopt best practice standards – in the meantime look at identifying &amp;/or creating best practice examples learning from other organisations and adopting these measures where appropriate</li> <li>• integrate business case for disability (£40bn pa disposable income estimated by DWP)</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> A best practice example from the Treasury is the idea of 'rolling' disability equality champions (passed between Directors). Applying this example has helped ensure all sectors are involved and addressed in relation to the duty.</p>

## 2. Process for Disability Equality Scheme development

Objective	Actions, outcomes and success indicators
<p><b>Impact assessments</b> of existing and proposed policies and practices – or the likely impact – undertaken with agreed methodology</p> <p><b>To understand disabled people's requirements through involvement and to identify gaps in provision</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• method statement for involving disabled people in identifying barriers within the built environment, in our practices and attitudes and also in prioritising items for the action plans that follow</li> <li>• prioritised timetable for impact assessments</li> </ul> <p><b>Management approach</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• agree Museum approach for involving disabled people on various requirements in order to identify outcomes and resource implications</li> <li>• agree prioritised list of relevant corporate documents to be impact assessed</li> </ul> <p><b>Best practice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• disabled people to help in monitoring progress and determining criteria for successful outcomes</li> </ul>
<p><b>Three-year action plans</b> – proposed steps towards fulfilment of the scheme</p> <p><b>To create momentum for change</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify prioritised items from the impact assessment process and locate within three-year action plans</li> <li>• consider mitigation measures and alternative approaches</li> <li>• commit to achievable items identified in the impact assessments and embed where practicable in existing/ongoing projects</li> <li>• build in monitoring for future adverse impact(s)</li> <li>• review on a yearly basis</li> </ul> <p><b>Management approach</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• agree Museum approach to embed prioritised items from the impact assessment process</li> <li>• agree to align with Museum's corporate and business plans, including financial objectives</li> <li>• agree to establish lines of accountability</li> </ul> <p><b>Best practice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• target user groups via programme development</li> </ul>

Objective	Actions, outcomes and success indicators
<p><b>Arrangements for gathering information and 'evidence'</b> on the effect of our policies and practices</p> <p><b>To establish what we need to know and what we need to promote</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• put into effect arrangements for gathering information and 'evidence' and making use of the information re:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. HR recruitment, development and retention of disabled employees.</li> <li>2. The extent to which our services and other functions take into account the needs of disabled people.</li> </ol> </li> <li>• involve disabled people to determine what we need to know</li> <li>• set aside resources for engagement</li> <li>• review arrangements for gathering on a regular basis</li> </ul> <p><b>Management approach</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• undertake an information audit for gaps in provision</li> <li>• include disability equality objectives in monitoring and user evaluation studies, wherever practical</li> <li>• develop mechanisms for the ongoing promotion of progress</li> </ul> <p><b>Best practice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• targeted research and project development via PSA3 priority groups</li> </ul>
<p><b>Implementation of the Disability Equality Scheme</b></p> <p><b>To celebrate and promote disability equality achievements</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• take steps as set out in the scheme and put into effect the arrangements for gathering information and making use of such information, within the three-year period</li> <li>• publish an annual report, on an ongoing basis</li> </ul> <p><b>Management approach</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• devise campaign to promote and publicise progress</li> <li>• devise monitoring and evaluation measures to track progress</li> </ul> <p><b>Best practice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• involve disabled people in developing ideas for the various communications aspects</li> <li>• link with other organisations to raise awareness and promote disability equality</li> <li>• exploit communication resources to raise profile of Museum work in disability equality</li> <li>• demonstrate corporate ability to make disability equality part of Museum business</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> This model was prepared by the Public Engagement Group Access Adviser 2006.</p>



# Visitor research at the Natural History Museum

## Market research

We currently profile our visitors through a variety of means:

- automatic door counter, providing overall visitor figures
- monthly surveys (sample 150 each monthly) providing demographic data, satisfaction ratings, motivations and catering and retail uptake
- self-completed questionnaire (monthly sample of 200 analysed) on the back of the Museum's map, which covers visitor flow and marketing information
- inclusion in the Association of Leading Visitor Attractions (ALVA) Benchmarking Survey (three waves annually – sample 100 each wave), which principally cover our services such as catering and retail but also includes a small amount of demographic data benchmarked against other attractions in the sector

## Exhibition research

The Communications team also carry out an evaluation report on each temporary exhibition. These reports look at the success of the communications campaign both in terms of the amount of press coverage received as well as the effectiveness of the marketing campaign in delivering audiences to the exhibition. The report is based on a number of different research sources across the Museum:

- attendance data, from ticket sales
- visitor questionnaires (located by the exit of the gallery, 200 every month), which include demographic questions as well as motivations to visit and satisfaction levels
- commissioned visitor surveys (sample 300)
- visitor map questionnaires
- visitor feedback – comments collected from feedback forms and map questionnaires handed into information desks

### Visitor experience research

From time to time, we also undertake ad hoc research projects evaluating the experience of visitors to particular exhibitions or reactions to proposed exhibitions or project. Recent projects have included:

- qualitative research (via commissioned focus groups) exploring the understanding of our current visitor experience (both intellectually and physically), and to test some ideas for future gallery 'zoning' across the Museum
- qualitative research (via commissioned focus groups) exploring the understanding of the current visitor experience in Phase One of the Darwin Centre and to test current ideas for the future planning for Phase Two visitor offer
- qualitative research (via commissioned focus groups) into proposed exhibition ideas, testing visitor interest and appeal and how these ideas might be further developed
- qualitative and quantitative research to evaluate the visitor experience, looking at key visitor interface areas – this Mystery Visitor Programme schedules 54 visits per annum for two years 2005–07
- an established customer feedback mechanism to collate and process visitor comments complaints and suggestions
- an ongoing mechanism to evaluate service delivery in specific areas, for visitors and internal customers – Service Quality Evaluation (SERVQUAL)

### Web research

Our website is a large, well-established and very popular site with many different audiences. It has recently been redesigned, a process that included some research into the styling, usability, functionality and content. The research included:

- qualitative research focusing on the usability of the site through 10 one-to-one accompanied browsing interviews
- quantitative online survey looking at user profile, how they found the site, what sort of information they were looking for and how they rated it

# Museum diversity policy

## Diversity policy statement

The Natural History Museum operates to a global agenda, generating new scientific knowledge and engaging with a large diverse audience. Diversity is at the heart of everything we do and is one of our five corporate values. Our collection is a model of natural diversity, but it is the variety of perspectives, knowledge, interest and understanding of many different people that gives it meaning. The collection itself is augmented by research findings from across the world. Our public programme marries the collection with the wide-ranging talents of Museum people and our audience brings a limitless range of backgrounds and perspectives to the Museum. Without diversity, we would be a mere repository of objects. In embracing diversity, we become relevant to people's lives: promoting the discovery, understanding, responsible use and enjoyment of the natural world.

We are passionately committed to valuing and reflecting diversity at every level within our workforce. Our success as an organisation depends on making the best use of all the talents of our people.

We recognise we do not yet fully reflect the diversity of our local population or the UK population as a whole, but our intention is to improve this year on year.

This policy is set within the wider context of the Diversity Strategy and the Audience Development Strategy, which have the overarching aim of:

- increasing the diversity of people engaging with the Museum's activities, and enriching their knowledge, understanding and enjoyment of the natural world

## Equal opportunities

As an equal opportunities employer, and again in line with our corporate values, we are committed to integrity and impartiality in dealing with our people, and other partners and organisations. We are committed to providing a work environment that encourages people of all backgrounds and beliefs to work well together and achieve their potential. Within this context, we comply with a number of the legal requirements (see References).

## Diversity

Diversity is a broad concept that builds on the progress made through equal opportunities. Diversity promotes an understanding of the value that difference brings and a respect for that difference. Promoting diversity at the Museum involves creating an environment that capitalises on everything that makes us unique – race, ethnic origin, colour, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, mental or physical abilities, religion or belief, age, marital status, socio-economic background, linguistic abilities, trade union membership/non-membership or any other appropriate distinction. It is about valuing all individual people for who they are.

## Policy framework

### Scope

The equality and diversity policy applies to all our people and candidates for employment.

### Recruitment and selection

The Museum recognises that conscious or unwitting prejudice in the recruitment and selection of people is a serious threat to diversity. We will fight to prevent and eradicate it. All stages of recruitment and selection will be conducted in accordance with our recruitment and selection policy and procedures. We are also committed to encouraging and facilitating use of positive action to overcome disadvantage, discrimination and deprivation.

### Training and development

The Museum wants its people to flourish. We recognise training as a key means by which everyone can develop their knowledge, skills, qualifications and experience necessary for effectively doing their job. Where training needs are identified through the performance management process, training opportunities will be made available, subject to financial and operational resources.

Equal opportunity issues are addressed at the induction stage and will be reinforced in other programmes including management development programmes and skills training (eg performance management, recruitment and selection). Training materials are free from bias and do not discriminate.

### Career progression/promotion

We will provide equal opportunities for career progression/promotion to all our people who have the required skills and aptitudes.

Line managers are advised to continually assess the promotion potential of every employee.

### Pay and reward

Our pay system is transparent, based on objective criteria and free from bias. Everyone should be equally banded for the same work or for work of similar weight. To achieve this, we will regularly review our pay practices for all employees including those who are absent on maternity leave.

### Work-life balance

We are a supportive employer: we understand the time our people spend working for the Museum is only one part of their lives. We recognise the need for flexible working patterns such as job-share, part-time and home working where an individual may wish to change their working hours, contingent with business and operational needs. These methods of working will be fully considered by managers, in consultation with HR where appropriate.

## Making it happen

### Communication

We will proactively communicate and promote this policy in a variety of ways, including the Employee Handbook in the HR section of our Intranet and through diversity awareness workshops.

### Breach of policy

Advancing diversity is about tough management as well as encouraging words. We will take very firm action against anyone proved to be in breach of this policy. Any such breach will be dealt with through the Museum's disciplinary procedure.

### Monitoring

We will monitor the effectiveness of our equality and diversity policy and make improvements in accordance with relevant changes in legislation and best practice. This specifically targets recruitment, career progression and termination of employment processes and procedures.

### Roles and responsibilities

Every single person at the Museum shares a collective responsibility for valuing the diversity of our staff, our partners and our visitors – 'one Museum' is another of our corporate values. Equally, we understand the importance of powerful and passionate leadership: this leadership starts with our Trustees and runs throughout the management line. Our Director is responsible for ensuring development and implementation of the policy across the Museum, starting with Directors Group. Directors develop their own action plans to support corporate initiatives for implementation throughout their own departments.

### Steering Group

An Equality and Diversity Steering Group, made up of people from across the Museum will report to the Human Resources Director and will be responsible for facilitating policy initiatives and consulting people on developments. The Diversity Steering Group will act as advocates and champions and will help to steer the policy throughout its delivery.

Reports will be regularly made to Directors Group, which will oversee strategy and ensure delivery against objectives and targets.

### Managers

Managers at all levels are working to ensure diversity is a living reality, not a paper exercise. All managers should be aware of their role in setting standards that create the right environment for equality and diversity and ensure commitment to the policy.

### Employees

It is everyone's responsibility to:

- co-operate with any equality and diversity measures introduced to ensure opportunity and non-discrimination
- treat others fairly without prejudice
- promote a work environment that allows people to feel valued and realise their potential, and encourage others to do the same

## Volunteers at the Natural History Museum

There are two volunteer programmes in place here at the Museum. There is a central Science volunteer programme co-ordinated by the Volunteer Project Manager. This programme covers all the Science departments as well as Public Engagement Group, the Wildlife Garden and the Libraries in a 'behind the scenes' experience. There is also a Learning volunteer programme in, which offers volunteers the chance to interact with the public through learning.

This programme is co-ordinated by the Learning Volunteer Programme Developer. The Science volunteer programme is divided into three separate non-paid workers: work experience, work placements and volunteers. All volunteers must be over the age of 18. There is currently no upper age limit.

We recognise the contribution volunteers make to our work and we are committed to providing rewarding experiences for those taking part in our schemes. Training is provided to all volunteers. There is a non-discriminatory application system in place for the fair and active recruitment of volunteers. Appropriate steps are taken to ensure a volunteer's needs and expectations are met and maintained to the best of our ability while they volunteer with us. The volunteer office records note 16 current volunteers with additional needs/disabilities (excluding learning difficulties).

## Recruitment and selection principles for volunteers

### Equal opportunity

The Natural History Museum has a policy of equal opportunity. We are committed to ensuring the recruitment and treatment of our staff and volunteers and the provision of goods, services and facilities to the public are carried out without prejudice regarding gender, sexual orientation, marital status, race, disability, age or religious belief. Volunteers involved with the general public at the Museum must have an awareness of issues underlying this.

All staff and volunteers are responsible for complying with this policy. More details can be found in the Volunteer Handbook, which includes the procedure to follow for suspected unfair treatment.

### Diversity

We value the diversity of our paid staff and volunteers and the unique perspectives they bring to our business.

### Benefit claimants and overseas volunteers

We follow best practice guidelines produced by Volunteering England on involving volunteers receiving welfare benefits, job seeker's allowance, income support, incapacity benefit, disability living allowance, asylum-seekers and volunteers from overseas. Please note, it is the responsibility of the individual concerned to seek and follow advice from benefits advisors and we will not accept responsibility for this. The Volunteer Project Manager can provide more details.

### Diversity Strategy and implementation

Section 7 actions set out how the disability equality duty will be developed by way of the Diversity Strategy and implementation. We will manage the various strands of diversity through the expansion of diversity forums for information gathering, impact assessment, implementation and monitoring and review.

# Summary statement of new policy on access and social inclusion 2004

## Preface to existing Disability Policy 1997/8

The Natural History Museum is working to extend its present policy beyond disability in line with DCMS policy, best practice guidelines and the continued roll out of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 - Part II (Employment) and Part III (Goods, Facilities and Services).

## Statement of policy on access and social inclusion

The Museum is committed to offering the widest possible access to our buildings, learning events including exhibitions and the collections, broadening our audiences and developing electronic resources to improve access to the information that our collections contain.

'The widest possible access' means:

### Physical

Increasing physical access to all our buildings, set in the context of our Conservation Plan, the developing Masterplan (including the Visitor Offer Strategy), the Access Strategy Plan 2004 and best practice guidelines.

### Sensory

Increasing sensory access to exhibitions and collections set in the context of our statutory duty of care and existing access policy and Museum guidelines.

### Intellectual

- increasing intellectual access for visitors of varying abilities, different cultures and languages.
- increasing accessibility to electronic resources
- increasing the website's accessibility for use by a broader audience

### Social

- increasing audience participation and face-to-face interaction
- increasing partnerships within the local and urban communities and with target audiences
- increasing cultural access/ownership in relation to the Museum's collections and Public programmes via consultation and curation
- increasing awareness of discrimination and equal opportunity issues via training on an ongoing basis for all Museum personnel including Trustees, Directors, Front of House/Learning managers, staff and volunteers, scientists and curators who interface with the public

The new **access** (physical, sensory and intellectual) **and social inclusion** (under represented and excluded audiences) **policy** will also set out the Museum's approach to the issue of Diversity.

This policy is at development stage and in discussion with stakeholders at various levels across the Museum. The review of the existing disability policy document was tasked to the Access and Diversity Co-ordinator for 2003 by Deirdre Candlin, Director of Visitor and Operational Services.

**Note:** Comparative literature and guidelines considered to date include those of DCMS, SBC, English Heritage, Museums' Association and the Science Museum.

## Policy review: key references

### External

British Museum Act 1963  
Museum and Galleries Act 1992  
The Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970  
Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995  
Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001  
The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000  
Copyright (Visually Impaired Persons) Act 2002  
The Data Protection Act 1998  
Freedom of Information Act 2000

### Internal

Audience Development Strategy 2003  
Brand Review 2003-04  
Museum Health and Safety Management Policy 2002  
Conservation Plan 2003  
Masterplan 2003  
Natural Progression Strategy for Science 2001  
Science Communication Strategy 2004  
The Science Vision draft 2004  
Visitor Offer Strategy 2003  
Website Strategy 2004

### British standards

BS5588-8:1999 Fire precautions in the design, construction and use of buildings – Code of practice for means of escape for disabled people.

BS 8300:2001 Design of buildings and their approaches to meet the needs of disabled people – code of practice.

### Others

Access in Mind Towards the Inclusive Museum Ann Rayner The Intellectual Access Trust, 1998  
Access for Deaf People to Museums & Galleries, Deafworks July, 2001  
Access to Museums, Archives and Libraries for Disabled Users Resource, 2001  
Code of Practice Rights of Access Goods, Facilities, Services and Premises DRC, 2002  
Developing An Access Policy MGC, 2000  
Disability Portfolio Resource, 2003-04  
Ethical Guidelines for Access Museums Association, 1999  
Museums, Archives and Libraries and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995  
SWMLAC 2003  
Museums for the Many Standards for Museums and Galleries to use when developing access policies DCMS 1999  
Responding to Cultural Diversity: Guidance for Museums and Galleries MGC, 2000



# The Museum's corporate governance

The following documents are core references for the Museum

## **Governance of the Natural History Museum**

Our Trustees have statutory duties under the Acts for the general management and control of the Museum and the appointment of the Director.

The Director is accountable to the Trustees for the care of the collections and other assets, and for general administration.

Within the framework of these statutory duties, the role of the Trustees is to establish Museum policy, review performance and endorse appointments to key management positions.

Under Part 1: First Principles Legislative and regulatory framework, the board and Director of will at all times act in accordance with the Acts, legislation applicable to the Board as Trustees of an exempt charity and all other applicable legislation, legal requirements, including relevant European and international requirements, and Government guidance applicable to the Museum as a Non Departmental Government Body.

## **Financial management statement and financial memorandum**

Under Founding Legislation status, the Natural History Museum is established under the British Museums Act 1963. We are also an exempt charity. The constitution of the Body is set out in Section 8 of the Act. The Body does not carry out its functions on behalf of the Crown. The Natural History Museum receives funding by virtue of Section 9 Schedule 7 of the Museums and Galleries Act 1992.

Under functions, duties and powers, the British Museums Act 1963 give(s) the Natural History Museum the following duties: to keep and inspect the collections, to make available an object in the collection for inspection by the public. The Museum should have a process of risk management embedded in its planning, operational, monitoring and review activities.

The Natural History Museum should seek to optimise income from non-Exchequer sources where this is consistent with the gallery's main functions and is in line with its funding agreement agreed with the department.

### Department for Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) funding agreement

#### Performance monitoring

The DCMS requires that performance against the Natural History Museum's PSA 3-related projects will be assessed through updates requested from the Natural History Museum in the context of the PSA 3 project to increase access to priority groups. This occurs on a twice-yearly basis.

The performance reports should:

- set out actual outturn against the targets above and against the performance indicators, efficiency savings target and PSA 3-related projects
- provide an explanation, where outturn diverges from the expected
- explain what action is being taken or is planned to address the shortfalls

Priority groups include: 'Those people with a physical or mental disability ie defined by themselves as having any long-standing illness, disability or infirmity that limits their activities in any way'. The responsibility for the delivery of the targets in this agreement (including the above excerpt) rests with the Board of Trustees and with the Director and Accounting Officer of the Natural History Museum.

### British Museum Act 1963

The British Museum Act 1963, Chapter 24, states that in respect of the collections, the Museum has a duty of care and an obligation to ensure that the collections are made available to the public visiting the Museum, for purposes of study.

### Museums and Galleries Act 1992

British Museum (Natural History): change of name (6) In section 1(1) of the Museums and Galleries Admission Charges Act 1972 (which specifies the museums and galleries which may make admission charges) for paragraph '(b) the British Museum (Natural History)' there shall be substituted '(b) the Natural History Museum'.

Source: Schedule 8, Minor and consequential provisions, Part I The British Museum and the British Museum (Natural History).

# Statutory requirements

## **The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995**

The Museum continues to address the DDA 1995 requirements as set out in Part II Employment and Part III Goods, Facilities, Services and Premises, of the Act.

## **The Disability Discrimination Act 2005**

The purpose of the new duty is to promote disability equality and the Museum is required to produce a Disability Equality Scheme as a statutory requirement. The Museum will comply with both the general and specific duties.

## **The Disability Discrimination (Public Authorities) (Statutory Duties) Regulations 2005**

The Museum will undertake the requirements as set out in the regulations.

## **The social model for disability**

'Disability' is now reflected in the social model, which acknowledges that the built environment, people's attitudes and organisational measures or decisions can disable users and create barriers. The duty directs public authorities to identify the barriers and understand user requirements by involvement.

## **Extent of provision – internal and external partnerships**

The disability equality duty covers all functions and activities, not just employment and service delivery, but budget setting, procurement, regulatory functions and setting the framework within which the organisation will deliver services.

Source: Guidance on gathering and analysing evidence to inform action Disability Rights Commission 2006.

## **Principles of the general duty**

When making decisions, developing or implementing a new policy, the Museum must make the consideration of the needs of disabled people an integral part of the policy-making or decision-making process.

The duty to promote disability equality requires the Museum, in carrying out its functions, to demonstrate due regard\* to the following six areas:

- promote equality of opportunity
- eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the act
- eliminate harassment that is related to their disability
- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
- encourage participation by disabled people in public life
- take account of disabled people's disabilities, even where it involves treating more favourably than others

\*Due regard means that authorities should give due weight to the need to promote disability equality, in proportion to its relevance. When considering proportionality, public bodies need to give greater consideration to disability equality in relation to areas that have the most effect on disabled people.

Source: The Duty to Promote Disability Equality. Code of Practice 2005

### **The specific duty**

The new section 49D(1) to (4) provides the power to impose by regulations, specific duties for named public bodies, to assist in the performance of their duties.

Source: Statutory Instrument 2005 No.2966 Disabled Persons, The Disability Discrimination (Public Authorities) (Statutory Duties) Regulations 2005. Regulation 3–2.

# References

## **Disability equality legislation**

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended 2005)

The Disability Discrimination (Public Authorities) (Statutory Duties) Regulations 2005 SI No. 2966

## **Equal opportunity legislation**

- Human Rights Act 2000
- Employment Rights Act 1999
- Employment Equality (sexual orientation) Regulations 2003
- Employment Equality (religion and belief) Regulations 2003
- Equal Pay Act 1970
- Employment Relations Act 1999
- Part-time Workers (prevention of less favourable treatment) Regulations 2000
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975 and 1986
- Indirect Discrimination and Burden of Proof Regulations 2001
- Race Relations Act 1976 and Race Relations Amendment Act 2000, Amendment Regulations 2003
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and DDA Amendment Regulations 2005

## **Disability Rights Commission 2006**

A guide to the disability equality duty for disabled people and their organisations.

An overview of the disability equality duty for the public sector.

Guidance on gathering and analysing evidence to inform action.

Position on single equality schemes – preparing and publishing your disability Equality Scheme 2006.

The Duty to Promote Disability Equality: Statutory Code of Practice Disability Rights Commission 2005

## **National Audit Office**

Delivering public services to a diverse society 2004

## **Office for Disability Issues 2006**

Improving the life chances of disabled people