

GUILDHALL ART GALLERY, CITY OF LONDON HERITAGE GALLERY AND LONDON'S ROMAN AMPHITHEATRE ACCESS POLICY

Written by Jeremy Johnson, Senior Curator and Gallery Manager: 01/08/2014
Reviewed by Vicky Carroll, Acting Head: 28/09/2016
Approved by Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee: 24/10/2016

For ease of reference, Guildhall Art Gallery, City of London Heritage Gallery and London's Roman Amphitheatre are referred to collectively as "the Gallery" within this policy. All three assets exist within the same building and make up the Gallery's collective offer. Assets are described separately where the reference is specific to a particular attraction only.

The Gallery is free to the public seven days per week.
www.guildhallartgallery.cityoflondon.gov.uk

Guildhall Art Gallery was established in 1886 as, 'a Collection of Art Treasures worthy of the capital city'. The collection contains works of art dating from 1670 to the present, including 17th-century portraits, Pre-Raphaelite masterpieces, Victorian genre paintings and a fascinating range of paintings documenting London's dramatic history. The Gallery also houses London's Roman Amphitheatre and the City of London Heritage Gallery (displaying some of the historic archival treasures of the City of London Corporation's London Metropolitan Archives (LMA)).

As well as displaying elements of the Guildhall Art Gallery's Permanent Collection and highlights from the LMA, the Gallery runs a regular programme of exhibitions and displays throughout the year.

ACCESS STATEMENT

This document sets out the Policy of the Gallery and its collections and information resources, with regard to physical and intellectual access provision for all visitors, users and staff accessing the Gallery's building and the collections.

OUR COMMITMENT

The City of London Corporation provides a unique and diverse range of services to the residents, businesses, workers and visitors in the City of London and beyond. It is committed to being proactive in providing services fairly to all potential service users. Promoting equality of opportunity for all is one of its core values.

The Gallery's policy is to treat all service users, and anyone else with whom it engages, equally and with dignity and respect and not to discriminate on grounds of age, disability status, employment status, ethnic or cultural origin, gender, marital status, nationality, religious belief or non-belief, responsibility for dependants, sexual orientation, social background, or any other grounds which cannot be shown to be justified. It will recognise, respect and value difference and diversity.

In partnership with its employees, residential communities and stakeholders, the Gallery will work hard to meet its obligations under the relevant anti-discrimination legislation, codes of practice and good practice guidelines.

STATEMENT OF GENERAL PRINCIPLES

All items in the Gallery's collections are held for everyone regardless of education, income, residence, or personal circumstances. The Gallery seeks to ensure that barriers to access, learning and enjoyment of the collection are removed, reduced, or overcome. The Gallery seeks to enable everyone as far as possible to have access to the collections, to provide information about them and to allow everyone to enjoy and study them in as many ways as possible.

As an asset owned and managed by the City of London Corporation, a service provider and equal opportunities employer, the Gallery is committed to comply fully with its obligations under the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and subsequent amendments.

The Gallery is committed to providing the widest and easiest possible access to its collection of paintings, sculpture and other works of art which it houses, conserves and displays.

It is committed to inspire and enable people of all backgrounds to access and use its resources effectively and creatively, both on and off site.

The Gallery aims to:

- Work with all visitors and enquirers to provide access in a safe and secure environment;
- Provide equal opportunities for all visitors and users of the collections;
- Consult with and be responsive to the needs of our visitors, users, staff and stakeholders;
- Develop a constantly improving service which strives to meet user needs;
- Employ effectively new technologies to deliver remote access to our holdings; and
- Raise awareness of the relevance and significance of the collections both now and in the future.

ACCESS TO THE GALLERY AND COLLECTIONS

Physical Access

The Gallery is open to the public seven days a week (with slightly reduced hours on Sundays). It seeks to provide all visitors with full and equal access to all areas of the building, ensuring that all equipment and facilities are kept in full working order; ensures that accessibility is built into all that it does to develop and improve (including temporary exhibitions, events and special activities); and seeks to ensure that future building projects provide appropriate physical access for all visitors, with expert advice sought where necessary.

As such, the Gallery takes into consideration:

- Physical accessibility: ensuring that those with physical disabilities, and the elderly, or those caring for young children, can access and appreciate all areas of the Gallery;
- Sensory accessibility: ensuring that those with impaired vision or hearing can enjoy and appreciate the collections and exhibitions;
- Emotional and attitudinal accessibility: ensuring that the Gallery environment and staff are welcoming to all visitors; and
- Financial accessibility: ensuring the Gallery's admission charges are set at an affordable level (general access to the Gallery is free of charge – but some special exhibitions are charged) and ensuring the Gallery shop stocks a range of appropriate low cost items.

Safety in the building

The Gallery is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all, taking account of the needs of visitors with disabilities in all safety procedures. It is the policy of the Gallery to enable all occupants of the building to be evacuated safely and at the same time in an emergency.

The Gallery provides fire marshals, uniformed staff, and staff trained in first-aid with training in the evacuation of people with disabilities and other emergency procedures.

Collections

Gallery visitors can view the themed displays and most exhibitions free of charge (some special exhibitions are charged).

Gallery visitors can attend free regular talks, introductory tours and workshops to help make the most of its facilities and collections.

The Gallery provides additional in-depth / special charged tours of the displayed collection and exhibitions for groups.

The Gallery is committed to encouraging and enabling the widest possible audience to study the collections, and seeks ways to improve and extend access to information and scholarly research. It provides access to the 'Reserve Collection' (i.e. art store or alternative loan venues) of works of art not on Gallery display on request.

The Gallery recognises that not all current and potential users can come to the Gallery. Users can access its digitised collection via our online data imaging system, accessed remotely via its website.

Documentation

The Gallery provides free access to its collection documentation, where requested documents can be viewed in its Study Room. Restrictions on content are limited to compliance with Data Protection legislation. The Gallery works with enquirers to find a solution allowing access to the required information, including in edited or different form.

Copies of documents for use in private research can be requested, subject to the current Copyright act. Publication of copyright material must be agreed with the Gallery in advance, and special conditions apply. Material protected under copyright legislation may not be reproduced without appropriate permissions.

Information and Signage

The Gallery undertakes to provide, as widely as possible, information about the building, its collections, facilities and services. It aims to provide free and accurate information and friendly and helpful advice on its collections, in response to personal, written and telephone enquiries.

The Gallery will always try to identify Gallery sources which appear to be relevant to the enquiry.

Up-to-date telephone recorded information will be available on the Gallery's facilities, exhibitions, events and activities.

The Gallery will ensure that all internal and external information and communications follow good practice guidelines as prescribed by specialist organisations such as the RNIB.

The Gallery will provide plans and access information in alternative formats such as large print.

All information provision, through exhibition texts and labelling, leaflets, publications and the web, so far as is practicable, will be written in plain English, and with short sentences. Jargon and specialist terminology will be avoided or explained.

Large print versions of display and exhibition labelling and leaflets will be produced where practicable to do so (excluding mass-produced leaflets).

Gallery events and news about collections and access to them are publicised through the Gallery's website.

The Gallery publicises news about its collections and exhibitions, along with forthcoming events, via social media (including Facebook posts and tweets).

The Gallery undertakes to review regularly its methods of communication and to adopt best practice in this area, in consultation with specialist organisations.

Visitor Involvement

Gallery visitors and users are invited to contribute comments, suggestions or feedback about the Gallery and its services through its comments book, comment/suggestion forms and by talking to staff. Senior management regularly review and consider contributions.

The Gallery undertakes visitor surveys (in person) and analyses the results to identify areas for improvement. Where possible, such contributions are acted upon to improve its service.

Gallery volunteers are encouraged, to support staff in enabling visitors to get the most from their visit – through ‘pop-up’ talks and introductory tours. It has an active Friends organisation, providing additional events and activities to its members, and encourages visitors and users to get involved with and support the Gallery.

EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

The Gallery is an equal opportunities employer and seeks to encourage and support staff to achieve equality of opportunity for recruitment, employment, training and promotion. It aims to ensure that its employment practices do not discriminate against people with disabilities and maintains a system for monitoring and reviewing procedures. The Gallery also aims to provide disability awareness and ‘welcome all’ training for staff and consults specialist organisations and other experts on ways to improve training in this area. It ensures that staff with disabilities are provided with appropriate adapted or additional equipment or services as far as it is able. Staff have received disability awareness and customer care training and aim to make all visits to the Gallery pleasant and rewarding.