

## 1 MISSION AND COMMITMENT

Tyne and Wear Museums' (TWM) mission is **to help people determine their place in the world and define their identities, so enhancing their self-respect and their respect for others.**

Tyne and Wear Museums' commitment is to a world-class service that is innovative, imaginative, creative, totally inclusive, secure and sustainable.

## 2 DIVERSITY STATEMENT

Tyne and Wear Museums is committed to ensuring that all aspects of its museum and gallery activities are fully accessible to all sectors of the community by removing or reducing any physical, sensory or intellectual barriers to access, and ensuring that no employee, user or other stakeholder is discriminated against for any reason.

TWM defines diversity as the complex mix of individuals and groups who together make up society. A variety of traditions, values, attitudes and beliefs influence everyone's identity and the identity of society around them. These influences may relate to ethnicity, faith, gender, sexual orientation and intellectual and physical ability, but might equally include health status, locality, educational, economic and social background.

TWM will consult regularly with people from a variety of social and cultural backgrounds to ensure that everyone can access its facilities and services. This consultation will draw on the framework established through Inspiring Learning for All, and will include representatives of community organisations, community leaders, other service providers and individuals as appropriate for particular initiatives.

TWM will take positive steps to promote equality for all people and will practice this through its dealings with visitors, users, stakeholders, volunteers and employees.

Whilst TWM recognises the broadest definition of cultural diversity, it will particularly prioritise improving its engagement with Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities and individuals in 2004 - 2008.

## 3 AIMS

In fulfilling its mission and in taking forward its work with audiences and communities, TWM seeks to reflect the diversity of its communities and users through:

- collections of objects and associated information
- displays and exhibitions
- events and learning programmes

- online activities
- a culturally diverse workforce

In addition, TWM will produce and implement inclusive policies, practices and procedures. These will increase the understanding and enjoyment of our collections and facilities by all our users.

To facilitate this we will endeavour to provide accessible formats and languages for the presentation and delivery of key information within our venues, and in our published and promotional material.

We will ensure that contractors, consultants and outside agencies working for or with TWM, or on TWM premises, adopt and observe the provisions of Newcastle City Council's Equal Opportunities Policy and this Policy.

We will be driven by a desire to provide an excellent service to all our users. We will ensure that this desire becomes embedded in our organisation and that effective provision of services for people from diverse social and cultural backgrounds becomes a goal of every employee.

#### **4 OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY**

The objectives and aims of this policy are:

- 4.1 To strive for excellence in the delivery of service to users from under-represented backgrounds and to become an exemplar of best practice.
- 4.2 To comply with the provisions of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 by prohibiting discrimination on grounds of race, promoting race relations, and promoting equality of opportunity.
- 4.3 To actively encourage participation in the activities of TWM by people from under-represented backgrounds as service users, staff, and volunteers.
- 4.4 To provide translations or interpreters where possible for residents of Tyne and Wear whose first language is not English, to ensure maximum participation in our programmes and use of our facilities.
- 4.5 To ensure that contractors, consultants and outside agencies working with, or within, TWM meet the same standards as we would expect to meet ourselves.
- 4.6 To provide all staff with adequate guidelines, information and training to enable them to carry out their responsibilities effectively and with confidence.
- 4.7 To improve collections, exhibitions and activities to represent and appeal to the range of backgrounds and interests of people living in Tyne and Wear today.
- 4.8 To encourage dialogue between people of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds, to promote understanding of diversity, thereby promoting

tolerance.

## **5 RESPONSIBILITIES OF ALL STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS**

Effective engagement with people from diverse cultural backgrounds is the responsibility of every employee, volunteer and member of governing bodies. Responsibilities for particular groups of employees are detailed in section 6 below. However, every member of staff and every volunteer will have responsibility for:

- contributing towards providing a world-class, totally inclusive service
- implementing and promoting the Equal Opportunities policies and procedures of Newcastle City Council and of TWM'S Diversity Policy
- contributing towards providing a world-class, totally inclusive service
- implementing and promoting Inspiring Learning for All
- eradicating and not tolerating direct and indirect discrimination against individuals on any grounds
- familiarising themselves with the provisions of this Diversity Policy and committing to its objectives and requirements
- participating in relevant training and development in order to maintain a commitment to inclusion and to increase skills and knowledge in the field of cultural diversity
- identifying personal and organisational skills and knowledge gaps in cultural representation issues
- understanding the particular duties and responsibilities specified for their role
- ensuring that they are aware of the TWM Diversity Working Group, and its work.

## **6. AREAS OF PARTICULAR RESPONSIBILITY FOR STAFF GROUPS**

Some groups of staff will have responsibility for the delivery of specific areas of this Diversity Policy. These areas of responsibility are NOT exclusive to the groups identified, and DO NOT exclude any staff, either from their responsibilities for delivering an inclusive service, or from identifying opportunities to improve and develop this service. The following paragraphs, however, indicate the groups of staff who are expected to lead on particular issues:

### **6.1 Senior Management Team**

The Director and Senior Managers will:

- Nominate a champion from the Management Team who will have overall responsibility for diversity policies, procedures and issues
- Identify budget provision for diversity initiatives and secure designated finance for the development of a programme of Diversity Awareness training for all staff
- Monitor, evaluate and review the Diversity Policy and all other policies and procedures to ensure legislative compliance and achieve best practice

- Support initiatives to improve the diversity of staff working at TWM, such as Positive Action Traineeships
- Maintain a Diversity Working Group with cross cutting representation from within TWM
- Promote diversity initiatives and develop and communicate examples of best practice throughout the Museum profession
- Ensure that all public programmes promote engagement with and understanding of diversity.

## **6.2 Building Managers**

Staff with overall responsibility for TWM premises will:

- Make museum buildings welcoming and easy to access and use
- Ensure that all external contractors, consultants and outside agencies working on their premises are familiar with and work within the terms of TWM's Diversity Policy
- Consult with local audiences to assess their needs for information in languages other than English, and attempt to provide that information where possible
- Ensure that all public programmes promote engagement with and understanding of diversity.

## **6.3 Curatorial staff**

Staff with responsibilities for the collections will:

- Use exhibition programmes, permanent displays, other forms of interpretation and the acquisitions policy review to develop our collections to reflect the cultural and social diversity of society, and to enhance understanding and appreciation of different world cultures
- Review and research existing collections to identify and highlight connections with diverse cultures and the potential for alternative interpretations and multiple perspectives
- Consult user groups for advice on the appeal and content of proposed new permanent displays and temporary exhibitions, wherever possible
- Use temporary exhibitions to provide a flexible way of targeting specific audiences
- Commission, employ and showcase artists from diverse cultural backgrounds
- Keep abreast of and engage with current research and activities conducted by universities, other heritage agencies and community organisations into the history of diverse communities in Tyne and Wear
- Evaluate the outcomes of exhibitions designed to increase visits by people from minority ethnic backgrounds and ensure dissemination of findings.

## **6.4 Front of House staff**

It is the role of all staff to interact with visitors and other users, however, for those whose primary responsibility it is to provide direct services to visitors, they should:

- Be aware of the need to ensure that all users are provided with an equal service
- Report to Building Managers on information and language barriers, good and bad experiences (including racist remarks or incidents) and feedback comments from the visiting public
- Be confident in providing information to people from a variety of social and cultural backgrounds.

### **6.5 Learning and Outreach and ICT staff**

Staff responsible for providing learning and outreach events and activities and managing and developing ICT resources will:

- Develop contacts with under-represented people
- Use learning activities and events to ensure participation by groups or organisations representing minority groups
- Build inclusion, diverse learning styles and equal access into the design and delivery of all events
- Use ICT, in particular the World Wide Web, to enhance access to TWM's services
- Evaluate the outcomes of projects designed to enhance participation by people from minority ethnic backgrounds and ensure dissemination of findings
- Develop the Loans Box service to respond to the interests of groups from diverse faiths and cultural backgrounds, and to encourage wider understanding of different world cultures by all audiences
- Encourage under-represented groups to produce exhibitions about their own community experiences or issues of concern to them
- Commission and employ artists and freelancer educators from diverse cultural backgrounds to deliver programmes and events.

### **6.6 Communications and Design staff**

Staff with responsibilities for publicity and display materials will be responsible for :

- Effective and appropriate marketing and promotion of museums and their services to actual and potential users
- Utilising a range of appropriate languages as budgets allow
- Use of appropriate translators to conduct benchmarking and evaluation surveys throughout TWM
- Commissioning research into the attitudes and requirements of future users from difference minority ethnic backgrounds, as budgets allow
- Using a range of positive imagery, reflecting the diversity of contemporary society
- Being aware of the significance of imagery and symbolism within minority ethnic communities
- Ensuring balanced press coverage of our exhibitions and activities.

## 6.7 Human Resources staff

Staff with responsibilities for recruitment and development will be responsible for:

- Advertising staff recruitment in a variety of media to attract as broad a range of candidates as possible, in conjunction with Newcastle City Council's Equality Policy
- Monitoring of equal opportunities policies
- Coordinating, administering and supporting the Positive Action Traineeship programme
- Identifying training needs on diversity issues, and developing appropriate programmes in response
- Providing information on workforce representation
- Building a diverse workforce.

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A large print version of this policy is available from Tyne & Wear Museums.

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