

DISABILITY POLICY OF THE GWYNEDD ARCHIVES SERVICE

1. INTRODUCTION

The Gwynedd Archives Service recognises the implications of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 as it was outlined in the report of the Disability Working Party to the Policy and Priorities Committee on 25 February 1997. The policy and the action plan were drawn up as a result of that document and the corporate training that resulted. In developing the policy the opinions of similar professional institutions were considered as well as the relevant policies of the Council itself and the comments of service users.

2. DEFINITION

According to the Disability Discrimination Act 2005, the definition of disability is:

“a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities”

The Gwynedd Council Disability Working Party has the following definition:

“People are made disabled more by the opinions, attitudes, standards and restrictions of society than by any individual defect.”

The Gwynedd Archives Service aims to improve physical access and to facilitate the access for people with sensory disabilities, e.g. people with a visual defect, a hearing defect etc. to the Service wherever it is possible and to recognise the right of all sections of the community to have access to the heritage of Gwynedd, whatever their age, sex, social status, ethnic roots or ability.

3. THE DISABILITY POLICY

The Gwynedd Archives Service aims to achieve the following:

- 3.1** To appoint a member of the professional team to be responsible for the requirements of protecting the interests of disabled people and for ensuring that the section conforms to the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 or any future legislation that replaces that act.
- 3.2** To act in accordance with the Council’s Equal Opportunities Policy, recognising the right of disabled people to take a full part in the work of the service and to arrange for consultation with disabled people on relevant matters.
- 3.3** To aim at providing equal opportunities for disabled visitors and users, recognising their rights to use the resources of the Service.
- 3.4** To undertake that all services contracted out conform to the disability policy.

- 3.5 To secure opportunities to discuss disability issues at all levels of the service - the Archives, Museums and Galleries Group, the Education group and the Service's Management Team.
- 3.6 To undertake that institutions that use the property of the Service meet the same standards as the Service itself.
- 3.7 To ensure that the staff and members of the Council are aware of the policy and understand their responsibility to implement it.
- 3.8 Complaints about disability issues will follow the Council's complaints procedure in consultation with the designated member of staff.
- 3.9 The Disability Policy will be available at all the service's sites and will be available on application to anyone in the appropriate format, e.g. large print, sound tape and on the Council's Web site.
- 3.10 Any new policies and developments by the service will take the disability policy into consideration, after consulting with people with disabilities and their institutions.
- 3.11 To ensure that the service uses appropriate guidelines and terminology.
- 3.12 To conform with building legislation (including adaptations to buildings) with regard to the requirements of people with disabilities. People should be urged to use the guidelines in Part M of the Building Regulations.

4. ACTION PLAN

4.1 Survey of Buildings

To arrange a full survey of our records offices in order to find out how suitable they are for disabled people and to propose how they can be improved. To invite access groups to assist with the work. The inspection will allow us to set targets for improving provision and for prioritising on the basis of need that is recognised by disabled people.

4.2 Training and Awareness

To ensure that the staff are aware of the policy and to provide training in order to implement the policy through internal and other courses. Where possible, staff will be encouraged to use disabled people to contribute to the training.

4.3 Providing information

To ensure that documents and leaflets reflect the needs of disabled people. Consideration will need to be given to the size of the print of the text [minimum of 12 point for public material] and the use of colour. In addition, information should be provided about any provision for the disabled that

facilitates their access to our service. This will be implemented through the Marketing and Publication groups of the Culture Division.

4.4 Education and the External work of the Archives

To ensure that the Education Service and staff that deliver the work of the archive in our communities consider the needs of people with disabilities.

5. MONITORING AND REVIEWING THE POLICY

The designated member of staff will monitor the policy and the action plan. The policy will be reviewed every five years or in the light of further Legislation or developments. The appraisal plan and staff meetings will be a means of monitoring developments. In addition, consultation will be arranged with relevant access groups.