

Parham Airfield Museum

Charity No 1201587

Access Policy

1. Introduction

We believe that everyone has the right to access Parham Airfield Museum (PAM), whether they are a visitor, remote user, volunteer or member of staff and regardless of ability, age, gender, cultural or social background, sexual orientation, faith, language, location or wealth. It is important that PAM is welcoming and inclusive to all. We are committed to removing barriers that prevent people from accessing our site and collections so that we can share histories of the US 390th Heavy Bombardment Group and the British Auxiliary units as widely as possible. PAM strives, within the limitations of the site and other resources, to offer the widest and most engaging access for all users. PAM recognises that access is a complex issue that must be addressed through the actions of the organisation. At the heart of our Access Policy is our belief that everyone benefits when barriers to access are removed.

Also refer to our Equality and Diversity Policy.

2. Scope

This policy covers provision at Parham Airfield Museum buildings as well as our website, social media and other online activities.

3. Responsibilities

The Museum Board of Trustees are responsible for ensuring that the museum meets its obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty and the Equality Act and the Museums Association's Code of Ethics by doing everything reasonably possible to make PAM accessible to the widest range of people. Trustees are responsible for ensuring that the work of the volunteers takes into account the need to maximise access by addressing the barriers outlined in this policy. Everyone involved in developing, delivering or maintaining spaces, activities and other resources for our users at PAM are responsible for making them as accessible as possible.

4. Identifying potential barriers to access

When we refer to access, we mean the opportunity to engage with our buildings, collection, content, and expertise. There are several key barriers to access:

- **Attitudinal** – e.g. some people may have a lack of interest in, or awareness of, the Museum and the subjects and issues it deals with.
- **Intellectual** – e.g. some people may find the museum too specialist in its approach to subjects and how they are presented; some may have learning disabilities which affect their ability to engage with the Museum; and some may not be able to read or speak English.
- **Economic** – e.g. some people may not be able to afford to visit the Museum. Even though entry is free, there are transport costs to consider.
- **Geographic** – e.g. some people will live too far away to visit the Museum, or have difficulty travelling to the museum.
- **Physical/sensory** – e.g. people with physical disabilities, limited mobility, or hearing or visual impairments may not be able to access the Museum, our website or social media channels.
- **Technological** – e.g. some people may not have access to the internet at home or use a mobile phone.

5. Physical Access

The Museum seeks to:

Uphold the statutory requirements of the Equality Act (2010) by taking reasonable steps to ensure that policies, practices and procedures do not discriminate against disabled people; by provide services which enable disabled people to use the Museum; and by removing, altering or circumventing physical barriers within our buildings.

Provide dedicated disabled parking space on the Museum forecourt, near the entrance, and a manual wheelchair for visitors who require one.

Ensure that our displays and learning activities, where feasible, are accessible for wheelchair users. Ensure that if any visitor cannot access a specific display or exhibit, we will provide an alternative way to access the information wherever possible (e.g. through images, video displays, written interpretation or engagement with a volunteer).

Provide an accessible toilet and baby-changing facilities. Provide seating throughout the Museum buildings.

Maintain opening hours throughout our open season - Sundays (Beginning of April – end of October), Sundays and Wednesdays (June – August) and Bank Holiday Mondays to maximise visiting opportunities for people to visit regardless of their working pattern. PAM will review these periodically and respond to requests for special events (e.g. booked group visit) subject to volunteer resources available.

Offer free access to encourage visits by all regardless of income.

Provide and improve internal signage and information to enable all visitors to explore the Museum and locate facilities easily. Provide a basic guide (leaflet) to the museum.

6. Users, Collections and Interpretation

The Museum seeks to:

Work with groups and advisors to develop our activities and aids for people with sensory impairments and special needs, to continually update our Access Audit and inform our Access Policy and Plan.

Display exhibits which reflect the range and diversity of the museum's collections, and engage with the diversity of our users and their needs. This supports our core aim of inspiring people by exploration of our wide-ranging collections and the histories they represent.

Provide access to all collections and appropriate associated information, to meet the needs of all researchers and different cultures and communities. This includes direct physical access and provision of information in a suitable and accessible format to users who cannot visit, e.g. by email or letter.

We seek to be sensitive to the nature of requests and to users, e.g. in providing full information on items in our collection to enquirers from first nation communities, or to local community groups exploring their local heritage. Information given out will be subject to legal and ethical constraints, e.g. data protection legislation or the need to protect sensitive historical information.

Access to study objects in the collections will be always supervised by a museum volunteer, to assist the researcher, ensure the security of the collections, and provide guidance in handling where necessary. Wherever possible, items will be made available in a wheelchair-accessible research area (Moller Café or Percy Kindred library) unless the size, weight or other aspects of the objects or specimens make it necessary to view in a more suitable area of the museum accompanied by a museum volunteer.

Promote public awareness of the full extent of the collections through special features in the Museum (e.g. rotation of displays), on-line (website blogs, social media) and through other remote means (e.g. talks by volunteers).

Potential improvements for access, to be considered in development plans, include changes to stores or improving our 'virtual tour' (linked to the Documentation Plan and digitisation of collections). We differentiate between commercial reproduction requests for images of the collection, and non-commercial / not-for-profit requests from local communities. This is to foster knowledge and use of the collections through their wider study and publication, and maintain a balance between legitimate income generation and access for non-commercial users.

Incorporate multisensory exhibits (e.g. to touch or listen to), and tactile objects into exhibitions and galleries where appropriate. Ensure that video-based exhibits have subtitles if they use the spoken word. Write text for use in our galleries, exhibitions, educational

resources, publications, website and social media channels which is carefully tailored to the needs of their intended audiences, in line with the Museum's style guide.

Provide appropriate aids and options to enhance exploration of the Museum and collections by all, e.g. opportunities to try on uniforms and military equipment.

Offer visits to schools and community groups who have difficulty in visiting the Museum.

Ensure that the content and delivery of our learning programmes and activities are tailored to the learning needs of their audiences.

7 Marketing and publicity

The Museum will:

Ensure that our promotional activities present the Museum as a welcoming, non-threatening, inclusive and family-friendly destination.

Promote the Museum to a broad range of users through a variety of media, printed and on-line, for local and target audiences, within the restrictions of budget and volunteer resources. Essential information on accessibility will be included on the Museum's website and programme leaflet, and wherever possible or practical to do so.

8. Staffing and training

The Museum will:

Ensure that visitors are made to feel welcome on arrival and are put at their ease. Our Welcome Desk volunteers are trained to offer a guide of what to expect inside the Museum, answer visitor questions and provide guidance and reassurance about navigation, how to move around the Museum and where to find key exhibits and points of interest.

9. Partnerships and networking

To extend access to collections further, the Museum will:

Consider loans to other museums subject to our conditions of loan and to approval by the Board of Trustees (Legal custodians of the collections).

Actively develop partnerships in the community for exhibitions, talks and activities programmes (e.g. use of Museum facilities for relevant functions e.g. book launches).

Adopted by the trustees on: 12 July 2025 Date PJ Senior Signature of Chair

The date when the Trustees most recently adopted this policy is shown above with the Chair's signature. Senior officers will review each policy informally as necessary and at least annually, bringing any updates thought necessary to the trustees for approval. Normally, each policy will be formally reviewed at least once every three years. The table below serves as a record of revision dates.

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