

PITSTONE GREEN MUSEUM

Access Policy

Issue 1 12th July 2012

Issue 2(amended Nov 2015 by DWT)

Issue 3 (Reviewed April 2019 by DWT)

1. Introduction

The Executive Committee of the museum is only too well aware that its income, and therefore its means to continue to exist, is derived mainly from the general public paying an admission fee to enter the museum when it is open, or by an arranged visit. It is therefore similarly aware that visitors need to enjoy and be satisfied with their visit, and so will consider further visits and communicate their satisfaction to their friends, relatives and neighbours. To this end, we provide free car parking and try to be family friendly in terms of the facilities offered. We welcome disabled visitors and think that some 85% of the site is accessible to them. Further, we support a dog-friendly atmosphere on the site.

2. Considerations

Geographical Access – we are located between the towns of Aylesbury, Tring and Dunstable. The local roads are well maintained and we ensure that adequate signage is in place along these routes ahead of open days. Our visitor surveys show that apart from local inhabitants, everybody else arrives by car. The car parking provision is extensive and free.

Physical Access on Site – the site comprises a diverse collection of buildings linked by a variety of surfaces, including grassed areas, cobbles, concrete and paving stones. These reflect the “organic” way in which the farm buildings accreted and are maintained in good order. As the site only has a single first floor display accessed by stairs, it is possible for physically challenged and disabled visitors to navigate around almost all of the displays. Where steps exist at ground level, we have attempted to provide alternative access and/or sturdy hand rails.

Cultural Access – we are located within a commuter belt that feeds the A41/M40 links. This area is multi-cultural in its demography. The purpose of the museum is to reflect the history of the area, the consequence of which is that the displays relate to a time before such multi-culturalism was the norm. However, it is apparent that this is no perceived barrier to visitors from different cultural backgrounds.

Social Access – often, the biggest consideration in visiting attractions such as ours is cost. We pride ourselves that we provide value for money with entrance fees deliberately held at a lower level than comparable sites. We provide concessions for children and older visitors. One of our aims is to provide an accessible educational experience and to that end we do not make a charge for schools, youth groups or scouts/ cubs/guides/brownies etc. An observation from our visitor survey of last season is that we cater to a significant variety of economic groups from across the area.

Intellectual Access – all information notices around the site are in Plain English, making few assumptions of the intellectual capacity of the reader. We have a web site that is easily navigated and are currently working on an intranet that will be made publically available in due course. The fact that junior school groups and U3A groups can both be catered for suggests that intellectual access to the museum operates successfully in most instances.

Commented [CJAP1]: An intranet is an internal or restricted communication network and would not be made publically (publicly) available. My short-term aim was the education of the society members and volunteers. However, in the long-term I would expect to provide information to verified educational establishments and particularly teachers in support of planning a visit or assisting in research.

I would not like to provide a shopping list for burglars.

We have in position, although not currently in use, a sub domain of edu.pitstonemuseum.co.uk. I would expect to large chunks of intranet artefact data to be available via this connection. The provision will need input from the teachers amongst us

So please could you consider “intranet that could be made available to verified educational organisations”

3. Policy

- Our policy is to always greet customers pleasantly, to treat them with respect, to seek to answer their questions as accurately as possible, to ask if we can help when they look as if assistance is needed, and, if appropriate, to offer to take them to their required destination.
- If we notice visitors doing, or about to do, something which could be considered dangerous to themselves or which could be harmful to our collection, we aim to advise them as politely

possible to desist in what they may be doing and to explain the reason why we have taken that stance. If, as is more likely, we discover visitors' children behaving in this way we will first ask the child to desist, and if that meets with refusal, we will seek the accompanying adult and ask them as politely as possible to retain control of their child.

- As we have a policy that children (under 16 years of age) are not admitted to the museum without an accompanying adult: we should never be in the position of having to deal with an unaccompanied misbehaving child.
- If a visitor has a query of substance regarding any item or items in the collection, whether or not on display, and if it is not possible to deal with that query there and then, we will invite the visitor to return at a mutually convenient time when we can endeavour to deal with the query satisfactorily. If this turns out to be a lengthy process we may invite a donation in return, but we will never demand one.
- If a visitor wants a copy of one of the photographs in our collection, we make a small charge for this to cover our costs.
- It is the long term policy to try to make some of our paper archives available in digitised form, on line. A start has been made on this lengthy process and it remains a continuing ambition.

3. Conclusion

The governing body has seen the museum expand and improve year by year. It has continually striven to improve its displays and facilities offered to visitors while holding admission prices and other charges at a reasonable level. It has also impressed upon its volunteer staff the necessity to engage with visitors in a friendly and helpful manner at all times, and if a question cannot be answered to find the person who can answer it.

This Policy was adopted by the Executive Committee of Pitstone & Ivinghoe Museum Society on

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Signed Chairman