Department for Culture, Media and Sport

Centres for Social Change: Museums, Galleries and Archives for All

Policy Guidance on Social Inclusion for DCMS funded and local authority museums, galleries and archives in England

MAY 2000

Contents

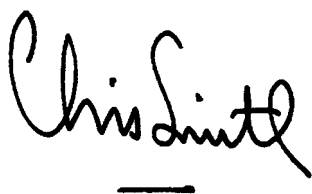# Foreword by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport

Combatting social exclusion is one of the Government's highest priorities, and I believe that museums, galleries and archives have a significant role to play in helping us to do this. They are often the focal point for cultural activity in the community, interpreting its history and heritage. This gives people a sense of their own identity, and that of their community. But the evidence is that museums, galleries and archives can do more than this, and act as agents of social change in the community, improving the quality of people's lives through their outreach activities. This policy aims to stimulate and direct that role.

I am enormously impressed by the good practice already taking place. This document includes some excellent examples of what museums, galleries and archives are doing to improve access and to engage specific groups in the community. But I also recognise that action to tackle social exclusion will have to balanced against their other important responsibilities, such as the acquisition of new material, the conservation and interpretation of their collections, scholarship and education.

The aim of the policy is to encourage museums, galleries and archives to adopt a strategic approach to social inclusion. Because the specific priorities will vary from organisation to organisation, the policy guidance outlines some of the issues relating to social exclusion and the common policy principles that should be applied to helping address and overcome them. It also includes a six-point process by which organisations can implement the policy objectives, and review action. Individual museum, gallery and archive governing bodies will need to consider their own particular local circumstances and develop their own policies. They must also involve those most directly affected at all stages of the process.

I also hope that museums, galleries and archives will be able to expand their use of volunteers. The Government would like more people to become involved in voluntary activity, and we believe that public services can benefit from a mix of people contributing to them. This is not as an alternative to paid staff, but to complement the work they do. Museums, galleries and archives can consider using volunteers to enhance their services, and as a way of directly involving disadvantaged people in the work of the organisation.

Finally, I recognise that this change will not be easy, and will take time. This may be inevitable because we are looking for sustainability and long-term cultural change in the role of museums, galleries and archives, not a short term "quick fix". In conjunction with the Council for Museums, Archives and Libraries, we will be encouraging museums, galleries and archives to play their full part in helping to foster social inclusion.

CHRIS SMITH

Executive Summary

1.   This report identifies policies which museums, galleries and archives can adopt to help combat social exclusion. The main policy objectives are:

   (a)   Mainstreaming social inclusion should be a policy priority for museums, galleries and archives.

   (b)   Achieving the widest possible access to collections and knowledge should be an objective for museums, galleries and archives who aim to make their services socially inclusive.

   (c)   Museums, galleries and archives should make full use of ICT as a means of making their collections more accessible

   (d)   Catalogues and key documents should be available on-line via the internet.

   (e)   Outreach activities should be an integral part of the role of museums, galleries and archives.

   (f)   Museums, galleries and archives should consult people at risk of social exclusion about their needs and aspirations.

   (g)   Where appropriate, collections and exhibitions should reflect the cultural and social diversity of the organisation's actual and potential audiences.

   (h)   Museums, galleries and archives should be a local learning place.

   (i)   Museums, galleries and archives should forge partnerships with other organisations.

   (j)   Museums, galleries and archives should develop projects which aim to improve the lives of people at risk from exclusion.

   (k)   Museums, galleries and archives should consider how they can further develop their role and act as agents of social change.

2.   Museums, galleries and archives are encouraged to adopt a strategy based on the following six-point plan:

   •   Identify the people who are socially excluded and their distribution. Engage them and establish their needs.

   •   Assess and review current practice.

   •   Develop strategic objectives and prioritise resources.

   •   Develop the services, and train the staff to provide them.

   •   Implement the services and publicise them.

   •   Evaluate success, review and improve.

3.   In implementing social inclusion policies, museums, galleries and archives will face a number of challenges including:

- Sustainability and long-term resource issues.

- Need for organisational and cultural change within museums, galleries and archives.

- Responding to the new ICT environment.

- Community ownership/community partnership.

- Integrating the role of museums, galleries and archives within a wider service framework.

- Demonstrating benefits and outcomes.

Section 1: Why a Social Inclusion Policy for Museums, Galleries and Archives?

1.1   Social exclusion is a condition involving poor awareness of and access to the economic, cultural and social networks of society. The Government's Social Exclusion Unit in the Cabinet Office defines social exclusion as "a shorthand term for what can happen when people or areas suffer from a combination of linked problems such as unemployment, poor skills, low incomes, poor housing, high crime environments, bad health, poverty and family breakdown." Social exclusion can take many forms. It can be direct or indirect, and can affect both groups and individuals. Exclusion also has a geographical dimension embracing rural, urban and suburban areas alike. The Government's aim in tackling social exclusion is to achieve improved outcomes, particularly in terms of better educational achievement, increased employment prospects, improved health and reduced crime.

1.2   Some of the main causes and symptoms of social exclusion are set out in section 2.

The role of DCMS and its sectors

1.3   The Social Exclusion Unit has established a number of Policy Action Teams (PATs) looking into the role that various sectors can play in helping to overcome social exclusion. DCMS chaired PAT 10 – Art and Sport – which recommends assessing provision and expenditure on culture and leisure both geographically and according to the social ethnic and professional background of users and potential users. It also recommends that there should be more systematic community consultation and that local authorities should develop plans for community based culture and leisure activities.

As part of the follow-up to PAT10, DCMS has produced the following overall aim for implementation of the recommendations:

"To promote the involvement in culture and leisure activities of those at risk of social disadvantage or marginalisation, particularly by virtue of the area they live in; their disability, poverty, age, racial or ethnic origin. To improve the quality of people's lives by these means."

DCMS is now developing a series of specific policies for its sectors. *Libraries for All: Social Inclusion in Public Libraries* was published in October 1999, and this policy for museums, galleries and archives continues the process.

Social Exclusion and Learning

1.4   Learning can be a powerful agent in combatting social exclusion by giving people the abilities, skills and confidence to engage with society. There is increasing recognition that learning can take place outside the classroom, is a lifelong process growing out of our everyday experience,

and that the cultural sector can make a large contribution. Informal learning has a key role to play in broadening people's understanding and awareness, and providing them with a first step on a learning journey.

1.5   Through the special combination of enjoyment and learning that they offer, museums, galleries and archives can provide many opportunities for overcoming social exclusion. Programmes can draw in specific groups within the communities that they serve, including marginalised groups. Exploring the context of their community can allow people to come to a greater understanding of themselves and stimulate their interest in society more generally. Being involved in creating an exhibition, including hands-on creation of objects to go in it, can help enormously to increase individuals' sense of self-worth, value and motivation. It can also release latent creative abilities and enhance imagination, vocabulary and self-expression. This in turn gives them the confidence to engage more fully in society and helps to reduce their experience of exclusion.

The Information Age

1.6   The Information Age has created fundamental social changes which call for policy action and for cultural adjustments at all levels of public service. These will be reflected in new kinds of social relationships, cross-sectoral partnerships, changes in patterns of communication, new ways of learning and new forms of mutual support. For those on the margins of our society, the potential benefits of enhanced information and communication often make no impression or are viewed as 'not for us'. Significant or growing gaps between those who have access to information and those who don't are unacceptable. Museums, galleries and archives have a role to play in helping to exploit the new technologies to generate social cohesion, community involvement and participation, and to aid lifelong learning. They can do this by providing content and access to ICT, and encouraging their buildings to be used as neutral meeting places.

The role of museums, galleries and archives

1.7   Museums, galleries and archives, with their unique collections, represent one of the most significant cultural resources in the community, and provide a valuable resource for lifelong learning. They can play a role in generating social change by engaging with and empowering people to determine their place in the world, educate themselves to achieve their own potential, play a full part in society, and contribute to transforming it in the future.

1.8   Museums and galleries can also provide a venue for community activities which require a safe public space. Indeed a museum or gallery building which people can enter without being challenged can become a valued environment for those who are socially isolated and have little contact with others. And although security considerations may impose certain constraints on users of archive buildings, much can be done to make visitors feel welcome and at ease.

1.9   However, recent research carried out by MORI shows that only 23% of people from social classes DE visited museums and galleries, compared with 56% of people from classes AB. We

believe that cultural activity can be enjoyed by everyone in society. Cultural activities can be pivotal to social cohesion and social change, helping to generate community identity and pride, celebrate cultural and ethnic diversity, and improve educational attainment. Museums, galleries and archives provide a special social and learning environment. Collections can be a starting point, with individuals relating to objects and displays that trigger their interest, but the experience can also involve interacting with others and learning social skills, increasing motivation, developing numeracy and literacy skills, and raising self esteem. To achieve these goals, museums, galleries and archives must be seen to be relevant, and must act in innovative and adventurous ways.

1.10   An important principle of social inclusion is engaging and involving those at risk of exclusion in the provision of services. For local authority museums, galleries and archives, many of the principles of Best Value will apply in seeking to address social exclusion. The Best Value process places a duty on local authorities to consult with and involve their users in the provision of appropriate services. Such consultation is an integral part of the overall planning process and enables effective and efficient use of resources as well as supporting the development of partnerships and sustainable community use, by fostering a sense of ownership. Similarly, the Modernising Government agenda places a responsibility on those museums, galleries and archives sponsored by Central Government to provide responsive public services, organised to meet the needs of users and potential users.

1.11   Every organisation has a responsibility to the people who make up its actual and potential audiences. Our objective is wider than simply encouraging under-represented groups to come into museum, gallery or archive buildings. If museums, galleries and archives are to make a real difference, their goal should be to act as vehicles for positive social change. However they will not be able to do this alone, and will only be fully effective by acting in partnership with others.

1.12   Many museums and galleries have a tradition of reaching across social divisions, and active and imaginative work is being carried out by museums, galleries and archives in combatting social exclusion. However, the pattern of provision is uneven and there is no national framework to influence and guide local initiatives. This policy document aims to give guidance to public museums, galleries and archives, at both local and national level, on the opportunities and obligations they have to make a real difference to individuals and communities at risk of social exclusion. All members of staff, as well as their governing bodies (trustees or councillors), can make an important contribution to achieving these goals.

1.13   While this report is primarily aimed at publicly funded museums, galleries and archives, the basic principles are equally applicable to the work of the independent and voluntary sectors. We hope that they will consider the contribution that they can make to tackling social exclusion and adopt the policy objectives recommended here.

Section 2: Identifying the Causes of Social Exclusion

2.1   In considering what they should do to combat social exclusion, museums, galleries and
         archives need to examine the circumstances of their communities, and the reasons why some
         people do not make full, if any, use of their services. Some of the main barriers to a socially
         inclusive use of museums, galleries and archives are:

         (i)   institutional;

         (ii)   personal and social;

         (iii)   related to perceptions and awareness; and

         (iv)   environmental.

Institutional

2.2   These are the barriers that museums, galleries and archives themselves, and their staff, may
         create, and which may discourage or restrict usage by certain people or sections of the
         community. They include:

         • Unsuitable or unduly restrictive opening hours, or restrictions upon the availability of
           services;

         • Inappropriate staff attitudes and behaviour;

         • Direct and indirect discrimination;

         • Inappropriate rules and regulations;

         • Charging policies which disadvantage those on low incomes;

         • Acquisition, exhibition and cataloguing policies which do not reflect the needs or interests
           of the actual or potential audiences;

         • Lack of signage in buildings, so that people cannot easily find their way around;

         • Lack of a sense of ownership and involvement by the community;

         • Lack of adequate provision of services or facilities for people with disabilities.

Personal and Social

2.3   These possible causes of social exclusion can be experienced by individuals, or as a result of
         cultural or community circumstances. They include:

         • Lack of basic skills in reading, writing and communication;

         • Low income and poverty;

- Lack of social contact;

- Low self esteem;

- Lack of permanent fixed address;

Perceptions and Awareness

2.4   Perceptions that museums, galleries or archives are "not for us" exist both in individual and community terms. This perception causes difficulties for:

- People who are educationally disadvantaged;

- People who live in isolation from wider society;

- People who don't think that museums, galleries or archives are relevant to their lives or needs;

- People with a lack of knowledge of facilities and services, and how to use them.

Environmental

2.5   Environmental barriers include:

- Difficult physical access into and within buildings;

- Problem estates and urban decay;

- The isolation experienced by people in rural communities;

- Poor transport links.

Section 3: Social Inclusion Policy for Museums, Galleries and Archives

3.1   This section sets out what we believe to be the basic components of an evolving social inclusion policy for publicly funded museums, galleries and archives. The policy objectives set out below are a framework for action, not a solution to social exclusion. They represent elements of good practice, rather than a rigid blueprint. We must ensure that they are developed, implemented and monitored, not only with the active involvement of people at risk of social exclusion, but also as part of an overall social inclusion strategy within the museum, gallery or archive organisation, governing body or local authority.

3.2   Increasing social inclusion is part of a process which many museums, galleries and archives have successfully begun, but which will take time for all organisations to achieve. Social inclusion is about more than just access, although that is clearly important. If museums, galleries and archives are to make a real difference, the must become an agent of social regeneration and a vehicle for broad social change. But they clearly cannot be expected to take on this role at once, and the organisational processes will have to be developed over a period of time. This journey towards social inclusion will have a number of stages:

      First Stage: Access – becoming inclusive and accessible organisations;

      Second Stage: Audience dev elopment – reaching out to new audiences, and creating
                                 events or exhibitions that are relevant to them;

      Third Stage: Museums, galleries and archives as agents of social change.

      In this way, access and audience development become a process by which to achieve the goal of improving the quality of life of people at risk of social exclusion. Furthermore, activities supporting each of these stages should be undertaken in parallel where circumstances permit.

3.3   Every member of the staff and governing body of museums, galleries and archives has a role to play in achieving greater social inclusion. Poor staff attitudes and prejudices can be a major barrier to inclusion, and success in implementing a social inclusion policy relies on the commitment of staff to equal opportunities, both in services to the public and between members of staff. This is why it is important that museums, galleries and archives become inclusive and accessible organisations. Many organisations will need to bring about internal cultural change through commitment, support, and training and development of staff before they can be effective in generating wider change.

3.4   DCMS has published standards for developing access policies in *Museums for the Many*. The access policy objectives in this guidance build upon the standards set out in that document. The Public Services Quality Group (the Quality Forum for Archives and Local Studies) has produced *A Standard for Access to Archives* which will benefit local authority, national and independent archive organisations who are committed to widening access to services.

3.5   In seeking to apply the objectives in this policy guidance, museums, galleries and archives should ask themselves:

- How can we use our collections to make a difference to the lives of people at risk of social exclusion?

- How can we develop our services so that we can improve the quality of life of people at risk of social exclusion?

- How can we work in partnership with others to make our activities and theirs more successful?

- What impact can our activities have on creating positive social change?

POLICY OBJECTIVES

(a) Mainstreaming social inclusion should be a policy priority for museums, galleries and archi ves.

Mainstreaming means putting a principle at the heart of policy making or the development of services. Acting in ways to promote social inclusion should underpin all decisions about services and policies in museums, galleries and archives. This applies both where services are being enhanced or changed, and when there is pressure to reduce or cut services, facilities or activities. Governing bodies should take account of social inclusion objectives in business plans, cultural strategies and similar strategic documents.

TYNE AND WEAR MUSEUMS MISSION STATEMENT

Tyne and Wear Museums have developed an organisational culture whose primary goal is 'total inclusion'. They aim to achieve this through making a positive and profound impact on people's lives in the region, and by contributing to economic and social regeneration. Their mission is: *To help people determine their place in the world, and understand their identities,so enhancing their self-respect and their respect for others*. The complete mission statement is at Appendix A.

Access

(b) Achieving the widest possible access to collections and knowledge should be an objecti ve for museums, galleries and archi   ves who aim to make their services sociall   y inclusi ve.

Museums, galleries and archives should ensure that they remove as far as possible the barriers to access to their collections and services: physical and sensory, intellectual, cultural, attitudinal and financial. This means that:

- Charges for services should not disadvantage people at risk of social exclusion. Governing bodies should consider how inclusive or exclusive their charging policies are. The aim of access/admission policies should be to achieve a more diverse and representative audience.

- Opening hours should be flexible and tailored to reflect the needs and interests of the community, rather than the convenience of the provider, including evening and weekend opening. Organisations should consider benefits to social inclusion of special openings, targeted at particular audiences.

- Buildings and services should be accessible to all. Museums, galleries and archives have a duty under the Disability Discrimination Act to make reasonable adjustments to help people with physical or sensory disabilities, or learning difficulties, overcome any 'substantial disadvantage' they encounter. This could include better signage around buildings, the size and positioning of captions, providing seating, and the possibility of installing induction loops for audio–visual presentations. To achieve this, it is recommended that a consultation group made up of disabled users and staff is established to review the facilities and services.

LONDON METROPOLITAN ARCHIVES EVENING OPENING

When London Metropolitan Archives added a second open evening to its standard opening hours, the success of the initiative was immediately apparent. Thursday user figures increased by between 50 and 100 per cent immediately, for the addition of a relatively modest $2^1/_2$ hours access time. While some of these users are readers who simply spend a longer day at the archives, it is also clear that others start their research at or after 5pm. In addition to these longer hours, evening users value procedures such as advance ordering, which enables them to make the most of their visit

(c) Museums, galleries and archi   ves should make full use of   ICT as a means of   making their collections more accessible

The use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) provides an important opportunity to make collections more accessible both through the internet, and by digitally presenting and interpreting collections. ICT can provide both a gateway to the collections of museums, galleries and archives, and an educational resource. Museums, galleries and archives can also make an educational contribution by providing content about their collections to other websites, in particular by connecting with the National Grid for Learning, and in the case of archives, by sending copies of their catalogues for inclusion in the National Register of Archives. Museums, galleries and archives should also work with public libraries and community centres to provide local ICT access points on their premises for people who do not have access to ICT facilities. This reflects the potential role of museums and galleries in particular as public spaces.

BOARD OF DEPUTIES OF BRITISH JEWS: ACCESS TO ARCHIVES

The use of ICT for publicising archive and other cultural heritage collections can yield exciting and unexpected results. London Metropolitan Archives has supplied the Board of Deputies of British Jews with an analysis of its archive for publication on its website (address: www.bod.org.uk/arch98.html). This not only makes the information about the archive generally available, but it also enables the Board to demonstrate a wholly justifiable pride in its archival heritage.

(d) Catalogues and k   ey documents should be a   vaila ble on-line via the internet.

It is important that potential users should be able to find out about the content or relevance of museums, galleries and archives, without having to visit them in person. Organisations should

consider how they might be able to make copies of their catalogues available to internet users, for example through participation in the *Access to Archives* programme.

GWYNEDD ARCHIVE SERVICE: FREE INTERNET ACCESS TO ARCHIVE CATALOGUES

In rural Wales, remote communities, poor transport links and low income levels lead to social deprivation, especially with regard to cultural resources. RHAGOROL, which means 'excellent' in Welsh, is a scheme established by Gwynedd Council, using ERDF funding , to break down barriers to archive use in a sparely populated area. Gwynedd supports two record offices but some residents must travel 30 miles to reach one. With on-line, item-level lists and associated digitised images of key illustrations, remote users can prepare in advance for a visit. 16 branch libraries provide free public internet access points and staff are being trained to mediate this resource for new users. Gwynedd Council also hopes to provide archive access points with digitised and microfilm surrogated copies in several libraries, an allied museum collection database, and e-mail enquiry and photocopy services. An overarching strategy aims to get more people using more heritage resources through cross-disciplinary co-operation.

Audience development

(e) Outreach activities should be an integral part of the role of museums, galleries and archives.

Museums, galleries and archives should undertake outreach work within the community. Central aspects of outreach should be consultation and involvement with under-represented groups and potential audiences. Even museums, galleries or archives with a small staff should consider channelling some of their resources into making contacts with people who are at risk of cultural and social exclusion; for example they could aim to identify and introduce to the museum, gallery or archive (through workshops or open sessions) at least one community group or organisation each year. Organisations should also consider the scope for holding exhibitions in community venues. The Museums and Galleries Commission published guidance on outreach and engaging audiences in *Building Bridges* and outreach activities to help tackle social exclusion should build upon these principles.

BIRMINGHAM CITY ARCHIVES: THE HISTORY VAN

In the early 1990s, Birmingham Central Library and City Archives purchased and equipped a van as a travelling outreach facility. The van is equipped with sound and video playback equipment, exhibitions can be mounted directly on the walls, and there are display racks for publications. The van goes to a wide range of venues, including shopping centres, parks, summer carnivals and festivals all over the city, allowing adults and children to be introduced to the diverse resources of the library and archives for local history. It is also taken to schools and elderly peoples' homes (and is adapted for disabled access) as part of broader outreach initiatives or reminiscence sessions.

KIRKLEES COMMUNITY HISTORY SERVICE: BAGSHAW MUSEUM

At the Bagshaw Museum in Batley the eclectic mix of ethnographic, natural history and social history collections seem at odds with the urban landscape and the local population, of whom 30 percent come from the Indian sub-continent. As well as the communities from Gujurat, Punjab and Azad Kashmir, the museum works with adults with learning difficulties, young offenders and disabled children with their carers. In 1998 Kirklees Community History Service replaced the former museum service. Outreach and community development form part of every job description, and the Community Education team works across the borough, emphasising the service's commitment to tackling social exclusion.A programme of Family Festivals to celebrate cultural diversity has resulted in schemes such as a Diwali project and celebration created by Almondbury Junior School in Huddersfield. The service has held exhibitions in cinemas, chapels and gudwaras. Targeted groups as well as the general public work with artists, musicians and performers, who assist in the interpretation of the collections and incorporate local people's stories.

(f) Museums, galleries and archi   ves should consult people at risk of   social exclusion about their needs and aspir   ations .

This is a crucial principle of social inclusion. Museums, galleries and archives should be relevant and, as far as possible, attractive to everyone. It is important that people at risk of social exclusion are given the opportunity to communicate their thoughts and wishes to those working in the organisations. This is more than just asking them what they want; it means involving them in all stages of planning, introducing and monitoring services. Ongoing consultation and advocacy groups are effective ways of maintaining links with members of the community. Governing bodies should also consider the role of volunteers, both within the museum, gallery or archive, or from within the community itself, as a means to achieve this and to involve the community in the work of the organisation.

BOURNEMOUTH BOROUGH COUNCIL: CHILDREN'S CONSULTANCY SCHEME

As part of a major scheme to refurbish the Russell-Cotes Art Gallery and Museum, Bournemouth Council involved pupils from the after-school club at Hill View Primary School in a children's consultancy project. The children took part in a visit to the museum site and meetings with councillors and council officers. The consultation highlighted the children's preference for active participation, and the need for a high standard of signing, toilets, seating and catering. They also recommended that the art gallery create a library containing books suitable for children. While the children accepted that the old Victorian house should be preserved as it was in the Russell-Cotes' time, they would prefer the modern part of the museum to be light and bright, containing modern art and new technology. The consultants noted how the children's knowledge, understanding, responsibility and self-confidence increased as a result of their involvement in the project.

(g) Where appropriate, collections and exhibitions should reflect the cultural and social diversity of the or ganisation's actual and potential audiences   .

It is important that museum and gallery displays and archive holdings are relevant and stimulating to their audiences. Where appropriate, acquisition and exhibition policies of organisations with a strong regional or ethnic potential audience should reflect the cultural and social diversity of the locality, region or communities served. People from local communities, or communities of interest, should be involved in identifying and selecting material. In this way communities will contribute to the acquisition policy, and there will be a broader public ownership of its delivery and success. In exhibitions of objects or documents, captions and texts should be written in plain English, and in other languages appropriate to the local population.

> **NATIONAL MUSEUMS AND GALLERIES ON MERSEYSIDE:TRANSATLANTIC SLAVERY GALLERY AND HISTORY TRAIL**
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> The Transatlantic Slavery Gallery, housed in the Merseyside Maritime Museum, was made possible by a donation from the Peter Moores Foundation. The gallery, which opened in 1995, highlights many of the City of Liverpool's links with slavery and the slave trade. The Slavery History Trail project began in 1996, building on the history trail tours that local black people had been running since the 1970s. The aim of the project was to build awareness within the community of the importance of slavery to the growth of the port and city. The main users of the trails are school groups, Afro-Caribbean clubs and societies, black student groups and adult education groups. An NVQ course is being developed to train black and other ethnic minority guides. The aim is to integrate the project into the fabric of the city's cultural industry, and in this way address the hopes and aspirations of the community to have their heritage fully represented in and by the city.

(h) Museums, galleries and archi   ves should be a local learning place.

Museums, galleries and archives are an important resource for lifelong learning, both in terms of formal educational achievement and informal methods of learning and self development (such as family and community history). Many people who have difficulty learning in traditional environments, such as schools, may be more able to absorb and understand through using objects and visual representations. Learning opportunities should be available both within museum, gallery and archive buildings and in the community. Museums, galleries and archives can play an important part in a consortium of learning networks and they should join with other learning organisations to provide a comprehensive service to the community, for example as members of the lifelong learning partnerships being developed by local authorities. There is also scope for closer co-operation with libraries.

MUSEUM OF LONDON ROMAN BOXES FOR SCHOOLS

The Museum of London is aware that only 10 percent of London's 2200 primary and special schools make regular visits to the Museum to use its collections in teaching. To improve access to these valuable resources, the Museum is conducting a trial for a scheme to provide primary schools in London with a box of Roman artefacts. Together with the artefacts, the box contains replicas, teachers' notes, a video and a training course for teachers in how objects can be used to teach not only history but also design and technology and other subjects. The results of the trial, which involves 200 schools, will be available in September 2000. The museum will then review and develop the boxes and the support materials, to ensure that teachers and pupils throughout London will find the material informative and enjoyable.

Agents of social change

(i) Museums, galleries and archi   ves should forge partnerships with other or   ganisations .

It is vital that museums, galleries and archives work in close co-operation with local authority/government services and the voluntary sector to develop and deliver social inclusion policies. Local authorities can provide information on socially excluded groups, and museums, galleries and archives can offer facilities and services to enhance what is already happening, as well as developing their own specific programmes. Partnerships should also be forged with other cultural and learning organisations, to help deliver more comprehensive and better targeted programmes of activity. Regional Cultural Consortia should help to co-ordinate such activity. To make such policies real, museums, galleries and archives should consider an annual programme of acting in partnership with others to identify individuals or groups for whom use of, or access to, collections might deliver increased social inclusion, and devise and implement a sustainable programme of activities to achieve this.

WEST YORKSHIRE PLAYHOUSE CELEBRATING MEMORIES SCHEME

West Yorkshire Playhouse has created a series of partnerships with arts and heritage organisations in Leeds for an HLF-funded project, Celebrating Memories. Involving thirteen projects over two years, Celebrating Memories extends the Playhouse's existing successful arts development strategy to include partnerships with both publicly funded and independent museums such as the Thackray Medical Museum. The project aims to develop new methods of engaging with local communities to access collections, and to discover how collections and artefacts can be used to challenge stereotypical images of museums and galleries. The projects include From Caribbean Shores, which seeks to examine the contribution of older African Caribbean communities, using artefacts from the City Museum and Art Gallery, and Doctor, Doctor, working with primary school children from a deprived neighbourhood and the Thackray Medical Museum to compare health and poverty in history with their own experiences. The project's organisers also hope to pass on some of their experience in raising funds for outreach work to the partner heritage organisations , so that they will be able to continue community development work after the scheme ends.

> ### INSTITUTE OF COMMONWEALTH STUDIES: MAPPING RESEARCH RESOURCE FOR CARIBBEAN STUDIES AND THE HISTORY OF BLACK AND ASIAN PEOPLE IN BRITAIN
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> Heading a consortium of fifteen other partners, and supported by a grant from the Research Support Libraries programme, the Institute of Commonwealth Studies has established the CASBAH (Caribbean Studies and Black and Asian History) project to identify and map national research resources for Caribbean studies and the history of Black and Asian people in Britain. The aim is to map the location of materials in these subject areas in archives and libraries across all sectors, in order to stimulate research in these fields and increase community access. The survey work will also be used to establish a methodology to identify relevant archival sources elsewhere. In addition the project will review national collection strengths and weaknesses with a view to co-ordinating collection development in the future.

(j) Museums, galleries and archives should develop projects which aim to improve the lives of people at risk from exclusion.

As part of the process of identifying target groups of socially excluded people, museums, galleries and archives should consider what they can offer in terms of activities which would not only appeal to those individuals or groups, but also have the potential to improve the quality of their lives, increase their self-esteem and help combat their exclusion.

> ### NOTTINGHAM CITY MUSEUMS AND GALLERIES: ASPLEY WOMEN'S PROJECT
>
> Aspley is a 1930's council estate on the edge of Nottingham. The women's group meets weekly with a health visitor and community worker to provide a time for mutual support, learning and "time off" from young children. The women are diverse in age, experience and ethnic origin. Some are in receipt of income support and some are single parents. The women were invited to contribute to an exhibition entitled "Mothers Pride" at Nottingham Castle museum. Working with the curator and a museums outreach worker, the women produced their own photographic work which illustrated their experiences of mothering, and text for the exhibition. The project has helped the women to increase their self esteem, develop their skills, and now see museums in a new light. They have subsequently attended family and summer events and have successfully completed another project in which they worked with a textile specialist to create two large costumes for the education room.

(k) Museums, galleries and archives should consider how they can further develop their role and act as agents of social change.

Once access and audience development objectives have been achieved, the next challenge for museums, galleries and archives should be to develop their services as a vehicle for broad social change and creating sustainable communities. They can do this by the example that they set to others, and by positive actions that they take. They should consider how they can contribute to tackling the wider problems experienced by people at risk of social exclusion; for example, museums, galleries and archives might identify, each year, a subject pertinent to public or social policy, which can be featured in an exhibition or event.

WALSALL MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY: BRENDA AND OTHER STORIES

Funded by Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council, West Midlands Arts, the Arts Council of England and Walsall Health Authority, Brenda and Other Stories: Art, HIV and You was exhibited in Walsall Museum and Art Gallery for three months in 1996. Its primary aims were to raise awareness of HIV and broader issues surrounding sexual health, to display high quality works of art from the UK and abroad, and to promote the use of arts exhibitions as an arena for generating consciousness of social issues. During the exhibition the number of HIV tests in the town rose by 30 percent. The success of the project's objectives were reflected in the huge number of responses by visitors who strongly supported Walsall Art Gallery's decision to confront the issues of HIV and AIDS. Evaluation of the education programme for secondary schools, funded by Walsall Health Authority, showed a higher level of sexual health awareness after the programme than before.

Section 4: Means of Achieving the Policy Objectives

4.1   This section sets out a process by which the policy objectives set out above can be implemented. We recognise that some museums, galleries and archives have been active in developing services to combat social exclusion, but that others have made less progress. The point is that, whatever scale of activity it is proposed to undertake, organisations will need to adopt a strategy, which we suggest they base on the following six-point plan. We believe that all of these approaches would benefit from partnerships with local authority services and other organisations.

1. Identify the people who are socially excluded and their distribution. Engage them and establish their needs .

This requires an holistic approach across local and regional communities. A starting point should be the work that local authorities may have already done in producing a community profile. Museums, galleries and archives will then need to consider which of the barriers to social inclusion apply to their particular localities, and which groups are most affected.

Once these people and groups have been identified, organisations will then need to engage with them in order to establish their cultural and information needs and how they can best be delivered. This may be done most effectively in conjunction with local authority services, such as education, libraries, social services, and with voluntary bodies. Representatives of the socially excluded groups will need to be involved in developing and establishing the response to these needs, and monitoring its success.

ADVOCATES SCHEME AT THE GRANGE MUSEUM

The Grange Museum Advocates Group was launched in November 1997, formed from a core of people who had worked with museum staff on a series of community exhibitions. This work had started with the creation of the Brent People Gallery in1993, telling the story of settlement in the Borough in the 20th century. To bring the gallery to life, people who offered to help advised staff on the narrative and presentation of the exhibition, acting as museum consultants for the project. This work led to the formation of an exhibition group and the first community exhibition: Front Room, a Caribbean Perspective. Over the following years, visitor figures increased and the visitor profile changed, reflecting far more closely the cultural diversity of Brent. The long-term aim is to broaden the representation of the group by forging more partnerships with the council, the voluntary sector and others, to take the work of the museum forward and ground it thoroughly in the community.

2. Assess and r eview cur rent practice.

The starting point should be to review the services that are currently provided, particularly those aimed at people at risk of social exclusion. The key questions are: *How far does the service meet the needs of all sections of the community* and *Is it helping to combat social exclusion?* This should take into account other relevant local strategies relating to IT, poverty and equal opportunities, and the existence of community/voluntary sector information networks. They should also consider, in conjunction with one or two community organisations, carrying out a review or audit of at least part of the museum, gallery or archive each year.

SOUTH WEST MUSEUMS COUNCIL MAPPING PROJECT

South West Museums Council is carrying out a mapping project of all the museums and galleries in the region. By collecting detailed information on aspects of service provision which impinge on social inclusion, it aims to inform the Area Museum Council's strategy and to provide comparative information for member museums. SWMC published its first survey in November 1999 and intends to continue sending out a questionnaire for self-assessment every year. By pursuing a regional approach and publishing the results of each survey, SWMC hopes to encourage its members to use the information for benchmarking and identifying strengths and weaknesses.

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3. De velop str ategic objecti ves and prioritise resources .

Once the needs have been established, museums, galleries and archives should consider how they can best be met. The strategy can be all-embracing, aiming to draw up a programme to help develop social inclusion across the community, or more limited, initially concentrating on the highest priority areas of social need. The str ategy that has been developed should be reflected in the wider cultural strategies being developed on a local and regional basis.

It is important that organisations assess carefully their capacity, in terms of people, financial resources and opportunities, to develop a sustainable social inclusion agenda. The strategy is likely to have resource implications to car ry out these activities, but it should be remembered that many of the services targeted at socially excluded people can also be used by other members of the community. All funding sources will need to be considered and additional resources might be found by working with others and developing partnerships, which may involve working with various local authority services, and with outside groups and agencies. Funding may also be available from sources such as the HLF Museums and Galleries Access Fund, which has recently been extended for a further three years, and European sources such as the Urban Programme and the European Social Fund. Museums, galleries and archives should also consider the role of volunteers in helping to deliver some services.

READING CORPORATE MEMBERS SCHEME

Reading Museums Service has developed a partnership scheme which combines strategic planning with creating a more inclusive museum service. They have developed a Business Plan which financially and conceptually links the school loans service, active since 1911, to the Corporate Members Scheme. All revenue from the Corporate Membership scheme is used to fund the schools loan service. Businesses in Reading who become Corporate Members receive a 'flying object' or 'flying picture' to display in their offices. A growing selection of objects from the museum's collections have been displayed in special travelling display units, which are installed in the company's premises. Members also receive invitations to exhibition openings and lunches, and are able to enjoy corporate hire facilities of the Art Gallery. In this way, Reading builds real partnerships by widening the museum's audience to both business people and school children, ensuring that commercial privileges are linked to socially inclusive benefits for local communities.

4. Develop the services, and train the staff to provide them.

In addition to making new facilities or services available, it is important to recognise the role of front-line museum, gallery and archive staff, together with volunteers. The culture of the organisation itself may need to change, in terms of attitudes and behaviours, values and beliefs. Staff should be fully informed and involved in the process, and be equipped with the new skills, knowledge and competence they will need. These processes should also include any volunteer support staff. Museums, galleries and archives should consider nominating one person to be responsible for familiarising themselves with social inclusion issues and taking the lead within the organisation, and managers should aim towards equal opportunities management both of people and of services to the public.

SHROPSHIRE RECORDS AND RESEARCH SERVICE: VOLUNTEERS

Shropshire Records and Research Service has developed links with a number of training organisations and voluntary bodies to provide volunteers to work on various cataloguing and conservation projects throughout the Service. Those taking up the placements range from women returners to young people seeking work experience. Some stay a few weeks; others have worked for the Service for many years. Around 50 individuals have contributed over the last 12 months. The volunteers provide the Service with much needed extra manpower, and they gain valuable work experience including IT skills, in a friendly and secure environment. Appropriate recruitment and supervision ensures that the needs of the Service and the needs of the volunteers are balanced.

EAST MIDLANDS MUSEUM SERVICE: SOCIAL INCLUSION TRAINING MANUAL

As part of Interact, its regional network of freelance education workers, the East Midlands Museums Service (EmmS) has developed a training manual aimed at freelance and sessional workers in the region. Commissioned from Nottingham City Museums, the manual evolved from the induction training provided to Interact members, and encourages trainees to better understand the needs of people who are not 'traditional' museum users.A number of Interact members frequently work in settings other than schools and museums, such as with mental health groups, school non-attenders, and older people's groups, and the manual focuses on their needs, in addition to those of schools. The EmmS' aim is to provide consistent, practical guidance for freelancers on social inclusion issues, and to stimulate trainees' respect and understanding for the people with whom they work.

5. Implement the services and publicise them.

As well as making new services available, it is important that they are publicised among the target groups, who should be given every encouragement and incentive to use them. This is an area where local champions from within the groups can play a significant role. Promotion should be continuous, and the opportunity should be taken to publicise success whenever it occurs.

NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM: PUBLICITY FOR DEAF PEOPLE

Over the last eight years, the National Maritime Museum and Royal Observatory have developed close contacts with the Deaf community. The museum produces an annual leaflet which they send to targeted community groups and publications, publicising the signed tours and talks regularly held in the museum.A database of Deaf contacts ensures that individuals and groups receive information about every signing event. As part of National Science Week the museum organised an Astronomy Day for Deaf people, publicised through leaflets and a special link on the National Science Week website. The day included a signed planetarium show, a performance by a signing actor on the life of eighteenth century Deaf astronomer John Goodricke and a meeting of the Deaf Astronomers' Society. The museum's leaflets include information about events for Deaf people in order to integrate signing activities with the museum's whole programme. The pages for Deaf people on Teletext and Ceefax, and more recently the Internet, have enabled the museum to target publicity to the Deaf community. The National Maritime Museum was a founder member of an informal network of London museums and galleries which allows for joint promotion of events for Deaf people.

6. Evaluate success, r eview and impr ove.

It is important that the outcomes and success of the service are regularly evaluated against predetermined objectives, criteria for success and performance indicators. This will enable museums, galleries and archives to demonstrate the difference they make to local people, learn lessons, and make further improvements to their service. Organisations could benefit from existing consultation or advocacy groups who are involved with projects, by involving them in reviewing and evaluation, both while projects are in progress and when they have ended.

Role of the DCMS

4.2   To help bring the changes envisaged in this paper about, DCMS will:

(i)   Ask the Council for Museums, Archives and Libraries to take an active role in encouraging museums, galleries and archives to adopt policies and undertake activities to promote social inclusion, and to monitor and review the success of these activities.

(ii)   Help to ensure that, in the longer term, museum, gallery and archive funding opportunities reflect these social inclusion objectives.

(iii)   Ensure that funding agreements with DCMS sponsored museums and galleries reflect these policy objectives.

Section 5: The Challenges that Museums, Galleries and Archives Face

Implementing social inclusion policies brings challenges for museums, galleries and archives if they are to provide a sustainable, long term service to socially excluded people. The main challenges are:

- **Sustainability and long-term resource issues   .**

  Adequate resources will be necessary to sustain the service, and particular consideration needs to be given to funding issues relating to the provision of ICT, and opening hours. Many authorities will be able to adopt short-term measures that may provide some quick gains. However, a more significant contribution lies in the development of a long-term social inclusion strategy and measures which are sustainable. This does not mean, of course, that the strategy should not include a number of short term projects relating to specific sections of the community (such as special exhibitions or events), provided these are part of an ongoing programme of action. The challenge for museums, galleries and archives is to use their resources more imaginatively in order to support new strategies, and to do so alongside their equally important responsibilities for safeguarding and displaying the national and local heritage, and providing opportunities for scholarship and education.

- **Need for or ganisational and cultural change within museums, galleries and archi   ves.**

  Mainstreaming and adopting positive measures for social inclusion means adapting and extending the range of services provided by museums, galleries and archives; forming new partnerships with the communities served and within local authorities; and challenging some of their more traditional values and practices. This cannot successfully be achieved without the active support of everyone involved in the organisation. Governing bodies, staff and volunteers should be involved in all aspects of the work – developing the social inclusion policy, consultation and engaging with communities, and evaluating the results. The internal culture of museums, galleries and archives may need to change in terms of attitudes and behaviours, values and beliefs. Recruitment of staff should seek to reflect the cultural diversity of actual and potential user s, and to encourage staff who are sympathetic to the principles of social inclusion. Staff, including volunteer s, should be given the development, training and support they need to achieve this, and managers need to ensure they have an understanding of the principles of equal opportunities and service delivery. Organisations should make links with training providers. The Cultural Heritage and the Information Services National Training Organisations can support organisations in creating and exploiting those links.

- **Responding to the new ICT environment.**

  The arrival of the Information Age, and its impact on people's lives, means that museums, galleries and archives have an important new opportunities to make available information about their collections. This is both in terms of providing details of their collections, facilities and services, and of making material available to other education and information providers.

- **Community ownership/community partnership   .**

  If social inclusion policies are to be fully effective, it is vital that individuals and representatives from excluded and community groups are involved in developing, introducing and monitoring the museums, galleries and archives initiatives, for example in terms of their collection policy and projects related to specific groups of people. Establishing and maintaining these links is time consuming, but every opportunity should be taken for fostering community consultation and partnership.

- **Integrating the role of museums, galleries and archi   ves within a wider service framework.**

  It is essential that the social inclusion activities of museums, galleries and archives are not considered in isolation. In the case of local authority services, they must be integrated within the local authority's wider strategy for improving social inclusion, and they must connect effectively with the services of other providers. Acting in partnership with others is one of the key ways in which museums, galleries and archives can play a significant role in tackling social exclusion.

- **Demonstr ating benefits and outcomes   .**

  If they are to show that they can make an important contribution to tackling social exclusion museums, galleries and archives will be required to demonstrate the benefits and outcomes of their social inclusion plans and activities. It is therefore crucial that objectives, criteria for success and performance indicators are set at the outset, and regularly reviewed and evaluated. Demonstrating the impact of activities to combat social exclusion is not easy, and it may be some time before the benefits are fully evident.

Section 6: The Consultation Process

6.1   We would welcome comments on the policy proposals set out in this paper. Please send comments by 31 July 2000 to:

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Appendix A: Tyne & Wear Museums – Purpose and Beliefs

Our Mission is:

> To help people determine their place in the world, and understand their identities, so enhancing their self-respect and their respect for others.

We Belie ve that:

> We make a positive difference to people's lives.
>
> We inspire and challenge people to explore their world and open up new horizons.
>
> We are a powerful education and learning resource for all the community, regardless of age need or background.
>
> We act as an agent of social and economic regener ation.
>
> We are fully accountable to the people of the North East.

We Pursue our Mission by:

> Maximising access to our outstanding collections, through research, scholarship and lively interpretation.
>
> Ensuring that our displays, exhibitions and programmes are wide-ranging, entertaining and effective.
>
> Exposing our public to ideas, thus helping counter ignorance, discrimination and hostility.
>
> Fostering creativity and community identity, recognising the diverse needs and aspirations of our public.
>
> Keeping abreast of political, economic, social and technological change.
>
> Working in partnership with others.

In addition, we:

> Acknowledge that success depends ultimately on the involvement and commitment of all our staff.
>
> Aim to be a benchmark and model for other museums.
>
> Advocate the value of museums regionally, nationally and internationally.

Our Vision for the Future of   TWM is for :

> Total inclusion
>
> World class quality
>
> Secure and adequate funding
>
> Sustainability
>
> Universal recognition of value
>
> Industry leadership
>
> International appeal
>
> Constant renewal.

Appendix B: Bibliography

Government publications

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Appendix C: Terms of Reference and List of Policy Group Members

1. In November 1999 the DCMS set up an informal discussion group to help it develop the framework for a social inclusion policy for museums, galleries and archives in England. Membership of the group is set out below.

2. The aim of the group was to help develop a framework of broad objectives which DCMS will be looking to the sector to achieve, and to assist in the identification of examples of best practice currently taking place.

MEMBERSHIP

Mark Mason	Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) (Chair)
Ros Saper	DCMS (Social Policy Unit)
Roger Stratton-Smith	DCMS (Libraries and Information Division)
Helen Raftopoulos	DCMS (Museums and Galleries Division)

Museums and Galleries

Chris Butcher	Local Government Association
Stuart Davies	Heritage Lottery Fund
Jocelyn Dodd	Nottingham City Museums and Galleries
Rosemary Ewles	Area Museums Council
Fran Hegyi	Scottish Museums Council
Karen Knight	Reading Museum and Archive Service
Caroline Lang	Museums and Galleries Commission
Garry Morris	National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside
Fahmida Shah	Victoria and Albert Museum
Virginia Tandy	Manchester City Art Galleries

Archives

Carl Harrison	Society of Archivists; Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Record Office
Deborah Jenkins	Association of Chief Archivists in Local Government; London Metropolitan Archives
Nick Kingsley	National Council on Archives; Birmingham Record Office
Chris Kitching	Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts
Iain Watt	Public Record Office

Secretariat

Chris Atkins	DCMS (Museums and Galleries Division)
Karina Grazin	DCMS (Museums and Galleries Division)