

The Disability Portfolio guides

1 Disability in context

How attitudes and values are changing. Will enable organisations to recognise, analyse and remove the barriers which disabled people face.

2 Meeting disabled people

An essential guide to customer care with practical advice for welcoming disabled people with different access requirements.

3 Training for equality

The range of staff training available and its benefits. Also advises on how to find a trainer who works effectively with your organisation.

4 Audits

Gives advice on how to assess the audit needs of your organisation, how to draw up an audit brief and recruit an auditor.

5 Disability Discrimination Act (DDA)

What the DDA covers, and what its implications are for museums, archives and libraries.

6 Inclusive information

Provision and promotion of information through a variety of media to ensure your message is accessible to all disabled people.

7 Using technology

How to improve accessibility to the use of ICT, provide relevant technology training, interactive exhibits and audio guides.

8 Access on a shoestring

Suggestions for creative solutions in combination with low-tech methods, to obtain optimum results with minimal funding.

9 Accessible environments

Advice on inclusive design for accessible environments, exhibitions and collections, lighting and signage, and labelling of information panels.

10 Outreach and partnerships

Working in partnership with external organisations and local communities to meet the needs of disabled people.

11 Consulting disabled people

Bringing together consultative groups of disabled people, and gaining their support for positive change.

12 Employment at every level

Advice on equality in recruitment, selection and retention, and on how to integrate disabled employees at all levels.



Further information

To order the Disability Portfolio at a cost of £25, or further copies of this leaflet, please contact viola.lewis@resource.gov.uk. The portfolio is also available free of charge from the Resource website.

- Guides 1 to 4 will be available in July 2003
- Guides 5 to 8 autumn 2003
- Guides 9 to 12 by end of 2003

Resource is the key strategic agency working with and on behalf of museums, archives and libraries and advising the Government on policy and priorities for all aspects of the sector. Our mission is to enable the collections, resources and services of museums, archives and libraries to touch the lives of everyone.

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Copies of the Disability Portfolio can be provided in alternative formats.

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The Council for Museums, Archives and Libraries

The Disability Portfolio



A collection of 12 guides on how best to meet the needs of disabled people as users and staff in museums, archives and libraries. This comprehensive collection gives invaluable advice, information and guidance to help you overcome barriers and follow good practice.

Introducing the Disability Portfolio

In 2003, the European Year of Disabled People, many museums, archives and libraries are focusing on improving accessibility for disabled people. Resource: The Council for Museums, Archives and Libraries is now issuing the Disability Portfolio of advice across the sector, addressing the improvement of management and legal obligations, and sensory, intellectual and physical access to services. The Portfolio is published as a result of collaboration with a working party, which includes specialist consultants, and aims to support the elimination of discrimination in service provision.

This collection of 12 guides has a predominantly practical focus, and aims to give museum, archive and library managers all the information they need to develop inclusive services and practices for disabled people. They aim to give the reader an understanding of the barriers that restrict participation by disabled people, and practical solutions to overcome them.

The guides also seek to explain how disabled people place themselves within society and what factors influence their choice of services.



Identifying disabled people and their needs

- There are currently estimated to be 8.6 million disabled people in Britain (14.7 per cent). This includes over 6.8 million of working age.
- Around 5 per cent of disabled people use a wheelchair. Many of these people are only occasional users of wheelchairs.
- The total UK adult population with any hearing impairment is 8.6 million (18.5 per cent), according to the Royal National Institute for Deaf People (RNID). This includes approximately 50,000 British Sign Language users.
- There are 1.7 million people with a visual impairment, according to the Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB). Over 90 per cent have some sight.
- According to Deafblind UK, 23,000 people are deafblind but many more people, especially if they are over 65, have some degree of both sight and hearing loss.
- The number of adults and children in the UK with learning disabilities is estimated at 1.2 million (2 per cent), according to Mencap.
- People who have experienced mental health issues at any time in their lives total one in seven (14 per cent) according to Mind.
- None of the above are necessarily mutually exclusive and people may have more than one impairment.

Building new bridges

The identity of disabled people has undergone dramatic change over recent decades. How people with disabilities view themselves affects how they behave, and how you view them affects how you serve them.

Today, society is subject to many cultural influences. The view of disabled people as valuable citizens with equal rights, who make their own life decisions and choices, continues to gain ground and shows disabled people as part of society and influential on its progress.

Disabled people can contribute on all levels – by saying what they want from services, working for organisations, suggesting change, passing on recommendations, and swelling visitor numbers. The culture of social inclusion recognises that disabled people exist, meets their needs and creates a space where they can contribute.

