

Didcot Railway Centre - Home of the Great Western Society

Access Policy – Issue 11

This paper sets out the Great Western Society's Access Policy. The Access Policy develops the third and fourth strands of our Mission.

Our Vision is to recreate the golden age of the Great Western Railway.

Our Mission is:

- To be a nationally accredited independent organisation
- To maintain Didcot Railway Centre as a working museum dedicated to the Great Western Railway
- To provide suitable facilities to demonstrate restoration and maintenance of the Collection
- To be open to the public for the enjoyment, benefit and education of the community.

Our challenge is to become a more commercially orientated organisation in order to achieve the Vision.

Didcot Railway Centre warmly welcomes all visitors with physical, sensory and learning disabilities. Our staff will do everything they can to ensure visits are both comfortable and enjoyable. Because the Centre is a working museum it is not always possible to make all areas, locomotives and carriages as accessible as we would like but our aim is to provide as much access as possible within those constraints.

We recognise that the steps leading to our entrance limit current access to the Centre. We have explored options and submitted a grant for a battery powered stairclimber to provide limited access for people in wheelchairs. The grant application will also give us the opportunity to commission an access consultant to advise us on improving access.

We provide guided tours for booked parties of visitors. Parties are welcome but are advised to check with the Centre beforehand. Our paths provide access around the Centre and we have an accessible toilet and wheelchairs available. Assistance dogs are welcome. While visitors with disabilities pay the normal admission charge, their carer is admitted free. However, if the carer wishes to pay to defray our costs, this would be welcome.

We have developed an Access Statement to provide a consistent response to visitors' comments about access. We will review the Access Statement once the building work at Didcot Parkway is complete. We will continue to review our signage and printed material to ensure they meet readability standards. We are developing a new web site and will ensure it meets accessibility standards.

The Access Policy is fully supported by senior management and was approved by the GWS Board on 7 July 2018. The policy will be monitored and reviewed every two years.

Ann Middleton
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