

**Recommended
Core Principles of
Proposed Minimum
Standards of
Service Provision
for Disabled People**



***commissioned by Amgueddfa Cymru and
Arts Council of Wales***

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of Proposed Minimum Standards
of Service Provision for Disabled
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Council of Wales**



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Introduction

Based upon the large list of minimum standards requested by disabled people we are recommending the initial standards of service (as listed below) and these have been grouped into the categories which disabled people responded to in our Widening Engagement Report (Phase 1) as being their most important issues to improve.

We recognise there are a considerable number of proposed minimum standards and that some will require additional resources and investment. However, some standards can be implemented for little or no cost, and many can be implemented for relatively low cost and low impact on staff resources. We have placed each minimum standard into 3 categories: little or no cost, low cost, requires additional investment, to assist venues and Amgueddfa Cymru - Museums Wales with implementation plans.

Chapter 1.

Marketing, Communications and Booking Tickets

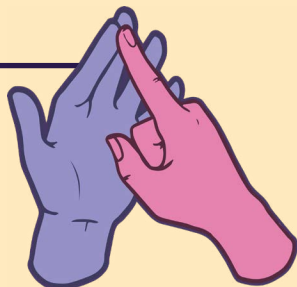
1. Arts venues and Amgueddfa Cymru should produce marketing materials trilingually

Welsh

English

British Sign Language

(given that the **British Sign Language Act** came into effect on 29th June 2022).



The production of marketing materials in other accessible formats should also be easily available upon request, such as:

- **Braille**
- **Audio-description**
- **Subtitling/captioning**
- **Large Print and fully Screen Readable**
- **EasyRead**

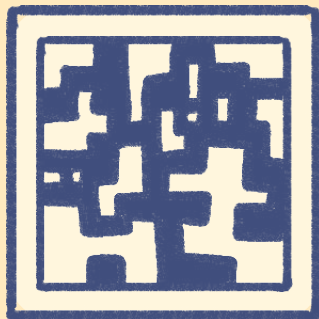
(noting that many formatted digital communications such as HTML column designed emails are not screen readable). Requires additional resources.

All websites should have an accessibility 'button' on their front page that goes directly to a section listing all accessible services and facilities in detail; including up to date information if any of these services are not currently available.

Little or no cost.

1. All marketing and other general information must have a QR code, clearly available, which links directly to access information about the venue, about the specific location and facilities of a particular event and list all accessible services provided for during that event, e.g. a touch tour of the stage and sets is available 1 hour before the performance starts for any visually impaired people and the main show is fully audio-described.

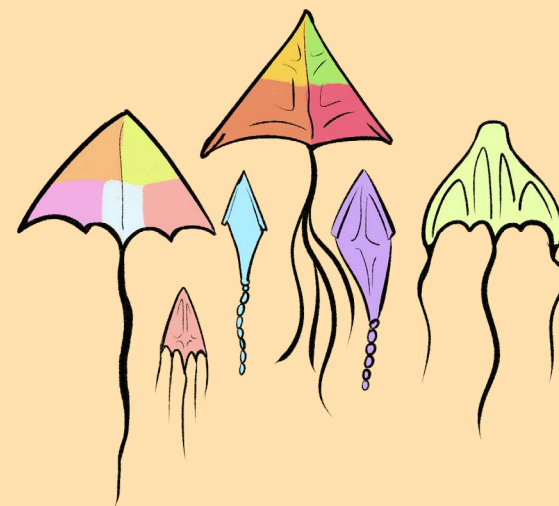
Little or no cost.



The QR code should also link directly to an accessible online booking system, which ideally is personalised for each registered disabled person. Such functionality and user friendly design will only be possible when the UK Arts Access Card scheme and database goes live (hopefully in 2024), and that scheme becomes integrated into an expanded Hynt Card scheme in Wales. Amgueddfa Cymru intend to join the Hynt Card scheme (and thereby the UK Arts Access Scheme) however timescales for this to become operational are yet to be determined. **Requires additional resources.**

Dedicated telephone (voice calls, especially for visually impaired people) and What'sApp numbers (especially for D/deaf and some neurodiverse people) should be available to all disabled people at each arts venue and Amgueddfa Cymru. These venues and Amgueddfa Cymru should adopt a callback service where possible to minimise costs for disabled people and to ensure the highest quality service, e.g. box office staff can call back when they are fully available to respond to the enquiry.

Low cost.



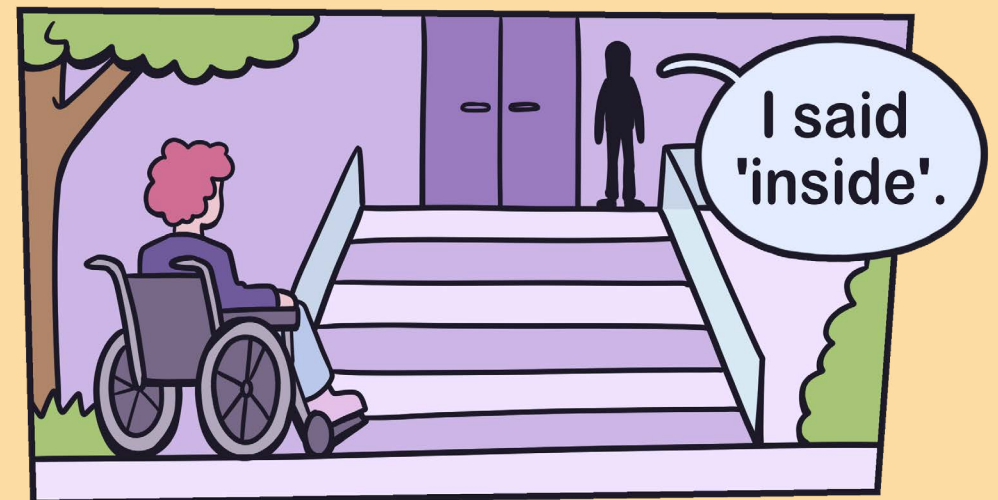
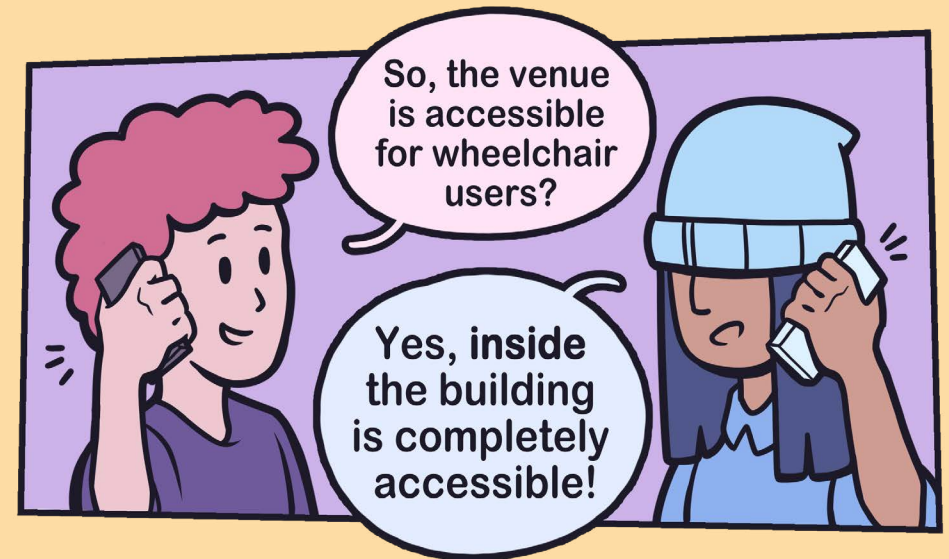
Arts venues and all Amgueddfa Cymru sites should be careful not to market themselves as 'fully accessible' without following the kitemark arts access scheme guidelines. Little or no cost.

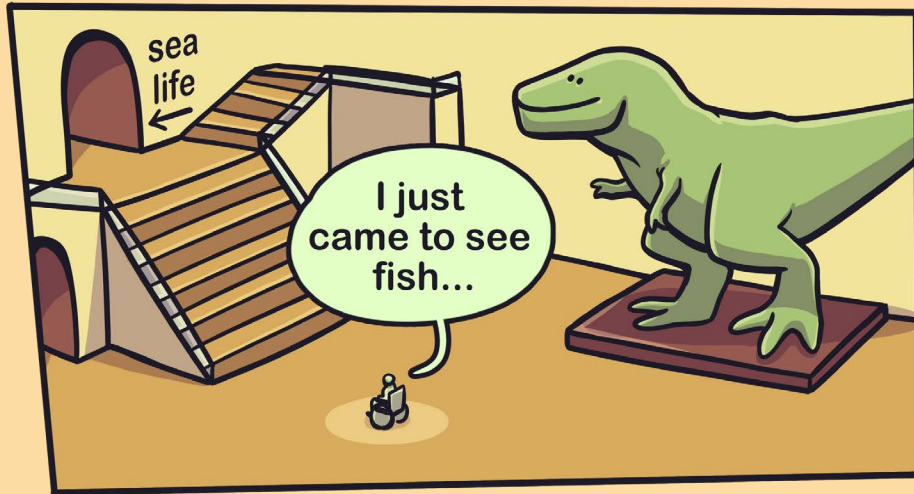
Chapter 2.

Creating an environment of honesty and trust

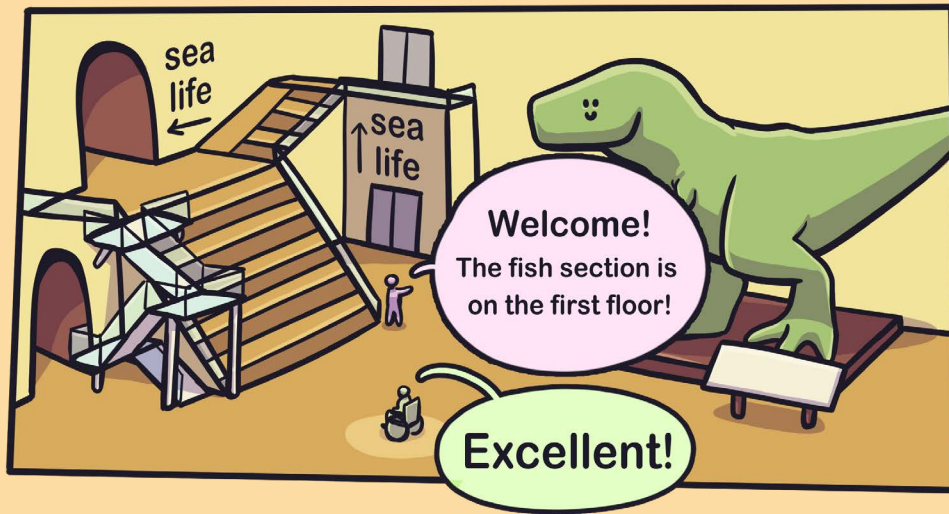
2. Trying to set a bar upon what constitutes an honest relationship between an arts venue or Amgueddfa Cymru and all disabled people is extremely difficult. In reality this can only be achieved over time and through genuine dialogue. Yet it is not unreasonable to require arts venues and Amgueddfa Cymru to publish statements that declare their commitment to openness, honesty and integrity, in terms of their services for disabled people.

Little or no cost.





The General Medical Council has published information on how NHS staff should behave in an open and honest way with both patients and those close to them. The UK Civil Service code includes integrity and honesty within its 4 published principles. Those appointed to Public roles have to agree to follow the Seven Principles (or Nolan) Principles of Public Life.



The statements do not need to be overly complex, but should build upon existing policies and statements around disability equality and adopting the social model of disability.

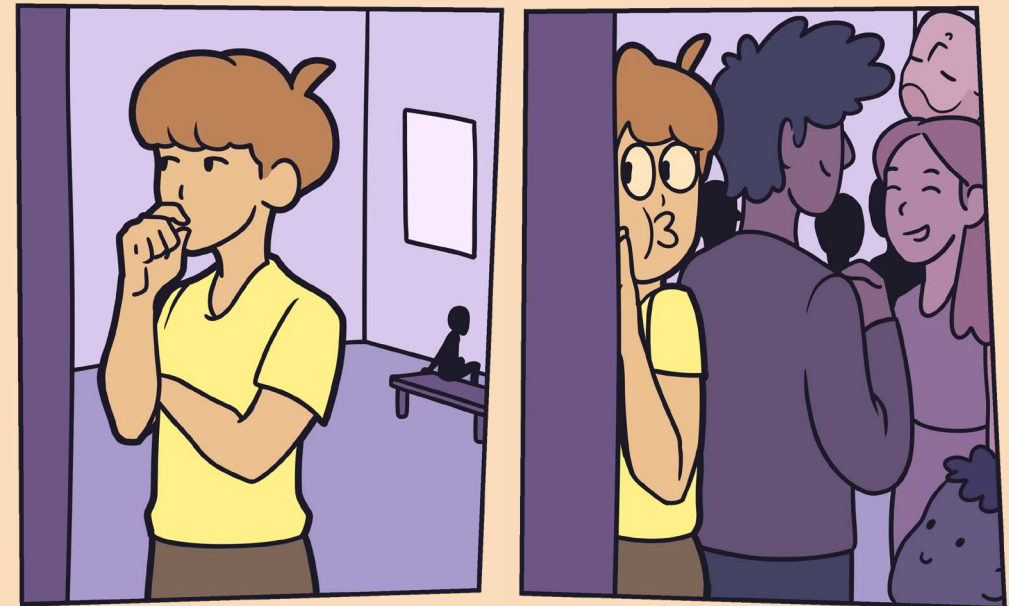
They could be as simple as “we commit to being fully open and honest in all communication, and other interactions, with disabled people in the delivery of our services.” Little or no cost.

Chapter 3.

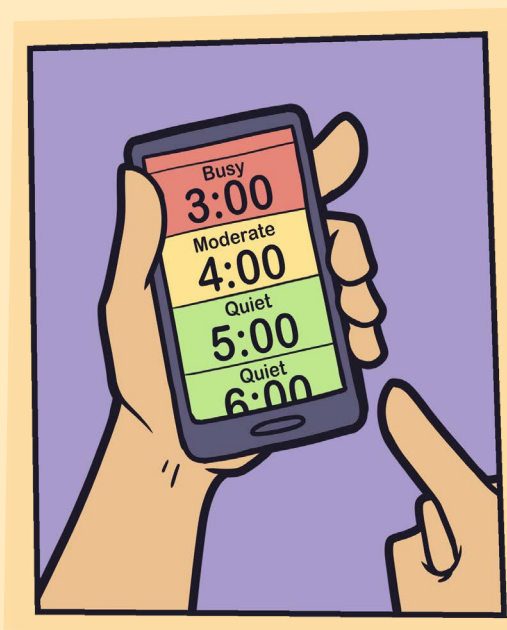
Separate spaces in Amgueddfa Cymru and venues for disabled people

- 3.** The extension of creating relaxed events and 'safe' environments is a provision that disabled people should now expect arts venues and Amgueddfa Cymru to provide, whenever possible.

However, Amgueddfa Cymru and venues can't simply always create separate, 'safe', relaxed spaces for their disabled customers, if their building facilities are fixed and constrained. Therefore the minimum standard provision needs to navigate a position which works for both disabled people and venues/ Amgueddfa Cymru equally.

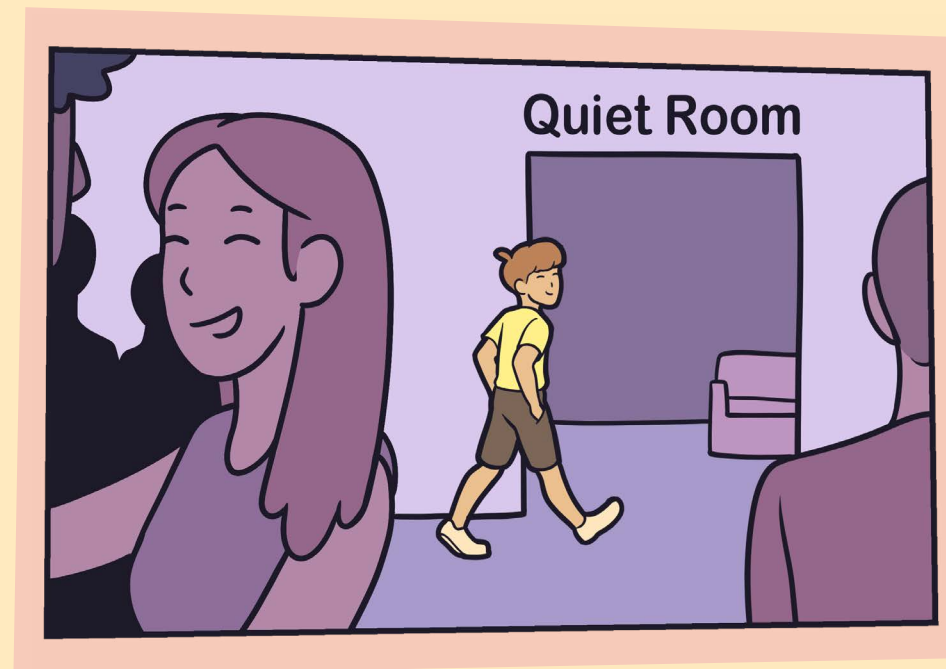


3. It is proposed that Amgueddfa Cymru should ideally look to identify suitable spaces in their buildings that can become a designated 'safe' space, either all the time or if that's unfeasible then a space that can be



designated a 'safe' space during less busy days or periods of time. Disabled people should be able to quickly and easily see how busy a Amgueddfa Cymru is at any time and then decide whether their experience will be positive based on that information. This should be relatively simple to manage given that Google announced in 2020 they were expanding their live busyness information which can be displayed in Google Maps even when people aren't looking for anywhere specific. It shouldn't be too difficult for Amgueddfa Cymru to post a live link from Google maps which shows busyness.

Low cost or may require additional resources.



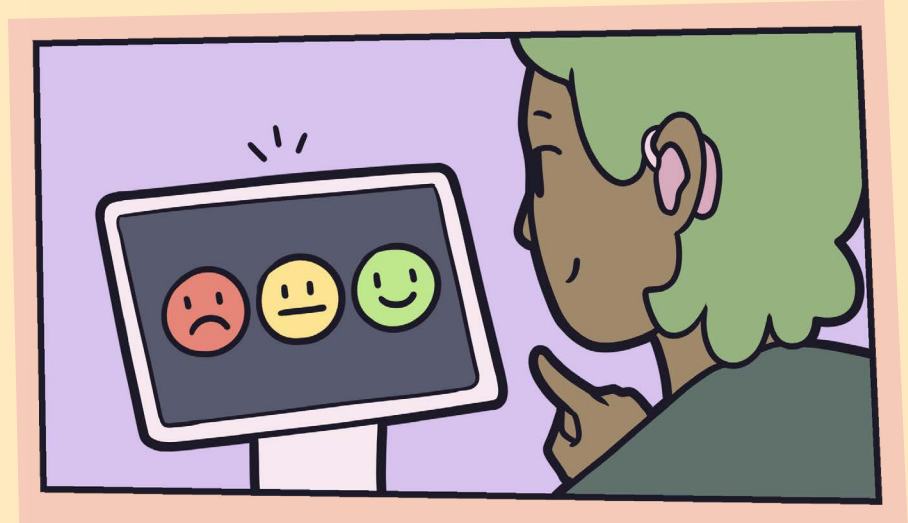
For arts venues the issue is slightly different in that they should know when they are going to have a busy performance, and when they've scheduled any relaxed performances. For busy performances we think venues should always look to provide a 'safe', quiet space for their disabled customers, and if this is not possible the venue should publicise the lack of this service as part of the accessible information for that event.

Little or no cost.

Chapter 4.

Dedicated Feedback Systems

- 4.** This issue is linked to honesty and availability of accurate accessibility information, but in other ways is a separate topic.



As a minimum standard of service all Amgueddfa Cymru and arts venues must be required to put a feedback system into place and to publish what any disabled person should expect in terms of procedures and communications.

We recognise that most Amgueddfa Cymru locations and arts venues will have different operating environments and systems and therefore a one size fits all approach, in this instance, is not feasible.



- 4.** Yet insisting that every venue and Amgueddfa Cymru has a published feedback system is fair and realistic for a minimum standard. This won't just benefit disabled people, but will benefit all customers; in knowing how to give their feedback, when they should expect a response, who will deal with any feedback or complaint, and whether they should expect any follow actions or not.

Little or no cost.



Bringing in such a requirement would take away many of the **frustrations** of disabled people, when giving feedback, as they often **feel ignored** or that they are perceived as always complaining, when sometimes they want to **simply suggest changes** that could improve the service for all disabled people.

The wider issue of how any feedback system is linked to any kitemark scheme is discussed in another section.

Chapter 5.

Staff Training

5. There is absolute agreement that staff training for everyone is a vital element in improving the customer experience for disabled people from both venues and Amgueddfa Cymru and disabled people in general. Yet there is little agreement as to what level, the frequency of training and who should be trained should become the minimum standard.

However, some aspects are clear. All staff, both employed or volunteers, at Amgueddfa Cymru and arts venue, whatever their role or level of seniority must have at minimum induction training. This should also include regular contractors and contracted and subcontracted services e.g. security, cleaning, bars and catering outlets.

Requires additional resources.

Freelancers are not currently included in this

requirement as we believe this is a more complex issue and needs further consideration. For example it would seem unreasonable to expect an arts organisation to train a freelancer for a 1 day contract. However, conversely it does seem services for an arts venue or Amgueddfa Cymru should be trained to a sufficient level of awareness and service delivery.



All people working at Amgueddfa Cymru or in venue (as listed above) must also annually update that training.

Requires additional resources.

From the perspective of disabled people, our research unanimously says that all training undertaken must be provided by disabled people, who have direct lived experiences i.e. the training must be disability equality training not disability awareness based training.

Requires additional resources.

Chapter 6.

Programming of Events (including timing for arts venues)

6. This topic triggers some very strong responses from disabled people. Yet their requests around it also trigger strong responses from arts venues; less so from the Amgueddfa Cymru.

In short; two issues need to be addressed from the perspective of disabled people. Firstly, venues should not programme events for disabled people as matinees, unless they have formally consulted several local disability organisations, and these organisations have agreed a matinee timing is the best option.

Low cost.

Secondly, venues should not separate between accessible performances on different days, e.g. programming a BSL interpreted show one night and a touch tour and audio-described show another night.

Disabled people often have other disabled friends or colleagues (with different access needs) and they have strongly expressed their frustration at not being able to attend together, or even if they can attend together, being unable to sit together.

6. If a show is accessible, and accessible in multiple ways then as a minimum standard all forms of accessible services should be available at the same time and disabled customers should expect to be able to sit together (in a suitable location for their collective access needs). If this level of

service is not available then venues must make this information easily available to all potential disabled customers before they book their tickets. The minimum expected service is to aim to not segregate provision or visitors. Aim to design all events and activities with the widest flexibility of access services as a baseline.

Requires additional resources.



The same largely should apply to Amgueddfa Cymru, and from our discussions it appears this should be of less complexity for them in moving forward. Amgueddfa Cymru are looking to adopt a complete service redesign or design thinking methodology to their future events and exhibitions. They recognise that if they adopt the key principles in design thinking: empathise, define, ideate, prototype and test - in relation to disabled people then they should be able to better understand disabled customers, challenge assumptions, redefine problems and create innovative solutions rather than the current model where barriers to access are tackled after an event or exhibition is devised.

Low cost.

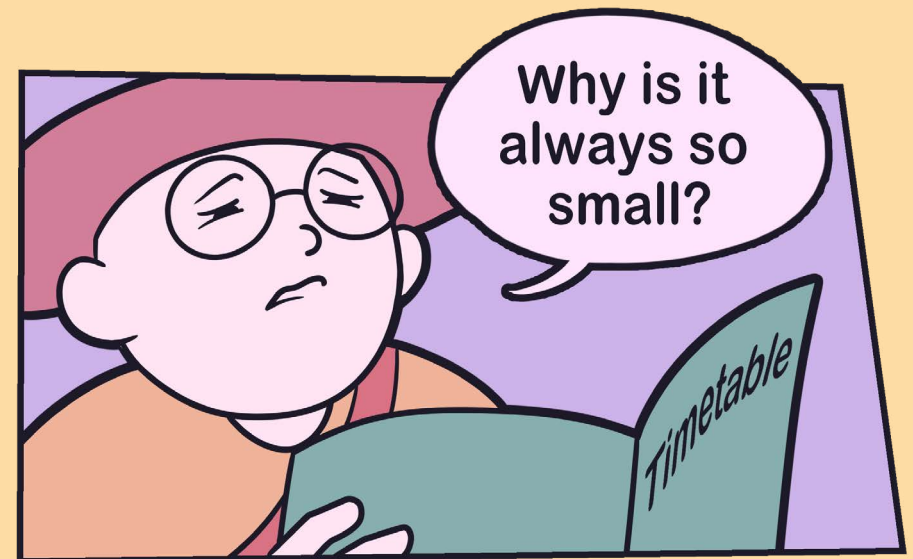
Chapter 7.

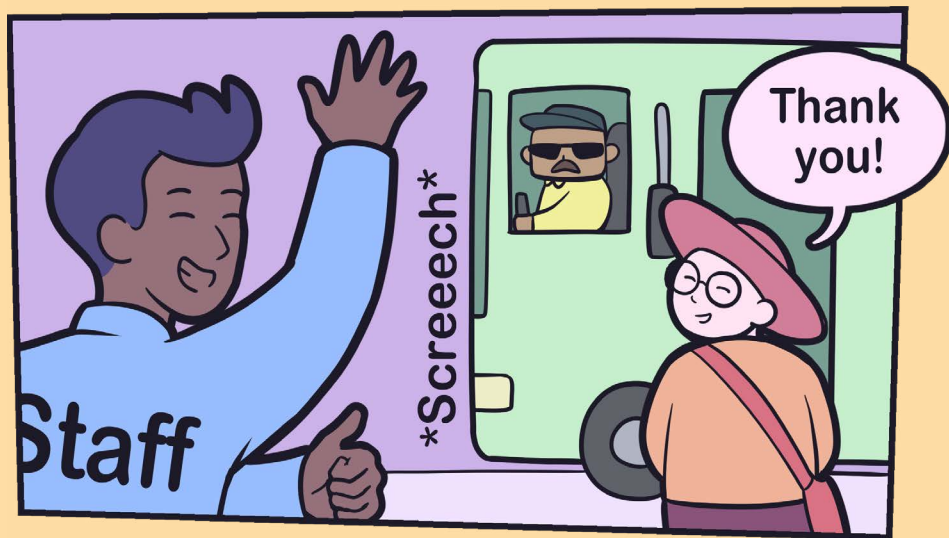
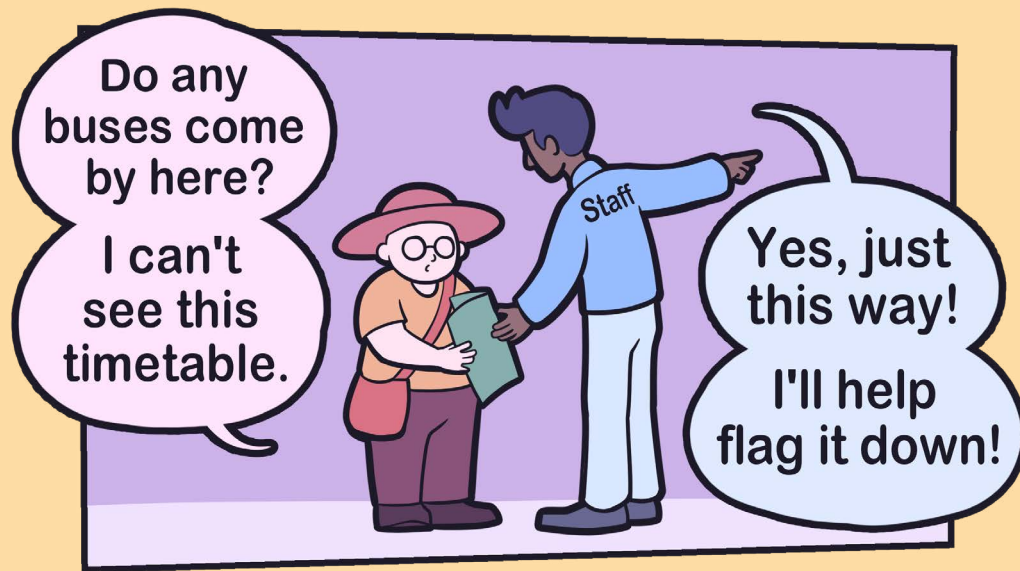
How to Stop Staff from Being Unhelpful?

7. It is hard to define a minimum standard of service provision that would completely eradicate this problem.

Nevertheless the introduction of fair and publicised feedback systems for disabled people and the mandatory requirement for all venue and Amgueddfa Cymru staff to undertake annual disability equality training should significantly reduce this problem.

Requires additional resources.





Chapter 8.

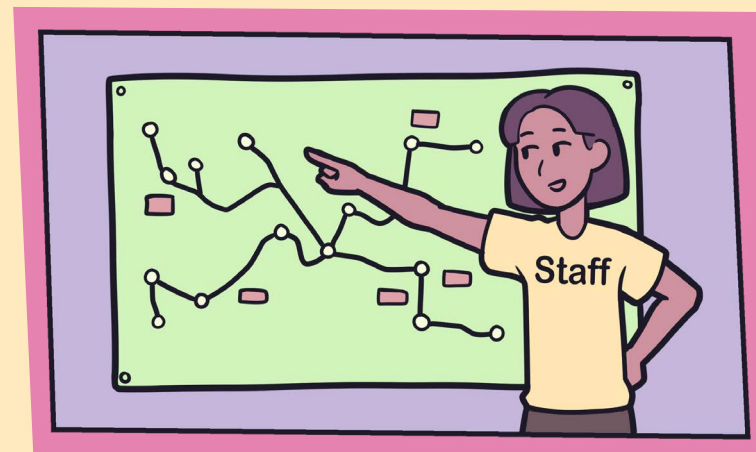
What role if any, should venues and Amgueddfa Cymru have in providing transport?

8. Realistically, given current levels of funding to arts and Amgueddfa Cymru in Wales, requiring them to provide a minimum level of transport linked services for disabled people, is beyond our current recommendations.

Instead, we do propose, though, that up to date information relating to all aspects of getting to and from a venue or Amgueddfa Cymru location is easily available as part of the wider accessibility information and QR code systems.

Information such as, which public transport

services are available, how near they are to the actual venue and what times they operate? Often public transport stops before an evening performance finishes, so questions such as, is there a taxi rank nearby, can taxis actually stop directly outside the venue, how do I book a taxi in advance?



Other questions such as, are there dedicated disabled parking spaces, and if so how can I book these in advance with my show tickets should all be clearly answered and regularly updated. Making this information more easily available doesn't mean the venue or Amgueddfa Cymru is being asked to provide greater transport services for disabled people, but venues are being asked to research this

and crucially keep this information up to date for particular events and performances. Linking a venue or Amgueddfa Cymru's travel information website to live travel data updates, such as Transport for Wales, should not be difficult. This reduces the onus on the disabled person to have to manage this aspect of their visit.

Little or no cost.

Chapter 9.

Reminding non-disabled people that not all disabilities are visible

9. This may seem a wider, societal issue, which should not be placed upon venues and Amgueddfa Cymru. But we believe a few simple actions could have a major impact on improving non-disabled people's understanding of disabled people's needs.

For example, if venues and Amgueddfa Cymru clearly displayed posters or digital screens that say **“Not All Disabilities Are Visible”** that would be a good minimum standard starting point.

Running a short video or making a public announcement at the start of a show, which explains the accessibility services/features for that particular day/show or facility would help wider knowledge of why disabled people need such varying levels of support. Moreover, an announcement at the beginning of all events stating clearly which disability access services

are being provided would help reassure disabled people attending that their access needs are being provided. All these examples should become the minimum expectation from any venue and Amgueddfa Cymru in seeking to tackle discrimination and ableism. **Little or low cost.**



Chapter 10.

Pricing Policies

10. As agreed in the current Hynt card scheme and as proposed in the UK Arts Access Card initiative- called 'All in'- companion tickets for disabled people must be provided free of charge (including any booking fees). We also believe that, in certain circumstances when verified, more than one companion ticket should be provided free. **Low cost.**

An additional, but related minimum standard is that a disabled person should not be required to purchase a ticket that is more expensive than the seat or location they have

requested, simply because the venue requires them to sit in another section of the auditorium, which happens to cost more than their originally requested seat.

Low cost.



Do Not Offer Credit, Just Refund

10. Refunds policies should be clearly publicised and easily found before booking a ticket, and included with a wider feedback system. Moreover, disabled people must be given full ticket refunds if some aspect of the advertised access services didn't work or

wasn't available to them i.e. there was a failure to deliver promised and agreed access services (clearly this needs to be verified). Venues must not only offer alternatives such as credit for a future event in these circumstances.

Low cost.

