

Bodelwyddan Castle Trust 2007 Access Policy

General Principles:

Bodelwyddan Castle Trust is committed to providing access to all sections of the community to its amenities, benefits and educational facilities and those provided by its trading arm Bodelwyddan Castle Enterprises Ltd.

In determining this policy, the Trust considers access to include all aspects of physical and intellectual access. It will seek to maintain and improve facilities to ensure that no section of the community is barred or discriminated against.

In a separate document relating to staffing, the Trust has adopted an Equal Opportunities Policy approved by Denbighshire County Council. The approach and general principles of fairness and equal opportunities for all included in this policy will form the background to matters relating to public access.

Disability:

Bodelwyddan Castle Trust has a statutory and moral duty to provide reasonable access in order to ensure that disabled visitors enjoy the Trust's services to the full extent.

Disabilities include;

- Lack of mobility and other problems of physical awareness, co-ordination and dexterity,
- Speech, hearing and visual impairments,
- Learning and understanding difficulties.

The Trust aims to achieve the following objectives;

- To provide ease of physical access to all public spaces.
- To provide a safe environment and means of escape.
- To offer visitors facilities that meet the needs of disabled visitors.
- To ensure fullest intellectual and sensory enjoyment of the Trust's collections and activities.
- To provide a welcoming environment sensitive to disabled visitor's needs.
- To make the public aware of the facilities and services available.

Intellectual Access:

The ethos of the Trust's activities is based on education in its broadest sense. The Trust provides access to a variety of learning experiences relating to a number of different subject areas. These principles are set out in the agreed Education Policy. The Trust wishes to ensure that all sections of the population have the benefit from this learning environment. Therefore the Trust will seek to;

- Ensure that exhibitions, displays and activities are available to a broad spectrum of the community.
- Promote the use of the facilities for the life long learning opportunities.

- Actively encourage participation from those sections of the community that may be considered disadvantaged.
- To make all sections of the community aware of the opportunities and facilities available.
- To work with organisations and agencies to ensure the fullest intellectual access opportunities at all times.

Language:

Bodelwyddan Castle Trust maintains bilingual (Welsh/English) access to the collections and the majority of exhibitions and facilities at Bodelwyddan Castle via the audio guide available to all visitors. In addition, a 'Basic English' version is also available upon request for those with a basic understanding of the English language. Outline information is also available in written form in French, German and Spanish.

All educational material produced by the Joint Area Museums Education Service on behalf of the Trust adopts the policy of equal status for both the Welsh and English languages. As a priority, the Trust will seek to develop a fully bilingual (Welsh/English) policy towards all operational matters as finance becomes available.

The Trust is aware of its responsibilities to ensure access to all visitors, some of whom may not have a command of either English or Welsh languages. Therefore the amount of additional information available in other languages will also be improved.

Facilities for disabled access at Bodelwyddan Castle

Parking

- Disabled drop-off point at the main entrance and dedicated spaces on the main car park, signposted clearly in the car park.

Accessing the Site

- There are two wheelchair access routes into the Castle. A CCTV monitor at the Main Entrance enables attendants to identify unaccompanied individuals who may need guidance to these points.

Inside the Venue

- All ground floor and first floor galleries are suitable for wheelchair users with lift access to permanent and temporary displays.
- Regrettably, permanent displays on the mezzanine and second floor are not wheelchair accessible. Handling resources are being developed to allow visitors to experience aspects of these displays.
- Due to the nature of the collections in our care, we are unable to permit the use of large, outdoor mobility scooters in the castle itself. However, free wheelchair hire is available for those with mobility difficulties.

Interpretation

- A free audio guide is offered to all visitors with a Braille transcription available on request.
- Written interpretation meets minimum RNIB requirements and is presented in low-level portable folders at the entrance to each room.
- Attendant staff are on hand to provide free guided tours to tailored meet the needs of individuals.
- The Education Officer can provide facilitated tours incorporating handling collections to pre-booked groups with access needs.

Facilities

- There are ground floor toilet facilities for disabled users at the box office and also in Caffi Castell.
- The Castle Gift Shop and Caffi Castell both have direct wheelchair access.