

Disability Equality Impact Assessment Questionnaire

Policy/Service/Change being assessed: Closure of Arts Centre with proposal to develop new Arts Venue in a Town Centre Location	Department: Place
Person Responsible for Assessment: Mike Crawshaw	Date of assessment: 30th January 2012

Brief description of service and to whom provided/available:

Darlington Arts Centre lies within the West End Conservation Area approximately 0.65 km to the west of the Town Centre. The current functions of the building include: Performance venue, Gallery venue, Participatory arts venue , VI Form College annexe Council Offices annexe, Catering and bar function, Neutral space for a variety of creative ideas and uses , Office space, Meetings space , Open / casual space.

The specific arts centre functions are largely based on the ground floor, working around three core spaces (lounge/bar and ancillaries, theatre, studio) and some discrete workshops.

Introduction

This template should be used with the Disability Equality Scheme 2006-2009. Completing this template without following the rest of the disability equality impact assessment process outlined in the Scheme does not comprise a disability equality impact assessment.

If, after reading the guidance, you require further information on how to implement the assessment, please contact Peter Roberts, Social Enterprise Development Manager on 01325 388713

Q.1 Is your service/policy/change accessible to all disabled people? Bear in mind any economic, social, environmental, physical, intellectual, cultural, linguistic, technological or other barriers.

Issue	Yes	No	If yes, what evidence do you have to demonstrate this?	If no, what do you plan to do to remove barriers to access?
Physical or mobility impairment	√		<p>Transitional arrangements to relocate groups using the arts centre and activities taking place in the arts centre will take into consideration the needs of people with a disability or health condition covered by the equality act 2010.</p> <p>For example alternative venues being considered include the Dolphin centre, Crown Street Library and the former 'Bridge' site on Hundens Lane.</p> <p>These sites are fully accessible (more accessible than the Arts Centre) and have good public transport links.</p>	
Sensory impairment	√			
Learning disability or mental impairment	√			
Other disabilities and health conditions covered by the Equality Act 2010 (eg. diabetes, HIV, multiple sclerosis, depression and cancer)	√			
Any other disability issue (e.g. frail/vulnerable people, people with mild impairments who do not perceive themselves as disabled, people with multiple impairment)	√			<p>Where rooms are hired by external organisations for activities in the Arts Centre (e.g. Teesdale Naturalists Filed Club. Piano Society ..) Council officers are working with these organisations to help find alternative venues that meet their needs, including the needs of any Members who have a disability or health condition.</p>

Q.2 (a) For whatever reason, does your service treat any group of disabled people differently from its other service users?

Yes
No

✓

If you have answered 'yes', please specify those individuals or groups affected and whether the impact has the potential to be adverse.

The Open Arts studio provides creative activities and programmes for disabled people, particularly people with learning disabilities and mental health problems. This service is organised by the Council, though part funded by the Primary Care Trust. Officers are working to re-locate the Open Arts Studio to the former 'Bridge' site on Hundens Lane should the Arts Centre close.
Over the longer term, should funding for a new arts venue be secured, the needs of disabled people will be integral to planning for the location and design of the new venue.

(b) What needs to be done to prevent any potentially adverse impact?

Re-location of Open Arts Studio with suitable facilities and access for disabled people.

Q.3 (a) Do you promote disability equality within your service? (e.g. through departmental equalities group, innovative marketing or community engagement techniques)

Yes
No

√

If you have answered 'yes', please give examples of how equality is promoted.

Leisure and Cultural Services are committed to promote equality of opportunity in all services and policies.

(b) Do you promote positive attitudes towards disabled people? (e.g. through customer care training, cultural issues awareness training, the use of images of disabled people in your publicity material)

Yes
No

√

If you have answered 'yes', please give examples.

The Council as a whole promotes a positive attitude to disabled people when providing all services. Employees are made aware of disability issues and there is mandatory training provided as part of the staff induction process. All Council staff operate within a culture where disability issues such as access to buildings, services and information are well embedded. The Council is committed to ensuring that information is in an easy read format and accessible in various formats and in a wide range of locations.

Images of disabled people are used on publicity leaflets

Q.4 Are there any plans in place within your Service to promote disability equality more effectively?

Yes
No

√

If yes, please outline what you intend to do (including details, if known, of timescales and areas to be covered, etc.)

Consultation and Impact Analysis on the proposed policy has included:

Meeting held with all groups with regular room bookings at the Arts Centre

Face – Face consultation / surveys with users of the Arts Centre

Opportunity to comment at Talking Together events, by email, letter, telephone or via an online forum.

Moving forward Officers will consult frequently with all affected groups, should the decision to close the Arts centre be taken. And work with affected groups and individuals to find wherever possible suitable alternative accommodation that meets their needs.

Issues raised as part of the impact assessment process have identified the impact of potential re-location of services provided at Vane House. This would affect visually impaired disabled people who map their way to Vane House by number of lampposts etc relocation would raise issues of accessibility to any new venue.

A range of users see the Arts Centre as a safe place to meet and these people would have less opportunity to share information and socialize this was raised by disabled people who were members of the Deaf Club.