

Royal Pavilion & Museums Equalities Plan 2015-18; update report February 2016

The following is a brief report against achievements from the 2015-18 Equalities Plan and is laid out as per the themes in the Plan, highlighting key actions.

Access:

Improved accessible signage & information:

New website developed in 2014-15 with support from Access Advisory Group, and with reference to gov.uk good practice guidelines and the W3C's AA standard.

Tweaks made to highlight web accessibility link on footer in response to Access for All advice. Site access statement PDFs dropped in favour of live web page: this ensures that this advice is easier to update, and we have fewer problems with the circulation of outdated advice.

Signage audited across Royal Pavilion Estate as part of the development of the estate project. New signage developed in gardens. Further development to follow as part of continued plans with Brighton Dome Brighton Festival.

Targeted Marketing:

Continuing to develop targeted marketing approaches across RPM;

Marketing plan developed for Fashion Cities Africa, and in the process of being implemented. One of the key target audiences for Fashion Cities Africa is the London and South East based African diaspora, particularly people originating from or with family links to the four featured countries (South Africa, Kenya, Morocco and Nigeria). This is a new audience for Brighton Museum and we have engaged some external specialists to help us communicate with them.

Improved access:

All induction loops have been reviewed by specialist and report provided to RPM.

Induction loops have been upgraded and repaired as advised to bring up to standard. On-going upgrades and repairs continue 2016-18.

Continuing to provide resources to assist disabled visitors; in 2015-16, worked with Access Advisory group & RPM Foundation to research and purchase Swedish walkers for each RPM site. Continuing to research good practice and listen to the needs of visitors.

Continuing to provide audio described tours for the blind and partially sighted; continue to provide access to tactile objects; This work has progressed in large part. Audio described tours have taken place for specific exhibitions, and the introduction of Gallery Explainers for recent temporary exhibitions has increased access to tactile objects in the Gallery space.

System developed for Museum Mentos members (adults with critical social care need) to ensure smooth transition for them accessing Brighton Museum whilst charging introduced.

Audiences:

Continuing to develop a more diverse volunteer base; overhaul of volunteer recruitment system during 2015-16 has seen development of fairer & more transparent processes and procedures. All volunteer opportunities are advertised at a range of venues, websites, and in local communities. Developing staff skills through training to be delivered in 2016. Supporting current volunteers with additional needs via two projects. Developing links with homeless charity to provide insight into sector with possible pathway to volunteering opportunities. Developing links with young people to develop volunteer offer.

Continuing to deliver a targeted Community Engagement programme; Delivery of targeted engagement for adults including; Limbless hospital exhibition development opening March 2016 and accompanying programme exhibiting disability history, bringing to light hidden stories to new audiences; working towards 2017 LGBT Gluck exhibition and related programme; On-going relationships and projects with many groups such as Rocket Artists, Museum Mentors, Access Advisory Group, and developing new relationships and projects e.g. Sensing Cultures project at Booth Museum looking at access for blind and partially sighted people, and projects for people with Dementia and their carers at Brighton Museum. Continuing to deliver a targeted Early Years & Youth Engagement programmes building on relationships and developing new ones, linking to events & exhibitions, and in reference to target audiences in RPM's Community Engagement Strategy.

Continuing to develop online content that appeals to a diverse audience; increased use of Tumblr blogs by individual teams and RPM sites has provided a more diverse output of content. Blogging is increasingly used to support programming e.g. extensive use of blogging by workforce development placement in support of Fashion Cities Africa. Currently planning training for blogging session to provide new skills for RPM staff and SEWS (Surrey, East & West Sussex) museums with the Museum Development Team.

Continuing work to represent diverse cultures and under-represented communities in temporary exhibitions through co-production/co-curation; work is progressing on Fashion Cities Africa which will open to the public on 30 April 2016, working with a range of BME community groups. Early discussions are taking place with local communities re LGBTQ exhibition in the Spotlight Gallery in 2017 exploring LGBTQ lives in Brighton & Hove.

Co-Programming - Planning and delivering events in collaboration with community groups; Events include: Gateways to WW1; Brighton Dome Brighton Festival; Hindu Women's Group; Rugby World Cup; The Great Escape and South Bank Centre,

London re Fashion Cities Africa, early discussions with Brighton & Hove Archaeology Society re National Archaeological Festival

Continuing to deliver on RPM's wider Arts Council Leadership role in Audiences & Equalities, across the museum sector; two workshops delivered and third planned around digital audiences and audience data based on session delivered at MA conference and Museum2Museum network. National conference planned for March 2016 in London on making Museum Websites fit their audiences.

Museum Development facilitating peer to peer learning around volunteers, researching diversity training for boards of trustees, offering development grants for young people in museums to stage museum activity 'Young Museum Shapers'. Museum Development has delivered and continues to deliver on a wide range of areas relating to audiences and equalities.

RPM's Digital Development Officer participated in second Voice of Culture workshop in Brussels on audience development by digital means, contributing to an advisory document for presentation to the European Commission.

RPM also delivered an international presentation on 'Play, Discovery and Co-Production' at a transmedia conference hosted by Museus d'Olot, Spain

Workforce:

Continuing to develop a more skilled and diverse workforce; Continuing to deliver Workforce Development programme for front-of-house staff. 22 staff have participated in 16 projects working with teams across the service in areas such as developing new tunnel tours, working with the conservation team, developing a new offer for foreign language schools, doing social media for Fashion Cities Africa, and supporting collections work. 5 staff applied successfully for Collections Assistant posts. Further plans to evaluate, and RPM hosting national conference on workforce development November 2016.

Successfully applied to be a delivery partner on British Museum's Learning Museum programme to provide Apprenticeship to local young person following targeted recruitment processes and open days. Project starts March 2016.

Collections:

Collect objects to reflect the diversity of our local communities; as part of Fashion Cities Africa exhibition and related programmes, a collecting panel has been established including members of the BME communities involved in the development of the exhibition. This is a pilot for RPM, and learning will be shared and built upon for e.g. the LGBT programming and Gluck exhibition 2017.