
Royal Mint Museum Access Policy

March 2013
Lucy-Ann Pickering and Arran Rees

Item 1.0

Access statement

The primary function of the Royal Mint Museum is to advance the education of the public in British coinage and the history of the Royal Mint through access to its collection. The Museum is located on the site of the Royal Mint in Llantrisant, South Wales. Challenges to access are inevitable due to the secure nature of the site. The Museum, however, has ensured there are a number of measures in place to combat this and is committed to increasing access to its collection further in a variety of ways.

Item 2.0

Modes of access

Physical access

Ease of access to the site, facilities on-site and equipment allowing access for disabled people.

Intellectual access

Access to the information held by staff and documents in the Museum collection.

Social access

Access for people from any background, regardless of education, religion, culture, age or stature.

Geographical access

Access for people from the local area, but also throughout the United Kingdom and further afield.

Cultural access

Access to the collections and cultural heritage of the United Kingdom coinage and the Royal Mint.

2.1**Physical access to the Royal Mint site**

The Royal Mint Visitor Reception is easily accessible through automatic outer doors via a ramp. In order to progress through from the Visitor Reception to the Royal Mint site all visitors must pass through security gates, which are wide enough for wheelchair access. A directional sign outside the Reception building indicates the location of the Museum. Navigation. However, should not be an issue as all visitors are accompanied by a member of staff.

Those who have arranged to tour the Royal Mint site are expected to comply with personal protective equipment requirements (PPE) which will be arranged for them by their host. Royal Mint tours are wheelchair accessible and, due to the personal nature of the tours, can be adapted for different levels of learning needs. The Royal Mint site covers 35 acres so it is advisable for those who have mobility needs to inform their host before arrival.

Toilets are located throughout the site and where required access can be provided to the factory's canteens. Visitor tour routes operate at ground floor level although there are a number of lifts that provide access to upper floors. Disabled toilets are located in the Visitor Reception area and the Commemorative Coin building, although there are none currently in the building in which the Museum is housed. Wheelchairs can be made available in Reception for anyone undertaking a tour of the site and drop curbs are present at all pedestrian crossings on site.

2.2**Physical access to the Museum**

At present physical access to the Museum for members of the public is limited as the Museum is situated on the site of the Royal Mint, which, for security purposes, has restricted access. As a result, all access to the Royal Mint site needs to be arranged in advance and therefore spontaneous visits to the Museum are not possible. Currently this acts as a barrier to those who wish to make an informal visit, although the Museum intends to overcome this through involvement in the construction of the Royal Mint Visitor Centre, which will feature exhibitions of Royal Mint Museum artefacts and be open to the general public.

Until the construction of the Visitor Centre, visits to the Museum will continue to be by appointment. They will be conducted on an individual basis and tailored to meet the visitor's needs. These visits may be confined to the Museum or as part of a visit to the whole Royal Mint site.

2.3**Access to the Royal Mint Museum collection on site**

The Royal Mint Museum currently exhibits a small number of objects in the Visitor Reception. These objects can be viewed by anyone visiting the Royal Mint (although the height of the cases may not be entirely suitable for those in wheelchairs). The Museum maintains a second display in the foyer of the Main Administration building. This can be viewed by all on-site visitors. The collection on display in the Museum is also kept at quite a high level, however, material can be moved by the Curators to a lower height to suit individual needs.

At present the Museum does not have an online catalogue, however, work

is currently being undertaken to compile one. Whilst a catalogue is being produced, feature items from the collection are published on the Museum's website and new material is uploaded on a regular basis. Until the catalogue complete, those wishing to enquire about the content of the collection are encouraged to contact the Assistant Curator (Information and Research) through the Museum's website.

The Museum has a published catalogue which was produced between 1906 and 1910 and is available to researchers on-site and libraries such as the British Library. It covers core parts of the collection including the historic tooling. Researchers wishing to study the collection, related material or use the Museum's library need to make an appointment as a visitor would.

2.4

Intellectual and social access

The Museum provides access to its collection through its website www.royalmintmuseum.org.uk. The website has seven sections on the history of the Royal Mint, of British coinage, the Museum collection, exhibitions, education, an 'about us' section and a news section. The text and content used on the Museum's website are largely academic in tone and written with the Museum's current audience in mind. The education section is an exception and is written using language broadly aimed at teachers and younger audiences. In order to improve access to a wider audience the Museum has set up social media accounts on Twitter and Facebook, allowing the Museum to update the public on a regular basis with current events, information and news.

Access to the collection is increased through a number of loans and, sometimes, financial contributions to exhibitions in other museums. For example, the Museum loaned 250 individual objects during 2012, reaching 10 different Museum's audiences, including the Royal Academy and National Museum Wales. The Museum also has a number of long-term loans to the British Museum, Bank of England Museum and the Currency Museum at the Bank of Canada. These loans provide the Museums and their audiences with access to items in the collection that would not usually be available to them. The Royal Mint Museum has also been involved in creating a joint exhibition with Historic Royal Palaces, *Coins and kings: The Royal Mint at the Tower*, which is due to open in May 2013 and will give the Museum a permanent presence in the Tower of London and provide access for their 2.5 million annual visitors.

Outreach activities undertaken by the Museum increase the amount of intellectual and social access with audiences. Three members of staff give lectures to adult education and special interest groups throughout the United Kingdom. Lectures range from introductions to the collection to in depth talks on Royal Mint officials such as Sir Isaac Newton.

The Museum runs an education and learning department that seeks to engage potential visitors through formal and informal learning. A number of educational visits have taken place to the Museum and wider Royal Mint site. Health and safety rules mean that nobody aged under 11 can come on site and tours are limited to seven children plus an adult from the school or educational body. More information can be found on the Museum's commitments to learning in the Education and Learning Strategy.

Intellectual access to the collection is provided through an enquiry system which saw 896 historical questions being asked and answered during 2012. The enquiries range from questions about mintage figures to in-depth queries about family history or minting errors. The target reply time for enquiries is 9 working days which enables people to access collection information within a short period of time.

2.5

Geographical access

The Royal Mint Museum is located on the Royal Mint site in Llantrisant and access to the site is best achieved by car.

There is parking available in three car parks, one designated for visitors and two for staff. The visitor car park is located directly in front of the Reception which can be accessed via a ramp. The first of the staff car parks is adjacent to visitor car park and the second directly opposite. The second staff car park acts as an overspill car park and the Royal Mint is accessed by crossing a dual carriageway road. A pelican crossing is in place to facilitate safe crossing of the road.

There are no directional road signs to the site. On entering Llantrisant industrial estate, however, the Royal Mint sign outside the main entrance is clearly visible from the road.

Access to the site via public transport is somewhat limited. A bus service from Cardiff, however, stops at the entrance to the industrial estate. It is also possible to arrive at Pontyclun station by train and then take a ten-minute taxi ride to the Mint.

Item 3.0

Staff

The Royal Mint Museum office is staffed 8:30 – 17:30, Monday to Friday. The Assistant Curator (Information and Research) works full-time and aims to answer enquiries within nine days. Enquiries can be submitted by telephone, post or via the website using the online enquiry form. Museum tours can be facilitated by four members of staff and the Museum strives to provide tours whenever required. During staff and volunteer inductions, the Royal Mint and Royal Mint Museum's equal opportunities policies are explained.

Item 4.0

Commitments to access

The Royal Mint Museum wishes to engage with audiences from differing cultural, ethnic, racial and gender backgrounds who have different religions, beliefs, nationalities, sexual orientations, gender identities, ages, physical and mental abilities.

The Museum wants to ensure that in the future physical barriers to the collection are eliminated as far as possible by making the buildings and displays more accessible. The Museum wants to ensure that visitors are able to view objects at an appropriate height and that labels are placed in appropriate positions at the correct size. With the building of a Visitor Centre at the Royal Mint many of the Museum's current barriers to access and participation will be removed.

The Royal Mint Museum is committed to ensuring that visitors are able to find their way around the Visitor Centre and the site easily and experience them as welcoming places. Spaces within the Visitor Centre, such as the

café, shop and factory tour, will involve social interaction between staff and visitors, which will increase the social access to the Museum, the collection and the Royal Mint.

Through the Museum's exhibitions, public services and education programme, intellectual and cultural barriers should be removed. The Museum will be able to engage all its users, providing experiences which are suitable and understandable. The Museum aims to meet the needs of visitors and learners by taking into account different educational experiences, learning styles and ways of understanding of users for all ages.
