



**BRITISH MOTOR INDUSTRY HERITAGE
TRUST**

ACCESS PLAN

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Appendix 1 – Drawings and photographs of the Heritage Motor Centre facilities

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1. Objectives of the Access Plan

This draft document will provide evidence of our commitment to providing access and will outline current facilities and provision at the Heritage Motor Centre. The full plan will also identify barriers to access based on research by staff and also consultation with disabled access groups, and an action plan giving details of suggested improvements to access for the Trust. It will also note priorities and measures that could be adopted within the plans for the museum redevelopment plan current subject to an application to the Heritage Lottery Fund.

2. Links to Museum Audience Development Plan

This policy will be amended and augmented by the findings of the Audience Development Plan commissioned by the Trust in November 2005 in connection linked to its Museum Redisplay Heritage Lottery Fund bid. This document will include a description and analysis of barriers to access. Following the completion of the Audience Development Plan, and the approval of the action plan contained within it, the BMIHT Access Plan will be revised and a comprehensive strategy for implementing improvements to access will be presented to BMIHT trustees in the spring of 2006.

3. Mission Statement of the British Motor Industry Heritage Trust

"To collect, conserve research and display for the benefit of the nation, motor vehicles, archives and ancillary material relating to the British motor Industry".

4. Access Statement for the Trust

"The British Motor Industry Heritage Trust is fully committed to ensuring that all of its activities are fully accessible to all and to removing all physical, sensory, intellectual and cultural barriers to learning and enjoyment of our collections and museum".

5. Our Access Aims

The Trust is committed to making access a core value of all our activities. To this end we will:

- Ensure that the Heritage Motor Centre is physically accessible to those with disabilities and that visitor facilities are provided to allow access to all parts of the museum.
- Ensure that we comply with the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) and that we avoid discrimination against disabled people in employment (1996) information, policy, practice and procedures (1999) service provision and access to buildings and premises (2004)
- Provide our staff with training and information to enable them to carry out their tasks and responsibilities
- Consult with disabled people both individually and as a group on a regular basis to ensure our policies, facilities and activities are as inclusive as possible.
- Encourage participation in the activities of the Trust by disabled people as visitors, researchers, staff and volunteers
- Aim to make our facilities accessible to all sections of the community including those from other cultures and traditions

- Strive to provide accessible formats for published and promotional marketing information provided by the Trust and centre to the public through printed, audio and web formats
- In planning any new exhibitions, displays and visitor facilities build accessibility into everything we do ensure the removal of any identified barriers to access
- Monitor accessibility issues on a regular basis as a result of feedback from staff, visitors and access groups

6. The Current Facilities of the Heritage Motor Centre

The collections of the British Motor Industry Heritage Trust are currently housed in the Heritage Motor Centre, a purpose-built museum and conference centre opened in 1993. The 'Art-Deco' style building has facilities on three levels and is set within 65 acres of grounds in a rural location approximately 8 miles from Warwick and 11 miles from Banbury.

6.1 The Building

(See attached plans)

Ground Floor:

Virtually all museum displays are located on this floor, with the car collection displayed in a 4000sq. metre exhibition hall. A classroom for education groups is also situated next to the main displays. The Trust archive, containing a large collection of business records, publications, and over 1 million photographs is also housed on the ground floor, although public access to material from our collection is gained through a Reading Room situated on the first floor. On the north side of the main exhibition hall are 6 conference syndicate rooms, used largely by corporate clients during the week, but also by car clubs and other groups at weekends. Other facilities on this level include the centre's maintenance and restoration workshop and other storage rooms. Access to the ground floor from the main museum entrance is gained either by escalators or a lift from the first floor. There are also two stairwells at either end of the main exhibition hall, for use by staff and as a means of escape in an emergency.

First Floor

Access to the building for museum, conference and education visitors is via a main entrance situated on the North side of the building. As well as a shop and café and kitchen, this level houses two 170 sq. metre lecture rooms, and a larger 624 sq. metre conference/exhibition suite. Beyond the reception area is a substantial exhibition gallery, currently displaying the museum's 'Green by Design' exhibition. The final facility on the first floor is the museum board room, which has views of the main display space of the museum.

Second Floor

The final facility on the top floor of the building is the Kestrel Suite and bar, an 'Art-Deco' styled rooftop restaurant and conference suite which has panoramic views of the local countryside. The suite is accessed by both a staircase from the main reception area and a lift from the temporary exhibition gallery.

7. Current Access Arrangements

The Heritage Motor Centre is fortunate that its current layout and facilities are accessible to people with disabilities although the Trust is aware that more can and will be done to improve the experience for visitors. Current arrangements include:

- Dedicated Disabled parking spaces close to the museum entrance.
- Additional wheelchairs available for visitors
- Level access to all parts of the building
- Lift access to second and ground floor
- Disabled Awareness training courses run for HMC staff
- Disabled Toilet facilities close to entrance and reception
- Audio Guide provided for visitors with visual impairment

8. Access Improvements

Following consultation with the South Warwickshire Disabled Access Group (SWAG) in 2002 a list of priorities were identified. The findings of the access review of 2002 are attached in Appendix 2 of this report. The SWAG have agreed to act as advisors to the Trust and will be carrying out a further access audit in 2006 that will be incorporated into the revised Access Plan. Bearing in mind the short and medium term plans for the museum redevelopment, some of the actions already noted will be completed when building work is carried out, particularly with the relocation of the museum entrance to the ground floor.

9. Museum Redevelopment Proposals and Implications for Access

The Heritage Motor centre 5-Year Plan identified a number of actions that would improve the viability of the business and give visitors a better experience at the museum. The main priority was the separation of the conference and museum operations by reducing operational difficulties experienced through using one entrance to the building.

These changes will involve the creation of a new visitor entrance at the front of the building, facing the main arenas. This will give the public direct access into the museum without having to use escalators or lifts from the existing entrance. At the same time the museum shop and café will also be moved down into the main exhibition gallery area. Both these actions will make access for those with disabilities much easier. It is hoped to complete the new entrance and shop move by April 2006, with the café being relocated in 2007.

At the same time, the opportunity has been taken to plan a complete refurbishment of the main display area on the ground floor, inserting an additional mezzanine floor into the space and adding additional interpretation to the exhibits on display. As part of this redisplay, the number of cars shown will be reduced, improving physical access around the exhibition.

The proposals for the redisplay will be the subject of a Heritage Lottery Grant application due to be submitted at the end of 2005, disabled access issues will be considered as an integral part of the design process both from the museum and architectural point of view. In addition as already noted, the South Warwickshire Access Group have agreed to advise museum staff on a regular basis as detailed design work takes place in 2006. If lottery funding is available, the new displays could be complete by May 2007.

APPENDIX I

Drawings & photographs of the Heritage Motor Centre Facilities

APPENDIX 2:

Access Review Notes - 2002 & 2005