

barbican

Barbican Renewal Access and Inclusive Design Advisory Group Terms of Reference

Background

Barbican Renewal is a major capital programme to ensure every part of the Barbican Centre's iconic site is restored, revitalized and relevant for future generations.

The Barbican is a Grade II listed Brutalist icon, recognised as one of the UK's architectural treasures. Since we opened our doors in 1982, we have become a world-renowned destination, offering a creative programme of unique breadth, at the heart of an estate of huge architectural significance.

However, over the past four decades the Barbican Centre buildings have deteriorated significantly. They need substantial investment to restore them to good condition and make them fit for the needs of current and future audiences. Building systems and ageing materials require replacement and modernisation, while underused areas of the site have the potential to be reactivated and opened up to the public.

Following an inclusive design audit of our spaces, undertaken by Arup Inclusive Environments, the Barbican Renewal design team are working to make access and inclusive design improvements that make the Barbican Centre safe, welcoming and accessible for all.

To inform and feedback on the development of this design, we're setting up an Access and Inclusive Design Advisory Group to receive expert input from building users with a wide range of lived experience.

Purpose and Role

The role of the Access and Inclusive Design Advisory group is to:

- Review Renewal design proposals as they develop, providing expert feedback and practical recommendation for potential adjustments and improvements to ensure Barbican Renewal delivers truly inclusive spaces
- Ensure the lived experience of a range of users with differing needs is considered in the shaping of proposals and the development of design
- Highlight opportunities to think creatively about access and inclusive design improvements that would have a positive impact on building users
- Review potential access challenges during periods of construction, including feeding back on plans to mitigate these impacts

Composition and Recruitment

The Access and Inclusive Design Advisory Group will have c.10 members.

Members of the group will primarily be d/Deaf and disabled people and those with long term conditions, though we are also keen to ensure the group involves people with other characteristics that mean they could experience barriers when visiting public buildings.

Recruitment will be via responding to an open call, which will include information being shared with relevant mailing lists, networks and organisations.

Selection of members of the group will be based on individuals offering perspectives on access and inclusive design that would positively contribute to design development, alongside ensuring the group includes people with a range of relevant expertise and lived experience.

In assessing applications, we'll be looking for people who can demonstrate at least two of the following:

- Lived experience of disability, neurodiversity and/or a long-term health condition
- Some prior experience of using the Barbican Centre building, and its existing barriers for d/Deaf and disabled people
- Knowledge or experience in one or more of the following: the social model of disability; d/Deaf and disabled people's rights; accessibility standards; equity and inclusion
- Knowledge or experience of good practice within a built environment/arts and culture context of inclusive design and/or equality impact assessments.

Time commitment and remuneration

It is anticipated the group will meet every three to six months to ensure regular input as Barbican Renewal design proposals progress. Our aim is for the group to work with the project throughout the current phase of Barbican Renewal which runs from 2025-30, though we'll review the composition of the group annually to ensure it continues to meet the needs of the project.

Meetings will usually last for 2-3 hours, with all participants paid an honorarium for attendance at each session. We will also cover pre-agreed costs for reasonable expenses incurred in attending meetings, including access costs. Honorarium payments will also recognise any required preparation time requested by the Renewal project in advance of meetings (e.g. reviewing papers, plans etc).

Agendas for each meeting and materials shared will be determined by the Barbican Renewal Project and Design team along with the Chair of the group to ensure timely and relevant input is provided for each project being developed.

Meetings will be held in an accessible space and we will make reasonable adjustments required to ensure everyone can participate. This includes offering a hybrid/online option to attend, alongside offering any materials in different formats as required.

Governance and relationship to the Barbican

The Access and Inclusive Design Advisory Group provides advice and recommendation to inform the development of the Barbican Renewal programme. The group is not a decision-making body.

The Access and Inclusive Design Advisory Group input will complement and add to the expert and detailed inclusive design analysis provided to the Renewal programme's inclusive design consultant (Arup Inclusive Environments). Responsibility for solving detailed access and inclusive design challenges will remain with the Renewal design team.

The primary focus of the Access and Inclusive Design Advisory Group is to provide advice on the future development of the Barbican Centre building. However, we recognise that in some instances, this may intersect with other areas of the Barbican's operations (e.g. programming, digital, audience experience). In these instances, the Barbican Renewal Project team will share this feedback with relevant departments and explore shared solutions where possible.