

EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY COMMITTEE EOC 08-02(p8)

Date: 12 December 2002
Time: 9.00am
Venue: Committee Rooms 3 and 4
Title: Training on Equality and Disability Issues in Cadw

Training on Equality and Disability Issues in Cadw

Purpose and Summary

1. To report on progress – virtually all staff have received basic training, while more specific initiatives have been developed to inform staff directly involved with disability issues.

Timing

2. For consideration at the 12 December meeting.

Consideration

3. At its meeting in November 2001, the Equality of Opportunity Committee considered Cadw's draft guidance on providing physical access to historic buildings and asked for a report at this time on related training within Cadw.

4. The guidance – intended for service providers, local authorities and others – has since been published. It was drawn up in consultation with the Disability Rights Commission and Disability Wales. We believe that it has been well received and is being used as a model for English Heritage's new guidance, which is now in preparation. It is available in hard copy or on Cadw's web site, and has been drawn to the attention of all of Cadw's staff.

5. Cadw has around 220 employees, although numbers vary because of seasonal recruitment at the monuments. Over the course of the year virtually all staff at all levels have received training on the requirements of the DDA and disability awareness as part of equality training, which also covered race and gender issues. A small handful missed sessions because of absences, but training will be provided as courses become available. In addition, Cadw's senior staff and representatives of our four branches have received training from the consultancy RMS on disability issues, including awareness raising, etiquette and case studies involving access to the monuments. It is intended to develop specific aspects of this training and extend it to all permanent custodial staff now that the summer season has ended and they can be released from site duties, and before the 2003 season opens. Short courses for

seasonal staff will be held in the course of next summer.

6. Access issues play a significant part in Cadw's activities, and have particular prominence in the work of those dealing with the conservation and presentation of the monuments, and listed building consents. These staff are relatively few in number, and involve both specialists with professional qualifications and administrative staff. In February 2002 our architect most heavily involved in access issues attended a three day course on access consultancy run by the Centre for Accessible Environment – the CAE also administer the National Register for Access Consultants, a government sponsored regulatory body. The

7. NRAC has two grades of membership: access auditor, who is qualified to identify impediments to access, and access consultant, who can identify and propose workable solutions to improve access. The training which he attended was part of the process of achieving a qualification as an access consultant, which is only open to people working in access issues for at least one year. It is a two stage process which involves preparing access audits for appraisal by CAE, in this case on Raglan Castle and Tintern Abbey. It is hoped that he will achieve the qualification by the end of the year. The knowledge gained is being shared with other staff in these areas, who have also contributed to the audits. Since Cadw's guidance on physical access to historic buildings was published, discussions on proposed alterations in which our architects have been involved have so far achieved the agreed access objectives while sufficiently protecting the quality of the building.

8. So far as the monuments in the Assembly's care are concerned, rather than rely entirely on developing in-house expertise and in order to compare and contrast perceptions as well as solutions we have invited tenders for three pilot access studies, focusing on Chepstow and Caerphilly Castles and Tintern Abbey. We thought it worth duplicating Tintern, as a mutual quality check on both approaches. In the light of the results, we will extend the auditing process to all 28 staffed monuments and on the basis of completed case studies develop a more formal training programme for staff who deal with these issues.

9. One of our inspectors of archaeology has also been holding discussion sessions within Cadw's Inspectorate and with colleagues in Presentation Branch to consider ways in which the presentation of the monuments might be adapted to the benefit of disabled people. This follows a suggestion made by consultants who have advised us that in cases where access for disabled people to some parts of the monument cannot be achieved, it may be possible to meet objectives by different or additional interpretation of the monument in places which are accessible.

Compliance

10. The paper is for information and there are no compliance issues.

Action for Committee

11. To note Cadw's report.

Contact Point

Tom Cassidy, Chief Executive of Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments.

November 2002