Heritage Interpretation for Senior Audiences

A good practice checklist for interpretation managers

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| **No** | **Recommendation** | **Check** |
| **Before the visit** |
| 1 | Provide clear information about the accessibility of the site in your website and in written material. |  |
| 2 | Provide information on the website about the availability of wheelchairs or other aids, and make these easily available onsite. |  |
| 3 | Be aware of psychological barriers, such as fear of heights or claustrophobia, and encourage group leaders to visit before  |  |
| **Arrival** |
| 4 | Provide accessible car parking close to the site. |  |
| 5 | Make sure there is easy and well-signed access to the site from public transport. |  |
| **Orientation** |
| 6 | Provide clear signage to, and around, the site, that has good contrast, commonly recognised symbols and clear fonts. |  |
| 7 | Where appropriate, provide short and clear audio announcements about closing times, special tours and other activities. |  |
| 8 | Clearly show the location of a lift if present. |  |
| **During the visit** |
| 9 | Make sure the site is suitable for people with mobility issues. |  |
| 10 | Provide seating at regular intervals around the site, and make sure its location is made clear to visitors. |  |
| 11 | Make sure there is good, even lighting, particularly on stairs, in toilets and on signs or written information. |  |
| 12 | Provide audio-visual material and make sure it is properly trialled and tested by people with visual and hearing impairments. |  |
| 13 | Treat people of all ages as equals. Make no assumptions about visitors’ knowledge of the site. |  |
| 14 | Plan and deliver interpretation as a comprehensive programme to explain the site to visitors with a range of interests, experiences and education levels. |  |
| 15 | Provide ‘layered interpretation’ at a variety of levels, that includes a simple overview and more ‘in-depth’ explanations. Give people the option to find out more detail in publications or websites. |  |
| 16 | Be aware of multiple interests in visitors, and their varied experiences and education levels. |  |
| 17 | Provide a range of interpretive media including personal, printed, animation, film, music and digital.  |  |
| 18 | Provide interpretation that involves using different senses, including smells, sounds and fun activities. |  |
| 19 | Offer opportunities for visitors to record their reminiscences and memories about the site or its features. |  |
| 20 | Offer inter-generational activities and themed events for visitors to share their knowledge and skills. |  |
| 21 | Spark memories and imagination in visitors by including historical images, text and other items in the interpretation materials. |  |
| 22 | Provide space, and a café, for rest and contemplation. |  |
| 23 | Provide child-free time slots for seniors. |  |
| 24 | Communication with visitors as if you are having a ‘two-way conversation’, not just explaining the site in a ‘one-way monologue’. Communicate *with* people, rather than talk *at* them. |  |
| 25 | Be patient and give people time to understand and tell their own stories so their experiences are personalised, and use these stories as part of your interpretation of the site. |  |
| **End of visit** |
| 26 | Say thank you and invite feedback. |  |