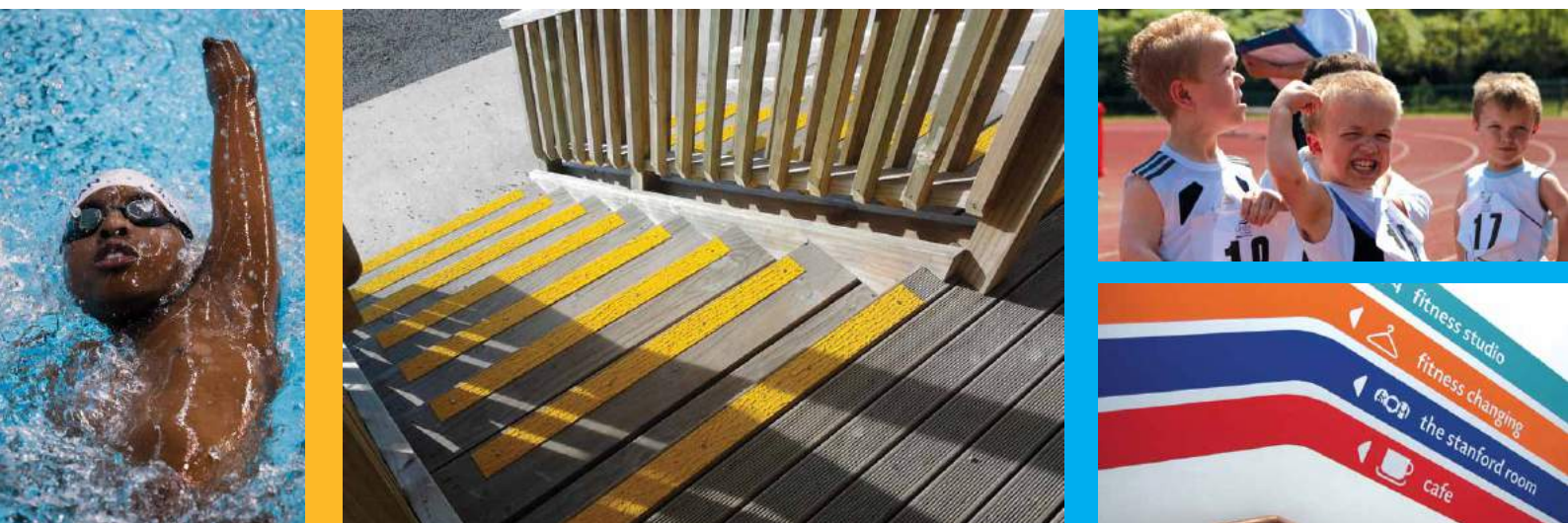
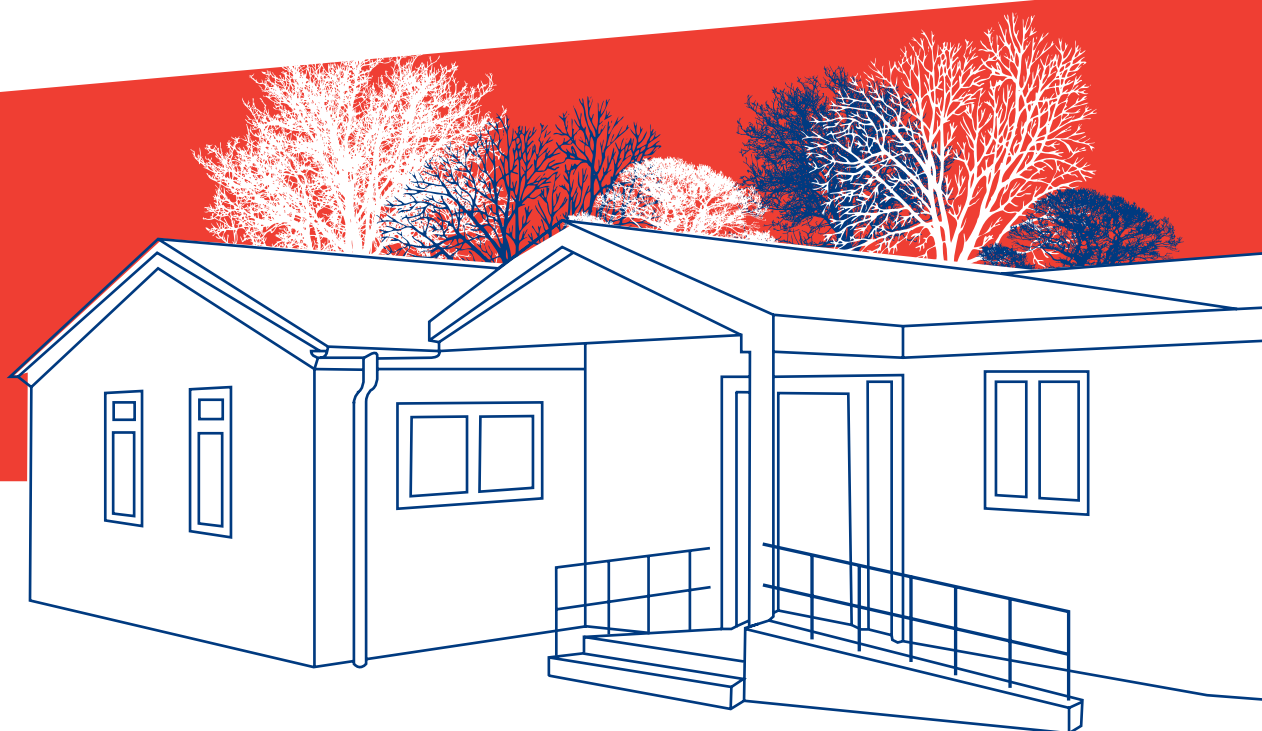


# Access for All: Opening Doors



A guide to support your sports club to improve physical access for disabled people





**An accessible and inclusive sports club sometimes requires a few physical adjustments to buildings but more than anything it needs some forward planning and continuing commitment.**

# Introduction to this guide

## Who is it for?

This guide is aimed at anybody involved in running or working in a sports club. You could be a volunteer, a coach, a club member or supporter. It is not a detailed technical guide, but intended as a starting point. The resource will take you through the main areas of physical access and signpost you to sources of further information and support. An accessible and inclusive sports club sometimes requires a few physical adjustments to buildings but more than anything it needs some forward planning and continuing commitment. Having a champion within the club, to give this on going attention would be a great solution. This could be you!

## Why does it matter?

Participation in sport and physical activity has many benefits for everyone:

- **Empowerment**
- **Health and fitness**
- **Social inclusion**
- **Talent development**

There are estimated to be over 11 million disabled people in the UK - that is one in five of our population. As well as it making good business sense to be welcoming to



a huge section of our community, there is also a legal duty to ensure your clubs are accessible for disabled people to use. The Equality Act 2010 requires sports clubs and providers to make reasonable adjustments to services so everyone has access and there is no exemption for private clubs any more.

**Remember not all impairments are visible**

Sports clubs have an on-going anticipatory duty to meet the reasonable needs of disabled people. It is therefore not sufficient to react on a case-by-case basis, clubs must prepare in advance by planning for most potential needs which may arise. For more information on the Equality Act 2010, see the EFDS factsheet Sports Clubs and the Equality Act (details in useful resources, section 7).

### **What about the buildings you use for your club?**

Buildings may have level changes and structural constraints, but much can usually be achieved with either modest physical adjustment and/or the introduction of appropriate management practices.

In very difficult situations, a building or service may sometimes need to be accessed by a disabled person via a different route. For example, via an alternative entrance where there is room to install a ramp or platform lift.

In a small minority of buildings, it may not be practicable or possible to adjust the building at all. An alternative building may need to be identified or the service may need to be provided in another way. To find out what's needed, talk to disabled people that are in your club or community. Ask them what their needs are and what you can change to make things better!

You should not be put off by the myths around health and safety and fire evacuation. An improvement to access is almost always an improvement to

safety for everyone. Only in very extreme and exceptional circumstances would safety considerations be a reason for not providing access to disabled people. There are no exceptions and, even in listed buildings protected by heritage considerations, there are lots of non-intrusive adjustments that can be made.

Although step free and wheelchair access is very important, achieving it successfully can sometimes present complex spatial and structural challenges. In exceptional circumstances, where wheelchair access is impossible (which is rarely the case), there will still be many ways of helping 95% of disabled people (who are not wheelchair users) to access your services.

It is recognised that some venues used on a regular basis by clubs will not have been designed for sports at all, such as village and church halls, nor will such venues be under the direct control of the club. In these situations, many of the temporary solutions mentioned throughout this guidance are likely to be used for much longer, if not indefinitely.

### **What's in it for me?**

Word of mouth is a powerful marketing tool. Once the word gets around that you want to be more welcoming, open to change, willing to make even small adjustments, then disabled people and their extended networks will recognise the customer service you provide. Everyone remembers a service which is accessible, memorable and friendly!

At least one in four households has a connection to a disabled person- usually a family member. Making your club more accessible will not only raise your profile in a positive way, it is very likely to increase your membership and club revenue. It may also strengthen your club's future chances of grant funding.

### When can I start?

Right away! Start thinking about little changes you can make immediately. These do not need to be expensive or time-consuming. In fact, many adjustments cost nothing or a few pounds, with a little bit of thought and planning.

### How do I start?

Check out what you already have in place. There is no legal requirement to audit premises but it is a very useful way of assessing how inclusive your club is.

Access audits vary in scope and complexity. An access audit could be undertaken by a professional or you may need to think about checking items yourself using a basic checklist to identify issues. Information on example checklists can be found in section 7. Make sure you involve some of your disabled members or spectators – they will be able to offer an invaluable personal perspective.

If you're in the fortunate position of currently seeking or procuring a new building or making significant changes to an existing one, we suggest you skip straight to the back of this guide to the further information section where you will find a list of the technical guides and information sources your designers need to know about. Sport England's Accessible Facility Design Guide 2010 will be particularly useful for all sports venues.

In any other circumstances, you can carry out a sequential review throughout your existing venue or jump straight to the section for a specific area that you need to look at, such as accessible parking or toilets.

## Let's get started...

The National Register of Access Consultants has a freely accessible database of qualified and panel-assessed consultants located throughout the UK see [www.nrac.org.uk](http://www.nrac.org.uk).



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# 1. Parking and transport

Many disabled people need to plan their journeys in advance and in more detail to ensure they are able to reach their destination in good time. The proximity

of public transport links, availability of accessible buses, trains and taxis, setting down points and parking can be critical components in ensuring they can arrive and return safely and easily.

## 1.1 Parking



Ensure other drivers do not abuse designated parking spaces for disabled persons.

You've probably noticed that accessible/blue badge bays are much wider than standard bays (3.6m wide overall). This is to allow enough room on one side for a wheelchair user or someone with walking aids to disembark from a vehicle. A transfer zone at the rear of the space is primarily for accessing the back of the vehicle, possibly with a tail lift or ramp. Where

space permits, at least 6% of the total bays (8% if you have a swimming pool) should be accessible where space allows.

Many sports club venues have limited parking provision, so often the best that can be achieved is to offer flexibility for shared use. For example, if more accessible parking bays are required, three standard spaces could be used to temporarily create two wider bays. Parking spaces can easily be reserved by cordoning off with plastic bollards and tape until the intended users arrive.

If you have or are aware of when disabled people will be attending sessions at your club and you don't have any marked blue badge bays, parking spaces should be reserved for blue badge holders with signs or markings to prevent others using



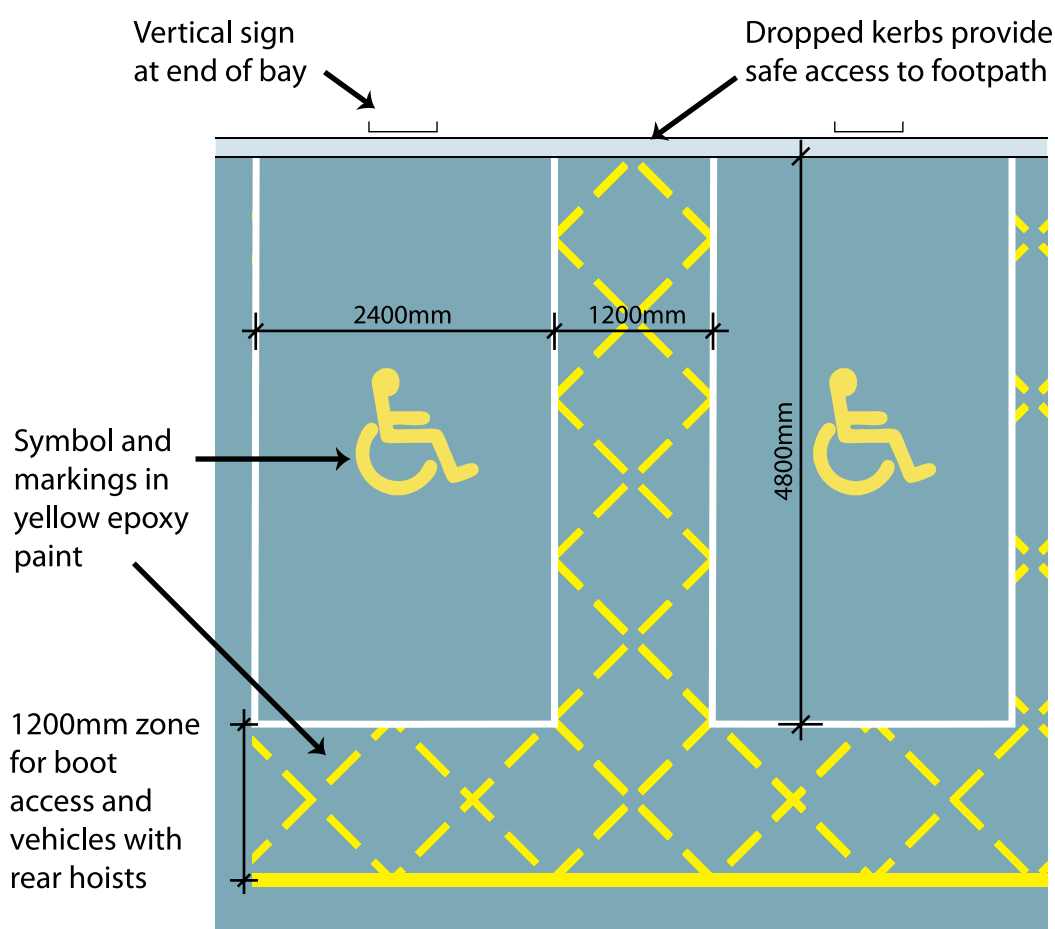
them accidentally. Where possible, these spaces should be located as conveniently as possible for the intended destination. Think about where this might be – is it the main entrance, the changing facilities, or, perhaps near the playing pitch? Ideally some parking should be provided no more than 50 metres away from the desired destination. If you don't own the facility speak with the owner and see if this is possible.

Also, where makeshift solutions are offered, make sure the arrangement is explained on websites and other literature so that disabled people understand it and know what to expect. Encourage your members to give advance notice of parking requirements when possible, especially when visiting other sites for matches etc. It is acceptable and good practice to prioritise parking for people who need it most so hopefully other venues will understand, respect and accommodate this.

If you have no parking facilities, find out where the nearest blue badge and standard parking provision is and give this information on your website and in literature. This will make it easier for people to plan their journey and decide how best to travel.

## 1.2 Passenger drop off

Information should be provided in advance suggesting places where safe and convenient passenger drop off is possible. You should bear in mind that taxi ramps often require a raised kerb so drop off for wheelchair accessible vehicles would ideally be against the raised footway with a kerb. If the routes between drop off and the building or activity are unclear, supplementary directional signs will help.



## 2. Getting about outside

It is vital that disabled people can identify and reach their intended destination independently and without risk, this means considering the overall accessibility of your external paths, walkways and seating areas.

### 2.1 Pedestrian approach

Paths and walkways should offer at least 1100mm to cater for sports wheelchairs (and much wider to allow for turning, 1500-2000mm). If your path is not wide enough, is there an alternative route that is better? Failing this, you can think about short term solutions to enable wheelchair user access until a permanent solution can be achieved:

- **Improvising with timber planks or roll out firm matting at the same level but to one side of an existing path (or separately).**
- **Adding some reinforcement on adjacent grassed areas (such as honeycomb plastic grid which grass will grow through but it will prevent a wheelchair sinking).**

### 2.2 Routes to external pitches and courts

Small dips in external surfaces (such as potholes) should be filled as a temporary measure with a suitable material. This can be anything that will be firm enough to prevent someone tripping or entrapping a heel, wheel or walking aid. If it is a small



hole, a mix of compacted sand or soil, stones, shingle etc., might be sufficient.

Where ground surfaces are soft and it is not suitable to provide formal access routes (across a sports field for example), it may be possible for you to introduce a means of support beneath the top turf layer. This could be a rubber grass mesh, which the grass grows through, or concrete honeycomb structures which will ensure the grassed areas cannot sink beneath wheelchairs or vehicles.

To provide access to a pitch or court across unstable surfaces, such as sand, shingle or gravel, it is possible to lay down lightweight Polyethylene matting or interlocking boards. There are a variety of types used at festivals and field events, which are available to buy or hire and they are easy to lay yourself.

Please note that coir or coconut matting is not suitable at all. This provides a very difficult surface for wheels and wears away



arrangements can be challenging. Knowing where puddles form on a regular basis at your venues will be helpful in planning around this.

## 2.3 Assistance dog areas

Assistance dogs support people with a variety of impairments or additional needs. For example, dogs may be the guiding eyes for people who are blind or visually impaired, provide alerts to people who cannot hear, or fetch items for people unable to reach; they are specially bred and trained for these important roles. Clubs should identify or create a suitable dog “spending area” which is free from litter, glass and other

unevenly over time. (If you currently use this type of mat at your entrances, it should ideally be replaced with a flat pile type).

You should aim to provide at least 1500mm width of temporary pathway if possible. If the route is very long, it may not always be possible to provide a continuous stable surface for the entire route (for example at away events). In this case, having two rollout runners with sufficient manpower may suffice (one person picking up the runner once used and placing it ahead of the one in use).

On hard surfaces such as tarmacadam or concrete, puddles can occur where the surface is uneven. Where large puddles form, an alternative route would be helpful or a temporary “bridge” may be formed with matting.

**Wet weather can be a real issue. This is not just because it so often stops play but puddles and flooding can wreck the most robust access routes and contingency**



Guide Dogs ✓  
Hearing Dogs ✓  
Assistance Dogs ✓





potentially harmful articles. These areas should be away from other areas where sports activities take place or where young children might play. Ideally, an enclosed concrete or grass surface area should be provided. More advice about assistance dogs can be found in the useful guide produced by the Equality and Human Rights Commission (more details given in section 7).

## 2.4 External lighting

**Have sufficient shaded areas for people who find strong sunlight difficult – such as people with some sight conditions. Large parasols or small gazebos can help as well as some golf umbrellas for rain or shine.**

Reasonable lighting outside a building will help people to safely negotiate any level changes or trip hazards. Adding some sensor lighting around entrances and routes from car parking is not usually difficult to organise and it is usually a cost effective security measure as well as improving safety and access.

Floodlights on external activity areas will enable everyone to play beyond daylight hours and will particularly benefit people with sight conditions.

## 2.5 Gradients and ramps

**Ensure ramps are not made dangerous by loose debris, surface water, leaves, snow or other hazards.**

Whenever possible, paths and walkways should be level or gently sloping as changes in level can make it difficult for many people with mobility impairments. Even a



step change as low as 15mm might be an issue for some, but these small changes in level can often be addressed with an angled piece of timber (like a wedge) on either side (or a chamfered section or a small fillet infill in concrete, timber or metal).

We would advise you to check all doors and steps on your site. Where doors have a raised threshold, which can be particularly problematic, a threshold ramp could be used.

Using a temporary ramp can be a short term measure for bigger level changes until a more permanent solution can be achieved but these should be chosen with care. A search online will provide lots of suppliers, and ramp prices start from around £100. A satisfactory ramp should have:



- A gradient no more than 1:12 (i.e. 12cms of slope needed for every 1cm of level change) The bigger the level change, the longer the ramp will need to be, subject to the space available.

See the illustrations below:

| Max. Gradient | Length of ramp | Max. rise |
|---------------|----------------|-----------|
| 1:20          | 10m            | 500 mm    |
| 1:19          | 9m             | 473 mm    |
| 1:18          | 8m             | 444 mm    |
| 1:17          | 7m             | 411 mm    |
| 1:16          | 6m             | 375 mm    |
| 1:15          | 5m             | 333 mm    |
| 1:14          | 4m             | 285 mm    |
| 1:13          | 3m             | 230 mm    |
| 1:12          | 2m             | 166 mm    |

- An anti-slip surface. Slip-resistance on an existing ramp can be improved with the addition of purpose made bands of grip tape.
- A minimum 100mm upstand at the edges (to prevent slipping sideways).

Where required (and feasible), permanent ramps must be as gentle as the space allows. Ramps should be a minimum 1500mm wide where space permits, and the longer the ramp the more gentle a gradient it should be.

#### Ramp Gradients - 6m Length



1:20 - 30cm over 6m



1:15 - 40cm over 6m



1:12 - 50cm over 6m



For temporary ramps, think about who will put the ramp in place, as there is no point buying a heavy duty ramp only to find no one is around who can lift it without injuring themselves. There are lightweight and roll-up ramps on the market which are relatively easy to manage by one person.

Don't be afraid to ask ramp suppliers for advice on choosing the most suitable ramp for your club.

For further guidance on design and construction of permanent ramps see the Approved Document to Part K of the Building Regulations 2013, BS8300 and also Sport England's Accessible Facility Design Guide documents (details in section 7).

## 2.6 Steps

Although they are critical for wheelchair users, ramps may not be the best option for other disabled people. Some people with arthritis and other joint conditions find walking on a sloping surface quite painful. Where level changes cannot be avoided, a choice of ramp or steps should be offered if there is enough space to provide both.

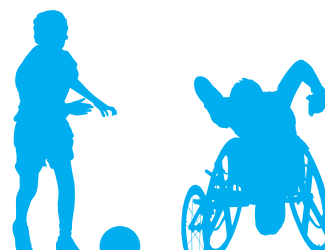
Defining step edges is also an easy improvement to make and greatly improves

safety for everyone. Simply paint or apply a visually contrasting, slip-resistant tape to the front edge of the step. (Yellow or white paint or tape works well on most steps). If your steps do not have any tactile ribbed warning surface, it may be possible to add some steel or rubberised bars on the top step at least to provide some warning for people with visual impairments. (This applies to external steps only, for safety reasons).

Open tread staircases can be potentially dangerous for some people, as the foot can be placed too far forward when going up and cause an accident. An inexpensive remedy may be to add a piece of timber across the back of each step to prevent this or, if you have alternative stairs to the same area, encourage use of those instead. (It should not be an issue coming down so do not worry about fire escape stairs that are only used for descent).

## 2.7 Handrails

Stairs and ramps should have handrails on both sides where possible, continuing around landings. The handrails are used for support and also for guidance for someone with a visual impairment or in low lighting conditions (such as evacuation under emergency lighting). Where avoidable gaps occur on stairways or landings, it may be possible to add a section of rail. Timber poles from any DIY store, like those used for broom handles or curtain poles, have an ideal



diameter for gripping and this will be a particularly welcomed safety feature. This is especially important where steps are irregular in shape or height, such as tapered steps and small half landings. Short sections of additional railing like this can make an inexpensive, but effective safety improvement until a refurbishment opportunity arises when more can be done. Sometimes it is not possible to provide handrails in full accordance with the technical standards. Any handrail or support is better than none at all.

## 2.8 Seating and rest points

**Some disabled people need more protection from cold weather conditions. If the venue is unknown or if you know the pitch or court is exposed, then wind breaks, gazebos and even some emergency foil blankets may be helpful.**

Disabled people may require rest points on a route, whilst spectating or resting between participation in sports activities. Occasional seating for this purpose can take many forms. It may be chairs that are brought along to the event for this purpose (some with arm supports are helpful), or use of existing features that are designed into the landscape. For example, low walling around flower beds can make useful ad-hoc seats, as can features such as boulders or steps. Surfaces that are not too low or too high will be particularly helpful, (450mm-500mm), but higher ledges such as walls or railings offer an opportunity to lean or perch.

Bench seats with arm and back support are particularly welcomed. Letting people know if there will be any seating at an

event for spectators and reserve players is particularly helpful for disabled people. Some disabled people are unable to stand for any length of time but may be unable to sit on the ground surface. Encourage members to bring their own seat to away events if practical to do so. Chairs for outdoor events may need to be folding, but there are lightweight, upright, sturdy picnic chairs on the market with good arm and back supports.

It is not uncommon for seating to be positioned in clusters around a table, effectively forcing a wheelchair user to sit “outside the circle” and feel excluded. Always remove one seat of any circles or clusters of furniture to allow seating alongside others.

## 2.9 Spectator and viewing areas

Some disabled people may find use of spectator areas difficult because they have stepped access or the sight lines are designed around average eye level and not someone who may, for example, sit very low in a wheelchair. Although removable seating from tiered banks of spectator areas are helpful, much can be achieved by careful positioning and this can be helped with a little advance planning and review:

- (a) Where is the best view of the court/field/pitch etc.? For example is there a higher bank that can be reached to provide good sight lines from a wheelchair and can wheelchair access be made possible? Sometimes this might be from an adjacent car park surface which is above field level, or possibly from the viewing patio/balcony of the sports club.

(b) Can anything be provided to raise the seat height for some people (for example a firm cushion)? Can you create a raised platform with ramps at one or both ends? Your local mobility store should be able to help with such items.

(c) Can another member describe the action (i.e. provide commentary) to someone with a visual impairment? Many blind and partially sighted people wish to enjoy the atmosphere of the sport and to support their friends or family, how can you make sure they can follow what is happening on the court/ pitch?

(d) What about someone who cannot hear announcements – can a visual display of the score be provided (maybe someone holding up a large numeral, or a white board that someone updates)?

**An access audit undertaken by a professional access auditor or consultant will be based on rigorous technical standards and is likely to give prioritised recommendations for physical and management adjustments together with budgetary indicators in a formal report. As anyone can call themselves an access auditor, it is worthwhile considering how they are qualified to advise.**



# 3. Information and communication

This section covers good signage for way finding and assistive technology to ensure information is communicated effectively to disabled people.

## 3.1 Signage

The way in which information is relayed is important. Not everyone is able to read a variety of text styles, sizes and formats. Clear and concise signage is particularly important for people who find communication more difficult (such as people with hearing loss or speech impairments).

Signs should be provided at each decision point where a choice of routes is available, for example more than one pathway or corridor, or a series of doors. External spaces can be a particular issue, as there is often limited visual contrast around green space and the route someone may take is not as regulated as indoors.

Making routes and directions clear is very important. Some disabled people need to conserve their energy and not waste it walking around areas trying to find their destination. Others will experience fatigue, breathlessness or pain and discomfort. If you know your current signage system is poor, it is possible to supplement this in the short to medium term with some “homemade” additional notices which will be more accessible to everyone. The guidance below can be applied to any printed material, whether it is an









instruction sheet, a temporary notice or a formal sign.

### 3.1.1 Text

- **Block capitals** (BLOCK CAPITALS) are actually harder to read for the majority, especially many people with dyslexia or visual impairments as there is no shape to the word. Using an initial **upper** case letter and then **lower** case text is best (e.g. Sentence case).
- Use a plain (**sans serif**) font such as **Arial**, **Helvetica** and Calibri (with the exception of Comic Sans which some people with dyslexia find difficult).
- Avoid **small font sizes** - a minimum **12 point** for documents and emails, **16 point** plus for large print information and notices and much bigger again for signs, depending upon viewing distance.
- Comfortable viewing heights are 1200-1700mm high for average standing height and 750-1350mm seated.
- Clear, non-reflective signage is a necessity.
- Seek a good colour contrast between the sign background and the text.

### 3.1.2 Colour

#### Recommendations for achieving satisfactory visual contrast:

|   | Background/<br>Environment  |   | Signboard<br>Background<br>Colour | Text or Symbol Colour   |        |       |
|---|-----------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|--------|-------|
|    | Red brick<br>or dark stone  |    | White                             | Dark<br>Grey            | Blue   | Green |
|    | Light brickwork<br>or stone |    | Navy or other<br>dark colour      | White                   | Yellow |       |
|   | Whitewashed<br>wall         |   | Navy or other<br>dark colour      | White                   | Yellow |       |
|  | Green<br>(vegetation etc.)  |  | White                             | Dark Grey, brown, black |        |       |

If your building or grounds are particularly large or complex, why not use colour as an additional aid to way-finding? Colour works almost subconsciously and can be easily introduced as part of the décor or on the signs themselves. You can then co-ordinate this with a particular activity or part of the site. For example, if you had two car parks, you would be able to ask visitors to “go to the lower car park (follow the orange signs)” or “follow the brown signs for the golf facilities”. Choose colours that are different to the background they’ll be seen against (for example avoid green signs in areas that are predominantly trees, bushes and grass).

### 3.1.3 Tactile signs

Tactile information such as Braille and/or embossed text will be helpful to some and is critical on certain signs, such as toilet doors. It is possible to add Braille information using a transparent self-adhesive tape below an existing sign, on a temporary notice or even on files, lockers and equipment. There is a Dymo label maker for this, costing circa £50 but you may find a local sensory services department will offer to do this at the cost of just the tape used. The most widely used tactile information is an





embossed symbol or text. The RNIB also sell a product called Tactimark which is a plastic writing tube with gel with which you can create freehand text or lines – the substance dries to give an embossed finish. It is available in black, white and orange at about £6 a tube. Embossed lettering is only helpful when in easy reach (such as on a door 1500mm high or below) and it needs to be of sufficient size to be legible by touch - minimum 15mm height of initial capital letter and 1mm raised depth from the background.

By matt laminating a simple computer print-out of appropriate text and/or symbols, and applying Tactimark pen or some Braille self-adhesive labelling it is possible to create your own notices and signs in an accessible way. (Always use

matt laminating sheets. They are only marginally more expensive and do not have the high reflectance which makes most laminated notices difficult to read under direct light or sunlight.)

A painted or taped line in a distinct colour is a simple solution to some situations that are difficult to cover in signage. This can be very helpful for external environments, where the destination does not have line of sight from the departure point.

Some people with visual impairments lose their ability to see colours clearly. It is therefore helpful to combine a colour with a shape, where possible – for example an orange triangle or a blue circle etc.



of the picture rather than the arrow. (Note: The wheelchair symbol is the exception and should always point to the right for consistency).

### 3.1.4 Pictures and symbols

Easily recognised symbols and images are helpful to everyone, especially people who are unable to see the text clearly or who do not have sufficient literacy or English levels to read the text. The most commonly used symbols are the male and female symbols for toilet doors. On example 1 on side, notice how much easier it is to see the difference between the male and female symbols because of the legs than in example 2.

Use arrows with a proportionately longer stem. (No chicken footprint arrows please. These are confusing). As a general guide, the arrow should be on the left of the text if it points left, and on the right if it points right. For straight on, use an upward arrow positioned on the left.

Sometimes it is desirable to include a symbol but some suggest a direction, deliberately or accidentally. For example, if you used a person walking symbol alongside an arrow on a sign, make sure the person is walking in the direction you want to go – research suggests that sometimes people will follow the direction

Example 1



Example 2



## 3.2 Hearing enhancement systems

There are over 9 million people in the UK with hearing loss. Many people benefit from wearing hearing aids but these amplify all sound, including unwanted background noise, which can make it difficult to interpret speech. Hearing enhancement systems allow hearing aid users to listen to a single sound source without any background noise and this is achieved by switching the hearing aid to a different setting. Appropriate signage to indicate the availability of a system should be clearly displayed, otherwise a hearing aid wearer will not know to use a different setting on their hearing aid.

Hearing enhancement systems are particularly important at key communication points. This will include reception counters in a formal setting or perhaps a table in a field near a sports pitch or court. The environment and the type of communication will dictate the best system to use. It can be overwhelming to choose between the different technologies available, but if you have nothing in place at present, make a start with a portable rechargeable battery system. It costs about £150 and will cater adequately for one to one communication, which is a

very positive start. (One-to one portable systems may be needed for individuals with hearing loss for membership induction sessions and some coaching sessions).

There are several types of hearing enhancement system. One is the induction loop which is the cheapest and most commonly used. Also, radio and infra red systems are worthy of consideration by sports clubs as these are both wire free and can be taken from area to area, including externally. Radio systems, for example, can receive a signal up to a distance of around 60 metres which may be needed for external environments. The sports coach or event manager wears a transmitter, and the individual wears a receiver.

For confidential communication indoors (such as between a coach and an individual athlete about a medical condition or other personal matter), an infra-red system is recommended and it can work in conjunction with an individual's hearing aid or via a headset.

Make sure you display a sign to show that there is an induction loop available, so that hearing aid wearers know to switch their hearing aids setting to use this.



**Regular maintenance of air-conditioning systems reduces background noise levels, which particularly affects people with sensory impairments.**



fitness studio



fitness changing



the stanford room



cafe

## 4. Come inside

**Providing access to buildings such as the club house, changing rooms or café areas enable disabled people to participate fully in sport and the social aspects of being a club member.**

### 4.1 Reception and meeting points

How will people find the reception or meeting point? In a large space where the reception desk is not directly in line with the entrance, bright runner mats leading to the reception counter or meet and greet point will help to make it more obvious to people who are partially sighted. If the finish of a reception counter blends with surrounding finishes, a welcoming floor mat (flat pile) is an easy way of highlighting the presence of the desk and where people should go. (In an external environment, it may be appropriate to do more – such as erecting a flag, parasol or gazebo of a colour that is easy to identify from a distance).

Whether it is a formal reception desk or a makeshift checking-in point in a church hall or on an external playing field, consider whether it meets the needs of all potential users – both seated and standing. A formal counter with a lower section or any standard height table (even a picnic table) will suffice for a less formal “meet and greet” point. If you have only a high level reception counter, either make sure people on reception are aware that they should come round the front to meet and greet visitors, or if you have room, place a low table next to your reception counter. Then,

the receptionist can slide across and work from both as required.

If there is no formal reception point, then directional signage becomes even more important (see section 4.1), and do not forget to provide seating where possible (see also section 3.8).

Try to provide a mix of seating styles to accommodate a range of needs. Low sofas and high perch stools are not suitable for everyone! One or two tub chairs or upright dining style chairs, with good back and arm supports, will cater for most needs, whether in reception, spectating or resting between events.

Always try to put a selection of your club information/literature where everyone can reach them. If your literature stands are high (above 1.2m), then why not put one of each booklet on a lower surface such as a coffee table or window ledge and replenish as necessary.

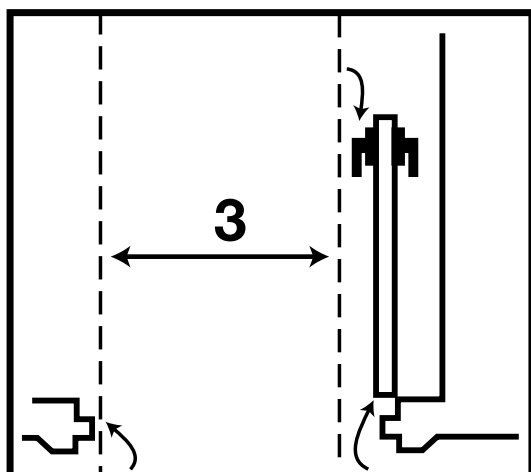
As previously mentioned, consider having a battery operated portable induction loop to assist hearing aid wearers (cost around £150) as a short term answer for a desk without a fixed counter loop system. Remember to clearly display signage to tell users of its availability!

### 4.2 Doors

A wider door is helpful to everyone but essential for many wheelchair users. When considering doors, the width of most interest is the clearance width rather than the size of the door leaf (see illustration) and this will need to be at least 750mm for a standard wheelchair to pass through (sports wheelchairs need much more,

at least 1100mm). Familiarity with your building and which doors might be an issue is, in itself, helpful in planning where access can be provided and where a management arrangement might help.

Even new building features can sometimes present physical challenges to disabled people. To enable people to summon assistance (for example for a heavy door or use of a portable ramp), a call point for



#### Did you know ?

Seven out of ten disabled people acquire their impairment between the ages of 18 and 65. For many within this age group, sport or exercise would have already become part of their lifestyle and they will most probably want to continue in it after becoming a disabled person.



assistance together with a suitable sign indicating its presence may be an interim solution and a wireless push bell from the local DIY store and a homemade sign (see section 4.1) can be introduced even at the most modest of venues.

Perhaps you have a secondary entrance (or exit) to the building which is wider and will make a better step free route? If this is the case, make sure there is directional signage and communication to let people know about it. Consider whether you need to improve the finishes etc., around this alternative entrance point. Does it look like a goods entrance? Think about perhaps some modest redecorating and some welcoming pictures and uplighters to improve this.

If you have lots of doors to check, it is sometimes easier to cut a strip of foam board or fairly stiff cardboard to the clearance width you need and walk through the building with it.

Sometimes, double doors are provided but if both doors need to be opened to provide a wide enough opening, this will be very difficult to do whilst operating a wheelchair or using crutches. However, holding the doors open will overcome this. (The good news about having a double door set is that the overall width is satisfactory. In due course, a venue might be able to replace the double set with a larger door plus a small door with minimal works).

Once you have identified any doors that are narrower than this, what do you do? If it is all of the doors, then you have a problem that only door widening can resolve. But assuming it is just a few doors, consider what they provide access to:

- Is it a unique space? Would another room/court be able to provide the same activity?
- Is there another way in?

As an example, say that you have some inside courts for racquet sports and basketball and the internal door clearances are 720mm wide. When the wheelchair basketball team have a booking, can you open up the double fire exit doors to provide direct access from outside? Of course it is not full access but it does allow the team to engage with their sport. In bad weather you could also provide some large golf umbrellas so that people do not get soaked! Perhaps you have another set of courts with a wider door? In that case, a sensible bookings arrangement would enable people needing the wider door to specifically reserve those courts.

The biggest challenge for many disabled people is the heaviness of the door – door opening forces can be measured with a simple Newton measure (available from the Centre for Accessible Environments, amongst other suppliers) and should not be more than 30 Newtons to open the door from closed to a 30 degree opening angle and 22.5 Newtons above 30 degrees opening angle. Door closers are usually fitted to ensure a door self closes where wind force may cause them to blow open or where they are a fire door to prevent the spread of fire/smoke. The presence of a door closer increases the opening force or weight of the door in day-to-day use. The solutions for this are:

- 1. Where the door is not a fire door, such as a toilet door, the closer could simply be removed. Many self-closing devices can also be adjusted (usually with a simple turn of a screwdriver) so it may be possible to reduce the heaviness of the door in this way.**
- 2. Prop or wedge the door open during the event/opening hours (if it is not a fire door).**
- 3. Have someone ready and able to open the door when needed.**
- 4. Fit an electro-magnetic or battery operated hold open device (linked to the fire alarm system so that it will shut if the alarm is triggered).**
- 5. Fit a hydraulic closer to reduce the door weight.**
- 6. Provide power assisted doors.**

Whilst options 4 to 6 are the best options in the long term, options 1-3 are often more realistic on a short term or ad-hoc basis.

When replacing any door closers, consider 'delayed action closers' as these allow the door to remain open for a pre-set period of time before closing at an adjustable speed.

A door closer can be fitted with a 'stand open arm' so that the door will remain open at a pre-set angle until it is closed manually, this is helpful on outer doors.

The style of door handle can also make opening a door more difficult. Door knobs, for example, require a good grip and hand

and wrist strength whereas an easy grip lever handle can be used with an elbow or closed fist if necessary. A few lever handles have a very uncomfortable kink in the lever, so it is always best to try one before replacing them all. Again, as a short term solution only for heavy doors and door knobs, you could ask a volunteer to open doors for someone to pass through. Please note that this is not independent or equal access and should be only be relied on in exceptional and short term circumstances.



For buildings that have listed features which may not be able to remove the door knobs, adaptors are available.

### 4.2.1 Revolving doors

Whilst revolving doors can be energy efficient by keeping the inside temperature stable, they are usually unsuitable for wheelchair users, potentially dangerous to someone who is partially sighted, or difficult to use for someone with a young child in a buggy, or laden with sports equipment. They can also be a hazard for people with walking aids. Manual revolving doors are often physically difficult to push into action and there is no control over the speed of the door when used at the same time as others. Automated revolving doors can be easier in this respect, but visually impaired people can find it difficult to judge when to step in, and guide dogs find them very difficult if not impossible. Most revolving doors should have a side “pass door” either alongside (or in older buildings sometimes around the corner) and it is important that directional signage is provided and the door is kept unlocked during hours of operation so that it is available for anyone to use, including people with hidden impairments and needs.

### 4.2.2 Power assisted doors

Some newer buildings may have power assisted doors, a set of automated sliding or swing doors which open on sensors or by pushing a pad or button. Few venues used by sports clubs will be blessed with such features but they may be considered during a refurbishment. Where these types of doors are provided the location of

the push pad or button should be clearly highlighted to users.

### 4.2.3 Glazing

Sometimes buildings have a glazed frontage and it is difficult to tell where the doors are, the same can apply to internal doors and walls where glazed partitioning is used.

All full height glazing (external and internal) that is not protected by furniture etc., should have manifestation or markings across a minimum of two bands (from 850 to 1000mm and 1400 to 1600mm) so that people do not walk into the glass by accident. If there are no markings, temporary notices (use blue-tac for a very temporary measure) or stickers on the glass in these zones will have the same effect in increasing safety. Innovative and exciting



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frontages can be created in the longer term and may extend beyond these zones, for example consider silhouettes of people playing sport or club logos etc.).

#### 4.2.4 Fire doors

As stated earlier, heavy doors are a challenge for many. Holding doors back in the open position removes the issue but, before propping any doors open and leaving them unmanned, check first whether they are a fire door. (It may have a small “FIRE DOOR” sign on the door - if not ask the building manager).

Fire doors can be held open but they require a device linked to the fire alarm system, which is usually hard wired. There are also portable battery retainer devices (circa £150), which have the flexibility to be moved around the building to help with particular events or activities. (Ask the building manager, your fire risk assessor or local fire brigade before purchasing).

### 4.3 Internal lighting

Lighting conditions are particularly important to people with sensory impairments and especially so at the reception or greeting point where people exchange information. People with hearing loss need adequate lighting to lip-read and people with visual impairments rely on good lighting to maximise their ability to see finer detail.

It is easy to increase lighting levels at a reception desk with one or two carefully placed task lamps and the bigger issue is sometimes one of controlling too much glare. Bright sunlight can be very disabling to people with sight conditions – having your focal point under the shade of a tree or parasol, for example, will help.

Sometimes the surface of a reception desk or table can be highly reflective. Simply add a non-reflective matt (anything from a leather bound desk mat to a tablecloth will suffice).

#### Fire Evacuation

Much thought is often given to enabling disabled people to enter a building and use the facilities inside it. Unfortunately, much less attention is given to their needs in an evacuation situation when lifts may be inoperative, so new hazards and obstructions are introduced.

Every occupied building has to have a Fire Risk Assessment and Fire Plan and these should include provision for disabled people. Assisted evacuation may be required and the responsibility for this lies with building management and NOT the Fire Brigade.

Good lighting is helpful to everyone. For moving around and most sports, light levels do not need to be as intense as they would be for reading, but a minimum 100-200 lux is recommended. (This is the level of lighting many people have in their homes). The average 60 year old needs 2-5 times as much light as a 20 year old, so if you do not have a light meter, start by asking some of your older club members if the light levels are comfortable.

**Clean light fittings, blinds and windows maximise the light available to assist people with sensory impairments.**

## 4.4 Corridors and walls

If corridors are too narrow (less than 1500mm width) for wheelchair and other mobility aid users, is there a different route or another room with better access?

Unfortunately, fixed features such as columns, corridors and doors cannot be easily adjusted and they will usually be impossible to change due to structural constraints, unless the resources are available to do this. In all circumstances it is important to keep corridors and other circulation spaces free from obstructions and identify any potential hazards and features.

**Check that manoeuvring space remains unobstructed (by, for example, plant displays, freestanding furniture or promotional stands) in the vicinity of ramps, steps, corridors or double doorways.**

**Floors should be washed during low activity periods or out of hours and temporary signs used to mark the hazard.**

**Corridors, means of escape and general access routes must be kept clear of debris and obstacles at all times. Storage of temporary materials or deliveries in such areas can quickly make a building inaccessible and pose a hazard to everyone.**

### 4.4.1 Visual contrast

Over 80% of people with visual impairments have some vision remaining and this can be used when moving around. When features have a tonal contrast from one another, they are easier to identify.

Fortunately, achieving visual tonal contrast inside is usually very easy. Most floors are in a mid to dark colour and tone (rarely white). Most walls (other than perhaps feature walls) are likely to be in a light shade and therefore this achieves satisfactory contrast in most buildings without any special effort. The doors (and/or their frames) can easily be repainted in a darker shade if they do not contrast from the walls. Columns can be painted in a different colour or tonal bands added at ground and eye level (typically at average eyeline of 1500mm). Tables that blend with floors can have table cloths or mats added, and soft seating that blends with carpets can have some cushions in a contrasting colour. The same principle applies to





smaller items such as signs, door handles, grab rails etc. The smaller the item the greater the visual contrast needed.

A white door and frame within a white or pale cream wall will visually blend, whereas if the door or its frame (or both) are painted with a mid or dark shade, it will stand out. Note that this is tonal (visual) contrast rather than colour contrast. The reason for this is that people with some sight conditions do not see colour very well or see it differently (for example around 10% of men are colour blind). Someone with monochromatic vision i.e. seeing in greyscale, will be able to navigate a room with a single colour providing tonal difference is evident. For example, grey-white walls, mid grey skirtings and doors

and dark grey carpet would work well, but a green door against a red wall might not. Imagine looking at a black and white image of both scenes. Depending upon the intensity of the shades used, the green and red scene may have no tonal difference at all when viewed monochromatically.

#### 4.5 Lifts

Lifts are essential for many people requiring step free access to different floor levels but are only likely to be available in larger venues. A lift is a major investment and will be disruptive to install but should be considered when opportunities arise. There are improvements that can be made to an existing lift, these include:

- Many lift cars have an integral handrail for support but one could be added if not. Sometimes it is helpful to add a drop down seat or have a chair available outside the lift that can be used.
- Consider adding a half-height mirror (handrail to ceiling of the lift car) on the rear wall of the lift car. This is helpful for wheelchair users who may need to reverse out. People with hearing impairments find it useful as they are more aware of other people entering the lift with them. If a mirror exists but it is full height, it is helpful to add some indication to the bottom half of the mirror (self-adhesive frosting effect would be ideal) so that a visually impaired person does not mistake the mirror for an opening.
- If your lift car is too small for some wheelchair users, you could consider buying a small lightweight wheelchair that you know will fit the lift car. Wheelchair users who are able to transfer would then have the option of using a smaller wheelchair to use the lift (whilst someone else transports the individual's wheelchair to the required floor afterwards by either the lift or via the stairs). It should be possible to fold the wheelchair or remove foot plates in order to reduce the size for transporting it.
- In a two storey building, a lift user will generally know which of the two floors they are on, but in higher buildings a visually impaired person in particular can become disorientated. If the lift is not equipped with audio announcements, one of the most useful additions is to display a large floor number on the lift landings, immediately opposite the lift doors. This can be done with a matt laminated print-out in the same way as other temporary notices.
- If control panels within a lift car lack any tactile information this can be improved by purchasing an inexpensive but bespoke self-adhesive vinyl sheet containing tactile and visual information for users. Alternatively, Braille tape could be added to the panel yourself.
- If the lift car floor is black or dark, (which can give the appearance of an empty shaft) then it would be helpful to cover this in a lighter vinyl slip resistant finish, carpet or place a flat dust mat within the car.
- If the lift car controls are too high for some users, then these should ideally be lowered. In the meantime, a reaching device could help, or provide a volunteer helper to control the lifts.
- Don't forget that you may not be able to use the lift in a fire evacuation situation. Check out the fire strategy for the building to see what the arrangements will be in an emergency. Sources of information on fire safety and evacuation are provided sections 5.2.4 and 7. It is rare that a suitable fire evacuation strategy cannot be developed for evacuation of disabled members from upper floors of a building – therefore it is not normally acceptable to deny access on this basis.



## 4.6 Refreshment areas

The biggest issue in many catering environments is the acoustics – lots of hard finishes can create considerable echo, which is very difficult for people with sensory impairments. Introducing some soft finishes, such as chairs or screens with fabric, curtains etc., will help a little. However, if the floor can be carpeted, this will reduce the amount of noise from chairs being moved in a really busy environment.

Refreshment areas have similar needs to reception waiting areas in terms of a mix of seating styles (see section 3.8). If all chairs are without arm supports, consider changing some for sturdy chairs with arm supports. (See seating section 3.8) If your tables and chairs are fixed, these will be quite difficult for many disabled people to access and it would be beneficial to supplement or exchange one or two fixed units with some freestanding tables and chairs. This offers flexibility for all needs. Ensure aisles between tables are kept clear – at least one aisle should be wide enough for a wheelchair user to turn (1500mm width needed), and the under table clearance height should be at least 700mm for comfortable wheelchair access.

Whilst ideally serving counter heights should not be too high (850mm recommended), this can be overcome by someone else bringing items to the table. This is a recommendation anyway for items where it would be difficult or potentially dangerous for a physically disabled person to carry (for example hot drinks).

The variety of food available should ideally include some finger food items. Have

straws readily available for use with hot and cold drinks. Plain crockery is easier for someone with a visual impairment, but must contrast from the tables on which they will be placed. A mix of cups with and without handles is also useful.

Menus should be displayed in a large print, easy read format (follow the guidance for information and notices in section 4.1).

A few clubs might use a venue with a vending machine. Assistance can be provided to operate the machine if needed, especially if the coin slot is too high or the dispenser too low. Braille tape could be added to the selection panel if a need is identified and there are also self-adhesive labels called “bump-ons” available in an assortment of colours, shapes and texture that can be added to particular products.

## 4.7 Toilets

**Explain to people responsible for cleaning or restocking the toilets how important it is to keep the transfer zone in the accessible toilet clear of obstructions such as bins.**

Every building should have at least one accessible toilet (commonly but inappropriately called a “disabled toilet”). If there is only one toilet provided at a site, then this should be designed to accessibility standards for disabled and non-disabled people to use. When planning new toilet facilities, the technical guidance in Approved Document M and BS8300 should be diligently followed (see useful resources, section 7), but sometimes a building has an existing facility that falls short of these standards in some way.

Often there are ways of improving these a little:

- Wheelchair accessible toilet facilities are typically at least 2.2m x 1.5m by today's standards, although older buildings may have some a little shorter (2m x 1.5m). It is helpful to understand what your accessible toilet offers spatially, so that this information can be given on websites or in answer to any enquiries.
- Sometimes the space of the cubicle is too narrow. If the width is under 1.5m, it may be possible to have the toilet pan moved closer to the nearest wall to increase the transfer zone (e.g. 400mm from centreline of the pan to the wall rather than 500mm).
- If the space is considerably undersized, this should be addressed by extending or providing an alternative facility, but in the meantime it should never be taken out of use as it will still be beneficial for disabled people who are not wheelchair users.
- An outward opening door should be provided where possible to make the most of the internal space, but to also allow the door to be opened in event of someone collapsing. This is usually with a coin – make sure a few people at least know about this!
- If the door has to open inwards, it will need an emergency break out mechanism but the main issue is that it will impact on the space. Can the door be changed for a sliding or bi-fold door to maximise the internal floor area available to manoeuvre a wheelchair?
- The door should be easy to latch from the inside.
- It is helpful to have clothes hooks at seated and standing height reach, as well as a shelf for belongings such as handbags, keys etc., as many physically impaired people will not be able to retrieve items on the floor. Clothes hooks are available with self-adhesive fixing tabs and therefore require minimal effort to put in place.



- Keeping an accessible toilet locked (even with a Radar key) is acceptable in only the most exceptional circumstances (such as a regularly abused/vandalised facility in a remote location).
- No one should be challenged about their need to use an accessible toilet. Many disabled people with hidden impairments have very valid reasons to need the features it contains (for example colostomy bag users or people with shy bladder syndrome).
- Most accessible toilets have a “corner layout” designed to meet building regulations. These will be either a left or right hand transfer and it is useful to know which it is in case someone asks.
- Not everyone has a specific transfer need, but some people have a weakness on one side. Right hand transfer is the more common requirement, but if you have more than one accessible toilet, these should alternate so that you can offer both. It is not uncommon to find this transfer zone and the toilet generally used for storage of cleaning materials, bicycles and all manner of things, but it really should be kept clear at all times.
- The corner toilet layout is intended to allow hands to be washed and dried before transferring back to a wheelchair, so the space between the basin and pan is critical for this. A common error is to place the soap and hand drying facilities beyond reach, but this can be easily addressed with a wall-fixed soap
- dispenser above the basin (where it won't spill onto the floor). In addition, there should be a tissue or hand towel dispenser beside the pan.
- If the distance between the basin and toilet pan is too large, rather than ignoring this altogether, at least provide some hand cleansing gel (use self-adhesive pads to provide a dispenser near the pan) until this can be addressed.
- Wheelchair accessible toilets should really have a higher level pan- 480mm to the rim rather than 420mm and it is often overlooked. Until a replacement pan can be installed, a raised seat can be fitted to make up the height difference. (Note that the hinges on these raised seats do take considerable strain and they are inclined to move more than a conventional seat, and they should therefore be checked regularly).
- If basins have twist operated taps, these can be difficult for many people to operate. The tap could be changed when possible, but in the meantime it is possible to buy an adaptor or a tap turner.



- Clearly labelling hot and cold taps is very helpful (especially where the hot water temperature is not controlled, as it ideally should be).
- Sometimes the toilet cubicle has poor visual contrast (for example white grab rails, white walls and white sanitary ware). This makes the layout difficult to interpret for people with visual impairments but adding a band of colour around the walls, or adding a contrasting band of soft grip self-adhesive vinyl to the grab rails can make a real difference. The toilet seat can be changed for another colour which highlights the position of the pan however darker seats can disguise any soiling so generally a light colour is preferred. (If the toilet seat has a lid, it must be changed for one without).
- Fittings such as backrests and grab rails are very helpful to people with a range of physical impairments, as long as they are robustly fixed and within reach. The horizontal rail at the side of the pan is most important and the drop down rail, in particular, is often not appropriately fixed. This needs to be weight bearing so don't be afraid to lean on this heavily to test it.
- Does the building have an emergency pull cord alarm in toilet cubicle and shower facilities? If not, until such time as one is fitted, can you improvise? (For example, by using a wireless doorbell inside the toilet, linked to a socket within range where someone will hear it or issuing a personal attack alarm so that a user could use this if they fell or needed assistance).



- Often an alarm has been fitted but the reset switch is out of reach. This is inconvenient and embarrassing (but not life threatening like the alarm not sounding somewhere that is manned). Even in remote locations (for example out on the sports field) it is possible to have remote monitoring arrangements, where a call point will sound somewhere offsite so that someone can raise the alert.
- Standard male and female toilets should ideally have one cubicle that is suitable for ambulant disabled people (able to stand). Ambulant accessible cubicles are usually easy to create. An outward opening door is desirable along with some grab rails. Ideally it should have a higher WC pan, but even grab rails alone are a worthwhile addition to make.

## 4.8 Changing areas and showers facilities

The following should be considered for changing and shower areas:

- Benches in changing facilities provided at a comfortable seat height – or one or two sturdy chairs.
- If full height lockers are not currently available, can you provide an alternative locked storage facility suitable for walking aids, artificial limbs etc., until such provision can be made?
- Slip resistant flooring (add anti-slip matting if not).
- Level access showers for wheelchair users (a low level shower tray will be adequate for ambulant users).

**As a sports club you should have a designated person responsible for knowing the up to date evacuation procedures and ensuring that assisted evacuation is part of this. It is important that members know what to do in case of a fire.**

**For visits to other venues/sites, find out in advance what the arrangements will be for evacuation. Can they provide buddies and assistive evacuation devices for events above ground level?**

**Making the host club aware of the needs of your players and volunteers will go a long way to ensuring everyone's safety.**

**If you wish to know more, the Department of Communities and Local Government Guidelines on Means of Escape for Disabled People gives clear guidance on evacuation strategies and some professional access consultants also have expertise in this area.**

- A flip down seat (offer a freestanding shower stool/chair if this is not available) within the shower areas.
- The shower head may be too high for some users. This can often be addressed by extending the pole on which a handheld shower hooks.
- Visual contrast is easy to improve with shower curtains and anti slip mats.
- Remember it is possible to purchase portable/removable toilet seat raisers, freestanding grab rails to go around a toilet, shower stools, shower wheelchairs and other aids for toilets and washrooms. These can be taken along for away events if there is any doubt about the facilities available at other venues!



## 5. Tell everyone and celebrate your successes

A lot of clubs do not always want to self-publicise their success. Perhaps it is not seen as the right thing to do- to blow your own trumpet? Or it simply has not crossed your mind. But your success can really help someone else and perhaps cut the time down to make more clubs accessible. There are a lot of ways to promote and share your great work. These could include the following:

- a) Give members and non-members access to information through your website, leaflets, posters, social media and other marketing material. Make it available in alternative formats and ensure you provide lots of different ways to contact you.
- b) Promote the changes and improvements you have made.
- c) Keep the changes up. Monitor and continually improve adaptations.
- d) Send EFDS your case studies and good news stories so we can share this with other clubs. EFDS can also use them on [www.inclusion-club-hub.co.uk](http://www.inclusion-club-hub.co.uk)

We already provide a lot of other resources, which may help you too. Visit EFDS resources <http://www.efds.co.uk/> resources for more advice and support.



### 5.1 Make it easy for people to find you

Where possible, give information in advance about public transport links, pedestrian routes, parking and drop off points. These are particularly important to many disabled people, who need to plan carefully for journeys no matter how short. This is also helpful if you are planning events or games etc. at other venues.

Provide:

- **Members and their families with directions, parking and public transport information for competition venues and away events.**
- **Brief details of the route and the distance (not walking time as this can vary enormously depending upon ability on the day).**

- **Telephone numbers and email addresses for local taxi companies with accessible vehicles.**

**Compare the two examples below:**

#### **EXAMPLE 1:**

“The building is 100 metres from the bus stops on Curzon Street. It is a gently sloping pathway with a single crossing point at Smith Street, which has dropped kerbs and blister warning paving. We have ample accessible and standard parking bays outside the building and the road is very quiet so drop off should not be an issue outside the building. Click here for map and text directions”.

#### **EXAMPLE 2:**

We’re just five minutes from rail and bus links and the town centre. Parking is available on a first come, first served basis.

You will have noticed that Example 2 is quite vague. Is it five minutes by taxi or on foot? Is it easy to find? Can a taxi drop me off outside the building?

Example 1 gives a much more positive impression that the venue welcomes disabled people and wants everyone to find them without any difficulty. Everyday vigilance about accessibility is paramount to ensure equal access.

## **5.2 Do it and share it!**

Once you have reviewed your facility and started to make access changes, please do not forget to share what you have managed to achieve.

Actively encourage feedback from your disabled members and visitors to continually monitor your buildings and external spaces. This helps you to make the adjustments and update management arrangements.

## **5.3 Continual Commitment**

Providing the best physical access for buildings and fields of play is only one consideration to ensure disabled people have equal opportunities in sport. Here are a few more considerations for you to think about and embed in your planning:

- **Provide flexible policies and procedures**
- **Arrange disability awareness training for your team (including volunteers)**
- **Stay informed of current and upcoming related legislation**
- **Ask the opinions of and inform your current and potential members**
- **Engage local disability organisations in your plans**




You have obviously already given the time and commitment to make your opportunities more accessible by reading this guide. Continual assessment of your club's accessibility means it can be maintained and enhanced. This needs some flexibility, especially when considering away event venues, the building you may be using and weather conditions. These are all part of the challenge and not hard to work around.

**Good luck!**

**EFDS would like to know how you have got on. Please share your great work with us at [www.efds.co.uk](http://www.efds.co.uk) and your own website.**

 **Twitter (@Eng\_Dis\_Sport)**

 **Find us on Facebook**



**Did you know ?**

At least half of disabled people's impairments are hidden so sports providers should never make presumptions on who is disabled and what they can or cannot do.



## 6. Further information and useful resources

### 6.1 Creating an accessible sports club

EFDS Inclusion Club Hub  
[www.inclusion-club-hub.co.uk](http://www.inclusion-club-hub.co.uk)

Centre for Accessible Environments  
[www.cea.org.uk](http://www.cea.org.uk)

National Register of Access Consultants  
[www.nrac.org.uk](http://www.nrac.org.uk)

### 6.2 NGBs and disability sport organisations

English Federation of Disability Sport  
[www.efds.co.uk](http://www.efds.co.uk)

National Governing Bodies of sport (NGBs) are a great source of information. For full details on your relevant NGB please go to [www.sportengland.org/our-work/national-work/national-governing-bodies/sports-that-we-recognise/](http://www.sportengland.org/our-work/national-work/national-governing-bodies/sports-that-we-recognise/)

British Blind Sport  
[www.britishblindsport.org.uk](http://www.britishblindsport.org.uk)

Cerebral Palsy Sport  
[www.cpsport.org](http://www.cpsport.org)

Dwarf Sports Association UK  
[www.dsauk.org](http://www.dsauk.org)

Mencap Sport  
[www.mencap.org.uk/what-we-do/our-services/leisure-and-sport/mencap-sport](http://www.mencap.org.uk/what-we-do/our-services/leisure-and-sport/mencap-sport)

Special Olympics GB  
[www.specialolympics.org](http://www.specialolympics.org)

UK Deaf Sport  
[www.ukdeafsport.org.uk](http://www.ukdeafsport.org.uk)

WheelPower  
[www.wheelpower.org.uk](http://www.wheelpower.org.uk)

### 6.3 Legislation, regulations and design guides

Sport England Accessible Facility Design Guide 2010  
[www.sportengland.org/media/30246/Accessible-Sports-Facilities-2010.pdf](http://www.sportengland.org/media/30246/Accessible-Sports-Facilities-2010.pdf)

Sport England also have further guidance which includes information on Facility Design, Audit Check Lists and Accessible CAD drawings  
[www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/tools-guidance/design-and-cost-guidance/accessible-sports-facilities/](http://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/tools-guidance/design-and-cost-guidance/accessible-sports-facilities/)

Equality Act 2010  
[www.equalities.gov.uk](http://www.equalities.gov.uk)

See EFDS Sports Clubs and the Equality Act 2010 Factsheet

Equalities and Human Rights Commission  
[www.equalityhumanrights.com](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com)

The Building Regulations 2000, Approved Document M: Access to and use of buildings (2004 edition with 2013 update), Approved Document K: Protection from falling, collision and impact 2013 Edition all free to download  
[www.communities.gov.uk/planningandbuilding/buildingregulations](http://www.communities.gov.uk/planningandbuilding/buildingregulations)

The Building Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2000, Technical booklet R: 2000 – Access and facilities for disabled people, The Stationery Office, 2001  
[www.nrac.org.uk/Resource\\_list.html](http://www.nrac.org.uk/Resource_list.html)

Non-domestic Technical Handbook (Safety), Scottish Executive, free to download:

[www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/Building/Building-standards/publications/pubtech](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/Building/Building-standards/publications/pubtech)

BS 8300:2009 with 2010 update Design of buildings and their approaches to meet the needs of disabled people – Code of practice, British Standards Institution, 2009, with 2010 addendum, can be purchased from the British Standards Institution:  
[www.shop.bsigroup.com/](http://www.shop.bsigroup.com/)

## 6.4 Inclusive design

The Colour, Light and Contrast Manual: Designing and Managing Inclusive Built Environments, Bright and Cook, Wiley-Blackwell, 2010 [www.wiley.com/legacy/wileychi/brightandcook/](http://www.wiley.com/legacy/wileychi/brightandcook/)

“Sign Design Guide” – Sign Design Society - a Guide to inclusive signage - ISBN 185878 412 3 [www.signdesignsociety.co.uk/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=54:the-sig..](http://www.signdesignsociety.co.uk/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=54:the-sig..)

Good Loo Design Guide, by Andrew Lacey, CAE/RIBA Enterprises, 2004 - can be ordered from the CAE  
[www.cae.org.uk](http://www.cae.org.uk)

## 6.5 Assistive aids

[www.youreable.com](http://www.youreable.com)

[www.independentliving.co.uk](http://www.independentliving.co.uk)

## 6.6 Technology

[www.connevans.co.uk](http://www.connevans.co.uk)

## 6.7 Fire Safety

See EFDS Sports Clubs and Fire Safety Factsheet

Guidance on Means of Escape for Disabled People [www.communities.gov.uk/publications/fire/firesafetyassessmentmeans](http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/fire/firesafetyassessmentmeans)

BS 9999, 2008 Code of practice for fire safety in the design, management and use of buildings only available as a purchase from BSI [www.law.resource.org/pub/uk/ibr/bs.9999.2008.pdf](http://www.law.resource.org/pub/uk/ibr/bs.9999.2008.pdf)

See EFDS Sports Clubs Health and Safety Factsheet

Safe Evacuation for All National Disabilities Authority, Ireland [www.nda.ie/Website/NDA/CntMgmtNew.nsf/0/BC5E9F0E705C006C8025784F003B42EE?OpenDocument](http://www.nda.ie/Website/NDA/CntMgmtNew.nsf/0/BC5E9F0E705C006C8025784F003B42EE?OpenDocument)

### Did you know ?

Adaptations for disabled people are often an advantage for everyone – for example, a wider path or door is an advantage for parents with young children in pushchairs, as well as wheelchair users.

The English Federation of Disability Sport (EFDS) is the strategic lead in sport and physical activity for disabled people in England. Our vision is that disabled people are active for life but currently in England, four out of five disabled people are not taking part in any sport or physical activity each week. Non-disabled people's participation rates are more than twice the level of disabled people.

Previous EFDS research has shown that physical access is one key area where sports providers can make a real impact to aiding disabled people to participate. This means being proactive to ensure your buildings, equipment availability or even health and safety policies do not restrict disabled people from taking part.

EFDS is aware that it is not always a simple task to go from non-accessible to fully accessible. However, we want to support providers and in this case, sports clubs, to understand the possible changes they could make to ensure their activities are more welcoming for everyone.

## Contributions

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- Chambers McMillan Architects - [www.chambersmcmillan.com](http://www.chambersmcmillan.com)
- Non Slip Surfacing Ltd. & Anti-Slip Solutions NZ Ltd - [www.anti-slip.co.nz](http://www.anti-slip.co.nz)

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The Centre for Accessible Environments (CAE) is a leading UK authority on inclusion, offering access audits, design advice, training, research and publications for clients and subscribing members all over the world.





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