

Accessible Sports Clubs Design Guidelines

2024 Edition



Disability
Sport **NI**

www.dsni.co.uk

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**This document is available in
alternative formats on request**

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Overview

Overview

Introduction

This accessibility guide is aimed at sports clubs which have a dedicated facility i.e. a club site and/or club buildings. The guide has been developed by Disability Sport NI to help sports clubs work towards achieving the physical environment conditions that will enable disabled people to take part in sport and active recreation.

About Disability Sport NI

Disability Sport NI is Northern Ireland's main disability sports charity working to improve the health and wellbeing of disabled people through sport and active recreation.

We believe that every disabled person has the right to participate in all aspects of life and are committed to building a more inclusive society where disabled people have the same opportunities as non-disabled people to lead a full, active and healthy lifestyle through sport and active recreation.

Disability Sport NI Design and Management Guides

This guide is now one of a series of six design and management guides developed by Disability Sport NI to encourage and support the development and management of sports facilities, sports stadia, outdoor places and sports clubs, which are inclusive of disabled people:

- Guide 1: Accessible Sports Facilities Design Guidelines
- Guide 2: Accessible Sports Facilities Management Guidelines
- Guide 3: Accessible Sports Stadia Design Guidelines
- Guide 4: Accessible Sports Stadia Management Guidelines
- Guide 5: Accessible Outdoor Places Design Guidelines
- Guide 6: Accessible Sports Clubs Design Guidelines

In addition, Disability Sport NI has produced two Guidance Notes, for Sports Pavilions and Boxing Facilities.

All guides and guidance notes are available to download from the Disability Sport NI website: www.dsni.co.uk

Your Accessible Sports Club

Good accessibility helps you to fulfil your legal duties under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995, but it also enables participation and inclusion. Disabled people have the same right to participate in sport and to be active as non-disabled people, and there is an increasing demand for opportunities, at both recreational and competition/performance levels. Your sports club has an important role to play in developing sport in Northern Ireland and all clubs should be aiming to increase the numbers of disabled participants and visitors who enjoy their sport.

If you work for, or are involved in running a sports club, by reading this guide you have taken the first step towards making your facilities more accessible for disabled people. Whilst the guide offers useful information and practical solutions to see you on your way to improving the accessibility of your club facility, undertaking all measures contained within it may be beyond the capacity of your sports club. You should, however, try to do what you can, and remember an improvement to access is almost always an improvement for everyone.

An accessible sports club sometimes requires physical adjustments to its site and/or buildings but more than anything it needs commitment from the club and requires you to be open to change. Begin by thinking of what changes you can make now, and use the tools within this guide to help you plan to do more.

Disability Sport NI champions good practice design, management and sports development to help create sports clubs that everyone can avail of. This guide is divided into seven sections, which provide basic design guidance and will take you through the main areas of physical access. Management considerations have been included throughout. It will also signpost you to sources of further information and support.



Guidance Signpost

- ▶ Guidance Signposts are denoted throughout the document. These guidance signposts provide relevant cross-references to further existing standards and guidance resources.

This guide focuses on the physical changes your club can make to become more accessible (note: physical changes do not necessarily involve structural alterations). To understand and learn more about the wider considerations and changes your club can make towards becoming more inclusive, contact Disability Sport NI's Inclusive Pathways team via email@dsni.co.uk

Creating an Action Plan

An Action Plan template has been developed to complement this guide. It is a basic self-check guide to help you identify potential issues and to plan ahead. The template, Appendix A in this guide, is also available to download from the Disability Sport NI website: www.dsni.co.uk

Please note, the Action Plan is a tool to get you started. It is advised that you have a formal access audit of your sports club carried out, by Disability Sport NI, if you plan on making a considerable investment into accessibility within your facility. To find out more, contact Disability Sport NI's Sports Facility Access team via email@dsni.co.uk

Engagement and Training

Engagement with your disabled visitors, participants, members and supporters is important when assessing accessibility. They can offer valuable feedback from a lived-experience perspective.

Advice on engagement and training, as well as adapting your programmes to provide opportunities for existing and new disabled participants, is available from Disability Sport NI. The training and education workshops listed overleaf are also available to book:

- Disability Inclusion Training
- Autism and Sports Coaching
- Inclusive Skills and Games
- Sports Leaders Awards
- Chair Based Activities
- Sight Loss in Sport

For other guidance and resources to make your sports club more inclusive, please visit www.dsni.co.uk

Inclusive Sport Award

The Disability Sport NI Inclusive Sport Award is designed to recognise governing bodies of sport that have made a commitment to creating an inclusive sports environment for disabled people.



Since the introduction of the Sport NI disability mainstreaming policy in 2005, Disability Sport NI has worked closely with a number of key governing bodies of sport in order to support and encourage the development of player pathways for disabled people. Whilst some governing bodies have successfully developed inclusive player pathways, others are just beginning to address the under representation of disabled people in their sport.

The Inclusive Sport Award will acknowledge the achievements of those governing bodies who have improved sports provision for disabled people and will provide the necessary support and guidance to others who wish to work towards developing an inclusive sports environment.

You can see the list of governing bodies that are working towards the Inclusive Sport Award on the Disability Sport NI website: www.dsni.co.uk. Disability Sport NI is open to working with all governing bodies. If your governing body is not registered on the Inclusive Sport Award you can signpost them to the website to find out more and register their interest.

Inclusive Club Award

The Disability Sport NI Inclusive Club Award is a fantastic opportunity to recognise and celebrate sports clubs that positively include disabled people in the club environment. Nominations are open to both mainstream and disability sports clubs who have made noteworthy improvements or introduced innovative programmes to include disabled people. The awards are presented on an annual basis and advertised on the DSNI website: www.dsni.co.uk



Nominations

Nominations are open to clubs who:

- Have a club constitution in place and are operating under good governance
- Are affiliated to the relevant National Governing Body where appropriate

Nominations can be made by club officials, coaches, parents, or club members.

Award Categories

Nominations will be assessed by a panel and awards will be presented under the following two categories:

- Mainstream Club Award
- Disability Club Award

To find out more about the Inclusive Club Award, contact Disability Sport NI or visit: www.dsni.co.uk



Sections

1-7

Accessible Sports Clubs Design Guidelines

- 1 Arriving at Your Sports Club
- 2 Moving Around and Using Your Sports Club
- 3 Viewing Areas in Your Sports Club
- 4 Your Communications
- 5 Thinking About Emergency Egress
- 6 Other Features to Think About
- 7 The Need for Ongoing Review and Good Management

1 Arriving at Your Sports Club

1.1 Paths

Think about the routes disabled people may take to reach your sports club. These could be:

- From accessible car parking bays to the club entrance, outdoor activity areas and playing surfaces.
- From the drop-off area to the club entrance, outdoor activity areas and playing surfaces.
- From the club entrance to outdoor activity areas and playing surfaces e.g. pitches and courts.
- From the public highway to the club entrance.
- From public transport stops, near to or within the site, to the club entrance.

The accessibility of routes can vary considerably, depending on surface and weather conditions. Path surfaces should be firm, smooth and comprise level or gentle gradients. Paths should not be slippery. Hard surface paths are ideal, however, if it is not possible for you to provide these throughout, you may wish to put measures in place to make sure that softer surfaces, such as grass, are robust in poor weather conditions e.g. by using strengthening materials. Bear in mind that materials like this need time to take hold and temporary solutions may be required in the short-term.

Permanent or temporary markings to separate pedestrian and vehicular traffic are helpful to reduce hazard. You should consider safe crossing points to reach the club entrance, outdoor activity areas and playing surfaces.

Dealing with lying water in wet weather can help to make your sports club more accessible e.g. by diverting around puddles. Uneven surfaces and potholes can present problems (potholes should be filled to offer a more even, comfortable surface to walk and wheel on).

Cobbles, sand and loose gravel surfaces are not considered suitable, however, in existing sports clubs where these are used, laying lightweight polythene matting or interlocking boards can help.

Other points for you to consider:

- Paths minimum 1500-2000mm wide are ideal to allow for passing and turning, and to accommodate sports wheelchairs. Where this is not achievable along the entire length of a path route, provide minimum 1200mm.
- Careful siting of permanent and temporary street furniture (such as signposts, rest seats, litter bins etc.), will avoid unnecessary obstacles where people walk.
- Think about where you may have existing dropped kerbs on paths. Adding tactile paving where there is a dropped kerb is helpful to provide warning and guidance for people who are blind or partially sighted.
- Paths should be level wherever possible, or have the shallowest possible gradient. Where ramps and steps are unavoidable on approach paths leading to the club entrance, outdoor activity areas and playing surfaces they should be suitably designed. Strive to provide a permanent ramp to overcome changes in level.
- The edges of steps should be clearly visible. This can be achieved by fitting contrasting nosings that wrap around the step tread and riser or painting the step edges.
- Highlighting the top and bottom landings of step flights using corduroy tactile paving will offer hazard warning on approach to external steps.
- See also Section 6.4 of this guide: External Routes – Paths, Tracks and Trails; and Section 6.5 of this guide: External Ramps, Steps and Handrails.

1.1.1 Lighting

The approach to your sports club facility, your parking areas, and the club entrance should be well lit. See Section 6.8 of this guide: Outdoor Lighting.



Guidance Signpost

- ▶ Disability Sport NI Guide 1: Accessible Sports Facilities Design Guidelines. **Section 1.1** External Routes and Pathways.
- ▶ Disability Sport NI Guide 5: Accessible Outdoor Places Design Guidelines. **Section 1.2** Accessible External Routes – Paths, Trails and Greenways, and **Section 1.5** Steps on External Routes.

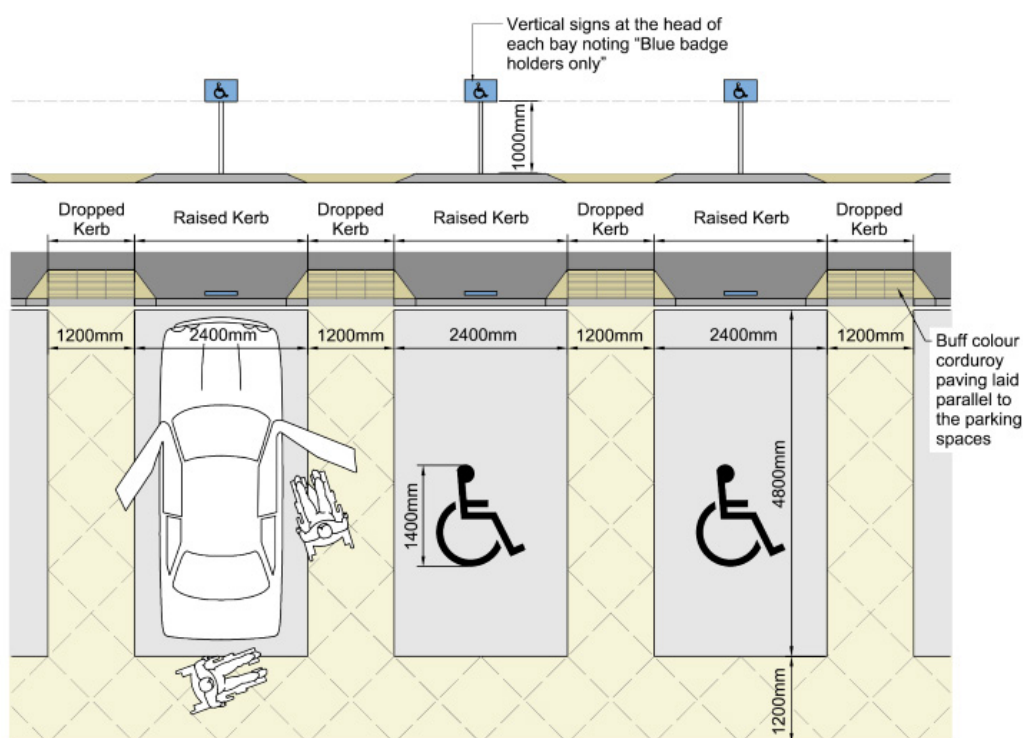
1.2 Parking and Drop-off

Many disabled people will travel to your sports club by private car, taxi or coach. Others, including people who are blind or partially sighted, will travel by public transport, whilst people who live nearby may choose to walk or wheel to the sports club.

1.2.1 Accessible parking bays

Figure 1 shows typical layouts of accessible parking bays, which include a 1200mm hatched safety transfer zone to both sides of each bay (to accommodate a disabled driver or passenger), and to the rear. Locating accessible parking bays on firm, level ground is important.

If parking is limited, or not available at your sports club, think about whether there is potential to use an area of ground at the sports club as a temporary or over-spill car park during events. Any temporary area identified for parking should include an accessible parking zone.



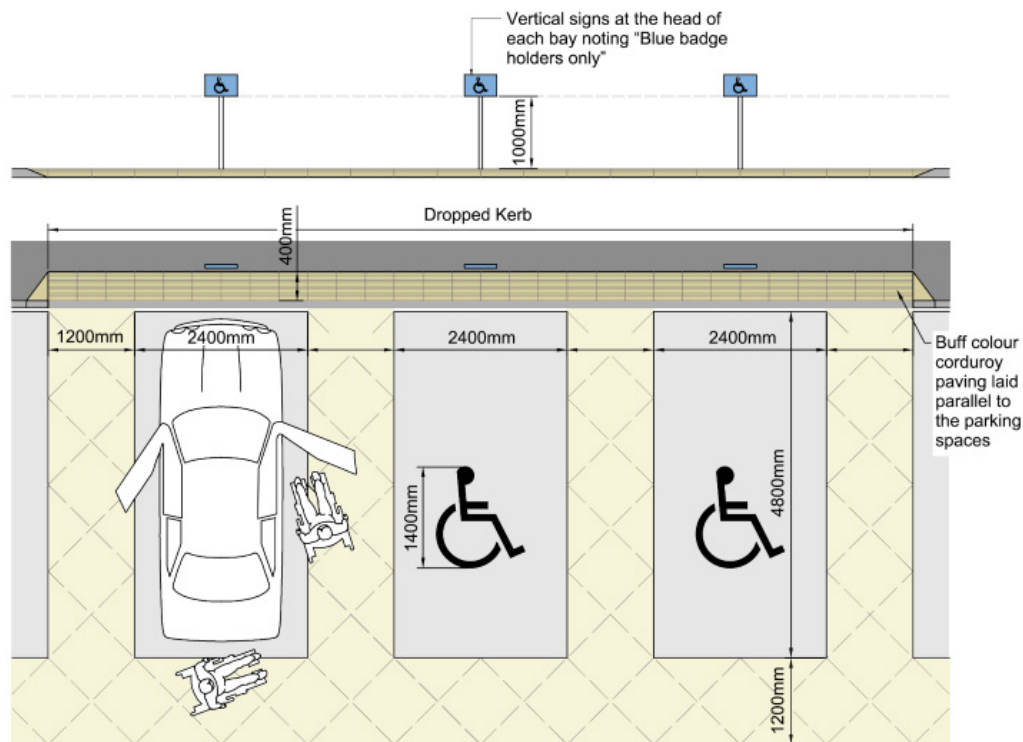


Figure 1 - Accessible Parking Bays

Other points for you to consider:

- Provide at least two accessible parking bays, or 8% of total parking capacity at larger sports clubs, whichever is the greatest.
- Accessible parking bays should be located as close as possible to destination points (preferably within 50m) e.g. consider if this will be the main entrance to your sports club, outdoor activity areas, playing surfaces, and/or close to your changing facilities. Planning for the provision of accessible parking bays to serve all likely destination points is very useful.
- If someone working for your sports club has a disability, discuss where they will park.

Management Considerations

- ▶ Take measures to make sure that accessible parking bays are not misused e.g. by introducing a policy for the management of accessible parking bays.
- ▶ Encourage disabled club members to provide notice in advance that they will require accessible parking e.g. if they're attending an away match, whereby you can inform the destination club to prioritise parking for them. Likewise, you should be accommodating to the needs of visiting club members and spectators.
- ▶ It is a good idea to provide information about permanent and temporary parking measures on your sports club website, on social media, in your club newsletters and club member emails.
- ▶ If you have no accessible parking bays at present, or limited accessible parking bays, you could assist disabled visitors by reserving more than one standard parking bay for their use when required.



Guidance Signpost

- ▶ Disability Sport NI Guide 1: Accessible Sports Facilities Design Guidelines. **Section 1.2** Parking and Setting-down Point.
- ▶ Disability Sport NI Guide 2: Accessible Sports Facilities Management Guidelines. **Section 1** Management of Accessible Parking Bays Policy.

1.2.2 Drop-off area

Provide information about a safe and accessible place to drop-off and pick-up. Figure 2 illustrates examples of what a drop-off area may look like.

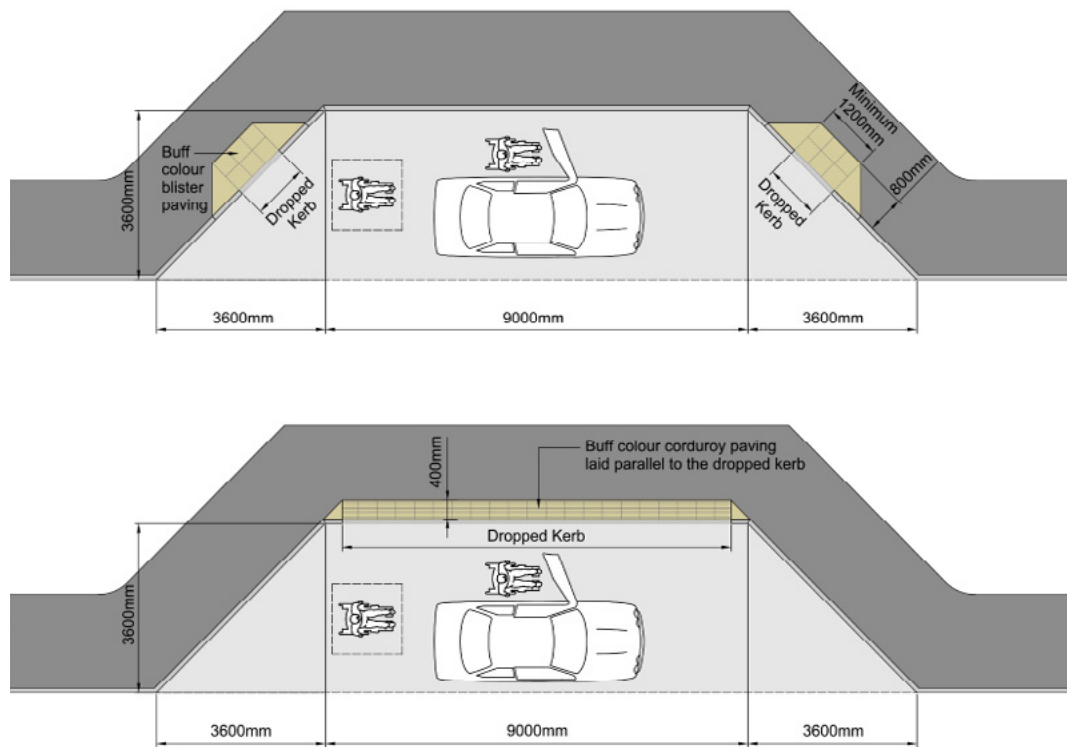


Figure 2 - Typical Layouts for Drop-off



Guidance Signpost

- Disability Sport NI Guide 1: Accessible Sports Facilities Design Guidelines. **Section 1.2** Parking and Setting-down Point.

1.2.3 Other parking facilities

You may also wish to provide:

- Mobility scooter parking outside your sports club (for larger sports clubs, mobility scooter parking should also be considered inside your sports club).
- External cycle stands.
- Space inside your sports club to park buggies.



Guidance Signpost

- ▶ Disability Sport NI Guide 1: Accessible Sports Facilities Design Guidelines. **Section 1.2.5** Other parking facilities (mobility scooters, bicycles and buggies).

1.3 Entrance

Level entrance to your club should be provided. Think about how you can overcome even small changes in level, as these can create difficulty for people with mobility disabilities, including wheelchair users e.g. you could consider threshold ramps or wedges (rounded or chamfered) to improve raised door thresholds.

If you have a larger change in level, or existing steps, at the club entrance, a ramp should be considered. In the short-term, a temporary ramp can overcome this but is not considered a long-term solution. When choosing a temporary ramp, provide a slip resistant surface, contrasting upstand edges, handrails, and the most appropriate length and gradient to overcome the change in level. Always seek advice on the most suitable type of ramp for your sports club.

The club entrance should be clearly visible. It may be the case that your sports club will be used, at least occasionally, by people using sports wheelchairs with cambered wheels. It is important that entrance doors are suitable in width. A minimum door width of 875mm is generally required, although 800mm is acceptable for existing buildings; 1000mm where sports wheelchairs are used and 1200mm where wheelchair tennis or squash activities take place.

Other points for you to consider:

- A large clear sign placed at the club entrance door will be helpful for first-time visitors.
- Having a canopy over the club entrance door provides weather protection if the door does not open automatically.
- Revolving doors are not advised, as they can be particularly problematic for many people, including people carrying sports equipment and people who are blind. If your existing entrance door is revolving, you should consider replacing it, or provide an accessible swing door adjacent to it.
- Markings on glass doors (commonly club logos or dots) can make doors easier to see when approaching them, either when entering or leaving the club. Placing them at two heights makes it easier for people to see when they approach in either a seated or standing position – the recommended height range is 850mm to 1000mm above ground level, and 1400mm to 1600mm above ground level.



Guidance Signpost

- ▶ Disability Sport NI Guide 1: Accessible Sports Facilities Design Guidelines. **Section 2.1** Entrance and Entrance Doors.

1.4 Welcome Areas

An entrance foyer, information point or reception desk is where you will probably welcome, and make first contact with, your club visitors, participants, members and supporters. This is where they will go for event or activity information, to enrol, to pay etc., so your welcome area must be easy to find and to use.

If it is currently difficult to locate the welcome area when entering the club, markings on the floor leading to the welcome area may assist some first-time visitors.

If you provide a temporary reception area or information points for outdoor club events, ensure that they are clearly visible e.g. using a flag or signs.

Management Considerations

- ▶ Club staff and volunteers should offer assistance e.g. assisting older people and assistance dog owners to locate the welcome area and club facilities.
- ▶ A sign saying that club staff and volunteers are willing to help can promote a visitor-friendly attitude, and encourage people to ask if they need some help.



Guidance Signpost

- ▶ Disability Sport NI Guide 1: Accessible Sports Facilities Design Guidelines. **Section 2.3** Visitor Reception.
- ▶ Disability Sport NI Guide 3: Accessible Sports Stadia Design Guidelines. **Section 2.5** Visitor Reception and Information Points.

2 Moving Around and Using Your Sports Club

2.1 Corridors

Corridors and passageways 1200mm wide are acceptable in an existing club building, however, 1500mm is preferred (2000mm will enable clear movement of sports wheelchairs, and allow wheelchair users to pass each other easily). Try to avoid using lobbies, unless they are big enough, and correctly designed, to accommodate wheelchair users.

Management Considerations

- ▶ Do not allow corridors and passageways to become cluttered.
- ▶ Any features along a corridor or passageway that cannot be easily changed, or present a potential hazard, could be highlighted.



Guidance Signpost

- ▶ Disability Sport NI Guide 1: Accessible Sports Facilities Design Guidelines. **Section 3.1** Corridors and Passageways.

2.2 Doors

Doors inside your sports club should be wide enough to allow people to pass through unassisted. Where double doors are installed, you should assess whether one leaf of the two is wide enough to allow clear passage e.g. for a person accompanied by an assistance dog, or parent with a pushchair. If not, consider how the second leaf can be opened easily and without restriction.

A minimum door width of 875mm is generally required, although 750mm or 775mm may be acceptable in existing buildings (depending on the corridor width and the direction of approach). **Note:** if sports chair activities and/or wheelchair tennis/squash activities take place in your sports club, doors will need to be wider (1000mm for sports chairs and 1200mm for wheelchair tennis chairs).

The type of handle fitted to doors is important i.e. shape, colour and height.

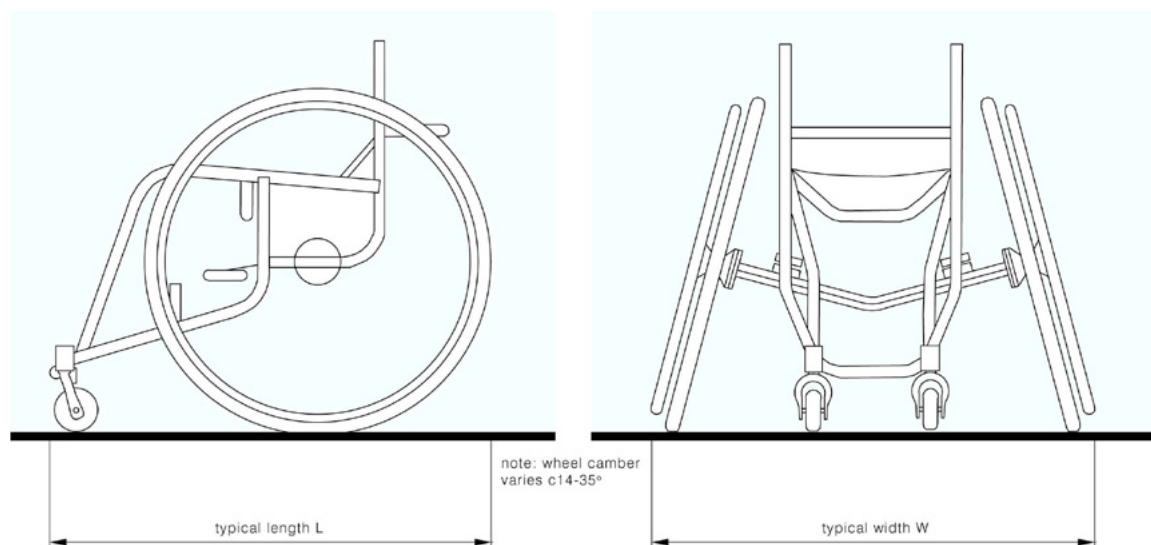


Figure 4 – Sports Wheelchair

Heavy doors cause problems for many people, including children and older people with reduced strength. The recommended maximum force required to open doors is illustrated in Figure 5. You can measure these using a simple spring device called a Newton measure.

For ease of use, think about whether:

- A door can be held open during opening hours (if it is not a fire door). Hold-open devices linked to the fire alarm system can also be fitted, to fire doors.
- A self-closer fitted to a non-fire door can be removed, or the force of door closers reduced.
- Club staff and volunteers can assist by manually opening and closing doors during a club activity or event.

The most effective solution to overcome difficult or heavy doors is power operation e.g. doors which open using a push pad, or automatically. Your sports club may have these already or you could plan to have these installed.

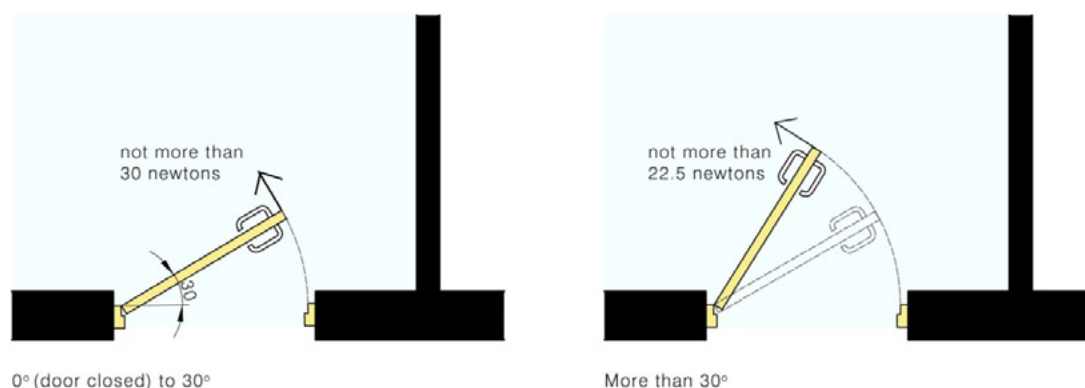


Figure 5 - Door Swing Opening Force Requirements

Management Considerations

- Doors that are not wide enough should be avoided e.g. consider whether you can permit access to the event or activity area via an alternative route through wider doors during a one-off event. Club staff and volunteers could be on hand to assist e.g. by escorting people to the alternative route doors from parking areas, using umbrellas if it is wet. Providing temporary signs and information, to let people know about any alternative measures in place, will be important.



Guidance Signpost

- Disability Sport NI Guide 1: Accessible Sports Facilities Design Guidelines. **Section 3.2** Internal Doors.

2.3 Lifts and Stairs

2.3.1 Lifts

To provide free and unrestricted access to all floors of a sports club, a form of vertical lift travel is advised. In sports clubs where a lift is not currently provided, it is useful to plan ahead financially, and in terms of any physical structural works required, to install a lift as soon as there is opportunity to do so.

Assess your existing lift to determine if it has:

- A clear space in front of the doors at least 1500mm by 1500mm in size.
- Audible announcements, to indicate arrival of the lift and the direction of travel, to assist people who are blind or partially sighted.
- A clear visual display indicating the level reached by the lift, to assist people who are deaf or have a hearing loss.
- Call buttons that are 900-1100mm above the floor. If not, provide a reaching device in the short-term, and plan for lowering controls.
- Raised tactile numbers/symbols and Braille. If not, consider applying self-adhesive information in the short-term.
- Doors that contrast well within the surrounding wall.
- Internal buttons 900-1100mm above the floor. If not, provide a reaching device in the short-term, and plan for lowering controls.
- A minimum nine second time delay to the lift door closing mechanism. This will assist older people, people who are blind or partially sighted including assistance dog owners, and people with mobility difficulties when approaching and entering/exiting the lift. If not, speak to your lift supplier to have this timing adjusted.
- An emergency communication system that gives audible and visual indication that the alarm has been raised and received.
- Slip resistant floor, which is not dark in colour. It can be inexpensive to change the floor to a light-coloured, slip resistant material.
- A directory sign within the lift listing what facilities are available on each floor level.
- A contrasting, easy-grip handrail with its top surface not less than 875mm or not more than 925mm above the floor of the lift. If not, fit a handrail.
- The provision of a mirror on the wall opposite the door, to assist people who need to reverse. If not, provide a mirror.

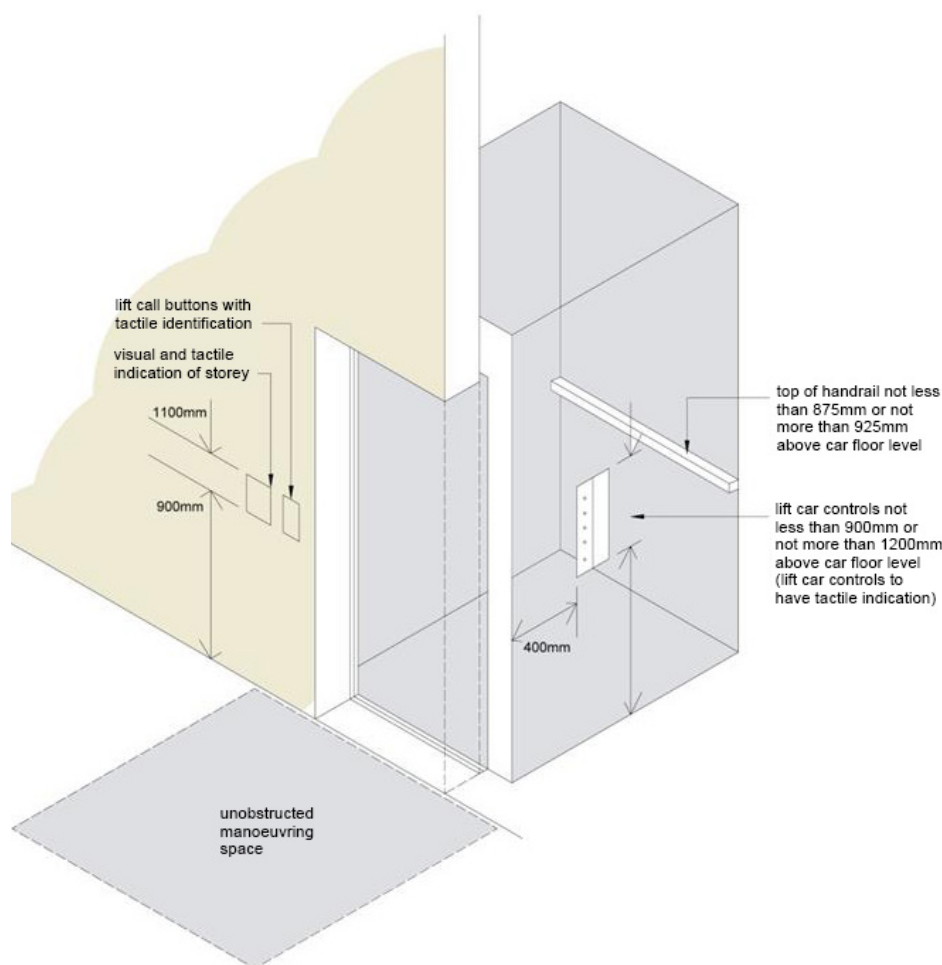


Figure 6 - Passenger Lift Car Fit-out

In some sports club buildings, it may prove too difficult to install a full passenger lift. If so, management should consider the installation of an enclosed vertical lifting platform which has:

- A fully enclosed car.
- Dimensions capable of accommodating a minimum of one wheelchair user and companion.
- No restrictions in terms of access or management e.g. assisted or restricted key access is not acceptable.
- Accessibility features such as visual and audible alert, tactile call and internal buttons, including Braille.

If you have a lift to upper floors, you must also consider how disabled people can evacuate easily in the event of emergency. See Section 5 of this guide: Thinking About Emergency Egress.

2.3.2 Stairs

Not everyone can use stairs, but certain features will assist people who can. These include:

- Width not less than 1200mm.
- A clear landing area at the bottom and top of each flight of stairs.
- Each stair riser with a height in the range 150mm-170mm.
- Each stair going with a depth in the range 250mm-450mm.
- Uniform stairs in a flight, to avoid confusing people, especially those who are blind or partially sighted.
- Edges of stairs that contrast visually with the remainder of the step.
- Slip resistant material.

If there are internal ramps or slopes in your sports club, identify the slope at floor level, and provide a sign to let visitors know.



Guidance Signpost

- ▶ Disability Sport NI Guide 1: Accessible Sports Facilities Design Guidelines. **Section 3.3** Vertical Circulation.
- ▶ BS 8300-2:2018. **Paragraph 10.2** Ramps and slopes, p.40-44.
- ▶ Stairs, ramps, guarding and protection from impact. Building Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2012 Guidance: Technical Booklet H. **Paragraphs 4.14 - 4.22**, p.36-38.

2.4 Handrails and Handholds

The provision of handrails and handholds that are easy and comfortable to grip, and not cold to touch, will offer support to all club visitors, including ambulant disabled people. Handrails should contrast visually with the background.



Guidance Signpost

- ▶ Disability Sport NI Guide 1: Accessible Sports Facilities Design Guidelines. **Section 3.4** Handrails and Handholds.
- ▶ BS 8300-2:2018. **Paragraph 10.3** Handrails to ramped and stepped access, p.44-46.
- ▶ For sports clubs where spectator viewing is provided, see Disability Sport NI Guide 3: Accessible Sports Stadia Design Guidelines. **Section 3.9.2** Handholds.

2.5 Inclusive and Accessible Toilets

The lack of good quality toilet facilities presents a significant barrier to your disabled visitors, members and supporters, as well as the participation of disabled people in your sports club activities.

Suitable and sufficient toilet provision should be provided for disabled people. Many disabled people do not require all of the features provided in a wheelchair accessible WC. As such, the recommendations below focus on the development of toilet amenities of a more inclusive design, which can benefit people with a wide range of abilities, combined with the provision of additional stand-alone accessible units.

2.5.1 Inclusive toilet blocks

Wherever a general block of male or female toilets is provided, it should be designed to be inclusive of non-disabled people and disabled people.

It is useful for wheelchair users, children and people of small stature to have the option to use a lowered urinal and wash hand basin e.g. one urinal set at a height suitable for wheelchair users in each male toilet block (380mm high) and one wash hand basin set at a height suitable for both ambulant disabled people and wheelchair users in each male and female toilet block (720-740mm high).

Ambulant accessible toilet cubicles in male and female toilet blocks, with outward opening door swing and contrasting grabrails, in line with building regulations, offer choice. If you do not have these, it may be possible to convert an existing cubicle to make this provision. Even the provision of grabrails and contrasting WC pan seats can be an improvement.

If your sports club provides a lot of children's activities, consider installing a lowered WC pan, 380mm high.

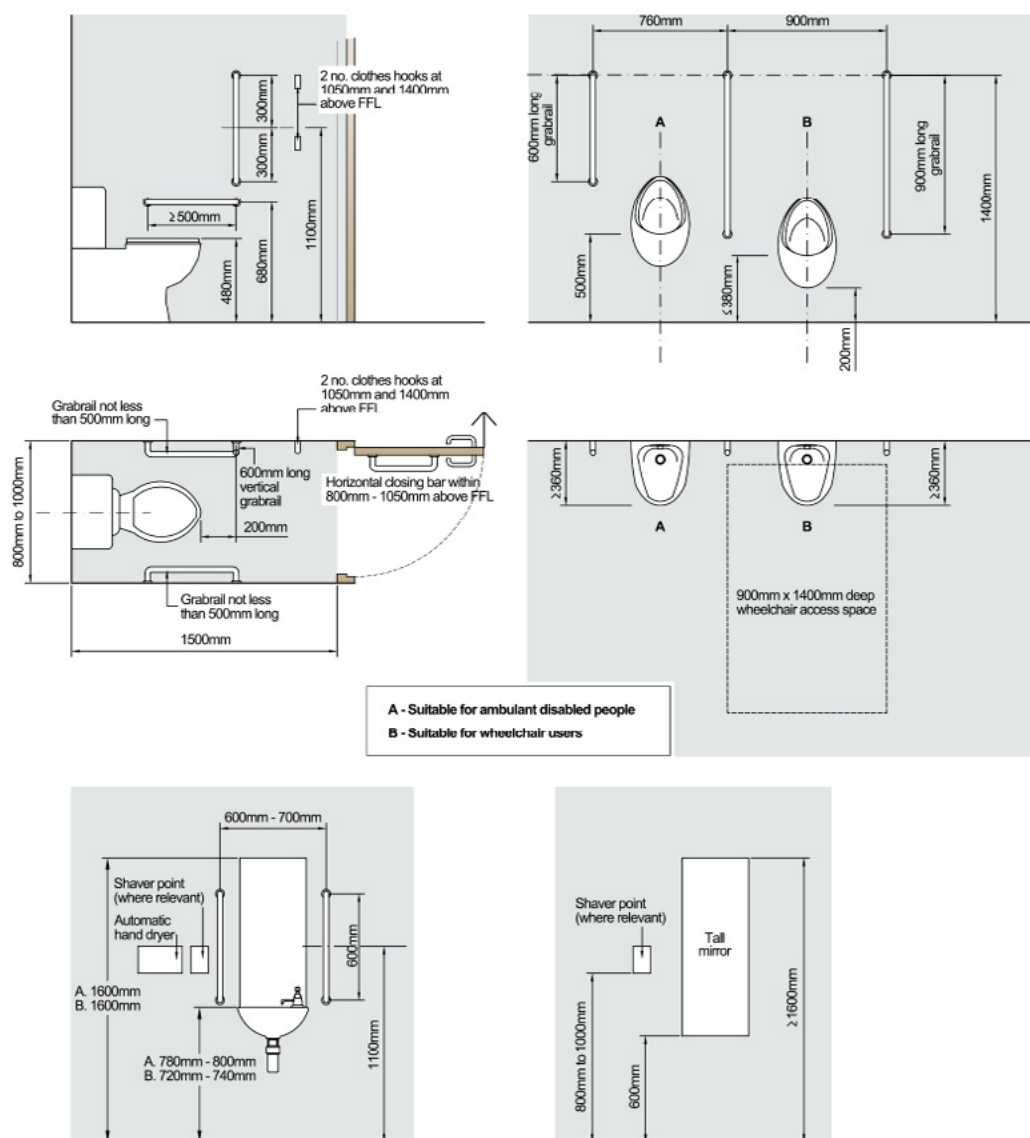


Figure 7 - Ambulant WC Cubicle; Urinals and Wash Hand Basins (accessible to wheelchair users and ambulant disabled people)

2.5.2 Unisex wheelchair accessible WC unit

Your sports club should have one or more unisex self-contained wheelchair accessible corner layout WCs for independent use, 1700mm by 2200mm in size (some older building units may have a shorter 2000mm length but should be 1500mm wide as a minimum).

When planning for a new or improved accessible WC facility, make sure to follow good practice design standards, to provide all necessary fixtures and fittings (as shown in Figure 8).

Doors to accessible WCs open outwards to maximise space inside, and to allow club staff to open the door from the outside in the event of emergency.

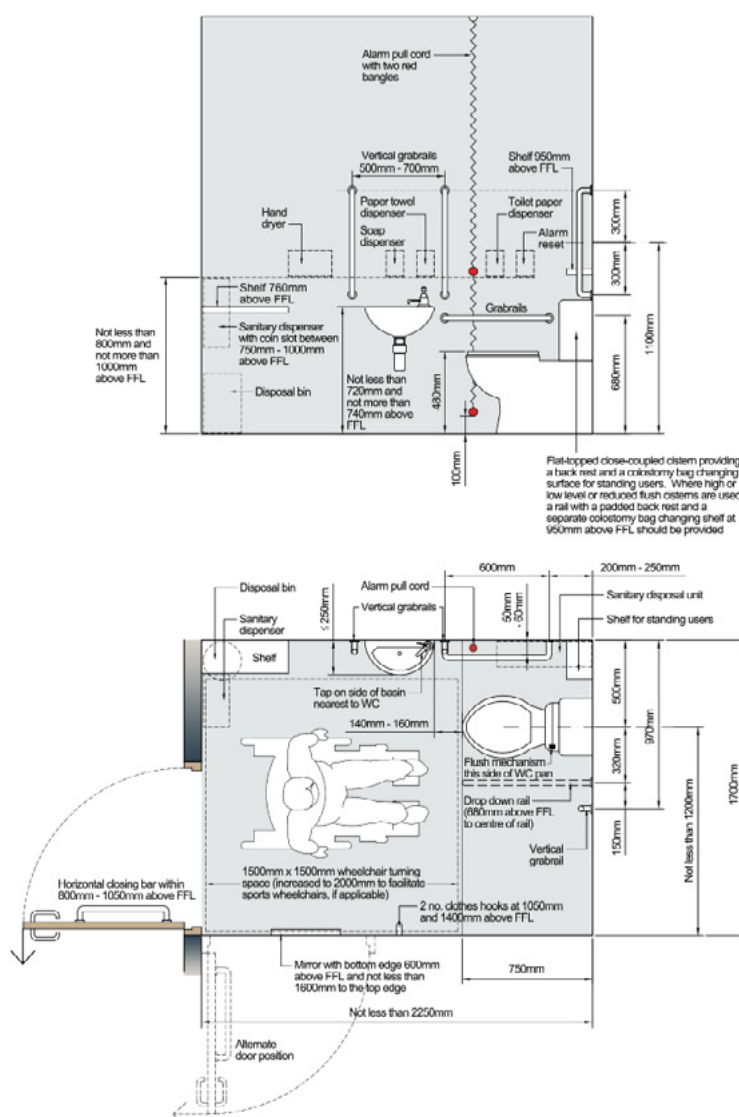


Figure 8 - Unisex Wheelchair Accessible WC

Management Considerations

- ▶ Provide information about inclusive and accessible toilets, including toilet sizes, on your sports club access information e.g. access statement on your website.
- ▶ Club staff and volunteers should know how to action the club's policy and response in the event that an emergency assistance alarm is activated in the accessible WC. Be aware that doors can open out e.g. using a coin.
- ▶ Housekeeping should keep the transfer space in accessible WCs clear at all times e.g. free from bins, and never tie alarm cords up or around grabrails.



Guidance Signpost

- ▶ Disability Sport NI Guide 1: Accessible Sports Facilities Design Guidelines. **Section 4.1** Sanitary Provision.
- ▶ Disability Sport NI Guide 2: Accessible Sports Facilities Management Guidelines. **Section 3** Management of Accessible Toilet Facilities Policy.

2.5.3 Baby changing

A parent or a child may have a disability.

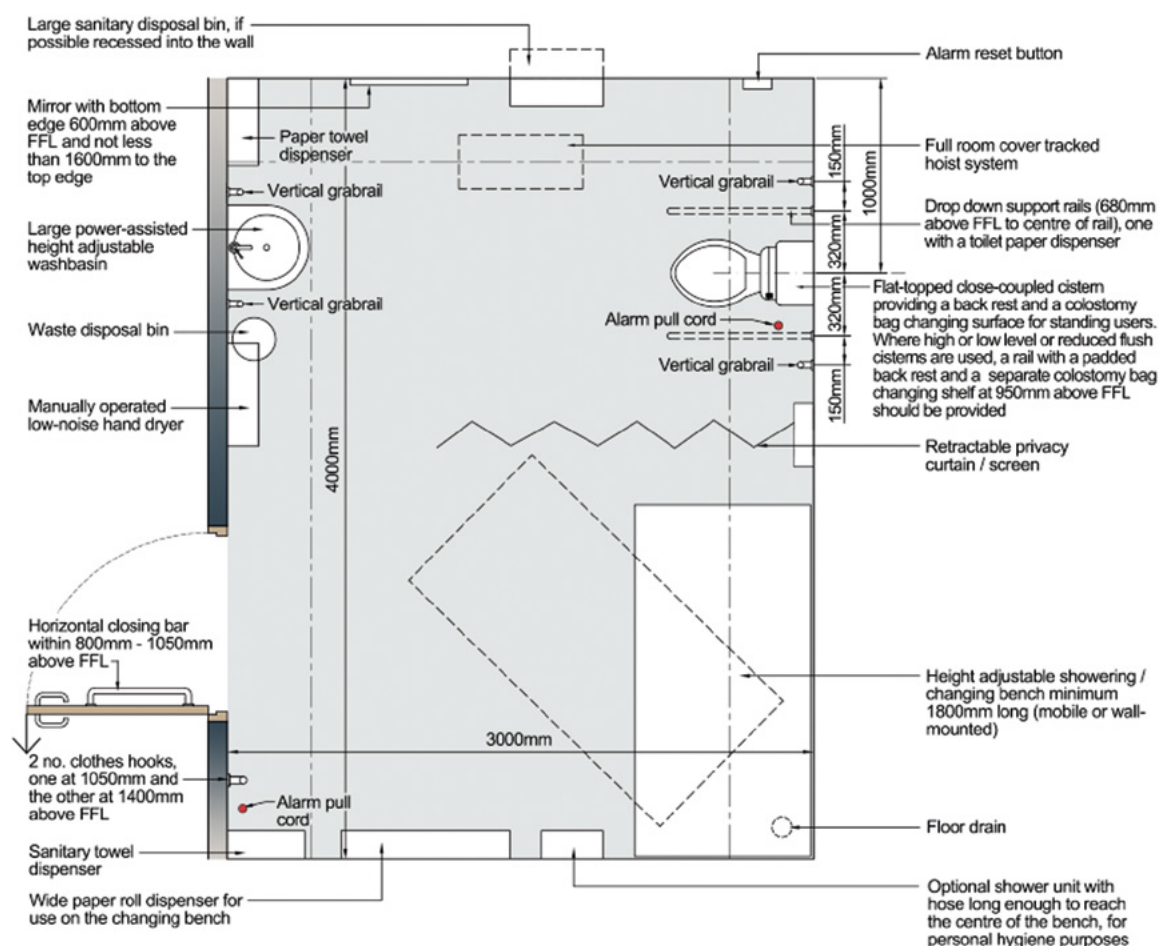
- Baby and child changing should be accessible and, where location allows, be separate to accessible toilets i.e. allocated as an accessible parenting room. If you have no option but to provide baby and child changing within an accessible toilet, the room has to be large enough to accommodate the additional space taken up by the changing bench and bins, so as not to obstruct the transfer and turning space needed by wheelchair users.
- A child-sized bench instead of, or in addition to, a baby bench, accommodates a broader range of need (preferably height adjustable).

2.6 Changing Places Toilets

Provision of a Changing Places toilet to serve the sports club site and building will enable many more disabled people, including those with complex and multiple disabilities, to enjoy club activities with their families and companions. A Changing Places toilet includes an adult-sized changing bench and hoist, in addition to a shower and toilet. **Note:** a freestanding mobile changing bench allows a carer(s) to assist from either or both sides. The bench should be height adjustable and, preferably, electrically operated.

Where provided, a Changing Places toilet facility should be registered through Muscular Dystrophy UK and include associated sign logos.

In sports clubs that host outdoor activities, matches or events, or where the existing club building may lack floor space to make adaptations, provision should be made in the form of a permanent constructed building or permanent prefabricated modular unit (registered as a Changing Places toilet through Muscular Dystrophy UK); or a temporary modular unit for use during one-off club events.



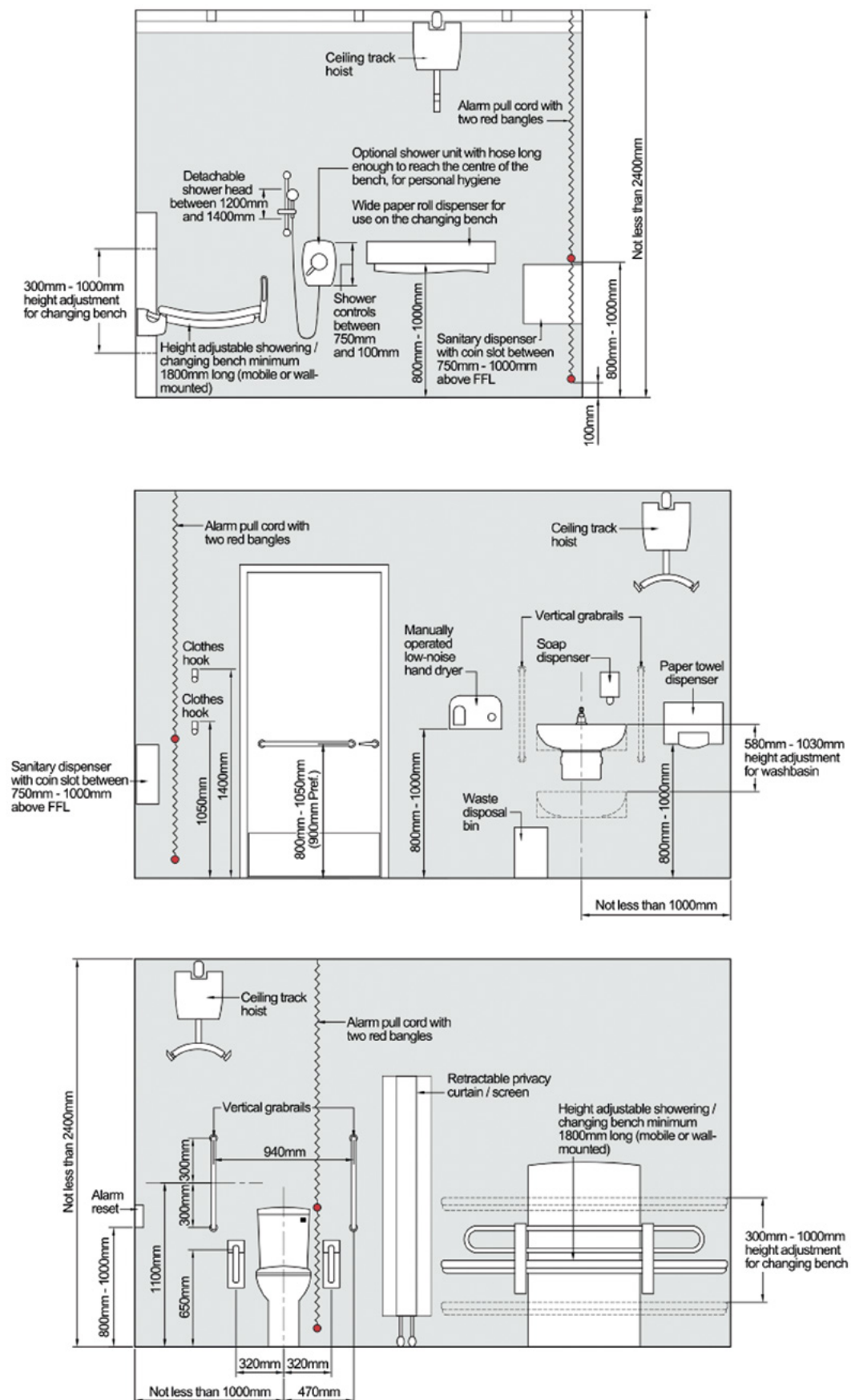


Figure 9 - Changing Places Toilet



Guidance Signpost

- ▶ Disability Sport NI Guide 1: Accessible Sports Facilities Design Guidelines. **Section 4.2** Changing Places Toilet Facilities.
- ▶ Disability Sport NI Guide 2: Accessible Sports Facilities Management Guidelines. **Section 4** Management of 'Changing Places' Toilet Facilities Policy.
- ▶ Disability Sport NI Guide 5: Accessible Outdoor Places Design Guidelines. **Section 2.5.3** Changing Places toilet facilities.
- ▶ BS 8300-2:2018. **Paragraph 18.6** Changing Places toilets, p131-134.
- ▶ Changing Places Consortium: www.changing-places.org
- ▶ www.musculardystrophyuk.org.
- ▶ To register a Changing Places Toilet in NI email: changingplaces@musculardystrophyuk.org
- ▶ Building Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2012. Amendments Booklet (AMD 8) Amendment.

2.7 Accessible Changing and Showering

The lack of good quality changing and shower facilities presents a significant barrier to the participation of disabled people in sports club activities.

In sports clubs, changing and shower areas should be of an inclusive design so that they can accommodate people with a range of abilities, and provide a degree of choice. A combination of inclusive wheelchair accessible incorporated changing and shower provision, and self-contained unisex accessible rooms is ideal. Figures 10 and 11 illustrate what these may look like.

Some clubs may already have a unisex accessible room for showering and changing. If not, you could consider whether it is practical to assign a store or empty room for this purpose, fitting it out appropriately. It may also be possible to alter existing team changing rooms and shower areas to provide a wider bench section with grabrails, lowered hook options, long length mirror, and an accessible shower zone that has a tip-down seat, lever controls and a height adjustable showerhead. Grabrails can easily be installed in changing and shower zones to assist people with mobility difficulties. The colour of grabrails is important to help partially sighted people to locate them on the wall.

Clear areas 1500mm by 1500mm will make manoeuvring in changing areas less difficult.

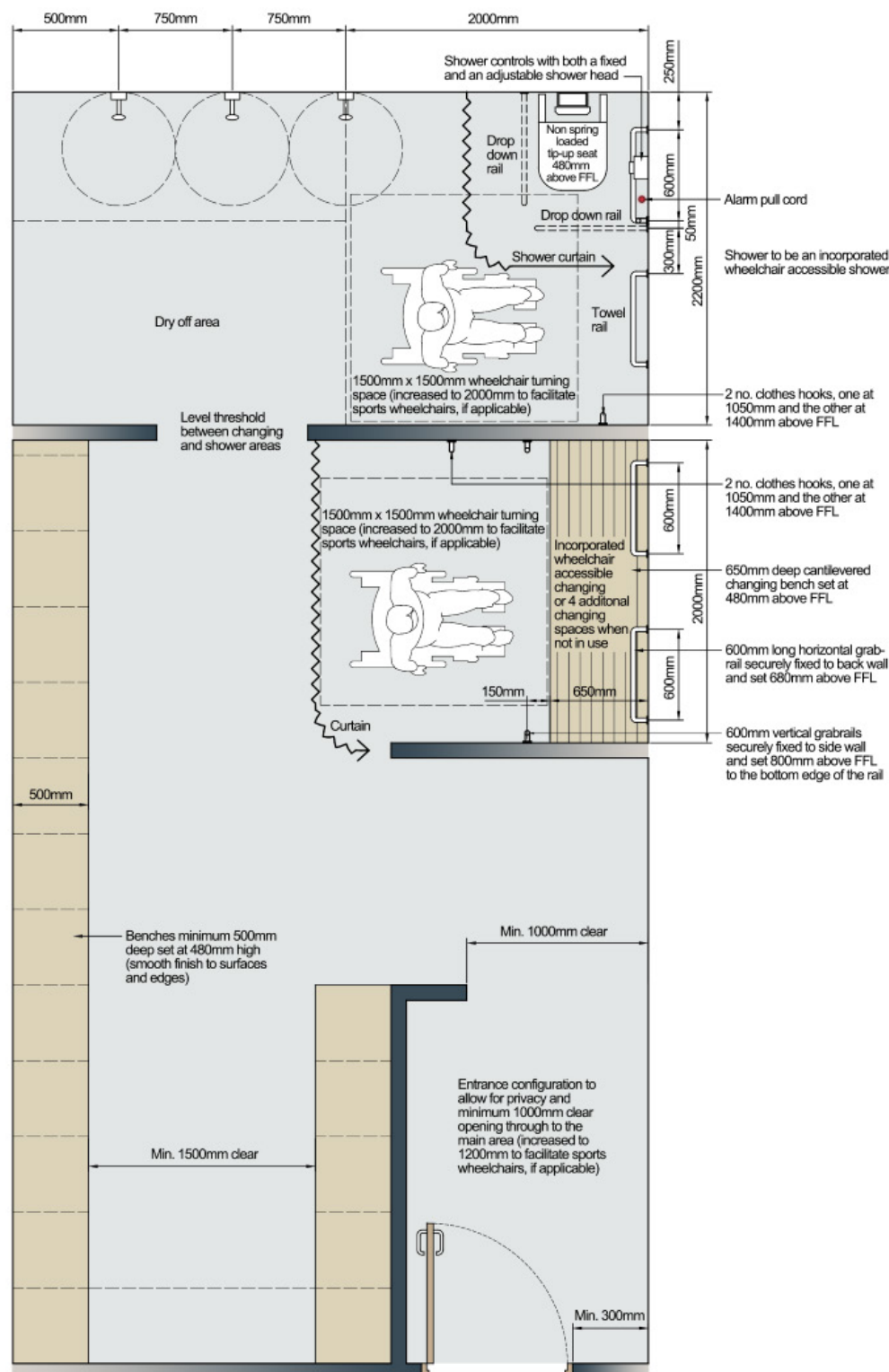


Figure 10 - Inclusive Changing Room (with wheelchair accessible incorporated provisions)

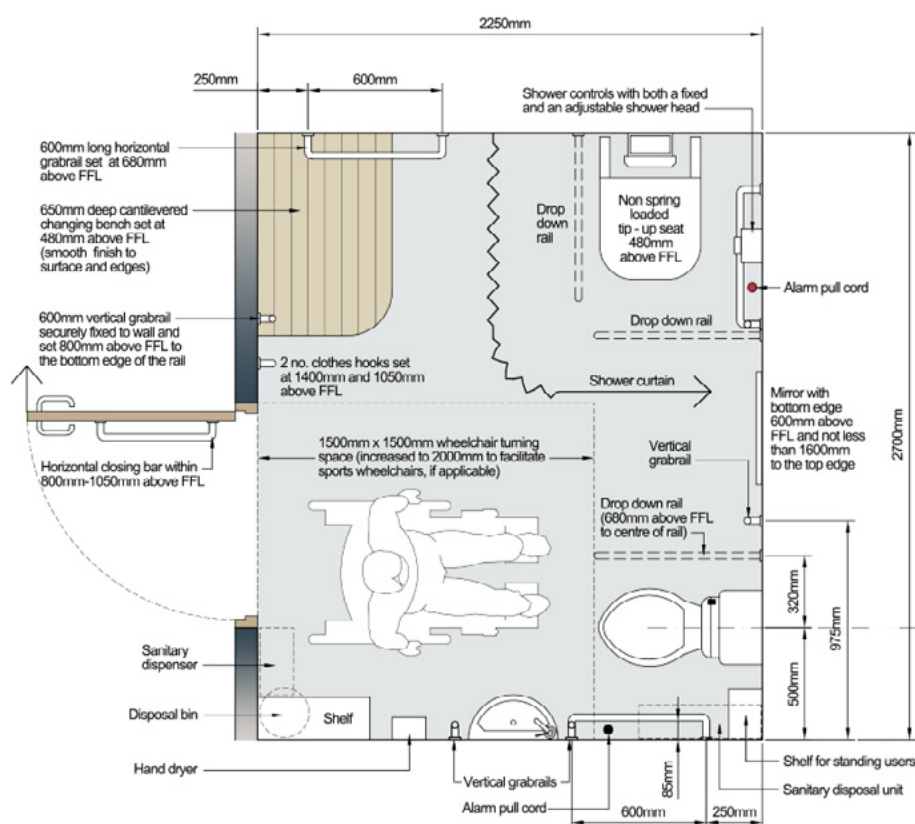


Figure 11 - Self-contained Unisex Accessible Changing/Shower/WC Room

2.7.1 Fixtures and accessible lockers

It is important to fit clothes hooks that suit a range of need e.g. 1 no. hook at 1050mm and 1 no. hook at 1400mm above the floor in each changing area. Making sure hooks contrast visually with the backboard and/or the wall is helpful for people who are partially sighted.

Locker options accommodating people with a range of abilities are best e.g. lockers with clear kneespace below to assist wheelchair users, longer length (1200mm) lockers to store underarm crutches, and full height (1800mm) lockers to offer limb storage for amputees.

Other points for you to consider:

- Locks to wheelchair accessible lockers should be located no higher than 1150mm above the floor.
- Locks should be easy to use one-handed by a person with reduced strength or limited manual dexterity.
- Lockers should be fitted with tactile numbers and Braille.

- Check to determine if hairdryer controls are no higher than 1100mm above the floor, and, if not, provide a lowered hairdryer.
- Long length mirrors set 600mm above the floor can be used by children, people of small stature and wheelchair users, so it is useful to provide one in each changing area.



Guidance Signpost

- ▶ Disability Sport NI Guide 1: Accessible Sports Facilities Design Guidelines. **Section 4.4** Accessible Changing and Showering.
- ▶ Disability Sport NI Guide 5: Accessible Outdoor Places Design Guidelines. **Section 2.5.5** Accessible changing and showering.

2.8 Refreshments

Commercial facilities may be available in your sports club, for example, you may offer refreshment or catering. If so, these areas should be accessible. Think of providing: a range of seating styles (with and without armrests); a counter area which is maximum 850mm high to assist wheelchair users and people standing; one aisle 1500mm wide between tables; and, clearance underneath tables 700mm high.

Staff service at tables is a good way to assist people who may find reaching or carrying difficult, and you could offer menus in large print or audio. Straws, different styles of cups and glasses with and without handles, and cutlery that contrasts with the table are helpful.

If you have vending machines, check that the coin, card and collection slots are accessible for all i.e. not too high for wheelchair users and children, or so low that excessive stoop is required.



Guidance Signpost

- ▶ Disability Sport NI Guide 1: Accessible Sports Facilities Design Guidelines. **Section 4.6** Commercial Activities.

2.9 Fitness Areas

The overall accessibility of fitness areas for disabled people can only be achieved if the fitness and conditioning equipment provided is also designed to be inclusive. For fitness areas within your sports club, you should aim to provide a range of Cardiovascular and Resistance Inclusive Fitness Initiative (IFI) Accredited equipment, such as those listed in Table 1 of this guide.

Clear space around each piece of equipment to assist movement and transfer will help, as well as a clear area for using the Small Equipment Pack items.

Cardiovascular	
Workout Type	Equipment Types
CV Upper Body	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upper Body Ergometer/Cycle • Rope Pulley Unit • Rowing Machine (with upper body only option)
CV Lower Body (Standing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treadmill • Lower Body Elliptical • Lower Body Stepper/Climber
CV Lower Body (Seated)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recumbent Bike • Upright Bike
CV Total Body	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total Body Ergometer/Cycle • Total Body Cross Trainer • Total Body Stepper/Climber • Rowing Machine

Resistance	
Workout Type	Equipment Types
Fixed Lower Body	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leg Press • Leg Extension • Seated Leg Curl
Fixed Upper Body	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chest Press • Seated Low Row • Lat Pulldown • Shoulder Press • Tricep Curl • Bicep Curl
Free Movement Resistance Note: Free Movement Resistance Small Equipment Pack comprises:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-function Adjustable Cables (Single Weight Stack) • Multi-function Adjustable Cables (Multiple Weight Stack) • Small Equipment Pack • Vibration Training Platform • Dumbbells Rack & Bench • Core/Balance • Multi-function/Stretch • Neoprene dumbbells - 0.5kg, 1kg, 2kg, 3kg, 4kg pairs • Soft grip dumbbells (with hand strap) - 0.5kg, 1kg pairs • Pilates bands - light, medium and heavy • Resistance tubes - light, medium and heavy • Wrist weights - 0.5kg, 1kg pairs • Ankle weight - 2kg pair • Gym ball stabiliser • Air disc • Squeeze balls (Pack of 3) • Core/Stabiliser tube - light, medium and heavy • Pilates ring

Table 1 – Examples of IFI Accredited Fitness Equipment

2.9.1 Outdoor fitness areas

See Section 6.9.1 of this guide: Outdoor fitness areas.



Guidance Signpost

- ▶ Accessible Sports Facilities, Design Guidance Note. **Section 16** Fitness suite: Screening area, Mirrors, Equipment layout, Stretch area, Rest area, Air conditioning, p.69-70. Sport England Publications, Wetherby. Sport England 2010.
- ▶ www.activityalliance.org.uk/how-we-help/programmes/65-inclusive-fitness-initiative
- ▶ www.activityalliance.org.uk/how-we-help/programmes/ifi-fitness-equipment

2.10 Visual Contrast

When surfaces and fittings within your sports club building contrast visually with each other, they stand out and are easier to locate. This will increase the ability of people who are partially sighted and people with neurological and/or sensory processing differences to navigate around buildings independently. These can include features such as floors, ceilings and walls, doors and walls, the handles on doors, fixtures on walls (such as grabrails and switches), and the edge of doors so that they are visible when open.

Redecoration presents an ideal opportunity to review your existing colour contrasts. Adequate Light Reflectance Values (LRVs) must be provided (generally minimum 30 points, however, Disability Sport NI recommends that as far as possible this should be exceeded when you are selecting colour and surface finishes).

Skirtings should contrast visually with the floor finish but may match the wall, or be similar in colour and tone to the wall.

Where spectator viewing areas are provided, contrasting seats and clear contrasting row and seat numbers are useful.

Think of simple cost-effective solutions to improve contrast to existing features in the club e.g. contrasting curtains in the shower areas, adding coloured bands to structural posts or columns to make them easier to see on approach, and contrasting accessories e.g. to highlight seats and tables within a room.



Guidance Signpost

- ▶ Disability Sport NI Guide 1: Accessible Sports Facilities Design Guidelines. **Section 4.11** Visual Contrast.
- ▶ Disability Sport NI Guide 3: Accessible Sports Stadia Design Guidelines. **Section 4.15** Visual Contrast.
- ▶ PAS 6463:2022. **Section 12** Surface finishes.

2.11 Floor Finishes

Slippery floors are hazardous for all people using the sports club. Even floors that are glossy can be perceived as being wet and slippery despite having a slip resistant surface. Patterned flooring can cause confusion for people who are partially sighted and people with Dementia. Floor finishes should be firmly fixed, and provide a firm foothold and good wheel grip.

Carpets with a deep pile are difficult for some people to walk or wheel on. Where used e.g. in club meeting rooms, carpets should have a shallow, dense, and non-directional pile that will not restrict the movement of wheelchair users, or present a tripping hazard to people using crutches, long canes, walking sticks and frames.

If you have a door mat at the sports club entrance, it should be fixed and flush with the surrounding floor surface to avoid people tripping on it. Loose mats are a serious hazard.

You could add temporary floor markings during an event to assist people who may not be familiar with the building or route of travel e.g. from the club entrance leading to the activity or event space.



Guidance Signpost

- ▶ Disability Sport NI Guide 1: Accessible Sports Facilities Design Guidelines. **Section 4.12** Floor Finishes, Run-off and Court Markings.
- ▶ Disability Sport NI Guide 3: Accessible Sports Stadia Design Guidelines. **Section 4.16** Floor Finishes.
- ▶ PAS 6463:2022. **Section 12.6** Floor finishes.

3 Viewing Areas in Your Sports Club

3.1 Accessible Viewing for Club Spectators

Where viewing areas are provided for spectating at your sports club, disabled people should be considered. Disabled spectators should have a choice of accessible vantage points and the opportunity to sit with a companion, or within a larger group. Wheelchair users, ambulant disabled people and assistance dogs should be accommodated.

If viewing areas are not located close to the car park, drop-off or the club entrance, the provision of rest seats is useful to offer respite.

See also Section 6.4.2 of this guide: Temporary viewing platforms for outdoor club activities and events.



Guidance Signpost

- ▶ For sports clubs where spectator viewing is provided, see Disability Sport NI Guide 3: Accessible Sports Stadia Design Guidelines; and Disability Sport NI Guide 4: Accessible Sports Stadia Management Guidelines.

4 Your Communications

4.1 Wayfinding, Signs and Information

Good external and internal signs are essential to enable disabled people to successfully navigate around sports clubs unassisted. For one-off events, temporary signs can assist first-time visitors e.g. to direct them to toilets and the activity or event area.

Provide consistent signs throughout the club, and avoid the use of sign clutter.

Other points for you to consider:

- Use simple wording in plain English.
- Use large, contrasting, and tactile universally recognised symbols e.g. for toilet areas. Include Braille where it is practical to do so.
- Each word on signs should comprise an initial upper case/capital letter and continue as lower case letters e.g. Car Park.
- Use a simple, contrasting font type.
- Place signs in prominent positions, located at key decision points e.g. at junctions on circulation routes.
- Signs should be mounted at or just below eye level (1400-1700mm above the floor) to facilitate touch reading. High-level signs, e.g. directional signs, should also be provided along circulation routes and in large busy spaces.
- No-go areas to the public should be clearly signed as 'No Entry'.
- The availability of staff and volunteer assistance is very important. Ensure to let your visitors know this help is available.
- If you have printed materials promoting the sports club, you should provide these in alternative formats e.g. large print. **Note:** font for large print should be minimum 16 point, and should be printed on standard sized paper (i.e. the same as other printed materials).

Lettering and numbers on signs should, as far as possible, meet those specified in Table 2 below:

Viewing Distance	Type of Sign	x-height (lower case letter)
Long distance	Signs seen when approaching a building (e.g. building entrances)	150mm min.
Medium distance	Directional signs (e.g. identification signs in reception areas or directional signs in corridors) *	50mm to 100mm Note: the greater the reading distance the larger the letter required within this range
Short distance	Room signs*	15mm to 25mm

Table 2 - Recommended Sign Font Heights

* Embossing required for signs within reach, to enable reading by touch

4.1.1 External waymarkers

Waymarkers placed at regular intervals and at key decision points are a useful information and navigation tool on external paths, tracks and trails.

- Waymarkers should be large in size (minimum 100mm diameter), with raised tactile information/symbols, located immediately adjacent external routes at regular intervals.
- Waymarkers must be easy to see on approach in both directions.
- Use simple pictograms/symbols, or distance indicators. Colour-coding can be useful at junctions along trails.

Management Considerations

- ▶ Actively promoting the accessibility of your sports club can increase participant numbers, and encourage first-time visitors. If you have made steps in improving your sports club's accessibility, then make people aware! This can be done in a range of formats, including on social media, your website and club newsletters.
- ▶ Any information you provide should be available in alternative formats on request e.g. large print. Provide contact details for requests.
- ▶ Planning a journey is key for disabled people, so providing as much information as you can is essential e.g. this may be about transport links, your accessible parking provisions, facilities you have for assistance dogs etc. Directions and route information is helpful for club members who are visiting an away venue or event. Provide as much detail as you can to give a positive impression, showing your awareness of disabled people and the need to plan ahead. Try not to be vague.



Guidance Signpost

- ▶ Sign Design Guide +: a guide to designing inclusive wayfinding information. Sign Design Society. Peter Barker, June Fraser and Andrew Barker. 2024.
- ▶ Disability Sport NI Guide 1: Accessible Sports Facilities Design Guidelines. **Section 6.1** Signs and Wayfinding.
- ▶ Disability Sport NI Guide 5: Accessible Outdoor Places Design Guidelines. **Section 3** Wayfinding, Signs and Information.
- ▶ PAS 6463:2022. Design for the mind - Neurodiversity and the built environment - Guide. **Section 6** Wayfinding.
- ▶ BS 8300-2:2018. **Paragraph 12** Signs and information, p.55-60.
- ▶ See It Right - Making Information Accessible to People with Sight Problems. RNIB.
- ▶ www.colourblindawareness.org
- ▶ Activity Alliance Inclusive Communications Factsheets 1-10
www.activityalliance.org.uk/how-we-help/resources/7067-inclusive-communications-factsheets
- ▶ Activity Alliance Access for All: Inclusive Communications Guide
www.activityalliance.org.uk/assets/000/000/020/EFDS_Inclusive_comms_guide_accessible_PDF_APRIL_2014_FINAL%281%29_original.pdf?1456915910

4.2 Alarms

Emergency assistance alarms are essential in areas where disabled people may be alone e.g. in sanitary accommodation, cubicles, changing areas and shower areas. In the short-term, if you do not currently have these, you could consider how you can assist people better e.g. by issuing a personal alarm.

Resetting the alarm if it is activated unintentionally is not possible if the alarm reset button is set too high. Critically, when an alarm is activated, it must be linked to a central area, such as your welcome area, where staff and volunteers are on hand to respond.

Think of how you can make staff and volunteers aware that an alarm has been activated during an external event e.g. a member of staff or a volunteer responsible for manning the inside of the club at all times to make sure external toilet alarms can be heard and seen if activated.

Emergency assistance alarms should have a red-coloured pull cord with two red-coloured 50mm diameter bangles. The lower bangle should be set at a height of 100mm above the floor and the upper bangle should be located in the range 800-1000mm above the floor.

Management Considerations

- ▶ Regular inspection of toilet facilities is required to make sure that alarm cords are not tied up. This makes them unreachable when needed, or drop-down rails unusable if cords are tied around them.



Guidance Signpost

- ▶ Disability Sport NI Guide 1: Accessible Sports Facilities Design Guidelines. **Section 4.9** Outlets, Switches and Controls.

4.3 Assistive Listening Systems

People who are deaf, have a hearing loss or tinnitus may find it more difficult to communicate in sports clubs due to poor acoustics and background noise. Systems are available to help. These are called Assistive Listening Systems (ALS).

ALS can help you to fulfil your legal duties under the Disability Discrimination Act, but fundamentally they help you to communicate better with your sports club visitors, participants, members and supporters.

ALS enable people who have a hearing loss to receive amplified sound signals without background interference. A magnetic field, within a certain floor area, transmits sound wirelessly from a microphone directly to a hearing aid, cochlear implant, bone conduction device, or telecoil receiver when they are switched to the hearing loop telecoil “T” setting (or “Loop Programme”).

There are different types of ALS available for different situations and environments:

- Induction Loops (also known as Hearing Loops).
- Infrared Systems.
- Radio/Digital Systems – FM/DM Systems.
- Audio over Wi-Fi, and Bluetooth streaming interfaces are now also available.

Key areas include:

- At welcome areas e.g. reception desks, service counters and information points.
- In club meeting rooms.
- In rooms or areas used for club spectator viewing, with a permanent or temporary public address system.

The most suitable ALS will depend on the size and type of your sports club, the degree of privacy required, and consideration to interference from outside sources e.g. overspill, electrical wiring, fluorescent lights etc.

Even a relatively inexpensive portable hearing loop can be a good starting point, as it will offer direct one-to-one communication.

Suppliers can offer advice on the right type for your sports club e.g. if you require it to be used externally, radio/digital systems are wire free and receive a signal over a longer distance. An infrared system offers more privacy so is helpful in rooms where confidentiality is required.

You could look into the provision of a portable headphone system for use in viewing areas to relay event commentaries to people who are blind or partially sighted.

To let your visitors know that an ALS is installed or available, a clear sign should be displayed (including at temporary sports club activity and event areas).

Management Considerations

- ▶ Consider the floor area coverage required e.g. a small, portable induction loop (hearing loop) may only be beneficial for one-to-one meetings within close range.
- ▶ Train club staff and volunteers in the operation of ALS.
- ▶ Club staff and volunteers should be aware of ALS locations, including where any portable systems are kept.
- ▶ The function and operation of ALS must be checked and maintained on a regular basis.



Guidance Signpost

- ▶ Disability Sport NI Guide 1: Accessible Sports Facilities Design Guidelines. **Section 6.3** Assistive Listening Systems.
- ▶ Disability Sport NI Guide 3: Accessible Sports Stadia Design Guidelines. **Section 7.3** Assistive Listening Systems.
- ▶ Disability Sport NI Guide 4: Accessible Sports Stadia Management Guidelines. **Section 3** Accessible Communications, including Provision for People who are Deaf, have a Hearing Loss or Tinnitus.

4.4 Visual Aids

If your club is holding an event, internally or externally, the use of large screens will assist people who may have difficulty viewing from a distance, and subtitles/visual information to complement public address systems will assist people who are deaf or have a hearing loss.



Guidance Signpost

- ▶ Disability Sport NI Guide 1: Accessible Sports Facilities Design Guidelines. **Section 6.4** Visual Aids.
- ▶ Disability Sport NI Guide 3: Accessible Sports Stadia Design Guidelines. **Section 7.4** Visual Aids.

5 Thinking About Emergency Egress

A sports club that is working towards improved accessibility must also consider that people of all abilities are required to leave safely in the event of an emergency. Things to think about for your sports club are features such as: fire signs and lighting; accessible refuge points ('safe areas'); horizontal and vertical means of escape; circulation routes; final points of exit e.g. if the final point of exit has steps, therefore may not be suitable for wheelchair users; whether the designated Fire Assembly Point (FAP) is easy to get to, and if it contains a clear sign.

Fire action notices throughout the club building should be filled out and displayed clearly, including details of the nearest FAP location.

Accessible final points of exit and exit routes can assist many disabled people to make their way safely and independently out of your sports club, and onwards to the designated FAP.

Installing an evacuation lift means that disabled people can use it in event of fire, as there is a separate electrical supply, and reduces the need for people to be left waiting in refuge areas, which can be frightening. Think whether your existing lift(s) can be upgraded to this standard and, if not, ensure that your fire strategy contains arrangements to enable evacuation when the lift(s) cannot be used.

Holding doors open can assist easier movement through a door but if they are fire doors (most likely fire doors will have a sign on them) they have to be kept closed at all times. It is often possible to fit hold-open devices to these fire doors as long as they are linked to the fire alarm system, whereby they will close on activation of the fire alarm.

Management Considerations

- ▶ Club management must plan for the safe evacuation of all people, and have suitable measures in place to facilitate it.
- ▶ Designate a person responsible for knowing and distributing evacuation procedures.
- ▶ Disabled people may require assistance to leave the building in an emergency. It can be a common misunderstanding that it is up to the fire service to evacuate, however, club management is responsible for organising the completion of risk assessment and fire action plans for the club, including evacuation of all people, and accounting for the needs of disabled people.
- ▶ Risk assessment and ongoing review is required by club management in relation to all aspects of fire safety at the club.
- ▶ Club visitors, participants, members and supporters should be familiarised with what to do in the event of fire or emergency evacuation.
- ▶ If your sports club is visiting an away venue or event, club management should find out the arrangements for fire evacuation at the venue, and could arrange for a buddy to assist members when evacuating. If there are certain individual requirements, make the visiting venue aware of these. Likewise, familiarise visiting clubs with your own club evacuation procedures.
- ▶ Debris and items stored, even temporarily, on exit routes or at exit doors can block escape and cause obstruction. Consider that, in the event of fire, normal lighting conditions may not apply, making obstacles even more difficult to avoid or negotiate.



Guidance Signpost

- ▶ Disability Sport NI Guide 1: Accessible Sports Facilities Design Guidelines. **Section 7** Getting Out of the Sports Facility.
- ▶ Disability Sport NI Guide 3: Accessible Stadia Design Guidelines. **Section 8** Getting Out of the Stadium.
- ▶ Disability Sport NI Guide 4: Accessible Stadia Management Guidelines. **Section 12** Egress - Emergency Evacuation Strategy.
- ▶ BS 9999:2017. Fire safety in the design, management and use of buildings - Code of practice.
- ▶ BS 9999:2017. **Section 45** Evacuation of disabled people, p.245-250 (including the use of emergency evacuation plans).
- ▶ PAS 6463:2022. **Section 14.5** Emergency evacuation.

6 Other Features to Think About

6.1 Providing for the Needs of Assistance Dogs at Your Sports Club

Assistance Dogs assist a wide range of individuals to lead a more independent lifestyle. For example, assistance dogs can be guide dogs for people who are blind or partially sighted, hearing dogs for people who are deaf or have a hearing loss, support or service dogs for people with physical disabilities and dogs that provide alert to individuals who have limited awareness of an impending life-threatening medical event.

Assistance dogs are highly trained working dogs and will wear an identification bib, harness or jacket, and tag when they are working. This makes it easier for your club staff and volunteers to identify them. Assistance dogs have well established toileting routines, so they are unlikely to foul in a public place.

6.1.1 Outdoors

A dog toileting facility is a designated external area where assistance dogs can relieve themselves. You should provide this at your sports club, close to the entrance. Although it is recommended that a toileting facility similar to Figure 12 should be provided, sometimes due to logistical or practical reasons this may prove less practical. If so, you could provide a sandbox in a secure area in the short-term whilst agreeing a more permanent solution with Guide Dogs Northern Ireland.

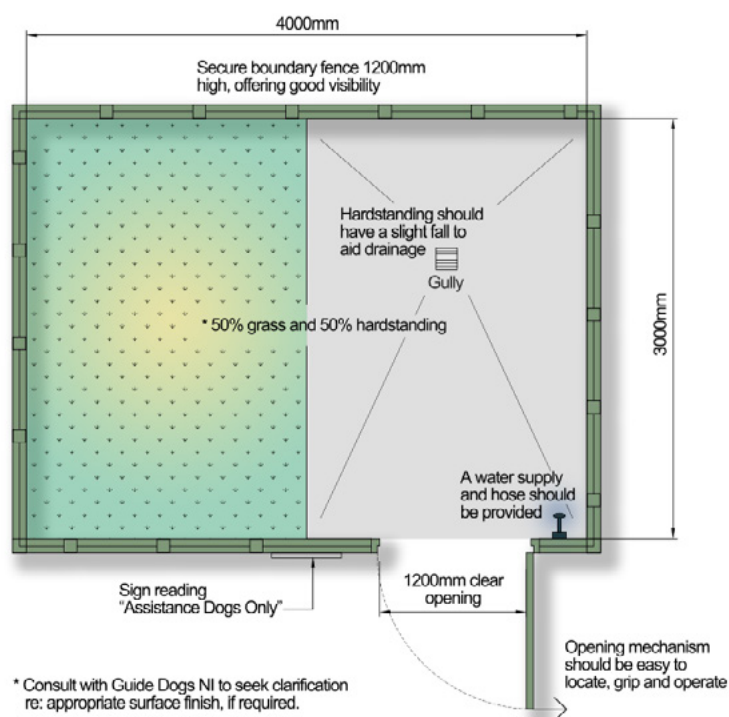


Figure 12 - Assistance Dogs Toileting Facility

6.1.2 Within sports club buildings

Assistance dog owners should have choices when visiting your sports club, so internal provision should be made available to enable an assistance dog owner to be accompanied within viewing areas, if that is their preference.

If an assistance dog must be away from its owner during an activity, there should, in agreement with the assistance dog owner, be an appropriate safe and secure space for the dog to rest unrestrained within or close to a supervised area. Access to a water bowl is helpful.

Management Considerations

- ▶ Designate club staff and volunteers who will be responsible for the welfare of assistance dogs during their visit, and for cleaning the dog toileting area.
- ▶ Having a policy to address the management of accessible dogs provisions is a good way of ensuring that your club staff and volunteers are aware of their duties, and that the needs of an assistance dog and its owner are a priority.



Guidance Signpost

- ▶ Guidance on dog toileting facilities for guide and assistance dogs. Guide Dogs.
- ▶ Disability Sport NI Guide 1: Accessible Sports Facilities Design Guidelines. **Section 4.14** Facilities for Assistance Dogs.
- ▶ Disability Sport NI Guide 2: Accessible Sports Facilities Management Guidelines. **Section 2** Assistance Dogs Policy.

6.2 Creating a Quiet Area

Some people can find certain situations and environments stressful, and the use of a quiet area can help to reduce negative sensory experience and anxiety¹. A quiet area could be a room allocated in your sports club when needed by adults or children. It offers a safe and warm space for respite or viewing, away from noise and large numbers of people.



Guidance Signpost

- ▶ Disability Sport NI Guide 3: Accessible Sports Stadia Design Guidelines. **Section 6.5** Quiet Areas and Sensory Viewing Rooms.
- ▶ BS 8300-2:2018. **Paragraph 19.3** Quiet spaces, p.154.
- ▶ PAS 6463:2022. Design for the mind – Neurodiversity and the built environment - Guide. **Section 14.1** Quiet and restorative spaces.
- ▶ PAS 6463:2022. **Annex B (informative)** Checklist for achieving flexibility in quiet and restorative spaces.
- ▶ Sensory Viewing Rooms: CAFE Guidance Note. Centre for Access to Football in Europe. 2019.
- ▶ Benefits of a Sensory Room. Jones, G. 2019.
- ▶ Neurodiverse sports fans. Safety, accessibility and experiences when attending live events. **Section 4.5.2** Tools and facilities.

¹ Neurodiversity is defined as "all types of ways humans think, move, process and act; therefore collectively includes all groups termed as neurotypical, neurodivergent or neurodegenerative." Taken from PAS 6463:2022. Design for the mind – Neurodiversity and the built environment - Guide.

6.3 Creating a Comfortable Environment

A comfortable environment is important for many disabled people, and people with illnesses. This aspect is often overlooked. A person may need to bring or wear personal measures to counteract or manage their environment, so sports club staff and volunteers should be mindful of this.

6.3.1 Lighting

Good lighting is very important to assist all people to use your sports club safely, including people who are partially sighted. If poor quality lighting is installed, or only low lighting levels are achieved, this can result in reflection, glare, and shadows on floors and other surfaces. This can be hazardous for some people. See also Section 6.8 of this guide: Outdoor Lighting.

Other points for you to consider:

- Light fittings that have shades or diffusers can improve lighting quality, as these features help to reduce glare and pools of light.
- Fitting blinds or curtains can be an easy way of controlling glare from natural light at different times of the day.
- If you have them fitted, sensor lights will avoid the need for people to find and use light switches.
- Providing task lights at your welcome areas can help to illuminate the face of the person speaking, to assist lip readers.
- If surfaces are reflective, providing a matt finish can help e.g. using a plain cloth cover on your welcome area desk or table.



Guidance Signpost

- ▶ PAS 6463:2022. Design for the mind - Neurodiversity and the built environment - Guide. **Section 11** Light, lighting and reflection.
- ▶ Disability Sport NI Guide 1: Accessible Sports Facilities Design Guidelines. **Section 4.10** Lighting.
- ▶ BS 8300-2:2018. **Paragraph 14** Lighting, p.65-66.
- ▶ Inclusive Design Standards. **IDS 26**, p53. London Legacy Development Committee. May 2019.

6.3.2 Acoustics

Noise can cause confusion and discomfort for some disabled people e.g. people who have a hearing loss and people with neurological and/or sensory processing differences.

When you are selecting internal finishes or furnishings, choose materials that absorb sound, including in areas where you may have a public address system installed. Don't forget about having a quiet area if it is needed (see Section 6.2 of this guide: Creating a Quiet Area).



Guidance Signpost

- ▶ PAS 6463:2022. Design for the mind - Neurodiversity and the built environment - Guide. **Section 10** Acoustics and noise management.
- ▶ Inclusive Design Standards. **IDS 29**, p.55. London Legacy Committee. May 2019.
- ▶ BS 8233:2014. Guidance on sound insulation and noise reduction for buildings. Code of practice.
- ▶ BS 8300-2:2018. **Paragraph 11.2** Materials and acoustic design, p.53, and **Paragraphs 15.6, 16.7, 17.6.4** Acoustics, p.70, p.85 and p.94.

6.3.3 Thermal comfort and odours (air quality, air conditioning and temperature control)

When some people are exposed to cold, heat or fragrances it can aggravate them or their illness symptoms. Windows and doors are a good way to offer natural ventilation if needed, or you may consider installing air conditioning or air filtration in your sports club. Having a choice of, or adjustable, temperature and humidity settings for use in your activity areas is useful. Don't forget that a quiet area away from odours can help if needed.

As good practice, creating a sensory map for your sports club building can assist people with neurological and/or sensory processing differences and people who have illness symptoms that can be heightened by certain environmental conditions. For example, a sensory map showing areas where odours may be present, temperature variations, areas where lighting, ventilation and temperature can be controlled etc.



Guidance Signpost

- ▶ PAS 6463:2022. Design for the mind - Neurodiversity and the built environment - Guide. **Section 9** Thermal Comfort.

6.4 Accessible External Routes – Paths, Tracks and Trails

For paths on approach to your sports club, see Section 1.1 of this guide: Paths.

Existing paths, tracks and trails should be upgraded where possible to improve accessibility.

If your sports club has developed tracks or trails to encourage active participation and to enhance recreation opportunities, they should be accessible for all people. They must be wide enough to enable different users to move and pass safely (minimum 1800mm allows wheelchair users to pass each other without the need for passing places). You should think about access leading to and from tracks and trails, as well as accessibility of the track or trail route.

It is important that the edge of a track or trail is clearly visible to assist people who are partially sighted e.g. using a defined or visually contrasting edge.

Rest seating, accessible wayfinding and the positioning of street furniture are also important considerations along paths, tracks and trails.

See also Section 4.1 of this guide: Your Communications; Wayfinding, Signs and Information.

6.4.1 Surfaces on paths, tracks and trails

Firm, stable and consistent ground surfaces contribute to the accessibility of paths, tracks and trails. Uneven, waterlogged and muddy surfaces present significant challenges for many users, including parents with pushchairs, people using walking and mobility aids and people who are blind or partially sighted. Loose and angular materials increase potential trip and slip hazards, can be uncomfortable underfoot and can present difficulties when wheeling or horse riding.

In outdoor areas of your sports club that are prone to waterlogging or mud, consideration could be given to a stabilising mesh or substructure matting to make the use of grass viable as a natural ground surface. Matting/grids permit grass to grow through, providing a firmer more level surface than may be achievable from grass alone. Any matting should be laid flush within the surrounding surface to prevent potential trip hazard. Remedial measures, such as the use of compacted stone, may be required in areas particularly subject to flooding or waterlogging.

Temporary surfaces may be necessary to reinforce softer ground or grassed areas subject to waterlogging and/or heavy footfall, including for use during matches or sports club events. **Note:** existing hardstand and firm ground surfaces should be utilised as much as possible on existing sites, and associated facilities sited within close proximity. Where used, the ground for temporary surfaces must be prepared with a suitable sub-base to prevent movement, undulations and distortion. Provide flush, easy-transition landings at junctions between the temporary surface and the existing ground surface. Provide visual contrast between the temporary surface and the existing ground surface. Maintain raised fixing bolts clear of the route width.

6.4.2 Temporary viewing platforms for outdoor club activities and events

Where temporary viewing platforms are provided for use during activities, matches or events, they should have an accessible approach route and level transition onto the platform. Viewing platforms should accommodate wheelchair users and ambulant disabled people, and their companions, and assistance dogs. On slopes leading onto platforms, a form of handrail support installed on both sides will assist older people and ambulant disabled people.



Guidance Signpost

- ▶ Disability Sport NI Guide 5: Accessible Outdoor Places Design Guidelines. **Section 1.2** Accessible External Routes – Paths, Trails and Greenways.

6.5 External Ramps, Steps and Handrails

Try to avoid ramps and difficult slopes around your site. Where possible, paths, tracks and trails should be level. A gradient 1 in 20 or steeper is considered to be a ramp and, if unavoidable, should be in accordance with ramp standards, including handrail support. If you already have ramps, surfaces should be firm and slip resistant in all weathers.

Changes in level and external steps, can present a barrier to disabled people at sports clubs, and should be avoided. If you already have steps, think about whether you can offer an alternative or plan for replacement e.g. when you are developing new paths, tracks or trails, or when you are upgrading your existing ones. It is important where steps and handrails are used, that they are well designed e.g. contrasting edges to steps, and easy grip handrails.



Guidance Signpost

- ▶ Disability Sport NI Guide 5: Accessible Outdoor Places Design Guidelines. **Sections 1.4-1.6.**

6.6 Rest Seating

Rest seats are needed, including along paths, tracks and trails, to offer respite for older people, people with mobility difficulties and people with hidden disabilities. When selecting seats, think about providing options such as seats with backrests, with and without armrests and seats of different heights e.g. 480mm high to enable direct transfer from a wheelchair, lower seats that children and people of small stature can sit on easily, and higher, flat seats that older people and ambulant disabled people can sit down and rise from easily.

If paths, tracks and trails are lengthy, you will need resting places that include a rest seat. That could be every 25-50m on paths, tracks and trails, on steep slopes and at lengthy step flights. Providing the resting place clear of the route width on a firm, level ground surface is helpful, and there should be a clear area at the side of the rest seat for a wheelchair user or assistance dog to rest alongside. Seats that are visually contrasting will help people who are partially sighted to find or by-pass them more easily.

On sports club grounds where amphitheatre-style seating is provided to facilitate outdoor activities, events or performances, putting up a clear sign and including protection from falling will help.



Guidance Signpost

- ▶ Disability Sport NI Guide 5: Accessible Outdoor Places Design Guidelines. **Section 2.2** Rest Places and Seating.

6.7 Picnic Tables

Where picnic tables are provided at your sports club, they should be designed to be inclusive of disabled people, and accessible directly from an accessible path or trail route. One, or more, wheelchair users should be accommodated at accessible picnic tables.



Guidance Signpost

- ▶ Disability Sport NI Guide 5: Accessible Outdoor Places Design Guidelines. **Section 2.3** Shelters and Picnic Tables.

6.8 Outdoor Lighting

Good lighting is essential if your outdoor sports club areas are to feel inclusive, safe and comfortable. Sports club sites, approach routes, and club building entrances should be well lit. Lighting must be provided if you offer evening and winter club activities, and this includes lighting on emergency egress routes. Even if temporary, lighting made available for an event will improve darker conditions along paths, tracks and trails, as well as at outdoor activity areas and playing surfaces.

Think about where lighting columns are located so as not to create a hazard or obstruct the width of paths, tracks and trails. If you can't avoid having these on routes, or they already exist, light columns should have visual contrast to assist all people, including people who are partially sighted.



Guidance Signpost

- ▶ Disability Sport NI Guide 5: Accessible Outdoor Places Design Guidelines. **Section 2.6** Lighting in the External Environment.
- ▶ Inclusive Design Standards. **IDS 07**, p26. London Legacy Development Committee. May 2019.

6.9 Accessible Play

If you provide a play park or play area at your sports club, it can be designed to be accessible for disabled children. Offer a varied and balanced range of play, including opportunities for social and independent play, accompaniment, and additional support if needed.

An accessible play park or play area should include accessible play equipment, including pieces that can be used by disabled children who cannot transfer from their wheelchair. Some examples of inclusive pieces include nest, cradle and roll-on swings, wide slides, sensory panels and a flush roundabout. You may be able to use existing natural features and landscape to promote multi-sensory play experiences. It is important that your play park or play area can also meet the needs of accompanying adults, who may be older people or grandparents e.g. think about accessible parking, toilets and rest seating.

Inclusive play parks should have ground surfaces that are safe and accessible i.e. wide, impact absorbing, and easy to walk and wheel on.



Guidance Signpost

- ▶ Disability Sport NI Guide 5: Accessible Outdoor Places Design Guidelines. **Section 6** Inclusive Play - Accessible Play Parks and Play Equipment.

6.9.1 Outdoor fitness areas

If you have a play park or play area at your sports club, having outdoor gym equipment close-by can encourage all generations to be active together. Where exercise and fitness equipment is provided, some apparatus can be included to accommodate the needs of older people, people with Dementia, wheelchair users and people who are partially sighted.



Guidance Signpost

- ▶ Disability Sport NI Guide 5: Accessible Outdoor Places Design Guidelines. **Section 2.1** Multi-sensory Greenspace.

6.10 Water-based Sports Club Activities

If you offer water-based activities at your sports club, they should be accessible to everyone, as disabled people want the same opportunities to participate in these activities as non-disabled people. Think about your facilities and equipment that disabled people can use to enter and exit the water e.g. the ability to transfer safely and easily into and out of boats.



Guidance Signpost

- ▶ Disability Sport NI Guide 5: Accessible Outdoor Places Design Guidelines. **Section 4.1** Access to Water-based Activities; **Section 4.2** Jetties and Pontoons; **Section 4.3** Slipways and Gangways; **Section 4.4** Hoist Provision and Equipment.

6.10.1 Accessible angling

If you provide angling activities at your sports club, it is important that accessible provision is made to suit people of all abilities. Think about whether your angling facilities include manmade riverbanks, on-bank fishing stands, and/or fixed over-water jetties or platforms from which to fish or board a fishing boat. Remember that the journey to angling facilities and the position and accessibility of specific angling facilities are important, as well as having toilets and parking close-by.



Guidance Signpost

- ▶ Disability Sport NI Guide 5: Accessible Outdoor Places Design Guidelines. **Section 4.5** Accessible Angling Facilities.

6.11 The Importance of Maintenance

Maintenance is key to ensuring continued accessibility in and around your sports club, including the accessibility of outdoor areas. Consider the following:

- Do not permit parking along paths and pedestrian routes around your sports club grounds, as this can obstruct clear width. Signs may help to discourage this.

- Trimming back vegetation along your paths, tracks and trails allows for clear width and clear headroom to be maintained.
- Regularly inspecting and maintaining your paths, tracks and trails is important if good accessibility is to be maintained at all times.
- Make sure to inspect and drain waterlogged paths, tracks and trails to ensure quality ground surfaces, and to prevent potential slip hazard, including on temporary routes used during your outdoor activities and events.
- It is critical that matting/grids, permitting grass to grow through, are allowed time to establish and bind, as there is potential for long canes or walking aids to become trapped in the grid holes. Prolonged use too early can prevent the grass from growing through at all. Careful monitoring of reinforcement mesh and vegetation growth is required to ensure it matures and binds correctly (where possible this should be permitted prior to any footfall that could restrict growth and binding).
- Regularly inspect and maintain wayfinding signs and waymarkers to ensure they are clearly visible.
- Ensure that external steps and ramps remain usable and safe in all weathers e.g. remove debris, leaf litter, standing water, ice and snow.



Guidance Signpost

- ▶ Disability Sport NI Guide 5: Accessible Outdoor Places Design Guidelines. **Appendix A** The Importance of Maintenance.
- ▶ BS8300-1:2018. **Annex A (informative)** Management and Maintenance, p.59-64.

7 The Need for Ongoing Review and Good Management

Ongoing review is needed to ensure that your sports club is as accessible and inclusive as possible, helping you to aim for better.

- Regularly review the accessibility of your sports club and consider how you can make further improvements to physical features. This guide, and the associated Action Plan (see Appendix A), will help.
- Management is equally important to the physical accessibility of your sports club, so you could consider policies and procedures that focus on the needs of disabled people e.g. management of accessible parking bays, assistance dogs policy, staff and volunteer training policy etc. Disability Sport NI's Guide 2: Accessible Sports Facilities Management Guidelines will provide some ideas to help you develop those.
- Make sure that regular Disability Inclusion Training is provided to club staff and volunteers, including new staff and volunteers. Think about the training of staff and volunteers brought in to help during one-off events.
- Keep up to date with the latest disability and equality legislation, as well as uplifts in design standards. Local organisations are available to advise on this, including Disability Sport NI.
- Engagement with local disability groups and existing disabled club members and supporters is key – gather their feedback and opinions to make things even better!

To understand and learn about the wider considerations and changes your club can make towards becoming a more inclusive club, please contact Disability Sport NI: email@dsni.co.uk

Other guidelines, support and resources are also available to make your sports club more inclusive at www.dsni.co.uk



Appendices

Appendix A Accessible Sports Clubs Design
Guidelines: Action Plan

Appendix A

This template is a tool to help you create an action plan to improve accessibility at your sports club. Each topic below relates directly to a detailed section within this guide, where you will find the related technical guidance and signposting. You can download a pdf version of this template, which should be used in conjunction with the guide, from Disability Sport NI's website www.dsni.co.uk

Arriving at Your Sports Club	Guide reference	Yes No N/A	Comments	Actions - How can you make this better?	Who is responsible?	Resources required
Paths Do paths leading to the club entrance have a firm surface? Are paths leading to the club entrance wide enough? Do paths leading to the entrance have a level or gentle gradient? If there are ramps or steps on path routes leading to the club entrance, are they suitably designed? If there are dropped kerbs on paths, has tactile paving been provided? Have bins, lampposts, seats and signs been placed clear of the path width? Is the approach to the sports club, its parking areas and entrance well lit?	Section 1.1 Paths Section 6.5 External Ramps, Steps and Handrails					
Parking and Drop-off Is there parking for disabled people (permanent and/or allocated during events)? Is there a drop-off area (permanent and/or allocated during events)? What other parking facilities are available at the club e.g. for mobility scooters, cycles and buggies?	Section 1.2 Parking and Drop-off					

<p>Entrance Can visitors enter the club without using steps?</p> <p>Note: sometimes the level or ramped access may not be at the front entrance.</p> <p>Is the accessible entrance easy to find?</p> <p>Is there a sign at the entrance?</p> <p>Are there automatic doors at the accessible entrance (these may open as a visitor approaches them or by using a push button)?</p> <p>If the doors are glass, are there clear markings so people will not walk into them?</p> <p>Is the entrance door wide enough?</p> <p>Portable Ramp Note: it may be acceptable for some clubs to have a portable or temporary ramp available to overcome a change in level, as a short-term measure. Check availability of a portable or temporary ramp where there is no permanent ramp.</p>	Section 1.3 Entrance					
<p>Welcome Areas Is there a lowered section at the reception desk or information table?</p> <p>Can the reception desk or information area be found easily?</p> <p>Are there signs or floor markings to direct visitors?</p> <p>Are rest seats, in a range of style options, available?</p>	Section 1.4 Welcome Areas					

Moving Around and Using Your Sports Club	Guide reference	Yes No N/A	Comments	Actions - How can you make this better?	Who is responsible?	Resources required
Corridors and Doors Are corridors wide enough (minimum 1200mm wide) and free from clutter? Are doors leading to club activities and toilet areas wide enough? Are doors easy to pull open or are they power operated? Can assistance be provided to help open doors during a club activity or event?	Section 2.1 Corridors Section 2.2 Doors					
Lifts and Stairs Is there is a lift available to overcome stairs or steps inside the club? Are lift buttons within reach (900-1100mm high on the landing; 900-1200mm inside the lift)? Is the lift floor light in colour? Are all fittings inside the lift installed? Note: in some clubs, the installation of an enclosed vertical lifting platform may be acceptable. If there are steps or stairs are the step edges highlighted? Do handrails offer easy grip? Are handrails colour contrasting?	Section 2.3 Lifts and Stairs Section 2.4 Handrails and Handholds					

<p>Inclusive and Accessible Toilets</p> <p>Is there a wheelchair accessible toilet facility?</p> <p>Note: this should be clear from obstruction and well signposted. The room should be a minimum of 1700mm wide x 2200mm long (some older club building units may have a shorter 2000mm in length but should be 1500mm wide as a minimum).</p> <p>Are all fittings inside the WC unit installed?</p> <p>Is there a toilet for ambulant disabled people in toilet blocks?</p> <p>Note: this will not be wheelchair accessible but will have grabrails and a closing bar on the door (door opens out).</p> <p>Is there a lower urinal and basin in toilet blocks?</p> <p>Is there an accessible parenting room?</p>	<p>Section 2.5 Inclusive and Accessible Toilets</p>					
<p>Changing Places Toilets</p> <p>Is there a Changing Places toilet?</p> <p>Does it include an adult-sized, height adjustable changing bench?</p> <p>Does it include a shower?</p> <p>What other accessories are inside the room?</p>	<p>Section 2.6 Changing Places Toilets</p>					
<p>Accessible Changing and Showering</p> <p>Are there wheelchair accessible changing and showering zones within main changing rooms; and/or a separate room for this purpose?</p> <p>Have accessible clothes hooks been provided?</p> <p>Have accessible lockers been provided?</p> <p>Is the hairdryer control within reach?</p>	<p>Section 2.7 Accessible Changing and Showering</p>					

Refreshments Can all people access refreshments easily? Have provisions been made to assist disabled people in refreshment areas? Note: this could be a counter 850mm high; flexible table and seating layout; vending machine with reachable buttons and coin, card and collection slots.	Section 2.8 Refreshments					
Fitness Areas Does the club have a range of Inclusive Fitness Initiative (IFI) equipment? Is there a clear space around each piece of IFI equipment? Is there a clear space to use the Small Equipment Pack items? For outdoor fitness areas, see Section 6.9.1.	Section 2.9 Fitness Areas Table 1 Section 6.9.1 Outdoor Fitness Areas					
Visual Contrast Note: look at doors in walls, grabrails, handles on doors (if you take a black and white photo it is a basic way of seeing whether surfaces contrast with each other). Are there any areas where this could be improved e.g. grabrails in an accessible WC? Does the skirting contrast with the floor?	Section 2.10 Visual Contrast					
Floor Finishes Are floors slippery or look slippery? Is the mat at the entrance door fixed down and flush so visitors are less likely to trip on it? Are carpets shallow pile?	Section 2.11 Floor Finishes					

Viewing Areas in Your Sports Club	Guide reference	Yes No N/A	Comments	Actions: - How can you make this better?	Who is responsible?	Resources required
<p>Is there a viewing area suitable for disabled people e.g. including viewing spaces for wheelchair users?</p> <p>Are there provisions for ambulant disabled people?</p> <p>Has companion seating been included?</p> <p>Can assistance dogs be accommodated?</p> <p>Is rest seating available on routes to viewing areas?</p>	Section 3.1 Accessible Viewing for Club Spectators					

Your Communications	Guide reference	Yes No N/A	Comments	Actions - How can you make this better?	Who is responsible?	Resources required
<p>Wayfinding, Signs and Information</p> <p>Are signs provided for club facilities and activities?</p> <p>Are signs well designed, including the correct size of lettering?</p> <p>Where there are printed materials e.g. club leaflet, is this available in a larger font?</p> <p>Have clear waymarkers been provided on paths, tracks and trails?</p> <p>Has a sensory map been developed, and promoted in club communications?</p>	<p>Section 4.1 Wayfinding, Signs and Information</p> <p>Table 2</p>					
<p>Alarms</p> <p>Is an emergency assistance alarm fitted in the accessible toilet(s)?</p> <p>Are red cord bangles at the correct height?</p>	Section 4.2 Alarms					

Assistive Listening Systems Note: ALS assist people who use a hearing aid, cochlear implant or bone conduction device. This may be at a reception counter or information point and could also be fitted in a larger area e.g. in a club meeting or activity room. A portable loop may be acceptable and can be moved around and used where and when needed. Is an ALS available e.g. hearing loop? Is a sign provided at each location where an ALS is installed or available?	Section 4.3 Assistive Listening Systems					
Visual Aids Are screens and scoreboards large and clearly visible?	Section 4.4 Visual Aids					

Thinking About Emergency Egress	Guide reference	Yes No N/A	Comments	Actions - How can you make this better?	Who is responsible?	Resources required
Have people with a range of abilities been considered in your risk assessment? Has emergency evacuation equipment been provided e.g. to assist escape from upper floor levels? Have clear fire signs been provided, including in refuge areas ('safe areas')? Has a designated Fire Assembly Point(s) been identified and clearly signed? If a lift is provided, is it an evacuation standard lift i.e. can be used in the event of fire? Are doors on hold-open devices linked to the fire alarm?	Section 5 Thinking About Emergency Egress					

Other Features to Think About	Guide reference	Yes No N/A	Comments	Actions: - How can you make this better?	Who is responsible?	Resources required
Providing for the Needs of Assistance Dogs at Your Sports Club The club should welcome Assistance Dogs. Is this signed at the entrance? Note: Assistance Dogs are not just guide dogs. Is there an external dog toileting facility (i.e. an area an assistance dog can use for toileting)? Is there an internal (safe and supervised) space for an assistance dog to rest if their owner is taking part in a club activity? Is a water bowl available?	Section 6.1 Providing for the Needs of Assistance Dogs at Your Sports Club					
Creating a Quiet Area Is there a quiet area away from crowds, noise, odours etc. when required? Is this signed at the entrance to the club and in club communications?	Section 6.2 Creating a Quiet Area					
Creating a Comfortable Environment: Lighting Are areas used for club activities well lit, including the entrance? Can lighting levels be adjusted to assist people who are neurodiverse if required? Have blinds or curtains been fitted to control natural light (reducing glare and shadowing)? Are there sensor lights?	Section 6.3.1 Creating a Comfortable Environment: Lighting					

<p>Creating a Comfortable Environment: Acoustics</p> <p>Are sound absorbent materials used, including in areas where public address systems are installed?</p> <p>Is a quiet area available (see: Creating a Quiet Area)?</p>	<p>Section 6.3.2 Creating a Comfortable Environment: Acoustics</p>					
<p>Creating a Comfortable Environment: Thermal comfort and odours (air quality, air conditioning and temperature control)</p> <p>Is natural ventilation available?</p> <p>Are heating and humidity systems adjustable in activity areas?</p> <p>Have you created a sensory map?</p>	<p>Section 6.3.3 Creating a Comfortable Environment: Thermal comfort and odours</p>					
<p>Accessible External Routes - Paths, tracks and trails</p> <p>For paths, see section above: Arriving at Your Sports Club</p> <p>Is the route leading to the track or trail accessible?</p> <p>Are tracks and trails wide enough to assist clear passage in both directions, and, if not, is a passing place available?</p> <p>Has a defined edge or visually contrasting edge been provided on tracks and trails?</p> <p>Are rest seats available alongside tracks or trails at regular intervals?</p> <p>Has street furniture, such as bins and lighting columns, been positioned clear of track or trail width?</p> <p>Has a suitable surface been installed on tracks and trails?</p> <p>If you have to provide a temporary viewing platform during club activities or events, is the platform accessible for wheelchair users, ambulant disabled people and companions, as well as assistance dogs?</p>	<p>Section 6.4 Accessible External Routes - Paths, Tracks and Trails</p>					

<p>External Ramps, Steps and Handrails</p> <p>If ramps are required to access outdoor club facilities, is the gradient suitable (maximum 1 in 12 over 2m; 1 in 20 over 10m)?</p> <p>Are steps suitable in size (goings and risers)?</p> <p>Are surfaces of ramps and steps slip resistant?</p> <p>Are step edges clearly visible?</p> <p>Are handrails easy to grip (circular or oval profile)?</p> <p>Are handrails colour contrasting?</p> <p>Are handrails positioned at a suitable height above ramps and steps and their landings (900-1000mm above slopes or pitchline and 1000-1100mm above landing)?</p> <p>Are handrails cold to touch?</p>	<p>Section 6.5 External Ramps, Steps and Handrails</p>					
<p>Rest Seating</p> <p>Is there a range of seating style options to assist people with a broad range of needs?</p> <p>Are rest seats positioned clear of the path, track or trail route on firm, level ground?</p> <p>Is space available on each side to accommodate wheelchair users and assistance dogs?</p>	<p>Section 6.6 Rest Seating</p>					
<p>Picnic Tables</p> <p>Has at least one accessible picnic table suitable for use by wheelchair users available where picnic tables have been provided generally?</p> <p>Is there a firm, level external route leading to the accessible picnic table?</p> <p>Is the picnic table positioned on firm, level hardstand?</p>	<p>Section 6.7 Picnic Tables</p>					

Outdoor Lighting Are sports club sites, approach routes and club buildings well lit? Has lighting provision been made for evening and winter club activities? Are emergency egress routes well lit? Are lampposts positioned off the route of travel on paths, tracks and trails? If unavoidable on paths, tracks and trails, are lampposts visually contrasting?	Section 6.8 Outdoor Lighting					
Accessible Play Has a range of accessible play equipment been included in play areas? Are suitable ground surfaces provided in play areas? Note: for detailed information on accessible play, see Accessible Outdoor Places Design Guidelines on Disability Sport NI's website www.dsni.co.uk	Section 6.9 Accessible Play					
Outdoor Fitness Areas Does the outdoor fitness area include equipment for older people and wheelchair users?	Section 6.9.1 Outdoor Fitness Areas					
Water-based Sports Club Activities Can participants access the water and boats easily e.g. using a hoist? If specialised equipment is provided, has this been promoted in club communications?	Section 6.10 Water-based Sports Club Activities					
Accessible Angling Is there an accessible route leading to and from angling areas? Has an accessible fishing stand or platform been provided? Are there toilets and parking facilities close by?	Section 6.10.1 Accessible Angling					

The Importance of Maintenance Are all areas of the club regularly inspected and maintained?	Section 6.11 The Importance of Maintenance					
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The Need for Ongoing Review and Good Management	Guide reference	Yes No N/A	Comments	Actions: - How can you make this better?	Who is responsible?	Resources required
Is physical accessibility reviewed regularly at the club in order to inform further improvements? Does the club have policies which adopt good practice procedures relating to the club's accessibility?	Section 7 The Need for Ongoing Review and Good Management					

Notes

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