

**Confidential**

# NADS: Additional information for the Sports Minister, Rt Hon Gerry Sutcliffe MP

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**10th January 2009**

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REGISTERED CHARITY NO: 107974

***The National Association  
of Disabled Supporters***

***Promoting a Level Playing Field for all Football Fans!***



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## **1. London Olympics 2012 – Football match venues.**

- 1.1. The football venues have been announced for 2012 as published on the website. NADS is concerned by some of the venues chosen as they already fall short of Accessible Stadia Guide best practice for disabled supporters and do not meet the Olympic Delivery Authority's (ODA) own minimum disabled spectators' criteria. How has this decision been taken – have the decision makers looked at equality issues?
- 1.2. NADS has formally raised this with the Built Environment Access Panel (BEAP) of the ODA of which NADS is a member and with LOCOG. We are awaiting a response.
- 1.3. Email to Margaret Hickish, ODA and Derek Wilson, LOCOG on 25th November 2008

*Further to the last BEAP meeting - to follow is a more detailed summary of disabled facilities at Old Trafford and Villa Park for the BEAP minutes and your information. This is our latest and most up to date information. I hope it's helpful and it would be fantastic if the ODA/LOCOG could use some leverage to ensure improved disabled facilities for 2012 and in legacy at both these stadia.*

### General Notes

*Home and away disabled supporters/spectators sit in the same area of the ground at both these stadia. The point here is that football fans are segregated (home and away fans) at football stadia - this is considered a matter of safety. NADS has received complaints of abuse towards away disabled fans at various stadia where they are sat with home fans.*

*When Old Trafford added 7910 extra seats in 2007 (by adding 2 new quadrants) they only added 16 wheelchair user spaces and made no further adjustments to rectify the deficits. If the club extends again prior to 2012 - will it add sufficient additional disabled seats to address deficits in line with either the Accessible Stadia Guide or more significantly, the high standards of 1% set by Olympics 2012?*

*Joyce Cook, NADS Chair and BEAP ODA member. Cc BEAP*

## **1.4. Old Trafford – Manchester United**

76,212 seater stadium. CEO has recently announced plans to further extend the South Stand (5000 + extra seats) in the future.

### Toilets and Catering

8 accessible toilets located adjacent to the disabled supporters' area - 2 are located within a disabled supporters' lounge (The Ability Suite). This is a lounge exclusively for disabled supporters' and does not allow for integration and inclusivity - access to this lounge is steward controlled. The Ability Suite has a refreshments bar with a low level counter.

### Parking

Free parking for all wheelchair users (other disabled groups have to apply to the club) which is situated about 50 metres from the disabled supporters' entrance to the stadium. Disabled parking bays are no different in size to non-disabled - do not allow extra space for accessible parking. From the car park there is a considerable slope down to the entrance point with level access within the stadium.

Disabled seating – no segregation of home and away disabled fans

**Wheelchair Users - 0.15% of stadium seating allocation - very limited choice of seating area (Accessible Stadia Guide (ASG) - 42% of recommended).** 120 wheelchair spaces with PA/carer seats alongside. 104 positioned in covered three-tiered area in the South East corner of the stadium. Sightlines on lower tier (third of all 120 allocated wheelchair spaces) are severely restricted as fans in front stand - TV monitors have been installed televising the game. 16 of the wheelchair spaces are located at the top of 2 quadrants added in 2007 (8 in each) and are accessed via lifts - these are especially high up with a good view.

**Visually Impaired Supporters - 0.027% of stadium seating allocation - no seating area choice. 21 places with PA/carer seated alongside.** Radio headsets are available on matchdays - no audio described commentary - club match commentary is available via Manchester United Radio (1413 AM).

**Ambulant Disabled Supporters - (Amenity Seating) - 0.028% of stadium seating allocation - no seating area choice.** 22 spaces located in front row of the second tier of the lower East Stand. They are accessed via the wheelchair user section and are elevated and covered, with additional grab rails and an easy access walkway.

**Hearing Impaired - no specific facilities in place within the stadium bowl.** Induction loop facilities at all customer contact points.

## **1.5. Villa Park – Aston Villa**

42,573 seater stadium - there are plans to increase seating to nearly 51,000 as part of Olympics 2012 and 2018 World Cup bid.

### Toilets and Catering

Toilets are directly behind the wheelchair area, with radar locks and keys available from stewards. The refreshment facilities have been adapted for both wheelchair users and ambulant disabled with full access to all catering outlets with steward assistance available if requested.

### Parking

100 disabled car parking spaces available + other car parks subject to availability. Additional parking available further away but drop off passes can be issued with at least 7 days notice. Area around the ground is hilly with ramps and lifts operating in the stadium.

Disabled seating – no segregation of home and away disabled fans

**Wheelchair Places - 0.19% of stadium seating allocation - no seating area choice (Accessible Stadia Guide (ASG) - 38% of recommended).** 83 wheelchair spaces in total. An elevated mid tier position provides the viewing area for wheelchair user supporters (the length of the Trinity Road Stand). The area allows all PAs to sit alongside with all positions fully covered. Sightlines are generally good.

**Visually Impaired - can sit in any area of ground - no specific amenity seating.** Local club radio available. Supporters can hire a portable receiver subject to availability. Headsets are provided free of charge. No audio described commentary.

**Ambulant - no specific amenity seats.** There is a dedicated area in the Home supporters' area, or alternatively the club will accommodate individual requests. Away

supporters are accommodated with their own supporters. No dedicated amenity seating with extra leg room, etc.

**Hearing Impaired - no specific arrangements in place.**

## **2. England World Cup bid 2018**

### **2.1. Press release - FA Confirms Board for 2018 World Cup Bid on 13th October 2008**

The FA has confirmed who will be the members of the Executive Board in preparation for a bid to stage the 2018 World Cup. The FA's wholly owned subsidiary company, England 2018 Limited, will coordinate the Bid and the makeup of the Board ensures that the Bid will draw on experience and achievement within football, world sport, international relations and the global business community.

FA Chairman Lord Triesman will Chair England 2018 supported by two Deputy Chairmen; Lord Mawhinney and David Gill. David Gill is Chief Executive of European Champions Manchester United and Lord Mawhinney is Chairman of the Football League. The government will be represented by the Minister for Sport, Gerry Sutcliffe. The Minister for Sport will remain the government's representative throughout the bidding process. The recruitment process for the England 2018 Chief Executive and Chief Operating Officer is ongoing. These appointments will also sit on the Executive Board.

There will also be three non-Executive Directors on the Bid team. Sir Keith Mills, is Deputy Chairman of LOCOG and was International President and CEO of the successful 2012 Olympic bid, and is one of three Non Executive Directors along with Baroness Amos, who has served as CEO of the Equal Opportunities Commission, Leader of the House of Lords and Secretary of State for International Development and Sir Martin Sorrell who is CEO of WPP, the world's largest advertising and marketing services group.

The Prime Minister's ambassador, Richard Caborn, a former Minister for Sport will provide support for the new Board after accepting an invitation to join strategic meetings of the Board but will not hold voting rights. In addition to the recruitment of CEO and COO, a number of senior management posts have been advertised nationally. In the interim, Former FA Director of Corporate Affairs Simon Johnson is Acting Chief Operating Officer.

Lord Triesman said: "I am delighted we have established an outstanding team of Board members who are committed to bringing the World Cup Finals back to England. Within this group, there is a wealth of experience that will be integral to the formulation of a successful Bid. England has to earn the right to stage the 2018 FIFA World Cup. Over the coming months, **we will have to show we can do so to the highest standards and with the right values.** People around the world football family will have views about what produces a great World Cup and we will be listening and learning. If we have the honour of succeeding it will be because we earned the right from the members of our international family. **I am confident this team will put together a Bid which exceeds FIFA's requirements and expectations by making the best possible case for a World Cup in England. We also want to show that a World Cup on these shores will benefit the development of football around the world and create positive change.** The creation of this team puts us in an excellent position to develop further these objectives when FIFA outlines its requirements later this month."

## 2.2. Further press release on 20th November 2008

The Football Association's Bid Company, England 2018 Ltd has today announced the appointment of Andy Anson as Chief Executive to the Bid project. Anson, 44, is currently Chief Executive - Europe - for the ATP, the men's professional tennis tour, and will take up his new role with the Bid Company in January, 2009. He was previously Commercial Director with Manchester United and also spent three years in Los Angeles working for the Walt Disney Corporation. Andy said: "It is an absolute privilege to be invited to take the role and play a part in the bid to bring the World Cup tournament back to England in 2018. This project is a chance for us to show that England can stage a successful tournament on behalf of the football world and I'm extremely excited by the prospect."

"It's a tremendous challenge and within the excitement there's also a huge responsibility for all of us working on the project. **A World Cup here can benefit the nation and unite communities across the country** but this is also a Bid that will aim to unite the entire globe. **We have fantastic infrastructure already in place – including some of the best and most famous stadia in world football** - but that alone will not be enough.

## 3. Clubs preparing for 2018 World Cup Bid

- 3.1. Several venues seem to have been 'tagged' as potential venues for the England 2018 World Cup bid that will need to provide larger capacity stadia. We have heard rumours that funding is already being made available for such venues to make improvements.

NADS is aware that Aston Villa FC (Villa Park) is one of the selected venues along with Sheffield United (Bramall Lane).

We have recently heard that Wolverhampton Wanderers has also been identified for possible expansion. Our early information is that there is no intent from the club at this time to make significant access improvements for disabled supporters. The club currently has 82 wheelchair spaces and should have 183; it meets only 46% of ASG. We are also aware that the club is unable to provide for further wheelchair users who may wish to attend games with games over subscribed.

### 3.2. Sheffield United

The club has announced plans to extend their stadium in 2 phases. Phase 1 will add 3200 seats to the current stadium capacity. The club website announced plans and invitations to view draft plans for Phase 1 with no mention of disabled facilities.

It recently came to the attention of NADS that Sheffield United FC staff had asked their local disabled supporters to sign a statement that club representatives had written. In effect this statement was a disclaimer that said that no improvements for disabled supporters would be needed in the next building phase. The disabled fans were not sure about what they were signing and turned to NADS who advised them not to sign and asked for an urgent meeting with the club. Discussions are now underway to ensure correct process and implementation of necessary improvements in line with Accessible Stadia Guidance.

### 3.3. Original letter as drafted by Sheffield United staff for disabled fans to sign – Oct 2008

Dear

As you are aware The National Association of Disabled Supporters (NADS) recently introduced their 'State of The Game Document', which highlights the failing of many clubs to provide adequate access and facilities for disabled supporters.

In this document NADS lay down a blueprint for clubs to follow with regard to providing improved access and facilities for disabled supporters.

Sheffield United Disabled Supporters (SUDS) are committed to improving access and facilities for disabled supporters at all football stadiums and particularly Bramall Lane, therefore we are pleased that our regular meetings with the Club allow us to identify if and where any improvements can be made, having for example resulted in access gates recently being placed in John Street which have improved access and egress significantly.

Following our recent discussion and review of facilities at Bramall Lane, Sheffield United Disabled Supporters (SUDS) have agreed that the Club are currently meeting the requirements of the 'State of the Game' document, within the limitations of the existing design and layout of the Stadium. *Not the case.*

Sheffield United Football Club has around 150 season ticket holders in the designated disabled area of the Stadium, both wheelchair users and ambulant disabled supporters. *Club has 95 wheelchair spaces, 85 home and 10 away and should have 183.*

Sheffield United Disabled Supporters Association (SUDS) represent the interests of these supporters, who have a wide and varying range of disabilities; we currently have almost 100 members.

Further to our meeting on Wednesday October 1<sup>st</sup> 2009, at which we discussed the planned redevelopment of the Kop and South Stand.

It was outlined at the meeting that the KOP part of the redevelopment is to be an extension of the rake of existing seating, the committee accepted that design and lift access implications would inhibit the provision of viewing at height for wheelchair users in the KOP stage of the redevelopment. *NADS (along with clubs architects) has identified suitable elevated areas for prescriptive numbers of wheelchair space.*

Although wheelchair spaces could be provided at the bottom of the KOP, it was agreed that these would be similar to unsold spaces already provided on John Street; on reflection access would also be an issue.

Sightlines in these wheelchair spaces would be restricted and would not meet our criteria to provide viewing at height with protection from the weather for our members.

The SUDS committee also confirmed that the KOP, they feel, is not the best environment for wheelchair users or ambulant disabled supporters, due to possible hostile crowd behaviour, bad language etc. *Simply not true – disabled fans are no different and want to be part of crowd.*

NADS would ideally like to see the provision of wheelchair spaces in all new stands, and the Club, we understand, are prepared to provide a small number of wheelchair spaces at the front of the KOP, subject to Safety Advisory Group approval, SUDS however do not see this as essential. *Not true.*

As the Stadium develops, our long term goal is for the Club to provide additional wheelchair spaces offering the option of viewing from height with adequate protection from the weather.

SUDS are therefore fully supportive of the Clubs planning application for the project to go ahead in 2 stages, with Stage 1 to have either no additional, or a small number of wheelchair spaces at the front of the KOP. *Not true.*

We would of course make the proviso that in the South Stand (Stage 2) of the project:

- There is the provision of additional wheelchair spaces offering uninterrupted viewing from height with fully covered spaces and adequate protection from the weather.
- There is access from the South Stand car park to the new disabled spaces via a least 2 lifts for both wheelchair users and the ambulant disabled.
- That SUDS are fully involved at the design and planning stage of the redevelopment (Stage 2), as we feel our involvement could help with practical issues that may not be considered by an 'able bodied' person.

We would hope that the provision of significant disabled spaces in Stage 2 of the project will enable the Club to perhaps meet GREEN GUIDE requirements for a new stadium. i.e. 186 wheelchair spaces, with a similar number of ambulant disabled spaces, and look forward to completion of the project. *Phase 1 would require that there be 192 spaces for wheelchair users and so on as per Accessible stadia Guide.*

Yours sincerely, Sheffield United Disabled Supporters Association

### 3.4. NADS conclusion

The Sheffield United disabled supporters had no real understanding of what they were being asked to sign and trusted the club was doing the right thing. It was by chance that this was first brought to NADS attention.

NADS feels that this is an example of how clubs may persuade local disabled fans to agree to unacceptable disabled supporter improvements. The club does not follow Accessible Stadia Guidance which lays out clear worked examples for such situations.

Current facilities at Sheffield United are not great, numbers are low and away seating is very poor. The new and ongoing discussions for revised improvements during Phases 1 and 2 are more positive and we hope that disabled facilities should be better provided as a result. *Following a meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> January with the club, NADS and SU disabled supporters; an access plan (with timelines) for improvements in line with ASG still needs to be agreed. The club have identified solutions to improve disabled seating and numbers.*

## 4. **Stadia new builds, extensions and improvements.**

- 4.1. Currently only stadia (or clubs) that apply for a Football Stadia Improvement Fund (Football Foundation) grant are required to consult with NADS as part of the funding agreement.
- 4.2. Some local disabled supporters have a good understanding of the Accessible Stadia Guidance and building regulations, others do not. Unfortunately many football clubs end up with disabled facilities that could have been better designed and laid out. Architects and stadium planners are asked to make savings by the club and unless disabled supporter advocates have a strong voice at the planning stage things can go wrong.
- 4.3. An example is the new Emirates Stadium (Arsenal) where a significant amount of retrograde work has been done to improve sightlines and so on. Arsenal refused to involve NADS.



- 4.4. Manchester United could have done much more to improve deficits when building the 2 new quadrants. Local disabled supporters were consulted via a club employee only and were not in a position to put a strong case for making necessary disabled seating additions in line with the stadium capacity and Accessible Stadia Guide.

## **5. Club Access Audits**

### **5.1. FA document: Addressing the Requirements of Part III of the DDA Act (1995) - A Management Guide for Football Clubs - Richard Wood Sept 2003.**

Page 23:

#### **What does “Reasonable” mean?**

Whilst the duty to take reasonable measures or steps is a requirement of the Act, prescribing what will be reasonable in each and every situation depends on local factors and is therefore not possible. A number of factors affect “reasonableness” and these are discussed below.

However, taking no action at all to improve access to goods, services and facilities is not reasonable. The DDA requires clubs to anticipate that they will have disabled customers and plan accordingly. Thus, the first duty of the club is to meet the “anticipatory” requirement that they are likely to need to make some reasonable adjustments and change some policies and working practices. The most effective way to establish what this will entail is to audit club facilities, services and operations and draw up a schedule of possible reasonable adjustments. The club will then need to make a judgement concerning which of the identified reasonable adjustments are effective, practicable and affordable using the items listed below to aid decisions.

Pages 31 - 35:

#### **The FSIF/FLA “Accessible Stadia” Report**

Their comprehensive report brings together the major design and access considerations that enable compliance with both Building Regulations and the DDA. It will be essential reading for clubs who are building new facilities and the courts are likely to view this document as detailing the standards that should be met. For existing facilities, the report can be used as a template against which the level of access to the stadium and other facilities can be measured.

The report will also be useful for clubs seeking external consultants to carry out audit work.

There is a chapter devoted to advising clubs on what skills they should be seeking from possible consultants as well as practical advice on how to set a consultancy brief for audit work.

**The report will be influential, not least because of the signatories to it. These include the**

**Football Licensing Authority, FA Premier League, Football Association, Football League, the National Association of Disabled Supporters (NADS) and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. In viewing the report, the courts are likely to conclude that the signatories agree that its contents set the standards to be met and that attaining those standards is likely to be viewed as reasonable.**

#### **Club Policies**

Developing a club policy is a useful starting point for developing a plan of action. This clear statement of intent enables the club to commence on a programme that will lead to:

- The recognition of the need for an audit that covers physical aspects such as the stadium and its facilities, club shops etc and operations such as ticketing, merchandising etc. The FSIF/FLA report gives information on what the club should expect from anyone appointed to do this work.

## **5.2. NADS Conclusion**

NADS is aware that very few clubs have carried out full external access audits as described within the Football Association DDA Guide and the Accessible Stadia Guide. Some have done a 'walk-round' critique with local disabled supporters. There is little evidence of completed access audits with resultant access business plans or access strategies to meet ASG requirements at most clubs.

The football authorities have provided no further clear direction to football clubs on access audits and the requirement for continued access improvements (in line with ASG and the DDA) since 2004. Neither do they appear to have been monitoring the situation. On several occasions, league representatives have publically stated that the ASG is for new stadia only. This is quite simply not true and as confirmed by government and indeed the ASG itself.

The Football Task Force report of 1998, Improving Facilities for Disabled Supporters also advised that NADS should carry out annual access audits to monitor progress. Funding for this project was awarded once only with NADS ground appraisals carried out in and around 1999/2000. Further funding support to monitor progress has since been declined.

The Football Licensing Authority and their inspectors could and should take responsibility for monitoring and enforcing equal access in line with the Accessible Stadia Guide and DDA.

The FLA as appointed by DCMS has the responsibility of issuing licenses to football clubs to host matches with spectators as described in the Football Supporters Act 1989.

"Before granting, amending, refusing or revoking a license, the FLA is required to have regard (among other relevant circumstances) to whether the equipment provided, procedures used and other arrangements enforced at the premises are such as are reasonably required to prevent or minimise the effect of offences at designated football matches; and to other such considerations as the Secretary of State determines."

## **6. NADS proposed plan for change**

6.1. NADS has proposed a plan for change that we believe most clubs would be keen to take up. The goal would be to achieve equal access and experience for all supporters.

- There should be an independent access audit of at each club, to examine their facilities, services and policies, with all necessary improvements identified and 'costed' and a clearly defined business plan or access strategy described. An agreement will be found as to what is truly achievable and reasonable and a timeline agreed.
- A central fund should be set up for clubs lower down the football pyramid to assist them in making all necessary improvements. This could come from football and/or Government.

- Football and Government should appoint independent assessors (Football Licensing Authority) to monitor progress at each club and ensure that improvements are made. This body of assessors should carry the necessary authority to carry out its work and could include NADS representatives among its stakeholders.
  - Annual inspections should be carried out by 'hit squads' as recommended by the Football Task Force in 1998. This should be funded by football and the access reports should be routinely reviewed by the football authorities, Government and NADS.
- 6.2. This plan has been presented to the Sports Minister, Gerry Sutcliffe and the All Party Parliamentary Football Group (APFPG) Inquiry into English Football & Its Governance. The APFPG summary report with recommendations will be published in early 2009.
- 6.3. In 12 years football managed to convert most stadia to all seated after the terrible tragedy, Hillsborough. When football and government put their mind to a project, anything is possible. We must join together to put things right for our disabled supporters.
- 6.4. Football has led the way in other areas of diversity such as anti racism and has the opportunity to lead the way for disabled people. Speak to any disabled person or their family or friends; no matter what their disability they will describe a life full of hurdles. In fact it is the environment around them that is disabling, rather than the person disabled.

## 7. NADS Funding

- 7.1. NADS receives very little funding when compared to similar organisations for non-disabled football supporters. Current funding is provided by the Football Association (£10,000 for 2008/09) and 5 year sliding scale part funding for a part time Administrator is provided from the Football Foundation (£10,000 for 2009, £6,000 for 2010 and finally £4,750 for 2011).
- 7.2. NADS has a large and representative pan disability disabled membership and works with the football authorities and clubs within the UK and Europe. This includes support for England and club disabled fans who follow their teams overseas. NADS also represents disabled spectators including those of other sports including rugby and cricket and sits on the Built Environment Access Panel for Olympics 2012. NADS currently receives no funding for its important international work on behalf of football.
- 7.3. NADS Membership:
- 32 Disabled Supporter Associations/Groups (DSAs) within football with more than 10,000 associated members - (46 DSAs exist in total)
  - 27 Professional Football clubs
  - Disabled Branch of England Fans (499 disabled members)
  - 4,150 individuals
- 7.4. Comparison with other organisations.
- As an example, the **Football Supporters Federation (FSF)** receives an appropriate level of funding to support its members. From their most recent annual accounts, this includes:
- £225,000 per annum provided in equal shares by the Football Association, Premier League and Professional Football Association.
  - The FA and Premier League also sponsor the FSF AGM each providing £5,000.
  - UEFA have granted £40,000 for the FSF European meeting in 2008.

- The Football League provides Millennium Stadium box seats and Wembley Stadium seats for onward sale at a value of £4,500.
- The Home Office provides £140,000 pa and Nationwide £35,000 pa (as an FA England team sponsor) funding for England fans information and support. A 2006 World Cup guidebook grant was also awarded for £45,000 along with T-Mobile World Cup Sponsorship of £16,000.

We are pleased that the FSF is able to continue its work for non-disabled supporters and receives more than £480,000 per annum (from 2008 accounts, excludes other sponsorship such as EA Sports) from the football family and government. However we believe that football should show the same level of commitment and respect to disabled supporters and NADS. Currently NADS receives only £20,000 per annum and this is not secure from 2009 and whilst disabled facilities and services remain unequal it is vital that NADS be able to continue to lobby for improvements and to promote disability awareness within football and all sports.

- 7.5. In a recent meeting with Gerry Sutcliffe, Sports Minister at DCMS and the NADS President and Chair, he agreed that NADS should be funded appropriately and also agreed that the current situation seems discriminatory. He has written to the football chiefs to ask them to meet to discuss NADS/disabled supporter issues. We understand that these meetings are now scheduled to take place.

## **8. Chairman of the Football Association - on Disabled Supporters Facilities.**

- 8.1. Lord Triesman gave evidence to the All Party Parliamentary Football Party Inquiry into Football Governance in December 2008.

- 8.2. When questioned about the issues for disabled supporters he said:

**Lord Faulkner:** “.....Furthermore, do you think that there is a strong case for improving the facilities for disabled supporters at football grounds? There is evidence that standards are very patchy.”

**Lord Triesman:** “.....It is important to ensure that we are assisting in every way that we can to improve grounds in the pyramid so that movement up and down, which comes with playing ability and winning points, is successful. **It is always argued that it is expensive to ensure that grounds really do answer the questions of the fans who happen to have a disability, but rather unashamedly I am not very worried about that argument against it. I can see no good reason why we should say that it is okay for some fans, but not okay for fans with disabilities.** We have work to do, and we must continue to have a discussion and to find funds from whatever source—stadium or (Football) Foundation—to achieve that aim.”

## **9. Written questions from Lord Faulkner of Worcester to the House of Lords – 20th January 2009**

- 9.1. To ask Her Majesty's Government whether replies have yet been received from the Premier League and the Football League to the letters sent by the Minister for Sport in April 2008 regarding the provision of facilities for disabled supporters at football grounds.
- 9.2. To ask Her Majesty Government's whether, pursuant to the reply from Lord Carter of Coles to Lord Faulkner of Worcester on 17 November 2008 (col WA 164), the Minister

for Sport has yet met the Premier League and the Football League to discuss their member clubs' obligations under disability discrimination legislation to ensure their stadiums comply with the Accessible Stadia Guidance; and if so, what the outcome of any such meeting was.

- 9.3. To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will commission a survey of the extent to which member clubs in the Premier League and the Football League meet their obligations under disability discrimination legislation to ensure their stadiums comply with the Accessible Stadia Guidance.
- 9.4. To ask Her Majesty's Government what sanctions are available to enforce compliance with Accessible Stadia Guidance by clubs in the Premier League and the Football League.
- 9.5. To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will give guidance to the Football Licensing Authority to take into account the provision of facilities for disabled supporters as a condition for granting a licence to admit spectators to designated football matches under Clause 10 (12 d) of the Football Spectators Act 1989.
- 9.6. To ask Her Majesty's Government to what extent the stadia chosen to host football events at the 2012 Olympics comply with the Accessible Stadia Guidance.

## **10. Landmark accessibility ruling for disabled people - Friday 16th January 2009**

In the first ruling of its kind, a judge has ordered the Royal Bank of Scotland to install a lift so that a wheelchair user can have the same access as any other customer.

Furthermore, in recognising the embarrassing treatment the young man experienced at the hands of the bank, he was awarded £6500 - the highest ever compensation payout in this kind of case.

In taking the case against the bank with the support of the Equality and Human Rights Commission, David Allen, a 17 year-old wheelchair user from Sheffield, has secured a historic legal victory.

**It is unlawful for businesses and public bodies to treat disabled people less favourably. But since the Disability Discrimination Act came into force in 1995, a judge has never before ordered an injunction to force an organisation to make physical changes to its property so that disabled people can gain access.**

**Mr. Allen's case will help ensure that a great number of disabled people in Britain are able to access goods, facilities and services.** His case was taken with the support of the Commission and he was represented by the Sheffield Law Centre.

David Allen's legal battle began when, contrary to signage outside his local branch of the bank and information posted on its website, he found that he could not gain access. In a catalogue of incidents, David had to discuss his current account details in the street, breaching his right to confidentiality and causing him significant embarrassment. The bank then suggested that he should use the nearest accessible RBS branch, even though it was a 10 mile journey and amounted to a 2 1/2 hour round trip journey by bus.

Judge Dowse of Sheffield County Court ruled that the Bank discriminated against Mr. Allen by not providing physical access to wheelchair users in its Sheffield city centre

branch, and that the bank made no serious attempts to make the branch accessible to wheelchair users as required under the law.

In handing down his judgement, Judge Dowse said:

"In the light of the findings, I have made it is plain that David has suffered from discrimination and that he has suffered from considerable embarrassment caused by the Bank". Quoting a previous judgment, Judge Dowse described discrimination against disabled people as, "a social evil".

John Wadham, Group Director, Legal at the Equality and Human Rights Commission said:

"When it comes to sensitive matters like our finances, we all value the discretion and security that Bank branches offer. Why should a wheelchair user be denied this service when all that is needed is a little thought on behalf of a company? The investment in some common sense facilities for wheelchair users is tiny compared to the reputational benefits for a company that is seen to treat all its customers well.

David could have settled for a behind the scenes sum of money but he stood by his principles and his tenacity will mean a great number of disabled people will now benefit from the precedent set by this case."

On hearing the Court's decision, David Allen said: "I'm glad justice has been done. I only wanted them to comply with the law and provide disabled access so I could get into my bank like my friends."

## 11. Slides showing examples of current issues:

### 9.1. Poor conditions - muddy, wet and uneven surfaces.....



Birmingham City – mud bath when it rains.



West Bromwich Albion lots of puddles and the surface is sloped with PA/carers sat behind barriers. Views blocked by stewards, police and photographers.

### 9.2. Poor views at pitch side and no shelter.....



Everton – lower than pitch, far side of pitch not visible.



Bolton – police and stewards refuse to move.



.....and why all disabled seats should not be pitchside.



### 9.3. Poor sightlines.....miss all the action



Manchester City away – these away fans stood for whole game.



Charlton Athletic away section for wheelchair users and ambulant disabled. No view of half of pitch. These fans stood for most of the game.



Manchester United – no view of third of pitch or goal mouth. Wheelchair users are prevented from moving forward to see pitch by stewards who do little to get fans in front to sit down.

### 9.4. Poor access and unable to communicate with PA/carers sat behind, often with no leg room.....



Liverpool – Box painted on floor with very limited space to pass along row when all wheelchair users in place – one at a time. PA/carers sit in a seat behind with little room. All pitchside and away disabled fans sit directly in front of home fans.



Everton – very restricted space for PA/carers who have to sit at an angle. Stewards ensure wheelchair users do not deviate out of allocated painted box.





Arsenal away section – PA/carers sat behind – difficult to communicate in a noisy match – this is a new stadium.

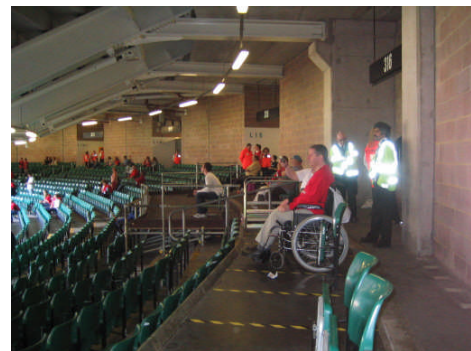


Blackburn Rovers with helper seats behind, no shelter from weather – get soaked when it rains.

#### 9.5. It's not all bad.....



Good view at Middlesbrough.



Good views at Millennium Stadium, Cardiff following retro refit with super riser.



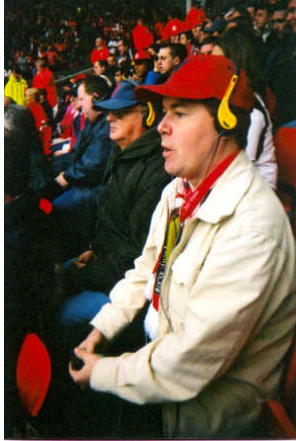
Arsenal home section – aluminium raised floor 'retro-fitted' to elevate platform by 600mm. A low cost and minimally invasive solution to improve sightlines.



MK Dons.....great view.



Port Vale with a great view. PA/carer seats have now been moved to back of platform to enable more seats as demand has grown. If funding was available, club (League 2) would be pleased to extend platform and add an away section.



Blind fans enjoying the game with full audio described commentary.



Havant and Waterloo FC from the Unibond Southern League (non professional) showing what can be done!

## 12. Premier League disabled fans provision with wheelchair user spaces

Club	Stadium Capacity	Wheelchair Spaces			Segregated	Accessible Stadia Guidance		Comments
		Home	Away	Total		Required	%	
<b>Arsenal</b>	60,432	229	12	241	yes	<b>251</b>	<b>96.02%</b>	New Stadium built after Accessible Stadia produced. Club failed to provide sufficient away wheelchair user seating with carers sat behind. Have had to make modifications to home wheelchair user areas. VI facilities excellent. In main a successful new stadium for disabled supporters with good facilities and services
<b>Aston Villa</b>	42,573	75	8	83	no	<b>215</b>	<b>38.60%</b>	No segregation for away disabled supporters. Meets less than 40 % of Accessible Stadia Guide numbers. Club have confirmed that they are turning away disabled ticket requests (particularly wheelchair users) at every game and could easily sell more if facilities were available. The demand depends on the games with a significant increase in demand for the "big" games. They have seen a significant explosion in numbers requesting ambulant seating and currently try and allocate these in general stand seating as there are no specific arrangements. They have spare radio headsets for visually impaired supporters at most games and have facilities to accept guide dogs but would prefer notice.
<b>Blackburn</b>	31,367	262	20	282	yes	<b>184</b>	<b>153.26 %</b>	All wheelchair spaces are pitchside, painted box on the floor and carers sit behind. There is no fence behind and if your team scores fans can surge forward. Open to the elements. Difficult to see past security stewards who are seated in front as you are actually below pitch level.
<b>Bolton</b>	27,879	160	23	183	yes	<b>174</b>	<b>105.17 %</b>	All wheelchair spaces pitchside with painted box on the floor and collapsible chair provided for carer. There is a fence between you and fans behind, so feels safer. View blocked by police and security stewards in front of you who often refuse to move. Camera crew and photographers also obstruct views. Home positions are slightly elevated which helps. Sold out of wheelchair seats in 2006/07 but this season, some spare capacity (about 90% utilised). They have no VI season ticket holders and have spaces available at most games. Ambulant spaces are approximately 80% used. Numbers obviously depend on who is playing/team performance.

Club	Stadium Capacity	Wheelchair Spaces			Segregated	Accessible Stadia Guidance		Comments
		Home	Away	Total		Required	%	
Chelsea	42,522	100	4	104	yes	213	48.83%	Older stadium with poor disabled facilities overall and severely limited disabled ticketing availability, no parity with non disabled. Mostly pitchside with only a few elevated. Elevated areas for away wheelchair users (max. 4 - less for some games) with no view if supporters in front stand. Mix of free + paid for tickets. Home wheelchair users = 50 are on a rota 1:5 basis (free tickets) & 50 are full price tickets sold on a match basis. Need to be a disabled Chelsea FC member to join either scheme - capped at 600 wheelchair users. Membership scheme has 500 more wanting to attend than club can accommodate. The real demand is unknown & will be even higher with membership capped. They have some VI headsets with ambulant/VI accommodated in same section as wheelchairs. Away allocation seems to vary depending on how many non-disabled supporters the away club take but is always less than the 10% & 15% PL and FA rules.
Everton	40,565	101	13	114	yes	211	54.03%	As an away fan, the spaces are very cramped (no room for carer) and you sit below level of pitch. No cover from weather. Added 8 home wheelchair user spaces last season - new elevated platform. Away disabled toilets very cramped, no room for carer and wheelchair user, transfer difficult. New stadia planned.
Fulham	24,600	31	7	38	yes	165	23.03%	Away disabled platform is difficult to access via a non-DDA compliant ramp and adverse camber. Carers sit behind but with not enough room to do so safely or comfortably and with no view of the pitch. Wheelchair users and ambulant disabled have no view of the near goal if supporters in front/to the side stand up. Far corner flag/touchline is obliterated by the near stand. Staff are generally helpful and the disabled portaloo has recently been replaced by a permanent structure.
Hull City	25,504	272	32	304	yes	167	182.04 %	New stadium with overall good facilities reported.

Club	Stadium Capacity	Wheelchair Spaces			Segregated	Accessible Stadia Guidance		Comments
		Home	Away	Total		Required	%	
Liverpool	45,362	92	8	100	no	221	45.25%	Meets less than 45% of ASG and severely oversubscribed. Operate a rota system for non season ticket holders. Current season ticket waiting list of around 14 years (average of 3 years for non disabled). Away fans sit in front of home fans and told not to celebrate. Significant risk of physical/verbal abuse. Pitchside seating with painted box on floor and carer sat behind - very little space for carer to sit which causes wheelchair users to spill forward outside of painted box. This makes access for other wheelchair users more difficult, space is very limited. Positioned on slope which feels as if you are falling! Get soaked when it rains - no shelter and stand roof ends immediately above and leaks badly. Serious threats and abuse to away wheelchair fans not uncommon. Plans for new stadium now on hold indefinitely.
Manchester City	47,500	189	9	198	yes	225	88.00%	Club does not provide sufficient numbers for away wheelchair users and very poor sightlines. Club personnel have identified that this could be rectified fairly easily. Council owned.
Manchester United	76,212	108	12	120	no	283	42.40%	Meets less than 43% of ASG. Severely oversubscribed for wheelchair users who cannot buy season tickets or go on a waiting list. Club operates 1:3 rota system for some wheelchair fans with remainder using a phone in 'first come first served' procedure on night before game for remaining seats. Ambulant disabled pay for tickets. Wheelchair users and VI free. Tickets only sold through Disabled Supporters Association & must be MUDSA member to qualify - unique to disabled fans. More than 750 wheelchair members (in 2007) with only 120 spaces in total for home & away. Club had an opportunity to address disabled seating numbers during recent stadium extension. Very limited views on lower wheelchair platform due to persistent standing. The club have added TV monitors - situation worse as stewards no longer encourage fans in front to remain seated. VI and ambulant fans have allocated seating areas with 20 Ambulant spaces. Away fans sat with home fans with incidents of abuse. Disabled fans match day stewards provide excellent service. Club has an 'Ability Suite' for disabled fans only (stewarded) on match days - would prefer to see inclusive refreshment and bar areas
Middlesbrough	35,120	100	15	115	yes	195	58.97%	Elevated positions for away fans offering good views.
Newcastle	52,387	197	8	205	yes	234	87.61%	Extremely high up at back of stands, with no other chose of seating areas. Problem for anyone with vertigo.

Club	Stadium Capacity	Wheelchair Spaces			Segregated	Accessible Stadia Guidance		Comments
		Home	Away	Total		Required	%	
Portsmouth	20,288	34	5	39	no	151	25.83%	Meets less than 25% of ASG. Very poor disabled facilities for both home and away fans. Very few away wheelchair user spaces. Poor toilet facilities. New stadium now on hold as no finance.
Stoke City	28,384	91	21	112	yes	175	64.00%	Disabled spaces allocated around stadium bowl in elevated positions. Very poor sightlines if fans in front stand. Friendly and helpful staff.
Sunderland	49,000	180	20	200	yes	228	87.72%	Down a very steep slope to pitchside locations. Carer sits behind. At risk from flying footballs, the weather and passersby. A shame as a level entrance would have given access to an elevated position – an opportunity missed
Tottenham Hotspur	36,236	51	5	56	no	199	28.14%	Meets less than 30% of ASG numbers and seriously oversubscribed. Mix of elevated/pitchside for home fans but only pitchside for away fans with carer behind. Some ambulant disabled spaces are on a step up and have very restricted legroom. Views nearly always blocked by stewards, police, staff, etc. 4 match day stewards trained in British Sign Language. Hospitality not accessible, steps from bar to boxes. New stadium underway.
West Bromwich Albion	26,500	141	21	162	yes	174	93.10%	Wheelchair users pitchside and positioned on a slope with carers sat behind a barrier. Open to the elements.
West Ham	35,657	115	6	121	no	197	61.42%	Severely oversubscribed. Wheelchair users' view is blocked by a Perspex safety barrier meaning half the pitch has a clear view and the rest cloudy. Away fans isolated from own fans, with catering facilities in home stands which can be a little frightening. Only 1 lift which takes 2 wheelchairs and thus can lead to a delay in exiting the ground. Home areas suffer poor sightlines from barrier in front & no carer seats. Pitchside positions are below pitch level. Dedicated stewards wear 'highly-visible' tabards and provide excellent services.
Wigan Athletic	25,023	64	14	78	yes	165	47.27%	Meets less than 34% of ASG numbers. Elevated wheelchair positions but no seats for carers who stand or sit remotely.

Visually Impaired provision and commentary available (ADC - Full Audio Described Commentary)						
Club	Capacity	Home	Away	ADC	Service provided	Fan Comments
<b>Arsenal</b>	60,432			yes	Full audio descriptive commentary service. Receivers and transmitters have been used for away matches in Europe. Dedicated guide dog relieving and refreshment area + offers audio matchday programmes on CD	Provided with receiver and full audio descriptive commentary
<b>Aston Villa</b>	42,573				Radio receivers to club radio. Can accommodate guide dogs, prefer notice	Provided with receiver as an away fan during 2007/08 but it did not work
<b>Blackburn</b>	31,367	22			Local radio receivers only	
<b>Bolton</b>	27,879	30			Local Radio receivers only	Was not offered headset (2007/08 season/away fan)
<b>Chelsea</b>	42,522				Digital TV radios - delayed commentary making it impossible to follow match and understand what is going on. Club ignored RNIB advice	Following previous attempts, supporter felt it wasn't worth the "hassle" of requesting a headset as the game was broadcast on national radio, used on headset.
<b>Everton</b>	40,565	50			Hospital radio, home fans only	Following previous attempts, supporter felt it wasn't worth the "hassle" of requesting a headset as the game was broadcast on national radio.
<b>Fulham</b>	24,600				Access Audio radio receivers	Was not offered headsets (2007/08 season/away fan) - apparently the equipment is "faulty" - happened again in 2008/09 season
<b>Hull</b>	25,504				No specific arrangements. Take own radio and listen to local radio (if available)	
<b>Liverpool</b>	45,362	60			Hospital radio, home fans only	
<b>Man City</b>	47,500	120			Club/local radio receivers (not good for away fans) - commentators have had some training	Provided with receiver as an away fan during 2007/08 but it only worked if you sat at the back of the stand
<b>Man United</b>	76,212	21			Radio receivers - not trained to give full audio described commentary	Provided with receiver as an away fan during 2007/08 but not full audio described commentary
<b>Middlesbrough</b>	35,120				Portable radios offered	Was not offered a headset (2007/08 season/away fan)
<b>Newcastle</b>	52,387	22			Local radio signal service (home fans only)	Was offered a headset but it didn't work (used own radio as on national station)
<b>Portsmouth</b>	20,288	2			Hospital radio only 2 receivers for home fans	Was not offered headset (2007/08 season/away fan)
<b>Stoke City</b>	28,384				No specific arrangements. Take own radio and listen to local radio	
<b>Sunderland</b>	49,000	40			Local radio only	Headset provided and worked.
<b>Tottenham Hotspur</b>	36,236	22			Access Audio radio receivers - not trained to give full audio described commentary	Was offered a headset but it was faulty (2007/08 season/away fan) - No apology received

Visually Impaired provision and commentary available (ADC - Full Audio Described Commentary)						
Club	Capacity	Home	Away	ADC	Service provided	Fan Comments
<b>West Bromwich Albion</b>	26,500				Headphones with seats at back of main stand. Home and away fans sit together. Otherwise take own radio and hope that it's on local radio! Matchday programme available in alternate format	
<b>West Ham</b>	35,657	65		yes	Full Audio Descriptive commentary service with trained commentators. Dedicated stewards wear 'highly-visible' tabards	2007/08/Away fan - Asked for a receiver but it did not arrive
<b>Wigan</b>	25,023	100			No dedicated service	Was not offered a headset (2007/08 season/away fan)

### 13. Ambulant disabled provisions.

Ambulant disabled spaces and allocations vary from club to club. Some clubs provide ambulant disabled seating areas and others accommodate fans in most accessible parts of stadium.

Parking is an issue for the ambulant disabled and elderly with many clubs not offering dedicated 'drop-off' points where parking is an issue.

A few clubs such as Derby County and Norwich City provide a shuttle service from remote parking areas to the stadium entrance. Dedicated resting points and informed/disability aware stewards and police outside stadia would help.

Many ambulant disabled fans have told us that they have stopped going to games because of this issue.



#### 14. Football League (Championship) disabled provision with wheelchair spaces

Club	Stadium Capacity	Wheelchair Spaces						Accessible Stadia Guidance		Comments
		Home	Away	Total				Required	%	
Barnsley	23,009	59	18	77	no			159	48.43%	
Birmingham City	30,009	65	19	84	yes	6 away; home n/k		180	46.67%	Mostly pitch side on muddy surface for away supporters. Carers sit behind. Risk of flying footballs and open to the elements. View obstructed by stewards/police/other hawkers walking past. 6 away elevated spaces on request. The club have confirmed that they are operating at slightly less than capacity for most games for wheelchair supporters but are full for the "big" games. They believed they could sell more if facilities were available. They have seen a significant rise in numbers requesting ambulant plus carer seating, can currently meet the demand. They have spare radio headsets for visually impaired supporters at most games and have facilities to accept guide dogs with notice.
Blackpool	9,000	41	10	51	yes			90	56.67%	Poor facilities.
Bristol City	21,497	75	16	91	yes			154	59.09%	Wheelchair users have to sit on angled camber/slope in order to see and let ambulant disabled see. Acceptable platform available but stewards refuse to use it (despite ticket office saying that is what it is for!)
Burnley	22,546	22	20	42	no			157	26.75%	
Cardiff City	20,000	28	5	33	yes			150	22.00%	New stadium in 2009?
Charlton Athletic	26,875	96	7	103	yes			170	60.59%	Mix of pitchside and elevated positions for home fans. Away fans enclosed in individual 'pen-like' areas with poor views if supporters in front or to side stand.
Coventry	32,000	71	10	81	no	72	30	186	43.55%	

Club	Stadium Capacity	Wheelchair Spaces			Segregated	Elevated	Pitchside	Accessible Stadia Guidance		Comments
		Home	Away	Total				Required	%	
Crystal Palace	26,309	28	28	56	no			169	33.14%	Away fans sit with home fans. Elevated but poor sightlines due to stand structure.
Derby County	33,597	187	19	206	yes			191	107.85 %	Excellent example of a club making continued improvements to disabled facilities. A combination of pitchside and some elevated positions. Carers sit behind in many areas. Chair lift to elevated away positions with a good view. Areas are with own supporters.
Doncaster Rovers	15,231	114	18	132	yes			125	105.60 %	
Ipswich Town	30,300	98	10	108	no			181	59.67%	Poor facilities for away fans and some good views for home supporters. Club looking to add away pitchside elevated platform for 15 wheelchair users with a new accessible toilet. Seeking funding.
Norwich FC	26,034	71	15	86	yes			168	51.19%	
Nottingham Forest	30,576	63	22	85	no			181	46.96%	Access to pitchside locations via muddy path
Plymouth Argyle	20,922	196	30	226	no			153	147.71 %	
Preston North End	22,225	90	27	117	yes			157	74.52%	
Queens Park Rangers	18,500	24	3	27	no			143	18.88%	Very difficult ground to access and very limited disabled supporters provision. Some elevated positions. Restricted views, away supporters who sit with home fans.
Reading	24,200	74	12	86	yes	86	0	162	53.09%	Generally good facilities spoilt by poor design when supporters in rows in front of wheelchair platform stand. ASG numbers reduced in 2007/08 when club decided to sit carers adjacent to disabled person rather than row in front (for home fans)

Club	Stadium Capacity	Wheelchair Spaces						Accessible Stadia Guidance		Comments
		Home	Away	Total				Required	%	
Sheffield United	30,936	85	10	95	yes	0	95	183	51.91%	No elevated positions. Poor access to seats/toilets etc for away fans. Club attempted to persuade local disabled supporters into accepting promise of future improvements rather than include additional disabled seating in current redevelopment.
Sheffield Wednesday	39,814	87	9	96	no			210	45.71%	
Southampton	32,689	176	23	199	yes	40?		188	105.85 %	
Swansea	20,500	242	10	252	yes	252		151	166.89 %	New stadium with lift access to elevated viewing positions offering excellent views with no restricted views.
Watford	22,000	31	6	37	no	10		156	23.72%	
Wolverhampton Wanderers	29,400	70	12	82	yes			178	46.07%	

Visually Impaired provision and commentary available (ADC - Full Audio Described Commentary)						
Club	Stadium Capacity	Home	Away	ADC	Service provided	Fan Comments
Barnsley	23,009	5			Headphones provided in disabled stand, otherwise sit anywhere and take own radio. Local radio	
Birmingham	30,009	30			Hospital radio	Was not offered equipment (2007/08 season/away fan). Stewards were not aware of whether a facility was available.
Blackpool	9,000				Feed available from press box	
Bristol City	21,497	10	on request	yes	Full Audio Descriptive commentary service - trained commentators	
Burnley	22,546	6			Fixed positions	
Cardiff	20,000	10	on request		Access Audio radio receivers to club radio	
Charlton	26,875	15			Portable radios offered only	
Coventry	32,000				No specific arrangements. Take own radio and listen to local radio	
Crystal Palace	26,309	6			Headphones connected to seats in Arthur Wait stand, home and away fans sat together. Commentary provided by hospital radio	
Derby	33,597	50	on request		Access Audio radio receivers only to club radio. Currently implementing full audio described commentary	2007/08 season/away supporter - Was offered a headset but it didn't work
Doncaster	15,231	9		yes	Full Audio Descriptive commentary service - trained commentators	
Ipswich	30,300	10	on request	yes	Full Audio Descriptive commentary service - trained commentators	
Norwich	26,034	10	on request	yes	Full Audio Descriptive commentary service - trained commentators	
Nottm Forest	30,576	10		yes	Full Audio Descriptive commentary service - trained commentators	
Plymouth	20,922	10	on request	yes	Full Audio Descriptive commentary service - trained commentators	
Preston	22,225				Local radio with headsets available on request	
QPR	18,500	6			Via Fixed positions	
Reading	24,200	12			Hospital radio – Fixed positions and not audio described commentary. Can sit anywhere with local radio commentary on portable radios with club commentary (unlimited)	Was not offered equipment (2007/08 season/away fan).
Sheffield United	30,936	14			Can sit anywhere and receive club radio	
Sheffield Wednesday	39,814	20			Headsets provided and collected from main reception, which is extra hassle not necessary. Commentary by hospital radio is reasonably unbiased	
Southampton	32,689	12			Headsets provided, these are handed out and collected back in by stewards. Club radio only	
Swansea	20,500	10			Access Audio radio receivers only	
Watford	22,000	12		yes	Full Audio Descriptive commentary service - trained commentators	
Wolverhampton	29,400				Club radio commentary	