



# **A Good Practice Guide to Creating an Accessible Stadium and Matchday Experience**

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# FOREWORD

Football is a sport for everyone no matter what their creed, colour or religious belief and as such the experience of witnessing a live football match, and the highs and lows it brings to fans around the world, should also be accessible to all – and yet it is not. A large percentage of the population currently does not have the easy access to the live game that they should, including some 80 million disabled people living in the European Union. The purpose of this document is to outline and share the practical solutions that can help football clubs and stadiums deliver accessible venues for this group.

Football audiences in Europe are becoming increasingly multicultural, representing as they do the wider social make-up of today's European society. It is also generally accepted that supporting football and being able to attend live matches is a vital part of European culture and tradition. Thus if we wish to be all-inclusive in today's modern Europe, we must make sure that our stadiums are also all-inclusive.

This guidance document is not intended as a one-fit solution to the issues disabled people face when attending live matches,

rather it provides a benchmark of good practices to enable UEFA's members and their clubs to provide accessible and inclusive stadiums for all European matches.

At UEFA we believe that the fan is always at the heart of the game. That is why we hope that this document, which we have helped produce together with our partner CAFE (Centre for Access to Football in Europe), will prove to be a valuable tool in the drive to make football, and in particular the matchday experience, as open and accessible as possible to all.

Best wishes,  
Gianni Infantino  
UEFA General Secretary



# INTRODUCTION

## **Total football, total access**

In August 2009, UEFA donated its Monaco Charity Award to the National Association for Disabled Supporters (NADS), to establish a new Europe-wide charity called the Centre for Access to Football in Europe (CAFE).

CAFE was created to ensure disabled supporters across UEFA's 53 member associations can enjoy attending football matches and to make it a problem-free and inclusive experience for all.

Disability affects around 10% of the population with an estimated 100 million disabled people living within the wider UEFA geographical region. It is estimated that at least 500,000 are football supporters; fans who have the right to enjoy football like everyone else, with the right to equal access. Yet many disabled people have been unable to fully express their passion for football due to the limitations of stadiums.

CAFE fully understands the impact of inclusiveness, empowerment and self-confidence that attending a live match can have on a disabled person and is working closely with stakeholders



to improve facilities in grounds, providing access advice to stakeholders, including UEFA, its 53 member associations and football clubs across Europe.

CAFE also cooperates with organisations such as the European Commission's Committee for Standardization (CEN) to ensure a more uniform pan-European approach to building standards and good practice for sports stadiums, and is working with UEFA and the EURO 2012 local organising committees in Poland and Ukraine to help provide better access for disabled fans at UEFA EURO 2012.

Another key aspect of CAFE's work is its direct support for disabled fans. With help to set up their own local supporter groups, disabled people are able to work with their own football clubs and governing bodies and continue CAFE's work at local and national level – work that is crucial to CAFE's sustainability and ongoing support. CAFE will know it has succeeded when equal access to the game's services and facilities is standard practice. Please visit our website [www.cafefootball.eu](http://www.cafefootball.eu) or contact us by email: [info@cafefootball.eu](mailto:info@cafefootball.eu), phone: +44 (0)1244 893586 or Skype: cafe-football.

## **Who should read this guide and why?**

The aim of this guide is to provide a benchmark of good practice for both new and existing stadiums, offering practical, clear solutions that will help football clubs, national associations and stadium managers to deliver high-quality grounds that are accessible, inclusive and welcoming for all.


It is important to note that the guidance and standards contained in this document are not the only way of achieving inclusive access. This guide is an advisory document and is not intended to be prescriptive or inhibit alternative and creative solutions. Indeed, there may be other equally satisfactory physical or operational solutions that achieve the same results. Also, this document is not designed to replace direct input from local disabled people and qualified local access professionals throughout the planning stages of any project, be it a new build, modernisation or extension. On the contrary, this is vital. It is, however, an invaluable tool which will help managers and planners to make their club and stadium facilities, services and events truly accessible for the whole community.

New stadiums are continually being planned and built, all of which are different because of differences in their location, scale and site. In addition, existing stadiums are constantly being extended, adapted and modernised. Common to all is the need to provide

well-designed, well-managed and well-operated facilities and services that meet the expectations and demands of supporters and customers, volunteers and staff, all of whom wish to experience and enjoy the thrills and excitement that football has to offer on matchdays and non-matchdays.

It is often said that an existing stadium cannot be improved without major structural changes. This is quite simply not true. Many smart, low-cost design and management solutions are already being implemented by progressive clubs and stadiums across Europe; solutions that provide accessible facilities and services to ensure a more inclusive, equal experience for all members of the local and wider community and earn the club a larger, more representative base.

This publication considers accessibility standards which are in many cases already defined in local building codes and regulations. However, planners and designers should recognise that even the best local building standards usually represent only the minimum access requirements, the underlying assumption being that the minimum is enough, when in reality it is only the starting point for developing functional, dignified and equal access to the built environment. Minimum accessibility standards do not necessarily address many of the barriers facing disabled people and others who need an accessible environment.



Minimum standards, by definition, usually only provide for minimum access. Truly inclusive planning for the whole community means going beyond the bare minimum. Designers and management should always try to aim higher when building or renovating venues and premises, to encompass the needs of a widely diverse and ever ageing community.

The authors of this publication have tried to create a structure that mirrors a walk-through of a stadium on matchday. However, the intention is also that each section can be consulted individually. We hope you enjoy this publication and find it helpful for making improvements at your stadiums, new and old.

For further information and guidance, please consult your local disabled supporter groups and refer to local building regulations and the reference documents listed at the end of this document.

## Why is good access so important?

Traditionally, accessibility has been viewed as an issue related only to disabled people. However, research has shown that the actual percentage of people who require accessible infrastructure exceeds 20% at any given time. Accessible football stadiums and services are in the interests of staff, volunteers, supporters and customers with a wide range of requirements and special needs, all of whom benefit from inclusive facilities.

Supporting football teams and attending live matches is recognised as an integral part of European culture and tradition. Football fans are increasingly diverse and becoming more and more representative of the wider multicultural European society. This naturally includes ever more disabled people wishing to attend matches. In addition, many clubs and stadiums provide facilities, services and activities on non-matchdays, placing themselves at the heart of local community life, and it is reasonable to expect an increasing number of disabled people to work and volunteer in football too, meaning that, as employers, clubs and stadiums must also provide an accessible working environment. There are more than 80 million disabled people living in the European Union\* alone – equivalent to the populations of Belgium,

the Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary and the Netherlands combined, or a sixth of the population of the EU as a whole. One in four Europeans has a family member with a disability, while 60% know someone in their close or more distant circles who is disabled. People with reduced mobility represent more than 40% of the population, with more than 30% of over 75s restricted to some extent and over 20% severely so. One in four people will experience mental ill-health at some point during their lives. Compared with non-disabled people, twice as many disabled people meet their friends and relatives less than once or twice a month. Half of all disabled people have never participated in leisure or sport activities and a third have never travelled abroad or even participated in day trips because of inaccessible venues and services.

As many as 97% of Europeans think that something should be done to better integrate disabled people into society and 93% say they would like to see more money invested in removing physical barriers that complicate the lives of disabled people.\*

Accessibility is essential for disabled people to be able to exercise their rights and participate fully in society. In fact, in many countries any lack of access to the built environment is considered

\*European Commission Publications Office – The European Disability Strategy 2010-20: People with disabilities have equal rights

a form of discrimination and many have already introduced disability legislation that requires reasonable access to public places and services such as stadiums and matches.

Accordingly, the EU disability strategy aims to eliminate barriers facing disabled people. The European Commission is promoting a “design for all” approach to the built environment so that buildings and public spaces are readily usable by as many people as possible and accessible to all.\* It is also working towards a European accessibility act setting out a general framework for goods and services.

Despite the diversity in the specific technical solutions available, at a functional level disabled people have similar access requirements across Europe. Moreover, accessible built environments are economically attractive. Functionally they are more flexible and the infrastructure more sustainable as there is less need for expensive adaptations at a later stage.

It is expected that as stadium-goers become more representative of the wider European community, the number of disabled people wishing to attend matches with their families and friends will continue to increase. Disabled people should therefore be seen

\*Statistics taken from the European Disability Forum website  
([www.edf-feeph.org](http://www.edf-feeph.org))



as valued customers, with good access seen not only as a moral issue but also as good business sense. Morally though, access is a basic human right and a fundamental pillar of social justice. Social justice is about accepting people as individuals and providing them with fair and equal opportunities to participate fully in society. A truly accessible environment is one where people are freely able to express their independence and where all barriers to integration have been removed.

CAFE estimates that at least 500,000 disabled people within the extended UEFA region\* are likely to be active football spectators, i.e. attending matches. It is clear that with equal access and opportunities this number would rise considerably, with many, many more disabled people aspiring to become match-goers.

Disabled people have the right to enjoy football, other sports and indeed all forms of entertainment in the same way as everyone else. This applies to football at all levels of the game.

More and more disabled people also wish to travel to football matches and tournaments abroad and as access improves more and more will feel able to attend major tournaments such as UEFA EURO 2012 alongside fellow fans.

\*UEFA has 53 members, extending beyond the geographical region of Europe

Football has a tremendous opportunity to set the standard to which others can aspire and to change the lives of many disabled people, enabling them to live more independent and fulfilling lives. We all have our part to play in ensuring that football is truly inclusive and we will know that we have succeeded when equal access becomes standard throughout the game.

\*Standardisation mandate m/420 in support of European accessibility requirements for public procurement in the built environment, m/420 en

# A: SOCIAL MODEL OF DISABILITY

## A:1 What is the social model?

When considering the need to create an accessible and inclusive environment such as a football stadium, it is crucial to consider the social model of disability, according to which it is physical, sensory, intellectual, psychological and attitudinal barriers that cause disability, not impairments. It is important to see the person and not the disability and to remove stereotypes. For example, a person who uses a wheelchair is only disabled when there are steps or steep gradients that cannot be accessed in a wheelchair. Likewise, a blind or partially sighted person is only disabled when information is not provided in an accessible format and access routes are blocked by physical barriers or trip hazards. The old medical model of disability looked at treating the disabled person as unwell or unhealthy and defined them according to their medical condition. This is disempowering and can be patronising to disabled people, who are just as able as anyone else provided their environment is accommodating to their specific requirements. For the purposes of this document, the main “categories” of beneficiaries of good access are described below. It is important to remember that some disabled people face “hidden” barriers

and some may have complex or multiple access requirements that cross the boundaries of these categories (a wheelchair user may also be blind or deaf, for example). That said, it must also be reiterated that disabled people are limited only by the barriers they face and they should not be defined by these “categories” or limitations.

## **A:2 Wheelchair users**

Approximately 1 % of the population use a wheelchair permanently or frequently because they find walking either difficult or impossible. This figure is even higher among older people. Wheelchair users are the most negatively affected by stadium design that does not embrace people with limited mobility, while providing universally accessible grounds, facilities and services assists not only wheelchair users but all stadium-goers. A wheelchair user may be limited by physical and/or attitudinal barriers.

## **A:3 People with limited mobility**

This group is made up of those often referred to as ambulant disabled people, such as those who can walk but require walking aids or those who find covering longer distances more difficult. This group benefits from facilities and services that are designed

to reduce travel distances and limit the need to stand for long periods. Ambulant disabled people may be limited by physical and/or attitudinal barriers.

## **A:4 Partially sighted and blind people**

This group, which as the name suggests includes people who are totally blind as well as those with limited or obscured vision, benefits from clear pathways and signage including tactile surfaces, colour contrasts and non-reflective surfaces, as well as alternative information formats such as Braille, large print, audio recordings and audio-description commentaries. It is important to note that only 18% of all partially sighted and blind people have no vision; most have limited or variously obscured vision. Partially sighted and blind people may be limited by sensory, physical and/or attitudinal barriers.

## **A:5 Hard of hearing and deaf people**

This group obviously includes people who are deaf (i.e. cannot hear at a functional level), who often use sign language and benefit from services such as interpreters and dedicated text-to-voice

telephone relay. However, the majority in this group have some hearing and therefore benefit from assistive hearing devices such as hearing aids, induction loop systems and passive infrared systems. Hearing loss is by far the largest single disability and it is often progressive over a long period of time, meaning a person may be unaware of the extent to which they are affected. Hard of hearing and deaf people may be limited by sensory and/or attitudinal barriers.

## **A:6 People with learning difficulties**

This group benefits from flexible services, plain language or easy-to-read documents and logical stadium layouts. In addition, stadium staff and stewards need to be sensitive to and aware of their needs, particularly in connection with communication and wayfinding on matchdays. For example, a person with autism may have a preferred matchday routine or behaviour which is important to their sense of well-being and can be easily accommodated. Learning disabled people may be limited by intellectual and/or attitudinal barriers.

## **A7: People with a psychological condition or mental ill-health**

This group benefits from a flexible and understanding approach to service provision, especially on matchdays. It is important to provide appropriate training to all staff and volunteers, who should take account of anxieties that might be experienced by this group, such as a fear of strange, confined or new places. This group may be limited by psychological and/or attitudinal barriers.

## **A8: Other beneficiaries of good access**

In addition to disabled people, many others derive huge benefits from accessible and inclusive stadiums and flexible services, including:

- injured supporters, volunteers, staff and players (think sprained ankles, fractures, etc.);
- pregnant women and parents attending matches and other events with young children;
- children themselves;
- older customers, volunteers and supporters, who may be among the most longstanding members of a club;
- people with restricted growth (commonly described as having a



final adult height of 4'10" or less);

- people not familiar with the local language, who may not understand complex signage;
- first-aiders and emergency services.

Clearly, at any given time a significant number of people directly benefit from accessible stadiums. Even more importantly, almost everyone will benefit at some time in their lives, often as a result of the natural aging process and the accompanying reduction in sensory and physical functions.

## B: KEY STAKEHOLDERS

While this publication often refers directly to clubs and stadium owners, it has been prepared as a good practice guide for everyone involved in the construction, modernisation and day-to-day management of new and existing football stadiums and club facilities and services, for matches and other events. Each of us can play a part and help to remove the physical, sensory, psychological and intellectual barriers that still exclude and limit the choices and experiences of so many disabled people, their families and friends wishing to attend football matches across Europe. However, there are a number of key stakeholders in the game who have the ability to effect real, lasting and meaningful change.

Key stakeholders include:

- European, national and local governments, ministers and members of parliament;
- football's governing bodies, especially UEFA and its member associations, and their leagues, regional associations and clubs;
- football club owners and investors (including private owners, shareholders and supporter trusts);
- football stadium owners, operators, shareholders and tenants (chairmen, directors, executives and managers);
- architects, designers, planners, project managers, engineers, access and building consultants, technical advisers and champions of inclusive design;
- club and stadium project sponsors;
- disabled football supporter (self-advocacy) groups, disability and equality organisations, and fan groups and associations.

# C: DISABILITY AND EQUALITY LEGISLATION

The authors of this document expect governments to review and, where necessary, update their existing local and national disability and equality legislation (including building regulations and bylaws). Where such provisions do not already exist, we expect governments to adopt robust disability and equality legislation with a view to providing inclusive and equal opportunities to disabled people, including access to public places and buildings such as football stadiums.

In addition, each football association should impose robust rules on inclusive and equal access to facilities and services as part of their club licensing requirements. This is especially important where national disability or equality legislation does not already exist, but is a necessary addition even where it does.



**Figure 1 - Fans make their way to Loftus Road in Shepard's Bush, London**

# D: MISSION STATEMENTS

Every service provider, including football clubs and stadiums, should publish a mission statement or social responsibility charter that clearly states its commitment to equality and to providing the best possible facilities and services for all its visitors and staff. This should include inclusive and accessible facilities and services for disabled people.

A club's mission statement or charter should clearly identify its facilities and services and what they comprise.

Facilities: stadium entrances and concourses, seating, stands and amenities, club shop, catering and refreshment areas, hospitality and conference areas, VIP areas, staff offices, ticket office, main reception, etc.

Services: club operations, ticketing, personal assistance where required, information (i.e. on accessible facilities and services such as accessible matchday parking), travel information, customer service contacts and accessible helplines, websites, publications, matchday programmes, etc.

This mission statement or charter should also identify a senior person, preferably a director, board member or senior executive, who has overall responsibility for all disability and access matters




and who has the power to implement policies. A dedicated disability or access officer should also be appointed (more on this in section F).

The mission statement or charter should include an access statement, drafted with the help of a suitably qualified access auditor commissioned to undertake an access audit and produce an access strategy or business plan with timely improvements agreed and required to ensure equal access to the club and stadium premises, facilities and services. The mission statement or charter should also state that this access plan will be reviewed



**Figure 2 - A fan at the Steponas Darius and Stasys Girėnas Stadium in Kaunas, Lithuania**





annually as part of the club's ongoing commitment to making improvements to its facilities and services for disabled people. More details on commissioning an access audit can be found in section E.

Finally, the mission statement or charter should also include a commitment to providing staff, stewards and customer service volunteers with regular disability etiquette and access awareness training.

In short, a club's mission statement or charter should clearly define its commitment to providing equal access for disabled customers, supporters, staff and volunteers by introducing good practice design solutions (for both new and existing stadiums), implementing policies and procedures endorsed by experts and dedicated staff, and organising good practice training and management strategies.

The club should undertake to consult its disabled supporters and their representative group or association on such accessibility issues. Where no such group exists, it should undertake to consult local disability organisations. CAFE can offer support in this area.



**Figure 3 - Tickets for an international friendly match between Germany and Brazil**

# E: ACCESSIBILITY AUDITING AND PLANNING

## E1: How to conduct an access audit

The best way for a football club to make sure it considers the specific needs of disabled people is by conducting an access audit of its stadium and other premises and then drawing up an access strategy or business plan.

Ideally, an access audit should be conducted by a professional auditor or consultant who has a measure of detachment from the club's affairs, to ensure an independent and thorough audit. Whenever possible, it should be undertaken by an auditor who has experience in auditing large sporting venues such as football stadiums and is familiar with the principles of inclusive building design and accessible services, as well as local disability, equality and employment legislation, building and safety regulations and the good practice guidance and technical reports available. The situation varies from country to country, so clubs and stadium managers should seek local advice as to who would be best placed to conduct their audit. For more information, please contact CAFE or your national disability organisation.

Each site or project to be audited will be different. It may be an existing stadium that needs to be modernised or adapted to provide accessible facilities and remove barriers, a stadium that is looking to expand, or a complete new build.

In all cases, the aim of the access audit should be to identify features and services that may affect or impose physical, sensory, psychological and intellectual barriers on a wide range of disabled people, including staff, volunteers, customers and supporters, on both matchdays and non-matchdays.

It is advisable to conduct the audit in the form of a disabled person's journey through the stadium and club premises, starting from the car park or accessible drop-off point through to the furthest away facility on-site. This approach will offer practical solutions to access barriers at each stage of the journey. Key stakeholders and access auditors can use the structure of this document to adopt a walk-through approach to assessing their premises, with reference to the good practice solutions proposed in each section.

But remember: ensuring good access requires more consideration than just following basic guidelines or a simple checklist. An ongoing and evolving process of consultation and review is required.

## **E2: What an access audit should include**

- A statement of compliance with good practice principles and guidance, local disability and equality legislation and building and safety regulations (including reference to the sources of advice and guidance used).
- The club's own philosophy and approach to inclusive design, maintenance, improvements and management of its facilities and services.
- Any key issues or constraints, which should be clearly identified, described and dated.
- Consultation with disabled people, including the club's disabled supporters, customers and staff.
- The auditor should seek the views of a wide range of disabled people with different access requirements. This will help to identify all barriers and enable the club to develop the most effective and inclusive solutions. Clubs can draw on the extensive experience of local and national disability groups and organisations as well as any disabled supporters and staff of their own.
- The auditor should provide an access appraisal checklist that can be used by the club's disabled supporters (or a local user-led disability group), the auditor and the club to evaluate the current situation and requirements. Please contact CAFE if you require an access appraisal template or checklist.

- As part of its ongoing support for disabled football supporters, CAFE helps local groups who wish to set up their own disabled supporter associations at club or national level. Where such associations already exist and regular dialogue is maintained between the club and their disabled supporters, the situation is almost always better than elsewhere.

- A detailed “walk-through” description of the existing stadium and club premises identifying all barriers that a disabled person might encounter, including detailed maps and photographs with descriptions and dates for future reference. The build dates of existing facilities and extensions should be noted and a copy of any building and safety certificates enclosed.

- As a minimum, detailed descriptions and, where appropriate, maps, diagrams and photographs of the following:

- The approach to the stadium, including local public transport; on- and off-site car parking; access routes and pathways; signage and wayfinding (both outside and inside the stadium); stadium entrances; circulation routes and concourses; exit routes; all stairways, lifts and ramps; stadium stands and their seating; amenities (including toilets, merchandising and shops, catering and refreshment areas, bars and outlets), hospitality and conference areas, VIP areas and directors’ boxes; staff offices; ticket offices and customer service points; reception areas;



clubhouses and meeting points; community and off-site facilities.

- Existing disability and equality management and operational procedures and policies such as ticketing and car parking; travel information; club information, including matchday facilities and services; customer service contacts and helplines; websites, club publications and match programmes; safety plan for evacuation of disabled people (both on matchdays and non-matchdays); staff training (disability etiquette and access awareness training).

- A matchday audit to ensure good access during events, when the stadium may be operating at full capacity. The sightlines of wheelchair users might seem adequate on a non-matchday when the stadium is empty, but their view may become obstructed when surrounding spectators stand for the opening ceremony or national anthems, or jump to their feet at exciting moments during the match. Likewise, signage that is clearly visible on a non-matchday may not be so apparent within a crowded concourse.

- A prioritised access strategy or business plan identifying and listing the access issues to be addressed, starting with the most urgent first. This document, to be agreed on by all the key stakeholders, should describe the work required (with clear timelines or work schedules) to remove physical, sensory, psychological and intellectual barriers and to ensure improvements



and adaptations to facilities and services, in line with this good practice guidance.

- Worked examples of improvements. Several worked examples of good practice design solutions for new and existing stadiums can be found in section N. Please contact CAFE for more information and a list of clubs who have used smart design solutions to improve access.
- A review of the club's mission statement or charter, with an updated access statement for inclusion in the mission statement/charter. More on this can be found in section D.

# F: DISABILITY OFFICERS

Football clubs should consider appointing a disability or access officer who is responsible for ensuring inclusive facilities and services for all staff, volunteers, supporters and visitors on matchdays and non-matchdays.

As they should be responsible for implementing access and disability policies and procedures within the stadium and club premises, the disability officer should have a clear, accurate understanding of local disability legislation and good practice solutions to providing an accessible environment.

The disability officer should ensure the club is proactively fulfilling its duties towards disabled people and applying its access strategy or business plan to constantly improve access to its facilities and services. They should also organise access awareness and disability etiquette training for all staff and volunteers (see section M for details) and be able to provide advice to disabled staff and volunteers.

The disability officer should always be available on matchdays and during any other events hosted and should report directly to the stadium manager and a club director who has overall responsibility for disability matters and providing inclusive access.

Thanks to a new UEFA club licensing requirement (Article 35 of the 2010 UEFA Club Licensing and Financial Fair Play Regulations)\*, all clubs competing in UEFA competitions will also have to employ a dedicated supporter liaison officer from 2012/13.

While the minimum requirements for supporter liaison officers are currently being developed, it is anticipated they will work closely with disability officers. It may be that one person could perform both roles at some clubs, but where this is the case it is essential that the spectator liaison officer has a thorough knowledge of disability legislation and accessible building regulations, as well as a good understanding of inclusive design for facilities and services.

\*Under Article 35 of the 2010 UEFA Club Licensing and Financial Fair Play Regulations, as of 2012/13 clubs competing in UEFA competitions are obliged to appoint a supporter liaison officer (SLO) to ensure a proper and constructive dialogue between the club and its fans. The SLO concept has gained full approval from the national associations represented in the UEFA Club Licensing Committee and has been devised in cooperation with Supporters Direct.

# G: APPROACHING THE STADIUM

## G1: Contacting the club

Some clubs provide a dedicated helpline for disabled supporters and visitors who may require specific access information or assistance. However, all customer service staff should be familiar with the accessible facilities and services available at their stadium and club premises, including accessible (disabled) parking and drop-off points (see sections G:3 and G:4).

Ticketing, customer service and switchboard/helpline staff should also be familiar with assistive hearing devices and services available to support hard of hearing and deaf people. This might include a local telephone relay service that enables a deaf person to communicate via telephone with the assistance of a third-party operator who translates speech to text and text to speech.

Induction or hearing loops that work with certain hearing aids should be available at all customer service points, including ticket offices, service counters, reception desks, shops and cafes. Good-quality lighting and non-reflective glass also makes the vendor or customer service representative more visible, which is useful to hard of hearing and deaf customers able to lip-read. Receptions, ticket offices and customer service counters (or at least one such ticketing/customer service counter) should be accessible and

lowered for wheelchair users. In a ticket office with a series of counters, it may be sufficient to have just one fitted with an aid to communication, provided it is clearly identified as such using the international deaf assistance symbol or signage. It is also important that the club provide easy access to any such dedicated window, so that a disabled person is not expected to queue for an unreasonably long time.

Disabled supporters and customers should be able to buy tickets for matches and other events in the same way as non-disabled people, be it online, through the ticket office or by telephone. Whatever the system, it is important that these services are fully accessible.

Moreover, the ticket office management should make adequate provisions to ensure there is no discrimination against disabled ticket holders. This means accessible seating should be available in all ticket categories and disabled and non-disabled people should have equal access to the same spectator loyalty schemes and membership groups, season and match tickets, away ticket ballots, etc.

Staff should be familiar with the layout of the entire stadium, including viewing areas, facilities and services for wheelchair users and disabled people requiring amenity and easy-access seating.

An additional, complimentary ticket should be given to disabled spectators if they require a companion or personal assistant to enable them to attend a match or other event or to assist with essential care. It is important that ticket office staff understand that a disabled spectator with a hidden disability may also require a complimentary ticket for a companion or personal assistant. For example, a spectator with a learning difficulty may be mobile but still require assistance to ensure their overall safety and guide them around the stadium. Likewise, a person with epilepsy who is prone to unexpected seizures may also require the support of a companion or personal assistant.

A disabled spectator with multiple special needs may require more than one companion or personal assistant to assist with medical or personal care, for example if they need a portable ventilator or oxygen therapy. It should not be assumed that such a person should not attend the match or event because they are “too ill” or a health and safety risk. Instead, clubs should be understanding and seek advice on how best to accommodate these challenges. Most clubs are excellent in this regard.

A disabled spectator who requires a companion or personal assistant should not be expected to pay a higher ticket price (including the companion’s ticket) than a non-disabled spectator. By the same token, a football club or stadium should not

be expected to routinely provide free tickets to all disabled spectators. Many disabled people prefer to pay for match tickets just like their fellow spectators, provided the facilities and services they receive are equal and they have the same choice of ticket categories and seating areas, including hospitality. Nevertheless, some football clubs and stadiums still offer a range of concessions, which may include free or discounted tickets for local disabled spectators. This is a decision for each club to take in consultation with its own supporters and visitors. Proof of disability should not be sought routinely and staff should use a common-sense approach; however a football club or stadium should be able to request some proof of disability when required and in case of reasonable doubt. Consultation with local disabled supporter groups and disability organisations is advised, to ensure a sensitive and appropriate approach. Football clubs and stadiums should also be aware of local legislation and guidance, and it is important to bear in mind that not all countries have a designated register of disabled people. Some consider such registers unacceptable, as they tend to be based on the medical rather than social model of disability (see section A for more about models of disability). This means that types of proof, where required, may vary.



## **G2: Getting to the stadium**

Matches and other events held at football stadiums attract many thousands of spectators in high concentrations. Consequently, getting to and from the stadium at these times can present some major challenges for disabled people. Accessible transport and access is essential, so clubs and stadium managers should look to develop a transport access plan for disabled supporters and customers.

The local infrastructure is key to providing accessible public transport that is able to cope with the large numbers of spectators, including disabled spectators, attending the stadium on matchdays. The European rail network is becoming more accessible for disabled people, as are many cities' public transport systems, so mapping out accessible routes from stations and bus stops to and from the stadium should be part of every access strategy or business plan.

Where public transport remains inaccessible or unreliable, cars will continue to be the favoured means of transport for most wheelchair users and other disabled people. Others will choose to get to the stadium using accessible minibuses, coaches and taxis. Football clubs and stadiums should ensure that their disabled supporters, customers, staff and volunteers have accessible parking and/or accessible drop-off and pick-up points at the stadium entrances.

### **G3: Drop-off and pick-up points**

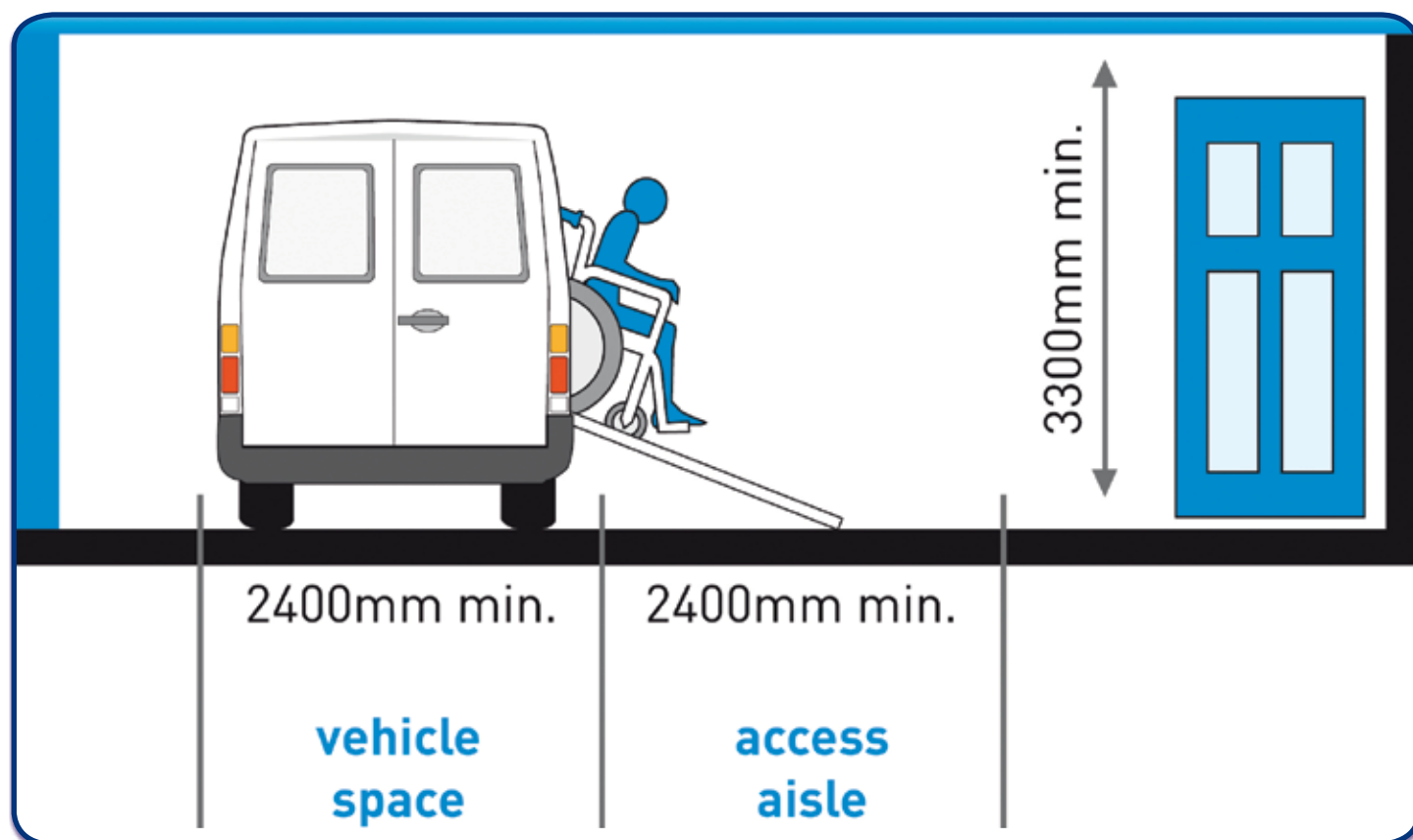
It is important to consider disabled people who arrive at the stadium by taxi or are dropped off by car, coach or minibus. If parking is severely restricted, as is sometimes the case at inner-city stadiums, it is important to provide access to suitable drop-off and pick-up points close to the stadium entrances.

Clubs and stadium managers may wish to consider issuing special passes or permits with disabled spectator tickets to ensure access to the dedicated drop-off point on matchday. These passes, which should also be available to any disabled staff, would make it easier for security staff and traffic police in the area to identify the disabled spectator or staff member.

Accessible drop-off and pick-up points should be provided no more than 50m from any entrance used by disabled people.

Wherever possible these drop-off and pick-up points should also be covered. Sufficient space should be provided for disabled people to get out of their car, minibus or coach in safety and without causing congestion for other traffic and incoming spectators. For wheelchair users in particular, this means a clear space between the vehicle and pavement (see figure 4). Transferring from a vehicle into a wheelchair which is up on the pavement can be extremely difficult and hazardous for many disabled people.

Drop-off and pick-up points should be accessible to rear-lift equipped vans and minibuses as well as side-mounted lifts or hoists used to assist wheelchair users who remain in their wheelchairs when moving from their vehicle to the kerbside. In planning for disabled spectators, it is important to consider that people tend to arrive at stadiums at different times but all leave at the same time. Specific factors and constraints may mean provisions and arrangements on matchdays and for other events should be discussed and agreed on with the local authorities.



**Figure 4 – An accessible drop-off point**

## G4: Car parking

As mentioned above, cars are still the most common and reliable means of transport for many disabled people. Football clubs and stadiums that provide matchday or event parking should include accessible parking for local and visiting disabled spectators. Stadium managers should ensure that designated accessible parking bays are supervised and controlled by stewards or other staff.

Because of the size and layout of football stadiums, it is recommended that designated parking bays be located as close as reasonably possible to the entrances used by disabled spectators.



**Figure 5 – Accessible parking at Cardiff City Stadium, Wales**

Accessible parking spaces should be wide enough to accommodate wheelchair users transferring out of their vehicle into their wheelchairs and should be clearly marked as shown in figures 5 and 7.





**Figure 6 – Derby County FC matchday shuttle service**

It is considered reasonable to allocate at least 6% of a stadium's overall car parking capacity to disabled people. Wherever possible this percentage should be higher. Consultation with local disabled supporter groups and disability organisations will help to achieve a fair and reasonable provision at your ground.

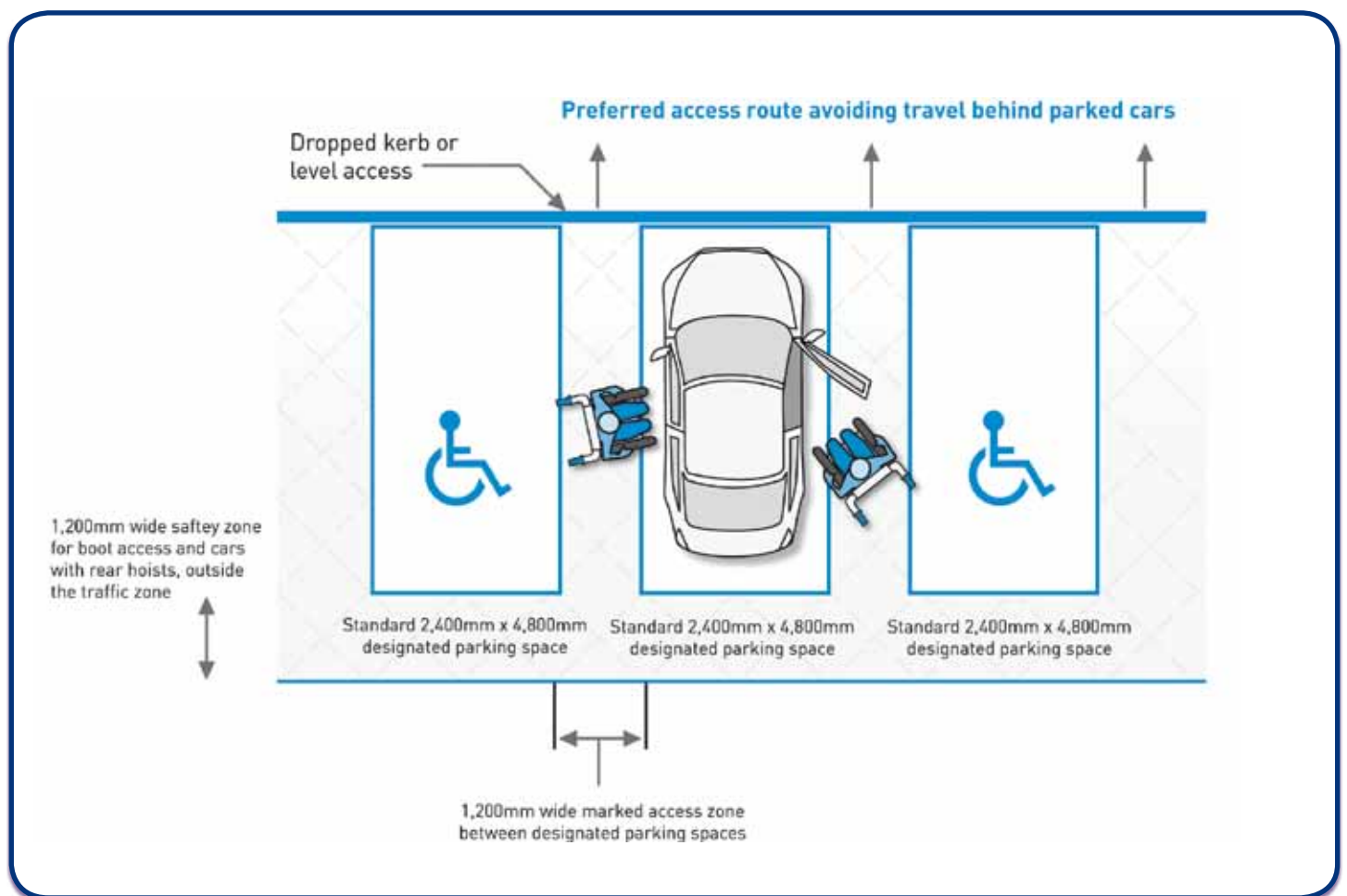
When planning a new stadium or alterations and improvements to existing premises, particular attention should be paid to ensuring:

- level access routes for pedestrians and wheelchair users;
- accessible drop-off and pick-up points;
- accessible car parking;
- good circulation for all within the stadium perimeter.

If on-site parking is limited or unavailable, an accessible shuttle service should be considered to assist disabled people attending

matches and other events (with drop-off and pick-up points at the relevant stadium entrances).

Depending on the local context, imaginative solutions can be found, for example providing golf buggies or carts to bring ambulant disabled people from long-stay car parks or public transport stops into the stadium perimeter. The local traffic authorities may also be able to help to identify accessible (disabled) parking bays in roads close to the stadium for use on matchdays and when other events are being held.



**Figure 7 – Accessible parking spaces**

## **G5: Access routes**

Wherever possible, to best accommodate wheelchair users and ambulant disabled people, access routes should be level or at least have the shallowest gradient possible. Any route or part of a route with a gradient steeper than 1:20 (or 5%) should meet the recommendations for ramped access (see section H:4).

It is recommended that access routes used extensively by spectators walking in both directions on matchdays should be at least 1.8m wide and have a clear height of at least 2.1m. A width of 1.5m may be acceptable if the route is less busy and passing places are provided for wheelchair users. Passing places should be at least 2m long and 1.8m wide (see figure 8 and local building regulations and access guidance for more details).

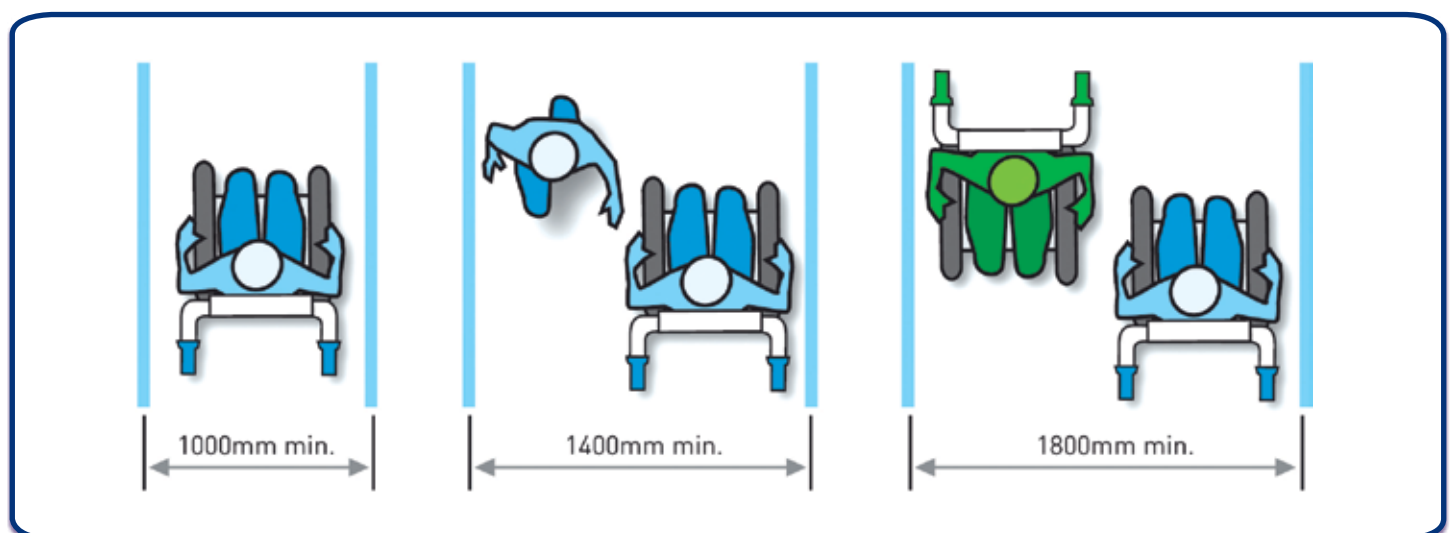
For the benefit of partially sighted and blind people, approved tactile paving should be provided at pairs of dropped kerbs, where an approach route crosses a road and at accessible drop-off and pick-up points. Tactile paving is a profiled paving surface that provides guidance and warnings to partially sighted and blind people.

In addition, access routes and circulation areas should be free of trip hazards such as protruding objects. For example, objects that cannot be detected by a cane can be hazardous for partially sighted and blind people as well as to anyone else whose attention



is distracted. Lighting, signs, rubbish bins, bollards and other fixed items located on access routes must be marked in highly contrasting colours and be cane-detectable, as some partially sighted and blind people use a cane to feel their way and identify any such obstacles in their path.

Rest stops are extremely important for ambulant disabled people who use walking aids such as sticks and crutches and have limited mobility, heart problems or breathing difficulties. Wherever possible, fixed seating with back rests should be provided at regular intervals along access routes to the stadium. This can be as simple as redundant stadium seating fixed to the outer wall of the stadium. This will enable many spectators to attend matches and other events who might otherwise find it too difficult. But please note, rest points should not obstruct the usual flow of matchday crowds, and nor should they become a trip hazard.



**Figure 8 – Access widths for wheelchair users**

## G6: Signage and wayfinding

Good, frequent signage benefits everyone, especially spectators on matchdays. However, clear and frequent signage is especially important to disabled people.

A well-coordinated, consistent approach to signage should be adopted and followed throughout the premises, especially to indicate public service areas.

Good signage is particularly important for partially sighted and blind people, people with learning difficulties and hard of hearing and deaf people, some of whom may have difficulty asking for directions and finding their way. Good signage can also help to minimise unnecessary walking for people with limited mobility.

Directional signage should be repeated at regular intervals along



access routes to reassure people that they are moving in the right direction, while restricted access and “no entry” signs should be clearly recognisable as such. Facilities such as car parking, information points, designated entrances (including general seating, hospitality and VIP areas), accessible entrances, turnstiles, ticket offices, club shops, refreshment kiosks,

**Figure 9 – Accessible (disabled-friendly) entrance signage**



**Figure 10 – An example of clear international signage**

restaurants, cafes, museums, first aid, circulation routes, lifts, toilets and escape routes should also all be clearly signposted. Signs should be easily visible to people of all heights at all times, including wheelchair users on matchdays. Signage that may be obvious in an empty stadium may disappear from view in a busy access route, concourse or passageway.

Signs should be of a good size, contrast sharply with the background (for example, light coloured text on a dark background) and be non-reflective. They should be positioned logically (where they are expected) and be illuminated wherever possible.

Signage should be easy to read and contain key information, such as distance indicators. Complex sentences and lists should be avoided. Short simple words that are clearly separated from one another are easy to read, and short, simple sentences are easy to understand and remember. Sentences or single word messages should begin with an upper case letter and continue in lower



**Figure 11 – A tactile wayfinding surface indicating a change in level**

case. Block capitals and italics should not be used, as they are harder to read. The same applies to abbreviations, words placed closely together and very long words. Text should be in a sans-serif typeface and where possible be accompanied by a universally recognised symbol or pictogram. Commonly used typefaces include Helvetica, Arial, Futura and Avant Garde.

Where possible, information signs, whether permanent or provided only for a match or event, should be accompanied by signs with tactile text and Braille within easy reach of wheelchair users and people with restricted growth.

Stadium designers and managers should also consider using tactile, coloured or tonal wayfinding surfaces as an inexpensive,

low-maintenance way of guiding people to and around the stadium. Many football clubs use their own club colours to decorate their stadium and this can be put to very good use to highlight pillars, doors, glass panels and light switches, making them more visible.

Many stadiums have an internal concourse where amenities such as refreshment kiosks and toilets are located. It is important that internal support columns and pillars do not obstruct free movement within these walkways. Bands of contrasting colour can be used around pillars to ensure that they do not merge with their surroundings but stand out from the background. In addition, door fittings should be colour contrasted to make them easily distinguishable from the door itself, while colour and tonal contrast should be used on stairs and steps to draw attention to the nosings. Although yellow and white are frequently used, there is no rule on what colour to use for step nosings. Again, club colours could be a good solution, provided there is a clear contrast between the colour of the steps, the nosings and the surrounding areas. A hazard-warning pattern should be provided at the top and bottom of all staircases.

Floor coverings should have a matt finish, such as matt vinyl, which will not cause reflections from windows or light fittings. Floor finishes should also contrast with the walls so that the boundaries



of the floor are clearly visible. This can also be achieved by painting skirting boards in a clearly contrasting colour.

Tactile, coloured and tonal wayfinding information is especially helpful for partially sighted and blind people, as well as visiting spectators who may not speak the local language. It can provide a creative and attractive means of communicating important information to everyone.

For more detailed information, please refer to local building regulations and guidance and the good practice publications listed at the end of this document. CAFE can provide further examples of good practice if required.



**Figure 12 – Colour contrasting on steps**

## G7: Staff and stewards

Matchday and event stewards and staff should be trained in disability etiquette and access awareness to ensure an inclusive welcome to all. The continuity achieved by using regular or permanent matchday staff in specific disabled spectator areas (such as wheelchair user or amenity seating areas) is helpful. However, it is important to ensure that all staff and volunteers receive disability etiquette and access awareness training as there may be disabled people in areas throughout the stadium on matchdays and non-matchdays.



**Figure 13 - DFB security at the Olypiastadion in Berlin during a German cup final, 2009**



All staff should be sensitive to the specific access requirements of disabled people. These requirements may be physical, sensory, intellectual or psychological and may not always be obvious. For example, a spectator may have a speech impediment or an unsteady gait, making them appear or sound intoxicated when they are not. Likewise, a person with a learning difficulty such as autism may have a routine that is especially important to their well-being and staff should be alert and sensitive to this eventuality. Many disabilities can be hidden or less obvious and it is important not to jump to conclusions. Not all disabled people use wheelchairs (see sections A and M for more information). An increasing number of football clubs and stadiums are adopting a proactive approach to providing an inclusive welcome. For example, some clubs provide several matchday and event staff or volunteers who are trained in sign language so that they can more easily communicate with hard of hearing and deaf people. Local disability organisations will be able to advise on such services and may be able to assist with extra staff training or the recruitment of trained volunteers.

## **G8: Assistance dogs**

Some disabled people will need to bring a dog with them to matches and other events. Specially trained assistance dogs are most commonly associated with partially sighted and blind people, but more and more disabled people use them, with hearing dogs for the deaf, for example, and dogs for people with epilepsy that can warn of an impending seizure. Assistance dogs are also increasingly being used to assist people with limited mobility, including wheelchair users.

A disabled person who uses an assistance dog may still require a companion or personal assistant to enable them to attend a match or to assist with essential care. For example, a dog would not be expected to carry refreshments but might be vital in guiding a disabled person around the stadium or in identifying critical health warnings. Assistance dogs are not pets. They are working animals and are relied on by their owners for independence and mobility. They receive intensive, specific training from professional staff before qualifying as assistance dogs and all owners, in turn, receive advice and training to enable them to maintain the high standards of working and social obedience expected of their dog.

Assistance dogs are specially trained to support their disabled owner in their everyday life and as such are used to attending live events and crowded venues such as stadiums on matchdays. They do not

disrupt stadium operations and are specially trained not to bother other people or climb on seats, etc. Staff and other spectators should be encouraged not to distract a working assistance dog and to check with the owner before any contact is made.

Clubs and stadiums should welcome assistance dogs and provide areas where they can be watered and relieved (often referred to as dog spending or relieving stations). It is also important to provide appropriate facilities in these areas for the disabled owners of assistance dogs, including good signage and seating. If the facilities are located outside the stadium, staff support may be required to guide or direct owners to the area.

Dog relieving stations should be secure, with a minimum enclosed space of 3m x 4m and a boundary fence or wall at least 1.2m high. Within this boundary, there should be a mix of soft (grass or similar) and hard surfaces and a slight gradient to assist drainage. The entrance to the relieving station should be accessible to wheelchair users and the surface area should be at least 1.5m<sup>2</sup> to allow wheelchair users to turn. A fresh water supply and hose should be provided, as well as a bin for dog waste, and the station should be kept clean.

A spectator who is accompanied by an assistance dog should have a choice of seating areas (with extra room for the dog) and facilities should be designed to take into account their needs. The



**Figure 14 - An assistance dog at a match**

best place for an assistance dog is with its owner, who has both the skill and the relationship with their dog to ensure a high level of control. The front row of a block or tier of seats usually provides more space and comfort for assistance dogs, but it should be noted that such dogs are extremely adaptable and use even limited space to their best advantage.

Assistance dog owners who wish to attend football matches are advised to notify the club or stadium in advance, to allow staff to identify the most suitable seating options for them. Assistance dog owners are also encouraged to consider their matchday arrival and departure times to avoid the crowds and congestion often seen at peak times.

# H: MOVING AROUND THE STADIUM

## H1: Entrances and exits

In public buildings, the most accessible entrance is usually the main entrance. However, in the case of football stadiums, where crowd control and safety factors normally require multiple turnstiles, etc., other designated entrances may be more appropriate for disabled people. The most practical design solution

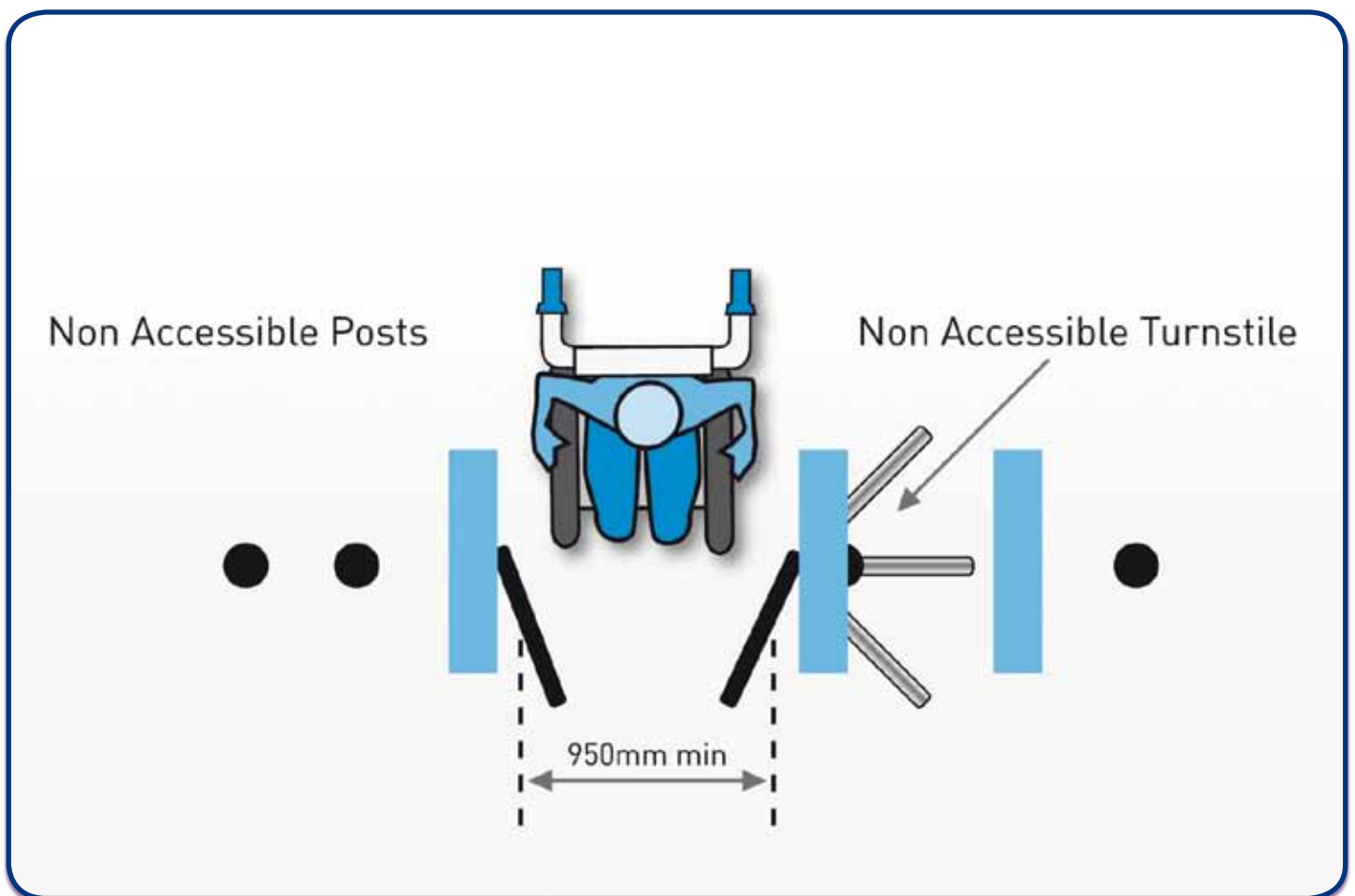


Figure 15 – An accessible entrance

or adaption for an existing stadium is an accessible gate with an attending steward or staff member, providing appropriate and level access.

Stadium entrances with turnstiles are not always suitable for wheelchair users, partially sighted and blind people or people with assistance dogs. Turnstiles with rotating arms are typically not wheelchair accessible, so where possible an accessible gate or opening should also be provided in their immediate proximity (see figure 15). This applies to all entrances to the stadium, including VIP and hospitality.

Staff entrances should also be accessible and suitable for any disabled people working at the stadium.

Where there is a mix of non-accessible and accessible entrances and exits, the accessible entrance and exit points should be indicated with clear signage featuring the international access symbol. This signage should be visible from a distance.



## **H2: Designated entrances**

All designated accessible entrances and lobbies within the stadium should allow independent and safe entry for disabled people. They should include access to shade and shelter from the elements if there could be a wait, and a clear pathway without threshold steps or changes in level.

The entrance threshold should be flush or ramped to avoid any trip hazards and entry mats should be recessed or flush with the flooring or ground to limit the risk of tripping, especially by those with limited mobility, who may use a walking aid or have an unsteady gait. It is advisable to avoid natural materials such as coir matting as this can cause additional friction and trip hazards, especially for wheelchair users and ambulant disabled people. External doorways should have a minimum effective clear width of at least 1,000mm for wheelchair users. Where double entrance doors are used, at least one leaf should have a clear opening of at least 875mm.

There should be sufficient additional space at entrances and lobbies to allow a disabled person and their companion to move side by side and to allow someone to pass in the opposite direction to a wheelchair user or spectator with an assistance dog (see figure 8). Disabled people are often not able to move quickly to avoid a collision and therefore need to be able to see



someone approaching from the other side of a doorway and to be seen themselves. Doorways should therefore incorporate visibility glazing or glazed panels.

Glazed panels and screens can, however, pose a hazard to partially sighted people, so they should be clearly marked with visibly contrasting bands, brightly coloured signage or the club logo in two places on the glazed panel or screen, at 850–1,000mm and 1,400–1,500mm above floor level, visible in both artificial and natural light. Likewise, doors should be easily visible and contrast with the surrounding walls and door fittings.

Some disabled people have difficulty opening doors and operating door handles. It should be possible to open a door with one hand and to operate all door handles and locks with a closed fist. Wherever possible, door handles and locks should be L or D-shaped or have a lever action. Knobs of a circular or spherical design are especially difficult for people with limited dexterity, arthritis or a weak grip.

Door handles should be positioned to suit people of all heights, including wheelchair users, and grab or pull handles should be installed on all entrances designated especially for disabled people. Full-length horizontal handles should be used to pull open entrance doorways and vertical handles should be avoided as these can catch on wheelchair joysticks and controls. Full-length

handles should also be avoided on the push side of doors. Doors should be easy to operate with appropriate door closers. Heavy doors should be avoided and the maximum recommended opening force of manually operated doors is 20–30N. Automated door closers that use sensors to open and close the door should be installed wherever possible. Where a revolving door has been installed in an existing stadium, there should also be an automated sliding door or an automated swing door with a minimum swing of 90° and a minimum pathway clearance of 1,500mm to enable a wheelchair user to enter with ease. Designers should avoid revolving, manual sliding and bi-folding doors in all new stadiums and instead adopt more accessible and inclusive solutions.

### **H3: Circulation areas**

Concourses should be designed for the smooth, unimpeded passage of spectators into, around and out of the stadium. Careful design can ensure that circulation is not impeded in a crowded stadium on matchdays.

Providing inclusive access for disabled spectators to all levels of a new, reconstructed or extended stadium or stand has considerable implications on the design of circulation routes. Stadium designers and managers should consider disabled people in particular when planning horizontal and vertical circulation routes and

passageways in the upper levels of stands, as these must be carefully planned and managed to enable safe entry and exit for both non-disabled and disabled spectators.

It is important that circulation routes minimise the distance for disabled spectators from the stadium entrance to their seats, and from their seats to refuges, evacuation lifts and amenities such as toilets and refreshments.

Large matchday crowds can restrict and limit the visibility of people with restricted growth, wheelchair users and children. Likewise, it can cause great disruption when a wheelchair user attempts to turn around or reverse in a confined, crowded space. A minimum width of 1,800mm is required for two wheelchair users



to be able to pass each other, assuming they can see each other approaching, and for a wheelchair user to be able to turn through 180°. A partially sighted or blind person who uses a long cane to feel their way requires a minimum width of 1,200mm to be able to operate the cane. A person using

**Figure 16 - A steward mans the disabled access**

crutches also requires a minimum width of 1,200mm in circulation areas and a width of 1,500mm to easily pass a wheelchair user. Corridors and concourses should be unobstructed and fire extinguishers, radiators, etc., should not be allowed to project into the clear corridor space. This will ensure that they do not present an access hazard to wheelchair users, ambulant disabled people or partially sighted and blind people.

The requirements for internal doors are generally similar to those for entrance doors and lobbies. Apart from accessible toilet doors, none should open out into corridors or concourses and all should have glazed panels to the same specification as entrance doors. Slip-resistant floor finishes or materials should be used for stadium circulation routes, especially in areas where the ground could be wet. Glossy and highly polished materials should be avoided, as they can appear slippery even if they are not and can cause reflective glare that may confuse partially sighted people.

As a general rule, disabled spectators should be accommodated without prejudicing their safety or the safety of others. However, safety measures should not be construed in such a way as to place undue restrictions on disabled spectators. For more information, please refer to local building regulations and guidance, as well as the good practice publications listed at the end of this document.

## **H4: Vertical circulation**

It is important that all spectators are able to access facilities and services within a stadium and changes in level can cause access problems for many, particularly those of limited mobility, including people with heart problems and breathing difficulties, partially sighted and blind people and wheelchair users.

It is very possible to find creative, low-cost solutions even for existing stadiums to make them more accessible and inclusive and ensure disabled spectators have a choice of seating like everyone else. A number of smart solutions have already been adopted at various stadiums across Europe. Please contact CAFE for further information.

### **STANDARD LIFTS**

A conventional passenger lift is the most suitable means of vertical circulation, enabling disabled spectators to reach facilities quickly and in comfort. Where possible, lifts should be located close to other means of vertical circulation such as stairs and ramps.

The number of lifts provided and their sizes should be calculated based on the number of disabled and non-disabled spectators expected to use them on matchdays, to ensure they do not experience undue delays entering or exiting the stadium and its facilities.

The landing area in front of any lift and the internal cabin area

should be well lit and designed to avoid glare to assist partially sighted people, while the doors should be visually distinct from their surroundings. Clear signage should be used to indicate the floor number in each lift lobby area and on the wall opposite the lift doors. Signs indicating the location of a lift that is about to arrive should be visible from a wide angle to give due warning to people waiting anywhere in the lift lobby.

The lift call button on each landing should be positioned 900–1,000mm above the floor and at least 400mm from any return wall so that they are within easy reach of wheelchair users. All lift entrances and access to lift controls should be kept clear, meaning furniture and other obstacles should not be placed in the way.

Wheelchair users require sufficient time and space to manoeuvre into a lift, so lift doors should remain open for at least five seconds. There should be a clear space of at least 1,500mm<sup>2</sup> in front of the lift entrance to enable wheelchair users to conveniently enter and manoeuvre. The recommended minimum internal lift size is 1,100mm wide x 1,400mm deep, which would accommodate one wheelchair user and a companion, but allow insufficient space for a wheelchair user to turn easily. An internal lift size of 2,000mm x 1,400mm, meanwhile, would enable one wheelchair user to travel with several other passengers and provide sufficient space for a wheelchair user and people with walking aids to turn through 180°.





**Figure 17 – A lift control panel with tactile and Braille symbols**

The entrance to the lift should provide a clear opening width of at least 900–1,200mm. Where a lift has only one entrance or is of the minimum internal size, a mirror should be installed inside, on the wall opposite the lift door, to enable wheelchair users to reverse out more safely. This would also enable a wheelchair user to see if anyone is behind them and to see the floor number. The mirror should not extend below 900mm from the lift floor to avoid confusing partially sighted and blind people orientating themselves to the position of the floor and walls within the lift. See section G:6 for more information about providing a clear contrast between the colour of floors and walls.

The control panel within the lift should be conveniently located, at a preferred height of 900–1,100mm above the floor and at least 400mm from any return wall. Duplicate controls should be provided on opposite sides of the cabin within large lifts or lifts with more than one entrance and exit.



Lift call buttons should have symbols in relief (embossed) to enable tactile reading. Call buttons should also contrast visually with the surrounding face plate and the face plate with the wall on which it is mounted. To provide additional assistance to partially sighted and blind people, there should be audible announcements of lift arrival and direction of travel.

The actual cabin size, position and height of controls, door clearance width and clear waiting area outside must all comply with local building regulations and legislation. It is also important to note that the design of a passenger lift may determine whether or not it can be used in the event of an emergency evacuation.

## **VERTICAL PLATFORM LIFTS AND STAIRLIFTS**

A conventional passenger lift should be provided as a means of access for all users to all levels in a new stadium, including those below ground. However, it is understood that in some existing stadiums it may not always be possible to install a conventional lift that would be suitable for use by wheelchair users and anyone else with limited mobility. In such cases, vertical platform lifts should be provided to ensure access to all key areas of the stadium, including wheelchair-user viewing areas, accessible toilets, refreshment areas, hospitality and VIP areas and executive or directors' boxes.

There are two types of vertical platform lift: non-enclosed platform

lifts that are used mainly to transfer wheelchair users (in their wheelchairs) and ambulant disabled people on a guarded platform from one level to another, and enclosed platform lifts that can serve a number of levels or floors. Wheelchair stairlifts may also be considered in some areas where a vertical lift cannot be installed, enabling wheelchair users to travel up and down stairs in their wheelchair and potentially offering a good solution in less busy areas such as VIP lounges and media zones.

Vertical platform lifts and stairlifts should be provided with easily accessible, clear instructions for use and an emergency alarm in case users get into difficulty. All users, including wheelchair users, should be able to reach and operate the controls and alarm.

Platform lifts and stairlifts are designed to travel slowly and it is



important to ensure that disabled spectators are not unduly delayed in reaching their allocated seats and services. These lifts may be operated remotely by a lift operator using a remote handheld control panel or independently by the disabled person using a continuous

**Figure 18 – An external, non-enclosed stairlift at Pride Park, Derby County FC, England**



**Figure 19 – An enclosed platform lift**

pressure control or push buttons. Both operating mechanisms should be provided to accommodate disabled people who may be unable to operate the controls. A platform lift or stairlift that is fitted with a fold down seat for ambulant disabled people is also recommended (see figure 18).

Platform lifts and stairlifts may be designed for external or internal use and guidance should be sought from the manufacturer as to whether the lift to be installed is suitable for the location intended.

### **Enclosed platform lifts**

An enclosed platform lift (for use by an unaccompanied wheelchair user) should be at least 900mm wide x 1,400mm deep. Where provision is also made for a companion or where two doors are located at 90° relative to each other, the platform should be at least 1,100mm wide x 1,400mm deep to allow space to turn the wheelchair. However, where possible a platform lift should be

installed that does not require the wheelchair user to turn to exit. The platform doors should be at least 800mm wide for a 900mm-wide lift, and at least 900mm for a lift that is 1,100mm wide or larger and where door openings are at 90° relative to each other. Doors should also contrast visually with the floor and walls, with any glass surfaces clearly identifiable to partially sighted users (see section G:6 for more information on this).

### **Non-enclosed platform lifts**

Non-enclosed platform lifts may be used to transfer people between levels up to 2m apart. Additional platform protection should be installed if a greater distance is to be travelled. The minimum clear dimensions of a non-enclosed platform lift should be large enough to allow ease of access and movement.

### **Stairlifts**

Stairlifts should not be installed in new stadiums or where it is possible to install a conventional passenger lift or platform lift. However, they can be a good solution in some existing stadiums. Stairlifts should be fitted with an alarm and be located within view of a member of staff in case users get into difficulty. The controls should be designed to prevent unauthorised use. Where there is only a single stairway available to an area, the minimum clear stairway width for emergency escape should be maintained between the carriage rail of the stairlift and the handrail opposite.

If there are two or more stairways available, the stairlift should be installed on the stairway not intended as the main means of escape in case of emergency.

When in a parked position, a stairlift should not reduce the required minimum clear width of a stairway or escape route or cause a potential hazard for blind and partially sighted people using the stairway or the adjoining landings.

It is important to consult local building control, safety and fire authorities whenever installing a stairlift or platform lift to ensure it will not conflict with or compromise evacuation or escape routes and regulations (see section L:2).

## **RAMPS AND STAIRWAYS**

Wherever possible, an inclusive design approach should be taken which avoids small changes in level when building or renovating stadiums and stands. If this is not possible, it may be necessary to install stairs and alternative means of access, such as ramps, for wheelchair users.

For a route or concourse to be considered accessible, the gradient or slope should be no more than 1:20 or 5%. Where the gradient or slope is greater, a ramp may be required to ensure inclusive access. Where the change in level within a circulation route is greater than 300mm, steps should be provided in addition to a ramp.

Where there are substantial changes in level, ramps may not be

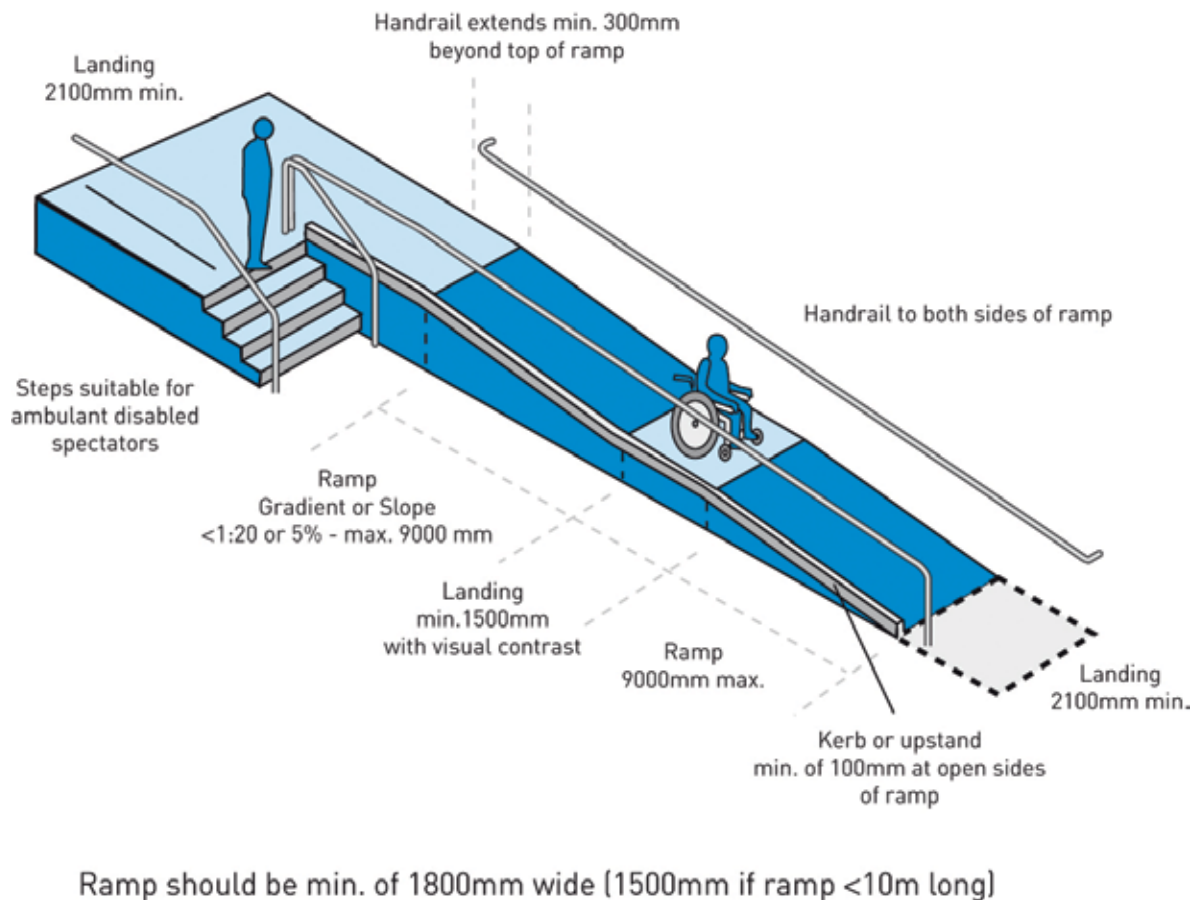
the best solution as they generally occupy large amounts of space due to the low pitch and frequent landings required to make them suitable for wheelchair users. Ramps should always be the last resort, but existing stadium characteristics or poor design may make them unavoidable.

## **Ramps**

Ramps can be permanent, semi-permanent or portable devices used to provide access to wheelchair users. They should have firm, non-slip surfaces and good lighting of all areas is essential. The gradient or slope of any ramp should be no steeper than 1:20 or 5%, as it is extremely difficult to push a wheelchair up anything steeper. Where a ramp with a gradient of 1:20 exceeds 9m in length, there should be level landings on which wheelchair users can rest along the way. Level landings or resting places should be at least 1,500mm deep and all should contrast visually with the ramp to aid partially sighted users.

Ideally, a ramp should be 1,800mm wide to allow two wheelchairs to pass each other. However on a shorter ramp (less than 10m long), a clear width of 1,500mm is acceptable, allowing an ambulant spectator to pass a wheelchair user. There should be a level and unobstructed area at the top and bottom of the ramp which is 1,500mm<sup>2</sup> clear of any door swing. This will ensure that wheelchair users are not required to attempt the task of opening





**Figure 20 – A ramp with minimum widths, gradients and levels**

doors while on an incline.

Ramps should also include an upstand of at least 100mm on any open side to prevent wheelchair wheels from slipping off the side. Ramps with a gradient of less than 1:20 do not require handrails, however where handrails are required they must comply with local building regulations. Wheelchair users do not normally need to use handrails to negotiate a ramp. However, in slippery conditions on long and/or steep ramps, handrails can help them to steady themselves. Where ramps are installed, adjacent stairs should also be provided

for people who have difficulty walking up or down ramps.

## Stairways

While stairs are not usually considered part of an accessible route, inclusive design enables people of short stature, elderly people, children and others to use them safely and efficiently, thus contributing to an accessible stadium.

A large number of people, including partially sighted and blind people, those of short stature and those with limited mobility are generally unable to manage incorrectly designed steps or stairs. Even where there are alternatives such as ramps or lifts, it is important that all stairways are well designed.

Stairways should incorporate features that assist partially sighted and blind people, enabling them to use them independently and safely. In addition, stairway design should take into account the needs of ambulant disabled people. Ramps can be a good



solution for wheelchair users, but others may have difficulty using them, for example if they cannot easily flex their knees or ankles. Therefore, even where ramps are provided, steps are also necessary to

**Figure 21 – A stairway with uniform steps, two handrails and contrast nosing**

ensure suitable and inclusive access.

Stairs should have uniform step riser heights and tread depths. The riser heights should be no more than 180mm and no less than 125mm. Treads should run no less than 280mm and no more than 350mm deep, measured from riser to riser. This offers plenty of space for an ambulant disabled person to rest and for a partially sighted or blind person to place a foot. Closed risers are essential, as open risers can act as trip hazards and may ensnare a cane used by a partially sighted or blind person.

Each step nosing should incorporate a permanently contrasting material that runs along the full width of the stair in high contrast to both the tread and the riser to help partially sighted and blind people to appreciate the extent of the stairs and identify individual treads.

Stairways should have between 2 and 20 risers in each flight. Stairways with 20 risers or more should include a level landing of 1,200mm<sup>2</sup> at the mid-point to allow for a rest stop, particularly for those climbing up the stairs. There should also be a level, unobstructed landing at the top and bottom at least as deep as each of the stairs.

There should be a uniform detectable warning that indicates having reached the top of each set or flight of stairs. It should run along the full width of the stairway to a depth of 600mm, starting

one tread depth back from the top stair. The warning should be of a contrasting colour to the surrounding floor surface and be tactile so that it is easily detectable by a cane or underfoot.

Where there are two or more steps, a single handrail should be provided on both sides at a height of 865–900mm. Handrails should always be positioned on both sides and continue across landings to provide an aid to balance for ambulant disabled people and to enable partially sighted and blind people to safely navigate up or down the stairs.

Handrails should have either a circular profile with a diameter of 32–45mm or an oval profile 50mm wide and 38mm deep. They should extend 300mm beyond the top and bottom of ramps and steps and return to the wall or ground at both ends in such a way as to avoid clothing getting caught. There should be a 60–75mm



clearance between the wall and any handrail. Handrails should also be in a colour which contrasts with the background to assist partially sighted people.

**Figure 22 – Tactile paving (detectable warning) with a barrier at the top of the stairs**

# I: VIEWING AREAS

## I1: Inclusive seating plans

It is now considered good practice and a basic principle of inclusive design that disabled people have access to any storey of a new non-domestic building. In football, this means that disabled spectators should be given a choice of inclusive viewing areas in all ticket categories and should have access to facilities throughout the stadium. Where full access is limited, for example by physical barriers for wheelchair users, a choice of alternative areas should be provided throughout the stadium, and not just at pitchside. Disabled spectators should not be limited to exclusive disabled seating areas but be given the opportunity to sit with supporters of their own team.

Not all disabled spectators require amenity seating or wheelchair-user viewing areas. It is therefore important to ensure an appropriate level of standard easy-access seating is available throughout the stadium, taking into account the number of disabled people overall and the increasing demand for accessible and inclusive facilities. This should include additional accessible seating within hospitality and VIP seating areas that is proportional to the overall number of



hospitality and VIP seats available, to provide equal access for all.

New stadiums should be designed to be inclusive and equal from the outset, offering a choice of seating for disabled spectators and their families and friends. Although it is commonly accepted that it is often more challenging to adapt an existing stadium to provide such choice, it is certainly possible with good planning and smart design solutions.

An access strategy or business plan should provide a clear schedule of improvements to be implemented over a reasonable period of time and a commitment from each key stakeholder to achieve equal and inclusive access for all (see section B for more information on key stakeholders).

Adequate viewing standards should be ensured in all viewing areas, so that seating is safe and serves its intended purpose. Seated spectators should have a clear, unrestricted view of the whole match or event. They should be able to remain seated and not have to stretch or strain to see; thereby also ensuring they do not obstruct the view of fellow spectators, especially people with restricted growth, children and disabled people.

It is unacceptable to consider seating with obstructed views as appropriate for partially sighted and blind spectators. As



explained earlier, it is a common misconception that they have no vision; in reality this is the case for only 18%. Some partially sighted and blind spectators prefer to sit near the pitch to make the most of their limited vision (sometimes with the use of a monocular or other visual aid) and/or to be able to hear the ball and pitchside action to better follow the game. It is, however, important that they too be given a choice of viewing areas throughout the stadium.

It is also sometimes wrongly assumed that partially sighted and blind spectators need to sit together. This should not be routinely enforced as it provides them with no choice and is not inclusive. For the same reason, the provision of an audio commentary and radio headsets should not be restricted to certain areas, especially as portable transmitters and headsets are now widely available (see section J:3 for more information about commentary services).

All stadium seating should contrast visually with the surrounding surfaces to assist partially sighted spectators. In addition, all seats should have an unobstructed view of scoreboards and video screens on which match and stadium safety information can be clearly displayed. However, where this is not possible, seating with a direct view of the scoreboards or video screens should be identified as such.

These seats can be of great benefit to hard of hearing and deaf spectators, who may not be able to hear information over the public address system. However, just like partially sighted and blind spectators, hard of hearing and deaf spectators should not be routinely grouped together. Unless they have additional, specific access requirements, they should be accommodated throughout the stadium.

There are a number of good practice documents that suggest definitions of inclusive design in terms of the minimum number of easy-access and amenity seats provided at a venue. In its technical report entitled *An Inclusive Approach to the Olympic & Paralympic Games*, the International Paralympic Committee advises that at stadiums hosting Olympic Games at least 0.75% of the overall seating capacity should be reserved for wheelchair users and a further 0.75% should be amenity seating. These figures are in line with the number of wheelchair users and people with limited mobility in Europe.

However, for the purposes of this document, the authors have used the disabled seating numbers recommended in the technical report CEN/TR 15913 (Spectator facilities – Layout criteria for viewing area for spectators with special needs), as recently ratified by all EU members and published

by the European Committee for Standardisation (CEN). CEN/TR 15913 makes minimum recommendations, but as explained previously, when taking an inclusive approach to stadium design it is important to look beyond the boundaries of minimum standards to meet the needs of the increasing number of disabled people wanting to attend football matches and other events. It is also important to future-proof new stadiums. It is expected that as stadiums become more representative of the wider European community, the number of disabled people wishing to attend matches with their families and friends will only increase. Disabled people should therefore be seen as valued customers, with good access seen not only as a moral issue but also as good business sense. Hence, an increasing number of designers are now taking a more progressive approach by including flexible seating solutions.

## **I2: Amenity and easy-access seats**

All stadiums should provide amenity seating for spectators who may require more space. Amenity seats should provide seating with extra leg room and it is helpful to provide some with armrests, although these should be removable. Amenity and easy-access seats should also have backrests, as should

all seats in stadiums used for UEFA competition matches.

Benches and bucket seats are unacceptable.

People with limited mobility may be unable to bend their knees or may need more room to access their seat using a walking aid or crutches, hence the need for extra leg room. They may be unable to stand easily or for long periods or easily change position. Therefore, amenity seating should provide a reasonable sightline from seated that is not obstructed by another spectator standing in front or to the side. A disabled spectator accompanied by an assistance dog may also require extra space for the dog to lie in front of or under their seat. They too should be provided with a choice of amenity seating.

Amenity and easy-access seats should be provided in easily accessible areas, such as at the end of rows, where steps are minimised to accommodate spectators with limited mobility.

Spectators requiring amenity or easy-access seats should be able to sit with supporters of their own team in a variety of viewing areas and ticket categories, including hospitality, VIP and directors' boxes. Such seating should also be located close to toilets and other facilities.

Table 1 shows the minimum amenity and easy-access seating requirements as recommended by the European Commission. These are minimum numbers only but are based on experience

and good practice concerning the number of disabled people likely to want to attend a match or other stadium event. Additional amenity seating should always be provided in hospitality and VIP areas (not included in the quota for general seating areas).

**Table 1 – Minimum number of amenity and easy-access seats (CEN/TR 15913)**

### **SEATED CAPACITY OF STAND OR STADIUM**

Under 10,000

10,000–20,000

20,000–40,000

40,000 or more

### **NUMBER OF AMENITY AND EASY-ACCESS SEATS BASED ON**

Minimum of 6 or 1 per 100 seats  
(whichever is greater)

100 + 5 per 1,000 seats above 10,000

150 + 3 per 1,000 seats above 20,000

210 + 2 per 1,000 seats above 40,000

All new stadiums should comply with these minimum standards from the outset. In the case of existing stadiums, an access audit should be commissioned and an access strategy or business plan prepared so that the required improvements can

be made and these standards met within a reasonable period of time (see section E).

The provision of adequate amenity and easy-access seating may also help to relieve the demand for wheelchair-user spaces if some such spaces are located close to dedicated wheelchair and mobility scooter storage areas. Some disabled spectators may wish to travel to the stadium by wheelchair or scooter because they cannot walk for long distances but prefer to transfer to easy-access or amenity seating for the match. Safe storage of wheelchairs and scooters will also ensure that concourses and other circulation routes are not blocked or obstructed during the match. Amenity and easy-access seating may in fact be required by a variety of spectators, such as those with temporary disabilities, elderly people, pregnant women, young children and so on.

There should be an accessible toilet within 40m of any amenity or easy access seating, with one accessible toilet provided for every 15 disabled spectator seats.

In addition, it is important that family members and friends are able to sit alongside disabled spectators who require amenity or easy-access seating and ticket office staff should be able to provide information about all amenity and easy-access seating areas within the stadium.



### **I3: Wheelchair-user spaces**

A variety of wheelchair-user spaces should be provided so that wheelchair users have a similar choice of seating and ticket categories to other spectators and are not isolated from the main body of the stand or stadium. The location and design of wheelchair-user viewing areas also need to be flexible and allow for greater demand in the future.

It is not acceptable to group all wheelchair users into one area or to provide wheelchair-user spaces only in home-supporter sectors. Disabled spectators are no different from other spectators in wishing to have a choice of viewing areas and be able to sit with supporters of their own team. By the same token, wheelchair users should be able to sit with or near family and friends, in addition to a companion or personal assistant who may be required to help them to access the stadium, facilities and services.

Companions and personal assistants should always be seated next to the wheelchair user. This is important for a number of reasons, especially as it may be difficult to attract the attention of a companion in a noisy stadium and the disabled spectator may be unable to turn to face a companion sat in front of them or behind. Many wheelchair users have limited movement within their wheelchairs and

some may have no movement or be unable to communicate easily. A selection of right and left-handed companion seating should be available next to wheelchair-user spaces. Easily moveable or flexible seating also allows friends and family to sit together. Flexible seats can be quickly removed to allow two or more wheelchair users to sit together or allow more non-disabled family members or friends to sit alongside a wheelchair user (see figure 23).

Wheelchair-user spaces should also be able to accommodate reasonably sized mobility scooters (as long as they do not obstruct the view and movement of other spectators). These are usually larger and less manoeuvrable than manual and electric wheelchairs. In any case, a disabled spectator who uses a wheelchair should be able to manoeuvre easily to a space that gives them a clear view of the pitch and surrounding stadium. They may also be accompanied by an assistance dog, in which case additional space should be provided for the dog to lie next to its owner.

Although an individual wheelchair-user space can be provided by a clear area at least 900mm wide and 1,400mm deep, it is recommended that each designated space be at least 1,400mm<sup>2</sup> to allow space for one companion or



**Figure 23 – Flexible seating at stadiummk, Milton Keynes Dons FC, England**

personal assistant to sit next to each wheelchair user in a fixed or removable seat.

Where there are rows or platform areas accommodating multiple wheelchair users, a clear circulation zone of at least 1,200mm should be provided to the rear of the wheelchair-user spaces to allow two wheelchair users to manoeuvre into position, turn and pass each other.

There should be an accessible toilet within 40m of any wheelchair-user space, with one accessible toilet allocated for every 15 wheelchair users.

Table 2 shows the minimum requirements for wheelchair-user spaces as recommended by the European Commission. These are minimum numbers only but are based on experience and good practice concerning the

number of wheelchair users likely to want to attend a match or other stadium event. Additional wheelchair-user spaces should always be provided in hospitality and VIP areas (not included in the quota for general wheelchair-user spaces). The use of flexible seating as illustrated in figure 23 may be a good solution in such areas.

As in the case of amenity and easy-access seats, all new stadiums should comply with these minimum standards from the outset. In the case of existing stadiums, an access audit should be commissioned and an access strategy or business plan prepared so that the required improvements can be made and these standards met within a reasonable period of time (see section E).

**Table 2 – Minimum number of wheelchair-user spaces (CEN/TR 15913)**

#### **SEATED CAPACITY OF STAND OR STADIUM**

Under 10,000

10,000 to 20,000

20,000 to 40,000

40,000 or more

#### **NUMBER OF WHEELCHAIR-USER SPACES BASED ON**

Minimum of 6 or 1 per 100 seats (whichever is greater)

100 + 5 per 1,000 seats above 10,000

150 + 3 per 1,000 seats above 20,000

210 + 2 per 1,000 seats above 40,000

## **14: Inclusive viewing standards**

It is important for everyone in the stadium to have a good view of the pitch and surrounding areas so that they can comfortably enjoy the match and stadium atmosphere. This includes all those in amenity and easy-access seating and wheelchair-user viewing areas.

An unobstructed view of the pitch should be ensured even when someone stands up in front or to the side. This is particularly important for disabled spectators who may not be able to stand or stand for long periods of time, change position or lean forward or to the side to get a better view. It is vital to ensure adequate sightlines for wheelchair users in particular, who are unable to stand even for short periods and may be paralysed or unable to move or turn their head. No part of the pitch or field of play should be further than 190m from any seat or viewing space and sightlines should not be obstructed by barriers, balustrades, handrails, roof supports, pillars or columns.

The provision of wheelchair-user spaces in different parts of the stadium has implications on the sightlines of both disabled and non-disabled spectators seated or standing nearby. All wheelchair-user spaces should be designed so that wheelchairs users can still see the pitch and



surrounding areas even when located behind standing accommodation or when people seated in front stand up even for a short time, such as during the national anthems or while the players are warming up.

The quality of sightlines is defined in C-values. This is the vertical measurement from the eye level of the person in front to the sightline of the person behind. Calculating C-values can be complex and should be undertaken by someone who fully understands the principles and wider issues of viewing quality.

The accepted formula for calculating sightlines is:

$$C = \frac{D(N + R) - R}{D + T}$$

Where:

**C** = the C-value

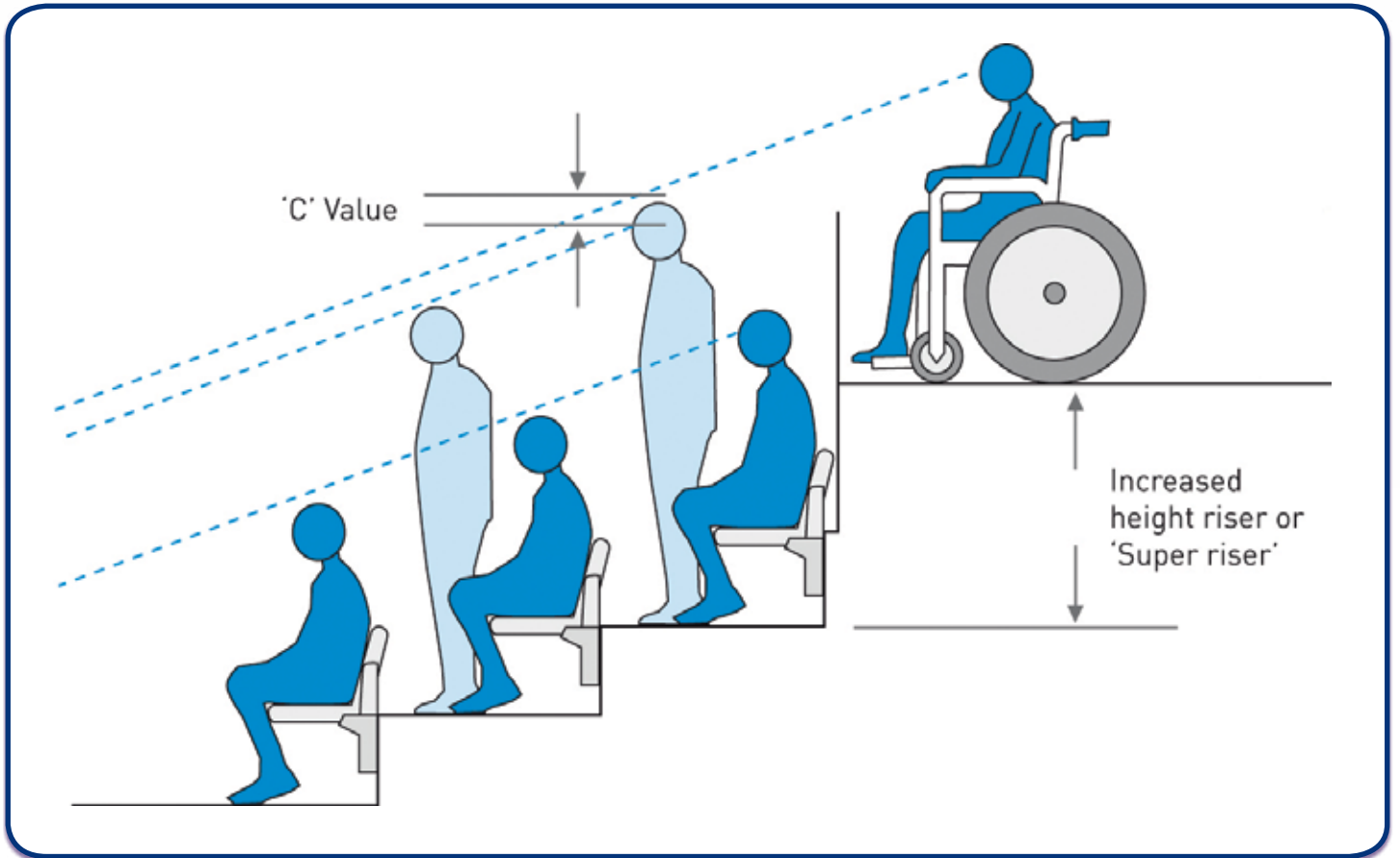
**D** = the horizontal distance from the eye to the point of focus

**N** = the riser height

**R** = the vertical height to the point of focus

**T** = the seating row depth

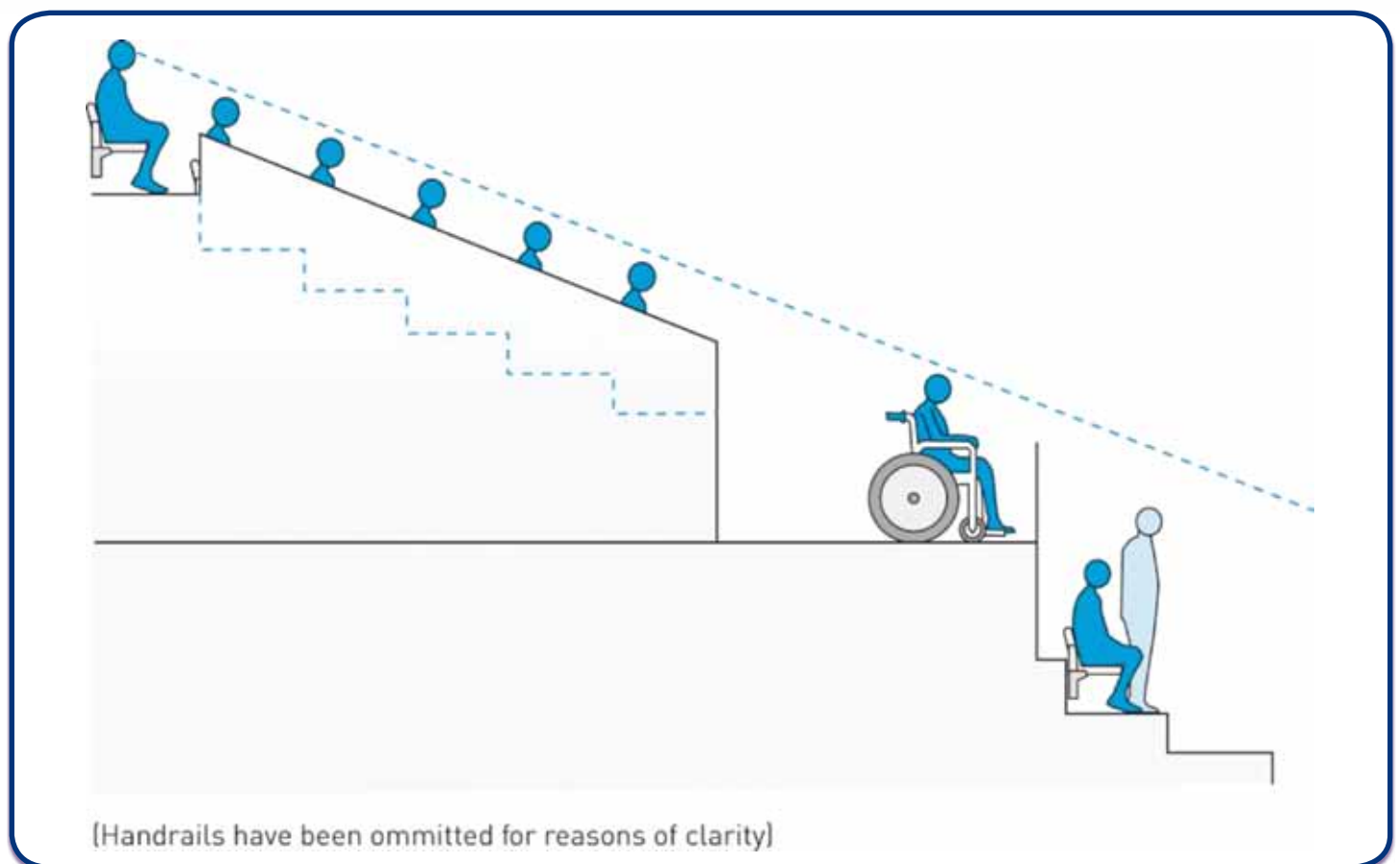




**Figure 24 – A wheelchair user's sightline**

It is proposed that a wheelchair user's eye level be measured as the vertical distance from the centre of their wheels. An average eye level of 1,150mm is generally used, while the assumed height of a person standing in front is 1,800mm, although it may well be that the person standing in front is taller and the person sat behind shorter. Particular care should be taken when considering averages for wheelchair users as the position of disabled people sitting in wheelchairs varies considerably and many disabled people are of short stature or unable to sit in an upright position.

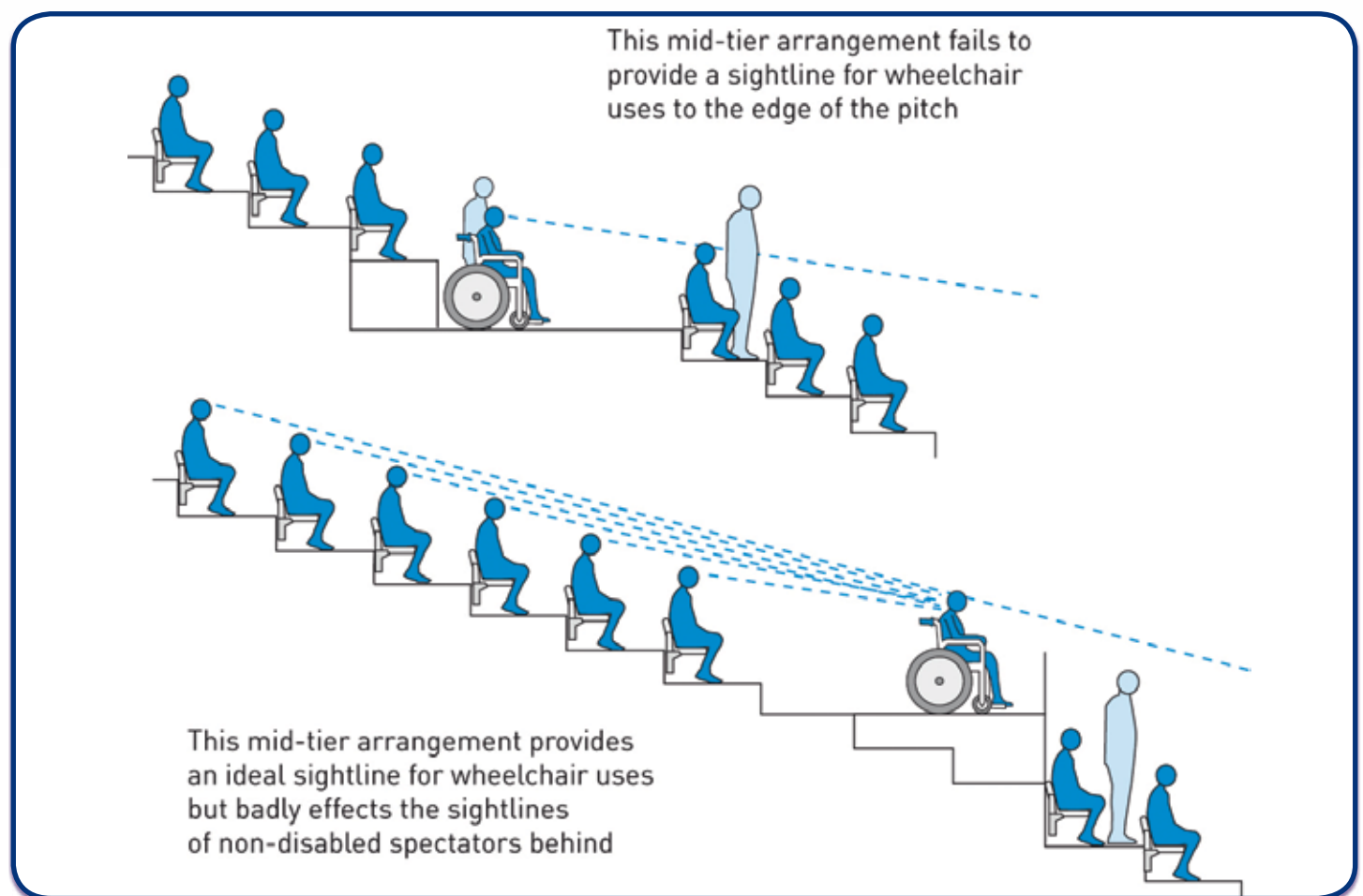
It is generally acknowledged that an acceptable viewing standard is obtained with a C-value of 90mm or above for all new stands. A C-value of less than 90mm is considered acceptable only in exceptional circumstances, for example where the recommended maximum viewing distance to the point of focus is exceeded.



**Figure 25 – An acceptable viewing standard for mid-tier wheelchair-user spaces (front of vomitory and surrounding non-disabled spectators)**

It has come to be expected that at exciting moments of a match some seated spectators will stand up, thereby obstructing the view of disabled people seated behind or

to the side. In order to create an acceptable sightline for wheelchair users in particular, an increased height riser, or “super riser”, should be installed, potentially several times the height of a normal stepping riser.



**Figure 26 – Inadequate or unacceptable sightlines from mid-tier viewing locations (Accessible Stadia Guide)**

CAFE recommends a minimum elevated position that ensures a wheelchair user is able to see the action on the pitch over any spectators standing in the row directly or diagonally in front (as illustrated in figures 24 and 25). The

minimum recommended increased riser height is 1,200mm. However, sightline calculations are very complex and there is no “one size fits all”. Designers could propose lower risers but in this case should demonstrate that they still achieve an acceptable viewing standard (C-value).

Wheelchair users should have a clear view of the whole pitch and surrounding areas at all times, especially when spectators seated directly or diagonally in front stand up. It is also important to note that a companion or personal assistant seated next to a disabled person should enjoy at least the same minimum C-value as their fellow spectators. Likewise, non-disabled spectators sat behind and to the side of wheelchair users also need to be considered to ensure that their sightlines are not unduly affected by the wheelchair user or their companion. Figure 26 illustrates a number of inadequate or unacceptable seating solutions with poor sightlines.

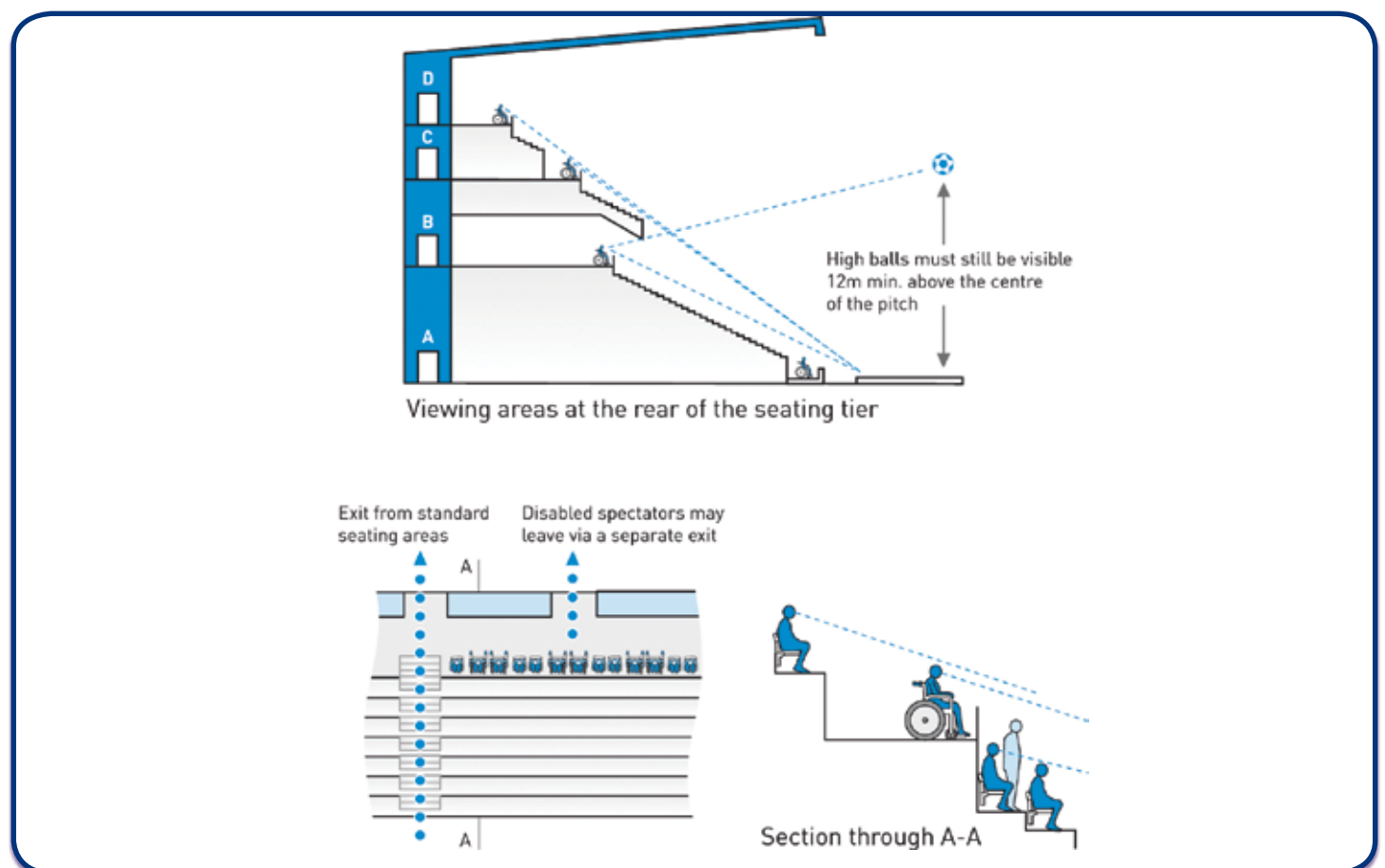
## **I5: Elevated viewing areas**

Disabled spectators should be provided with a choice that includes elevated viewing areas with easy access to toilets and refreshment areas. Upper tier positions were sometimes considered inappropriate for disabled spectators because

it was thought their safety would be compromised by the longer, more difficult access and exit routes. Thankfully, this is no longer the case, with smart design solutions ensuring a more inclusive approach.

Elevated viewing positions are generally preferred by disabled spectators as they often offer better protection from the elements and a better overview of the match, as long as sightlines are not compromised by overhanging tiers or roofs.

For wheelchair users, spaces at the rear of a seating tier



**Figure 27 – Sightlines from elevated viewing positions**

could be the ideal solution in several respects: they provide perfect sightlines, without any detriment to the sightlines of other spectators, they are easily accessible and particularly suitable for emergency evacuations and, most importantly, they present the designer with the opportunity to extend the viewing area horizontally for as far as is necessary to accommodate the number of wheelchair-user spaces required.

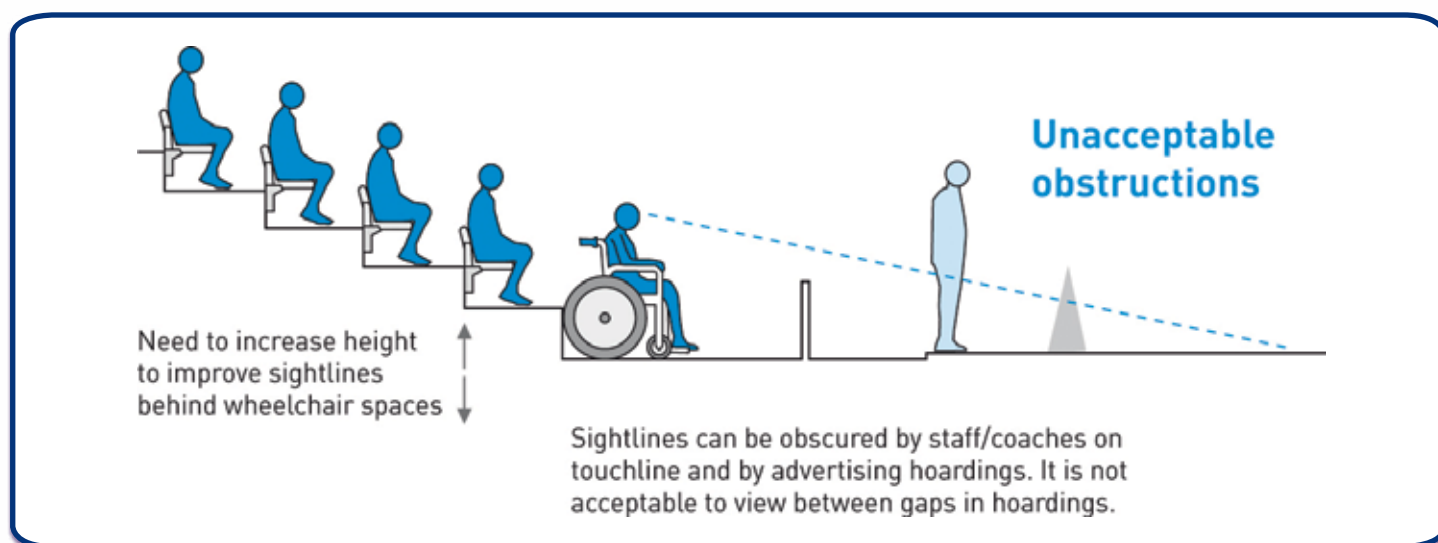
In a multi-tier stand, a position to the rear of the lower tier is convenient for wheelchair users for a number of reasons, as illustrated in figure 24. Lift access to such positions should also be relatively easy to achieve.

The layout of some grounds may even allow effective ground-level access to the rear of upper tiers. Designers should therefore be prepared to provide upper-tier viewing areas for disabled spectators, together with lifts and easy access to amenities such as nearby toilets and refreshment areas (see figure 27).

## **16: Pitchside viewing areas**

Although it may still be appropriate to provide some pitchside viewing areas for disabled people as well as accessible seating within the stands, stadium designers and managers should





**Figure 28 – Sightlines from pitchside viewing areas**

ensure an equal level of choice for all and disabled people in all areas should have adequate access to amenities such as toilets and refreshments.

Although it should be noted that some partially sighted spectators may still prefer to sit at pitchside so they can hear the sound of the ball and activity on the pitch, helping them to better follow the game, no more than 25% of wheelchair-user spaces and 25% of amenity seating should be provided at pitchside.

Matchday staff, players and coaches, press officers, dugouts and advertising hoardings can all obscure sightlines at pitchside (see figure 28) and the areas behind the dugouts and goals in particular (up to the 16m line and including the technical area) should be avoided as wheelchair users and ambulant disabled people are less able to adjust their position to see around or over obstructions.

Viewing areas for disabled spectators should be covered to protect them from the elements, including rain, wind and sun, and while covered pitchside areas may be considered advantageous for some disabled spectators, they may interfere with the sightlines of spectators located in the rows behind, requiring that those rows be raised. The first row of seats for both disabled and non-disabled spectators should, in any case, be raised from the pitch to ensure an adequate view.

## **17: Mid-tier viewing areas**

When planning for wheelchair users, spaces in the middle of seating tiers raise a number of issues for designers and stadium managers, as illustrated in figure 26.

A viewing platform directly in front of a vomitory may provide excellent sightlines for wheelchair users but this has to be balanced against the potentially adverse effect on the diagonal sightlines of other spectators seated behind or to the side.

A good solution may be to provide a continuous horizontal platform along the length of a stand, avoiding any obstruction to diagonal sightlines. These platforms may also be ideal locations for fitting removable or flexible seating (see section 1:8). In such cases, a lift-up barrier should be considered to prevent non-disabled spectators from migrating to the

wheelchair-user area, creating congestion, obstructions and safety hazards.

## **I8: Flexible seating**

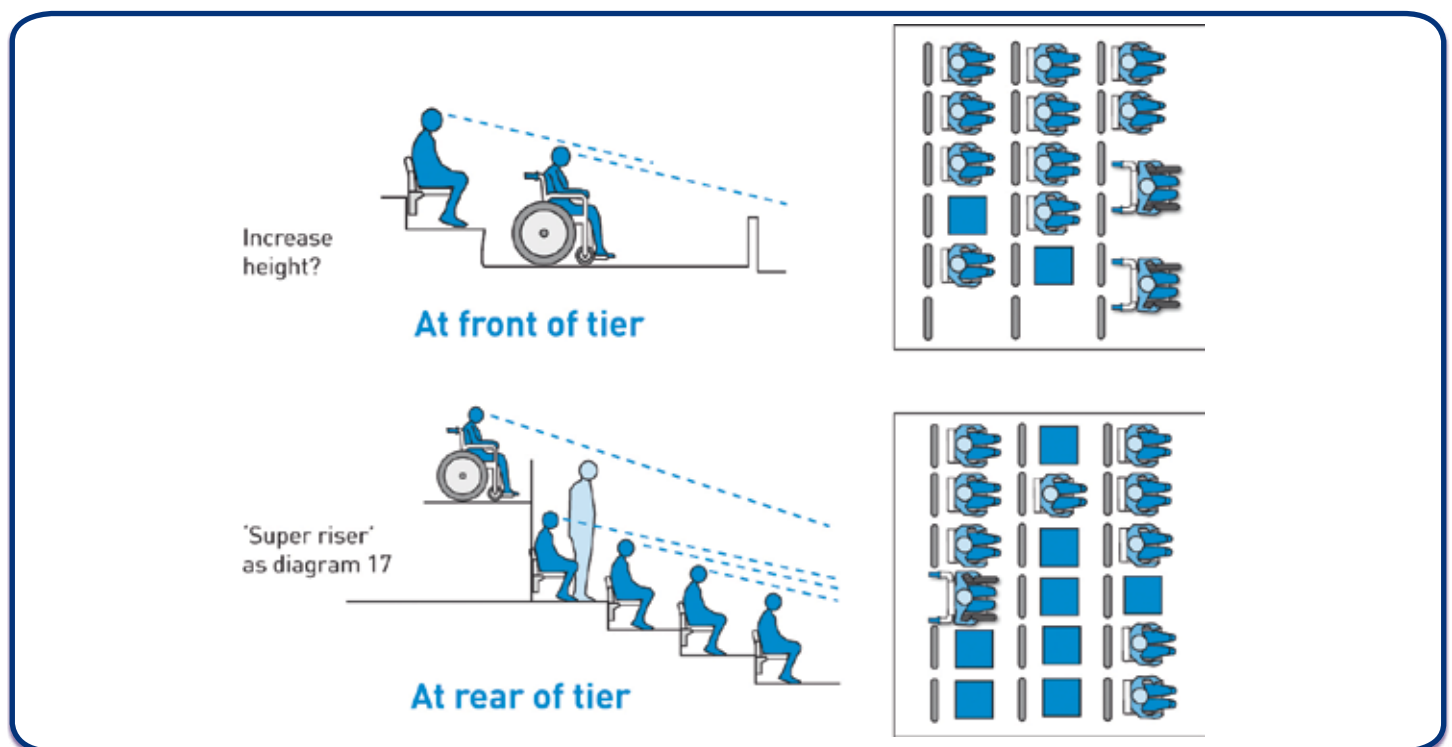
Additional wheelchair-user spaces may be provided in new and existing stadiums by removing seats, as long as there is fixed seating adjacent for companions and personal assistants and the space, viewing standards and access to facilities is the same as for permanent wheelchair-user spaces.

Flexibility may be useful when accommodating wheelchair users with family and friends, for example, or when two wheelchair users wish to sit together. In addition, there may be occasions when the minimum provision for wheelchair users is not sufficient to meet demand and flexible seating would be a good solution.

Another acceptable flexible solution may be to install drop-down or tip-up (not loose) seats in dedicated wheelchair-user viewing areas (see figure 23), for use by non-disabled spectators when the space is not required by wheelchair users. However, it should be recognised that where match tickets are usually available to people up to and even after the start of an event, this must be the case for non-disabled and disabled people alike. This means the standard minimum

allocation of wheelchair-user spaces, as shown in table 2, must be available at all times. In addition, since wheelchair-friendly access and circulation routes have to be provided for the maximum number of wheelchair users in any given area, it may be most appropriate to only locate flexible viewing areas at the front or the rear of a seating tier. In these positions, generous circulation widths are more easily provided.

When considering such flexible seating, designers should take into account the recommendation for elevated viewing and the use of “super risers”, as illustrated in figure 24, due to the possible sightline implications when positioning wheelchair users at the front or rear of a viewing area. Figure 29 shows



**Figure 29 – Flexible viewing areas**

adjoining fixed seats in the front row of a lower tier that are unused, with the space therefore occupied by wheelchair users. On average, a wheelchair user's head is 40–60mm higher and 200–300mm further forward than spectators sitting in fixed seats. Therefore, the rows behind such flexible viewing areas may need to be raised to compensate. Likewise, when wheelchair-user spaces are provided in the back row, the height of this row will need to correspond with figure 29 to provide adequate sightlines when spectators in front stand up. Designers should also be aware of the risk of forward crowd spillage in mid-tier or front-of-tier viewing areas and consider lift-up barriers to minimise the risk for wheelchair users.

## **19: Standing accommodation**

Although standing accommodation is prohibited in most UEFA competitions, where it is provided, disabled spectators should also have access. Some stadiums contain large areas of standing accommodation and unless disabled spectators are taken into account this could easily cause an imbalance between the amount of disabled viewing areas and the overall capacity of the stadium. In new stadiums that provide standing accommodation, designers should demonstrate that all of the criteria for

dispersal, adequate sightlines and inclusive access are met as they would be in seated viewing areas. There should also be level spaces for wheelchair users who wish to sit with family and friends in these areas.

In existing stadiums, a sensible, inclusive approach should be adopted that accommodates disabled spectators, whereby designers and stadium managers find a way of providing access for disabled people to standing accommodation without compromising anyone's sightline or safety.

## **I10: Non-matchday events**

Stadium designers and managers should consider the implications on other events held at the stadium when deciding on viewing areas and the location of amenity and easy-access seating, wheelchair-user spaces and facilities for disabled spectators. For example, an accessible spectator viewing area located at one end of a stadium might be rendered unusable when a temporary stage is set up in front of it for a concert.

As always, it is advisable to seek the advice of local disability groups and event organisers.



# J1: PROVIDING ACCESSIBLE INFORMATION

## **J1: Alternative format information**

Football clubs and stadium managers should consider providing information about their facilities and services to local disability organisations to ensure the club is reaching the wider community and to encourage new customers and spectators. In addition, clubs should set up an accessible website that provides all relevant information for disabled people wishing to attend matches or visit club outlets such as shops, museums or cafes.

Everyone has a right to any information that is publicly available. This obviously includes partially sighted, blind, hard of hearing, deaf and learning disabled people. For disabled people wishing to attend a match or event, accurate information is often even more important as it enables them to plan ahead and anticipate any access difficulties they may encounter.

Partially sighted and blind people are often excluded from reading printed materials because of a lack of alternative mediums or large-print formats. Appropriate solutions, including large-print programmes and information leaflets

and alternatives to traditional printed materials such as Braille, audio tapes, CDs, MP3 files and dedicated telephone services are cost-effective ways of ensuring more disabled people have access to club and stadium information. Consultation with local disabled supporters and disability organisations should help to determine the best means of communication.

### **PRINTED INFORMATION – CLEAR PRINT GUIDELINES**

Most football clubs provide the majority of their information in printed leaflets and match programmes and on dedicated websites. A policy should be established with the help of the access (disability) officer to provide such information in more accessible formats.

Firstly, the font in many football programmes is size 8.

A partially sighted reader may not be able to read information in size 8 font and as such will be excluded.

Such a small font size makes it very difficult for many people to read standard matchday programmes, but it is quite simple and inexpensive to produce more accessible materials using some basic accessible design principles.

These clear print guidelines should be followed by anyone publishing documents, including club leaflets and match programmes.

## **Contrast**

Use high contrast colours for text and background. Good examples are black or dark blue text on a white or yellow background, or white or yellow text on a black or dark blue background. The better the contrast between the background and the text, the more legible the text will be. Black text on a white background provides the best contrast of all.

## **Type colour**

Printed material is most readable in black and white. If using coloured text, restrict it to titles, headlines or highlighting.

## **Type size**

Bigger is better. Keep your text large; preferably between 12 and 18 points, depending on the font style used (point size varies between fonts). Consider your audience when choosing a point size. Where 12 point or smaller is used, alternative versions of the document in 14 point or larger should be available on request.

## **Font family and style**

Avoid complicated and overly decorative fonts. Highly stylised fonts such as those with ornamental, decorative or handwritten styles should be avoided. Instead, choose standard, sans-serif fonts with easily recognisable upper and lower-case characters. Arial and Verdana are good choices.

## **Type styles**

Blocks of capital letters, underlined and italicised texts are all harder to read. One or two words in capitals are fine but the use of capitals for continuous text should be avoided, as should underlining and italics.

## **Letter spacing**

Don't crowd your text; instead keep a wide space between letters. Choose a mono-spaced font rather than one that is proportionally spaced.

## **Text setting**

It is important to avoid fitting text around images if this causes lines of text to start in different places. Such layouts are very difficult for a partially sighted person to navigate. Likewise, text should not be set over images or textures as this affects the contrast.

## **Forms**

Partially sighted people often have larger handwriting than average, so it is good practice to provide extra space on forms. This also helps people with conditions such as arthritis that can affect the use of their hands.

## **Paper finish**

Use a matte or non-glossy finish to cut down on glare. Also, reduce distractions by not using watermarks or complicated

background designs. Ideally, uncoated paper should be used with a weight of 90g or more. If the text shows through from the reverse side of the page, the paper is too thin and the text will be difficult for a partially sighted person to read.

### **Clean design and simplicity**

Use distinctive colours, sizes and shapes on the covers of materials to make them easier to tell apart.

### **Braille**

Some partially sighted and blind people receive training to read Braille language. It is considered good practice to provide Braille versions of documents (which are unlikely to change, e.g. mission statements) upon request.

Local disability organisations may be able to print low cost Braille copies of documents and this may be an easy option for clubs and stadia to consider. However, since most partially sighted and blind people do not read Braille, it should not be the only alternate format available. Both audio and large format documents are good alternatives.

### **Audio recordings and programmes**

Audio versions of publications can be simple recordings done in-house or by local suppliers and released via accessible websites, podcasts or distributed as MP3 files.

This will ensure that publications are accessible to partially sighted and blind people.

### **Electronic documents**

This is a low-cost solution that has been adopted by some football clubs and stadiums to cater for their partially sighted and blind spectators.

When preparing documents such as match programmes for publication, it is possible to produce a plain text version in a Word document for email distribution at no or very minimal extra cost. It is important to be aware that many PDFs cannot be read by most PC screen-reader software used by partially sighted and blind people, as a basic PDF document is no more than a picture or scanned copy of a page. Electronic documents should be RTF or DOC files with minimum formatting and graphics.

### **Video, DVD and CD releases**

All video and audio media formats should include captioning or an accompanying text description or script of the content to ensure that a hard of hearing or deaf person can access the information. Where possible, it is considered good practice to include a text copy of the script or dialogue, subtitles, sign language and an audio-described version of



any video clips or films (see section J:3 for more information about audio-description commentaries).

## **Website design**

Websites provide an ideal opportunity for football clubs and stadiums to promote the accessible facilities and services available to their disabled supporters and customers, so it is important that this information is easy to find and read.

Websites need to be accessible to disabled people who may be colour blind, partially sighted or use special voice-activated or screen-reader software. Voice-activated software is sometimes used by people with limited mobility who are unable to use a mouse or keyboard, while screen-reader software is often used by partially sighted and blind people who cannot read the content of websites.

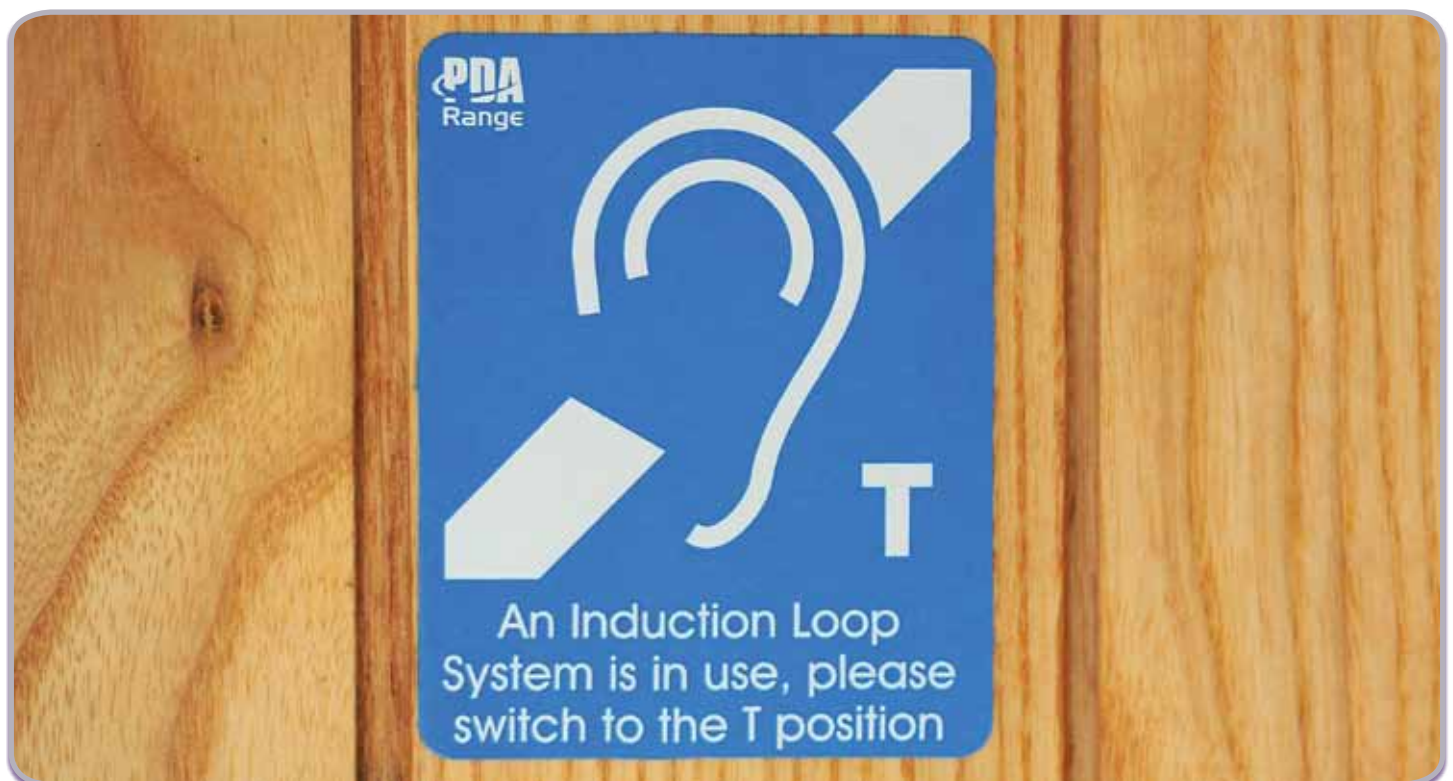
Creative use of colour and contrast can dramatically enhance the accessibility of a website for partially sighted people, who may have difficulty reading and distinguishing text from a background colour. Background images and patterns, on the other hand, may cause problems, and pictures and photos should always be accompanied by a text description.

The site layout should be logical and easy to follow and any audio information available, such as in a video or audio clip, should be accompanied by a script or text for hard of hearing

and deaf people. For more information about good website design please contact your local disability organisation or CAFE.

## J2: Stadium provisions for hard of hearing and deaf spectators

Hearing loss is by far the largest single disability and this is often overlooked when designing facilities and providing services. Hearing loss is often progressive over a long period of time and people can be unaware of the extent to which they are affected. It should be noted that many older spectators in particular experience progressive hearing



**Figure 30 – Signage indicating the assistive hearing device at Tallaght Stadium, Co. Dublin**

loss, so it is important to provide assistive hearing devices throughout stadiums.

Football club and stadium staff, especially all customer service and matchday staff, should be suitably trained and sensitive to the needs of hard of hearing and deaf spectators. Where possible, several members of staff and/or volunteers trained in sign language should be available on matchdays. Much like the spoken word, several versions of sign language exist across Europe, but local disability organisations can provide advice in this regard.

In areas such as ticket outlets, where customers are separated from staff by a screen, good quality lighting and non-reflective glass should be installed to assist hard of hearing and deaf people who can lip-read.

Ticketing, customer services and switchboard/helpline staff should also be familiar with local telephone relay services that enable hard of hearing and deaf people to make and receive calls via a third-party operator who translates speech to text and text to speech.

Where possible, club and stadium staff should be ready to take and exchange written notes to communicate with people who cannot communicate clearly orally, or cannot communicate orally at all. This can be as straightforward as

carrying a notebook and pen.

They should also take account of the needs of hard of hearing and deaf people who use assistance dogs (see section G:8 for more information on assistance dogs).

## **HEARING AUGMENTATION**

### **Public address systems**

Stadiums need to ensure their public address systems are designed to cater for hard of hearing and deaf spectators. One of the easiest ways of doing this is to increase the number of speakers in each area of a stand: if the hard of hearing spectator is physically closer to a speaker, the volume can be reduced and the clarity increased.

### **Assistive hearing devices**

There are a number of assistive hearing devices available, with new and improved technologies continually being developed. It is therefore important to familiarise yourself with the latest equipment available. Local disability organisations will be able to advise you further.

The most common and easy-to-use assistive hearing devices are FM loops and passive infrared systems.

### **FM loops**

FM or audio induction loops are used both at large venues and in one-on-one service counter applications. Literally, a

low-output FM radio signal is broadcast through a specific area. The signal is picked up through a conventional microphone and transmitted through the FM loop. Users can access the signal via a special receiver, FM radio or the T-switch available on most modern hearing aids. Since these are RF (radio frequency) units, no line of sight to the FM loop is required. This is the most suitable assistive hearing device for use in stadiums and should be available throughout the stadium bowl and in all service areas.

As radio frequency signals, FM loops are affected by other RF and atmospheric conditions. In addition, since these signals are available through the public FM radio band, they do not provide secure communication exclusively to people who are hard of hearing. Nevertheless, audio induction loop facilities should be available within all spectator areas, including ticket offices, service counters, reception areas, merchandising outlets and hospitality areas. They should be tested regularly and customer service and matchday staff should be trained to use them.

### **Passive infrared systems**

Passive infrared systems are best used indoors as they can be affected by direct sunlight. Emitters are placed strategically



around a room to provide a line-of-sight service to the user, who typically needs a receiver (to be issued by the stadium) to access the signal. Any line-level signal can be transmitted using this system, which is also commonly used for simultaneous interpretation between different languages.

### **Real-time captioning**

Text versions of all spoken words and audio information should be displayed on the main video screens, scoreboards or other dedicated screens located throughout the stadium.

There are two forms of captioning: closed captioning, meaning only viewers who chose to decode or activate the captions see them, and open captioning, which is simply text displayed on a screen or scoreboard for all to see (the kind most commonly used in stadiums).

Captioning can be used on any scoreboard or video screen capable of displaying public announcements, general information and emergency instructions to supplement the public address system for hard of hearing spectators.

### **Warning systems**

Warning systems within a stadium usually consist of evacuation signals, announcements over the public address system and visual instructions on electronic scoreboards.



In most situations, it is reasonable to expect hard of hearing and deaf spectators to rely on other spectators and staff for emergency warnings. However, there are some situations where they could be on their own, for example in the toilet. Stadium managers should therefore consider installing flashing warning lights in such areas.

### **J3: Audio commentaries**

It is recommended that audio match commentaries be provided for partially sighted, blind or hard of hearing spectators, and this may even be a service other spectators would be keen to use. To accommodate partially sighted and blind spectators, this service should be “audio-description” and at international matches audio-description commentaries should be provided in the local language of each team.

#### **Audio-description commentaries**

Audio-description commentaries provide a commentary with additional information for people without a visual view of the match or activities being described. It is an additional narration that describes all significant visual information such as body language, facial expression, scenery, action, and clothing such as team colours – in short, anything that is important to conveying the plot of

the story, event or image. An easy way to consider audio-description commentary is to think about how a radio commentator usually delivers information. It is not the same as a TV commentary, as radio listeners rely entirely on the commentator's description whereas TV viewers usually pick up visual as well as audio information.

Listeners tune into or receive the audio-description commentary via a headset or receiver. There are a number of ways to provide such a service and it is important to pick a system that gives the beneficiaries a choice. The most important thing is for the commentator to be experienced in providing audio-description commentaries. Many people who rely on match commentaries enjoy the local radio station coverage, while others prefer a dedicated stadium system. In any case, it is unacceptable to provide a TV commentary as the users do not have the benefit of additional visual information. Clubs and stadiums should contact their local disabled supporters to discuss their preferred service.

### **Fixed audio-description commentaries**

Some stadiums provide audio-description commentaries to designated seats only. Where a fixed system is used, the disabled spectator is given a headset that plugs into a

receiver point usually located under their seat. The headsets may be fixed to the seats too or handed out on a match by match basis. This system is relatively easy to manage but is not very inclusive as it does not provide a disabled spectator with any choice about where and with whom they sit.

### **Portable audio-description commentaries**

As explained, it is considered good practice to take an inclusive and accessible approach to all services and facilities and to not unnecessarily limit disabled spectators to one particular part of the stadium. When this approach is applied to audio-description commentary services for partially sighted and blind spectators, the solution is a portable system.

When using a portable audio-description commentary system, the commentary is transmitted to a radio receiver through a headset which can be used anywhere within the stadium. This means that partially sighted and blind spectators can choose to sit with their friends and family and among supporters of their own team rather than in designated areas only. This also allows partially sighted and blind spectators from visiting teams to use the service.

### **Commentary equipment**

There are a several types of audio-commentary equipment on the market, including radio systems which operate across a

specific MHz bandwidth within the stadium (usually exempt from licences). The transmitter sends the signal to the user's receiver or headset, which is normally a small handheld, battery-powered box with a plug-in earpiece or headphones. The receiver (with headphones or earpiece) is given to the user before the match and then collected afterwards and charged ready for the next game. It is important that someone is responsible for testing and maintaining the equipment between matches.

Such systems usually provide good sound quality with a range of up to 200m between the transmitter and receiver. The transmitter and receiver have a number of user-selectable radio channels and are operated in the same way as a standard portable radio. Maintenance is usually very low, with both transmitters and receivers running off a standard or common battery supply using rechargeable (with a charger unit) or disposable batteries.

The only limitation of this handheld receiver and headphones system is in the distribution and collection procedures before and after the match. Users often have to collect and return their receivers and headphones at designated points in the stadium and many stadiums like to take a deposit to ensure safe return of their equipment after the match.

With continued advances in technology, however, audio-commentary systems are improving constantly. For example, it is now possible to give users disposable, all-in-one portable receiver and earpiece units designed to pick up the designated audio-commentary within the stadium. These units are low cost and can be sold in club shops or supplied with tickets. Some prefer this system as it makes pre-match distribution easy and requires no maintenance.

Please consult local disabled supporter groups and disability organisations or contact CAFE for more information.



**Figure 31 – Commentary positions at Stadion Tivoli Neu, Innsbruck, Austria**

## **Audio-description commentators**

The key to a good audio-description service is to ensure a good commentator.

The person providing an audio-description commentary



should be specially trained to describe the on-pitch action at all times rather than talking about statistics or tactics or providing lengthy summaries of previous action. Their training should include an introduction to visual awareness followed by sessions on voice, technique, preparation and language.

Audio-description commentators should be accommodated within the media area on matchdays to ensure that they have a good view of the pitch and stadium and therefore enable them to provide an accurate live commentary. An experienced audio-description commentator will be able to describe the pitch activity, the surrounding atmosphere and any action in the stands to ensure that partially sighted and blind spectators can fully enjoy all aspects of a match.

It may be possible to enlist the support of local radio and media services to help to recruit and train volunteers to deliver this service on matchdays.

Linking up to a local radio station is not always considered a satisfactory solution, with some partially sighted and blind spectators preferring a dedicated and familiar audio description. It is important to provide a choice of solutions where possible, and in any case a local radio commentary may not always be available.



# **K: ACCESSIBLE AMENITIES**

In addition to the stadium itself, all facilities and services should be inclusive and accessible to all. Disabled spectators are no different in wanting to purchase club merchandise and refreshments on matchdays. They may also wish to buy hospitality packages, have access to restaurants and bars and, of course, use the toilet.

## **K1: Accessible toilets**

It is extremely important to ensure that adequate toilet facilities are provided for disabled people within all areas of the stadium (including those used only on non-matchdays), particularly for wheelchair users, who cannot normally use standard facilities. As such, accessible toilets should be dispersed around the stadium and as close as possible to areas used by disabled spectators and staff. Accessible toilets should never be used as storage areas even on a temporary basis. They should be properly maintained and kept clean and serviced, ready for use.

Stadium staff and stewards should ensure that specially designated toilets are not abused by non-disabled spectators on matchdays, when demand may be high at peak times. However, sensitivity is required, as some people (such as those who use a colostomy bag or have a hidden disability) may require an accessible toilet even though it is not obvious.

In assessing the numbers required, designers should consider the time a disabled person may need when going to the toilet (usually longer than a non-disabled person) and the demand for accessible toilets at peak times such as half-time or the end of a match.

Unisex toilets should also be available to enable a companion or personal assistant of the opposite sex to offer assistance if required.

Accessible toilets should be clearly identified with appropriate signage, including tactile signage for partially sighted and blind people (see section G:6 for more information on accessible signage).

Doors should be fitted with easy-action privacy bolts for people with limited dexterity. It should be possible to open such doors with one hand and operate all door handles and locks with a



closed fist. Wherever possible, lever-action door handles and locks should be used. Knobs of a circular or spherical design are to be avoided as they are especially difficult for people with limited dexterity, arthritis or a weak grip.

**Figure 32 – An example of an accessible toilet**

All door handles and other fittings should contrast visually with the surface of the door to assist partially sighted users. Likewise, the doors themselves should contrast with the surrounding walls.

The colour schemes of all toilet blocks, including accessible toilets, should incorporate contrasting colours and tones for the floor, walls, doors, fixtures and fittings to assist partially sighted people. For example, all door handles and other fittings should contrast visually with the surface of the door, and the door itself should contrast with the surrounding walls. A black toilet seat is preferable to a white one where the toilet bowl is also white, and walls should be coloured if white furniture is installed.

All flooring should be of a slip-resistant material and every accessible toilet should contain an emergency pull cord that extends almost to the floor on the transfer side of the toilet so that a disabled person who has fallen to the floor can reach it easily. In addition, the end of the cord should be fitted with an easy-grab pull ring and the colour of both the cord and pull ring should contrast with the walls (red is a commonly used colour). The reset button should be located within reach of the toilet seat in case of accidental activation. Stadium staff should be alert to the emergency alarm and carry keys so they can open the toilet door in an emergency.

## **Wheelchair-accessible toilets**

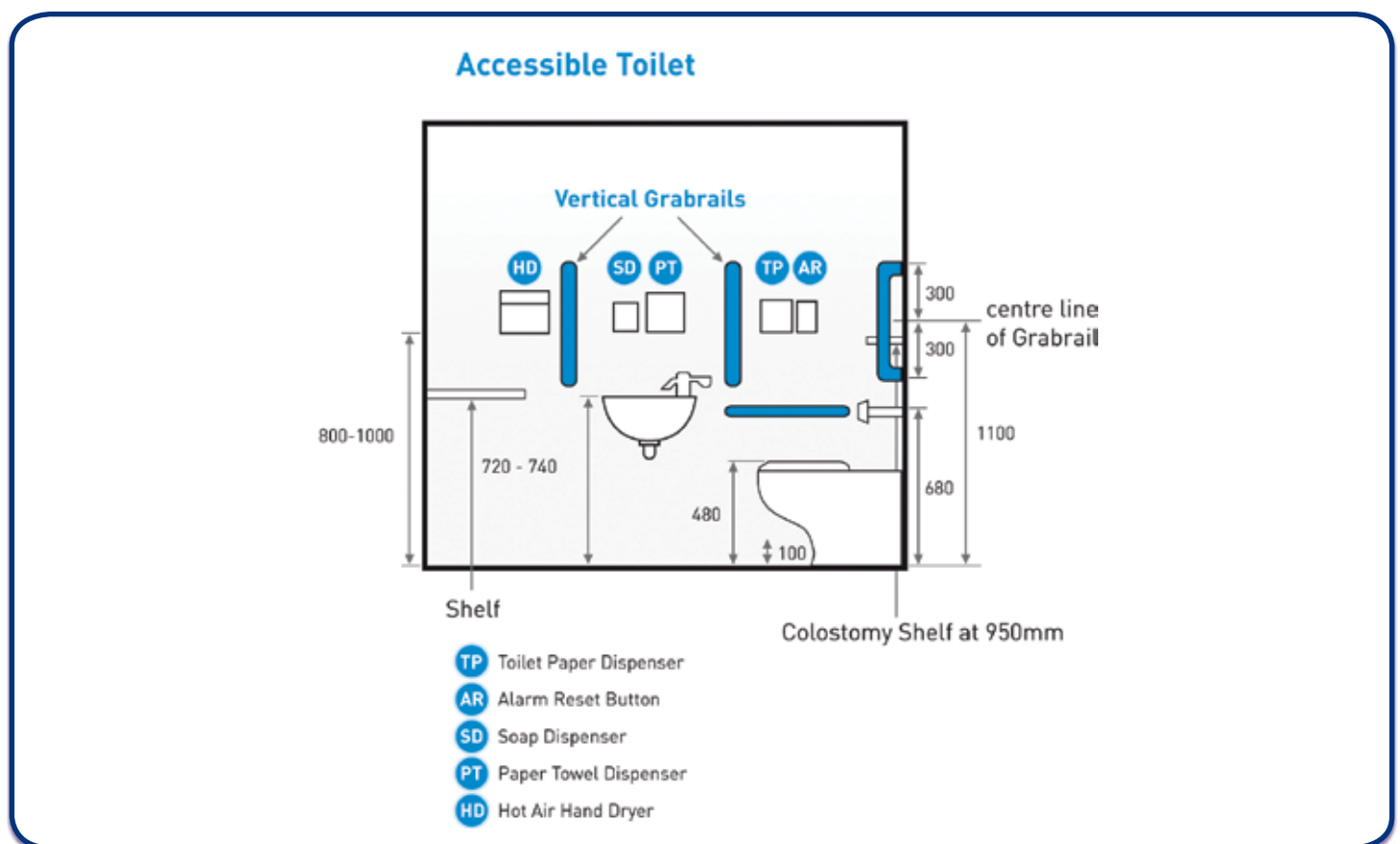
It is considered good practice to provide at least one wheelchair-accessible toilet per 15 wheelchair-user spaces, as close as possible to the wheelchair-user viewing areas. The horizontal travel distance from a wheelchair-user space to a wheelchair-accessible toilet should not exceed 40m and the route should remain accessible and free of obstacles at all times.

Wheelchair-accessible toilets should have sufficient clear floor space to allow a wheelchair user to make a 180° turn and allow a companion or personal assistant to help the disabled person transfer from their wheelchair to the toilet if required. As such, the clear floor space (i.e. with no obstructions or reductions caused by furniture, etc.) should be at least 2,200mm x 1,500mm. This is the minimum space required to manoeuvre a wheelchair into and around a toilet cubicle. It is also important to ensure that there is a transfer space of no less than 750–900mm adjacent to the toilet seat.

Wheelchair users transfer from their wheelchair to the toilet seat in different ways and using different angles depending on their degree of mobility. If more than one wheelchair-accessible toilet is available, they should offer different layouts suitable for left and right-hand transfers from wheelchair to toilet seat. The toilet flush lever should be placed at a height of 800mm on the transfer

side of the toilet so that it is within easy reach of a person with limited mobility. Where possible, the toilet should be fitted with an automatic (electronic) flush system. This eliminates the need to reach over the toilet to flush, which may be an unnecessary falling hazard.

The toilet seat should be at a height of 450mm to facilitate transfer and the toilet seat lid should be fitted and supported 10–15° beyond vertical, to act as a backrest. A back support should be installed if there is no seat lid or tank and the toilet tank top or cistern should be securely attached to the near wall. Toilet paper



**Figure 33 – Layout of an accessible toilet**

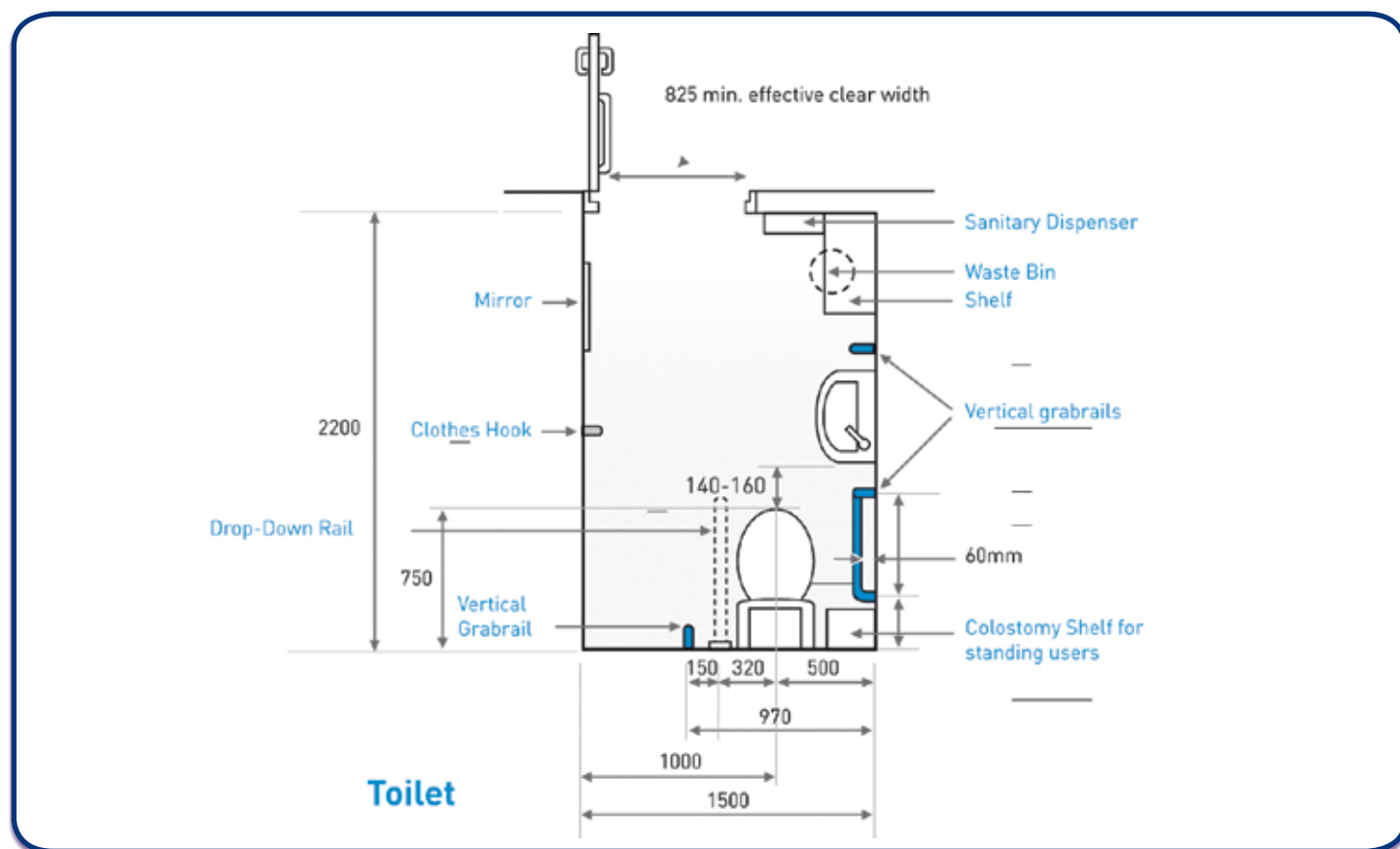
dispensers should be easy to reach from seated (450–750mm from floor height) and conventional open-roll dispensers are preferred, as they require only minimal dexterity.

Toilets should be equipped with L-shaped grab bars (750mm horizontally and vertically) mounted 230mm above and 150mm in front of the toilet seat. All hinged support or grab rails should be counterbalanced. A hook should be available at two levels (1,050mm and 1,400mm above the floor), along with a small shelf at a height of 750–950mm that can be reached from the toilet seat for people who use special items such as gloves or colostomy bags. A small washbasin should be installed 720–750mm above the floor with a lever-handle mixer tap (monobloc) or automatic/motion-activated tap on the side of the basin nearest the toilet. The washbasin should be accessible both from a wheelchair and when sitting on the toilet and should be large enough to allow for somebody assisting the disabled person. Height-adjustable washbasins may be considered to accommodate a greater range of disabled people.

Soap and hand-towel dispensers or hand driers should be located within easy reach, at a usable height of 920–1,200mm and approximately 750mm from the centre of the sink. They should be easy to operate (e.g. lever-operated or hands-free). A full-length mirror should also be installed with its base at 1,000mm, usually



behind the sink, to allow wheelchair users to view themselves easily. Rubbish bins, sanitary bins and other obstacles should not block access to the toilet or accessories, or encroach on the clear floor space available (including the required 600mm pull space beside the door). Doors should open outwards and not into the clear floor space. Where this is not possible, as it would obstruct a circulation route for example, the clear floor space should be increased to at least 3,000mm x 1,500mm to allow wheelchair users access to the toilet with the door open, and it must be possible for the inward opening door to open outwards in the event of an emergency.



**Figure 34 – Layout of an accessible toilet**

Automatic door closers should be avoided and replaced with a 100mm D-handle mounted on the pull side of the door, 500mm from the hinge side of the door and 1,000mm from the floor.

A full-length horizontal handle may be fitted to the inside of the door to help wheelchair users to close the door behind them, but vertical handles should be avoided as these can catch on electric wheelchair joysticks or controls.

Automatic lighting that activates when the toilet is occupied should be considered. Otherwise light switches should be installed inside the toilet, within easy reach on entering and no higher than 1,000mm above the floor. Where automatic lighting is used, back-up switched lighting should be provided in addition to a motion sensor. Fixed or time-out automatic lighting systems should be avoided as a disabled person may require longer than these systems allow for.

### **Accessible toilets for non-wheelchair users**

At least 10% of the cubicles (with a minimum of one) within a toilet block should be designed for people with limited mobility. This means they should be fitted with support rails and be large enough to accommodate people who use crutches or have limited leg movement, thereby also providing space for parents with small children.

In men's toilets, at least one urinal per block should be suitable for

persons with limited mobility. Vertical hand or grab rails should be provided where privacy screens are not installed. In addition, an unobstructed space that is 800mm wide × 1,100mm deep should be provided in front of all washbasins, and basin rims should be set 780–800mm above the floor. Where possible, vertical support bars should be fixed to each side.

### **Toilets in first aid rooms**

Toilet cubicles incorporated into any new first aid rooms should be accessible to disabled people independently. When an existing first aid room is renovated, an accessible toilet should be provided either inside or nearby.

### **Changing Places toilets**

Some football clubs have more recently installed Changing Places\* or peninsular toilets. A Changing Places toilet offers a larger space with special lifting equipment that can be used by disabled people with complex and multiple needs often requiring the help of up to two assistants. Installing a Changing Places toilet will enable a

\*Changing Places is a UK consortium consisting of Mencap, PAMIS, Nottingham City Council, Dumfries and Galloway Council, the Department of Health's Valuing People Support Team, the Scottish Government and the Centre for Accessible Environments. For more details on Changing Places, see <http://www.equalaccess.com.au/news/180/> and <http://www.mencap.org.uk/node/7141>.



be height-adjustable, but can be manually or electrically operated and wall-mounted or free-standing. It should be possible to fix any height-adjustable changing bench at an appropriate, safe working height for assistants, to reduce the strain on their backs.

Such facilities are not designed for independent wheelchair users but enable disabled people with complex needs to attend and enjoy matches. As such, clubs should, wherever possible, consider installing a Changing Places or peninsular toilet at their stadium. Further advice on designing and installing Changing Places toilets and similar facilities can be provided by your local disability organisation or CAFE.

## **K2: First aid rooms**

First aid rooms must be able to accommodate disabled as well as non-disabled spectators and staff and should be clearly signposted and easily identifiable. The entrance and room itself should be large enough to accommodate a wheelchair user and their companion or personal assistant, bearing in mind that either of them could be the one in need of first aid.

Accessible (easy-access) chairs with armrests should be available for accompanying friends or relatives with limited mobility. In addition, an adjustable examination couch should be provided for people of limited mobility or restricted growth.



As always, it is also important to ensure a good visual contrast between all first aid room equipment and furniture and their surroundings to assist partially sighted patients or companions. The first aid room should at least be located close to an accessible toilet and/or Changing Places or peninsular toilet (see section K:1 for more information), but ideally there should be one within the first aid room itself.



**Figure 36 – A general view of the medical and first aid room at Stade Henry Jeanne, Bayeux France**



The stadium manager should also ensure that an emergency procedure is in place to safely escort a disabled person located anywhere within the stadium, including any designated wheelchair-user areas, to the first aid room.

All first aid room staff and volunteers should be trained in disability etiquette and access awareness, so that they are easily able to assist and communicate with a disabled person, be they a patient or an accompanying relative or friend.

### **K3: Refreshment facilities**

Disabled people should be able to make independent, unimpeded use of refreshment facilities, including self-service outlets. Bars and service counters should be close to disabled spectator viewing areas and accessible to all, including wheelchair users and partially sighted and blind people.

It should be noted that disabled spectators may experience difficulties in using both toilet and refreshment facilities during the limited time available at half-time, when circulation areas within the stadium are at their most congested. In this case, stadiums may wish to provide a refreshment order service for disabled spectators, organised by trained volunteers or staff. Hawkers selling a choice of beverages and food services may also be an effective solution in disabled spectator viewing areas. However,

wherever possible, the stadium facilities themselves should be inclusive and accessible enough for disabled spectators to mix with fellow spectators in the refreshment areas.

Refreshment counters and bars should be designed with a lower section for wheelchair users at a level no more than 850mm above the floor and with a clear space beneath up to at least 700mm above the floor. This can be achieved by providing level access and removable seating, or no seating at all, to accommodate wheelchair users. Table legs or bases should be set in from the table edge to allow for wheelchair users. A number of seats with armrests should also be included to help ambulant disabled people to sit down and stand up.

## **K4: Directors' boxes and hospitality suites**

As explained earlier, all areas of the stadium, including the VIP and directors' boxes and corporate and hospitality suites, should be accessible to disabled people, along with any adjoining facilities and amenities. As such, inclusive design principles should be used in these areas too, and improvements should be made where required to ensure equal access.

## **K5: Retail outlets and other commercial areas**

Many football clubs and stadiums have retail outlets that sell club merchandise and memorabilia, with such sales having become an important and valuable source of income. Several stadiums also have museums and conference facilities which are often open on non-matchdays. It is important that these areas are fully accessible, as disabled supporters are no different from non-disabled supporters in wishing to purchase replica kits and other merchandise, and they may also wish to attend club events and other activities. If your customer outlets are not accessible, the likelihood is you will be losing out, not just on the custom of disabled people, but also their friends and families.

## **K6: Media**

Disabled people are becoming more active and independent and can be rightly found in all walks of life. There are an increasing number of accredited disabled press and other media representatives, including match photographers, who should be provided with accessible facilities and services just like the spectators (in their case media working area, media conference room, interview areas, etc.).

Also, in older stadiums, TV and radio broadcasters may need to set up temporary facilities from which to cover a match. This can include laying temporary cables, but with careful planning it should be possible to ensure they do not cross pedestrian pathways or access routes. Where they do, it is vital that they are suitably covered so as not to greatly impede access and allow wheelchair users and others to cross safely and easily. Covers should provide a gentle ramp over cables and contrast visually with the surrounding surfaces to make them easily identifiable by partially sighted people.

# L: LEAVING THE STADIUM

It is important to ensure the safety of disabled spectators and staff before, during and after the match, which includes when they leave the stadium. Clubs and stadium managers should bear in mind that, although not all spectators arrive at the stadium at the same time, they all want to leave the ground simultaneously.

## **L1: Exit routes**

As explained in previous sections of this publication, most guidance recommends that disabled spectators be accommodated throughout the stadium, and wherever possible each stand should have accessible entry and exit routes. However, much will depend upon the design of the stadium, the number of accessible areas and entrances provided and the safety plan implemented by the stadium manager. Many existing stadiums, in particular, have more limited points of access for disabled people. However, even in these situations, with smart design solutions and alterations it should be possible to create more accessible entrances and entrances to ensure greater choice for disabled people. Normal exit routes may simply be the reverse of the arrival routes.

Safety procedures should prevent confusion and conflict between

disabled and non-disabled spectators during both normal stadium exits and emergency evacuations.

## **L2: Emergency systems and response**

The authors of this publication wish to stress the importance of seeking local expert advice on safety and emergency systems and responses. The information provided here is for reference only. Different regulations, legislation and standards may apply locally. The key to accessible emergency services is planning. Stadium managers should be aware of the steadily increasing number of active disabled people in the community and hence at their stadium on matchday. They should ensure that all emergency planning includes an analysis of how best to serve disabled and non-disabled people. Just like good access planning, proper evacuation, first aid and emergency procedures must take into account the specific needs of disabled people. But measures that help people to find their way, especially in an unfamiliar environment, are essential to everyone, not just those with limited vision, limited colour perception or hearing loss.

It does not always follow that a person who is hard of hearing is completely insensitive to sounds; many are sensitive enough to conventional audible alarm signals to require no special provision. In most situations, it would also be reasonable for hard of



hearing and deaf spectators to rely on other spectators and staff for emergency warnings. However, a visual fire alarm or strobe warning system which operates in conjunction with audible signals should also be considered. Such systems should, in particular, be visible in toilet blocks and cubicles and in front of lifts throughout the stadium. Wherever possible, safety and emergency information should also be communicated on scoreboards or video screens throughout the stadium. Alternative means of raising the alarm include paging systems, vibrating devices and sound signals broadcast within carefully selected frequency bands.

Fire alarms and fire extinguishers must be installed at an accessible height so that anyone, including wheelchair users, can reach them in an emergency. Easy-to-read, low-mounted emergency procedures and exit route maps should also be located around the stadium.

Stadium staff should be trained to facilitate the safe evacuation of disabled people in an emergency and response teams should be aware of common health issues and conditions faced by disabled people, to ensure they can provide the appropriate response.

Ambulant disabled people should be provided with a choice of more than one entrance and exit route. In addition, special equipment should be available to assist their evacuation.

Safety measures are, of course, a critical part of stadium

management. However, they should not be construed in such a way as to place undue restrictions on disabled people. As explained elsewhere in this document, accessible design should mean disabled spectators can be accommodated at all levels of the stadium (not just at pitchside), without jeopardising their safety or that of others.

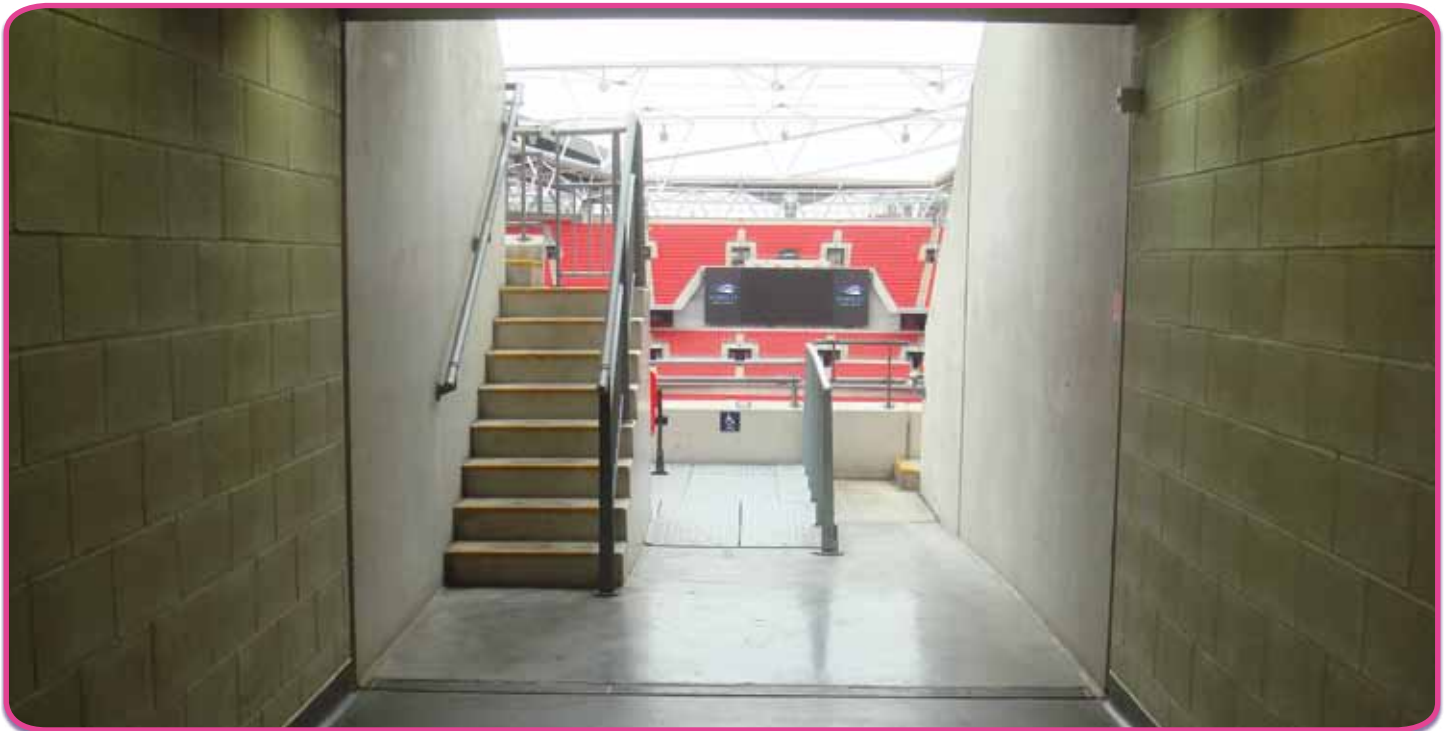
### **Horizontal escape**

Traditional fire safety standards require that escape routes be kept clear, fire warning tones or signals be provided and people be able to independently escape via steps and stairs. This is clearly inadequate for some disabled people, but satisfactory provisions for assisted escape can be made within stadiums by using appropriate fire-resistant construction methods and devising a comprehensive escape management system in conjunction with the local safety authorities and fire services. If evacuation routes are shared by disabled and non-disabled spectators, it is also important that stadium managers ensure staff and matchday stewards are trained in disability awareness and alerted to potential safety conflicts in case of an emergency.

### **Refuges**

A refuge is an area whose construction can withstand fire for at least half an hour as standard and from which there is a safe escape route, via a protected stairway or external escape route,

to the final exit. Where possible, emergency lift access should be provided, but in all cases the escape routes from refuges on all levels must comply with local regulations and safety standards and be agreed with the local safety authorities and fire services. Refuges are designed as a temporarily safe space for disabled people to wait for an evacuation lift or assistance up or down stairs. They must be large enough and/or of a sufficient number to accommodate the maximum number of disabled people anticipated on each level. They can be a compartment of the building separated from any potential fire source or a protected lobby, corridor or stairway. A refuge may also be an open area such as a flat roof, balcony or podium which is sufficiently



**Figure 37 – Good access planning at Wembley Stadium, England**

protected (or distant) from any fire risk and has its own means of escape.

Whatever the area used, each refuge must provide sufficient space for wheelchair users to manoeuvre and all those in need of the refuge to wait to be evacuated, without having an adverse effect on other people's evacuation. It is also recommended that a system of communication between each refuge and the fire control point be provided, to prevent disabled people being left unassisted in an emergency.

### **Evacuation lifts**

A normal passenger lift may only be used for emergency evacuations if it is provided with the safeguards required for an evacuation lift. In a stadium, an evacuation lift is likely to be a practical necessity to ensure rapid escape for disabled people, particularly wheelchair users. Unlike a normal passenger lift, it is essential that a lift which is to be used as a means of evacuation for disabled people can continue to operate with a reasonable degree of safety in the event of a fire. This is only possible where suitable safeguards to the lift engineering system and the lift shaft construction exist. Even with these safeguards a lift can fail, so it is crucial that having reached a refuge with an evacuation lift, a disabled person can also access a stairway as a last resort, should the conditions in the refuge become untenable. All evacuation lifts

and corresponding refuges should therefore also provide access to a protected staircase that wheelchair users can be carried down if necessary (more information on escape stairs later in this chapter). A fire-fighting lift (which is primarily intended for use by firefighters) may also be used to evacuate disabled people. Arrangements could be made by the stadium manager to initiate this evacuation by assuming control of these lifts until the arrival of the fire brigade, which could then continue the evacuation of any disabled people still in the premises. Such lifts must comply with local safety and emergency regulations and meet the requirements for evacuation lifts. It is also essential to liaise with the relevant fire safety authority to coordinate procedures for the use of a fire-fighting lift for evacuation purposes.

All lifts designated for use as evacuation lifts should be clearly indicated as such, with signage on every level. An evacuation lift should be situated within a protected enclosure or refuge consisting of the lift shaft itself and a protected lobby on each level served by the lift. As mentioned, the protected refuge should also contain a protected stairway (escape stairs). Except for lifts serving two storeys only, evacuation lifts should contain a switch which brings the lift to the final exit (usually ground level), isolates the landing call buttons and enables an authorised person to take control. The primary electrical supply should be from a sub-

main circuit exclusive to that lift. It should also have a secondary supply from an independent main or emergency generator and an automatic switch for changing from one to the other. Any electrical substation, distribution board or generator supplying the lift should be able to withstand the effects of fire for at least as long as the lift shaft itself.

### **Evacuation chairs**

In the event of an emergency in which an evacuation lift cannot be used, an evacuation chair may be deployed to get disabled people down flights of stairs quickly and safely. An evacuation chair enables a single user to evacuate a disabled or injured person down a stairway in the chair with no heavy lifting or manual handling.



There are a number of evacuation chairs available on the market. The minimum requirements are that they are lightweight and easy to use. They should be wall-mountable or foldable so that they can be stored safely in refuges and key evacuation areas for use in case of an emergency. All staff should know where such evacuation chairs are stored and be

**Figure 38 – An example of an emergency evacuation chair**



trained and able to correctly use them in case of an emergency. If it is necessary to transfer a wheelchair user from their wheelchair to an evacuation chair, care should be taken to do so safely and to secure the person in the evacuation chair, which should be fitted with a safety strap or harness.

### **Escape stairs**

Where a refuge area does not have emergency lift access, the stairs serving it should comply with the corresponding safety evacuation requirements. As a rule, they should have a maximum riser of 170mm, instead of the 180mm maximum allowed for escape stairs elsewhere.

In general, narrow staircases with tight turnings are deemed unsuitable for escape purposes. Staircases need to be of such a width that wheelchairs and their occupants can be carried down them if necessary. The minimum width for any part of a stadium escape system is 1,100mm for existing premises and 1,200mm for new builds. This is adequate to accommodate a standard tubular steel wheelchair. If the handrails project more than 100mm from the edge of the stairs, these minimum dimensions apply between the handrails.

### **Handrails and exit arrows**

The design of handrails for escape stairs requires particular attention. They should contrast visually with the supporting walls,

be continuous, and be large enough and far enough from the wall to allow a firm grasp. It is also recommended that they be marked with arrows indicating the direction to the nearest exit level on every level other than the ground or exit floor.

### **Wheelchair stairlifts**

Where wheelchair stairlifts are used for normal access, they should not be used as a means of escape. However, where stairlifts are installed in a stairway which is also used for emergency evacuation, it is essential that the stairway width required for escape stairs is not reduced by any fixed part of the stairlift, such as its carriage rail. Allowances may also need to be made elsewhere in the escape route for space taken up by other parts of the stairlift installation, such as its power unit and the lift itself when not in use.

### **Ramps**

Ramps can be a useful alternative to stairs, but concerns have been raised about their suitability for small changes in level within stadiums, as they may not be easy to see during an emergency evacuation. Where they are necessary, the gradient should be as gentle as possible and they should comply with local building and safety regulations. They should also include clear signage alerting people to the change in level. See section H:4 for more on ramps generally.

# M: TRAINING FOR ACCESSIBILITY

While the authors of this publication have concentrated on design standards and good practice recommendations, there is a strong link between design and management.

Well-designed facilities should reduce the need for additional stewarding and matchday staff. However well designed the facilities though, access awareness and disability etiquette training remains crucial to delivering truly accessible services and it is generally acknowledged that attitudinal and communication barriers, as well as misconceptions and stereotypes, can be even harder to overcome than architectural obstacles.

Clubs and stadium managers should therefore ensure that all customer service staff and matchday stewards are well trained and sensitive to the needs of disabled people. Knowledge and familiarity with all the stadium facilities, including their location and access provision, is an essential part of this training. Easy-to-understand stadium leaflets containing information about the accessible facilities and services available and how to find them are a valuable guide for staff and disabled spectators alike.

Staff and stewards should receive general disability etiquette training as well as job and venue-specific access awareness

training. The aim of disability etiquette and access awareness training is to enhance understanding and demystify the issue of disabilities for all customer service staff and volunteers. Training should provide them with the tools and confidence necessary to apply basic disability etiquette and access awareness in their roles. It should be effective, culturally appropriate and focused on practical ways to ensure a high-quality matchday experience for all disabled spectators.

The designated disability or access officer should be involved in pre-match planning with the stadium manager and ensure that stewards and matchday staff are fully trained and capable of handling access and disability issues, including getting to, from and around the stadium, car parking, facilities (including toilets, catering and club shops), spectator viewing areas and emergency evacuation procedures.

## **M1: Disability harassment and abuse**

For some European disabled people, safety and security is a right that is frequently denied. Violence and hostility, based on a person's "disability" can occur in the street, on public transport, at work, at home, on the web; so much so that disabled people begin to accept it as part of everyday life and are often forced to go to extraordinary lengths to avoid it, thereby limiting their own lives.

Such crimes are based on ignorance, prejudice, discrimination and hate and they have no place in an open and democratic society. Feeling or being unsafe or unwelcome – from shunning or rejection to violence, harassment and negative stereotyping – has a significant negative impact on disabled people's sense of security and well-being. It also impacts significantly on their ability to participate both socially and economically in their communities. According to a report by the Office for Public Management, commissioned by the UK's Equality and Human Rights Commission\* "disabled people are at higher risk of being victimised in comparison with non-disabled people. The evidence suggests that those with learning disabilities and/or mental health conditions are particularly at risk and suffer higher levels of actual victimisation."

The report also notes that there is severe under-reporting of incidents, and not simply due to barriers within the criminal justice system or third-party organisations: "The relationship between the victim and the perpetrator can also throw up significant challenges to a disabled person's willingness and ability to report." Disabled

\*Disabled people's experiences of targeted violence and hostility, Chih Hoong Sin, Annie Hedges, Chloe Cook, Nina Mguni and Natasha Comber, Office for Public Management, Equality and Human Rights Commission 2009

people may also blame themselves for what happens to them, or may simply come to accept these incidents as a part of everyday life.

CAFE and FARE (Football Against Racism in Europe) have received several reports\* and images of disability hate crimes that have occurred at European football matches, including verbal abuse, offensive banners and threats of physical violence. In addition, there have been incidents of verbal abuse and bullying on several football fans' internet forums. The authors of this publication ask all stakeholders to be aware of these risks and to be vigilant in monitoring and reporting incidents of disability abuse that occur within the game. This should include the implementation of effective reporting and helpline services that raise awareness for this lesser known form of abuse.

## **M2: Basic disability etiquette**

Disabled people expect the same customer service as non-disabled people and disability and equality etiquette training is all about good customer service. To understand exactly what your customer wants, you must concentrate on the person rather than their disability or condition. Their

\*Hateful: Monitoring Racism, Discrimination and Hate Crime in Polish and Ukrainian Football 2009-2011



specific needs may be different from non-disabled customers, but your approach to them should not be. You should simply endeavour to remove any barriers that may restrict their use of your services and facilities. The disabled people your staff meets will mostly be colleagues and volunteers working at the stadium or spectators coming to the stadium for a good time. They do not require pity, just consideration and good service. It is important to remember that not all disabled people use a wheelchair and that many have to deal with a range of physical, sensory, psychological or intellectual barriers. For example, there are partially sighted and blind people who also have limited mobility so may use a walking aid such as a stick, frame or crutches, and people with learning difficulties may also be blind or deaf or use a wheelchair. In addition, there are many disabled people with invisible or hidden conditions such as arthritis, epilepsy, heart problems, breathing difficulties, mental ill-health and hearing loss. These types of disabled spectators may also need extra consideration and support when using your facilities and services, much like wheelchair users and blind people.

### **M3: Non-discriminatory language**

The authors of this publication have taken care to use the social model of disability whenever possible throughout this document, as described in section A.

It is vital for all of us to try to use the correct terms when referring to disabled people and to do our best to move away from more negative or derogatory stereotypical words and expressions sometimes used to describe disabled people.



**Figure 39 - An Arsenal supporter at Wembley**

This includes terms such as ‘impaired’, ‘crippled’, ‘invalid’ and ‘handicapped’. The word ‘invalid’, for example, is based on the English word literally meaning invalid or worthless, while the word ‘handicapped’ is considered by many to be derived from an English word once used to describe someone who begged with a ‘hand-and-cap’ or ‘handicap’. It will take time for society to change but the football family can take an important lead in talking about positive steps that will help to remove negative stereotypes and images of disabled people. If you would like to receive more information on this subject, please contact CAFE.

## **M4: Communicating effectively**

Good communication is important when assisting any customer and this is particularly important for some disabled people, such as partially sighted and blind people and hard of hearing and deaf people (see section J for more information).

When talking about things that concern them, it is important to always address the disabled person directly, and not somebody accompanying them. Also, make sure the manner in which you address them is respectful. Try to take a step back, crouch or sit down when talking to a wheelchair user so they can see you easily without straining their neck or having to look up at you. You may also need to move to a quieter location to ease communication.

Be sure to listen. If a disabled person has a learning disability or speech impairment, be aware that it may be necessary to wait longer than you are used to for them to explain themselves, ask a question or provide an answer. You should never finish someone's sentences for them. Always listen carefully and patiently to what they are saying and if you do not understand them do not be afraid to ask them to repeat themselves. Alternatively, repeat back to them what you think they have said to make sure that you have heard them correctly.

Hard of hearing and deaf people may need to lip-read. If so, face them directly when talking and do not conceal your mouth or face. Be aware that bright sunlight or shadows can obscure expressions, making lip-reading difficult. Speak clearly using straightforward, short sentences, but at your normal speed and in your normal tone, unless the person specifically asks you to speak louder or slower. If they have not understood you, do not be afraid to repeat yourself or try to rephrase what you are saying. Some hard of hearing and deaf people and learning disabled people may find it easier if you also use hand gestures or a map when giving directions, and if you have not been understood, offer to communicate using a pen and paper instead. When talking to a learning disabled person, it is especially important to use positive, straightforward sentences, such as "Are you looking for the seating area?" rather than "You're not looking for the seating area are you?"



## M5: Assisting a disabled person

Do not assume that a disabled person needs assistance just because they have a disability. What might look like a struggle to you may simply be someone managing perfectly well at their own pace and in their own way. Always ask first, and if the disabled person tells you they do not need your help, do not impose your assistance or take offence at your offer being refused.

Be proactive and offer assistance if you think it is required, but never touch a disabled person or their mobility aid without their permission. It is impolite and may also affect their balance. If a disabled person requests



**Figure 40 - Crystal Palace fan at St James' Park, Newcastle**

assistance to their seating area or other facilities and you are unable to leave your position, call one of your colleagues for assistance.

If a wheelchair user requests your assistance, first ask the person where they want to go and then tell them you are about to push them.

When escorting a partially sighted or blind person you should allow them to grip your elbow and walk beside you. Always describe your path or the route you are taking, e.g. “Another few feet and we will be turning left” or “We are just about to reach some steps”. When you reach the destination, let the disabled person know where they are and, if necessary, ask another member of staff to take over.

If the disabled person has an assistance dog, they may prefer to walk independently beside you. Assistance dogs are highly trained and you should not touch, pat, feed or distract them while they are working.

Most important of all, do not be afraid of disabled people. They will not mind if you make a mistake as long as you treat them with respect and understanding.



# N: WORKED EXAMPLES

The following worked examples of good practice design improvements, based on fictitious clubs and sites, have been adapted (with special permission) from the UK Accessible Stadia Guide. One is also included in the CEN Technical Report CEN/TR 15913:2009 on spectator facilities. It is recognised that no two sites or projects are the same, whether they are new or existing stadium projects, but many aspects are transferable. Each worked example attempts to lay out a total approach that includes access, parking, tickets, circulation and movement and, most importantly, good viewing solutions.

## N1: Worked example 1

**Description:** A new stadium with a 50,000 capacity which is located out of town with good rail and road links and local bus services. There is a two-metre change in site level from north to south with limited on-site parking for 100 cars. Public car parking is available in various locations within a 2km radius.

**Access plan and brief:** The access consultant has prepared an access statement and an access business plan in cooperation with the design team and club. In addition, the architects and design team have worked closely with the disabled supporters' club and local disability organisations to agree an access consultation process to enable monitoring through each design and construction stage. An access appraisal checklist has been agreed to

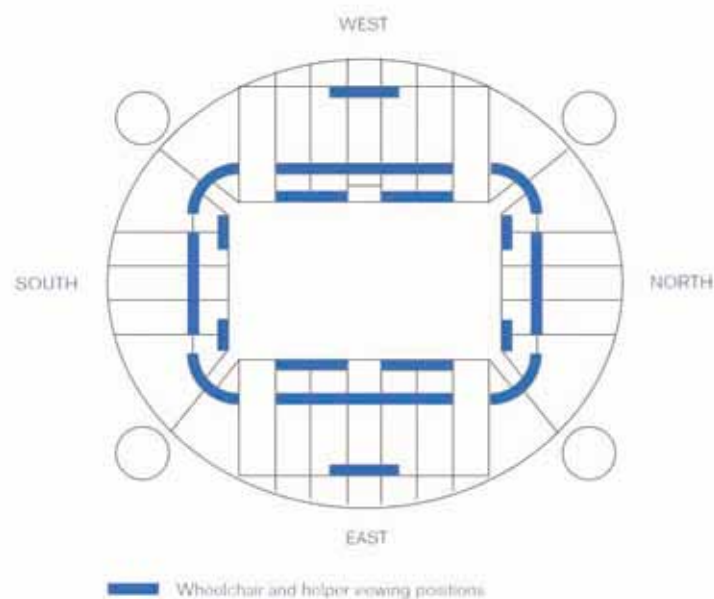
document this user-led consultation process. The access business plan will be monitored and reviewed on a regular basis.

**Transport:** There are transport drop-off points for coaches and disabled passengers (cars) with an accessible shuttle service from designated public car parks. There is provision for 12 disabled parking spaces (more than 6% of the overall parking allowance).

**Access to ground:** Dedicated entrances with level approaches.

**Circulation and movement:** Accessible staircases, ramps and lifts to upper levels.

**Support facilities:** Accessible toilets and refreshment areas in close proximity to disabled viewing areas. Viewing areas are dispersed and in a variety of positions around the stadium including family areas. Visiting disabled spectators will be located with their own fans. Flexible layout including amenity



**Worked example No. 1 (not to scale)**

and easy-access seating at various locations to accommodate disabled spectators (non-wheelchair users) and their assistance dogs.

**Information and signage:** Coordinated approach to information and signage that includes booking disabled spectator tickets, matchday facilities, location of viewing areas and support facilities. Accessible match commentaries. Safety and evacuation plan. Staff (disability and access) training.

### **Disabled spectator seating**

Wheelchair-user spaces (with companion seating): 230 (1,400mm<sup>2</sup>)

Amenity (and easy-access) seating: 230 (min 500mm x 760mm)

Flexible provision allowing increase

### **Location of wheelchair-user spaces**

West stand: 50 upper tier and 20 pitchside

East stand: 50 upper tier and 15 pitchside

South stand: 43 upper tier and 10 pitchside

North stand: 32 upper tier and 10 pitchside

TOTAL (with companion seating): 230

230 amenity seats dispersed around stadium at lower and middle tier levels.

Players and officials dugout located in seating area, East stand.

All wheelchair-user spaces to be designed to provide clear sightlines when non-disabled supporters stand up. C-value: 90.

Flexible location of toilets and refreshment areas depending on number of customers (away supporters).

## N2: Worked example 2

**Description:** A new stadium with a 10,000 capacity, with 3,000 seats and 7,000 standing (covered). The long-term development plan includes the possibility for a seated stand on the eastern side of the stadium. Located on the outskirts of town within 5 kilometres of the nearest train station, there is a good local bus service to the stadium which is increased on matchdays. The stadium is surrounded by light industrial businesses and some residential areas, with on-site parking for 150 cars and the use of local parking areas available on matchdays. The site enclosure slopes approximately 4 metres from west to east.

**Access plan and brief:** The club has sold its existing stadium located in the centre of town and is relocating to a site to enable a substantial increase in the capacity, both for seated and standing spectators. Support facilities and commercial activities will include a health and fitness club. Consultations and discussions with an access forum (disabled supporters' club and local pan-disability organisations) has established and agreed an access consultation process for the new development which will include provisions for wheelchair users and amenity seating for disabled supporters and the introduction of audio-described commentary for partially sighted and blind spectators. An access statement and business plan will be prepared by the access consultant and design team and reviewed and evaluated throughout the construction and development of the new stadium. An access appraisal checklist will be agreed with the access forum and used to monitor and record this user-led

consultation process. The facilities and services will also be reviewed and monitored after completion and once in use.

**Transport:** The local town planning consent included a 'green travel plan', and the club will provide, in addition to the local bus service, an accessible minibus shuttle service from the mainline train station and has secured agreements from local factories for additional accessible car parking on matchdays. Covered drop-off points for disabled passengers and coaches close to entrances will be provided with 15 on-site disabled (accessible) parking spaces for disabled spectators and 2 for staff.

**Access to ground:** Dedicated entrances with level approaches.

**Circulation and movement:** Accessible ramps and staircases to the eastern stand. Lifts and staircases to upper level of clubhouse and viewing positions.

**Support facilities:** Accessible toilets and refreshment areas located at each corner of stadium and under the stands.

**Viewing:** Dispersed around the stadium at pitchside and within the seated areas. Visiting disabled spectators will be located with their own fans. Provision for assistance dogs. All wheelchair-user locations will be in elevated viewing positions and at pitchside with clear sightlines if surrounding spectators stand during the match or warm-up periods.

**Information and signage:** Coordinated approach to information and signage that includes booking disabled spectator tickets, accessible matchday facilities, location of viewing areas and amenities. Accessible matchday commentaries and programmes. Safety and evacuation plan. Staff training (disability and

access awareness).

## Disabled spectator seating

Wheelchair-user spaces: 42 (1,400mm<sup>2</sup>)

Amenity seating: 42\* (min 500mm x 760mm)

\*Flexible provision allowing increase

## Location of wheelchair-user spaces

West stand: 20 high tier and 10 pitchside flexible

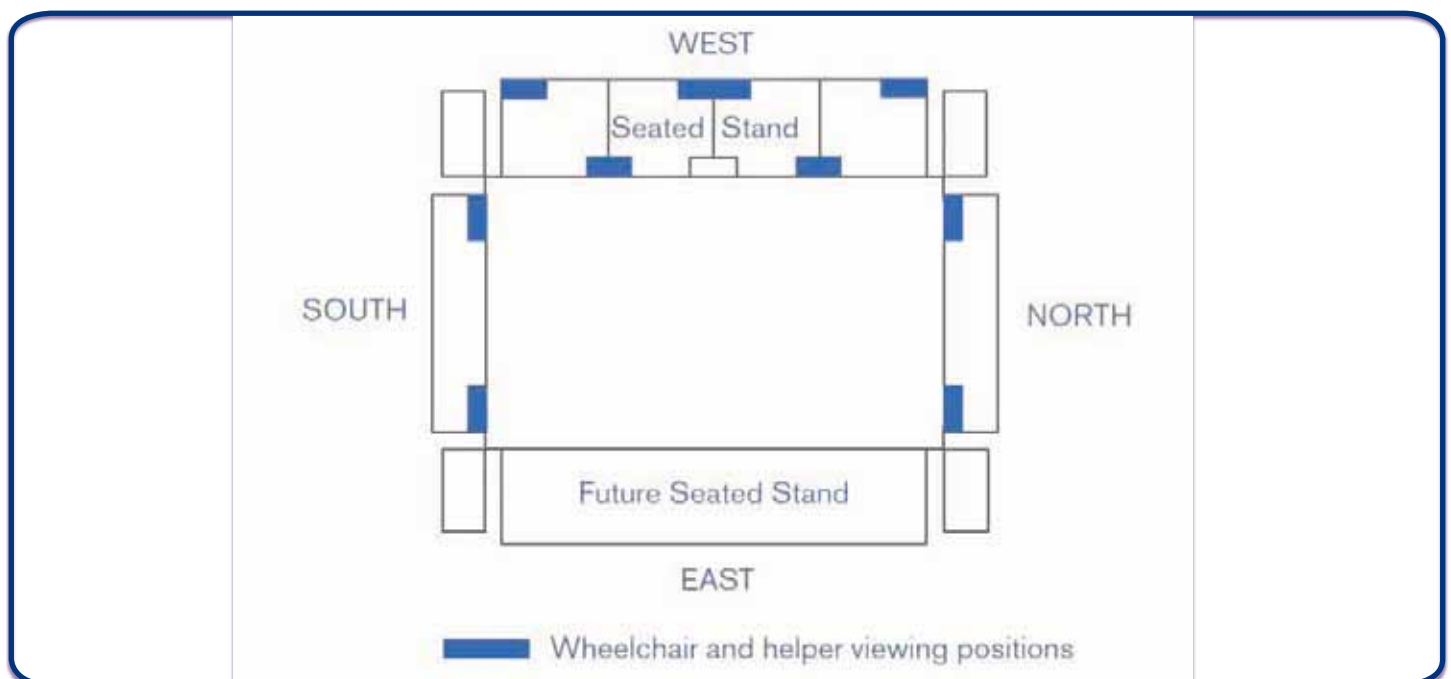
South stand: 6 pitchside      North stand: 6 pitchside

TOTAL (with companion seating): 42

Amenity seating spaces located in West stand.

Players' and officials' dugout in seated area, West stand.

All wheelchair-user spaces to be designed to provide clear sightlines when non-disabled supporters stand up. C-value: 90.



## Worked example No. 2 (not to scale)



## N3: Worked example 3

**Description:** Existing stadium with a 22,500 capacity (all seated) built in 1993. Proposals include a new 5,000-seater stand (south) replacing an existing 2,500-seater stand. The stadium is located in an urban area of a large city with good rail links (2 kilometres), but congested and heavily used local main roads. There are significant level changes of 5 metres south to north. The stadium has limited on-site parking for 120 cars with local authority car parks in close proximity. Street parking is not allowed on matchdays (residents only).

**Access plan and brief:** The club has a policy to provide equal viewing areas for disabled supporters (including wheelchair users and amenity/ easy-access seats) and works closely with the disabled supporters' club. The age of the existing facilities, built in 1993, and the need to provide additional seating has led the club to carry out an access audit that will look at all aspects of the club's access duties as an employer and service provider (spectators).

**Access audit:** The main issues and shortcomings identified include the access routes, entrances, poor signage and information, remote toilets and refreshment areas, poor sightlines in certain areas, insufficient provision for wheelchair users and insufficient numbers of amenity seats for disabled supporters, circulation and movement to upper levels.

### Existing provision

Wheelchair-user spaces, with companion seating: 100 (shortfall of 65)

Amenity seating: 165 (poor standard)

## Proposed

Wheelchair-user spaces, with companion seating: 165 (improved and new)

Amenity seating: 165 (improved)

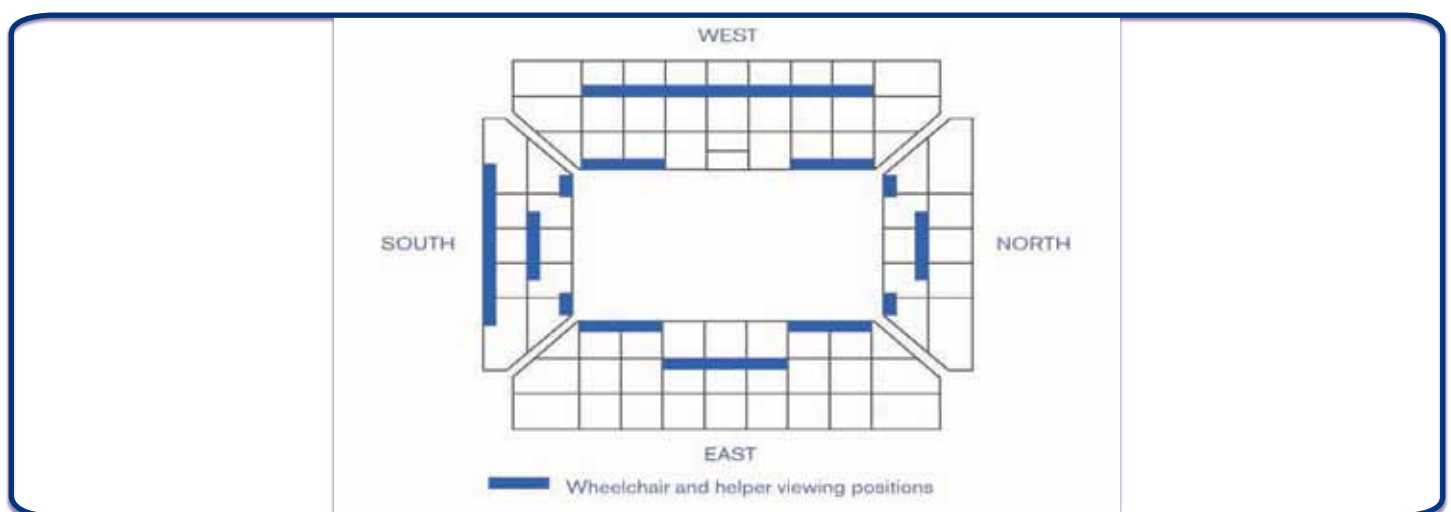
**Transport and car parking:** The club will provide an accessible shuttle service from local authority car parks, with additional disabled parking bays made available in local streets on matchdays. A drop-off point for disabled passengers will be provided. 15 disabled parking spaces already exist.

**Access to ground:** Dedicated entrances will be provided with level approaches.

**Circulation and movement:** Accessible lifts, ramps and stairs.

**Support facilities:** Additional accessible toilets and refreshment areas will be provided as part of an overall refurbishment and upgrading programme.

**Viewing:** Consultation and agreement with the disabled supporters' club on limited existing facilities and constructional constraints has led to a more generous provision for disabled spectators in the new stand design and a phased programme of works to existing stands. There will be provision for disabled spectators with assistance dogs.



**Worked example No. 3 (not to scale)**

**Information and signage:** An accessible website and improved arrangements for booking disabled spectator tickets will be introduced and coordinated accessible information, signage and wayfinding will be implemented. Staff training will be improved (disability/access awareness).

**Amenity seating:** Flexible seating for 165 disabled people, can be increased but concentrated in identified areas. In addition, family areas will be located behind pitchside viewing positions in the East and West stands.

Players’ and officials’ dugout relocated with seated area in West stand.

All wheelchair-user spaces to be designed to provide clear sightlines when non-disabled spectators stand. C-value: 90.

Alterations in existing stands will require elevated viewing positions.

**Location of wheelchair-user spaces and companion seating**

		Existing	Proposed
West stand	High level	35	45
	Pitchside	10	15
East stand	Mid-tier	20	18
	Pitchside	10	15
South stand (New stand)	High level	Nil	35
	Mid-tier	7	10
	Pitchside	4	6
North stand	Mid-tier	10	15
	Pitchside	4	6
TOTAL		100	165

## N4: Worked example 4

**Description:** Existing stadium with a 25,000 capacity, with seated areas, built in 1998. Proposals include a new covered South stand for 2,500 spectators to replace a stand built in 1985. Located in a large city within an area that is undergoing major regeneration through a mix of residential offices, small businesses and a large supermarket. A new rail link to the area is proposed, together with increased bus services from other parts of the city. The site includes parking for 300 cars. The stadium improvements include upgrading parts of the existing facilities and the construction of new stands.

**Access plan and brief:** The club is supporting the establishment of a new disabled supporters' club which will be involved with the project together with management, an access consultant and a design team. The club has commissioned an access audit of the existing facilities and agreed an access business plan. The access plan will be subject to review and appraisal as the upgrading works and new construction progress.

**Access audit:** The access audit identified limited access routes inside the ground, insufficient toilets and refreshment areas in proximity to the seated areas, poor signage and information, and a need to increase the provision for wheelchair users and amenity and easy-access seating for disabled spectators.

### **Existing provision:**

Wheelchair-user spaces, with companion seating: 110 (shortfall of 58)

Amenity seating: 120 (shortfall of 48)

## Location of wheelchair-user spaces and companion seating:

Existing	Proposed		
West stand	High level	30	40
	Pitchside	20	15
East stand	Mid-tier	30	38
	Pitchside	20	15
South stand	High level	Nil	20
	Pitchside	Nil	8
North stand	High level	Nil	25
	Pitchside	10	7
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>110</b>	<b>168</b>

In addition, family areas will be improved and located behind the pitchside viewing area in the West stand. The amenity and easy-access seating provision for disabled spectators will be increased from 120 spaces to 150 spaces (minimum dimensions of 500mm x 760mm) in flexible layouts.

All viewing positions to be designed to provide clear sightlines when non-disabled spectators stand. C-value: 90.

**Transport and car parking:** Timescale for the new rail link is uncertain, and the club has agreed to provide additional car parking spaces in the existing car park for disabled spectators, with improvements to the location of the drop-off point for disabled passengers in cars and coaches. The disabled supporters' club has received financial assistance to purchase an adapted coach.

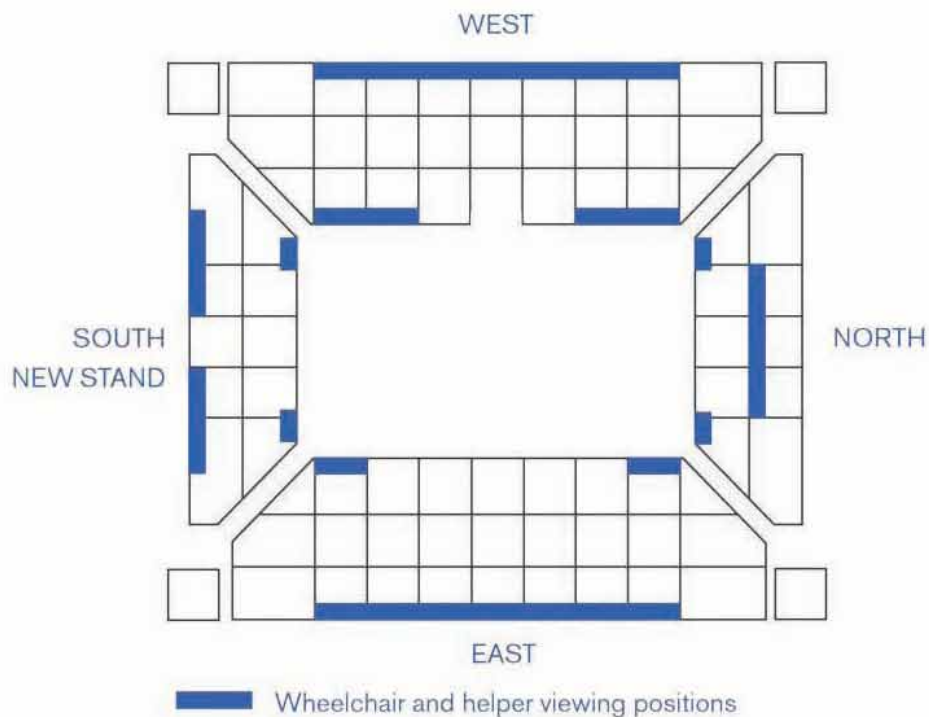
**Access to ground:** Level approaches and surfaces will be improved.

**Circulation and movement:** Accessible ramps and lifts to serve the upper levels of the West and East stands.

**Support facilities:** Additional accessible (disabled) toilets and refreshment areas will be provided in the West stand and the corners of the South stand.

**Viewing:** Improvements to, and an increase in, viewing areas in the West stand with elevated positions.

**Information and signage:** Website accessibility improved and a coordinated approach to accessible information and signage will be implemented. Provision for assistance dogs.



**Worked example No. 4 (not to scale)**



## N5: Worked example 5

**Description:** Existing stadium with a 15,000 capacity (seated), built in 1995. With no proposals for enlargement or upgrading, the stadium is located close to motorways with large towns in a 50 kilometre radius. There are large office developments and a DIY outlet in the vicinity. The nearest rail link is 8 kilometres away, with a bus service to the stadium. The site is generally level within the stadium, but car and coach parking is on a hillside with 300 spaces.

**Access plan and brief:** The club has received complaints from disabled spectators about several access issues including car parking, access to the stadium and the limited number of accessible viewing positions. Mindful of its mission statement and commitment to providing accessible facilities and services, the club has commissioned an access audit. The audit will examine the facilities, services and club policies for disabled spectators, employees (and volunteers) and customers both on matchdays and non-matchdays. The access auditor will also provide an access business plan outlining the planned improvements and upgrading works to be completed.

**Access audit:** The design plans for the improvements and upgrading works were provided by the client (and the architects), including the site plans, externals plans, sections and elevations. Existing facilities were audited using a 'walk-through' approach with detailed measurements, descriptions and photographs collated highlighting features such as ramps (and their gradients), pathways, amenities, seating positions and sightlines, signage and so on. This publication was used as a good practice reference with major issues and

physical barriers reported as follows:

**Transport:** Introduction of an accessible minibus service from the nearest rail station on matchdays.

**Car parking:** Additional disabled car parking spaces to be provided close to entrances. The existing provision of 10 spaces will be increased to 18 disabled parking spaces (6% of 300 = 18) with improvements to ramped access routes from the car park. A covered drop-off point will be added for disabled spectators and coaches.

**Access to ground:** Access routes (gravel) from car parking to be resurfaced with smooth surface and new level approaches, accessible ramps and steps introduced.

**Circulation and movement:** Additional accessible lifts to be added to West and East stands to serve mid-tier and high-level viewing positions. There will be improvements to surfaces, pathways and handrails in identified areas with the addition of vision panels to certain doors.

**Support facilities:** Improvements to existing refreshment areas to ensure accessibility. Additional disabled toilets to be provided close to viewing areas in West and East stands.

**Information and signage:** Club website and arrangements for booking tickets to be made more accessible. Coordinated accessible signage and wayfinding to be added throughout the stadium.

**Wheelchair users:** The areas for wheelchair users had been heavily criticised by disabled spectators. The main complaints included the low number of

available spaces and poor sightlines (especially when non-disabled supporters stand up during key moments of the game such as when goals are scored). A number of options and solutions were investigated.

### **Existing locations of wheelchair-user spaces and companion seating**

West stand	High level	35 (poor sightlines)
	Pitchside	15
East stand	High level	20 (poor sightlines)
	Pitchside	15
South stand	High level	10
	Pitchside	10
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>105 (shortfall 20)</b>
<b>Amenity seating</b>		<b>90 (shortfall 35)</b>
East and West stands		

### **Proposed locations of wheelchair-user spaces and companion seating**

West stand	High level	35
	Pitchside	10
East stand	High level	35
	Pitchside	10
South stand	High level	10
	Pitchside	6
North stand (away)	High level	13
	Pitchside	6
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>125</b>

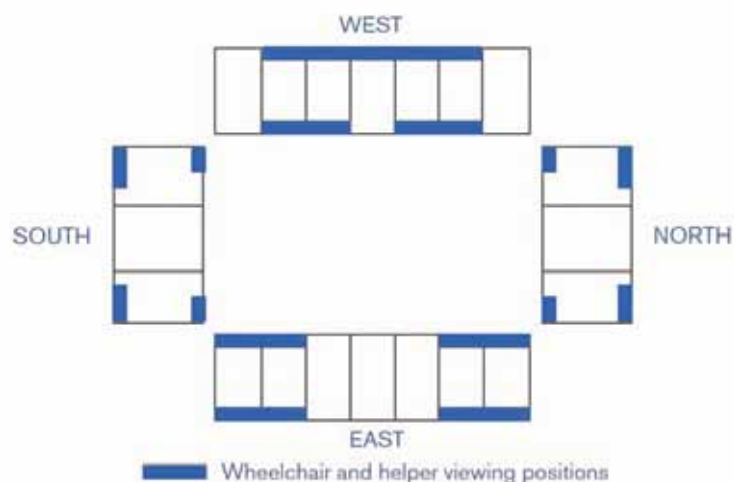
In consultation with the disabled supporters' club and disability organisations, an acceptable seating plan for wheelchair users was agreed. This will provide additional viewing locations at pitchside and improved elevated locations at high levels in the West, East and South stands, with new high-level viewing

positions in the North stand for visiting spectators. The work will be phased over three years. Additional amenity seating will be provided for disabled spectators (minimum dimensions of 500mm x 760mm).

Amenity seating located in West, East and North stands with provision for assistance dogs.

All viewing positions to be designed to provide clear sightlines when surrounding non-disabled spectators stand. C-value: 90.

Programme of improvements to be phased in over three years.



### Worked example No. 5 (not to scale)

Worked example figures 1 to 5 have been adapted from the Accessible Stadia Guide with special thanks to the Football Licensing Authority and the Football Stadia Improvement Fund.

# GLOSSARY

**Accessible built environment:** A “built” or physical environment created or modified so that all people can get to, from and around it.

**Amenity seating:** Seating with additional leg room to the front and side of the seat providing space for an assistance dog or for a person who uses mobility aids such as crutches or walking aids. The seating may additionally incorporate arm rests. Amenity seating should be provided in addition to wheelchair user spaces throughout the stadium, at the end of rows. This seating is also suitable for pregnant women and people of unusual body size.

**Alternative format information:** Written publications, websites and documents produced other than in standard print. Some examples of alternate formats are text files on a computer disk, large print, audio books on tape or in MP3 format, Braille, etc.

**Assistive hearing device:** A device used by hard of hearing people that augments sound, making it clearer and louder, and in many cases blocks out surrounding environmental or background sound and interference.

**Attitudinal barriers:** Attitudes, fears, prejudices and assumptions that prevent disabled and non-disabled people from meaningfully interacting with one another in a non-discriminatory and inclusive way.

**Audio description:** A commentary with additional information for people who do not have a visual view of the activities being described. It provides

additional narration that describes all significant visual information such as body language, facial expression, scenery, action, clothing, colours and anything else that is important to conveying the image, venue, match, event or surrounding ambience.

**Barrier-free design:** An approach to design that creates buildings, transportation systems and outdoor environments that disabled people can access and use independently and safely and with the same choices as everyone else (see universal design).

**Built environment:** Spaces, infrastructure and venues created or modified so that people may live, work and socialise within them. Examples of built environments include buildings, public spaces, transport, parking spaces, streets, monuments, stadiums, etc.

**Companion:** See personal assistant.

**Disability harassment, abuse and hate crime:** Any incident of harassment or abuse which is perceived, by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice based on a person's disability or perceived disability.

**Easy-access seating:** Seating located in easier to reach areas of the stadium such as at the end of rows and with few steps. This seating, which should be available throughout the stadium, should be clearly identified by the ticket office and available on request.

**Good access:** Provision of a barrier-free environment and related changes in policies, procedures or the built environment itself to ensure that all



individuals can benefit from, and participate in, all activities and events.

**Inaccessible:** Any venue, activity, service, policy or event that is not open to or excludes disabled people because of one or more restrictive barriers.

**Inclusion:** Active engagement of disabled people at all levels of society.

The mere presence of disabled people does not necessarily constitute inclusion. An organisation, programme, service or venue is only truly inclusive when disabled people are enabled and valued as fully contributing members, self-advocates, staff and/or clients with a sense of worth, belonging and self-esteem.

**Independent living:** Access to equal rights and opportunities with personal and consumer choice and control so as to be able to express independence and fully integrate and participate in society.

**Intellectual barriers:** Obstacles that might hinder a disabled person from understanding their environment and services. These barriers could include complex instructions, poor signage or complex way-finding information.

**Interpreter:** A certified or trained individual who facilitates communication between people who do not speak, hear or understand the same language. This might be from English to French or from the spoken word to sign language for someone who is deaf or hard of hearing.

**Medical model of disability:** Medical definitions of disability which focus attention exclusively on the individual and assumes that all limitations are based on an individual's medical diagnosis or pathology. According to the social model of disability, the medical model fails to measure the impact

of external, environmental and socially created barriers in limiting people's capacity to perform "expected" social roles.

**Personal assistant or companion:** Person or companion who supports a disabled person to enable him or her to live independently in his/her home and community. The disabled person might otherwise be restricted by physical, sensory, intellectual or psychological barriers. A personal assistant or companion might help a disabled person with functions of daily living, self-care, mobility and independence.

**Physical barriers:** Material obstacles that might hinder disabled people from gaining access to buildings, public places and services. These barriers could include steep ramps, steps and other permanent, temporary or transient barriers.

**Psychological barriers:** Obstacles that might hinder a disabled person from feeling safe within their environment or in using services. These could include rigid rules and routines, confined spaces and inflexible services.

**Real-time captioning:** Process where a captioner types out, on a device and/or in shorthand, words that are spoken and the words are then displayed on a computer monitor, TV screen, video screen or other type of audio-visual device for people who are deaf or hard of hearing.

**Segregation:** Practice of removing disabled people from their communities, isolating or separating them from others, or treating them differently because they are "disabled". Segregation is sometimes used as an unimaginative and non-inclusive management solution to existing

physical, sensory, intellectual or psychological barriers. Segregation is considered by most disabled people to be a medical model solution that isolates and removes their rights to choose.

**Self-advocacy organisation:** A national or local group of disabled people who speak and advocate for themselves. There are self-advocacy organisations throughout Europe with disabled people increasingly empowered to form their own groups to promote equal access and inclusion

**Sensory barriers:** Obstacles that might hinder disabled people from receiving information about their environment and services. These barriers could include audible alarms or instructions, menus or signs in standard written text only.

**Social model of disability:** A framework for understanding disability in terms of the environmental limitations or barriers created by society. By removing these barriers, disabled people are enabled to express their independence and enjoy fair and equal opportunities to participate fully in society.

**Temporary/transient barriers:** Movable obstacles in the “built” or physical environment that might hinder disabled people. These may be created by objects such as furniture, parked cars, planters and any other barriers that can easily be removed.

**Telephone relay:** A service that provides communication assistants or translators who act as intermediaries on the telephone between hearing

individuals and individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind and/or have speech disabilities.

**Universal design:** An extension of the idea of barrier-free design to cover the needs of all members of society, including children and seniors, to create a truly inclusive and equal environment.

**Universally accessible:** Equally accessible to all people. This might refer to accessible facilities, services, policies or attitudes.

**Voice recognition software:** Assistive technology computer software that allows people to write and use equipment by means of their voice rather than their hands.

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UEFA  
Route de Genève 46  
CH-1260 Nyon 2  
Switzerland  
Telephone +41 848 00 27 27  
Telefax +41 848 01 27 27  
**UEFA.com**

Union des associations  
européennes de football

