

Foundation Award Assessment/ Renewal

Information to help you complete the self-assessment questionnaire

The use of this self appraisal will allow a sailing club or centre to assess, in a basic manner, the capacity of the premises and the organisation to welcome people who have a wide range of disabilities.

To use this appraisal form you should look around your premises and answer the questions; it is valuable if two people work together to undertake this process. When the questions in each sector have been answered you should make a decision on the accessibility of the premises.

After Section one and two is completed you should answer the questions in Section three, which will give an indication of the areas of disability for which your club is suited. Please sign and return the completed form.

Section 1

Sign in book

It is important that you can identify the numbers of people both on the water and on shore.

Training - How many volunteers or members in total have received Disability Awareness Training?

Awareness training is vital for any club that offers service to disabled people; training will people to have an understanding of a wide range of disabilities and of the way in which the built environment and people's attitudes can work together encourage participation and inclusion.

How many volunteers or members have received volunteer training?

Volunteer training helps everyone involved and gives practical advice on how to recruit, retain and reward volunteers.

Moving & Handling - Is there a policy on moving and handling?

No one should ever attempt to lift another person in order to get them in or out of a boat; this is dangerous to both the lifter and the lifted. The club should have an agreed policy on moving or handling and the existence of this policy should be clear to all members and volunteers.

Is there a certificated hoist? Is it regularly maintained? Are volunteers trained to use the hoist? Has a risk assessment been completed for any sailor requiring any method of moving and handling?

A hoist is a valuable tool in moving disabled people into and out of a boat; however, the hoist must be of an approved design and carry the correct certification and insurance. It must be subject to professional maintenance, and those who use it must have received formal training in its operation. It is essential that the person who is being hoisted (or a carer) always directs the hoisting operation. It is essential to formally assess the risks involving in moving a disabled person and for all members of the team to be aware of the situation.

Recruitment - We would very much appreciate your feedback on how you recruit new sailors and volunteers.

Section 2 - Arriving at, entering and inside the building

Is there car parking in marked, accessible bays? Are the car park surfaces even, well lit and free from hazards?

Many disabled people will arrive at a club or centre by car and it important for them to be able to park in a way that enables a wheelchair to reach the car doors and tailgate. Although a car park may have plenty of space, marked bays of the correct dimensions are necessary to prevent another car, unknowingly parking close alongside a disabled person's car and thus preventing the door from opening wide enough for wheelchair use. It is difficult for people with mobility or visual impairments to move across uneven, muddy, or dark car parks.

Do any steps have visual and tactile markings?

The edges of steps should be marked in a contrasting colour in order that people with impaired vision are able to discern them. A tactile marking at the top and bottom of a step or stair can indicate the floor number or the area, which the steps lead. Tactile markings can either be in Braille or embossed lettering.

Do any steps have handrails?

People with mobility impairments will lean on a handrail when ascending or descending stairs; it is important that handrails are easily gripped, easy-to see, and are on both sides of the steps. Handrails should extend for 300mm beyond the top and bottom of the steps in order that the user may lean forward when on the steps. People with visual impairments will use the handrails to judge the gradient of the steps and also for support.

Does any entrance door have two leaves; are both kept unlocked?

It is common practice to only unlock one half of a double door; this renders the door useless for a wheelchair user and some people with other mobility impairments (unless the leaves of the doors are over 850mm wide). There should be a practice of always unlocking both halves of a door.

Are corridors kept free of hazards or obstructions?

Cluttered walkways are dangerous and can be impassable for wheelchair users and those with other mobility impairments as well as creating difficulties for visually impaired people.

Are ramps in good condition, free of hazards and non-slip?

All ramps should be well maintained and have a non-slip surface. Ramps should be a minimum of 1200mm wide, have handrails at both sides, and be supplemented by steps. Ramps up to 5000mm long should have a maximum gradient of 1 in 15; up to 10,000mm long a maximum gradient of 1 in 20. If a ramp is less than 2000mm long the gradient can be up to 1 in 12.

Does rooms used for training or lectures have an induction loop for hearing aid users?

People who use hearing aids often have difficulty in hearing what is being said in a training situation; the provision of an induction loop can be very valuable. There should be a policy that the loop system is used whenever information is being given.

Toilets, Showers and Changing Rooms

Is there a wheelchair accessible toilet? Is it clean? Is it used for storage?

There are very specific design guidelines for wheelchair accessible toilets; information on these is available in the RYAS Brief Guides series of booklets. A toilet that does not have the correct handrails, sink positioning, seat, and pull handle can present dangers

to the user. Wheelchair users will use their hands to move a round; a messy floor means messy hands. The space alongside the pan in a wheelchair accessible toilet is for parking a wheelchair when transferring sideways onto the seat, it should not be cluttered by bins and other stored items such as cleaning equipment.

Does the alarm cord run from floor to ceiling? Are the sink and drying facilities in good order? Is the area beside the pan kept free of obstruction?

A wheelchair accessible toilet is often quite isolated from other parts of the building; once the door is locked no one is going to come into the room. In an emergency it is vital to have an alarm to summon help. The pull cord for the alarm must run right down to the floor so that someone who has fallen can reach it. For some disabled people it is necessary to carry out sterile procedures whilst in the toilet. For this reason it is vital to have good hand washing and drying facilities. The sink and dryer (or towel dispenser) should be located so that they can be used whilst seated on the toilet and before transfer back into a wheelchair. The space alongside the pan in a wheelchair accessible toilet is for parking a wheelchair when transferring sideways onto the seat; it should not be cluttered by bins or other stored items.

Is there a wheelchair accessible shower? Is the cubicle used for storage? Does it have a shower curtain? Does the alarm cord run from floor to ceiling?

A wheelchair accessible shower should have a seat in order that the user can transfer out of the wheelchair and use the shower. There must be a flexible shower hose in order that one may reach all parts of the body whilst seated. The shower controls should be easy to use with wet hands. A shower curtain is necessary to stop water falling onto the user's wheelchair and dry clothes. A wheelchair accessible shower should be fitted with handrails. A shower cubicle should not be used for storage. A wheelchair accessible shower is often quite isolated from other parts of the building; once the door is locked no one is going to come into the room. In an emergency it is vital to have an alarm to summon help. The pull cord for the alarm must run right down to the floor so that someone who has fallen can reach it.

Are the wheelchair accessible toilet and shower independent or combined in the same cubicle?

There are many acceptable designs for wheelchair toilets and showers; further information is given in the RYAS Brief Guides series. If the club has a combined cubicle it is important that there is space for turning a wheelchair and that the toilet (and toilet paper) is unlikely to get wet when the shower is in use.

Are there accessible changing rooms? Do they have side, deep, benches?

Changing rooms for use by disabled people should have plenty of turning space. Wide, deep benches are vital; as many disabled people will sit down to change their cloths. Large lockers for storing artificial limbs, callipers, etc are valuable.

Getting to the water - Are external routes free of obstructions and hazards?

The route from the car park to the buildings and from the buildings to the water should not present a hazard to disabled people. Sometimes boats, masts, gear, ropes, kitbags, are strewn across walkways and these can be dangerous. A vigorous policy of policing walkways is valuable.

Section 3 – Summary of your assessment of your club/group

To help you choose the categories of disability most suited to your club, please read the following definitions.

Ambulant; People who have a physical disability, but who do not have impaired mobility; an example of this category is a person who is without an arm, or may have a chronic illness.

Partially ambulant: People who have impaired mobility but are able to walk, generally with crutches or sticks; an example of this category is someone who walks with callipers and crutches

Non-ambulant (independent transfer): people, who do not walk, but are able to transfer unaided into a boat; an example of this category is a person who has paralysed legs.

Non-ambulant (assisted transfer): People who do not walk and require assistance in transferring from a wheelchair into a boat; an example of this category is a person who has paralysis of four limbs and will require a hoist or other device to transfer from chair to boat.

Blind: People who have no effective sight; it should be noted that many people in this category will have some sight, but it will not, generally, be of use.

Visually impaired: People who have limited vision; this category may include those who may be able to see in some areas of their field of vision and not others.

Deaf: People who have little or no useful hearing and who may communicate using sign language which is different in its structure from English; this may lead to difficulties with understanding instruction and terminology.

Hearing impaired; People who have reduced hearing and who may use hearing aids in everyday life. In some instances hearing aids may not be used on the water and this will reduce the person's capacity to hear.

Deaf blind; People who have substantial impairment to both sight and hearing and will communicate by tactile language.

Learning disability; People who have difficulty in understanding or retaining information. This group is by far the largest number disabled people and the widest range of disabling conditions. Often there are no special facilities that are required in order for learning disabled people to sail (unless a person has another type of disability) but a high degree of understanding of learning disability is required. It is important that club staff and volunteers work closely with the carers of learning disabled people to ensure safety and the best possible sailing experience.