

Assessing Access at Sailing Venues and Facilities

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Introduction

Sport England state that 1 in 5 people in England have a long standing limiting disability or illness. Almost 70% of disabled people are aged over 50 and almost 75% of disabled people have more than one impairment. Not everyone who has a long standing limiting disability will identify as such. All these facts point to those involved in providing sailing opportunities needing to consider how accessible their venue and facilities are.

The Equalities Act applies to all organisations that provide a service to the public or a section of the public and to anyone that sells goods or provides facilities.(Service Providers). Therefore clubs that provide RYA training or other services to members of the public may be considered to be Service Providers, as will most commercial RTCs. The Act also applies to private members' clubs if they fall within the definition of an Association (bodies with 25 or more members; and that have rules regulating who can become members (though not necessarily formal or written); and that have a process of selection to become a member). Community Amateur Sports Clubs should also assume that they are covered by the Act.

Under the Equalities Act there is a duty to make 'reasonable' adjustments to the physical features of premises in order to ensure that there are no physical barriers to the services and facilities on offer. What is reasonable will vary from issue to issue and will be influenced by the size of the club or RTC, its financial resources, the cost of the adjustments and the particular circumstances of the case. Carrying out an assessment / audit will help you plan and decide what is reasonable. It is good practice to be proactive rather than wait for people to tell you something is inaccessible.

Using this Document

This document follows a typical journey from arrival through to going boating. It is meant to be a tool for those involved with a particular club or centre to self-assess the accessibility of existing buildings and facilities, including access to the water. It is not a definitive guide and does not detail every bit of design guidance that exists.

Anyone considering a new build or major renovations of an existing building or facilities should seek advice from professional consultants on accessibility issues.

Each section includes:

- General advice referencing any specific standards or codes of practice
- The checklist questions
- Space to record
 - comments and feedback
 - actions you can take to improve access
 - information that could be made publically available to let others know how accessible your venue and facilities are

Whilst there is a wide range of guidance and standards for inclusive and accessible design (and this document sources some of those), listening to what disabled people think and the barriers they face is the easiest way to find out what you can do to

improve access and ensure your facilities are usable. One way to do this is to carry out a self-assessment with disabled people, walking through the facilities and getting user comments and feedback.

At all times you should have in mind:

1. Who is using or is likely to use the facilities?
2. What do they think about the facilities?
3. How do they find getting around and the reality of using the facilities?

Following this approach and using this tool will enable you to produce:

- an action plan of steps you can take to improve access
- an accessibility statement to be made publically available

Accessibility statements

An accessibility statement is a way of describing the facilities and support available to enable people to access what is on offer, both on shore and on the water. When done well, they move the focus away from a person's impairment, and instead provides the information a person may need to judge whether they will be able to access everything on offer. It should reassure and address some of the barriers disabled people commonly face. It is suggested an accessibility statement covers the same areas as the self-assessment. It can be, but doesn't have to be a standalone document / web page.

As a minimum any accessibility statement should include the following key messages:

- We are proud of our facilities and activities. We have considered any barriers to accessibility, and involved disabled people in this process. We want to provide information about accessibility.
- We can offer support in getting to know the building, the facilities and accessing the activities. Do contact us so we can listen to what you need.
- We know we probably haven't thought of everything and we are committed to improving access where we can, so do let us know if there is anything you think we can do better.

Sources

This document is designed as a self-assessment tool. It has drawn from a number of sources which contain further detail should you need it. It is worth noting that should you feel you need further detail you may also need to seek independent, professional advice.

Sport England – Accessible Sports Facilities – Design Guidance Note

<https://www.sportengland.org/media/4508/accessible-sports-facilities-2010.pdf>

Activity Alliance: Access for All – Opening Doors

<http://www.activityalliance.org.uk/how-we-help/resources>

Activity Alliance – Inclusive Marketing and Communications

<http://www.activityalliance.org.uk/how-we-help/programmes/1817-inclusive-marketing-and-communications>

BS 8300-1:2018 - Design of an accessible and inclusive built environment. External environment. Code of practice.

This standard brings diverse advice together to provide a definitive source of authoritative recommendations on inclusive and accessible design for the external built environment.

<https://shop.bsigroup.com/ProductDetail?pid=00000000030335801>

BS 8300-2:2018 - Design of an accessible and inclusive built environment. Buildings. Code of practice

This standard brings diverse advice together to provide a definitive source of authoritative recommendations on the inclusive and accessible design of buildings

<https://shop.bsigroup.com/ProductDetail/?pid=00000000030335835>

BS 6083-10:1988, IEC 60118-10:1996 - Hearing aids. Guide to hearing aid standards

https://shop.bsigroup.com/en/ProductDetail/?pid=00000000000180743&_ga=2.219840415.787319832.1534859523-2036989884.1534859522

Dementia-Friendly sport and physical activity guide – Alzheimer’s Society / Sport England

<https://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/further-guidance/dementia-friendly-sport-and-physical-activity-guide/>

Getting There

Do you provide enough information to enable people to plan their journeys to your venue? The proximity of public transport links and the availability of accessible buses / taxis / trains can be critical components in ensuring people are able to arrive safely and easily.

It is worth considering how easily people can access your venue by public transport, on foot, or by car, if local public transport options are useable by anyone in a wheelchair and whether clear and logical signage indicates routes to your venue from the nearest public highway or footpath.

Any signage or route information on approaches to your site, or 'You Are Here' maps at public transport points nearby can be really helpful, but you will need to work with others such as your local authority, local transport companies, or the Highway Agency to get these provided.

Signage / Route information

Signs should contrast visually with their background and letters must contrast with the sign colour. Capital letters should be used for the first letter only. Typefaces commonly used are Helvetica/Arial/Futura/Avant Garde. Signs must not be reflective and positioned so as to avoid reflection from natural or artificial light. Lettering heights are detailed in BS8300:2018 and vary according to the likely distance the sign needs to be read from, where it is sited and whether the sign is giving a location or directions.

Getting There

Checklist questions

1. Can people access the venue conveniently by public transport, on foot or by car?
2. Are local public transport options accessible to people using wheelchairs or with prams?
3. Is there clear and logical signage that indicates routes to the venue from the nearest public highway and / or footpaths?

Comments and Feedback

Follow up Actions

Information for Accessibility Statement

You may want to provide a postal address, including postcode, a phone number (including one that can receive text messages), an email address, a SAT NAV reference and a map. Clear directions from the nearest public highway and / or footpath will be useful. Details of all local transport options including whether they are accessible to people using wheelchairs and the distance they are from the venue should be provided. Finally any local community transport organisations that may be able to help should be listed.

Arriving and entering

This section helps you consider the proximity of parking and setting down points, how people can reach buildings and facilities on site, and the overall accessibility of external paths and walkways as people arrive.

What do people need to do to enter the site, what parking is available and is it wide and large enough to allow people to transfer in and out of wheelchairs, are routes clear, unobstructed on level, firm surfaces?

Is there step free or ramped access around the external areas of the site? Can people easily find the entrance and reception areas?

Site Entry

If you have a barrier or locked gate, a means for calling for assistance can make a difference to access. This could be a call button, or a continually monitored telephone number. Consider whether the call button can be used by people with visual impairments or limited dexterity. Using a phone number that is capable of receiving texts benefits deaf people and people who are hard of hearing. Details can be found in BS 8300-1-2018.

A gate that is self-closing under its own weight is preferable to one with a sprung hinge; if the catch can be operated with a clenched fist it is likely to be accessible to most.

Drop off / set down and Car Parking

Consider the size of vehicles likely to be arriving, the direction they come from to / and plan a clear drop off area, factoring in the need for dropped kerbs and tactile paving. Review the area for safety.

Sport England recommend a minimum of 2 designated wheelchair car parking spaces, or 6% of the total parking provision, whichever is greater. BS 8300-1-2018 details a size of 2400mm x 4800mm, with alternative dimensions for larger / specialist vehicles. Dropped kerbs and tactile paving may be needed, surfaces need to be firm and level offering a safe route to the entrance, with signage above each space as well as pictograms on the ground.

Larger parking spaces or 'family spaces' can make a real difference for people who are not yet eligible for a blue badge, but may be experiencing cognitive difficulties (e.g. Dementia).

Route finding

If you have post mounted signage (lettering ideally at least 150mm in height) and directional signs (50-100mm in height) consider the distance people will be viewing it from and how legible they are. Signs must contrast visually with their background and letters must contrast with the sign colour. Ensure capital letters are only used for first letter; typefaces commonly used are Helvetica/Arial/Futura/Avant Garde. Signs must not be reflective and positioned so as to avoid reflection from natural or artificial light.

Arriving and Entering

Any lighting for routes should provide at least 100 lux at ground level.

Ramps and steps

Ramps should come with handrails, have a non-slip surface that contrasts with adjacent paving, have level areas top and bottom and a maximum gradient of 1 in 12. Steps require handrails, highlighted nosings, non-slip treads (250-300mm) and ideally closed risers (150-170mm).

Doors

Entrance doors should offer suitable contrast with their immediate surroundings and the building façade. Contrasting door furniture assists ease of use. Doors should provide a clear opening of 800mm. If you have glass doors, ensure there are warning indicators that contrast under natural and artificial lighting at both standing and seated height. A warning strip on the leading edge increases awareness when open. Door handles should be easy to grip, operate the mechanism and open (again from standing and seated positions) – ideally 19mm diameter, D shaped with an easy return. Thresholds should be level. Automatic doors can improve use of the building for everyone.

If you have an electronic door entry system, the activation point should be located on the latch edge, either on the door face or on the adjacent wall (within 200mm of the door frame / aperture). Proximity type cards may be the easiest to use. Swipe card and insertion type systems require more precise hand control, but if used should be orientated vertically.

Entry phone systems should be sited for use by all users, contrast with the background so they can be seen and ideally have an LED display to enable deaf people and people who are hard of hearing to use them. A means of indicating the call is acknowledged and that the lock has been released should be both audible and visible. If a video system is used, it needs to have a wide enough view to ensure any visitor is in the line of site. The option to include hearing (induction) loops with entry phone panels is desirable. Provision of a phone number capable of receiving text messages can assist visitors with a variety of communication needs.

Reception

Any entrance areas should be friendly and welcoming to put people at ease. Counters should include a lowered section to suit wheelchair users. Additional lighting may be required to ensure the receptionists face is evenly lit to aid lip reading, but avoid pools of bright light or deep shadows. Reception areas should have good colour and tonal contrast and shiny surfaces should be avoided as they produce glare and shadows. Clearly label any glass doors or partitions. A fixed induction loop (BS 7594:2011) should be provided and consideration given to the acoustic environment. Larger entrances or facilities could consider seating in the entrance area, particularly if people are likely to be waiting. Perhaps offer a quiet space for anyone who might be feeling anxious or confused. A few minutes with a supportive person might be all they need to feel comfortable. If you have a sign in system, make sure support is on offer for those that might need it, including those living with dementia.

Arriving and Entering

Checklist questions

1. What procedures are in place to gain entry to the site?
2. Is the experience of entry friendly and welcoming?
3. Is there a designated dropping off / set down area near to the main entrance for all vehicles?
4. Are there enough wide, marked and reserved car parking spaces on firm ground that include a transfer zone at the rear?
5. If NO to q3. is it possible to create temporary wider parking bays and / or reserve parking bays for blue badge holders?
6. Do you have any larger 'family spaces'?
7. Have you reviewed the safety issues surrounding parking areas?
8. Where is the nearest blue badge and standard public parking facilities?
9. Are routes from parking to the main entrance unobstructed, step free, wide enough to allow for wheelchairs / mobility aids, and on a firm, level surface that is slip resistant in all weather conditions?
10. Do any steps have handrails, highlighted nosing, non-slip treads and closed risers?
11. Do routes to the main entrance have any of the following to support people finding their way: tactile information, visual clues, clear and logical signage, clear definition to path edges, or illumination?
12. Is the entrance to the building distinguishable and easy to use?
13. Can people easily use any electronic or phone entry system in place?
Particularly those with sensory impairments and other communication needs?
14. Does the entrance have a raised threshold?
15. If you have a lobby, are the doors the same width as the front door and can you clear one door before negotiating the second?
16. Can people easily find any reception or meeting point?
17. If you have a reception counter, does it have a lowered section for wheelchair users?
18. Are there any highly reflective surfaces in the reception area - this can be visually difficult for some?
19. Is the reception well lit, in a way that avoids areas of bright light or deep shadows?
20. Do you have / need seating in reception or a quiet space for anyone who might feel confused?
21. Is a person available to support anyone who may need help signing in?

Arriving and Entering

Comment and Feedback

Follow up Actions

Information for Accessibility Statement

Detail the procedures to follow to gain entry to both the site and the main building along with any assistance that is available. Provide information about drop off points, designated parking and (if needed) the nearest blue badge and standard parking facilities. Highlight if you have step free or ramped access from arrival points to entering the main building and be honest about any limitations

The External Spaces

Consider the external spaces, where people need to get to, and how they find their way to different facilities they will access at the venue.

Routes

Routes around external areas should be free from hazards (e.g. litter bins, seating, drainage gratings, signposts, overhanging foliage) and ideally have a clear width of 1800mm. If there are any hazards on main routes, consider what protection may be needed, and visual contrast should be used to ensure any hazards can be more easily seen. Seating at regular intervals can help.

Outside areas

Sufficient shaded areas can help people who find strong sunlight difficult. Seated areas should have provision for wheelchair users including seating without arm rests and varying heights and widths.

Policies and procedures should be in place for assistance dogs and dog spending areas provided.

Steps

Steps may be a preferred route for some, but can provide hazards, particularly for people with a visual impairment or those who struggle to judge depth of field. Handrails, highlighted nosing, and non-slip surfaces all help. Open risers can mean there is a risk people trap their toes between treads / risers or feeling insecure when looking through gaps.

The External Spaces

Checklist questions

1. Are the external routes throughout the venue clear, step free, unobstructed with good visual clues, logical signage, firm level surfaces, sufficient in width for wheelchairs / mobility aids and dropped kerbs on footpaths?
2. Are any external steps / staircases accompanied by a ramp?
3. Do any external steps have handrails, highlighted nosing, non-slip treads and closed risers?
4. If you have any seated areas, can tables accommodate wheelchair users?
5. Do you have sufficient shaded areas, and seating at regular intervals along longer routes?

Comment and Feedback

Follow up Actions

Information for Accessibility Statement

Highlight if you have step free or ramped access around the external areas, any provision of access to seated / shaded areas. Make it clear that assistance dogs are welcome. Be honest about any limitations

Internal Areas

This section help you consider whether people can easily use the interior of buildings, without asking too many questions. It asks you to look at how people get around, colour schemes, lighting, the acoustic environment and furniture.

Corridors

Corridors should be wide enough to accommodate wheelchairs, with turning spaces where needed. They should be free from obstructions, with necessary items such as bins, fire points and radiators clearly visible and with barriers. Contrast between walkways, surrounding areas, and walls should be used, and flooring styles chosen to avoid visual distraction / confusion. If doors are not required for fire safety, consider removing them.

Visual environment

Lighting should not present shadows across walls / floors in the spaces and corridors used. Shiny surfaces could be avoided as they can result in glare. Lighting over steps should provide clear distinction between each step and riser (100 lux at ramp / step level). Use of natural light should be maximised (along with the ability to reduce sun induced glare) and task lighting considered.

Contrasting fixtures, fittings, furniture, tableware and cutlery aid visual orientation between critical elements (doors, walkways, ceilings, plates etc).

Bold patterns on walls or floors can lead to disorientation for some.

Noise

Background noise can be distracting for people with cognitive issues or sensory impairments, affecting the ability to concentrate. Consider the need for quiet / safe spaces where people can take time out?

Doors

Doors should provide an opening of 750mm but you may need to consider wider doors if larger wheelchairs are likely. Pull handle (vertical) at a height for all to use (bottom height 700-1000mm and top end height no lower than 1300mm from floor). D shaped handles (19mm diameter) with a return ensure ease of use and should be situated at 1000mm from the floor. Door furniture to contrast with the door, which should contrast with the surrounding areas.

Vision panels in doors enable people on either side to see and be seen. They should be positioned centrally or offset to the leading edge, and be no less than 100mm in width. Glass should have warning indicators (at both seating (1050mm) and standing (1500mm) height which contrast under natural and artificial lighting with the surface behind it. Warning strips on the leading edge increase awareness of open doors.

Lifts

Lift doors should provide at least 800mm of clear opening and cars have minimum dimensions of 1100mm x 1400mm. Control panels should be 900-1100 from floor

Internal Areas

level and be at least 400mm from any return, with tactile buttons contrasting in colour and luminance with the surrounding faceplate and wall. There should be voice indication for lift arrival, level reached and direction of travel. Support rails should be on side and rear walls at a height of 900-1000mm from floor level. Mirrors should be 900mm above the floor on wall opposite door to allow wheelchair users to see behind them when reversing out. Automatic doors should have a delay before closing and the sensors should allow the closing to be over ridden.

Stairs and Ramps

Ramps should have handrails and a non-slip surface that contrasts with surrounding area. The maximum gradient is 1 in 12. Steps should have handrails, highlighted nosing, non-slip treads (250-300mm) and closed risers (150-170mm). Temporary ramps should be available at all times.

Signage and navigation

Clear and logical but not excessive signage needs to be provided at all junctions, including steps and ramps – it should be consistent throughout the building. Safety signage is a legal requirement. Place signs at key decision points for people who are trying to navigate the building for the first time. Clear and repeated signs for toilets and exits are important and can help guide people back to the area they came from.

Think about landmarks. Research shows that people with dementia use 'landmarks' to navigate their way around (e.g. a clock, or plant).

Lack of contrast is a good way of de-emphasising features that are not for public access. Providing a map of the venue may help people find where they are and where they need to go?

Seating / Assembly areas

Well signed seating and resting places put people at ease. Seating should be 450-475mm in height and there should be at least some provision without arm rests to suit people with mobility needs. Tables should permit access and use by wheelchair users (knee space 700mm high).

Counters and serveries should be 760mm in height with knee space 700mm high and 500mm deep for wheelchair users. Menus should be provided in large print.

In any areas where meetings or public gatherings are held, a fixed induction loop will support hearing aid users.

Flooring

Think about people who may have perception difficulties. For example, shiny surfaces might look wet and make people anxious, black or very dark areas may look like a hole, and bold patterned carpets can disorientate.

Food and drink

Make sure the method for serving food is clear whether it is table service or counter ordering. Easy read and large print menus will help many.

Internal Areas

Checklist questions

1. Are corridors, passageways, and aisles wide enough for a wheelchair, with turning space and room for passing?
2. Are corridors free from obstructions with good lighting that reduces shadows and glare?
3. Do you have any shiny or reflective flooring, black or very dark colouring in areas of flooring or bold patterned flooring / carpets?
4. Are any doors absolutely necessary for safety or functional reasons?
5. Are doors wide enough for a wheelchair, clearly visible, easy to grip, operate the mechanism and open?
6. Can people either side of the door at both standing and seated height, see or be seen?
7. If doors are glazed, are they prominently marked to prevent people walking into them by accident?
8. Is a lift available that is big enough to accommodate a wheelchair, has support rails with a fitted mirror opposite the door? (only if the building is more than one storey)
9. Can the lift be independently used by a person in a wheelchair or with sensory impairments?
10. Does the lift have delayed action closing which can be overridden?
11. Are stairs and ramps well lit, with good signage, supported by handrails and with enough space for turning / passing?
12. Are any ramps in place at a gradient that can be used easily, with non-slip surfaces?
13. Is furniture strong and stable but flexible enough to allow different seating styles / arrangements?
14. If food / drink is on offer, can a person in a wheelchair get to the servery / counter, be served, and then sit comfortably at a table?
15. Do you have large print menus available? Easy read?
16. Are social / meeting / assembly areas well-lit and decorated in a way that maximises contrast between key elements?
17. Are light switches and other environmental controls clearly visible against their background?
18. Does signage use colour, font, text size and contrast to ensure it is legible?
19. Is a hearing (induction) loop or radio aid provided and do staff / volunteers know how to use it?
20. Are there any particularly noisy areas internally? Can you do anything about this?
21. Do you have any quiet / safe spaces with seating where people can take time out?
22. Do you offer a map of the venue?
23. Do you have landmarks around that could be used to help navigation?

Internal Areas

Comment and Feedback

Follow up Actions

Information for Accessibility Statement

Highlight provision of any facilities that improve access (e.g. step free environment / lift / ramps / induction loops). Be honest about any limitations.

WC and Changing Areas

This section helps you consider whether people can easily use the wc and changing facilities. It considers mobility, equipment, lighting and colour schemes as well as procedures for responding to alarms.

Visual environment

Facilities should be well lit, without shadow or glare, with contrasting colour schemes that help identify key elements, and with clear, logical but not excessive signage.

WC cubicles

Outward opening doors and vertical and horizontal grab rails can assist all users. Door controls should have an emergency release operated from the outside.

For a wheelchair accessible WC, location signage is needed with good colour and tone contrast, ideally using the standard pictogram. The approach should be clear and unobstructed, the doors should have lever operated controls, a horizontal grab rail on the inside and be outward opening. A lighting pull cord should be located close to the leading edge of the door. A call system should be linked to a central control point with a red pull finishing close to the floor. Vertical and horizontal grab rails (32-35mm in diameter) should be in contrasting colour to wall finishes, and there needs to be one vertical either side of a wash basin, one horizontal on the wall next to the WC. The toilet seat should ideally have a padded backrest, be without a lid, with a raised seat. The flush handle should be on the transfer side, and a mirror should be provided. Ensure that basin, soap and drying facilities can be used from the seated position. Mixer taps are better and max temperature limited to 41deg. The floor must be slip resistant and make sure any bins do not obstruct transfer. Door locks should be easy to use for a person with limited dexterity. A choice of paper / fabric handtowels as well as hand driers can be useful.

Changing facilities

Self-contained unisex changing facilities with space for a companion or assistant of either sex should be provided, with communal separate-sex changing areas as an additional provision – an opposite sex carer or partner may want to help a person. Tip up seats, with a back rest and horizontal and vertical grab rail as well as drop down grab rails on the opposite wall will help. Seating that looks like seating, and that is clearly visible against walls and surfaces can really help. Coat hooks, towel rails and alarm pull cords should be at a height that can be used from a seated position. Changing mats, or a height adjustable adult sized changing bench could be considered. If you have lockers you may need to consider methods to help people identify their locker (re-usable stickers, for example).

For some people mirrors can cause confusion. Think about the size and position of mirrors.

Changing Places

The Changing Places Consortium launched a campaign in 2006 on behalf of the over 1/4 of a million people who cannot use standard accessible toilets. This

WC and Changing Areas

includes people with profound and multiple learning disabilities, motor neurone disease, multiple sclerosis, cerebral palsy, as well as older people.

To use the toilet in safety and comfort many people need to be able to access a facility which has more space and the right equipment, including a height adjustable changing bench and a hoist. A Changing Places facility meets certain standards. Advice and design guidance is available from <http://www.changing-places.org/>.

Showers

Floors must be slip resistant, and as level as possible. Any drain must be located away from the circulating area. The approach must be unobstructed, doors have lever operated controls, with a horizontal grab rail on the inside. Lighting pull cord and red pull finished call system should be in place. A privacy curtain, tip up shower seat and optional tip up seat for drying will help. The hose should be flexible and adjustable in height. Ensure turning space for wheelchairs.

Hoists

A full room cover tracked hoist gives the greatest flexibility, makes the best use of space and improves a person's privacy and independence. Other systems / mobile units are acceptable if they provide a similar level of access and independence.

Policies and protocols

If call systems are installed, a protocol for responding to an alarm needs to be in place. If hoists are provided policies and procedures in their use are required.

Signs and navigation

Clear signage inside and outside the toilet is important. Having a 'way out' sign inside is really effective.

WC and Changing Areas

Checklist questions

1. Are the WC and changing areas well signed, and do you have signage indicating the way out as well as the way in?
2. Does the layout in the communal changing areas allow sufficient space for wheelchair users to move about freely without obstructing others?
3. Is there direct access from the changing areas to showers?
4. Are individual accessible changing cubicles available?
5. Are changing benches wide and comfortable enough?
6. Are changing benches clearly visible against walls and surfaces?
7. Is a hoist available in any of the changing facilities? Is the hoist mobile or tracked?
8. Is there a height adjustable adult sized changing bench?
9. Is there a large waste bin for adult disposable pads?
10. Are all the facilities well lit, without deep shadows or glare, and with clear, logical, consistent signage that uses colour, font, text size and contrast to ensure it is legible?
11. Does the colour scheme throughout WC, shower and changing facilities provide sufficient contrast to differentiate between key elements?
12. Is there a WC cubicle with a slip resistant finish, vertical and horizontal grab rails, emergency release operated from the outside and an outward opening door, in a colour scheme that distinguishes fittings from their background?
13. Is there a WC specifically designed and designated for wheelchair users?
14. Is there a wheelchair accessible shower facility?
15. Are any mirrors located or sized in a way that might cause confusion for some?
16. Do you have a method for people to easily identify lockers they are using?
17. Are people able to use the locks, washbasin, soap and drying facilities, including from a sitting position and for those with limited dexterity?

WC and Changing Areas

Comment and Feedback

Follow up Actions

Information for Accessibility Statement

Detail any and all accessible WC, changing or shower facilities you have in place. Be honest about limitations. If you provide a hoist, detail this and make it clear whether individuals need to provide their own sling or not

Getting on the Water

This section focusses on both the routes to any pontoon, jetty or boat in use; the pontoons and or slipway; the boats available and safety or assistive equipment provided.

Routes to the launching area

Routes to the launching area should be free from hazards, easy to locate, step free and on a firm surface that is slip resistant in all weather conditions. Routes should be wide enough to allow for wheelchairs, have room for passing and turning. If there are any hazards on main routes, consider what protection may be needed, and visual contrast should be used to ensure any hazards can be more easily seen. Seating at regular intervals can help.

Steps

Steps may be a preferred route for some, but can provide hazards, particularly for people with a visual impairment or those who struggle to judge depth of field. Handrails, highlighted nosing, and non-slip surfaces all help. Open risers can mean there is a risk people trap their toes between treads / risers or feeling insecure when looking through gaps.

Signage

Clear, consistent and logical but not excessive signage can be provided at all junctions, including steps and ramps.

Pontoon / Jetty

Access to any pontoon / jetty / slipway needs to be safe, and wide enough (preferably 1200mm) to allow circulation space for wheelchair users. The pontoon or jetty itself will need allocated space for wheelchair users, passing room and turning spaces. If access is ramped, ideally there should be a level surface at the top and consideration given to how this is hinged and covered so that edges remain flush to the pontoon. At the bottom (pontoon end) a buffer slope may be needed. The effect any changes in water level or tide on the ramp gradient needs to be considered and assessed. Hand rails on both sides of ramps should extend to the buffer plates at the top and bottom. Handrails on the pontoon itself will provide support and reassurance all. Surfaces need to be slip resistant in all weather conditions. Contrast colour edge marking is advisable and contrast considered between any fittings on the pontoon and the immediate surroundings. Once people are in boats and launched, space is required for wheelchairs and mobility aids.

Boats, Aids and Equipment

It is important to consider the boats you have available and whether any are suitable for people who use wheelchairs, have limited mobility or limited core / trunk support.

A wide range of equipment can people getting in and out boats (e.g. transfer boards, stacking steps, hoists), supporting sitting positions once in the boat and independently controlling the steering and other controls, from high tech to low tech, from homespun to commercially available.

Getting on the Water

Beach wheelchairs may be needed where provision of a pontoon or landing stage is out of the question.

Personal flotation devices and other sailing safety clothing.

What to wear, and how to be safe in the boat may be a barrier for many new to sailing, so consider what you are able to provide in terms of personal flotation devices and clothing to keep people warm and dry.

People

It is helpful to think of Sailing as being accessible because of the combination of the appeal of the sport itself (outdoor, on the water, freedom etc), the fact that it is equipment based so there is something out there for everyone including some very specialist kit, and it is reliant on people to make it happen (often volunteers). People are vital. The ability to listen to sailors and what they need, to welcome people so they have a great experience every time and to show potential sailors what is possible are all key. So having the right people trained in the safe and effective use of the equipment (including hoists), any technology and the boats you use is vital as is ensuring staff and volunteers can listen, assess the support a sailor may need to be independent and help sailors choose the right equipment, boats and adaptations for them.

Getting on the Water

Checklist questions

1. Is the route to the water and launching area easy to locate, clear, unobstructed, firm and with a step free, slip resistant surface?
2. Is there access onto the pontoon / jetty for wheelchair users?
3. Is the pontoon / jetty sufficient in width and circulation space for wheelchair users?
4. Does the pontoon / jetty have high visibility markings on the edge, and good contrast between any fittings and their background?
5. Do you have a dry space to store wheelchairs and other personal equipment while people are sailing?
6. Does access to the pontoon / jetty and the pontoon / jetty itself have sufficient handrails?
7. Do you have any aids and equipment to support sailors to self-transfer from wheelchair to boat, and back again?
8. Do you have a hoist available for use on the pontoon / jetty?
9. Do you have boats that can be used by people who use wheelchairs, have limited mobility and / or limited core / trunk support and can you launch the boats safely?
10. Do you have aids and equipment to support people sit in the boat so they are well positioned for all the controls?
11. Do you have aids and equipment to assist sailors with visual impairments to learn to sail and control the boat independently?
12. Do you have aids, equipment and technology to support people with limited grip, strength or movement to steer and trim the sails?
13. Do you provide personal flotation devices and / or clothing for safety and warmth on the water?
14. Are staff and volunteers trained in the safe and effective use of equipment, aids and technology available on the pontoon / jetty / slipway and in the boats? Do you have records of training completed?
15. Are staff and / or volunteers available who can assess the support and aids a sailor may need to choose the right boat, get in and out of it, sit comfortably and safely and use all the controls independently?

Getting on the Water

Comment and Feedback

Follow up Actions

Information for Accessibility Statement

Get across the support you can offer to get people in the right boat, with the right equipment, continuing their sailing journey. Listing the type of boats might not help people who know nothing about sailing, but get across there is something for everyone. Similarly you don't have to detail every bit of equipment but state whether getting on the water is accessible to wheelchair users, and that you have a range of aids to help people in and out of the boats, to sit comfortably and control the steering and sails. Perhaps engage disabled people already involved to promote it to others and get across how accessible it is. If you have a hoist, detail this. Be honest about any limitations. If you provide personal flotation devices and clothing state this. Most of all reassure that the activity will be suitable, that you will listen and welcome people.

Emergency and Safety

This section helps you consider whether those sailing with you can get out of the building or boats in an emergency.

Strategy

You need to detail the procedures on how an emergency evacuation would be implemented, including warning people that there is an incident, who is responsible for alerting the emergency services, who co-ordinates the evacuation, the exit routes to be used and where to assemble. The procedures and plans must cover all members and users of the facilities – if people who attend regularly have particular access requirements you should consult on how to address these. Staff and volunteers should know the plan and what to do.

Lifts

Passenger lifts cannot be used in an emergency, but all lifts should have a means of alerting people to an emergency, and if this is an emergency telephone system does it include an inductive coupler (for hearing aid users).

Designated Fireman's lifts and Evacuation lifts can be used in a fire or emergency – they will have a separate power supply. Fireman's lifts are used to move equipment to upper floors. It is essential such lifts are correctly identified.

Refuge areas

Upper floors need a safe space where people can stay in safety from a fire for a period of time – they need a communication system. Evacuation chairs can be provided to aid movement from upper floors.

Exit routes

Escape routes must be clearly identified and remain unobstructed at all times. Final exit doors should be level with the ground (if not a portable ramp may be required) and lead to a place of safety away from the building.

Alarms

Deaf people and people who are hard of hearing may not hear alarms so benefit from a visual indicator as well.

PEEPs

Regular users / members / sailors who may require assistance during an evacuation need a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan. You can consult groups who use the facilities regularly on their requirements and PEEPs can be generic for particular user groups (e.g. visually impaired / partially sighted; deaf / hard of hearing; wheelchair users; learning difficulties)

Emergency and Safety

Checklist questions

1. Is there an emergency evacuation strategy and plan in place that includes provision for all users / members / sailors?
2. Do all staff, volunteers and participants know about the plans in place?
3. If you have a passenger lift, does the emergency telephone incorporate an inductive coupler?
4. Is there a designated evacuation lift and / or a fireman's lift?
5. Can all ground floor fire escapes and exit routes be used by wheelchair users and others who may require assistance?
6. If there is no means of evacuating people from upper floors are there safe places / refuge areas with a communication system where people can remain?
7. Is the fire alarm fitted with visual alarms?
8. Are Personal Emergency Evacuation Procedures in place for regular users who require assistance during an evacuation, including people who may have a temporary disability or condition (e.g. pregnancy)

Emergency and Safety

Comment and Feedback

Follow up Actions

Information for Accessibility Statement

You may want to reassure people that their safety is your primary concern and that you are happy to talk through what might need to be put in place while people use the venue and the facilities.

Communication and Information.

This section helps you start considering whether you communicate and provide information in such a way that makes it easy for people to know their way around and find out what is going on without asking too many questions (particularly those with sensory impairments or communication difficulties). It includes considering signage as well as the ways you communicate with participants and gets you to consider how you would respond to specific communication needs.

Meeting areas / Training rooms / Reception

Hearing enhancement solutions such as Induction loops, radio aids or infrared systems support hearing aid users and others to communicate. Remember lots of people use hearing aids who would not consider themselves deaf or hearing impaired.

Signage and Maps / Guides

Clear and logical but not excessive signage helps people get around without asking too many questions – it should be consistent throughout the building. Safety signage is a legal requirement. Signs should contrast visually with their background and letters must contrast with the sign colour. Reflection from natural or artificial light can cause legibility problems. Capital letters should be used for the first letter only and sans serif typefaces can be easier to read (Helvetica, Futura, Arial, Avant Gard). A guide or a map of the venue can help people identify what is going on and where.

Easy read and large print menus and other information regularly made available should be created.

Colour schemes and tactile surfaces

Colour schemes, use of contrast, changes in surface texture and can guide people around the venue.

Social media, websites and newsletters

It is worth testing your communication methods for accessibility – considering legibility (text size / colour contrast) and ease of use with assistive technology (for people who can't see or hear very well, those who find words difficult, or a keyboard or mouse hard to use).

Members, participants and users may reasonably request alternative formats for information or specific communication support (e.g. interpreter), so consider how you will respond?

Communication and Information

Checklist questions

1. If you have a public address system is it clearly audible? Is the system supplemented by visual information?
2. Do you have hearing enhancement solutions (induction loops / radio aids / infrared systems) and if so, where are they located?
3. Does signage use colour, font, text size and contrast to ensure it is legible?
4. Do the buildings and facilities use colour schemes, use of contrast and changes in surface texture to guide people around?
5. Do you provide information boards / a guide / map of the venue with information about the facilities and activities?
6. Is there a need for any braille information or signage?
7. Is printed information (including menus / activity lists etc) available in large print and other alternative formats in response to reasonable request?
8. Have you tested digital and online communication (websites, social media and e-newsletters) for accessibility – either by asking participants or seeking professional advice?
9. Would communication support (e.g. sign language interpreters) be provided for training, meetings, events or other public occasions if requested?
10. Are positive images of disabled sailors included in your publicity material?

Communication and Information

Comment and Feedback

Follow up Actions

Information for Accessibility Statement

State you want information (in print and online) to be accessible but invite people to let you know if it isn't and reassure you will try to do something about it. If you can or do make information available in different formats, or you would provide communication professionals / interpreters in some circumstances – state this. Engage disabled people who are already involved to promote it to others.

Communication and Information

Version control

Scope	All Sailability sites, sailing clubs and training centres who want to self-assess the accessibility of their facilities
Version	1.1
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Changes	
1.1	Updated to reflect “Dementia-friendly sport and physical activity guide” – Alzheimer’s Society / Sport England.