

Accessible Sports Facilities FAQ's

1. The Accessible Sports Facilities DGN appears to have dramatically increased the requirements for disabled changing and toilet accommodation. Why is this?

The Accessible Sports Facilities DGN has added a recommendation for an additional unisex WC within the 'sports chair' zone and the provision of the 'Changing Places' assisted changing facility for larger venues.

These changes are in line with British Standard BS 8300: 2009 and proposed developments to Building Regulations Approved Document M: 2004.

2. What provisions should we make for wheelchairs in our Leisure Centre?

The provision for wheelchairs will depend upon the facilities available. For Sports Halls, where wheelchair sports are played (e.g. Wheelchair Rugby, Wheelchair Tennis etc.) specialist chairs that are wider than standard chairs will need to be accommodated.

Refer to section 17 'Wheelchair Sports' within the Accessible Sports Facilities DGN for detailed guidance.

A copy of the design guide can be downloaded from here:

http://www.sportengland.org/facilities_planning/design_and_cost_guidance/idoc.ashx?docid=62299267-f2a5-451f-8731-4bcfdafa08ea&version=-1

3. How do I establish what access provision is required in our proposed facility?

The Accessible Sports Facilities DGN provides detailed guidance with regard to providing accessibility in a range of sports facilities. In more complex developments consulting an Access Consultant may also be beneficial.

Consultation with local accessibility focus groups (comprising a balance of the disabled people likely to be using the facility) during the project design stage may also assist in establishing suitable provision.

4. When should commentary at sports events be supplemented by textual displays?

The Accessible Sports Facilities DGN states that where spectator provision includes a public address system, this must be supplemented with appropriate hearing aids, such as induction loops and visual text displays for people with hearing impairment.

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5. Can assistance dogs be taken into the changing rooms?

Assistance dogs are not normally allowed in changing rooms although some operators may make exceptions. Generally assistance dogs will need to be left at a designated location within the facility - see FAQ 6 below.

6. What provision is needed for assistance dogs when someone is using the facility e.g. Using the swimming pool?

A secure and quiet resting place should be provided close to the reception (preferably in an office) - see The Accessible Sports Facilities DGN figure 4. Further guidance is also available from the Guide Dogs website:

<http://www.guidedogs.org.uk>.

7. What size lockers are needed for disabled use?

Lockers for storing elbow or forearm crutches, callipers or artificial limbs should be at least 1.2 high x 0.3 wide x 0.5m deep.

Full size 'Axilla' (under arm) crutches will require larger (full height) lockers which should be 1.8 high x 0.3 wide x 0.5m deep.

Accessible Sports Facilities FAQ's continued

8. What provisions should be made for the visually impaired in respect of signage within a facility?

Guidance on signage for the visually impaired is available to registered users of the Sign Design Society website:

<http://www.signdesignsociety.co.uk/>

The 'Sign Design Guide' - is available for purchase from their online shop:

http://www.signdesignsociety.co.uk/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&layout=blog&id=10&Itemid=19

9. Is one passenger lift sufficient for our two storey facility?

This will depend upon the nature, size and use of the facility on the upper floor(s). It will also depend upon how many disabled people will be using the upper floor.

In a small sports facility with limited provision at first floor level, and normal accessibility needs, one accessible passenger lift may be adequate. In larger facilities two lifts will be required to cater for increased accessibility requirements. The provision of two lifts provides flexibility in the event that a lift becomes temporarily unavailable (e.g. breaks down), preventing trapping of disabled people on the upper floor.

Where the numbers of disabled people expected to use an upper floor is higher, then special consideration may be needed to provide increased provision. If possible at least one lift should also be designed as a fire evacuation lift. Refer to the Accessible Sports Facilities DGN Section 6 Emergency Escape for further details.

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10. Do we need to make special provision for access to a swimming pool - is a disabled hoist sufficient?

Access to a swimming pool will depend upon the type of pool and the range of people who are expected to use it. The Accessible Sports Facilities DGN provides guidance upon several different access methods - refer to pages 63 - 65.

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In larger facilities a submersible platform lift would be the preferred means of access. For a small pool a single hoist may be adequate. Where hoists are mobile but secured to the pool surround by means of a socket, several socket locations should be provided around the pool to allow flexibility.