



**CENTRE FOR  
INCLUSIVE LIVING  
Perth & Kinross**

Guide to Organising an Accessible and Inclusive Event

## Centre For Inclusive Living Perth and Kinross

CILPK is a membership led Disability Organisation

We are run by disabled people for disabled people and we offer a range of services designed to ensure better access, greater equality of experience and meaningful improvements in our right to live independently with support where appropriate

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If you would like more information about the guide or advice for your own event or venue, then please get in touch with us.

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# Guide to Organising an Accessible and Inclusive Event

## 1.0 Introduction

When organising meetings, training sessions, conferences and other events it is important to make sure that they are accessible and inclusive to everyone attending. This guide gives guidance on how to make your event as accessible as possible.

### 1.1 What is an accessible event?

Staging an accessible event goes beyond getting in and out of a building, it means making sure that everyone can attend your event and fully participate once they are there. This includes presenters, participants and sponsors.

People often consider accessibility to be just about ramps and doors, while this is important it would be a mistake to see accessibility as simply this issue. It's also about attitudes and aspirations, communication and allowing everyone to be fully involved.

The measures you put in place to ensure accessibility will have benefits for all. It helps ensure that everyone can attend and participate equally in an event. In turn this helps ensure that everyone has a voice and is aware of issues that may impact on them. Planning an inclusive event ensures that you do not inadvertently discriminate against any individual or group.

This Guide does not attempt to list everything that will need to be done for every type of event. It is not designed as a technical checklist covering detailed specifications.

### 1.2 The Equality Act 2010

The link below takes you to a guide produced by Independent Living In Scotland about the Equality Act 2010.

#### [Link to ILIS information](#)

The areas that are covered in the Equality Act include disability, sex, race, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership and gender reassignment.

## 2.0 Choosing the Venue

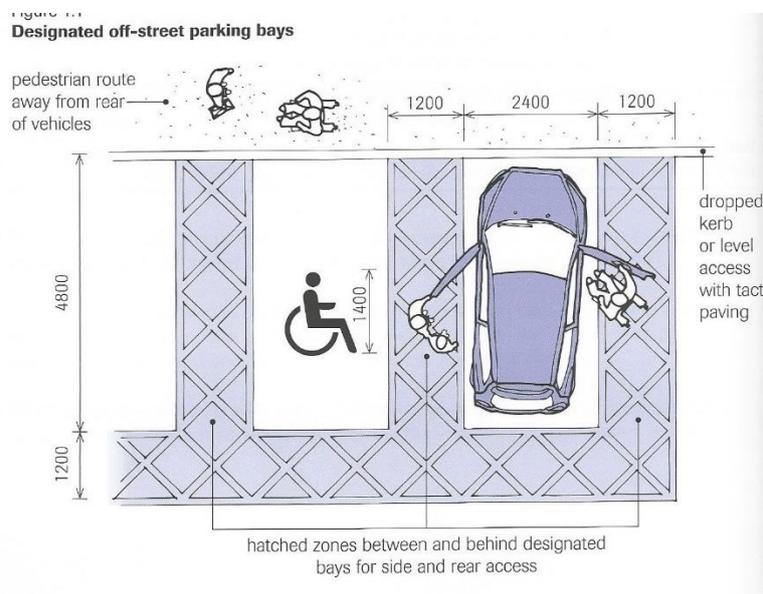
It is very important that the venue you choose is accessible for everyone. This section describes some areas that you should look out for when selecting your venue, it is not an exhaustive list and all of the areas may not be relevant to your event.

If you are using your own venue it may not be fully accessible but there may be small changes that you can make to make the event as accessible as possible.

## 2.1 Transport

It is important that people are able to get to your event, some things to think about are:

- are there disabled parking bays near to the entrance? Properly designed bays should look like the picture below.



- is there public transport that stops near to the entrance?
- Is there adequate parking nearby?
- Are there drop off points?

All of these areas should be clearly signposted.

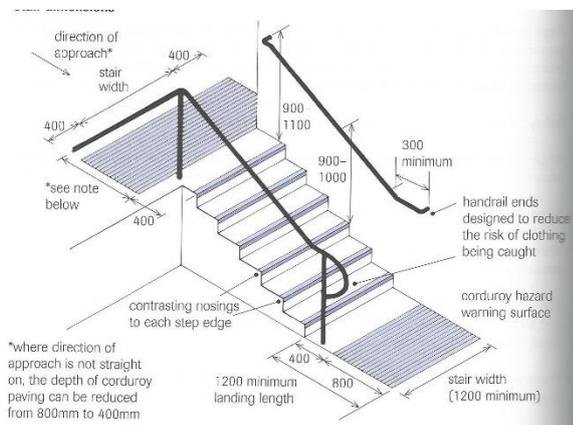
It would be useful to know this information so that you can relay this to people attending the event. If there are no parking facilities at the venue is there on street parking that you can let participants know about.

## 2.2 Accessible Routes

It is important that people are able to get from the car park or public transport to the building without too much trouble. Things to look out for are:

- There should be dropped kerbs so that wheelchair users can get onto the pavement
- There should be tactile paving at crossing points
- Are there any steps that do not have a ramp as well which would prevent wheelchair users from accessing?
- Are there any obstacles in the way such as advertising boards or street furniture that would make it difficult to access the venue?

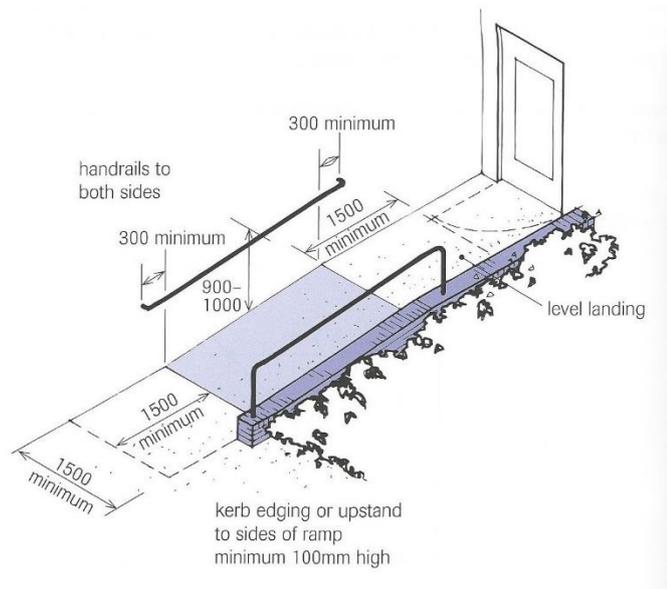
The picture below shows a good example of steps which have tactile markings at the top and bottom, handrails and also a colour contrast on each step.



## 2.3 Inside the venue

Once in the venue it is still very important that people are able to get around easily. Some things to think about include:

- It is much easier to get around the venue if everything is on the same level. If there are steps, then there should either be a ramp or a lift so that there is an alternative to the steps.
- How far do people have to walk to get from the entrance to the event room and breakout rooms? The shorter the distance the better. If there is a long distance it would be advisable to have seats on the route for people to have a rest.
- If there is ramped access are the ramps acceptable. Eg not too long or steep, see picture below.



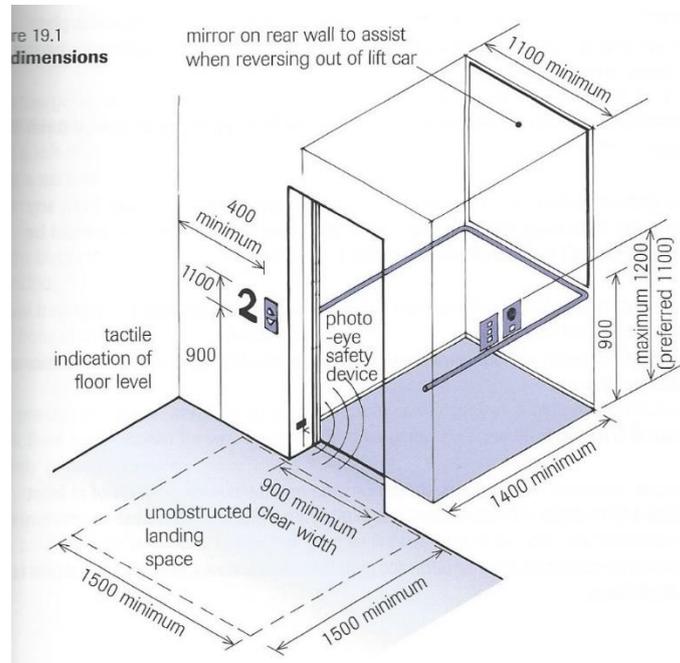
- Does everyone enter through the same door or is there only level access through a side door? We would suggest that you choose a venue where everyone can enter through the same door.
- There should be clear signage throughout the building.
- There should be good lighting throughout
- Are there automatic doors? access is made easier if there are automatic doors. If not are the doors able to stay open to let people in?
- Are there colour contrasts where appropriate? Such as on signage, doors and hallways so that visually impaired people can find their way easily

## 2.4 Lifts

If there is a need for a lift to be used, you should consider the following areas to make sure it is as accessible as possible:

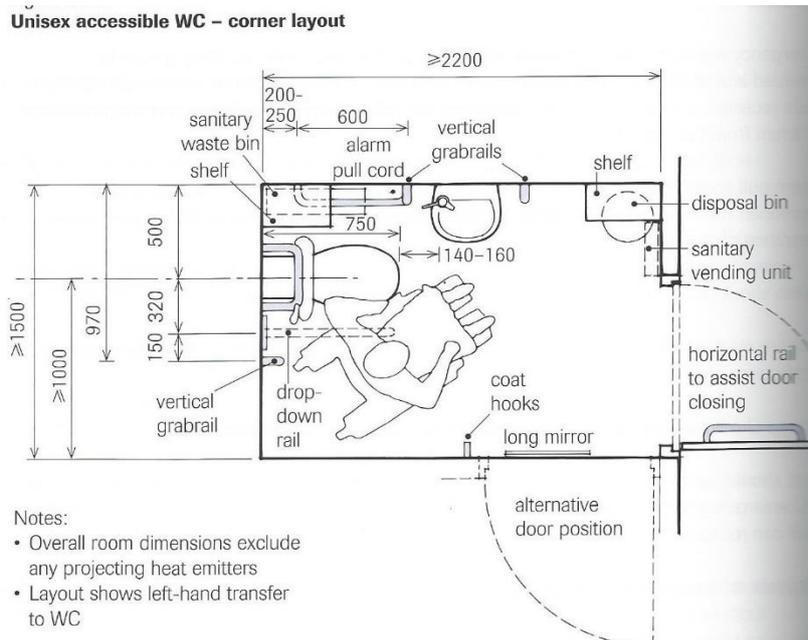
- Is it sign posted?
- Is it easy to find?
- Is it close to the event room?
- Is the route to the lift clear?
- Is the lift an appropriate size?
- Are the control buttons at a height that a wheelchair user could reach?
- Are the control buttons raised?
- Is there audio information to alert people of what floor they are on?
- Is there a mirror

Below is a picture of a lift that is fully accessible

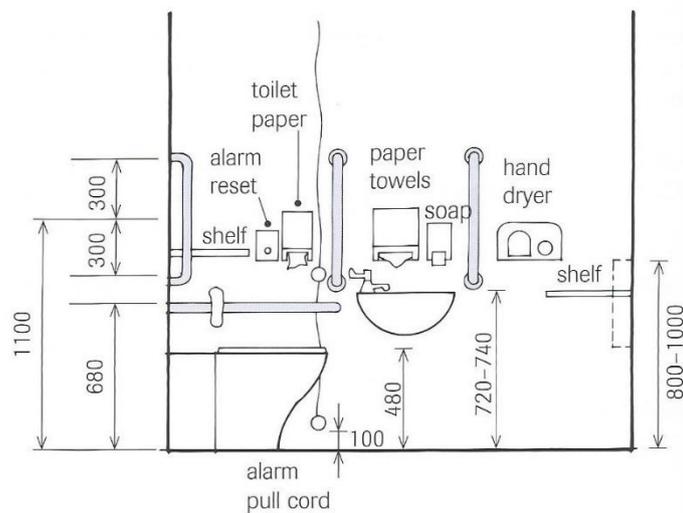


## 2.5 Accessible Toilets

It is very important that there is an accessible toilet. Below is a picture of what an accessible toilet should look like:



Unisex accessible WC – corner layout



These pictures show all the requirements for an accessible toilet such as the grab rails, the extra shelves, the alarm pull cord which should go all the way to the floor and the layout of the basin and paper towels etc.

You should also check how far the journey is from the event room to the toilet. Is it an accessible route and if it is quite far away are there any chairs that could be used for people to have a rest? Also is there signage to the accessible toilet.

You should check that the toilet is free from clutter and that there is a 1.5 meter unrestricted turning circle.

## 2.6 The Room

In the room itself there are various things that you should look out for such as:

- If there is movable furniture it makes it easier to set the room up and cater for different needs.
- If it is fixed seating is there areas for wheelchair users?
- Is there a selection of chairs eg seats with arm rests? This is beneficial to meet different needs.
- If you are going to be using tables are these an appropriate height for wheelchair users? It is useful if tables can be moved around and also if there are different table heights so that everyone can be catered for.
- If there is a stage for the speakers is this accessible?
- Is there a hearing loop in the room? If there is not a fixed hearing loop is there a portable alternative?
- Is there enough room for people to manoeuvre around the room?
- Is there private space near to the room for people who may need to use them for a short period e.g. for religious observance, to administer medication etc.

- What are the emergency evacuation arrangements and places of safety for people who may not be able to use stairs in the event of a fire or another emergency?
- If there are heavy doors into the room are they able to be held open?
- Does the room have good lighting?
- Are guide dogs allowed to into the room?

There are two websites which can be used to help decide what venue you choose; these are:

- [Disabled Go](#) This website gives you information about venues and the access that they have
- [Euans Guide](#) This website has reviews from disabled people about venues

### **3.0 Promoting the event**

It is important that the event is promoted in various ways so that everyone has the opportunity to take part.

Some areas that you may wish to consider include:

- If you choose to use the internet to promote the event is this in a format that specialist software will be able to read?
- Have you advertised that the information will be available in different formats eg
  - Different languages
  - Large print
  - Easy read
  - Braille
  - Audio
- Are there different ways that people can contact you about your event eg
  - Phone
  - Email
  - Post
  - Text phone
- If people need to sign up for the event what information do you need? Eg
  - Dietary requirements
  - Access requirements
  - Communication requirements

Once you have this information will you be contacting people before the event to make sure that you have covered their requirements?

If they have access or communication requirements it may be helpful for you to know what these are and what is best for the person.

Questions that you may want to consider:

- Are they a wheelchair user? this will allow you to have spaces ready for people when they arrive and not have to move furniture around
- Will they be bringing a personal assistant with them? In this case you will need to make sure there is a space beside the wheelchair user for the PA.
- If you are charging for your event will you be charging for the personal assistant as well?
- Will you be providing personal assistants at the event to help people?
- What are the communication needs?
  - Do they need an:
    - interpreter
    - BSL
    - Large Print
    - Easy Read
    - Note Taker
- Will you be sending information out beforehand to tell people what access is available and if you are making arrangements for any communication needs.
- Make sure you communicate with the person in the way that suits them best.
- If you are unsure ask the person what they want.

#### **4.0 Timing of the Event**

It is important that you have the event at a time that will suit your target audience.

Things to think about include:

- Religious events
- Child care responsibilities
- Care responsibilities for carers
- Disabled people who require carers may be restricted in the time that they can attend an event
- How far people need to travel to attend the event

## 5.0 The Event

Before the event you should check the following:

- Handouts should be available in different formats eg Easy read or Large print. Hopefully you will have the requirements from your discussions with people who have said they had additional requirements.
- If you need interpreters etc have they been contacted and any provisions they need met such as getting information to them before hand?
- Presenters should be made aware of any adaptations and alternative formats in place.
- There should be breaks throughout the day to allow for people with health conditions
- Time should be allowed for people to move from one room to another if different rooms are being used.
- Check that the technology being used does not interfere with the hearing loop.
- Questionnaires and feedback forms should be printed in accessible formats.
- It may be helpful for you to have staff on hand to help people if such forms need to be filled out.
- All cables and other trip hazards should be covered up in a way that wheelchair users can still get past and that visually impaired people can see a contrast in the coverings.

If displays and stands are being used have the following been thought about?

- There should be enough room for everyone to negotiate around the displays
- Everything should be secure so that no stands will fall down if they are bumped into
- All trip hazards should be covered up?

## 6.0 On the day of the event

At the event it is important to make sure that everything you checked when you chose the venue is still the same.

Things to check are:

- There is no one parked in the disabled bays without a blue badge
- There are no obstructions such as bins and advertising boards on the approach to the building
- There are no obstructions once people are in the building to get to the room
- The registration desk is well signposted and at a height that everyone can use
- Staff at the reception desk are aware of anybody coming with a disability and the needs that they have
- There is appropriate signage to the:
  - Reception desk

- The room
- Any break out rooms
- All toilets
- Lifts
- Refreshments
- The hearing loop is working
- The room is laid out with enough space for wheelchair users and their PA's
- Spaces are reserved in appropriate places for people with communication requirements
- Are there seats available for interpreters etc?
- Are the accessible toilets free from clutter?
- Are the venue aware of the dietary requirements?
- Are there mugs and straws available for anyone who need them?
- If refreshments and food is being provided will there be tables for people to sit down and eat?
- If catering is self-service will there be staff to help people?
- Are there roving microphones for any questions from the audience?

## 7.0 Useful Information / Contacts

- Centre For Inclusive Living Perth and Kinross, [www.cilpk.org.uk](http://www.cilpk.org.uk)
- Include Us All – Inclusive Communication Hub <http://includeusall.org.uk/>
- Scottish Disability Equality Forum provide an Easy Read service at cost <http://www.sdef.org.uk/>
- Scottish Accessible Information Forum (SAIF) for guidance <http://www.saifscotland.org.uk/>
- BSL Interpreters
  - Deaf Connections – <http://www.deafconnections.co.uk/>
- Electronic Note taking
  - Note taking Scotland – <http://www.notetakingscotland.com/>
- Hearing Loop hire
  - Action on Hearing Loss – <https://www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk/>
- Scottish Accessible Information Forum (SAIF) – <http://www.saifscotland.org.uk/>
- Accessible Venues in Scotland
  - Euan's Guide – <https://www.euansguide.com/>

Pictures from Designing for Accessibility, 2012 Edition, Centre for Accessible environments, RIBA publishing.

## 8.0 Checklist for choosing a venue

<b>Transport</b>	Yes	No	Comments
Are there disabled bays?			How many
Is there other adequate parking near to the venue?			
Is there public transport to the venue?			
Is there drop of points?			
<b>Accessible routes</b>			
Is there a route clear from obstructions from: see 2.2			
Disabled Bay to entrance?			Distance?
Bus stop to entrance?			Distance?
Car Park to entrance?			Distance?
Drop off point to entrance?			Distance?
<b>Inside the venue</b> see 2.3			
Is the entrance and route to the event room level?			
If there is ramped access is it acceptable?			
Can everyone enter through the same door?			If no, where is accessible entrance
Is the distance from the entrance to the room acceptable?			
Is there signage to all areas?			
Are there colour contrasts where appropriate?			
<b>Lift</b> see 2.4			
Is it sign posted?			
Is it easy to find?			
Is it close to the event room?			
Is the route clear?			
Is it big enough?			
Are control buttons at a height that is reachable by a wheelchair user?			
Are control buttons raised?			
Is there audio information to alert people to what floor they are on?			
<b>Toilets</b> see 2.5			
Is there an accessible toilet near the event room?			
<b>Event Room</b> see 2.6			
Is the speakers' area accessible?			
Is the room big enough for people to move around?			
Is there movable furniture?			
Is there a Hearing loop?			Portable or for the whole room?
Is there private space near by?			
Is there a selection of furniture?			
Are assistance dogs allowed in the room?			
Can doors into the room be held open?			
Are there emergency procedures?			

## 9.0 Checklist for promoting the event

<b>How will information be sent out?</b> See 3.0	Yes	No	Comments
Online			
Hard copies			
Large Print			
Braille			
Audio			
Easy Read			
<b>How can people sign up for the event?</b>			
Online			
Post			
Email			
Phone			
<b>Timing of Event</b> see 4.0			
What time of day			
Length of the event			
Breaks throughout the day			
Does day clash with religious holidays etc			
<b>What information do you need?</b>			
Do they have any access requirements?			
Do they have any dietary requirements?			
Do they require any communication support?			
<b>Further information you may request</b>			
Are they a wheelchair user?			
Do they need any assistance? (will you be offering PA's)			
Will they be bringing a PA with them?			
If it is a chargeable event will the PA be free?			
What are their communication needs?			
Will you be contacting people beforehand that have extra requirements to make sure their needs are met?			
What are the dietary requirements?			

## 10.0 Checklist before the event

See 5.0	Yes	No	Comments
Are handouts available in different formats?			
If interpreters are needed have they been contacted?			
Are presenters aware of any adaptations or alternative formats?			
Are there breaks throughout the day?			
Is time allowed for people to move rooms?			
Does any technology being used interfere with the hearing loop?			
Are any questionnaires or feedback forms available in the required formats?			
Will you have staff on hand to help people with these forms?			
All cables and trip hazards should be covered and they should have a colour contrast			
If there are stands is there enough space to get around?			
Are the stands secured?			

## 11.0 Checklist On the Day

See 6.0	Yes	No	Action required
Are there any obstructions outside on the routes into the venue?			
Is there anyone parked in the disabled bays without a blue badge?			
Are there any obstructions once in the building on the route to the event room?			
Is the registration desk at a height that everyone can access?			
Are staff at the reception desk aware of anybody coming with a disability and the needs that they have?			
Is there appropriate signage to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Registration desk</li> <li>• Event room</li> <li>• Lift</li> <li>• Accessible toilets</li> <li>• Refreshments</li> <li>• Any break out rooms</li> </ul>			
Are there different types of seats available?			
Are there spaces reserved for wheelchair users and their PA's?			
Are there spaces reserved for people with communication requirements?			
Are there seats available for interpreters etc?			
Is there enough space in the room for people to move around?			
Is the hearing loop working?			
Are accessible toilets free from clutter?			
Are the venue aware of the dietary requirements?			
Are there mugs and straws available for anyone who need them?			
If refreshments and food is being provided will there be tables for people to sit down and eat?			
If catering is self-service will there be staff to help people?			
Are there roving microphones for any questions from the audience?			