

Making Monaghan Accessible

Accessible Communications Policy

Introduction

Monaghan Local Authorities is committed to promoting the equality agenda in the county. All individuals and communities in Monaghan have the right to access and understand accurate and timely information in a manner appropriate to their needs in order to access on an equal basis all the opportunities and services offered by the local authorities. Accessible communication systems and supports promote equality of opportunity. It also helps combat the effects of social exclusion and the removal of other barriers that prevent people from fully participating in society.

To enable this to happen, Monaghan Local Authorities has developed this accessible communications policy. This policy document sets out the many ways in which we communicate with the public and how we can use those methods of communication in an accessible manner.

Policy objectives

The key objectives of this policy are:

- To ensure all elected members and staff are aware of this communications policy and to ensure they are aware of the many ways we can make our information accessible.
- To ensure consistency of accessible communications throughout the local authorities.
- To ensure the widest possible access to information through a wide range of communication opportunities.
- To meet all statutory obligations within the Disability Act 2005, and to go beyond what is required to reflect and promote best practice nationally.
- To pursue value for money and effectiveness in making information accessible

To achieve these objectives Monaghan Local Authorities will:

- To ensure appropriate access to communication supports for people with a disability where they are required.
- To ensure communities are aware of the various communication support facilities and how to access them.
- To allocate appropriate resources.
- To regularly monitor the effectiveness of the policy by continuing to consult with communities to ensure that the communication support facilities are appropriate to their needs.
- To give staff sufficient guidance and support to enable them to effectively put the accessible communications policy into action.

This policy is designed in a way that sets out the main ways in which we communicate with the public and how we can ensure those communication systems are accessible to all our customers. If you require any further assistance with this policy you can contact Bernie O'Rourke Access Officer at 047 38140 or borourke@monaghancoco.ie

The policy covers:

- Written communications
- Face to Face Communications
- Communications by telephone
- Electronic Communications
- Accessible public meetings and events

Written communications

Written or printed communications

For Monaghan Local Authorities printed information is one of the most important and useful methods of communicating information to the public. In many cases this method of communication used by organisations is currently inaccessible to certain members of the community, in particular people with disabilities.

Through the implementation of this policy Monaghan Local Authorities will ensure that their information will be available in accessible and alternative formats.

How do I make printed information accessible?

All publications can be made more accessible by enhancing their readability. The font size, the layout, the colour and contrast of all printed and visual materials are important. Plain English and simple, jargon-free text are also very helpful.

These guidelines will assist you in developing and printing accessible written information and should be applied to any standard or large print material that your department produces.

1. Formatting

- Use a very minimum of type size 12 point or ideally 14 point.
- Use clear and simple fonts that are easily recognisable. Avoid decorative, ornamental or handwriting font styles. (a clear sans serif font is preferable)
- People recognise the shape of a word rather than every single letter when they read. Avoid underlining words or putting them in italics, as these make it more difficult to recognise letter shapes. Avoid writing a full sentence in CAPITAL LETTERS, as they distort the word's shape.
- It is better to emphasise words using a bold type.
- If using bullet points, make sure they are solid and in a contrasting colour.
- Splitting words between two lines, by using a hyphen, should be kept to a minimum, as this disrupts the reader's flow.

- Use an average of 15 to 20 words in each sentence. Consecutive sentences that are too long or too short will tire the reader's eyes and make it harder for them to follow what you are saying.

Numbers and amounts

- The numbers 3, 5 and 8 can be misread and, with some fonts, 0 and 6 can be confused. Choose a font that has clear numerals. When using tables, make sure that the numbers and the borders are not too close together.
- Use decimal points only where necessary, as they can be difficult to see.

Layout

- Always use a consistent layout for each section to make it easier for the reader to find information. Use recurring features, for example, position headings and page numbers in the same place for each section.
- For longer documents, include a list of contents as a useful navigational aid. For a list of contents, use a dotted line between the text and the page number.

Leading

The space between lines of text is called leading. If lines of text are too close they can appear to merge making it difficult to read. Generally, the space between one line and the next should be at least 1.5 to 2 times the space between words on a line.

Paragraphs

- Align text to the left, as this makes it easier for the reader to find the start of each line.

- Only use centered text for main headings or titles. Centered text, where each line starts in a different place, is difficult to follow.
- Leave at least one full line between paragraphs. This will divide the text into sections, making it easier to navigate. Do not indent the first word of a paragraph.

Columns

- If using columns, leave plenty of space between the columns. If the columns are too close together the reader may read across the page rather than down the column.
- Do not place images into a column, as the reader has to skip over the image to read the next line and can lose their place on the page.

Images.

- Images that add to the understanding of the text are useful, it is important to ensure images are explained and captioned. Ensure that text captions are located in the same place in the document so that the reader can easily find them.
- Use images and photos with clear edges and good contrasting colours.
- Make sure that images are clearly separate from text.
- Make images and photographs as large as possible but so large that make the image unclear.

Colour

- Contrast between text and the background on which it is printed is essential for people with low vision.
- Make sure the contrast is strong. It is better to use a very dark colour and a very pale colour, for example dark text on a light background.
- Use different colour combinations for different sections of a document, for example choose navy and yellow for Chapter One, cream and brown for Chapter Two and so on.

Paper quality and surface

- Avoid glossy paper and gloss lamination. Choose matt, silk or uncoated paper. The paper should be a little thicker than standard photocopying paper so that you cannot see the design or text on the reverse of the page.
- If the paper folds over, ensure that creases are not on the text.
- Choose binding methods that allow the document to be laid flat for photocopying, scanning and reading with magnification. Wire or comb binding allows a larger document to be opened flat.

Application forms

- Make sure all information is large enough and clearly spaced so reader can identify start and ending of questions.
- If a reader needs to write on a form, make sure that there is plenty of space for them to write in larger print.
- Make answer boxes stand out by having them in a lighter colour than other parts of the form.
- Use as many questions that require a box ticking for answer as possible. In this instance make sure tick boxes are clear and large enough to write in.
- Tick boxes should be on the left before the appropriate answer or linked to the answer by a dotted line.
- Make sure tick box borders and answer lines are solid and at least 1 point width.
- Make sure tick boxes are not confusingly located between two answers.

Printed Information in Alternative Formats

In addition to information that is produced in standard print formats there are many techniques we can use to make information more accessible to those who have difficulty accessing standard printed information.

For example documents and information can be presented using the following:

- 1) Large print
- 2) Braille
- 3) Audio
- 4) electronic formats
- 5) Online information

As part of the implementation of this policy Monaghan Local Authorities will put in place the various technologies and equipment to ensure information is available in all of the above formats on request. Staff will be advised on how and where alternative formats can be accessed. In addition, original publications will provide information about these alternative formats and how to get hold of them.

Outlined below is a briefly description on each of the alternative formats available

Large print

- Use a simple Serif font such as Times New Roman.
- Aim for a standard of Times New Roman bold 16 point to 18 point, but be aware that some people need higher magnification.
- Text should provide contrast. The best contrast is to use bold type, ideally on light yellow paper, but if not, off-white paper.
- Avoid glossy paper
- Avoid italics and capitals to emphasise words. The main body of information should use capitals and lower case appropriately.
- Use double spacing between lines.
- Use a flexible binding so that document can be laid flat for ease of reading.

Braille

Around 10 per cent of blind people read Braille, a writing system of raised dots that are read by touch. The original material for a Braille document in disc format and avoid complex formatting such as graphs or bar charts.

Monaghan Local authorities have identified a Braille transcription agency who will produce documents in Braille on request. A minimum of two weeks is required to meet this request and members of the public should be informed of this timescale.

Audio

Documents in audio format can be used by people with visual impairments and may also be used by those who may have reading difficulties. Once a document is in an accessible printed format, it is relatively straight forward to modify the document for audio recording. An audio version is produced in a recording studio, where professional readers record your document onto an audio cassette. Monaghan Local Authorities have identified a company that will produce documents in audio format on request. Again a minimum timescale of two weeks would be required to produce a document in this format once requested.

Text messaging

People with a hearing impairment often use text messaging as a quick and easy form of communication. Monaghan local Authorities are currently researching options on how to develop this service through advertising a mobile number or by introducing telephone landlines that accept and send text messages. For Monaghan County Library Services a text number is available which is 087 9685457 (international dial code 00 353)

Electronic information

People may access electronic files through assistive software and technology such as JAWS, Windows Eyes, Supernova Reader Magnifier, and Kurzweil. These screen readers and magnifier applications assist people with visual impairments to 'view' documents by converting text to speech. Most common computer applications such as MS Office and Internet Explorer are reasonably compatible with many assistive technology devices.

The following software such as can be used with most computers.

- Braille
- Speech output devices
- Braille printing
- Screen reading software
- Large screen magnification
- Adapted keyboards

Further information on electronic accessibility you can access the Irish National IT Accessibility Guidelines, (published by the NDA), includes guidelines for the web (based on the WAI WCAG's), telecoms, software applications and public access terminals. www.accessit.nda.ie.

Additional resources

Besides the NDA guidelines, a number of other resources exist to help you ensure accessibility with regard to websites and online information.

Guidelines

- Technology aids available to assist vision-impaired people in everyday tasks are discussed in the National Council for the Blind of Ireland publication; NCBI makes Every Day Easy with Technology available on www.ncbi.ie.
- Accessibility testing. There are web-sites which provide automated accessibility testing. While these sites are useful, as automated tests they are not enough on their own to identify whether a site is usable or accessible. A website can pass either of these tests, but still not be fully accessible.
- Bobby, available on www.cast.org/bobby/

- The NCBI Centre for Inclusive Technology (CFIT) provides consultancy in inclusive design and independent verification of accessibility through auditing and user testing. See www.cfit.ie

Making sure people are aware of alternative formats

One of the key issues in successful accessibility is ensuring service users are aware of the support and alternative formats that are available. Lack of requests for information in alternative formats may be perceived as lack of demand. But unless individuals and groups experiencing barriers in accessing information are aware of the supports available it is unlikely they will request it. It actually highlights the need to advertise and promote the services, supports and alternative formats available.

Dealing with request for information in alternative formats

In the future Monaghan Local Authorities will advertise that all information will be available in alternative format on request. This service will be advertised on future publications and documents to ensure people in the community know this service is available. If a request for a document/publication/application form is made to you or your department you should following the procedure outlined below

1. Record the name contact detail of the person making the request
2. Let them know that we will process their request within 2 weeks of their request
3. Identify the nature of the format they are requesting, (Braille, Audio etc)
4. If a document is request in large print, follow the steps outlined in this document.
5. Any other requests should be forwarded to the IS section.
6. In most cases the IS section will be able to provide the service internally.
7. In the event of requests for Braille or Audio print outside consultants have been identified to provide the service.

8. If you are unsure, contact the Access officer who will assist you with this request.

It is not feasible for all public documents to be readily available in all formats however Monaghan Local Authorities will endeavour to ensure that all requests for alternative formats will be provided within two weeks of request.

Sign Language Interpreting Service (Irish Sign Link)

Hainault House

The Square

Tallaght

Dublin 24

work Tel/Minicom: +353 (01) 413 9670

email: slis@slis.ie

www.slis.ie

Bridge Interpreting

Work: Tel/Text: +353 (01) 087 904 6594

email: office@bridgeinterpreting.ie

web: www.bridgeinterpreting.ie

Face-to-Face Communication

How we communicate with people can affect whether and how services are used or accessed by people. Negative attitudes to people with a disability can impact on social isolation and stigma. First and foremost we should always treat people with dignity and respect.

Some people find it difficult to access lengthy written information and instead would prefer to receive it through face-to-face contact, especially when the information is complex.

You can ensure that you are providing information in an accessible manner by being aware of the barriers people face in accessing information and the potential discriminatory situations that may arise. Information delivery can be greatly improved by focusing on the principles of equality in customer service. Customer service includes several levels of information giving: basic information, signposting and explanation; detailed interviews or casework; and assistance through support or advice.

In carrying out these various functions, it is important that you:

- listen carefully to the service user
- identify his/her information needs
- Advise on options available and take action or make referrals where appropriate
- Enable or empower the service user to make informed choices and take action.

The language of communication

How you communicate about people is as important as how you communicate with them. As a result, you need to be aware of the words or phrases that express gender, ethnicity, racial or disability stereotypes. It is important to use language that fosters positive attitudes. Always use 'people first' language which emphasises the person rather than a disability, age or situation that someone is in e.g. by saying people with disabilities rather than 'the disabled'; or older people rather than 'the elderly', or homeless person rather than 'the homeless'.

Examples of 'people first' language:

- people with disabilities
- my son has autism
- she has a physical disability
- he uses a wheelchair
- she has Down Syndrome
- he has a learning disability

It is important that the language used emphasises abilities rather than limitations.

Communicating with your service users

You can use simple techniques to communicate with people in a friendly, non-judgmental way. Dealing face to face with service users with specific needs involves adopting courtesy and respect as well as taking note of some additional communications needs.

- Listen to the customer.
- Maintain eye contact without staring.
- Make the customer feel comfortable.
- Treat the customer with dignity, respect and courtesy.
- Ask the customer to tell you the best way to help. If unsure, always ask.
- If offering assistance, wait until the person has accepted your offer or has given instructions before you help.
- Deal with unfamiliar situations in a calm, professional manner.
- Allow for extra time if necessary.
- Be relaxed.
- Speak directly to the person rather than through a companion or personal assistant who might be present.

Communicating with people with disabilities

While all your service users require the same levels of respect, courtesy and listening skills, you may need to take some additional steps to ensure people with a disabilities access the services and information they require. Here we outline some of the main approaches to take with:

- People with hearing impairment

- People with visual impairment
- people with speech difficulties;
- people with learning disabilities;
- People with limited mobility

People with hearing impairment

People with a hearing impairment communicate in a variety of ways. Profoundly deaf people tend to use Irish Sign Language and may need professional interpreters to link between you and them. Others may rely on lip reading or have hearing aids, while others may rely on speed text writing as the main form of communication. In communicating with someone with a hearing impairment you should consider the following:

- To attract a deaf person's attention, wave your hand or tap them on the shoulder while in their line of vision.
- Speak clearly, slowly and in a normal tone of voice, as exaggerated speech can distort lip movements.
- Face the light source and reduce any background noise if possible.
- Use written notes if needed.

People with visual impairment

There are many different types and degrees of visual impairment. Some people have total vision loss while others may have limited vision. To communicate with people with a visual impairment you should consider :

- Always identify yourself and others who may be present by name when addressing someone with a visual impairment.
- Speak in a normal tone of voice and identify your movements if you move from one place to another.
- When offering assistance to someone with a visual impairment, allow them to take your arm rather than taking theirs.

- When offering seating, place the person's hand on the back or arm of the seat.
- Describe anything you point to.

People with speech disabilities

- People with speech difficulties may be hard to understand, so allow extra time for communicating and be patient.
- Be encouraging rather than correcting and don't speak for the person.
- Use notes where necessary and never pretend to understand something when you do not understand it.
- Be patient and allow time to ensure that you understand each other.
- Use clear and simple words.
- Verify their responses by repeating questions in a different way.

People with reduced mobility and wheelchair users

- For a wheelchair user, try to be at eye level.
- If you must stand, step back slightly so the person does not have to strain their neck to see you.
- Don't assume people who may have reduced mobility or use a wheelchair have visual or hearing impairment or intellectual disability.

3. Communications by telephone

Accessible Telephone Skills

For many people the telephone is a lifeline to basic services and information. In a rural county like Monaghan access to services and information is crucial to combating the affects of social exclusion and rural isolation. For Monaghan Local Authorities the provision of service over the telephone is central to the organization. For people with a disability the telephone can be important means of getting services and information, the manner in which we deliver our services on the telephone can great improve the accessibility of our services, similarly poor telephone skills can create enormous difficulty and frustration for people trying to access services and information. Some of the information outlined below may seem basic and obvious but the absence of some of these points can create stress and frustration for people.

Appropriate greetings and endings

The first point of contact with the caller is important, an appropriate greeting helps to build a good rapport and avoid misunderstandings and wasting time. An appropriate greeting may also put someone at ease if they have difficulties with speech, hearing or comprehension. Don't always assume you know the needs, situation or ability of the person calling.

The three elements of an appropriate greeting are:

- Identifying the organisation

- Give your name and job title/department
- Asking how you can help the caller.

For example:

Good afternoon, Monaghan County Library, Anne speaking How can I help you?

When you close the call you should:

- make sure that the caller has no more queries
- thank the caller
- Let the caller put down the receiver first so they don't feel you have cut them off.

Gathering information

A person on the other end of the telephone has called Monaghan Local Authorities for a reason. They will require a service, information or advice and they will require you assistance to complete the call as quickly and as clearly as possible.

In a simple information-seeking call

- Ask for the caller's name
- Clarify what information they require
- IF you don't have the information yourself, clearly identify who would have the required information and how they can be contacted.

Dealing with a difficult caller

Sometimes a caller is very difficult, especially if complaining. First remember that this caller is a customer of the local authority and should be treated with respect. Secondly, the caller may be in some distress so your handling of the call could

result either in more stress for the caller. Whatever the nature of the problem, don't try to fob the caller off by disclaiming personal responsibility or by trying to pass the buck.

What you should do is:

- Listen without interrupting
- Gather the facts and make a note of them
- Take their details so you can get back to them
- Sympathize with them and offer to act as fast as you can
- Apologize if you have made the mistake
- Stay calm even though the caller is angry and possibly abusive.

Once you have an accurate picture of the situation, you are in a position to propose a course of action to your caller.

- Outline the proposed course of action that you or the caller will take
- Check that it is acceptable to the caller
- Confirm that they understand what is to be done
- Thank them for their call and allow them to hang up.

Listening skills

The ability to listen properly is vital in delivering an accessible telephone service

Listening skills can be divided into

Passive listening

Passive listening is simply allowing the caller to talk and not taking any action to ensure we have the right message.

Active listening

Actively listening means indicating to the caller that we are listening by interrupting in an encouraging manner—interruptions could be 'yes', 'I see',

'Okay', 'right,' ' Secondly we mean asking questions or using prompts to ensure that the caller gives precise information so that the message we receive is accurate.

Telephone etiquette

Just because you can't see the caller doesn't mean they won't be affected by what you are doing or saying. For some people making a phone call may be a stressful and frustrating experience. We should try to minimize that stress as far as possible. We can do this by

- Being helpful to the caller even if the subject of the call is not strictly speaking your field of responsibility. This means trying to find someone who can help now, or someone who can ring them back later.
- Don't put the caller on hold and then leave them suspended there indefinitely.
- Speak clearly, and courteously
- Never eat or drink while taking a call

Here is an example of a call where active listening skills are used and a course of action is agreed: The customer is looking for information on making an application for disabled person grant. (For this example, the caller is visually impaired and would like some to make changes to his home)

A: Good morning, Monaghan County Council Housing section, John speaking How can I help you?

B: John, hello, I would like to reconstruct my house and I was told you could help me.

A: Ok, are you looking for some advice on how to reconstruct your home or is do you require other information?

B: I have had significant reduction in my sight in the last year or two and I was told I can get a grant to make changes to my home.

A: Ok well it is information on the disabled persons grant you need. It is Mary

Smith who deals with that, she isn't here at the moment but I can send you out the information on the grant and I can make an appointment for you with Mary if you like.

B: That would be great thanks

A: We can provide the information in an alternative format if you like?

B: That would be great if you could send it in large print

A: No problem I'll get that out to you today, Mary will be available at 3 on Tuesday if that suits

B: That would be great thank you

A: If you come to the reception at the main entrance and ask for Mary Smith she will meet you there.

B: Thank you

A: No problem, is there anything else I can help you with today?

B: No thank you, you have been very helpful, good bye

While this example may seem to be simple and straightforward, because the staff member of the council offered so much information and support to the caller it ensured that the caller received all the information they needed with additional stress. John was clear at the end of the call that the caller required no further help.

5. Holding accessible public meetings and events

This Checklist is designed to assist with planning events and functions that are accessible to everyone. It is important that people with disabilities have the same opportunities as other community members to access and participate in public meetings, consultations, functions and events.

People with disabilities can face barriers when attending and participating in public functions in a variety of ways. They may experience difficulty hearing what is being said, seeing small print on an invitation, climbing steps to the venue, understanding signage or using a toilet facility in the building.

To ensure that events can be accessed and enjoyed by everyone it is important to consider the items listed on this checklist. It is recommended that the organisers visit any venue chosen for a public function or meeting so that they may be satisfied of the accessibility of the venue and services.

Whenever possible functions should be held in fully accessible venues.

It is recognised that standards for access have changed over time and many older buildings will not comply with current requirements. Event organisers, however, should always select the most accessible venues for public functions. Further information on accessible venues in the county can be obtained from the Office of Community & Enterprise 047 38140

In instances where the venue is not fully accessible some access barriers may be addressed by having informed staff available to provide assistance to members of the public attending the event.

The checklist:

As access requirements for people with disabilities will vary depending on the people attending and the type of event. To use these checklists, just tick “Yes” or “No” to the questions asked. This checklist is designed to be a quick, overview of the accessibility of a venue and function. It is not designed to assess every aspect of access in detail. It will indicate whether people with disabilities can easily attend your function and participate. This document is aimed to be a resource for staff organising public meetings, events etc.

Invitations, advertisements and promotional material

Many people in our community experience difficulty in hearing, seeing and communicating with others. There are many simple ways to ensure your invitations and promotional material are accessible to people with disabilities.

	Yes	No
Many people in our community experience difficulty in hearing, seeing and communicating with others. There are many simple ways to ensure your invitations and promotional material are accessible to people with disabilities.		

Text

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| • Have you used a plain font (such as Times new roman or Arial) in your invitations and promotional material? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Is all text at least a minimum of 12 point type size? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Have the invitations and promotional material been printed on matt paper and in contrasting colours? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Is the text uncluttered with an absence of background graphics and patterns | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Content

- | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| • Did your invitation or promotional material state whether the venue is accessible to people who use wheelchairs? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Did your invitation include information about the accessible facilities at the venue such as the location of parking or nearest set down area? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |


- Have you encouraged your invited guests to identify whether they have any access requirements such as accessible parking, an audio loop or sign language interpreter?
 - Have you included in the invitation your facsimile number and email address so guests have alternative ways of communicating their attendance?
 - Is written promotional material available on request in alternative formats such as large print, audio tape, computer disk or Braille?
-

External environment

People with disabilities require a continuous, even, accessible path of travel. An accessible path of travel means there are no obstacles in the internal or external environment such as revolving doors, kerbs or steps.

Location of the nearest:

- Bus stop: _____
- Taxi rank: _____

	Yes	No
Accessible parking bays		
• Does the venue have an accessible parking bay?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		
• Is the accessible parking bay/s identified by the international symbol of access?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
- raised sign	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
- ground markings		
• Is the distance from the car park to entrance less than 40m?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Continuous accessible path of travel

Is there a continuous accessible path of travel, including kerb ramps, to the building from the:

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| • Accessible parking bay/s? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Set down area? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • If there are steps to the building: | | |
| - Is there a ramp available for wheelchair users? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| - Do all steps have handrails? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| - Is there a contrasting strip on step edges? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • If there is a ramp to the building: | | |
| - Is the gradient no steeper than 1:14? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| - Does the ramp lead to the main entrance? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
-

The building

	Yes	No
Entrance		
• Is the entrance level?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• If there is a step/s at the entrance of the doorway:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
- is there a ramp of not more than 450 mm in length and with a gradient of 1 in 8?		
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Is the entrance door easy to open?		
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Is the clear door space 800 mm (preferred) or 850 mm?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Internal environment

• Is the inquiry or reception counter low enough for a wheelchair user?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Does the venue have an accessible path of travel from the front entrance to all areas guests will use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• If there are internal steps:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
- Do all steps have handrails?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
- Is there a contrasting strip on step edges?		
• If there are ramps:		
- Are they no steeper than 1:14?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
- Do they have handrails?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Do all doors have a clear space 800 mm (preferred) or 850 mm?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• If there is only a side approach to the door, is there 1200 mm clear space in front of the door?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Does the venue have a non-slip floor surface or carpets with a firm low pile of 6 mm or less?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Visibility**Yes****No**

- Are facilities in the venue clearly signed?
- Is the venue well lit?
- Are there any areas of high reflection or glare?

Toilets

- Does the venue have a unisex accessible toilet?
- Is the toilet situated on the same floor as the function?

Signage

- Does the venue have clear, directional signage to:
 - the function room?
 - the toilets?



The function

Everyone wants to be able to see the stage, hear speeches being made, understand training or messages being delivered. The following checklist will ensure your function is one where everyone's communication requirements are met.

If you are organising a sit down function and your guests include people using wheelchairs, the following checklist will assist you to create an event where all of your guests feel comfortable and relaxed.

Communication	Yes	No
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is there a position where the interpreter will stand, so people who are deaf or hard of hearing can see both the person speaking and the interpreter's face and hand movements?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Can the audio-visual technicians position spotlights for the interpreter which distribute light clearly and evenly to the face and upper body?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Does the venue have an audio loop installed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If there is an audio loop:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- what type: induction loop/ infra-red/FM- has it been placed towards the front of the room with clear sight lines to the stage and the interpreter?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Sit down function		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Are there sufficient walkways (1000 mm or wider) in the function room?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is there 900 mm space between tables?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is there 710 mm to 840 mm space under the table to allow a wheelchair to slide comfortably underneath?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
