

## HOD tips – Access

Successful events require that you to think about a potential audience and provide 'access' – whether this be physical, sensory and intellectual. Organisers often worry about costs, but in most cases it can simply be a matter of providing clear communication, help when it is needed and a bit of imagination.

- Think about how visitors can enter, move and rest at your event. Well lit, clutter free aisles and seating areas for breaks and queues are useful. Provide tables stocked with materials that provide alternative ways of accessing inaccessible areas of your property (e.g. photo albums with site maps).
- Talk naturally and directly to disabled people, not to carers or partners about them. Offer help and make sure it is accepted before you give it.
- If you are leading tours, choose areas to talk with good light and acoustics. Ask if anyone needs to lip read and give advance warning of areas that are bright or dark as you progress.
- If you are guiding someone with a visual impairment offer your elbow to their hand and ask how they wish to be advised of steps, hazards, changes in the floor etc. Tell them if you are moving away from them.
- Think about tactile opportunities. Touch and smell can help orientate and give a sense of moving from one space to another.
- Provide accessible text. Use a sans serif font (i.e. Ariel) in clear print (12pt) or large print if possible (14pt +). Keep the spacing clear and the text jargon free. Avoid glossy paper and placing text over images.
- Displays and Signage need to be 30pt as a minimum. Placing black text on white background is good for contrast.
- Keep your text simple. Use a clear structure and provide a basic outline of the information first. Break up blocks of print with bullet points or illustrations. Remember that line and sentence lengths can affect both legibility and comprehension.
- If you can provide additional assistance or alternative formats then advertise that you can in an accessible way.
- The HODs registration form will ask you to indicate how wheelchair accessible your venue is. Please tick the respective boxes so that we can advertise this in our event directory.

Useful websites

**Easy Info**

[www.easyinfo.org.uk](http://www.easyinfo.org.uk)

Making information easier for people with learning difficulties.

**Royal National Institute of the Blind**

[www.rnib.org.uk](http://www.rnib.org.uk)

Advice on producing accessible information.

**Royal National Institute of the Deaf**

[www.rnid.org.uk](http://www.rnid.org.uk)

Practical communication tips

**Museums Libraries and Archives Council**

[www.mla.gov.uk](http://www.mla.gov.uk)

'Disability Portfolio' –guides to access issues

**British Council of Disabled People**

[www.bcodp.org.uk](http://www.bcodp.org.uk)

UK's national organisation of the Disabled People's Movement

**Plain English Campaign**

[www.plainenglish.co.uk](http://www.plainenglish.co.uk)

Tips on keeping information simple

**English Heritage**

[www.english-heritage.org.uk](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk)

Easy Access to Historic Properties

**Mencap**

[www.mencap.org.uk](http://www.mencap.org.uk)

Making information & services easier for people with learning difficulties.