



See Sport Differently

Guidance on making the match day experience accessible for spectators with sight loss

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We'd like to thank these clubs and organisations for their collaboration with this guidance:



Introduction



Sport should be accessible for all

Sport has always been a cherished part of my and my family's life. All my life I have been a keen sports player, a dedicated fan and spectator. And I'm delighted my two children are as keen on sport as I am.

Yet, being able to access sport has been something I have taken for granted.

This should be the same for all blind and partially sighted sports fans, but it isn't. UK sport should provide an accessible environment which welcomes both participants and those who visit sporting facilities to follow the action.

Too often access to and within grounds and stadia, the facilities on offer, the accessible communication and the return travel is difficult to negotiate or completely absent. In many cases this deters sports fans with sight loss from getting involved.

I know how much fun I have had from being engaged with sport. Think of the excitement we all feel being part of a crowd experiencing the visceral thrill of the sporting moment – a goal, a try, a tackle, a race! It is unfair to deny this to people with sight loss because not enough thought and effort goes into making the sporting facility and experience accessible? We have benefitted from the help of some committed supporters ourselves, but we think it's time for all sporting bodies and clubs to do their bit. Sport should be for everyone. Together we can make this ambition real.

Matt Stringer, RNIB CEO

Charlotte, Wolves football fan

“We need everyone to join in to help create a more inclusive match day for fans with sight loss.”

Hi, I'm Charlotte and I'm a season ticket holder at Wolverhampton Wanderers FC. I love being part of the pack (as we call it at Wolves) and attend home games with my dad who is a lifelong Wolves fan too. I have Usher's Syndrome – which affects my hearing, vision, and mobility.



On match days, my Dad has to play an important role in my spectator experience by acting as my Personal Assistant – assisting me with the challenges I face when attending matches, such as accessing the stadium and navigating through crowds and steps to get to our seats.

We've received great support from the club who have helped us to select seats so that I can have the best spectator experience possible despite my sight loss. They've helped to locate seats where the sun wouldn't be in my eyes during a game (which is very important as glare can affect my vision) and seats near to the halfway line so I can follow the game more easily.

When attending football games, blind and partially sighted people can experience other challenges such as the lack of audio-described commentary during a game, inaccessible match day programmes, or stewards who lack awareness and understanding of sight loss and how to best assist a blind or partially sighted supporter.

Every blind or partially sighted person's requirements are different, and this guidance contains some handy checklists and quick wins that you can implement to help make your stadium more accessible for us.

I'm so pleased to see that professional sports clubs are already proactively taking steps to ensure their stadiums are accessible, but we need everyone to join in to help create a more inclusive match day experience for blind and partially sighted spectators.

Executive summary

RNIB and British Blind Sport have created this best practice guidance to help ensure you can provide blind and partially sighted people with the best possible match day experience.

In the UK, two million people live with sight loss – this figure is predicted to double to four million by 2050 [1].

By following our best practice guidance, you can improve the experience for all fans, not just those with sight loss, who attend your stadium.

How we created this guidance

We set up focus groups with blind and partially sighted football fans, from around the UK, to explore ways in which the match day experience could be improved. We also talked to the staff responsible for Disability and Inclusion at the following football clubs:

- Arsenal
- Everton
- Plymouth Argyle
- Wolves
- Wrexham AFC

These clubs had been identified as examples of existing best practice in accessibility for disabled fans. These clubs were selected ensuring an equitable geographic representation and it was important to include clubs from leagues at each end of the football pyramid (Premier League and EFL).

Myth-busting

We would like to dispel some commonly held myths about blind and partially sighted people which provides context for this best practice guidance.

- 93 per cent of people registered blind or partially sighted have some 'good' or 'useful' remaining vision. [2]
- Around seven per cent of blind and partially sighted people read braille. [3]
- Not all blind people 'look like blind people' – Not all blind and partially sighted people wear sunglasses, have Guide Dogs or use a white cane.
- Sight loss affects people of all ages not just older people. Many children, young people and working age adults are registered blind or partially sighted.

What fans with sight loss tell us

- Blind and partially sighted fans may struggle to fully enjoy their match day experience due to inaccessible stadiums and facilities.
- Many more blind and partially sighted fans who currently do not go to football matches would regularly and independently attend games if they knew the stadiums were safe, welcoming, and accessible.
- Living with sight loss can be very isolating – for blind and partially sighted fans attending football matches brings a sense of inclusion and feelings of belonging and “having a football family where everyone looks out for each other.”
- There is a lot of existing good practice and goodwill to improve the match day experience for blind and partially sighted fans, but this is patchy and there is a lot of work still to do.
- When conducting desk research for this guidance ‘accessibility’ in a football stadium context almost always referred to wheelchair accessibility. This best practice guidance aims to level the playing field and ensure blind and partially sighted fans requirements receive equal attention.



The elements key to making the match day experience accessible, according to fans with sight loss, are:

- A tangible sense of belonging – feeling fully included
- Sight Loss Awareness Training for stewards and all fan-facing staff
- Effective, high quality audio description technology and commentary
- An accessible physical environment – including signage
- Accessible match day programmes

Recommendations to improve the match day experience

We recommend clubs provide an accessible match day pack similar to that used at Wolves. Stewards hand these packs to blind and partially sighted supporters when they arrive at their seats.

Elements of the pack include: A QR code for an audio programme and food and drink menu, information in braille and a fully charged audio description headset. Make sure audio description kits are fully charged and all stewards know how to operate them and where to find spare batteries.

Clubs could also:

- Have a dedicated Disability Access Officer and/or Disability Liaison Officer at their club, whether they are in the premier league or a lower league, whose sole focus is disability and inclusion, as is the case for many of the clubs involved in this project.
- Allow blind and partially sighted fans to visit your stadium for a familiarisation tour on a non-game day, to enable them to orientate themselves.
- For key signage avoid club colours and keep it simple, for example, using large black text on a white or yellow background.
- Hold regular organised 'check-ins' with blind and partially sighted fans to discuss innovative ideas, solutions, and accessibility issues. This also enables the Disability Access Officer (DAO) and/or Disability Liaison Officer (DLO) to get to know their blind and partially sighted supporters and foster the sense of belonging.

Note: A 'check-in' could be an organised in person meeting, telephone group, quarterly online surveys or whatever method suits you. Regular, organised, and meaningful contact with blind and partially sighted fans is essential.

A tangible sense of belonging – feeling fully included

As with all football fans, blind and partially sighted people enjoy the sense of belonging and the feeling of being in a 'tribe' that supporting their team brings, be it attending matches in person or by watching games at home or in the pub – the sense of belonging is everything.

“The whole tribal thing... the singing, the connection, the togetherness, whether that is at an international level, patriotism, magnified a million percent when watching the football with Cardiff City, the banter, the chanting... the nonsense that goes with it, the escapism of life in general when you're at a match... it's time out from life”

[Focus group participant]



Simulation of how a person with Diabetic Retinopathy might see during a match

Evidence suggests that living with sight loss is particularly isolating, with 47 per cent of blind and partially sighted people feeling isolated and cut off from other people [4]. This means the opportunity to go to a football game for many can be the only chance for social connection during the week. For blind and partially sighted fans, this can be a special moment in their day to day lives, hence the need to make stadiums accessible for all.

Football clubs are core elements of the communities they represent and reflect. For example, Everton pride itself on being “The People’s Club” and run a campaign called ‘All Together Now’ to ensure that people have the best experience possible when they attend Everton Football Club.

“All Together Now is the Everton Family’s equity and inclusion campaign, which aims to ensure that we live up to our moniker of being The People’s Club and provide safe, welcoming, and inclusive environments for all. The Everton Family strives to create environments where people from all backgrounds feel safe to be their true selves. We aim to create an open and transparent atmosphere in which people feel respected, celebrated and empowered, regardless of their identity or background – a place where everyone feels they belong, through designated match days, community projects, awareness training for colleagues and supporters, and regular dialogue with Everton’s Disabled Supporters Association.”

[Everton FC]

One blind and partially sighted fan summed up the excitement attending a match brings.

“It has got to be the coming together of everyone, enjoying the experience with friends, family and whoever you are going with and the collective experience beyond that, the regular faces that you see in the terraces, like the jokes you have about other fans, observing other people’s habits, those sorts of things, that’s what I look forward to”

[Focus group participant]

It’s vital that clubs truly reflect the town, city or region they serve. This is only possible if there is access and inclusion for all fans, including blind and partially sighted people.

Find out how many blind and partially sighted people live within your club’s community. Click on this link to RNIB’s Sight Loss Data tool rnib.in/447pMrc



The importance of sight loss training and awareness for stewards

Stewards are the first point of contact for any fan as they approach and enter a stadium and the quality of this service can make an enormous impact. Most participants reported incredibly positive experiences of their interactions with stewards, however there were some examples where improvements can be made.

For many blind and partially sighted fans, the last 100 metres and entry to a stadium is particularly stressful due to the volume of people, the noise, and the need to locate the correct gate/entry point. This stage of the match day experience can be extremely disorientating, especially for blind and partially sighted away fans or blind and partially sighted parents with children. To help reduce this level of stress and anxiety we have compiled some top tips for stewards on the next page:



Stewarding top tip suggestions

- All stewards and fan facing match day staff should undertake sight loss awareness training to support them when engaging with blind and partially sighted fans, contact: SeeSportDifferently@rnib.org.uk.
- Implement 'meet and greet' style of stewarding similar to that at Plymouth Argyle, where specific stewards who wear different coloured jackets mingle in crowds outside the stadium.
- Ensure your stewarding provision supports blind and partially sighted fans before, during and after the game, safely escorting them around and out of the stadium as well as into it.
- Endeavour to develop a team of dedicated 'accessibility stewards' based inside the stadium who are trained in disability access requirements and communication and are distinguished from the regular stewards by wearing a distinct colour and having the words 'Accessibility' clearly printed on their uniforms.
- "Just ask" – it is okay to ask if someone would like assistance – encourage your stewards to ask if a blind or partially sighted person requires any assistance in and around the stadium e.g. getting into the ground or locating their seat(s).
- If a blind or partially sighted fan asks to be guided, the Steward should ask how best to do this rather than simply taking the blind and partially sighted person's arm. For more advice on guiding click on this link (rnib.in/GuidingPeopleWithSightLoss).
- If your club develops the specific 'accessible stewards' roles (see above) ensure this role is clearly visible on their jackets to help fans with colour blindness identify them.
- Use descriptive language like, "we are about to reach a set of steps that go up, when we reach the first step, I will tell you" or "we are about to enter a very busy concourse, how would you like me to guide you to your seat".
- Not all blind and partially sighted people look blind e.g. wear sunglasses or use a white cane.
- Please do not ask a blind or partially sighted person to put their cane away, canes are mobility aids which they rely on to navigate safely and independently.

Below are some examples where stewards would have benefitted from sight loss training:

“We were outside the ground and there were a lot of cobbles, I was using my cane and a Steward came up and lifted my cane off the floor. I asked him why and he said he did not want me to break my cane on the cobbles”. **[Focus group participant]**

“A Steward asked me to fold up my cane because people could mistake it for an offensive weapon”. **[Focus group participant]**

And an example of where they got it right.

“It was an evening kick off last winter and I was going to meet my mates by myself at the ground as I’d been working late... I had my cane out but must have looked lost as a Steward appeared from nowhere and introduced herself and asked if I needed any assistance or help... the relief was huge as I was very disorientated... she asked if I needed guiding and offered me her arm and led me through the crowd telling me about any obstacles like steps that were coming up... rather than just leaving me inside the ground she took me to my seat... this made a massive difference to me... something so simple but with a massive impact”
[Focus group participant]

Consider having dedicated disability aware stewards

Several stadiums have disability dedicated stewards who take responsibility for disabled fans entry and exit of the stadium. For example, if a fan approaches the dedicated Steward and asks for assistance, the Steward will not only assist them into the stadium and to their seat, but they will show the fan where facilities such as the nearest accessible toilets are located. Importantly, the dedicated Steward returns at the end of the match and assists the disabled fan out of the stadium. These stewards are easily recognisable by wearing a distinct colour high visibility jacket.

Examples of stewarding best practice:

Wolves – accessible stewards

“Some of them [accessible stewards] are retired or want a slow pace, a lot of them have experience with accessibility and a lot of them want to learn... they are all trained on inclusion and accessibility, they have training on sight loss, hearing loss, Dementia, Neurodiversity. They are put on the same station each game, so supporters know who they are, and they know who the supporters are. They have a reactive role – if something comes up (with a fan) they can sort it... but they are there to be ‘that familiar face’, they ask how the family are, they know everything about them, their needs usually and what they expect...they seem to know the people they have on their stations... even the away fans going through the accessible entrance recognise the same stewards... “It’s you again I haven’t seen you for ages... they know that face”. [\[Wolves\]](#)

Plymouth Argyle – match day ambassadors/helpers

These specialist stewards are distinguishable from the mainstream stewards by the purple colour of their jackets. They have a proactive role in supporting mainstream stewards who cannot leave their assigned stations. They have licence to roam freely in and around the stadium, looking to spot and support home and away fans who may need a little extra support.

“The match day helpers are our friendly faces, our ‘meeters and greeters’, they are there to give that extra personal touch and attention to someone who may not be familiar with the place (stadium)... they can identify fans who have additional needs in the crowd outside the stadium and assist them through the entrances to their seats.” [\[Plymouth Argyle\]](#)

Arsenal – a meet and greet service

Arsenal offers a meet and greet stewarding service outside of the stadium for fans who may not be familiar with the stadium and its facilities.

“It’s about ensuring everyone has the best match day experience, regardless of their disability. It might not always be obvious what the disability is, but our stewards are trained to ask the right questions and assist accordingly”. [\[Arsenal FC\]](#)

Effective, high quality audio description technology and commentary

High quality audio description enables blind and partially sighted spectators to keep up with play knowing what is happening in 'real time'. It also allows blind and partially sighted spectators to watch a match independently without having to ask sighted fans what is happening during a game. Here are some top tips to ensure the audio description technology and commentary available at your club meets the requirements of blind and partially sighted spectators:

Ensure there is only one commentator who purely describes events on the pitch rather than adopting a TV pundit style of communication. For example:

Like this:

- "Pickford kicks long into the French half, Saka controls the ball on his chest and dribbles into the French box".

Not like this:

- "Everton's Pickford, who is making his fiftieth cap today for England kicks the ball long, finding Arsenal's Bukayo Saka who controls the ball brilliantly on his chest and attacks the French defence... amazing pace and confidence from the 22-year-old".

Consider piloting an 'Audio for All' approach to your existing audio description offers. For example, a focus group participant had been instrumental in setting up Cambridge United's audio description provision called 'Audio for All'. The premise is that many fans will struggle to see the match with low level sight conditions and will not consider themselves partially sighted or blind but still benefit from audio description.

Audio description that does not have a delay in the commentary:

"[DAB radio] it's never instant, it's not the same as analogue, though there's a rumour they'll turn off the analogue signal which is a concern because if you switch to DAB or have to access commentary through a phone, you're likely to have a delay, and for me, even a one second delay can make a huge difference to your enjoyment of the match."

[Focus group participant]

Try and ensure your audio description headphones are discrete, rather than what some blind and partially sighted fans have described as 'large ear defenders'. Blind and partially sighted fans want to blend in rather than stand out from the crowd.

Examples of audio description best practice:

Wolves – accessible pack












Wolves have created an 'accessible pack' for blind and partially sighted fans which stewards hand to blind and partially sighted supporters when they arrive at their seats. The pack contains the fully charged audio description receiver meaning blind and partially sighted fans do not need to go anywhere to locate the AD headset as it is there waiting for them. Within the pack, there are instructions on how to use the audio description equipment – braille is available and a QR code which provides audio instructions.

Wrexham – The impact of audio description

"We have a little girl who is completely blind who has used it (audio description) for many years, and we now have a little boy who is about seven... he absolutely loves it, his dad has emailed and said what a massive difference it has made to the boy... he's behind the goal among all the fans, the singing, near the drummer... he's among it all for the atmosphere but he also has his audio descriptive commentary."



Audio description top tip checklist

-  Audio description should be available for all matches, not just Men's Premiership/EFL or European games. It should also be standard for all women's matches at your club.
-  A Disability Steward should deliver audio description equipment to the blind and partially sighted season ticket holder before kick-off. This avoids the equipment being moved from the seat or falling off if the seat tips up.
-  Ensure audio description devices are available for collection in more than one location within the stadium. This will prevent blind and partially sighted spectators from having to navigate crowds to locate the audio description devices.
-  Ensure all stewards know where blind and partially sighted spectators can obtain audio description devices and spare batteries during a game.
-  Ensure all audio description devices are fully functional including fully charged batteries.
-  Provide an audio description device collection point in both the away and home sections.
-  Create audio/braille/large print instructions on how to use audio description receivers. You can use a QR code to create audio instructions.
-  Regularly listen to the commentary yourself, is it of a standard/style you would be satisfied with?
-  Ensure you have enough receivers for both home and away fans that can be pre-booked.
-  Encourage your blind and partially sighted fans to book audio description equipment in advance with the away club.
-  Audio description equipment should be free to use at all clubs with no deposit required to ensure no economic barrier is created to accessing commentary.



The physical environment

Many aspects of the physical environment can cause challenges for blind and partially sighted fans. Many clubs have 'accessibility sections' for wheelchair users, however the accessibility requirements of blind and partially sighted fans can be different. We recognise that huge physical overhauls and changes to stadiums may not be achievable and so this section suggests small and easy to implement changes that can improve how blind and partially sighted people navigate your venue.

Seating – Our focus group participants suggested that it would be useful to consider introducing a specific area for blind and partially sighted fans. This location would allow an unobstructed view of the pitch, close to toilets, with extra lighting and clear signage. Many sight loss conditions are detrimentally affected by glare from the sun so the location of such an area would ideally be in an area of the stadium that does not receive as much sunlight as other areas. We recognise that this may not be every blind or partially sighted fans preference as it may create segregation and the inability to sit with friends. The most important thing is providing a choice and adopting a personalised approach.

Buying tickets – If a spectator discloses that they are blind or partially sighted when buying a match day or season ticket they could be offered a seat that best meets their requirements based on their sight loss (supporting documentation may be requested/provided) e.g., clear view of the pitch, close to the pitch, not in direct sunlight, low level tier of the stand to avoid steps. If a companion ticket is requested, it should be issued free of charge and recognised as a reasonable adjustment.

Navigation – Lifts should have audible warnings and indications of floor and direction of travel e.g. "going up" and "doors closing". Ramps and paved areas should have tactile edges that can be navigated by long cane users. Appropriate manifestations should be provided on glass doors and screens.

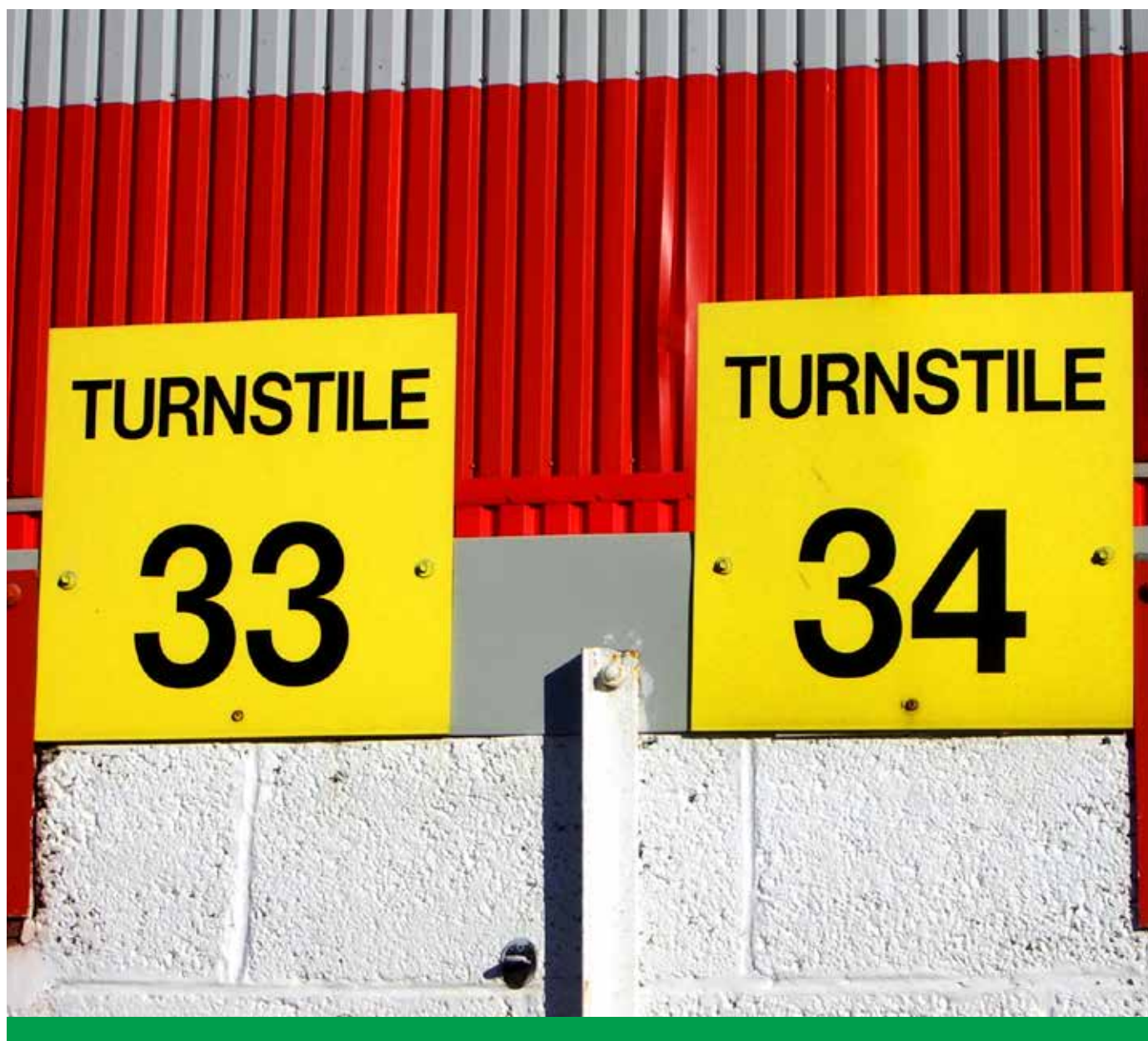
Signage – 93 per cent of people registered blind still have a small amount of useful vision left on which they rely to navigate themselves independently [2]. Due to such a range of sight loss conditions and levels of varying vision, clear and bold signage makes a huge difference. For example, large black text on a white background or black text on a yellow background is preferable for blind and partially sighted people.

Making signage for facilities such as toilets and exits accessible can mean the difference for a blind and partially sighted spectator being able to independently navigate their way around the stadium and enjoy the same match day experience as sighted spectators.

Accessible signage reduces levels of stress and anxiety felt by blind and partially sighted spectators who often worry about not being able to independently find facilities such as toilets or being able to find their way back to their seats having used them.

“I always get more anxious about orientating myself, this preoccupies my mind, and I cannot relax or enjoy the game until all those steps are in place... finding the toilets can be difficult as walkways are poorly lit, and the signs are very small. I have walked into ladies’ toilets accidentally a few times which is not great!” **[Focus group participant]**

For more information on accessible design to improve your stadiums signage please click this link to RNIB’s Accessible information resources (rnib.in/AccessibleInfoResources)



Examples of physical environment best practice

Everton – accessible platform and signage

As part of Everton's moniker as "The People's Club", they have made positive strides in ensuring everyone is included. At Goodison Park there is an accessible platform that caters for all disabilities, from its lift access for wheelchair users, to its positioning in the stadium to take into account the sun and its movement for fans with sight loss. The accessible platform is also situated close to food stations and accessible toilet facilities. Signage at the stadium has good colour contrast and is clearly visible.

Wolves – accessible signage

At Wolves, printed material is available in large print and braille. All signage in and around the ground is accessible, with good colour contrast and appropriate sizes and positioning. There are signs around the area where guide and assistance dogs are allowed to sit informing other fans and visitors of their presence.

What are optical markers?

New wayfinding technology such as NaviLens enables blind and partially sighted people to independently navigate environments such as busy train stations. Through small colourful codes (similar to QR codes) placed on walls and floors which are picked up via an app on a blind or partially sighted persons phone which provides them with navigational and location information. RNIB has recently piloted this solution in Euston Station (London). NaviLens is also used on the New York, LA, Madrid, and Barcelona transport networks. NaviLens can easily be implemented into any stadium in the UK allowing independent access and navigation for all, not just blind and partially sighted spectators.

The information acquired via NaviLens appears on your mobile device and in the language your phone is set to. This is fantastic technology for fans whose first language is not English. Please note there are a wide variety of digital wayfinding solutions available, NaviLens being just one of them.

The built environment basics

Steps – Ensure that all the steps have colour contrast and handrails.

“There are a lot of steps to navigate, and I do struggle if there are no rails, and some of the steps I have noticed since I have been a season ticket holder in this one stand, they are not all marked... When it is busy that is the last thing you want to think about.”

[Focus group participant]

Lighting – Ensure all areas around the stadium that fans can access have suitable lighting, particularly for night games. Many sight loss conditions are detrimentally affected by poorly lit environments.

Examples of physical environment best practice










Plymouth Argyle – accessible stadium entrances

“There are six accessible entrances each without turnstiles where accessibility trained stewards are on hand to assist”.

Wrexham – accessible stadium entrances and toilets.

“There is an accessible entrance which is wider and does not have turnstiles and there are accessibility trained stewards who can assist... We also painted the walls in the toilets red so that the toilets, urinals, and sinks were all clearly distinguished so fans with sight loss could easily see them. Before we did this it was just all bright white in the toilets, we made the toilets accessible with just a few tins of paint”.

Physical environment top tip checklist

-  A person-centred approach – match the seat with the sight loss. When supporting blind and partially sighted fans to purchase tickets including season tickets allowing them to choose (where possible) a seat that best meets the requirements of their eye condition.
-  Designated area for guide dog owners and their dog to be seated along with a designated guide dog 'spending area' (A spending area is a specific area guide dogs go to the toilet).
-  Clearly marked step edges e.g. edge of all steps painted bright yellow or white to ensure blind and partially sighted fans know when a step is coming up.
-  Clearly marked handrails so blind and partially sighted fans can locate and hold the handrail e.g. the area of the wall directly behind the handrail is painted white to ensure the handrail is clearly visible and distinguishable from the wall.
-  Avoid using club colours for signage – use clear colour contrasts on all signs e.g. black text on yellow or white background in large font. Do not use colours such as red text on a green or blue background – keep it simple.
-  Ensure menus for food and beverage stations are in large and clear text so blind and partially sighted fans can independently order food and drinks.
-  Menu information can be contained within a QR code or optical marker so fans can access this information on their smartphones which will already be set up to meet their accessibility requirements.
-  Ensure all areas of the ground are well lit, especially concourses, walkways, and entrances. Many sight conditions make it particularly challenging for blind and partially sighted fans to see in poorly lit environments.
-  Colour contrast toilet facilities – if your toilet areas are all white including the toilet or urinals it can be challenging for a blind and partially sighted fan to independently locate them. A white toilet/urinal with a coloured wall behind creates a great colour contrast.



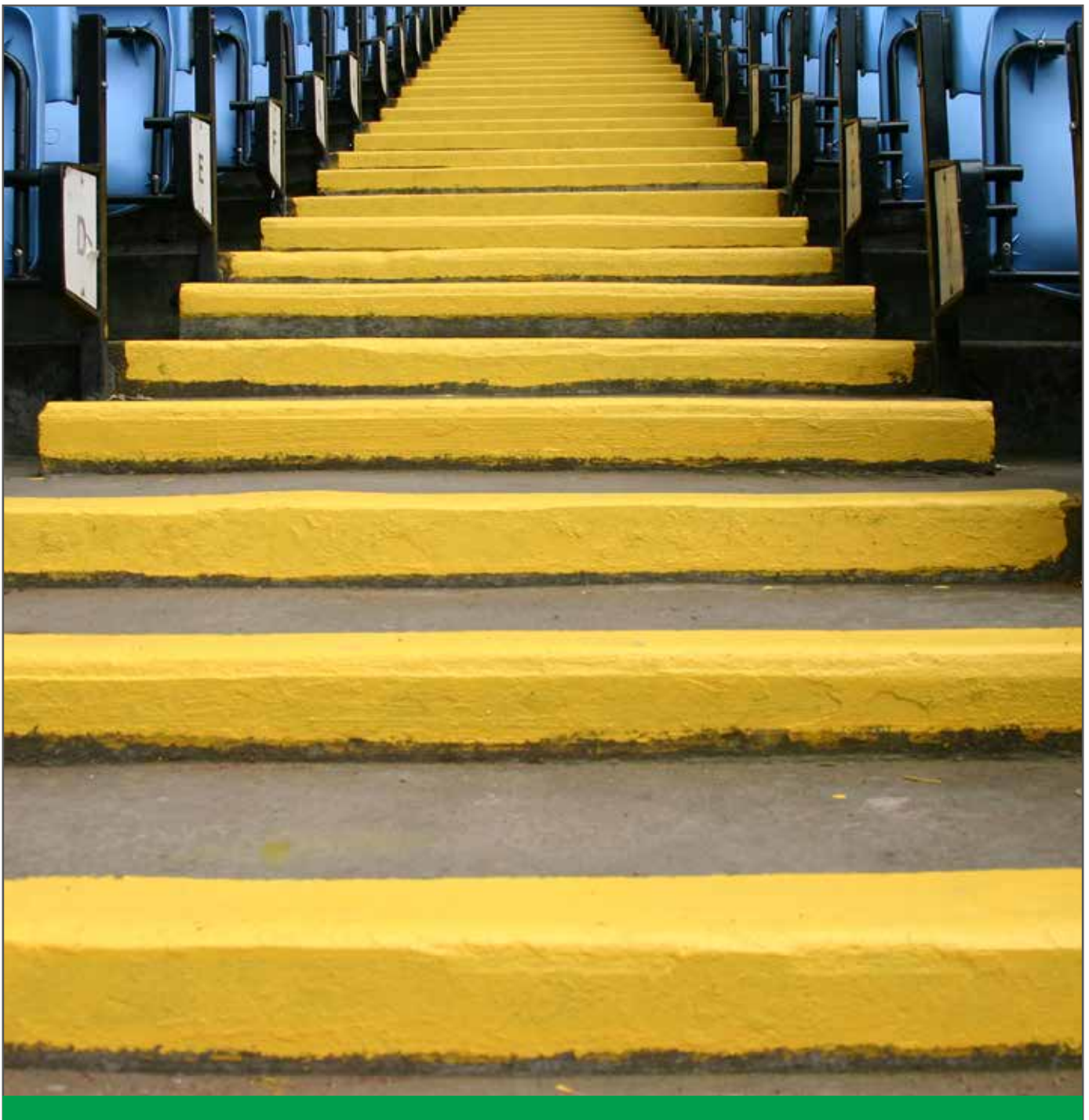
Accessible entrances – ensure your ground has at least two accessible entrances staffed by an Accessibility Steward. The accessible entrance should be easily identifiable from a distance to ensure blind and partially sighted fans can independently locate and enter it.



Allow blind and partially sighted fans to visit your stadium before a match so that they can orientate themselves.



Create video content that enables blind and partially sighted fans to view the physical journey into the club.



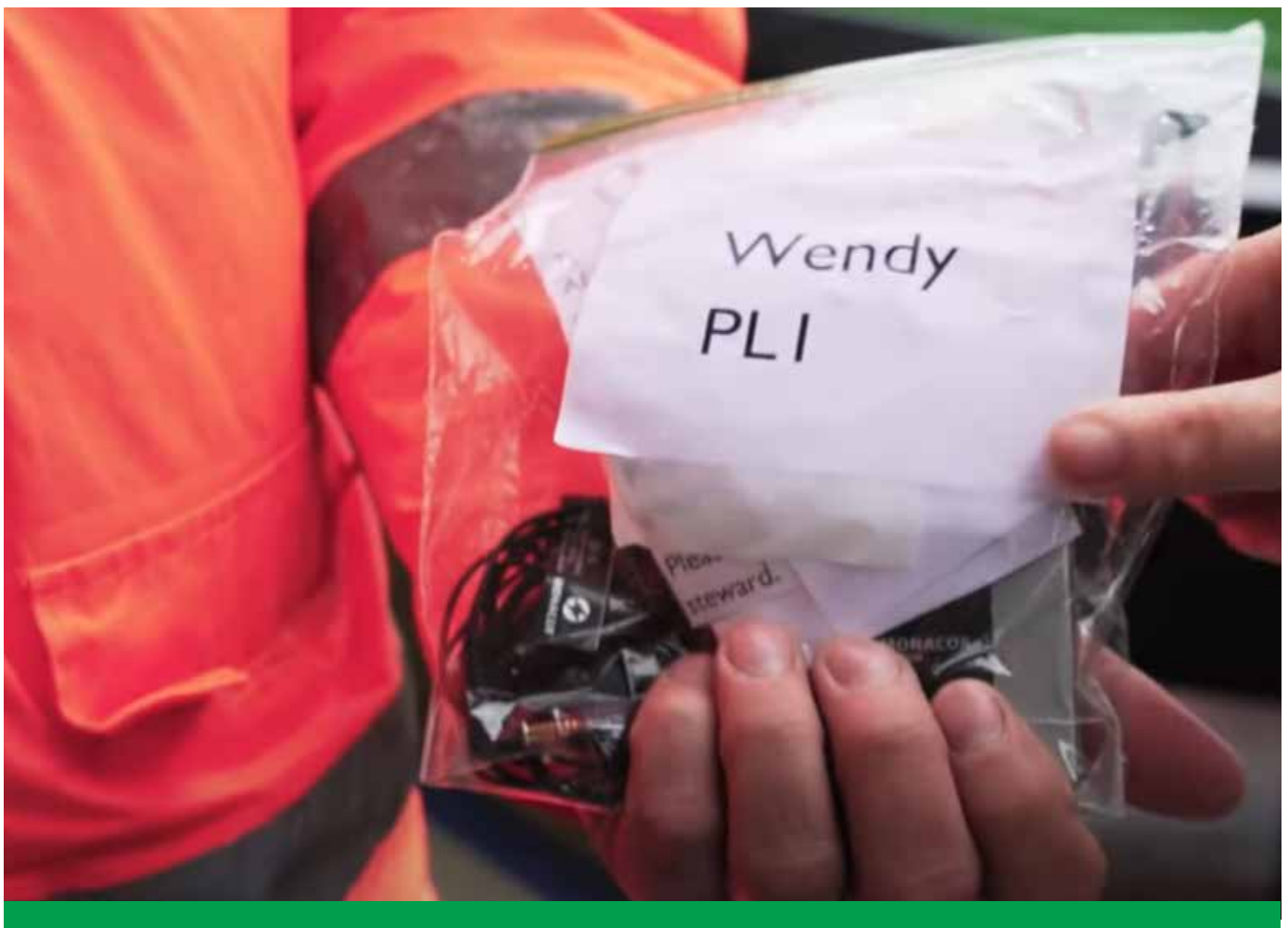
Accessible match day programmes

Match day programmes mean a lot to many fans. They add to the experience of going to a match and are both a great and traditional way for clubs to communicate with their fans.

“I went to watch one team at the start of the season and the thing that irked me about that experience was when I bought the match day programme – because the club play in blue, they decided that the first name of the players should be in a slightly different shade of blue on the blue programme, it seems like such a basic thing that they’d just got wrong and it makes you wonder.” **[Focus group participant]**

By adopting audio technology or accessible design principles (rnib.in/AccessibleInfoResources) match day programmes will become accessible for all fans including blind and partially sighted people.

Arsenal’s audio match day programmes are made available 48 hours after a match. The service is outsourced to a third party where four people read out the entire programme.



“We want the fans to have the full inclusive experience. They want to feel part of the club and the audio programme lets them do that the programme includes interviews, extra information on the match, player quotes and so on... our blind and partially sighted fans said they really like it.”

[Arsenal FC]

Arsenal is in the process of making their access guide available in audio format. This will include information on the accessible facilities at the stadium, accessible transport nearby and other useful information..

Here are some top tips to make your match day programmes accessible.

Colour contrast – Many clubs often use their club colour(s) in the text of match day programmes. This can sometimes make text very difficult for blind and partially sighted spectators to read. Text clearly should contrast against its background.

Digital programmes – Many blind and partially sighted spectators struggle to read hard copy programmes. One solution is to have the programme emailed on PDF to fans who register for this option on match day. Using assistive technology on their smart devices (enlarged text, voice over) all blind and partially sighted spectators would have equal access to the programme, they would also be able to save them in a similar way many sighted fans save their hard copy programmes.

Examples of accessible match day programmes best practice

Wolves – QR codes

Here is an example of the QR code found within Wolves' accessible match day pack. By simply accessing the QR code you are taken directly to the audio programme.



Accessible programme top tip checklist

- ✔ Strive to digitalise your programme by always offering an audio version. A digital audio programme is better for everyone not just blind and partially sighted fans.
- ✔ Ensure the content is the same within audio/digital programmes as the standard printed version. Fans using an audio version should not miss out on content due to their disability.
- ✔ Whilst transitioning to audio/digital programmes, offer blind and partially sighted fans large print versions at least 24 hours before the match.
- ✔ Ensure accessible colour contrast and text are used for both printed and digital programmes.
- ✔ As with signage, avoid using club colours for text as often these are not accessible, keep it simple by using black text on white backgrounds.



Light levels and time of day can impact on a variety of sight loss conditions

Summary

There is already a massive amount of existing excellent practice taking place within football stadiums that makes a huge difference to blind and partially sighted spectators.

It is important to acknowledge the incredible hard work that exists within clubs and organisations such as the English Football (EFL) and Premier League to do the right thing and evolve their provision for blind and partially sighted fans. This guidance is aimed to provide clubs with guidance and examples of how to make their stadiums among the most accessible in the world regardless of their standing within the Premier League or EFL.

By adopting this best practice, your club can enhance its match day experience not only for blind and partially sighted fans, but for all fans. RNIB's design principle of "design for everyone, better for everyone" is embedded in this best practice guidance, a principle that ensures inclusion and equity for all spectators now and in years to come.

For more information, please visit:

rnib.org.uk/our-campaigns/see-sport-differently

Organisations

Thank you to all the organisations and clubs involved.

- Arsenal, Everton, Plymouth Argyle, Wolverhampton Wanderers, and Wrexham
- British Blind Sport
- EFL
- Level Playing Field
- Premier League
- RNIB

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