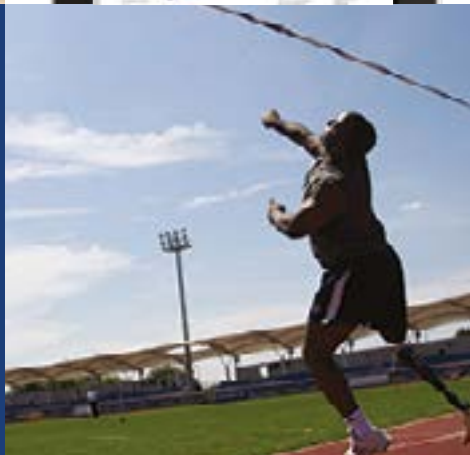


# Access for all: inclusive communications

Reaching more people in sport and physical activity  
through inclusive and accessible communications



14point  
**Bold**



## In this guide:

<b>1</b>	<b>The English Federation of Disability Sport (EFDS)</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>Using design to improve accessibility</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Why is inclusive communication important?</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>Use of fonts and text layout</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>2.1</b>	<b>Who are disabled people?</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4.2</b>	<b>Images and diagrams</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>2.2</b>	<b>The social and medical models of disability</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>E-newsletters</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>2.3</b>	<b>Understanding the law and what's required</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>Use of colour/colour contrast</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>2.4</b>	<b>Messaging, wording, better practice terminology</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>Layout</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>2.5</b>	<b>Accessibility and inclusion</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>4.6</b>	<b>Emails</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Getting started</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>4.7</b>	<b>Social media</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>3.1</b>	<b>Embedding inclusive communications</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>4.8</b>	<b>Videos</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>3.2</b>	<b>Developing an inclusive communications policy</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>4.9</b>	<b>Mobile applications (apps)</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>3.3</b>	<b>Reaching a wider audience</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>4.10</b>	<b>Printed documents</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>3.4</b>	<b>Auditing current communications and planning for future needs</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>4.11</b>	<b>Portable Document Format (PDF)</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>3.5</b>	<b>Accessible formats</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>4.12</b>	<b>Posters</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>3.6</b>	<b>Websites</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>4.13</b>	<b>Infographics</b>	<b>35</b>
			<b>4.14</b>	<b>Campaign or promotional communications</b>	<b>36</b>
			<b>5</b>	<b>Inclusive communications better practice checklist</b>	<b>38</b>
			<b>6</b>	<b>Resources and further information</b>	<b>39</b>
			<b>6.1</b>	<b>British Sign Language (BSL)</b>	<b>40</b>
			<b>6.2</b>	<b>Design</b>	<b>40</b>
			<b>6.3</b>	<b>Easy Read</b>	<b>40</b>
			<b>6.4</b>	<b>Guides to support and attract more disabled people to participate in physical activity</b>	<b>41</b>
			<b>6.5</b>	<b>Transcription and captioning services</b>	<b>42</b>
			<b>6.6</b>	<b>Accessibility software</b>	<b>42</b>
			<b>6.7</b>	<b>Web accessibility guidance and testing</b>	<b>43</b>
			<b>6.8</b>	<b>Glossary</b>	<b>43</b>

# 1 The English Federation of Disability Sport (EFDS)



The English Federation of Disability Sport (EFDS) was established in September 1998 as the strategic lead and umbrella body dedicated to disabled people in sport and physical activity throughout England. Our vision is that disabled people are active for life. EFDS is a national charity and supports a wide range of organisations to deliver more inclusive programmes.

In addition to being a funded National Partner of Sport England, EFDS provides a platform for collaborative working across England. Our full Members include National Disability Sport Organisations and Regional Federations. As a Federation, EFDS brings together the energy and expertise, which exists within our Member organisations and partners across the whole of England, embracing all impairment groups and all sports.

We want sport and physical activity to be a meaningful experience, whatever level disabled people choose. By helping the sport sector and engaging with disability organisations, we are in the best position to support participation at every level.

EFDS continues to work with a range of National Governing Bodies of sport (NGBs) to maximise the opportunities within their own programmes for disabled people. We support NGBs and other providers with our insight on disabled people, sports development expertise, local engagement and marketing knowledge. In addition, our close partnerships with the National

Disability Sports Organisations (NDSOs) mean we have access to a wealth of expertise on disabled people with specific impairments.

Central to EFDS's work with a wide range of partners is communication. The way organisations talk, words used, tone of voice or even body language can affect anyone's opinion of the sport or fitness provider and most of all – their trust in them. Communication is also about listening to the audiences and using the insight to target more effectively. EFDS continues to build on our insight of disabled people's preferences in language, messages and the channels to reach more participants.

This guide has been written with Big Voice Communications to ensure we can share a wealth of information, increase participation and improve access to more opportunities for everyone.

# 2



# Why is inclusive communication important?

The number of disabled people playing sport regularly has risen slightly over the years. In December 2013, Sport England's Active People Survey 7 – an annual, in-depth measure of the nation's sporting habits – revealed that a record number of disabled people in England now play sport each week. The number of disabled people aged 16 and over playing sport once a week increased by 62,000 over the last year, bringing the total number to its highest recorded figure of 1.67 million.

But, disabled people are still half as likely to be taking part in sport as non-disabled people (18.5 per cent compared to 39.2 per cent). This means there is still a long way to go in order to address this imbalance and inclusive communications play an important role in this.

The communications you send on behalf of your organisation are a vital component of what it means to be involved in your sport or physical activity. Without attracting new people to your sport, the on-going engagement from your participants and the exchange of information about events, competitions and membership subscriptions, your organisation will eventually cease to thrive. It is vitally important that every communication you send whether it is a calendar of events, promotional material or a member newsletter, reaches the widest possible audience. The more people you can successfully communicate with the better. Message received and understood. However, despite the great advances in technology, which make mass communications deliverable at the click of a button, there are a number of different factors that prevent some groups of people or individuals from receiving your communications.

The way in which disabled people access your communications may be different to non-disabled people; and people with different impairments have different needs or experience different 'barriers' to accessing your information. There are approximately 11 million disabled people in the UK – as a group, disabled people are a large part of your potential audience. And, as with any other large group, there can be no one-size fits all approach to how or what you communicate with disabled people.

There is a growing trend towards personalisation of communications, people want to receive your information how and when they choose to receive it and on a device of their choice. Disabled people are no different in this respect, and what works in terms of accessibility for one disabled person does not necessarily work for another. For example, the communications preferences of one person with dyslexia

might vary widely from the next person's. Approximately 10-15% of the UK population has dyslexia, so this is something you need to be aware of.

As a professional communicator you do not need to be an expert on different impairments. Broadly speaking there are different impairment groups that have different access requirements.

- Visual impairment/blindness
- Hearing impairment/deafness
- Mobility/physical impairments
- Cognitive impairments/learning disability
- Mental health conditions
- Long term health conditions

As well as thinking about different groups of disabled people, for your communications to be inclusive consider other factors such as reading age and English as an additional language. Your communications should ideally be written, produced and distributed in a way that means they are inclusive to all.

If information is not accessible, a person may:

- Avoid opportunities, offers and services completely
- Not turn up for a sports session, event etc.
- Respond to only some of information given
- Ask a lot of questions – leading up to, during and after.

## 2.1 Who are disabled people?

One in five people in the UK consider themselves as a disabled person. 'Disabled people' are not a homogenous group and come from all walks of life. This means alongside their health condition, impairment or disability, disabled people come from different cultural, ethnic and religious as well as socio-economic backgrounds.

'Disability' is used as a catch-all phrase – this is broadly accepted but some groups and individuals do not necessarily identify with the term and would not consider themselves to be disabled. How many older people do you know who say – "I'm not disabled. I am just old"? The term disability covers a wide range of different conditions and impairments – far too many to name individually. There is a broad legal definition in the UK, which is as follows (see above):

"A physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities" (Equality Act 2010).

- 'substantial' is more than minor or trivial – e.g. it takes much longer than it usually would to complete a daily task like getting dressed
- 'long-term' means 12 months or more – e.g. a breathing condition that develops as a result of a lung infection

It is not necessary to know or understand different types of disability or long-term health conditions, though if you work regularly with a particular group you may wish to inform yourself. It is much more important to know and understand the sorts of things that get in the way and prevent disabled people from participating in every day life. The things that get in the way are called "barriers" and they include everything from inaccessible buildings, websites and people's attitudes or assumptions.

## 2.2 The social and medical models of disability

There are two schools of thought or 'models' on disability, the social and medical models:

- The **social model** of disability says that it is the barriers in society such as inaccessible buildings or people's attitudes that create disability and by removing those barriers you overcome the disability.
- The **medical model** says that a person's health condition or impairment causes the disability and that this requires medical intervention and treatment to cure the problem.

This guide is based on the social model of disability because it empowers disabled people and encourages non-disabled people and organisations to be more inclusive. By removing 'barriers' we remove the disability. For more information on the social model of disability visit [www.odi.dwp.gov.uk](http://www.odi.dwp.gov.uk)



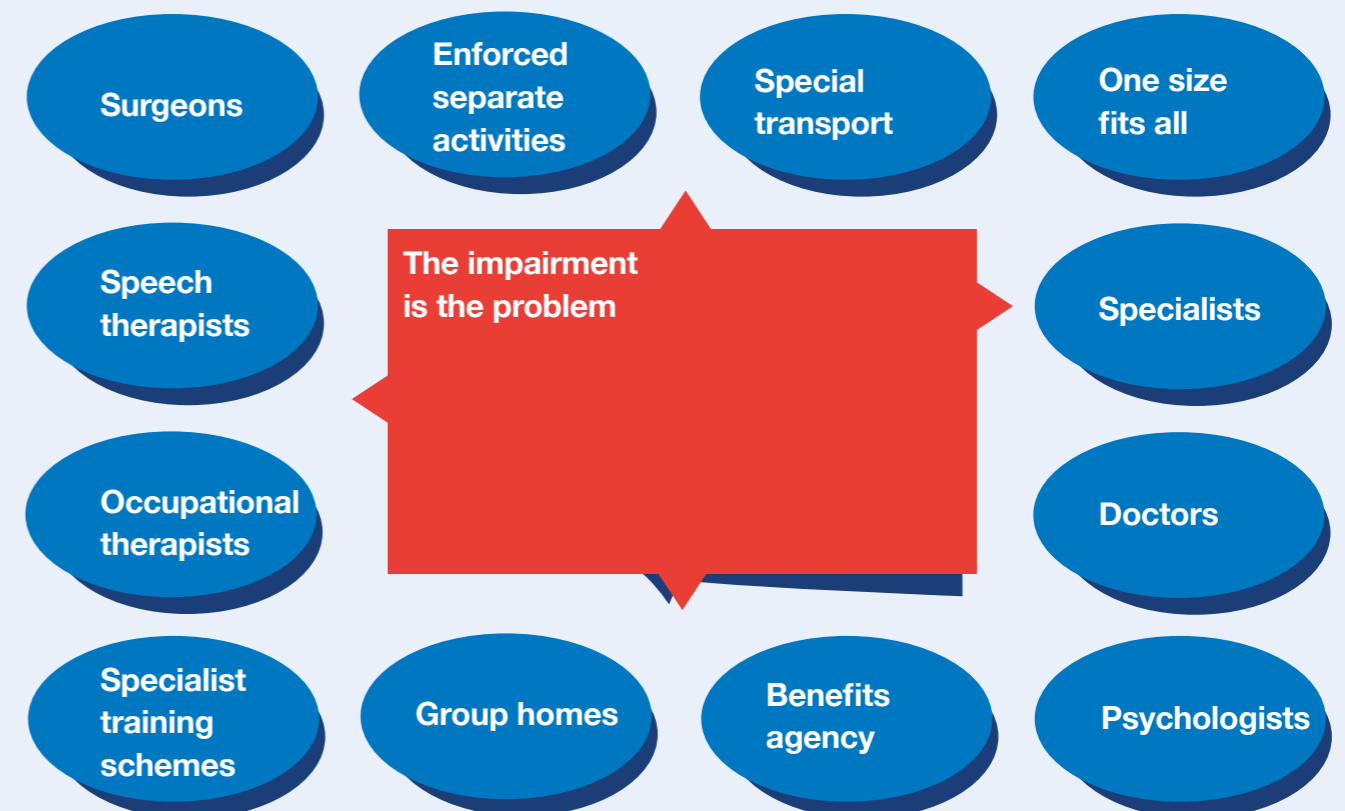
### Social model diagram

Disabled people are active citizens, campaigning for equality, working in partnership with allies



### Medical model diagram

Disabled people are passive receivers of services aimed at cure or management



## 2.3 Understanding the law and what's required

The Equality Act 2010 protects disabled people (and other groups) from discrimination in employment and in the provision of goods and services. If the way you communicate with disabled people as employees or customers or stakeholders is found to be discriminatory, your organisation could be liable. The best way to avoid legal action is to take a best practice approach to producing inclusive communications.

Essentially the Equality Act is an amalgamation of several pieces of anti-discrimination legislation, including the Disability Discrimination Act of 1995. As with most pieces of legislation the provisions are quite detailed and in some instances quite complex.

Your job as a communicator is to understand the potential discrimination that could arise from not considering the communications requirements of disabled people (and other groups). The most important concept that was enshrined in the Disability Discrimination Act was that of making 'reasonable adjustments'. The idea being that if you make an adjustment to the usual way of providing goods and services then the 'barrier' for the disabled person is removed.

Making a 'reasonable adjustment' to something in communications terms can simply mean providing an alternative way of receiving the information. For example if you have a leaflet about your organisation in printed format have other formats available such as a digital version or a large print version as an adjustment for those who cannot read the original communication.

## 2.4 Messaging, wording, better practice terminology

Using the wrong kind of language can itself create a barrier. As the English language evolves and adapts so do the terms we use to describe disabled people in our communications. How we describe people is important as labels of whatever kind have a habit of sticking. If you were to survey the national, regional and trade press you would find frequent mentions of unacceptable terms such as 'wheelchair bound' or 'Cerebral Palsy-sufferer'. Both of these terms and many similar ones convey an image of the disabled person as helpless, dependent, to be pitied when the reality is that a wheelchair enables someone to live an active life and play sport.

Opposite are some dos and don'ts when choosing terminology.

**"Your job as a communicator is to understand the potential discrimination that could arise from not considering the communications requirements of disabled people (and other groups)."**

## Messaging, wording, better practice terminology



**Do use**

Disabled person

Person or non-disabled person

Dwarf, person of short stature, person of restricted growth

Person with a certain condition or impairment

Wheelchair or mobility-scooter user

Learning disability or person with an intellectual impairment

Deaf people/hearing impaired

Blind people/visually impaired

Brain injury



**Do not use**

The disabled, handicapped, crippled

Able-bodied person, normal person

Midget

Sufferer

Wheelchair or mobility-scooter-bound or confined

Retarded, backwards, slow, mentally handicapped

The deaf

The blind

Brain damage

### Examples in sport

Can you see the difference in the terminology and tone used?



**Good example:**

**In our sports club, disabled and non-disabled people are actively encouraged to join in.**



**Bad example:**

**In our sports club, able-bodied people love seeing the disabled join in around their club.**



**More bad examples:**

**Steve fights to inspire cerebral palsy sufferers**

**How cricket helped man overcome his disability**

**Wheelchair bound players find football 'weeely' challenging**



## 2.5 Accessibility and inclusion

Accessibility and inclusion are terms that are used frequently in the disability sport sector, often interchangeably. It is important that communicators understand these terms and the importance of embedding inclusion into every piece of communication and every communication campaign.

Accessibility is ensuring that disabled people can access your communications (website, promotions, venue materials, your courses or competitions etc.) and that there are no barriers that prevent this. A barrier to access might be only providing materials in hardcopy, font size 10 – or only offering one type of communication route e.g. telephone contact details but no email or post address. Making something accessible means providing alternative means (formats or options) to access what’s on offer if the ‘standard’ offer is not accessible.

An inclusive communication is designed to reach as broad and diverse an audience as possible with accessibility for different groups built in and part of the core communication.

“Making something accessible means providing alternative means (formats or options) to access what’s on offer if the ‘standard’ offer is not accessible.”

Accessibility is ensuring that disabled people can access your communications and that there are no barriers that prevent this.

# 3



# Getting started

## 3.1 Embedding inclusive communications

The best way to embed inclusive communications across your organisation is to develop an inclusive communications policy that clearly sets out your commitment to inclusion. In order to develop your policy, involve internal and external stakeholders. The length and complexity of your policy will be determined by the size and scope of your organisation. If you are a small, local or regional organisation you might simply have a short statement on accessibility and inclusion on your website. If you are working for a larger, national body you could reasonably be expected to have a more detailed policy in place.

## 3.2 Developing an inclusive communications policy

If you are thinking about developing an inclusive communications policy a good place to start is to ask your colleagues, volunteers, members or participants some questions such as:

1. What type of communications do we issue and how frequently?
2. Who do we usually reach with our communications?
3. Who do we want to reach with our communications?
4. How do we reach our stakeholders, which channels do we use?
5. How do we anticipate the communications needs of disabled people and other diverse groups?
6. Do we provide our communications in a range of formats?
7. Are our messages clear?
8. Do we use plain English?
9. Who is responsible for and who pays for alternative formats?
10. Do we monitor the impact of our communications?

When you are developing your inclusive communications policy involve a range of people from different backgrounds and with different communications requirements from inside and outside your organisation. You may be a little bit concerned about sharing the inner workings of your organisation's communications with others, but the insights you will get from your internal and external stakeholders will enable you to draw up a policy that is fit for purpose and will give you the chance to fix



anything that is currently not working with your existing communications strategy.

Once your inclusive communications policy is written also consider providing some suitable training for anyone who works on your communications. They need to know what they are expected to do when working on your communication campaigns. When your policy is written and your training has been completed- launch the policy – ensuring the document is inclusive – via appropriate channels, e.g. your newsletter, intranet and website. Don't forget to communicate it too!

### Quick tips:

- Ask people who you work and interact with; research communication needs and how well you are reaching them
- Use the insight to develop an inclusive communications policy
- Change or fix communications which do not fit within the new policy
- Train relevant staff on new policy and any methods adopted
- Make sure the policy is accessible and launch it
- Share your better practice with all stakeholders and especially disabled people

## 3.3 Reaching a wider audience

Essentially the job of a communicator is to tell your organisation's story, to get the word out on a new initiative or event or to keep your employees, members, supporters, sponsors and stakeholders informed about your news and programme activities. It is vitally important that you consider your audience to be as broad and as diverse as possible. That way you will avoid unintentionally excluding people from your communications.

Disabled people are a large part of your target audience, but also consider other communications requirements. Older people respond differently to certain types of communications and may face barriers (such as technical ones) that may prevent them from engaging with your organisation. You need to consider that the person reading your communication might not necessarily be the intended recipient. It could be their parent, carer or personal assistant.

The language we all communicate in is English but there are very many people living in the UK who have English as an additional language. Communications that are clear and use Plain English will benefit not only someone with a learning disability, but someone whose first language is not English. The average reading age in the UK is nine years old. This is not commonly known but it has a significant impact on how your communications are received. The Sun newspaper uses language that someone with a reading age of nine can understand, The Guardian by contrast uses more complex language that on average could be read by someone with the reading age of 14. The benefit of taking an inclusive approach to your communications is that you will reach a wider audience than you first anticipated.

## 3.4 Auditing current communications and planning for future needs

Getting to know your audience is a first and important step in being able to communicate with them effectively. You do not need to be an expert on different impairments or conditions. However you need to become skilled at understanding how different people will interact with your organisation. Over time you will build up an accurate database of your members and stakeholders' communications requirements. This could be providing digital only (and accessible) versions of your materials, making follow-up phone calls to help explain the annual membership increase or ensuring the information you send out to a member or participant also goes to their parent or carer.

Conducting an audit of your existing communications is a good starting point to assessing where you are in terms of accessibility and inclusion and what you need to plan for future communications.

- Identify your existing and target audience. If you have data available on access requirements and preferred formats then you will hopefully be able to cross-reference that with your delivery channels to see whether you are meeting the communications needs of your members.
- Measure the impact of your communications. If you routinely measure the impact of your communications and you have data on preferred formats then you are in a good position to understand how well you are performing in terms of inclusive communications. (This does not mean to say that you still do not need to check the accessibility of your communications; it just means you at least know your base line of requirements from your audience).

## 3.5 Accessible formats

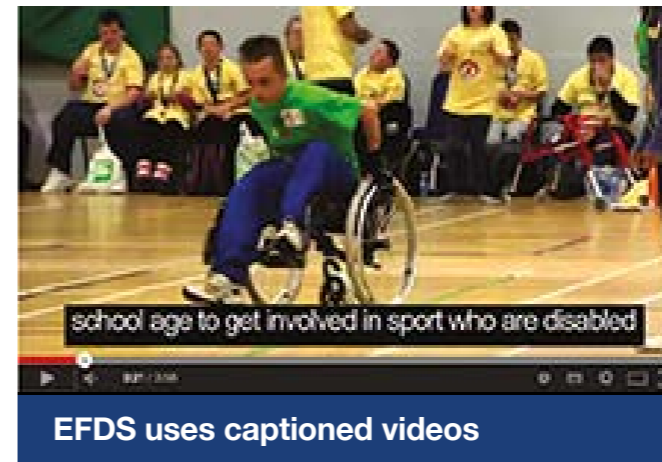
- Include access requirements on forms and surveys – If you do not have information on preferred formats or access requirements available take this opportunity to include it as a data requirement on future forms and surveys.
- Anticipate the needs of different audiences. During forward planning anticipate the needs of different audiences by making your communications as inclusive as possible and allowing for alternative formats. The more information you have about your audience the better you will be able to communicate with them. Being able to target your communications will ultimately save you time and money in the long term. If you know that you only have five people that would like a large print version of your newsletter you can tailor your output and stock levels accordingly.
- List your communications channels and resources, for example:
  - > Website/digital marketing
  - > Social media
  - > Member communications
  - > Printed publications
  - > Image library
  - > Newsletters
  - > Media releases
  - > Email
- Audit each communication channel to see whether you are being accessible or inclusive with those communications. There are specialist advisers who can conduct an accessibility and inclusion audit on your behalf or you could do it yourself with the support of some of your staff, participants and members.

Bring together a cross section of your staff, participants and members with different communications requirements. This could be a meeting in person or a remote exercise. Get people to review each type of communication and assess whether it meets their needs. You can ask questions like:

- Did you receive this communication?
- Could you access the information in the communication?
- Did you know what we wanted you to do as a result of receiving this communication?
- What would have improved the communication from your point of view?

Collate and evaluate people's responses and look for any particular patterns that are occurring in your communication channels.

You will then need to bring your different data sets together – look at your audience and their communications requirements alongside your communications channel audit and your focus group feedback. This should give you a pretty clear picture of where you are and where you need to get to. This information is the first and most important building block of developing an inclusive communications policy.



Where possible your communications should be accessible and inclusive to all, but sometimes the type of communication means that it will not be accessible to certain groups. For example, a deaf person is not going to be able to listen to the voiceover on a video, so you can either ensure that the video is captioned from the beginning, or provide a transcript of the voice over so the deaf person can read what has been said. In these instances you need to provide an alternative version that is accessible and it should provide the recipient with as close to the same information and experience as the original communication.

Cost is a factor in providing communications to voluntary and participant-based organisations, so you might need to monitor the range of alternative formats you provide. The more inclusive the original communication is the less alternative formats you will have to provide and the less time, money and resources will be spent on communicating the same message to different groups.

It is not so much a question of how many different kinds of formats to provide, but ensuring that you have anticipated the

“The more inclusive the original communication is the less alternative formats you will have to provide and the less time, money and resources will be spent on communicating the same message to different groups.”

needs of different groups when you planned your communication campaign.

**Typical communications barriers include:**

**Blind/visual impairment** – print publications (magazines, flyers and reports), inaccessible websites, use of images, PowerPoint presentations, PDF documents, colour contrast, posters, displays, banner stands, videos without audio commentary.

**Deaf/hearing impairment** – face-to-face communications such as speeches, presentations, awards ceremonies, announcements via loudspeakers and coaching sessions, videos without captioning or BSL interpretation, musical accompaniment (events, ceremonies on videos)

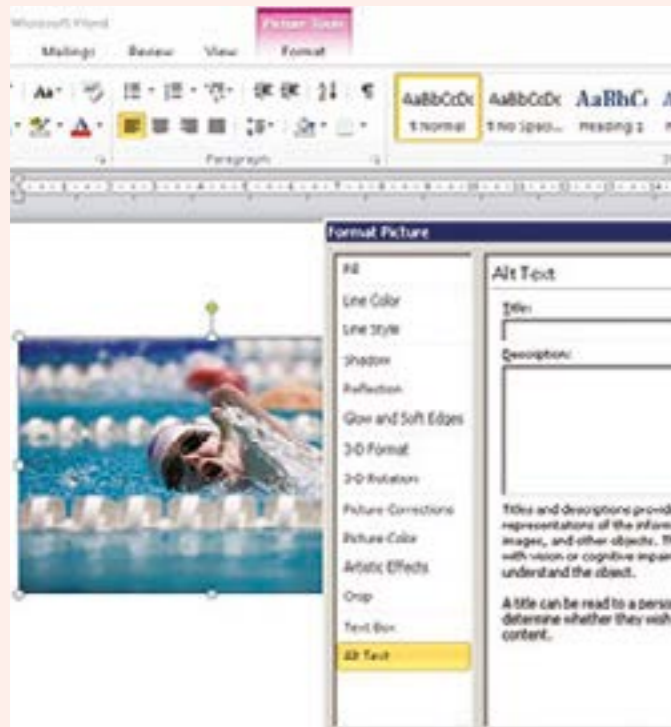
**Learning disability** – complex use of language, data visualisation, layout of websites and documents, colour contrast, use of images, lengthy communications

**Mobility/ physical impairment** – website layout and accessibility (e.g. too many clicks), positioning of signage, posters and flyers, weight of printed publications

**Mental health condition** – layout, use of colour, tone and style of language



## Making material more accessible



Add Alt Text to images in Word so a screen reader can recognise them

The barriers illustrated on the previous page are potential barriers that can be identified, adapted and/or removed. There are ways of making each type of communication more inclusive and these examples do not mean you can never issue PDFs or videos or posters, but be aware that there are potential barriers for certain groups.

### Types of accessible formats:

- Accessible PDF documents
- Accessible Word documents
- Audio versions
- Easy Read and Makaton
- Braille and Moon
- British Sign Language
- Hearing/Induction loops
- Large print
- Subtitling (captioning)
- Telephone
- Textphone
- Text to speech/speech to text
- Translation services

Some alternative formats can be produced easily at low cost in-house. For example having a transcript of the dialogue in a short video can be simply produced as a Word document and, if you apply the correct use of layout in Word (table of contents, headings etc.) then the document should be accessible to a broad variety of people.

Digital versions of printed materials are also a good alternative, provided the files are built in such a way that a screen-reader can access them or the user can change the font size and colour contrast settings. A screen-reader is a software device that speech enables text so that someone with a visual impairment can access the information. As a screen-reader is a computer (of sorts) it only follows a logical layout and will read what it can 'see' – so text that is part of the graphic design of your document or web page will not be picked up by the screen-reader as it can not 'see it' in the structure of the page or document.

You can download basic screen readers for free to try it out yourself. These days most phones will have accessibility functions that enable voiceovers etc. Ensuring online accessibility means your content is more available to the end user on various devices.

With images it will be difficult to make images accessible to everyone, but you can convey what you are hoping to communicate by using the image by describing it. Do not let the image alone convey the meaning of the message, as that will exclude a variety of different audiences. Having an audio version of a document or a video is a way of making the content accessible to people with visual impairments. Similarly describing the mood conveyed by music in a film on captioning will enable those with a hearing impairment to get a sense of what is being conveyed.

For some formats it will be necessary to source external suppliers. Braille is a good example. There are around 12,000 Braille users in the UK and different types of Braille. There is an increasing trend of providing key

information in Braille and ensuring that any signage in premises have Braille embossed on them. The good news is that Braille is not as expensive to produce as you might think. The Royal Mail will deliver Braille documents and publications free of charge under the 'Articles for the Blind' scheme: <http://www.royalmail.com/personal/uk-delivery/articles-for-the-blind>. Note- the scheme also extends to sending audio and electronic media as well as equipment like mobility aids.

Easy Read is an alternative format that is intended to make your communication accessible to people with learning disability. It breaks down complex information into shorter text and supports the meaning of the text with the use of easy to understand images or icons. If you have a very long and complicated document consider producing an Easy Read version of it, or at least providing a shorter summary document if you do not have the budget to commission one. Whatever your communication is, if you use Plain English and have an uncluttered layout with clear headings and you have thought about barriers like reading age, then you will make your 'standard' communication more inclusive. A good example can be viewed at: <http://easy-read-online.co.uk>

**The rules**

There are some rules you will need to follow to be an Activity Buddy. The rules are there to keep you and the people you support safe.

If you are an Activity Buddy, you should **not**

-  × let other people hurt you or treat you in a bad way
-  × give people money or buy them things
-  × tell anyone where you live or what your telephone number is

An example of an easy-read document used in sport

## 3.6 Websites

In the English Federation of Disability Sport's Lifestyle Report 2013, one of the questions disabled people were asked was, 'how do you find information about interests and hobbies?'. The most popular answer by a huge margin was Internet search sites. Imagine if they find you on a search site, they click through to your site and cannot find or read the information contained within it. It would not be an ideal starting point for those you are trying to encourage to take part.

The way in which websites are designed can sometimes create barriers for people accessing information on the internet with the use of assistive technology or for those with cognitive or mobility impairments. Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.0) have been produced by the World

Wide Web Consortium (W3C, the web's governing body). WCAG is essentially a set of checkpoints that help ensure that web sites are designed and written properly.

W3C provides an 'easy check' overview which allows you to assess whether you think your current website is accessible or not. It is a great starting place for understanding web accessibility but be aware that your website could pass these checks and still not be fully accessible.

The areas highlighted by W3C are:

- Page title
- Image text alternatives (alt text) for photos, graphs and illustrations
- Colour contrast

- Text resizing
- Keyboard access and visual focus
- Forms, labels and error messages
- Multimedia alternatives
- Basic web structure

Additional evaluation guidance is available from:

- [WCAG-EM Website Accessibility Conformance Evaluation Methodology](#)
- [Selecting Web Accessibility Evaluation Tools](#)
- [Involving Users in Evaluating Web Accessibility](#)

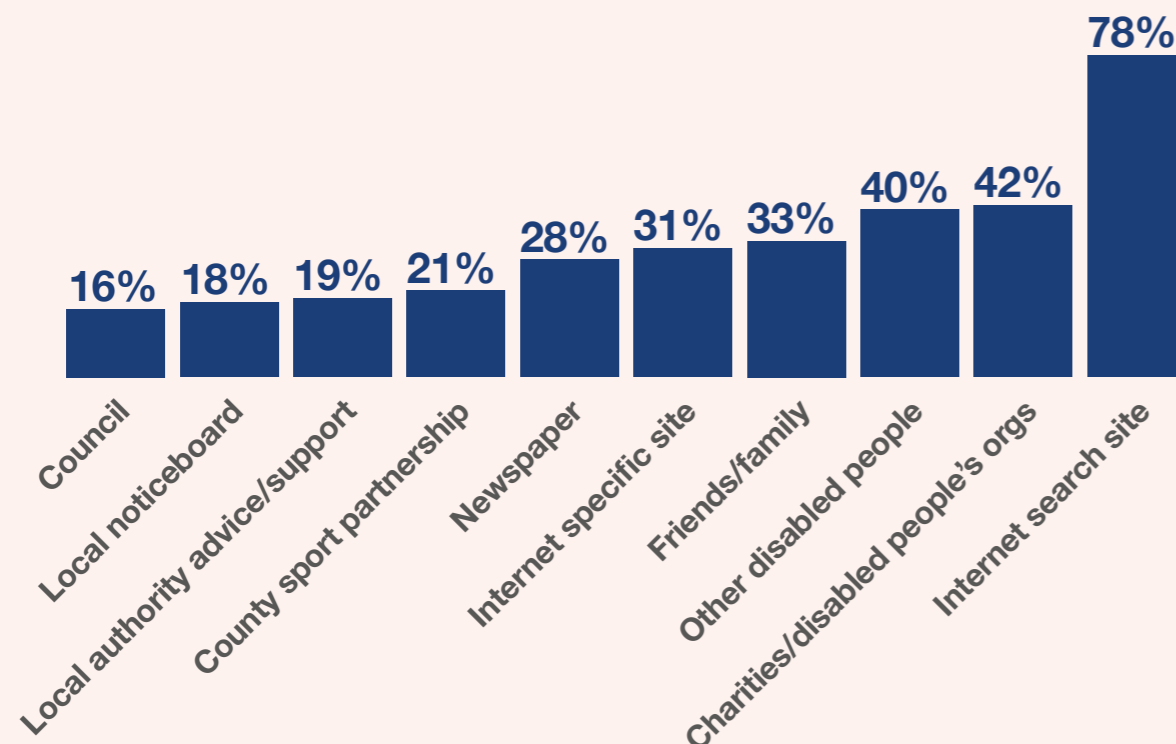
Although the guidelines do not explicitly cover other forms of digital communications such as newsletters or marketing campaigns, it is advisable to apply the same principles when producing e-newsletters, flyers or other marketing communications.

There are a wide variety of resources available on web accessibility. One of the most comprehensive (and accessible) websites is the BBC's My Web My Way: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/accessibility/guides/>. Another fantastic resource for communicators and web development professionals is the W3C's Before and After Demo: <http://www.w3.org/WAI/demos/bad/Overview.html> This website is a live demonstration of accessible and inaccessible web pages, show the before and after versions and it clearly explains what is in accessible and what the solutions are.

### Web accessibility checklist

- ✓ Images have alternative text (so if you can't see the image you can still read the text).
- ✓ Colour contrast between foreground and background is sufficiently strong.
- ✓ Text re-sizes according to user preference.
- ✓ Headings are correctly used in the stylesheets (they're not just ordinary text made to look big and bold).
- ✓ Links make sense by themselves (e.g. no instances of links that just say "Click here" or "More...").
- ✓ Tables are used for laying out tabular information and have proper headings and summaries.
- ✓ Visual presentation is defined in 'stylesheets' and is not embedded in the pages.

### Q Survey: "How do you find information about interests and hobbies?"



Credit: EFDS Lifestyle Report 2013



Visit [www.efds.co.uk](http://www.efds.co.uk) to see an example of an accessible website design

Carry out an accessibility and usability check on your existing website(s) to see if there are any barriers you need to remove. Web content changes rapidly and can be added by many different people in an in-house team or agency. Even if your content management system has certain required fields such as labels for images it doesn't necessarily mean they are being filled in correctly. When you go through any training for new staff or refresher lessons on content management for your website, it is always best to emphasise why the labelling is important within the system.

When commissioning a new website, accessibility and usability should be a key component of the project and design brief. Ask your web developer whether they are familiar with the WCAG guidelines. Factor in time and budget for disabled and non-disabled user testing at different stages in the website design and development before the website goes live.

There are also a wide variety of web accessibility functions that you can have built into your website to provide your web visitors with some easy-to-use tools to make your content accessible

 Listen

Consider including a 'listen' option on your website

**“Even if your content management system has certain required fields such as labels for images it doesn't necessarily mean they are being filled in correctly.”**

to them the way they need it. Buttons such as font increase and colour contrast switching buttons are very common and often compliment the functions available on web browsers. More sophisticated solutions that offer a broader variety of customisable settings as well as text-to-speech functionality are being integrated into websites. The text-to-speech functions will make your content more accessible to people with dyslexia or with visual impairments. Such web accessibility software often includes translation and dictionary features which immediately open your website up to audiences whose first language is not English and people with a low reading age.

It's also a good idea to have an accessibility statement on your website. Include that your website has been designed to be accessible to disabled people. It should be consistent with your organisation's inclusive communications policy. Make sure you include details about any special accessibility features like the ability to increase font size or change settings.

4



# Using design to improve accessibility



Designers work with type, layout and colour to create an accessible design

## 4.1 Use of fonts and text layout

Most people in the UK read from left to right so it is best to left align your copy. When your text is left aligned, the eyes and brain know where to go to at the start of every line. When text is centralised the reader has to work harder to find the start of each line.

When laying out your copy use unjustified text where possible. Justified or centralised text puts uneven spaces between words. Unjustified text is easier to read as the spaces between words are regular and the reader knows what to expect.

Often we underline words or titles to add emphasis, but this can make the word harder to read for some people. Your eyes have to work harder to separate the word from the line to read it. Emphasis to a word or title can be added by using bold font or

a larger or different style of font. Italics are commonly used to denote a real name or a quote or to add emphasis, but they can make the words more difficult to read. The slant of the letters changes the weighting of the font in the reader's eye, making it appear less solid. Your readers need to work harder to identify the letters and words. Use quotation marks to signal a quote or a name and use a bold font for added emphasis— but use it sparingly as large chunks of bold font are hard to read. A word of caution, some screen readers will shout out words in bold, this might not be the desired impact you were hoping for!

We learn to read words that use lower case letters, only using capital letters at the start of sentences. Using capital letters for full

words, titles or sentences makes it harder for the reader to identify the words. The most accessible style of writing to read is 'sentence case'. Again, if you would like to highlight words, use bold, or increase the size of the font.

Your font choice can have a big impact on the accessibility of your communications. One of the most accessible and most widely available fonts is Arial; others include Calibri, Century Gothic, Trebuchet and Verdana. All these fonts are "sans serif" fonts. A serif is a little decorative line that is found on letters in some fonts like Times New Roman or Georgia. "Sans serif" means "without the decorative line". Some people find it difficult to read serif fonts, because they distract the eyes and the brain from the overall shape of the letter. The use of

serif fonts in digital publications can also be problematic as the pixilation on screen can distort the serif, causing the word to blur around the edges.

Font size 12 is considered to the minimum size at which people read comfortably. For electronic communications, most readers will be able to customise the size of the font on their computer screen on via their internet browser, but it is still considered best practice not to publish anything smaller than the equivalent of Arial 12 pt. For audiences where Easy Read communications are required there is a recommended minimum of 14 pt. font size.

✔ Text is ranged left or left-aligned

✘ Text should not be centred

✔ Text is unjustified for even space between words

✘ Jusified text is harder to read as spacing is odd

✔ Use bold or **scale** for emphasis

✘ Avoid *italics* or underlining for emphasis

✔ Use upper and lower, also known as 'sentence case'

✘ ALL CAPITALS ARE HARDER TO READ

✔ San serif fonts like Arial or Verdana are clearer

✘ Serif fonts like Times New Roman are too fussy

✔ 12 point should be minimum 14 pt for Easy Read

✘ Do not use type sizes that are below 12 pt

## 4.2 Images and diagrams

The choice of font and font size may be pre-determined by your organisation's brand guidelines. If the main font is a serif font, it may be good to use a sans serif font for alternative versions of the communication and to get the brand guidelines updated to reflect that.

“If the main font is a serif font, it may be good to use a sans serif font for alternative versions of the communication and to get the brand guidelines updated to reflect that.”

The use of images in communications is no longer considered to be a 'nice to have'. Different people respond to certain elements of communications and a well-chosen image, design or diagram can serve to reinforce the main message of your communication.

We use images to illustrate a point or to convey a mood. Some people receiving your communications may not be able to view the image in the same way; this could be someone with a visual impairment or a learning disability or difficulty such as dyslexia. In electronic communications, it is essential that all images and graphics are 'tagged' so that those using a screen-reader (a device which reads out what is on screen) also get an idea of the image being used even if they can not see it.

✓ Good example of text on an image



✗ Bad example of text on an image



✓ Pictorial diagrams can help people understand the message quickly



If using photographs of people to illustrate your communications, it is best practice to ensure that your selection is a diverse range of people and where possible, try to ensure images of different groups are positively portrayed. But, you need to avoid tokenism and images that do not look or feel natural. The best photographs are more likely to be ones taken at sports venues or clubs and at your events or training sessions. Image libraries are a great resource and some such as Promoting Activity: [www.promotingactivity.co.uk](http://www.promotingactivity.co.uk) have professional inclusive imagery.

If your poster campaign is about encouraging more disabled people to participate in your sport then, for example, an image of a disabled person as a spectator is not appropriate. Do not get hung up on trying to ensure that one image ticks all the boxes, you are asking too much of that one image. Instead, ensure that where possible you vary the use of images throughout a specific campaign or suite of communications.

Shading or pictures behind the text can reduce the colour contrast between the text and the background. A blurring of the colours or a weakening of the definition between text and shading/images will make the communication more difficult for some and impossible for others to access. Highlight words or key facts by placing them into a text box or using a larger font size instead.

A clear diagram can convey a lot of information, and helps people to understand the message more quickly. Diagrams are useful for your audiences, and particularly for communicating with people with learning disability.

## 4.3 E-newsletters

Sending out your organisation's news in an e-newsletter is the most efficient and cost-effective way of reaching all your audiences and stakeholders. There are many free or low cost programmes such as Mail Chimp, Market Mailer or GetResponse that can instantly professionalise the look and feel of your e-newsletter. The guidance on accessibility that applies to websites should also be applied to e-newsletters. The World Wide Web Consortium has a good rule of thumb is to ensure that the layout of the template is not overly complicated. People accessing your e-newsletter via screen-reader device will find it more difficult the more complicated the layout is. Clear headings, properly labelled and formatted are also critical and it is best practice to offer HTML and plain text versions of your newsletter. Have a web-based landing page to house all the information. Subscription services such as Campaign Monitor or Campaign Master have this functionality built in, but it is still important to have your style sheet or template tested for accessibility before you launch it.



An email designed with high contrast for good legibility (Credit: JGM Agency, [www.jgmagency.co.uk](http://www.jgmagency.co.uk))

## 4.4 Use of colour/ colour contrast

The use of colour is a central part of professional communications and your brand management. Your organisation is likely to have an official palette of colours set out in your brand guidelines or you use a colour scheme based on your logo. Often designers or communicators will use colour to enliven a communication and while colour to add emphasis can be very impactful, caution is advised. Too many colours can be disorienting, especially if communications from your organisation are usually in a certain colour combination. A vast array of colour might distract the reader and make it harder for your message to be understood. Over-use of colour might be problematic for people with learning disability, people with a lower than average reading age or for those whose first language is not English.

### Colour contrast

There are a variety of free tools on the internet which allow you to check the colour contrast of text on a certain background.

Here are some sites that allow you to test colour contrast:

- Colours on the Web, Color Contrast Analyzer: <http://www.colorsontheweb.com/colorcontrast.asp>
- Juicy Studio, Luminosity Colour Contrast Ratio Analyser: <http://juicystudio.com/services/luminositycontrastratio.php>
- The Paciello Group colour contrast analyser available for downloading: <http://www.paciellogroup.com/resources/contrastAnalyser>

### Examples of marketing material using strong colour contrast for clarity



## 4.5 Layout

Any document or communication should be laid out clearly and simply in order to ensure accessibility of the information. The precise layout might be prescribed by your organisation's house style or brand guidelines, so keep those in mind. If you feel your brand guidelines make requirements that mean a document is inaccessible by design, it is worth reviewing them internally. The main things to consider with layout are:

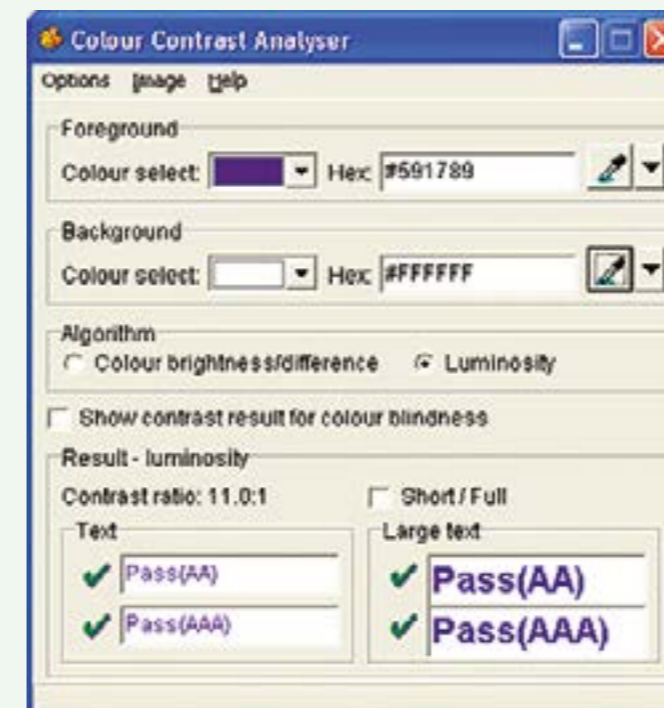
- **Headings** – ensure headings are clearly marked. This is important for people who might be reading your document using a screen reader or text-to-speech software. If headings are not correctly marked in the body of the document then the screen reader will not understand what it is reading. Using the headings function in programmes like Word will help you to structure your document properly. The headings function in Word enables you to structure long documents and create contents tables more easily.

- **Visual order** – if you are using tables in a document that have multiple columns or if you are laying out your text in more than one column you make sure that the underlying structure of the document (how it is technically set up) actually corresponds to the visual order of the information. Screen readers or text-to-speech software will read the text in the order it is presented technically in the structure of the document or web template, not how it is presented visually as part of a graphic design. This video, an Introduction to Screen Readers: [http://youtu.be/o\\_mv06EQ0tM](http://youtu.be/o_mv06EQ0tM) shows someone using a screen reader and explains the difficulties that are encountered.

- Webaim, Colour Contrast Checker: <http://webaim.org/resources/contrastchecker/>

Be mindful that the colour brightness and luminosity are different factors to consider, see graphic below. You will also need to consider the type of communication you are producing; the application of certain colour combinations works well in a digital format with the back-lighting you get on-screen, but you may find on paper that the effect is dulled or that the sheen of the paper makes it harder to distinguish the colours.

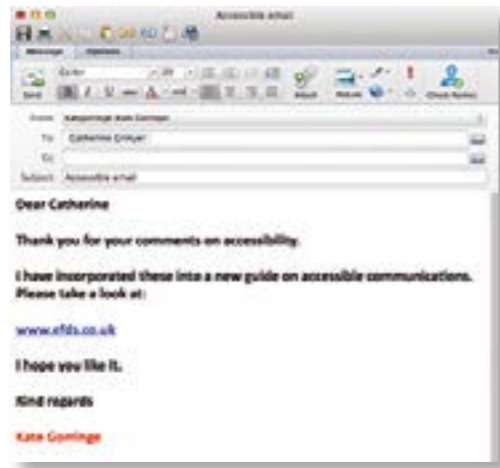
This is an example of a colour contrast analyser tool that is available for free/ downloading on the Internet



## 4.6 Emails

- **Images** – if images are important for your communication clearly position them and make them distinct from any text, shading or overlay. It will be helpful to some of your audience to position images consistently in the same place (e.g. left aligned, right aligned or centred). This will help to give clarity to your layout and provide your communication with a structure. All images should be labelled or given a title. This is especially important in digital communications – this can be done using the alt text label – alt text means “alternative text” and should give a brief description of what the image is otherwise the screen reader will just say something like, “image: blank”, leaving the visually impaired person confused as to whether or not there is an image there. To check whether the images on your website have alt text labels hover your cursor over the image, the alternative text should appear. If you don’t have any alt labels either ask your web agency or find the image title field in your content management system.

Providing a title for an image will also help someone who finds it difficult to read. An appropriate image and title might help them to understand your message more clearly. Images should not be the sole way of communicating important information – if it is vital to convey the meaning of the image for the overall communication, then you need to repeat the information in text also.



Email is the most common form of communication. In the UK millions of emails are sent each minute. Email can be a very accessible and inclusive communication channel. There is a difference in emailing personal contacts and in sending mass communications to an entire database of members. Ideally every email you send should be accessible, but it is particularly important that mass communications are, as you do not know the exact communication requirements of the recipients. You need to ensure the following:

- Your choice of font, font size and font colour are accessible
- Avoid using background stationery as it can make the text difficult to read
- Layout the text as you would a letter, include plenty of paragraphs and generous spacing
- Always use plain English and avoid too much jargon and too many abbreviations
- If you are sending attachments, ensure they are in an accessible format (or do not send them)
- If you are providing links to a website,

check that the link works and ensure that the information you want your reader to see is accessible – there is no point directing someone to information that is behind a pay-wall or that is in a format that only certain people can read

- If your email contains a call to action of some kind, always be mindful that the most obvious or convenient response may not be the most inclusive or accessible. Think about what sort of alternative response routes you could provide. Ensure your team is briefed on how to handle the responses.
- Provide full contact information for yourself or a named individual in your organisation – phone number, email address, website address, social media channels, text phone (if available), mobile phone (SMS) and your postal address. This is often overlooked in out-bound mass communications.
- Avoid including too many logos or graphics in the footer of your email
- If you use corporate branding in your e-mail signature, ensure that is clear and accessible
- Avoid using email addresses that are out-bound only. Addresses that say donotreply@.... are not inclusive. Why email someone if you do not wish to be emailed back? Communication is two way!

## 4.7 Social media



Social media channels are a great way of engaging new and existing members in your organisation. On the whole as they are quite new channels with mass audiences, the main social media sites are inclusive by design. There are some things to bear in mind with the different channels:

- **Twitter** – undoubtedly a great way to communicate short, timely pieces of information to a mass audience but the use or over-use of hashtags and abbreviations can make some Tweets very difficult to understand. You will get a great response if people can actually follow your Tweets. Make any calls to action clear and if you are providing links to websites, ensure the content is accessible or that there are alternative formats available.

### Communicating via Twitter

#### Good use of Twitter

**GoodTwitterUser** @goodtwitteruser  
The game starts at 6pm, we hope to see you there [www.rovers.com](http://www.rovers.com)

#### Poor use of Twitter

**PoorTwitterUser** @poortwitteruser  
d gAm starts @6, we hOp 2 c U aL ther  
#footie #rovers #teamtrials <http://instagram.com/p/jcOhkaIDqL/>

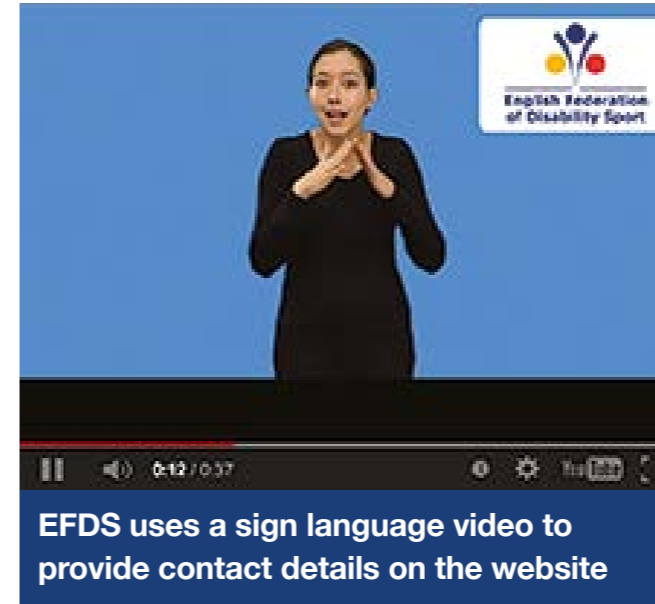
## 4.8 Videos

- **Facebook** – for sport organisations Facebook is a fantastic way of creating a more informal space to share ideas and information and increase participation. The site has improved its own accessibility and inclusion over recent years. You need to be mindful of posting rich content such as videos or PDFs, ensure these are accessible and that any links to external information is also accessible. Sometimes if there are long chains of posts on items they can be difficult to follow, your site moderator should keep that in mind and intervene where possible.

In general terms, remember that not everyone is interested in using social media as a way of keeping informed about the world. Some people may not be able to use social media due to their impairment or health condition, or due to lack of access to a computer, smartphone or tablet. Avoid relying solely on communicating via social media as you will not reach everyone that way.

The last few years have seen a huge increase in the use of video content. Videos are a great way of launching a new campaign, showcasing your organisation or documenting a tournament or competition. Videos can be easily embedded into other communications channels such as e-newsletters or websites and many organisations have their own video channel on YouTube or Vimeo. If you are developing or distributing video content you need to think about catering for different audiences. Not everyone will be able to see or hear what is going on. To ensure your video is inclusive, consider the following:

- If you are producing a video, factor in getting the text captioned (subtitled) and if possible, having an audio description recorded as well. This means you have one version of the video that is as inclusive to different groups as possible. If you are working on a tight budget, it is possible to use the free captioning services available on YouTube or Vimeo
- Subtitles (closed or open captioning) can be useful not just for those with hearing impairments. Imagine a noisy sports arena, exhibition hall or even showcase displays at local shopping centres where you want to show your latest promotional video. Subtitles can help in those environments too.
- Provide an audio commentary (or a description) for any solely visual elements of the video such as scenes, costumes, action not clear from dialogue.
- British Sign Language (BSL) interpretation is available. You might wish to provide two versions of your video one with



BSL, one without – the one with is more inclusive and although more expensive to produce with BSL, it is more cost effective to have one video for everyone. Some sport bodies have developed short BSL videos for their coaches or other workforce to use.

- If you are displaying the video on your website or in a digital newsletter and you do not have captioning and/or audio description, provide a word document (or accessible PDF) transcript of the video, or at least make it known that a transcript is available on request.
- If you are planning to show a video to a group of participants or employees as part of a presentation, ask beforehand whether anyone has any particular access requirements, and try to cater for them in advance or follow up as soon as possible with an alternative format.

## 4.9 Mobile applications (apps)

Mobile applications are a great marketing communications tool and it is important to think about making your mobile application accessible to the widest possible audience. As it is a new and emerging technology there are some pitfalls to be avoided but also a lot of opportunities to be embraced. If you are planning to launch a new app then the best place to start by asking yourself two questions:

1. What is the purpose of the application – or what do you want it to do?
2. Who is going to be using your application and what access requirements might they have?

Part of the scoping for the project should include detailed answers to those questions. If the purpose of the application is to keep your audiences up to date with fixtures, results and news from the club then it does not need to have a complicated design or layout. The information should be readily available without the need for complex graphics or content that might present some users with accessibility difficulties.

### Include an accessibility statement

In your accessibility statement include that your app has been designed to be accessible to disabled people. It should be consistent with your organisation's inclusive communications policy and any policies that appear on your website. Make sure you include your accessibility statement in the details about your app and describe any special accessibility features like the ability to increase font size.



## Mobile applications (apps)



The BBC Sport app is a good example of how to design with accessibility in mind. It follows the BBC's own Mobile Accessibility Guidelines, which are free to download at [http://www.bbc.co.uk/guidelines/futuremedia/accessibility/mobile\\_access.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/guidelines/futuremedia/accessibility/mobile_access.shtml)

### Accessibility testing your app

Your app needs to be accessibility tested in much the same way as you would test a website. Here are some questions to ask. Also, have your app user-tested by people with different communication support requirements including someone that uses a screen reader:

- Can users change the font size setting?
- Does the colour contrast meet the WCAG 2.0 guidelines?
- Do you rely on colour or visual icons to communicate information or instructions? (For example – press the green button or use the house button)
- Can buttons or menu items be pressed with a thumb, index finger and stylus pen?
- Does the app work on different types of devices?
- Does the screen orientation work in portrait and landscape positions?
- Is there a feedback /contact us option?
- Do you provide information or instructions on accessibility?

If you or your developer cannot answer these questions correctly consider having a full accessibility audit and be prepared to allow time and budget for making adjustments to the app.

## 4.10 Printed documents

There is a broad range of people who find printed documents difficult to access, which is why it is important to consider making your printed material as accessible and inclusive as possible as well as allowing for alternative formats. These are some of the things you need to consider when producing a document for print and distribution:

- Font size and style
- Layout
- Plain English
- Use of images
- Colour choice and contrast
- Type of paper stock
- Size of document
- Length of document
- Information about alternative versions (language or format)
- Contact information

## 4.11 Portable Document Format (PDF)

PDF is a very popular format and there are many different kinds – basic documents with text and images or more complex forms or multimedia files. Essentially a PDF allows organisations to distribute newsletters, flyers, events calendars, membership forms, articles or reports in a digital format without the content becoming distorted, altered or copied. The leading provider of PDF software Adobe has extensive guidance on how to produce accessible PDFs: <http://www.adobe.com/accessibility/products/acrobat.html>

PDFs can often be inaccessible to disabled people. If you are blind or have a visual impairment and you use a text to speech tool or a screen reader you might find it difficult to access a 'standard' PDF such as the ones that are created by using the 'save as PDF' option. It all depends how the PDF file is created and you will need to use a professional version of Adobe Acrobat. The good news is that it is possible to create accessible versions of PDF files, which allow you to preserve your content, maintain your brand identity and enable screen readers to read out the content to a disabled person.

If you are producing a PDF document using Microsoft Word and Adobe Acrobat, here is a checklist that should make your PDF accessible:

- A clear reading order that is logical and easy to follow
- Images that have information in them must have alternative text (Alt text)
- Decorative images and headers and footers that are repeated should be taken out of the reading order so they can be 'ignored' by the screen reader

- Headings, table of contents, links and bookmarks should be used to structure the document properly
- Language should be clear and easy to read and the language choice should be specified
- Sufficient colour contrast
- Security settings should not exclude someone using a screen reader or other type of accessibility software

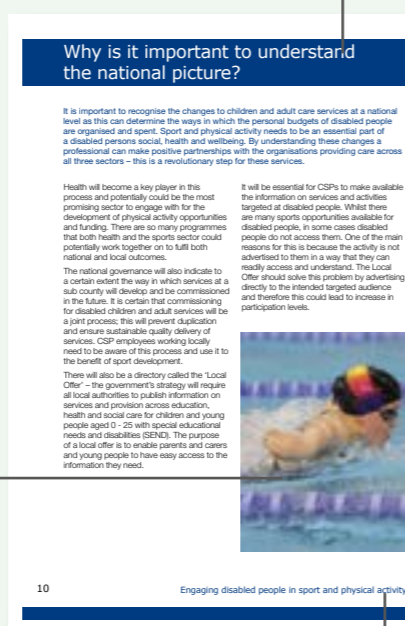
There are designers who specialise in making your designed PDF files accessible from the start. This is reassuring, as some designers do not always know the importance of accessibility to you. This guide has also been made in to an accessible PDF file to show you how it can be done by a designer.

## Creating an accessible pdf

Contents	
<b>1 Background and context</b>	<b>3</b>
1.1 Introduction and aims of guide	3
1.2 Disability and ageing	3
1.3 Legislation	4
1.4 Lifestyle choices	4
1.5 Participation levels	5
1.6 The benefits of physical activity	5
1.7 Barriers to engagement	7
<b>2 Recommendations in overcoming barriers to engagement</b>	<b>9</b>
2.1 Terminology and perceptions	9
2.2 Delivering the right activities	10
2.3 Local community networks and partnership development	12
2.4 Accessibility of the activity	13
2.5 Adapting equipment	13
2.6 Marketing and promotion	14
2.7 Staff training and awareness	14
2.8 Volunteers	15
2.9 Motivations	16
<b>3 Good practice case studies</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>4 Further information and useful resources</b>	<b>22</b>
4.1 Disability sport and physical activity organisations	22
4.2 Health conditions and physical activity resources	22
4.3 Older people and physical activity resources	22
4.4 Motivation and behaviour change resources	23
<b>Notes</b>	<b>24</b>

Use contents list and bookmarks to help navigation

Use ALT text to label pictures



Use style sheets to identify heirarchy of text (eg Heading 1, Heading 2, Paragraph)

Remove repeated information from the tagged reading order

## 4.12 Posters

Poster campaigns are a great way of raising awareness about your organisation in leisure centres, gyms, schools and sports facilities or club. Most posters are designed to be eye-catching and have a combination of images and text. There is a call-to-action which is typically to contact your organisation's website for more information on getting involved. Posters are cost-effective and are widely used, but if they are not produced well they can unintentionally exclude people and if used in isolation, they will most certainly exclude certain groups like blind people or people with a visual impairment.

If you are launching a new poster campaign consider the following:

- Use of inclusive images – showing disabled people active in (and enjoying!) your sport. Depending on the event, choose images that also reflect the interaction in sport between people, not disabled people in isolation.
- Use of font style, size and colour – avoid block capitals and italic script
- Layout of information, no text over imagery- unless it is blocked behind with good colour contrast.
- Colour contrast
- Clarity of the call to action
- Full contact information for your organisation
- How to request alternative versions of the poster
- Providing the information to specific groups via an alternative method (e.g. email)
- Physical position of the posters in clubs, leisure centres, sporting facilities or other venues

## 4.13 Infographics

Infographics can engage your audience, explain the complexities of the industry you are in and help you to tell your story visually. The designs are often highly sophisticated and complex, conveying large amounts of data visually. There is a huge trend towards using infographics to communicate complex information on one page – great for getting your message across to journalists for example. There is a common-held view that infographics cannot be accessible or inclusive, but that is not necessarily the case. As will all forms of communications it comes down to what you are trying to convey and how you are conveying it. An infographic can be accessible if it is designed correctly. If not designed properly, here are some of the common barriers that occur:

- Often, images do not have enough text information to describe what the infographic is representing.
- Screen readers only read out the alt-text description and in many cases that information is missing or mislabelled.
- Use of colour is important for those who are colour blind, whether it is in the design of icons or text or the colour of the background.
- Choice of font and style is also potentially a barrier for some people.
- People with a learning disability will have difficulties decoding complex information.

### How to make your infographic accessible:

- Provide a text alternative for the infographic.
- Use HTML to create your infographic rather than using an image file.

## 4.14 Campaign or promotional communications

- Choose a colour palette that meets minimum contrast requirements to ensure that your infographic is accessible.
- The contrast ratio between the text (or image of text) and background must be at least 4.5:1 for normal text or 3:1 for large text. Normal text is text that is up to 14 point bold or 18 point normal, whereas large text is at least 14 point bold or 18 point normal. You must meet this requirement if your website is WCAG 2.0 Level AA compliant.
- If you use colour to convey information within an infographic, and make sure the same information is communicated either in text or via other visual cues such as text formatting or font size.
- There is a difference between using colour for aesthetic reasons and using colour to convey information.

When preparing your campaign/promotion displays it is important to consider how different people might interact with your campaign. If, for example, you are doing a campaign to widen or increase participation in a leisure centre reception you will need to think carefully about the following:

- The physical location and height of any counter-top information such as leaflets or flyers and banners or posters. If display levels are too high, or in a place that is difficult to see or access you might unintentionally exclude some of the following groups: people that use wheelchairs, walking aids or mobility scooters, person of short stature or restricted growth and people with visual impairments.
- Use of banners, posters and other printed materials – the guidelines on best use of font size, layout, images and colour contrast should be followed. You might like to consider having some alternative formats of your information available such as large print, braille or digital/audio versions. If your budget does not allow this, then whoever is on duty either from your organisation or the leisure centre should be made aware that some people might require some assistance in finding out more about taking part. For example taking the person's telephone number or email address for a follow up communication would be a reasonable alternative to providing accessible formats such as Braille or Easy Read. Ultimately, the goal of a campaign to increase participation in your sport or club etc. is to gain as many new participants as possible, so having a range of different contact and information options should ensure that you are reaching as wide an audience as possible.

- If your display or information point includes a touch screen device or a computer terminal, you also need to consider the position and height of the device or terminal. Ask yourself, is there room for a wheelchair-user or a mobility scooter? Are there chairs on hand for people who find it difficult to stand for long periods? You also need to consider the accessibility of the information you are providing on-screen. Whether it is a web-based application or an interactive information guide, you need to ensure that you are meeting the guidelines on the accessibility of digital information (see web accessibility).

- The choice of venue could be leisure centres and sports facilities that have the Inclusive Fitness Initiative (IFI) Mark. IFI is a programme managed by EFDS. It operates an accreditation scheme; an IFI Mark recognises the achievements and commitment of leisure facilities that support disabled people to be physically active. The accreditation provides an inclusive platform for disabled and non-disabled people to be active together. A venue with an IFI Mark is more likely to have disabled visitors and be a good venue for your awareness-raising campaign and/or other activities.

More information on the IFI Mark facilities is available [http://www.efds.co.uk/inclusive\\_fitness](http://www.efds.co.uk/inclusive_fitness)



## 5 Inclusive communications better practice checklist

- Develop an inclusive communications policy, which sets out your organisation's commitment to providing inclusive communications and alternative formats. Publish this policy on your website and offer the opportunity for people to provide you with suggestions and feedback.
- Always consider who the audience is for each and every piece of work. Is your internal audience different to your external audience, do you actually know who you are trying to reach and by what communication channels? How do different groups need to access your information?
- Include accessibility as an essential requirement for each project – an explicit reference to inclusive and accessible communication should be made in your scoping document so that any colleagues or suppliers know what has to be produced from the beginning.
- Allow time and budget for producing alternative formats as well as for accessibility and usability testing of any digital communications.
- Inclusive design can save you time and money, the more accessible and inclusive your communications are the less time and money will be spent on making adjustments. Use clear English, be succinct and design your campaign to be as readable as possible.
- Accessibility or inclusivity does not mean you have to compromise on good design and brand integrity; it just needs to be factored into the creative process and designers need to be briefed.
- Best practice in web accessibility (WCAG guidelines) should be applied to all other digital communications.
- Do not assume that your designers or developers understand what accessibility or inclusive design is, even when they say they do! Be prepared to challenge what you are given and ask for informal or formal feedback from disabled colleagues or users.
- Make sure you have your digital communications tested for accessibility and usability by different groups before you launch them, factor some time in to do any fixes (there will be some) and ensure your designer or developer does not charge you extra for it – if you have briefed them on the need for accessible and inclusive design and functionality then that is what they should deliver.



## 6 Resources and further information

As it can be difficult to know where to go for specialist support we have included a small selection (not an endorsement) of useful resources, links or organisations. We've tried to be comprehensive in signposting a broad range of organisations. Any organisation that is not listed on the following pages is not excluded for any reason other than the author being unaware of the service or company.

## 6.1 British Sign Language (BSL)

- Action on Hearing Loss, A buyer's guide to BSL online: [www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk/supporting-you/accreditations-assessments-and-training-for-businesses/a-buyers-guide-to-bsl-translation-for-the-internet.aspx](http://www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk/supporting-you/accreditations-assessments-and-training-for-businesses/a-buyers-guide-to-bsl-translation-for-the-internet.aspx)
- National Registers of Communications Professionals working with Deaf and Deafblind people: [www.nrcpd.org.uk](http://www.nrcpd.org.uk)
- Remark translation is a specialist language and communications consultancy: [www.remark.uk.com](http://www.remark.uk.com)
- Sign Video, remote video translation service for BSL users can be integrated online: [www.signvideo.co.uk](http://www.signvideo.co.uk)
- The National Deaf Children's Society has been working with various sports partners, from The FA to England Athletics, to create short videos to support clubs or coaches to learn some basic BSL related to sport: [www.ndcs.org.uk/whats\\_on/me2/are\\_you\\_an\\_organisation/sports/bsl\\_for\\_sport.html](http://www.ndcs.org.uk/whats_on/me2/are_you_an_organisation/sports/bsl_for_sport.html)

## 6.2 Design

Many of the principles of inclusive design are covered in this guide – font size, layout, use of images etc. If you have an in-house design team or an agency you can share this guide with them and put inclusive design as a requirement in your design briefs. If you do not have a design team or agency, here are some useful resources on inclusive design:

- Design Council: [www.designcouncil.info/inclusivedesignresource/studies\\_index.html](http://www.designcouncil.info/inclusivedesignresource/studies_index.html)
- Inclusive Design Toolkit: [www.inclusivedesigntoolkit.com](http://www.inclusivedesigntoolkit.com)
- A library of inclusive images can be viewed at: [www.promotingactivity.co.uk](http://www.promotingactivity.co.uk)

## 6.3 Easy Read

- Change – videos, illustrations and Easy Read: [www.changepeople.org/easy-read-services](http://www.changepeople.org/easy-read-services)
- Easy Read Online provide a translation of your documents into Easy Read: [www.easy-read-online.co.uk](http://www.easy-read-online.co.uk)
- VoiceAbility provide easy read translation services into a number of different formats – print, audio and digital: [www.voiceability.org/what\\_we\\_do/easyread\\_services](http://www.voiceability.org/what_we_do/easyread_services)
- Mencap has produced resources to help you to learn more about communicating with people with a learning disability, and how to make your existing communication materials more accessible: [www.mencap.org.uk/all-about-learning-disability/information-professionals/communication](http://www.mencap.org.uk/all-about-learning-disability/information-professionals/communication)

## 6.4 Advice and guidance to support and attract more disabled people to take part in sport or physical activity.

The English Federation of Disability Sport, its Inclusive Fitness Initiative (IFI) and partners have produced many resources to support you to improve inclusive communications. All the IFI guides are available at: [www.efds.co.uk](http://www.efds.co.uk)

- Guide to supporting and attracting deaf and hearing impaired people to use the gym
- Guide to support and attract people with a learning disability to use the gym
- Guide to support and attract people with a visual impairment to use the gym
- Guide to support and attract wheelchair users to use the gym

The National Disability Sport Organisations can support you to and advise you on work with people with specific impairments:

- **British Blind Sport (BBS)**  
Since its formation in 1976, BBS has become the leading voice for blind and partially sighted people in sport and leisure in the UK. From grassroots to Paralympic representation, BBS encourages participation in sport at all levels:  
[www.britishblindsport.org.uk](http://www.britishblindsport.org.uk), telephone 01926 424247 or email [info@britishblindsport.org.uk](mailto:info@britishblindsport.org.uk)
- **Cerebral Palsy Sport (CP Sport)**  
CP Sport are the sports organisation for people with Cerebral palsy. They provide advice and guidance as well as delivering sporting opportunities to people of all abilities, from play to performance.  
[www.cpsport.org](http://www.cpsport.org), telephone 0115 9257027 or email [info@cpsport.org](mailto:info@cpsport.org)

- **Dwarf Sports Association UK**  
Launched in 1993, the Dwarf Sports Association UK aims to make opportunities accessible to anyone of restricted growth in the UK.  
[www.dsauk.org](http://www.dsauk.org) or telephone 01246 296485
- **Mencap Sport**  
Mencap Sport is the national organisation promoting and developing sport for people with a learning disability across England.  
[www.mencap.org.uk/sport](http://www.mencap.org.uk/sport) or email [sport@mencap.org.uk](mailto:sport@mencap.org.uk)
- **Special Olympics Great Britain (SOGB)**  
SOGB is a provider of year-round training and competition opportunities for people with a learning disability across England, Scotland and Wales.  
[www.specialolympicsgb.org.uk](http://www.specialolympicsgb.org.uk), telephone 0207 2478891 or email [info@sogb.org.uk](mailto:info@sogb.org.uk)
- **UK Deaf Sport (UKDS)**  
UK Deaf Sport encourages people who are deaf or hard of hearing to participate, enjoy and excel at sport. They provide information on sporting events throughout the UK and are linked and affiliated to ICSD (the International Committee of Sports for the Deaf) as well as Deaflympics.  
[www.ukdeafsport.org.uk](http://www.ukdeafsport.org.uk) or email [office@ukds.org.uk](mailto:office@ukds.org.uk)

## 6.5 Transcription and captioning services

- **WheelPower**  
WheelPower, the national charity for wheelchair sport, provides opportunities, facilities and equipment to enable disabled people to participate in sport and lead healthy active lives. Through its annual programme of events, links to its member sports associations and other organisations, WheelPower supports individuals to find sports which they are passionate about.  
[www.wheelpower.org.uk](http://www.wheelpower.org.uk), telephone 01296 395995 or email [info@wheelpower.org.uk](mailto:info@wheelpower.org.uk)
- Communicating with people with a learning disability: a guide: [www.mencap.org.uk/Communicating\\_guide](http://www.mencap.org.uk/Communicating_guide)
- You can access over 400 IFI accredited facilities through the EFDS website search facility: [www.efds.co.uk/inclusive\\_fitness/ifi\\_gyms](http://www.efds.co.uk/inclusive_fitness/ifi_gyms)

- Bee Communications – remote captioning, conference calls, videos: [www.bee-communications.com](http://www.bee-communications.com)
- Remark Translation – audio, Braille, BSL, captioning: [www.remark.uk.com](http://www.remark.uk.com)
- Sterling Transcription [www.sterlingtranscription.co.uk](http://www.sterlingtranscription.co.uk)

## 6.6 Accessibility software


- Claro Software – a broad range of different accessibility products including ClaroPDF which speech-enables PDF documents, aimed more at individual users rather than organisations: [www.clarosoftware.com](http://www.clarosoftware.com)
- Recite Me – web accessibility software that allows users to customise your website so they can access your content the way they need to: [www.reciteme.com](http://www.reciteme.com)
- Texthelp – provide a range of assistive technology solutions and offer BrowseAloud, a tool that provides reading support to website visitors: [www.texthelp.com](http://www.texthelp.com)

## 6.7 Web accessibility guidance and testing

- AbilityNet – leading UK charity that provides extensive guidance, support and services on web and IT accessibility. They offer a full range from web user testing to ‘icomply’ a comprehensive accessibility management framework: [www.abilitynet.org.uk](http://www.abilitynet.org.uk)
- Labscape – web accessibility testing, user-testing, training and accessibility services like producing accessible PDFs: [www.landscape.co.uk/accessibility\\_services.htm](http://www.landscape.co.uk/accessibility_services.htm)
- Shaw Trust offer accessibility testing, reviews, training and consultancy: [webacc.shaw-trust.org.uk/our-services](http://webacc.shaw-trust.org.uk/our-services)
- World Wide Web Consortium (W3C), Web Accessibility Initiative: [www.w3.org/WAI](http://www.w3.org/WAI)
- W3C provide a comprehensive list of web-based accessibility testing tools: [www.w3.org/WAI/ER/tools/complete](http://www.w3.org/WAI/ER/tools/complete)
- RNIB offers a wide range of web accessibility consultancy and training services: [www.rnib.org.uk/professionals/webaccessibility/services/Pages/services.aspx](http://www.rnib.org.uk/professionals/webaccessibility/services/Pages/services.aspx)
- User Vision – usability and web accessibility testing: [www.uservision.co.uk](http://www.uservision.co.uk)

## 6.8 Glossary

Apps	Mobile applications
BSL	British Sign Language
EFDS	English Federation of Disability Sport
IFI	Inclusive Fitness Initiative
PDF	Portable Document Format
WCAG 2.0	Web Content Accessibility Guidelines
W3C	The web’s governing body World Wide Web Consortium



English Federation of Disability Sport  
SportPark, Loughborough University  
3 Oakwood Drive  
Loughborough  
Leicestershire LE11 3QF

Tel: 01509 227750  
Fax: 01509 227777

This document is available in other formats.  
Please contact [federation@efds.co.uk](mailto:federation@efds.co.uk)

Produced March 2014.

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