

YCBA Chair's Communication to Club Secretaries - Disability Access Update

I previously wrote to you on 15th July 2024 regarding the work that the YCBA's Diversity, Inclusion and Equality Committee have started to provide support to clubs to improve their disability access arrangements as well as their provision of information regarding these arrangements.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank those clubs who have already returned their completed template detailing their current disability access arrangements and urge those clubs who have not yet returned them do so as quickly as possible.

The Diversity, Inclusion and Equality Committee plan to share the good practice learnt from the results of the completed templates and other sources to support clubs in their consideration of all aspects of disability.

Disability Access – Legal Requirements

As indicated in my earlier letter the Equality Act 2010 places a legal requirement on private clubs and other associations to make reasonable adjustments to allow people to become members or associates and for them and any disabled guests to participate in their activities.

I am attaching two documents which provide guidance for private clubs regarding their legal responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010.

As you will note from page 8 of the earlier of these two documents reasonable adjustments need to be made to avoid a disabled person experiencing a substantial disadvantage in comparison with non-disabled people.

A club may need to make adjustments to a policy or practice, such as relaxing a ban on animals for people who use assistance dogs. It may have to provide an auxiliary aid, such as providing information in accessible formats. It may have to make physical adjustments to parts of its premises.

A club is only required to make adjustments that are reasonable in all the circumstances. What is reasonable will depend on factors such as the practicality and cost of making the adjustment. A private club is not required to do anything that will alter the fundamental nature of the club and what it does.

As previously indicated, in terms of the facilities that a club provides for its disabled players the YCBA advises that the following should be provided, where it is reasonable in all the circumstances:

- Easy access for wheelchair users and members with other mobility issues.
- Accessible toilet facilities for disabled members.
- Accessible parking spaces near the club entrance where the club has its own car park.
- Equipment to enable disabled members to play bridge as comfortably as possible such as card holders, large print playing cards, access to a hearing loop etc.
- Information regarding disability access arrangements to be displayed on club websites using inclusive language. [The following weblink provides guidance in this area - <https://gmcdp.com/terminology-and-language>]

Disability Access – Yorkshire League Matches

Whilst all clubs should provide information regarding disability access arrangements on their club websites, this is of particular importance for those clubs playing in the Yorkshire League as this involves players playing at other clubs and venues.

Where a Yorkshire League club has a player for whom a reasonable adjustment may be required when playing at another club this should be communicated to the relevant club's Match Secretary at the earliest opportunity to enable this to be considered.

Where Clubs playing in the Yorkshire League are unable to put in place a reasonable adjustment within their own club the use of an alternative venue should be considered.

The Yorkshire League Committee intends to consult with Yorkshire League clubs on the practical implications of the proposal that in certain circumstances the venue of matches might be changed to facilitate participation by players with disabilities. The YLC will consider an amendment of the Yorkshire League rules for the 2025-26 season, in the light of the outcome of the consultation.

If any advice is required regarding this matter, the following individuals can be contacted: -

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