

# FACILITATING PHYSICAL ACCESS

Creating rallies, training sessions and competitions that are welcoming and accessible to everyone in The Pony Club community helps foster a supportive, judgement-free environment. When parents, guardians, coaches, volunteers, officials, and members with access needs are fully included, the whole community benefits — and recognising potential barriers is the first step toward removing them.

## THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN EVENT PLANNING:

- The type of **surface**
- How accessible are the **toilets**
- Lighting **visibility**
- Clarity of **signage**
- Size of **parking** spaces
- **Distance** between parking and the event
- Viewing **platforms**
- Are **hearing** loops available
- Width and ease of **entrances**
- Height of **countertops**
- Visual and aural **emergency** announcements



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You may not be using your own venue and you may not be able to make arrangements to improve accessibility. What you can **always** do is be transparent and communicative about what potential challenges there might be. That way, those with access requirements may be able to plan accordingly. This starts with awareness of what those challenges might be. The person who knows best how to support someone, is the person themselves. Everyone's challenges look different. Allowing feedback and accepting it with kindness and without judgement should always be welcomed.

## REMEMBER!

**Anyone may face physical access challenges at any time, temporary or permanent, due to accident, injury or illness. Events that are access friendly, are people friendly.**

**Never try to help someone with a disability by touching them or their aid without their consent!**



## **SURFACE**

Gravel, sand, cobblestones and grass can all pose challenges for those with mobility restrictions. Informing everyone in advance of what surfaces they are expected to move on allows people to make informed choices about what aids might be the most appropriate to bring.

## **VIEWING PLATFORM**

Some equestrian venues offer raised platforms or areas free from visual obstruction for wheelchair user and those who may need to sit down more often. It's worth knowing if the venues you use have this.

## **HEARING LOOPS**

Hearing loops give aural feedback to hearing aid users. Knowing whether your venue has a hearing loop system may make a difference to who can or cannot attend events.

## **COUNTERTOPS**

Venue cafes and restaurants (including food trucks), trade vendors, photographers, raffle and fundraising stalls all may have counters which are too high for wheelchair users to use. It is worth being mindful of this when structuring layouts. Where this is impossible to avoid, it is important to have additional support available or a plan to serve those affected.

## **TOILETS**

Not all accessible toilets are created equal! There are specific legal requirements for toilets labelled as accessible to meet, though many fall short of this. Accessible toilets are often used by businesses as storage. Advocating for The Pony Club communities needs is one small thing we can do to help maintain people's independence and dignity. If your venue does not have an accessible toilet, communicating that in advance can help with planning ahead.



## ENTRANCES & EXITS

While this predominantly applies to buildings, gateways can also be considered. Things to be considered are the width of the entryway, how easy it is to open, (e.g., is there automatic or manual doors, how heavy is it), and if there is an additional access entrance and is it well signposted.



## PARKING

Distance between parking and activity can be easily informed and should be minimised where possible. Wide parking spaces are necessary for wheelchair users to efficiently get their equipment from their vehicle. Equestrian events typically do this quite well to allow for space for horse, but it is something to keep in mind if setting up your own parking areas.



## SIGNAGE

Is your event well signposted? Even within the venue? Clear and legible signage limits confusion and ensures that everyone gets to where they need to go.



## EMERGENCY ANNOUNCEMENTS

In the event of emergencies, those with disabilities are more at risk of harm. Indoor venues should have both visual and aural cues to alert the public that evacuation is necessary. There should also be a plan for persons with physical mobility restrictions. Check with your venue what their emergency protocols are and in sure everyone is aware. This makes events safer for everyone.



## VISIBILITY

For those with visual impairments (of any severity!), sufficient lighting is essential. Try to plan your events in clear daylight. When the dark British winter comes in, be cautious of venues where artificial lighting is insufficient.



# SAMPLE EVENT SCHEDULE

## ANNUAL BRANCH QUIZ

DATE:	28th February 2026
TIME:	7:00pm
VENUE:	Pony Club Head Office
ADDRESS:	Old Warwick Road, Little Shrewley, Warwickshire, CV357AX
what.3.words:	///frock.trips.clash
CONTACT:	Rachel Greene
PHONE:	+44 07 1234 567
EMAIL:	enquiries@pcuk.org
PRICE:	£10 per team
SCHEDULE:	Minis - 7pm Juniors/Seniors - 8:30pm
ACCESS:	Limited disabled parking available in front of entrance. Carpark is gravelled. Once in the automatic door, please follow signs for 'Quiz'. Basic disabled toilet on site.