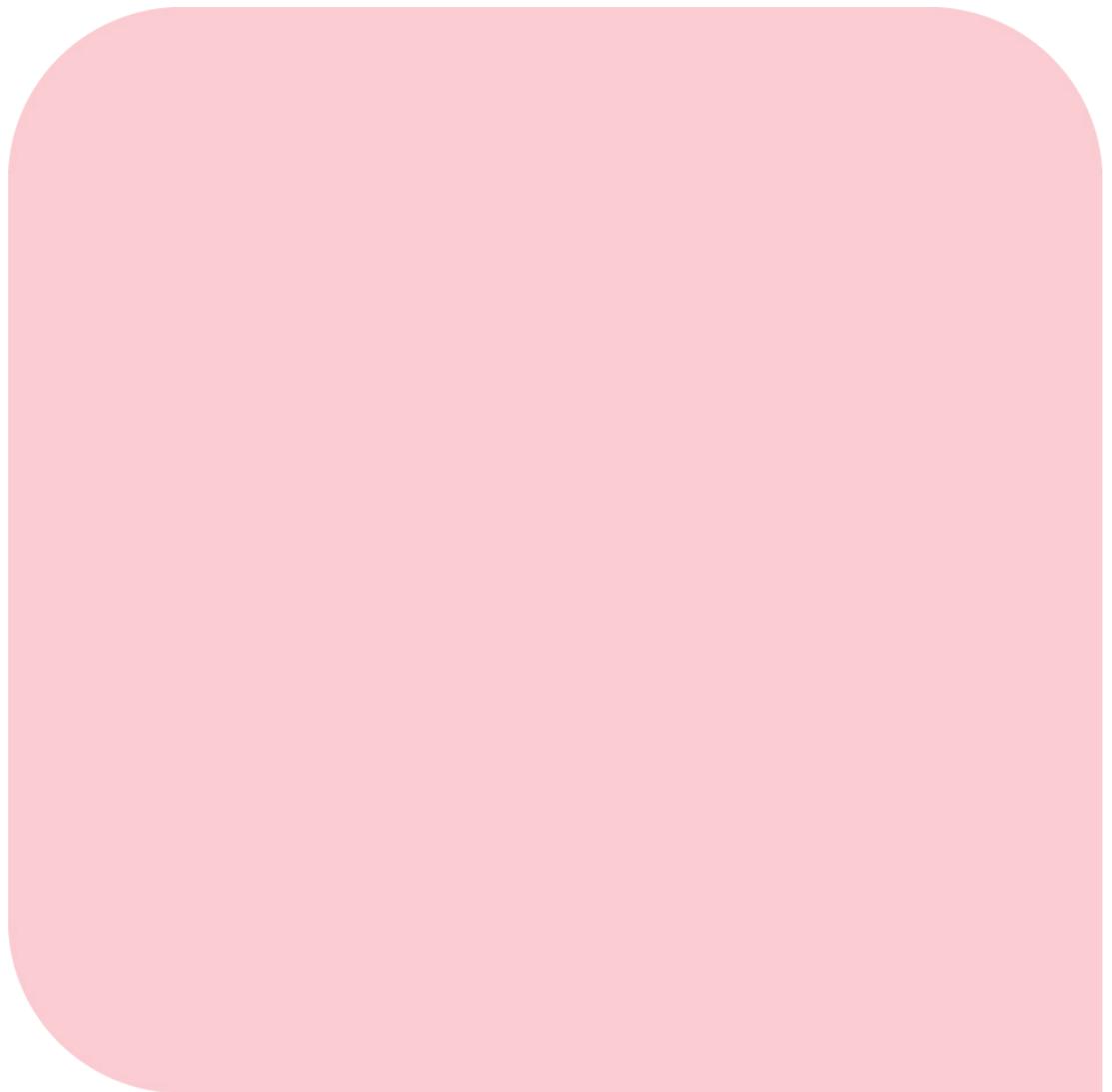


How to make events accessible



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Introduction

These guidelines provide information about how you can make the event accessible for your guests. Events can include one-to-one meetings, larger meetings, conferences, and so on. It looks at the different stages from planning and support, to travel on the day of the event itself.

The guidelines start with some general points about making events accessible and then includes information specific to different groups.

The law says that you need to be make reasonable adjustments to the service (in this case the event or meeting) to make it accessible for disabled people. This might mean having information available in alternative formats, for example in Braille or in 'easy read'. It does not mean you have to have information available in alternative formats if no one who needs those formats is attending. You should ask people, perhaps on the booking form, whether they need information in an alternative format or whether they have any other needs. As far as possible, you should try and meet these needs. See Appendix A for an example.

If you are holding an event outside your office, some access issues will be the responsibility of the venue as they are providing you with a service. Although it is not always clear who is responsible, a good guide may be that you are responsible for the meeting content and all related issues and that the venue is responsible for physical access. In practice, it is always best to check that all access issues are covered as many venues that claim they are accessible may actually not meet all the requirements of your guests, for example, some venues that are wheelchair accessible inside, have steps at the entrance.

It is good to think about accessibility and have a budget for this from the beginning. Common sense and flexibility are also key.

Planning events

General information on planning events

- Ask people you are inviting whether they have any needs. This includes at a minimum asking people whether they require:
 - > Braille
 - > documents on tape
 - > an induction loop
 - > large-print documents: 14pt 16pt 18pt 20 pt
 - > wheelchair access
 - > sign-language interpreter
 - > parking for disabled people
 - > food that meets any dietary requirements.
- When setting a date for your event, avoid weekends, school holidays and religious holidays. You can find a list of religious holidays and definitions on www.interfaithcalendar.org.
- When organising events in Northern Ireland, avoid booking dates on St. Patrick's Day or during marching seasons.
- Avoid starting your event too early if people are travelling long distances and aim to stick to the times you give people.
- Plan breaks around every 45 minutes. Make sure that they are long enough for people to eat and drink, go to the toilet, rest and pray if they need to.
- Ask speakers to get you their presentations at least four weeks before the conference so they can be prepared and sent out in different formats if needed.
- Let people know about housekeeping (for example where the toilets are) at the beginning of the meeting.
- Some disabled people will need support so they can take part in a meeting. Personal assistants can help people with physical disabilities or sensory impairments with getting from place to place, with drinks and food, going to the toilet, taking notes or minutes, turning pages and holding things. People with learning disabilities often also need support to understand reports and papers before and during the meeting.

- Some people may like to bring their own supporter, or personal assistant and some may want support arranged for them. If you need to book support for them you can get a list of trained personal assistants from the local 'Centre for Integrated Living' or a list of supporters from your local People First or Speak group.
- You should make it clear to people that your organisation is happy to pay for support.

Planning events attended by black and minority ethnic people

- Think about Muslim prayer times – these change slightly each day and in winter and summer. See www.islamicfinder.org for more information.
- Translation/interpreting should be provided by professionals if needed. The local council or Race Equality Council will tell you about interpreting services in the area. It is a good idea to have a list of community language interpreters prepared.
- The Language Line Service (0800 169 2879) could be used for one-to-one interpreting. This is a telephone service where you can arrange to talk to an interpreter.
- Infrared or radio systems can be used to offer language translation services. It is important to check that it does not affect the system in use for hearing aid users.

Planning events attended by people with visual impairments

- Try to send people papers in people's chosen format such as Braille, large print, audiotape or on CD before they come to the event.
- If you are going to be using a video during the event check whether an audio described version is available. This means that there is extra narration to tell people about facial expressions, body language, actions and costumes.

Planning events attended by people with learning disabilities

- A few people with learning disabilities use Makaton to communicate. Makaton is a basic signing and symbol system. If they use it, they may ask for papers in Makaton and their supporter will use it to communicate with them.

- Do not plan too many things in one meeting and put the most important things at the top of the agenda.
- Use easy words and pictures. SCIE has rights to the CHANGE picture bank – it can be found through the participation portal through SCIE’s intranet SCIEnet.
- Make information available on audiotape or on CD (containing documents in different formats) if people need this.

Planning events attended by deaf and hard-of-hearing people

- Deaf and hard-of-hearing people may require various kinds of support in order to participate in meetings. Some deaf and hard-of-hearing people use a loop system, others use language support professionals and/or hearing aids.
- Some people use an induction loop system to hear presentations or meetings more clearly. Some buildings have loops systems built in and have portable loop systems available for small to medium events. This is the sort of adjustment, as well as physical adaptations that the venue should be responsible for.
- Deaf and hard-of-hearing people can be supported by language support professionals. These professional services include:
 - > British or Irish sign language interpreters
 - > relay interpreters.
- Local deaf societies and organisations may be able to help you find a language support professional. If the assignment lasts a long time or is complicated you will need to book more than one interpreter.
- There are not enough language support professionals in the country. You will need to book four to six weeks in advance if possible.
- If no communication support is available talk to people about the alternative steps that can be taken.
- Try to give language support professionals an idea of what the meeting is about beforehand, including any video and presentations. Sending them the agenda and any papers is a good way of doing this.

- If you are using videos, they can be subtitled or overlaid with British or Irish sign language interpretation. If none of these are possible, you could send out the transcript to deaf and hard-of-hearing people.

British or Irish sign language interpreters

- For some people, British Sign Language (BSL) is their first language. This is not the case for all deaf people. BSL is completely different to English and so a BSL interpreter is needed. The law says that you must provide an interpreter if asked and you cannot make the person pay for it.
- You do not always have to provide 'live' information through an interpreter – you could give signed information out on video, CD-ROM, DVD or on a website.
- You could consider video interpreting. This means using an interpreter through a videophone rather than in person. This is useful for short, last-minute, one-to-one meetings.
- As the service provider (due to the fact you are organising the content of the meeting or conference), you must provide an interpreter if it is needed unless:
 - > it will make communication easier not to have one
 - > you have the full agreement of the deaf person.
- International Sign Language is sometimes used instead of British Sign Language where people are from minority ethnic groups.
- BSL has regional dialects. If this is a potential issue, it is best to have the interpreter present (rather than on video) so that they can clarify anything.

Relay interpreter

- Sometimes you might need to get a relay interpreter. This is an interpreter or a deaf person who puts BSL into a certain form so that the deaf person can understand it. Get advice when you book to make sure you get the right kind of interpreter.

Deaf-blind communicators and guides

- Deaf-blind communicators and guides work with people on a one-to-one basis. They use different ways of communicating such as the manual alphabet, block alphabet, Braille keyboard and hands-on signing (the person places their hands on the communicators to follow the shape of the signs). Please bear in mind that deaf-blind communication often requires more time (often 50 – 70 per cent more time).

Lipspeakers

- Lipspeakers are trained professionals who repeat what a hearing person or speaker is saying, without using their voice, so that you can lipread them easily.

Note takers

- Note takers now work mostly electronically, noting down on a computer the main points of what is being said.

Speech-to-text reporters

- A speech-to-text reporter (also known as a palantypist) types out everything that is being said. If there are only a few deaf people using a speech-to-text reporter, the text is usually viewed on a laptop screen but can be viewed on a large screen. This can also help everyone to keep up with what is being said.

Planning events attended by people with mental health problems

- Do not start meetings too early in the morning. People who take medication or experience depression may find it hard to get up.
- Keep presentation segments short as some people find it difficult to concentrate for long periods.

Planning events attended by substance misusers

- Try not to launch into a difficult session straight after a break as some people will have taken medication during the break and it can sometimes take up to half an hour for the medication to settle down and people's concentration to return to normal.

Ensuring venues are accessible

General guidance on ensuring venues are accessible

- It is essential that you visit a venue you haven't used before to check its accessibility before confirming a booking.
- Please use the SCIE venue checklist (see Appendix B) to assess the venues accessibility.
- Here is a list of access features (covered on the checklist) you should ask the venue about:
 - > Are adapted rooms (see the accommodation section) available?
 - > Are there quiet areas for speakers, performers and exhibitors?
 - > Is there car parking available?
 - Disabled parking bays need to be clearly marked, on firm level ground (not gravel) and near the entrance. There should be space (1.2 m) at the end and sides of the bay (for opening boots or using hoists). You could ask the venue how they check that only disabled people are using the bays.
 - If there is no car park at the venue, find out about local on-street and car park facilities. It may be possible to reserve spaces for disabled people. If you can, let people know how far the parking is from the venue.
 - If there is an intercom at the entrance, make sure deaf and hard-of-hearing people and people with physical impairments can still get in.
 - > Are venue staff disability aware? Could someone who understands access issues brief them before the event?
 - > Is the drop between the pavement and the road or the slope leading to the dropped area accessible for people with mobility problems or people using wheelchairs?
 - > Is there space for people to move about with trays and space for everyone to be able to sit down at a table in the eating area? These areas should not be separated by steps – people should be able to sit together.
 - > Are the electrical sockets easily accessible?
 - > Are there suitable entrances and exits (preferably the same for everybody)?
 - > Does the venue's evacuation procedures meet the needs of people with mobility and sensory impairments e.g. by describing clearly how to get out (and not just by pointing) in the event of an emergency?
 - > Are flipcharts and pens available if needed?
 - > Are guide dogs allowed into the venue?
 - > Does the venue have an induction loop?
 - > Is internet access available (preferably broadband)?

- > Are wheelchair-accessible lifts available? If possible, hold the event on one floor only.
 - > What is the lighting like? Natural lighting is best with an option of blinds/curtains.
 - > Does it have separate meeting rooms /quiet room?
 - > Are data projectors, screen and laptops available for hire?
 - > Is there a reception desk/bell to call for help?
 - > Is there space for registration and a cloakroom?
 - > Are there seats dotted around the building?
 - > Are there smoking areas? If possible make this near the meeting area but far enough so that people do not have to inhale smoke if they do not want to.
 - > Is there room for a stage? Space should be left for this if necessary and ramps provided.
 - > Can you control the temperature in the room? Is the air-conditioning too noisy?
 - > Are there sufficient toilets and toilets for disabled people?
 - The building should have adapted toilet facilities so that everyone can get to the toilet easily. Some people may also need a changing table and shower; a hotel room may be useful for this. On the day you should check that the toilet is in good condition.
 - > Are the corridors wide enough to accommodate wheelchairs?
 - There should be enough space in the corridor for people in wheelchairs to turn around and for people to pass each other.
- Please make it clear where help and support can be found on the day.

Ensuring venues are accessible for black and minority ethnic people

- Consider setting up a prayer room that could also be a quiet room. If possible put an arrow in the room pointing east.

Ensuring venues are accessible for people with mental health problems

- Offer cigarette breaks regularly as they may be particularly important for this group.
- A quiet room may be really useful for people with mental health problems and also people experiencing fatigue.

Ensuring venues are accessible for blind people and people with visual impairments

- Do handrails or texture show people when there is going to be a change in what is around them (like stairs)? Could you put brightly coloured tape on for contrast and texture?
- Glass doors can be very dangerous for people with visual impairments. It is really important that there is a strong contrast between the door and the doorframe. Could you put stickers or bright signs on the glass?

Inviting people to an event

General guidelines to inviting people to an event

- Let people know that the meeting/conference is accessible and that support/interpreters can be booked – this will help them to decide whether to come or not. People will want to know if they have to pay for anything to come.
- Make sure you let service users and carers know that you will pay them for attending the event.
- Check any websites that you advertise on are accessible to the relevant standards.
- Make sure people know who to contact if they want more information and that staff can answer or find out about questions about accessibility.
- Give people the option of e-mail, telephone, fax and post.
- SCIE uses a booking form to let people know what adjustments have already been arranged and to ask people what works best for them.

Inviting people with learning disabilities to an event

- Booking forms should be in easy read.
- Use easy words and pictures in meeting and conference papers (see the information section).
- You could colour code the papers (keep colours the same each meeting).
- Papers should be sent out at least two weeks in advance.

Greeting people

Greeting people with a disability

- You should never assume that you know what a person needs, you should always ask the person what help they may need.
- Remember that some people may have a disability that is not visible.
- Always treat a disabled person in the same way that you would treat anyone else, do not be patronising.
- Guide dogs are working dogs and should not be patted.
- If someone has an assistant make sure that when you are talking, you continue talking to the person with the disability, not the assistant.

Greeting people with a visual impairment

- When greeting someone with a visual impairment, make sure that you introduce yourself to them.
- Ask the individual how you may help them and if you guide them, make sure that you describe where you are going and if there are any stairs, be sure to say whether the stairs are going down or up.
- If there are other people in the room, make sure that you introduce them and say a bit about them, for example, 'This is Terry who is a member of the Partners' Council'.
- If you offer someone a seat, guide their hand to the back of the chair, telling them that there is a chair to sit on.
- If you leave the person, let them know that you are going and if they are sitting with other people, be sure to introduce them.
- If you are aware that someone with a visual impairment is coming to the meeting, make sure that papers are sent to them in advance. Some people like to receive papers by email and have a machine that will automatically convert information to Braille. Others will want you to do this for them or may want the information in

another format such as tape. It is important to give the person plenty of time to listen or read papers.

Greeting people who are deaf or hard of hearing

- Ask the person how they would like to communicate. Do not assume that because they are deaf, that they cannot hear anything. There are many types different types of deafness and individuals will have their own ways of communicating.
- If you are in a meeting, make sure that people speak one at a time.
- If you are speaking to a deaf person, make sure that they are looking at you as they may want to lip read. If they are lip reading, try to make sure that you do not have your back to a light source as they will not be able to see you clearly. Speak clearly but do not over exaggerate words. Do not chew gum or cover your mouth.
- If they are wearing a hearing aid, make sure that the venue has an induction loop, this stops background noise interfering.
- Make sure that you keep to the agenda as this is what they will be expecting or if you have any amendments or additions to the agenda, make sure that this is explained.
- If an interpreter is needed, make sure that this is booked in advance and that the interpreter receives all the papers to allow them to prepare for the meeting.

Greeting people who are deaf and blind

- Let the person know that you are there by lightly touching them on the arm.
- If they have a guide with them, speak to the individual, not the guide.

Greeting people with speech difficulties

- Listen to them carefully and if you do not understand ask them to repeat it. Do not attempt to finish sentences or assume what they are going to say.

Greeting people who use a wheelchair

- Never lean on someone's wheelchair – this is part of their space.
- Try to get to the same level as the wheelchair user, by kneeling down or sitting on a chair.
- Never move the wheelchair without the person's consent.
- If they have an assistant with them, speak directly to the individual, not the assistant.

Greeting people with learning disabilities

- Speak to the person as you would to anyone else but do avoid jargon.

Greeting people with mental health problems

- Give the person plenty of time to make decisions, do not pressurise them.

Greeting people with a facial disfigurement

- Greet them as you would anyone else. Do make eye contact but do not stare.

Catering

General guidance on catering

- It is good to provide a choice of food and drink, where possible.
- Try to offer hot and cold drinks. Put out non-sugar sweeteners and decaffeinated drinks. It is good if you can put out drinking straws.
- Some people need a snack during breaks. It is good to offer fruit alongside sweet snacks.
- Offer a choice of cutlery and crockery if possible. For example, a mug may be easier for people to use than a cup and saucer.
- Label food. Say whether it is meat, vegetarian or vegan. Separate meat and fish from vegetarian food.
- Try to avoid pork, beef and shellfish. This covers a lot of dietary needs.
- Ask the venue to have staff available to talk through the menu on offer and to help people get the food they want and carry trays if needed.
- Make sure there are seats and tables for everyone and that there is enough room for people to move around. The area should not be divided by steps.

Catering for deaf and hard-of-hearing people

- Deaf and hard-of-hearing people may need a clear view of the checkout screen if in a canteen, so they can see how much they have to pay.

Catering for people with visual impairments

- You could make menus more accessible by using large fonts, using contrasting paper and ink and by not using shiny covers.

Catering for people with mental health problems

- Offer regular drinks as some medication makes people very thirsty.

Catering for substance misusers

- Water should also be available to this group as medication can make people very thirsty.

Accommodation

- You might want to provide information about hotels in the vicinity of the venue which are accessible. Find out what people need and then ask the hotel. Sometimes hotel staff do not know exactly what their 'accessible' room is like so be as specific as you can (for example, ask if there is a walk-in or wheel-in shower, if that is what the person needs).
- Please use the SCIE venue checklist when looking for accommodation. It lists the important issues.
- Ask the local tourist board and disability groups for information on good accessible accommodation in the area.

Telephone contact

Telephone contact with people with speech and language impairments

- People with speech or language difficulties may telephone to book or find out more information. When answering the phone, keep calm, be patient and act normally and do not hang up. Always remain helpful and polite.
- If you have difficulty understanding a person on the telephone, ask if they would prefer to use email, fax, post or continue on the telephone.
- Clarify what people want using questions that need simple answers. Repeat back what they say and wait for them to confirm. You could ask another member of staff to listen and help you. Always ask the person on the telephone if this is OK.
- Never agree to something when you do not know what the caller has said. If the call is not going well, make sure the caller is aware. See if they would be happy to write instead.
- If the person needs to write something down, ask them if they are able to do it. They might want a personal assistant, carer or friend to write it down for them. If this is the case, just tell the assistant what they need to write down and then continue the conversation with the person.

Telephone contact with people with learning disabilities

- Avoid taped information if possible, as people find it easier to use a personal service.

Telephone contact with deaf and hard-of-hearing people

- Texting is used by some deaf and hard-of-hearing people.
- Some people use Minicomms or textphones. These allow the person to have a conversation with another person or organisation using text rather than speech. SCIE has a textphone in reception. The number is 020 7089 6893.

- If you cannot access a textphone, there is a service called typetalk (see www.typetalk.org), which allows you to talk to an operator, who will then type the message to the Minicom user. The Minicom user can then type back a reply which the operator will then speak back to the phone user. To call someone with a textphone dial 18001 and then their number.

Travel

General information about travel

- It is useful to find out how accessible local transport is and tell the people coming to the meeting or conference. This includes low floor buses, the local train station, minicabs and accessible taxis and dial-a-ride. The Council for Voluntary Services may be able to help you find transport services in your area.
- If possible, provide clear instructions on how to find the building and where the drop off point is. Including photographs of the building will help people to recognise it. The venue may be able to help with this.
- You should offer to buy tickets for people beforehand. First, see the latest version of the SCIE service user payment guidelines. Ask people what their transport needs are as they might know about services they have used before or may want to arrange it themselves.
- If possible, aim to finish the conference/meeting before it gets dark, where possible, so people do not have to walk or travel home.

Travel for people with learning disabilities

- Make sure people have someone to travel with if they cannot travel alone.

At the event

General information about being accessible at the event

- Be welcoming and assist people if needed. Avoid being patronising.
- If talking to someone who uses a wheelchair, make sure you are at their level and not looking down on them.
- Simple, clear and colourful signs will help people get to the meeting room.
- Let people know about housekeeping at the beginning of the meeting. Tell people where the toilets, fire exits and smoking areas are.
- Remind venue staff to look out for things going wrong. For example, bags on the floor and open cupboard doors are hazards for visually impaired people, and groups of people block access for wheelchair users.
- Some people will need individual support to understand where the exits are. Do not just point to the exits, give a description of how to reach them.
- Set down the meeting rules. It is often a good idea to get the group to come up with their own rules. The Partners' Council meeting rules are a good starting point.
- If seats are allocated, you will need to make sure that disabled people are not discriminated against, for example, by being placed all together or away from a hearing loop or interpreter.
- Make sure any evening entertainment that is organised is also accessible.
- Arrange to pay travel, childcare or carer costs in cash on the day. See SCIE's service user payment policy.
- If you are going to take photographs or video people during the meeting you must ask people if they mind at the beginning. Explain what the photographs will be used for. Epileptic people may be sensitive to flashes.
- Introduce yourself and other organisers so that people know who to ask for if they need help. Colourful badges or distinctive t-shirts work well at a large event.

- When dimming the lights for a presentation, please make sure people can still see their supporter. You could try closing the curtains to reduce glare but keep the lights on. Covering bright surfaces with a tablecloth can also help reduce glare.
- Portable microphones are good for questions from the audience. These will also help hard-of-hearing people to follow what is being said either via their language support professionals and through the induction loop or infrared systems.

At the event – deaf and hard-of-hearing people

- Deaf and hard-of-hearing people are likely to prefer seats where they have a good view of what is going on and where they can see any communication support they are using.
- Language support professionals will advise you on where they need to sit or stand in relation to the speaker and the audience.
- Give interpreters and language support professionals regular breaks.

At the event – blind people and people with visual impairments

- People may need guiding from one part of the venue to another. Make sure staff are on hand to help with this. People may tell you how best to assist them (if not, you should ask how they want to be assisted) and may need to hold on to someone as a guide. It is good to describe any obstacles or features ahead such as ramps, steps and doors.
- Be aware that vastly different lighting levels between rooms can make it difficult for people.
- If you are using spot lighting/lamps for people to do close work, think about:
 - > where the lamp is placed
 - > how bright it is
 - > how much heat the lamp puts out – it can be uncomfortable for people
 - > can the lamp be moved
 - > can the user turn it on and off themselves?

- You can use colour contrast to help people. For example, you could put a coloured cushion on someone's seat so they can recognise it.
- Signs covered in glass or on glossy paper can be difficult for people to read.

At the event – people with learning disabilities

- Traffic light cards are useful at meetings. You can have a green card for ok/yes/I agree, a red card for no and an orange card for slow down/repeat. These might help people who are nervous to take part.
- If you find people are finding it hard to take part in a large meeting you could do some small group work.
- If possible, give people different ways of saying what they think.
- You can use PowerPoint or a flipchart to support discussions.
- If possible, do not introduce any new ideas that are not on the meeting papers.
- You can use props and objects to support you (a ballot box for voting for example).
- To help follow the agenda, you could put a picture up for each agenda item and take it down when it has been covered.

Venue staff

- Let staff know that making the event accessible is a priority and that disabled people value a positive attitude. Tell venue staff about accessibility adjustments (such as furniture layout) you have made and the changes you want to make. You might tell them how you want furniture laid out, that you would like them to serve food or carry trays or not to change the adjustments you have made.
- Make sure they are well prepared to deal with any problems and to make further changes on the day.
- Ask if staff have had training on race and culture and diversity or if workers have had the chance to spend time working with different groups of people.

Useful links

- Mencap: www.mencap.org.uk
- Royal National Institute of the Blind: www.rnib.org.uk
- Royal National Institute for Deaf and hard of Hearing People: www.rnid.org.uk
- The Council for the Advancement of Communication with Deaf people: www.cacdp.org.uk
- Website containing 'Information for All' leaflets about making information easier for people with learning disabilities and other resources: www.easyinfo.org.uk
- Accessible Information including an easy read service: www.insiredservices.org.uk

Appendix A: Sample booking form

<Insert name of event>

- I am **coming** to this meeting.
 I am **not coming** to this meeting.

Name	<input type="text"/>		
Job title	<input type="text"/>		
Organisation	<input type="text"/>		
Address	<input type="text"/>		
Telephone	<input type="text"/>	Facsimile	<input type="text"/>
Mobile	<input type="text"/>	Textphone	<input type="text"/>
Email	<input type="text"/>		

Do you have any special requirements?

- Braille
 Documents on tape
 Induction loop
 Large-print documents: 14pt 16pt 18pt 20 pt
 Wheelchair access
 Sign-language interpreter
 Parking for disabled people
 Dietary requirements: _____

Will you be bringing a personal assistant or a guide dog?

- Yes. What is the name of your personal assistant: _____
 No

Is there anything else we should know to enable you to attend this meeting?

How would you prefer to be contacted?

- By telephone
- By fax
- By email
- By post
- By text.

Can we use your details to invite you to other events and to send you SCIE resources?

- Yes
- No

Completed forms

Please return your completed form by <insert date in this format e.g. 1 January 2000> to book your place.

By post: <Insert name>
 Social Care Institute for Excellence
 Goldings House
 2 Hay's Lane
 London SE1 2HB

By fax: 020 7089 6840

By email: XXX.XXX@scie.org.uk

Please provide the same information as requested on this booking form.

For more information

If you have any questions about this event please contact XXXX at SCIE on 020 7089 XXXX, 020 7089 6893 (textphone) or email XXX.XXX@scie.org.uk

Appendix B: Venue check list

Contact and booking details

Contact name	
Venue	
Address	
Telephone	
Facsimile	
Date(s) venue provisionally booked for:	
Date venue held until	
Notes	

Transport

	Distance			Approx. distance	Comments (e.g. bus numbers, tube lines, train times)
	Close	OK	Far		
Train station/Underground					Disabled parking bays need to be near the entrance and there should be a 1.2m space at the end of the bay to allow people to open the boot and use a hoist. Check the intercom will not stop people getting in.
Walking distance from station					
Bus stop (Are the buses accessible?)					
(Accessible) Taxi availability					
Car parking availability (venue)					
Car parking availability (close by)					
Disabled parking bay					

Accessibility

Accessibility of main entrance

If steps are the only entrance option, the venue is not suitable. Try to get a venue where the entrance is the same for everyone.

	Yes	No	Comments
Flat			
Ramp			
Stairs			

Accessibility of doors

Note: Take a tape measure to check all door sizes – they must be a minimum of 800mm (80cm) wide. The lift needs to be quick and efficient.

	Width		Comments
Entrance			
Lifts			
Toilets			
Venue rooms			
Others – bedroom/dining and catering area/bar			

Accessibility of amenities for wheelchair users

	Easily accessible	Inconvenient	Inaccessible	Comments
All floors/areas to be used				i.e. are lifts/ramps available if necessary, are doors wide enough, is there colour contrast and markings on large door panes etc.
Foyers/hallways clutter and barrier free				
Smoking area (if necessary)				

Facilities

Facilities – toilets

Note: Don't accept a disabled toilet that only has a handrail – this is not a proper disabled toilet.

	Yes	No	Comments
Male/female toilets adapted – how many			
Grab rails			
Lower sinks			
Alarm cord			
Width suitable			
Changing table and shower (a hotel room may be useful for this)			

Facilities – main room

	Yes	No	Able to supply?	Comments
Room capacity – room for wheelchair users to manoeuvre. Check room layouts and max numbers for each: cabaret theatre horse shoe				N.B. Allocate two spaces per wheelchair user
Natural daylight				
Blackout/blinds for presentations				
Heating/air conditioning – is it controlled centrally? Is it noisy?				
Room for a registration desk/cloakroom				
Room for staging if entertainment				
Electrical sockets easily accessible				
Technical /audio visual help available				
Induction loop				
ISDN line				
Telephone line				

LCD projector/ screen				
PC – internet access				
Laptops/flipcharts/OHPS				

Facilities – syndicate rooms

	Yes	No	Able to supply?	Comments
Room capacity – room for wheelchair users to manoeuvre. Check room layouts and max numbers for each: cabaret theatre horse shoe				N.B. Allocate two spaces per wheelchair user
Natural daylight				
Heating/air conditioning				
Induction loop				
ISDN line				
Telephone line				
LCD projector				
PC/ Laptops				
Laptops/flipcharts/OHPS				

Facilities - bedrooms

	Yes	No	Able to supply?	Comments
Number of bedrooms				
Adapted rooms – how many				N.B ask to view an adapted room check layout e.g., emergency switch, wider bathroom a sliding door grab handles by the toilet and the bath also lower light switches and storage and a spacious room. Ideally the fire escape is no further than 3 metre(s) from the room. Some people may need a flat wheel-in shower and may not need to be able to use a bath.
Can furniture be easily moved?				
Is there a flashing alarm/vibrating pillow?				
Is it an adapted shower? Be specific when you ask about this – is there a walk – in or wheel-in shower?)				
Is there a bath if needed?				
Are there enough emergency alarms/ grab rails etc in the right places?				

Where is the fire exit or wheel chair refuge in relation to the bedroom?				
Are appliances reachable, e.g. hairdryer, tea/coffee, trouser press, storage cupboards, mirror etc				
Is there enough room for a wheel chair user to move?				
Interconnecting rooms – how many?				
Heating/air conditioning				
Telephone line				

Catering

	Yes	No	Comments
Is there suitable space for - tea/coffee breaks lunch dinner breakfast			
Is the catering area close to the conference area and fully accessible?			Check that there are no steps separating off or dividing the eating area.
Do they have sample menus?			Menus should not be printed on shiny paper as this may be difficult for people to read

Health and safety

	Yes	No	Comments
Check evacuation procedures			
Who is available for first aid on the day?			
Insurance			

General organisation

	Comments
What exactly does the hire charge include?	
What deposit is required and how far in advance of the event?	
What are the cancellation penalties?	
Signage at venues – any restrictions?	