



**Water, Mills and Marshes
Access report**



Introduction



This report relates to the development stage of Water, Mills and Marshes - a £4.5 million programme of projects that focus on the people, communities and heritage of the Broads drained marsh landscape.

There are 38 projects and 55 partners involved in the initiative which is presented by the Broads Landscape Partnership.

The project will be based within areas of the Broads National Park, 117 square miles of the UK's largest nationally protected wetland with 125 miles of navigable waterways within Norfolk and Suffolk.

The vast majority of the projects take place within the National Park but aim to make an impact in the neighbouring conurbations of Norwich, Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft. The report was prepared by the team at Claritie CIC.

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Physical access

SECTION ONE

ACCESS FOR ALL - OVERVIEW AND KEY PRINCIPLES

The Broads landscape represents one of the country's most valued places for public recreation and education, but it is also particularly vulnerable. The aim of the conservation strands of the LP (Landscape Partnership scheme) is to maintain the Broads in ways that not only sustain their existing significance but, where appropriate, add to them.

Improving access is about much more than meeting legal requirements. It is an opportunity to improve the quality of experience for all participants, attract new audiences, and increase the likelihood of repeat attendance.

Access improvements benefit all sorts of people. Nationally it is estimated that one person in five is disabled (11.7 million), and that a further 18 million people would benefit from improved access to public spaces, including older people, families with young children and people with temporary health problems.

Access needs to be thought about in its widest sense. We need to pose the question how easy is it for people to explore the landscape, enjoy it and feel comfortable in it?

The Equality Act 2010 requires a reasonable approach to improving access. To meet their responsibilities under the Act service providers - in this instance Scheme Partners - need to be willing not only to make practical changes on the ground but also to change the way their staff and volunteers behave and operate.



Physical access

SECTION ONE

CORE PRINCIPLES FOR PROVIDING ACCESS FOR ALL

The below points feature the core principles that should be adopted by the scheme.

AN INCLUSIVE APPROACH - recognises everybody as a potential scheme participant. The challenge is to ensure that each participant has an equally satisfying experience.

AN INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENT - one that can be used by everyone, regardless of age, gender, disability or background. It results from a creative approach to design and management that embraces diversity and seeks solutions that will benefit as many people as possible. Traditional approaches to improving access have tended to segregate disabled people. Even though access may be improved, disabled visitors can feel isolated and patronised.

CREATING A BALANCE - It is rarely possible to do everything for everyone. The point is to create a balance across the Landscape Partnership scheme so that the widest range of people possible are able to take part. Providing choice is important. For example, if a Gateway Hub offers audio tours, an equivalent experience should be provided for visitors who are deaf or hard of hearing through written materials or signage.

A CREATIVE APPROACH - Simply following design specifications will not result in inclusive events and projects. Specifications are a starting point, but common sense and a creative approach are required to find the solutions that work best within a particular landscape.

CAREFULLY PLANNED AND MAINTAINED ACCESS PROVISIONS - these can help attract new audiences and improve the participant's experience. However, they need to be balanced against maintaining the integrity of the landscapes of the Broads. This in turn requires an understanding of its development; its historic and cultural associations; its archaeology, and scientific or wildlife interest; its aesthetic qualities and its role as an amenity. Part of the scheme's challenge is to appreciate these potentially conflicting interests and find the most appropriate solutions to improving access.

NO STANDARD SOLUTIONS - The wide variety of landscapes means that access improvements cannot be standard solutions. For example, the benefits of good signage are well understood but the actual design of signs needs to be specific to each site.

Physical access

SECTION ONE

The Equalities Act – An overview

The Equality Act provides a legal framework to protect the rights of individuals and advance equality of opportunity for all.

It is against the law to discriminate against anyone because of:

- age
- being or becoming a transsexual person
- being married or in a civil partnership
- being pregnant or on maternity leave
- disability (You're disabled under the Equality Act 2010 if you have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities)
- race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
- religion, belief or lack of religion/belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

These are called 'protected characteristics'.

The Act sets out the different ways in which it is unlawful to treat someone, such as direct and indirect discrimination, harassment, victimisation and failing to make a reasonable adjustment for a disabled person.

People and organisations who have duties under the act as a service provider, employer, education and other provisions of the act, need to ensure that they do not discriminate against people with protected characteristics. They must take positive steps to remove the barriers a person faces because of their disability. This is the '**duty to make reasonable adjustments.**'

A service provider is anyone who offers goods, facilities or services to the public (called 'services' for convenience). It doesn't matter whether the services are free or paid for, or how big or small the organisation is (one person or a large company) or who runs it – for example, government, a voluntary organisation or commercial business. This will cover many of the project partners involved with the Landscape Partnership Scheme.

When considering physical access to the landscape it is necessary to take account of duties relating to disabled people and to consider potential barriers to access.

Physical access

SECTION ONE

The Equalities Act – An overview

The Public Sector Equality Duty

The Public Sector Equality Duty, which is made up of a general equality duty supported by specific duties, is part of the Equality Act 2010 and applies to certain public sector bodies including key organisations such as local authorities and the providers of health, transport and education services. Those bodies must have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different groups. This duty encourages consideration of physical access for disabled people and the making of appropriate adjustments.

Key Principles for providing Access for all at Events and Activities

Enabling people to reach the activity – consider how easy it is for people to get to an activity or event

Providing Comfort - Comfort is important for all participants, but particularly those who tire easily and need to rest more often. Providing seating and shelter allows older or disabled people to explore a longer historic route or to pause to absorb information. Consider access to facilities such as toilets.

Offer Choice - This is one of the most important aspects of an inclusive scheme. It ensures that participants can decide how they want to use and enjoy it. Some people will visit independently, others with family, friends or as part of a group. It is important to provide for all of these. Clear information will help people make choices about what and when to attend

Safety - Safety is fundamental. Health and safety policies and practices must address everyone. Feedback from visitors, front-line staff and volunteers will help identify problems that might be overlooked by routine checks. Issues include emergency evacuation procedures and how these are communicated to people with different disabilities. Safety checks should take account of temporary work and how it might impact on access.

Embracing Diversity - An inclusive approach sees diversity as an opportunity to find creative design and management solutions. It relies on a positive approach being adopted by everyone involved in volunteer recruitment, events management, project design and management, education programmes and ongoing maintenance.

Developing Skills - Disability awareness training is designed to increase people's understanding of disability and access issues. It should be ongoing, linked with other skills development, and provided for all staff and volunteers involved with the scheme. Ideally, a training programme will include some sessions focused on specific disabilities such as a deaf awareness session or understanding the impact of sight loss as well as general awareness. Some of the most effective training is gained by working and consulting with disabled people.

Consulting with People - It is important to involve disabled people or groups as early as possible to allow them to help shape activities.

Physical access

SECTION ONE

Key Principles for providing interpretation for all

The Key Principles for providing interpretation for all are:

Set your goals - Be clear about what you want to achieve and the message you want to put across. Plan your interpretation thoroughly.

Find out who your audience is – Don't think of disabled people as a special and separate audience. Providing interpretation for all may simply be a case of making small technical changes, such as increasing the print size on a leaflet the next time you print it.

Don't try to interpret everything - Too much information can be confusing. You should leave some things unsaid. Give visitors the chance to explore the countryside on their own and find out some things for themselves. Provide the same, or similar, messages in more than one way. Visitors can choose how to use the interpretation.

Appeal to all the senses - using techniques which will get the message across

Considerations for provided access to people with disabilities

For people with mobility impairments the scheme needs to consider the following:

- Accessible routes for guided walks or trails based on existing infrastructure
- Rest stops on the route which include seating and shelter
- The time people take to get around a trail.
- Where you place interpretation boards. Put them at a height and angle next to a path where they can be read easily, and do not block views or features of interest
- How you design display materials to make sure people with poor hand control can take an active role

For blind or partially sighted people you will need to consider the following

- Usually people who are blind or partially sighted will visit the countryside with people who can see. But they will still prefer to be able to find out about the place they are visiting by themselves.
- Techniques which use several senses (sight, sound, touch, smell and taste) are best.
- Use clear and wide-ranging descriptions.
- Use a mixture of methods. For example, think about producing an audio tape guide, and also a large-print leaflet with good colour contrast covering the same subject.
- For some people who are blind or partially sighted, Braille is essential.
- Some people who are hard of hearing will find audio or video tapes difficult to use because they may not have a hearing aid that works with them.

Physical access

SECTION ONE

Key Principles for providing interpretation for all

For people with learning disabilities you will need to consider the following:

- Adults with learning disabilities are not children so you should not speak to them as if they are.
- If you use written materials, make them as clear as possible, or use pictures and symbols rather than words.
- As with any visitor, some people with learning disabilities will prefer to explore the countryside on their own.
- Self-guided trails and written materials may be the most difficult methods for some people with learning disabilities to use. Person-to-person interpretation is easier for all people.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR WORKING WITH NORFOLK ASSOCIATION FOR THE BLIND

Consultation was undertaken with Norfolk Association for the Blind on opportunities for their involvement with the project. They recommended:

- Providing content for their Podcast and other audio mailings on the scheme
- Providing audio feedback from events which can be distributed to people who are unable to get out and about
- Considering if there are opportunities through the project for carers to have days activities as well as service users
- Using them to provide and undertake access audits for sites or venues
- Undertaking transport audits of potential public transport routes.
- Creating interpretive content including tactile drawings and maps, audio packs, large print and Braille.
- Considering trails using 'phone in' systems and phone signals
- Considering use of 'pen friend' to access interpretative information.
- Actively looking for hands on activities – if they are provided with a list of different projects/activities from the Scheme Activity Plan they will advise as to which are of interest. For example archaeological artefact handling sessions based on the Broads Hidden Heritage strand would be of great interest.

Physical access

SECTION TWO:

Overall scheme access recommendations

1. Opportunities for people to get involved with scheme projects, events and activities should be communicated centrally and include technological solutions aimed at increasing accessibility:
 - Introductory short video on the scheme with versions including audio description, subtitles, and BSL
 - Centrally located events guide
 - Web design features on Scheme front page (as a minimum) aimed at 'print-impaired' users
 - Large scale print versions of events guides or information on how to get involved with the scheme
 - Foreign Language versions of key information on the scheme where appropriate
2. Information on the scheme and opportunities for involvement targeted at Disability User groups with targeted sessions at three gateway hubs [see section four below]
3. Centrally available information on the scheme website or publicity should allow disabled people to make informed choices about which events, activities or projects are accessible to them.
4. Information should be provided for project partners on how the scheme can assist with getting people to events (provision of transport)
5. Each project, event or activity should complete a simple access assessment – provided below. In many cases this could be undertaken at the same time as the project, event and activity is risk assessed.
6. A member of the core Scheme Staff should have responsibility for access to all and should ensure that all scheme partners complete the simple access assessment and provide feedback after the project, event or activity is completed, so improvements can be made.
7. The Landscape Partnership scheme as a whole should provide opportunities for people with disabilities to take part in projects, events and activities independently, others with family, friends or as part of a group. Not all events, and activities can be aimed at everyone but the scheme as a whole should reflect the diversity of the communities within and around the Broads.
8. Training and skills workshops for project partners should be undertaken as laid out in Section Two below
9. Implementation of access recommendations for Gateway hubs as laid out in Section Three below

Physical access

SECTION TWO:

Overall scheme access recommendations

10. Whitlingham Country Park, Beccles Quay, Bure Park, Nicholas Everitt Park, and Burgh Castle Roman Fort should be KEY GATEWAY SITES FOR ACCESS and Whitlingham Country Park, Nicholas Everitt Park, and Burgh Castle Roman Fort should be PRIORITY SITES FOR INTERPRETATION and EVENTS aimed at people with mobility impairments, blind or partially sighted people, people who are deaf or hard of hearing and/or people with learning disabilities.

Table One: Access Assessment

ACCESS ASSESSMENT – WATER, MILLS AND MARSHES: THE BROADS LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP			
The aim of this access assessment is to ensure that where ever possible an event, activity or project is providing equal access for all and that reasonable steps are taken to remove barriers to access.			
<i>How easy is it for people to take part, enjoy the activity and feel comfortable?</i>			
Name of the Event/Activity/Project			
Short Description of Event/Activity/Project (when and where is it, what does it involve):			
Who is the event aimed at:			
	ISSUES/BARRIERS TO ACCESS FOR ALL	REASONABLE SOLUTIONS	POST EVENT FEEDBACK AND RECOMMENDATIONS
People finding out about the event/activity/project			
People reaching the event/activity/project			
Existing level of access at site/venue/location			
People taking part in the event/activity/project			
Providing choice on how people can get involved			
Providing comfort and facilities			

Physical access

SECTION THREE

Current Access situation with current partners

A questionnaire was circulated to project partners to determine the current situation for providing access for all within the Broads Landscape Partnership Area.

Partners were asked to answer in relation to the areas of work or proposed activity that are relevant to the 'Water, Mills and Marshes Landscape Partnership project' they are undertaking.

The questionnaire asked:

- Are you/your organisation familiar with your duties under the Equalities Act 2010?
- Will you/your staff require additional training to fulfil your obligations
- Do you currently work with groups or individuals with following disabilities:
Emotional/mental and Physical
- If you manage sites, buildings or attractions which are accessible by the public under the project will you have provision for people with disabilities or special access requirements?
- If you provide online information on the LP area, do you provide alternative formats for people with particular needs such as Hearing Impaired, Sight Impaired
- Do you currently provide training for staff members to assist people with special access requirements?

Nine responses were received from the Broads Authority, Burgh Castle, FWAG, Norwich University of the Arts, RSPB and the South Yare Wildlife Group.

The returned questionnaires showed that the project partners have a good understanding of their duties under the Equalities Act 2010 but with the exception of the Norwich University of the Arts and the Broads Authority that they would need assistance in providing information in alternative formats both in hard copy and digitally. Organisations also did not provide training for staff members to assist people with special access requirements.

Recommendations:

The core scheme staff centrally coordinate information on the scheme and scheme projects in alternative formats for people with particular needs such as Hearing Impaired or Sight Impaired

The core scheme staff should be responsible for liaising with groups with disabilities and act as a gateway to provide with opportunities to get involved with project activities or events. At the start of the Scheme there should be a one day workshop for all project partners to increase confidence in working with people with special access requirements. This should include information on how to increase the accessibility of their project or activity and information on engaging with particular groups including those with mobility issues, the deaf or hard of hearing, people with visual impairments and people with learning difficulties.

Physical access

SECTION FOUR - GATEWAYS TO THE BROADS

Background

A central strand of providing access for all is the development of gateways to the Broad Landscape from strategically located urban hub parks. These localities provide opportunities for the promotion of the wider Landscape Scheme and as a first locality for engaging with new audiences who have not previously explored or interacted with the Broads landscape.

Several of these locations also have existing infrastructure for providing access to people with disabilities which the Scheme can draw on.

These sites will also provide opportunities for recreation and act as sites for “Going the Extra Mile” Engagement Activities.

There is funding allocated during the delivery stage of the scheme to undertake small scale capital works to improve interpretation, signage, access and visibility. Therefore it is not appropriate to undertake a full accessibility survey at these sites but rather to identify where small scale changes can help improve access.

There is not large amounts of money for physical access improvements for people with disability so hubs which have existing good levels of access have been recommended as Priority Hubs. The audit has been undertaken of the six sites proposed in the development stage plus one additional rural site.

The audit has identified and made recommendations for:

1. Improving Access for All
2. Opportunities for Interpretation and Publicity
3. Going the Extra Mile

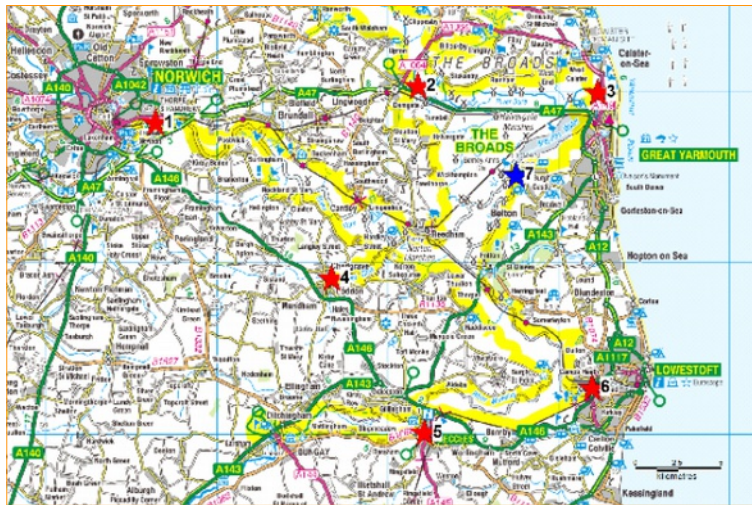
Overview

Six sites were proposed in the Round One Landscape Partnership Bid. This audit has identified which of these should be priority sites and also identified and recommended one further rural hub.

4. Whitlingham Country Park, Norwich
5. Acle War Memorial Recreation Ground
6. Bure Park, Great Yarmouth
7. Chedgrave Common and Loddon
8. Beccles Quay
9. Nicholas Everitt Park, Lowestoft
10. Burgh Castle Roman Fort [new rural hub]

As well as providing detailed information for each hub the access audit also provides a suggestion of which of these hubs will be best suited for wider public engagement events.

Physical access



Map showing location of seven Urban Hub sites in red; and one rural hub in blue.

1. Whitlingham Country Park, Norwich; 2. Acle War Memorial Recreation Ground; 3. Bure Park, Great Yarmouth; 4. Chedgrave Common and Loddon; 5. Beccles Quay; 6. Nicholas Everitt Park, Lowestoft;; 7. Burgh Castle Roman Fort [new rural hub].

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URBAN GATEWAY 1: Whitlingham Country Park



Location: Whitlingham Country Park lies on the south eastern side of Norwich and is focused on a 35 hectare area around Whitlingham Great Broad. It is a well-used and popular location.



Physical access

GATEWAYS TO THE BROADS

Whitlingham Country Park

Existing Things to do: There is a wheelchair and buggy accessible path around the Great Broad (about 2 miles / 3 km) and two all-terrain wheelchairs are available to book from the visitor centre. There are also trips on the fully wheelchair accessible solar Ra boat (which runs from April until the end of October).

Facilities: The Historic Flint Barn one of three Broads Authority Visitor Information Centre, with Café and WC. It is wheelchair accessible.

Information and Interpretation: Inside the Flint Barn there is introductory information on the Broads. Information boards outside of the Barn are old and in need of replacement. They currently provide information on the Park, the Great Broad Walk, and the Norfolk Wherry and the Wherryman's Way. There are also several sculptures associated with the Wherryman's Way route.



Reaching the Hub: Ample paid parking. Buses go from Norwich to Trowse, then there is a 25 minute walk along Whitlingham Lane to the park. It is also a 2 mile walk from Norwich Station. There are bike lock up points.

Accessing the wider Landscape: Adjacent to the Wherryman's Way (35 mile recreational route) which has its own website. The signage for the Way is good in this location.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- KEY GATEWAY SITE FOR ACCESS
- PRIORITY SITE FOR INTERPRETATION and EVENTS aimed at people with mobility impairments, blind or partially sighted people, people who are deaf or hard of hearing and/or people with learning disabilities.

Physical access

GATEWAYS TO THE BROADS

Whitlingham Country Park

Improving Access for All:

- Provision of additional benches and “resting points” around the wheelchair accessible path.
- Access to online versions of interpretation boards in large print and audio versions.
- Information exists online describing the facilities available but this is spread across various websites and it is difficult to find.
- The site is only truly accessible by car from Norwich – if the location is to be used for larger events and publicity transport should be provided from the city to allow more people to attend.
- Self-guided interpretative trail of the Great Broad with large print version, and Braille version including development of a descriptive audio trail for the Great Broads circuit – developed in partnership with the Norfolk Institute for the Blind
- Events providing person to person interpretation around the trail including a “signed” session for those with hearing impairments.

Replacement Information Boards:

1. A board which provides information on the park, the Great Broad and its relationship to the wider Broads – consider incorporation of a tactile element for people who are blind or partially sighted
2. A board which provides information on the Circular Walk – indicating good stopping points
3. A board on the Wherryman's Way.

These should also provide links to online versions as .PDFs and audio versions.

All new boards should be accessible to wheelchair users, Make sure that visitors can reach the board. For a person who is partially sighted this may be particularly important so they can get close enough to read the text.

Interpretation and Publicity Other

- Opportunities for events using the Picnic Meadow
- Opportunities for audio points using the poetry collated for the Wherryman's Trail
- Guided walks, heritage and adventure activities focusing on the Great Broad

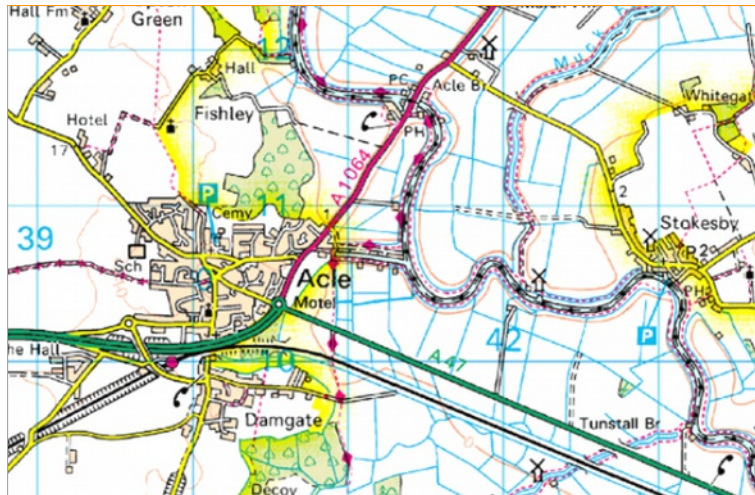
Going the Extra Mile

Taster sessions exploring the Wherryman's way on bike and on foot.

Physical access

GATEWAYS TO THE BROADS

URBAN GATEWAY 2: ACLE



Location: Located in the centre of Acre the recreation ground is associated with the Acre Recreation Centre and the main car park for the town.

Existing Things to do: There's two information boards providing information on walks. One of which provides information on a walk into the LPS area entitled the Bure Valley-Tunstall Walk. The Centre is a focus for local activities in Acre

Facilities: The Centre consists of the Social Club, Indoor Bowls. Main Function Hall, the two function rooms in the extension, and various sporting pitches and grounds. It has a large, free car park. It has full broadband facilities and caters for the disabled.

Information and Interpretation:

There is a general notice board.

Reaching the Hub: There is a large car park, Acre is on a bus route and Acre Station is 1km to the south.

Accessing the wider Landscape: Access to the LPS scheme area is over 1km away and there is no signposting.



Physical access

GATEWAYS TO THE BROADS

ACLE

RECOMMENDATIONS

Minimal interpretation

Improving Access for All:

The Acle Recreation Centre would be suitable for indoor activities for the disabled or other groups. This is not a good location for wider scheme events or publicity

Interpretation and Publicity Other

- Creation of an interpretation board describing the links between Acle and the Broads
- Transform the existing circular walk into a digital and online product, with accompanying audio guide.

Going the Extra Mile

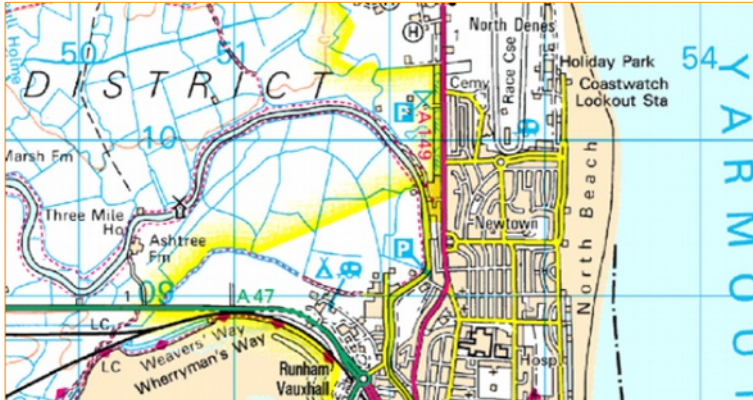
General guided walks from the Recreation Centre into the marshes to the east.

Explore potential for providing access to a surviving Mill to the east of Acle.

Physical access

GATEWAYS TO THE BROADS

URBAN GATEWAY 3: Bure Park, Great Yarmouth

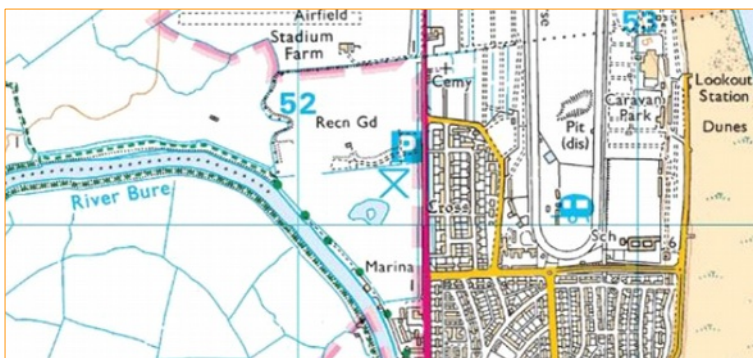


Location: Located off the A419 on the north side of Great Yarmouth.

Existing Things to do: Bure Park, Great Yarmouth, is a 20 acre open space bordering the River Bure with a pitch & putt 18 hole golf course, a children's play area, lake with wildfowl, picnic seating area

Facilities: Large car park. No toilet facilities. A burger kiosk. A picnic area.

Information and Interpretation: Information board providing information on the Park and its history.



Reaching the Hub: There is a large car park and the park is accessible by foot from Great Yarmouth

Accessing the wider Landscape: The path to the footpath along the River Bure is not well signed from the car park and is rough under foot and not well maintained. Once the river is reached there are expansive views across the marsh and opportunities to walk alongside the River Bure for many miles



Physical access

GATEWAYS TO THE BROADS

Bure Park, Great Yarmouth

RECOMMENDATIONS

KEY GATEWAY SITE FOR ACCESS

Improving Access for All:

- Improvement of signage from Car Park to the river
- Improvement of access route to the river – including potential to improve surface of access route.
- Provision of additional benches and “resting points” which provide views out over the River and the marsh.
- Visual and audio description of the panoramic landscape view – potential for creation of tactile map or board.
- Events providing person to person interpretation of the broads from this location.

Interpretation and Publicity Other

- Opportunities for events using the large amount of parkland space. But would need to provide toilet facilities, refreshments and shelter.
- Provision of some form of art installation would improve transition from park to the River – perhaps with input of the local community.

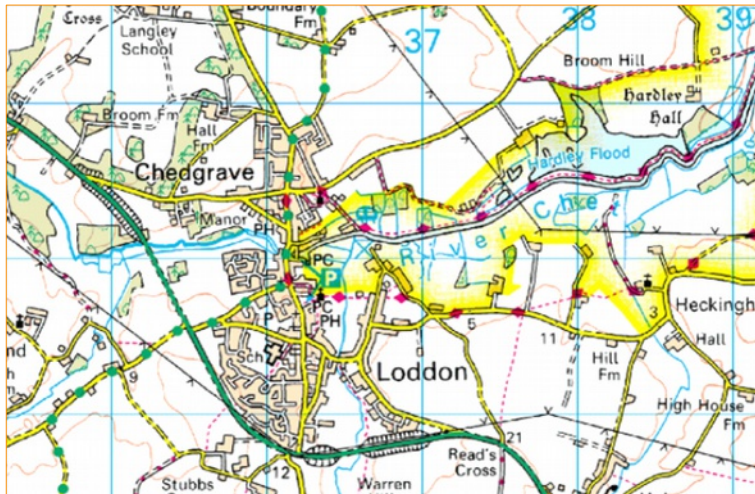
Going the Extra Mile

Taster sessions exploring the River Bure on foot.

Physical access

GATEWAYS TO THE BROADS

URBAN GATEWAY 4: Chedgrave Common and Loddon



Location: Chedgrave Common lies to the east of Chedgrave on the River Chet, to the south is Loddon.

Existing Things to do: There is a circular walk from Chedgrave Church across the Common developed as part of the Wherryman's Way.

Access to the Wherryman's Way is not available at Harley Flood for the foreseeable future due to issues with the River Bank.



An easy access footpath to Chedgrave Common is advertised which is understood to start from the Pits Play Area but on the site visit was not judged to be accessible.

Facilities: There is parking at the Pits Play area and more car parking is available at Loddon and at Loddon Staithe.

Information and Interpretation: There is an information board on Loddon and Chedgrave at Loddon Staithe.

Reaching the Hub: There are frequent bus services from Norwich, Lowestoft and Beccles.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Minimal interpretation

Improving Access for All: The issues of access at this location means that it has been assessed as a low priority for providing access for all.

Interpretation and Publicity Other: Opportunities for information board on scheme focusing on relationship between Loddon, the River Chet and Chedgrave Common.

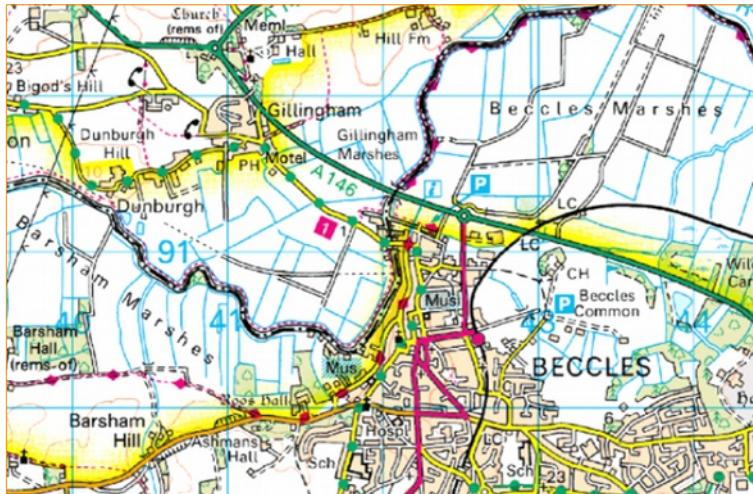
Going the Extra Mile

Access difficulties mean that walks along the Ferryman's Way can only go south for any distance.

Physical access

GATEWAYS TO THE BROADS

URBAN GATEWAY 5: Beccles Quay



Location: Located on the North Eastern side of Beccles.

Existing Things to do: 4 mile trail of Beccles Marsh including a much shorter easy access trail.

Facilities: Toilets including disabled facilities are open April to October. Radar key required. Privately run café. Visitors information. Benches and picnic tables in the public park on the western side of the river.



Information and Interpretation: Information board on the town and another on the history of Beccles Fen .

Reaching the Hub: Parking including disabled spaces on the north side of the A146, smaller number of spaces at the North Quay. Buses run to Great Yarmouth and Norwich. The quay is 1km from the train station.

Accessing the wider Landscape: Access to Mills and Marshes along Angles Way.



Physical access

GATEWAYS TO THE BROADS

Beccles Quay

RECOMMENDATIONS

KEY GATEWAY SITE FOR ACCESS

Improving Access for All:

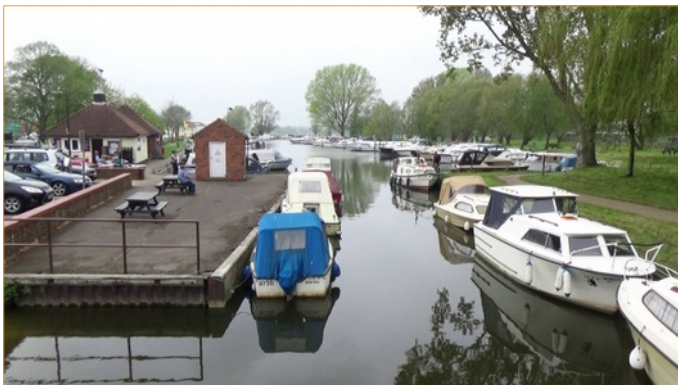
- Provision of additional benches and “resting points” around the easy access accessible path.
- Access to online versions of interpretation boards including information on Beccles fen walk and easy access trail in large print and audio versions.
- Information exists online describing the facilities available but this is spread across various websites and it is difficult to find.
- Self-guided interpretative trail of Beccles
- Events providing person to person interpretation around the trail
- Additional information board on the scheme discussing Beccles relationship to wider landscape
- All new boards should be accessible to wheelchair users, Make sure that visitors can reach the board. For a person who is partially sighted this may be particularly important so they can get close enough to read the text.

Interpretation and Publicity Other

- Opportunities for events using the Picnic Areas
- Guided walks, heritage and adventure activities focusing on Beccles Fen

Going the Extra Mile

Taster sessions exploring the Angles Way on foot.



Physical access

GATEWAYS TO THE BROADS

URBAN GATEWAY 6: Nicholas Everitt Park, Oulton Broad, Lowestoft



Location: Oulton Broad is 2-3 miles inland from Lowestoft.

Existing Things to do: Paths through the park. Lowestoft Museum. The park is one of the most popular areas around The Sunrise Coast, with brass band concerts, artist displays and garden fetes. Speed and powerboat racing fixtures are popular draws.

Facilities: In the centre of the park, there is a traditional bandstand and a large, open space. This is a popular spot for picnics. Beyond this is the children's play area, trampolines, crazy golf and refreshment facilities. There are accessible public toilets.

Information and Interpretation: The Lowestoft Museum is in the centre of the Broads.



Reaching the Hub: A large pay and display car park is accessible from Bridge Road, a second smaller car park is located to the rear of the Harbour Master's office. It is less than 1km from Oulton Broad North Station and Oulton Broad South Station and is on a bus route.

Accessing the wider Landscape: Access to the Angles Way which leads to Carlton Marshes Nature Reserve where there are 3 km of trails including a short wheelchair accessible loop offering year round access, car parking and picnic area.



Physical access

GATEWAYS TO THE BROADS

Nicholas Everitt Park, Oulton Broad, Lowestoft

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **KEY GATEWAY SITE FOR ACCESS**
- **PRIORITY SITE FOR INTERPRETATION and EVENTS** aimed at people with mobility impairments, blind or partially sighted people, people who are deaf or hard of hearing and/or people with learning disabilities.

Improving Access for All:

- Access to online versions of interpretation boards in large print and audio versions.
- Information exists online describing the facilities available but there is no interpretative information on the story of Oulton Broad
- Self-guided short interpretative trail of describing Oulton Broad and its relationship to Lowestoft (use historic photographs from museum to show change through time) with large print version, and Braille version including development of a descriptive audio trail – developed in partnership with the Norfolk Institute for the Blind.
- Children’s activity version of the trail – for young families
- Events providing person to person interpretation around the trail including a “signed” session
- Signposts and information on how to access Angles Way from Park



Replacement Information Boards –

A board which provides information on the view out from the park across Oulton Broad – showing a then and now view of the area.

All new boards should be accessible to wheelchair users, Make sure that visitors can reach the board. For a person who is partially sighted this may be particularly important so they can get close enough to read the text.

Interpretation and Publicity Other

- Opportunities for reaching new audiences during public events including at Power boat Racing
- Develop relationship with museum
- Short Guided walks, heritage and craft activities focusing on Oulton Broad provide excellent opportunities to engage new audiences.

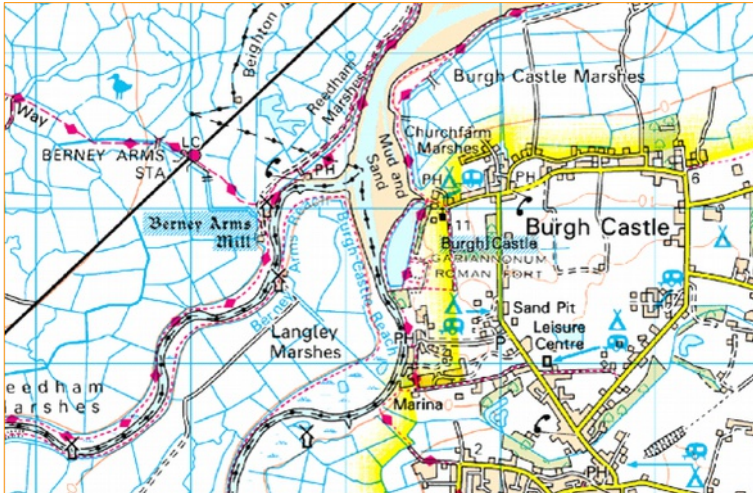
Going the Extra Mile

- Taster sessions exploring the Angles way on bike and on foot.
- Encouraging people who use the park to go on to visit Carlton Marsh as a first step into the Broads by running special ‘Experience day’ sessions at the Marsh

Physical access

GATEWAYS TO THE BROADS

URBAN GATEWAY 7: Burgh Castle Roman Fort [new]



Location: The Burgh Castle site lies c. 6km south-west of Great Yarmouth and c. 5km west of Gorleston. It is in a dramatic position close to the southern edge of Breydon Water, overlooking the confluence of the rivers Yare and Waveney.

Existing Things to do: There's a wheelchair and buggy accessible path around the Great Broad (about 2 miles / 3 km) and two all-terrain wheelchairs are available to book from the visitor centre. Trips on the fully wheelchair accessible Ra solar boat (which runs from April until the end of October).

Facilities: There are no toilet or other facilities at the site itself. Two small open-sided structures in the car park area, housing interpretation panels, offer some shelter from bad weather.

Sometimes there are displays in the church. The Burgh Castle pub (the Queen's Head) is nearby, at the junction of Church Road and Back Lane.

Information and Interpretation: Interpretation panels in the car park area and around the fort provide information for visitors on the Fort itself. A timber viewing platform overlooking the rivers and marshes is an ideal spot for observing wildlife, appreciating the remarkable view and imagining how different this landscape would have been in Roman times. An all-weather path around the property is wheelchair friendly, and disabled users can open gates with the help of RADAR keys (available for the registered disabled).

Reaching the Hub: By boat there is a public landing stage on the east bank of the River Waveney, a short distance north of the Burgh Castle Marina and Caravan Park. First Eastern Counties' Service 5 (Yarmouth-Burgh Castle via Bradwell) stops outside the Queen's Head (unmarked stop). The journey takes half an hour. It is then a very short walk along Butt Lane to the site entrance.

Physical access

GATEWAYS TO THE BROADS

Burgh Castle Roman Fort [new]

Accessing the wider Landscape: You can follow the Angles Way long-distance path from Great Yarmouth to Burgh Castle along the southern shore of Breydon Water. Total distance c. 6km

RECOMMENDATIONS

- KEY GATEWAY SITE FOR ACCESS
- PRIORITY SITE FOR INTERPRETATION and EVENTS aimed at people with mobility impairments, blind or partially sighted people, people who are deaf or hard of hearing and/or people with learning disabilities

Improving Access for All:

- The site is very accessible but currently is interpreted with regards to the fort itself. However this site also presents a great opportunity to provide access to all of views towards Wickhampton Marshes and the Mills. This would provide opportunities for larger groups of people to appreciate these features. This is important due to the access constraints of visiting the marsh and mills described in Section five below.
- Self-guided digital interpretative ‘views’ of the mills and marshes visible from the Fort, potential for mobile friendly digital overlays of the views, with large print version, and Braille version including development of an audio description – developed in partnership with the Norfolk Institute for the Blind.
- Digital information on accessing the site needs to be made more accessible.
- Provision of additional benches and “resting points” at the view out from the marsh.
- Access to online versions of existing interpretation boards in large print and audio versions.
- If the location is to be used for larger events and public transport should be provided from the surrounding towns to allow more people to attend. Temporary Accessible toilet facilities would also have to be provided
- Events providing person to person interpretation including a “signed” session
- New Information Boards -

A board which provides information on the view out from the Marsh. These should also provide links to online versions as .PDFs and audio versions.

All new boards should be accessible to wheelchair users, making sure that visitors can reach the board. For a person who is partially sighted this may be particularly important so they can get close enough to read the text.

Interpretation and Publicity Other

Opportunities for events using area of the Fort

Guided walks, heritage and adventure activities focusing on the Marsh and Mills

Going the Extra Mile

Taster sessions exploring the Angle’s way on foot.

Physical access

SECTION FIVE - PROVIDING ACCESS TO THE MILLS AND MARSHES OF THE BROADS

The most accessible way currently to appreciate the Mills themselves is by boat. An audio guide and written trail for the mills along the various navigations within the LPS scheme would provide those who are already using the waterways with access to information on the various mills they pass.

In this case barriers to access are access to boats and the accessibility and design of the boat available. This issue is dealt with elsewhere. However the aspiration is to provide physical access on foot to the setting of the mills under conservation. This could include providing access to key viewpoints where the mills are visible within the marsh [see section four – Rural Access Hub] or providing direct physical access to the outside of one or more mills.

In the latter case the main barriers to access in the LP area are:

- Reaching the mills and marshes [travel constraints and parking]
- Conditions of existing rights of way
- Conditions of navigating and accessing the marshes
- Gaining permissive access to mills from existing rights of way
- Gaining permissive access from landowners to visit exterior of mill.

Once this has been achieved potential barriers relating to the historic fabric building fall into two broad categories:

1. external physical elements of the building and its setting,
2. any feature arising from the design or construction of a building itself

The Equality Act does not override other legislation such as listed building or planning legislation, and the need to obtain appropriate approvals still applies in the case of changes made to improve access.

Historic England has written guidance on providing easy access to Historic Buildings <https://content.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/easy-access-to-historic-buildings/heag010-easy-access-to-historic-buildings.pdf/>

Consultation was undertaken with Andy Hutchison, Lead Trails Officer. This raised the potential for a series of cycle route through the marshes using unclassified roads (some of which would need permissive access) and rights of way – this would provide wider access to the mills.

Physical access

SECTION FIVE -

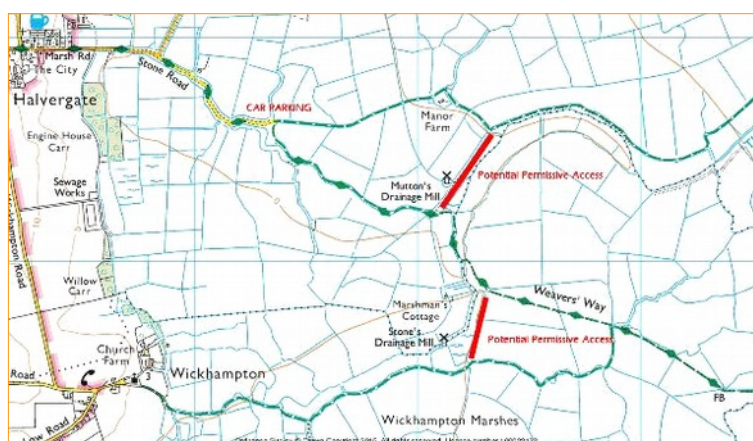
PROVIDING ACCESS TO THE MILLS AND MARSHES OF THE BROADS

CASE STUDY OF POTENTIAL FOR PROVIDING ACCESS TO MILLS ON HALVERGATE MARSH

Halvergate and Wickhampton Marsh is one of the most accessible Marshes on foot within the Broads Partnership. In summer (when the conditions are not too wet) it is possible to walk a 14 km plus circuit from Halvergate across the Marsh following the Weavers Way to where it meets the Wherryman's Way, and then following the Yare north past the now shut Berney Arms returning via the Fleet within this circuit 20 plus mills are visible and the route traverses close to the location of mills including that at Berney Arms itself. This could be turned into a self-guided interpretative trail. However this type of walk would only be suited to the confident, fit and experienced walker. Access to the mills and marsh is also needed for a wider range of people and groups.



One potential site to create this wider access is the creation of a short trail from the existing parking to the east of Halvergate taking in Mutton's Drainage Mill in a loop (1.5 km) with an extension to Stone's Drainage Mill (1.5km).



This could be accompanied by audio and written interpretation material, explaining the natural history of the marsh, its cultural history and the story of the Mills themselves at key stopping points.

Such a trail could be the focus of activities and events during the life of the Partnership Scheme including providing access to groups without private transport, new audiences and people with disabilities.

Physical access

SECTION FIVE -

PROVIDING ACCESS TO THE MILLS AND MARSHES OF THE BROADS

Increasing the accessibility of the mills would require:

1. The creation of two Permissive Access routes. Note, if this was not achievable, a simple 'there and back trail' along the footpath on the Weaver's Way could be created and a more accessible route along the track past Manor Farm to a view point towards Mutton's Drainage Mill on the public right of way.

2. Some non-intrusive formalising of the car parking available at the end of Stone Road. In summer time the track past Manor Farm is fairly accessible for all Terrain Mobility Scooters – this would need to be formally assessed.



3. Need for additional signage where the route deviates from the Weaver's Way.

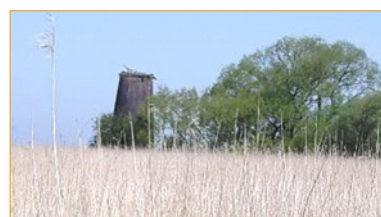
4. Creation of a viewing point from publicly accessible track towards Mutton's Drainage Mill to the south – note this also represents potential permissive access track which might be suitable for All Terrain Mobility Scooters in the summer (again would need to be assessed).



5. Potential access to the base of Mutton's Drainage Mill including opportunities for tactile experiences and interpretation of the working elements of the mill.

6. Replacement of stiles along 1km stretch of Wherryman's Way with gates.

7. Contrasting story of mills in different condition level. Permissive path towards Stone's Drainage Mill provides access to reed beds rather than drained farmland.



8. Clear information on barriers to access caused by mud and standing water in the winter and restrictions to dog walkers and young families of grazing livestock.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Creation of an accessible walking trail on Halvergate Marshes
- Creation of permissive access routes to 5 of the 13 mills owned by Norfolk County Council.
- Creation of one cycle loop using unclassified roads and existing rights of way. The first step would be GIS mapping of the system.
- Creation of an audio guide and written trail for the mills along the various navigations within the LPS scheme.

Digital access

Digital Access

Overview

In the UK, digital accessibility is covered by the Equality Act (2010) and the associated Code of Practice (2011)

Digital Accessibility is defined as the ability for all individuals to easily use information technology products and services regardless of any physical or mental impairment they may be affected by.

In real terms this means that ALL people disabled or otherwise should be able to understand, navigate, and interact with the Web, software programs, document formats such as e-books, PDFs and so on, and that they can contribute to the Web.

Digital accessibility has often been assumed to be something that is provided for those with better known disabilities, such as blind or deaf people, or people with reduced mobility. But, while it is still vitally important to ensure that these groups can access as much of the web as is practical, current discussions about accessibility also highlight its application to a much wider proportion of the population.

The ageing population, and the often slowly debilitating conditions that arise through the natural ageing process, represent a significant number of digital users. For example, there is a large section of the population that is disabled in some way: at least 11 million people - over 15% of the population - in the UK.

When ageing-related disability is included, this rises to 20% or more. These disabilities significantly affect the level of online satisfaction experienced by disabled people.



Digital access

Digital Access

The Facts

There are many reasons why a person might be disabled, some permanent, some temporary. But particular groups within society are particularly likely to struggle with low-accessibility web resources:

- Mobile device users: a very high percentage of the general UK population, and very significant globally. Disabled people are more likely than average to browse using a smartphone, rather than a laptop or desktop computer.
- Over-65s will become well over 10% of the EU population by 2025. While many might not think of themselves as disabled, they are likely to experience gradual deterioration of their abilities across many modalities, for example, eyesight and/or dexterity. These can combine to make web navigation and participation difficult.
- 2.2 million people in the UK have difficulty with memory, concentration or learning, and 2 million people in the UK have dyslexia. Many more have low levels of literacy or numeracy.
- 1.8 million people in the UK have a vision impairment, of which 180,000 are registered blind.
- Almost 2 million people in the UK have a hearing impairment, of which 50,000 use British Sign Language to communicate.
- 2.6 million people have difficulties using their hands, which may impact their use of keyboards, screens and mice.
- Over 1 million have a progressive, cyclical or fluctuating condition such as multiple sclerosis, which will periodically affect their ability to use the web.
- In the UK, only 41% of disabled people use the Internet, compared to 75% of non-disabled people¹⁴; 82% of blind or partially sighted people not online cite their sight loss as the reason.

As well as disabilities, there those that are digitally excluded including:

- Those in social housing - 37% of those who are digitally excluded are social housing tenants
- Those on lower wages, or unemployed - 17% of people earning less than £20,000 never use the internet, as opposed to 2% of people earning more than £40,000. 44% of people without basic digital skills are on lower wages or are unemployed
- Young people - 6% of people who lack digital skills are between 15 and 24 years. Only 27% of young people who are offline are in full-time employment.

Source: www.gov.uk/government/publications/government-digital-inclusion-strategy/government-digital-inclusion-strategy

Digital access

Digital Access

Positive actions

This report is not going to list the totality of guidance for digital access. This is both extensive and well documented on sites such as the Web Accessibility Initiative site, www.w3.org. We strongly recommend that this site be highlighted to all participating partners as it offers digital access principles that are easy to understand and apply.

Although the scheme cannot hope to address all the issues relating to digital access it can certainly ensure that it has a positive impact wherever possible.

The most positive actions that the scheme can undertake is to ensure that:

1. Digital content is gathered and provided in an appropriate manner and
2. Tools to help those who may need technical assistance are clearly signposted.

The scheme has the potential to reach those who are physically unable to visit particular projects and geographical areas. The regular production of audio and visual representations of projects would be an excellent manner of enabling as many people as possible to enjoy the initiative.

People who cannot hear audio or see video need alternatives. Examples of alternatives for audio and video include:

- Text transcripts and captions of audio content, such as recordings of people speaking
- Audio descriptions, which are narrations to describe important visual details in a video
- Sign language interpretation of audio content, including relevant auditory experiences.

Social media has a host of accessible applications that could be both utilised and highlighted by the scheme.

YouTube offers an on-line in-line captioning capability that allows a completed video to be captioned and the captioning to be switched on or off by the viewer.

Facebook has Automatic alternative (alt) text, a feature that uses object recognition technology to create a description of a photo for the blind and vision-loss community.

Twitter just made a new change that allows users to caption images posted through the mobile app. Research shows that tweets with images receive 150% more re-tweets than tweets without images.



Digital access

Digital Access

Recommendations

Digital access is more than just making content available – it's about making it usable and understandable by as many people as possible. It is often argued that making content accessible for those with any kind of disability will automatically make it more understandable to a far wider section of the community.

Steps to achieve digital access are not difficult to take and in view of this we make the following recommendations:

- The scheme might consider offering a 1 day digital access course, given by a specialist company and attended by all project heads
- As a new barrier or solution to digital access is discovered the facts surrounding the issue be circulated to all project partners
- Annual meetings should be held with those groups representing community members with digital access issues to assess how well the scheme is meeting their needs.

Report compiled by the team at **Claritie**

8th. November 2016

