

# DISABILITY ACCESS POLICY



## **Statement in Support of Disability Access**

Hibernian Football Club is committed to ensuring that its' supporters and customers are not discriminated against on the grounds of disability. The Club strives to ensure that as far as is reasonably practicable all customers have access to all goods services and facilities provided by or offered to the public by the Club.

The Club endeavours to avoid making offers less favourable to persons with disabilities by having flexible arrangements to ensure where alternatives are necessary the goods and services available are, as far as is reasonable suitable for the expectation of the supporter.

The Club will continue to improve the facilities and provisions offered to supporters by consultation with a new representative group of supporters as part of its' 2019 Disability Work Plan and ongoing future development of its services overall.

### **Ticketing and Pricing Policy**

Hibernian Football Club has an open dialogue with its disabled supporters and encourages them to contact the club through the Disability Access & Liaison Officer to discuss facilities and improvements. The Ticket Office has a dedicated telephone line where advice and information can be obtained.

The Club is currently in the process of establishing a Disability working group to assist with the review of the Disability Workplan and to consult and acknowledge the voice of disabled supporters.

Accessible discounts may apply to an individual depending on their level of disability or need. The criteria used will be as follows:

- PIP (personal independence payment) enhanced in either criteria
- High level Care component of DLA (Disability Living Allowance)
- High level Mobility component of DLA
- Blind, or Deaf Blind registration (BD8 or CVI Certificate) or evidence from an eye specialist, for example an optometrist, that the individual would qualify to be registered as severely sight impaired (blind) or sight impaired (partially sighted).
- Deaf confirmation in writing from Social Services that the individual is included on their Deaf Register, or a letter or report from an aural specialist confirming that hearing loss has been recorded at 70 – 95 dBHL or worse.
- War pensioner/disabled services veteran

## **PERSONAL ASSISTANTS**

Personal Assistants, where identified and agreed as part of a reasonable adjustment need, will be included in the ticket price subject to availability.

This list is not an exhaustive list and consideration should always be given to any other evidence that can be provided. In all cases, common sense should prevail and the dignity and privacy of the disabled person should be paramount.

Accessible tickets for personal assistants are available to disabled supporters in receipt of the following:

- DLA – High Care and/or mobility Component
- PIP – Enhanced
- Attendance Allowance
- Blind or partially sighted registration certificate (BD8 or CVI Certificate) or evidence from an eye specialist, for example an optometrist, that the individual would qualify to be registered as severely sight impaired (blind) or sight impaired (partially sighted)
- Confirmation in writing from Social Services that the individual is included on their Deaf Register, or a letter or report from an aural specialist confirming that hearing loss has been recorded at 70 – 95 dBHL or worse – covered by below

In special circumstances the Club reserves the right to issue Personal Assistance tickets to supporters who are not in receipt of any of the above. In these

circumstances, the Disability Access Officer should be contacted. If a disabled supporter requires/requests two personal assistants, a meeting with the Disability Access Officer should be made to discuss the requirements and authority given to more than one personal assistant ticket to be issued.

Please note that if the disabled person cannot attend a match at Easter Road we will only allow a personal assistant access provided they pay for a full price seat. The personal assistant should make contact with the Ticket Office to upgrade their ticket prior to any home match where this position may occur. Failure to do so will result in not being permitted entrance to the stadium.

Personal Assistants tickets are issued to the Season Ticket Holder and have no acquired season ticket rights.

Personal Assistants must accompany the holder whilst on the site at all times as they have been issued in order to support the Season Ticket Holder.

Personal Assistants may not attend a fixture without the holder unless by holding a separate upgraded ticket.

Personal Assistant Tickets acquire no rights to away tickets, memberships or discounts.

Personal Assistants not performing a supportive role whilst on the premises will render the holders entitlement null and void. If Season Ticket Holders are experiencing problems with support from their Personal Assistant whilst on site they should bring this to the attention of the Disability Access Officer who will assist them to deal with the problem.

Every effort will be made to accommodate Personal Assistant in an adjacent seat but where this is not possible throughout the Stadium or for adhoc purchases, they will be accommodated in the nearest available seat subject to availability..

## **WHEELCHAIR USERS**

Due to the age and design of the Stadium, not all areas are fully accessible to wheelchair users so spaces can be limited in the seating bowl. The following areas are currently available

West Stand, lower platform

East stand lower

North stand lower (restricted view)

South stand lower (restricted view)

South stand upper (access by lift)

## **AMBULANT DISABLED**

Supporters who have some independent mobility can purchase tickets throughout much of the Stadium but are advised to check areas that are suitable to their needs e.g. close to vomitory access to concourse for toilets or refreshment counters. Or wide aisled area etc.

Additional Ambulant disabled seating will be created during 2019 to accommodate for those with lower or limited mobility, without a wheelchair.

Details of specific requirements should be given to ticketing staff so that suitable places can be allocated.

## **BLIND AND PARTLY SIGHTED**

The Hibernian Football Club operate an audio commentary service. There is an area within the West lower stand for blind and partially sighted individuals. However, Blind or partially sighted supporters are entitled to purchase season tickets or occasional tickets in other areas of the Stadium.

The audio service is available to all Season Ticket and Away supporters. All supporters wishing to make use of the service should contact the Disability Access Officer. Commentary equipment is available free to use. All commentators are trained volunteers. Commentators are located within the Press area of the West stand and are able to access other areas of the stadium in which to deal with any issues.

Equipment must be returned post-match to West stand reception. There is no charge for the equipment hire provided it is returned in good order.

All other members who attend occasionally and registered on our database with the Club take priority for vacant spaces. After which empty spaces can be applied for via the Disability Access Officer.

Guide dogs are welcome at the Stadium. It is important that a Guide dog can be located comfortably, seated next to its owner in comfort and safety. Should the supporter wish to occupy another area it is requested that they contact the Disability Access Officer.

## **HEARING IMPAIRED**

The Club is currently making provision for mobile induction loop units at strategic customer interface areas. These are namely the Ticket Office, and main Reception. These systems can be moved to venue locations easily to provide individual assistance to communication.

A review of provision for hearing impaired patrons will also include the purchase of a new discreet loop induction system for our conference and banqueting purposes. This will enable hard of hearing guests to with the aid of a neck loop and adjusting their hearing aid to take part in all meeting conversations.

## **SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS**

Hibernian Football Club is committed to maintaining a safe environment for all its disabled visitors and supporters.

As part of its continuous review of services, the Club has taken account of the previous requirements of the disability discrimination act part iii and the additional requirements of the Equality Act 2010, in relation to access to the Stadium, seating areas and facilities.

For purposes of this policy and clarity of arrangements offered by The Club, the following are defined as disabilities:

- Deaf, sign language users, deafened, deaf-blind and
- Visually impaired persons
- Prescribed wheelchair users
- Learning difficulties/disability and sensory difficulties
- Autism
- Mobility impairment
- Severe physical conditions
- Severe and enduring medical or mental health problems
- Older people with physical frailty

You are 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.

Substantial is more than minor or trivial, eg it takes much longer than it usually would to complete a daily task like getting dressed. Long-term means 12 months or more. Certain conditions are not to be regarded as impairments for the purposes of the Act. These are:

- addiction to, or dependency on, alcohol, nicotine, or any other substance (other than in consequence of the substance being medically prescribed);
- the condition known as seasonal allergic rhinitis (e.g. hayfever), except where it aggravates the effect of another condition;
- tendency to set fires; • tendency to steal;
- tendency to physical or sexual abuse of other persons;
- exhibitionism;
- voyeurism

There may be circumstances of impairment which would though only temporary, but lasting for over one year, meet the above definition. This does not entitle the individual for the duration of the temporary disability to be eligible to the additional access discounts of The Club.

Disabled supporters are asked to make us aware when making bookings of any special arrangements they need in order to assist us to make the correct

reservations or arrangements for them. This may be if accessing our hospitality service or using other services and access to facilities within the stadium.

## **COMMENTS AND COMPLIMENTS**

The Club has a procedure in place and guarantees to supporters and customers with disabilities that any complaints of discrimination will be taken seriously and dealt with promptly. These should be directed to the Club Disability Access Officer in the first instance who will discuss this with The Chief Executive.

Any positive comments about improvements that can be made to our disability access provision are also welcome.

## **MOBILITY RESTRICTION SUPPORT**

Wheel chairs will be made available, to give assistance to individuals who may by reason of frailty or mobility impairment require the use of one for the duration of their visit to the Club or to transfer from one location to another.

These wheelchairs are located at each First Aid station within the concourse of the stadium.

Lifts are available at accessible points throughout the Club, and though access to venues is possible in all but a few hospitality areas, equal provision of service can be replicated.

Disabled people are advised to inform us of any arrangements that we may require to have in place for them so that we can ensure suitability of venues.

Where for reasons of safety wheelchairs cannot be accommodated at some of the hospitality areas, specific provision may be available to allow viewing and an equal level of service replicated. This is operated on a first come first served basis.

The Club request that as much notice is given as possible in order for adjustments and arrangements to be put in place.

Persons with restricted mobility but not regular wheelchair users (referred to here as ambulant or semi ambulant disabled) should when purchasing tickets indicate any adjustment to fully access certain parts of the stadium, this will enable staff across functions to make appropriate provision.

In these situations the supporter is made known to stewards and or Safety Supervisors at the location who can be aware of their specific needs in the unlikely event of evacuation. The areas available in these circumstances may be restricted according to the individuals' physical capability to access seating. Some areas of the Stadium are deemed to be who unsuitable for any person with a disability for safety reasons and will not be offered as available.

Provision is currently being created for Wheelchairs and mobility scooters to be left at the designated shelter according to seat location.

**Rest a While** and **refreshment seating areas** within each concourse are being installed. These will be designed to allow our ambulant disabled or elderly patrons to catch a breath before getting to the turnstiles.

Refreshment Seating areas within each concourse area will be erected to allow wheelchair users/ambulant disabled and their Personal Assistants to eat amongst their peer supporters. For those wishing to remain seated in their allocated seat, a Preorder service will be available on request but must be ordered on arrival and can be collected or delivered just before half time.

**Accessibility Assistant** roles will be created to assist disabled supporters with their visit to the Stadium and are happy to pass any information to the Disability Access Manager to help improve our supporter match day experience.

## **SENSORY AND LEARNING DISABILITY & AUTISM**

The Club is currently consulting with supporters with regards to facilities required to support those with learning or sensory difficulty to enable them and their families to acclimatise to Stadium atmosphere and activities.

It is envisaged that this area will have a dual role of encouraging new young support and to be available for those who may need to have some quiet time and a safe place during the game or event.

In working with the Hibernian Community Foundation, The Club is considering activities areas to allow young people to work out any communication or sensory difficulties including a **quiet zone** for those who need to chill down from over stimulation.

Adaptations are continually reviewed and any additional adjustments to signage to assist visually impaired persons, those with a learning difficulty/disability as part of an on going programme.

## **ACCESS**

### **Lifts**

Lifts are manned by stewards to enable access for all to the correct location on a match day. Lifts are available to the West lower wheelchair platform and South upper platform. Lifts to hospitality areas and office areas can be accessed from main reception. A lift pass is required for those without a disability but have mobility difficulties to assist with access to upper stadium seating.

Audible indicators to inform arrival at each floor levels have been installed as have audible indicators that the lift has arrived.

For non match-day events customers are encouraged to indicate special requirements within their booking forms until such time as the Club has completed all adjustments to enable assistance to be given.

Individuals attending the Stadium who may require assistance with accessing our facilities or evacuation in an emergency must let stewards know so that appropriate



arrangements can be made. The Club will ask each supporter for the 2019/20 season accessibility questions that will allow us to determine need and offer support where and when required.

For reasons of safety it may not always be possible to accommodate the customer in the area indicated by their ticket if it was not clear at the time of booking that special arrangements are needed. The Operations/Match Day Safety Officer may have to be consulted however every effort will be made to ensure the supporter is suitably accommodated.

### **Toilet Facilities**

Disabled toilet provision is available within, or close by each of the access areas for disabled supporters. Hospitality suites have accessible toilet facilities.

Accessible Toilets are available in each concourse area throughout the stadium.

A need to provide larger cubicles (not wheelchair accessible) have been identified and made available during the season 2019/2020.

### **Signage**

The Club is constantly striving to improve its signage and information provision for all its supporters and is currently working on a programme of improvements.

## **MONITORING AND PROVISION**

The Club has a programme of improvements and consults with consultants and DDA experts including other Football Clubs to ensure it is regularly reviewed and updated. The Club welcomes input from supporters and customers using the Stadium. The Club is developing links with Café Football, an organization working with UEFA dedicated to improving access to Stadium throughout Europe.

The Club will also consult with disabled people through the establishment of a Disability Working Group. The remit of the group will be to assist and work with the Disability Access Officer to discuss potential improvements on the Clubs facilities and also to assist review and implement the Disability Workplan. Any suggestions from these meetings are presented to the Chief Executive for consideration.

## **TRAINING**

Hibernian Football Club will in the course of its staff development programme provide disability awareness training and other condition specific training as required.

In addition, Hibernian Football Club will provide training in the special assistance equipment, which it has purchased to enable its provisions for communication and evacuation purposes for disabled persons.

## **POLICY REVIEW**

This Policy has been developed as part of the overall access and communication strategy at Hibernian Football Club and our desire to work with disabled supporters to improve services and facilities. As access improvements are part of an ongoing programme, this Policy may not be a full reflection of all current arrangements.