

Inclusive Design for Outdoor Recreation



Introduction

In the past number of years there has been a significant growth in the recognition of the benefits of taking part in outdoor activities worldwide. From Forest Bathing in Japan to introducing the art of Friluftsliv of Finland into everyday life, the ability of slowing down and recognising the beauty of nature in the outdoors. Irish Wheelchair Association, together with Sport Ireland, brought about the 'Access Great Outdoors' guidelines to ensure people with a disability in Ireland could take part in outdoor activities and recreation of their choosing.

According to the 2016 census 13.5% (643,131) Irish people were recorded as having a disability. The Irish Government ratified the United Nations conventions on the rights of a person with disabilities (CRPD) in 2018 which considers that 'disability as an evolving concept'. CRPD provides the framework to promote, protect and ensure the rights of all people with disabilities outlining how state providers and governments can take appropriate measures to enable persons with a disability to participate in recreational leisure and sporting activities.

Ireland is renowned for its natural beauty, rugged landscapes and spades amounts of outdoor appeal, yet up to 13.5% of Irish Citizens could be missing chances to become captivated by this scenery. These guidelines will not answer every question, but they will help facilities look with a trained eye on how to improve their accessibility levels, whether this is improving directional instructions on display boards or widening a gate so a trail can be accessed by a wheelchair or buggy.

Active Disability Ireland, along with Sport Ireland Outdoors are taking the next steps in the development, recognition, and training of these guidelines. Creating resources, fact sheets, and training opportunities nationwide. Keeping in line with the 'Great Outdoors, A Guide for Accessibility' document, we hope to introduce a uniformed approach to all imagery and terms nationwide, so it will not matter what amenity is visited, the same approach will have been taken.



Aimed to create a guide for developers, managers, planners and designers of publicly accessible Great Outdoors facilities and amenities in Ireland including those responsible for:

- Site and landscape management, planning, development, and upgrade
- Online information pertaining to outdoor sites and their access
- On-site display information and way-finding

The following resources are broken into sections as follows:

Trails, Greenways & Public Parks

Playgrounds

Beaches

Waterways

The Built Environment

It is hoped these guidelines will be used in future planning of amenities, such as access to beaches, waterways and trails to ensure a universal design approach is used. Where designers will need to push their own creatural strengths in constructing amenities suitable for all ages and abilities.

