

Inclusive Design for Outdoor Recreation

Trails, Greenways & Public Parks



Definitions

Trails: A trail is usually a path, track or unpaved lane or road. Some can be welcoming and easy to traverse however some can reveal challenges for people with disabilities.

Greenways: Are usually a traffic free route used recreationally by walkers, cyclists and other non-motorised transport like wheelchairs or buggies. Generally low gradients as they are predominantly disused railway lines and are suited to all abilities.

Public Parks: Established public area, developed to allow public rest, play and enjoyment. May include amenities such as coffee shops and picnic areas

Symbols



Multi Access Symbol

Has a wide and firm surface, must meet criteria as Class 1 Trail



Challenging Access Symbol

May be narrower, slightly different surfaces with slight steep inclination, is a mixture of criteria set out for Grade 1 and Grade 2 Trail

Design Criteria

What To Keep in Mind

- Parking bays to be close to access point
- Public Accessible WCs close proximity to access point
- Suitable access symbol on display to ensure participants are aware of what is to be expected

Width	Can two wheelchair users pass each other safely?
Upstand	Edge protection/Upstand to assist a person with a visual impairment
Headroom	Is the trail clear of overhanging vegetation
Railings	For assistance and protection
Rest Areas	To be available at regular intervals, shelter areas would also benefit users
Viewing Areas	If a barrier is required, a perspex barrier would be most suitable
Maintenance	Regular upkeep to ensure trails remain accessible to all users

Surfacing

Multi Access Trails	Firm, compact, stable, and non-slip i.e. Concrete, Tarmac, bitumen macadam, dust binding, timber, and brick paving
Challenging Access Trails	Textured surface with slight inclines i.e. Loose gravel, woodchip, and grass
Colour	Light in colour in contrast to the surrounding landscape
Drainage	Good drainage

Route Information

Supports	• Guide/Assistant Dog permitted • Audio/Guided tours available • On site dual equipment made available and promoted
Access Level	Display level of trail
Grade & Length	Estimated duration, keys features along route, details of any obstacles & alternative routes to take
Seating	Location of seating/rest areas
Waymarking	If multiple routes, markers a clearly defined for each route in both directions
Emergency details	Contact details of emergency services, to provide feedback or to report an incident

Entrance and Exit Points

Universal Design approach to be carefully planned to ensure access for all. Limited strength or restricted manual dexterity should be considered to easily gain access to a trail.

Width

- 1m gap is required to allow a person using a wheelchair to gain access

Mechanism

- Self closing two way gates
- Visible latches on both sides

Latches

- Easily usable
- Minimal strength and dexterity required



Obstacles and Barriers

Regular Checks

- It must be considered, when working with nature, unforeseen obstacles can unexpectedly appear. Regular checks on trails should be carried out.
- Check for Erosion and Protruding vegetation

Trees and Boulders

- May define a route, with creative thinking these do have to be obstacles.

Bridges

- If slope/angle is too steep and alternative route should be considered.



Picnic Areas

Creating accessible picnic areas will give more opportunities for families to enjoy longer durations in the outdoors. Accessible picnic tables are available in an array of shapes.

Consider the following:

Information	Location displayed on maps or display boards
Signage	Clear use of signage directing to picnic area
Surface	Surface around and leading to accessible picnic tables should be firm and non-slip, avoid materials such as cobbles, grass, or loose gravel
Height	Should be between 75cm-80cm with a clear space underneath
Seating Areas	Mixture of seating provided, backrests, armrests for example
Placement	Consider location of tables allowing for a choice with shade if necessary

