



CULTURE
HEALTH &
WELLBEING
ALLIANCE

Come as You Are:

Guidance for embedding access in creative health work

Table of Contents

Introduction	4
Why Access and Why Now?	5
What is Access/Accessibility?	5
Why is it important for people working in creative health?	5
Developing your Idea	6
Accessible by Design	6
Common Access Considerations	6
Building strong foundations	8
In-house or specialist services?.....	8
Steering and Advisory Groups	8
Asking Questions and Challenging Assumptions	9
Making Detailed Plans	9
Make Access Visible	9
Venue Considerations	9
Budgeting and Time Management.....	10
Ticketing Options	11
Pre-Information – in multiple formats	11
Diversity of Contributors and Attendees	11
Case Study: CHWA 2023 Making Change:A Snapshot	13
Keeping It Relevant	18
Reasonable Adjustments.....	18
Delivering the work	18
Set the Tone	18
Staffing	19
Access Register.....	19
First Aid / Pastoral Care	19
Learning from the work	21
Attendee Feedback	21
Debrief with Team and Collaborators.....	21
Access Evaluators	21
Sharing Your Findings	21
Conclusion	22
Appendix 1	23
Additional Resources	25

A Note on Language

We will be using the term **disable, disability, D/deaf, disabled** and **neurodivergent** interchangeably throughout this document. This follows the Social Model of Disability, attributing the barriers or difficulties people face onto societies disabling approach, rather than onto the individual.

We will be using the term **access need** to describe any support or alternative considerations needed for someone as a result of disability

Introduction

The Culture, Health & Wellbeing Alliance (CHWA) is the sole free-to-join membership organisation for creative health across England. We provide networking, collaborative advocacy, support and resources, fostering health and wellbeing for all through creative and cultural practice. We are an Investment Principles Support Organisation (IPSO) funded by Arts Council England.

Our work brings us into contact with individuals, organisations and institutions working at the intersection of health, creativity, wellbeing and social justice. It includes planning medium-scale in-person events, and supporting people working in the sector, many of whom have lived experience of marginalization, whether through disability, heritage, neurodivergence or a multitude of other factors. Prioritising and embedding access into the organisation is a vital component of our work, and something we hope is a strength of our organisation.

We often hear people say they would like to be more accessible in their approach, but are unsure about how to do this practically, from where to start, to concerns about costs and time restrictions. This resource is designed to offer some suggestions you might want to consider, and highlights some great practice from other organisations. Whilst we recognise the skills and experience in our team relating to access, CHWA is not primarily an access organisation, so we have also signposted to organisations who have more detailed expertise to share. This resource is also largely focused on participatory projects, or events. For organisational issues (e.g. recruitment and staffing) we'd recommend referring to the resources signposted at the end.

The idea of accessibility is constantly developing, which means there is no one tick-box list for every scenario. This can be a long journey for you or your organisation, as it is for CHWA, and it takes time; you don't need to achieve everything right away. The most important thing is an awareness and proactive commitment to improving access, approached with curiosity and compassion.

Please reach out if you have any questions, comments or suggestions for further examples of great practice.

Fiona Moon
National Coordinator
Culture, Health & Wellbeing Alliance
info@culturehealthandwellbeing.org.uk

Why Access and Why Now?

What is Access/Accessibility?

The term 'access' is a bit of a catch-all, and it can mean different things in different situations; but it broadly refers to the practice of making information, activities and/or environments as safe, meaningful and easily useable for as many different people as possible. This often includes considering people or groups with disabilities, neurodiversity or health conditions, who may need alternative options or considerations when engaging with an activity or service. It can also encompass access requirements relating to culture or lifestyle.

According to disability charity [Scope](#), there are 16 million people in the UK living with a disability, health condition, or access need. Over the last 20 years, the [social model of disability](#) has become more widely used and understood. The basis for the model is that people are dis-abled not by any specific diagnosis, but by the way the environment or society has been set up, structured or built, which can put barriers in the way of being able to take part in the same way as their non-disabled peers. In other words, it's not the person but the environment that needs to change. Barriers to access can be physical, logistical, psychological, financial, or cultural, or a mixture of these. For the purposes of this document, we will primarily be focusing on the first three categories.

Why is it important for people working in creative health?

It's important to recognise the role organisations and individuals in all sectors can play in creating environments where disabled people can thrive and contribute in the same way as non-disabled people. According to ONS Employment data, 24% of the UK's working age population has a disability, with 70% of disabilities in the UK being non-visible*, which reframes access as a vital component of any event or organisation, rather than simply a 'nice to have' addition. In creative health, this number is higher. CHWA's most recent [State of the Sector Survey](#) noted that 31% of respondents identified as D/deaf, disabled or neurodivergent.**

Access and representation are also intrinsically linked – the more the sector can make itself accessible to disabled people, the more disabled people will be able to engage as professionals and participants, the more diverse the sector will be. By considering access needs and encouraging wider conversation, we also set a precedent for others to do the same.

Developing your Idea

The most important aspects of creating an accessible culture are: understanding some of the common access considerations, offering choice and autonomy, and being realistic in what can be achieved. Know that it is impossible to make an environment fully accessible to all people at all times, particularly when access needs overlap and sometimes directly contradict each other. Whilst some things may come up more regularly, it's important to remember that every person is unique – there are as many access requirements as there are people! You are also working within limitations of roles, budget and other structural factors.

Accessible by Design

A good access offer should feel seamless in the way it integrates with other areas of your work. To ensure that access remains a priority and is given the time and resources needed, conversations about access and inclusion should start as soon as conversations about the piece of work starts. This will probably mean considering how you build your budget, and might involve forming a steering or advisory group, or getting input from lived experience or consultancy services. Funders and commissioners too have a responsibility to ensure that their systems actively support you to build in access (see the [Creative Health Quality Framework, page 12](#)).

Common Access Considerations

Every practitioner or organisation's access approach will be unique, and will depend on the scale, type of activity, audience and resources available. But wherever you're coming from, there are many easy ways to better incorporate accessibility into what you do, and many things you are probably already doing. Some common considerations are listed below.

Wheelchair spaces

Ramps

Door widths

Accessible toilets

Large Print

Audio Descriptions

BSL

Quiet Spaces

Mental Health First Aid

Hearing Loops

One to One Access Support

Alternative Formats
Dietary Requirements
Visual Stories
Captioning

[CHWA's Creative Health Quality Framework](#) provides a great starting point for ensuring your work is person centered, equitable and safe.

Case Study: Reach In Reach Out



'Reach In Reach Out' (RIRO) was a creative volunteering and wellbeing project that brought together young people, artists, creative producers, and researchers across four sites and seven organisations in the West of England from 2022-2024. It was coordinated by Arts & Health Southwest.

OBJECTIVES

The aim was to co-create a programme with young people to support their creativity and wellbeing and offer pathways to community engagement and volunteering in the cultural sector. The project targeted young people aged 16-25, living with physical or psychosocial challenges, at risk of social isolation, or transitioning to further education or employment.

Given the varied needs of the participants, the project used a variety of approaches to make the activities accessible.

RECRUITMENT BY REFERRAL/PARTNERSHIP

RIRO's Bristol partners recruited young people who were already engaged with social prescribing organisations and who were being supported in developing skills for employment. These young people usually have health care needs and struggle to access employment and skills development opportunities. The social prescribing organisations supported the young people throughout the duration of the project and offered practical solutions, for example transport to the workshops.

IDENTIFYING NEEDS

Asking participants on the enrolment form 'What do we need to know about you to help you get the best experience?' supported inclusion and access but allowed the young people to lead.

ANTICIPATING AND ACCOMMODATING ACCESSIBILITY ISSUES

RIRO participants had a wide range of needs, including communication challenges, social anxiety, isolation, neurodivergence, wheelchair use, and medical concerns. Partners devised a variety of accommodations, including sessions with hybrid face-to-face and online participation, sending activity packs for at-home participation, facilitating written as well as verbal communication, and allowing people to engage when and how they felt able. Knowing these accommodations would be provided helped the young people feel that they were meant to be in the space and were welcomed as full participants.



Three young people and one adult wearing masks and decorating a large graffiti canvas

MAKING CREATIVE ACTIVITIES ACCESSIBLE

The partners repeatedly asked themselves 'how can we make these art media and methods accessible?' The concept of 'scaffolding' was a key element in the Bath group, breaking down complex tasks and activities into smaller, more manageable steps, and providing support and feedback as the young people mastered new techniques and began to work more independently. The programme team took more responsibility for designing and leading an early event, demonstrating the creative skills needed in design, the planning and coordination of the space and the visitors.

TRANSCENDING ACCESSIBILITY AND ISOLATION

Physically disabilities and social isolation were a challenge for some participants, and they were often unable to participate in person. But over time this changed.

"Another amazing thing that's happened is that one of our young women, who is a wheelchair user, has been attending sessions on Zoom, but [then] she came to [an in-person] session. That was brilliant! And it was so lovely to see her in the flesh, as it were."

RIRO Project Facilitator

Truly enabling participation, regardless of barriers, communicates care and supports the wellbeing of young people. For more information, please see the RIRO webpage

<https://culturehealthandwellbeing.org.uk/riro>

Building strong foundations

In-house or specialist services?

Some access requests are easy to fulfil within your own teams and resources. However, people with access needs deserve the same standard of experience, and shouldn't have to work harder to engage with an event or access the support they need, so it's important to recognise the limitations you may have, and when you may need to contract a specialist service. A good example of this is BSL or live captioning; but you might also need to employ specialists in developing easy-read versions of documents, or managing physical access. It's important to budget appropriately for this, or request extra resources if needed. Crucially, this can sometimes mean reducing the scale of events or projects to allow more expenditure on access.

Knowing who your intended audience is and tailoring support to that community, if appropriate, is really important. Now could also be a good time to take a look at the skills within your team, and whether the work is likely to require extra skills to keep people feeling safe and considered. For example, if the project is specifically aimed at improving mental health and wellbeing, or designed for a community who are more likely to have experienced trauma, do you need to invest in more pastoral care in the form of Mental Health First Aiders, counsellors or support staff?

Steering and Advisory Groups

These groups can be a fantastic way of including D/deaf, disabled and neurodivergent people, and those with access needs and knowledge right from the start of your project. We only know what we know, and it's not possible for you to accommodate access needs if you aren't aware of them. By recruiting a diverse group to support you, you can discuss considerations that may be needed for people to engage with your work, as participants, audience members or contributors/collaborators. You can also ask for their input and expertise in looking at draft agendas/schedules/session plans with an access stance.

If you are engaging with a steering/advisory group model, be sure to recruit those with a wide variety of lived experience and perspectives to get the most from the group. It's also extremely important you are clear in your initial communication what's expected in terms of time, commitment and tasks, and ensure you've made a note of any access support they might need. Steering group and Lived Experience experts should always be paid for their contribution. CHWA's policy on [Paid Engagement with Freelance, unwaged, part time or low waged individuals](#) is one example of how you could approach pay for Lived Experience

Experts. For more general information on pay and lived experience, please refer to the [Fair Pay and Lived Experience Manifesto](#) from Arts & Homelessness International.

Asking Questions and Challenging Assumptions

One of the great things about having other people involved in the planning process is the sheer variety of ideas and approaches in the room. Just because something has always been done a certain way, it doesn't mean it can't be re-imagined to better suit the access needs of those engaging with it. At CHWA's 2023 national conference, for example, we decided on a 'slow start' on the first day, with sessions starting at 2pm. This allowed people time for travel and to arrive hopefully feeling rested. Although particularly helpful for some of our disabled attendees, it also helped set a tone for pastoral care throughout the event. Often, many access adjustments are also welcomed by those who wouldn't consider themselves to have access needs.

Making Detailed Plans

Make Access Visible

Ensure you are talking about access in all of your advertising and comms about the work. It helps to have a dedicated access page on your website with common FAQs, along with an email address for access enquiries. Inviting people to get in touch with access suggestions is also a great way to pick up on anything you may not have considered, as well as showing people you are prioritising access.

If your event is ticketed, make sure you invite people to detail their access needs at signup. This is vital so that you can consider how you might meet those well in advance, or if you need further information or clarification of how best to support someone. Remember also that your access offer isn't fixed; new or unexpected needs may emerge, and what's right for one project may not be for the next one. People may not always communicate their needs, so it's useful to have basics covered (see above list).

Venue Considerations

If your event or project involves hiring a venue, consider the practicalities of this from an access perspective. It may be that all of your attendees have specific needs that require a certain approach, but in general, step free access, suitable toilets, lifts, access to a quiet

space, and light, welcoming rooms is a good start. We'd always recommend visiting a potential venue at least once and spending time in the space/walking the routes your attendees will take. Taking another person, such as a member of your steering group, will add another perspective. Consider things like:

- Are light levels suitable in all spaces?
- Do stairs have handrails and are they wide enough?
- Are doorways wide enough for wheelchair access?
- What is the venue provision for D/deaf people (eg. Hearing loops/space and sightlines for BSL interpreter)
- What is the access like immediately around the building?
- Does the surrounding area feel safe for someone who may be more vulnerable?

Considering the route from the nearest carpark or train station is also very important, especially for those who are easily fatigued, have mobility issues, or are wheelchair users. Those with processing needs made need maps or instructions in a different format. Multi-day events may also need to consider the availability and reserving of accessible accommodation. For large events with lots of people arriving at once, having staff or volunteers visible to welcome and direct people, and offer extra support, is also important.

You may decide to run elements of the work online, to improve access for those with barriers to attending in person. If so, don't forget these people may also require access support, so ensure there is a team member in charge of this.

Budgeting and Time Management

Making an event or project truly accessible comes with additional costs. It's important to be aware of this, to avoid budgeting issues or overpromising on what can be offered. Typically, specialist services like captioning and BSL may be the biggest outlay, but additional costs could involve accommodation, staff support and hearing loop provisions. The best place to start is by making a list of essential access costs, then 'nice to have' additions, and getting quotes for these. Though this can vary widely, we would recommend putting 10-30% on top of your budget aside for access related costs (see CHWA national conference case study, p.14). Keep a running total of access costs, to inform your next project.

Another important consideration is staff time and capacity. When coordinating access, it's important to be thorough and well organised, and this often requires additional meetings, producing additional resources, and sourcing specialist equipment. Access should also always be built into your risk assessment process. The time and cost of this work shouldn't be

underestimated, so think about whether this will be handled by one person, or spread across a team.

Ticketing Options

If your event is ticketed, it is best practice to offer an additional ticket for an assistant or companion for those who have barriers to accessing the event independently. Ideally, these should be offered free of charge. The disabled person should not need to provide proof of disability and their request should be taken on good faith. Other things you can do to make ticketing more accessible is offer tiered or subsidised ticket options, or, for multi-day events, the option to attend for certain parts only. Bear in mind that if your speakers or performers require a companion, they will also need accommodation and transport!

Pre-Information – in multiple formats

For some D/deaf, disabled or neurodivergent people, planning for and attending events can come with added stress and more complex logistics, therefore, it's helpful to offer clear, detailed information as early as possible. This could include schedules, maps, joining instructions and visual stories. Offering this information in multiple formats, such as easy read, large print or audio could also be really helpful and is relatively easy to do – simply recording information as a voice note on your phone, or changing the font size on documents before printing can make a big difference. RNIB have a [guide to producing large and giant print documents](#) on their website. A specific access document or web page might also be appropriate. If you know you are going to be discussing potentially distressing themes in advance, a content disclosure may also be helpful. CHWA has some good examples of [previous conference information](#) on their website.

You may also want to consider pictures and biographies of staff in advance, so that people feel more familiar with you, and can see specialist skills within the team.

Diversity of Contributors and Attendees

Representation is another important facet of access. Consider how you can better reach the disabled community so that they are represented at your event. If you are looking for artists or contributors, can you do targeted call-outs, or share the opportunity with disabled-led organisations or charities? Lived experience is vital for creating a safe and inclusive space, and avoiding tokenism, and if the work is specifically targeting a certain demographic, we would

strongly advocate for someone with that lived experience to lead on the project. A fantastic example of this can be seen in our Peterborough Presents case study below.

You may also want to collect EDI information from participants/attendees so you can measure your reach in terms of diversity. If collecting data, it's important to have a clear plan about what you will do with it, and why it's important – and to communicate this with the people you are seeking information from.

If you are recruiting freelancers or staff specifically for the event, don't forget to consider access. See Curating for Change's ['We are not all the same' Action Plan](#). Creative Access also has an [accessible recruitment checklist](#) available on its site.

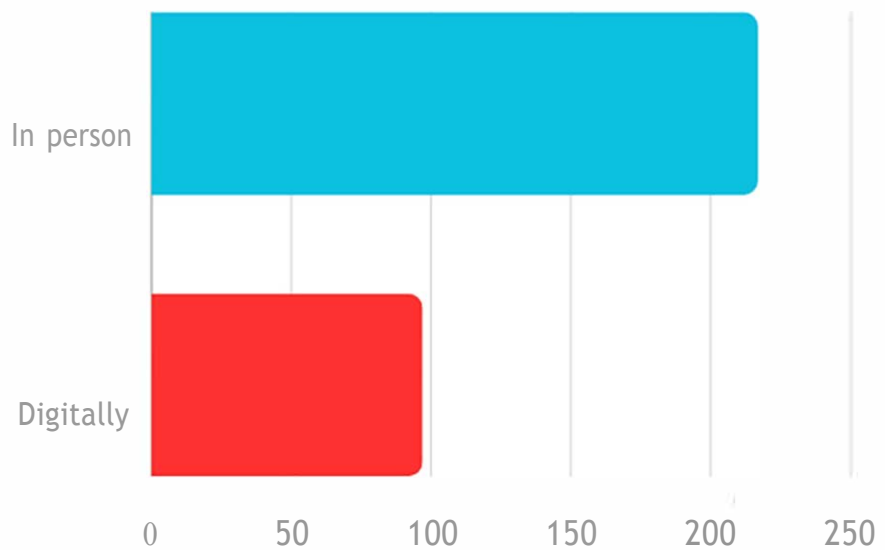
Case Study: CHWA 2023 Making Change:A Snapshot

217 people

attended the Making Change national conference in Barnsley

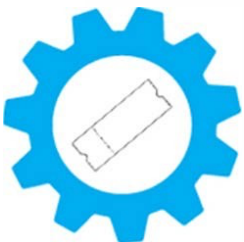
97 people

attended the event digitally



92 individuals
shared their work or practice

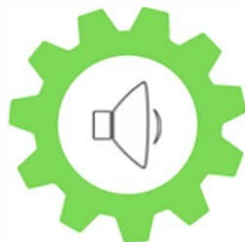
The main access considerations were:



Free companion tickets



Travel and accommodation supplied



Quiet and Safe Spaces



Reserved Seating



Hearing loops

Advance information including

Videos, maps and access guides



Visual Story



Pictures of spaces and staff, highlighting particular skills such as Mental Health First Aid

- Options for carers and those with dependents to discuss specific needs
- Guidance for those with caring responsibilities, breastfeeding and more
- Tiered pricing and bursary options
- Additional staff support (meetings, navigating the space etc)
- Additional attention to pacing/setting the tone for each day, with an emphasis on care and taking rest when required

157 people filled out an EDI form

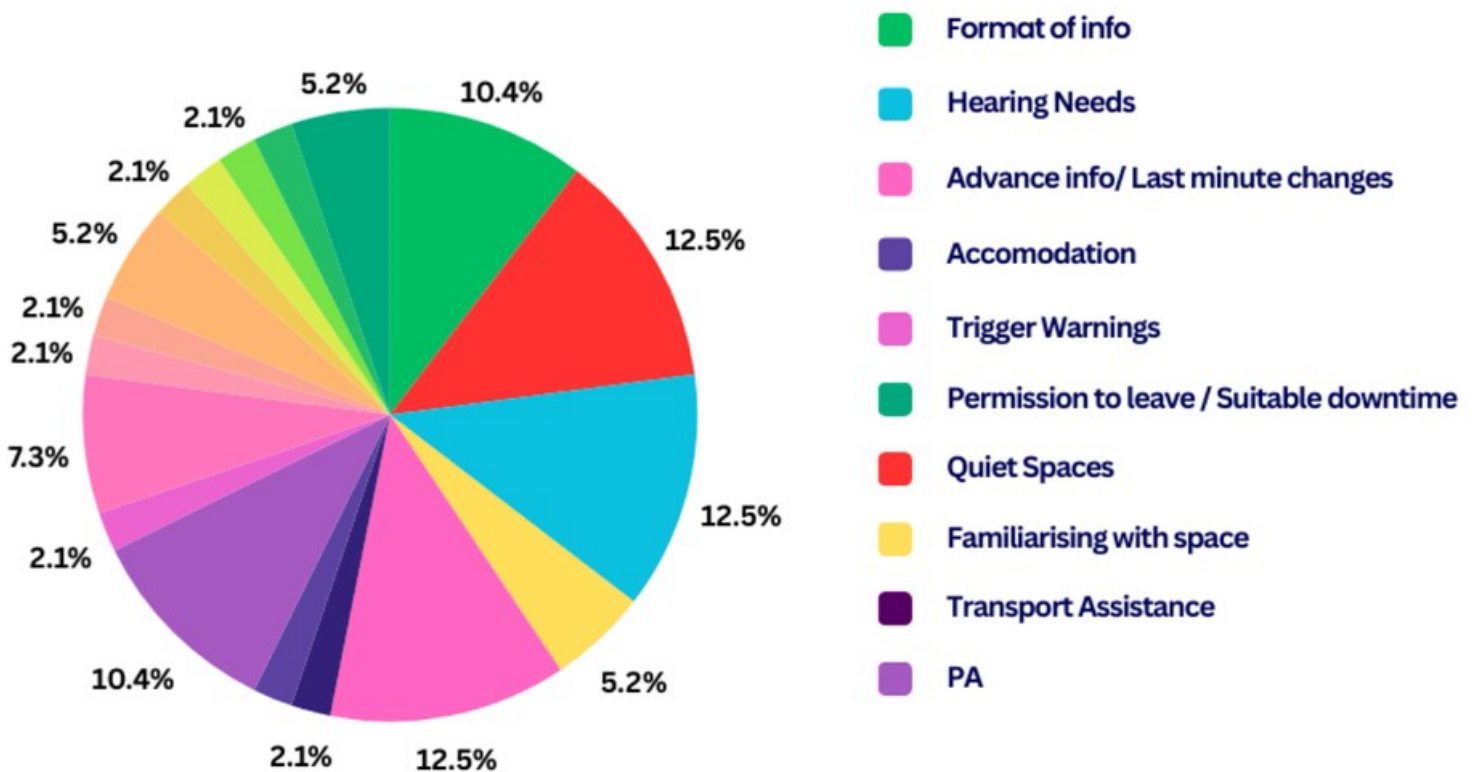
24% of those people identified as D/deaf, disabled or having a long-term health condition



15% identified as neurodivergent



Types of Need



The most common type of access needs mentioned prior to the event were **hearing needs**, access to a **quiet space**, or **additional / advance planning meetings**

Accessibility Costs

Item	Budget	Actual
Quiet room	300	300
Equipment hire - ramp for venue	450	0
Companion travel costs	500	260
Companion accommodation costs	0	580
Companion tickets	0	500
Consultancy	1200	1200
BSL(access)	2100	0
Live streaming	5050	4510
Captioning	3000	3000
Unforeseen access costs	250	0
Staff time @ approx 5 hours per week 21.54 inc. on costs	0	2050
Total	12850	12400

CHWA had budgeted an additional spend of **£12,850** for tangible access costs. This did not include a spend for staff time. This is roughly **27%** of the total event budget. Total actual spend for access without staffing was **£10,340**. There were also additional indirect costs which aren't included here, such as travel and hotels for staff pre-conference to test access provisions.

The main reason for the underspend was the lack of need for BSL interpretation. There were also some access costs that were agreed with contributors that weren't needed on the day.

The biggest areas of actual spend in regards to access were **live streaming, consultancy** and **captioning**. There were more requests for companion/accommodation support than anticipated, and more requests for pre-conference support in the form of meetings/emails, which is shown above as an hourly rate for the member of staff responsible.

Keeping It Relevant

It's important that the access decisions made are proportionate, relevant and applicable to the type of work you are doing. It is totally fine to adapt your approach as you go along, depending on what needs emerge and any feedback or suggestions you receive. Many specialist services, such as BSL, need to be pre-booked far in advance and confirmed a couple of weeks before. These services can be a large chunk of your budget, so if nobody has requested needing them, it's OK to stand them down and use those funds to fulfil other access requirements. The most important thing is clear communication around this – ensuring your providers are comfortable with cancellation, giving people plenty of opportunity to request, publicising the cut-off date, and letting people know if those services won't be available.

Reasonable Adjustments

Everybody will have a different opinion on what a 'reasonable adjustment' is in each situation. Whilst we recommend doing everything possible to make your work accessible, it's also important to know your limits. Over promising can damage trust, and can, in some cases be dangerous. Don't promise things that will be trickier to deliver further down the line. It is OK to tell someone you aren't able to meet a specific need, as long as you can demonstrate that you've tried your best and there are real reasons why. For example, asking for a warning before loud sounds is reasonable, but asking for a guarantee of no loud sounds at all might be out of your control. If you can't fulfil the request in its' entirety, but there are additional things you can do, such as offering headphones or a quiet space, this can also be helpful.

Delivering the work

Most of the work comes in the planning stage, but there are a few things you can do to create a supportive and inclusive environment during the day.

Set the Tone

When welcoming people, creating an inclusive environment helps reassure disabled people that they are welcome, and their needs have been considered. A reminder of where to find toilets/quiet room and any other access provisions is a great way to do this, and of any particular staff members they can go to for access support. If you are happy for people to take breaks, move around, make themselves comfortable however they need to then let them know – again inviting people to participate in a way that works for them helps normalise

varying needs, and allows people to manage their own care. Depending on the nature of the project/event, it may be appropriate to build a 'contract of care' as a group, which can further help people feel safe and valued, and allows them to contribute their specific preferences.

Staffing

Ensuring you have enough visible staff to deal with access enquiries, and that they have been properly briefed, is essential. You may want to consider one 'access lead,' but all the team should be aware of access needs that have been shared, and where to find useful information.

Access Register

Detailing any access needs or adjustments on a register is a good way to ensure any previously agreed adjustments can happen smoothly and seamlessly. Making it easy for attendees/participants is key – for example clear signage to hearing loops/quiet rooms/accessible toilets. Disabled people shouldn't have to work harder to attend, so make your support offering clear.

First Aid / Pastoral Care

Ensure there are suitably knowledgeable and trained people to deal with any unexpected events, as this shouldn't fall to the practitioner. Always have someone in a floating capacity, so they can easily be responsive and go where needed. Depending on the project, you may need to consider specialist skills, such as Mental Health First Aid, Safeguarding Awareness, or knowledge of a particular disability or neurodiversity, such as Dementia or Autism.

Case Study: Reasonable Adjustment by Peterborough Presents



Reasonable Adjustment was a powerful project with and for people in Peterborough who are d/Deaf, Disabled, and/or Neurodivergent (DDN for short). It took place in autumn/winter 2023. The title, Reasonable Adjustment, makes reference to the 1995 Disability Discrimination Act. We wanted to create something that gave voice to DDN people in Peterborough, that both celebrated and raised awareness about the realities of their lived experiences.

Reasonable Adjustment included: an artist residency, a research residency, an exhibition in the city centre, an artwork trail around Peterborough, events and activities, printmaking, zine making, scratch building, an open chat, a fashion show, gaming, and more! The project culminated on International Day of People with Disabilities in December 2023. An estimated 5800 people took part.



A gallery space with several chairs, portraits on walls, and a blue wall with words and phrases associated with disability

We hadn't originally planned on creating any kind of booklet / zine, but we got chatting to one of the participant's mums and she suggested we should get a booklet made so the exhibition can live on. The digital zine is a downloadable PDF file. It has accessible fonts, colours, letter sizing, image descriptions, and has been formatted for screen reader use.



A wall of 9 pieces of colourful artwork, expressing words and thoughts associated with disability



A single yellow chair featuring writing in braille, in a large open space

Designed and formatted by the brilliant Fi Cifaldi, you can download it via the [Peterborough Presents Website](#) 20

Learning from the work

Attendee Feedback

Encourage those who attended to feed back to you, and give attendees/participants choice in how they feed back to you during and after. Not everyone will feel comfortable with written feedback forms, for example, some may prefer a phone chat, text message, video or voice note. You can also get creative with visual and artist feedback methods during the event or project.

Debrief with Team and Collaborators

In every piece of work, it's important to reflect on both the things that went well, and the challenges/unexpected events/things that could be stronger. This will provide you with a strong foundation for any future access work. Ensure that you give adequate time to reflecting and reading feedback specific to access and inclusion, and note any patterns or themes that stand out. If you're preparing a report or evaluation document of any kind, don't forget to include feedback re. access on this.

Access Evaluators

If they're planning to attend anyway, you can ask your lived experience or steering group members to provide some feedback to help you improve your offer next time. Alternatively, you can ask a local disability charity or access consultant to do this for you.

Sharing Your Findings

When sharing your evaluation, whether publicly or with stakeholders, it's really important to be honest and look critically at the feedback and experiences of a variety of people. Documenting the challenges or the things that didn't go as expected is just as useful – it gives you a benchmark to work from in future, and helps build trust among disabled people if they can see you are committed to learning and improving, and are able to take and implement less positive feedback, as well as celebrate the successes. Creating a 'call to action' list is a good way to prioritise potential future changes based on feedback. A good example of a measured evaluation is [CHWA's Making Change Conference Evaluation](#), available on our website.

Conclusion

We hope this gives you some useful starting points when considering access. Not all of the suggestions will be possible or relevant, and that's ok. Access is a deeply personal area, and there can be fear around 'getting it wrong' which can stop people even attempting to embed an accessible approach. Remember, it's OK not to have all the answers; the key things to consider are:

- Approach access with a curiosity, openness and try not to have pre-conceived ideas
- Include D/deaf, disabled and neurodivergent people in your planning and delivery
- Be realistic in what you can achieve and the skills you have – ask for specialist help if needed.
- If you are unsure what access support someone might need – ask 'how can we best support you?'

Appendix 1

Access Guidance Questions

Below are some questions that can help with early planning of an event or project

What do you want to do and why?

Who is involved in the idea right now? Who do you want to be involved in the future? How will you ensure disabled people are part of planning and decision making around access in a meaningful way (including fair and equal pay)

If you want to include disabled people as contributors, what needs to happen? Do you need to offer longer timescales, multiple ways to read and respond to information, flexibility on interview processes and times?

What scale and scope do you want the event to have?

Who is your audience? Are there any particular access requirements that you know are high amongst the demographic, that need to be included as standard (for example, will a lot of your cohort benefit for large print, or would extra Mental Health First Aid be a good idea)? This will also help inform suitability of venues, and programme structure.

How are you hoping people will engage? Is there a way to add multiple options here?

How are you going to collect information about access needs, and action them? Is there anything you know you definitely cannot offer (for example, the event needs to be at a certain venue that you know doesn't have a lift). What alternatives could you offer instead?

Are there particular links you have/can make with disabled-led communities that may benefit from the event? Is there also scope for them to offer professional input/advice?

Who is supporting financially? Do you know your budget or are you building it around the plans? Is it sufficient to make the event accessible? Or do you need to find more funding/scale down the activity? We recommend allocating between 15-30% of your overall budget for access costs.

Now would be a good time to gather quotes for specialist services to keep costs realistic

How are you planning on keeping people feeling safe and supported during the event (including your team)? What considerations/specialist skills/extra staffing might you need?

Who will be responsible for access on the day, or will the responsibility be shared?

How much time/resources will planning an accessible event take? Do you currently have that in your team? Trust and consistency are really important – try to avoid over promising on your access offer.

What kind of environment are you looking to create and how will you communicate this? Additional things such as photos, visual stories and videos, and language guidance will help reassure people that they have been considered.

How are you going to make your access offer most visible in the run up to the event?

If your event is interactive in any way, how can you provide autonomy and choice in how people get involved (e.g. Multiple ways of giving feedback)

Additional Resources

[Creative Health Quality Framework](#)

[Unlimited Arts](#)

[Scope Disability](#)

[Shape Arts](#)

[Attitude is Everything](#)

[Disability Arts Online](#)

[We Shall Not Be Removed](#)

[Disability Arts Cymru](#)

[Sense Arts](#)

References

* House of Commons Library Research Briefing: Disabled People in Employment (18.03.2024):
<https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-7540/>

** Creative Health UK: State of the Sector Survey, Tang, J. (01.02.2024):
https://www.culturehealthandwellbeing.org.uk/sites/default/files/SectorReport_202040201.pdf