

Northampton Saints Rugby Football Club



Access Policy

A Guide to Facilities Available at Franklins Gardens for Disabled People

This Document is available in large
print or electronically on request.

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1. Introduction

Northampton Rugby Football Club invites and welcomes disabled people, and their companions, to attend Franklins Gardens and use its facilities, both on match and non-match days.

The Club provides match day and other conference and function facilities which are accessible for disabled people.

Where any access issues are identified, the Club is committed to exploring avenues to remove those identified barriers that are necessary and reasonable within the spirit and requirements of the Disability Discrimination Acts of 1995 and 2005 and the Equality Act 2016 to improve access for all. To assist this process the Club is committed to undertake regular consultation with its supporters, and other users, with disabilities and their companions. Notwithstanding this, the Club reserves the right to refuse access to areas of the ground for disabled people where it is shown by risk assessment that it would be in contravention of overriding Health and Safety legislation.

2. Definition

Northampton Rugby Football Club recognises that the term 'Disability' is a very broad term. Like non-disabled people, disabled people come in all shapes, sizes and ages. They also have varying degrees of disabilities.

The Club recognises the following definitions of disability:-

Disability Discrimination Act 1995

'A physical and/or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities'

The Social Model

'Disability arises from the interaction of people with impairments, with excluding social, material and organisational barriers.

The problem is not with the individual.

Without the social, material or organisational barriers, the impairment would still exist but the disability would not. The problem is not with the individual but the way that society reacts'.

3. Facilities

Northampton Rugby Football Club provides the following facilities and match day concessions for disabled people and /or their companions. The Club reserves the right to request proof of a disability before providing any concession.

This may include proof of:-

- Receipt of medium or higher rate Disability Living Allowance
- Severe Disablement Allowance

- Attendance Allowance
- Disabled 'Blue Badge' (for car parking only)

4. Ticketing

There are 85 wheelchair positions within the stadium bowl that each come with an accompanying carer seat; these can be found across all four stands. Cinch Stadium at Franklin's Gardens is also a front-loading stadium, with the front row of seats in the Barwell, Church's and Cinch Stands accessible from ground level.

Accessible viewing for wheelchairs and mobility scooters is charged at a bespoke rate, please call the ticket office.

Accessible seating for ambulant disabled guests is available, please call the ticket office to discuss the most suitable available seats and current rate.

Companions, where appropriate, are provided with free admission subject to the following conditions:-

- There can only be one companion per disabled person. Other guests are welcome to attend at normal match day rates.
- The companion must be fully capable of providing assistance to the disabled person in the event of an emergency situation or ground evacuation.
- To qualify for a complimentary companion ticket, we would require the one of the accepted forms of paperwork below.
 - Receipt of the middle or higher rate of the Disability Living Allowance (mobility or care component)
 - Receipt of the standard or enhanced rate of daily living component of the Personal Independence Payment
 - Receipt of the enhanced rate of the mobility component of the Personal Independence Payment
 - Receipt of the Severe Disablement Allowance, the Employment and Support Allowance or the Attendance Allowance
 - A specialist personal letter from the hospital to confirm that the person is in receipt of support services
 - A copy of a local authority blind & visually impaired person's registration card or a CVI document.
 - A copy of an entitlement to War Pensioners Mobility Supplement letter.

Assistance dogs are welcomed, please book these in advance by contacting the ticket office.

5. Parking

Northampton Rugby Football Club provides free parking for disabled people as follows:

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|------------------|-----------|
| • VIP car park | 13 spaces |
| • Car Park 'A' | 13 spaces |
| • Car Park 'C' | 5 spaces |
| • Car Park 'D' | 40 spaces |
| • Bingo car park | 50 spaces |

Car parking tickets are available from the Club and must be applied for and displayed on the vehicle to gain entry to the car parks. They are issued on either a seasonal or (where available) match day basis. The ticket allows parking in the **designated car park only**.

- Accessible car parking – blue badge must also be shown upon entry.

'Drop Off Points' for disabled people are provided, via the Abbey Street entrance or the main VIP car park on Weedon Road. These allow the disabled person to be dropped off close to the stands but the car must then be removed and parked elsewhere. 'Drop Off Point' tickets are also available from the ticket office either on a seasonal or match day basis. These must also be displayed on the vehicle to take advantage of this concession.

The 'Blue Badge Scheme' does not automatically give access to the designated disabled car parking facilities at this ground.

6. Access Routes

All public areas of the ground are accessible for disabled people. A complete circulatory route of all stands at ground level is currently possible, however there is no access for wheelchairs at Gate 1 between Carlsberg and Barwell Stands (steps).

7. Viewing Areas

The ground provides a number of viewing areas for spectators with disabilities and their companions:

- Carlsberg/East Stand - two areas at the upper level
- South Stand - one area at the upper level and four areas at ground level
- Churches/West Stand - three areas at ground level
- Barwell/North Stand - three areas, one at ground level, one on the first floor and one on the second floor (disabled access is available via Gate 4, Bingo Car park for ground floor. First or Second floor access is via the Barwell Stand reception).

A total of 179 spaces for disabled people and their companions are provided.

Gate 4 provides access for disabled people to the Barwell Stand area.

People using the accessible viewing areas in the *Carlsberg/East Stand* should access through the main Carlsberg Stand reception area.

People using the accessible viewing areas in the *South Stand* should enter via Gates 2 or 3. Those using the Upper level viewing area should then use the dedicated entrance in the South Stand reception.

People using the ground level accessible viewing areas in the *Churches/West Stand* should enter via Gates 2, 3 or 4.

Respective entrance gates are shown on season and match day tickets.

8. Toilets

A number of toilets for use by disabled people are provided around the ground:-

Carlsberg/East Stand - two at the upper level and three in the bar areas

Cinch/South Stand - two at the upper level and one in the concourse

Churches/West Stand - two at ground level (one each end of the stand)

Barwell/North Stand - three at ground level, three each on the first and second floors. One next to the medical room at the rear of the Barwell Stand, N/W corner.

The toilets in the Rodber Bar and Heroes public in the Carlsberg Stand are accessed by use of radar keys. All are clearly signed and conform to current regulations and design guidance.

9. Refreshment Facilities

The majority of catering facilities are accessible to disabled people, low level sections of bars/food outlet counters are provided. Consideration is being given to the provision of suitable refreshments at viewing areas where disabled people are unable to visit the catering areas.

10. Miscellaneous

All design features, signage, built environment issues and structural finishes at the ground have taken account of the current requirements and regulations made to assist the access, safety, comfort and enjoyment of the facility by disabled people.

11. Management Issues

Northampton Rugby Football Club has an appointed Access Officer to continually monitor and update procedures for attending to people with disabilities whilst using this ground.

12. Match Day

All match day safety stewards receive awareness training in relation to Disability Awareness, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, the Equality Act 2016 and provision of help and assistance to people with disabilities. They also undertake other customer care training.

Dedicated safety stewards are deployed to all upper level disabled viewing areas.

Dedicated match day safety stewards are trained in the use of 'Evac Chairs'.

'Key Point' telephones, providing direct contact with the stadium control room, are installed in all upper level and the majority of ground level accessible viewing areas.

First aid and medical cover is provided at all matches.

An inclusion hub within the main village area, is manned by trained staff who can assist when needed.

Senior Club managers are available at all matches to provide advice and assistance to disabled people.

13. Non-Match Day

All staff at Franklins Gardens are aware of their responsibilities and commitments to provide advice and assistance to disabled people.

All staff are aware of the contents of this document.

Senior Club managers are available to provide advice and assistance and to resolve any issues with people with disabilities.

14. Emergency Procedures

In the event of an emergency incident arising at the ground on a match day people with disabilities will be assisted by dedicated safety stewards. It is important in these circumstances that the companion of the disabled person is also able to provide assistance where required.

Depending upon the type and location of the incident, disabled people may have to be evacuated from their viewing positions either within or outside the ground. In some circumstances it may be necessary to use the 'Evac Chairs'. Where this is the case they will be used by trained safety stewards.

In the event of an emergency incident occurring on a non-match day, disabled people will be assisted by Club staff who are aware of the emergency systems and their responsibilities.

15. Consultation

The Club is committed to consulting with its supporters and other users with disabilities both through supporter engagement surveys and through direct communication around specific issues. This policy itself has taken account of comments brought to our attention in a previous consultation process.

16. Review

Northampton Rugby Football Club welcomes comments on this document and its provision of facilities or concessions to people with disabilities.

This policy document will be reviewed and updated, where appropriate, on an annual basis.

17. Amendments

Amends from January 2023

- Front page contact person updated.
- Addition of assistance dogs
- Where applicable “disabled” replaced with “accessible”

Mark Darbon
Chief Executive

Date.....