



British Wheelchair Archery Association

Guide to Including Archers with Impairments

FOREWORD

This guide was originally written for the benefit of archers with impairments and disabilities. However, during the course of researching it, I found club and tournament organisers didn't realise their obligations under the Equality Act and had never received proper advice.

While archers are entitled to what the Act calls "reasonable adjustments" to enable their participation, the Act recognises there is not an infinite "blank cheque" to pay for them. This guide attempts to strike a balance and provide solutions on a low cost or no cost basis.

I am confident that the ideas involving the rules of shooting are accurate as I discussed them with Archery GB's Judges Committee. I discussed various issues with the Equality and Advisory Support Service and the advice on the legality of situations is based on those discussions. Anyone involved in litigation should seek professional advice and NOT rely on anything in this guide.

I would like to thank Dani Brown and Pippa Britton, (ex-international para-archers) Chris Turner of Wheelpower and Steve Snelling-Day of the English Federation of Disability Sport; for their comments and advice during the development of this guide. My thanks also go to the EFDS for allowing me to reference their excellent resources.

A common theme throughout is the need to change attitudes and thinking to perceived problems. If this guide starts that process I will be gratified.

Bob Smith

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INTRODUCTION

Archery has a justified reputation for being an inclusive sport. Archery was one of the original events in the Paralympics and Great Britain has been winning medals and titles since that time. The key to this success has been the ease with which people with disabilities can take up and progress through the sport. Throughout Archery there is a lot of support and empathy for people with disabilities and this guide aims to build on that and make it more effective.

Some people have impairments and these may lead to a reduction in capability. It is true that people with a wide range of impairments can participate in archery. This makes the sport **accessible**. What we have is a group of people who are going to participate in a different way. **Inclusion** is about enabling that participation. The key to achieving inclusion is to plan for it at the start of any activity, not view it as bolt-on extra or worse not consider it at all.

Archery GB's definition of an archer with impairment is the same as the 2010 Equality Act and is as follows:

"A person that has a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on their ability to carry out normal daily activities."

The Equality Act contains a number of phrases not in common use so they are introduced here.

Disability is one of several "**protected characteristics**". People with these characteristics are entitled to access services and activities from "**service providers**" at the same quality of experience available to everyone else. You would be acting unlawfully if you indulged in "**direct discrimination**", "**indirect discrimination**" or fail to make "**reasonable adjustments**". Reasonable adjustments are the changes needed to provide that equality of experience quoted earlier - more on these later. Everyone should realise that you can be sued for compensation in the County Court if you discriminate against someone covered by the Act.

This guide will focus on where people with disabilities experience Archery; in Clubs and at Tournaments. We will be promoting best practice, which in some cases goes beyond the minimum requirement in the legislation. We make no apology for this as we want Archery to continue as a leader in this area and fulfil our vision for the sport.

All the "HOW NOT TO DO IT" examples quoted are actual experiences of archers with impairments. Apart from being extremely bad practice, these situations contravene the Equality Act.

GUIDANCE

All "service providers" have duty to make reasonable adjustments to enable the participation of archers with impairments, or provide a justified explanation if

unable to do so. In this section we are going to look at situations we have encountered and ways of dealing with them. Most "issues" are easily resolved if the right thinking is used from the start. Some advice will have to be generic because each situation has to be judged on its merits.

Clubs

An Archery Club is a "service provider". If you are an "open" club then as the name suggests you accept membership applications from anyone. If you are a "closed" club then as long as any person meets the criteria for membership then you can't refuse the application. If you do, you will be guilty of direct discrimination.

INCLUSION HUB CLUB

This resources provided by the English Federation of Disability Sport (EFDS) is a great resource to help clubs include more disabled people in their activities. The toolkit provides clubs and coaches with practical ideas, methods and resources to ensure that everyone has a positive experience.

Go to: www.inclusion-club-hub.co.uk

However, there will be circumstances where membership would be impractical. If in doubt, best practice would be to outline the situation and invite the person to judge for themselves.

Access We all know some facilities used in archery are not ideal; old buildings, fields down the end of a track etc. However, a person with reduced mobility may be able to work round them with some support. It would not be reasonable to expect an archery club to finance major access modifications. However, if you are planning improvements, particularly using grant aid, then good access should be designed in. Archery GB has facilities guidance on their website.



OPENING DOORS

This is another excellent resource from the EFDS to support sports clubs to improve physical access for disabled people

www.efds.co.uk/resources/case_studies/2317_access_for_all_opening_doors_a_guide_to_support_sports_clubs_to_improve_physical_access_for_disabled_people

HOW NOT TO DO IT -1

An archery club decided to improve the entrance to its toilet. It did this by laying flat slabs and leaving quite a high step. A wheelchair user who can walk using sticks, was told that he could "obviously" manage the step!

Solution All club members need toilet facilities! If you are installing/refurbishing/hiring such facilities, then use an accessible design. Everybody else

can still use it. Most clubs hire their facilities. Asking the owner for toilet facilities should be a first step. Grant aid funding is often made available to address access issues or increased community usage.

Support What support would be reasonable for a club to offer? If the skills needed are readily available then the club should offer that support. Some examples:

- Most wheelchair users prefer to be independent. Even if it feels awkward, ask what will be the best way to make their access to the club easier - a helpful push or bringing in archery kit from the car is not unreasonable.
- Some forms of visual impairment allow an archer to move around and shoot with a tactile or normal sight. However they struggle with close-range vision. So they may need some assistance with assembling kit and filling in a score sheet.
- Archers with reduced mobility may need help in collecting arrows.

All of the above require skills are readily available within a club. If an archer requires specialist support, then it is unreasonable to expect a club to train someone to provide it. However, there is the option to explore outside support, allowing the archer to provide their own, or there are training opportunities if the club wishes to support archers further.

Before leaving this section, some other issues need to be addressed. The first is beginners' courses and "have-a-go shoots". Some coaches will be reticent about teaching people with impairments. We would recommend going on Archery GB's "Pass it On" course to gain the skills. It is good practice to collect relevant medical information beforehand. This can then be used to make an objective judgement. Blanket bans are not a good idea.

IMPAIRMENT FACTSHEETS

Factsheets have been created by sports coach UK and the National Disability Sport Organisations to raise awareness around specific impairment groups. Participants should always be treated as individuals and not defined by their impairment. This information provides a generic information and reference point. When coaching a disabled person speak to them about their abilities and aspirations.

Go to www.archerygb.org/disability

HOW NOT TO DO IT - 2

A wheelchair user signed up for a beginners' course. The club then said he could not do the course with the rest of the group as it might "upset" them. He ended up doing the course on a separate night on his own.

People with disabilities cannot be excluded or treated differently at such an event. **This is direct discrimination and is illegal.**

Solution: People with disabilities should be included and the structure and format of the course altered. Any printed material should be in an accessible

form. Collecting relevant information will allow the course to be planned effectively.

Most archers with disabilities shoot with standard equipment. If modification is required then contact Archery GB for advice.

The next issue is safeguarding. People with impairments can be regarded as "Vulnerable Adults". Your club's safeguarding procedures need to be applied appropriately to people in this category.



Finally, a word on diplomacy; it is often not the message which offends, but the way it is delivered. Consider these 2 replies to a wheelchair user.

"We don't cater for archers in wheelchairs."

"Thank you for your interest in our Club. Unfortunately our indoor facility is very old and has never been modified for access. Although we have toilet facilities, these too have never been modified. As a result we are not confident we can meet your needs. If you would like to visit us to make your own judgement, then we'd be happy to see you at one of our shooting sessions."

Which one is a justified explanation? Which one would **you** rather receive?

Tournaments

Tournament Organisers have a more difficult task. Clubs can make changes on a weekly or daily basis. Tournament Organisers get one chance per year! Good planning is the key to including impaired archers and **Appendix A** lists a planning process. The Organising Body and the Tournament Organiser are the service providers and the responsibility to make reasonable adjustments rests with them. For record status it is mandatory to comply with Archery GB's "Tournament Organisers' Handbook" and SAP-3. Some of what follows is contained in those documents.

Participation British and World Archery rules are different. British rules are framed for common sense interpretation and evidence is only required in cases of doubt. Under World Archery rules a National Classification is needed to qualify for the competition. If an impaired archer arrives without documentation they should be allowed to shoot, but their results won't count and they are not eligible for any awards. In both cases "reasonable adjustments" still have to be made.



What's reasonable? In general, the expectation increases with the size of the tournament and the higher the status it possesses.

Information If someone is going to organise, then they need the correct information if the job is going to be done effectively. Tournament documentation usually consists of a prospectus and an entry form. Since most communication is electronic these days, there is no merit in trying to cram everything onto one page of A4; especially if a visually impaired person is trying to read it!

- Forms should be in Microsoft Word and in a Sans Serif font of at least 14 point.
- PDF files don't work well with screen readers. For general reading and to help with dyslexia, "Verdana" is the recommended font.

It is good practice to outline the parking, access and toilet arrangements and what support is available in the pre-information.

INCLUSIVE COMMUNICATION

The English Federation of Disability Sport has produced an inclusive communications guide called Access for all. Go to:

We firmly believe that the archer has a responsibility to provide the Tournament Organiser with the relevant information. **Appendix B** is sample entry form which is free to use. In it the impaired archer can state what they need, and informs the organiser whether they can move on and off the line and whether they intend to bring an agent. For record status shoots, some of this information is mandatory under SAP-3.

Finance Nobody runs a tournament to make a loss. There is concern that if a wheelchair or stool based archer stays on the line then it cuts down the amount of income. If you deny entry on the basis of someone's disability then that is direct discrimination.

HOW NOT TO DO IT – 3

A TO refused entry to 2 wheelchair users on the basis he already had 2 wheelchair users in the tournament and 2 more would make it financially unviable.

Archers with disabilities have the same right to enter a tournament as everyone else.

Solution: Plan for inclusion and use the budgeting procedure below.

We have heard, but never had proof of, impaired archers being charged 2 entry fees on the basis they "take up 2 spaces on the line". This is unlawful and if you have a documented case then you should pursue disciplinary action through Archery GB or consider legal redress.

Can a Tournament Organiser include impaired archers and maintain control of their income? There are other ways by which impaired archers can be enabled to shoot apart from staying in position on the line. These will be covered in the next section. If you elect to leave them in position, entry procedures can be modified in the following way.

Archery GB's best figures suggest that about 5% of their members have an identifiable disability. So if you are running a 100 place event then you can expect 5 impaired archers to enter. If you allow them to stay on the line, then budget on an entry of 95 and reserve 5 spaces for impaired archers. In this example a £10 entry fee goes up to £10.50.

In the prospectus you state that reserved spaces will be released to any archers if they are not taken up by the closing date for entries. You can accept extra entries from impaired archers if there is space in the general field. Your income will not be reduced by accommodating impaired archers.

In the next sections we will be looking at supporting the participation of an archer with impairments during shooting. **The key is for an organiser to make a proper assessment of the support he can organise by various means and making it clear in the prospectus.** We'd suggest the same 5%

figure used in the finance section. Support should be allocated on a first come, first served basis.

Moving on and off the line Archers with reduced mobility can move! It's just moving 5 metres across grass, with all their equipment, in a set time, is highly impractical unless there is an "adjustment". So the first possibility is use an assistant/agent. You can certainly encourage an archer to bring one, but you cannot make it a condition of entry because of the following.

HOW NOT TO DO IT – 4

A wheelchair based archer entered a high status tournament. He informed the Tournament Organiser he used a wheelchair but then heard absolutely nothing further despite further enquiries. The only way he could participate was to hire his carer – at the cost of £100 for the day.

For record status shoots it is mandatory to have tick box to indicate wheelchair use and a space for an archer to state their needs on the entry form. No archer can be left facing an extra bill of this nature to compete in a tournament because of their disability.

The effects described above are indirect discrimination and discrimination arising from a disability and both are illegal.

Solution: Use the information below to plan ahead and communicate the support that is available.

If you have the resources then a member of the field party can assist as they are often not committed at change of detail. The Tournament Organiser will have to determine how many/if they can be deployed in this way.

The next option is to alter the field layout. A wheelchair based archer can be placed on the end of a target line, and at change of detail move **sideways** along the line. The alternating archer then simply steps in and shoots. By leaving gaps in the target line you can create more spaces for archers to move sideways into.

Stool based archers and Visually Impaired archers are better accommodated by using a wider lane width. A judge I talked this over with recommended that for the visual presentation of the field, wider lanes widths should be grouped together. **Please see the diagrams in Appendix C.**

Using these effectively relies on collecting good information so you can plan the field layout.

There is a dispensation, which is sometimes used, where stool based archers have a chair 1 metre behind the shooting line. This is totally at the discretion of the judges and the TO. If allowed it obviously helps, but archers are reminded they must not disturb other archers who are shooting.

Arrow collection and scoring. The obvious solution is to use an agent. By all means encourage archers to bring their own, but it cannot be used as an entry condition for the same reasons given earlier.

Archery GB's Disability Committee has a preferred alternative which relies on the goodwill generally found in archery. If you look at **Appendix B**, you will see there is a box for people to opt out of collecting arrows for others.

When arranging the target list; the Tournament Organiser can place an impaired archer with fellow archers who are prepared to help. We would recommend that the impaired archer be set up to alternate on the line so there is a 3 to 1 ratio for arrow pulling. If the tournament is a 2 day event: then the Tournament Organiser should rotate the target list so people's good nature is not over-stretched.

One member of the field party can cover 2 archers if they are placed on adjacent bosses. There may be less help available as the field party will have other tasks during this time. However, a field party member can often double up arrow scoring and pulling with another duty.

From the discussion above you can see that a Tournament Organiser can accept any number of entries where the archer will provide the support. Combined with the other methods it is easy to reach the 5% figure we suggest.

CONCLUSION

We have tried to look at situations found in archery and suggest alternate ways of finding solutions. There are obligations we must meet, but by making reasonable adjustments and taking some positive steps, we can all help to make our sport more inclusive. We hope this guide makes people think about the issues.

Planning for Inclusion

Decide how many archers you can support through your organisation. We would recommend 5% of the entry as this will be completely justifiable.

How many will you allow to stay on the line? For outdoor tournaments there are methods available to alternate all wheelchair and stool based archers.

Budget your tournament according to the guidelines in the Finance section.

In the Tournament Prospectus make it clear how many supported places are available and that they will be allocated on a first come first served basis. You can accept any number of entries where the archer will provide an agent.

Either use the entry form in this guide or check your own contains the same information.

After the closing date determine how many disabled archers have entered, how many are bringing agents and how many archers are prepared to collect arrows. Prepare the target list. It would be good practice to indicate wheelchair and stool based archers so their target partners know in advance.

Decide which variations of the target line are needed to alternate the archers and plan the field layout accordingly.

APPENDIX B

Gender	Surname	Forename	Club	AGB No	Bow (R,C,L)	Wheelc hair Stool User?	DOB	Entry Fee

Name and address of sender

e-mail address for results

If you want printed results then enclose a C5 stamped, addressed envelope.

DISABLED ARCHERS - PLEASE STATE YOUR NEEDS

ARE YOU ABLE TO MOVE ON AND OFF THE LINE IN THE TIME ALLOWED?

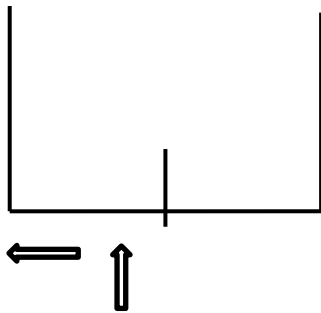
DO YOU ATTEND TO BRING AN ASSISTANT/AGENT?

Able bodied archers – Please tick if you are NOT prepared to collect and score arrows for disabled archers

Signed(Parent if Junior)

APPENDIX C

Alternating wheelchair and stool based archers by altering the field layout. All of these have been checked and are legal.

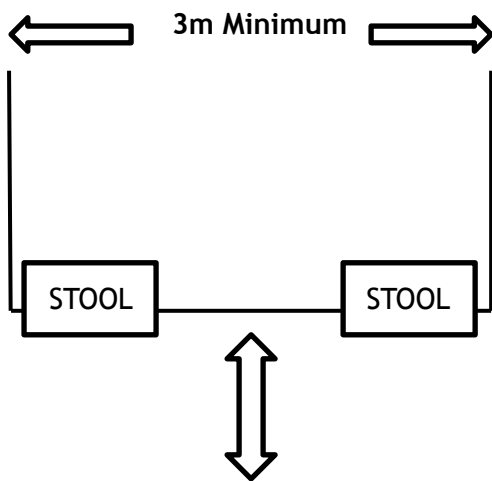


Alternating a wheelchair user. The archer moves sideways along the line and the target partner steps in to shoot. This can be used on the ends of a line of targets. See below how to create more "ends".

Indoors the archer puts his bow down to the side and reverses out of the way to allow access to the line.



Bosses can be arranged in blocks with a metre of space between each block. This arrangement would allow 6 wheelchair users to alternate with a target partner. In WRS shoots the number in each block should be a multiple of 2 or 4 to accommodate lane lines.



Stool users can be accommodated by using a wider lane width. If a chair is allowed behind the shooting line this arrangement is very effective. Wider lane widths should be grouped together on the target line. 2 stool users should not be on the same target unless at least 1 agent is present. Replace with an able bodied archer.

ALTERNATING