

Disability Discrimination Act Policy

The Disability Discrimination Act (1995) aims to stop discrimination against people with disabilities and requiring employers, providers of services and owners of premises to make reasonable adaptations to accommodate their needs. The Woodland Trust is committed to complying with the requirements of the Act and to providing an environment in which each person is treated fairly and without prejudice. We reflect this commitment to equal opportunities in all aspects of our work and in particular as follows:

Employment practices

We are committed to providing equal opportunities for all employees. Our aim is to select, recruit, train, promote and reward on the basis of merit and performance and to maintain a working environment free from unlawful discrimination. We will employ personnel with disabilities and will treat such employees in exactly the same manner as other employees, the needs of their disablement permitting.

Information and Enquiry Services

We aim to take reasonable steps to accommodate the needs of people with disabilities in production of information leaflets and other key literature for supporters or members of the public, including web-based material.

We will produce special adaptations of our literature in other formats such as audiotape where there is evidence of demand for it and where the cost is likely to be reasonable. The language used in our literature will be kept as clear as possible, bearing in mind the nature of the publication and the target audience. We will ensure that all staff dealing with enquiries from the public are aware of their obligations under the Act and receive appropriate training. A complaints procedure will be put in place to ensure that any complaints from supporters with disabilities can be resolved speedily and efficiently.

Access to sites

We take pride in the fact that virtually all our woods are freely available for access by members of the public.

In the design of access provision, we seek to minimise the extent of physical 'barriers' to direct access to and within our woods. In practical terms this means taking such measures as the use of kissing gates or simple gaps rather than stiles where possible and the design of routes to minimise gradients. By taking such an approach we hope to be able to accommodate as wide a range of people as possible.

We also recognise that people with pushchairs, - those with limited mobility such as wheelchair users, elderly people or those with visual impairments, may require more specific facilities to enjoy our woodland. Many of our woods will not have such facilities. However, we welcome such groups and our aim is to provide specifically designed access for them where the site's topography allows, where there is a demonstrable local demand and where it is practical to do so within the constraints of available funding and other management objectives of the wood. We will take advice from those with particular experience in this area to ensure standards and specifications are suitable.

Access to premises

We aim to take reasonable steps to accommodate the needs of people with disabilities.

Reasonable assistance will be given to ensure that disabled visitors and employees are helped with access to the workplace and facilities. We welcome ideas whereby our office buildings and facilities can be made more user-friendly.