## **HEART OF MIDLOTHIAN FC**

## **TYNECASTLE PARK**

## **Accessible Policy & Procedures**



### **General Policy**

Heart of Midlothian Football Club ("the Club") is committed to Supporters and Customers who are disabled having full access to all matches, goods, services, and facilities provided and offered to the public.

The Club employs a Disability Access Officer (DAO) to support, as necessary, the needs of all Supporters who are disabled. The DAO will work closely with the Heart of Midlothian Disabled Supporters Club to ensure the needs of all Supporters who are disabled are fully considered.

The Club has a pan-disability approach recognising support is required for supporters who are wheelchair users, ambulant disabled, partially sighted/blind, hard of hearing and have learning difficulties. However, disabilities out with this list are recognised in addition to our elderly supporters who may have reduced mobility.

The Club operates a concessionary ticketing policy for certain accessible areas due to the level of facilities available, as outlined in the ticketing procedures. The Club will ensure there is no discrimination between persons with different disabilities.

The Club recognises not all facilities are fully accessible to people who are disabled and is committed to making the necessary reasonable adjustments described by the Equality Act 2010 to ensure full compliance with the legislation.

Accessible facilities are detailed below however are not limited to this list as improvements are considered on an on-going basis.

- Audio Descriptive Commentary
- Wheelchair User Viewing Areas
- Easier Access Seats
- Ramped Access rear of Gorgie Stand
- Ramped Access via Gerrards Yard
- Lifts x 3 Gorgie Stand (1), Main Stand (2)
- Escalator Main Stand
- Support from Stand Managers and Stewards

The Club guarantees to investigate all complaints of disability discrimination and will respond as quickly and timeously as possible.

# Accessible Procedures and Match Day Provisions

#### Stadium Access:

External access to the stadium for supporters who are disabled is provided at the Tynecastle Terrace and McLeod Street entrances. Access to the seating and concourse areas of the Main, Gorgie, Wheatfield & Roseburn Stands is via passenger lifts situated at the East Side of the Gorgie and Roseburn Stands. In addition, there is a lift in the main stand reception area which can be used on request by contacting the DAO.

A ramped access is also provided from Tynecastle Terrace at the rear of the Gorgie Stand. There is also a pedestrian entrance/exit in Wheatfield Place which supporters who are disabled may utilise which has a seated waiting area provided for convenience.

Access to main stand and other areas is also available by an escalator.

Access to all main stand hospitality areas is in place.

The entrance to the Club Shop and Ticket Office is fully accessible.

Accessible entrance to the Gorgie Suite is via the Gorgie Corner.

#### **Ticketing Procedures:**

#### Home Support

A minimum of 87 and maximum of 99 spaces for Wheelchairs User\_supporters and their personal assistants are available in the stadium. Adjacent personal assistant seats are also available.

Admission is charged at a concessionary rate for wheelchair users due to the level of facilities available (in consideration of the match category), admission for personal assistants is complimentary.

Blind/partially sighted supporters and their personal assistants who were members of the Rex Blind Parties before 2023 are allocated several seats in the Main Stand (Lower Section T), with an audio commentary system provided. Tickets are charged at a concessionary rate with admission for the personal assistant being complimentary. Blind/partially sighted supporters and their personal assistants may

choose to sit in any other area of the stadium (subject to availability) with audio commentary provided, which can be requested from the Disability Access Officer. Admission is charged at the relevant rate based on age bracket & seating zone (in consideration of match category), with admission for the personal assistant being complimentary.

Ambulant and other supporters who are disabled can choose to sit anywhere within the stadium (subject to availability). Admission is charged at the relevant rate based on age bracket & seating zone (*in consideration of match category*), with admission for the personal assistant being complimentary (if criteria qualification met).

Additional seats are available in the new stand concourse for use by those with limited mobility. These are clearly labelled accordingly.

Complimentary Personal Assistant Tickets: a complimentary PA season or match ticket will be issued if the applicant is covered or in receipt of one or more of the following: -

- Receipt of Disability Living Allowance All award levels with the exception of somebody receiving the lower level of the care component only
- Receipt of Child Disability Payment All award levels with the exception of somebody receiving the lower level of the care component only
- Receipt of Personal Independence Payment all award combinations
- Receipt of Adult Disability Payment all award combinations
- AFIP as it is an equivalent to PIP & ADP for Armed Force personnel injured on active service.
- Attendance Allowance both award levels
- War Pensioners' Mobility Allowance or War or Service Disablement Pension for 80% or more disability
- Blind or partially sighted and have a registration certificate (BD8 or CVI Certificate) or other relevant evidence from an eye specialist such an optometrist.
- Confirmation in writing from a GP, consultant, or relevant specialist that an individual is included on their Deaf Register, or a letter or report from an audiologist confirming that hearing loss has been recorded at 75-80 dBl or worse.
- Original letter from a GP or consultant stating that the individual has a physical disability and requires a companion whilst in the stadium.
- Original letter from a GP or consultant stating that the individual has an intellectual disability and requires a companion whilst in the stadium. In cases of mental health – confirmation in writing from GP or consultant or other suitably qualified professional that the individual requires additional support.
- Industrial Injuries Disabilities Benefit if the rate is above 20%.

Whichever one or more of the above is relevant the most recent documentation confirming this information needs to be provided when purchasing for the first time with a PA. Any questions or advice on this subject should be addressed to the Club's Disability Access Officer. It is a condition of obtaining a complimentary PA ticket that it is for a seat immediately adjacent to the season ticket holder who has a disability and that the PA is aged 13 or higher.

A complimentary personal assistant season ticket can only be used when accompanying a season ticket holder who is disabled. Otherwise, the personal assistant ticket must be upgraded to an alternative Concession Match Ticket or Adult Match Ticket for the game where the season ticket holder who is disabled cannot attend. Failure to adhere to this policy may result in the cancellation of the season tickets.

Concessions are also available for adults who are in receipt of Employment Support Allowance and are in the Support Group (or the Universal Credit Equivalent) who first purchased their season tickets in 2022 or before. This excludes adults in the Work-Related Group. Adults in receipt of this benefit need to supply the Club with an award letter dated in the current year before purchase.

#### **Away Support**

A number of Wheelchairs User\_supporters and their personal assistants are available in the Roseburn Stand. Segregation will apply to allocation for home and away fans. The available number of spaces is dependent on the categorisation of the match and the number of sections and seats allocated to away fans. This can range between 4 and 20 spaces.

A number of tickets will be provided (on the away Club's request) for any other fans who are disabled and their personal assistants, however the number available is not unlimited for practical reasons.

Admission is charged based as per the rules set out for home fans.

#### **Accessible Parking:**

Limited accessible parking is available and is coordinated via the Disability Access Officer, in consultation with the Security and Safety Officer.

#### Home Support

**NBD Staff Car Park, Wheatfield Road:** 20 accessible spaces are available to season ticket holders who are in possession of "blue badge".

**Gerrards Yard Car Park, Wheatfield Street:** A limited number of accessible spaces are available to season ticket holders who are in possession of "blue badge".

Tynecastle High School Car Park, Mcleod Street: 36 accessible spaces are available to season ticket holders who are in possession of "blue badge".

**Street Parking Wheatfield Place:** Limited number available on a first come first served basis however the Club has no involvement in allocation. Council parking attendants will monitor. Disabled blue badges must be clearly displayed in the vehicle.

#### Away Support

Bus parking is available in **Russell Road**. Additional facilities are also available for cars if blue badges are displayed. This is subject to the bus allocation not being fully utilised.

Tynecastle High School Car Park, McLeod Street: 3 accessible spaces are available to visiting supporters who are in possession of "blue badge".

The Disability Access Officer will also support where possible ad hoc bookings for accessible parking.

#### **Match Day Stewarding:**

Heart of Midlothian employ contracted stewards to assist in the control of all stadium events and deal with spectator's needs. They also have an active role in any emergency situation and receive full training from their company on a continual basis. Suppliers are advised by the Club to ensure training incorporates disability awareness.

#### **Provision of Information on Club Operations:**

Information on all Club activities are listed on the Club's comprehensive website and is supported by mailshots, newsletters, match day magazines and radio / press announcements.

Accessible information can be obtained by visiting the Club's website by clicking on <a href="https://www.heartsfc.co.uk/tickets-and-hospitality/matchday/accessibility-information.">https://www.heartsfc.co.uk/tickets-and-hospitality/matchday/accessibility-information.</a>
<a href="https://www.heartsfc.co.uk/tickets-and-hospitality/matchday/accessibilit

#### Stadium Signage:

The Club in consultation with the Disability Access Officer will continue to review and identify any signage needs. This will be particularly relevant following any refurbishment or alteration.

#### **Staff Training:**

The Club will review the requirements for staff training and provide the necessary training to staff as required.

#### Feedback:

The Club encourages supporters to provide feedback on any accessible issues. This is essential as the Club always strives to look at ways of improving the match day experience for our supporters who are disabled.

#### Contact:

The current Disability Access Officer is Keith Ferguson who can be contacted by email at <a href="mailto:keithferguson@homplc.co.uk">keithferguson@homplc.co.uk</a>, telephoning 0771903211 or by writing to Keith Ferguson, Disability Access Officer, Heart of Midlothian Football Club, Tynecastle Park, Gorgie Road, Edinburgh, EH12 2NL