



Buggy Policy – Including Disabled People

Making Reasonable Adjustments

Update

This update has been published following an increase in the number of enquiries from clubs and golfers as to what is a reasonable adjustment for disabled people who require the use of a buggy in order to play golf.

The aim of the document is to provide clarification to commonly asked questions and provide links to supporting resources.

Key principles

As a reminder, the following points summarise what should be included and considered in a facility's buggy policy

- The policy should include how it will make reasonable adjustments to include disabled people who require the use of a buggy in order to play.
- The reasonable adjustments should reflect how buggy use will be managed when weather conditions may otherwise restrict their use.
- The reasonable adjustments should be made on a hole by hole basis.
- The policy should include covering how individuals own single seater buggies will be accommodated.
- The policy should be published and available to view.



Further information, clarifications, and resources

Bans and restricting use

Blanket bans of all buggy use should be avoided. Restrictions on the use of buggies should consider how, if the course is open, that disabled people who require a buggy in order to play can access the course.

The assessments should be made hole by hole and routes put in place to manage the buggy traffic on the course.

Whilst the ambition should be to offer the same access to disabled people as non disabled people, the topography, turf conditions and weather conditions impact on each hole may mean that it is not possible to offer this.

As part of the clubs longer term planning, considering how the same level of access can be offered should be a key principle.

Managing buggy traffic

When considering how buggies can continue to access the course you can specify routes that should be used. Asking golfers to leave their buggies on these routes and walking to their ball should be considered.

You may need to consider differentiating even further if you have golfers who are profoundly impaired and require getting closer to their ball before play. Agreeing how and where these users access the course should be recorded as part of your policy.

There may be the ambition to open holes on the course that due to the cumulative impact of the weather or stress on areas of turf mean that you need to withdraw buggy use or re-route traffic

These adjustments are for general play but can be used to provide competitions. You may wish to consider how during wet and/or winter conditions that 9 hole competitions could provide opportunities for players requiring buggies whilst limiting the impact on the course.



Individual seater or privately owned buggies

The use of privately owned buggies should be clear within your buggy policy. You should also include what will be required for these to be used on your course, commonly this requires the golfer to sign a document that confirms that they are responsible for the maintenance and insurance of the buggy.

These buggies should be used in the same way as any buggies that you also use on site and if there are restrictions in place due to the weather or turf conditions then these should be made clear to the buggy user.

Counsel sought advice states that if you require a golfer to use a buggy owned or leased by the club instead of their own buggy then you should not charge them for this.

England Golf commissioned research which was concluded at the end of 2020 comparing the use of two single seat version of buggies against a standard club buggy to provide data to assist in decision making on restrictions.

When buggies are driven sensibly then turf damage can be reduced.

This comparative study conducted by the Sports Turf Research Institute is available to download from our website.