

MORETON — IN — MARSH SHOW

Improving Accessibility and Public Facilities at the Moreton Show

Grant awarded by:

UK Shared Prosperity Fund - Cotswold District Council

Grant awarded to:

Moreton in Marsh and District Agricultural and Horse Show Society (Moreton Show)

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Registered Office: Moreton Show Office, 5, Wychwood Court, Moreton-in-Marsh, GL56 0JQ.

Project Title:

Improving Accessibility and Public Facilities at the Moreton Show (Saturday 7th September 2024)

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1. Background to the grant application:

Moreton Show, held on the first Saturday of September each year, is one of the biggest one-day agricultural shows in the UK. It offers a vast array of attractions for all the family while championing the agricultural and equine industries, both so critical to the infrastructure of rural Britain. The annual event regularly attracts an audience in the region of 25,000 visitors.

The Moreton Show Society continually strives for improvement and had identified, from visitor feedback, the need to improve accessibility to the event to ensure all visitors feel able to attend and enjoy the Show. This feedback from previous years requesting further assistance for visitors with additional needs, is consistent with the industry's findings that many people are unsure whether to visit an event as they are concerned about accessibility.

In addition, it was also noted from previous years that a review of the meeting point/lost children and vulnerable adult point should be carried out each year and improvements, if required, implemented annually.

Moreton Show was delighted to be awarded the UK Shared Prosperity Fund grant from Cotswold District Council in Spring 2024 and worked quickly to implement projects that would ensure that the 2024 Moreton Show was more accessible to visitors with a wide variety of disabilities. It also introduced the provision of certified drinking water taps around the showground, for all visitors to re-fill their water vessels reducing waste and costs of purchasing water.

2. Project Aims and their Alignment with Council Priorities as outlined in the Grant Application Form:

Increasing accessibility and therefore inclusivity, helping to build community cohesion and allow an increased and wider audience to attend the annual show. This will in turn help to boost the local rural visitor economy and rural leisure enterprise, by providing show visitors with information relevant to people with a wide range of physical and mental disabilities and conditions.

In addition, the project would help to assist in the shared aim of tackling the climate emergency by discouraging the use of single use plastic. This will be primarily achieved by providing a greater number and better labelled drinking water standpipes at the event for visitors to refill their own vessels. By encouraging show visitors to drink water provided free of charge we are providing a healthy alternative to sugary drinks, the reduced consumption of sugary drinks will benefit the health and wellbeing of those attending the show.

3. Research carried out prior to commencing the project:

- a. Evidence of how other events have improved accessibility to their venues was collected and reviewed, these included events hosting music festivals, airports, farm parks and other outdoor green field sites. This involved reviewing of online resources and by visiting these venues and events.
- b. Meetings held with the following, to draw on their knowledge and experience:
 - i. **Mark Harwood Browne** - Disability officer at Worcester University. Mark assists disabled students at the university and had firsthand experience on how people prefer to receive information and how to present facts.
 - ii. **Lisa Moore** - Show Manager at Devon County Show- Devon County Show has improved its accessibility over the last two years and Lisa was able to provide relevant and poignant guidance.
 - iii. **Dene Hazelwood** - Moreton Show Health and Safety Advisor. Dene's extensive knowledge of the 'Purple Guide' on events was important in our planning of improvements.
 - iv. **A Social Media Influencer** - who has an autistic adult son and provides daily updates on social media on the frustrations he finds in everyday situations.
 - v. **Ruth Mayhew** - Senior Communities and Events Officer at Aylesbury Town Council. Ruth has implemented a range of innovations to make Aylesbury Town Council events more accessible to all visitors.
- c. The course run by 'Attitude Is Everything' on 'Disability, Equality and Customer Service Training' was attended. Much evidence was presented in this training which endorsed the Show's desire to improve accessibility. It was stated that 75% of disabled people had 'walked away' from a UK business because of the poor accessibility or customer service. Furthermore over 20% of the UK population is disabled.
- d. A full review of the facilities already available at the Show was carried out and analysed.
- e. Two Moreton Show Trustees, Mr Tim Gardner and Mr Simon Randall CBE, kindly agreed to offer advice on the project and help with organisations who might be able to assist or provide appropriate services.

4. Pre-Event Accessibility Enhancements:

a. Accessibility Videos

To encourage a greater number of visitors with access needs to attend this year and, in the future, the Society produced an accessibility-focused video in advance of the event and a second one summarising the show activities giving a flavour of the day. These videos are now available on the official show [website](http://www.moretonshow.co.uk) (www.moretonshow.co.uk) as well as social media channels.

There is visual guidance on the layout of the showground, specific accessibility provisions, and advice on how to navigate the site. The initiative was aimed at easing concerns for those who might be unsure about attending a large rural event with potential mobility challenges. The videos have been well-received, with several visitors commenting positively on the clarity and usefulness of the content.



Image: Screenshot of accessibility webpage on the Moreton Show's current website.

b. Dedicated Accessibility Webpage

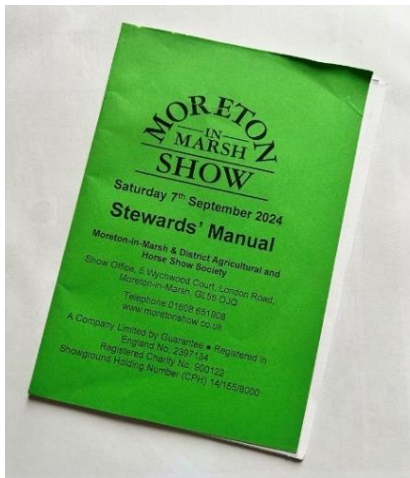
A new and dedicated accessibility webpage was launched on the Moreton Show's official [website](http://www.moretonshow.co.uk), consolidating all relevant information for visitors with access needs. This page detailed parking arrangements, accessible facilities, mobility scooter hire, medical assistance and information about the quiet room and helping visitors plan their day effectively. The website references the Society's indebtedness to the Cotswold District Council for awarding the grant from UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

c. Updating stakeholders

The Show informed all stakeholders of the award of the grant and the projects that would be developed for the 2024 Moreton Show. These stakeholders included trade stand vendors, sponsors, contractors, judges, stewards, volunteers and the public. The information was shared in various methods including by formal letter, steward's

manual, by social media over several weeks, via the Show website and verbally in the pre-show briefings.

d. Staff and Volunteer Training



The success of the Moreton Show's accessibility initiatives relied heavily on the commitment of the show's staff and stewards, most of whom were volunteers. All personnel received comprehensive pre-show training to ensure they were well-informed about accessibility measures and best practices for assisting visitors. This included an overview of the accessible facilities available on-site and instructions on how to respond to emergencies involving mobility aid users or neurodivergent individuals.

The Steward's Manual was updated and improved prior to the Show to ensure it covered all the relevant points.

Image: Volunteer's manual including accessibility info for staff on the day.

e. Advising on Ground Conditions and Terrain Challenges

As the Moreton Show is held on farmland, the terrain presents unique accessibility challenges. The surface is primarily grass with no hard roadways or paths which can make navigation difficult for visitors with mobility aids. While the ground is mostly level, there are small undulations that could cause challenges for wheelchair and mobility scooter users. In wet conditions the grass can become muddy and rutted, further complicating accessibility. Sturdy mobility scooters were able to navigate the site however would have struggled in some areas if the weather had been worse. This messaging was important ahead of the Show.

The mobility scooters that were available to hire at the event were appropriate for the terrain. Gateways and walkways were assessed prior to the show and remedial works were conducted where necessary to make the ground level.

Image: The entrance/exit to the blue badge car park showing ground conditions.



5. At The Event Accessibility Enhancements

a. Staff Identification



Image: Show car parking steward in high viz.

To enhance visitor-steward interactions, all staff and stewards wore name badges identifying their role and name alongside their bright coloured tabards, ensuring they were easy to locate in case assistance was needed.

Many visitors reported that staff were approachable and helpful, with several positive comments made about the friendliness of the volunteers and staff.

b. Sunflower Scheme and Hidden Disabilities

The Moreton Show also implemented the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Scheme, which allows visitors with non-visible disabilities such as autism or chronic pain to discreetly indicate that they may need extra assistance.

Visitors wearing the sunflower lanyard could expect additional support or patience from staff, stewards and judges, all of whom were briefed on the scheme. The implementation of this initiative reflects the Society's commitment to inclusivity for all types of disabilities, not just those that are immediately visible.



Image (left): Staff at the Secretary marquee wearing a sunflower lanyard to support the initiative. Image (right): Show signage supporting that Moreton Show is part of the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Network.

The following message was circulated to all judges, stewards and relevant contractors on a simple flyer:



Moreton Show is proud to support the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower initiative; not every disability is visible, some are hidden. We are asking our judges and stewards to be aware and mindful of any exhibitor or member of the public wearing the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower. The sunflower lanyards are a discreet sign to indicate that a person has a hidden disability and may need additional support, help or a little more time. For more information, please visit: hdsunflower.com.

c. Toilet Facilities

Mobiloo and Accessible Toilets

One of the key accessibility improvements at the 2024 show was the inclusion of Mobiloo, a mobile accessible toilet complete with a hoist and changing bed for visitors with severe disabilities. This service was incredibly popular, with 25 individuals using the facility throughout the day – a notable increase from the typical use at other festivals (usually around ten people). This suggests a real demand for accessible toileting options at agricultural shows like Moreton. Visitors could also wait comfortably on seats provided outside these facilities an improvement aimed at reducing fatigue for those with mobility issues.

The Show has provided pollyjon style accessible toilets for many years, these units were increased in number and situated near entrances and in high footfall locations.



Image (left): Accessible toilet next to block of portaloos. Image (right): Mobiloo accessible toilet with ramp and hoist.

Radar Locks on Accessible Toilets

A key recommendation from visitors and staff alike was the installation of radar locks on accessible toilets. These locks ensure that the toilets are only used by individuals with disabilities or mobility needs, preventing misuse and improving the availability of the facilities. Given that some accessible toilets were reportedly used by able-bodied individuals, implementing radar locks in the future would ensure that these important facilities are preserved for those who genuinely require them.

It is worth noting that many people who may need the accessible toilet facility do not carry or even have a radar key and therefore installation of radar locks would place these people at a disadvantage and, in turn, lead to more difficulties than the present abuse of accessible toilet facilities. However, radar keys can be purchased cheaply, therefore perhaps they could be issued to those who need them at the Show. Further evaluation of this will be needed before implementation, there will also need to be buy in from the temporary toilet supplier.

d. Blue Badge Parking

A designated Blue Badge parking area was made available close to the showground entrance, allowing visitors with mobility issues to park conveniently near the event. However, the popularity of the show meant that this area became very busy by mid-morning, with some visitors reporting difficulty finding parking. More than 400 cars parked in this designated parking area. The show office offered a telephone line to assist visitors with specific parking needs in advance, but feedback suggests that expanding the capacity of this parking area may be necessary in future events.

e. Mobility Scooter and Wheelchair Hire



Image: Event Mobility scooter hire at the 2024 show.

For those who did not bring their own mobility aids, the show partnered with Event Mobility to offer both electric scooters and manual wheelchairs for hire. These were available from the Blue Badge parking area, with visitors able to pre-book in advance via the website.

All the scooters available for hire were used, Event Mobility need to increase capacity for future Shows.

f. Medical Assistance

A fully staffed medical tent was located on the showground throughout the day, providing first aid services and emergency assistance. Visitors in need of help were

able to report to any steward or directly to the Secretary's Tent and medical personnel were on hand to assist.

g. Wristbands

On entry to the showground, there was the opportunity to fasten a wristband to any members of a party enabling them to feel more secure knowing that should they become separated, their name and a contact number were written on the wristband. This scheme was particularly useful for families with young children or individuals with cognitive impairments.

h. Quiet Room and Neurodivergent Support

A major addition to this year's event was the inclusion of a Quiet Room, designed to offer a calm space for neurodivergent individuals and others who needed a break from the sensory overload of the show. This space was used by six individuals throughout the day, including visitors seeking privacy for breastfeeding, those experiencing anxiety and individuals needing time away from the noise and crowds.

The Quiet Room was a steel sound proofed lightly furnished container unit without windows. The Quiet Room was located near the meeting point, baby changing tent, and lost persons tent. The three facilities were overseen and managed by TLC Welfare staff, who had the appropriate training and experience.

Image (left): The Quiet Room next to the baby changing facilities marquee. Image (right): Inside of the quiet room space.



Feedback on the Quiet Room

The Quiet Room received overwhelmingly positive feedback, with many visitors commenting that they were pleasantly surprised by its availability. Several families took pictures of the space to share with friends who might benefit from its use in the future. Suggestions for improvement included the need for better flooring inside the room, particularly during wet weather and a higher ramp for easier access.

i. Carer Tickets and Entry

In recognition of the needs of individuals requiring assistance, carers were admitted free of charge upon the purchase of a full-rate admission ticket by the person they

were assisting. Visitors simply needed to present relevant documentation, such as a Personal Independence Payment (PIP) or Blue Badge registration, at the ticket gates.

To ease the entry process for all visitors, including those with access needs, the Society encouraged the purchase of advance tickets through the website. This helped to reduce queuing times on the day, especially during peak periods.

j. Signage

Signage was another area of focus for accessibility improvements. Throughout the showground, large maps with 'You are here' arrows were strategically placed, accompanied by clear signposts identifying the different zones. Stewards in Hi-Viz tabards were stationed at regular intervals to provide guidance, and large-text timetables were made available at the Secretary's Office upon request. Visitors could also request these timetables in advance, ensuring they had the necessary information before arriving at the show.



Image (left): Large 'you are here' maps at the 2024 show. Image (right): Entrance gate signpost in large print text.

k. Meeting Point / Lost children & vulnerable adults

There was a designated meeting point for visitors located near to the Quiet Room. Here too was also the lost children / vulnerable adults' structure with a TLC steward available.

The Meeting Point was clearly sign posted, the location was made to be very visible on the map. Its level of use by the visiting public is un-known.

l. Picnic Area

A picnic area was available to help any visitors who wished to bring their own provisions and did not want to queue in busy areas for food and drink.

The picnic area was in a quieter location, which tended not to be crowded or noisy. Seating and cover for shade was provided and the area was well signposted. It was difficult to judge how much this area was used, but it certainly had plenty of people seated at peak times.

m. Additional Water Points



Recognising the importance of hydration at a large rural event, the showground introduced four water points which were scattered across the greenfield site. These water points were accessible to all, ensuring that visitors with mobility issues or those unable to navigate long distances could easily remain hydrated without having to traverse the entirety of the showground. Feedback indicated that this simple provision significantly improved the comfort of visitors during the event.

The water from these points was tested at a lab prior to the Show to check it was safe to drink.

Image: Installed water point at the show with large, clear signage.

n. Designated Viewing Area

The 2024 Moreton Show expanded a designated viewing area adjacent to the Grand Arena, offering an accessible space for visitors with mobility challenges or other specific needs to enjoy the day's arena events comfortably. This area was heavily utilised throughout the day, providing a clear, unobstructed view for those using wheelchairs, mobility scooters, or requiring extra space.

The positive feedback highlighted its importance, as it allowed attendees to enjoy the spectacle without navigating crowded or uneven terrain. Given its success, the viewing area is expected to be carried forward in future shows, with plans to raise awareness and expand its use year-on-year ensuring that all visitors can equally engage with the show's attractions.

There is a need for an accessible viewing area next to the Attractions Arena at future shows. It is important that the same facility is provided next to all public arena's.

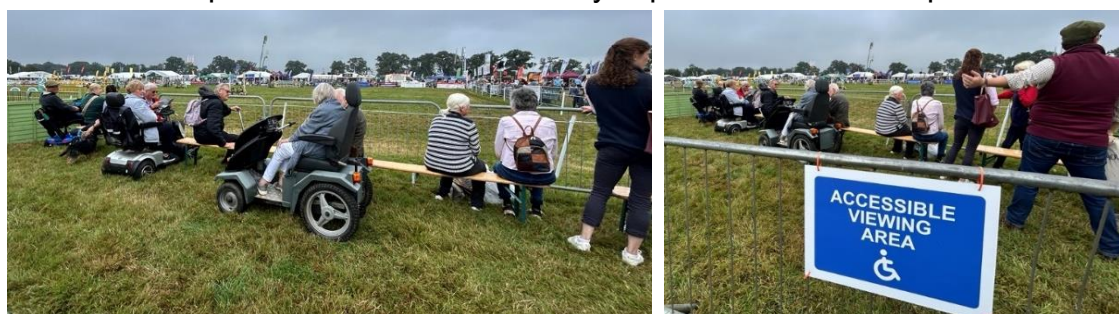


Image (left): Visitors of the show using the accessible viewing area by the main ring. Image (right): Signage next to the main arena viewing area at the 2024 show.

6. General Visitor Feedback

Feedback from the event was highly positive, with all surveyed visitors rating the accessibility of the show as 'excellent' on a scale of excellent, good, fair or poor. Visitors praised the various accessibility features, from the available water points to the medical support and the thoughtful design of the quiet room. All respondents indicated that they would attend the show again in the future, highlighting the success of the event's accessibility initiatives.

Please find below an image of the questionnaire used:



Moreton Show Accessibility Feedback Form

Thank you for attending the Moreton Show! Your feedback is important to us. Please help us improve by answering the following questions about the accessibility of the event.

1. Overall, how would you rate the accessibility of the Moreton Show?

- Excellent
- Good
- Fair
- Poor

2. How easy was it for you to find accessible parking or transportation options?

- Very easy
- Easy
- Difficult
- Very difficult
- N/A (did not use)

3. How accessible did you find the entrance and exit points of the show?

- Very accessible
- Somewhat accessible
- Not accessible

4. Did you use any accessible facilities at the show (e.g., toilets, seating, viewing areas)?

- Quiet Room: Yes No
- Mobiloo toilet and changing: Yes No unable to use with scooter
- Viewing area: Yes No
- Picnic area: Yes No
- Blue badge parking: Yes No

5. Were there any challenges or barriers you experienced regarding accessibility at the event?

(Please describe)

Mobiloo too only use with wheelchair.

7. Recommendations for Future Improvement

While the 2024 show made significant strides in improving accessibility feedback suggested several areas for further enhancement:

Radar locks could be added to all accessible toilets to prevent misuse by those without disabilities.

The Mobiloo needs a better ramp, which allows for heavy large mobility scooters to access the unit.

Flooring in the Quiet Room and higher ramps should be considered to improve access and comfort for visitors with mobility issues.

Expanding the Blue Badge parking area could help accommodate the growing number of visitors with access needs.

Even more 'You are here' sign maps are required.

8. Conclusion

The 2024 Moreton Show successfully implemented a wide range of accessibility improvements, benefiting many visitors with disabilities and specific needs. These efforts, combined with the positive feedback from attendees, demonstrate the Society's commitment to making the show as inclusive as possible. The success of these initiatives, along with recommendations for further enhancements, sets a strong precedent for future events, ensuring that the Moreton Agricultural Show remains accessible to all members of the community.