

Accessible Maps, Images and Signage

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RNIB Map for All at Abbeydale Industrial Hamlet in Sheffield

Introduction

We're the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB), one of the UK's leading sight loss charities and the largest community of blind and partially sighted people.

There are around two million people in the UK with significant sight loss and millions more who struggle with standard print and signage.

Everyday 250 people begin to lose their sight. RNIB has a crucial role to play in creating a world where there are no barriers to people with sight loss. We want society, communities and individuals to see differently about sight loss.

For over 25 years, RNIB has been the UK's market leader in the design and production of accessible maps, image and signage and all of our services are tailored to meet the requirements of our clients.

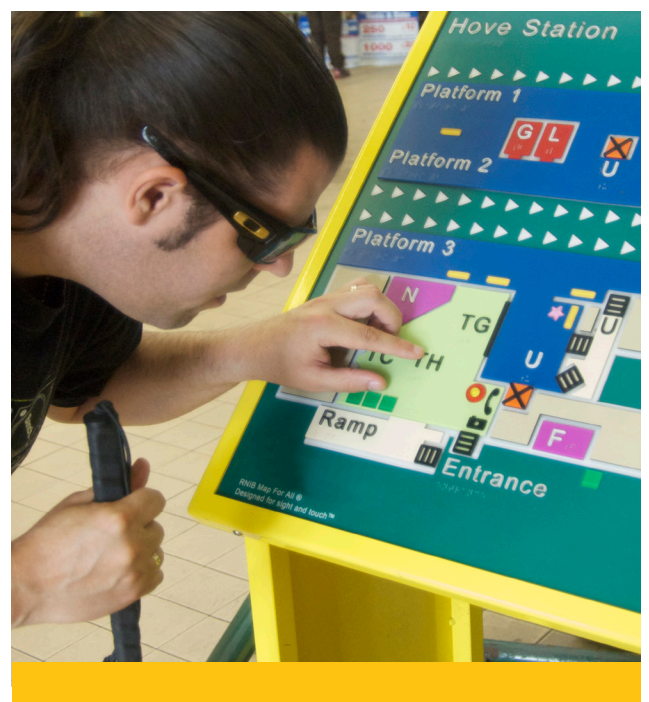
We offer six services:

- Accessible images with full description writing
- Accessible hand-held maps
- RNIB Map for All
- Accessible signage
- Accessible touch installations
- Accessible maps and images workshop

Our fully comprehensive service includes:

- initial project/idea discussion, consultancy and advice to enable you to focus on the relevant elements to ensure that maximum accessibility is achieved
- working with you on the content of your project
- product design including braille transcription and full proofreading
- product production with quality check

Our Accessible Maps, Images and Signage Consultants are available to talk through your ideas and requirements. Their contact details can be found on the back page.



Accessible images

Our accessible images are available in two formats – tactile with braille or large print – and are specifically and carefully designed interpretations for blind and partially sighted people. When combined with labelling, detailed and comprehensive descriptions, and informative text, they give people with sight loss the opportunity to explore and engage with objects/ images that would not normally be accessible to them.

The provision of accessible images, which focus on the key elements of the items being portrayed, will enhance the experiences people

with sight loss have during their time at your venue by making their visit more engaging, interesting, educational, informative, stimulating and independent.

Accessible images are ideal for museums, art galleries, historic houses and heritage sites. However, they are also suitable for any venue where there is “something to see” that may require interpretation in order to allow engagement by people with sight loss. This might include paintings, portraits, drawings, historical objects, building facades, building decoration, monuments, and statues.



Sample accessible images

Images from The Tactile Image photography exhibition, by kind permission.

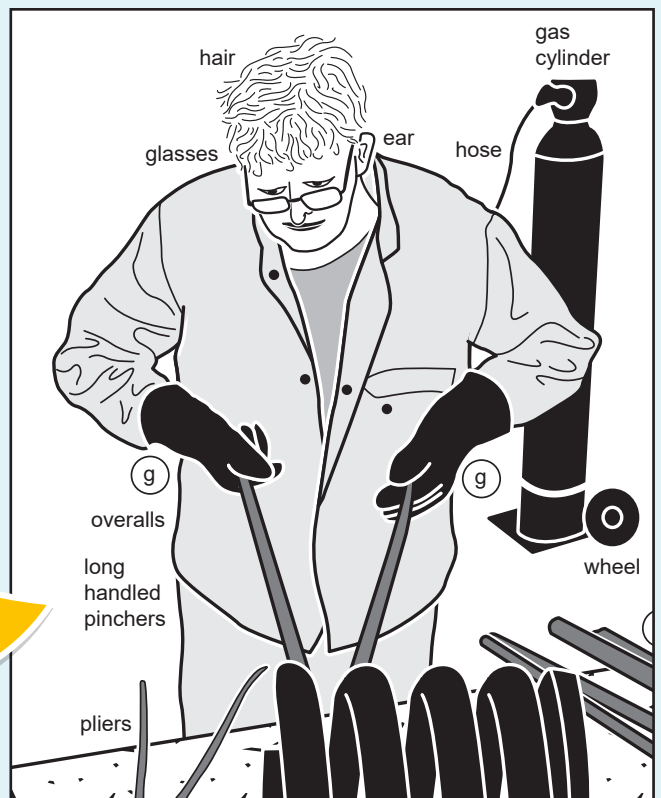
Tactile image with braille



Actual photograph



Large print image



Accessible hand-held maps

Blind and partially sighted people often have great difficulty in comprehending the layout of large areas or buildings, particularly when they are not familiar with them. Although printed maps may be available for visitors as either portable or on static display boards, many of these will be inaccessible to people with sight loss.

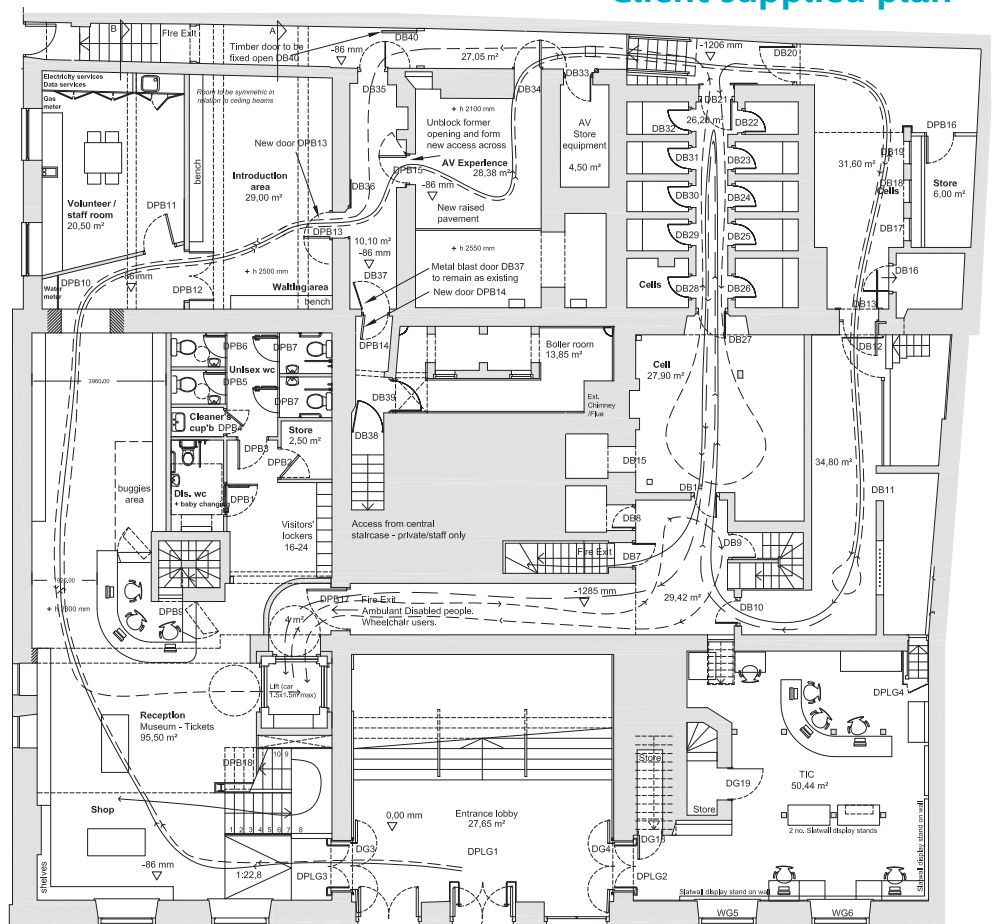
Our accessible hand-held maps are available in two formats – tactile with braille and large print. These maps allow blind and partially sighted people equal access to information to help them understand the layout of an area or building. This enables them to engage with their environment more independently and allows them to make their own choices about where to go and what to do within an area or building.

Additional access information can also be included to give more

information which will increase the understanding and confidence of people with sight loss.

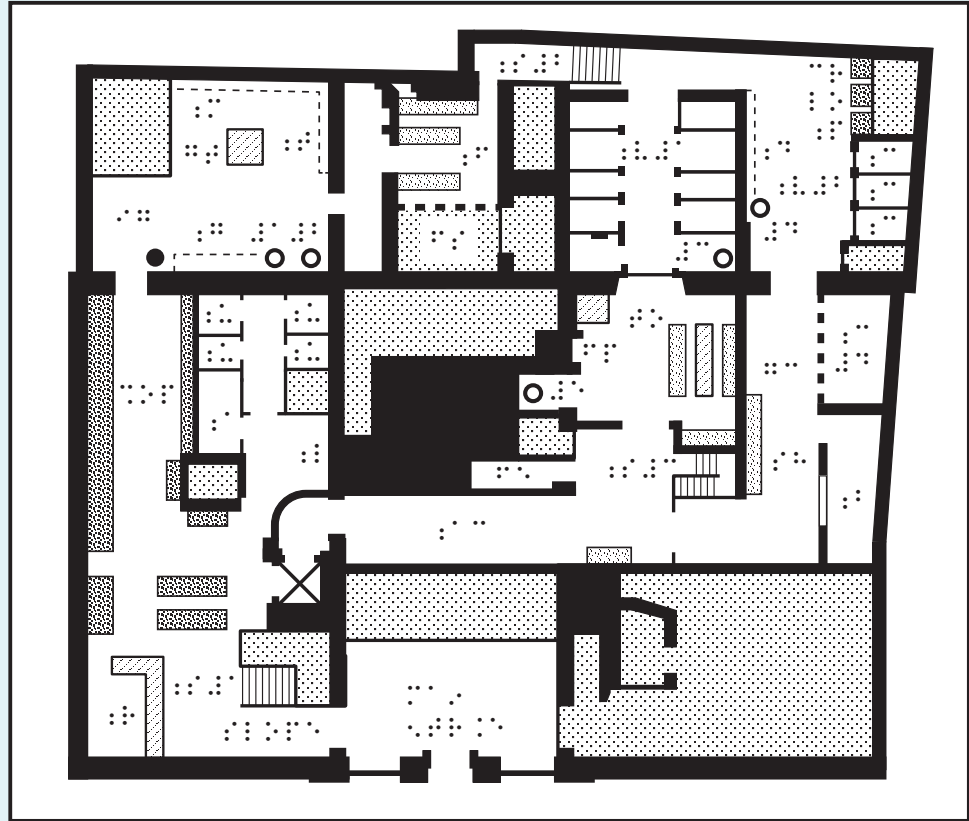
Accessible hand-held maps can also be used to convey information about changes to an environment like road layouts in public consultation documents. The provision of accessible maps will allow blind and partially sighted people to better understand what is being proposed and enable them to fully engage in the consultation process.

Client supplied plan

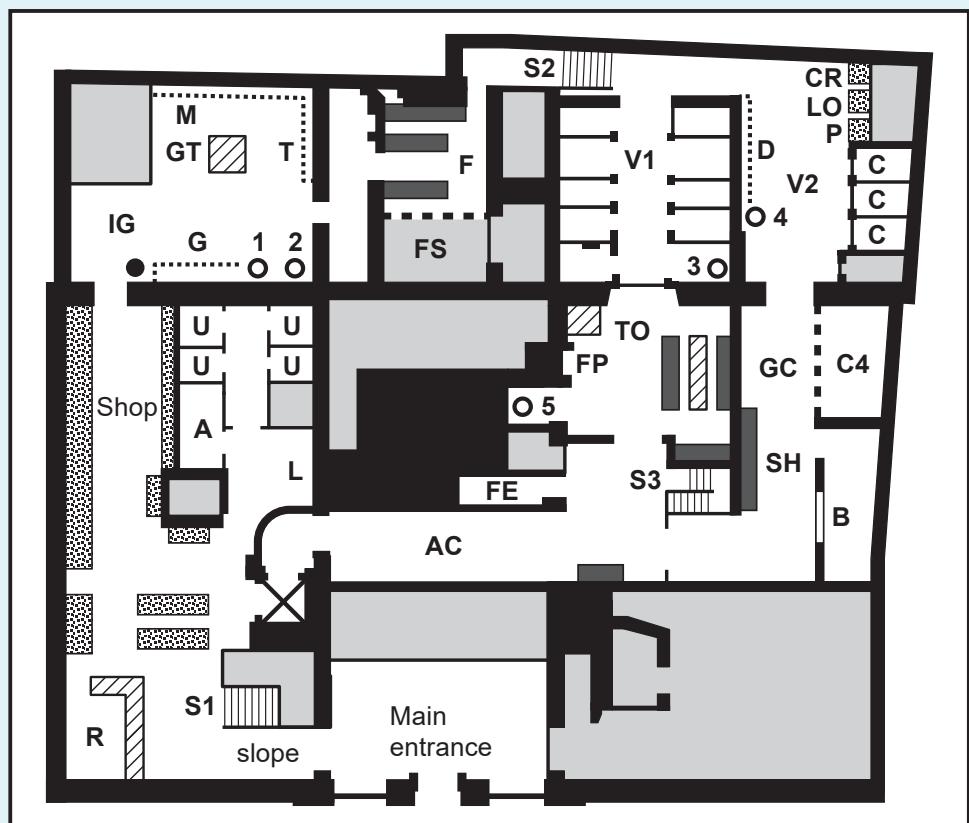


Sample accessible hand-held map

Tactile plan with braille



Large print plan



RNIB Map for All

RNIB Map for All is a unique product that we design and manufacture for people of all ages and abilities including people with sight loss. Our maps can be read by sight, by touch, or a combination of both with 'inclusive access for all' as the core principle giving the reader an overview of the layout of an area or building.

Our maps are suitable for wide variety of locations including transport hubs, museums and heritage sites, country parks, education establishments, hospitals, public and office buildings, shopping centres and leisure facilities. Basically anywhere where a map is required.

RNIB Maps for All help people, particularly those with sight loss, to be more independent allowing them to make choices about where to go and what to see and do.

Each map is carefully designed and created to combine both visual and tactile

elements resulting in a map that is a mixture of layers, visual contrasts, textures, raised large print and braille lettering, as well as tactile and visual symbols. They are manufactured from exterior grade signage acrylic with a non-glare finish making them suitable for both indoor and outdoor use.

Every map carries a strapline "RNIB Map for All – Designed for sight and touch" that helps to explain the purpose of the map. Our logo can also be added along with your logo.



Derby Station
RNIB Map for All

Sample RNIB Maps for All



Joseph Clarke School RNIB Map for All (by kind permission of Joseph Clarke School)



Ferry Meadows Country Park RNIB Map for All

Accessible signage

A sign is a means of conveying information about direction, location, safety or a form of action. Signs are very important to people who are unfamiliar with their surroundings or who need to know how to do something, such as find the fire exit or operate a door entry system. Sign readers may be anxious, confused, lost or nervous and a proportion will have sight loss that makes location and understanding of a sign more difficult than usual.

A successful sign system should minimise such anxiety and confusion. It should be easy to understand and people with sight loss should not be placed at a disadvantage. Signs should be clear, concise and consistent.

Our accessible signage consists of raised large print and braille with a good visual contrast so they can be read by both sight and touch. They can also have raised pictograms and symbols that are suitable for access by touch.

We follow the guidelines in the 'Sign Design Guide a guide to inclusive signage' and 'BS ISO 17049:2013 Accessible design – Application of braille on signage, equipment and appliances'.

Our bespoke signs are designed and manufactured to the requirements of each client.



Sample accessible signage

Level 2

Accessible, male and female toilets
Rooms 2.1 - 2.15

♿️
♂️ ♀️
♿️ ♂️ ♀️



Accessible,
male and
female toilets

♿️ ♂️ ♀️
♿️ ♂️ ♀️

Fitness
Suite

♿️

Room
52

♿️

Reading Room

♿️

1

♿️



♿️

Year 7 Office

♿️



♿️

Andrea Bocelli
Room

♿️

Accessible touch installations

Accessible touch installations can be used to interpret a wide range of subjects in a variety of different environments and have 'inclusive access for all' as the core principle.

The provision of accessible touch installations in a wide range of interesting materials gives a diverse audience including people with sight loss, children, people with learning difficulties and wheelchair users sensory experiences they may never have had before. A unique object will also be added to the museum or art gallery.

Our interpretations can be designed to cover a wide diversity of subjects including:

- a relief of a painting or image to bring definition to an otherwise linear object
- accurate scale models of buildings
- re-creating representations of whole objects from partial remnants or artist impressions
- replicas of objects scaled to size so that the whole object can be explored.



Sample accessible touch installations



Painting of The Virgin and Child Resting in an Imaginary Landscape, attributed to Bernaert Van Orley



In progress – the clay modelling of the close up of the Virgin and Child relief



Completed – cast resin relief with a bronze finish

Accessible image and maps workshop

The creation of accessible images is more complex than simply creating a tactile or large print copy of the original and are much more than simple outline drawings. Our workshop provides an introduction to the world of accessible images and maps. It is available as either a half day or full day training for up to 20 delegates at a venue of your choice.

Learning Outcomes are:

- understand what an accessible image/map is and how they can be used
- understand the differences between visual and tactile recognition that underpin the use of any tactile image/map
- understand the basic design principles for accessible images and maps
- understand the importance of supportive information for any accessible image or map including description writing
- guidance on how to decide whether to provide an accessible image or map or provide an alternative
- showcase and explain how other organisations have used accessible images and maps at their sites.

Things to think about

To maximise the impact of any accessible materials provided at your venue, you need to have a complete promotional package to ensure that visitors know of their existence and staff are trained on how to introduce them to visitors. Promotion on your website and any publicity material is an ideal way of achieving this.

Consider working with local user groups with various needs to find out what they would like and to evaluate the accessible material subsequently provided.

It is very important that accessible materials are an integral part of the venue and equal levels of importance are given to any accessible information as is given to print or other formats like audio.



Barry Ginley, Equality and Access Manager at Victoria and Albert Museum, standing in front of the tile-top table in the Jameel Gallery reading a tactile image of the table top.

RNIB

See differently

For further details about accessible maps, images and signage please contact:



01733 375113 or 01733 375356 or



email tactilemapsandimages@rnib.org.uk

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