



Bosinver

Accessibility Review

August 2022



Bosinver Accessibility Review



OVERVIEW

In June 2022 the Access Cornwall Team spent time speaking with Pat and Elaine of Bosinver Farm Cottages as well as conducting research into the online information and resources available to help those with accessibility needs. This work was followed by a review of the site during which the team were able to visit key locations and engage in the animal feeding and pony ride activities.

Access Cornwall's Accessibility Ambassadors included reviewers with a range of disabilities and accessibility needs, including individuals who are wheelchair users, vision and hearing impaired, autistic and dyslexic.



All of their Accessibility reviewers commented that they received a warm welcome and they all thoroughly enjoyed their time visiting Bosinver. It is streets ahead of other cottage resorts in Cornwall when it comes to accessibility due in part to the site itself but also due to the excellent website, customer service and the detailed and helpful accessibility information which is available.

One of the reviewers Seb Lewis, who is a wheelchair user, commented:

“During our visit to Bosinver I tried to be as independent as possible as I felt this is what Bosinver is striving to achieve, an environment where those with struggles can be carefree and enjoy a break.

The site was pretty easy to get around independently, this is in part because of the detailed information online which allowed me to plan ahead of time and also due to the amazing hosting of Pat and the team who could answer any questions and solve any issues.

It was so welcoming, all the staff we spoke to were passionate about what they do! They truly care and it shows. For me personally it was awesome to go somewhere and come away feeling like I could go on holiday and be independent. That has not happened before.”

Access Cornwall's initial review covered the main public spaces of Bosinver - at the time of their visit they were unable to enter the accessible accommodation due to the properties being occupied by guests but further visits are planned. Here are some of Bosinver's accessible features that the team highlighted during their visit.

ARRIVAL, RECEPTION AND CAR PARKING

Overview

The signage, parking and reception areas are all very accessible.

Parking

There is good parking space available near to the main reception as you arrive and also guests have allocated car parking spaces next to their cottages. The car parking space near to reception is on a good surface with fairly level access to the reception office and there is parking alongside most cottages with level access.

Signage

Signage to Bosinver was clear and considered easy to read by our vision impaired guest. There has been discussion over the need for signage to certain facilities on site, but we understand that the decision not to put too many signs out is in keeping with the look and feel of Bosinver.

Lighting

The lighting is clear and not too bright. Outside lighting is on automatic timers (movement sensors) so brilliant environmentally and great for those with vision impairment and sensory sensitivities, as you are not walking into dark places.

Reception



The reception building is easy to find, at the main entrance, it has fairly level access and a wide doorway which can accommodate most wheelchairs. The bright colours and signage



make reception easy to locate and find for vision impaired visitors. There is a hearing loop available, and staff experienced in communicating with fellow staff / team members who have hearing impairment. If any guests struggle with the slight lip to the doorway there is a portable metal wheelchair ramp available from reception.

ACCESS AROUND THE MAIN SITE

Much of the Bosinver site is accessible, particularly the area near reception, the Play Barn, Swimming Pool and Tennis courts.

The animal feeding area is largely accessible to most wheelchair users and those with vision or other mobility impairment.

The slope down to the Games Room can be tricky for manual wheelchair users to manage alone.

The fields and nature trail areas are obviously tricky for those with vision and mobility impairment, but offer other accessibility advantages that we have detailed in this report.

Lighting is good, there is access via car to the cottages and largely level access to most of the cottages and the surfaces are generally tarmacked. The site therefore is largely accessible to most people who would wish to enjoy a stay here.

Signage

It's understandable that you don't want too many signs around Bosinver. What you do provide is maps. These are really helpful for people who are neurodiverse, or struggle with a disability that affects communication, as it's actually much harder than you think to ask for directions and help and it also means you might be less independent.

THE PLAY BARN



Overview

The Play Barn is a bright, open space with lots of natural light surrounded by a lovely patio offering views to the trees and fields beyond. It is accessed via a tarmac path and close to reception and the building itself has fairly level and step-free access. There is a slight lip into the door that might be difficult for those with heavier chairs but the portable ramp which is available to borrow from reception works well.

There is an accessible toilet. It has two rails behind the toilet and space for a wheelchair to turn. Overall the reviewers felt this was a great space.

THE GAMES ROOM



There is a tarmac road leading downhill from the main entrance and Reception to the Games Room. There is a ramp in the lower door to make it easier for those who are mobility impaired to get into this building. There is a wheelchair accessible Pool table, Ping Pong table, Atari Pac-Man game station and a Pucket table, all were free to use. There are various board games and books to use. This is a lovely quiet room, again set in a light, natural space. There are a variety of social opportunities here, so children and adults can come and interact with other guests if they wish, or choose a solitary activity such as a game or reading or use this as a peaceful, quiet space if they have it to themselves.



The biggest issue that Seb our wheelchair user had during his visit was access to the Games Room. The hill down to it (pictured above) is quite steep however Seb was able to access the Games Room with help from Ally and Mary on the day and weather conditions were helpful too. Please note that if someone were completely on their own, or the weather decided to change, it would not be safe for a manual wheelchair user to get up and down this slope solo.



The doors to the games room have now been replaced and a new tarmac ramp constructed to make the games room accessible to wheelchair users and mobility impaired people.

SWIMMING POOL AND CHANGING ROOMS



Overview

The main building and changing rooms of the pool have wide, level access and this is very helpful for individuals who have mobility impairment.

The swimming pool is also a lovely sensory area, with repurposed plastic artwork which offers interesting stories about plastic pollution, and which also has a recorded story to listen to about it, ideal for kids with sensory needs or those who cannot read the displays due to dyslexia or other learning differences.

The toilet / changing cubicles are made of recycled plastics, with information on the company that makes them. The pool had a distinctly different colour between the pool edge and the poolside, and lighting is good, which is very helpful for those with visual impairments. The toilet and changing facilities have good accessibility for those with mobility impairment with grab rails, bench seating and baby change.

NATURE TRAILS AND OUTDOOR PLAY AREAS

Overview

The nature trails and outdoor play areas at Bosinver are magical places. They may not be ideal for individuals with vision or mobility impairment, but the trails and the play equipment which is beautifully embedded into the natural environment are wonderful areas for kids who have special accessibility needs such as autism, ADHD or learning disabilities.

Many studies recognise the huge benefits of the natural environment for individuals who are neurodiverse, for example this one from Natural England: [Engaging children on the autistic spectrum with the natural environment: Teacher insight study and evidence review - NECR116](#) . It is believed that kids who are neurodiverse enjoy engaging with the sensory aspects of nature and find the natural environment offers a greater sense of freedom and fewer restrictions than more formal environments.

Bosinver's nature trails and play areas offer more than just a chance to be outside in nature. The play equipment supports sensory activities which can be highly beneficial. For example, the plank walkway pictured below offered Finley the chance to develop his balancing skills. This is particularly helpful as Finley's autism diagnosis reveals that he has difficulties with his vestibular sense. This sense governs the ability to assess where your body is in space, and affects balance and physical coordination.



The natural spaces also offer children and adults alike, plenty of opportunities to find quieter spaces or to engage in activities which help to balance sensory needs.

The sensory garden is a wonderful place for this reason. As well as supporting biodiversity, it is beneficial for neurodiverse people and also for those who have dementia or learning disabilities.

The nature trails and boards also encourage children to engage with the natural environment, and it can give kids who are autistic a very easy to understand and clear mission to engage in, which can be very helpful.

ANIMAL FEEDING AND PONY RIDES



Overview

Both the location of the animal feeding and the way it is managed by the Bosinver team make these highly accessible activities. The review team were all able to access the areas and enjoy the activities.

The area where the animals are fed is a farmyard and therefore naturally rougher terrain with gates, but nonetheless it is largely accessible for the majority of people with mobility and vision impairment. There is a lot of space surrounding the animals and pens, the slopes are gentle and the ground is manageable for both powered and manual chairs. Those using mobility scooters which need very smooth surfaces might find it tricky.

At feeding time the animals are released from their pens and enclosures to come up to you. The farm area is on cobbled ground so due to the nature of the ground it was not perfect ground, but with the animals coming to you it means you can find a place where you feel comfortable and felt secure.

The staff make the experience particularly accessible. Dave, Helen and Paul are friendly and approachable. Farmer Dave is intuitively good with children and our reviewers reported that he was gentle and spoke clearly. He made everyone feel included and safe, especially



during the pony rides. The pony rides were set out well with the horses waiting to the side for a staff member to help children on to one best suited of the two horses.

All children are made to feel relaxed and safe. The pony ride takes place away from the main area where people are waiting for their turn so it is safe for children who are waiting for their turn.