



**CYMRU**  
**FOOTBALL**  
**FOUNDATION**

# **CHANGING ROOM GUIDANCE**

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## Introduction

This document has been prepared to provide a simple, 'walk-through' guide for clubs and other organisations planning to construct a changing room block, clubhouse or pavilion.

The guidance also provides essential information to support the case for any facilities grant funding application.

## What To Do First

Before commissioning an architect/design team, the preparation of a feasibility study is an essential first step. The study will inform the design brief, specifications, features and scale of provision, based on both current and future needs.

The initial plan should set out the user requirements for male, female and disabled users, it should account for future changes in participant groups, as well as considering different needs, together with the establishment of a design brief that is fully inclusive. See the link to the FAW's 'Environments for Her' guide at the end of this document.

- Check the standards needed to meet any competitive league requirements.
- Establish the player and coach requirements, alongside the officials and spectators.
- Confirm if there are any non-playing requirements for the general membership and other user activities. If there are, **please refer to the Outline Guidance for Community Rooms/Social Areas Addendum** at the end of this guidance.

Next, make an assessment of the current infrastructure, if this takes the form of an upgrade, you may need to carry out a structural and services condition survey, as well as reviewing and addressing what works well and what causes a problem for users.

Consider the overall site and relationship between the access, car parking and pitches, to the off-pitch infrastructure. The location, traffic and pedestrian flow should all be visible accessible, safe and well lit.

Undertake some initial investigations into what will ultimately inform the required surveys i.e.: bats; ecology; asbestos; phosphates; planning; sustainable drainage scheme; floodlighting; utility supplies; designs and costs. It is also important that you seek the Local Authority planning opinion, building regulations and other consent requirements i.e. for new builds/extensions this might include:

- Ground condition surveys, drainage, ground stability, levels etc.; SuDS i.e. all construction work in Wales of 100m<sup>2</sup> or more will have drainage implications.
- Environmental surveys i.e. impact of the development on the natural habitat and ecology i.e. bats and trees.
- Utilities – provision of services – power supply and drainage to service the building growth and additional users/visitors to site.
- Car parking, highways and additional visitors/traffic to site will demand additional car parking together with safe access to and from the highway.
- All new builds and extensions have to satisfy Building Regulations including the provision of appropriate accessible facilities and early advice should be sought from the Local Authority to establish the requirements.

Identify whether there are any specific requirements relating to the needs of potential user groups who are of a particular faith and how the design of the facility can be accommodated to meet them. For example, providing a multi-faith facility.

Finally, establish a design and performance brief for issue to the appointed design team/contractor i.e.: design requirements; standards; budgets; timescales; approach to procurement; lifecycle costs and maintenance.

*Top tips:*

1. *Cost – set a realistic budget. Base design around a simple, functional and easy to manage facility.*
2. *Ensure the facility is inclusive for everyone – make it welcoming and accessible.*
3. *Consider how to implement environmentally sustainable principles and practices into the design from the outset.*

## General Design Guidance for Changing Blocks

There are a number of different methods that can be used to construct buildings such as changing rooms and clubhouses, ranging from more traditional types such as concrete blocks and bricks, to timber frames and various modular solutions.

These types of buildings need to be robust and resilient given the nature of their use and provide longevity due to their significant cost. Consequently, the Cymru Football Foundation ordinarily insists on a traditional type of construction method as a funding condition.

Future designs should include branding and signage incorporating a diverse range of imagery i.e. females, males, people with disabilities, people from different black and ethnic communities. Ensure the access is visible, with well-lit and safe routes for pedestrians in the surrounding areas as well as close proximity to parking, all of which will contribute to the safety and confidence of existing users and newcomers alike.

Interior spaces should have good lighting, light walls and bright colour schemes.

Female friendly changing rooms should be located with separate access and privacy screens should protect the entry to changing rooms.

Individual shower cubicles with lockable doors or shower curtains and toilet cubicles with seated toilets and hygiene/sanitary products freely available are important for females with low confidence and body image concerns.

Separate and gender-neutral changing rooms should be designed for both male and female officials serving a mix of female and male referees and their assistants.

The facility should provide accessible toilets close to the building entry point, with the number subject to Building Regulations requirements.

## Outline guidance for the development of new changing facilities

The following summary guidance can also be used as a performance specification for the upgrading of existing infrastructure, and the brief is based on a two-team changing room model, but can be increased depending on needs.

The total area of the general arrangements for a two changing room sized pavilion inclusive of toilet provision and a small kitchenette will be c.120m<sup>2</sup> plus 10% circulation. Provision of a community space will necessitate an additional provision of c.100m<sup>2</sup>.

## Accessibility

The entrance should be clearly visible and should be emphasised by use of a canopy, striking colours or contrasting materials. Consider access at both the rear of the building and the front.

It will be important that suitable surfacing, markings, level routes, lighting and the location of accessible parking, ramps and pathways will be employed to enable everyone to be able to make use of the facility.

All internal areas should also be easily accessible. Utilise suitable door sizes, corridor widths and other disability requirements when designing your building.

### **Views 'in and out'**

Glazing panels overlooking playing areas may need to be protected by secure roller shutters.

### **Separation of clean and dirty zones**

It is important that the circulation from the wet/muddy areas, such as changing rooms should be separate from circulation to social spaces, and any other accommodation provided within the building.

Players using any natural turf pitch should be provided with a dedicated way in and out of the changing rooms, with clean tread mats to reduce the transfer of dirt and mud, along with a boot changing/washing area.

Where costs allow, a draft lobby should be included within the entrance area.

Provide an accessible toilet, with baby change table, suitable for all groups as well as serving parents/guardians and siblings.

### **Circulation and Internal Surveillance**

Any corridors within the building should be designed ideally to a width of 1800mm to allow wheelchair passing and also for players carrying bags etc.

Good visibility of all circulation spaces must be provided to ensure the safety of all users particularly vulnerable groups, children and young people, females in a mixed gender environment.

## **Changing rooms**

Two changing rooms are to be provided that are suitable for both adult and young people – suitable for male and female sports participants.

The changing rooms should be large enough for each to accommodate up to 16 players and 3 coaches, together with a trainer/physiotherapist (football) and 25 players for rugby.

The minimum size of the changing area, excluding showers and toilets to be 1m<sup>2</sup> per person. This therefore requires a changing area of no less than 20m<sup>2</sup> per changing unit (football) and 29m<sup>2</sup> (rugby).

Natural ventilation to be provided by way of high level, opening, security windows.

Vanity provision should be provided for players to feel comfortable after their game. Fix mirrors in each changing unit and consider provision for hairdrying.

## **Benches**

The changing benches should be no less than 500x100mm spaces per player and the height should be no less than 480mm above finished floor level.

## **Lockers**

Lockers can be considered for the secure storage of valuables, either within the changing rooms or in the public / general circulation areas.

## **General protection**

Interlocking doors between changing rooms must be carefully managed and the areas must also be secure when considering the use of the changing rooms by children and young people or male as well as female players.

Ensure there aren't any sight lines into the changing rooms through corridor doors. Where necessary, consider use of partition walls or screens to obscure lines of sight.

## **Toilets**

Cubicle toilets, which are gender-neutral should be provided as opposed to urinals.

## **Officials**

The facility should provide two additional changing rooms such that the match officials can be both male and female. This would mean that a changing room for three persons is to be provided, with an alternative accessible toilet/ changing room so that the needs of a mix of genders can be satisfied.

## **Showers**

Allow for a minimum of 4 cubicle showers within each team changing room, operated by self-closing / push buttons. Avoid open shower designs which do not offer user privacy.

Floors in the shower areas should be tiled with a slip-resistant ceramic finish, laid to the required falls and with a level threshold.

Shower area walls to be finished with either ceramic tiles or a continuous uPVC cladding system.

The changing areas should be designed such that they can be used by both able-bodied and disabled people but one unisex changing room should be provided with an accessible shower and toilet.

## **Support services**

In addition to the small store there is a need for a cleaner's store to include a bucket-sink and allow for the safe, secure storage of cleaning materials and equipment.

A plant room should be appropriately sized and located to accommodate incoming utilities, meters, plant, equipment and boilers, with its location designed to allow for maintenance vehicular access.

A small store room should be created off the hall space for the secure storage of tables and chairs.

## **General finishes**

All floor finishes should offer a durable, easy to clean surface – vinyl, non-slip such as Altro or similar, with the walls of a fair-faced concrete block construction.

## Other 'Fit for Future' considerations

As part of the feasibility consideration should be given to the value of technological and environmentally sustainable developments such as USB charging points; WiFi connectivity throughout; and solar panels; LED lights and EV charging points etc.

## A Few Useful Links

The following three links will take you to more detailed specialist guidance should you wish to undertake further research. However, your architect/design teams/contractor will be familiar with specialist requirements and should be instructed to refer to professional design guidance to inform their work. It should also be noted that every circumstance is different and the Football Foundation and FA guidance in England refers to some grant processes, programmes and approaches that don't necessarily apply in Wales.

**The Football Association of Wales' 'Environments: For Her'**, is a player led resource pack which outlines barriers and solutions to pave the way for the future of the female game in Wales. It promotes the importance of creating inclusive and positive spaces where women and girls can feel confident. The booklet is there to support clubs, schools, coaches, parents and facility providers with key hints, tips and methods to ensure every female across Wales can play football without fear and in a positive, inclusive environment:

[http://contentfaw.aws-skybrid.co.uk/files/7716/5210/9484/A5\\_Environments\\_For\\_Her\\_Digital-min.pdf](http://contentfaw.aws-skybrid.co.uk/files/7716/5210/9484/A5_Environments_For_Her_Digital-min.pdf)

**Football Foundation changing room and pavilion design guidance:**

<https://footballfoundation.org.uk/changing-pavilion-design-key-considerations>

**Sport England, Design and Facility Cost Guidance:**

[Design and cost guidance | Sport England](#)

## OUTLINE GUIDANCE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITY ROOM / SOCIAL AREAS

### What To Do First

Before commissioning an architect/design team, the preparation of a feasibility study is an essential first step to establish both needs and a detailed business case for the proposals, leading the way to the establishment of the design brief, specifications, features and scale of provision required.

The initial study should include no less than the following – where appropriate:

- Market assessment i.e.
  - Current customer/client user reviews – their experience of what works well, needs improving/is missing.
  - Wider consultations i.e. surveys, presentations, meetings etc with the community and new audiences/potential user groups, as well as a review of other similar provision in the neighbourhood and catchment area to understand:
    - understand the needs and gaps in provision – now and future
    - identify opportunities for partnerships, income generation and third-party funding
    - avoid duplication
    - assess realistic usage levels for the proposed activities also testing how much people will be prepared to pay for the services
  - Assessment of size of catchment population within a 20-minute drive/walk/cycle time;
  - Impact of any new facility on the use of existing facilities, avoiding user displacement that may impact on the sustainability of other facilities.
- Management/operational plans needed, to include staffing arrangements, marketing and usage plans, to show how the new facility will generate more activity and by whom, with an accessible pricing policy;
- Analysis of the organisation's capability through a strength and weaknesses assessment. The organisation should be well established and financially robust, with a healthy current turnover / generating annual surpluses; a strong paying membership and a number of working partnerships;
- Assessment of pricing, including a sensitivity and affordability analysis with the forecast income set to secure sustainability. The sensitivity analysis must take account of other providers and in particular where Local Authorities/the

public sector are able to charge subsidised rates for public use of similar offers in the same overall area

- Business planning addressing:
  - detailed income and expenditure forecasts;
  - management and maintenance;
  - outline cost plan;

### **General Design Guidance**

Social and refreshment areas should be designed to create a friendly welcoming atmosphere, with the community 'space' designed to satisfy a variety of needs, including post-match entertainment, teaching and learning, volunteer education/pre- and post-match briefings, somewhere for waiting parents and siblings and suitable spaces for small community events such as yoga or other low-level physical activities.

The layout and design should be informed by the findings from the community and user consultation. The design should be fit for purpose for the host organisation/club, as well as its key partners which could include schools, disability groups and other users with quite specific needs.

The social space will be used, before, during and after sporting activities, perhaps for the selling of food and drinks. This will demand a small kitchenette with servery to the side of the hall, and perhaps also opening to the exterior of the building.

A simple Public Address (PA) system to be installed with the controls housed within the kitchen area.

Suitable space for waste and recycling bins should be identified along with the requirement for vending machines and sanitary disposal bins.

Key to project cost control is to keep the design of the external building envelope simple. Additionally, to minimise occurrences of vandalism and general anti-social behaviour, keep hidden recesses in the building to a minimum, avoid easy access to roofs and consider rounded or overhanging eaves, concealed downpipes and a secure roofing system.