



HOW TO MAKE ACCESSIBLE GREENWAYS

#GreenWays4ALL



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KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MAKING GREENWAYS ACCESSIBLE

When designing accessible greenways we need to take into consideration a set of minimum, technical, accessibility-related criteria in order to ensure that greenways can be used and enjoyed by everyone – including people with disabilities – under safe and comfortable conditions.

Accessibility to natural spaces has been less well developed than accessibility in urban environments. For this reason we believe it is essential to provide some guidelines that can be implemented not only on greenways but also in any action carried out in natural areas, such as paths, nature trails, etc.

We are confident that this brochure will help European greenway planners and managers to develop initiatives aimed at improving accessibility along their routes and making greenways an integrating element for the development of accessible tourism experiences and products.

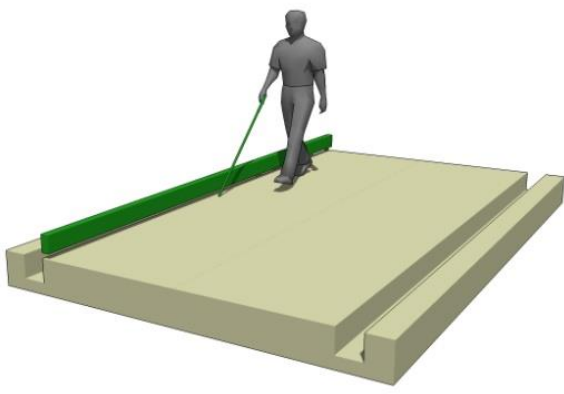


GENERAL CONDITIONS FOR ACCESSIBLE GREENWAYS

Accessible greenways are those that can be used by everyone in a non-discriminatory, independent and safe manner..

All accessible traffic-free walking and cycling routes must meet the following requirements:

1. Throughout the route there must be a free passageway with a minimum width of 2.50 m allowing people to travel, pass each other and change direction regardless of their physical capacity or mode of travel, and a minimum headroom of 3.00 m.
2. The passageway may occasionally be narrower provided that the minimum width at any given point is 1.50 m.
3. Any elements along the greenway, such as vertical signage, furniture, etc. must not encroach on the accessible route.
4. There may be no single steps or ridges. Height differences must be overcome in accordance with accessibility regulations.
5. Surfaces must meet specific conditions enabling them to be used by everyone.
6. The maximum transverse gradient is 4% and the maximum longitudinal gradient is 6%.
7. Accessible traffic-free routes must have a minimum lighting level of 20 lux throughout their length. If this level is achieved by artificial lighting (e.g. in tunnels) lighting should be evenly distributed and glare free.
8. Accessible greenways must have proper signage and communication systems.
9. The continuity of accessible traffic-free routes at crossing points with other routes, underpasses and bridges must be ensured.
10. Continuous edge protection must be provided at the sides of accessible traffic-free routes.



THE SURFACE: A KEY ELEMENT

The surface is one of the most important elements when assessing the accessibility of a greenway since it is common to everyone, whatever their mode of travel.

Examples of accessible surfaces:

- 🍁 **Asphalt:** A natural finish can be obtained by treating the surface with appropriate synthetic binders and aggregates.
- 🍁 **Layers of crushed aggregate:** Made of graded aggregate, decomposed granite, crushed stones, gravel, crushed quarry material, or any other suitable granular material. In all cases a binder must be used to stabilize the surface.
- 🍁 **Natural stone setts or slabs:** Laid on a hard base and joined using a binder to form a smooth surface.
- 🍁 **Concrete:** With a fine non-slip wet or dry surface coating.
- 🍁 **Wood:** With joints less than 1 cm wide and laid perpendicular to the direction of travel.
- 🍁 **Untreated surface:** Compacted to 95% Modified Proctor density, with no irregularities. It will require intensive regular maintenance due to alterations caused by weather, wear and tear.



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RECOMMENDED SURFACE

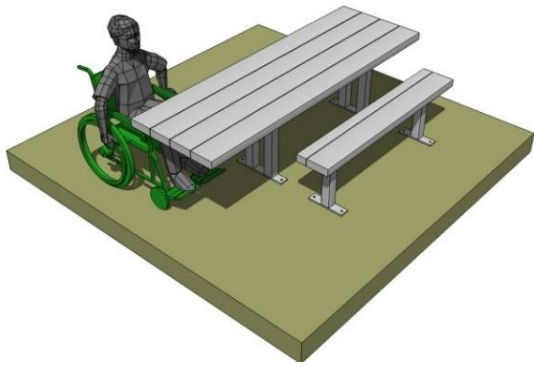
WE RECOMMEND!

Selected aggregate and binder made from recycled micronized glass. The resulting surface looks like compacted earth.

- ✓ The surface retains its natural look, texture and colour, and can also be pigmented.
- ✓ It is waterproof and inhibits plant growth.
- ✓ It is also suitable for vehicle traffic, thereby facilitating the maintenance and control of the greenway.



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NON-ACCESSIBLE SURFACES

SAND, GRASS AND GRAVEL RULED OUT



Accessible areas with sand, gravel or grass surfaces are not permitted as they hinder the passage of wheelchairs and may cause people with reduced mobility, visual impairment, or cognitive dysfunction to slip or trip.

At places where it is deemed necessary, strips of tactile paving should be laid to help people find a specific place or element, or to warn them of a hazard.



OTHER ELEMENTS TO CONSIDER

In addition to the above mentioned issues and the matter of the surface, the following aspects also need to be considered:

- ✓ Bridges and footbridges
- ✓ Underpasses and tunnels
- ✓ Intersections
- ✓ Gutters, drain and tree wells
- ✓ Direction lighting and signage
- ✓ Edge protection
- ✓ Safety elements such as railings
- ✓ Hand rails
- ✓ Rest areas, viewing points, shady areas, and vegetation
- ✓ Urban furniture, water fountains, waste bins, and bollards
- ✓ Interpretational signage such as information boards
- ✓ Characteristics of written media
- ✓ Reserved vehicle parking areas
- ✓ And, of course, accessible toilets!



All this technical information, best practices for accessible greenways in Europe, and plenty more besides is available in our *Practical Guide to Opening Up the Territory on Accessible Greenways*.

Download from www.greenways4all.org and www.viasverdes.com



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The EU funded project Greenways4ALL aims to move forward towards the creation of accessible tourism products linked to greenways.

www.viasverdes.com www.aevv-egwa.org www.predif.org

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