How to Take Accurate Measurements for your Accessibility Guide
It is important to take accurate measurements for inclusion in your Accessibility Guide. Potential customers will need these measurements to make an informed choice on whether or not your venue is able to cater for their access requirements. This document illustrates the basics of taking and recording measurements, explains standard notations and provides examples.

The Measuring Tape

Measuring tapes are available in a variety of sizes. For indoor measurements, a three metre or five metre long tape should be sufficient. A longer tape may be required for some outdoor measurements, although long measurements can also be carried out satisfactorily in stages.

Many types of tape are available but most commonly they will have a plastic or steel body and a ribbon made from thin flexible steel that coils up under spring tension within the body. A locking switch holds the ribbon out of the body at the required length. Releasing the switch allows the ribbon to self retract. Some tapes also have a hold button which does the same as the locking switch but must be continuously pressed to keep the ribbon out.

Measuring

The ribbon will usually have a steel hook at its end. The hook can be used to hook over the object you are measuring (Method 1) or to abut it (Method 2), depending on which face you are measuring from. The hook slides back and forward very slightly to compensate for its own thickness depending on which method is being used.

Reading and Recording Measurements

Measurements stated as part of technical building standards and other statutory processes in the UK use a metric notation. Your Accessibility Guide will use the same notation and you should record your measurements in millimetres. It is therefore important that the tape used has a metric scale on its ribbon. Many tapes will have both an imperial scale (inches and feet) on one side of the ribbon and a metric scale (millimetres and centimetres) on the other.

A metric scale is explained opposite. There are ten millimetres in one centimetre and one hundred centimetres in one metre. The primary markings on most metric tapes are centimetres. Centimetres are written as cm; millimetres as mm and metres as m.

Examples:
You should record 10cm as 100mm
You should record 55cm as 550mm
You should record 100cm as 1000mm
You should record 220cm as 2200mm
Example Measurement 1

Measure the clear width of the corridor illustrated below.

You should measure the unobstructed width at the corridor’s narrowest point. This is from the face of the radiator (the obstruction) to the opposite wall.

The clear width is $1044\text{mm} = 104.4\text{cm} = 1.044\text{m}$.
Round it \textbf{down} to the nearest 10mm, which gives $1040\text{mm} = 104\text{cm} = 1.04\text{m}$.
Record it as \textbf{1040mm}
Example Measurement 2

Measure the clear width of the door illustrated below.

You should measure the clear space through the door opening, not the actual door width, nor the aperture width. To do this, open the door to 90 degrees and measure from the door face to the door stop. Disregard the door handle or other ironmongery.

The clear width is 816mm = 81.6cm = 0.816m. Round it down to the nearest 10mm, which gives 810mm = 81cm = 0.81m. Record it as 810mm.