



Bryony Pritchard, Royal Welsh Agricultural Society Case Study: Enhancing – Insights from PIWS Training

- **Delegate:** Bryony Pritchard | Membership Officer
- **Location:** Royal Welsh Showground, Llanelwedd, Builth Wells LD2 3SY
- **Course:** Piws 4-day Champion Training Course
- **Date:** 26/02/2025



4-day Champion Training Course

Background

Bryony Pritchard, Membership Officer for the Royal Welsh Agricultural Society, attended the PIWS training course focused on event accessibility. Bryony's role involves communication with members, ensuring they receive relevant information about the society's three annual events: the Spring Festival, the Royal Welsh Show, and the Winter Fair. Bryony participated in the training to try and improve accessibility within these events, as well as the outside events and conferences that they host to improve inclusivity for all attendees.

Motivation for Attending the Training

Bryony's motivation for attending the workshop stemmed from her desire to create a more accessible and inclusive experience for all event attendees. Her expectations were to gain a better understanding of accessibility requirements, identify key improvements, and ensure the society's events are inclusive, open and accessible to a wider audience.

Key Takeaways from the Training

The training provided valuable insights into:

- All different types of disabilities and how it can affect people's ability to interact and attend the events.
- The importance of digital accessibility, particularly for websites and booking systems.
- The financial benefits of making events more inclusive, emphasizing the value of the "Purple Pound"—the spending power of disabled individuals.
- The necessity of clearly communicating accessibility features to potential attendees via online platforms and event materials.

Impact on Accessibility Approach

The training has significantly influenced Bryony's approach to accessibility by:

- **Developing an Accessibility Committee:** This committee will assess current provisions already in place, and plan future improvements.
- **Short-Term and Long-Term Planning:** Implementing immediate improvements while also working on a comprehensive long-term strategy.
- **Improving Digital Accessibility:** Ensuring event websites and booking systems will be fully accessible, making it easier for disabled attendees to find relevant information and plan their visit.

Identified Areas for Improvement

Key areas identified for enhancement or further development include:

- **Facility Access:** Ensuring venues are accessible for individuals with both physical and hidden disabilities.
- **Website and Ticketing System Enhancements:** Improving digital content to better communicate accessibility provisions.
- **Staff and Steward Training:** Providing accessibility training for staff and volunteers to improve on-site support for attendees.

The Value of Industry Collaboration

Working with other event professionals during the training was highly beneficial. Bryony highlighted key takeaways from collaborating with other major events, such as:

- **Learning from Best Practices:** Gaining insights from organizations that have successfully implemented accessibility measures.
- **Sharing Resources:** Exploring the possibility of sharing accessibility infrastructure, such as adapted toilet facilities, among events to reduce costs.
- **Enhancing Ticketing Systems:** Collaborating with other events that use the same ticket providers to integrate accessible booking features.

Implementation of an Accessibility Strategy

Bryony has recognised that importance of this audience, and as a result the team are preparing a strategic report outlining short- and long-term accessibility goals. In a few weeks, they will present their findings to the board of directors, highlighting current accessibility measures, identified gaps, and the need for staff and steward training to better support disabled attendees.

Immediate Benefits and Expected Outcomes

While immediate changes have yet to be fully implemented, Bryony anticipates:

- **Incremental improvements at upcoming events,** starting with the Spring Festival, which is the smaller of the events, as Bryony feels that starting small and getting it right is an effective way to trial out new approaches.
- **Positive audience engagement,** as clearer accessibility communication encourages more individuals to attend events confidently, including creating videos that clearly highlight how what to expect on arrival, how to get around the events with accessibility in mind.

Further Support and Training Needs

To sustain progress, Bryony emphasized the need for:

- **Expanded staff training**, particularly for gate staff and stewards, to ensure a welcoming and accommodating environment through attending the bite sized induction to accessibility training sessions delivered by PIWS.
- **Specialized accessibility training**, such as dementia awareness, to improve staff interactions with diverse attendee needs.
- **Ongoing consultation with accessibility experts**, maintaining a partnership with PIWS to seek advice and refine strategies as needed.

Conclusion

Participation in the PIWS training has been invaluable for the Royal Welsh Agricultural Society. The training has facilitated crucial insights, sparked new initiatives, and encouraged collaboration with other event organizers. By integrating accessibility improvements into short-term and long-term planning, Bryony and her team aim to create a truly inclusive event experience for all attendees. The society is committed to continuous learning and action, ensuring accessibility remains at the forefront of event planning and execution.

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