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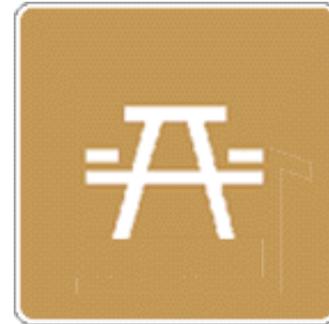
Picnic Areas

1 Picnic Areas

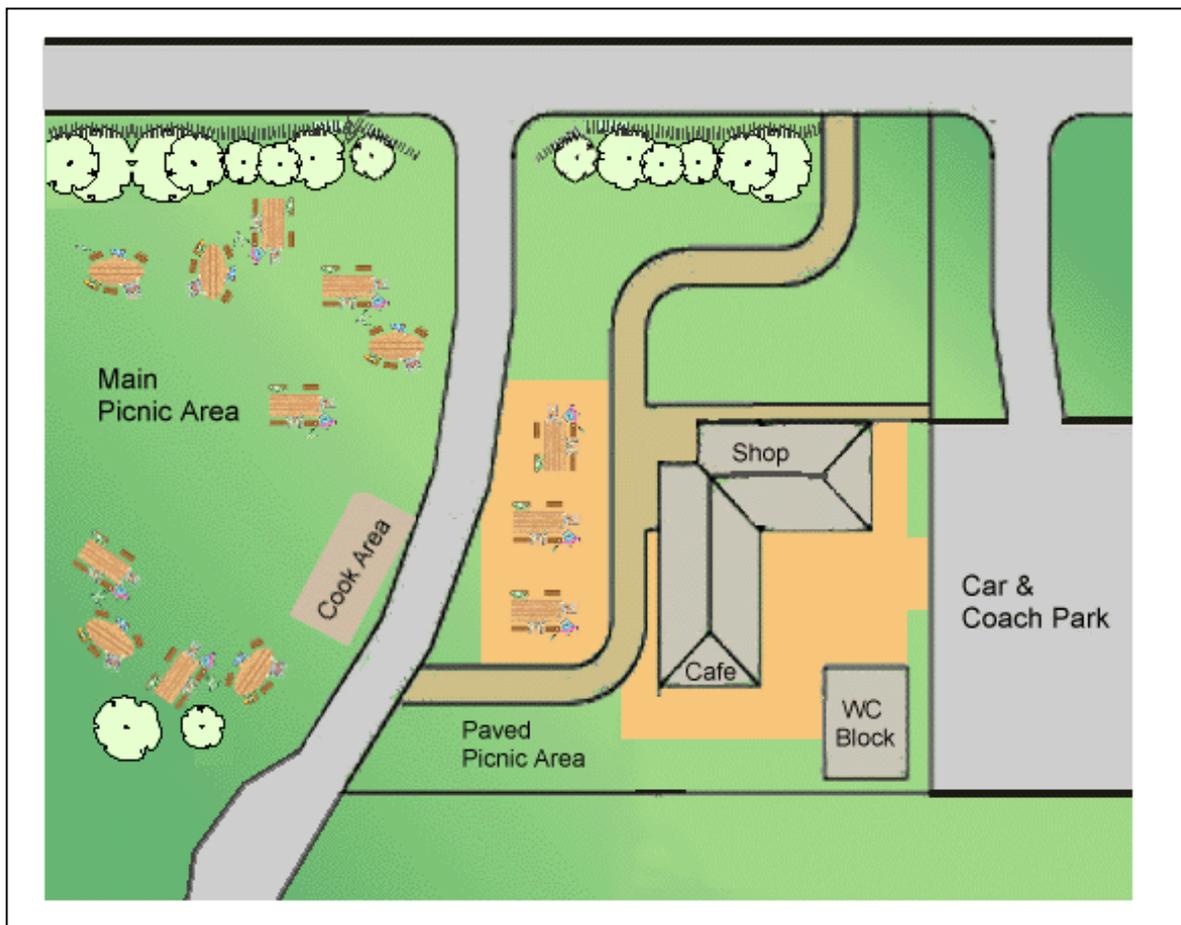
Picnic areas are a major draw to viewing places, beaches and other tourist venues. These may be formally owned and organised as a business or may be provided free for all by local authorities. The basic criteria remain the same; they must be accessible by the widest range of people as possible.

The main features for an accessible picnic area are:

- ◆ Car parking and coach drop points within easy distance with a firm fairly level surface, without sand or loose gravel etc. and well drained without potholes and erosion ditches.
- ◆ Served by a footpath with a firm level, drained surface which is either level to 1:20 (5%) incline or has suitable ramps and stepped access with hand & guard –rails (as applicable),

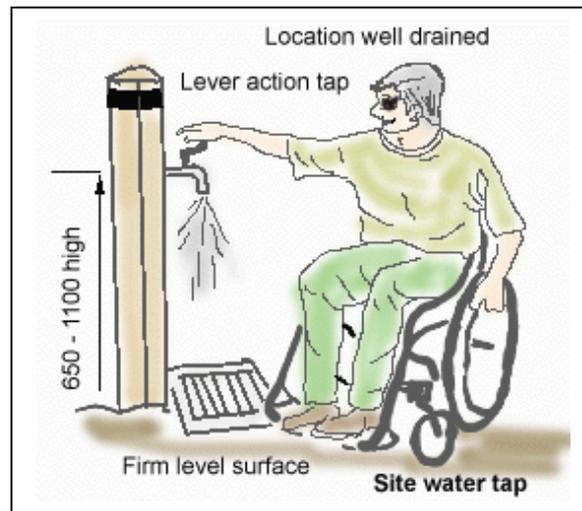


Standard Sign



- ◆ Slopes of the required clear spaces not to exceed 1:50 in any direction. Natural and natural-appearing surfaces are often used in picnic areas. A 1:50 slope on these surfaces may not be adequate to ensure proper drainage. In these cases, exception 1 allows the slope in any direction to be 1:40 a 1:30 maximum can be used on one side where there is a drainage problem.
- ◆ The picnic area can be paved, firm compacted surface or well mown grass, the area should be as level as possible. Slip resistance is not required because of the tree leaves and needles, duff (partly decayed organic material on the forest floor), mud, snow, ice, etc. that often cover outdoor areas.
- ◆ Litter bins with easily opened lids should be provided away from the eating area; near the exit point to the car park encourages use.
- ◆ When possible accessible toilet and changing/wash facilities should be provided.

- ◆ An accessible design potable water faucet should be available near the picnic area, and along an accessible pathway. Lever action taps rather than twist or pinch grips should be used. Picnic areas sited along country paths may be some distance from mains supply managers should consider



- providing warning notices at the parking/path head area, providing water supply at the path head, provide a water supply tank at the remote picnic/rest site.

- ◆ Where the water supply is not potable the tap should be clearly marked with a standard warning sign.
- ◆ Where food & drink are not sold an accessible water supply should be available.
- ◆ If fires are to be permitted a paved and prepared fire pit area should be available away from trees and eating areas. Provision of ready cut timber is advisable to prevent indiscriminate

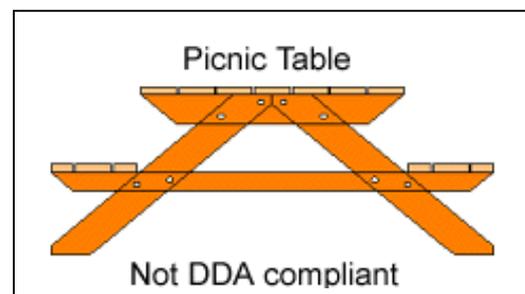


damage to trees etc. A pile of loose sand should be available near the fire for quickly extinguishing the fires.

- ◆ Providing surfaced formal footpaths in the area will encourage people to stay off easily damaged plantations, wild growth and sand dunes. On longer routes seating should be provided every 50 metres and every 30 if there are inclines and steps along the route. See our guide 'Street Seating' for further details.
- ◆ Similarly providing a designated play area helps reduce damage.
- ◆ Providing a shelter at the site should be considered especially where parking is more than 50 metres from the picnic area.

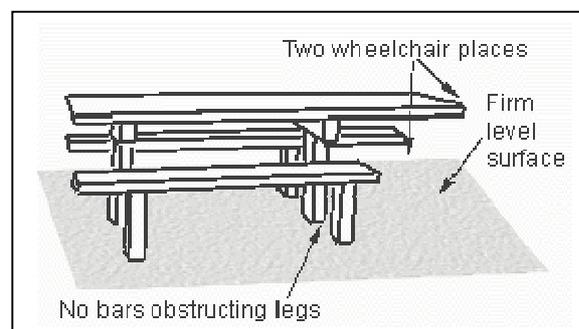
1.1 Picnic tables

Accessible picnic tables and sites provide opportunities for a broader visitor base. If planned properly, access can occur with minimal stress on staff and budgets.



- ◆ The most commonly used picnic tables are not DDA compliant and should not be used.
- ◆ Should have tops at around 700 mm to 900 mm max. taller tables may not be suitable for young wheelchair rider use,
- ◆ If there are fixed benches they should not have cross beams to the table legs as this impedes free movement of peoples legs, a bench height of 475 mm is the most generally useful height for adults,
- ◆ Where there are fixed benches some tables should be designed to cater for people with longer legs or who are unable to bend their legs to sit. Omit the central foot rest on some table spaces.
- ◆ Other fixed benches should be set back further from the table to permit larger people to sit.

- ◆ Providing part of the bench with a higher seat and footrests helps make the table useful to children and people of different heights and body sizes.

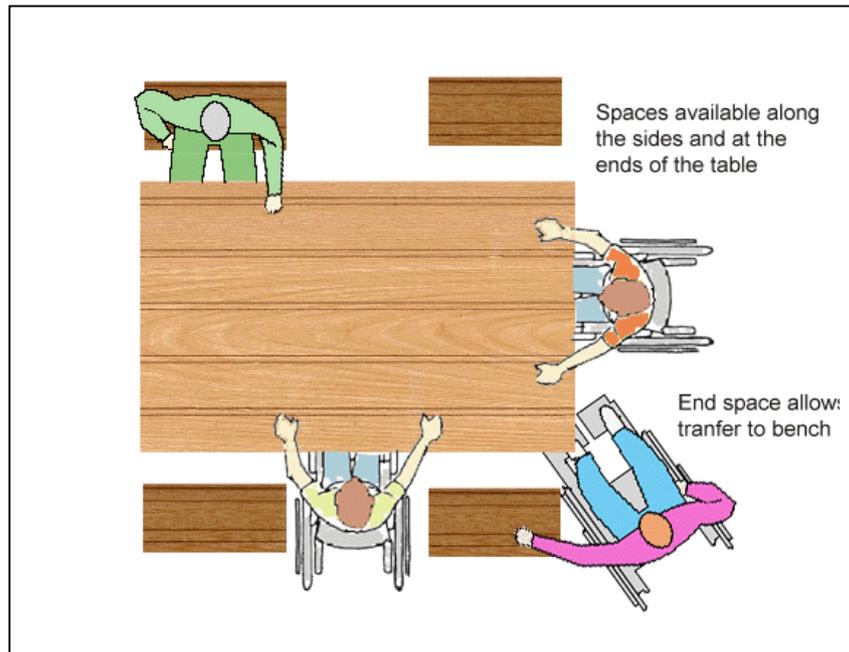


- ◆ Seat to table top height
2 to 5 years: 350 mm,
6 to 10: 420 m,
older: 450 mm.

For younger children the body space between bench and table can be reduced.

Using three seat heights at 450, 480 and 530 provides suitable height seats for most people.

- ◆ The bench should leave at least one space at the end to permit transfer from wheelchairs and/or a wheelchair pulling up to the table. At least 1 or 5% (in larger groups) of tables should have this provision.
- ◆ The level surface should extend along one end of a table with fixed seating to permit transfer from mobility scooters or wheelchairs. Riders should not be expected to remain on their vehicle at all times. Changing seats should be an available option.



- ◆ A proportion of seating spaces should have back rests.
- ◆ Provision of a wheelchair seating space size include a minimum clear floor space, width, depth and table clearance, in addition to knee space and toe clearance.
- ◆ Knee space should allow a minimum of 680 mm in height, 765 mm in width, and 480 mm in depth.
- ◆ Toe clearance requires a 228 mm (adult) 420 mm (young child) minimum height and extends an additional 120 mm minimum from knee clearance, 765 mm minimum width and 480 mm in minimum depth.
- ◆ Clear floor space is a minimum of 765 x 1400 mm, with one full-unobstructed side connected to an outdoor recreation access route.
- ◆ Table clearance requires a minimum of 900 mm clear floor or ground space surrounding the useable portion of the table, measured from the seat.
- ◆ The surface at the table should be level, smooth and well drained. Table tops do not have to be square or rectangular, oval tops designs can simplify inclusion of wheelchair riders.



See also our guide 'Street Seating'.

Suggested proportion of accessible tables. Note: where tables are provided along walking paths etc. the proportion of accessible tables provided should be the same as for the main area.

Number of Fixed Tables Provided	Number of Tables Required to be Accessible (50%, but no less than 2 when two or more are provided)	Number of Accessible Tables Required to be connected to an outdoor recreation access route (40% of accessible tables, but no less than 2 when two or more tables are provided.)
1	1	1
2-4	2	2
5-6	3	2
7-8	4	2
9-10	5	3
11-12	6	3
13-14	7	3
15-16	8	4
17-18	9	4
19-20	10	4
21-22	11	5
23-24	12	5
25-26	13	6
27-28	14	6
29-30	15	6
31-32	16	7
33-34	17	7
35-36	18	8
37-38	19	8
39-40	20	8
41 +	50%	40% of the accessible tables

Accessible picnic tables should be dispersed among the different types of picnic areas provided. For example, if there are picnic areas near a lake and picnic areas near a playground, accessible picnic tables must be at each of the different picnic experiences. This provision for dispersing the accessible picnic tables does not require an increase in the total number of required accessible picnic tables.

It is essential that some tables are sited in shaded areas to cater for people who have photosensitive vision.

The provision for number of wheelchair seating spaces in relation to the tabletop perimeter length is as follows:

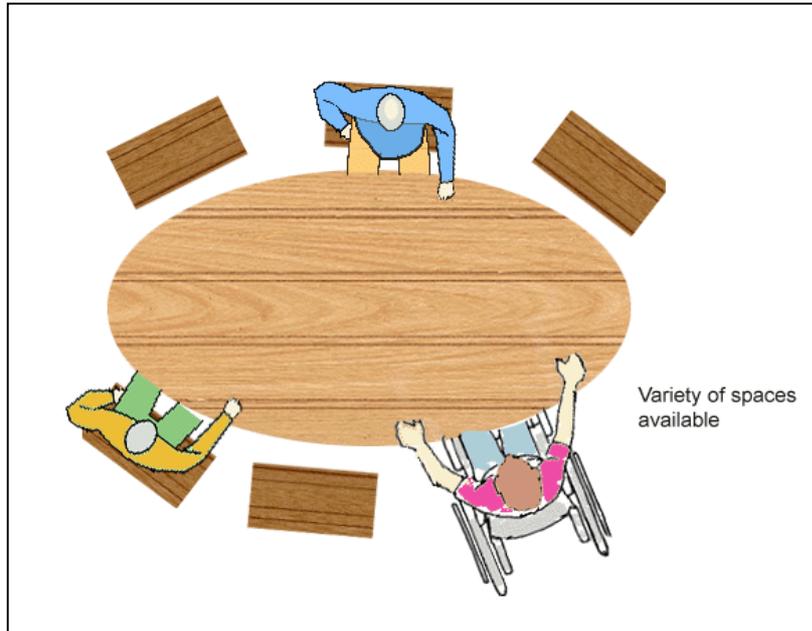
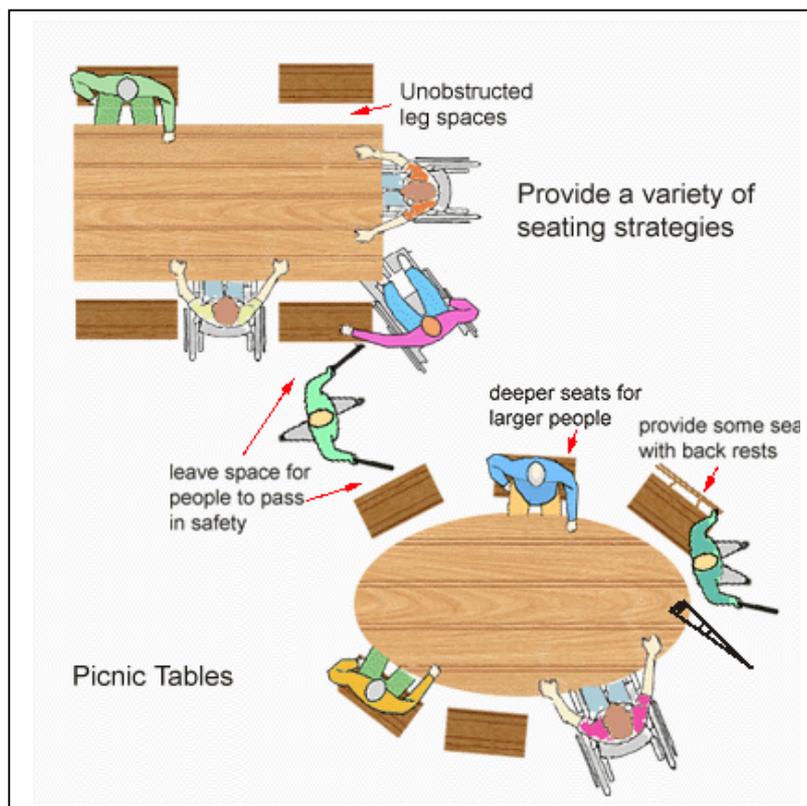


Table Top Perimeter of	Wheelchair Seating Spaces
Up to 6000 mm	1
6350-11000 mm	2
11500-16000 mm	3
16500-21000 mm	4
23500-26000 mm	5

The surface of the clear floor space and accessible seating space at picnic tables must be stable and firm. No ruts, gravel, sand or roots should cause tripping hazards.

Surface should drain camber 1:50 to 1:40.

Two detailed drawings of accessible picnic tables can be found in the Appendix.



Compliance with surface provisions may not be necessary if one of the following conditions for departure apply:

- ◆ Where compliance would cause substantial harm to cultural, historic, or significant natural features or characteristics;
- ◆ Where compliance would substantially alter the nature of the setting or the purpose of the facility, or portion of the facility;
- ◆ Where compliance would require construction methods or materials that are prohibited by national or local regulations or statutes;
- ◆ Where compliance would not be feasible due to safety, terrain or the prevailing construction practices.

Portable tables are positioned by visitors. This compromises or blocks access to the accessible picnic site or picnic element. It is suggested that clear routes are marked in some way to indicate where tables and seating are not permitted.

2 Signage

It is a waste of effort and money making the area accessible if no-one knows it exists. Ensure that any advertising which mentions the location includes information about its accessibility features.

- ◆ Signage is an important consideration, being able to find the site along country roads and lanes requires good signage and direction.
- ◆ Direction signs should have 150mm (minimum) high lettering and the picnic area symbol. Mounted on flag boards 2100mm + above surfaces.
- ◆ Signs meant to be read at a distance should have larger text and symbols. Roughly for each 10 metres increase in reading distance text size should increase by 100 mm.
- ◆ Lower 12-1400 mm height signs should be used to guide people with low vision mounted on posts or walls alongside the path.
- ◆ Road signs and signs on walkways and footpaths the area serves should be provided both at high level for distance sighting and at low level.
- ◆ Signs at the approach points and parking area should indicate local facilities and amenities.
- ◆ Consider providing the more important signs in a tactile readable format.
- ◆ Any signs should have a level clear area permitting people to approach and read them.



- ◆ A sign warning of the danger of electric shock should be displayed at the entry point to any Fields or areas where electric fences are used. The power could stop pacemakers and may cause injury to other people.

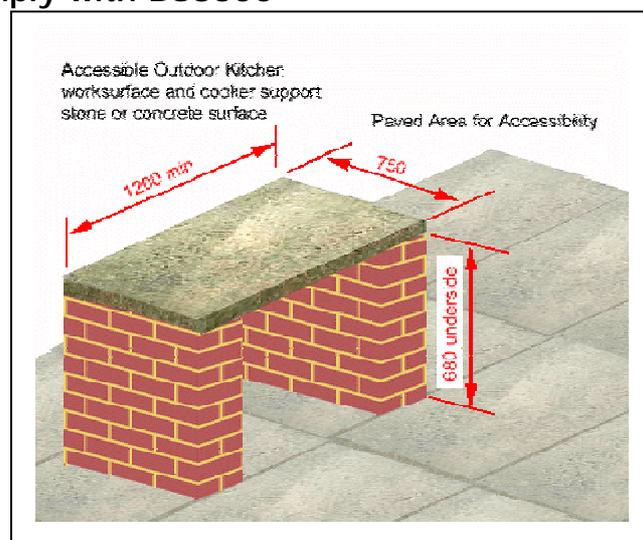
2.1 Notices

- Warning and advice signage about fire management at picnic sites should be prominent along entry routes and fire permitted areas.
- Advice signage regarding disposal of wastes and packaging to prevent contamination and ingestion by animals.
- ◆ Large text and where possible tactile notices sited near the entry points should give any rules and directions which apply to the site. Sign board should be between 800 and 1700 mm height and sited near but off the walkway.
- ◆ Emergency and assistance telephone numbers should be given in the notice especially where the site is unsupervised. Where possible an accessible telephone should be available in the area.
- ◆ Local pathways and places of interest should be shown on a map. Information should include information about any accessibility limitations imposed by the path routes and design, including details of hazards, special interests or views. Where routes may be unsuitable for some users' i.e. steep or rough surfaces, this should be indicated. Colour coding/symbol marked routes help people keep to their planned walk.

3 Equipment Features

3.1 Cooking Surfaces, Grills, Pedestal Grills

- Where only one cooking surface, grill, or pedestal grill is provided in a picnic area it should comply with BS8300 –
- Where multiple cooking surfaces, grills, or pedestal grills are provided in a picnic area, 50 percent, but no less than two, should comply.
- Of the 50 percent required to be accessible, 40 percent, but no less than two, must be located along an outdoor recreation access route





- Accessible cooking surfaces, grills, and pedestal grills to be dispersed throughout the area and among the types provided. For example, if a picnic area offers different types of cooking surfaces, the total number of accessible cooking surfaces is to be distributed among the different types provided. This provision would not increase the number of cooking surfaces, grills, or pedestal grills required to be accessible.
- Accessible cooking surfaces should be installed between 380 mm and 860 mm above the ground/floor. This provides a comfortable reach range for cooking.
- In the outdoor recreation environment, picnic and camping elements must be vandal-resistant, large animal-resistant, and adaptable to weather conditions of extreme heat, cold, and moisture.
- A minimum clear space of 2200 mm deep by 1220 mm wide be provide at all usable portions of the cooking surface, grill, or pedestal grill. This should be 1:50 (1:40 where drainage is required). The surface of the clear space at usable portions of cooking surfaces, grills, and pedestal grills is required to be firm and stable.

3.2 Fire Ring

- Where provided fire ring/place height should be 220 (min) – 450 (pref.) mm above the surrounding surfaces, any kerb edging should extend no more than 180 mm above this height. A clear level space extending a minimum of 1220 deep by 1220 wide be provided at all usable portions of the fire ring.
- Where only one fire ring is provided in a picnic area it must connect to an outdoor recreation accessible route. Where more than 1 are provided, 50% should be accessible. At least 40% should be located along accessible routes. They should be dispersed amongst other fire ring locations, e.g. a picnic area may provide fire rings without cooking surfaces (i.e. for camp fires only,) and some with cooking surfaces in open or sheltered areas.
- Where open flame is used consider providing fire fighting equipment close to the location. This should be designed for use by people of all abilities.

3.3 Waste and recycling skips or bins

- 50% of the compartments should be accessible to assure the user of finding at least one usable accessible compartment in a multi-bin container.
- A minimum clear space of 2200 mm deep by 1220 mm wide be provide at all usable portions, This should be 1:50 (1:40 where drainage is required). The surface of the clear space at usable



positions is required to be firm and stable and constructed and maintained to accessible standards.

Vehicle access to the skip should be designed to minimise damage to path and accessible area surfaces. Where rutting is possible the vehicle route should be reinforced with a sub-base layer under the grassed area.

- Where problems exist with large animal intrusion, the necessity of protecting the health and safety of the user and the animal populations override accessibility requirements.

Opening mechanisms should require no more than 20 Newton force. The container may have a hinged, sliding or other cover and be situated where it is not subject to animal intrusion, thus dictating the animal-resistant controls.

3.4 Fire Fighting Equipment

Where fires and gas cookers etc. are likely to be used by visitors adequate fire fighting equipment should be available. The type provided will depend on the location/user Risk Assessment. Obtaining advice from the Forestry and Fire Rescue Service is recommended.

Equipment should be:

- Suitable for people of a wide range of abilities to use.
- Easy to identify
- Be within reasonable distance of cooking areas.
- Have level, firm access space for mobility vehicles and people with mobility aids to reach the equipment
- Have suitable signage

Appendix A – Accessible Picnic Tables

