

## **Access Statement - Stadium of Light** **Last Update: 5<sup>th</sup> January 2018**

This access statement does not contain personal opinions as to suitability for those with access needs, but aims to accurately describe the facilities and services we offer to visitors.

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Stadium of Light is situated near Sunderland city centre, located 0.9 miles from the mainline railway station. All approaches to the stadium are paved with mild inclines/declines.



We offer numerous facilities and services for supporters with access needs, including 208 spaces for wheelchair users, access for personal assistants, audio commentary for visually impaired supporters, a Sensory Room and more. Full details are contained within this document.

We look forward to welcoming you to the Stadium of Light. If you have any queries in respect of Ticket sales, accessible car parking, headset provision or require other accessibility assistance please call the **Ticket Office on 0191 5515264** or email [ticket.office@safc.com](mailto:ticket.office@safc.com).

The Club's Disability Liaison Officer (D.L.O.) Chris Waters can be contacted for any additional issues on **0191 551 5122** or via email at [chris.waters@safc.com](mailto:chris.waters@safc.com)

## **GETTING HERE**

**CAR** – See Car Parking section below.

**RAIL** – The nearest mainline railway station is Sunderland, located 0.9 miles from the Stadium of Light.

The stadium is also served by two stops on the regional Tyne and Wear metro service – Stadium of Light and St Peter's. Both stations are located 0.5 miles from the stadium.

Both stations can be used pre-match, but after games supporters travelling towards Newcastle should use Stadium of Light station only, while southbound passengers (towards City Centre and South Hylton) should use St. Peter's.

All Metro stations are fully accessible, with lifts to platform where required and step-free access to trains.

A comprehensive Metro Access Guide, published by the system operator, [can be downloaded here](#).

**TAXI** – Station Taxis are a prominent local company who can provide accessible transport upon request. Taxis can be booked via **0191 555 5555**.

**BUS** – The nearest bus stops are located towards the north-east corner of the Stadium site. Bus numbers 2, 3, 4, 12, 13, 15 and 16 all serve the stadium. Buses are accessible. The city's main bus interchange, located at Park Lane, is 1.3 miles from the stadium and also houses a Tyne and Wear Metro stop.

## **PRE-ARRIVAL**

**MEDICATION** - The club's ground regulations prohibit portable containers or glass bottles being brought into the stadium. Should these be required for medication purposes, please contact the **Ticket Office on 0191 5515264** in advance or email [ticket.office@safc.com](mailto:ticket.office@safc.com) and a cover letter will be issued granting permission. If you have any concerns on a match day please contact the nearest steward who can consult with the Safety Officer.

**WEBSITE** – The club's official website, [www.safc.com](http://www.safc.com), contains comprehensive information regarding all aspects of the club. The website was relaunched in June 2016 and is compliant with most aspects of the Single A component of the W3 guidelines, as well as some areas of Double A accreditation. The club is constantly working to improve accessibility of digital properties under its control.

## **CAR PARKING**

The stadium offers a total of 110 free parking spaces for patrons with accessibility requirements. These spaces are offered to eligible SAFC season card holders first and foremost, and then on a first-come, first-serve basis. These must be pre-booked by contacting the Ticket Office using the contact details above.

Distances from the accessible car parking area to the main accessible entrances range from 11m up to approximately 60m. There are no steps to entrances and lowered kerbs are provided.

There is a drop-off point located opposite the main entrance to the stadium, with a dropped kerb.

Car park surfaces are level asphalt with parking bays clearly marked. Car parks are lit and accessible entrances can be accessed directly via a wide, level path which runs around the perimeter of the stadium.





## TICKET OFFICE AND CLUB SHOP

The ticket office is located in Black Cat House, situated outside the stadium to the north east as shown on the site map.



There are no steps either to the ticket office entrance or counters. The entrance to the ticket office provides 80cm (31") clear width when the door is fully opened. The interior of the ticket office is level with a clear, large queuing area. There is no seating in the inside area.

The ticket office features fluorescent lighting, a lowered counter at one of the ticketing windows, and an induction loops for customers who are hearing impaired.

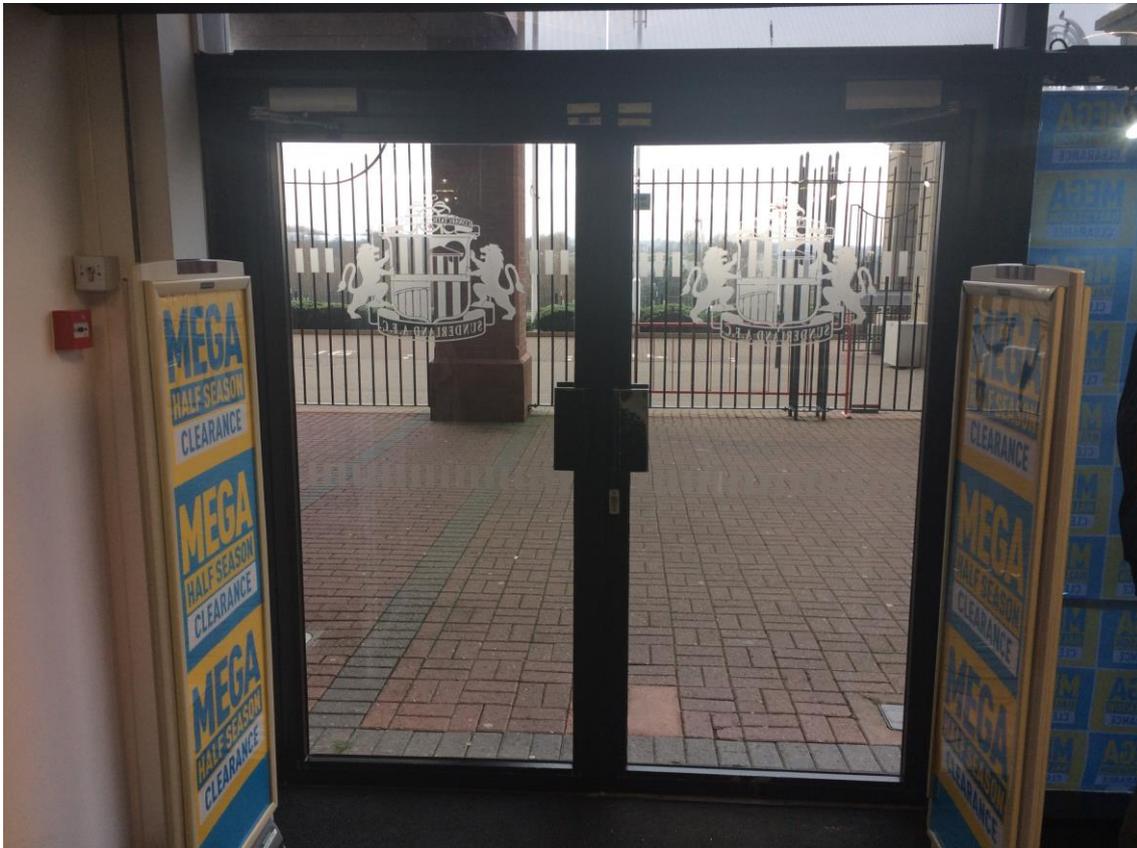




The club store is located in the exterior of the West Stand, next to the main stadium entrance. Please refer to the site map above.

The store is well-lit by LED pendant lighting with some fluorescent. It provides level access via the front door, which provides 86cm (33.8") of clear width when fully opened.



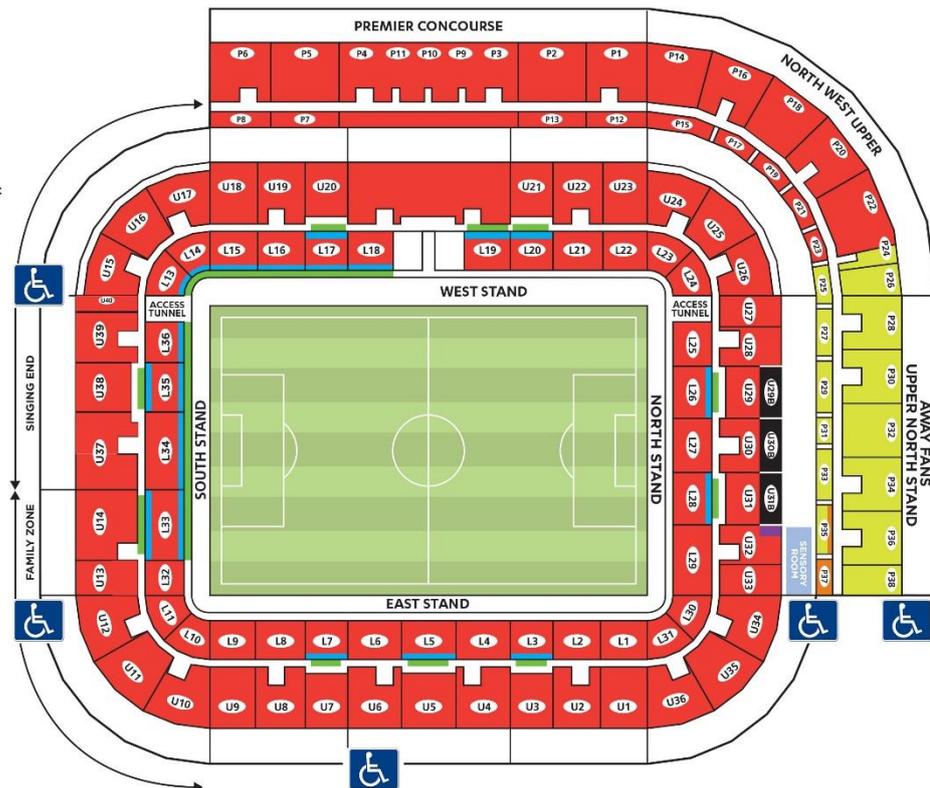


## ACCESSIBLE ENTRANCES AND TURNSTILES

Accessible entrances are located at 62A, 32A, 46A and 54A. The Black Cats Bar, located in the North Stand, and all West Stand hospitality areas are fully accessible via lift.

### Accessibility Location Plan

- Home Wheelchair Positions
- Home P/A's & Ambulant
- Nathan Shippey Sensory Room
- Away Fans W/C & P/A's & Ambulant
- Corp W/C & P/A's

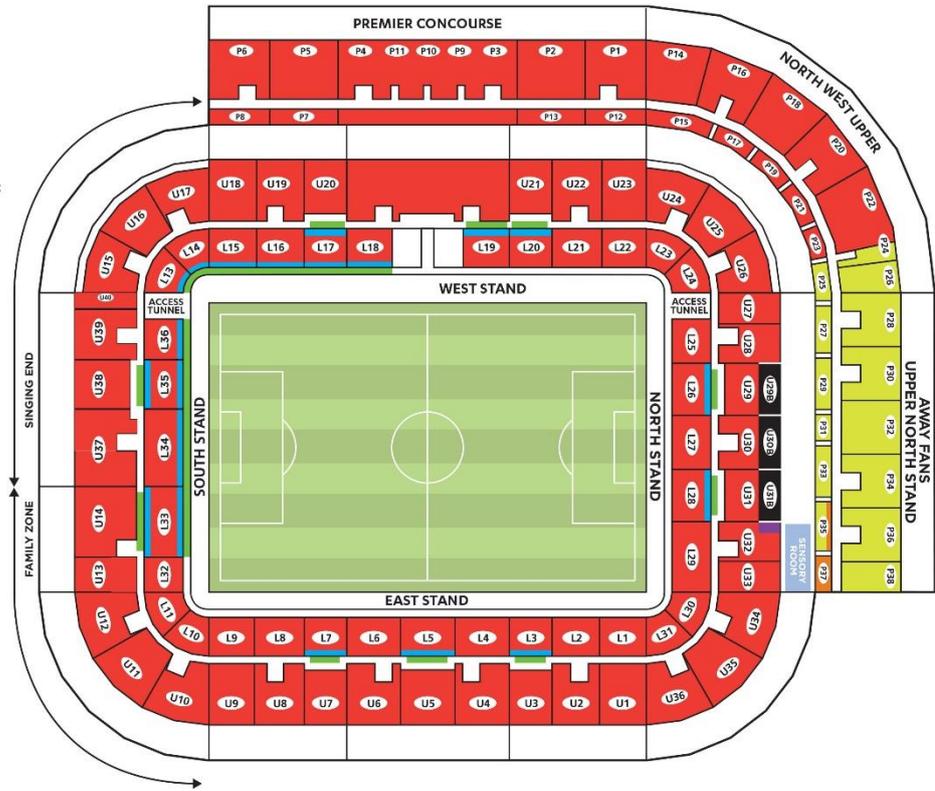


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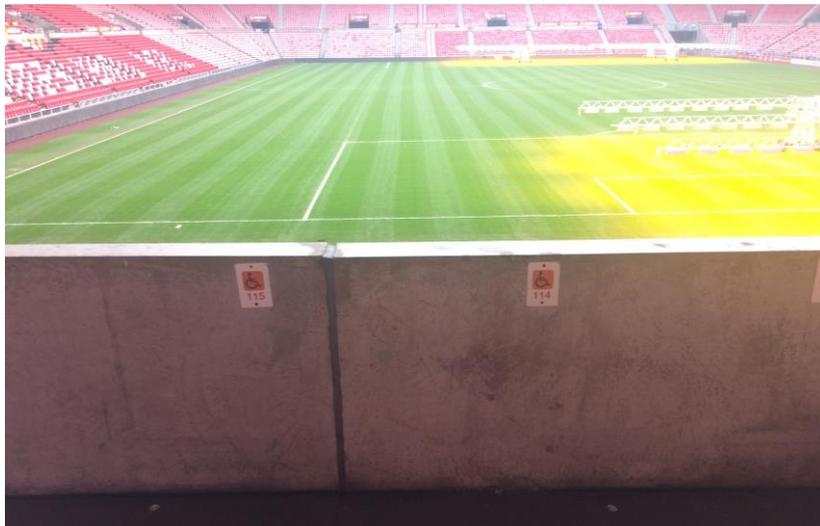
# ACCESSIBLE SEATING AREAS

## Accessibility Location Plan

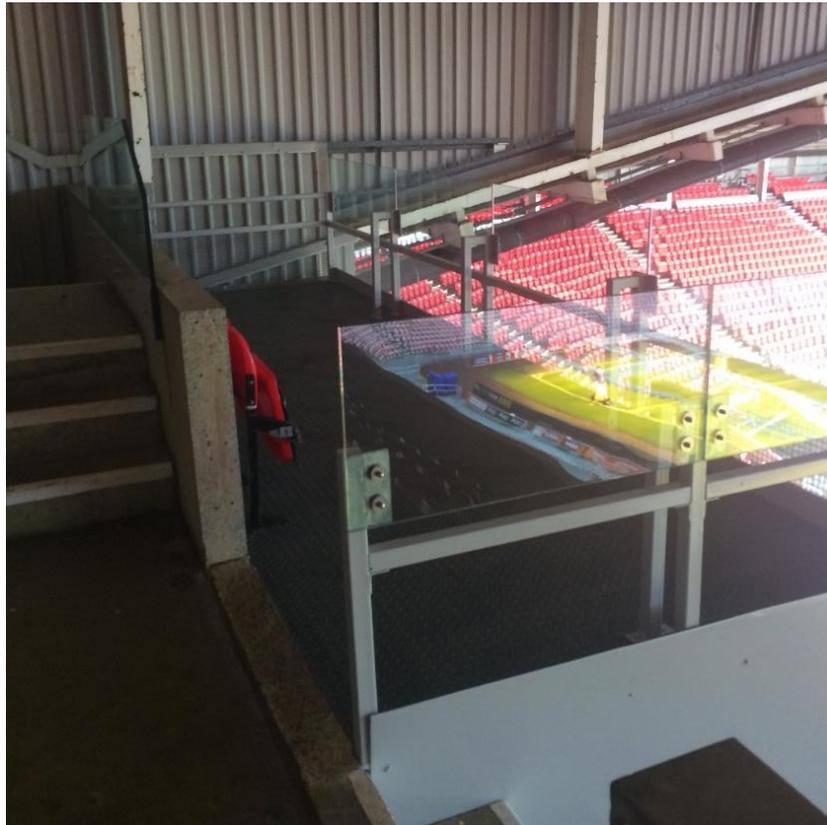
- Home Wheelchair Positions
- Home P/A's & Ambulant
- Nathan Shippey Sensory Room
- Away Fans W/C & P/A's & Ambulant
- Corp W/C & P/A's



[Download a PDF copy of this map](#)



*Example of accessible seating area – lower tier*



*Example of accessible seating area – upper tier*

All accessible entrances are manned by stewards who can assist as required. Turnstiles operate using a bar code scanner system. Accessible seating is located on the stadium's lateral gangway (row 16) and at pitchside. There are also accessible spaces in the away section in the North Stand Upper, accessible via the lift in the Black Cats Bar entrance.

There are no seats with restricted views and spaces are partially protected from the weather, though pitchside seats may not be entirely covered by the stadium roof.

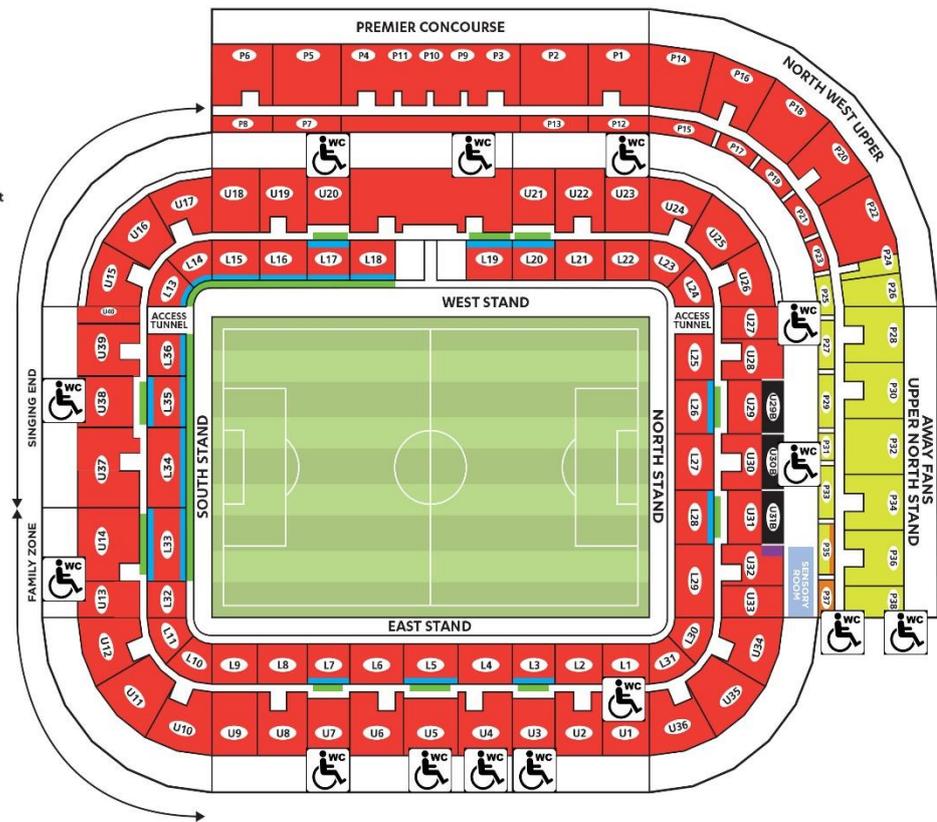
Supporters in accessible areas can bring along a Personal Assistant, who can sit next to them or in the seat directly behind depending on the area. All accessible spaces are guaranteed to have a Personal Assistant seat directly adjacent.

The club provides audio commentary via portable headsets for supporters who are blind or partially sighted. These are tuned to BBC Radio Newcastle and can be requested free of charge via **0191 5515264** or email [ticket.office@safc.com](mailto:ticket.office@safc.com).

## ACCESSIBLE TOILETS

### Accessibility Location Plan

- Home Wheelchair Positions
- Home P/A's & Ambulant
- Nathan Shippey Sensory Room
- Away Fans W/C & P/A's & Ambulant
- Corp W/C & P/A's



[Download a PDF copy of this map](#)

The toilets are locked and can be accessed via RADAR key. This can be brought along or requested from the nearest steward. Accessible toilets have level entry.

Accessible toilets have non-slip laminate flooring and lever taps. Accessible toilet doors allow 97cm (38") clear width when opened. There is an equal amount of LH and RH space either side of accessible toilet bowls, varying from 80cm (31") to 120cm (47"). However, most are 95cm (37"). Toilets measure 45cm (17.7") from floor to top of seat. All accessible toilets have grab rails.



## **CATERING**

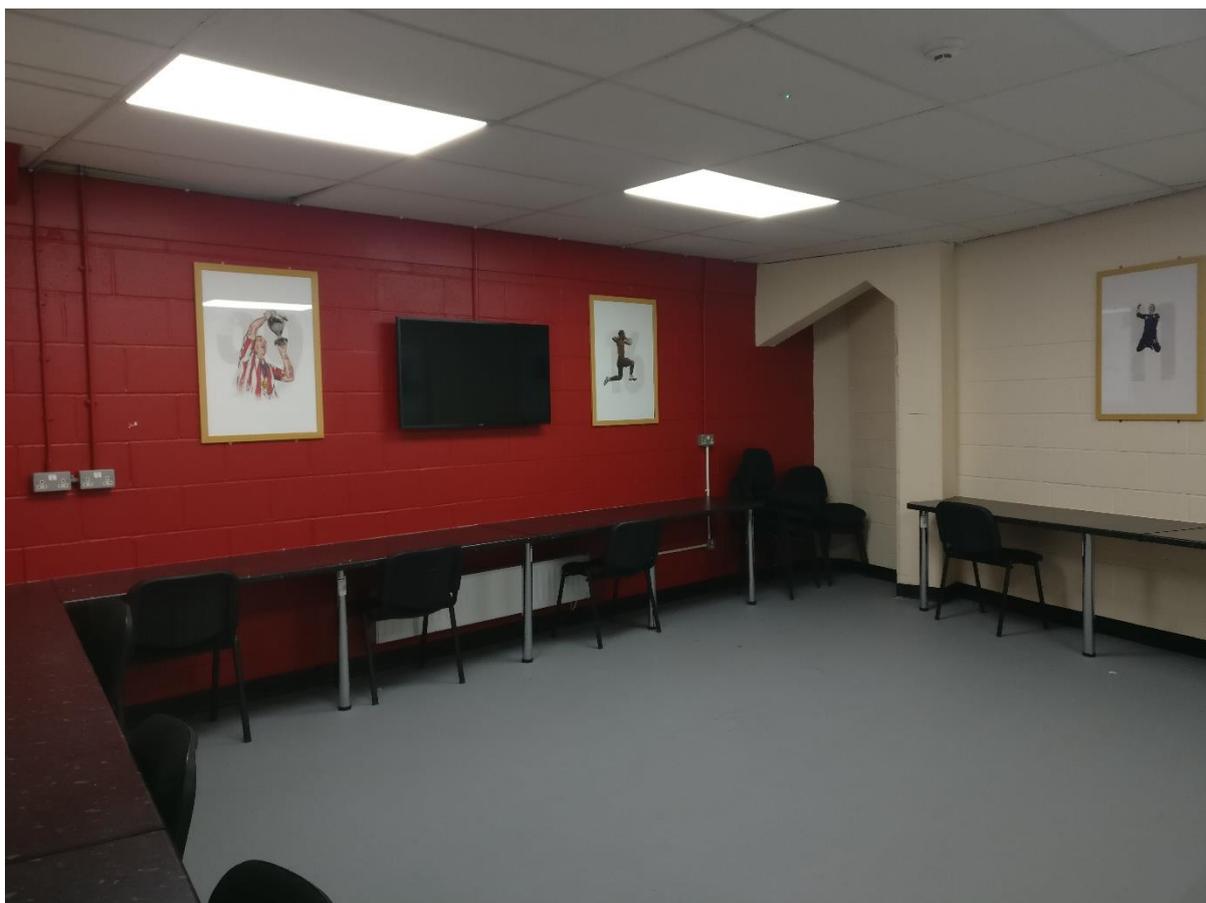
Catering facilities have access via ramps. They also feature lowered counters. There are no seating areas or accessible areas to rest food or drink (apart from on the lowered counters).

Food and beverage information can be read out by staff upon request.

## **WARM ROOM**

A dedicated Warm Room for supporters with accessibility needs is available, with no pre-booking required. This room is equipped with seating and a television, so supporters can watch the game in the room if they so wish.

The Warm Room is located in the South West Corner of the stadium, adjacent to turnstile 62A.



## **SENSORY ROOM**

Sunderland AFC was the first club in the UK to offer a dedicated sensory room for supporters sensitive to loud noise and/or on the autistic spectrum. This can be booked on a game-by-game basis by contacting [chris.waters@safc.com](mailto:chris.waters@safc.com), subject to availability. It is located in the North Stand and fully accessible via lift. A second Sensory Room, located in the West Stand, is currently under construction and is set to open in the near future.



*View from the Nathan Shippey Sensory Room*

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Members of club staff have undergone Equality and Diversity training, delivered by an external provider.

Accessibility training is also provided as part of the general training programme for stewards and safety personnel.

Staff are trained to assist in the event of a stadium evacuation, which will also be supported by messages over the public address system.

Assistance dogs are welcome in all areas of the stadium and water bowls can be provided via a steward.

Clear signage is provided around the stadium site and primarily features a combination of red and white. Stewards are available around the stadium site for any further queries.

The stadium does not offer a charging area for mobility scooters or battery-powered wheelchairs.

## **FUTURE PLANS**

- To continue to look to improve access around the stadium where appropriate

- To continue to proactively communicate with supporters with accessibility needs through established channels
- To conclude construction of the second Sensory Room

## **CONTACT INFO**

Address: Sunderland AFC, Stadium of Light, Sunderland SR5 1SU

Telephone: 0371 911 1973

Website: [www.safc.com](http://www.safc.com)

Email: [enquiries@safc.com](mailto:enquiries@safc.com) / [chris.waters@safc.com](mailto:chris.waters@safc.com)