

INCLUSIVE ACCESS

Muirfield Riding Therapy Centre in East Lothian, Scotland has recently completed the construction of a purpose-built accessible changing facility



The staff at Muirfield Riding Therapy Centre are delighted to have completed a new accessible changing facility on their premises to ensure their visitors are well-catered for. Due to a lack of space, the new facility is not classed as an official 'Changing Places' unit as the team involved had to improvise with the space they had, but it has vastly improved the accessibility for visitors to the centre. The work involved knocking two individual toilets into one room to create a large accessible toilet and changing room which has enough space for wheelchair users and is suitable for centre visitors with varying levels of mobility and independence. The project was overseen by volunteer Audrey Arthur, the charity's Riders, Parents and Carers Representative, and Morven McLelland who is a qualified occupational therapist and also a member of the centre's board of trustees.

As space within the new unit was at a premium, Morven undertook in-depth research to ensure the equipment they installed would be best suited to all involved. As a charity, the centre has to ensure every item it purchases offers value for money while also meeting the needs of its users, and Morven's input was invaluable with her knowledge gained from many years as an OT. Morven looked at various changing benches, hoists and basins and concluded that the Ropox Swing Wash Basin was the perfect solution as it offered the flexibility they

needed as it is extremely compact, well designed and manoeuvrable, while also offering excellent value for money.

"I was delighted to be part of this project which was volunteer-led. I was able to offer insights into the essential equipment we needed to make this space as accessible as possible including the swing washbasin which provides greater accessibility for those people using wheelchairs. As an OT it is great to see companies such as Ropox producing products which are thoughtfully designed to improve people's independence and dignity for use in a centre such as ours, yet would also blend into a bathroom in a domestic home," said Morven.



Due to the current pandemic, users have not yet been able to use the new facility but staff and volunteers have all been impressed. In addition to the Ropox Swing Wash Basin, the unit also features a ceiling track H hoist system which provides full coverage of the room and enables users to transfer to the height-adjustable bench and accessible toilet with dignity and ease.

The unique ergonomic design of the height adjustable Swing Wash Basin from Ropox ensures it will fit in even the smallest of rooms. The 180° swing allows people with reduced mobility to position the washbasin in front of the toilet so they can wash their hands while seated as opposed to having to move across the room to reach a basin. There is also plenty of room under the basin for a wheelchair making it ideal for wheelchair users.

The Swing Wash Basin is available with or without manual height adjustment and depending on the model, the range of adjustment is 15cm for models without a dock-in and 20cm for models with a dock-in, this allows the user or their carer to set the height at the optimum level. The rotation and swing of the basin are not affected by which model is installed.

As with all Ropox equipment, the Swing Wash Basin has been designed to look equally at home in a domestic or care setting while still meeting the needs of the individual and their carer.

Muirfield Riding Therapy, a member group of Riding for the Disabled UK, (Scottish Charity ref SC028674), has been providing life-changing therapeutic riding, for free, for people of all ages with various disabilities from East Lothian and Midlothian since 1989. This year it is also celebrating the 10th anniversary of its partnership with NHS Lothian, The Children's Therapeutic Riding Service. This service provides hippotherapy, a specialist form of physiotherapy, on horseback and was the first, and is still the largest service of its kind in Scotland. The centre is fully self-funded, and volunteer-led, with around 200 volunteers on its books, and can accommodate 120 riders each week. Visit muirfieldridingtherapy.org.uk to find out more.

For more information on the full range of accessible bathroom and kitchen solutions available from Ropox visit **ropox.com** call **07444 577609** or email **ms@ropox.com**.

