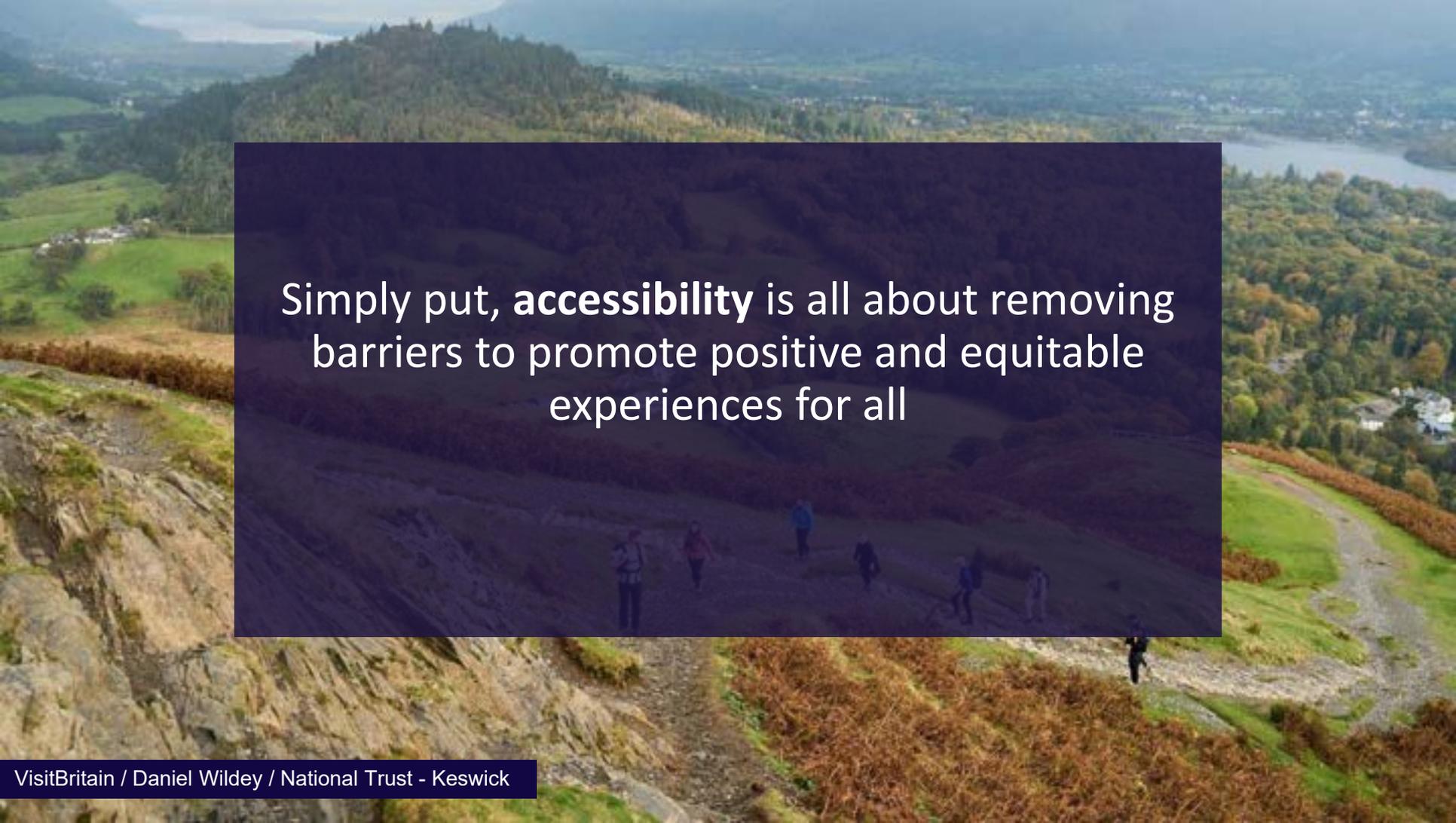


Accessibility – Don't fear what you don't know

Ross Calladine, Accessibility and Inclusion Lead, VisitEngland & Government-appointed Disability & Access Ambassador for Tourism 10.02.26



VisitEngland

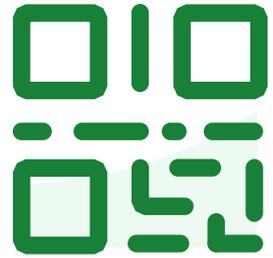


Simply put, **accessibility** is all about removing barriers to promote positive and equitable experiences for all

The background image shows a museum interior. A large white aircraft with a blue and red roundel is suspended from the ceiling. Below it, a person in a wheelchair is visible on a balcony with a glass railing. The scene is lit with warm indoor lights. A red semi-transparent box is overlaid on the center of the image, containing white text.

“Tourism experiences that can be enjoyed by people with physical, sensory and cognitive impairments and others with accessibility requirements”

Do not edit
How to change the
design



Join at slido.com
#???????

① The Slido app must be installed on every computer you're presenting from

slido



In one or two words, what do you feel or think about accessibility in your organisation?

Who has accessibility requirements?

People with:

Physical or mobility impairment

Sight loss

Temporary impairment

e.g. due to operation, broken limb

Hearing loss and
D/deaf people

Learning difficulty or intellectual disability

Families with young children

Dementia

Mental health
condition

Older people

Social/communication impairment/ neurodivergent people
e.g. an Autistic Spectrum condition

3G families

People with dietary requirements

Long-term illness/health condition

And others!

The Accessible Tourist Profile

Influenced

Sceptical

Anxious

Impacted

Loyal



The reality for many

“I have researched accommodation and chosen ones saying they are wheelchair accessible, only to find that in the majority of cases there have been major access problems, (...) many times I have had to come away early, as it is too tiring to manage the barriers.”

“People take for granted nipping on holiday, but for those with access needs such a lot of thought has to go into it.”

“The lack of access has a daily impact on us. It has made us nervous to try new places and leads to frustration and upset”



What issues can people with accessibility requirements face when they're trying to enjoy tourism and hospitality venues?

Removing barriers

“I couldn’t get into the venue”

“I couldn’t participate”

“No suitable accessible toilet”

“Lack of appropriate parking”

“I couldn’t get around the venue”

“There were no alternative formats”

“Lack of accessible transport to venue”

“The environment made me uncomfortable”

“The facilities weren’t what I expected”

“Staff attitudes”

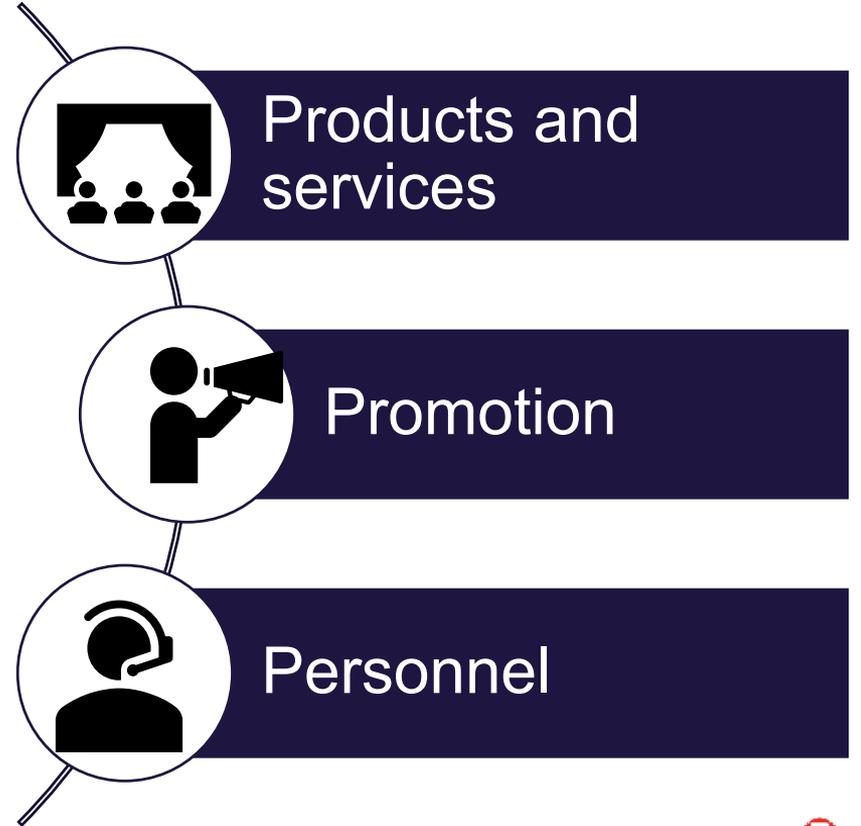
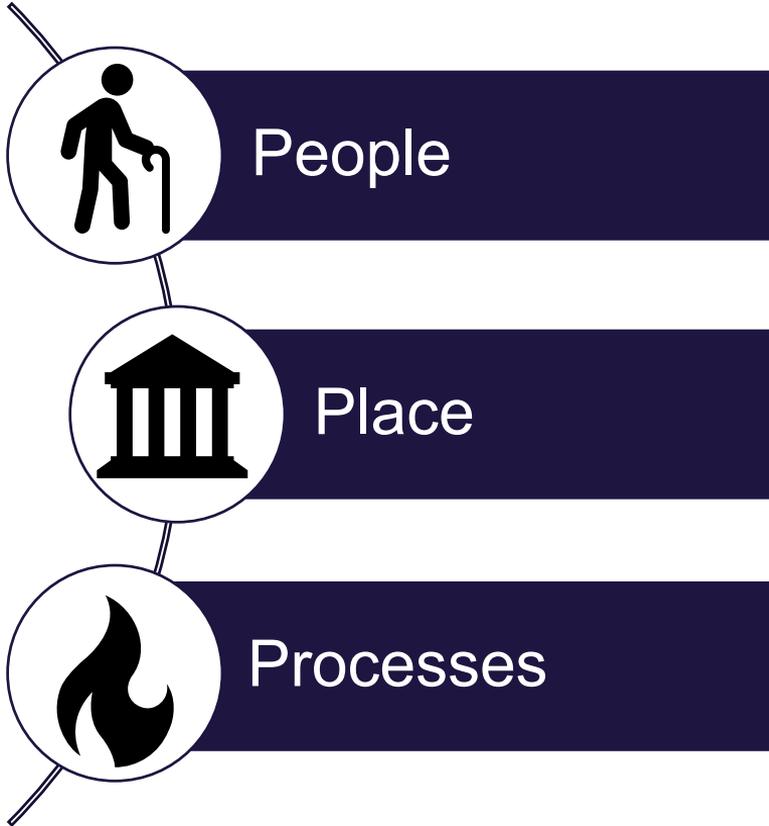
“Inaccessible website”

“Lack of access information”

What's your motivation?



Focus on The 6 Ps



Accessibility: Your essential guidance



Accessible and Inclusive Tourism Toolkit for Businesses



Action
Checklists



Top 20 Tips



Technical
Guidance



Disability Concessions and pricing incentives

New guidance

- **Consider two principal concession types** – Disabled customer discounts and essential companion concessions
- **Present pricing clearly and warmly** – Make concession information easy to find on your website
- **Handle requests for evidence sensitively** – Consider initiatives like The Access Card, which streamlines verification for both businesses and customers.
- **Never charge extra for accessibility** – This could be discrimination under the Equality Act 2010.

[Section 6: Marketing your accessibility | VisitBritain.org](#)



Top Tips for businesses

- Train all staff in disability awareness and ensure they are familiar with accessible facilities, services, equipment and evacuation procedures
- Always welcome assistance dogs
- Provide a hearing loop and test it regularly
- Ensure your website meets accessibility standards and all written communications with customers are available in accessible formats
- Provide accessible ways for disabled customers to give feedback, acting and responding promptly to comments
- Provide sufficient accessible parking spaces and drop-off areas
- Include images of disabled people in your marketing
- Appoint an Accessibility Champion and encourage accessibility ambassadors
- Provide a step-free entrance.
- Provide accessible toilets and ideally a Changing Places facility
- Provide an 'Access for All' section on your website
- Provide a detailed and accurate Accessibility Guide to promote your accessibility.



An accessible ensuite bathroom at Inn on the Moor

The information barrier (1)

95%



95% **check accessibility** in advance of going to a new place.

90%



90% said it was important or extremely important to **know about accessibility before visiting a place for the first time.**

87%



87% **expect accessibility information** to be on a venue's website.

The information barrier (2)

77%



77% had not visited a venue because they **couldn't find out about accessibility.**

73%



73% said **they'd had to leave a venue as it wasn't accessible to them.** The top cause was that the facilities people had been told were there, weren't (75%).

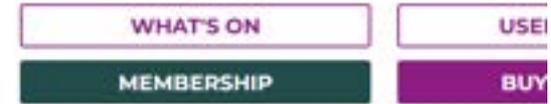
96%



96% said having **accessibility information available in advance** would make them more likely to visit somewhere.

Provide an 'Access for All' section on your website

- Clearly signpost from homepage, don't hide in footer.
- All access information in one place.
- Avoid using 'disabled/disability/special needs' in title.
- Don't state you are 'fully accessible'.
- Include photos/video of disabled people.
- Include link to Accessibility Guide.



WHAT'S ON

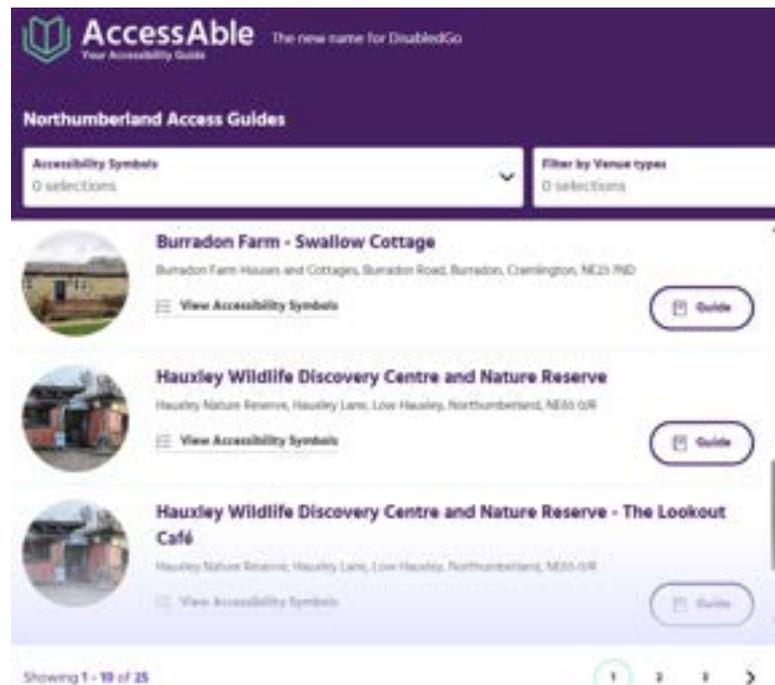
EVENTS CALENDAR
LILIDOREI

PLAN YOUR VISIT

OPENING TIMES AND PRICES
HOW TO FIND US
WHAT'S IN THE GARDEN
WAYS TO SAVE AT THE ALWICK GARDEN
ACCESSIBILITY
RECOMMENDED
ACCOMMODATION
FAQ'S
ALWICK TOWN

Get an AccessAble Detailed Access Guide

- Describes all areas of a venue
 - 100s of pieces of accessibility information,
 - Includes measurements and photographs.
- Created by a professional access surveyor
- Removes the burden and responsibility of collecting information that can be technical
- Add link to guide on your website
- Published and searchable on AccessAble's website, used by around six million people a year
- Use the [AccessAble booking portal](#) – discounts available now! **Extra 20% for first 10 businesses**
- <https://visitnorthumberland.youraccessibilityguide.co.uk>



Seven secrets of inclusive hospitality



Be open



**Honour
autonomy**



**Build
understanding**



**Craft
connections**



**Reject
preconceptions**



Drive change



**Accommodate
differences**

voco® Manchester - City Centre (was Hotel Brooklyn)

Accessible facilities =
**£217,000 additional
revenue**
in its first full trading year





Pledge one specific action to take in the next 30 days



**“Fear of saying the wrong thing,
doing the wrong action, making a
mistake. I say let’s get brave. Let’s
act. Let’s get some things wrong.
Let’s make a positive difference to
disabled people and create an
inclusive world”**

Welcoming LGBTQIA+ Customers

- New e-learning course to help tourism businesses welcome LGBTQIA+ customers.
- Covers essential LGBTQIA+ terminology, practical tips, and proven strategies to welcome all.
- 1-hour self-paced, interactive course available for free.
- Register for an account on the VisitEngland Academy Learning Platform to access the course.
- Relevant for all tourism professionals.
- [Explore the course](https://visitenglandacademy.visitbritain.org/): visitenglandacademy.visitbritain.org/



English Tourism Week – 13 to 22 March 2026

English Tourism Week is an annual celebration of the tourism industry, showcasing its importance to local communities and economies. The theme this year's is '**Local Stories, National Growth — Celebrating English Tourism Week.**'

How can businesses get involved:

- invite their local MP to spend time with them onsite
- give them a role to play
- keep their destination informed on what they are doing
- put out on social media channels
- tag their MP, destination and us



#EnglishTourismWeek26

**Industry Toolkit
is available**



For practical guidance, case studies and top tips on Accessible & Inclusive Tourism visit:
visitengland.org/access; [@VisitEnglandBiz](https://twitter.com/VisitEnglandBiz)



Get in touch:

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[@RossCalladine](https://twitter.com/RossCalladine)

