



## Business Support Guides

# Action checklist for business events venues

Accessible and Inclusive Tourism Toolkit for Businesses

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# Want to make your business events venue more welcoming to everyone?

**The checklist below is designed to help you understand the practical changes you can make and to stay focused when it comes to your inclusivity journey. You don't have to action everything at once; the checklist has been designed to allow you to tick off tasks that have been completed and add notes relating to further actions you might wish to take, stakeholders you might like to engage with, or reminders on when to revisit an issue.**

Whilst every venue will have differing priorities and restrictions (such as historic infrastructure), each section of the checklist has some 'quick win' actions which are likely to be achievable in a short period of time at little or no cost. At the end of the document, there is an action planning template. You can complete this digitally by downloading the Microsoft Word version of this checklist.

Remember – accessibility is a journey with empathy at its heart. Listen to others, ask for help and don't let a desire for perfectionism halt that all-important progress.

This action checklist is aimed at event organisers who hire third party venues. If you also manage a physical business events venue, please also read the business events venue action checklist.

**For actions relating to a bar or restaurant, please see the separate food & beverage checklist.**

Please note: this action checklist is part of the [Accessible & Inclusive Tourism Toolkit for Businesses](#). It is strongly recommended that it is used in conjunction with the full guidance available in the main toolkit. [Top 20 tips](#) and [technical guidance for the built environment](#) are also available as downloadable documents.

## Insight and feedback

Action	Done	Notes
Quick win: Seek feedback from people with accessibility requirements, acting and responding promptly to comments.		
Working with Disabled people not just for Disabled people. Co-designing with the Disabled community is key to creating accessible, successful events.		
Invite Disabled people and accessibility professionals to visit your venue and give insight, feedback and recommendations. Lived experience is expertise. Pay Disabled experts for their work.		

## Pre-visit information

Action	Done	Notes
Quick win: Offer event organisers and attendees a choice of how to contact you (e.g. telephone, email or text message) and find out about the <a href="#">Relay UK</a> service used by D/deaf people and people with a speech disability.		
Quick win: Check information about your accessible facilities on third party websites and booking channels.		
Quick win: Ensure you inform attendees if any of your accessible facilities and services change or become unavailable between registration and their visit e.g. if a lift will be undergoing maintenance.		
Provide information about the solutions that you will provide and if there is no solution and that will make it impossible for some people to attend offer online solutions, live stream the event, or provide a video of key moments or learnings.		
Include information about the different accessibility features that will and will not be available. For example: There will be a loop system.		

## Your website

Action	Done	Notes
Quick win: Provide a detailed and accurate Accessibility Guide, with measurements, photos and videos of the venue.		
Provide an 'Accessibility' or 'Access for All' section, which is easy to locate in the main menu.		
Quick win: Publish the programme, event documents and practical details in advance, along with a phone number that can be used for both voice calls and text messages to support someone who is lost, late or has accessibility issues on arrival.		
Quick win: Provide information on accessible transport options to your/the event venue, including licensed taxis who are reliably known to accommodate wheelchair users and people with assistance dogs. Ensure any event shuttles can accommodate wheelchair users. If you have attendees coming from overseas, provide a link to airport accessibility information.		
Quick win: Include hotels and other type of accommodation that have accessible bedrooms in your accommodation directory. If you direct attendees to destination websites for this information, ensure information on accessible accommodation is available.		
Think about other local businesses that attendees may wish to visit and research their accessible facilities. You can also add information on the accessibility of local businesses to your website, or link to this information on local destination websites, with a particular focus on those that have step-free access and an accessible toilet.		
Provide a floorplan of the event space and layout.		
Clearly identify accessible spaces on the floor plan - toilets, lifts, quiet rooms and other available spaces.		
Ensure your website meets <a href="#">Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)</a> to enable all users to navigate easily.		
Use good colour contrast.		
Avoid flashing content like pop ups.		
Provide a video showcasing the accessibility facilities and services of the venue.		
Ensure all videos are captioned and consider providing audio description.		

## Your website continued

Action	Done	Notes
Quick win: Provide Alternative Text ( <u>Alt-text</u> ) for all images.		
Consider adding sign language translation. e.g. <u>Signly</u>		
Provide an accessibility statement to tell potential participants about your work on accessibility and your willingness to adapt the space to meet everyone's needs.		
Use clear, plain language and provide a simple and clear menu to ensure a seamless user experience.		

## Arrival

Action	Done	Notes
Quick win: Welcome attendees with trained assistance dogs. This is a legal requirement even if you have a 'no dogs/pets' policy.		
Provide sufficient accessible parking and a drop-off point. Provide clear signage to indicate that these spaces are reserved. If you don't have easily accessible parking, locate the nearest locations where someone can use their <u>Blue Badge</u> and share this information with attendees.		
Provide a well-lit and uncluttered area allowing ease of access to your entrance area, with different seating options for attendees.		
Ensure clear signage is provided at all key points, including to an accessible entrance if the main one does not have step-free access.		
Quick win: The availability of quiet spaces and sensory aids such as ear defenders, earplugs, fidget toys, and weighted blankets.		
Provide wheelchairs, mobility scooters and Trampers for loan, where appropriate. Link in with the closest <u>Shopmobility</u> service.		
Make sure the paths from the parking/ drop off area to the entrance are wide enough. Ensure that these routes are clear of obstacles and that the surface is even.		

## Customer service points

Action	Done	Notes
Quick win: Consider the impact of background music and refrain from playing music in areas where staff interact with attendees.		
Consider the BSL <a href="#">Sign Video</a> , Sign Solutions, Translate Live and ISL IRIS services which provide a live video link to British and Irish Sign Language Interpreters. For larger events consider an app that can link to accessibility software.		
Provide hearing loops at registration, conferences rooms and help desks, test they are working properly and provide signage where the loop is effective.		
Provide a lowered section to any service counter e.g. shop, reception, café, and ensure it is kept clutter-free.		
Provide portable payment options, such as a hand-held card machine that can be brought to an attendee if required. Make sure these payment devices are accessible, for example large buttons.		
Provide braille signage and tactile maps of the venue at key information points so that blind and low-vision people can navigate the space independently.		
Designate key staff to move around the space to assist participants if they need essential information and don't have easy access to a key information point.		
Provide information staff with an app or assistive technology that allows them to assist people with speech, sight or hearing disabilities.		
Establish quiet times at information points where distractions and noise are minimised.		
Where possible, provide a digital desk or kiosk where participants can access information independently.		

## Physical environment

Action	Done	Notes
Ensure evacuation routes are available for attendees with accessibility requirements and that these are clearly signed.		
Provide clear signage from the entrance to the event area, and key facilities such as toilets.		

## Physical environment continued

Action	Done	Notes
Quick win: Ensure water bowls are available to use, should assistance dog owners require them.		
Quick win: Identify a toilet and exercise area for assistance dogs, ideally within the grounds of the property or nearby, and provide a waste bin.		
Provide consistent levels of lighting throughout, especially at the entrance, in eating areas and toilets. This should be bright but not harsh, avoiding strobe lights.		
Quick win: Ensure paths are kept clear of obstacles, debris, moss, ice and fallen leaves and have firm, well-maintained surfaces. Ensure that any permanent features are securely fixed, e.g. statues.		
Quick win: Provide adequate space to move in between areas. Ensure wheelchair users are able to easily move between tables and displays.		
If you have steps or changes in level, install handrails to help those unsteady on their feet, and provide contrasting nosing strips on stairs for ease of identification.		
Provide ramp access to stages and speaker platforms.		
Avoid dark rugs and mats, as they can be perceived by attendees with dementia or sight loss as black holes, and avoid shiny or reflective flooring, bold patterns and stripes, as they can cause confusion.		
Avoid deep-pile carpets that may cause trips or make it difficult to manoeuvre for a wheelchair user.		
Ensure that doors or door frames contrast in colour to the adjacent wall and floor and that door handles contrast in colour to the door.		
Provide networking/drinks tables at different heights during breaks, so they can be used by those of shorter stature, standing and seated attendees. Remember to leave space for wheelchair users to access tables.		
Ensure all furniture can be moved to make space if necessary.		
Ensure seating and table arrangements do not obstruct wayfinding.		
Provide a selection of seating at regular intervals internally and externally. Whilst backrests are always recommended to provide support, a variety of seating types and materiality should be available, e.g. with and without armrests, low, high, firm, soft.		

**Physical environment** continued

Action	Done	Notes
Provide accessible seating for Disabled customers and their companions within auditoriums; ensure good sightlines. Add signage to indicate that these seats are reserved for accessible seating.		
If your venue has allocated seating, allow attendees to select their preferred location when booking. Provide information on the booking platform about the characteristics of each seating area (light, temperature, noise, space) so that attendees can ensure they choose a seat that is accessible to them.		
Install an infrared loop system in event rooms, cinema screens and theatres.		
Provide a quiet room equipped with soft furnishings, low lighting, and no music to offer a peaceful space for those needing a break from the event.		
Ensure lifts provide audible messages and have contrasting raised letters and numbers on the control panel. Ensure the lift is large enough for a wheelchair user and companion.		
Provide designated charging areas for power wheelchairs and mobility scooters.		
Consider using tactile floor marking tape to aid wayfinding.		

**Audio-visual**

Action	Done	Notes
Quick win: Inform attendees pre-event of any special effects such as flashing lights or photography, strobe lighting or sound effects, as they may affect people with epilepsy and tinnitus.		
Ensure that any audio is at a suitable sound level, with little echo.		
Ensure that microphones and lecterns are height-adjustable for those of shorter stature, seated and standing speakers.		
Quick win: Provide a roving microphone for questions. If this is not possible, ensure that presenters are briefed to repeat questions before answering.		

## Toilets

Action	Done	Notes
Provide accessible toilets and ideally a Changing Places facility. If this is not possible find out where the <u>nearest one</u> is and share this information with your attendees. Ensure the alternative changing facilities are step free access and wide enough to welcome wheelchair users.		
Quick win: Where an accessible toilet requires a key or code to gain access e.g. RADAR key, provide clear guidance on the door as to where a key or code can be obtained.		
Quick win: Ensure emergency pull-cords hang to the floor and are regularly tested – get a free red cord card from Euan’s Guide. Ensure that the light switch and door lock are in an accessible height.		
In accessible toilets, ensure that the transfer space next to the toilet is kept clear, the fire alarm includes a visual beacon and the facilities are never used as a storage space.		
Quick win: Provide support rails at urinals, toilets, washbasins and on the back of toilet doors, in line with built environment technical guidance.		
Quick win: Ensure any support rails contrast in colour to the wall and the toilet seat contrasts in colour to the toilet and floor to assist blind or partially sighted guests.		
To assist customers with dementia, make cubicle doors in toilets clearly visible with door handles, put a ‘way out’ sign on the toilet door, clearly label hot and cold taps and show how to use sensor taps, flushes and hand dryers.		
Ensure accessible toilet doors are easy to lock, paper towels are provided in addition to hand dryers, and a full-length mirror is available for use by both seated and standing users.		
Provide accessible baby changing facilities that are separate from your accessible toilet(s), where feasible.		

## Information on site

Action	Done	Notes
Provide clear signage at key decision points to and from facilities, including main entrances, toilets and customer service points. Consider large print, contrasting, pictorial and tactile signs.		
Consider using wayfinding and interpretation apps that support an inclusive experience for all attendees.		

**Information on site** continued

Action	Done	Notes
Include accessibility information on any general maps e.g. accessible routes, accessible toilets, lifts, accessible drop off and parking.		

**Food & beverage**

The following actions are specific to informal business event catering. For information on actions related to dedicated catering spaces or formal dining, such as gala dinners, see the separate Food & beverage business action checklist.

Action	Done	Notes
Provide for different dietary requirements e.g. dairy-free, gluten-free, lactose-free, nut-free and make it clear in your food labelling whether there is a risk of cross-contamination.		
Quick win: Provide menus and ensure waiting staff are briefed on the types of food being served and can accurately describe them to attendees, including assistance with reading dietary information.		
Quick win: Offer table service.		
Ensure all food and beverage options, including drink stations, can be accessed by wheelchair users and those of shorter stature. If this is not possible, ensure staff are available to assist at all times.		
Ensure crockery contrasts with the table linen or surface e.g. avoid using white crockery, white linen and clear glasses all together.		
Quick win: Provide easy-grip cutlery, beakers and straws on request. Include this information in advance and on the event information and menus.		

**Marketing**

Action	Done	Notes
Quick win: Review your marketing channels to ensure you are reaching a wide range of Disabled people.		
Quick win: Regularly promote your accessible facilities and services through your communication channels, including social media.		
Undertake a photoshoot featuring Disabled people and use the images in your marketing. Pay them for their time.		

## Marketing continued

Action	Done	Notes
Consider inviting Disabled social media influencers to your business.		
Apply for accessibility awards.		

## You and your team

Action	Done	Notes
Train all staff in disability awareness and ensure they are familiar with all accessible facilities, assistive technology, services, equipment and evacuation procedures.		
Quick win: Give all staff a copy of your Accessibility Guide so they can see at a glance the facilities and services available.		
Quick win: Ensure staff wear name badges and make it clear if they can support people affected by dementia – e.g. by wearing the <a href="#">Dementia Friend badge</a> .		
Provide BSL / ISL Level 1 training to customer service staff members. Train staff on how to use <a href="#">Sign Video</a> .		
Quick win: Provide staff with tips and guidance on inclusive language use.		
Quick win: Ensure relevant staff are trained in the use of the <a href="#">Relay UK</a> telephone service and are confident to use it.		
Quick win: Identify a member of staff to be an Accessibility Champion and encourage others to be ambassadors for accessibility.		
Quick win: Regularly discuss workplace adjustments with your team.		
Quick win: Ensure Disabled staff members have a personal evacuation plan.		
Arrange for people with lived experience of disability to provide awareness sessions with staff. Lived experience is expertise. Pay Disabled experts for their work.		
Provide an accessible staff room and quiet space for employees.		

## Hiring staff

Action	Done	Notes
Write accessible and inclusive job descriptions: Use plain language, focus on life skills rather than academic achievements, provide information about accessibility in the workplace, provide information about job benefits.		
Include a disability inclusion statement in your job descriptions.		
Quick win: Post job adverts on inclusive websites, such as EvenBreak.		
Quick win: Check that your job adverts and job descriptions are accessible and inclusive. For example, compatible with screen readers.		
Quick win: Encourage applications from Disabled people.		
Provide job application documents in alternative formats.		
Quick win: Provide several ways in which applicants can contact you.		
Ensure interview venues and/or software is accessible; ask candidates what provisions they require.		
Ensure roles within your business are accessible to Disabled people; this includes leadership roles.		
For the interview process, provide interview questions and agendas in advance.		
For the interview assessment process, make sure you have a diverse panel, that decisions are made based on interview scores, and that hiring managers are trained in disability bias.		
For more information on recruitment of Disabled people see <a href="#">module 7</a> of the toolkit.		

