Accessible and Inclusive Tourism

Accessible Tourism or Inclusive Tourism, as it's also known as, is the term used to describe tourism that serves the needs of a full range of consumers.  The Inclusive Tourism market refers to anymore who has a specific access requirement such as people with hearing loss, visual or mental impairment, learning differences, wheelchair users, older people and families with young children. Accessibility is not only about human rights - it is a business opportunity for destinations and companies to embrace all visitors and enhance their revenues.

1 in 5 people in the UK have an impairment, which may affect their choice to stay or visit. 72% of disabled customers are more likely to visit new places if they feel welcomed by staff or venues appears to care about accessibility. Improving your accessibility benefits all customers and does not always require major or expensive changes.

**Benefits of inclusive tourism**

* People with health conditions and impairments tend to take longer holiday breaks than average and therefore tend to spend more money per trip
* Disabled travellers and senior travellers spend significantly more when they go on holiday than other market groups
* Inclusive businesses have higher occupancy rates and a more loyal customer base who is keen to recommend them to their family and friends
* Becoming more inclusive can make life easier for a wide range of customers. Think of people with hearing loss, mental or visual impairments, wheelchair users, senior travellers or families with young children
* The market is set to increase as the UK’s population ages and the benefits for businesses and destinations catering for inclusive tourism are growing
* 86% of senior travellers make a return visit if their needs are met
* It’s a human right!

**Important: As a service provider you have a duty under the Equality Act 2010 to make reasonable adjustments to ensure your business or service is as accessible as it can be. Equality Act 2010: guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)**

Fife already has some fantastic accessible venues, accommodation and attractions but there is always more we can do to make sure everyone can experience our area to the full.

To find out more about accessible locations and venues in Fife, head to our visitor facing page: [Accessibility guide to Fife - Welcome to Fife - Accessibility guide to Fife](https://www.welcometofife.com/accessibility-guide)

Here are some great resources for learning more about accessible and inclusive tourism:

* [Inclusive Tourism Toolkit](https://www.visitscotland.org/supporting-your-business/marketing/toolkits/accessible-inclusive-tourism)
* [Welcoming autistic people: A guide for tourism venues](https://www.visitbritain.org/sites/default/files/vb-corporate/business-hub/resources/autism_guide_for_tourism_venues_2018.pdf)
* [Top 10 tips on Inclusive tourism](https://www.visitbritain.org/sites/default/files/vb-corporate/business-hub/resources/top_10_tips_inclusive_tourism.pdf)
* [Listen Up! Tips and advice to help you welcome customers with hearing loss](https://www.visitbritain.org/sites/default/files/vb-corporate/business-hub/resources/listenup.pdf)
* [Dementia-friendly tourism - A practical guide for businesses](https://www.visitbritain.org/sites/default/files/vb-corporate/business-hub/resources/dementia_friendly_guide_for_tourism_businesses_0.pdf)
* [Euans Guide](http://euansguide.com)

On our social channels, we use the hashtag #AccessibleFife

**Create an Accessibility Guide**

Access surveys consistently show that a lack of published accessibility information is one of the top barriers. This is true for both disabled people and others with specific access needs. When planning a trip, 81% of disabled people will check a business’ website before visiting. But 73% have found information on a venue’s website to be misleading, confusing, or inaccurate.

56% of visitors think that if a venue doesn’t advertise their accessible facilities, it’s because they don’t have any.

An Accessibility Guide can help you to communicate your facilities and services to disabled people and other customers who want specific accessibility information, such as older travellers and families with young children.

Detailing the accessibility of your venue in an Accessibility Guide will enable these people, their family and friends to make informed decisions as to where to stay and visit in view of their individual requirements.

VisitScotland and VisitEngland have developed <accessibilityguides.org>. This website allows you to work through a tailored questionnaire and create your own guide. It’s free, quick and easy to use, and will enable you to provide all the information your customers need to prepare their visit.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e7Vcp57gnXA>

A short film (3:16) about the importance of Accessibility Guides

**Access to Employment**

Employers:

Encouraging job applications from disabled people is good for business. It can help increase the number of high-quality applicants and help fill gaps created by the hospitality recruitment crisis. You can create a workforce that reflects your diverse range of customers and bring additional skills and experience to your business.

The costs of making reasonable adjustments to accommodate disabled employees are often low. The benefits of retaining an experienced, skilled employee who has acquired an impairment are usually greater than recruiting and training new staff. It is also beneficial for the individual.

Fife Council supports Fife employers to provide successful and meaningful employment opportunities for people with disabilities and health issues.

They offer employers:

* Information on current diversity and equality legislation
* Disability Awareness Training for staff to increase confidence when dealing with disabled colleagues and customers
* Support for employees who are struggling to stay in work due to disability or health issues
* Help to become a Disability Confident employer

Employees:

If you have a disability or health condition and are interested in finding a job, Supported Employment Service (SES) can help you through the Positive Pathways programme.  They can create a Vocational Profile for you, where you are, your skills, career goals and once you are in work, they will make sure you get all the help and support you need to succeed in the job. You can find out more here:

[Positive Pathways](https://www.fife.gov.uk/kb/docs/articles/jobs-and-training2/supported-employment)

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