

# Accessibility & education: Knowledge transfer in England

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



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# About me

- Accessibility and Inclusion Lead at VisitEngland.
- Developing initiatives that help tourism businesses and destinations tap into the high value, growing accessible tourism market.
- Led the development of best-in-class accessibility toolkits for tourism businesses and destinations.
- Convenes England's Inclusive Tourism Action Group comprising leading accessible tourism stakeholders.
- Regularly speaker at national and international accessibility industry events.
- Appointed Disability and Access Ambassador for Tourism by the UK Government in January 2022.



# About the British Tourist Authority

A non-departmental public body funded by the UK Government's Department for Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS)

- Our purpose is to drive a thriving tourism industry, creating economic prosperity across Britain.
- **VisitBritain:** Promoting Britain as a destination internationally to drive growth in international leisure and business tourism.
- **VisitEngland:** Leading and enabling a sustainable and resilient visitor economy in England by supporting the English tourism industry and encouraging domestic trips.
- A key role in leading the industry towards achieving the Government ambition for the UK to become the most accessible tourism destination in Europe.



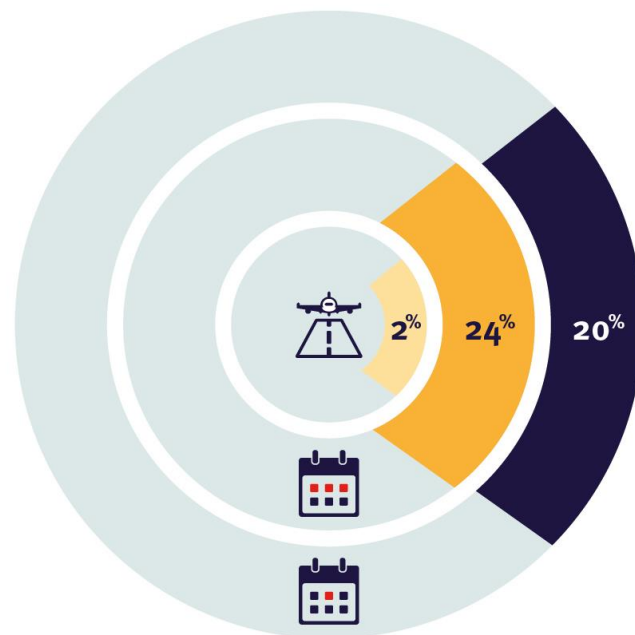
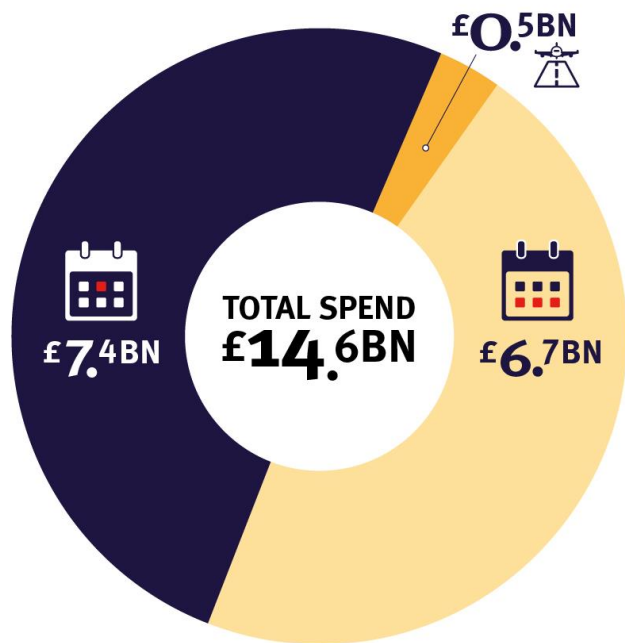
## Background and Context – Key statistics

- **1 in 6 of the world's population (1 in 4 of the UK population) is disabled** (1.3 billion/16 million people), which may affect where they choose to stay or visit.
- **England Tourism Purple Pound = £14.6 billion** - Total annual expenditure generated in England by those with an impairment or those travelling within a group where a member has an impairment.
- **45%** of English people who identify as disabled did not take a holiday in England in the last 12 months (compared to 35% of non-disabled people).
- **Only 2%** of all inbound trips to England in 2018 were taken by those with an impairment and their travelling companions.



# The business case

England trips taken by those with an impairment and their travelling companions



# New Accessible & Inclusive Tourism Toolkits

Equipping the visitor economy with the resources and knowledge they require to deliver accessible experiences

- Consolidate and build on existing guidance
- Form best-in-class holistic toolkits with practical tips and real-life case studies
- Help to develop destinations, venues and experiences that people with a wide range of accessibility requirements can enjoy
- Host on the Business Advice Hub, part of the VisitEngland/VisitBritain industry website
- To follow: Learning modules for businesses and destinations



# Previous accessibility guidance

## Welcoming autistic people A guide for tourism venues



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## Top 10 tips on inclusive tourism

## Take the lead

A guide to welcoming customers with assistance dogs



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Scotland

## Listen Up!

Tips and advice to help you welcome customers with hearing loss

ACTION ON HEARING LOSS

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## One step ahead

A STANDARD TO HELP YOU ACCOMMODATE OLDER AND LESS MOBILE GUESTS



## Dementia-friendly tourism

A practical guide for businesses

## National Accessible Scheme

For Serviced, Self-Catering, Hostel and Campus Accommodation



## Winning More Visitors

A guide for destination managers on providing Access Information on destination websites

## Destinations for All

A guide to creating accessible destinations



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# Business Toolkit

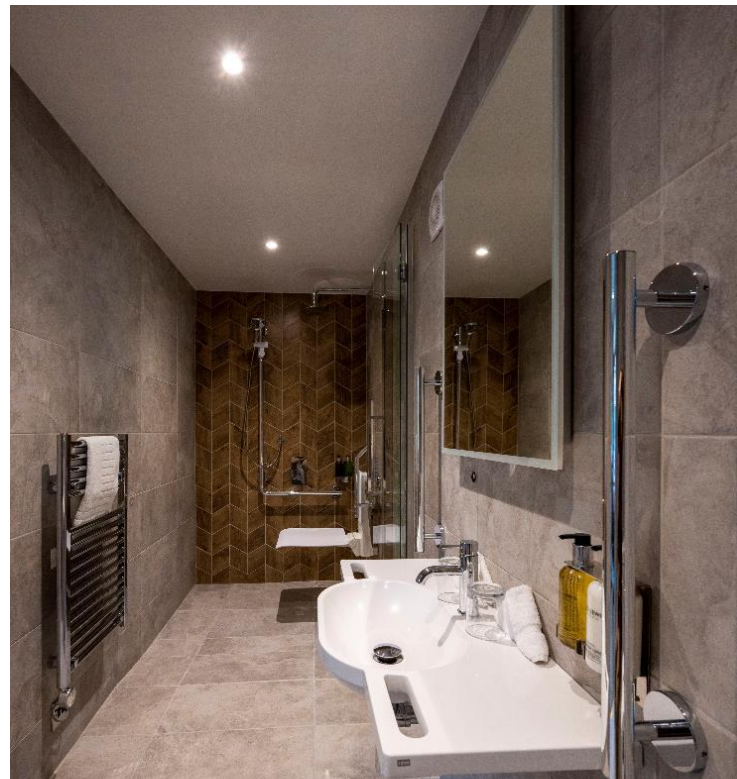
- **Complete** - guidance on improving accessibility across the key areas of Customer, Place, Information and Employment
- **Practical** - real-life case studies, top 20 tips, actionable checklists and technical guidance for the built environment
- **Co-produced** - over 30 charities, trade associations and independent assessors co-produced the content
- **Free** - available to all on the Business Advice Hub, [www.visitengland.org/access](https://www.visitengland.org/access)
- **Ongoing updates** - a live resource that will be updated regularly
- Launched 30th Nov. ahead of International Day of People with Disabilities 2023





# Know your audience and tackle misconceptions

- Largely micro, small and medium-sized businesses
- Time poor, busy working in the business not on the business
- Limited budget and competing priorities
- Fear of getting it wrong
- Accessibility = wheelchair users
- “Changes are expensive”
- Inclusive rather than exclusive spaces
- Design-led rather than medical environments



An accessible ensuite bathroom at Inn on the Moor

# Key topics

Why do this?

Learning from other businesses

Removing barriers

Internal culture

Inclusive recruitment and employment

Lived experience engagement

Knowing your customers

What is accessibility?

Marketing accessibility

An inclusive welcome

Providing accessibility information

Accessibility audit

Progress rather than perfection

# Toolkit structure

## Main Toolkit

Holistic guidance  
with real-life case  
studies

## Action Checklists

Downloadable  
business-specific  
actionable checklists  
to plan and prioritise  
improvements

## Top 20 Tips

Downloadable  
business-specific top  
tips

## Technical Guidance

Built environment  
guidance for  
renovations,  
conversions, new  
builds



# Driving engagement

- Driving advocacy
- Launch event with key stakeholders
- Webinars with trade associations, quality scheme assessors
- Podcasts
- Presentations at tourism conferences
- Paid advertisement on social media
- Communications toolkit and promotional business cards for partners
- In the top 10 most visited pages across the whole of the industry website.

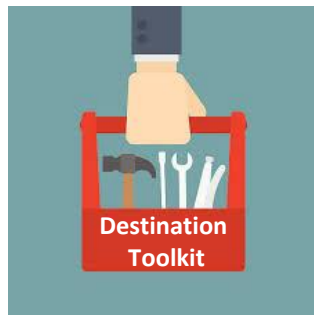




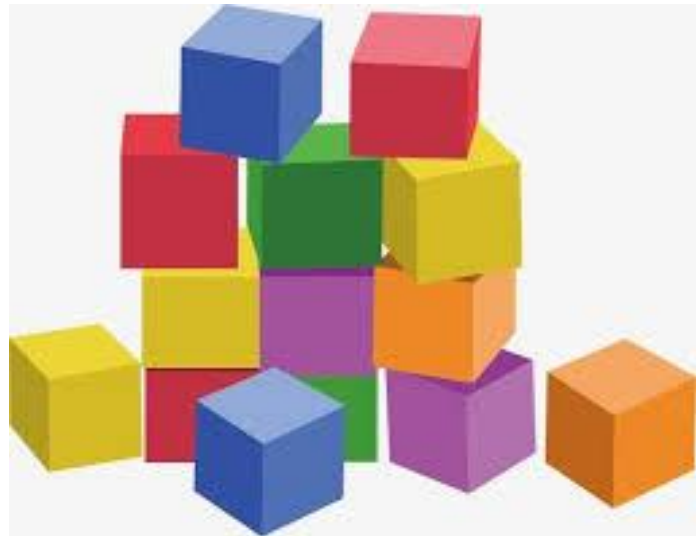
# Destination Toolkit

- **Complete** - foundation 'building blocks' and 'Kick-start' and 'Enhanced' accessible destination development programmes
- **Practical** – a range of downloadable tools and resources to help action the guidance
- **Co-produced** – steering group of 8 destination access champions provided input
- **Free** – available to all destinations in England accredited as Local Visitor Economy Partnerships
- **Ongoing updates** - a live resource that will be updated regularly
- Launched 28 February 2024

**Access &  
Inclusion UK**



# Foundation: The Building Blocks



Learning from  
other  
destinations

Leadership  
& culture change

Strategy & Policy

Supporting your  
businesses

Why do  
this?

Working with  
stakeholders

Celebrating success

Providing  
Accessibility  
Information

Destination  
Audit

Funding

[visitengland.org/access](https://visitengland.org/access)

@VisitEnglandBiz @RossCalladine

Ross.Calladine@visitengland.org