

# Accessibility Guides launched by national tourism bodies

If you have access requirements then you are much less likely to go to new places. VisitScotland and VisitEngland are teaming up to put a stop to that, while helping businesses get into Accessible Tourism.

The national tourism organisations have launched a new, free to use website for the easy production and publication of Accessibility Guides. An Accessibility Guide is produced by tourism operators to provide potential visitors with important accessibility information about their venue and service.



Photo courtesy of Euan's Guide

On the website you will find ways of getting visitor information in a user-friendly format. This will make it easier for businesses to explain what they offer as well as allowing disabled customers, their friends and families to compare venues before they visit.

Research shows that one in five people in the UK have access requirements. This includes not only wheelchair users, but also people with hearing loss, visual impairments, older people, families with young children and many more. In 2015, £12 billion was spent in England, and £1.3 billion in Scotland, on trips where a member of the party had an impairment. This includes day trips, domestic overnight trips and inbound trips.

A survey by [Euan's Guide](#) found that 54 per cent of people with access requirements avoid going to new places if they can't find information about accessibility. It is therefore considered imperative that businesses cater for this market by providing up front, essential information about their venue's

accessibility.

As part of the Equality Act 2010, a service provider has a duty to make reasonable adjustments to ensure disabled people are not put at a substantial disadvantage compared to those who are not disabled.

VisitEngland and VisitScotland's Accessible Tourism programmes have been supported by the UK and Scottish governments respectively. By working in partnership, the organisations have ensured they bring a unified approach creating consistency for disabled visitors.

**Malcolm Roughead, Chief Executive at VisitScotland said:**

"It is our aim to make tourism inclusive and accessible for all, so that every single person can benefit from all that Scotland has to offer. It also represents a huge commercial opportunity for the country with accessible tourism spend valued at £1.3bn. A report released by Business Disability Forum found that 75 per cent of disabled people and their families have walked away from a service provider at a cost of £1.8 billion to UK businesses every month as a result of poor disability awareness.\*

"Our new website, created in partnership with VisitEngland, will help businesses produce informative guides in a user-friendly format, that will promote inclusion and enable all our customers to have the opportunity to achieve, to have fun, to live life in the same way as anybody else." "This is a marvellous initiative that recognises the need for disabled people to be able to have a holiday and rely on accessible and inclusive tourist infrastructures.

"This successful partnership between VisitScotland and VisitEngland will allow even more people to make an informed choice about access to holiday facilities, enabling them to explore more of our countryside and some of Scotland's most iconic attractions."

**Fiona Hyslop, Cabinet Secretary for Culture, Tourism and External Affairs, said:** “This is a marvellous initiative that recognises the need for disabled people to be able to have a holiday and rely on accessible and inclusive tourist infrastructures.

“This successful partnership between VisitScotland and VisitEngland will allow even more people to make an informed choice about access to holiday facilities, enabling them to explore more of our countryside and some of Scotland’s most iconic attractions.”

To view the new website go to [www.accessibilityguides.org](http://www.accessibilityguides.org)

To find out more about Accessible Tourism [CLICK HERE.](#)