**The Access Survey 2017**

**Introduction**

In the autumn of 2017, we launched The Access Survey 2017 to find out what disabled people think about accessibility in public places. The survey was created for anybody who has ever had to consider disabled access before going somewhere, whether that be a cafe, museum, hotel or anywhere else. The responses revealed the good and the bad situations that arise when visiting places as a disabled person.

While many of the responses suggested areas for improvement, there were an encouraging number of people sharing their experiences of excellent accessibility.

We hope that the findings of this survey will help to raise awareness of the importance of accessibility and disabled access information. Thank you to everybody who took part in The Access Survey 2017!

Euan and the team

**Key Findings**

95% try to find disabled access information about somewhere before visiting for the first time.

92% when thinking about accessibility, say that they do not feel very confident about visiting new places.

83% have experienced a disappointing trip or had to change plans last minute because of poor accessibility.

**We asked:**

**Thinking about accessibility, on a scale of 0 to 10 (where 0 is not confident and 10 is very confident) how confident are you about visiting new places?**

Zero

5%

One

9%

Two

9%

Three

17%

Four

16%

Five

14%

Six

11%

Seven

10%

Eight

5%

Nine

0.7%

Ten

2%

**When visiting a new place, do you try to find disabled access information about it beforehand?**

Yes

95%

No

5%

**If you have used a venue’s website to check disabled access before visiting, have you ever found the information to be misleading, confusing or inaccurate?**

Yes

86%

No

14%

**Have you ever experienced a disappointing trip or had to change your plans last minute because of poor accessibility?**

Yes

83%

No

17%

**How do you find information about disabled access before visiting somewhere?**

I contact the venue directly

59%

I check their website

85%

I ask friends, community groups or other people

33%

I use Euan’s Guide

31%

I search the internet

53%

**What makes places difficult to access?**

Nowhere to park

46%

Can’t get into the venue e.g. no automatic doors, lack of ramp

61%

Can’t get around the venue e.g. narrow corridors, poor layout

69%

No suitable accessible toilet

53%

No suitable alternative formats

11%

Facilities aren’t as expected e.g. lack of hoist, faulty equipment, broken lift

40%

Uncomfortable environment e.g. too loud or overstimulating

22%

No welcome or assistance offered

23%

Staff unsure how to work equipment e.g. portable ramps or hearing loops

28%

**I am more likely to visit somewhere new if…**

I can find relevant access information about the venue

86%

I feel welcomed by staff or the venue appears to care about accessibility

72%

It has been recommended to me by someone with similar requirements

67%

I can see pictures and read what others have said beforehand

70%

**If a venue has not shared its disabled access information I…**

Avoid going because I assume it is inaccessible

47%

Phone or email the venue to check accessibility

63%

Check Euan’s Guide to see if it has been reviewed

28%

Take a chance and go anyway

16%

**When somewhere has good accessibility I…**

Tell others about it

83%

Make a return visit

86%

Review it on Euan’s Guide

27%

Share it on social media

49%

**How likely are you to share your experiences of disabled access with others? Answer on a scale of 0 to 10 (where 0 is not likely and 10 is very likely).**

Zero

0.3%

One

0.4%

Two

0.5%

Three

1%

Four

1%

Five

7%

Six

6%

Seven

15%

Eight

19%

Nine

14%

Ten

35%

**How do different places compare?**

Pubs & bars

66% say generally poor accessibility

34% say generally good accessibility

Cafes & restaurants

50% say generally poor accessibility

50% say generally good accessibility

Shops

53% say generally poor accessibility

47% say generally good accessibility

Museums & galleries

19% say generally poor accessibility

81% say generally good accessibility

Historic places

71% say generally poor accessibility

29% say generally good accessibility

Cinemas & theatres

31% say generally poor accessibility

69% say generally good accessibility

Music venues

39% say generally poor accessibility

61% say generally good accessibility

Hotels

42% say generally poor accessibility

58% say generally good accessibility

Sport venues

39% say generally poor accessibility

61% say generally good accessibility

Transport hubs

51% say generally poor accessibility

49% say generally good accessibility

Outdoor

59% say generally poor accessibility

41% say generally good accessibility

Healthcare

22% say generally poor accessibility

78% say generally good accessibility

Public & council buildings

45% say generally poor accessibility

55% say generally good accessibility

**Have opinions changed?**

* More people think access in museums in generally good (81%) compared to 2016 (57%) and 2015 (57%).
* Pubs are viewed as generally more accessible in 2017 (34%) than in 2016 (12%) and 2015 (11%).
* Cafes and restaurants are improving, but opinions are more divided than in previous years.
* Opinions are most divided about transport, hotels and music venues.
* Consistency is lacking between venues, and this makes it difficult for disabled people to know what to expect when visiting somewhere new for the first time.

**Around the country**

* Participants in Northern Ireland are more likely to research somewhere’s accessibility before visiting (however there was a small sample size for Northern Ireland).
* People in Scotland are more likely to share their experiences of disabled access with others.
* Staff welcome was more important to participants in England than elsewhere in the UK.
* Confidence about visiting new places is lowest in Wales when thinking about accessibility.

**You also told us…**

* “My main issue is that disabled toilets are often full of junk and sometimes people have to be moved to allow access to the toilet. It’s embarrassing and makes you feel like a second class citizen.”
* “Websites which don’t include information about accessibility make me assume they are inaccessible.”
* “I live in a small village and most of the local pubs and restaurants are not accessible.”
* “Even if access is not great, the places we return to are the ones that listen and try to improve things.”
* “Museums are leading the way we find, followed by theatres and cinemas.”
* “Biggest obstacle is heavy doors on the outside or inside of buildings - even in an otherwise accessible venue.”
* “Even when there are disabled parking spaces, the venue often doesn’t understand what is needed.”
* “My local nature parks used to be accessible, but they’ve changed some of the gates and now I can’t get access.”
* “I think that generally things are improving for disabled people. There is still a long way to go but it is getting better. We are heading in the right direction.”
* “I’m autistic, so it really helps me to see photos, floor plans, detailed information and reviews of places before I go there.”
* “Places need to realise that accessibility is far more than just ramps and lifts and accessible toilets. Those things can be great, but a place can still be completely inaccessible to me due to lighting, sound, the expectation for quiet or silence, different formats not being adequate.”

**You also told us…**

* Euan’s Guide is the disabled access review website.
* Reviews are written by disabled people, their families, friends and carers.
* The site was founded by Euan MacDonald MBE and his sister Kiki.
* Euan is a powerchair user and wanted to hear from other disabled people about accessible places to go.
* The site went live in November 2013 and now has over 6,000 disabled access reviews and listings for places in the UK and beyond.
* Euan’s Guide is endorsed by Professor Stephen Hawking and JK Rowling.

The Access Survey 2017 was carried out by Euan’s Guide and Disabled Access Day between October and December 2017. A total of 712 disabled people, their families and friends shared their opinions in this survey.

Euan’s Guide also published a report into accessible toilets in 2017. Read it at [www.euansguide.com/toilet-survey](http://www.euansguide.com/toilet-survey).

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