



# The Access Survey

2019

GUIDE  
EVAN'S

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**Euan's Guide** makes it easier for disabled people to find great places to go.

**EuansGuide.com** is the disabled access review website where disabled people, their family, friends and carers can find and share reviews on the accessibility of places around the UK and beyond.

# Introduction

Since 2014 we've been asking disabled people their opinions of 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 restaurant, shop, theatre, hotel or anywhere else. It is the longest running survey of its kind here in the UK.

The responses to the 2019 Access Survey suggest that some progress is being made, but there is still a lot more that could be done to improve access.

We hope that the findings of this survey will help to emphasise the importance of accessibility and disabled access information. Thank you to everybody who took part in the 2019 Access Survey!

Euan MacDonald, Co-founder of Euan's Guide



Euan MacDonald MBE

# Key Findings

**93%**

Try to find disabled access information about somewhere before visiting for the first time.

**83%**

Are more likely to visit somewhere new if they can find access information about it beforehand.

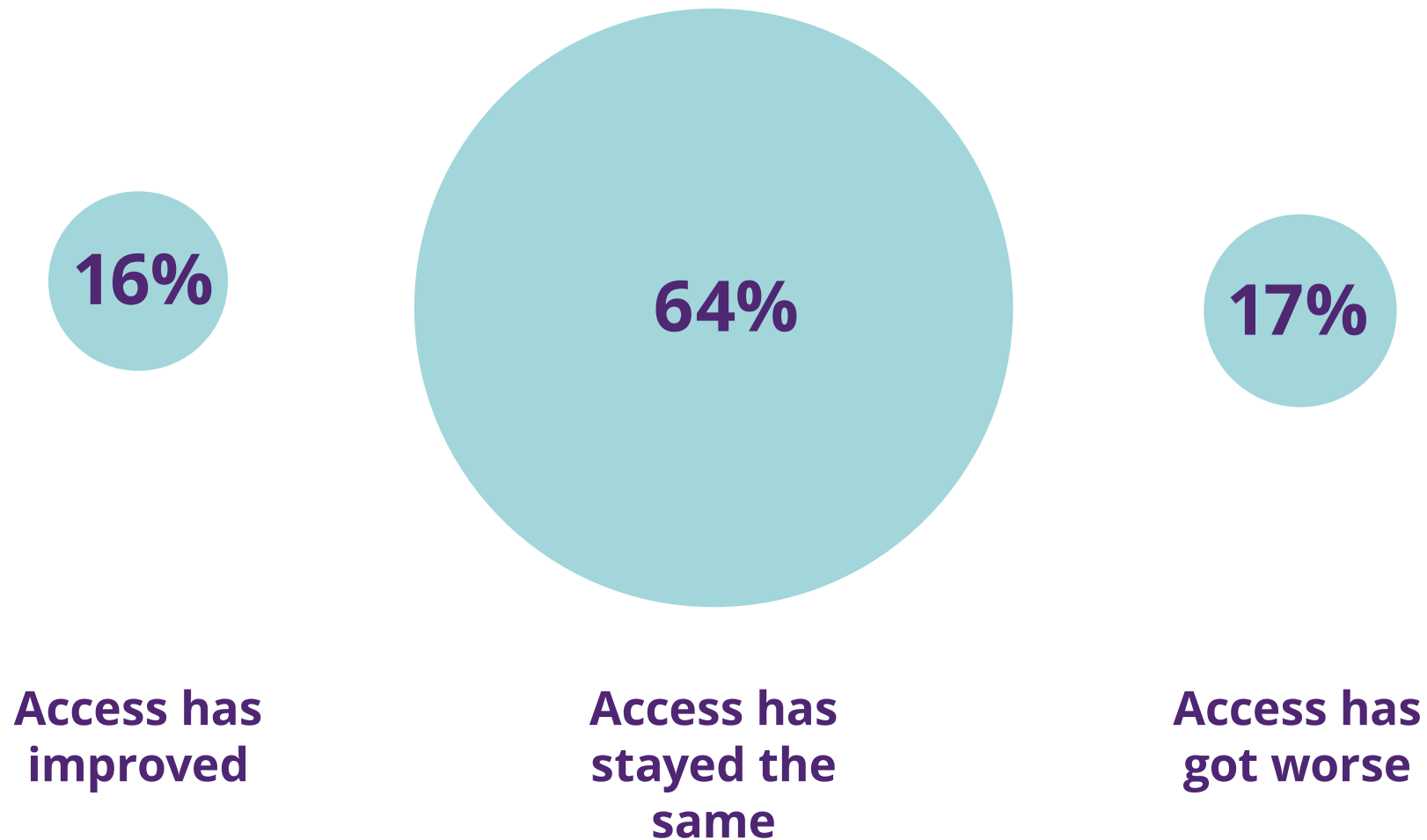


**70%**

Use two or more sources to try to find disabled access information before visiting somewhere new.

## We asked...

In the past year do you feel that there has been any change to overall levels of access for disabled people in the UK?



# What do you think about the overall levels of access?

“More small businesses are trying to improve access. Considering the costs involved, I feel they should be commended for their efforts.”

“I feel there has been slightly more of an awareness for invisible disabilities, with more provisions for disability outside of just ‘wheelchair users’ or ‘mobility needs’.”

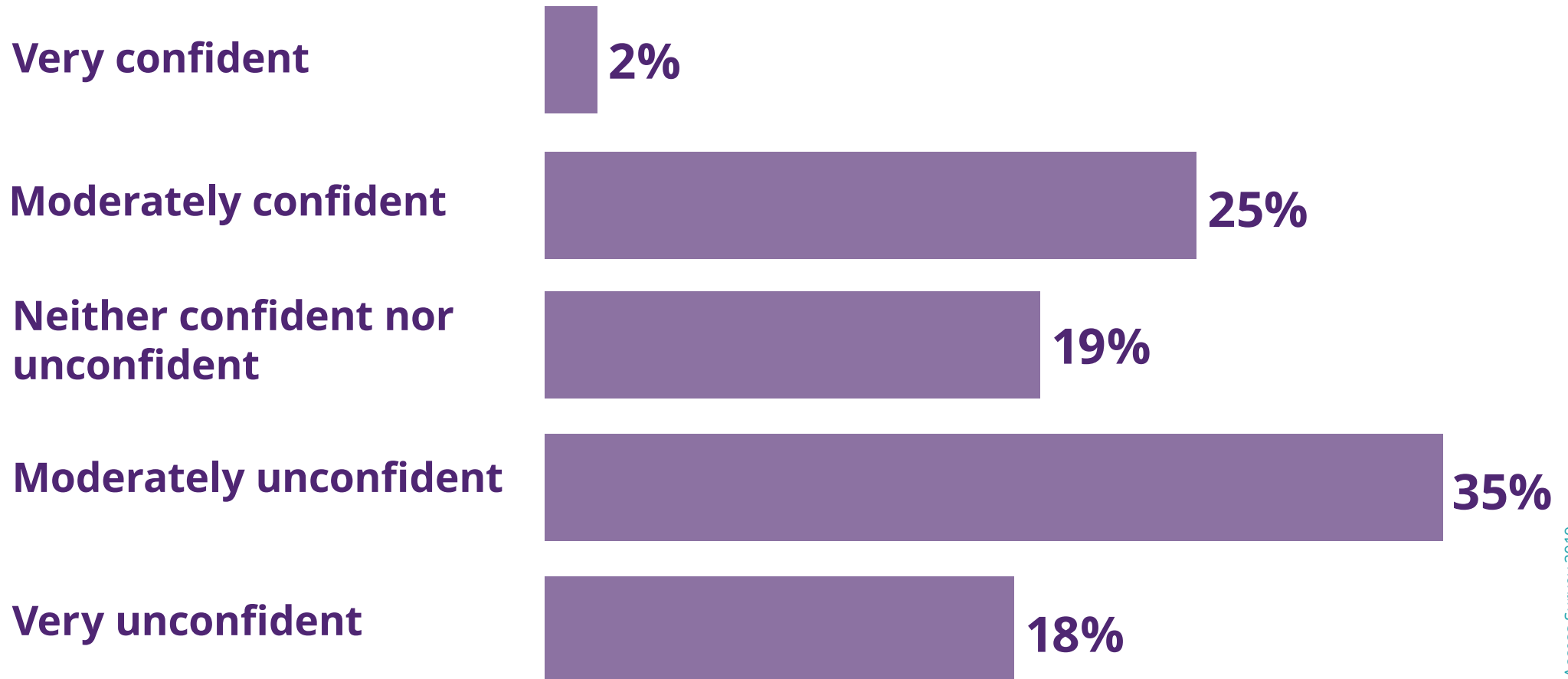
“Awareness of the need for better access seems to have increased but actual improvements don’t match this.”

“Lighting often not designed for visual impaired. Sound/noise environment not accounting for hearing or speech impairments.”

“Public spaces such as shops are, at times, totally impossible - especially at Christmas time and during sales when products are packed along the aisles.”

## We asked...

Thinking about accessibility, how confident are you about visiting new places?

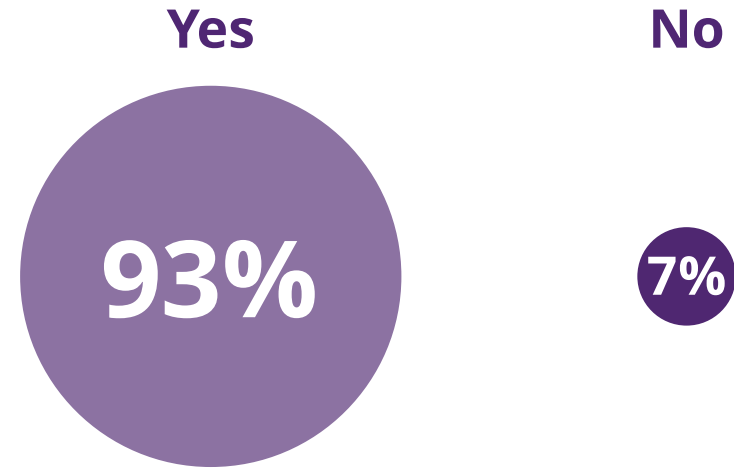


53% of participants are either moderately or very unconfident about visiting new places.



# We asked...

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



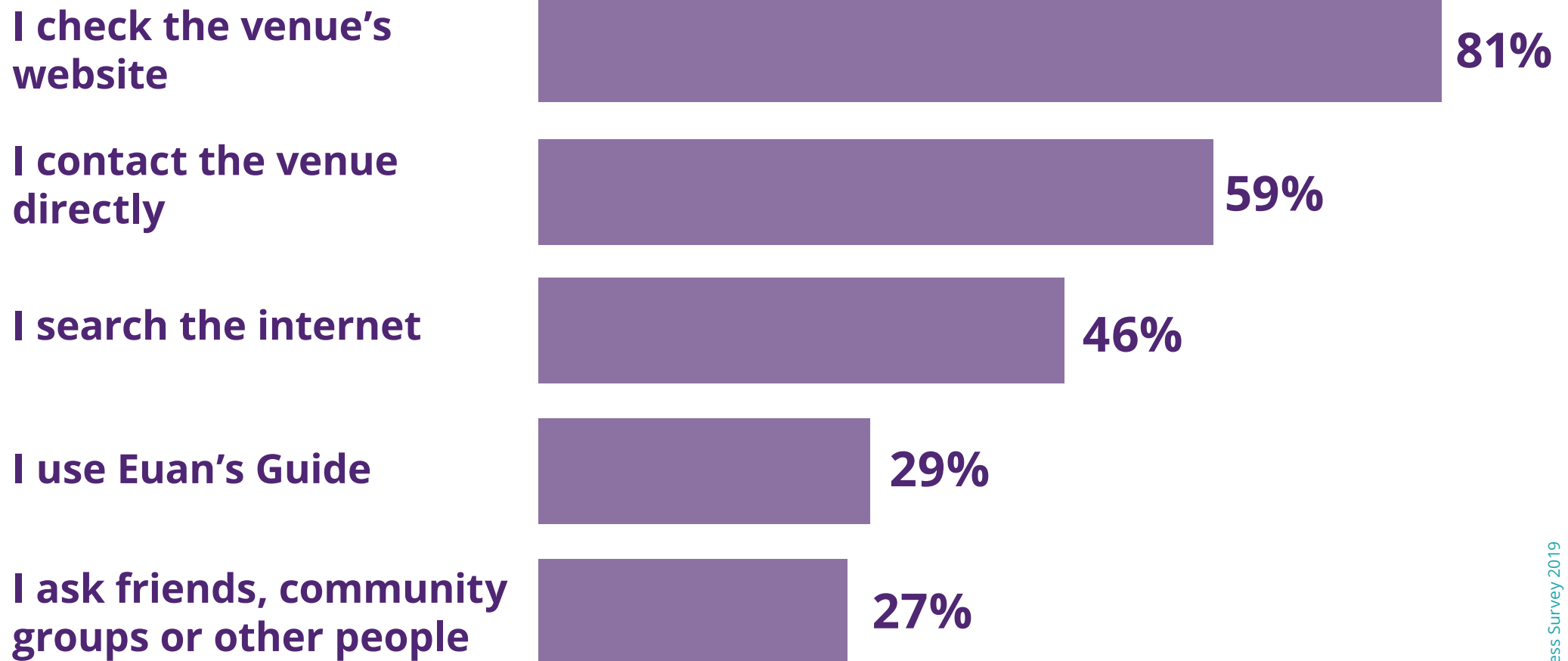
If you have used a venue's website to check disabled access before visiting, have you ever found the information to be misleading, confusing or inaccurate?



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



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



70% of people are using 2 or more sources before visiting somewhere new. This suggests it is still difficult for people to find accurate information on somewhere's disabled access.

# Is website information ever misleading?

"Sometimes the information is wrong, usually it is absent."

"A general lack of detailed information e.g. how many stairs?"

"Fully accessible tells me nothing."

"Venues' websites often fail to mention that the lift is out of order and no alternatives are available."

"Not all of the sites are voice over friendly so I miss out on a lot of the information."

"Many venues don't include access information asking you to call instead (which is hard when your disability affects your hearing and speech too!)."

"Sometimes a site may say its accessible, but don't mention that access is via a completely different street entrance to the main entrance. Or I find that only part of the venue is accessible."

# How has poor accessibility affected you?

"Holiday ended after two days because of incorrect access information for holiday cottage."

"Being locked out of my hotel because the side door that is "accessible", but is apparently locked at 9pm, which they didn't warn me [of]."

"I've had to change venues for gatherings because of lack of accessibility, whether physically inaccessible or inappropriate sensory environments for neurodiverse pals. "

"Often have to cut a trip short because of lack of Changing Places facilities."

"It takes great effort to get out so when I end up not getting in it is infuriating as I have used up that day's energy and also become depleted."

"Having to go to a different venue because they were unwilling to allow my Guide Dog in."

"I recently got stuck on a tube train and ended up 13 stops on further than intended as I couldn't alight anywhere else."

# The most common barriers to access people found when out and about

1. Not being able to get around the venue

65%

2. Not being able to get into the venue

58%

3. Not being able to participate in the same way as others

52%

4. Not having access to a toilet that suits their requirements

50%

5. The facilities weren't what they had expected

43%

5. A lack of appropriate parking available

43%

7. Staff attitudes or not getting the required assistance from staff

42%

8. A lack of accessible transport options to the venue

31%

9. Staff being unsure how to work equipment

29%

10. The environment made them feel uncomfortable

27%

11. Not having access to alternative formats to suit their requirements

22%

# I am more likely to visit somewhere new if...

**I can find relevant access information about the venue**



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



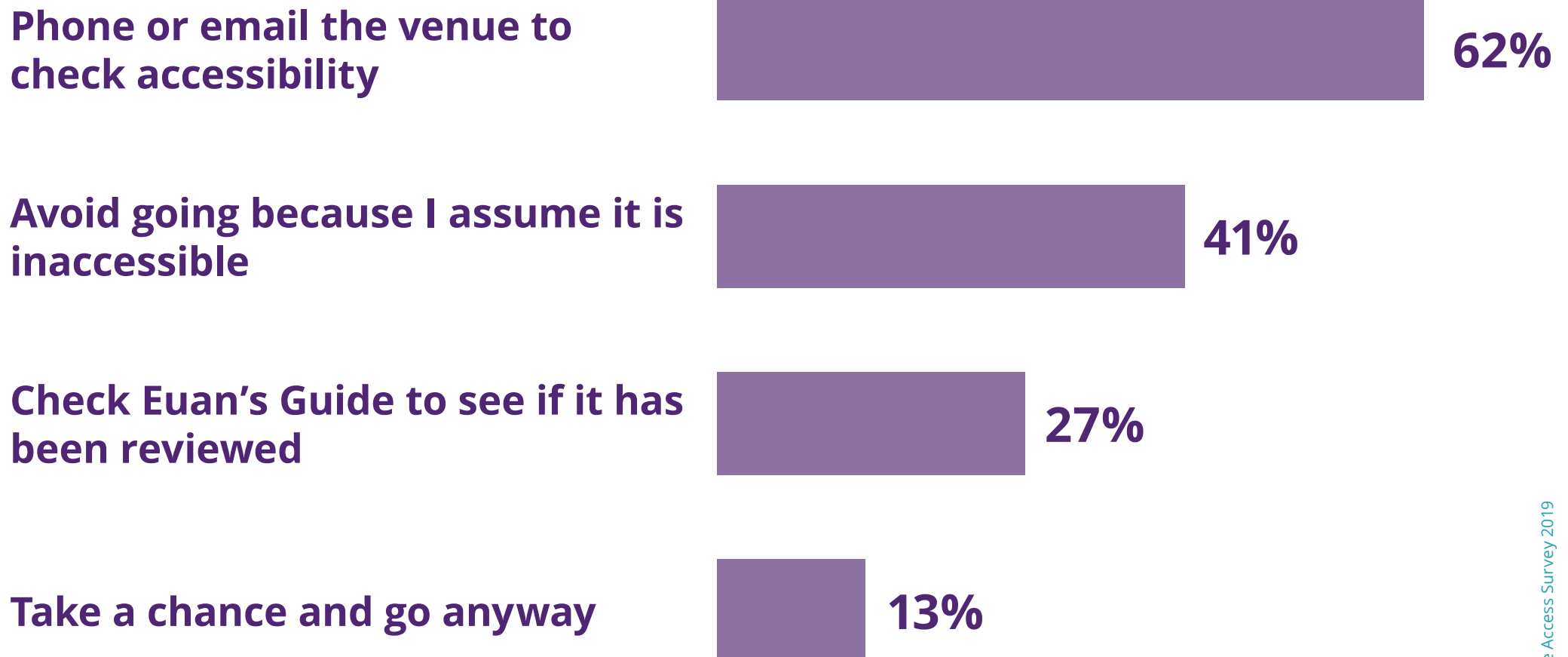
**It has been recommended to me by someone with similar requirements**



**I can see pictures and read what others have said beforehand**

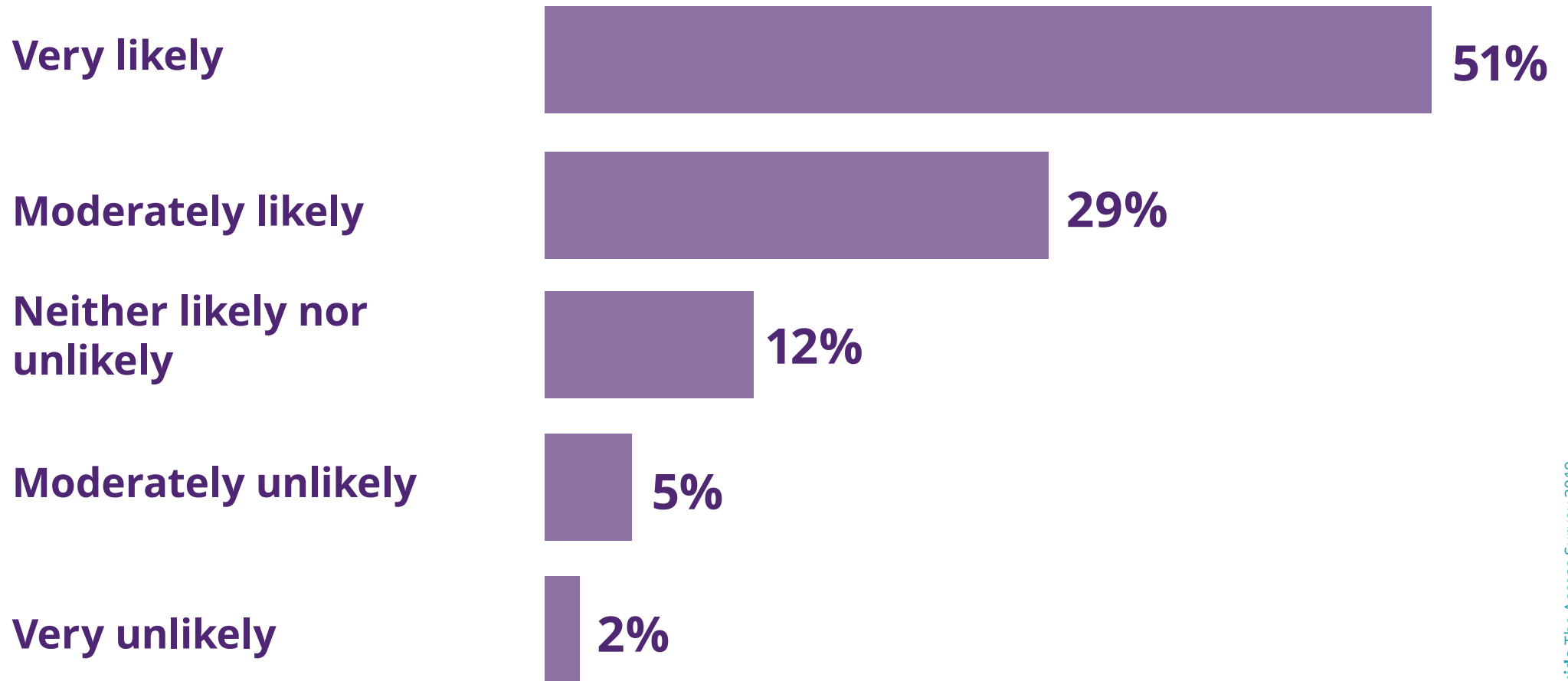


# If a venue has not shared its disabled access information I...



# We asked...

How likely are you to share your experiences of disabled access with others?

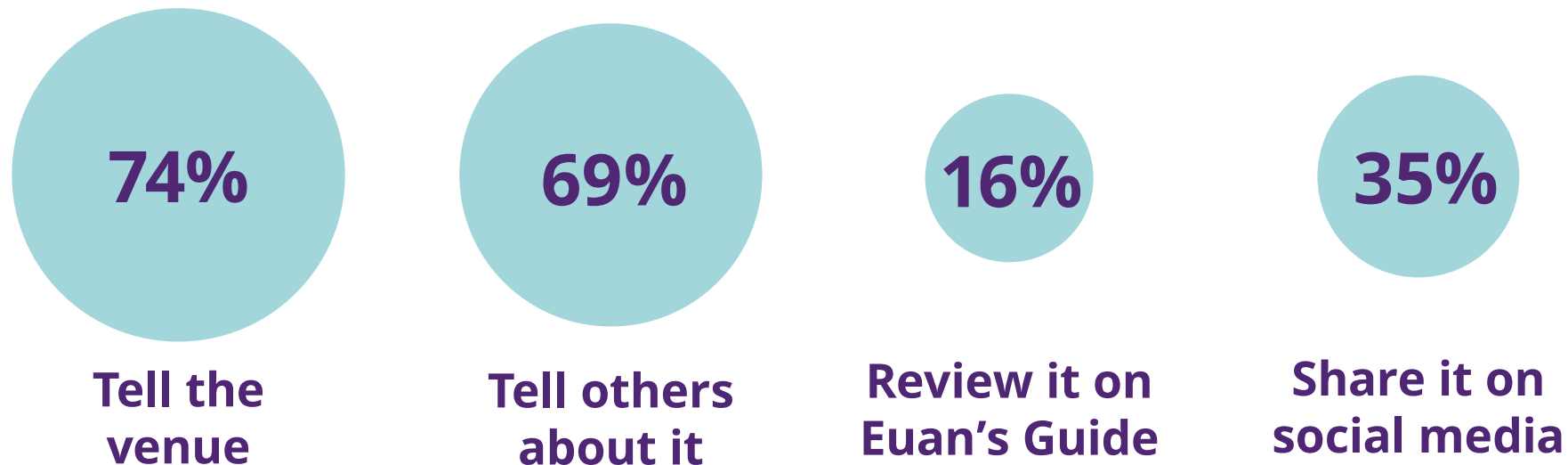




## When somewhere has good accessibility I...



## When somewhere has bad accessibility I...

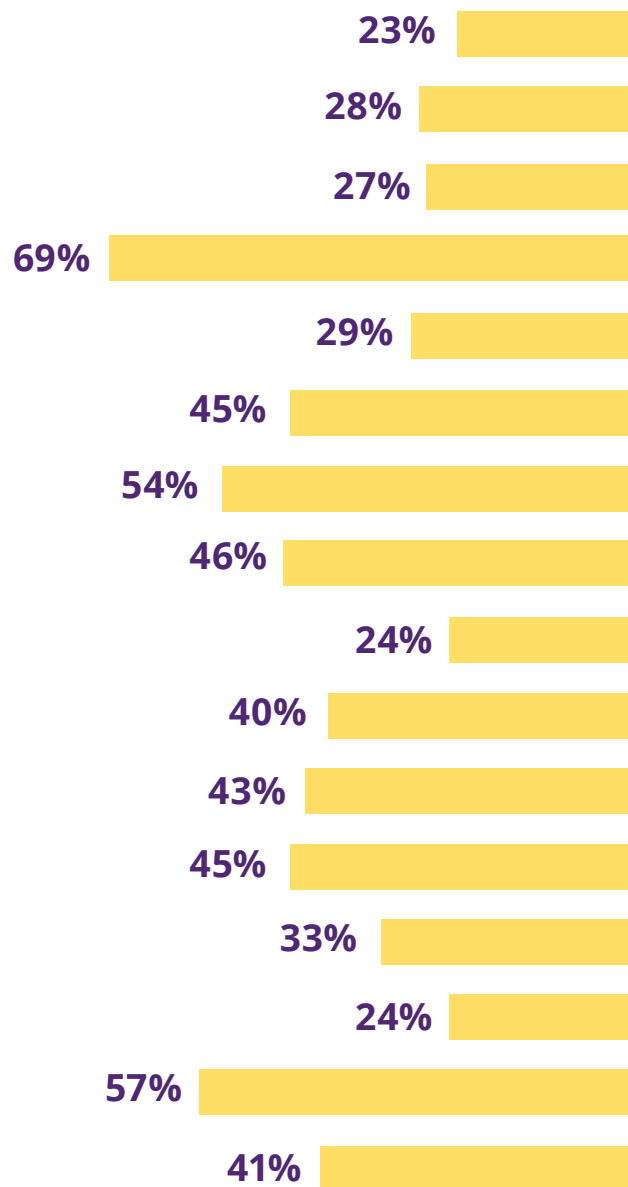


# What does this mean?

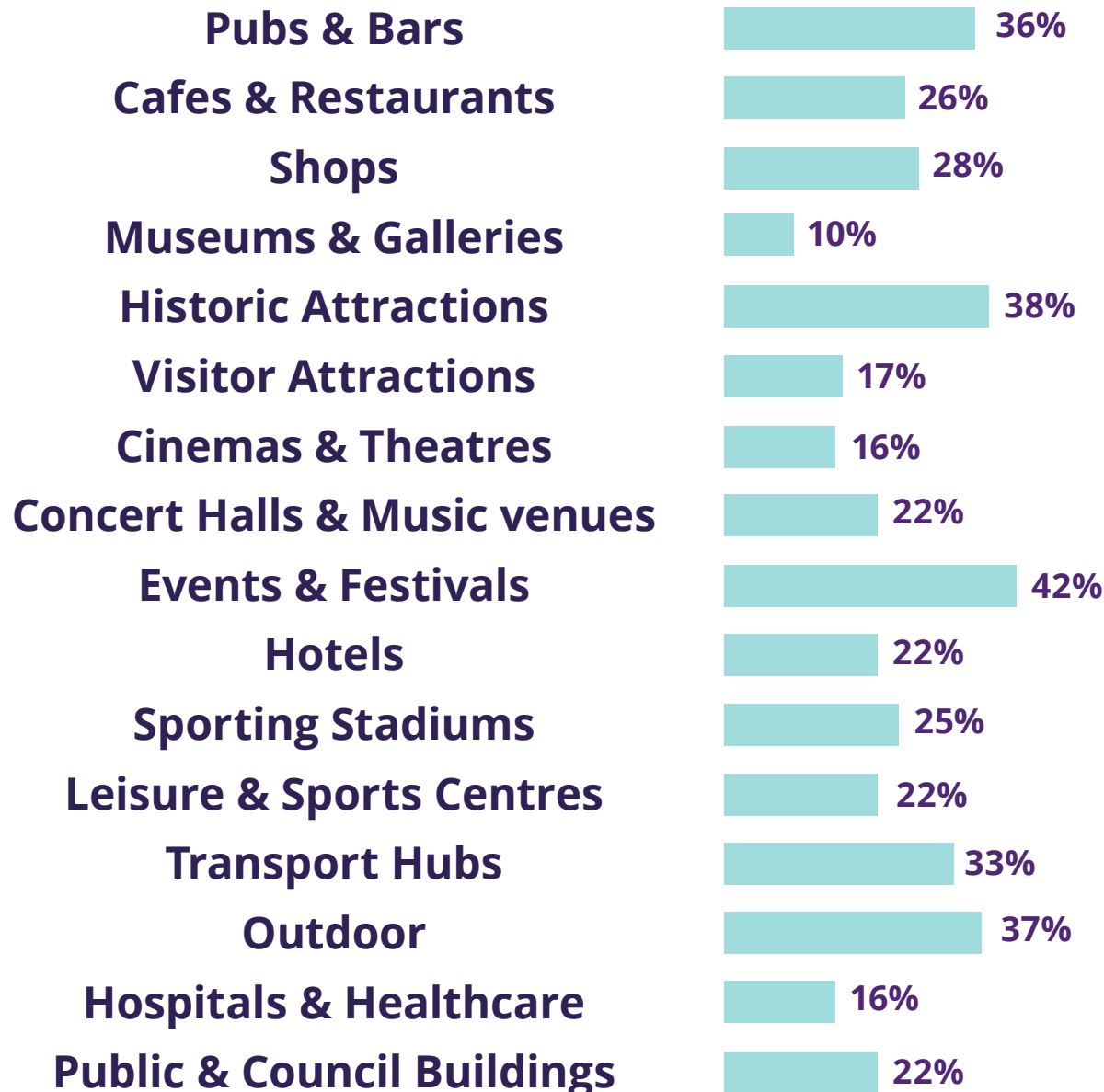
- Overall, 80% of people are likely to share their experiences of disabled access with others.
- People are more likely to contact the venue directly if they felt it has bad accessibility.
- People are more likely to review somewhere and tell others about their experience when they perceive somewhere as having good accessibility.
- People are equally likely to talk about their experience on social media, regardless of whether or not they felt accessibility was good or bad.

# How do different types of places compare?

Typically good or excellent accessibility



Typically poor or very poor accessibility



# What does this mean?

- Museums and art galleries continue to be rated as the most accessible venues.
- Over half of the respondents felt that accessibility in hospitals and healthcare centres and in cinemas and theatres was above average.
- Events and festivals were considered to be the least accessible type of place.
- Historic attractions, outdoor places and pubs and bars were all also likely to be regarded as having poor access.
- Participants were given the option to rate places as average. Cafes and restaurants and shops were the types of places most likely to be rated as average. (46% felt accessibility in cafes and restaurants was average, 45% felt that accessibility in shops was average.)
- People were most divided on transport hubs with a third rating them as generally good, a third rating them as average and a third rating them poorly.

# Has anything changed?



**The number of people finding information on a venue's website to be misleading is dropping. Unfortunately, it still remains high. In 2018 86% found the information misleading, in 2019 the percentage dropped to 77%.**



**The perceived accessibility of concert halls and music venues has increased slightly. In 2018 38% rated these types of places as above average, in 2019 the percentage rose to 46% rating them as either good or excellent.**

From a comparison of the 2018 and 2019 Access Survey.

## Around the country...

Participants in Northern Ireland are more likely to feel confident about visiting new places\*.

Over a third of people from Wales felt very unconfident about visiting new places. However, they were more likely to rate sporting stadiums higher than participants from elsewhere in the UK.



People in Scotland were more likely to think that access has improved in the past year. They were also more likely to rate concert halls and music venues as having 'good' or 'excellent' accessibility compared to participants from elsewhere in the UK.

People in England were more likely to say that overall levels of access have got worse in the past year. They were also more likely to rate cafes and restaurants poorly.

\*There was a small sample size for Northern Ireland.

# What change would make the biggest difference to you getting out and about more easily?

-  1. Improve accessible transport options
-  2. Improve disabled parking spaces
-  3. Have more detailed and reliable access information easily available
-  4. Improve pavements by creating more dropped kerbs and making the surface smoother
-  5. Change people's attitudes
-  6. Increase staff training and awareness
-  7. Having more ramps available
-  8. Creating more accessible toilets and improving existing ones
-  9. Having more Changing Places toilets
-  10. Places giving more consideration to different access requirements that people might have

A summary of the most prominent themes that emerged from this open response question.

# About Euan's Guide

Euan's Guide is the charity making it easier, safer and more rewarding for disabled people to find, visit, and share accessibility information about, great places.

- Euan's Guide was founded by Euan MacDonald MBE, a powerchair user, and his sister Kiki in 2013.
- At the heart of the charity is **EuansGuide.com**, the go-to online resource written by and for disabled people to find and share information about access at the places they enjoy visiting.
- It is an invaluable tool for everything from planning somewhere to take the kids at the weekend to picking a last minute place for lunch.
- EuansGuide.com now has thousands of disabled access reviews for places across the UK and beyond.
- As a charity, Euan's Guide relies entirely on voluntary income to make life easier for disabled people, their families, friends and carers.





The Access Survey 2019 was carried out by Euan's Guide between October 2019 and January 2020. A total of 1,027 disabled people, their families and friends shared their opinions in this survey.  
81% of respondents identified as a disabled person.

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Euan's Guide is a charity and we rely on volunteers and voluntary income to be able to keep our accessibility website running and deliver our award-winning projects and activities.

To find out more about our work and how you can help as a volunteer reviewer, partner, fundraiser or supporter please visit: **[EuansGuide.com/donate](https://www.euansguide.com/donate)**

