



Accessible
and Inclusive
Tourism



Checklist – Accessible & Inclusive Tourism

Visitor Attractions and Experiences



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Introduction

Ensure everyone feels welcome at your visitor attraction and experiences

To make sure that everyone benefits from a great visitor experience and becomes an ambassador for your visitor attraction and experiences, you need to demonstrate a thoughtful, empathetic approach to people's varied abilities.

Best practice can help you win repeat visits and market your attraction effectively to the widest possible audience. However, factors like poor information, inaccessible infrastructure and inadequate customer service can cause frustration and have a negative impact on a visitor's experience and their enjoyment of their time with you.

This checklist is designed to help you assess how ready your visitor attraction or experience is to provide a welcome for all, and you can use it to spot oversights and points of friction in the visitor experience. The information you gather as you work through the checklist will become an asset you can use to market your attraction more effectively. It will also help you to identify areas where there is room to improve your offer and its appeal to a wide audience.



Use the checklist to:

- ✓ Guide you through the process of evaluating the accessibility of your attraction's communications, infrastructure and customer service.
- ✓ Identify practical changes you can make (from quick wins to more ambitious changes).
- ✓ Identify marketable features of your business that can improve your attraction's appeal.
- ✓ Benefit from peace of mind and handy reminders of necessary actions to improve your offer.
- ✓ Maintain standards of excellence.
- ✓ Track your progress as part of a process of continuous improvement.

Please note: This action checklist is part of a wider range of resources provided by Fáilte Ireland, and it is aimed at owners and managers of visitor attractions and experiences. Use it with other resources, including our [Effective Communications Guide](#) and the food and beverage business access checklist, to make sure that you provide an authentic and inclusive welcome.

For more information, visit the [Accessible and Inclusive Tourism Business Support Hub](#).

Inclusion and Accessibility

The terms 'accessible' and 'inclusive' are often used interchangeably, and they should go hand in hand. However, they have quite different meanings, and it is important to keep both in mind when you are running a visitor attraction or experience that offers a genuine welcome for all.

'Inclusion' means including and accommodating people so that everyone can participate in and enjoy the experiences you offer.

The word 'accessible' means 'easy to approach, reach, use, and understand'.



Accessible

An accessible visitor attraction is physically, technologically and socially easy to access and approach, as well as relaxing and enjoyable to experience.



Inclusive

An inclusive attraction goes beyond accessibility to actively welcome and accommodate diverse customers and suppliers. It provides equal opportunities for all to enjoy a satisfying and memorable visitor experience, and it can also help people to enjoy time with others, respecting the fact that adjustments may be required to deliver these equal opportunities.

Improving accessibility and inclusion is a continuous and rewarding process. Some of the actions you identify as you work through the checklist will be quick, simple, and affordable fixes. Others – like issues caused by infrastructure or training gaps – may need more time to solve. These more complex actions may also require collaboration with colleagues, managers, and other stakeholders, such as suppliers, tour group organisers or disabled people's organisations.

Revisiting the checklist frequently will help you stay actively engaged in this process. It will also ensure that you are regularly renewing your commitment to continuously improve your welcome for all. Use the checklist and the wider resources available through Fáilte Ireland to spur you on and chart your progress!



Checklist – Accessible & Inclusive Tourism

Visitor Attractions and Experiences

Business Name:

Year:



Pre-visit Information and Booking

To ensure good governance, completion and review of these actions is the responsibility of the person who is the Task Owner.

Use the following options to indicate task status in Completed column: **Y = Yes, N = No, P = Partly or A = Active**

If Action is not completed, use the Notes column to provide more detail.

Action	Task Owner	Completed (Y/N/P/A)	Notes
Does your website include a dedicated section that outlines your attraction's and/or experience's accessibility features and supports visitors in understanding how you provide an accessible experience? An Access Welcome Guide is a section on your website that provides clear, reliable information about your business's accessibility features, helping visitors with access needs make informed and confident booking decisions. To support you in developing an Access Welcome Guide section on your website, please visit Fáilte Ireland's Access Welcome Guide Hub			
Have you gathered or updated your business's accessibility information in a single document to create a handy Access Welcome Guide for your staff, customers, and tour group organisers?			
Do you offer a few different ways for people to contact you to enquire about a visit to your attraction (e.g. telephone, email, text message, and the Irish Text Relay service which is available for use by D/deaf people and people with speech impairments).¹			

¹ The Irish Text Relay Service enables people who are D/deaf, hard-of-hearing or speech-impaired to make and receive calls independently through type and read, type, and speak and type and listen supports. Find out more at [Irish Text Relay Service](#).

Action	Task Owner	Completed (Y/N/P/A)	Notes
Does promotional material specify the name and details of the person who can take enquiries about the accessibility of your attraction? Do you incorporate learnings from the enquiries they receive into your general information for visitors?			
Do you offer concessions (e.g., free essential companion entry and a concessionary rate for disabled customers)?			
Do you provide flexible family tickets that allow for different numbers of adults and children, including grandparents?			
Is it part of your booking process to ask customers 'Do you, or those you are travelling with, have any accessibility requirements?'			

Action	Task Owner	Completed (Y/N/P/A)	Notes
Where possible, do you offer free familiarisation visits to those with accessibility requirements and/or their essential companions?			
Have you checked the accuracy of the information about your accessible facilities on third-party websites and booking channels?			
Have you provided your local tourist information centre, destination group and accommodation providers with a list of your accessible facilities and services and do you update them as things change?			
Do you let visitors know at the start of their visit about any accessible features that are temporarily out of order (e.g. lifts) and any alternative arrangements?			

Your Website

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Action	Task Owner	Completed (Y/N/P/A)	Notes
Does your website meet the standards set out in the international Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG2)? ² You may need to seek advice from your site designer here, but simple steps towards compliance include providing alternative text for all images. Training in web accessibility is also available via Fáilte Ireland's Business Hub and learnIFI (Fáilte Ireland's learning platform), where live learning and self-paced courses are available. ³			
Are the values of accessibility and inclusion clearly reflected in your website's content (text, imagery)? How are you making this judgement call (e.g. are you seeking feedback from users)?			

² WCAG 2 Overview | Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) | W3C.

³ Find resources at: [Live Learning](#) and Fáilte Ireland's learning platform, [learnIFI](#).

Action	Task Owner	Completed (Y/N/P/A)	Notes
Do you provide detailed and accurate information on the attraction's accessibility, along with useful measurements and photos? If you decide to put this information in a dedicated Access Welcome Guide area of your site, ensure that your general information is also clear about accessibility, as people will not always identify themselves as having accessibility needs. For example, a person who wants to use a pushchair on outdoor paths might look at your attraction's garden page without checking the site's accessibility section.			
Do you share a sensory map which can help people to understand what to expect at your attraction, noting features such as noisy areas, flashing lights and toilet facilities?			
Do you provide information on and links to accessible transport options, using the information you have gathered for your Access Welcome Guide? Is this information regularly updated (e.g. when timetables change)?			
Have you ensured that the information you provide about the destination in general is equally useful to all visitors (e.g. in a list of accommodation, restaurants, or other attractions, do you note their levels of accessibility, including factors such as suitability for wheelchair users, accessible rooms, and menus)?			

Wayfinding & Navigation

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Action	Task Owner	Completed (Y/N/P/A)	Notes
Is clear external signage provided, including to an accessible entrance if the main one does not provide step-free access? Where possible, the main entrance should be accessible.			
Do you provide clear internal signage to help visitors orientate themselves throughout their visit? - Is signage installed at a height visible to wheelchair users? - Is signage easy to interpret (adequate font size, strong colour contrast, clear symbols and braille)?⁴			
Do you offer to provide an orientation tour to visitors with disabilities and provide help with luggage, wayfinding, and navigation?			
Have you developed a set of standard Emergency Evacuation Plans (EEPs) for the safe evacuation of people with disabilities? Are they reviewed at regular intervals (e.g. twice a year)?			
Do you ask all visitors if they require any assistance with evacuation in an emergency? Discuss the standard options available and agree and record any specific arrangements made with individual people.			

4 Centre for Excellence in Universal Design, 'Signage Design', available from [Centre for Excellence in Universal Design](#).

Arrival

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Action	Task Owner	Completed (Y/N/P/A)	Notes
Are sufficient accessible parking spaces available to match capacity and is a drop-off point provided in line with Irish Wheelchair Association guidelines? ⁵ If the attraction doesn't have easily accessible parking, have you located the nearest accessible parking spaces and shared this information with attendees?			
Do you welcome guests with trained assistance dogs? This is a legal requirement even if you have a 'no dogs/pets' policy. ⁶			
Are staff trained in assistance animal etiquette (e.g. don't touch, talk to, feed or distract)? ⁷			
Do you make adjustments for people who are unable to stand in a queue for long periods, such as fast-track access or remote queuing (include these supports for areas around the attraction that can become busy too)?			

5 For guidance on what sufficient parking means, see the guidelines on 'Access to the Built Environment' by the Irish Wheelchair Association.

6 In Ireland, there are four organisations that have accreditation with Assistance Dogs International, Inc. (ADI). These are: Autism Assistance Dogs Ireland, Irish Dogs for the Disabled, Irish Guide Dogs for the Blind, and My Canine Companion – Autism Service Dogs. For more information, visit [Assistance Dogs International](#).

7 For more information, see [Guide Dog Foundation](#).

Action	Task Owner	Completed (Y/N/P/A)	Notes
Do reception areas, information points, help desks, and food/shop counters include a lower-level section for wheelchair users or people of short stature? Where this is not available, is an area with lower-level seating and tables available?			
Where there is a reception desk, registration point, or other point where a queue for access is expected, do you provide some rest seating in this space for people to use as they queue/wait?			
Do you facilitate people with Autism and/or mobility challenges to be excused from queueing?			
Are your volunteers/staff clearly distinguishable from visitors so people can identify them easily (e.g. wearing name badges and/or upper-body clothing such as distinctive polo shirts or gilets in bright colours, with a clear title on the back and front indicating any specific assistance they can provide, such as seating assistance, technical support, Dementia-friendly customer service)?			

Action	Task Owner	Completed (Y/N/P/A)	Notes
If visitors or staff use badges, do they have a large, clear font and there is an option for them to be worn without people having to operate a clip or pin (e.g. use lanyards, which can support the sustainability of your event, or stickers)?			
Do you provide access to a variety of (free, loan or hire) sensory equipment on arrival, such as activity packs for children or fidget spinners, ear spinners and weighted blankets?			
Do you let visitors know at the start of their visit about any accessible features that are temporarily out of order (e.g. lifts) and any alternative arrangements?			
Do you provide storage, when requested, for mobility devices, care equipment, medication, or other essential items? For example, staff may be asked to store crutches or a walker or to refrigerate certain medication. • Do staff have training so they can respond appropriately to related requests? • Do you provide clear signage to public areas and clear instructions and/or support so a person can retrieve stored items when needed? • Are there any issues or procedures around the storage of expensive items or equipment?			

Customer Service Points

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Action	Task Owner	Completed (Y/N/P/A)	Notes
Are all staff aware of, and using the inclusive communication strategies set out in Fáilte Ireland's Effective Communications Guide? Helpful strategies include: • Providing a clear welcome. • Using plain language and non-discriminatory terms. • Adjusting pace and tone to suit the people you are addressing. • Actively listening to and focusing on the people you are communicating with.			
Do you inform visitors about sources of information and support available throughout their visit (e.g. maps, audio guides in different languages, the opportunity to talk to your Accessibility Champion)? An Accessibility Champion is someone who acts as the voice for access and inclusion in your business – they have oversight of all of your accessibility actions and policies (training for Accessibility Champions is available through Fáilte Ireland's Business Hub and learniFI).			

Action	Task Owner	Completed (Y/N/P/A)	Notes
Do you consider the impact of background music and refrain from playing music in areas where staff interact with customers? Are quiet areas available and clearly identified, and are staff trained to lower music on request?			
Do you provide a means of written communication at key service points to assist D/deaf customers, if required? A simple pen and paper or handheld white board and wipeable marker pen will be useful.			
Do you provide written information in alternative formats (e.g. digital, large print and easy-to-read versions, QR code) on request? Is information provided in visual format for guests who cannot read or who may have limited fluency in English?			

Around the Attraction

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Action	Task Owner	Completed (Y/N/P/A)	Notes
Are water bowls available for use by assistance dogs?			
Have you designated an assistance animal relief area, and exercise area, ideally within the grounds of the attraction or nearby, along with a handwash station for owners? Have you also provided a biowaste bin and some dog-poop bags or a pooper scooper?			
Do you regularly ensure there are no tripping hazards such as loose cables or personal belongings in aisles and public areas within your attraction?			
Are any temporary threshold ramps suitable for wheelchair users to pass over?			

Action	Task Owner	Completed (Y/N/P/A)	Notes
Do you provide adequate space for people using mobility aids to move between areas and exhibits, including temporary exhibits? ⁸			
Do you ensure external paths are kept clear of obstacles, debris, moss, ice and fallen leaves and have firm well-maintained surfaces? Do you also ensure that any permanent features (e.g. statues) are securely fixed?			
Do you have at least one form of casual seating available in spaces like exhibition areas or galleries where groups are likely to spend quite a bit of time standing?			

8 Note that the Government of Ireland advises that a 1800mm turning circle is required for wheelchair users and 1200mm minimum circulation space, as per building regulations. See 'Technical Guidance Document M: Access & Use', available from [Government of Ireland](#).

Toilets & Comfort Facilities

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Action	Task Owner	Completed (Y/N/P/A)	Notes
Where an accessible toilet requires a key or code to gain access (e.g. RADAR key), do you provide clear guidance on the door as to where a key or code can be obtained?			
Have you clearly indicated the availability of accessible and unisex facilities using signage that uses easily understood symbols and Braille as well as words?			
Do you ensure emergency pull-cords hang to the floor and are regularly tested?			
Do you provide support rails at urinals, toilets, washbasins, and on the back of toilet doors, in line with the government's current technical guidance on access and use of the built environment? ⁹			
Is equipment such as a track hoist or a height-adjusted changing table available?			

⁹ See 'Technical Guidance Document M: Access & Use', available from [Government of Ireland](#).

Action	Task Owner	Completed (Y/N/P/A)	Notes
To assist blind or partially sighted visitors, have you checked that any support rails contrast in colour to the wall and that toilet seats have colour contrast with the toilet and floor?			
Have you clearly indicated baby changing facilities and any private spaces suitable for feeding babies?			
Have you shared information about Changing Places facilities that are available at your venue or nearby?			
Where possible, do you indicate the availability of a quiet space with an electrical outlet that can be used by visitors who may need to rest, express breastmilk, or take medication?			

Information and Interpretation

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Action	Task Owner	Completed (Y/N/P/A)	Notes
Does your interpretation reflect the principles of universal design so that it can be accessed by the widest possible audience? When you are refreshing interpretation, think about: • Providing information in different formats (text, visual material, audio guides, tactile experiences) • Using language that is easy to understand (e.g. for visitors who have English as a second language) and reinforce meaning with imagery and/or sound. • Accessible design for information boards (e.g. adequate font sizes and colour contrast).¹⁰			
Do you offer object handling to allow blind and partially sighted people to explore historical or replica items?			
Do you ensure that TVs and other audiovisual resources playing in public areas have the subtitles turned on?			

¹⁰ Centre for Excellence in Universal Design, 'Customer Communications Toolkit', available from [Centre for Excellence in Universal Design](#).

Action	Task Owner	Completed (Y/N/P/A)	Notes
Where you have presentations, do you allow attendees to reserve seats if they wish to lipread or be close to an ISL interpreter (in front row/rows), near the toilet or exit?			
Is it possible for event participants and attendees to reserve access to neck hearing loops if there is no installed loop? Are hearing loop arrangements made clear in advance?			
Where staff are involved in providing or supporting interpretation, have you ensured that they are aware of best practice in relation to inclusive language and customer service?			
Do you offer dedicated sessions with tailored support to visitors who may not be comfortable visiting your attraction during busy periods? Choose off-peak times, turn off background sounds and lower lighting to facilitate relaxed visits. Options might include quiet/relaxed sessions for people with disabilities or Dementia-friendly sessions.			

Tour Groups

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Action	Task Owner	Completed (Y/N/P/A)	Notes
Do you always ask organisers at the booking stage if there is any information they would like to share about the group that will help you to optimise their experience (e.g. mobility, special interests, diet and/or equipment needs)?			
Do you share your Access Welcome Guide, or an adapted version, as well as relevant local information with the organiser, and share the contact details of your Accessibility Champion?			
Do you provide an opportunity at the start of the visit for people to let you know if they have any additional requirements they would like you to take into account?			
Do you clearly indicate any features of the experience, like flashing lights or loud areas, to help your visitors navigate the tour comfortably?			
Do you routinely check with the whole group about their comfort levels and needs during a tour, rather than singling anyone out? For example, you could invite everyone to stand where they can hear and see you, and ask everyone if the stairs are ok, noting alternative routes, such as lifts and ramps.			
Where possible, do you begin and end tours in areas where there is seating available?			

Marketing

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Action	Task Owner	Completed (Y/N/P/A)	Notes
Have you ensured that the marketing channels you use are reaching people with accessibility requirements? For example: Have you ensured your marketing materials are accessible to people with disabilities, such as those who are blind or have low vision, by including alt text and captions? Have you mentioned your Access Welcome Guide, or used information about the accessibility and inclusivity of your event, in your online listings?			
Do you ensure that information shared on social media is provided in forms that can be read by screen readers (i.e., do not rely on people being able to read text on images; ensure adequate levels of contrast between text and background when you create graphics).			

Action	Task Owner	Completed (Y/N/P/A)	Notes
Are all print materials designed to meet high standards of accessibility?¹¹ Prepare print materials with care, ensuring colour contrast and legibility. Avoid using small font for details, such as exhibit labels, and consider providing a QR code to link to an online, accessible version of the same information. Ensure all information is accessible before sharing it with others.¹²			
Do you regularly promote your accessible facilities and services through your communication channels, including social media?			
Have you let local disabled people's organisations and groups (e.g., Autism support groups) know about your services and supports, and do you keep them updated about any changes in your offer?			
Do you integrate representation of all disabilities naturally in the imagery and text used in your marketing communications? Avoid representing people with disabilities as heroic when they are simply taking part in your venue's activities.			

¹¹ Centre for Excellence in Universal Design, 'Customer Communications Toolkit', available from the [Centre for Excellence in Universal Design](#).

¹² You can easily make sure a PDF is accessible by running Microsoft's Accessibility Checker before you generate or save your document as a PDF. After you've addressed any issues found by the Accessibility Checker, Microsoft 365 will use that information to create accessibility tags in the PDF. For more information, see [Microsoft Support](#).

You & Your Team

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Action	Task Owner	Completed (Y/N/P/A)	Notes
Have you given all staff and people involved in receiving visitors a copy of your Access Welcome Guide so they can see immediately the facilities and services that are available?			
Do all staff wear name badges, and do they make it clear if they can provide specific types of support (e.g. wearing a Dementia-friendly badge, if they have received appropriate training to show that they can support people with Dementia)?			
Do you regularly check that all staff, including part-time and seasonal team members, have been provided with tips and guidance on inclusive customer service practices, such as inclusive language use? It is important to ensure that everyone receives a copy of Fáilte Ireland's Effective Communications Guide.			
Does the communication in your team reflect best practice (e.g. do you ask a person what is the best way to help, treat each person with dignity, use respectful language, and use the communication channels and strategies that suit each person best)?			

Action	Task Owner	Completed (Y/N/P/A)	Notes
Are relevant staff trained to use the Irish Text Relay service, and are they confident about using it?			
Do you regularly discuss workplace adjustments with your team to ensure you are all responding to each other's needs and identify issues that need to be addressed through more accessible and inclusive policies and procedures?			
Have you identified a member of staff as an Accessibility Champion and encourage others to become ambassadors for accessibility?			
Do disabled staff and volunteers have a personal evacuation plan? Are they reviewed at regular intervals (e.g. twice a year)?			
Have you identified knowledge gaps and training needs in your team?			
Do you regularly review opportunities for upskilling available through the Fáilte Ireland Business Hub and learniFI? Your Accessibility Champion can track training levels and opportunities for your team.			

Hiring Staff

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Action	Task Owner	Completed (Y/N/P/A)	Notes
Do you ensure roles at every level of your business, including leadership roles, are accessible to people with disabilities?			
Are your job adverts and job descriptions accessible and inclusive?			
Do you encourage applications from people with disabilities?			
Are job adverts posted via inclusive websites such as the site for the <u>Open Doors Initiative</u> ?			
Do you provide several ways in which applicants can contact you?			
Do you provide an onboarding service so you can learn about employees' needs and identify ways to help them thrive in their roles? Is an onboarding manual used to streamline the sharing of basic information that is useful for all?			
If you hire seasonal or temporary staff, ensure that you have a strategy and procedures in place so that they understand the importance of, and how to deliver, accessible and inclusive services.			

Feedback & Continuous Improvement

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Action	Task Owner	Completed (Y/N/P/A)	Notes
Do you use a visitor survey to gather feedback? Feedback, both positive and negative, gives you opportunities to improve your offer.			
Do you ask your staff to make note of questions or issues they encounter in relation to accessibility? You can use the data you gather to: • Improve pre-visit information. • Identify practical changes that need to be made (e.g. improved interior signage) • Identify training needs and information gaps. • Inform inclusive policies and procedures			
Do you invite local disabled people's organisations and groups to provide feedback and suggestions on your offer and ways you can improve it (ensuring that people are compensated for their time and input). For example, you could invite a local dementia group in for a complimentary visit and coffee morning to review your 'relaxed session' offer.			

Action	Task Owner	Completed (Y/N/P/A)	Notes
Do you use your findings to update your policies and practices and inform things like training and staff development plans?			
Where requested, do you provide feedback to visitors about how you have responded to their queries? Showing that you are willing to listen and learn is a great way to demonstrate a real commitment to providing a welcome for all.			
Is 'accessibility and inclusion' a standing item in any team meetings and annual reports?			
Are accessibility and inclusion embedded in your attraction's governance, through inclusive policies and procedures, and do you monitor progress so you can ensure standards and identify areas for improvement?			

This action checklist is aimed at owners and managers of visitor attractions and experiences. If you serve food, please also read the 'food and beverage' checklist. If you host events at your attraction, you may also find the 'business event venue' checklists helpful.

Consider sharing the Access Welcome Guide and information you have gathered with your local destination organisation, and agencies or groups that regularly use your venue to help improve the accessibility and inclusivity of events in your area. For training opportunities and further information, visit the [Accessible and Inclusive Tourism Business Support Hub](#), and visit [learnIFI](#) for resources, Live Learning and self-paced courses.

