

# Enhancing the quality of your service

**Writing an Access Statement for your business** – An easy reference guide

## What?

### What is an Access Statement?

An Access Statement is a written, clear and accurate, and above all honest description of your current facilities and the services you offer, to enable a potential visitor to make an informed decision as to whether your business meets their particular access needs.

## Who?

### Who Benefits from your Access Statement?

Quite simply – All of your customers will benefit from your Access Statement - both current and potential, because of the additional information you will provide for them.

You and your staff will also benefit - An Access Statement is a way of informing all staff (new and existing) of the accessible facilities and services that you offer and could improve responses to specific enquiries. It can also enable your staff to be involved with access planning.

Anyone with a specific access requirement will certainly benefit from your Access Statement e.g. the ageing population (a growing market both domestically and from overseas), families with young children, anyone with a temporary access requirement (e.g. broken leg) or one of the 10 million UK residents whose disability is covered by the Disability Discrimination Act (1995 revised 2005) (DDA), 2.5 million of whom travel regularly.



## Why?

### Why have an Access Statement?

- It informs your potential customers, clearly and in a concise format, about the services and facilities you currently offer.
- It helps to manage guests expectations.
- It is also a statement of intent and a commitment to providing equality of guest experience.
- It is a mandatory part of your quality assessment.
- It may help you meet the various legal obligations placed on you by the DDA.
- An Access Statement will also help you to identify possible accessibility issues.

## How?

### How do you write an Access Statement?

The template provided, as part of this guidance, will give you a structure to follow. A series of headers followed by succinct bullet points is the suggested presentation method (see the example Access Statements for reference). Also in the template there are items suggested which you could include in your Access Statement.

It is easiest to follow the visitor journey from initial contact with the customer, that is through any marketing and information you are providing to the point of departure, noting any details of facilities or services that may help guests, particularly those with access requirements to your property. The self survey forms which form part of the information pack for the National Accessible scheme may help with this process. The self survey form will guide you through each area of your premises and the information collected as part of this self survey can be used when writing your Access Statement.

Your Access Statement can be backed up with photos and/or diagrams and floor plans, which many people find a useful reference.



**An introduction to Access Statements**



## Where?

### Where do you publish your Access Statement?

You should try to ensure that your Access Statement is published in as many places as possible to help make it available to as many people as possible – consider the following:

Include it on your website, with any confirmation letters, in a separate leaflet, make it available in room folders, in brochures, available on demand and on display in the reception area. You should ensure that wherever possible, you produce it in alternative, accessible formats if requested e.g. audio, larger print (minimum font size 16).

Make the Access Statement available via many different methods (suitable for your business) e.g. by FAX, post, electronically and verbally.



## Which?

### Which businesses can use the template?

The template is suitable for hotels, guest accommodation, self catering, holiday, touring and camping parks, hostels, bars, restaurants, spas and visitor attractions (if a particular section is not relevant to your business enter 'Not available' in the section to highlight to the consumer you do not have this facility or area available at your property).

This guidance is not exhaustive and there may be additional items you feel you need to include. We understand that each business is unique and will include many different areas and facilities; the template is designed to allow for this.

The template is available on [www.visitbritain.com/accessstatements](http://www.visitbritain.com/accessstatements)

### Which is the best way to approach writing my Access Statement?

Prepare the information you would like included in your Access Statement. For accommodation operators this might be easier if the relevant self survey from the National Accessible Scheme is completed which will then have all the information about your premises in one place.

Complete any measurements (where you intend to include them) and details before starting to enter information onto the template.

Open up the template and type into all the fields. Ensure that the text is succinct for guests to read. Included in the template there is help and advice for each field.

Once finished you can transfer all the information into a standard document. At this point the information you have entered onto the template will pull through to the created document.

If you are unable to enter all the data in one sitting there is a facility to keep your work for 7 days within the template. You will be issued with a unique number to retrieve your work.

**Remember!: keep the information simple, clear and concise**



## What now?

### I have written my Access Statement what now?

Publish the completed Access Statement on your website and in hard copy.

Have your Access Statement ready to show your Quality Assessor at the time of assessment.

Review your facilities, services and staff training and awareness, regularly, and update your Access Statement accordingly

Make access requirements an integral part of your maintenance and refurbishment programmes (where necessary, update Access Statements accordingly).

Keep updated about changes in the law as it is constantly evolving.

When updating your Access Statement ensure that it is changed wherever you have it listed and in each format.

Further help

More help and advice and further contacts can be found in the landing page of [www.visitbritain.com/accessstatements](http://www.visitbritain.com/accessstatements)



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