

# the access statement and pubs/

why an access statement will  
make a real difference for  
your pub

## **Why is it good for my business to complete an Access Statement?**

Pubs are the home of hospitality in the UK and are widely known and prized for their warm welcome and excellent service.

We want as many people as possible to enjoy going to pubs including those with access needs and an Access Statement can be a valuable marketing tool to help you tap into what is estimated to be a £2 billion a year market.

By providing an Access Statement you can:

- enhance the quality of experience you offer to all of your visitors
- help visitors who have specific access requirements (about 1 in 5 people in the UK have a disability and many others such as parents with pushchairs have additional access needs) make informed decisions about your site.

Most visitors make the decision to visit before they come to your site –if they have access needs and they're not confident they will be met-they probably won't bother!

So, don't be scared to talk about Access – it can only be a positive to provide potential customers with information.

## **What is an Access Statement?**

An Access Statement is a description (written and/or pictorial) of your facilities and services to:

- help inform people with specific access needs about what to expect
- allow each visitor to make an informed decision as to whether your pub meets their particular access needs

## **Who should be involved?**

Producing an Access statement is something that is worth doing in collaboration with staff to ensure that they understand what it is and what it can be used for.

This can also help to reduce the burden on the licensee as the guidance can be broken down into sections and different members of staff can gather information for each section.

The final statement should be collated and considered as a marketing document so it is worth making it as readable and attractive as possible.

## **So how do we write an Access Statement and what experience do we need to have?**

No experience necessary! To make writing your Access Statement as easy as possible for you we have developed an online tool in partnership with VisitEngland for you to use.

All you need to do is to write an honest description of the facilities and services available (and in some cases, not available) at your pub. Guidance of things you need to think about and consider for inclusion in your Access Statement is given at every step along the way.

We have also produced a sample Access Statements just to give you an idea of how your access statement might look, which we recommend you look at first. But remember, don't just copy, make the Access Statement your own, it is your marketing tool!

NB: It doesn't matter if you don't have particular facilities or services – the important thing is to make the information available so that those with access needs can make an informed decision.

### **How long will it take to complete?**

It depends on your site but 1-2 hours should be sufficient.

### **How do I get started?**

Just go to [www.visitengland.org/accessstatements](http://www.visitengland.org/accessstatements) and follow the online instructions:

Step 1: Create and print your own information collection form. You need this form to be able to walk around the reserve and gather your information. From the options select the Pub template.

These sections you must complete:

- Introduction
- Pre-Arrival
- Car Parking Facilities and Arrival
- Customer Toilets
- Bar/bar area and Dining area/area
- Public areas
- Additional Information
- Future Plans

These sections are optional and need only be included in your Access Statement if you have them at your pub:

- Beer garden/Outdoor area/Smoking area
- Bedrooms
- Accommodation - Bathrooms, Shower-rooms & Toilets

## **What do I need to do next?**

Step 2: Gather your information.

With your printed information collection form you need to go out and walk around the pub making notes, following the guidance provided in the relevant sections.

If you wish to you can also take a camera with you and where possible take good quality photos for each section. Visitors tell us that a good picture helps them to see clearly what is on offer as well as inspire them to visit, so they can add to your Access statement.

You might also need a **tape measure** (as long as possible) to measure doorways, chairs etc.

Although lots of pubs may find it difficult to make physical changes to the building, there are lots of small changes that you can put in place to make things easier for visitors with Access needs.

Good service is key and an inclusive approach to customers. You can also look at our pub access check list for some suggestions of simple low cost alterations which will help make your pub more accessible to all:

### Pub Accessibility checklist

- Ensure staff are well trained to respond to the needs of people with Access needs and help out where possible – this can often avert any potential problems or issues
- Think about contacting the Council to request a dropped curb outside the pub to assist customer entry into the pub
- Where possible ensure that access to the pub is level e.g. through use of ramps

- Try to make sure that doors are as easy to open as possible or think about fixing open heavy or stiff internal doors
- Try to make sure that menus and drinks lists are clear and easy to read or have large print versions available for customers with visual impairments – alternatively encourage staff to read out menus to those who need it
- Signpost different areas as clearly as possible, particularly accessible toilets
- Try to use contrasting colours where possible on signs and when laying tables to make things easier for those with visual impairments
- Train staff to assist those who might find it difficult to get the bar by serving at tables
- Consider whether it might be possible to change the layout of the pub particularly to assist people in getting to the bar/toilets
- Think about putting in place grab rails on difficult stairs and steps and in toilets
- Consider installing a hearing loop for those with hearing impairments
- Think about incorporating Accessible adjustments into planned future refurbishments as this will reduce cost in the long run
- Talk to your customers to see what changes would make things easier for them and incorporate if possible

This is only a short list of useful changes that can be very helpful to those with Access needs.

For further information on low cost alterations and advice on making changes check out the VisitEngland Website: <http://www.visitengland.org/access>

For a more comprehensive view on obligations under the law you can access our full guidance for pubs on the Equality Act and your obligations under it.

### **What do I do once I have collected all of the information?**

Once you have collected all of the information you need, go back to the online tool and start to write your Access Statement following the online instructions. For each section, examples are given of the sort of things you might include.

You can look at the example access statements for help and guidance on how to do it.

### **What do I do once I have written my Access Statement?**

You will save your completed Access Statement as a Word document. You should now insert any photographs you have taken. Do a final check of the document, looking at content, spelling and formatting to ensure you are happy with it. Remember this is an

important marketing document for your pub. Keep the font Arial and size 14pt, don't be tempted to change it.

### **How should I make my Access Statement available to visitors?**

Add your Access Statement to your website as a downloadable Word document or PDF. Make sure it is in a prominent easy to find place. You may want to include a paragraph where the Statement is downloaded that explains how you welcome everyone and have produced the Access Statement to give visitors more detailed information about the pub to help them in making their choice.

If you don't have a website it would be worth highlighting it or linking to it on you pub company/brewery website profile if you have one or on your profile on pub finder websites.

It may also be useful to have a few hard copies available to give to visitors and make sure your local Tourist Information Centre, if you have one, has copies.

### **Once I have written my Access Statement is that the job finished?**

Having an Access statement will be really helpful to lots of visitors.

However, so that it stays useful it is a good idea to review it at least annually, to ensure it is up to date and record any changes.

Finally, it is a good idea to listen to your visitors and any comments they may have about the Access Statement and any questions they may frequently ask about accessibility and reflect them in your updated version.

### **Where can I get any further help or guidance?**

Still not sure? The supporting information below should help:

- VisitEngland <http://www.visitengland.org/access>
- BBPA Pub accessibility Guidance

### **External guidance to help:**

- Doors: [www.accesscode.info/buildings/6\\_5.htm](http://www.accesscode.info/buildings/6_5.htm)
- Toilets: [www.accesscode.info/buildings/6\\_9b.htm](http://www.accesscode.info/buildings/6_9b.htm)