



Visit Wales  
Croeso Cymru

## ACCESS STATEMENT

**This fact sheet has been produced by Visit Wales to help businesses in all sectors of the tourism industry ensure, that visitors have reliable information when deciding whether or not a place is suitable for them.**



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru  
Welsh Assembly Government

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## ACCESS STATEMENT

Many of you will have prepared your Access Statement as a mandatory part of participating in Visit Wales grading. Others will just be joining the scheme and wish to be made aware of its preparation and status. This fact sheet is a revised issue of that issued some 3 years ago and is relevant in both cases, as it covers some new areas and brings the information in line with current practices.

### 1. So what is an Access Statement?

It is unfortunate that this term is also associated with buildings and their construction- two similarly named, but distinctly different documents.

- a) Design Access Statement – This is submitted at the Planning stage of a project and records how access issues have been considered and developed from inception, through all stages of development to the operation and management of the Building.
- b) **Access Statement** – in this context it is a clear, accurate and honest written statement of the services and facilities you offer – **NOW**.  
An Access Statement is seen as the most appropriate way of presenting your accessible qualities to the potential visitor.

### 2. Why have an Access Statement?

#### a) From your perspective -

- It is highly likely that your current services and facilities will meet many peoples' expectations, but you may not be advertising that fact, with the result of **underselling** yourselves.
- The wider your potential for attracting more visitors, the more profitable and sustainable your business will be.
- Apart from the **10 million U.K. residents** covered by the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), you will also be reaching an ageing population – Silver Surfers – their families, including young children, and anyone with a temporary impairment such as a broken leg.
- In writing your Statement, you will be able to easier identify barriers that exist, and hence find reasonable solutions to their removal.
- As changes occur, your staff will be reminded of the full range of services offered and be able to respond more efficiently and accurately to queries.

#### b) From the visitors' point of view-

- From the information provided the potential visitor has the CHOICE to decide on a location best suited to their circumstances and life style.

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- It lessens misunderstandings from interpreting only a symbol, so ensuring a happy holiday experience. Symbols used **on their own** are dangerous.

c) It's a living document

As your business develops, so too will your Access Statement. This may be by reason of;

- Visitor Feedback – so encourage constructive comments that will act as a catalyst for the removal or adjustment of barriers.
- During refurbishment or new-build extensions, there is the opportunity to meet current best practice covered by regulatory standards and the DDA.

### 3. How to achieve a meaningful Access Statement

a) Gathering the information-

You need to 'travel' the Visitor Journey to, in and around your property on their terms. In writing down features and obstacles met you will be able to identify what barriers need addressing.

It is not only physical issues that need to be considered, but here is an opportunity to inform many other potential visitors about sensory qualities (décor/lighting/etc.) and how information is provided.

To self audit or enlist help?

To help you on this journey, there are various check lists you can obtain from National and Local Disability organisations such as Disability Wales, RADAR, CAE, and also from Visit Wales.

Local Access Groups can be engaged to carry out very useful 'walk and talk surveys' and also to carry out **Disability Equality Training** for you and your staff.

For larger premises, Consultancy Practices can be commissioned for written reports.(National Register of Access Consultants) If you decide to carry out your own survey don't be afraid of writing down what appears to be taking on the proportions of a NOVEL! From its pages you will later extract and prioritise that which the potential tourist most wants to know. In the meantime you no doubt may have 'uncovered' quite a lot that in the past has gone unnoticed! Many of you will have gone through this process and may need to 'fine tune' the information gathered.

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b) The essence of an Access Statement: - **FACTS not OPINIONS**

Information provided must be-

**Accurate - Appropriate - Accessible.**

**Accurate** – Describing the environment as it is, factually, e.g. 3 steps to main entrance.

(The phrase ‘not suitable for wheelchair users’ is an opinion – your opinion).

**Appropriate** – You are considering an inclusive tourism product. Accessibility is not just about ramps, wide doors and lifts. The information now needs to consider sensory and intellectual impairments.

**Accessible** – Making the information available ‘every which way’ E.g. electronically: fax: post: word of mouth (telephone): letter: web site: brochure. Also advertise in publications such as ‘Open Britain’.

4. Your Statement – Prioritised

Various templates exist to help your Statement become a worthwhile tool. Visit Wales and Visit Britain have collaborated to produce a template, found at:

[www.accesstemplate.co.uk](http://www.accesstemplate.co.uk).

[www.tourismtrade.org.uk](http://www.tourismtrade.org.uk).

then search ‘access statements’

Basically you need to cover that Visitor journey that your survey took, the important aspects being:-

- **Getting there**
- **Getting in**
- **Getting around**
- **Getting out**
- **Getting about**

Depending upon your accommodation type, suggested bullet point headings will vary, but you should still follow the areas above.

a) Hotels and Serviced Guest Accommodation - provide information covering-

Exposure: City or town centre, open moor land, amidst woods, overlooking cliffs etc

Transport: Public transport provision / courtesy car service. Taxi. Distance(s) to nearest town(s).

Parking: Designated spaces / drop off points / surface-level, firm / illuminated.

Entrances: Clearly identified / service call button / level-ramped or steps / manual or automatic doors / clear door opening (cm) / level alternative to a stepped main entrance / opening times.

Reception: Lighting / hearing loop fitted / low level section of desk / seating / staffed.

Public Rooms: on one level / signage / lighting levels / door widths / corridor widths / furniture can be re-arranged.
Public Toilets: location / adapted for wheelchair user to transfer / unisex / baby change / support rails / colour contrast.
Lifts/Stairs: Location / number floors accessed / type lift-platform or stair / talking / tactile buttons / size carriage.
Bedrooms: Location-ground floor/ adapted for wheelchair user / TV with teletext / bed combinations.
Bathrooms: En-suite or public / Adapted-support rails, level entry shower, transfer space, colour contrast.
Lighting: Lux levels / dimmer switches / additional task lighting available.
Evacuation: information sheet / escape routes / refuges / staff training / visual and audible signs.
Externals: Free run area for assistance dogs / level paths and surfaces / seats / features e.g. statues, container planting, ponds, Seasonal sounds, smells and activities (hay making) / log burner / textures in the use of local materials for walls and paths etc.
Equipment: Hired in or owned / hoists, vibrating alarm clocks, wheelchairs, mattress elevators etc.
Information: Hotel, location information and menus in a range of formats / lists - Local carers / Local hire companies / accessible taxi / hospitals / doctors.
Miscellaneous: Mobile phone reception / O/S grid ref / post code (for Satellite Navigation). Have staff received Disability Equality Training.

#### b) Self Catering Accommodation - provide information covering -

Exposure: City/town centre, open moor land, amidst woods, overlooking cliffs etc.
Transport: Can the property be reached by public transport / car / courtesy car service / distance(s) to nearest town(s).
Parking: Adjacent to property / car parking within 50m / drop off lay-by.
Entrances: Level / ramped or steps / shared / door width / manual or self closing.
Lifts: Number of floors served / audible announcements-raised letters / stairs - handrails.
Rooms: Is there a ground floor - kitchen/bedroom / bathroom / toilet.
Bedrooms: Single / double /connecting. Can furniture be rearranged/ door widths.
Bathroom / Toilet: Adapted for wheelchair user / support rails to sanitary ware / level entry shower / wet room - bath / shower.
Kitchen: Accessible when seated:-work surfaces / oven / microwave / hob / kettle / sink / fridge / freezer / cupboards.
Door widths: Kitchen / lounge / bedrooms / toilet / open plan.

Externals: Free run - spend area for assistance dogs / level paths / any features e.g. statues , containers, ponds, Seasonal sounds , smells and activity (hay making), log burner / textures - use of materials for floors, walls, paths.

Equipment hired in or owned: additional task lighting / teletext TV / hoists / mattress elevators / wheelchairs etc.

Information provision: In a range of formats about the property, its location. Lists- Local carers/local hire companies / accessible taxi / hospitals / doctors.

Miscellaneous: Mobile phone reception / O/S grid ref / post code (satellite navigation). Owners on site - contact details. Power supply - mains / other / stand-by.

### c) Attractions - provide information covering -

Exposure: Outdoors- acreage / indoors / confined spaces / noisy.

Transport: Can it be reached by public transport / is transport provided from pick-up points. Distance(s) to nearest town(s).

Parking: Is there parking on site / within 50m of site entrance / are there designated blue badge spaces / is there a coach / car drop off point; are routes to the main entrance level.

Entrances: Level / ramped / steps / lift. Door width and is it manual / automatic, service call button.

Ticket office / gift shop: Is there a low level counter / induction loop / are displays below 120cm / are passageways wider than 120cm.

Is information available in a range of formats / is there a minicom telephone number.

Public Areas: Is the attraction on one level / are there lifts to different levels / is there an accessible WC and changing room / meals to suit dietary needs.

Are menus in large print / photos, is signage clear and consistent. Are paths suitable for prams / wheelchair users, are seats at regular intervals. Is there a free run / spend area for assistance dogs.

Equipment / Support: Wheelchair hire / are accessible modes of transport provided around the site e.g. electric buggy / train etc. are there public phone boxes. Have staff received Disability Equality Training.

Information: Are there guide books in a range of formats .are there guided tours / are there audio guides / is there a BSL signer in house.

Miscellaneous: Mobile phone reception / O/S grid ref / post code (satellite navigation).

#### d) Caravan Parks - provide information covering -

Exposure: Forest / open fields / cliff top, etc.

Transport: Public transport / pick up points with courtesy car. Distance(s) to nearest town(s).

Access roads: Lighting / speed bumps / surface-tarmac etc / footpaths.

Parking: To Units - alongside / within 20m. To public facilities – car park with designated spaces.

Reception: Service call button / level entry / steps / manual or automatic doors / opening times.

Public facilities: Toilets - Accessible for wheel chair user / Shop or delivery of provisions, Laundry - level entry, Clubroom/restaurant- level or ramped entry/internal lift.

Units on site: Touring pitches / Static - accessibility -ramped - level entry showers.

Externals: Play areas. Free run / spend area for assistance dogs / Picnic tables and benches. Seasonal activities e.g. hay making.

Support: Hours warden on site / Public phone box / Mobile phone reception. Security - site locked.

Information: Site map in large print / tactile.

#### e) Hostels - provide information covering -

Exposure: City or town centre/ isolated / edge village, etc.

Transport: Public transport / pick up points with courtesy car. Distance(s) to nearest town(s)

Parking: On site/within 50m /designated blue badge spaces.

Entrances: Level / ramped /steps. Automatic or manual doors/ service call button / opening times.

Lifts: Number of floors / audible announcements/raised letters.

Rooms: Dormitory / individual. At ground floor level - Bedrooms - bunks / beds. Toilet - bathroom – wet room.

Public rooms: Floor level- Lounge, accessible toilet, dining, laundry, drying area, kitchen - equipment available when seated - worktop, oven, microwave.

Externals: Free-run / spend area for assistance dogs, seating / play area. Seasonal sounds, smells and activity (hay making), log burner / textures – materials used for floors, walls, paths.

Equipment: Hired in or owned e.g. hoists / shower chairs, etc.

Information provision: In a range of formats about the property and its location. Lists of Local carers / local hire companies / accessible taxi / hospitals / doctors.

Miscellaneous: Mobile phone reception / O/S grid ref / post code (for Satellite navigation).

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## 5. Glossary of terms used

- a) D.D.A. - Disability Discrimination Act (1995) was introduced to prevent discrimination against disabled people. Those covered by the Act include people who are - blind or partially sighted; Deaf and hard of hearing. People who have - heart conditions; problems with incontinence; insulin dependent diabetes; experienced mental health problems. People with - epilepsy; Downs Syndrome; Dyslexia; learning difficulties; HIV; Multiple Sclerosis; Cancer, and Wheelchair users. All service providers, and that includes **accommodation providers**, have a **duty** under the Act to, where reasonable, **remove barriers to access**.
- b) Regulatory Standards. -Building Regulations Part M; British Standard BS 8300; DDA.
- c) RADAR - Royal Association for Disabled and Rehabilitation is a lobbying organisation that provides guides regarding accessible locations in the UK, both in print and on line.
- d) CAE. - Centre for Accessible Environments. - A membership organisation established to promote Best Practice in the design of the natural and built environment. It manages the National Register of Access Consultants (NRAC).
- e) Disability Equality Training. - Based on the Social Model of Disability; it is the environment that is the handicap not the impairment.
- f) Wheelchair transfer. - The space at the side (s) of a WC, bed or bath that enables a wheelchair user to transfer from one to the other -approx 80cm.
- g) Colour Contrast. - To assist in particular visually impaired people navigate and use buildings safely: examples are:- painting door frames a different colour to the wall; having sanitary ware a different colour to the tiled background; using lighter coloured crockery on a dark table cloth.
- h) Lux Levels. - Lighting levels are not measured in the size(s) of the bulb, watts, but in lux, recommended for various locations by the CIBSE. e. g. Bedrooms 100 lux
- i) Hearing Loop - a fixed or portable device that enables hearing impaired people, via their hearing aid, to hear more effectively.
- j) CIBSE- Chartered Institution of Building Services Engineers.
- k) Task Lighting. - The provision of table and standard lights to increase the luminance in an area.
- l) Free Run/spend area. - An area dedicated to exercising and toileting Assistance Dogs.
- m) Assistance Dogs - Used as a companion or to carry out various tasks for disabled people. They include Guide dogs for the blind, Hearing dogs for the Deaf.



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## 6. Examples of Access Statements

As all properties submitted for Visit Wales's grading need to write an Access Statement, examples will be found under the location heading on [www.visitwales.co.uk](http://www.visitwales.co.uk) such as those that are listed below:

### a) Serviced

[www.coedllyscountryhouse.co.uk](http://www.coedllyscountryhouse.co.uk)  
[www.llwynonnguesthouse.co.uk](http://www.llwynonnguesthouse.co.uk)  
[www.annanhotel.co.uk](http://www.annanhotel.co.uk)

### b) Self Catering

Ash Tree Lodge, Llanfynydd, Carmarthenshire  
<http://www.holidaycottagewales.com/holiday-accommodation-for-the-disabled.htm>

### c) Attractions

Bodnant Gardens, Conwy. [www.bodnant-garden.co.uk](http://www.bodnant-garden.co.uk)  
Welsh Mountain Zoo, Colwyn Bay  
<http://www.welshmountainzoo.org/zoo/homepage/eng/182>

### d) Caravan Park

Tyddyn Isaf, Isle of Anglesey. [www.tyddanisaf.demon.co.uk](http://www.tyddanisaf.demon.co.uk)  
Waen Farm, near Abersoch. [www.waenfarm.co.uk](http://www.waenfarm.co.uk)

### e) Hostel

YHA Snowdon Ranger  
[http://www.yha.org.uk/find-accommodation/wales/hostels/Snowdon-Ranger/local\\_info.aspx](http://www.yha.org.uk/find-accommodation/wales/hostels/Snowdon-Ranger/local_info.aspx)

## 7. Contacts

### Visit Wales

**Post:** The Old Junior School  
New Street, Machynlleth Powys SY20 8AT  
**Tel:** 0845 0108020  
**Email:**  
quality.tourism@wales.gsi.gov.uk  
**Web:** www.wales.gov.uk/tourism

### Tourism for All

**Post:** c/o Vitalise,  
Shap Road Industrial Estate  
Shap Road, Kendal, Cumbria LA9 6NZ  
**Tel:** 0845 1249974  
**Email:** info@tourismforall.org.uk  
**Web:** www.tourismforall.org.uk

Tourism for All is the centre of expertise on accessible tourism, working for a world class tourism experience for everyone.

### National Register of Access Consultants

**Post:** 70 South Lambeth Road  
London SW8 1RL  
**Tel:** 020 7735 7845  
**Email:** info@nrac.org.uk  
**Web:** www.nrac.org.uk

The NRAC is an independent register of accredited access auditors and access consultants. It is the only UK wide accreditation service for individuals who undertake access auditing and consulting. The NRAC is a resource for those seeking professional advice on how to make improvements to the built environment in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

### RADAR

**Post:** 12 City Forum  
250 City Road  
London EC1V 8AF  
**Tel:** 020 7250 3222  
**Email:** radar@radar.org.uk  
**Web:** www.radar.org.uk

RADAR campaigns for better lifestyles for disabled people & their families.

### Disability Wales

**Post:** Wernddu Court  
Caerphilly Business Park  
Van Road  
Caerphilly CF83 3GW  
**Tel:** 029 2088 7325  
**Email:** info@disabilitywales.org  
**Web:** www.disabilitywales.org

Disability Wales is a membership organisation of disability groups and allies across Wales. They work to the social model of disability, which recognises that people are disabled more by poor design, inaccessible services and other people's attitudes than by their impairment.

### Local Access Groups

These can be found via Disability Wales or via [www.accessgroupresources.co.uk](http://www.accessgroupresources.co.uk)

### Royal National Institute of the Blind (RNIB)

**Post:** 105 Judd Street  
London WC1H 9NE  
**Tel:** 020 7388 1266  
**Email:** helpline@rnib.org.uk

### Royal National Institute for Deaf People (RNID Cymru)

**Post:** 16 Cathedral Road  
Cardiff CF11 9LJ  
**Tel:** 020 2033 3034  
**Email:** rmidcymru@rnid.org.uk  
**Web:** www.rnid.org.uk

For information and advice on how to develop and market your tourism business, contact us on 0845 0108020, e-mail: [quality.tourism@wales.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:quality.tourism@wales.gsi.gov.uk) or visit [www.wales.gov.uk/tourism](http://www.wales.gov.uk/tourism)

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