

Accessibility champion brief

Accessible and Inclusive Tourism Toolkit for Businesses

What is an Accessibility Champion?

- Someone who is responsible for embedding accessibility throughout the business by assessing access provision and promoting equality and diversity
- Duties will typically become part of an existing role. In some cases, where resources allow, it may be a specific role, either full-time or part-time, possibly undertaken by a volunteer
- They may be at any level within your business and the duties may be split between two people e.g. a Managing Director, who inspires everyone within his/her business and builds accessibility into the business plan and a Front of House Supervisor, who takes on the drive to implement best practice and encourages other team members to participate and understand
- They are the driver behind developing access for all and should ensure that everyone works positively to provide inclusive customer experiences.

Who could be your Accessibility Champion?

To consider who in your business is the right candidate to take on this role, you need to assess their qualities.

Qualities:

- Inspired by inclusive tourism and the value and potential this has for the business
- Passionate about making improvements to current services and facilities in order to offer an inclusive experience for all your customers
- Wants to drive change and inspire colleagues
- Wants to make a real difference for disabled customers
- Acts as a role model by communicating, sharing, leading and inspiring both management and staff
- Drives best practice by increasing understanding of the wants and needs of disabled customers and how these might be met
- Recognises, advocates and supports equality within the workplace
- Keeps up to date with developments in inclusivity and implements them where appropriate.

The Cambridge Dictionary definitions:

Accessibility “the quality or characteristic of something that makes it possible to approach, enter, or use it”

Champion “a person who enthusiastically supports, defends, or fights for a person, belief, right, or principle”

What actions could your Accessibility Champion deliver?

- Evaluate the business through an accessibility audit to identify needs and gaps in relation to information, facilities and customer service
- Lead on the development of an action plan to bridge the gaps identified in the audit
- Implement the actions within the [Accessible and Inclusive Tourism Toolkit for Businesses](#) on improving accessibility
- Engage accessibility ambassadors throughout the business to help embed inclusive practices
- Write an inclusive tourism promise/pledge for the business in relation to welcoming all disabled customers
- Embed accessibility in the business plan under Corporate and Social Responsibility, developing key policies and procedures relating to accessibility
- Ensure that the voice of disabled people is represented in your business e.g. through participation with charitable organisations, employment of disabled people, promotion and marketing
- Be aware of current legislation on inclusive tourism (e.g. the Equality Act 2010) and business obligations
- Share best practice from other tourism businesses and emulate where possible
- Communicate positive achievements on inclusive tourism to colleagues throughout the business
- Apply for accessible tourism awards such as VisitEngland's Accessible & Inclusive Tourism Award and the Cateys Accessibility Award, involving colleagues from across the business in the application
- Use expertise to help answer accessibility related enquiries and complaints
- Review accessibility related feedback to further develop the business.