



Making your site more accessible to people living with dementia

Many people living with dementia, and their families, who enjoy nature and the outdoors tell us they want to know about experiences which will be accessible to them. They say they want to know whether a place is 'right' for them ranging from a visitor centre with facilities to a more remote experience with no provision. Having a diagnosis of dementia does not necessarily mean a need for a high level of adaptation, but people tell us that knowledge and information is key.

Every visitor site and public open space will be different in terms of accessibility. The challenge is how to provide consistent information online, with physical materials that can be displayed (cards, leaflets, posters) and on site (signage, information boards).

People will often assess their own risk and what they need to feel safe.

For visitors to feel prepared, informed, confident and welcome both in their planning and when they the visit, we suggest providing:

- A few key pieces of information
- Choice of experiences
- Concise information

Before visiting – *95% of visitors with access requirements look for accessibility information before deciding to visit (Euan's Guide survey)*

Accessibility information:

- Every organisation will have its own risk assessments, policies and guidelines.
- Check the accessibility guide at your location. Does it include some dementia specific considerations on sensory and neurological issues (e.g., challenges around light, noise, and visual perception). How people process information needs to be additionally considered.
- We cannot second guess what those issues may be. Consulting with people with lived experience provides insight into an audit process. This can guide and support site managers in decision making as well as build ownership into the process – **see Toolkit Factsheet – How to contact local groups.**

Resources to review accessibility and visitor experience

Useful for small and larger sites with a visitor centre.

- **Visit Britain - Create an Accessibility Guide** (follows guidance for the NASC – National Accessible Standards Scheme)
- **Visit Britain - Dementia Friendly tourism guide for businesses**
- **Alzheimer's Society Dementia Friendly Environment Checklist** – for indoor spaces but also good for outdoors signage, toilets, seating.
- **DEEP - Is this INSIDE public space dementia inclusive?** A checklist for dementia groups that can be used with site managers
- **DEEP - Is this OUTSIDE space dementia inclusive?** – as above for outside spaces

Access information - Website and digital content

- How **easy** is it to find access information on your website?
- Can you use **pictures and film** to provide information as well as a written description? This can help with a visual understanding of facilities e.g., entrance area, parking, and if these facilities are present) toilets, signage, café, steps, seating.
- **Contact name & number** Access guides cannot personalise or cover every access query. Sometime people just need to speak to someone. Where possible provide a named contact, who can give that personal touch to respond to calls and emails.
- **Consider how we 'name' or refer to people with additional needs** – the words we use matter to normalise experiences for everybody.
- For guidance on content, layout and use of images, ask your focus group on what works for them - **also see: Guides by DEEP – the UK Network of dementia voices:**
 - Dementia Words Matter – Guidelines on language about dementia
 - Writing accessible dementia friendly information
 - Writing accessible websites



Access information - Non-digital

In your area ask about how people find out about events or information. Consider printed content for local newsletters and magazines. Posters or pick up cards for information boards & libraries, GP practices and medical centres, carer support groups, cafes.

* Use clear friendly messages such as 'Everybody welcome' or 'We will do everything we can to support you to take part - just ask named person'.

Your own dementia awareness

- Ground your thinking in personal experiences – listen to [Dementia Diaries](#) (short audio diaries) to hear the voices of people living with dementia talk about their experiences out in nature.
- Person first - Whilst an understanding of some of the different and unique needs around dementia are important to know, recognise it's about the individual first.

Training for staff and volunteers

- See Dementia Adventure for free [Dementia Skills Training](#) on dementia awareness and creating outdoor experiences.
- See Alzheimer's Society for shorter dementia awareness sessions [Dementia Friends](#)

Site specific considerations:

Every location is unique. It may not be possible for a location to be fully accessible (and it does not always need to be). Sometimes small changes can make a big difference to enable people to use a site more independently.

Being independent can often increase the pleasure in our experiences.

At the site:

Consider the following - **but see Resources listed earlier** for further detail:

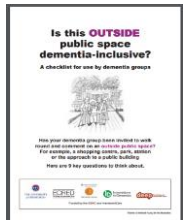
- What is my experience on arrival?
- How easy is it to find my way?
- How clear are the signage/way-markers?
- How are distances marked? Do they show time as well as distance?
- If there are no toilets, how far is it to the nearest public toilets?
- Are there quiet spaces to sit and relax?
- Are different path surfaces highlighted on a site guide?
- Is there information on self-guided things to see and do that change with each season?
- What type of nature & sensory experience could I have on arriving, within a 5–10-minute walk, 20-30mins and further? See [Making walks sensory](#) www.sense.org.uk

Resources



DEEP – UK Network of dementia Voices

[Dementia words matter: Guidelines on language about dementia](#)



DEEP – UK Network of dementia Voices - www.dementiavoices.org

[Auditing inside & outside public spaces](#)



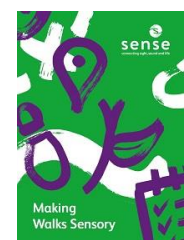
Alzheimer's Society –

[Dementia Friendly Environment Checklist](#)



Visit England, Visit Scotland

[Dementia Friendly Tourism Guide](#)



SENSE [Making walks sensory](http://www.sense.org) www.sense.org

Using the senses to connect with your surroundings.



[Parkopedia](#) Gives information about local places to park, fees, spaces



www.toiletmap.org.uk Radar key accessible toilet locations