

VisitEngland Launches Online Tool for Pubs to Improve Access for Visitors

24 October 2011. VisitEngland, the national tourist board, today launches a new version of the Access Statement Online Tool, aimed at helping businesses cater for visitors with access needs. This new version is specifically tailored for pubs and has been created in partnership with the British Beer and Pub Association (BBPA).

The online tool provides detailed guidance on the information that may be required by people with access needs when visiting a pub.

Businesses are encouraged to write a general introduction describing the location (city centre, countryside, coast), and to summarise any specific services and facilities suitable for people with access needs. In addition, information may also cover the following areas:

- **Pre-Arrival** - transport services, a description of the streets in the area surrounding the pub (e.g. paved/cobbled/level/uneven), information provided in alternative formats such as large print and audio.
- **Car Parking and Arrival** - car parking, drop off points, alternative entry points, number of steps, handrails and ramps.
- **Bar & Bar Area and Dining Area/Restaurant** - access to the area and layout, lighting, seating and tables, floor surfaces, alternative formats of menus available.
- **Beer Garden/Outdoor Area/Smoking Area** - accessibility of outdoor furniture, service offered to customers in outdoor area, layout (e.g. pavement, terrace, play area).

Additional areas that are covered include: public toilets, accommodation and future plans for improvement.

Ross Calladine, VisitEngland's Skills, Welcome & Accessibility Manager said:

"People with access needs require specific information about a venue in advance in order to be able to make an informed decision about whether an establishment can cater sufficiently for their needs. Pubs,

like any other tourist venue, should provide as much information to visitors as possible - this will help to enhance the visitor experience and also highlight areas where the business could improve."

Brigid Simmonds, Chief Executive, British Beer & Pub Association, also commented:

"We were delighted to work with VisitEngland on this tool. Access Statements are a great way for pubs to ensure customers with any specific access needs have the information they need.

"Whilst it is not always easy for pubs to adapt what are often historic buildings, great service and accurate information are key in ensuring that as many people as possible enjoy Britain's pubs. This tool will play a valuable role in enhancing pubs as the home of great hospitality in the UK."

Once a business has created their Access Statement they can then make this information readily available to visitors. Pubs can promote their statement on their website if they have one, or post it where they have a listing on a company site or a generic 'pub finder' site. It should also be kept on hand for bar staff to use when describing over the phone what facilities they have.

VisitEngland requires any business that is part of the quality assessment schemes for accommodation and attractions to have an Access Statement.

The national tourist board is also working with partners like the British Hospitality Association to provide tailored guidance for the many varied experiences visitors can have when on holiday in England.

For more information from VisitEngland see www.visitengland.org/accessstatements

For BBPA's guidance on accessibility in pubs see:
<http://www.beerandpub.com/industryArticle.aspx?articleId=258>

Ends

For more information contact:

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About VisitEngland

- VisitEngland is the national tourist board representing the public and private sector stakeholders of English Tourism. It works in partnership creating national tourism strategy, optimising marketing investment, and developing the visitor experience across England
- VisitEngland uses its Enjoy England consumer brand in the domestic market and markets England under the VisitEngland brand in international markets
- For corporate information see www.visitengland.org, for consumer information see www.enjoyengland.com

About VisitEngland's Accessibility Agenda

- VisitEngland coordinated the inclusion of a question concerning health conditions and impairments into the 2009 United Kingdom Tourism Survey (UKTS). VisitEngland was the key sponsor with support from Visit Wales, South West Regional Development Agency, North West Regional Development Agency, Advantage West Midlands and London Development Agency. A question was also added to the International Passenger Survey (IPS) in 2010.
- VisitEngland provides tourism information for people with physical and sensory needs at www.enjoyengland.com/access
- VisitEngland provides a number of tools and resources to help tourism operators accommodate people with access needs at www.visitengland.org/access.

About British Beer & Pub Association:

- The British Beer & Pub Association is the UK's leading organisation representing the brewing and pub sector.
- Its members account for 96 per cent of the beer brewed in the UK and operate around half of Britain's 51,000 pubs.