

Why 'Accessible' Toilets Aren't... Or, Why We Need #Benchoist

Even in today's inclusive society, potentially up to 14.5million people* – 15% of the UK population – are being excluded, because conventional wheelchair accessible (Document M) toilets (even when built to the correct specification...) aren't suitable.

They need more space, and/or a hoist, and/or a changing bench.

The emotional argument:

Without any or all of these 'extras', those 14.5million people either have to:

- go home early,
- face having to use – or lie on – a toilet floor,
- avoid going to a venue or outlet that they think doesn't have suitable toilets, or
- not go out at all.

And the same applies to their carers: they either cut a trip short, avoid your venue, outlet, or stay at home.

All it takes is an extra 1.6m x 2m floorspace...⁺

The financial argument:

Disabled consumers represent a market worth £80billion a year.

(Department for Work & Pensions)

Research highlights over 80% have taken their business elsewhere, to a more accessible provider:

(EFD, RADAR)

Disabled people represent 20% of an average retail business' customer base.

(Atkins Management Consultants for Office of Disability Issues report 2010)

Businesses that have a better focus on disabled customers have seen an increase in customer base, increased sales and increased profitability.

(Atkins Management Consultants for Office of Disability Issues report 2010)

The legal argument:

Under Equality Act 2010, providers are required to make 'reasonable adjustments, including to the built environment' to ensure disabled people are not put at a 'substantial' disadvantage.

These adjustments should also be made *before* there is a demonstrated need.

Under Building Regulations Approved Document M 2013 and the complimentary good practice guidelines of BS8300:2009:

- Disabled people should be able to find and use suitable toilet accommodation no less easily than non-disabled people.
- Where space is limited, a single, unisex, enlarged accessible WC facility (unisex being a facility that enables *one or two* assistants of either sex to assist a disabled person) should be provided.
(note, so capable of accommodating up to 3 people and a wheelchair!!)
- In any larger building to which the public have access in numbers, or where visitors may spend longer periods of time, it is desirable that a toilet with adult changing table/shower/ with a fixed track hoist (Changing Places) should be provided.

Potential users of a toilet with extra space, bench and hoist:

- * - 1.5million wheelchair users
- 6.5 million people who have either bladder or bowel incontinence
- 3.8million adults morbidly obese
- 1.5million people with a learning disability
- 1.2million people living with stroke
- 62,000 amputees
- 30,000 people with cerebral palsy
- 13,000 people with acquired brain injuries
- 8,500 people with multiple sclerosis
- 5,000 people with motor neurone disease
- 8,000 people with spina bifida
- 120,000 people with a stoma

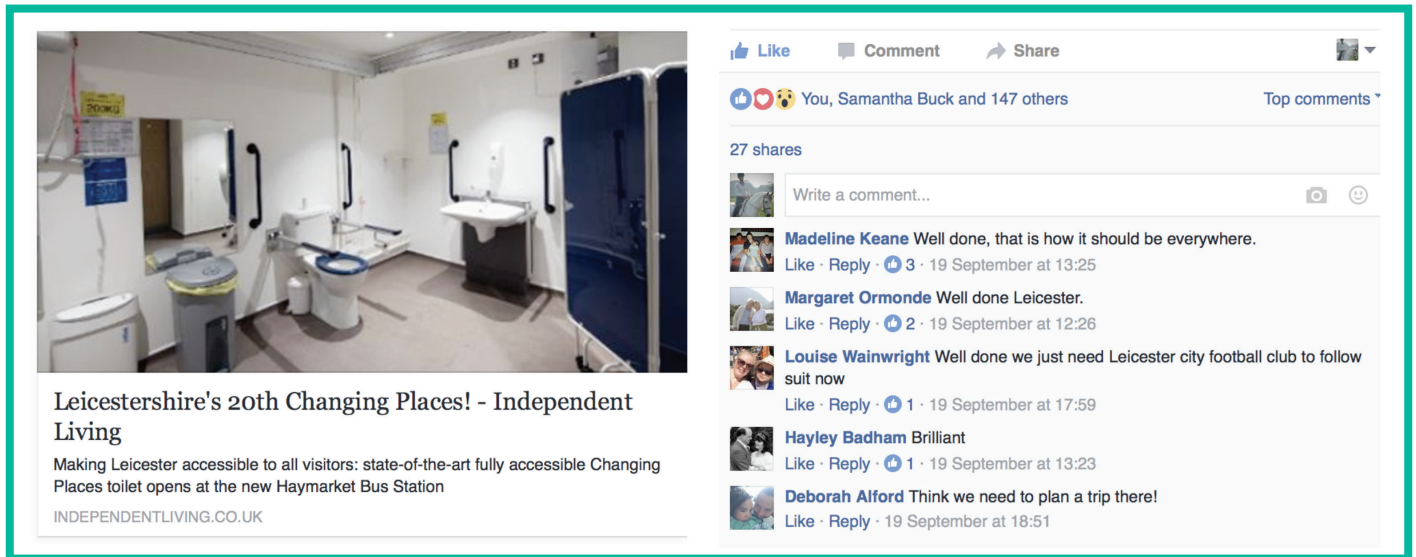
⁺ unisex wheelchair-accessible WC 2m x 2.2m/4.4m²; Space to Change 7.5m², Changing Places 12m²

People Talk!

The best form of advertising is recommendation.

With social media, word spreads quickly.

Equally, if your facilities are **NOT** what people expect, they will let the world know!



Leicestershire's 20th Changing Places! - Independent Living
Making Leicester accessible to all visitors: state-of-the-art fully accessible Changing Places toilet opens at the new Haymarket Bus Station
INDEPENDENTLIVING.CO.UK

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You, Samantha Buck and 147 others

27 shares

Write a comment...

Madeline Keane Well done, that is how it should be everywhere.
Like · Reply · 3 · 19 September at 13:25

Margaret Ormonde Well done Leicester.
Like · Reply · 2 · 19 September at 12:26

Louise Wainwright Well done we just need Leicester city football club to follow suit now
Like · Reply · 1 · 19 September at 17:59

Hayley Badham Brilliant
Like · Reply · 1 · 19 September at 13:23

Deborah Alford Think we need to plan a trip there!
Like · Reply · 19 September at 18:51

Believe it or not, having good accessible toilet facilities, with a bench and hoist, makes such a difference that people **WILL** base a decision to spend time – and money – with you on that provision!

Tell them about it:

- highlight on your website,
- promote on social media,
- advertise on site,
- signpost it,
- train staff.

It won't get used if people don't know about it.
Tell them, they will tell their friends etc etc...

Use it as a sales tool. It'll get people to visit.

Submit it for the Loo of the Year Award – get recognised for your facilities.
Notify OpenBritain, Tourism for All, DisabledGo! to put on their websites.



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