

Dementia Awareness Toolkit for Sand Dune Site Managers:

Site considerations & auditing



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 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 on site, but people tell us that knowledge and information is key.

Every Dunescapes site will be different in terms of accessibility. The challenge is how to provide information **online**, with **hard copy 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

These statistics from Euan's Guide, The Access Survey 2018, show how important it is to provide information for visitors with access requirements before visiting a site.

'95% of visitors..... look for accessibility information before deciding to visit. 83% Are more likely to visit somewhere new if they can find access information about it beforehand.'

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 issues such as challenges around light, noise, and visual perception? How people process information also needs to be considered.
- We cannot second guess what these 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 check list to review accessibility and visitor experience - these checklists are useful for small sites as well as larger sites with visitor centre facilities.

- **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
- **Alzheimer's Society Dementia Friendly Environment Checklist** – for indoor spaces but also good for outdoors signage, toilets, seating.
- **Visit Britain - Create an Accessibility Guide (follows guidance for the NASC – National Accessible Standards Scheme)**

- Visit Britain - [Dementia Friendly tourism guide for businesses](#)

Access information - Website and digital content

- How **easy** is it to find access information on your website?
- Can you use **pictures and video** to provide information as well as a written description? This can help us visually understand what facilities are like such as the entrance and parking area. If these facilities are present it's also very helpful to show accessibility for toilets, signage, café, steps, paths and seating.
- **Contact name & number** Access guides cannot cover every access query. Sometimes 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 for website and other digital materials, ask your focus group on what works for them - **also see:**

Resources: 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 how people find out about events or information.
- Consider printed content for local newsletters and magazines.
- Look at options for 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 the 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. You can search on topics such as nature, outdoors, well-being, access
- 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:

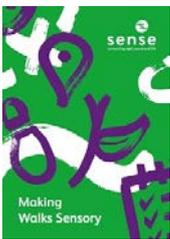
Every location is unique. It may not be possible for a location to be fully accessible (and it does not always need to be). Sometimes small changes can make a big difference to enable people to use a site more independently. Being independent can often increase the pleasure in our experiences.

At the site:

Consider the following - but see **Resources Checklists** listed on page 1 for more detail:

- What is my experience on arrival?
- How easy is it to find my way?
- How easy is it to read the signs to the parking area, entrance and visitor area so that I can find my way there and back?
- If way-markers are used on trails, are there enough to reduce my worry of becoming disorientated or getting lost?
- 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 there quieter times of the day or week to visit to avoid crowds?
- 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](http://www.sense.org.uk)
- Is there a charge for me to enter the venue or join an activity? Are there concessions for carers or free admission for those in carer roles?

Key resources highlighted in this fact sheet:

		
<p>DEEP – UK Network of dementia Voices <u>Dementia words matter: Guidelines on language about dementia</u></p>	<p>DEEP – UK Network of dementia Voices - www.dementivoices.org <u>Auditing inside & outside public spaces</u></p>	<p>Alzheimer's Society – <u>Dementia Friendly Environment Checklist</u></p>
		<p>Map for Radar key accessible toilet locations – www.toiletmap.org.uk</p>
<p>Visit England, Visit Scotland <u>Dementia Friendly Tourism Guide</u></p>	<p><u>Making walks sensory</u> www.sense.org.uk Using the senses to connect with your surroundings.</p>	

See also: Dementia Awareness Toolkit – Contacting Local Groups, downloadable from <https://dynamicdunescapes.co.uk/get-involved/site-managers/>

This resource was produced by [Dementia Adventure](#) and [Dynamic Dunescapes](#).

