

Inclusive Hospitality Network

Meeting notes

Date: 03.02.24

Time: 15:00-16:45

Location: Online

Attendees

Rachael Marshall

Helen Kane (note taker)

Ed Murray

Steve Catlin

Faye Medcalf

Len Goss

Kelly rose

Jane Simpson

Diane Howarth

Alexander Matthams

Carrie-Ann Lightly

Jenny Wheeler

Kate Sandle

Vicky Richards

Rosy Payne

Tracey Proudlock from 15.31

Bradley Culmer, NYMAS group from 16.00

Ross Calladine (speaking)

Permission was granted for recording.

1 - Welcome

Rachael - Thanks for attending. Some people have been working on items in the time since the last meeting.

2 Guidance documents have been published, 3rd in progress - accessible en-suites in hotel accommodation.

Today's plan - discussion on how to move the group forward - Rachael has been guiding so far.

2 – Presentation by Ross Calladine of Visit England

'Update on the new accessible and inclusive tourism toolkit for businesses'

Kate Nicholls is current ambassador for hospitality, with Ross.

A range of information has been produced. In 2023 all the information was collated by MIMA. Jean Hewitt also involved. The intention is to inspire people. The guidance group worked with hospitality trade associations, draws on best practice.

Launched 30.11.23. Free. Summarised technical guidance. Also good engagement driven on the website.

Invite to the group to engage, recommend any changes.

Links to the toolkit and a business card provided.

Good examples requested.

Ross email: ross.calladine@visitengland.org

Link to publication: <https://www.visitbritain.org/business-advice/make-your-business-accessible-and-inclusive/visitengland-accessible-and-inclusive>

3 - Discussion

Faye requested an email address - provided.

Menus in an easy read format highlighted.

Sunflower Lanyards promotion requested - Premier Inn currently using them.

Rosy - Link requested to be mailed.

Interested in profiling beds in hotels. There are plenty in self-catering accommodation, but more beds required in hotels.

Diane - Electric profiling beds. Cottage in the Dales provides profiling beds. Most other places charge, at around £100 a week. Storage and assembly is the only issue. Education for providers would be good, as others are resistant to inclusion. This should be at the top of the toolkit.

Ross to add more focus. Lots of low-cost examples are provided in the toolkit.

Diane would like to discuss myths, such as Changing Places toilet - best business decision they have made.

Steve - Hotel rooms are not dedicated, so used by non-disabled people, so there are issues for profiling beds such as occasional use assembly.

Diane sets a minimum 3 night stay for profiling beds for assembly reasons. Can be a big deal assembling for single nights.

Rachael - Existing Inclusive Hotels Network publications provided details on the business case for making changes. Profiling beds issues are similar to hoist issues in terms of pushing the business case. Some hoists have since been removed due to lack of take-up. Hoists were not advertised.

Diane - Hoe Grange Holidays in Derbyshire have similar beds to ours, don't look clinical. 100 are available on ebay, cheapest is 99p.

Rosy - It just needs one hotel group to trial it.

Carrie-Ann - I have stayed at both holiday groups mentioned. Previous experience - Tried to have a bed delivered, which is a service, although there was no storage space available in the hotel, but a lovely experience.

Faye - would like to include making hotels more sensory friendly - lighting, etc. Offered to work with Ross.

Rachael - there has been lots of work about patterns, hotel carpets. Design for the Mind PAS 6463. Jean Hewitt (PAS 6463 editor) also had input into the toolkit.

Diane - Autism friendly guidance was shown by Ross in the presentation. We followed that and Jen Cooper guided us. Both documents are helpful. The Autistic Society still run the award for hotel providers.

<https://www.autism.org.uk/what-we-do/autism-training-and-best-practice/autism-accreditation/autism-friendly-award>

Ross Recommended Marsham Court Hotel, Bournemouth as a good example. We included neurodiversity, linked to PAS 6463.

Jane - highlighted Wraxall Yard, Civic Trust winner this year + others.

<https://www.civictrustawards.org.uk/winners/wraxall-yard-cta>

<https://www.civictrustawards.org.uk/winners/wraxall-yard-sga>

<https://www.civictrustawards.org.uk/winners/kings-gate-caernarfon-castle-sga>

Rachael: Charles, AbleStay, a previous speaker is now fully booked and also looking at a new ski resort. AbleStay won the Cateys 2023 Accessibility Award, sponsored by the Blue Badge Access Award. Link:

<https://www.thecaterer.com/indepth/cateys-2023-accessibility-award-ablestay>

4 – General

Rachael - Rachael – IHN now has its own website, thanks to Steve:

<https://www.ihn.org.uk>

Content needed. Perhaps a summary of the conversation written up on the website today, profiles of people involved for example. 100 people are in the LinkedIn group, 17 online in this meeting. Access consultants, operators.

Premier Inn were involved at the start.

The website page is on the CAE website. Shannon's details have been removed, due to workload.

Change of name - keen to progress and need to be careful to guide people familiar with the old name to the new one.

Logo - Not sure it reflects the purpose of the group and the designer wasn't paid. Perhaps a sponsorship opportunity?

Tracey - Yes, Premier Inn were involved. I went on a visit to South London.

Finding people with a personal commitment recommended. People may come to us for personal advice when things go wrong.

Rachael - both the organiser and visitors could learn a lot from visits. We had a strong contact at The Caterer, who sadly died.

Faye - offered to run the network with Rachael. Faye and Ruben meeting at 2pm on 18th April for a chat. Rachael to discuss help from all volunteers together.

Ross - Brooklyn hotels in Manchester and Leicester just sold by the owner, Robin. Liberty suites not perfect, the hoist didn't go through to the bedroom etc, but it was a start. Owner runs the blue badge access award with Fiona Jarvis. Trying to engage change in the industry. Don't see the cause of the group in isolation, there are many groups out there to connect to.

Rosy - The hotel doesn't have a profiling bed.

Diane - Access to the Dales visitor had some issues, such as being asked if she wanted a disabled room or an accessible room, mirrors too high, etc. RIBA book by Julie Fleck Are You An Inclusive Designer raised. Would be good for

hotel designers to link with accessible professionals to get it right before fit-outs. Many groups operate in isolation. There is help and information out there but it's difficult to find.

Jane recommended RIBA Plan of Work overlay. Useful to pass on to developers, runs from stage 0 to 7.

Steve - planning can influence the outcome. Premier Inn, Archway planned to put in 1 hoist, planners insisted on 8. Working with hotel chains is a great idea but a lot are franchised hotels. International hotel group owned 3 hotels in UK, one was sold and the new owner took out the ceiling hoist and provided a mobile hoist and large thresholds on the doors. Franchisees can take accessible features out. Dorset hotel in Shepherds bush have taken their hoists out too - an example in the IHN publication.

Diane - Head of planning in Yorkshire wrote to her to say accessibility has no influence on planning law.

Tracey - London plan is a strong document, so there's no reason for hotels to get it wrong. Co-production on projects, with disabled people there as equals should be used and encouraged. Few people have the ability to do that. Nothing changed to the Brooklyn hotels when feedback was given. I don't have high access needs but had problems at both of the hotels. Told Robin, nothing changed. People don't always listen to issues or know how to pick them up. Developers should keep some money back to fix things.

Alex - % for hoists in the London plan and regulations are difficult to enforce. International chains put the bed against the wall, focus on money and profits.

Ross - a lot relates to architecture. A compromise is needed. Ed Warner pushed accessibility against designers taught skills. Jean is trying to influence it, in university lectures. Not enough universities engage with accessibility.

Rachael - 1 lecture on Part M got me into accessibility. I've since worked with Tourism and Events Management students at Cardiff Metropolitan University with Vicky Richards, who is with us today.

Vicky - Have been working for 8 years on accessibility. It's popular with students, many taking it forward. One student has developed an accessible toolkit for a London organisation. Embedding it from the beginning is important.

Jane - At an RIBA day recently, university is high on their agenda. I find students very interested, especially on Neurodiversity. Training of architecture students is improving.

Faye - disability should be at the top of everyone's agenda and note the disability action plan.

Suggested a Whatsapp group as her emails clog up as she's on 50 different networks or Facebook messenger.

Rachael to add to notes and keep the conversation going.

Steve - How to go about getting Part M aligned with the BSI document.

Rachael - Approved documents are part of an ongoing review cycle. There has been talk of the next review of Part M. The British Standards usually has quite an influence on the approved documents.

Jane - There have been discussions, no minister in place to approve and need to wait for government approval. British Standard is coming up for review now. Also waiting for the Arup research to be issued, just the toilet research has been issued so far.

Meeting closed at 16.45

**Next meeting: Wednesday 2nd October 2024, online at 2pm – 3:30pm.
Invitation will be sent to all members in advance.**