

P-05-806 We call for all premises in Wales to be awarded an Access Certificate number similar to the Food Hygiene Certificate, Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 04.03.20



Dear Petition Committee

We are delighted at B.C.D.P (Bridgend Coalition of Disabled People) that our Scores on the Doors Petition is again being looked at and we are glad we have a number of other charities and organisations including Disability Wales and Scope behind the idea.

As you may know our original idea was to have literally have “Scores on the Doors” similar to the Food Hygiene Certificate showing how assessible and disabled friendly premises are.

But our thoughts were then changed, and we would like to see just **logos** displayed on the front of a building and on their website to show what they offer.

For example, it would be great if a disabled person knew in advance if a pub, restaurant or hairdressers, etc had an accessible toilet by them displaying a logo on the door to say they have good access and have toilet that can be used by a wheelchair user.

Likewise, if a bank has a good hearing loop it would be good if the hard of hearing community knew in advance, and if a restaurant offered a braille menu it would be good if this was advertised.

There are many premises where staff have undergone dementia training or are autism aware. But once again most premises don't advertise this.

During the time our petition was alive and more recently we have spoken to many groups and individuals who say they are far more likely to go somewhere if they knew in advance what the premises offered and if they were accessible.

We do not want this idea, if implemented to punish or name and shame listed buildings or places that have poor disabled facilities but to show and promote the good. But even if you have a basement bar or a salon with steps there is no reason this establishment cannot still rate highly by having a hearing loop, braille menu or staff be trained in sign language so the premises may not be suitable for a wheelchair user but excellent for those with sensory impairments.

We think the idea is a positive one and we have had 99% good feedback. Many business owners with good access have said they would happily display logos to show what they offer and improve facilities to get more logos and offer more services.

The main reason we have decided logos would be better than a number scheme is a premises could offer excellent services to those with sensory impairments or learning disabilities but be completely inaccessible to wheelchair users, or vice versa.

Statements we have had recently have read:

Statement 1: “I am a wheelchair user and recently went to Llandudno for a weekend conference. I wanted to go out and watch the football on TV and to have food, but I was unaware which premises had good access and if it was possible for me to use loo when there. If this idea was implemented and I could search the net and see on a premises website what services they offered it would make my life a lot easier. Likewise, if logos were displayed on the front in building I would know which food establishments I could empty my bladder in. Going to a hairdresser’s or simply buying a newspaper would also be made so much easier”.

Statement 2: “As a visually impaired lady I recently went out for a meal in Cardiff. When I entered premises I was shown to my table and waiter saw my white stick and asked me if I wanted the braille menu. I had no idea they offered this service and said yes straight away. It made my day and meal much better as someone didn’t have to read menu out to me. I told various visually impaired groups that this restaurant has a braille menu and many now go to eat there.

The restaurant does not advertise the fact it has a braille menu, but it should and if a braille sign was on door then far more people would go there”

Statement 3: “My son Tom has autism and can often have a breakdown and huge tantrums and he is often seen as being naughty. I rarely take my son out because of this and am selective where we go. I know a lot of places offer staff autism awareness training and often these places are far more understanding to Tom and his needs. So, it would be great if a logo was introduced to show staff have had this training”.

Statement 4: “Any such idea has to include and increase mental health awareness training for staff and there needs to be more safe

spaces for those with mental health issues to go to and relax. Plus when they are in place there needs to be more information to where they are”.

Statement 5: “As someone who has recently had to start using a chair in her 20s I want to go out to clubs and festivals but often you get somewhere and they have poor access or no disabled toilets. It would make my life much easier if I knew in advance how wheelchair friendly a place was”

Statement 6: “I was recently down Chippy Alley in Cardiff during a Rugby International. There were huge queues outside three fast food outlets and a small queue outside a fourth. I noticed that those who had queues had 4 or 5 hygiene ratings and the other had a score of 2. Showed that this system works, I am sure a disability rating would work just as well.

We at Bridgend Coalition of Disabled People firmly believe this will be a simple idea to implement and would change many lives for the better and we have had good feedback from a variety of disability groups across Wales.

The main criticism this idea has had is will it be used to vilify listed buildings that cant improve access. The answer to that is no, we wont. We want to promote the good and be positive, not slate those with poor access. But there are things that even listed buildings can do and even if physical access cannot be improved they can make life easier and improve services for those with sensory impairments.

Thanks

Simon Green (Bridgend Coalition of Disabled People)