



The Access Survey

2018

GUIDE
EUAN'S



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Euan's Guide makes it easier for disabled people to find great places to go

Introduction

The Access Survey by Euan's Guide and Disabled Access Day is the biggest and longest running survey of its kind in the UK. Since 2014 we've been asking disabled people their opinions of accessibility in public places. The survey was created for anybody who has ever had to consider disabled access before going somewhere, whether that be a café, museum, hotel or anywhere else.

The responses to The Access Survey 2018 have revealed the good and the bad situations that arise when visiting places as a disabled person, and show the need for better access provision, availability of information, and awareness raising events like Disabled Access Day.

We hope that the findings of this survey will help to emphasise the importance of accessibility and disabled access information. Thank you to everybody who took part in The Access Survey 2018!

Euan MacDonald, Co-founder of Euan's Guide



Euan MacDonald MBE

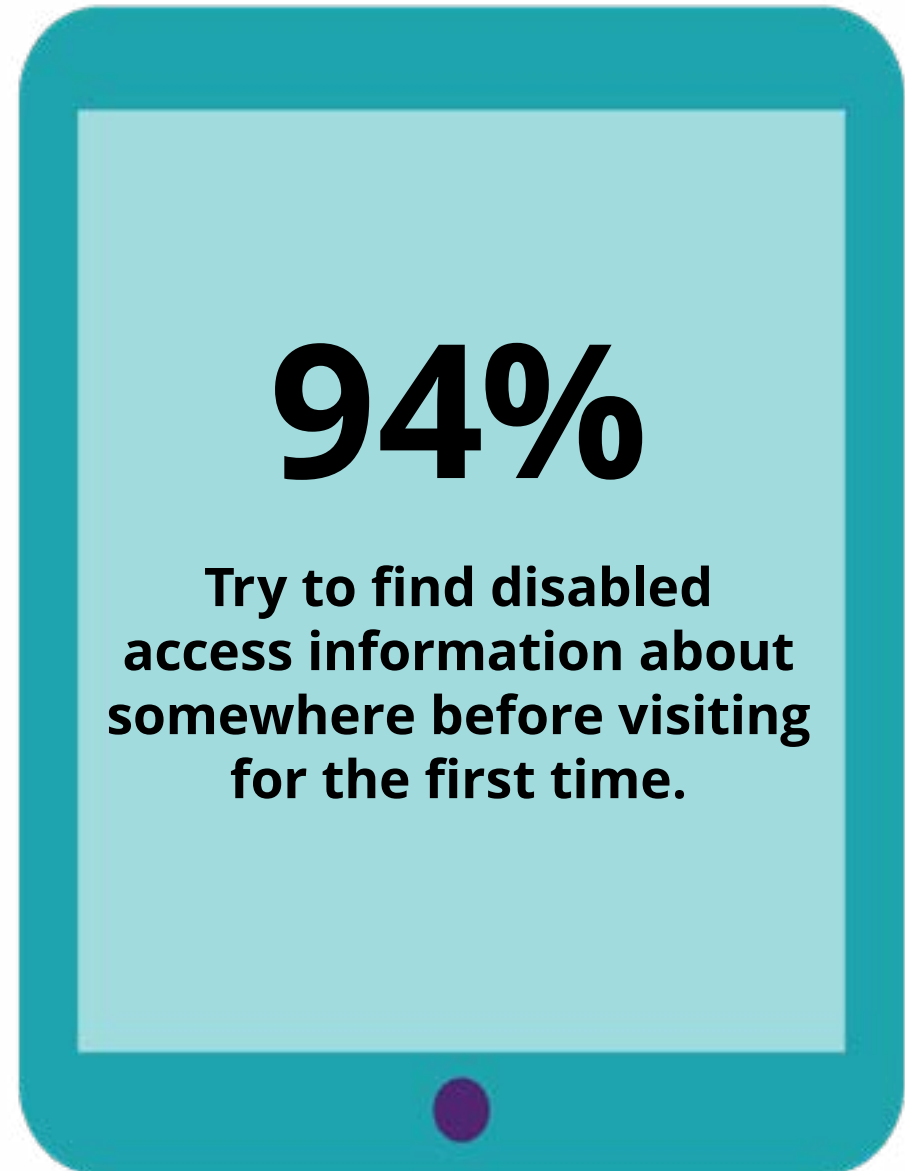
Key Findings

86%

Have found disabled access information on a venue's website to be misleading.

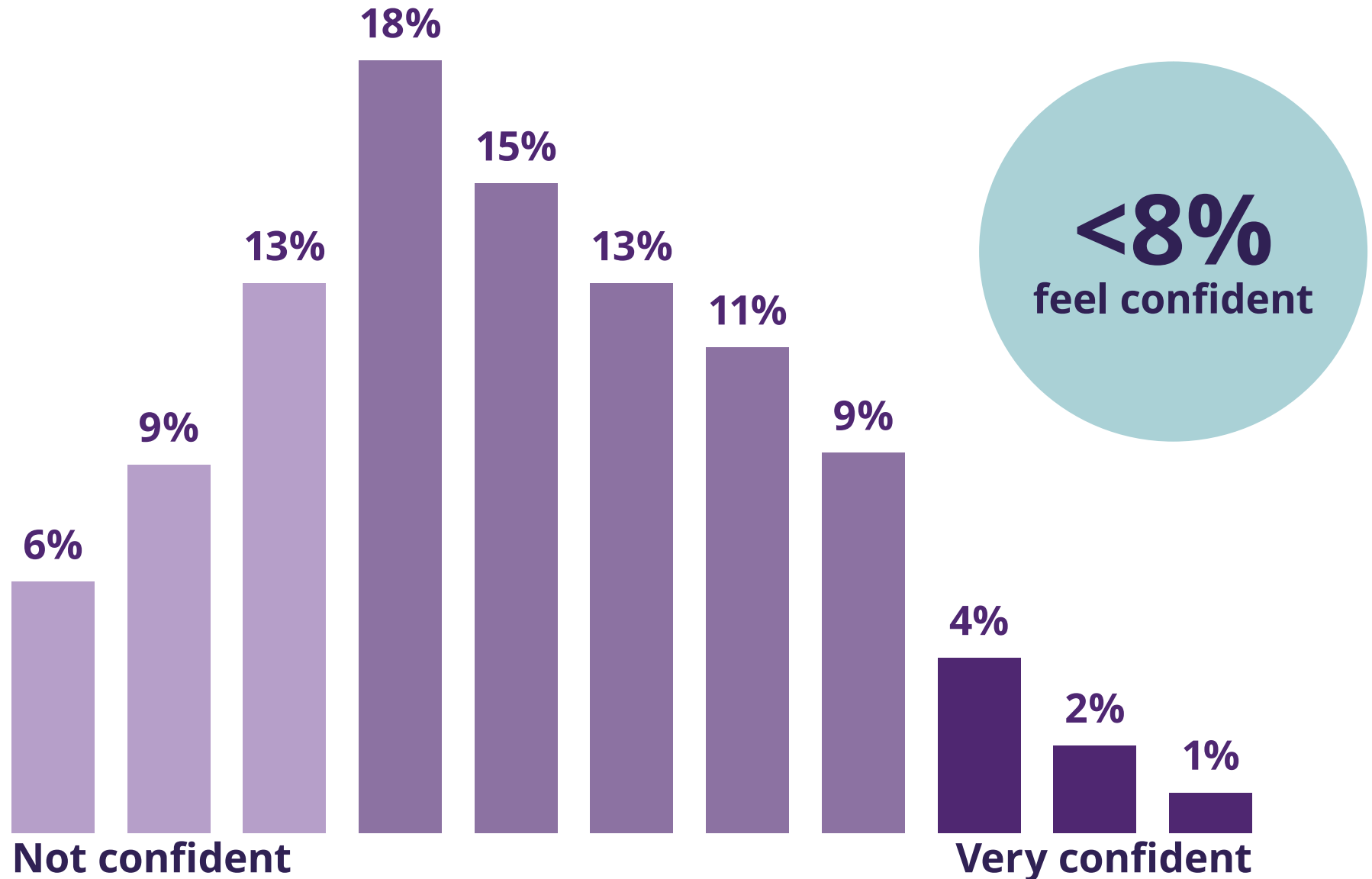
88%

Are more likely to visit somewhere new if they can find access information about it beforehand.



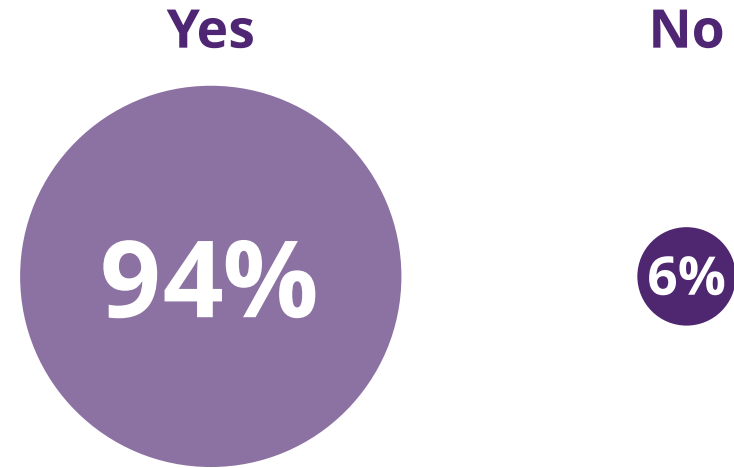
We asked...

Thinking about accessibility, how confident are you about visiting new places?



We asked...

When visiting a new place, do you try to find disabled access information about it beforehand?



If you have used a venue's website to check disabled access before visiting, have you ever found the information to be misleading, confusing or inaccurate?



Have you ever experienced a disappointing trip or had to change your plans last minute because of poor accessibility?



How has poor accessibility affected you?

“Had to return from holiday because facilities were not as described.”

“Checked a venue’s website beforehand to find out when arriving that lifts were too small for the wheelchair to fit in.”

“Many times I have had to leave restaurants as the toilets are not accessible.”

“I have encountered many broken lifts but the most disappointing is the lift at my university’s student union. It is out of order very often and at the level of entrance to the building there is only the reception, all bars/nightclubs/cafes are on the other floors. This has resulted in me being excluded from nights out.”

“Having been told that a boat did take wheelchairs, on arrival we found that my husband’s chair was too heavy. They had not informed us of a weight limit.”

“We visited a certain castle in Northumberland. We paid to get in only to be told that I could sit in front of a TV with a DVD of the castle whilst my husband and son looked around the castle.”

“Went to a restaurant only to find they had a refit and there were no tables available for me to sit at as I can’t fit into benches of the booths.”

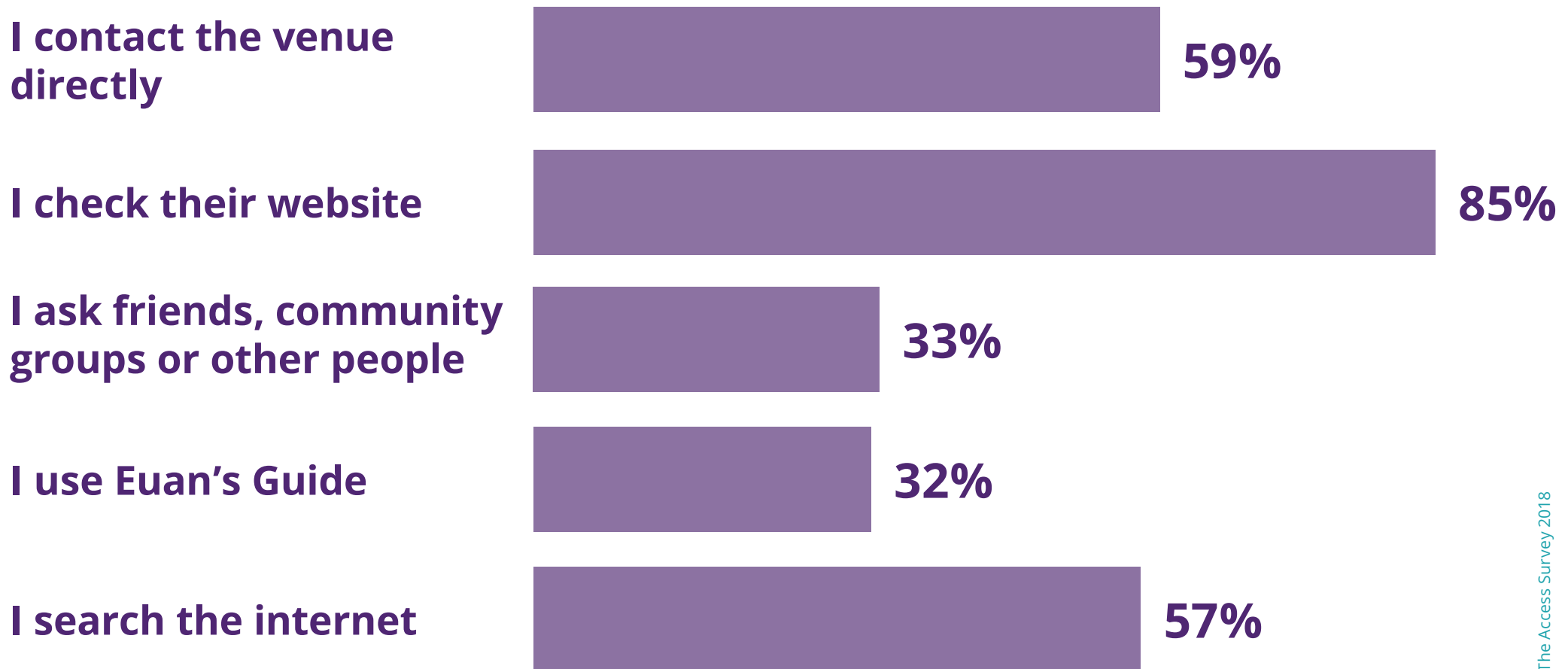
“I have been to places where I have been expected to pay a full admission charge but cannot access much of the venue. I object to this and have refused to pay on occasion.”

“Our poor visits inevitably involve Changing Places toilets not being in full repair - hoists broken, environment wet and/or dirty.”

“There was no radio loop for hearing aids and I couldn’t hear the presenter who was far away.”

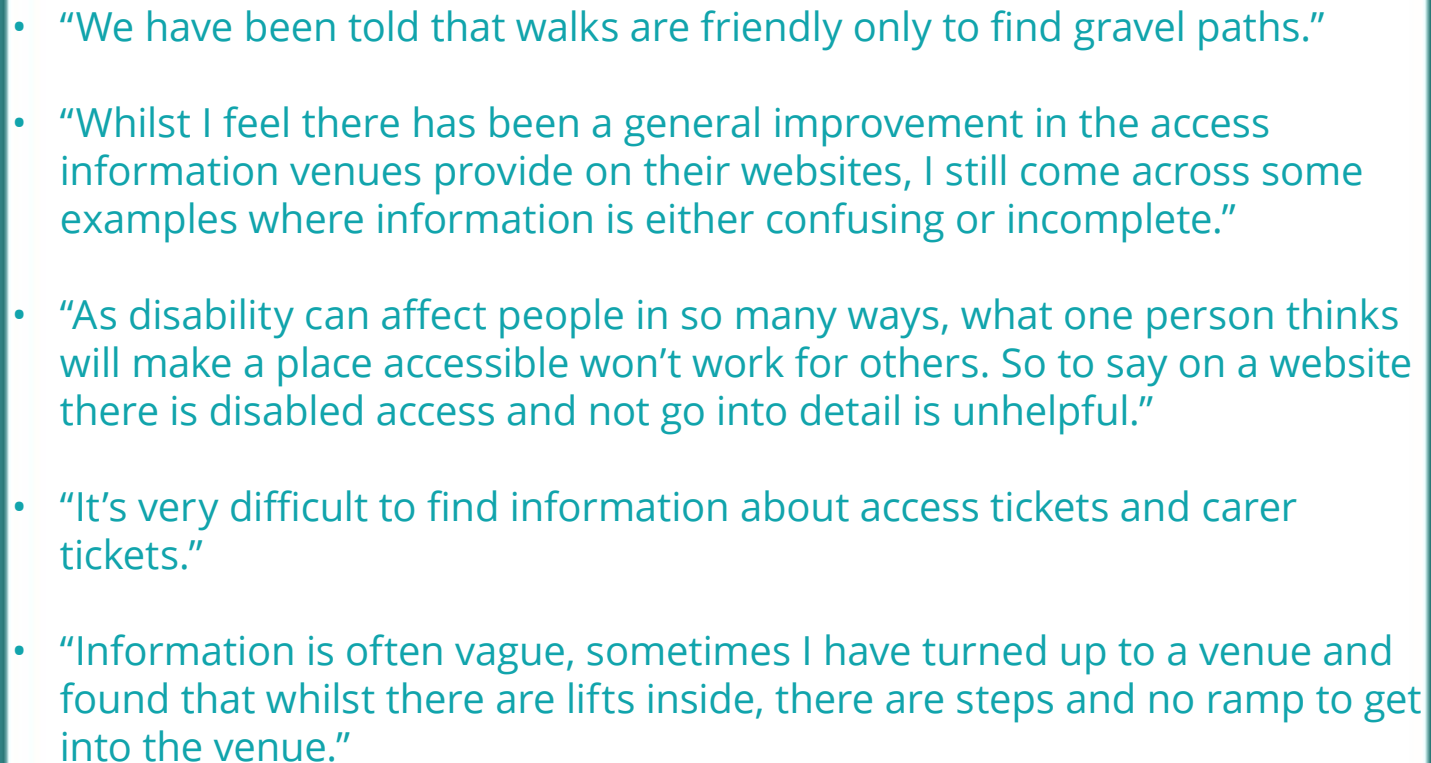
“Disabled toilets being out of order or being used for storing supplies.”

How do you find information about disabled access before visiting somewhere?



Is website information ever misleading?

- “You are nearly always asked to ring a helpline which can be stressful. Why can’t all the info be put on the website?”
- “I booked a room in a B&B after checking its website and found that the corridor leading to the room was too narrow for my scooter.”
- “It’s not unusual for access to be described as ‘fully accessible’ yet you can’t use the toilet or get around easily.”
- “Whilst places say they have a platform lift or disabled loo, they’re not great at telling you the size or layout.”
- “Websites themselves are often inaccessible due to my visual processing difficulties and info on them is generally only for wheelchair users.”
- “Sometimes info is out of date, or recent changes have not been applied e.g. works, temporary restricted access etc.”

- 
- “We have been told that walks are friendly only to find gravel paths.”
 - “Whilst I feel there has been a general improvement in the access information venues provide on their websites, I still come across some examples where information is either confusing or incomplete.”
 - “As disability can affect people in so many ways, what one person thinks will make a place accessible won’t work for others. So to say on a website there is disabled access and not go into detail is unhelpful.”
 - “It’s very difficult to find information about access tickets and carer tickets.”
 - “Information is often vague, sometimes I have turned up to a venue and found that whilst there are lifts inside, there are steps and no ramp to get into the venue.”

What makes places difficult to access?

Nowhere to park

48%

Facilities aren't as expected e.g. lack of hoist, faulty equipment, broken lift

41%

Can't get into the venue e.g. no automatic doors, lack of ramp

64%

Uncomfortable environment e.g. too loud or overstimulating

24%

Can't get around the venue e.g. narrow corridors, poor layout

72%

No welcome or assistance offered

31%

No suitable accessible toilet

55%

Staff unsure how to work equipment e.g. portable ramps or hearing loops

26%

No suitable alternative formats

14%

I am more likely to visit somewhere new if...

I can find relevant access information about the venue



I feel welcomed by staff or the venue appears to care about accessibility



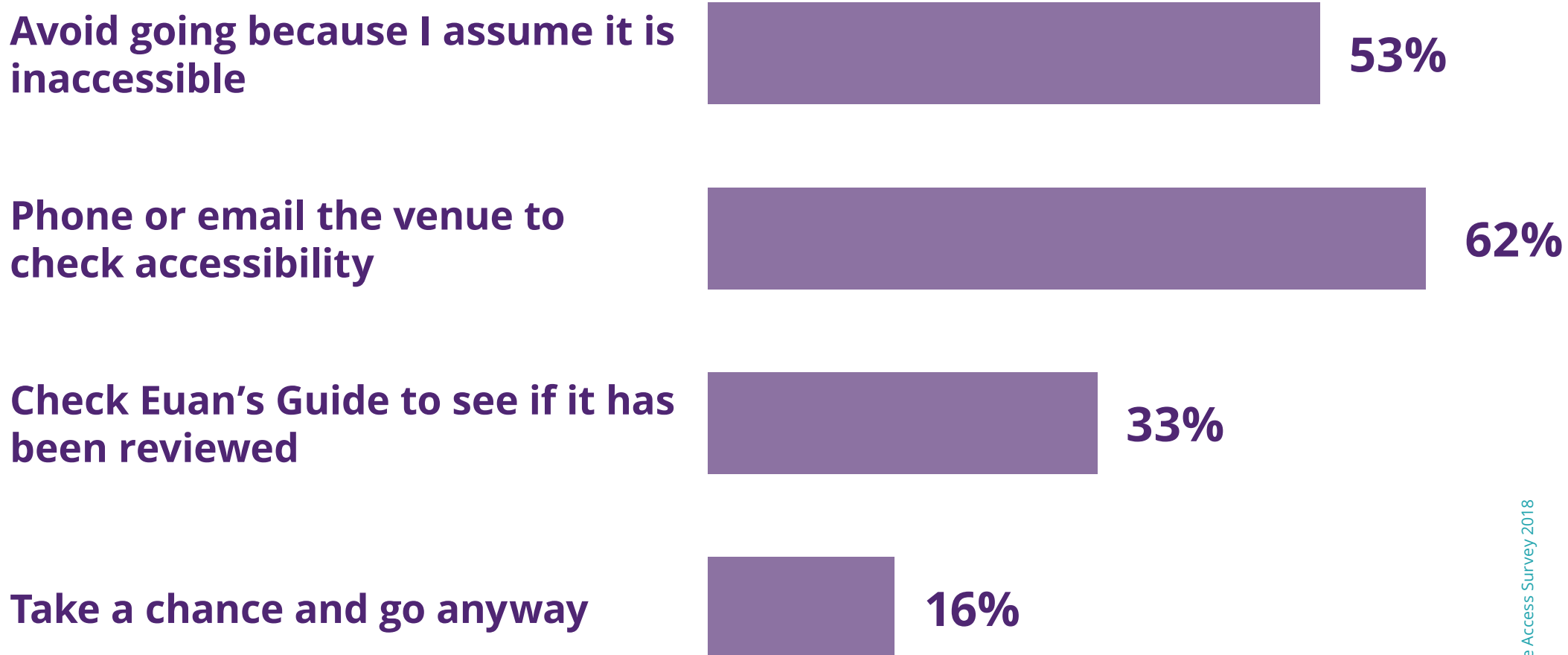
It has been recommended to me by someone with similar requirements



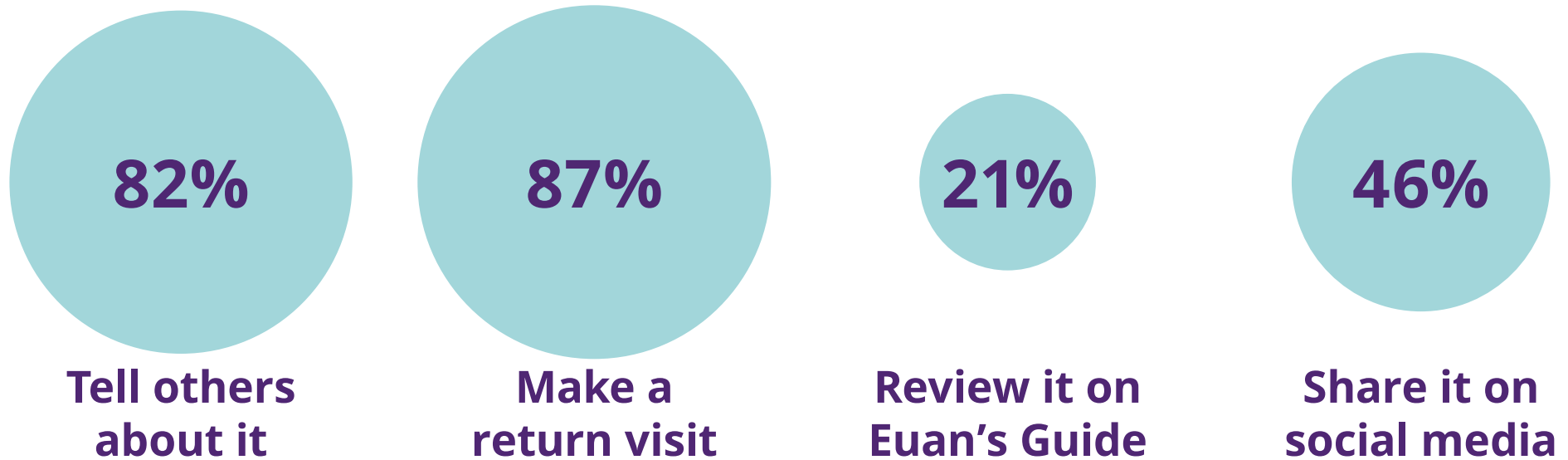
I can see pictures and read what others have said beforehand



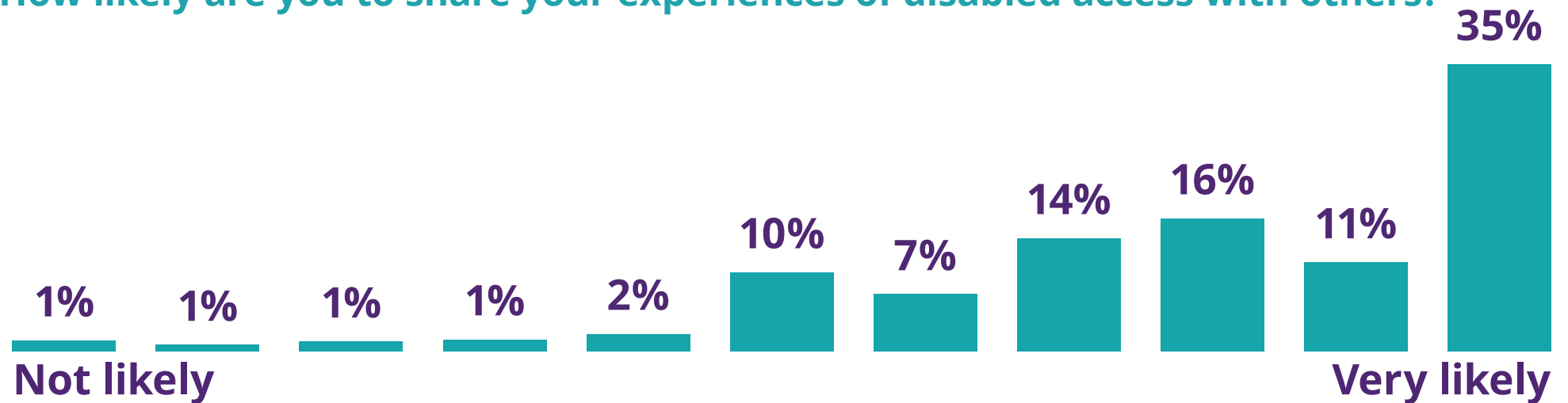
If a venue has not shared its disabled access information I...



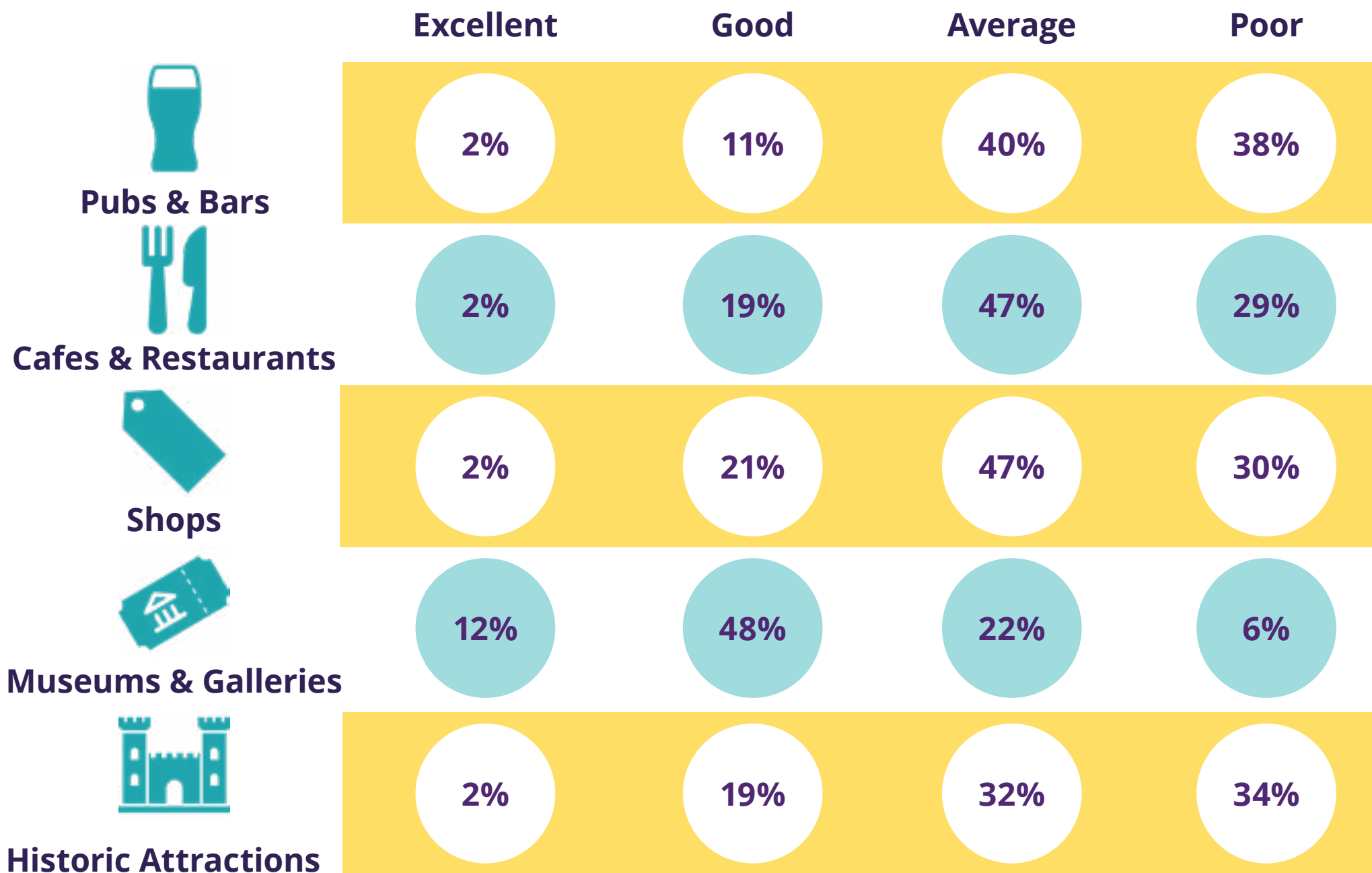
When somewhere has good accessibility I...



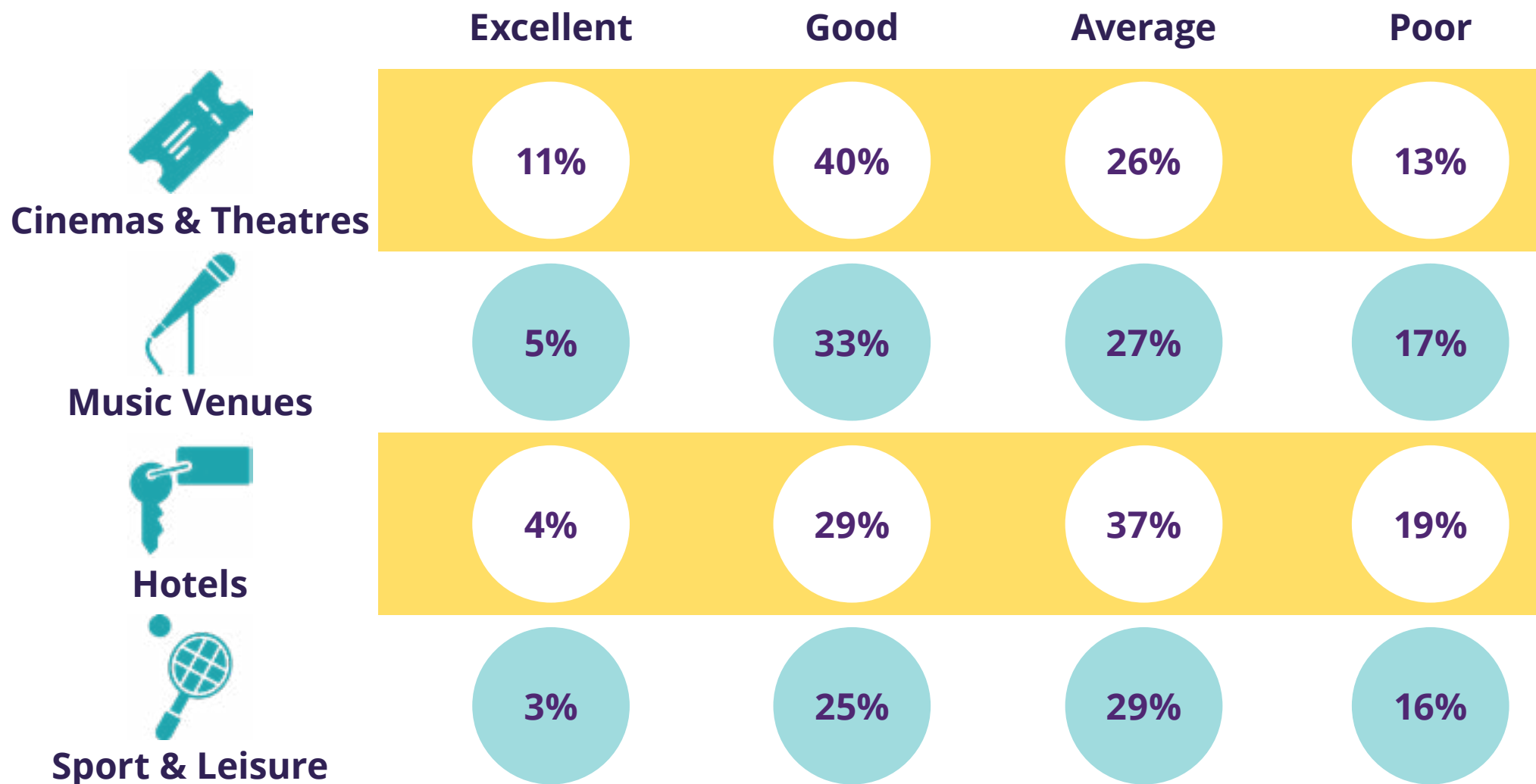
How likely are you to share your experiences of disabled access with others?



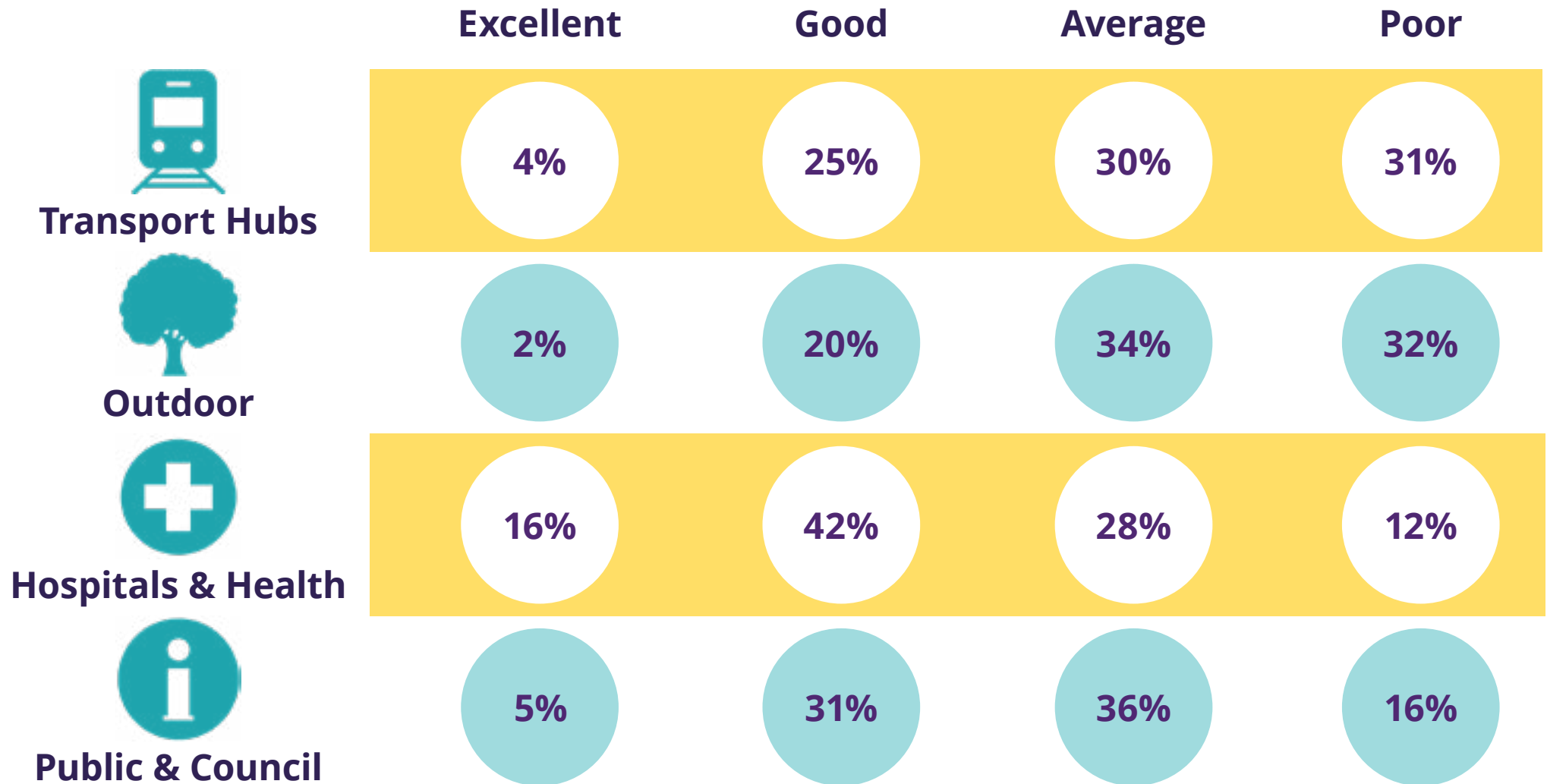
How do different places compare?



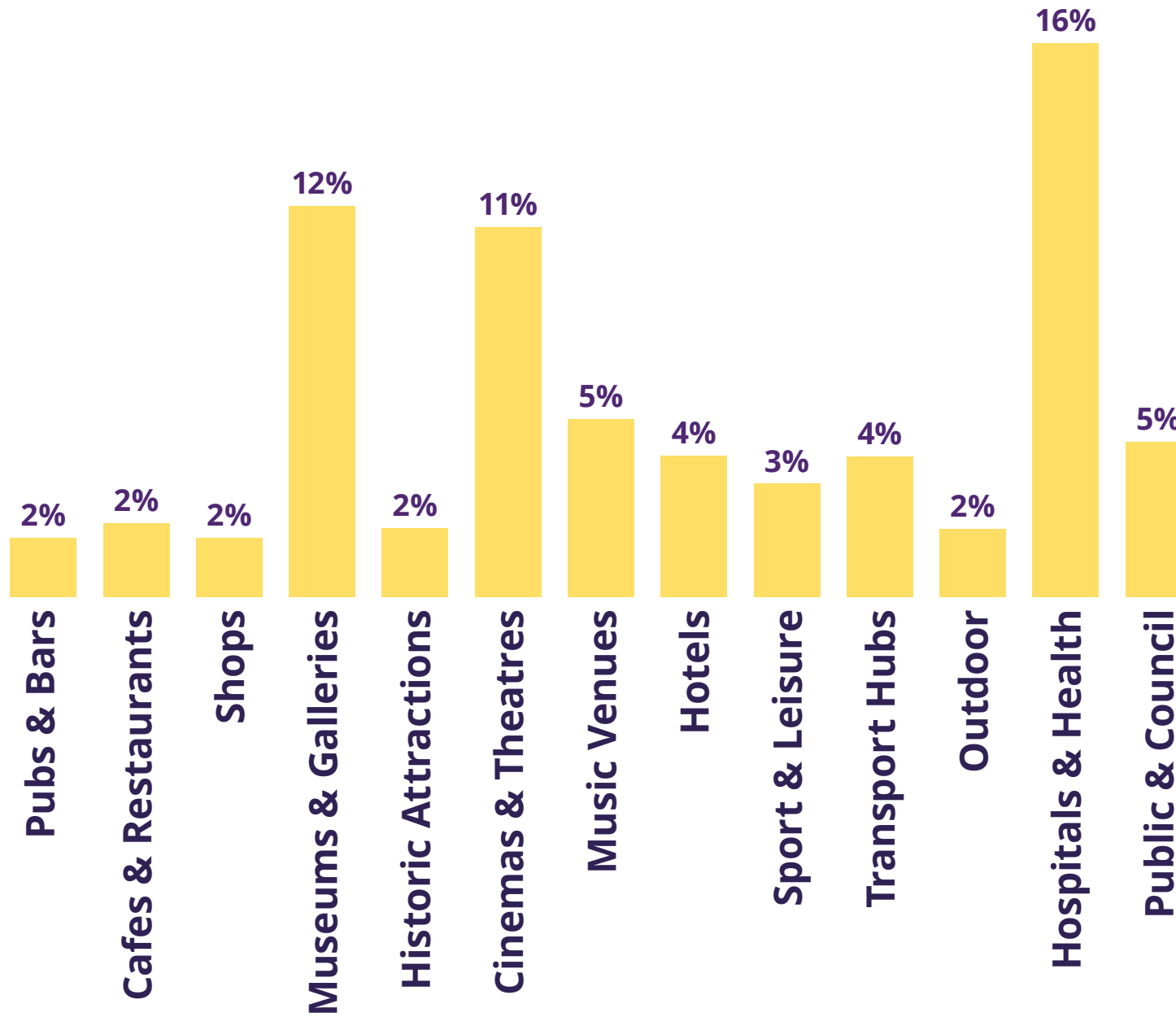
How do different places compare?



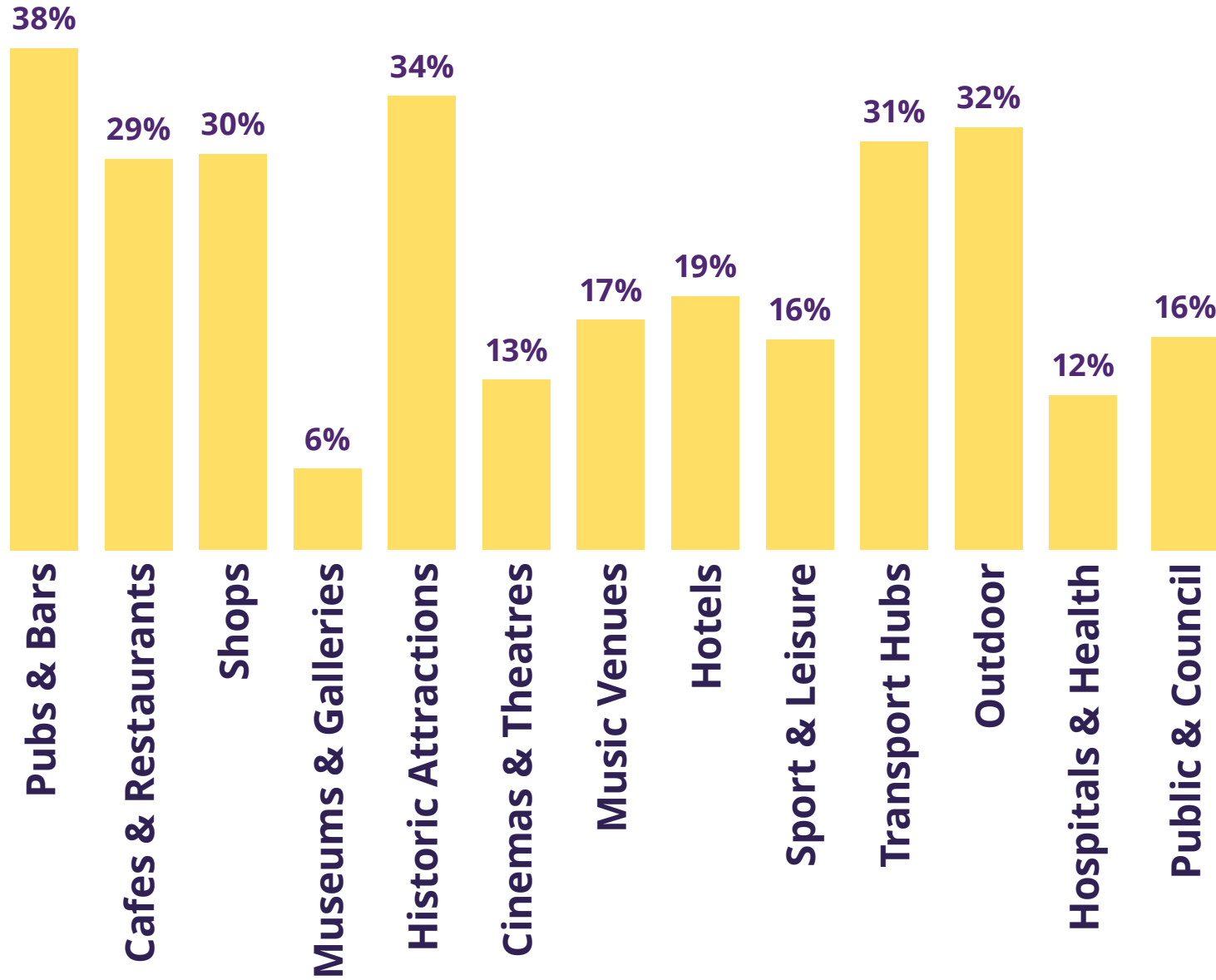
How do different places compare?



Which venues typically have excellent accessibility?



Which venues typically have poor accessibility?



What does this mean?

- Museums and galleries are considered to be typically more accessible than other venue types (60% of respondents said access was either 'excellent' or 'good').
- Hospitals and healthcare centres were also considered very good (58% said access was 'excellent' or 'good'). However, they are not viewed as accessible as in previous years.
- Although less likely to be described as 'excellent', theatres and cinemas have typically 'good' access according to popular opinion (40%).
- Pubs and bars were considered by most people to be the least accessible and as difficult to access as some historic places (38% of respondents thought pubs had typically poor access).
- Also more likely to have poor access were outdoor places and transport hubs.

You also said...

“Galleries and museums tend to be the most reliable for good access and a warm welcome.”

“I really miss going out into the countryside and there are hardly any walks which are wheelchair accessible with a hard surface.”

“I love visiting historic places. I fully understand they cannot alter things as modern buildings can. I feel however a lot of places could do more but use this history as an excuse. A virtual tour is NOT a tour.”

“Shops, particularly fashion retailers, do not allow enough room between rails when you are on a mobility scooter.”

“Some older buildings can be tricky due to there being no space to adapt for accessibility, but some really surprise you. I would recommend doing a bit of research and read a few reviews as you might get to visit some places you thought you wouldn't be able to.”

Has anything changed?



More of you are making return visits to accessible venues.



More of you are contacting venues directly.



There have been more disappointing trips due to poor accessibility.



Transport hubs have become less accessible.



More people are concerned about access at hospitals and healthcare venues.



Museums have continued to improve their accessibility.

From a comparison of Access Survey data between 2014 - 2018.

Around the country...

Participants in Northern Ireland are more likely to avoid visiting somewhere if it has not shared its access information*.

Confidence about visiting new places is lowest in Wales when thinking about accessibility*.

Staff welcome was more important to participants in Scotland than elsewhere in the UK.

People in England are more concerned with seeing pictures and reading what others have said before visiting somewhere new.



*There was a small sample size for Northern Ireland and Wales.

What would make the biggest difference to you?



“Knowing places are accessible would improve my confidence. I’d like to be able to go places on my own in my wheelchair.”



“Easy to find information that’s not buried in the depths of a website.”



“Wider information about access and carers.”



“Better independent wheelchair access where no help from staff is needed.”



“Not having to plan every trip down to the smallest detail, I would like to be spontaneous at least once!”



“If all text was much bigger and much clearer.”



“More consideration for hidden disabilities.”

About Euan's Guide

- Euan's Guide makes it easier for disabled people to find great places to go.
- The site was founded by Euan MacDonald MBE and his sister Kiki.
- Euan is a powerchair user and wanted to hear from other disabled people about accessible places to go.
- The site went live in November 2013 and now has thousands of disabled access reviews for places in the UK and beyond.
- Euan's Guide has been endorsed by Professor Stephen Hawking and JK Rowling.



The Access Survey 2018 was carried out by Euan's Guide and Disabled Access Day between October and December 2018. A total of 903 disabled people, their families and friends shared their opinions in this survey.

Euan's Guide

CodeBase
Argyle House
3 Lady Lawson Street
Edinburgh
EH3 9DZ

0131 510 5106 / +44 (0)131 510 5106

hello@euansguide.com

www.EuansGuide.com

www.twitter.com/euansguide

www.facebook.com/euansguide



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