

# Sensory Trust information sheet

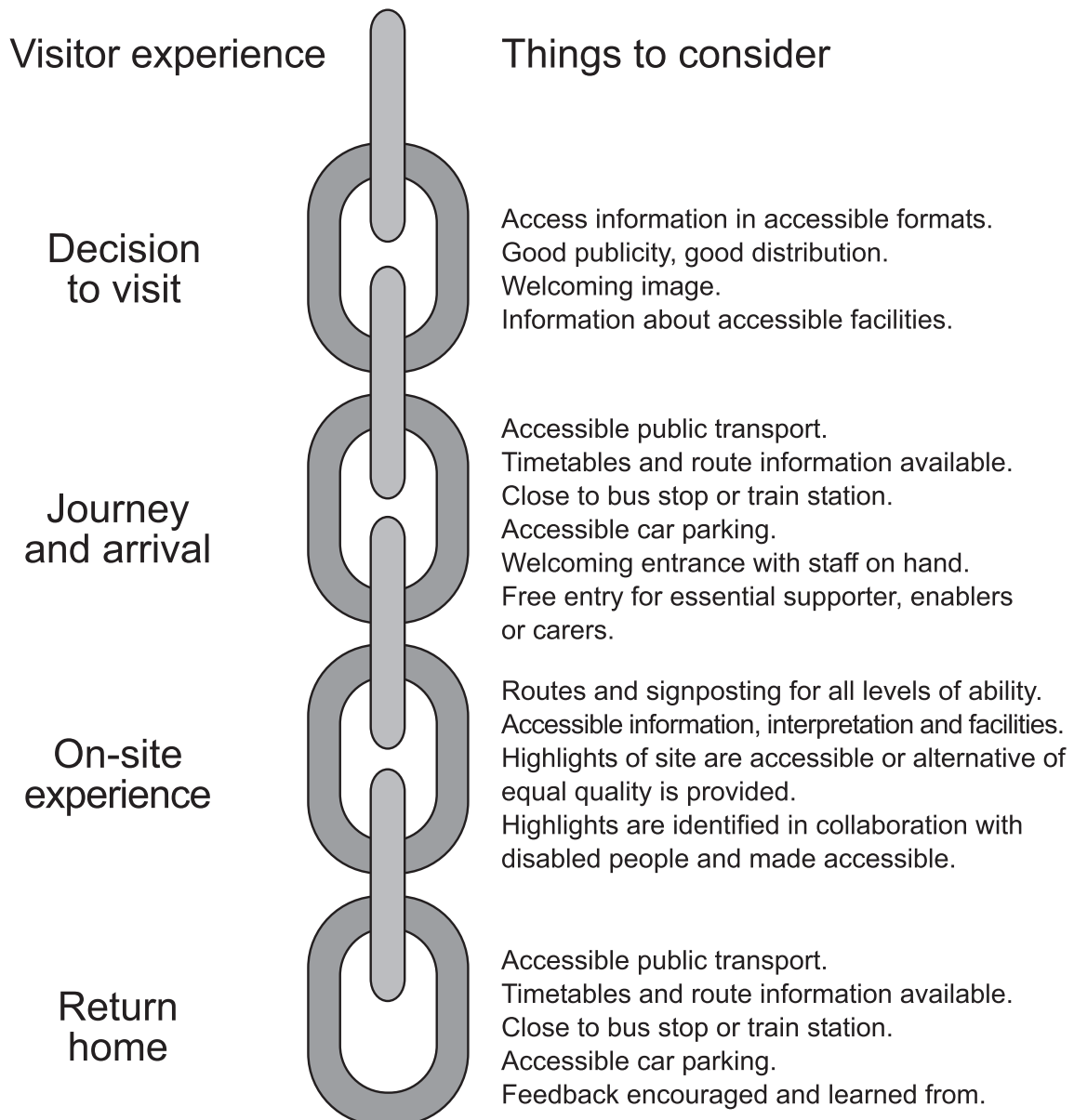
## The Access Chain

Access is a chain of events that begins with the decision to visit and ends with the visitor's safe return home. No improvement should ever be made in isolation. For instance, a new accessible visitor centre may fail to improve visitor numbers if there is no accessible car parking nearby, and it has not been promoted in the right way to the right people. Think links. Failing to provide for every link in the visitor

experience can mean that the visit may end with the visitor feeling frustrated, or the visit may simply not happen.

The Access Chain is not a model for the order in which improvements should be undertaken. For instance, there may be little to gain from improving public transport links to a site that is completely inaccessible.

### The Access Chain



## Decision to visit

Most decisions to visit a site are made at home. Many people require a good deal of information about transport, facilities and staff in order to plan a visit. This information should be available in a range of accessible formats and promoted through standard channels and other outlets such as local radio, leaflets at surgeries, day centres and community halls and direct mail to disability and other groups

## Journey and arrival

The more choices people have in ways to reach your site, the more accessible it will be. Talk to local public transport providers to look at ways of improving their services that connect to your site. Involve disability and access groups in these discussions and remember that many disabled people rely on their cars to get about.

There are other things that can be done to improve the arrival experience for visitors, such as having trained staff and volunteers on hand and free entry for carers.

## On-site experience

There are many things that can be done to improve the visitor's on-site experience. Some of these are detailed in the Sensory Trust web site, and in other publications.

- Routes and signposting improvements
- Facilities are made accessible
- Information and interpretation is designed to include disabled people
- Highlights are accessible or experiences of equal quality are created
- Disability awareness training for staff
- Inclusive events and activities

## Return home

Improvements to the return link of the Access Chain are usually made by improving the journey and arrival link. Make it easy for people to get involved and give feedback on their experiences. Visitor satisfaction is probably the truest measure of whether the access improvements have worked.

## In brief

- 1 Remember that a visit begins and ends at home
- 2 Think links - think about access issues at every stage of a visitor's experience
- 3 Remember why-to-come (site highlights) as well as how-to-come (practical access information)
- 4 Ensure that the information you provide is available in a variety of formats for differing needs
- 5 Make sure that you use plain English for all written information  
[www.plainenglish.co.uk](http://www.plainenglish.co.uk)



## Sensory Trust

The Sensory Trust promotes and supports the creation and management of outdoor spaces that can be used and enjoyed by everyone, regardless of age or ability.

Visit [www.sensorytrust.org.uk](http://www.sensorytrust.org.uk)

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