

4b3

Access

Do

Remove social and environmental barriers that prevent people from participating.

Story

One museum service invites people with learning disabilities to carry out access audits of its facilities.

Anxious students might find it difficult to get to know others in the class. The tutor was encouraged to include some gentle icebreakers into the first few sessions to help people feel at ease in the group.

Day services in a local authority in Scotland are working in partnership with other departments to develop a series of 'personal care' spaces across the authority with the intention that people with significant physical disabilities will then have better access to the full range of community facilities, workplaces and leisure venues.

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Access

Hints & Hazards

A lift or handrail may increase access, whilst negative attitudes and preconceptions may create another kind of barrier.

Some people with impairments are skilled at carrying out an access audit – visiting a facility and service to see how accessible it is. Access auditors (sometimes known as access consultants) are an unregulated group. Each auditor would have a different perspective, so a team would give a richer picture.

If no-one locally has these skills, the authority may like to invest in supporting people to undertake this training and then to act as a local knowledge bank.

For guidance on organising an access audit, see *Bates 2007*.