



Access For All Universal Access Guidelines Regarding Outdoor On-Street Dining

Access For All is a network of individuals and organisations based in Galway City working towards improving the universal access of the local built environment and developing Galway City as a disability friendly society.

Article 9 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Ratified in Ireland in 2018) states that persons with disabilities have the right to access the physical environment, on an equal basis with others.

Access For All have created the guidelines below to ensure universal access to outdoor on-street dining and public facilities and to assist Galway businesses to support people with children, disabled people and older people to maintain access to the public realm and enjoy their experience as customers.

Disabled people welcome the opening up of Galway with the opportunities outdoor dining give for safe socialising.

What we are looking for is not just measures to provide reasonable accommodation but the recognition that we are treated the same as everyone.

On-Street Dining Spaces

Ensure any kerbs that customers are expected to use to come down from the pavement and onto the on-street dining area are clearly identified with deep colour contrast and ramped for access. There are temporary ramps that can be hired for outdoor spaces and events.

The walkways through the outdoor dining area must be appropriately marked and tactile surfaces provided so that visually impaired people can navigate the newly laid out on-street dining experience.

Adequate spacing between tables must be provided so that disabled customers who are wheelchair users or who have assistance dogs or mobility aids will be able to navigate and join their friends wherever they are sitting.

Good supervision of dining areas is crucial so that incidental obstacles such as shopping bags, buggies or stray seating does not become trip hazards.

Ensure that all business owners availing of outdoor dining areas are aware of their obligations towards the safety of the public.

Assistance and Groups

We recommend that restaurant staff make themselves aware of the needs of people with disabilities and be mindful of their disabled customers by providing assistance, where

necessary, in guiding people with mobility issues to dining areas particularly if these areas are newly laid out, over crowded or busy.

Offer verbal instructions to guide a vision-impaired person or wheelchair user and never grab or shout at a person, always ask if assistance is required.

Some disabled people have been cocooning at home and may feel uncomfortable in returning into the City particularly where groups gather. Efforts should be made to inform hotel/hostel staff; walking guides; cyclists; language schools and educational facilities to respect those whose mobility or sensory ability e.g. eyesight is challenged. The fear of being knocked over can be very real.

Escorted people being supported by a guide or carer need a greater distance to manoeuvre the streets as opposed to one person going through a walk way.

Toilet Facilities

Toilet facilities are a concern for Access For All in relation to their availability for both wheelchair users and visually impaired people.

Toilet facilities need to be made available for all outdoor and indoor dining and should be accessible to families with children, wheelchair users and those who require specialized amenities & extra space for toileting.

The toilet facilities should be of an adequate space and be cleaned and maintained regularly for safe hygiene standards and Covid-19 infection prevention control.

Hand sanitising facilities should be available and height accessible for people who are standing and seated.

There are accessible mobile toilets and changing places that can be hired for outdoor spaces and events.

Public Footpaths

Ensure that people with mobility issues can navigate comfortably and safely through the city by maintaining adequate space on the footpaths.

Do not block footpaths with street furniture, obstacles, including sandwich boards for advertising and wheelie bins or delivery vehicles or queues of customers.

Ensure that dished / dropped kerbs and ramps on the footpaths are clear for disabled access and not blocked by people, obstacles or vehicles.

Disabled Parking, Signage, Bollards & Obstructions

Parking bays should not be repurposed for use within outdoor on-street dining spaces.

Disabled parking and disabled passenger rights are not negotiable and should be respected.

Ensure that any existing bollards or other obstacles are easily identified.

Ensure that any bollards, menus, advertising boards or other obstacles such as flower pots are easy to manoeuvre and not causing obstructions.

Ensure that people holding signposts and menus are adhering to the guidelines and not causing obstructions.

Refuse

Extra bins need to be made available as extra rubbish will be produced. Overfilled bins will over spill rubbish onto the street and footpath and this will be particularly hazardous to people with disabilities, parents with buggies and other pedestrians to navigate the accumulation of rubbish littered on the streets.

Refuse facilities for takeaway products should be readily available and cleared frequently.

Power Cables and On-Street Surfaces

If additional power cabling is needed to be laid on the road this will cause issues for power chair users and manual wheelchair users. The ground clearance needs to be at least 1 meter with a ramp at each end so that the power chair or manual chair can navigate over it. What is not appropriate is a strip, the width of the road but very thin from top to bottom with a height of 3 or 4 centimetres. The wheelchair will not be able to get over this & will get stuck.

Textural changes to assist the visually impaired should be mandatory even if of a temporary nature.

Awnings

Ensure that any coverings or awnings are safely erected and at a safe height.

Advance Trial and Accessibility Proofing

Access systems need to be tested by people with varying abilities to ensure that what has designed and implemented is practical/usable in the real world. Walkways through the outdoor dining areas need to be tested for universal access. This means that people have adequate space to walk past the outdoor dining area and into the next outdoor restaurant or to pass it to the next street.

Access For All have members who are visually impaired, who use a cane or guide dog, powerchair and manual wheelchair users, people with walking frames or crutches and are willing to assist you with advance trials and accessibility audits.

Bookings and Disabled Customers

13% of the population in Galway City identified as having a disability in 2016 (CSO Census). Have you considered whether your restaurant booking system is accessible for people with differing disabilities to access and use? Increasing access to 13% of the population in Galway City who have a disability, their families, friends and carers is an effective way to increase revenue and benefit the economy.

Always remember, disabled people are your customers too.

Useful Links

National Disability Authority:

<http://nda.ie/Resources/Accessibility-toolkit/>

NCBI's Change Your View campaign:

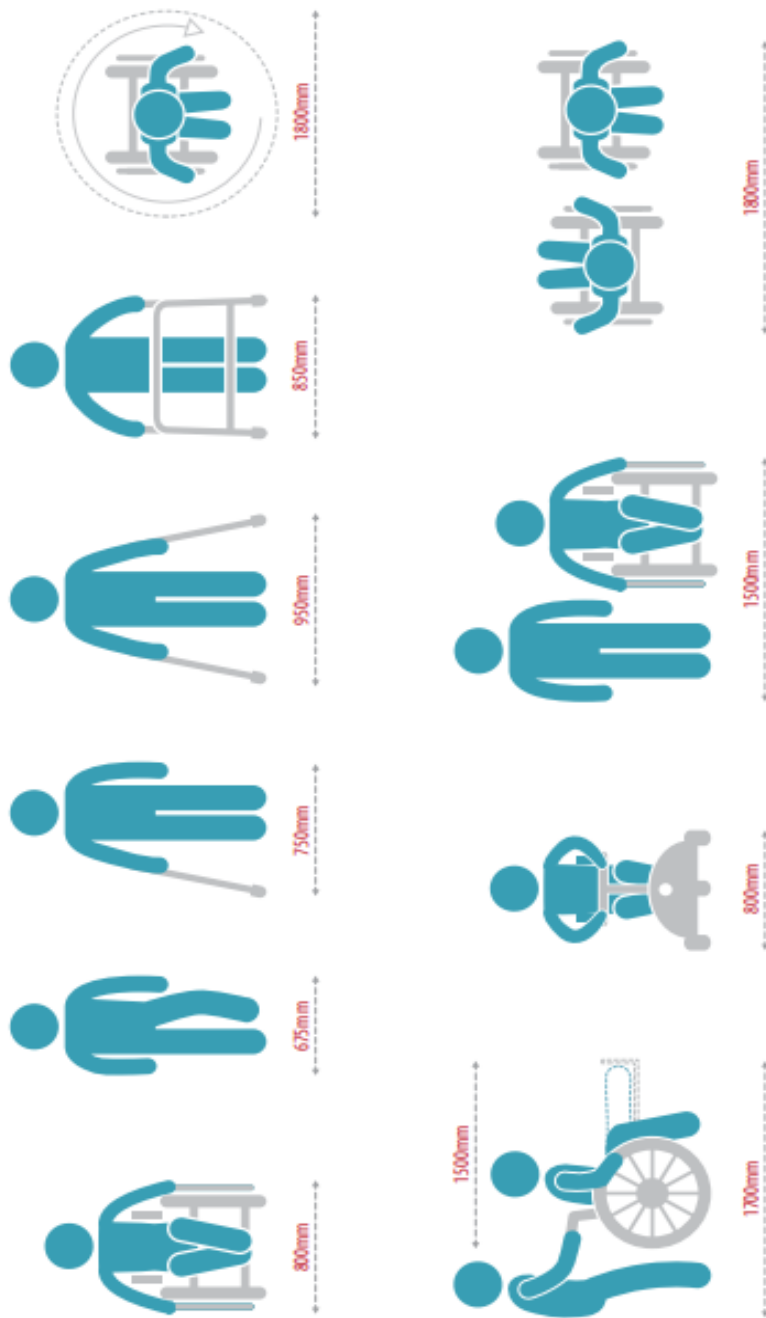
<https://www.ncbi.ie/change-your-view-campaign/>

Fáilte Ireland Best Practice Guidelines:

[Best Practice Guidelines Outdoor Dining](#)

[Outdoor Dining - The view of a Disabled Campaigner](#)

Figure 2 – Space Requirements



Reference: **Irish Wheelchair Association, Best Practise Access Guidelines, Edition 4, 2020**
https://www.iwa.ie/app/uploads/access-guidelines/best-practice-access-guidelines/3188_IWA_Best_Practice_Access_Guidelines_4.pdf