

Lights, Camera, Accessibility: Making Every Story Accessible

At ITV Studios, we're all about bringing amazing stories to life. But it's not just the stories on screen that matter – it's the journey of everyone involved, from the moment they step onto set to the final cut. We're committed to making that journey as inclusive as possible, so every contributor, guest, and presenter feels valued and empowered.

Beyond the Screen: Navigating the Production Journey

Think about the path to screen: casting calls, conversations, meetings, travel, briefings, makeup, costumes, mics, rehearsals... It's a lot! And it's even more complex when you factor in individual needs.

Accessibility: Not a Chore, But a Core Value

We believe providing accessibility shouldn't be an afterthought. It's about anticipating needs, having open conversations, and building inclusive practices into everything we do.

Imagine if...

- A contributor is part of the Deaf community? We ensure clear communication through interpreters or live captions.
- A presenter discloses they're Autistic? We create a calm and predictable environment, minimising sensory overload.
- An actor has a mobility restriction? We ensure accessible sets and provide appropriate support.
- A colleague uses a wheelchair? We ensure they can move freely between locations and have access to all necessary facilities.

These are just a few scenarios, and each person's needs are unique. The more we understand in advance, the better we can prepare and adapt.

Let's build a culture where everyone feels welcome, respected, and able to contribute their best.

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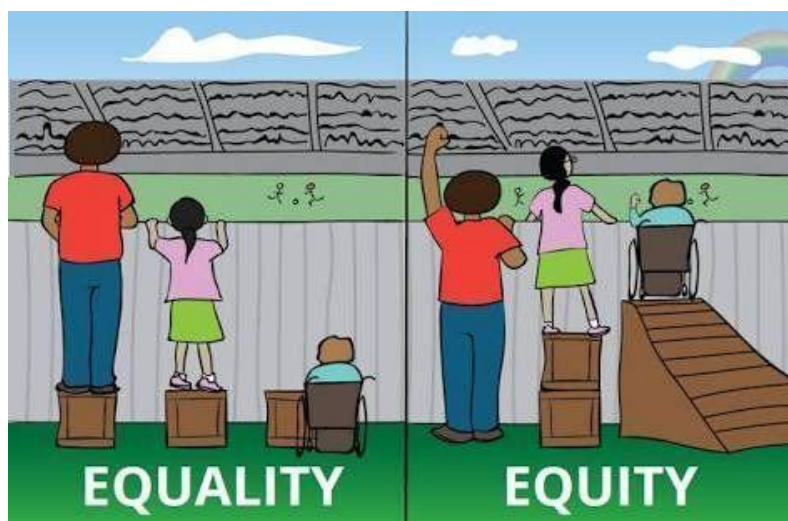
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CHAPTER 1: WHAT DO WE THINK OF WHEN WE THINK OF ACCESSIBILITY

When most people think about accessibility, their minds likely jump to ramps, step-free access, or accessible toilets. These are essential, absolutely, but there's a whole world of possibilities beyond that, especially when it comes to the vibrant world of TV studios and locations.

Picture this: a hearing loop in the studio so everyone can catch every word, visual aids to help folks get acquainted with the surroundings beforehand, and clever ways to mic up those with sensory issues. It's about turning up the volume on inclusivity and making sure everyone feels welcome and comfortable.

This isn't about ticking every box on a checklist, it's about opening our eyes to the countless ways we can make a difference. Remember, accessibility isn't just about equality, it's about equity. It's about recognizing that we all have unique needs and going that extra mile to create a level playing field where everyone can shine.



CHAPTER 2: RESEARCH CHATS AND GETTING ACCESSIBILITY INFORMATION

Making great telly is full-on, right? Sometimes the rush can mean we forget the little things that make a HUGE difference to the folks we work with. We might try a 'one-size-fits-all' approach, but that doesn't work when someone has specific needs.

And let's face it, productions can be a bit of a whirlwind. We might chat to someone at the start about what they need, but then a different team takes over. Things get lost in translation, and suddenly those needs aren't met. That's not just a hiccup, it's letting someone down.

So, here's the deal: let's nail those conversations about access from the get-go. The more we practise, the easier it gets. Soon it'll be second nature, and everyone on set feels welcome and supported. That's the ITV way!

2.1 - Mode of communication

Before we jump into chatting, let's quickly find out what's the best way to connect. Some folks love a good old-fashioned phone call, while others might prefer a different approach. If someone is part of the Deaf community, a call might not work for them, and even for others, it can sometimes be tough to process spoken words on the spot.

A video call (like Googlemeet or Zoom) can be a great option, as it gives people the chance to use captions and "read" the conversation along with us. But, hey, if a phone call is the way to go, we'll roll with that too!

It's super important to remember that the excitement of being on screen can sometimes make people hesitant to speak up about their needs. They might worry about being seen as "difficult" or even losing their spot on the show. So, let's make it crystal clear that we're here to support them, no matter what.

And, of course, let's always use the language that people prefer when talking about themselves. If you're ever unsure, take a peek at the Inclusive Language Guide on MyITV – it's a great starting point! But remember, the most important thing is to be led by the person themselves.

2.2 - Auditioning / Casting

When it comes to auditions, making sure everyone feels welcome and supported is top priority. We want every talented individual, whether they are Disabled or not, to have an equal shot at shining.

It all starts with asking. We encourage you to reach out and find out what specific accommodations would make the audition process smooth and comfortable. And rest assured, asking won't hurt your chances – we want you to be at your best!

Here are some ways to create an inclusive audition experience:

- **Audition from Home:** If possible, let performers audition or interview from their own space, where they can feel most relaxed and confident.
- **Accessible Locations:** If the audition is happening at a specific location, make sure it's accessible to everyone. Think about things like step-free public transport links, dedicated accessible parking spaces, and step free or ramp access from the street to the set.
- **Clear Communication:** Share plenty of information beforehand. Let people know who they'll be meeting, where they're going, and what to expect. And if the location is new to them, provide clear directions and photos of accessible entrances and parking.
- **Post-Audition Updates:** Keep everyone in the loop! Let them know if and when they'll be hearing back, regardless of the outcome, and try to provide a timeline. If there are any delays, let them know.
- **Refreshments and Restrooms:** If you're providing food and drinks, remember to ask about dietary requirements. And always have straws available – you never know who might need one. Make sure everyone knows where the restrooms are located.
- **Behind the Scenes:** If the audition involves backstage or hair and makeup areas, ensure they're accessible with enough space for everyone to move around comfortably.

Additional Considerations for an Inclusive Audition Space:

- **Clear Visual Signage:** Make sure directions and important information are easy to see, with large print and sans-serif fonts.
- **Accessible and Gender-Neutral Bathrooms:** Ensure all bathrooms are accessible and inclusive for everyone.
- **Accessible Common Areas:** Make sure everyone can help themselves to refreshments and snacks in kitchen and common areas.
- **Quiet Room:** Provide a peaceful space where people can de-stress or take a break if needed.
- **Accessible Equipment on Set:** Have ramps, footstools, or other equipment available for use on set.
- **Guide/Assistance Animals:** Welcome guide or assistance animals on the premises.
- **Hearing Loop and Adjustable Lighting:** Consider installing a hearing loop and making sure the lighting in common areas can be dimmed if necessary.

Remember, we want to make sure everyone feels comfortable and supported during the audition process. By being proactive and thoughtful, we can create an environment where all talented individuals can shine.

2.3 - Research chat / Preliminary Discussions

Early chats with guests are your chance to set the stage for a smooth experience. We know there's a lot to cover, but taking a moment to understand their needs early on prevents a whole lot of drama later!

Talking about disability can feel awkward, but trust us, most people appreciate being asked directly rather than having assumptions made. It's about showing you care, not being perfect. If you slip up, own it and learn from it - we all do!

A great way to start is mentioning what's already in place. Like, "Hey, we've made sure the building has step free access and there is accessible blue badge parking outside the front entrance." It signals that you're thinking ahead.

If it's an interview, chat about how they want their disability described. Words matter, and everyone's different. Some prefer "autistic person," others "person with autism." It's personal, so let's ask!

Remember, a little prep goes a long way in creating an inclusive and welcoming experience for everyone!

2.4 - What you should be communicating during preliminary chats

We all know that every guest is unique, and their needs will be as varied as the shows we create. It's about understanding those individual needs, and crafting a truly comfortable and enjoyable experience.

So, here's the magic question that opens every door:

"Is there anything we can provide or you wish us to know to make your experience a more comfortable one?"

It's simple, it's direct, and it shows we genuinely care.

Extra Tips for a Stellar Experience:

Keep the Conversation Going: Let your guests know they can always reach out if they think of anything else that might help.

Preferred Language Matters: Ask about the language they'd like you to use when talking about their disability.

Eye to Eye: Some guests may prefer you to get down to their level when chatting. It's a small gesture that makes a big difference.

Tip 1: Set the Scene

Give your guests the VIP treatment by taking them on a virtual tour of the day! Share a breakdown of what to expect – who they'll meet, where they'll be, even what they can grab for a snack. A little insider knowledge can go a long way in making everyone feel relaxed and ready for the spotlight.

Tip 2: A Picture's Worth a Thousand Words

Share some photos of the set or location – the entrance, the green room, even the makeup chair! A sneak peek can turn those "unknowns" into familiar sights, building excitement and easing any nerves.

Tip 3: Lights, Camera, Welcome!

Why not roll out the red carpet with a short video tour? Capture the journey from arrival to the studio floor. It doesn't have to be Hollywood-level production, just a friendly welcome that makes everyone feel at home.

Tip 4: The Recap

After the research chat, send a friendly email summing up everything you discussed. It's a handy reminder for your guests, and it shows you're paying attention to every detail.

Sharing the Spotlight

Remember, we're all in this together! Share examples of how you've made things accessible in the past – it can help guests feel confident about voicing their own needs. And don't be afraid to share your learning experiences too – we grow from every show we create.

Spread the Word

Lastly, let's make sure everyone's on the same page. Share any access requirements with the whole team, from the runners to the director. It's about working together to ensure a smooth and unforgettable experience for every guest.

CHAPTER 3: GETTING TO LOCATION / STUDIO

Getting to the studio is all part of the day, but we know that travel can sometimes be a bit tricky especially for those who might need a little extra support, such as children, older folks, or those with accessibility requirements. To help things go smoothly, we've put together some handy tips to make the journey easier for everyone.

We know you're a travel pro, booking trips day in and day out. But it's easy to forget that not everyone is as familiar with the ins and outs of travel. Let's take a look at those little things that might cause a bit of confusion, so we can make sure everyone's comfortable and informed.

3.1 - Travelling by Train

Getting your train tickets – When it comes to train tickets, remember that not everyone finds those ticket machines easy to use. Clear instructions are always appreciated, and why not offer to have those tickets printed and sent out to them? Just remember to allow plenty of time for delivery!

And while e-tickets are convenient, not everyone has a smartphone. Some folks might need a little extra help with those.

The importance of a seat reservation: When you book train tickets, you might see an option to reserve a seat. This is more common on longer journeys - think big intercity mainline trains rather than short local lines.

You've sorted the train times and you're ready to book those seats. Just a heads-up: seat reservations are for a specific train at a specific time. If your plans change, it can be tricky to switch those reservations, so it's best to get them right the first time.

If your travel plans change, you can still use a different train. You might find a spare seat, but it's not guaranteed. So, while you could get lucky, you might end up without a seat for your journey. Something to think about!

It's worth remembering that trains have priority seats, usually located near the doors. These are for people who need them most, but there's no guarantee you'll

get one. If you need a priority seat, it's something to think about before you travel.

Here's a tip for train travel: on longer journeys where you'd usually need a seat reservation, there are sometimes unreserved seats available. These can be useful if you haven't booked a seat in advance.

Keep in mind that these seats are limited, and they can be harder to find if you're boarding the train further along the route.

Here's the information on where to find these unreserved carriages on some of the major train lines...

LNER: Coach C in standard class and Coaches E and M in first class

GWR: Coach G

Avanti West Coast: Coach C

Hull Trains: Coach A

Grand Central: On services from West Riding some unreserved seats are peppered throughout the train, on services from the North East it's coach B

East Midlands Trains: On trains journeying from Sheffield/Nottingham the unreserved coach is usually coach D

CrossCountry: Coach F

Lumo: A limited number of unreserved seats on each train

It's helpful to remember that travelling can be unfamiliar for some people. Taking the time to explain the journey and offer support can make a big difference. They'll appreciate the extra effort!

Passenger Assistance:

Travelling can be a bit daunting for anyone, especially if you don't do it often. The good news is that National Rail has a Passenger Assist service to support. They can help with all sorts of things, from getting around the station to finding your seat on the train as well as putting down a ramp to get on the train. They can even help with your luggage! Just let the train company know you need assistance when you book your tickets, and they'll take care of the rest.

Passenger Assist is a helpful service, but stations can be quite different in terms of accessibility. It's a good idea to check out the facilities at your station before you travel.

City centre stations usually have great facilities for everyone. But if you're travelling to a smaller station, it's worth checking what's available before you set off. National Rail has a website with all the details you'll need to plan a smooth journey. You can find it here: <https://accessmap.nationalrail.co.uk/>

If you're planning to use the Passenger Assist service, remember to book it in advance. National Rail asks for at least two hours' notice before your journey. You can book it through their website here: <https://passengerassistance.com/>

3.2 - Travelling by Air

Air travel can be just as unpredictable as train travel, if not more so. The experience can vary greatly depending on your departure and arrival airports, as different countries and airports have different accessibility policies. It's crucial to do your research before you travel.

Assistance in the airport

Airports can offer assistance to help you get from check-in to your departure gate, and then through arrivals when you land. This can be really helpful for getting around a busy airport.

It's worth remembering that the kind of assistance available can vary from airport to airport and with different airlines. It's a good idea to check with both the airline and the airport before you travel to see what support they can offer.

If you have a learning or cognitive disabilities, UK airports are starting to recognise the Sunflower Lanyard scheme. It's a way of letting staff know you might need some extra help. This could include assistance at check-in or access to the special family lanes at security, making your journey a bit easier. Just keep in mind that this scheme isn't used everywhere yet.

Airports can be pretty full-on, but some now offer quiet rooms for those who need a bit of a break from the crowds. It's a good idea to check the airport website before you travel to see if they have one.

Some airports offer fast-track security passes, which can be helpful for those who find busy areas overwhelming. And if you need a break from the crowds,

some airports even have quiet rooms. It's worth checking in advance to see if your airport offers these.

Speedy boarding can be a worthwhile investment for air passengers. It allows for more time to settle in and get comfortable before the flight takes off, which can be especially helpful for those who need a little extra time or assistance.

Wheelchair users

When it comes to wheelchairs and flying, things are changing a bit. As of 2024, passengers won't be able to keep their wheelchair with them in the plane's cabin. It'll need to be stored in the hold, or if it's foldable, it might go in a cabin cupboard. There's always a risk of damage to their wheelchair during the journey, so it's worth checking with the airline about how they handle wheelchairs.

Before you book, the airline will need some information about the wheelchair, including the weight, dimensions and battery details (if it's electric). Make sure you check this with the passenger before you start booking.

Assistance Dogs

Assistance dogs are generally allowed in the plane cabin, but airlines have different rules about them. It's always best to contact the airline directly to check their specific requirements for travelling with an assistance dog.

It's important to remember that emotional support or therapy dogs might not be allowed in the cabin, and some airlines might not allow dogs to travel in the hold. So, it's definitely worth checking the airline's rules before booking your passenger's flight.

Passengers who are blind or partially sighted or who are deaf or hard of hearing

The cabin crew are there to help, so don't hesitate to ask for assistance. If you let them know your passenger needs some extra support, they can give them a briefing tailored to their needs. This could include explaining where things are on the plane, or helping with things like opening food packaging.

Food intolerances/allergies/safe foods

Airlines do their best to cater for different diets, but it's tricky to guarantee that every meal will be completely free of certain allergens. If the passenger has any

allergies or intolerances, it's a good idea to advise them to pack their own snacks and any medication they might need.

Passengers are usually allowed to bring their own food through airport security these days, but remember to check the rules about liquids. Anything over 100ml won't be allowed through.

3.3 - Travelling by taxi

Booking Accessible vehicles

Taxis are a great way to get around in big cities or towns, but if you need a wheelchair-accessible vehicle, it's worth planning ahead. London's black cabs are all wheelchair-friendly and have ramps, but outside of London, it's best to check with the taxi company first. You might need to book in advance, so it's something to keep in mind of a person's schedule when you're making travel plans.

Be aware of pickup points

Finding your pre-booked taxi at a busy station can be a bit tricky. Stations can be large and confusing, and taxi pickup points aren't always easy to find. If you're booking a car for someone, make sure they have clear instructions on where to find it. Sharing a map or a photo of the pick-up point can be really helpful. Google Maps can also be a useful tool, especially as some stations have indoor Google views inside.

3.4 - Booking Accessible Hotels

Hotels built after 1991 are required to have at least one accessible room. However, the definition of a "fully accessible" hotel is a bit vague, and accessibility standards can vary significantly between different places.

Here's what you should generally expect from a hotel:

- **Easy access:** Getting into the hotel and your room should be straightforward.

- **Accessible bathrooms:** Features like grab rails, roll-in showers, shower chairs and ample space to move around are important to consider.
- **Accessible bedrooms:** These should offer plenty of space, with things like lower beds and accessible light switches.

Remember that every hotel is different! It's always best to check the specifics before booking. A quick call or a look at their website should give you the details you need.

Finding a hotel room with a ceiling hoist isn't as easy as you might think. In fact, across the UK, only 16 hotels offer this feature. So, while hotels are making improvements in accessibility, there's still room for more.

When booking a hotel for a guest that requires an accessible room, it's always best to ask them what they require in as much detail as they are able to give you. The more information you have, the easier it will be to find the right room.

It's worth noting that sometimes less expensive hotels have better accessibility than more expensive ones.

If you're looking for a hotel with ceiling hoists, they can be tricky to find. The Premier Inn in Archway, North London has nine rooms with ceiling hoists, but it might not be conveniently located for everyone.

When booking an accessible hotel room, it's important to find the right balance between accessibility features, location, and convenience. Do your research and ask questions to find the best fit for your guest.

Online reviews can be a great way to get a feel for a hotel's accessibility. While a hotel might say it's "Disabled friendly," it's always a good idea to check what other guests have experienced.

If you're unsure whether a room will meet your needs, don't hesitate to ask the hotel for photos. This allows you to see the room firsthand, share them with your guest and they can let you know if it's suitable.

CHAPTER 4: AT THE STUDIO OR ON LOCATION (BEFORE GOING ON SET)

It's TX/RX day, which means it's showtime! The studio or location is buzzing with activity, and everyone's focused on getting the show on air. But even with the best planning, things don't always go smoothly. Unexpected issues can crop up and put pressure on an already tight schedule.

To help things run a bit smoother, here are some things to consider:

4.1 - Arriving at Studio / Location

Before your guest arrives, it's helpful to think about their journey through the studio. Consider the route they'll take to get to their dressing room, the green room, makeup, or the set.

Here are a few things to check:

- **Are there any steps along the way?**
- **Would grab rails or seating areas be helpful?**
- **Is the lighting suitable for those with visual impairments?**
- **Are there any busy or noisy areas that might be overwhelming for some?**
- **Is the signage clear and easy to follow?**
- **Are corridors, paths, and doorways wide enough for wheelchairs and mobility aids?**

Thinking about these things in advance can help your guest feel comfortable and welcome.

Arriving at a new studio can be a bit daunting, so let's make sure our guests feel welcome and prepared. Here's how:

- **Share some photos:** Send a few pictures of key locations, like the taxi drop-off point, beforehand.
- **Clear directions for drivers:** Make sure taxi drivers know exactly where to go, especially at larger studios. Using the "What3Words" app can be helpful for pinpoint accuracy.
- **Provide a map:** A simple floor plan with key locations marked can be really useful.
- **A friendly contact:** Make sure your guest has the number of someone they can contact on arrival.
- **Offer a quick tour:** If you're picking them up, point out key places like toilets along the way. And if they're using a wheelchair, make sure the route is step-free.

A little preparation can make a big difference in helping your guest feel comfortable and ready for their time at the studio.

4.2 - Timings

When planning the day's schedule, remember that everyone has their own pace. Some people need a bit more time than others to get ready and feel comfortable.

It's always best to allow plenty of time for things like briefings, travel, and settling in. A relaxed atmosphere makes for a much better experience for everyone, and it can help to reduce stress levels.

So, keep those timings generous, and you'll create a smoother, more enjoyable day for everyone involved.

4.3 - In Makeup

The makeup room can be a very different experience for everyone. Here are a few things to keep in mind to make sure everyone feels comfortable:

- **For wheelchair users:** Make sure there's plenty of space by removing the makeup chair beforehand if they'd prefer to stay in their own chair.
- **For those with BSL interpreters:** Ensure there's enough room for the interpreter to join them.
- **For those who are shorter:** Have a footstool available, and consider using adjustable chairs.
- **Allergies and sensitivities:** Talk to your guest beforehand about any products or tools that might cause them problems.
- **A relaxed atmosphere:** Try to schedule makeup sessions during quieter times for those who prefer a calmer experience.
- **The choice is theirs:** Remember, it's perfectly okay for guests to decline makeup or do their own.

A little consideration can go a long way in making the makeup experience a positive one for everyone.

4.4 - Dressing Rooms

Green rooms can be quite lively, which might not be everyone's cup of tea. A dressing room can offer a quieter space to relax, but it's important to make sure it's suitable for your guest's needs. Check that it's spacious enough for a wheelchair, and that the bathroom is accessible. If your guest needs help getting ready, you could arrange for someone to assist them.

Dressing rooms can sometimes feel a bit isolating, so make sure your guest has a contact number for someone they can reach if they need anything.

It's also helpful to show your guest how everything works in the dressing room, like the lights, fridge, and TV. A quick tour or a simple guide can make them feel more comfortable.

4.5 - Providing Food

Everyone has their own preferences when it comes to food and drink. Some might need special cups or have certain allergies, while others might have sensory sensitivities. It's always a good idea to have a chat with your guest beforehand to find out about their needs and preferences.

If you're providing catering, let your guest know what's on the menu in advance. And don't forget the straws – they can be helpful for lots of people!

4.6 - Rehearsals

Rehearsals are important, but they can take longer than you expect. When you're planning your schedule, make sure you allow plenty of time for rehearsals, as well as other things like hair and makeup.

Remember that people rehearse at different speeds, so be flexible with your timings.

For more detailed advice on accessibility on set, take a look at the next chapter.

4.7 - Coming to the set / location in advance

Even if your guest isn't involved in rehearsals, it's a great idea to let them visit the set beforehand. This can be really helpful for those with visual or mobility impairments, as they can check for any potential obstacles and raise any concerns.

For those who might find the studio environment a bit overwhelming, a pre-visit can help them to feel more comfortable and prepared. They can get a sense of the space and identify any potential sensory triggers.

Just try to schedule the visit for a quieter time, as studios can get very busy.

4.8 - Meeting Presenters / other performers

Stepping onto a new set and meeting new people can be a bit overwhelming, so let's try to make it easier for our guests. If possible, arrange a quick meeting beforehand between your guest and the presenters or other cast members. Even a brief introduction can help to break the ice and ease any anxieties.

If your guest is comfortable sharing, it can be helpful to let the team know about any specific needs they might have. This way, everyone can offer support in the right way.

Remember, it's all about making your guest feel comfortable and welcome. A little bit of preparation can go a long way in creating a positive experience for everyone.

4.9 - Guide Dogs / Service Animals in studio / on location

Guide dogs and other service animals are welcome in our studios, but it's important to remember that they're working animals. Please be respectful and avoid touching or distracting them. If you're not sure, it's always best to ask their owner first.

4.10 - Getting the first question in advance

Interviews can be a bit daunting, even for seasoned pros. To help your guest feel more comfortable, why not tell them the first question? This can help to settle their nerves and build confidence.

The first question can be nice and easy – nothing too challenging. It's simply a way to help your guest relax and get ready for the interview.

A more relaxed guest often makes for a more engaging interview, so it's worth considering this simple trick.

4.11 - Mic'ing Up

The sound team are like the experts of the studio – they make sure everything sounds perfect without ever stealing the spotlight! But they also play a big part in making our guests feel comfortable.

Attaching a microphone can feel a bit intrusive, especially in a new environment. It's important to be sensitive and make sure your guest feels at ease.

There's no single way to mic someone up – it depends on the situation and the individual. Sometimes a guest might be happy to help, other times they might need some assistance. If you know your guest has any specific needs, let the sound team know beforehand so they can be prepared.

If in doubt, just ask your guest how they'd prefer to be helped. Clear communication is key to making everyone feel comfortable and ensuring we get the best sound possible.

CHAPTER 5: NAVIGATING ACCESS ON SET

You've planned everything perfectly, the set's ready, and you're all set for a fantastic shoot! But sometimes, unexpected things can still pop up. It's always good to be prepared to adapt and find solutions on the spot.

Remember to listen to your guest and be understanding if they have any concerns or new needs arise. Work together to find the best solution.

And if something does go wrong, don't worry! Just apologise and do your best to fix it. We all make mistakes, and it's how we handle them that matters.

With a positive attitude and a bit of flexibility, you can create a welcoming and inclusive experience for everyone, even if there are a few surprises along the way.

5.1 - Time to get onto set

Getting to the set on time is essential, but it's not always as simple as it sounds. There can be all sorts of unexpected delays, from last-minute toilet breaks to wardrobe adjustments and technical hiccups.

These things might seem small, but they can quickly add up and cause stress for everyone involved.

To avoid this, make sure you allow plenty of time for your guest to get to the set. Don't make the schedule too tight – build in some flexibility to deal with any unexpected delays. A relaxed guest is a happy guest, and that makes for a much better experience for everyone.

5.2 - Being quiet on set

While it's important to maintain a quiet atmosphere on set, it's also important to be mindful of those who might find complete silence a challenge.

Try to be understanding if your guest makes a bit of noise, and avoid making them feel uncomfortable.

Think about timings and try to minimise waiting time on set for those who need a quieter environment to prepare. If possible, move noisy activities like mic'ing up to a separate area.

A little consideration can make a big difference in creating a comfortable and supportive atmosphere for everyone.

5.3 - Lighting

Studio lighting can be surprisingly bright, and the contrast with the backstage area can be tricky for those with visual impairments. When guiding people around, make sure the walkways are clear and point out any ramps or steps. A little bit of awareness can make a big difference.

5.4 - Navigating around a set (even if they've seen it already)

Even if your guest has had a chance to see the set beforehand, it's important to remember that things can change. Sets are dynamic spaces, and what might have been clear during a rehearsal could be different during filming.

Equipment might have moved, lighting could have changed, and even the number of people on set can vary. These might seem like small details, but they can make a big difference to someone's experience.

So, always be mindful of your guest's needs and keep an eye out for anything that might cause them difficulty. Don't assume that just because they've seen the set before, they'll be fine. A quick check and a heads-up about any changes can make a big difference.

5.5 - Wheelchair transference

Wheelchairs are a welcome sight on our sets! If a guest wants to transfer to another seat, let's make it easy for them. Clear some space, provide support, and allow plenty of time. No need to rush!

It's important to remember that it's the guest's choice whether they stay in their wheelchair or transfer to another seat. Ask what they prefer, and respect their decision. A quick rehearsal beforehand can help them decide and make sure everything goes smoothly.

5.4 - Requiring additional aids on set

Even with the best preparation, there can be things you only notice at the last minute. A table might need to be moved, a cushion added, or a footstool provided. It's all about those little adjustments that make a big difference.

Remember that not everyone's mobility needs are obvious. Some people might find it difficult to stand for long periods, even if they don't use a wheelchair. They might prefer to use lifts, or need a chair to sit on while they wait.

It's helpful to let the team know about these needs in advance, so they can be prepared to offer support. Being aware can go a long way in creating a comfortable and inclusive environment for everyone.

Deaf Participants/Participants who are hard of hearing:

When we have Deaf or hard of hearing guests, it's important to ask if they need a British Sign Language interpreter. Even if they don't, there might be other things to consider. For example, think about where they're sitting in relation to the presenters as they might rely on lipreading. If they're hard of hearing on one side, make sure they're positioned so they can hear clearly.

It's also helpful to let them experience the studio acoustics beforehand, so they can get a sense of the sound environment.

Check if the studio has a hearing loop, and talk to the sound team about what's possible. They might be able to connect a presenter's microphone directly to the guest's hearing aid.

If a British Sign Language interpreter is needed, make sure they're positioned where the guest can easily see them, and that they can hear clearly themselves. Accessibility is always a priority!

Blind guests/Guests who are visually impaired:

Guests who are blind or are partially sighted will require more support in navigating different areas of the building and their experience will be tailored according to their individual needs. Hopefully, we've already got all the details about their needs, and the team is ready to help.

If they have to wait between activities, keep them updated. No one likes being left wondering what's happening. A quick update every few minutes can make a big difference.

When it's time to move, introduce yourself clearly. "Hi Alex, I'm Ben, and I'll be taking you to the studio." Simple and reassuring.

If they've asked for it, give them a brief description of yourself when you first meet. "I'm Sarah, I have short brown hair, and I'm wearing a green dress."

Give them time to get comfortable on set. Let them explore the space, find the camera, and get a sense of where everything is. If they have a guide dog, their furry friend will need a bit of time to explore too. When giving directions, be clear and specific. "Take a step forward... there's a cable on the floor... now turn right... and here's your seat."

Finally, make sure they know where to look when they're on set. Have someone sit in for the presenters so they can get their bearings. Explain clearly where the cameras are and who they'll be talking to.

It's all about making sure everyone feels comfortable and included, so they can relax and enjoy their time in the studio.

Having procedures in place for emergency situations

Risk assessments are essential for a safe set. Make sure yours includes everyone's adjustments, especially those who might need extra help in an emergency. Check those escape routes – can everyone get out easily? And make sure the safety crew knows who might need a hand.

Safety briefings should be clear and easy to understand for everyone. If you're not sure how to make it work for someone, just ask.

Keep an environment calm

Television studios can be pretty hectic places. It's easy to get caught up in the pressure and forget that not everyone is comfortable in that environment.

A bit of stress is normal, but it's important to be mindful of how it might affect others, especially those who are less familiar with the studio environment. A calm and supportive atmosphere can make a big difference for everyone.

CHAPTER 6: WORKING WITH AUDIENCES

Having a studio audience adds a fantastic buzz to a show, but it also means we need to think carefully about accessibility. Everyone should feel welcome and have a great time.

While you might have a separate team managing the audience, it's still a team effort to make sure everyone has a positive experience.

Consider having a dedicated accessibility coordinator to oversee the process. They can make sure everything runs smoothly and everyone feels comfortable and included. They can also support the team with supporting on screen and off screen Disabled people on the production, as well as audience.

6.1 - Audiences being cast, sourced, brought in

Let's make sure our audience has a stellar experience! When it comes to booking tickets, can people easily share their access needs? And if they do, do the ticketing team understand our policies for accessibility and can they handle those requests like the pros they are?

Nobody wants to wait around feeling uncomfortable, so let's make sure there's plenty of comfy seating before the show. And can folks easily let us know if they need anything? Happy audience, happy show!

Those Sunflower Lanyards are a signal for extra support. Let's make sure we spot them and offer a helping hand. Everyone deserves to feel like a VIP.

With a bit of teamwork, we can create a truly fantastic experience for our audience.

6.2 - On the day of transmission/recording in the studio

Let's make sure our audience has a comfy and enjoyable experience! Plenty of space for wheelchair users and their assistants, with seats that are just the right

height for everyone. And if folks need to stretch their legs during the show, let's make that happen safely.

If we're bringing audience members on set who are wheelchair users, make sure those ramps are at a comfortable gradient. No one wants to feel like they're climbing a mountain!

Safety briefings should be clear and easy to understand, with captions on videos and interpreters if needed.

Feeling a bit overwhelmed? We should have a quiet space nearby for anyone who needs a break. And if they want to come back to the studio, that should be easy too.

We need folks around who can help with any access requests. And let's be understanding about bags and coats – sometimes they hold essential things like medication or sensory aids. Of course, we need to keep safety in mind too.

Water should be available for anyone who needs it. And those hearing loops? Make sure they're working properly throughout the seating area.

If we have special guests in the audience, make sure everyone knows so they get the VIP treatment. And give them a number to call if they need anything.

With a bit of planning and care, we can create a fantastic experience for everyone in our audience.

And one more thing...

It's easy to get caught up in the whirlwind of a busy day, but don't forget to check in with your guest regularly. Make sure they're happy and comfortable throughout their time with you. A quick chat can make a big difference.

Remember that everyone's different, and people's needs can change throughout the day. So, keep the conversation going and be ready to offer support whenever it's needed.

CHAPTER 8 - USEFUL LINKS AND PLACES TO TURN TO IF YOU NEED ASSISTANCE

Need a helping hand? We've got a whole bunch of resources ready to lend some support. Check out these links for expert advice and guidance:

We're all about teamwork here at ITV Studios, and that includes working with some brilliant organisations who can offer extra support. So, don't hesitate to take a look and reach out. We want everyone to have a fantastic experience.

ITV RESOURCES

ITV's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Team (DE&I): If you have any queries that you wish to discuss in terms of support, accessibility or adjustments for something you're working on, contact the D&I team and they will escalate to the right people. You can get in touch via inclusion@itv.com

There are also a number of resources on the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion team's website which might be helpful. You can take a look at these [here](#).

ITV's Inclusive Language Guide: A highly useful document that helps ensure all staff understand the importance of inclusive language both with each other and with people they have to interact with. You can read this on [MyITV here](#).

WIDER INDUSTRY RESOURCES

TV Access Project (TAP): The TV Access Project is an industry-wide initiative that is working towards full inclusion for Disabled people by 2030. They have developed an excellent resource for further information on how to provide better accessibility in production. Read their [Production Toolkit on the PACT website](#).

The 5 A's: TAP created the 5As as guidelines for Disability Inclusion in UK Television Production. These guidelines are to ensure the full inclusion of Deaf, Disabled and/or Neurodivergent Talent within Production.

The 5As stand for: Anticipate, Ask, Assess, Adjust and Advocate.

You can learn more about these and how to put them into practice on the [ScreenSkills website](#).

TripleC: A disabled-led organisation with a mission to increase the role of Deaf, Disabled and/or Neurodivergent people in the arts and screen industries. [Visit their website](#) to find out more.

ACCESSIBLE TRAVEL LINKS

National Rail: The National Rail website is an excellent resource in providing [specific information about an individual stations accessibility](#) (or lack thereof) as well as providing a [very detailed map to use for reference](#).

Passenger Assistance: The booking system used by National Rail to book additional assistance for passengers. [This can be accessed either via its website](#) or an app you can download.

Tourism For All: A very handy database that provides accessibility information for a variety of Hotels across the U.K. ensuring you are able to make an informed decision. [Visit their website](#)

DISABLED PEOPLE'S ORGANIZATIONS

Services for people who are blind or have low vision

RNIB (Royal National Institute for the Blind)

T: 0303 123 9999

helpline@rnib.org.uk

Services for people who are Deaf or hard of hearing

RNID (Royal National Institute for the Deaf)

T: 0808 808 0123

E: contact@rnid.org.uk

Services for people with learning disabilities and acquired brain injury

Mencap

E: helpine@mencap.org.uk

T: 0808 808 1111

Services for people who use mobility aids

Living Made Easy

T: 0300 123 3084

E: training@livingmadeeasy.org

CONCLUSION

We've covered a lot, but there's always more to learn. Every guest is unique, so don't make assumptions. Just have a chat and find out what they need to have a great experience.

The world of television is constantly changing, and we need to keep moving forward. Let's ditch those outdated practices and create a more inclusive and welcoming environment for everyone. At ITV Studios, we're not just about making great television, we're about making a difference.