

The UK still has work to do when it comes to accessibility across business and hospitality

1 year ago



Leading mobility retailer [CareCo](#) wants to raise awareness about the issues with functional accessibility in the UK. Accessibility has improved dramatically in the UK over the last decade, with laws in place to support new buildings being able to accommodate disabilities and businesses actively looking to support the disabled community but research shows that there is still work to be done when it comes to functional accessibility.

Functional accessibility is where all barriers are removed to ensure that people who have mobility needs can have the same experience as a person without. An example of functional accessibility would be an office that had a ramp and had made reasonable adjustments for someone who was a wheelchair user to get them into a building but not have an interior that could be easily manoeuvred.

CareCo has sourced accessibility issues that people with disabilities face every day that can often feel invisible. We've recreated some of the experiences that people shared with us in the release below.

An accessible office in which workers said they could carry them up the stairs each day

"I disclosed my disability, told them that I'd love to attend an interview and when I got to the door, they told me that they were going to get a couple of colleagues to carry my up the stairs. Not only did this feel undignified, but it also felt disingenuous as they'd told me prior to attending that the office was fully accessible. Even if I hadn't left and voiced a polite no thank you, there was no way I was going to be sat every day outside my place of work waiting for somebody to carry me up." - *Female graduate, 22*

No view, spilt drinks and constant knocking

“Bought tickets to a gig that was advertised as accessible, and whilst I got through the queue system with no issues, and managed to make it to the lift, there was a raised floor and nowhere for wheelchair users like myself to have any view of the stage. I was surrounded by other people who were standing and whilst access to the room was easy enough, being in the venue itself meant I couldn’t see the band, and I was surrounded by people who were constantly knocking me and spilling drinks. Luckily, I had a friend who did help, but I believe that all venues should offer a space for people who have mobility issues that aren’t just placed at the back as an afterthought.” - *Small business owner, 34*

We could get through the door of the restaurant but no further

“Went for a meal with my family to a relatively busy restaurant for my 40th birthday and phoned on two separate occasions (following a mistake on our first call) to ensure that they could accommodate my husband, a wheelchair user, which we were assured would not be a problem at all. When we arrived, the restaurant looked busy, as expected, and having never attended before because it was out of town, we assumed everything would be ok. When we arrived, there was a ramp, and everything looked promising but when we got into the restaurant (which wasn’t small either) tables were placed so closely together that there was no way that we could get to our table. The staff tried to be nice enough about it, but it was obvious that there had been nothing done to accommodate us, tables had been booked near the door and there was nowhere for us to sit. Naturally, it was a few of us given it was my 40th and we ended up having to leave because they couldn’t seat us anywhere meaning they lost out on money, we ended up eating elsewhere which put a dampener on things, but ultimately it felt like they had a ramp so they’d done everything they could to help someone with a disability but in reality, it felt to me like they’d done it just so they could say that it was accessible when in reality it was anything but. It’s 2025, things like this shouldn’t really be an issue now” - *Nurse, 41*

Will Harrison, founder at CareCo says, “Accessibility shouldn’t be a tick-box exercise, there’s no doubt that there is progress, especially in the UK and as a nation we should be applauded for that but there is obviously a very real issue at play when it comes to performative accessibility. There are countless examples of people being able to access venues, buildings, restaurants easily but not being able to manoeuvre around meaning that whilst they can get through the door, they don’t get to share the same experiences as others. We’re calling on all sectors to genuinely consider the disabled experience in their businesses to ensure that they’re not only doing what is legal but what is right to do.”

**Quotes have been sourced from people who’ve responded to a PR request and asked to remain anonymous*