

CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL
COMMITTEE REPORTS AND UPDATES

COMMITTEE:	Community Committee		
MEETING DATE AND TIME	17 April 2025 7.00 pm	LOCATION	Congleton Town Hall
REPORT FROM	Cathy Dean, Communities and Admin Officer		
AGENDA ITEM REPORT TITLE	12.1 Disability Welcome Scheme		
Background	<p>Congleton Town Council is working with residents to make its activities and the town more accessible. The Equal Access in Congleton group, led by disability advocate Deborah Lawson and Congleton people with a wide range of disabilities, is advising the Council on improving life for disabled people. While some issues lie outside the Council's control, understanding them helps to improve accessibility for all.</p>		
Details	<p>26% of Congleton residents – about 7,500 people – have a disability (DWP). Many want to shop locally, but according to a Town Council survey, 87% face accessibility issues. We're working to improve access for both shoppers and businesses.</p> <p>Part of the work was to launch the Disability Welcome Scheme, the Disability Welcome Scheme uses helpful checklists to raise awareness and encourage simple, practical changes in areas like premises access, communication, staff awareness, and the internal environment.</p> <p>The group made up of local people with lived experience, helped create a checklist of simple measures businesses can take, such as large-print pricing, clear aisles, temporary ramps, and staff training.</p> <p>Businesses meeting the checklist requirements will receive a 'Disability Welcome' window sticker, certificate, and inclusion in a planned Disability Guide to Congleton.</p> <p>All businesses with a shop front are encouraged to apply. The leaflet is available from the Congleton Information Centre and the town council's website.</p> <p>https://www.congleton-tc.gov.uk/business-support-development/disability-welcome-congleton/</p> <p>Disability Welcome leaflets were delivered to Town Centre businesses (apart from Mill Street/Swan Bank) and West Heath shopping areas.</p> <p>The positive response from businesses with 9 leaflets returned so far (10th April 2025). Press releases and articles in Bear Necessities will further promote the scheme.</p> <p>We plan to deliver more leaflets to other shopping areas such as High Town, Market Quarter etc.</p>		

Window Stickers



Appendix 11.2 – Terms of Reference

The group has created 'Terms of Reference' for the Equal Access Group, which will help any new members who join to understand the aims and purpose of the group.

Financial Implications	Community Committee agreed on a budget for the Equal Access Group on 29.08.24 CO/10/2425 – 1) Support to the group in implementing a promotional Campaign for the Public (including social media and high-quality video) £1000. Disability Guide to Congleton £1000 Business (Shop/Pub) 'Disability Welcome' Scheme (certificates & stickers) £250.
Environmental Implications	Considered as part of each piece of work.
Inclusivity Diversity Impact	Equality and diversity are at the very heart of this campaign. We want to make Congleton as accessible as possible and communicate the town's offer so that disabled people can plan visits to Congleton with confidence.
Decision Required	That Councillors note this report and accept the Terms of Reference.