



Planning your Holiday or Break – Getting Started

RV

Hello, I'm Ray Veal and I'm the Chief Executive of Tourism for All

AC

Hello, I'm Ana Crome and I'm the Administration Manager for Tourism for All

RV

Ana, while you've been with Tourism for All you've helped many people with access needs to research and plan holidays and breaks?

AC

Yes, and in these programmes I am going to share with you some of the things I've learned and the tips I've picked up

RV

And you haven't just done this research and planning on behalf of other people?

AC

No that's right

I am myself a person with access needs

I have arthrogryposis, a condition which affects all the main joints in my body

I have very limited mobility and I use a powered wheelchair

RV

So, what are you going to cover in this programme?

AC

In this programme I'm going to talk about being confident to plan your holiday or break and what you should make sure you know before you start planning

RV

We should say at the start that we know that many people with access needs have concerns about planning a holiday or break?

AC

Yes

They believe that the facilities they need to allow them to enjoy a holiday or break will not be available – at least not where and when they want them and at a price they can afford

And they worry that even if accommodation or an attraction is accessible to them, they will not be welcomed and the staff will not understand what they need or how to give them good service

RV

And have you found that that is particularly true for people who are newly experiencing impairment and having access needs – perhaps as a result of an accident or condition?

AC

Yes

For people like myself, who were born with our conditions or impairments, it is easier because we have never known anything else

But people who are new to impairment and access needs can feel particularly anxious about the prospect of planning a holiday

More than once a caller has told me that they had thought that their diagnosis meant that they would never be able to take a holiday or break again

RV

But you've helped them see that that was not the case?

AC

Yes and I was really glad to be able to do that

RV

So, based on your experience, there is really no need for anyone with access needs to feel nervous about planning or taking a holiday or break?

AC

No

The range and quality of accessible accommodation have improved enormously in recent years and attraction operators and event organisers understand better how important it is to be accessible to all visitors

Wherever you want to go and whatever you want to do, there is a holiday or break which is right for you and which you will really enjoy

RV

So what is the most important piece of advice you would give anyone with access needs who wants to take a holiday or break?

AC

The most important single piece of advice I would give is to plan the holiday or break that you want, not just the one that you think you can have

RV

Of course, to help ensure that you get the holiday or break that you want, you should plan your research carefully?

AC

Yes, and there are a number of things you should think about and make sure you know before you start

So here are my 7 Steps for preparing to research and plan the holiday or break that is right for you

Step 1 - Think about who will be going on the holiday

Will you be going alone or as a couple?

Or will you be going with a larger group of family or friends?

Consider the wishes and needs of all the people who will be going on the holiday

RV

Sounds like a good starting point

What's Step 2?

AC

Step 2 - Think carefully about what you want from your holiday

There are some key things you should think carefully about, to help you understand what you want from your holiday and prepare to plan it

First, think about when you want to go

You really need to allow yourself enough time to plan your holiday

I recommend that you try to start planning at least 8 weeks in advance

And how important is when you go?

Is this flexible?

Next, think about what type of holiday you want

Do you want an active holiday, with plenty to do and see, or do you want something slower paced and more relaxing?

And how important is the type of holiday?

Is this flexible?

Next, think about where you want to go

Do you want to take your holiday or break in a particular area?

Do you want to be in a town, with restaurants and shops or do you prefer the countryside?

Or do you want to be at the seaside?

And how important is the destination?

Is this flexible?

Next, think about how far you want to go

How far - and for how long – are you prepared to travel from your home to your destination?

And how important is the time or distance that you will travel?

Is this flexible?

Next, think about how you want to travel

Is there a particular mode of travel (like the train) that you want to use to get to your destination?

What about travelling around while you are away?

And how important is the mode of travel?

Is this flexible?

Next, think about where you want to stay

What type of accommodation do you want to stay in?

Do you prefer self catering to a hotel?

And how important is the type of accommodation?

Is this flexible?

And finally, think about what you want to do

Are there particular attractions or events that you want to visit?

And how important are particular attractions or events?

Are these flexible?

RV

So Ana, you've highlighted seven key things to think carefully about:

When you want to go
What type of holiday you want
Where you want to go
How far you want to go
How you want to travel
Where you want to stay
What you want to do

And are these the key things you think about when you are planning a holiday or break for yourself?

AC

Absolutely

In my experience holidaying with access needs, thinking about all these things from the start – and how flexible they are – really helps me to understand what I want from my holiday and makes planning it a lot easier.

RV

So when you have thought about these key things, and how flexible they are, what's Step 3?

AC

Step 3 – Decide which of the things you want are the most important to you

Having thought about the things you want from your holiday or break, decide which of these are the most important to you and which, if any, are flexible

RV

And then?

AC

Make these things the fixed points of your holiday and build your plan around them

RV

So you've decided the most important things you want from your holiday

What's Step 4?

AC

Step 4 – Think about your budget for your holiday or break

How much do you want to spend on your holiday or break?

Remember that getting to your destination and your accommodation are not the only costs of your holiday or break

Don't forget to include all the additional costs, like getting around while you are away, travel insurance, food and entrance tickets to attractions and events

RV

And if you're travelling with a carer?

AC

If you need a carer to travel with you, don't forget to factor that cost into your budget as well

RV

Okay, you know what you want to spend on your holiday

What's Step 5?

AC

Step 5 – Think about the specific access needs that need to be met on your holiday or break

Consider each person who will be going on the holiday or break and what facilities or assistance they may need

RV

And that brings us to Step 6?

AC

Step 6 – Write everything down in a checklist

This will help you make sure that you have all the important information to hand - about the things you want from your holiday or break, your budget and the access needs that need to be met – when you begin your researching and planning

RV

And to help you to make a note of all the things you want to consider in your holiday and break planning, you can download our Holiday Planning Checklist through the Resources link on the 'Advice to Travellers' page on our website

So once you've thought about your holiday and written everything down in your checklist, what's Step 7?

AC

Step 7 – Keep reviewing your checklist and don't be afraid to change it

RV

Yes, you may realise there is something you have forgotten or you may think of new things

Or your circumstances may change

AC

So keep reviewing your checklist to make sure that you have all the information you need up to date and to hand when you begin researching and planning your holiday or break.

RV

So those are Ana's 7 Steps for preparing to research and plan the holiday or break that is right for you

AC

Yes, these are the steps that I follow when I am preparing to plan an accessible holiday or break, whether that's for me, with my access needs, or for someone else

They work for me and I hope they will work for you

RV

Don't forget that you can download our Holiday Planning Checklist through the Resources link on the 'Advice to Travellers' page on our website, to help you make sure that you have all the important information to hand when you begin researching and planning your holiday

AC

Thank you for listening

RV

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