

Art, aperitifs & accessible loos

Your guide to accessible city breaks in England

It's so easy to plan a short getaway with our guide to some of the most accessible English city breaks. Thanks to VisitEngland's Access for All project a selection of attractions and places to stay across Lincoln, Nottingham and Birmingham have undergone an 'accessible reinvention.'

The result is welcome news to the disabled traveller; warm, disability-savvy staff, mobility, hearing and visual impairment ratings for accommodation and improved accessibility to the best attractions in the area. City weekendening has never felt so good...





The Strait
& Steep Hill,
Lincoln

Magnitude of history

Lincoln's stalwart heritage fuses with a fun, popular cultural scene



The Collection

Small, yet perfectly formed, Lincoln packs serious cultural kudos into its ancient heart. This historic city captivates first with its web of medieval streets, magnificent eleventh century cathedral and Norman castle. Yes, it's home to one of only four surviving copies of 1215 Magna Carta; sheer historic gold; but scratch below the surface and you'll also find a vibrant city in touch with its cool, cosmopolitan side. The Steep Hill area is lined with quirky vintage boutiques, cafés, restaurants and chocolate shops. And despite its inclines, the city is easy to get around thanks to the Steep Hill Shuttle; a wheelchair accessible bus that stops at 13 locations across Lincoln. At the Brayford Waterfront, the atmosphere is more lively;

bars, restaurants, luxury hotels and a multiplex cinema fringe this picturesque inland harbour. And, as a city with many cobbled streets, accessible transport is high up on the agenda here. Wheelchair and scooter loan is available from Shopmobility in Lincoln Bus Station, and accessible taxis from Marks Passenger Services.

The Cultural Quarter is where the city's artistic scene ignites. Its eclectic mix of theatres, museums, galleries, music, cuisine, bars and café culture adds a fresh, directional dimension to a break here.

The Collection and Usher Gallery is the hub of the Cultural Quarter's action. Fusing an award-winning archaeology museum and the region's premier art gallery in the same location is a genius move.

At The Collection design your own

Roman mosaic, immerse yourself in the Stone, Bronze or Iron Age or learn how archaeological treasures weather.

After all that ancient-inspired activity, take time out at **Stokes Collection Café**. It's a restorative space serving a delicious menu of speciality teas, coffees and homemade dishes using fresh, locally-sourced ingredients. Sunday brunches are excellent – standout dishes include the 'Sweet Sunday' – an indulgent blueberry and white chocolate crêpe – and the Latino Benedict – eggs Benedict with a fiery chorizo and salsa kick.

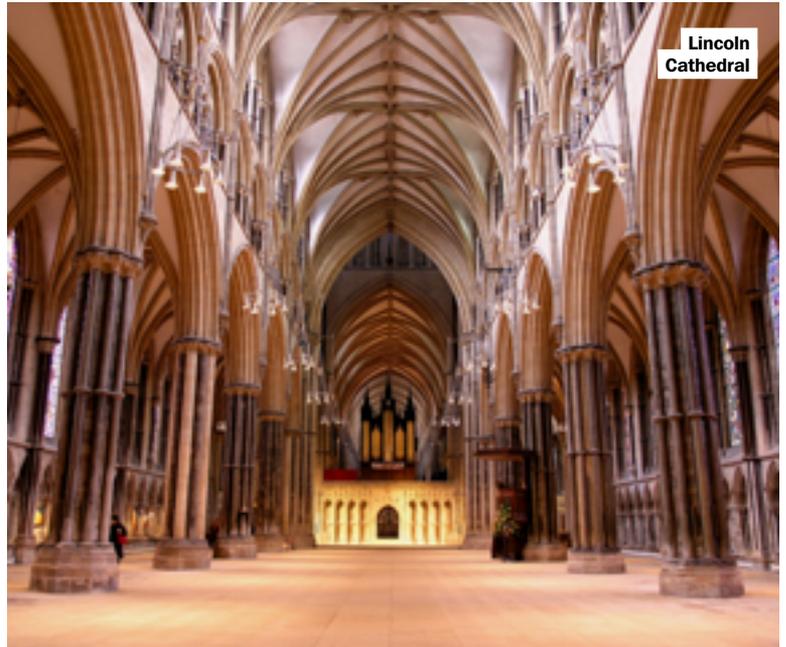
At the Usher Gallery accessibility is a high priority. You enter through a wheelchair-friendly glass pavilion and a new, wider lift enables access to the upper galleries. The space is home to fine and decorative art and horology (clocks and watches). Outside in the Temple Gardens admire the elegant neoclassical sculptures and the large commanding bronze known as A Mighty Blow for Freedom.

Arguably the most iconic of Lincoln's landmarks is the **Cathedral** and it's neighbouring castle. The imposing Gothic cathedral towers over Lincoln like a medieval skyscraper. When the cathedral tower

was constructed between the 13th & 14th centuries, it claimed the crown as the tallest building in the world, stealing the mantle from the Great Pyramid of Giza. Take a tour around the cathedral to learn more about the building's impressive history and its connection to Magna Carta. Around 85% is accessible by wheelchair.

The Museum of Lincolnshire Life charts the social history of the county from 1750 to today. The Industry and Agricultural Gallery exhibits farming machinery and a first-world-war tank. And at Commercial Row you can step into shops from bygone eras such as the chemist or post office. 90% of the museum is on ground level.

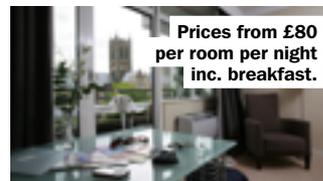
Intersperse that history and culture with some natural beauty at the **Natural World Centre** in Whisby. Set in the lush expanses of a nature park, the centre hosts inspiring exhibitions and creative events for all the family. Little Darters Adventure play area is an activity hotbed for the kids. Or hire a mobility scooter yourself and explore the woodland trails in Whisby Nature Reserve.



Lincoln Cathedral

Where to Stay

Check in with confidence – these addresses offer great accommodation and are committed to offering you a warm welcome. Arrive, then kick-back and relax.



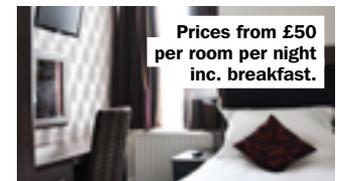
Prices from £80 per room per night inc. breakfast.



THE LINCOLN HOTEL

Set in the heart of uphill Lincoln and commanding exceptional views of the Cathedral, The Lincoln is a glamorous hotel in a stylish 1960's building with beautiful manicured gardens. The Green Room is a unique aviation themed fine-dining restaurant. There are two well-equipped accessible rooms with fully-adjustable sanitary ware, wheel-in showers and connecting rooms.

thelincolnhotel.com,
01522 520 348



Prices from £50 per room per night inc. breakfast.



LONGDALES HOUSE

This Bed and Breakfast is located on the edge of the Bishop Grosseteste University campus. Inside the ambience is cosy and contemporary. There are 18 rooms and breakfast is served in the university Refectory. With an on-site Access Champion, Deafgards, a portable hearing loop, bed risers and an accessible room, there's a wealth of very helpful facilities here.

Longdaleshouse.co.uk,
01522 583 681

MUSEUM OF LINCOLNSHIRE LIFE

Lincolnshire.gov.uk/
museumoflincolnshirelife,
01522 782 040

THE COLLECTION & USHER GALLERY

thecollectionmuseum.com,
01522 782 040

NATURAL WORLD CENTRE

naturalworldcentre.co.uk,
01522 688 868

LINCOLN CATHEDRAL

lincolncathedral.com,
01522 561 600

STOKES COLLECTION CAFÉ

thecollectionmuseum.com/stokes,
01522 523 548

Need to know

Under VisitEngland's Access for All campaign key staff members have completed disability awareness training. Accommodation and attractions have been audited by a professional access advisor, and many have received a mystery visit from guests with accessibility requirements. All venues listed display access statements on their websites giving detailed information on their accessibility.

FOR MORE INFORMATION GO TO

VisitLincoln.com/accessible

The new Hood

Nottingham is throwing off its more obvious shackles and emerging as one edgy culture-loving dude

The Robin Hood green tight-clad clichés may have stuck, but Nottingham is so much more than a city with a charitable hero and a multi million pound nineties movie to its name. Visit and you'll find a vibrant county capital with cosmopolitan city ambitions. Today Nottingham's buoyant independent music, cinema and performing arts scene gives it a hip undercurrent. Fuse that with award-winning heritage, medieval caves, independent shopping, hidden cocktail bars and kicking nightlife and you can see why this city's got the cool kids talking. The art and architecture are pretty up there too; with classical, modern and landscape art showcased

across the city. And fine Tudor, Regency and Victorian façades sit alongside the asymmetric industrial lines of Nottingham Contemporary. It's an eclectic cultural hub and one that's fully committed to keeping its colourful sites open to all. As the proud owner of the first accessible tramway in the country, Nottingham is working hard on providing visitors with improved accessibility.

Designed by award-winning architects Caruso St John, **Nottingham Contemporary** is one of the country's largest contemporary arts centres at over 3,000 square metres. Inspiration for the building's unique design came from the surrounding 19th century lace

markets. Home to four galleries, a performance and film space, learning studio, shop and a café bar, its changing programme of exhibitions is sure to capture your imagination. Their Access to Art for All scheme provides artist led workshops and free gallery tours for a wide range of groups with additional support needs.

The **New Art Exchange** is a cutting-edge visual arts space that celebrates the region's cultural diversity. And it certainly does it well. With an eclectic variety of art exhibitions, lectures, film-screenings, live music, dance and theatre, it's clearly serious about shining a light on all art forms. All five floors can be accessed by lift. A hearing loop system operates in the

reception and performance spaces.

The **Galleries of Justice Museum** is another example of Nottingham's offbeat identity. The unique concept fuses history with live performance. Based at the city's old courthouse and gaol it brings exhibits and stories around crime and punishment to life. Walk in the shoes of one of the city's outlaws, or watch the villainous Sheriff of Nottingham put Robin Hood on trial. 90% of the exhibits at this Grade II listed building are accessible for wheelchair users, with virtual reality presentations available for harder to reach areas.

The city's drinking and dining scene is also flourishing. At **Sinatra Bar and Restaurant** the emphasis

NOTTINGHAM CONTEMPORARY

nottinghamcontemporary.org,
01159 489 750

NEW ART EXCHANGE

nae.org.uk,
01159 248 630

GALLERIES OF JUSTICE

galleriesofjustice.org.uk,
01159 520 555

SINATRA BAR AND RESTAURANT

sinatrabarandrestaurant.co.uk,
01159 411 050

THE NED LUDD

thenedludd.com,
01159 484 221

SOBAR

sobar-nottingham.co.uk,
01158 240 364



is on seasonal fresh ingredients, cocktails and fine wines. A Pre-Theatre or Express Lunch menu is available and every Thursday they host live music in the bar. Wheelchair access is provided at the entrance and an accessible toilet is located on the same level. Menus are available in large print format.

If you fancy curling up over a languid lunch in a great English pub environment, **The Ned Ludd** is the place to do it. This bar and restaurant showcases 14 craft beers and four real ales on draught, served alongside local artisan food. The front doors open out wide to accommodate wheelchair users, a hearing loop is located behind the bar and large print menus are available.

Sobar takes the conventional bar concept and turns it on its head. This alcohol free, café/bar venue puts food, virgin drinks and mocktails at the heart of its business and sets them to the backdrop of original entertainment.

Developed by Double Impact, the

Nottingham based drug and alcohol recovery charity, with the support of a grant from the Big Lottery Fund, this venue is inclusive and friendly. A portable access ramp is available, a hearing loop is installed and there is an accessible toilet with handrails.

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Couple at Nottingham Contemporary



Galleries of Justice Museum

FOR MORE INFORMATION GO TO
**ExperienceNottinghamshire.com/
 access-for-all**

Where to Stay

Check in with confidence – these addresses offer great accommodation and are committed to offering you a warm welcome. Arrive, then kick-back and relax.



Prices from £81 per room per night.



THE NOTTINGHAM BELFRY

The Nottingham Belfry is an expansive 120 room-strong hotel with state-of-the-art facilities. The luxury spa is a highlight with six treatment rooms, indoor pool, jacuzzi, sauna and steam room. Book in for a signature Espa Rebalancing Ritual. Choose from six purpose-built accessible rooms with emergency pull-cords. Two have a wet room with an accessible wheel-in shower, wall mounted drop down seat and grab rails.

**Qhotels.co.uk/nottingham,
 01159 739 393**



Prices from £52 per room per night.



JURYS INN NOTTINGHAM

Literally five minutes from the train station, tramway and main city centre car parks, Jurys Inn Nottingham is the place to check in if you're travelling by public transport and on a budget. Infusion Restaurant and Inntro Pub are located onsite and three of the 264 spacious rooms are wheelchair accessible with lowered beds.

**Jurysinns.com/nottingham,
 01159 016 700**



Custard Factory,
Birmingham

Brum for everyone

Now up there with the big city hitters, Birmingham's star is firmly on the rise

ALFIEBIRDS AND THE OOBLECK

alfiebirds.co.uk,
01212 706 665

CAFÉ OPUS

cafeopus.co.uk,
01212 483 226

ASTON VILLA FOOTBALL CLUB

avfc.co.uk,
08006 120 950

THINKTANK BIRMINGHAM SCIENCE MUSEUM

birminghammuseums.
org.uk/thinktank,
01213 488 000

BIRMINGHAM HIPPODROME

birminghamhippodrome.com,
08443 385 000

The culmination of huge investment and regeneration over the last decade is propelling this industrial city into an exciting cultural stratosphere. And, as Britain's second largest city, there's no denying its cosmopolitan credentials.

If one building sums up the city's transformation perfectly it's the award-winning Library of Birmingham; setting the cultural tempo with its edgy design. The metamorphosis of New Street station followed; Grand Central is the luxury shopping destination, housed in the mezzanine level. There's a sleek new look at high-end shopping destination The Mailbox, too.

The city's cultural and sporting life is vibrant. As well as a host of outstanding museums and galleries, Birmingham has four Michelin-starred restaurants alongside a profusion of secret cocktail

hangouts and waterside bars.

Accessibility is high up on the agenda here, too. Mobility scooters are available from Shopmobility in the Bullring, and Changing Places accessible toilets are installed at The Library of Birmingham and Cadbury World in Bournville. VisitBirmingham.com has a number of photo journeys online; detailing the best access routes in and around attractions. If you need someone to accompany you for a short trip when you arrive here, the city's Southside wardens are an excellent option.

Alfie Birds and The Oobleck is a unique hangout. With a tagline that reads "gourmet eats and beats", you get the gist. This is a kick-back and chill space perfect for meeting friends and enjoying world craft beers, ciders, gourmet burgers and fresh stone-baked pizzas. The Oobleck is a 350 people capacity live music venue, right

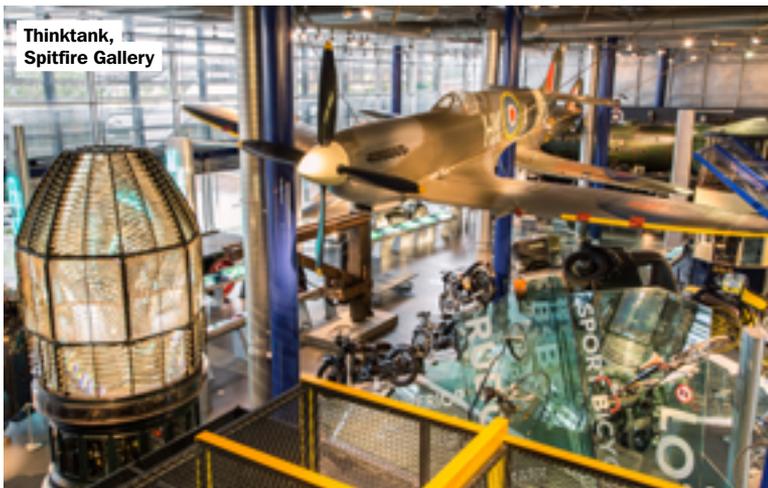
next door. The main bar and pizzeria have level access and the Oobleck has a short entrance ramp. A large print menu is available in the restaurant.

Café Opus is another of Birmingham's interesting, independent food destinations. Tucked away on the ground floor of the magnificent Ikon Gallery in Brindleyplace, it's fuelled by a passion for market fresh ingredients. The all day brunches are of exceptional quality, if you fancy something healthier try the Café Opus Club Salad or the Halloumi Burger. Wheelchair access is provided throughout.

Sports-lovers should put a trip to **Aston Villa Football Club** on their trip hit list. Soak up the atmosphere and tread the footsteps of Villa's finest star players of past and present. The stadium tours are really memorable and give you an insight into the club's history and a chance to get up close with the European Cup, FA Cup and



Villa Park



Thinktank,
Spitfire Gallery

League Cup. Tour guides will tailor the tour to suit your needs and there is a platform lift for wheelchair users to give access to the football pitch area.

At **Thinktank Birmingham Science Museum** you can travel back in time to experience the city's industrial past in the morning. Then spend the afternoon exploring futuristic inventions and space travel under the very same roof. The outdoor Science Garden is packed full of giant, interactive exhibits. Centrally-located accessible lifts operate to all floors

and can accommodate wheelchairs.

If you fancy watching some live opera, ballet, a west end show, some stand-up or dance then head to the **Birmingham Hippodrome**. This not-for-profit registered charity is home to the Birmingham Royal Ballet, DanceXchange and plays host to the Welsh National Opera's entire repertoire. Accessibility is a subject close to the charity's heart. Their own Access Forum Group actively listens and reacts to the needs of all disabled visitors.

FOR MORE INFORMATION GO TO
VisitBirmingham.com/travel/accessible-birmingham

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Prices from
**£79 per room
 per night.**



HOTEL LA TOUR

Right next door to Selfridges and Moor Street Station, this luxury four star hotel excels at delivering exceptional attention to detail. Modern, yet classic in style, it has 174 rooms and an onsite gym. There are ten accessible bedrooms with strobe lights linked to the fire alarm and hearing loops at reception and in the Alvar bar.

**Hotel-latour.co.uk,
 01217 188 000**

The Accessibility Key: Decoded

Understanding VisitEngland's National Accessible Scheme

Use this handy, at-a-glance guide to decipher if a hotel is likely to meet your level of accessibility needs. Accommodation that displays any of the official logos have been independently assessed against demanding criteria. Assessed properties may have facilities such as handrails, ramps, level-access showers, hearing loops and colour contrast. Ratings are split into three categories; mobility impaired and older people, visually impaired and blind people and hearing impaired and deaf people.



Older and less mobile guests

Suitable: If you can climb a flight of stairs, but banisters or grip handles would make it easier.



Part-time wheelchair users

Suitable: If you have problems walking or can walk a maximum of three steps, or need to use a wheelchair some of the time.



Independent wheelchair users

Suitable: If you're a wheelchair user and travel independently.



Visually impaired guests

Suitable: If you have difficulty reading small print, are registered blind, have poor sight or are visually impaired.



Guests with hearing loss

Suitable: If you have a slight hearing difficulty, are deaf, wear a hearing aid or have hearing loss.

As everyone's accessibility needs are unique, please do check your individual requirements can be met before booking.

**Bright lights.
Big city.
Large print.**



VisitEngland™

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AccessforAll**

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accessible breaks
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