

# Make Room! Bath Workshop



We Are The People is a group of disabled people and allies learning about disability issues at Bath Spa University.



We have learned that **accessible LGBTQ+ spaces** are important to Disabled people in the LGBTQ+ community in the Southwest of England.

**Accessible** means that something includes disabled people.



For instance, a LGBTQ+ space that is **not** wheelchair accessible, would be an example of an **inaccessible** LGBTQ+ venue.



We ran a creative workshop in Bath, held at Bath Spa University Locksbrook Campus for those impacted by accessibility in LGBTQIA+ venues.

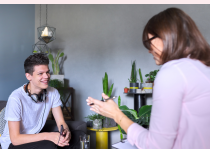


It was important to us that our workshop was engaging, welcoming and emotionally safer.

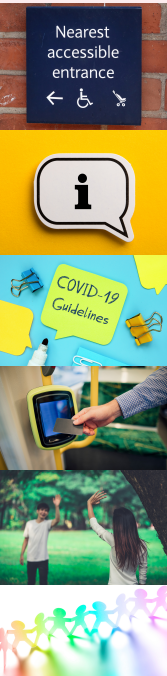


We considered many different things when we planned for this workshop including:

- A variety of art materials
- Working with therapists to provide a quiet space in the workshop.
- Our own lived experiences of welcoming spaces.







Accessibility considerations we planned for included:

- Wheelchair accessibility
- Providing information about the event in advance
- Providing a clear Covid policy and provisions
- Paying people back for their travel
- Having someone to meet participants at the door
- Creating a group agreement to encourage a safer and respectful space.



The workshop was kept small in numbers with 6 participants.



Participants were drawn to the workshop by:

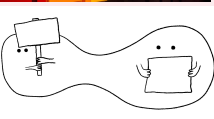
- Passion for inclusion and accessibility, and experience working in this area



- Enjoyment of art



- Frustration at lack of accessible LGBTQIA+ events.



We worked with the artist Sapphire Henrisken to create blob characters as part of the creative activities for the workshop.



Participants coloured in and drew on the blobs to show different emotions, and share accessibility needs and experiences.



Photograph by Gabriella Tigoglu

Participants also made badges to share themes of accessibility, pride and protest.

Badges could be taken home, along with their drawings.



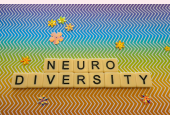
Collages were also made using collage sheets and colourful paper.



We asked participants what the word 'accessibility' means to them.



Being able to get to/into spaces was one answer.



But participants pointed out accessibility means a lot more than just wheelchair access, with the importance of neurodiversity and sensory needs discussed.



Participants shared that knowing in advance exactly what to expect about an event was very important to them.



Participants shared that having an activity based event, such as making art, can take the pressure off the social aspect.



We talked about the importance of quiet spaces in events and what participant's ideal quiet space might look like.



A lack of resources, funding and knowledge was seen as one major issue that impacted accessibility for LGBTQIA+ events.



Participants discussed how old, listed buildings in Bath are more likely to be inaccessible.



Participants liked that we hadn't asked questions about their Disabled and LGBTQIA+ identity before attending, as this can feel very intrusive.



Participants shared that inaccessibility can be a vicious cycle.

This is because if spaces are inaccessible it means disabled people are unable to attend, and are not seen or heard in public life.

This leads to inaccessible spaces carrying on without change.



At the end, the Make Room team sat down together to think about what went well and what could be improved for our next workshop in Bristol.



The team agreed it would be good to have more opportunities for participants to discuss as a group and share their art.

Want to find out more?  
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