

# Neurodivergent spaces

Appendices to Report



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# Appendix 1: Places specifically mentioned

## Cafes and Restaurants

### Restaurant

Sensory and Rye	The Morgan Car Experience Centre
Tiffany's café Buttermarket, Hereford	Wagamamas

### Supermarkets

Aldi	Asda
Co-op Leominster	Lidl
Morrisons Leominster	Tesco
Waitrose	

### Shops and shopping centres

Area 151 Pokémon store, Hereford	Matrix, Hereford
Area 51	TGS
BlueCross mobility	National Star Charity shop
Body Clinic , Leominster	Newsagent, Broad street, Leominster
Coco's nail salon	Old Market Shopping Centre
The Entertainer	Philip Morris
H&M	Poundland
Home Bargains	Primark
Jessicas sweets	Ross Town Market
Lion Gallery, Leominster	Tiger
London Look Hairdressers	Warhammer
M&S	Wilko Store

## Clubs

Aspire hub youth club	Hereford FC Edgar Street Hereford
Football club	Richmond Club
The Geek Retreat	Rugby Club Hereford
Hereford Bowling club	

## Charity, Voluntary and Community sector

Cart Shed	HANDS
Community Garden Ross	Hereford Hub at Maylord Orchard
Cracked Slipper drama group at the Kindle Centre	Ivy Close
ECHO	Lee's Place
Enviroability	Radio ECHO

## Employment and volunteering

Hereford Make - CIC	National Trust Volunteering Opportunities
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## Pubs

Generally	The Herdsman Pub
Dukes Head Leominster	The Monument
Green Dragon	The Royal pub in Ross
The Cosy Club	Three Barrels

## Fast Food Outlets

Greggs	MacDonalds drive-by
MacDonalds	Subways

## Community Buildings

Leominster Library	Larruperz Centre Ross
Library at town hall Hereford	

## Leisure Buildings

Bromyard Gym	Presteigne swimming pool
Halo Gym (Ross swimming/Leisure)	Running Club
Hereford swimming pool	Swimming pools
Ledbury swimming pool	The Core Roller Skating, Foley Trading Estate
Wye Leisure	

## Outdoors

Countryside	Walks
Cycling	Wapley Hill Woods, Pembridge
Norton Woodlands and field	Woodlands
Queenswood	

## Education

Art College Hereford	Montessori School, Monmouth
Bishop School Kinder Centre	School helpers
Kingsland Primary School	U3A

## NHS

CAMHS	MIND
CDC Dentist	Oxygen Therapy Centre
Dentist and NHS	Presteigne GP surgery
Hereford Hospital	Rotherwas Immunisation centre
HMG Medical Centre and Walgrave	Rylands GP
Leominster surgery	The health centre near ASDA where they do blood tests
Let's Talk Therapy	

## Online support

### Stadiums, Festivals and Entertainment venues

Alton Towers	Live Music
The Courtyard	Odeon Cinema, Hereford
Glastonbury	Stadiums

## Other

Family Court System	Nowhere
Home	

## Transport

Beacon College minibus	Planes
Bus 492	Trains
Bus Ross to Hereford and Ross to Gloucester	Train from Hereford to Leominster

Bus station café	Zipper buses
Buses and Trains	Taxis

# APPENDIX 2 – Herefordshire Council website information about Neurodivergent people

## Neurodiversity

Neurodiversity refers to the variation in the way that all human brains work.

## Neurodivergent

Neurodivergent means that the brain functions, learns and processes information differently. A neurodivergent person is someone whose brain handles information in a way that is not typical of most people. It's estimated that around 1 in 7 in the UK have some kind of neurodivergence.

The most common types of neurodivergence are:

- [Autism](#)
- [Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder \(ADHD\)](#)
- [Dyslexia](#)
- [Dyscalculia](#)
- [Dyspraxia or Developmental Co-ordination Disorder \(DCD\)](#)
- [Developmental Language Disorder](#)

Other examples of how the brain processes information differently and, therefore, are considered to come under the neurodivergence umbrella are:

- [Dysgraphia](#)
- [Tourette's syndrome](#)
- [Misophonia](#)
- [Executive dysfunction or cognitive functioning difficulties](#)

Some people will have more than one type of neurodivergence, which can often co-occur and overlap.

## Appendix 3 – Excerpts: Neurodivergent No.s and financial benefits of inclusion

### Office for National Statistics

For some neurodivergent conditions there are no definitive statistics in the UK according to the Office for National Statistics.

#### *Condition-Specific Data*

*We do not hold separate official prevalence estimates for ADHD, dyslexia, dyspraxia, or other learning difficulties. The only neurodivergent condition captured in our surveys is autism (and ADHD via HEAL20). Previous [autism prevalence tables](#) were produced by our Life Course team, but we do not hold updated editions of this analysis.*

[Prevalence of neurodivergence among the adult population in the United Kingdom - Office for National Statistics](#)

### The Neurodiversity Directory

The Neurodiversity Directory gives the following statistics: United Kingdom – prevalence of neurodiversity. Full set with sources is in Appendix 3.

An estimated 15% of the UK population are neurodivergent ([City & Guilds, Neurodiversity Index, 2025](#)).

This figure aligns with global prevalence estimates and represents approximately 10 million people across England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland.

ADHD affects an estimated 3-4% of UK adults, representing approximately 1.9 million people ([Clinical Knowledge Summaries, National Institute for Health and Care Excellence, 2025](#))

Adult ADHD diagnosis has increased significantly in recent years as awareness has grown that ADHD is a lifespan condition, not solely a childhood disorder. Many adults are now receiving diagnoses in their 30s, 40s, and beyond after years of unidentified challenges.

39% of UK respondents report having a neurodivergent child ([City & Guilds, Neurodiversity Index, 2025](#))

This figure, substantially higher than population prevalence estimates for children, likely reflects sampling methodology (responses from families

already engaged with neurodiversity topics) but also demonstrates the widespread family experience of neurodivergence across UK households.

## **Financial returns of neuro-inclusion**

Companies that establish neuroinclusive cultures have reported 28% higher revenues, double net income, and 30% higher profit margins ([TextHelp survey, 2024](#))

While causation is difficult to isolate – something I've said several times with several other neurodiversity statistics – organisations prioritising neuroinclusion demonstrate strong financial performance across multiple metrics. The correlation may reflect organisational sophistication: companies capable of implementing effective neuroinclusion likely excel in other operational areas including innovation, talent management, and adaptability.

63% of companies with neuroinclusive hiring practices saw improvements in overall employee wellbeing, 55% observed stronger company culture, and 53% reported better people management ([CIPD, Neuro-inclusion at work study, 2024](#))

Neuroinclusive practices create spillover benefits extending beyond neurodivergent employees. Flexibility, clear communication, structured feedback, and explicit processes improve experiences for entire workforces, generating cultural returns that justify investment even before calculating direct productivity gains.

# Appendix 4 – Reasonable Adjustments

Under the Equality Act 2010, businesses and organisations have a legal duty to make 'reasonable adjustments' that will allow disabled people to access the same opportunities and services as non-disabled people.

You can find more explanation and advice on Talk community website with Infographics for different disabilities as examples.

[Reasonable adjustments - Talk Community Directory](#)

## Healthwatch Reasonable Adjustments Infographics.

You can find a range of Reasonable Adjustment Infographics created by Healthwatch Herefordshire both on the Talk Community site and Healthwatch Herefordshire's website.








[Search | Healthwatch Herefordshire](#)



### Reasonable Adjustments

The majority of disabilities and impairments have very specific adjustments that can be made to make services and employment more inclusive.

However, there are some general adjustments that can be made that will make your service or workplace more accessible and inclusive for all.

<p><b>1. Remember everyone is different.</b> Always ask 'What will help?'</p> 	<p><b>2. Use careful speech.</b></p> 
<p><b>3. Give clear instructions and avoid jargon.</b></p> 	<p><b>4. Offer an environment that is open to a flexible schedule or working hours.</b></p> 
<p><b>5. Provide staff disability awareness training.</b></p> 	<p><b>6. Be kind, patient and make allowances.</b></p> 
<p><b>7. Make your physical building easier to access. This might include altering stairs, doorways, entrances and exits, toilet signs, colour contrasting handles, lighting and ventilation, and potentially the size of the property.</b></p> 	

## Appendix 5 – A compassionate approach to meltdowns

### Excerpt of: A Compassionate Look at Neurodivergent Meltdowns and Support Strategies

<https://www.serenitysomaticpractice.org/embodiedmusings/a-compassionate-look-at-neurodivergent-meltdowns-and-support-strategies>

For those witnessing a meltdown, your response can significantly influence its duration and intensity. Your primary goal is to help reduce the overwhelming stimuli, not to reason or discipline. First, ensure immediate safety in a quiet, calm manner. If in public, help guide the person to a less stimulating space if possible. Lower the lights, reduce noise, and create physical space around them. Do not crowd them or touch them without explicit permission, as this can feel threatening and add to the sensory overload.

Second, practice silent, non-judgmental presence. Avoid asking questions, giving instructions, or trying to talk them out of how they feel. Your quiet, calm, and patient presence communicates safety far more effectively than words can in that moment. Simply being there, without demand, is a powerful form of support.

Third, after the meltdown has subsided, offer unconditional support. The post meltdown phase is often characterized by exhaustion and vulnerability. Offer a glass of water, a blanket, or simply a kind word. Do not demand an explanation or lecture about what happened. Later, when everyone is regulated, you can have a collaborative conversation about triggers and support needs. Your compassionate response can help rebuild trust and mitigate the shame that often follows these intensely vulnerable episodes.

## Appendix 6 – Local Training offers

Useful FREE training links and articles re good customer care that may help with training design or tips sheet or recommendations.

<https://www.bgateway.com/stories/blog/how-businesses-can-support-neurodivergent-staff-and-customers>

<https://businessdisabilityforum.org.uk/resource/neurodiversity-toolkit/training-customer-facing-staff-neurodiversity/>

<https://tinyurl.com/Neurotrainvids>

### Local and National Training

Valerie Fitch is happy to do Autism Awareness training for all staff free of charge. Valerie's training hails from personal and family experience and was formerly involved in NAS and ICB. Valerie has provided training to the local police force for many years. Her contact details are:

[Valeriefitch@btinternet.com](mailto:Valeriefitch@btinternet.com)

### Oliver McGowan training

<https://www.herefordmake.org/autism-training>

### National Autistic Society

[Training](#)

### Autism Experience

Contact HANDS hub and Parent Carer Voice

<http://hands-hub.co.uk/>

### Accessible Herefordshire

[What We Offer | AccessibleHerefordshire](#)

### Mind

[Mental Health Training for Businesses in Herefordshire – Business Support](#)

Delivers Autism awareness training as well as mental health awareness training – develops the training with autistic people.

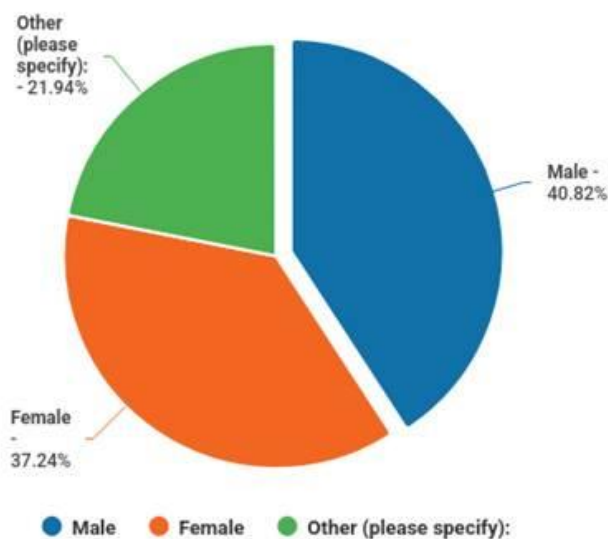
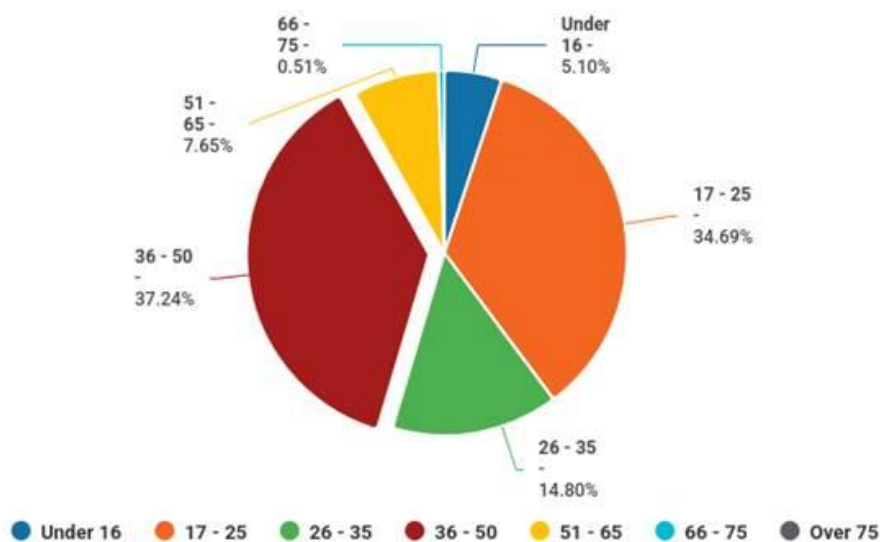
### Autism West Midlands

[Training | Autism West Midlands](#)

# Appendix 7 – Demographics

## Demographics of online participants

This is an approximate breakdown of people who participated.



# Appendix 8 – Online Checklist charts

## Introduction

In the online and paper checklists, we set out a number of areas so that people could identify why the place was comfortable or why it was not. The checklist asked questions to help people to consider each area. The Checklist was bought together from audits created by neurodivergent people including the one used by people in Herefordshire to audit GP surgeries in Herefordshire and Worcestershire.

The areas highlighted were:

Entrance, Sight, Sound/ Noise, Smell, Space, Staff communication, Staff attitude and training, Lighting and temperature, Accessible, Extra Consideration, Signs.

People told us about places they were comfortable to go to and filled the aspects that were most important to them. The charts that follow indicate the areas that some commented about. Because people mainly chose to review places that had spaces, they felt comfortable in the results appear favourable on the whole. But if you consider that these are places people feel comfortable it is important to note the not so good and bad aspects.

It is important always to bear in mind that the people answering are those that are comfortable getting out and about at all. They are the answers to places that they go and feel more comfortable in.

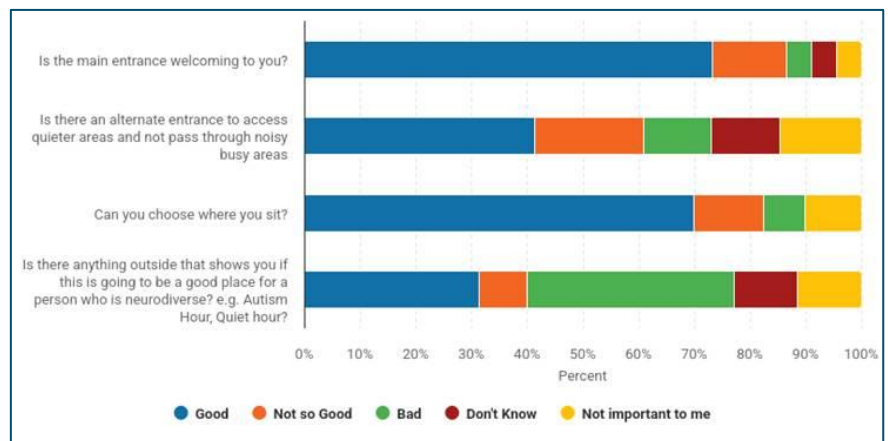
People were asked to use the questions as a prompt but to answer with a judgement of Good, Not so good, Bad, Don't know or Not important to me.

## Entrance

50 people told us about the entrance of their chosen venue or transport.

Over 70% found the entrance welcoming.

The worst aspects were lack of information to indicate that the venue or transport would be a good place for them to be. 38% said this was bad about the places or transport they use.



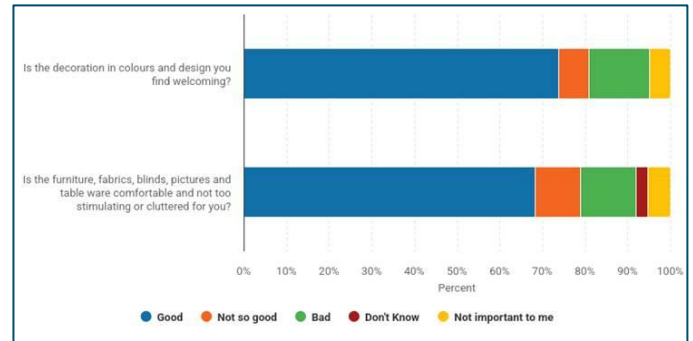
## Sight

In spaces mentioned, 42 answered this part of the checklist.

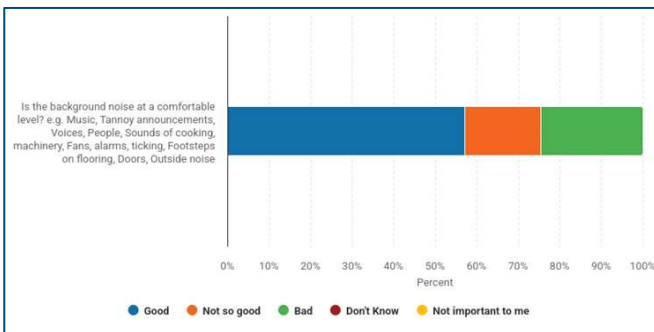
74% Found decoration, colour and design welcoming.

7% Not so good and 14% bad.

Almost a quarter found the furnishings over stimulating and cluttered.



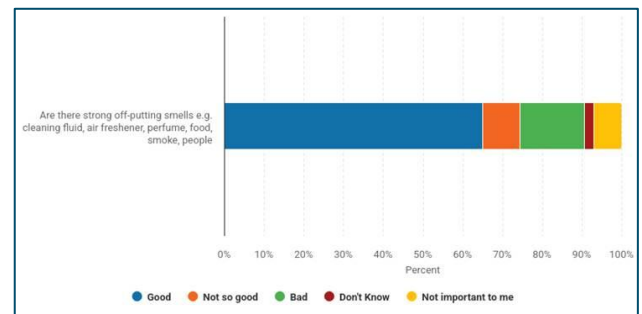
## Sound/ Noise



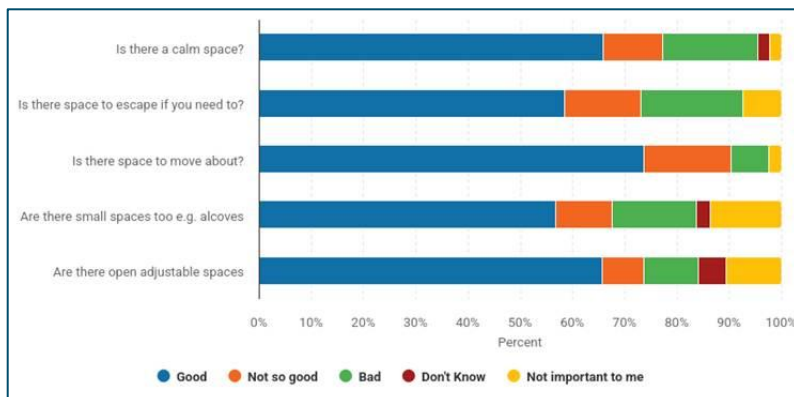
49 answered this part of the checklist and 43% Found noise levels Not so good or bad.

## Smell

43 answered this part of the checklist  
65% finding smells not overpowering  
judging the space they were reviewing  
good and 25% said not so good or bad.  
7% said it was not important to them.



## Space



47 people chose to fill this aspect of the checklist about the space they were reviewing. 74% felt there was good space to move in the space they reviewed.

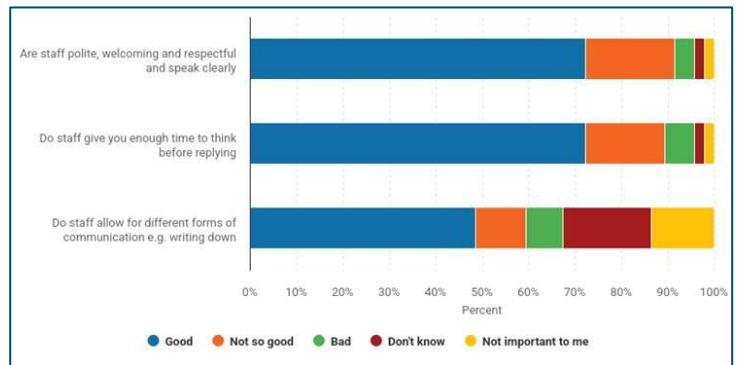
Even so, 29% noted that it was 'not so good' or 'bad' when it

came to calm spaces and 20% felt the place they reviewed was bad in not having a space to escape to.

## Staff communication

49 people chose to comment about this area. Lots of positives but still over 20% scored politeness, welcoming and respect Not so good or bad.

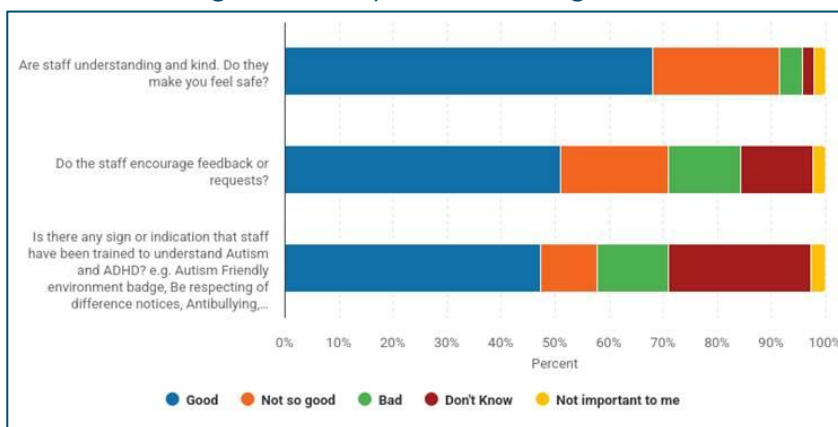
Importantly being given enough time scored well though 23% scored not so good and bad.



Places do less well offering alternative forms of communication which concerns 19% and another 19% don't know if it is offered while for 14% it is not important.

## Staff attitude and training

48 people answered this section and 28% scored staff understanding, kindness and a feeling of safety as Not so good or bad.



A third felt staff were not so good or bad at encouraging feedback or requests.

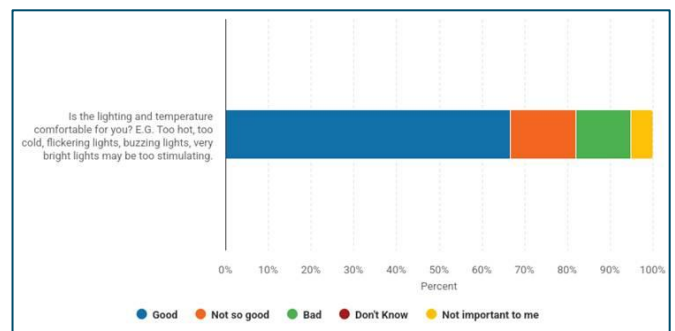
47% felt there was some sign that staff had an awareness of Neurodivergent customers.

## Lighting and temperature

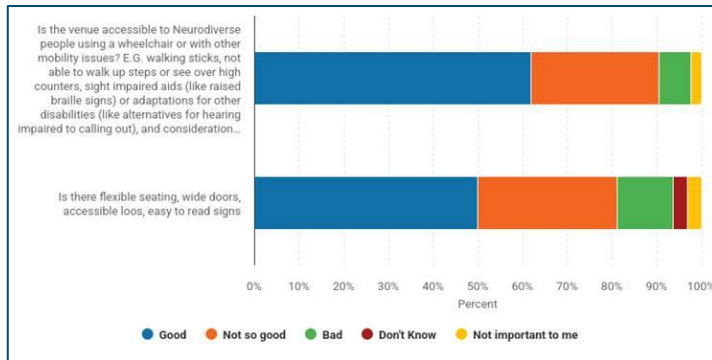
39 people chose to judge this area of the space they reviewed and 28% ticked not so good or bad.

5% said it was not important to them.

67% said this aspect was good in their chosen space.



## Accessible



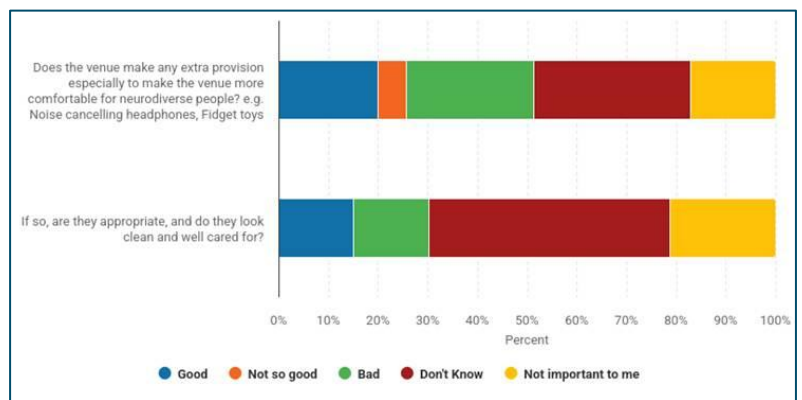
42 people chose to highlight how they felt about this aspect. 36% ticked not so good or bad.

43% chose not so good or bad for their views of flexible seating, wide doors, accessible loos and/or easy read signs.

## Extra Consideration

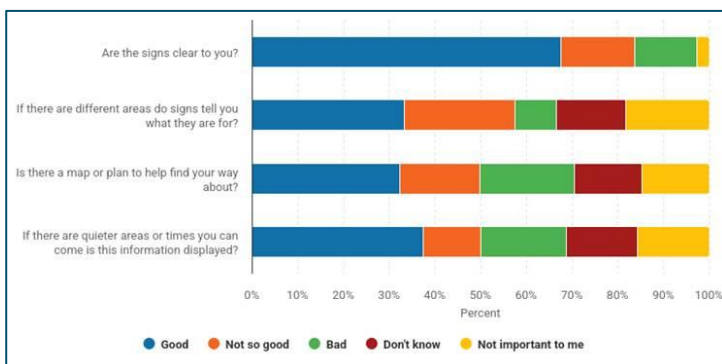
35 answered this aspect of their chosen place. Just 20% noted Good extra provision. 32% said not so good or bad. 31% did not know and 17% said this was not important to them.

As to appropriate, clean and looked after provision 15% chose Good 15% chose bad and 49% chose Don't know. 21% said this was not important to them.



## Signs

37 chose to highlight this area of their chosen space. Two thirds felt the signs displayed were clear to them.



More guidance being displayed around different areas, plans to find your way around and guidance on quieter times or areas was apparent in scores with roughly a third scoring not so good or bad in these areas.

A further sixth did not know if such things existed. However, another sixth said this was not important to them.

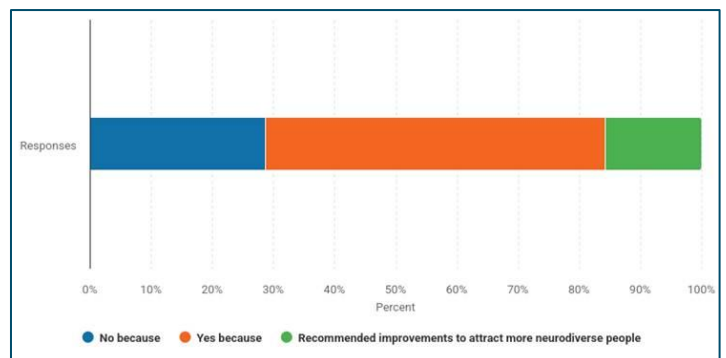
## Would you come here again or recommend it to neurodivergent friends or people in Herefordshire?

91 people answered this question.

70% said that they would come to the place they reviewed again or recommend it to others.

36% said they would not.

20% recommended improvements.



## Appendix 9: General comments by type of place

(Highlighted passages are quoted in the main report)

### Supermarkets

"Supermarkets – don't go at all! People, smell, lights. Quiet hours – still smells, won't go alone. Twice a year – work out when the least amount of people will be there e.g. Something big on TV and go 20 minutes before closing and race around. Weigh up if I really need to go".

"Horrendous – (Supermarket name) does a quiet hour, but I can only go with my husband, and he can only do outside of normal working hours. I'm a wheelchair user, but we are walking distance of Ross town centre Couldn't go to the supermarket without support for my autism traits.

"Lots of people, amazon locker, ATMs – all of this encourages lots of people to be by the entrance, so you need to get through these people just to get through the door – then sometimes you just want to leave as soon as you get in. Lights – horrendous. The Tannoy. Would like a nice one-way system – know where you are going – everyone going the same way. Wouldn't it help if there was a trained staff member as I wouldn't do it. When I asked in the past about being in a wheelchair, they were 'shirty', it made me feel they were too busy to help. They have not given me the confidence that they are approachable".

"Lots of her clients like the quiet times at (Supermarket names), only thing is that it's such a limited time and they feel like it's just a bit of a gesture. It would be nice to have a slot every day, not just once a week".

"Fidget toys in supermarkets – they are aware of these and it's a nice gesture, but they don't want to be touching things other people have touched. This is nice but other things are more important, for example, having different 'quiet time' times".

"Good when they have a set route and know where they are going – throws them when things change. Having a pre-warning that some things have changed and to ask if you need help".

"I don't like it when supermarkets change their layout".

"I have to do Supermarkets in stages. I try to go in and come out quite quickly. I don't do a big shop, I keep it minimal. Smaller shops are difficult because of the problem of parking. In a Supermarket I can park quite close".

"My anxiety increases as soon as I go through the door, but I just have to grin and bear it. The worst thing is that there are lots of people and a lack of logic in determining where things are found. Also, the staff inconsistency the fact that it is very bright and noisy, but I go because I have to".

"I don't go to supermarkets at all, but if I do with someone who's buying food for us, I wear full headphones and stay in a fun aisle. I find there's lots of noise, mostly no personal space, and people who bang into you. All the time I'm in there, I am on high alert for other people and events I can't control. Things like kids misbehaving, kids screaming, and climbing".

"I think it would help autistic people in a supermarket if there was a system that they could follow to go around it that made sense and was logical".

"I manage supermarkets by wearing headphones and going in with a list. If you are not prepared, you get lost, and it can take an hour and a half to do what should be done quickly. I have a mission, and I split the list up. ALDI is my closest and cheapest supermarket".

## **Doctors**

"One Dr comfortable with and now can't do that".

"Needs to come up on the screen if you are autistic. It's the receptionists more that I struggle with".

## **Hairdressers**

"Issues with touch – find one you like and stick to them".

## **Gyms**

"I go to the Gym on my own".

"Sports / gym – anything that people enjoy is a good avenue for someone with ADHD".

"(Name) sport centre – very good. When I went to visit – they took her to a quieter area; took their time showing her round and suggested quieter times to attend. I used to swim and use the gym (have stopped but due to other issues, not the Autism). They said if I wanted to go away and process it and come back, that would be fine".

## **Restaurants**

"They are generally loud – I ask to turn the music down, but they sometimes say they can't as that would turn the music down everywhere in the restaurant, not just one part

You could have signs to say you are welcome to ask if music could be turned down

(name) restaurant – always go there, same place, same food and drink, so the staff get to know you and its fine".

"Not too much change with menu's etc".

"It's different in the evening (different staff and louder music)".

"It's good when they ask 'have you got a preference of where you would like to sit' – giving people the option makes it so much more accessible. Option for restaurants to have quieter evenings would be good".

## **Swimming pools**

"It would be good to have a silent swim".

## **Safe Spaces and Quiet Spaces**

"I Like the idea of safe spaces – would be good if it was adopted everywhere. The same with quiet spaces".

## **Cafes**

"Certain ones. Learn the people who can deal with your quirkiness".

"I wouldn't go to a café by myself".

"Cat/dog café / puppy café would be good".

"Simple food choices – important".

"Cafes that are good – small, out of the way. You get to know the staff, so the turnover of staff is good. 11am is always a busier time when everyone stops for a coffee".

"Use the independent ones – for all the same reasons, e.g. staff etc".

"The one we used to like has just closed".

## **Pubs**

"There are some challenges in places such as pubs, relating to behaviour – being seen as difficult".

"Generally, I find it hard in pubs when they are overcrowded and noisy".

## **Clubs**

"Lowering the threshold to take part is important. If I was to join a rugby club, it probably wouldn't work out. "Fitting in" is a barrier to lots of things. Unless you are given the opportunity – route into community things is harder".

## **Soft Play**

Soft plays are very loud and have a hot and sweaty smell.

## **Transport – trains, buses, planes, minibuses**

"Transport – hate trains and buses due to the amount of people, but I drive. If I do go on a train, I now go first class, which makes a lot of difference and willing to pay the increased cost – not all can afford this".

"At the platform – worried I will do something wrong (am a massive planner). Can't do a change at a station".

"Book something on a good day and then don't go on a bad day".

"Transport – things that affect using it are frequency, routes and low numbers".

"Bargain card for parking (like a disabled pass) – thinking about getting back to the car with all the unpredictable so the closer you are the better".

"Bus/rail card would be better"

"One lady carries a card – got on the internet. It would be good if this was recognised by travel companies".

"Trains / buses – very difficult – noise / smell / over stimulation / are you safe / are you being misunderstood. Can't be bothered to go through with it so don't use it".

"Awareness for train staff / bus drivers. Every staff member trained up, not just ambassadors".

"Biggest challenge – need things to be in towns due to transport".

“Train station – book tickets online as the station can be stressful with things like queuing and overwhelming feelings”.

“Too impatient for queuing. One lady says she can use masking for queues”.

“Station – quiet spaces – you just go through the barrier then there is not much direction. Not sure what will happen. Definiteness and security – get there early to deal with things but then you have the waiting”.

“Buses – don’t like sounds and smells (the bus itself and all the people). Don’t like face to face interaction with the driver – they seem to expect small talk. Have a disabled bus pass and just want to be able to show it with no talking”.

“Don’t use buses – too overwhelming – having to sit next to someone who may start a conversation with you is daunting – this builds anxiety and fear”.

## **Services**

“Anxious as going to a service anyway, environment brings anxiety up and up so by the time you’re seen, your anxiety is heightened”.

“Don’t like organisations”.

Live in fear of having things done to you

## **Toilets**

“HAND DRYERS are quite an issue – they set my kids off and we have to take ear defenders in order to be around them. I have noticed more people go back to paper towels which suits us. I would like to get rid of them all”.

## **Library**

“Library – easier coming together and good as its quiet”.

“One place I feel very comfortable is the (place name) – can go alone. There is a little area that is quiet, you can get a coffee yourself and have some games there. You can chat but generally it is a lot quieter because it’s a (place name) and you are not expected to be loud. The council have always had this space but have recently changed the way they have used it (in the last year), which is good”.

## **Visitor attractions**

“You can get an access card if you are in receipt of PIP payments – means you don’t have to queue at things like the safari park. It was for the child, and they need someone to be with him”.

## Generic issues and feelings

"Good at masking for about 45 minutes".

"Just because problems aren't visible, doesn't mean we don't need recognition of it".

"Life is such a fight, I'm always tired".

"Home is our nest – protected – all the masks come off"

"Queues – minute we see a queue we walk away"

## Support needs

"My son joins a group and if they don't have the support, they then have the desire to stop. They don't have the ability to then change or be flexible to go back and therefore never go back".

## ID cards and hidden disability identifiers

"A little badge like the dementia friendly badge – coupled with a card would be a good idea. Person has badge. Place has a badge – so there is a match".

"Can't physically show. Look at the access card criteria".

"Discussed some kind of ID badge – people have their own spectrum – some people with autism would jump at the chance of a badge, but most people with ADHD wouldn't want that. Although would appreciate the understanding in the community".

"ID cards – NAS have ID cards. Police have said that anyone can carry these and so don't accept them".

"A green button – indicating neurodiversity".

"I used to wear the sunflower lanyard. It's a hidden disability symbol. But then Covid happened and if you wear a sunflower lanyard you didn't have to wear a mask so anyone could go online to get out of wearing a mask so no point doing that now. The idea of wearing sunflowers is that they take more time and have more patience. Airports used to have a special line for sunflower people".

"Got a sunflower card (with additional information) – I'm choosy on where I use the sunflower card as don't want to make myself stand out. But I use it at places like hospital appointments as I know I need to get through those things".

JAM Card is a simple yet effective tool for people with invisible disabilities to overcome communication barriers. Show your JAM Card when you need a little extra time or help to reduce stress in social situations such as public transport, shopping, hospitals, or in the workplace

“Also think about whether you include siblings, parents, carers, cousins. Carers tickets – discounts for the carers (You mainly must be cheeky and ask). National carers ID card (Approx £20). Access / Nimbus card – has symbols on it that say if you are autistic, VI or need a plus one). Sunflower lanyards / wristbands – but need to be aware of latex allergies”.

“A little badge like the dementia friendly badge – coupled with a card. Person has badge. Place has a badge – so there is a match. Seated somewhere quiet. It would be nice to make people aware so we wouldn’t have to go out of our way to say it”.

## **Advice and Information sources**

“A weekly place – drop in – where people can help you to access all these places as everything is hard. All these different categories. CAB type service would be useful”.

“What I think is missing is something overarching, something well-advertised, where you go for initial support and point you in the right direction of various options”.

## **Employment**

“Discussed the Workwell project – didn’t think it was designed for him. Whoever commissioned it, was focusing on high needs neurodivergent people and he hasn’t got high needs. Lots of able people are wasted due to lack of understanding. Lower needs – as able as neurotypical individuals. Most jobs he has had – he did really quickly – but people questioned, how do you do it so quickly”.

“Interviews are designed for neurotypical people. Don’t know how to act. Don’t know how you will be perceived”.

“Having a neurodiverse champion for workplaces would be good”.

“My son’s employment issue. Accountancy would suit him really well. Some autistic people are used as gamers as they can spot the errors. Like minute taking – spotting the errors”.

## **Engagement**

"Giving people a reason to engage. A lot of neurodivergence is grouped together and there is quite a lot of perception and negativity surrounding them. I don't need extra help, I just need to be told when I'm, upsetting others. Not seeing the social cues – a big part of ADHD. Come across as being inconsiderate of people's feelings. Can't avoid the issue so you detonate other people's insecurities".

"It takes more work to get people with ADHD out of their shell to consider something. Creation of broader social activities that aren't specifying that they are for a sub-cultured group (i.e. for neurodivergence) that allow people to enjoy themselves for a low cost, in a high comfort environment".

"Increasing understanding is the main point. Create more generalised semi curated social activities. There is lots of provision for older people, but not much for 20 – 50 yr olds. How to get people to mix / interact over a shared interest. That's where a lot of good can be achieved".

## **Places to socialize that don't involve alcohol – ADHD**

"A lot of people who are in addiction / recovery have undiagnosed ADHD. They don't fit into workplaces, so it takes them to that route of addiction and alcohol. Need places where the culture isn't alcohol".

## **Consultation**

"Focus groups – we like them".

## **Not going out**

"A massive thing with neurodivergence is where people don't leave the house. It's a massive issue at universities – if you find it hard to socialize – people wouldn't leave their rooms. You get put in a flat with random people".

"Kid's have to conform – can't cope with college (and it's not compulsory)".

"I know 6 people who are out of work / struggle to leave the house so find it hard to find work".

"How do I connect with others who are similar to me, if they are on another side of the campus. I am still living on campus as it's more of a safe space. Something online to connect with people could be good".

"If you label it right, it could be ok e.g. social anxiety group???"

“Someone in the student union set up a WhatsApp group with like-minded people and then you can make social connections individually”.


“I only attended because of another person – not comfortable with focus groups”.

“A platform that works like dating apps would be good. My son just wanted a companion. Just a simple friend’s group – freedom to just hang out (In the description or small print say that it is a safe space for neurodivergent people or those who are socially anxious”.



**healthwatch**

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