

‘Considerate Friends’ Report with Recommendations for Cafes in Fishponds

Considerate Friends are a group of unpaid family carers and disabled people who visit local services to suggest recommendations and improvements for disabled people, carers and people aged 50 and over. The project works across the Greater Fishponds area and visits started in January 2018.

The project is under the umbrella of Bristol Ageing Better and run in partnership between The Care Forum and Carers Support Centre. Carers Support Centre supports carers to volunteer for the project and organises the visits.

On 18th January 2018, a small group of volunteers went to visit Café Grounded on Fishponds Road and made the following observations and recommendations to cafes around their accessibility.

Observations -



We observed the following positive aspects of the cafe:

- The café is considerably less cramped than the other two cafes that we visited. This means that it is far easier to manoeuvre around the café for people using a scooter or wheelchair. There was also far more choice of accessible tables. At the other two cafes,

Considerate Friends sat by the door as it was much harder to move around the café than at Café Grounded.

- There is little background noise and so much easier to hear than the first two cafes that Considerate Friends had visited that day.
- Although at first glance, the door looked narrow, it was actually wide enough for wheelchairs and scooters and only one person has to open the door. At the other two cafes that Considerate Friends had visited, two people were needed to open the doors.
- There is an accessible toilet.

Suggestions for improvement –

- The café is very dark – could there be more light?
- A volunteer who uses a wheelchair could not fit under the tables and to perch behind and lean over to have her drink.
- The menu is expensive and therefore not accessible to local carers, older people and many disabled people.



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We noticed



the care forum



Carers Support Centre

that it wasn't obvious how to bolt the door in the accessible toilet, having observed another customer finding this difficult. Could some instructions be put up to make this clearer?

- The counter is relatively high and so therefore not accessible for people using wheelchairs or scooters that are not height adjustable.
- Parking is limited near the café. We acknowledge that this is difficult to solve!
- Some of the tables are wooden. We had concerns about the hygiene risk of germs spreading, of which older people and some disabled people with lower immune systems would be more susceptible to. Could they all be covered in laminate? We noticed that you had done so with some of your tables.
- Many older people experience loneliness. We would like to recommend that you incorporate chat mats in the cafes.

<https://www.coffeecompanions.co.uk/get-a-chat-mat.html>