

Open That Door

Headliners and disability group Transition Team have produced a short film to highlight disability access problems.

Members of Headliners in Belfast have produced a short documentary focusing on accessibility difficulties faced by disabled people.

Open That Door features members of the Transition Team interviewing public officials who outlined barriers - both physical as well as attitudes.

Disability Action's Orla McCann said: "The biggest barrier is not the steps at the door or a door width or other physical aspects which can ultimately be overcome.

"The biggest barrier of all is actually in the attitudes of people whom you interact with."

She also stressed that it was in "the interest of people who have a disability" to use places that have provided facilities in order create awareness to the growing need for them to other businesses.

The documentary was a joint project by Headliners and the Transition Team.

The new smoking ban has caused problems for entry into shops and restaurants as smokers are crowding outside these areas.

Furniture outside of buildings for smokers has deterred wheelchair users from entering the premises.

Stella Gilmartin, who is an Equality Officer in Belfast City Council, said website Disabled G was "very useful".

This site offers 200 different venues such as shops and restaurants, giving a rating on how accessible they are for people with disabilities.

Belfast City councillor Pat McCarthy said access for wheelchair users like ramps on the roadside and entries into shops are needed in Belfast.

He added people with disabilities are consumers and nothing should restrict their rights to purchase products.

Newtownabbey Borough councillor Lynn Frazer said businesses are unable to create disability access overnight, only a group effort from businesses and communities could achieve it.

About this article

This story was written by Conrad Corr, 16

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