



Introducing the Access Card and Nimbus Operating System



THE QUEEN'S AWARDS
FOR ENTERPRISE:
INNOVATION
2022

The Access Card and NOS

Nimbus, a disability consultancy service, developed the Access Card in response to frustrations shared by disabled people and event organisers in how disability was evidenced and the need for reasonable adjustments communicated.

- For disabled people, the frustration was in repeatedly sending in personal documents which bore no direct relation to the needs of the individual.
- For the venues, it was frustration in interpreting these documents and the additional admin burden it placed on their staff.

Our goal was to produce a single consistent method of communication between customer and provider; therefore simplifying the process for both.

Since its initial development, the card is now widely accepted at major event venues across the UK and beyond, and even more widely taken simply at face value.

The technological development behind the card now means that an unprecedented technical response to disabled peoples' needs is now possible and a live API allows for online ticket sales (and more) to be genuinely achievable for the first time for disabled people.

The Access Card scheme continues to evolve and I hope that once you have read this document you will join us in communicating how your services can meet the needs of disabled customers.

Please feel free to contact me directly with any questions

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www.nimbusdisability.com
www.accesscard.online



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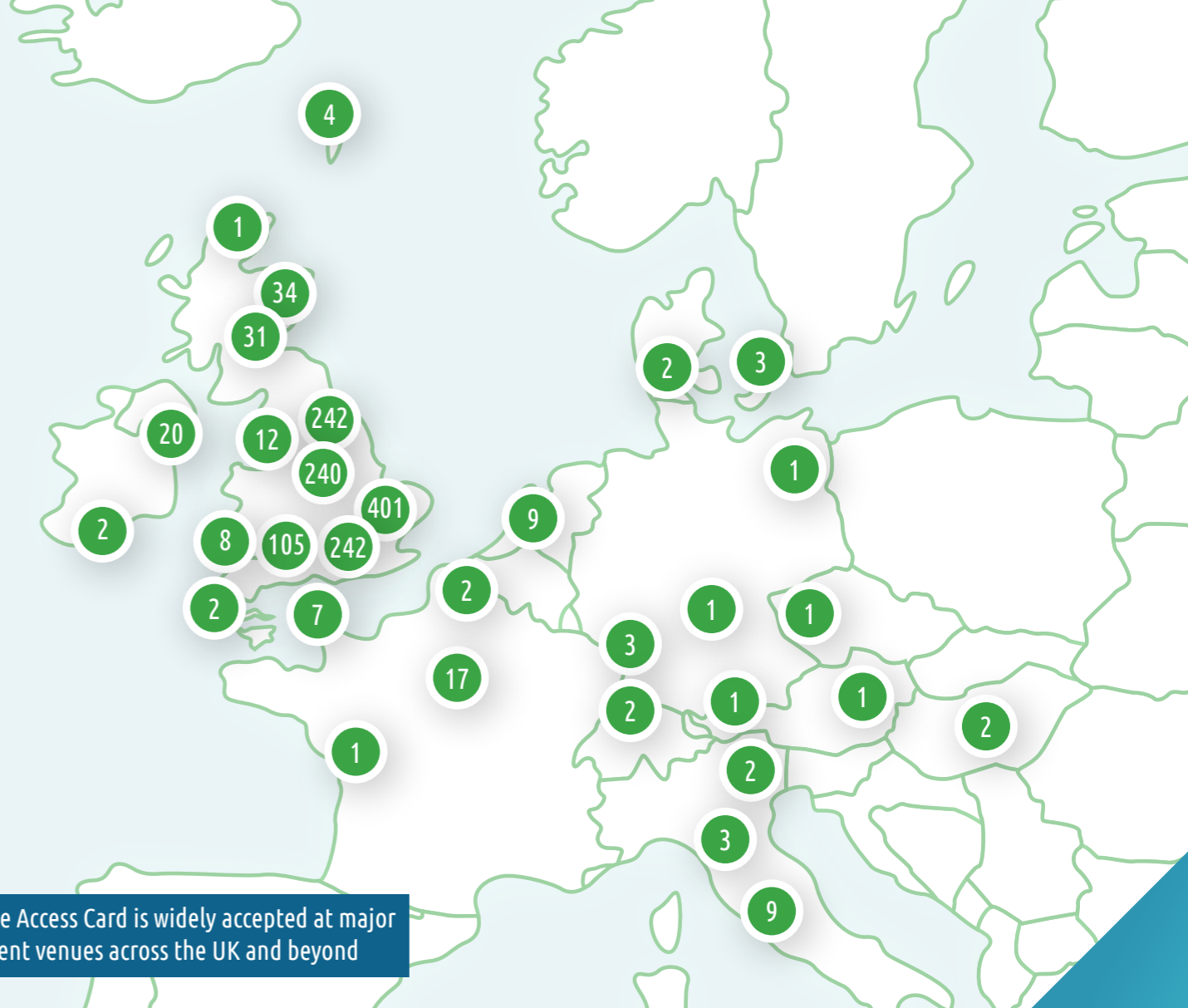


Nimbus Operating System®

What is the Access Card?

The Access Card means different things to different people; these are a few of the uses which vary between individuals and context used.

It is basically an ID card for disabled people, powered by a sophisticated verification system that indicates what their legal rights might be and gives businesses an indication of the support you need to provide.



The Access Card is widely accepted at major event venues across the UK and beyond

Proof of access requirements

In some circumstances, such as booking tickets and accessing free essential companion spaces; it is proportionate and reasonable to make sure that the person requesting that adjustment has a genuine need for them. In these circumstances, many organisations ask for proof of disability/access requirements.

Our experience shows that there is very little consistency of what constitutes 'proof' and how this might be asked for and accepted across organisations.

It also becomes a problem for disabled people to have to repeatedly submit personal and private information. The Access Card was designed to be a one-stop shop for assessing needs and communicating access requirements across multiple providers giving consistency for customers and organisations.

An Access Card is only issued to disabled people who can provide a suitable degree of supporting information. This information includes supporting evidence such as doctors' reports, entitlement to disability-related benefits or any other type of supporting information.

Communication of disabled person's needs

In the course of applying for an Access Card, symbols are assigned which indicate the type of reasonable adjustment a person may need in accessing the service.

This has the impact of becoming a useful customer service tool meaning that your staff can concentrate on meeting a person's needs rather than assessing whether or not a person might be entitled to a certain provision.



Communicating your organisation's ability to meet customers needs

The use of symbols and their focus on identifying barriers means that you, as a service provider, can describe in detail the services that you can provide to meet customers' needs.




We ask providers to take some time to think about how they can meet each of the needs indicated on the card and to submit a listing to the Access Card website directory.

ACCESS CARD NOTES

An Access Card (with either the symbol Standing and Queuing or Level Access) or Merlin Ride Access Pass Registration ID can be used to claim a Ride Access Pass from Merlin. An Access card with a +1/+2 symbol can be used on the day to claim free carer tickets to enter the park. It can also be used when applying for a Merlin Annual Carer Passes.

Free Access Registration A free registration is available at this venue as an alternative to an Access Card. Please use the link below to begin your application. Please note, if you already have an Access Card, you don't need to apply again. Simply provide your name and Access Card ID number to the venue. [Click here to start your registration](#)

ACCESS GUIDANCE

 STANDING & QUEUING If you believe you are unable to stand in a queue line for any other reason, we are happy to arrange a Ride Access Pass.	 LEVEL ACCESS For guests using wheelchairs, please use the gates between the turnstiles as this is a wider access point. A limited number of wheelchairs are available.	 WC URGENT TOILET ACCESS All toilets across the Resort have access for guests with wheelchairs or additional needs and can be seen on the map. We are also proud to have
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This listing details the particular reasonable adjustments available and becomes an access statement to better inform a disabled customer of what to expect in terms of access.

This is a completely free service for your organisation.



Loyalty card

We believe that by submitting a special offer for disabled people and attracting them to use your service for the first time; you will in actual fact be showcasing the accessibility of your service and therefore attract return custom.

Disabled people and their family's choice of venue and activities is limited explicitly to whether the venue is accessible to the disabled person themselves. This decision-making represents an estimated combined spending power of disabled people and their close friends and family equating to about £212 billion a year.

This spending power of disabled people in the United Kingdom is known as the Purple Pound.

www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/business-39040760/the-power-of-the-purple-pound-explained



Who gets an Access Card?

Access Cards are not simply given to anyone who asks for one.

Nimbus has for a long time been advising businesses on how and when to make reasonable adjustments for disabled people. It was our expertise in making complex decisions on reasonable adjustments that contributed to the development of the Access Card.

Our decision-making is based on seeing enough information from 3rd party professionals that indicate the need for a particular type of reasonable adjustment; identified on the card by symbols.

In many cases this 3rd party information will be related to benefit entitlement but, as we tell businesses, not all disabled people claim disability benefits. In these circumstances, we do ask for further information in the form of medical records or similar.

Our decision-making is respected across a broad range of ticketing industries and is ultimately based on the same criteria as The Equality Act itself.



How can you accept it?

At face value

Access Card holders use their cards in a variety of situations with organisations that might never have heard of the scheme, let alone have submitted a listing on our website.




It is important to remember that the needs indicated on the card relate to the person's rights as a disabled person under the Equality Act and refusing to act on a symbol where possible may equate to a failure to make a reasonable adjustment.

Many providers simply take this information at face value and provide the services requested at the point of delivery. There are no forms for you to fill in, it's free of charge and it's simply good customer service.

If you are going to choose this route we do recommend that you let us know – otherwise you could be missing out on new business; if we don't know you accept the card we can't promote you!

THE SYMBOLS

On the front of your Access Card, there are 9 spaces to display symbols used to highlight the barriers you face and the reasonable adjustments you might need. Here's a description of each one of the symbols:

 Standing and queuing	 Level access	 Distance
For people who find standing and/or queuing a substantial barrier to accessing services. This may include people who physically cannot stand or queue for any significant amount of time, or people that have an issue with understanding the concept of queuing.	For people who require wheelchair accessible facilities or have to have level access as they are unable to make even a few steps. We do not add the standing and queuing symbol for wheelchair users as if a queue is accessible this should present no problems. If a queue is not accessible then this will be addressed by each venue as an adjustment related to the need for level access.	If you have difficulty moving yourself more than short distances this is the symbol for you. We have no strict definition of what distances are involved as it will be for you to discuss this with providers, who will let you know how they can meet your needs. We do however need to see information that confirms you have a medical condition that has a significant impact on the distance you can move. You might also get this symbol if you are a wheelchair user that cannot self-propel distances. You would not get it if you are a powered wheelchair user or if you

Introducing the Nimbus Operating System



Nimbus, a Queen's Award winner for Innovation, operates a number of 3rd party access registration schemes which are based on the software created to run the Access Card platform.

Dubbed NOS; The Nimbus Operating System managed by our expert team of disabled people is able to simplify and speed up a robust access registration process which highlights the legal rights disabled people have when using your business. In turn, giving your team the unrivalled ability to seamlessly ensure that these needs are met.

Where the Access Card has become popular and businesses want to streamline their customer access registration scheme and offer a free alternative to having an Access Card, they subcontract Nimbus to run these access schemes on their behalf.

Currently, we operate free-to-register access schemes on behalf of providers from ticketing companies, West End theatres and theme parks to Leicester Squares' famous Hippodrome Casino.

At all of these venues and events, and many more, an Access Card is recognised and no further registration is required and customers are offered the opportunity to upgrade to a full Access Card.

If you're interested in finding out more about integrating NOS into your internal access registration schemes or enabling online bookings please scan or visit the link below for more information

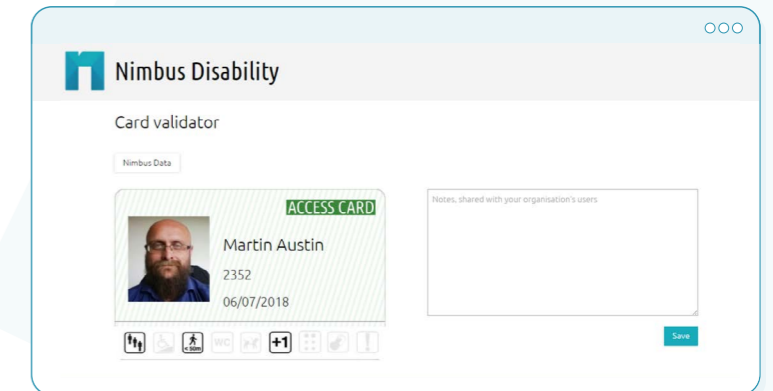


www.nimbusdisability.com/services/access-card-and-nos

NOS: manual validation

We created an online validation tool in NOS to be used inside box offices throughout the UK.

The NOS portal enables your staff to enter card details which may be taken over the telephone to validate the veracity of a card and the symbols it contains. The ability to create multiple user accounts and populate a notes field means that the validation tool can become a useful customer relationship management tool; fleshing out needs specific to your venue.



There is **no charge** to access this service.

We simply ask that you complete an annual licence agreement form and make it clear on your website and any access-related information that the Access Card is recognised at your venue.

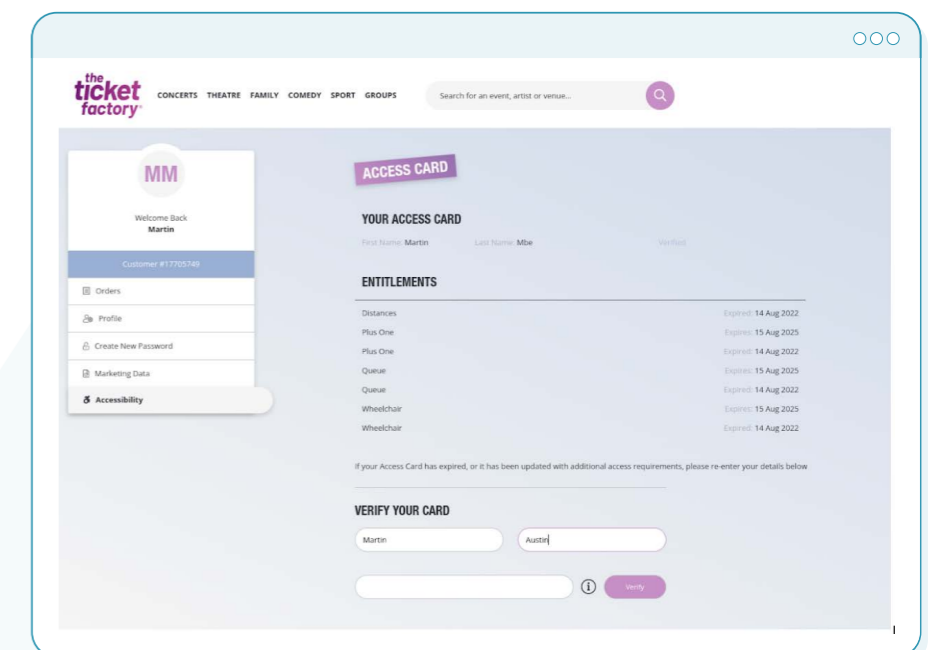
Reach out to find out more.

NOS: full digital integration

For organisations that need a live real-time feed, we've created an API code which allows your system to talk to NOS directly. This has proven particularly useful in circumstances such as ticketing sales but also has applications across health and social care.

For further information on the API, test code and dummy-end data, please get in touch directly.

There is **no charge** to access this service.



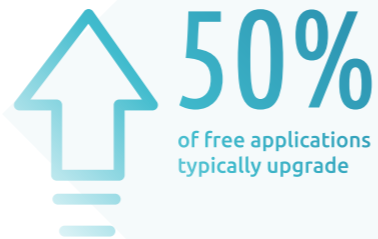
Subcontract your in-house access scheme

As the Access Card scheme has grown, we have seen an increase in venues wanting consistency in the way applications are processed and integrated into their systems, and we also see savings in the administration of non-Access Card holders' access requirements.

It is also critical to remember that all venues must have a free alternative to processing a customer's requirements – access cannot be placed behind a paywall.

We can act as an independent 3rd party to manage your access registration scheme with the same professionalism in decision-making, and utilising the same digital infrastructure of the Access Card, for customers who do not wish to pay the cost of an Access Card application.

Charges vary on the scale of operation but we operate on a monthly contract and only charge for customers that we successfully add to the scheme. Customers are offered the opportunity to upgrade to an Access Card at the end of the free application and, at the time of writing, we upgrade c.50% of free applications, for which there is no charge to our business clients.



ACCESS REQUIREMENTS REGISTER - BOOK YOUR TICKETS ONLINE

We take customer's access needs very seriously and we are proud of the developments we have made to make online bookings possible for disabled people.

We've partnered with the Access Card scheme to make online sales available to disabled customers. We have now gone one step further allowing customers to register their requirements for FREE, opening the online journey to more customers. This is a requirement moving forward to allow the right tickets to be sold to the right people, so please take advantage and pre-register to make it easier and quicker to get those top selling tickets!

The new FREE registration scheme for deaf and disabled customers will result in access requirements being linked to your account with The Ticket Factory. This will allow you to choose the best tickets to meet your requirements. There will still be our Contact Centre for those who prefer to use the phone and for complex booking requirements that aren't available online, but again you will need to provide your registration number. We are just opening the online journey up, so you can secure those tickets when a big artist goes on sale.

REGISTER NOW

WHO IS OUR PARTNER?

We've chosen to pass the registration scheme onto Nimbus Disability, who runs the 'Access Card'. Nimbus Disability is a social enterprise and an organisation run by and for disabled people and is recognised as a lead authority on accessible ticketing in the UK.

BENEFITS	FREE REGISTRATION	ACCESS CARD
3 year cost	£0	£15
Recognised at Resorts World Arena and Arena Birmingham	✓	✓
Way to communicate your needs with privacy	✓	✓
Photo ID card with symbols relating to need	-	✓
Recognised at venues and events across UK and beyond	-	✓

MERLIN ENTERTAINMENTS

Merlin Entertainments Ride Access Pass

About Your Application

Thanks for applying for a Merlin Entertainments Ride Access Pass.

This scheme will provide you with an access registration code to give you the opportunity to book a ride access pass, a service available for the sole use of disabled people unable to access queues, across their 4 UK Resorts including Alton Towers Resort, Thorpe Park Resort, LEGOLAND Windsor Resort and Chessington World of Adventures Resort.

Your organisation will benefit from a unique inbox monitored by our team and a branded application form.

Detailed, no-obligation quotes and proposals are available on request after a short discussion about the nature of your organisation.

Freemium

We are now pleased to offer a freemium service for smaller providers. Under this scheme, we offer up to 100 successful access registrations each month at no cost. Unlike the full subcontracted service you will not receive a personalised inbox or a branded application form but everything else is exactly the same.

Our business-to-business services

Consultancy

We're available to offer you clear and concise support for all manner of accessibility and equality-related topics. Our unique cross-sector experience gives us an insight into sectors from Health Care to Tourism and Education to Sports participation.

www.nimbusdisability.com/services/consultancy



Auditing

The hardest part of compliance with all of the legislation and good practice is knowing where to start – how far off the mark are you? Are you already doing what you need to be doing? If you're not doing what you should be – what do you need to change?

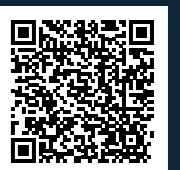
www.nimbusdisability.com/services/auditing



Training

Our training services range from introduction to the concept of accessibility and reasonable adjustments to in-depth interactive consultation and exploration of systemic change and development.

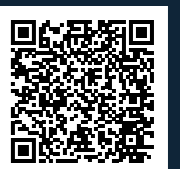
www.nimbusdisability.com/services/training



CredAbility

Created by disabled people, for disabled people; our CredAbility Quality Marks allow you to quickly communicate to disabled customers that you have made proactive steps to make your services, your building and / or your employment practices accessible and welcoming.

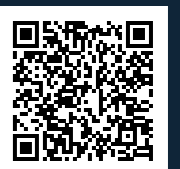
www.nimbusdisability.com/services/credability



The Nimbus Provider Network

Nimbus, unique in the breadth and reach of our client base, hosts a series of partner networking events throughout the UK. Membership includes organisations as diverse as arenas and safari parks, festivals and West End theatres, petrol stations and casinos.

www.nimbusdisability.com/services/npn



Our partners



To read case studies of our work with various partners scan or visit www.nimbusdisability.com/case-studies



Its barriers that disable people, and solutions that enable them

What it means

What to do



STANDING AND QUEUING

Customer has difficulty with queuing or standing.

Offer to jump queues / find seating. Offer to find somewhere away from crowd to wait.



LEVEL ACCESS

Customer needs wheelchair accessible facilities.

Describe availability of wheelchair accessible facilities and be aware of evacuation procedures.



DISTANCE

Customer has difficulty with distances; perhaps wheelchair user unable to self-propel distances, or people with limited mobility.

Find short cuts where possible, explain distances involved.



URGENT TOILET NEEDS

Customer may need urgent access to a toilet. May have a hidden impairment.

Orientate customer with facilities on arrival. Allow urgent access to any toilet no questions asked: including staff / 'disabled' / accessible. Consider options for seating near to facilities if required.



ASSISTANCE DOGS

Customer needs assistance dog.

Allow use of assistance dog – find a water bowl and let customer know best place for dog's toileting.



ESSENTIAL COMPANIONS

Customer needs assistance.

Offer assistance / allow additional entry for them to bring their own support. Free +1 ticket policy.



VISUAL INFORMATION

Customer has difficulty with visual information.

Give information verbally – be descriptive of routes / additional information and make them aware of availability of further support.



AUDIBLE INFORMATION

Customer has difficulty with audible information.

Consider offering loop system access, BSL interpretation or take time to communicate in alternative formats.



MISCELLANEOUS

Customer may have other relevant needs.

Ask if there is anything else you can do to support customer / anything you may need to be aware of.