

alphabetti

T H E A T R E

Case Study: Alphabetti Theatre, Newcastle

Here's an example of a great EPIC plan that's been put in place at Newcastle's Alphabetti Theatre. They've taken the opportunity of the forced closure to make some great changes to Alphabetti's building, facilities and systems, with the overall aim of improving access for disabled audiences, performers and staff.



Alphabetti's Artistic Director, Ali Pritchard, describes the changes taking place now and in the near-future, using our EPIC framework:

Extra Investment

- ✓ Thanks to funding from Arts Council England we have been able to invest in special equipment for providing audio description for blind and partially-sighted customers.
- ✓ We've also invested in captioning equipment to make our shows more accessible to deaf and hard of hearing customers.
- ✓ We're also training our technical staff to be able to operate these new systems.
- ✓ Due to the age and repurposed nature of our building (originally was a rubber stamp factory) in places it is inaccessible. We can't sort out all of the issues, but are making significant improvements to it by: Improving our entrance ramp, improving the doors, improving the toilets and improving the furniture.

Personalisation

- ✓ We've thought a lot about the different needs of our customers and performers, and how we can be more flexible to meet their needs.
- ✓ We're going to change our booking system to enable priority seats to be booked, for example for those customers who need extra space for a wheelchair, or for their assistance dog.
- ✓ All of our staff are also being trained in disability awareness and getting tips on how to remove disabling barriers. We want to provide more tailored assistance to meet individual needs.

Involvement

- ✓ In doing this work, we've involved disabled customers, performers and trustees – they know us well and know what changes would make the biggest difference.
- ✓ We will continue to ask for their advice and guidance as we improve access in the future.

Compliance

- ✓ Our team is more aware now of how to anticipate and remove barriers that could stop disabled customers from having a great time with us.
- ✓ We're also planning some big changes to the access information on our website, with more detailed information which is easier to find.
- ✓ We know we still have work to do but feel like we are doing a much better job of providing an inclusive environment.

If you want to know more, visit <https://www.alphabettitheatre.co.uk/>

