VOCALEYES

# Survey of blind and visually impaired people about museum and heritage site re-opening and live-streamed events

## August 2020

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ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND

## Introduction

The survey was run using SurveyMonkey between 13 and 31 August 2020. An alternative version was offered in a Word document, using Large Print. Respondents were recruited from VocalEyes social media followers and email subscribers, and subscribers to individual museums who also shared the survey.

All the questions were optional. Most offered fixed responses, with the majority of these also offering a field for comments. Between around 29 and 37 people responded to each of the fixed response questions.

The survey asked no demographic questions, as we did not expect to be getting close to the numbers needed for a statistically valid survey. However, all respondents whose data was recorded answered yes to the question "Before lockdown were you a regular user of audio description services in museums or online?".

## Executive Summary of results

**In the Museum**

- Respondents overall were concerned about several aspects of museums re-opening at the current time: with social distancing being the area of most concern, followed by using public transport (which is also connected to social distancing as well). Of less concern were temporary pre-booking and check in processes, but these obviously need to be accessible (online and via telephone), and with clear information provided beforehand.
- A large majority of respondents were happy to use their own devices for audio description provided by the museum, but had a range of comments about what needs to be in place for that to work.
- When asked what was needed to be in place for people to return, comments covered the following areas: audio description, booking, cleaning, events, gloves, guiding, hand sanitiser, information, layout, lighting, masks, online, queues, routes, signage, staff, time and visitors.
- Around 3 in 10 respondents indicated that they would wait until social distancing and masks were not required before returning to museums, while around 5 in 10 indicated that they would not wait.

**Online / Live-streamed events**

- The most used platforms were Zoom and YouTube. They were also the two platforms that respondents found most accessible.
- The following aspects of a live-streamed AD event were deemed important or very important by between 62% and 73% of respondents (in order of popularity): having a subject expert as well as an audio describer; having large

images of objects available; having a Q&A session; the tour leaders being present at the museum.

- The opportunity for socializing with other participants was deemed important or very important by 41% of respondents.
- The optimum length for a live-streamed event was one hour (66% of respondents).
- Scheduling: weekends were preferred by more than weekdays, and fewest people 'would not do'. Early afternoon (around 2-4pm) most preferred.
- 85% indicated that they would be likely or very likely to listen to a recording if they couldn't make a live event.
- 45% agreed or strongly agreed that online events would mean they engaged with museums more often.
- 85% agreed or strongly agreed that they would be interested in attending live-streamed events run by museums that they were unlikely to be able to visit in person, including those in other countries.
- 58% agreed or strongly agreed that they would be happy continuing to attend live-streamed events in future, even after museums and galleries re-open
- However, 47% agreed or strongly agreed that "they don't like live-streamed events: it's not the same as being at a museum or gallery in front of artworks, artefacts, and face-to-face with people."

**Publicity**

- The most commonly cited way that people found out about AD events (other than through VocalEyes) was through individual museum mailing lists, checking the websites of venues known to provide AD, and word-of-mouth.

**Other**

- When asked whether there were other things that they wanted to comment on, respondents talked about consultation, proximity to artworks and artefacts, gallery labelling, the opportunities for increased access through live-streamed events, but also the potential loss of community if live AD events at venues were to cease.

## Q1 How concerned are you about getting to and from the venue using public transport?

N=37

1. Not at all        **8%**
2. Slightly          **11%**
3. Moderately        **24%**
4. Very              **43%**
5. Extremely         **14%**

Weighted average: **3.43** (Moderately / very concerned)

**Selected comments**

"I'm very worried about using public transport."

"Don't want to use public transport, would use taxi if not too far."

"Reduced timetables, uncertainty of your booked service running, fewer staff available to help, complex one-way systems hindering catching connecting services in time, all add to making the journey far more difficult and stressful."

"I am a blind guide dog user and I usually use tubes or buses to get to museums in London. As I understand it at present, we would not be able to get assistance on tubes etc. This would make it quite difficult for me particularly if I needed to change. Until I can get help with public transport I would have reservations about going to my usual museums. … it would be difficult to know how efficiently I could get somewhere by bus. I would have no idea that the bus was full for example and with only 30 people allowed on a double-decker bus this is likely to happen…."

"Since the start of COVID when I have left the house I have found a reluctance amongst the public to socially distance; this is compounded by the inconsistent availability of TfL staff to support me as I travel around London."

"If I have to travel by local transport on my own, I am concerned to know where I am going to, if I have someone traveling with me or going by a taxi then I am much more relaxed."

"It depends on where the museum is located and whether it is easy to get to after leaving public transport"

"For now, tubes are relatively empty and I don't feel anxious about using them."

"Most visually impaired people will be coming to venues via public transport, so building confidence using public transport again is crucial."

"I am slightly concerned mostly because there are still many people who are not clear about social distancing or the need to wear a mask. I am also slightly concerned

that the usual and familiar ways of navigating the system will have changed beyond recognition and that there will be no one to assist."

"Was ok with help of a friend. Now there's Covid19 I've really been put off using public transport. Have only used cab/taxi driver I know. Very uneasy even walking in local area.

"Actually could be so stressful I suffer a fit and then land up in hospital just from the stress of doing a journey, not been on train/bus since lockdown."

"We often use the underground and are very concerned about social distancing as many people don't seem to notice my symbol cane and make allowances."

"Does depend if I'm in a familiar area and if I know the museum and staff. I'm more confident then, but in new areas I would feel anxious and would welcome staff support"

## Q2 How concerned are you about the pre-booking and check in process?

N=35

|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | Not at all | **31%** |
| 2. | Slightly | **31%** |
| 3. | Moderately | **29%** |
| 4. | Very | **9%** |
| 5. | Extremely | **0%** |

Weighted average: **2.14** ('Slightly concerned')

"My concern solely stems from the possibility of changes in process and support availability being made without sufficient time to confirm the changes to me."

"If it's online, how easy is it to fill in the form?"

"As long as these pre-booking forms are accessible online or can be filled in via the phone, this shouldn't be an issue. Check in at the venue needs to be clearly marked with high contrast and tactile markers and indicators and staff to give verbal directions."

"I am very concerned about the pre booking for museums, galleries etc. Their websites and booking systems are often poorly designed and inaccessible. There is also an issue with regard to security of personal information and payments."

"Not very good doing things online & doing 'new' things."

"Email and by phone are OK for me"

"As long as this is kept simple and easy to navigate even with the use of accessibility technology when online, it should be fine. Queueing and social distancing can be difficult and then negotiating one-way systems to eventually find a member of staff to help to check-in can be tricky. Perhaps having a system where a booked arrival time and a specific waiting point away from the main queue where, VI visitors can be met by someone and brought into the building could be useful?"

"I am happy to book online with venues however, it all depends on both how accessible the venues website is and how easy is it to use and navigate around as a screen reader user. Many websites seem to have very different booking systems, some with a time limit, some using CAPTCHA, some with tick button options that are not accessible with a screen reader. Venues not only need to have their websites tested for accessibility but also user tested to by people using screen reading software and also magnification software."

"I would need to have sighted assistance, for example to find where to queue and to be told where I had to go on a one-way system for example."

"My wife will be able to help me so should be no problem, as she accompanies me to events."

"Depends on familiarity; queuing and waiting arrangements could be difficult so being welcomed by a staff member would greatly support this and helpful pe-visit information is essential so I know what to expect when I arrive and how accessible my on-site experience will be."

## Q3 How concerned are you about navigating new routes and or changes to the venue layout?

N=35

- Not at all **6%**
- Slightly **31%**
- Moderately **26%**
- Very **26%**
- Extremely **11%**

Weighted average = **3.06** (Moderately concerned)

"These risk compromising my safety and my ability to travel safely and enjoy the venue and its contents without putting myself at risk."

"I will be extremely happy if there is a member of staff who could assist / guide me because I will find it extremely difficult to navigate on my own."

"It's difficult to understand how these new routes will pan out and the changes to the venue in terms of going one way, certain areas closed off or restricted in numbers...."

"I am only slightly concerned about this issue as I am able to follow others. However, when the setting is very dark or there are flights of unmarked stairs, the availability of a guide or volunteer can be very helpful."

"If I am escorted by museum staff, volunteer or friend, there is no problem, if unaccompanied, I would be moderately concerned."

"I will have someone with me to guide me."

"My concerns are that some venues won't have good pre visit information on their websites with updated access guides, route information, etc.  I visited a venue in February 2020 and had previously visited said venue on a number of occasions and had read their access guide prior to the visit to check to see if anything had changed. On arriving at the venue, the layout of the entrance and reception area had changed and the access guide had not been updated. Will many venues be updating their access guides and route information at the moment I wonder?"

"I would need a very good description; sighted guide or a tactile way that I could follow a one-way route."

"New routes take time to learn; unexpected layouts can be confusing; signage almost always inaccessible."

This will depend on the size of venue and whether it's outside or inside. I am concerned that my access needs many not have been considered and that one-way systems will be laid out with sighted people in mind and that on-site signage may not be large enough or route boundary guides not clear or with good colour contrast, but also I'm slightly anxious about how other people visiting might react. I can visit independently but many people don't understand what white canes are for: so I think this is a really important area for venues to consider. They need to make it easy, and quick for customers to get through queuing and staff need very good description training to support verbally as far as possible."

## Q4 How concerned are you about maintaining social distance in a public space?

N=36

- Not at all **3%**
- Slightly **17%**
- Moderately **22%**
- Very **33%**
- Extremely **25%**

Weighted average: 3.61 (Moderately to very concerned)

**Selected comments**

"The layout and congestion of public spaces are inconsistent, unpredictable and essentially governed by sighted people; we of the visually impaired community often appear invisible to them."

"I have no peripheral vision so find it really difficult and my guide dog doesn't understand social distancing."

"Social distancing as it mainly relies on visual checking and feedback is very difficult to impossible depending on one's level of vision."

"Social distancing for a completely blind person even with a guide is difficult and I would be anxious about putting anyone at risk."

As a Guide Dog owner I don't think my dog is that good at keeping within the 2 metre social distancing limits. I would need someone with me or near to me giving me good description and if I was with a group of people or in the venue with other members of the public I would need to know whether I was keeping within the social distancing guidelines.

"Clear regular signage can help, but it's the people I'm not so sure about, some are good at it and others not, not everyone is keeping to good social distancing and might want to go back to look at an exhibit item when it's a one way system so bottlenecks might occur and this means it could be difficult to move between spaces and orientate around other people. I'm anxious that staff may not understand the variety of visual impairment not all of us will have canes or dogs, so good awareness is essential."

## Q5  How concerned are you about access to a guiding service?

**N=33**

- Not at all      **33%**
- Slightly        **12%**
- Moderately  **24%**
- Very             **18%**
- Extremely    **12%**

Weighted average: **2.64** (Slightly to moderately concerned)

"I am not fussed as long as there is someone to help me from the museum/ heritage site. If there is a shortage of staff, then it is best that I am informed well in time before my visit so that I can find someone to help me."

"I don't know how the guiding service will work for long periods of time, for shorter guiding sessions if both participants wear a mask and it is for a short while, I would feel less concerned."

"I am already being accompanied and supported by my guide help"

"I will have someone I know guiding me"

"As a guide dog owner, I would only need someone to give me directions and help with directions …If I was not with my guide dog I would use my white stick but would prefer to be guided as quicker but I don't think taking someone's arm to be guided is something venue staff will want to provide and [am unsure] whether I would like them to guide me in the current situation."

"As I would need sighted assistance, I feel I would only go back into [museums] when this was available. This isn't because I'm concerned about catching Covid, it's more about having my needs satisfied in a way that would be uncontroversial. For example, a friend of mine went shopping and was linked with a shopping assistant who was then told off by their manager for not obeying social distancing rules: this kind of embarrassment would be unacceptable."

"This is complex given current social distancing arrangements; staff and volunteers may not be able to offer guiding support so how do we get around this? Are there PPE equipment, arm bands gloves etc that could help? I suspect most visually impaired people would visit with an access companion, but if you are relatively familiar with a site or venue then you might go on your own and could benefit from sighted support even if led through good verbal description as opposed to arm-led sighted guiding."

## Q6 How concerned are you about access to tactile or audio resources?

N=36

- Not at all **6%**
- Slightly **31%**
- Moderately **31%**
- Very **22%**
- Extremely **11%**

Weighted average: **3.03** (Moderately concerned)

"All these resources have physical interaction and if they have not been consistently sanitized there is a risk of infection."

"How often will they be cleaned?"

"I think the only way to ensuring access to tactile materials is to produce one artefact or item to touch for each participant as passing things round is probably not the safest way to go. As for audio resources, they could be made available via download or maybe via the phone so each participant could have access to his own copy of the information and wouldn't have to rely on devices lent by the museum but bring their own device if available."

"My concern is that the access to the audio or tactile device is not clear e.g. where is the button to activate?"

"The venue would have to ensure that the tactile objects are cleaned after use in line with the current guidelines. Maybe provide disposable gloves for people to use?"

"Audio resources are very helpful"

"I don't mind if tactile resources are not available really. Generally, I prefer to have things described to me."

"I think with good sanitising arrangements, I hope this can be got around but I'm not sure how this is going to work for groups or object handling sessions….I want touch experiences, but I want them to be clean and this also raises the point, how is a visually impaired person going to know where hand sanitiser is etc, lots to consider here including how outreach boxes might be used"

**Summary: ranking of the above questions in order of level of concern, starting with the highest weighted average.**

1. Social distancing: 3.61 (moderately/very)
2. Using public transport: 3.43 (moderately/very)
3. Navigating new routes/changes to venue layout: 3.06 (moderately)
4. Tactile/Audio resources: 3.03 (moderately)
5. Guiding service: 2.64 (slightly/moderately)
6. Pre-booking and check-in process: 2.14 (slightly)

**Q7 Overall, what needs to be in place at a museum for you to feel safe?**

**Comments covered**

- **Audio description**: of changed layout; available on own device
- **Booking**: possible via telephone
- **Cleaning** regime
- **Events**: Small number of participants on access tours; special sessions / days for VI children
- **Gloves**: available for purchase
- **Guiding**: system that does not involve touching other people (e.g. a handheld or wrist-worn band that is cleaned before being provided;
- **Hand sanitiser**: available, at regular points which are made known to VI customers (eg, by major entry and exit points throughout the building).
- **Information:** clear
- **Layout**: Text / audio description of changed layout
- **Lighting**: good levels
- **Masks**: obligatory; available for purchase at venue
- **Online**: Good pre-visit information; alternative accessible content
- **Queues**: not being required to find and stand in them
- **Route**: clear tactile markings; audio-described; that guide dogs can understand (e.g., barriers, not arrows on the floor)
- **Signage**: Iconography instead of lots of writing (supports people with a wide range of disabilities and or communication needs and is generally universally known throughout the world)
- **Staff**: sufficient; offer help when needed; good awareness; access knowledgeable; warm & friendly in welcoming you; trained as guides
- **Time**: Enough time to visit the exhibition without feeling rushed;

- **Visitors**: limited number allowed at one time; space for them to social distance; non-blind people to be made aware/understand visually impaired and blind people's needs

## Rate your agreement with the following sentences:

## Q8 "I will wait until social distancing and masks are no longer required before I visit a museum or gallery again"

N=34

- **Disagree or strongly disagree**     **47%**
- Neutral     15%
- Agree or strongly agree     29%
- Don't know     9%

"Circumstances are always changing and if venues make customers feel confident to attempt visiting despite masks, social distancing, and one-way systems, then people will come."

"It is unsure how long we will have to continue with masks and social distancing so I would still go and see an exhibit if I wanted to and felt safe"

"I think it will be a very long time before there are no restrictions in place"

"I've already been to one museum and actually the experience with fewer people (due to limited ticketing capacity) made me feel safe and more valued as a customer and it was a much better accessible experience as I could get nearer to things and move safely as people were in the main observing social distancing. I've also missed the arts so much and work in the sector so am desperate for people to start going back."

**Online, live-streamed events**

**Q9 Since the beginning of lockdown in mid-March, have you attended a live-streamed event online run by a museum, gallery or heritage site?**

N=31

- No                                **65%**
- Yes, about once a month    **26%**
- Yes, about once a week      **6%**
- Yes, several times a week   **3%**

"I don't like listening to things online unless I have no other choice."

"I have really enjoyed accessing these online cultural performances, something to look forward to in the sometimes long evenings."

"These have been very enjoyable and informative"

"Over the last four or five months I've participated in several online (Zoom/webcast) live events – lectures, recitals and one funeral – but none of them from a museum, gallery or heritage site. In general, I seem to have a fairly strong built-in resistance to online culture."

"I tried Hastings Contemporary Robot tour it was very interesting and raises good questions for accessible support using this approach."

**Q10 Since the beginning of lockdown, have you watched or listened to a recording of a live-streamed event?**

N=31

- No                                **29%**
- Yes, about once a month    **39%**
- Yes, about once a week      **26%**
- Yes, several times a week   **6%**

**Q11 Since the beginning of lockdown, have you watched or listened to a theatre production streamed online?**

N=30

- No                                **37%**
- Yes, about once a month    **47%**
- Yes, about once a week      **13%**
- Yes, several times a week   **3%**

**Q12 Which of the following platforms have you used? (you can select more than one). In the next question, you will be asked which you prefer / find most accessible.**

N=30

- Zoom 90%
- YouTube 83%
- Facebook 40%
- Microsoft Teams 40%
- WhatsApp 33%
- Skype 17%
- Google Hangouts 3%
- Instagram Live 3%

Other (please specify):

- Google Meet x 2
- House party
- Vimeo

**Q13 Which of the following platforms did you prefer / find most accessible or easy to use?**

- Zoom 66%
- YouTube 52%
- Facebook 24%
- WhatsApp 24%
- Microsoft Teams 7%
- Instagram Live 3%
- Skype 3%
- Google Hangouts 0%

"I require assistance to access as if I leave my access reading software on it becomes intrusive for other people."

"I need help accessing all the platforms."

"Zoom via telephone"

"I'm using synaptic software which makes them equally accessible."

"Zoom's hard because it's difficult to follow chats and watch and engage with the content at the same time but has been so good to have the option"

## Q14 What has your general experience been of online cultural content with audio description?

**N=29**

- Excellent **17%**
- Good **55%**
- Fair **24%**
- Poor **3%**
- Bad **0%**

"On YouTube, I have never found anything that is audio described."

"Varies on AD Provider and type of cultural event being described."

"Very limited amount of content available online with AD, but where it has been provided it has been excellent and very helpful."

"AD really helps me appreciate / understand the content"

## Q15 How important is the opportunity for socializing with other participants?

- Not at all important or unimportant 29%
- Neutral 31%
- **Important or very important** **41%**

"I hadn't thought of this as an important aspect personally, but I think it could be important for some people either via text chat or maybe a discussion after the event?"

"You can share the experience and exchange views."

"Good for networking and keeping in touch with friends and family has been vital during lockdown"

**Q16** **How important is having the event leader or leaders in the museum itself , and not just in an office or home?**

N=32

- Not at all important / unimportant        18%
- Neither unimportant or important        19%
- **Important or very important**        **62%**

"Depends on the type of webinar and whether or not they need to be at the exhibit. I am blind so my point of view may differ from people with some remaining vision."

"One-to-one discussion if you need help understanding something. There may not be enough time for your questions to be answered in an online event."

"I would prefer to have someone from the venue there with me so I am able to ask questions, interact with them, etc."

**Q17** **How important is having access to high quality images of artworks or artefacts, if these are being audio described?**

N=33

- Not at all important / unimportant        24%
- Neither unimportant or important        6%
- **Important / very important**        **69%**

"I think this could be useful for participants with partial sight who could enlarge these images easily and not get any pixelated effect which happens when zooming in on images of poor quality."

"You can watch with family and friends … if there are images"

"For those who have some workable vision, imagery is a helpful addition to the audio description. That in mind good quality images are important to gain the best from them."

"This does help me see the detail of the object"

"I have no vision so this doesn't matter to me."

**Q18** **How important is it to have a curator or other museum expert, as well as an audio describer if the event is an audio-described tour?**

N=33

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. Not at all important / unimportant | 12% |
| 2. Neither unimportant or important | 15% |
| **3. Important / very important** | **73%** |

"Some curators may be able to provide all information needed but, where they are not confident, perhaps having an audio describer present would be a good idea."

"I think it is very important to have a curator there, as he/she can answer any content questions the participants may have and it reinforces the link to the museum."

"The expert can add interest, information and enthusiasm"

If it is possible to have some interaction during the tour, then an expert being on hand would mean any questions can be answered well. If the guided tour with audio description is non-interactive, then the audio describer should suffice alone.

"It is always very interesting to have an expert there. You find out so much more about the exhibition."

"Good to keep connection with the venue whose curated the experience; the conversations are richer "

"I don't think it needs the curator as well. Great if they are there to answer questions but the audio describer is more important. However, ideally it should be both."

"Gives connection to the venue, supports opportunities for conversations to happen and feels a 2-way process, but it's not essential to have the museum staff member there but having a lead helps facilitate conversations especially if VI people are involved"

**Q19** **How important is it to have a question and answer session as part of a live-streamed event?**

N=32

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. Not at all important / unimportant | 18% |
| 2. Neither unimportant or important | **16%** |
| **3. Important / very important** | **66%** |

"A nice idea to share discussions, extend the event a little more and make it more interesting."

"I may not understand something. I may be on my own. I might feel that i have missed out by not knowing the answer"

"If the AD is of a good quality this wouldn't be necessary."

"Always good to have the opportunity for questions at the end of a tour whether it is streamed or you are there at the venue."

## Q20 What do you think is the optimum overall length for a live-streamed event online?

N=29

- 45 minutes   14%
- **1 hour        66%**
- 90 minutes   17%
- 2 hours        3%

"Perhaps multiple but short sessions on different aspects of a theme or 3 or 4 objects followed by a discussion would be best, as attention spans and Zoom fatigue does occur."

"Several separate ones at 30mins each"

## Q21 Scheduling Live-streamed events

**Weekday**

- Preferred – 32%
- Might do – 58%
- Would not do – 10%

**Weekend**

- Preferred – 45%
- Might do – 52%
- Would not do – 3%

**Morning (9-11am)**

- Preferred – 17%
- Might do – 37%
- Would not do – 47%

**Lunchtime (around 12-2pm)**

- Preferred – 13%

- Might do – 73%
- Would not do – 13%

### Early afternoon (around 2-4pm)

- Preferred – 45%
- Might do – 45%
- Would not do – 10%

### Late afternoon (around 4-6pm)

- Preferred – 27%
- Might do – 60%
- Would not do – 13%

### Evening (6-9pm)

- Preferred – 35%
- Might do – 52%
- Would not do –13%

### Summary

- **Weekend preferred by more, and fewest people 'would not do'**
- **Early afternoon (around 2-4pm) most preferred.**

## Q22 If you weren't able to attend a live-streamed event, how likely are you to watch a recording afterwards?

N=35

- **Likely or very likely          85%**
- Neutral                                  6%
- Unlikely or very unlikely      9%

**How much do you agree with the following statements:**

**Q23   Accessible tours at museums are often booked out or at times that aren't good for me. Online events would mean I engaged with museums more often.**

N=34

- Disagree or strongly disagree        30%
- Neutral                                                21%
- **Agree or strongly agree**               **45%**
- Don't know                                           4%

**Q24   I would be interested in attending live-streamed events run by museums that I am unlikely to be able to visit in person, including those in other countries.**

N=35

- Disagree or strongly disagree        6%
- Neutral                                                9%
- **Agree or strongly agree**               **85%**

**Q25   I would be happy continuing to attend live-streamed events in future, even after museums and galleries re-open**

N=35

- Disagree or strongly disagree        18%
- Neutral                                                18%
- **Agree or strongly agree**               **58%**
- Don't know                                           6%

**Q26   I don't like live-streamed events: it's not the same as being at a museum or gallery in front of artworks, artefacts, and face-to-face with people**

N=35

- Disagree or strongly disagree        24%
- Neutral                                                26%
- **Agree or strongly agree**               **47%**
- Don't know                                           3%

**Q27 Are you happy for museums and galleries to make live-streamed events inclusive for everyone or have specific audio-described events for blind / visually impaired audiences?**

N=35

- Inclusive events for all                                    21%
- Specific AD events for blind/VI audiences    35%
- **Both**                                                          **44%**

**Q28 What barriers do you experience accessing online editorial content (audio, video, text etc.)?**

- **Audio Description**: Non-availability, time-limited availability
- **Audio quality**: poor
- **Colour contrast**: poor (light grey text on white for example)
- **Editorial articles**: inadequate description of images
- **Font size:** too small
- **Format:** compatibility with screen reader
- **Images**: lack of description
- **Links**: not clear, poorly labelled.
- **Navigation**: cluttered and badly designed webpages
- **Pop-up windows:** inaccessible
- **Screenreader**: content not properly labelled, so screen reader doesn't pick up
- **Videos**: lack of description, clash of description with dialogue. "Often promotion and welcome videos don't have verbal content: they just use music and captions"
- **Webinars**: inadequate description of what is going on on-screen.
- **Wifi**: poor quality

**Q29 Screen reader users: For editorial content on a museum's website, do you prefer to have a recorded audio version of an article or use your screen reader?**

- Recorded audio 36%
- Screen reader 21%
- Don't mind 15%
- I don't use a screen reader 27%

**Q30  Aside from VocalEyes, where else do you learn about accessible / audio-described online content? This will help VocalEyes and museums it advises with their marketing campaigns**

- Direct from museums via email newsletter / bulletins
- Sight loss charities (national): e.g. RNIB, Thomas Pocklington Trust, VICTA
- Sight loss charities (local): e.g. Kent Association for the Blind
- Checking websites and YouTube channels of venues known to provide AD
- Local Talking Newspaper
- Word of mouth from friends
- Social media (Twitter and Facebook named)
- Disability Arts Online website
- Disabled / VI bloggers

**Q31  Is there anything else we haven't asked that you'd like to share?**

- **Consultation**: venues should consult more with blind and VI people when designing audio devices and pay them (in £ or vouchers) for consultation time.
- **Live AD events**: a shame if live AD events ended in the long term.
- **Online content**: "… Online content has opened a lot of chances to join in; I think there is an opportunity here in the current situation for venues to open up more to VI people and also people with other disabilities who would normally not be able to visit a historical building to offer a fantastic fully accessible experience."
  "Many audio-described tours for various reasons have to be on a date and time when numbers of people attending are very low e.g. a tour might be on a Monday morning when the venue is quiet: Offering both a live and professional online audio-described tour could increase engagement and take up as well as when we are out of the pandemic more visitors to their venues."
- **Proximity**: frustrating not to be able to get closer to picture. Maybe there could be special times for disabled people when one could be allowed to get really close.
- **Recorded AD tours**: Label/number of the artwork needed to select relevant stop on recorded guide is often very small and unreadable.
- **Social**: "AD events provide me with social opportunities and a community of VI people. This has been the biggest loss during lockdown and continues now. Any way in which that social interaction can be facilitated during online events would make a huge difference as I'm still as isolated as in lockdown and will be for the foreseeable future."

Report written by Matthew Cock, Chief Executive, VocalEyes

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If you have any questions, or wish to contact VocalEyes to help your museum or heritage site welcome and engage with blind and visually impaired audiences, please get in touch: matthew@VocalEyes.co.uk