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A register of dementia-friendly tourist destinations should be created to help sufferers and boost the sector, the Scottish Conservatives have said.

It would enable attractions north of the border to become accredited sites for people with conditions like Alzheimer's, as well as their carers.

And with an estimated 850,000 people living with dementia in the UK, the move could boost visitor numbers for a range of businesses.

Shadow culture secretary Rachael Hamilton came up with the plan after submitting a written question to the Scottish Government, asking if it had a register of specific dementia-friendly locations.

No such list exists, ministers confirmed, and now Ms Hamilton has called for an accreditation scheme to be launched.

She said the Scottish Government could support businesses to embark on a range of measures to make their attraction more accessible for dementia sufferers.

That could include the creation of a quiet room for patients to take a "time out" during a visit; creating clearer working and signs for directions and advice; and changing the colour of doors to make them easier to locate.

Experts have also suggested hosting memory cafes and workshops, and organising bespoke tours for care homes as ways to help patients and carers.

Ms Hamilton added the Scottish Government could also support tourism firms who wanted to train staff in how to deal with challenges presented by visitors with dementia, and help in making necessary changes to any physical infrastructure.

Scottish Conservative shadow culture secretary Rachael Hamilton said:

"Creating a list of accredited dementia-friendly tourist sites would be of benefit to everyone.

“It would make a day out or short holiday for those living with the condition far more accessible and enjoyable, and of course would be of benefit to their carers.

“And it would immediately open the market to 1.7 million people in the UK, if you consider each visitor with dementia would likely have a carer accompanying too.

“The tourism industry in Scotland is more reliant on elderly customers than perhaps many people realise.

“The sector, like everyone else, has a role to play in improving the lives of these vulnerable patients, and this would be a good way to do it.

“It would mean trips to these attractions could become more feasible, and that in turn helps with a degree of independent living and keeping up levels of physical exercise.

“With the support of the Scottish Government and the input of charities, it would be relatively inexpensive for a tourist attraction to become officially dementia-friendly.

“I hope this is something all political parties in Scotland can get behind to make a positive difference for patients, carers and the tourism economy in general.”