



**SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE**

# **MOBILITY HOUSING**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The purpose of the Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) is set out in the Government's guidance (see Planning Policy Guidance Note PPG12, (1) paragraphs 3.18 and 3.19). Its role is to supplement the policies and proposals of the draft Unitary Development Plan, providing guidance for those preparing planning applications (paragraph 3.18). It is a material consideration in deciding planning applications (paragraph 3.19). The weight accorded to it will increase if it has been prepared in consultation with the public, and is the subject of a Council resolution. However, it does not have the special status (paragraph 3.19) of a development plan policy.

1.2 This SPG is intended to supplement Policy H7 of the draft UDP which states that:

“In all new or refurbished housing the provision of a proportion of mobility housing to meet local need, will be encouraged except where the physical characteristics of a site or existing buildings make it impracticable”.

(See Appendix One for full text).

It is not in itself a statement of policy, but sets out in more detail how the policy will be put into practice.

## 2. BACKGROUND

### The Policy and Its Aims

2.1 Mobility Housing is defined in the explanatory text accompanying Policy H7 as:

“*General purpose housing* built to certain basic standards so that *it* can be easily adapted without major structural alterations to be lived in by people with disabilities...”

2.2 A separate ‘Policy Background Paper’ (2) describes the aim and reasoning behind the policy. Briefly, the guidance is not aimed at specialist housing companies or trusts. It applies to general purpose housing. A dwelling-unit designed in accordance with these principles would be normally entirely suitable for occupation by able-bodied people. It may be the case that mobility housing units will not be occupied (initially) by people with disabilities. (But many able-bodied people incur some disability in their lifetime through age or illness.) The first aim of the policy is to promote an easily adaptable housing design suitable for use by everyone. The second is to increase the total number of units in the housing stock suitable for conversion. Therefore initial occupation by a precise type of household is not an objective in itself

### Government Guidance

2.3 Planning Policy Guidance Note 13 'Land For Housing', (PPG3), in paragraphs 7 and 8, dealing with access for people with disabilities to housing, states:

"... where there is clear evidence of local need, a local planning authority could include in a local plan a policy indicating that it would seek to negotiate elements of housing, accessible to the disabled, on suitable sites."

The local need in Sheffield for this type of housing is described in the Policy Background Paper referred to in paragraph 2.2. The draft Policy (see Appendix A), states that an applicant will be encouraged to provide a "proportion of" the numbers of dwellings on any one site to mobility housing standards. The proportion is defined as a minimum of 25%, reflecting the local need in the Sheffield area. A figure is included in order that a framework for discussions may be established with applicants.

2.4 PPG3 initially looks to the use of the Building Regulations legislation to make provision for people with disabilities in domestic properties as it currently does in non-domestic buildings. However, since that change has not as yet taken place and the Council considers the local need for the provision exists now, the policy has been included in the UDP.

2.5 PPG3 also sets out locational requirements which are of a site specific nature and require assessment by dealing with individual cases on their merits - it states:

"...(sites) would normally be located close to shops and public transport and be in an area of level ground."

In an area such as Sheffield these criteria are not considered wholly appropriate. Many people with disabilities live in a wide variety of areas not necessarily close to shops and services, and within areas which have steep gradients. They also find public transport in the region largely inaccessible, relying more on the car. Consultations with the local Access Group and other disability groups have not identified the PPG locational features as significant, (other than in relation to gradients within individual building plots and their detailed design).

2.6 Paragraph in its last line states: "the plans should not seek to impose detailed standards". The Council has specifically excluded from the text of the draft Policy design guidance on standards.

### Other Guidance

2.7 The design criteria contained in these notes should be read in the context of the policy framework for the site as described in the Unitary Development Plan and any Planning Briefs etc., for the site.

### Implementation of the draft Policy

2.8 Individual sites and the plots within them will be selected from all housing sites that come forward and then assessed against:

- gradients on the site
- transport links
- local shopping and other services.

Consideration will be given to the age structure of local population, the dwelling types, and the most appropriate features to include in any design. The guidance would be applied flexibly taking account of all of these factors. Full details are contained in the Policy Background Paper(2) entitled 'Mobility Housing'.

## **3. THE CRITERIA**

3.1 These notes provide details of the features which the Council would consider to be part of the design of an adaptable, accessible dwelling. The features are split into two groupings. First *visitability* i.e. those which achieve a dwelling capable of being visited by a person with a disability. Second, *full mobility* housing, where all the standards are applied to the dwelling and it is useable by anyone who may live in it, (and want to visit it). It is the aim of the Policy that the full mobility standard should be applied wherever practicable. The visitability standard represents a lower, sensible grouping of features where the full mobility standard is impracticable for possibly a variety of reasons relating to the design of the dwellings.

3.2 Reference is made to the Council's "Disabled Access Standards" design sheets in each section which are contained in Appendix 2. In many instances specialist design information is not applicable, over and above what is set out in this SPG.

### Visitability Standard

#### **3.3 External**

##### *Entrances*

The principal entrance to have a doorset of at least 900mm wide. 300mm clear wall space to be provided to the opening edge of door. Thresholds to have a maximum upstand of 26mm where it is shown one is required due to climatic conditions.

A ramp to the principal entrance to be constructed where a level approach is not provided.

##### *Paths and driveways ..*

*All paths and/or driveways to be hard surfaced laid with flush-fitting joints. The use of gravel or a similar loose granular material would not be acceptable.*

*No gradient to exceed 1:12.*

##### *Parking*

Where visitor car parking spaces are included in the design of the scheme, an appropriate space for disabled car-users on level ground and at least 5.0m by 3.5m., should be provided with access to the adjacent properties.

### *Overall site environment*

All paths to include the following features:

- at least 1.2m wide
  - no gradient exceeding 1:12
  - non-slip surfaces and no loose granular materials
- Play equipment to be at least accessible to parents/carers with disabilities.  
Dropped kerbs should be provided throughout the site

### **3.4 Internal**

Where properties include the provision of a downstairs toilet it should be accessible, complying with the Council's Disabled Access Standard's Sheet 12.

#### Mobility Standard

### **3.5 External**

All external areas should comply with the standards shown for the *Visitability* criteria.

#### In addition

##### *Bin stores*

The height to the aperture should not exceed *950mm* and *1200mm* to any handle.

##### *Car Parking*

Car parking space of at least *5.0m* by *3.5m* should be provided on level ground in close proximity to the property.

A car-port or garage should be provided where appropriate. Alternatively, *space* to construct one should be available.

##### *Entrances*

All entrances to be accessible in accordance with the criteria under entrances for *Visitability*, except for internal garage doors where the need to meet safety codes result in no alternative being available.

Principal entrance to have a porch or shelter.

### **Internal**

##### *Doors*

All doors should a doorset of at least *900mm* wide.

*300mm* clear wall space to be provided to the opening edge of door

Level thresholds.

##### *Circulation Areas*

Lobbies and halls to have a clear turning circle of at least *1.5m* in diameter.

Corridors to provide a space at least *900mm* deep outside room entrances.

##### *Kitchens and bathrooms*

Space to be provide to allow wheelchair access to all facilities in the room.

##### *Access to upper floors*

Stairs to be structurally capable of installation of a stair lift and a power point to be available at foot of stairs.

### *Windows*

In principle rooms the window cill should not exceed 800mm high with any window controls no higher than 1.2m. all controls should be operable by someone with limited dexterity.

### *Electrical controls*

Sockets and other similar controls, such as thermostats, should be located between 0.900m and 1.2m above the floor.

### *Statutory services*

Access to consumer units and stop valves to be available to a wheelchair user.

## **4 FURTHER ADVICE**

If you wish to discuss the details of any scheme or you have any queries as to how to implement the policy you may contact the Access Officer by telephoning 0114 734197 or by writing to the Access Officer, Planning, Transport and Highways, Sheffield City Council, Howden House, 1 Union Street, Sheffield S1 2SH. The Access Officer can liaise on your behalf with any case officer if you have submitted a planning application.

## **5. REFERENCES**

1. Planning Policy Guidance Note PPG12, Development Plans and Regional Planning Guidance, Department of the Environment, HMSO, 1992.
2. UDP Policy Background Paper: No.13. "Mobility Housing", Directorate of Planning and Economic Development, SCC,. 1994.
3. Planning Policy Guidance Note PPG3 (revised), Housing, Department of the Environment, HMSO, 1993.

## APPENDIX A: The Draft Policy

### The Policy

“In all new or refurbished housing the provision of a proportion of mobility housing to meet local need, will be encouraged except where the physical characteristics of a site or existing buildings make it impracticable”.

### Definitions

|                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 'A proportion'     | - a minimum of 25%                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 'Mobility housing' | - general purpose housing built to certain basic standards so that it can be easily adapted to be lived in by people with disabilities.                                                                             |
| 'Local need'       | need in the City as a whole                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 'Impracticable'    | - where it is impossible to include:<br>a) Plots on roads with gradients not exceeding 10%.<br>b) A ramp to the principal entrance to a house without the creation of more than one rest platform along its length. |

### Reasons for the Policy

Most housing development is built to standard designs. But these do not take account of the needs of people with impaired mobility. Whilst standardisation can reduce total costs, it can actually increase them for people for whom the basic unit is unsuitable.

Adaptation by the builder can meet the needs of a particular buyer with disabilities; but people who become disabled whilst living in a standard house face heavy costs to adapt it to their changing needs. By designing easily adaptable houses for everyone, costs can be kept down.

The Government's national planning guidance states that planning policies should take account of general needs and the wide variety of market demand. Together with this an allowance should be made for housing for people with disabilities, where there is a clear evidence of local needs.

Figures derived from a Census Office study on disability show that 15% of people in Sheffield are in need of mobility housing. The figure of 25% given in the definition of 'a proportion' includes an allowance of 10% to remedy the lack of existing suitable housing.

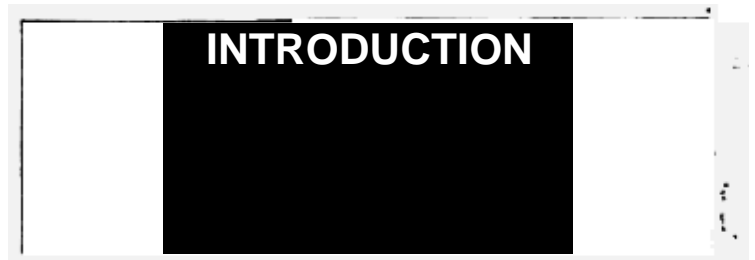
Very few existing houses or new conversions are suitable, for example, for people who are wheelchair users. This creates problems not only for the occupants but also for visitors. Designing for mobility will give people with disabilities a choice of housing of different types and tenures, enable more people to remain in their homes if they become disabled and enable individuals to live as independently as possible in the community.



## **APPENDIX B: Disabled Access Standards Sheets**

The following set of Design Sheets contain a variety of information not all of which may be appropriate to every development. For example, the Sheet 12 gives details of a full, size disabled persons' toilet which may not be required in all properties.

Further detailed design guidance is available from the Access Officer, telephone 0114 2734197. (see body of report for full address).



## **INTRODUCTION**

This set of Design Sheets describe the Council's basic access standards which it expects to see in all develop meet in the City. They have been formulated taking account of current "good practice" and the relevant legislation, such- as "British Standards". The sizes described should not be taken as the. only dimensions to follow. The Council would like to see all builders, developers and the users of the built environment do better. This is particularly important when it comes to wheelchair sizes. There is no standard for the design of wheelchairs, each model is physically different to another and they perform very differently too. Only by sheer weight of numbers & specific designs being available does an "average" or standard come into effect. Building designers need to therefore remember that working to a minimum may exclude many people -particularly as new wheelchair models come onto the market.

The Council does not view access for people with disabilities as an "extra". It should be incorporated into any proposal from the beginning to produce functional but attractive designs.

if you require further information or assistance with a project in relation to disability issues, then please contact the Council's Access Officer for People with Disabilities by telephoning 0742 734197. Alternatively you may write, marking the letter appropriately to the Head of Planning, Transport and Highways, Howden House, 1 Union Street, Sheffield, S1 2SH.

This information on each sheet is the functional, users view Whilst appropriate legislation has been considered, further investigations, for example of the Buildings Regulations 1991 may be necessary to ensure a finished building complies with all aspects of health and safety legislation. Further advice is available from the individual Departments within the Council.





## ACCESS CHECKLIST

Here is a simple checklist of features you should ensure your building, or area of open space, takes account of. The watchword is attention to detail.

1. A ramped alternative to a stepped entrance.
2. Doors with adequate opening width.
3. Car parking bays for users with disabilities (not just the Orange Badge holder).
4. Dropped kerbs and tactile paving, particularly in car parks.
5. Signposting:
  - to entrance to building
  - car parking spaces for people with disabilities.
  - raised letters on signs to allow blind/visually impaired to interpret them.
6. Unisex toilet for people with disabilities.
7. Reception desks:
  - with recessed areas for the knees of wheelchair users
  - lowered sections.
8. Good, balanced lighting.
9. Induction loops.
11. Lifts, for major changes in level.
12. Handrails to changes in level.
13. Clear routes for the blind/visually impaired.

10. Audio-visual alarms and information systems.

11.

### DON'T BE TEMPTED TO

1. Use large areas of glazing or mirror-glass, its dangerous and confusing for the visually impaired.
2. Ignore size recommendations:
  - ramps that are too steep are no good at all
  - toilets that are too small (or lack adequate handrails).
3. Allow dark interiors.
4. Have reception desks with high counters and security screens.
5. Have 'back-door' entrances for people with disabilities.
6. install revolving doors with no alternative - many people from children to the elderly don't like them.





Spaces reserved for people with disabilities should be provided on level ground as near to the buildings to be used as possible as it is both inconvenient and dangerous for people with disabilities to have to travel far across car parks. Such spaces should be undercover if possible as transfer between the car and a wheelchair may take some time, while puddles or ice could be dangerous for those unsteady on their feet.

Additional width is needed in bays to allow doors to be opened fully, and wheelchairs drawn along side if necessary. Where two bays are placed side by side the additional width required can be shared between them.

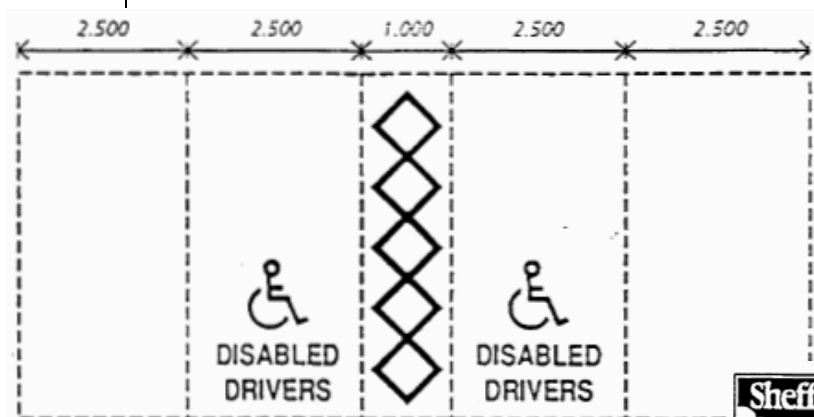
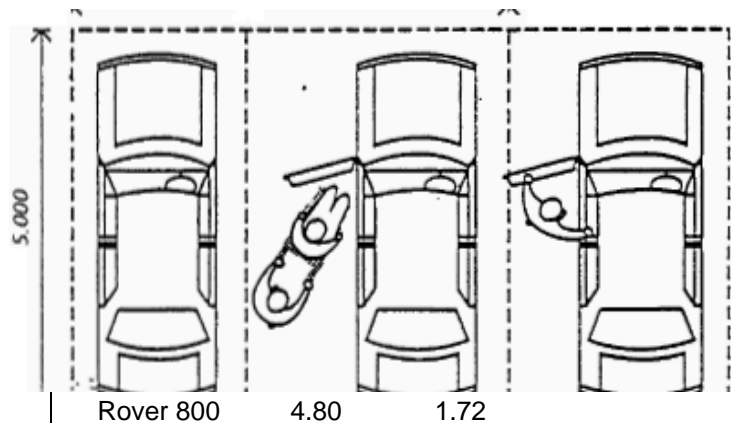
Bays reserved for people with disabilities must be clearly marked with the British Standard 'Disabled' Symbol, and should be clearly signposted from the entrance of the car park.

Where garages for people with disabilities are provided, up-and-over doors that do not necessitate stepping back or reversing the chair are preferred, although not all such doors are convenient. There should be adequate room to draw a wheelchair alongside the car.

Kerbs between the parking spaces or garage and the building(s) that they serve, should be ramped.

**.Typical Car Sizes (in metres):**

| Car Model     | Length | Width |
|---------------|--------|-------|
| Mini          | 3.04   | 1.42  |
| CitroenAX     | 3.50   | 1.56  |
| Metro         | 3.52   | 1.56  |
| Renault 5     | 3.60   | 1.60  |
| VWPolo        | 3.66   | 1.42  |
| Ford Fiesta   | 3.74   | 1.85  |
| WV Golf       | 3.98   | 1.49  |
| Ford Escort   | 4.04   | 1.88  |
| Maestro       | 4.06   | 1.68  |
| CitroenBX     | 4.21   | 1.67  |
| Renault 19    | 4.15   | 1.73  |
| Rover 200     | 4.22   | 1.68  |
| Volvo 300/400 | 4.27   | 1.70  |
| WV Passat     | 4.42   | 1.60  |
| Ford Sierra   | 4.43   | 1.92  |
| Montego       | 4.47   | 1.70  |
| Renault 21    | 4.50   | 1.80  |
| Ford Granada  | 4.67   | 1.96  |
| Saab 900      | 4.68   | 1.69  |
| Renault 25    | 4.71   | 1.80  |
| Citroen XM    | 4.72   | 1.80  |
| Volvo 200/700 | 4.77   | 1.80  |



**Design Data - Car Parking**  
 Standard parking bay: 2.500 x 5.000 (min)  
 For ambulant disabled: 3.000 x 5.000 (min)  
 For wheelchair user: 3.500 x 5.000 (min)



standard bay wheelchair users ambulant

disabled  
2.500

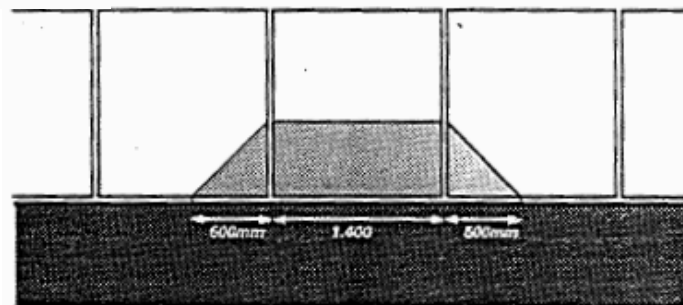
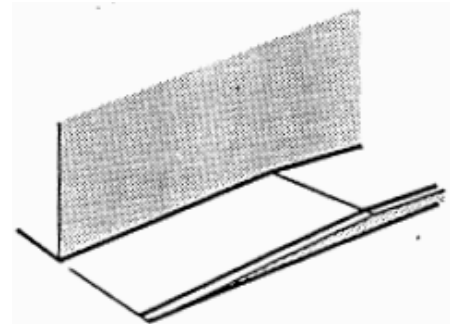
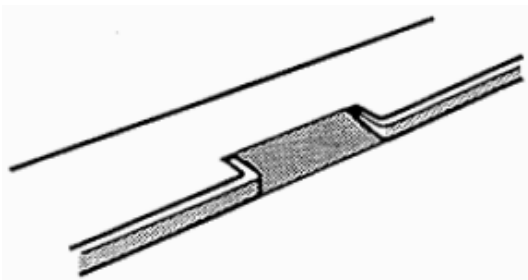
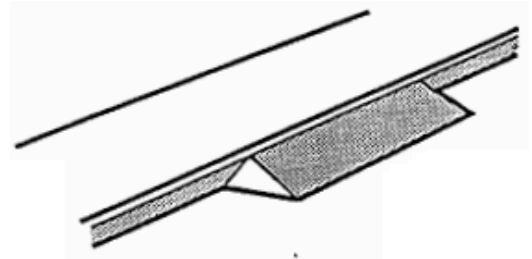
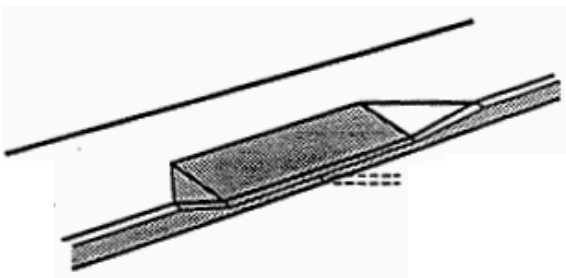
3.500

people. 3.000

Pavements and paths need to be wide enough to allow the unimpeded passage of wheelchairs, and pushchairs. Where there are lamp posts or other obstructions on the edge of a pavement these should not reduce the width to the extent that a wheelchair cannot pass. Surfaces should not be uneven, in particular paving stones should be level, and loose gravel chipping should not be used as they make wheelchair access virtually impossible. At road junctions or crossing points pedestrian and vehicular surfaces should be blended to a common level with an easy slope.

The ramped surface and the level platform at its head should be of a different texture to the rest of the path or pavement to avoid danger to the blind or partially sighted. Details of appropriate tactile paving and its **use are available** in the Department of Transport Circular 1/91.

A large camber on the road into the gutter will cause the footplate of a wheelchair to scrape the ground. At all times the aim should be to make it as easy as possible for a wheelchair to reach the pavement.





## EXTERNAL FEATURES -PAVEMENTS & PATHS

*max*  
12mm

### Design Data - Pavements and Paths

Preferred minimum width for pavements: 1.35m  
Additional width to allow wheelchairs and prams to pass: 1.65-1.8m  
Preferred maximum gradient for paths and for short ramps: 1:12  
Preferred minimum kerb height: 75mm (if required)  
Minimum width for dropped kerbs: 1.4m  
Tactile paving criteria: Department of Transport Circular 1/91.

# DISABLED ACCESS STANDARDS 5

## EXTERNAL FEATURES - STREET FURNITURE

There are two equally important questions to be asked when street furniture is considered, first can people in wheelchairs or with prams negotiate the obstructions? And second, can the blind and partially sighted walk in the area safely? Seats with arms and upright backs should be provided wherever possible, especially where people are likely to be waiting for any length of time for example at bus stops, by taxi ranks, by public telephones or by lifts. They should also be provided along roads that are frequently used by the elderly and disabled - particularly in shopping streets. As with all street furniture they should be positioned at either the front or the back edge of the pavement rather than in the middle where they would cause an obstruction. For the blind and partially sighted it is important that wherever possible obstacles (be they seats, raised flower beds, litter bins or anything else) should be regularly, rather than randomly, situated. Projections at head level (including buildings, shops awnings and overhanging bushes) are at worst dangerous and at

best the source of an unwanted shower if hit when they are wet by a blind person. Obstructions at ground level should be 900mm, ie. waist rather than knee high.

For the partially sighted a change in the colour of the surface around an obstacle helps, while for the blind a change in the texture is essential. In many cases this can be incorporated as a design feature, for example, around raised planters or litter bins.

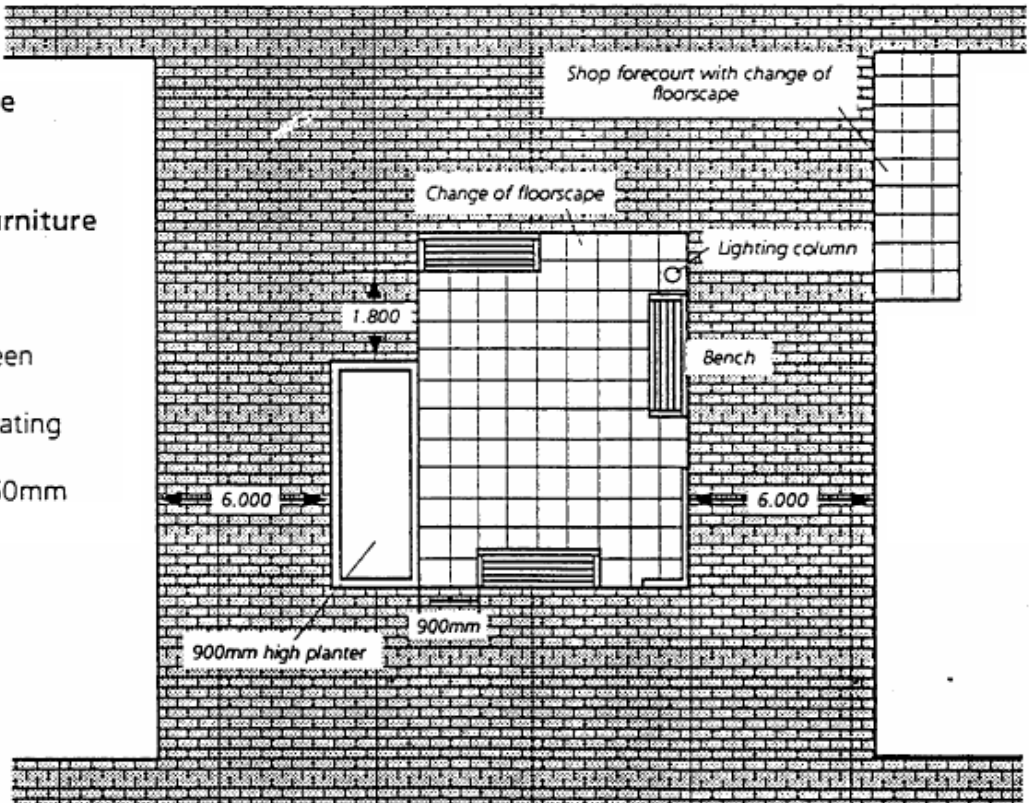
Grating bars should be at right angles to the direction of flow of pedestrian traffic and the holes should be very small to prevent sticks, wheels or shoe heels being trapped.

Manhole covers should be flush with adjoining surfaces.

### Possible street furniture layout

### Design Data - Street Furniture

- Minimum height of any obstruction: 900mm
- Minimum distance between obstructions: 900mm
- Maximum diameter of grating holes: 20mm
- Minimum seat height: 660mm



# DISABLED ACCESS STANDARDS 6

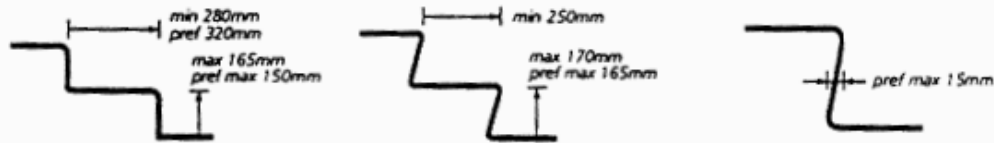
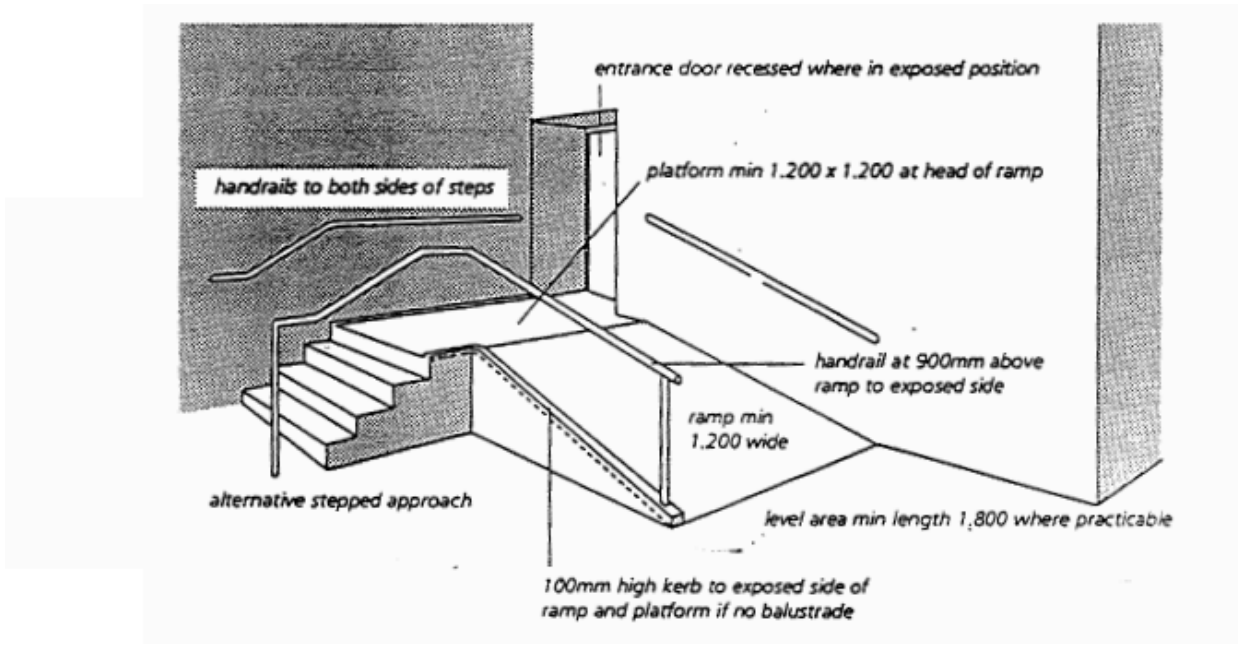
## ENTRANCES -STEPS AND STAIRS

Many ambulant disabled people prefer steps to ramps. There are different recommended step to step sizes for internal and external steps, but the principles that should be observed are similar.

Steps should be clearly identified; for the blind and partially sighted there should be a change in the texture and colour on the surface near the steps. There should be handrails on both sides of the steps and the rails should extend for 300mm on the level at either end of the steps. Tread

surfaces should be non-slip, both winders and open risers should be avoided while nosings should not project, although risers may be splayed. Wherever possible external steps should be under cover to provide weather protection.

Where there is only a small change in level, two shallow step's separated by a platform of at least 1200mm depth could be negotiated by a wheel chair user, whereas two steps without a platform would be impossible for most.



### External steps Design Data - Steps and Stairs

External Steps - Minimum going depth: 280mm (320)mm; Maximum riser: 150mm (145mm)  
 Internal Steps - Minimum going depth: 250mm; Maximum riser: 170mm (165mm)  
 Maximum vertical rise between landings - External: 1.2m; Internal: 1.8m  
 Landings at least 1.5m deep.  
 (Figures in brackets are the preferred dimensions.)  
 Texture and colour treatment for steps: Diagrams 2 & 3 of section M2 of Approved Document Part M, Building Regulations 1991.





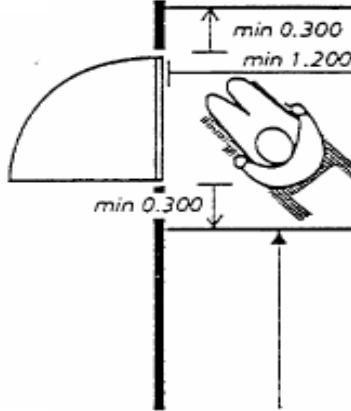
# DISABLED ACCESS STANDARDS 7

To be read in conjunction with Sheet 6 'Entrances Steps and Stairs'

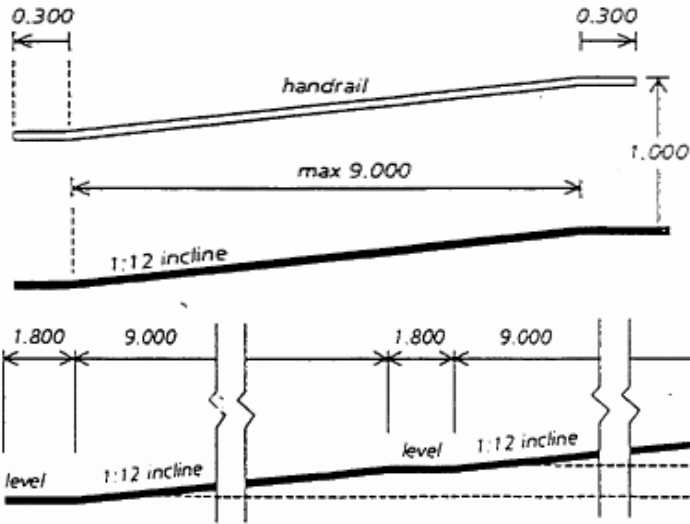
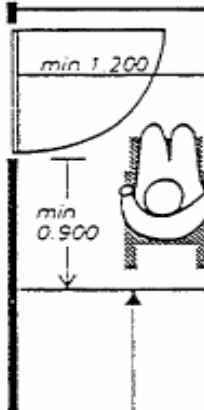
## ENTRANCES -RAMP

Ramps are nearly always preferable to steps for people in wheelchairs, but for many ambulant disabled people - particularly those who are unsteady on their feet - they can be a hazard.. It is essential that the presence of a ramp is clearly indicated by a change in the texture and possibly the colour of the surface at either end of the ramp, and the surface must be non-slip. Hand-rails should be provided on both sides of the ramp, extending at either end for 300mm. There should be a small kerb on the exposed side(s) of the ramp to prevent wheelchairs or walking sticks slipping off the edge, of at least 100mm.

Very long ramps are not only tiring but also space consuming, and in the long run lifts may be a better alternative. Where long ramps are necessary then rest platforms should be incorporated in the length of the ramp. There should be a level platform at each end of the ramp, particularly



Rest Platforms



### Long Ramps



- Design Data - Ramps
- Minimum width of ramp: 1.2m
- Maximum gradient of ramp where flights are not longer than 5m: 1:12
- Maximum length of ramped surface: 10m
- Rest platform dimensions: 1.5m x 1.5m
- Minimum raised kerb on exposed side: 100mm.



# ENTRANCES -DOORS

Apart from being of an adequate width for wheel chairs, doors should be easy to open by people with limited strength or who are unsteady on their feet. Where doors have two leaves it should be possible for a wheelchair to obtain access without having to open both doors. Two-way swing doors are advisable as some people find it easier to push a door than to pull it towards them. Under no circumstances should revolving doors be the only means of access. In public buildings and shops and where people are carrying heavy loads, self-opening doors should be specified.

Frameless glass doors are dangerous as the partially sighted and children may not see them, while wheel chairs may damage the glass or even break them.

Where large areas of glass are used this should be clearly indicated by the use of coloured panels or signs on the door, and kicking plates should be provided. Conversely, a glass visibility panel should be included in doors that are not of glass and this should be positioned so that children and people in wheelchairs, as well as the fully abled-bodied, can see and be seen. This is particularly important in fire doors in long corridors.

## Design Data - Doors

Minimum clear opening width of door: 775mm  
 Clear wall space on leading face of door 300mm  
 Maximum height of raised threshold if necessary 26mm

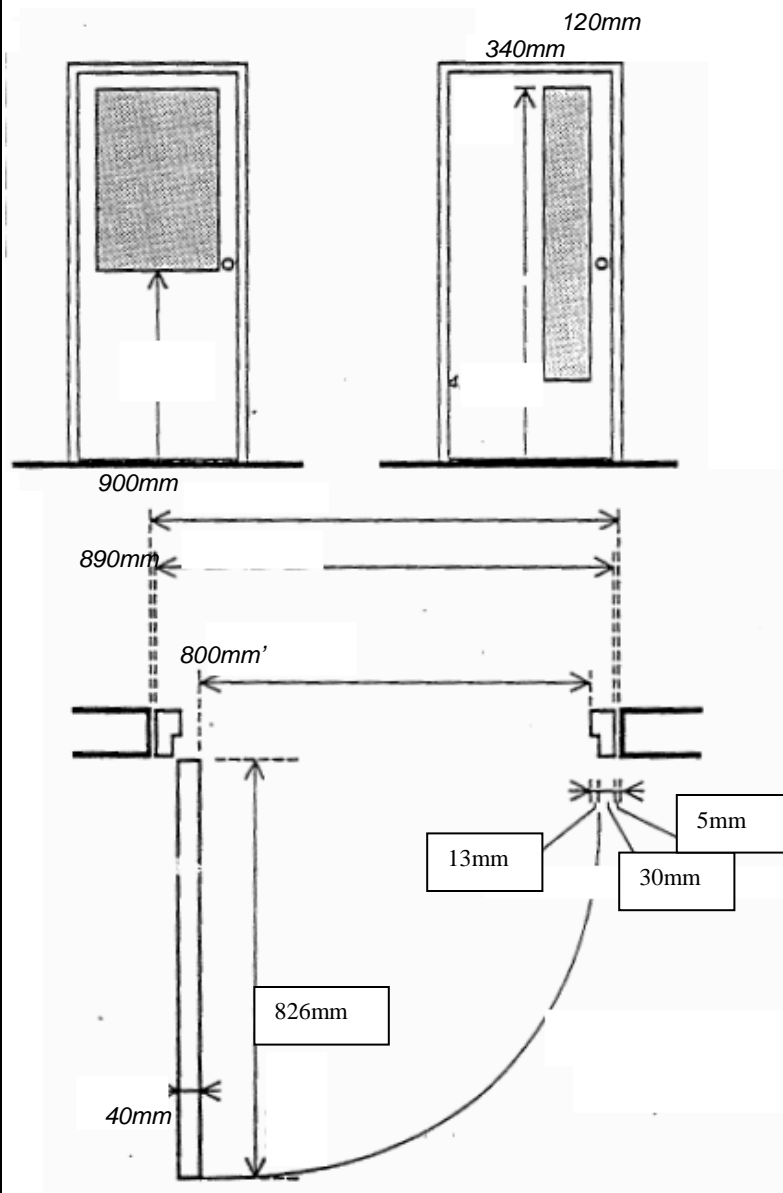
Maximum recommended resistance for external doors: 1 2Nm

Maximum recommended resistance for internal doors: 8Nm

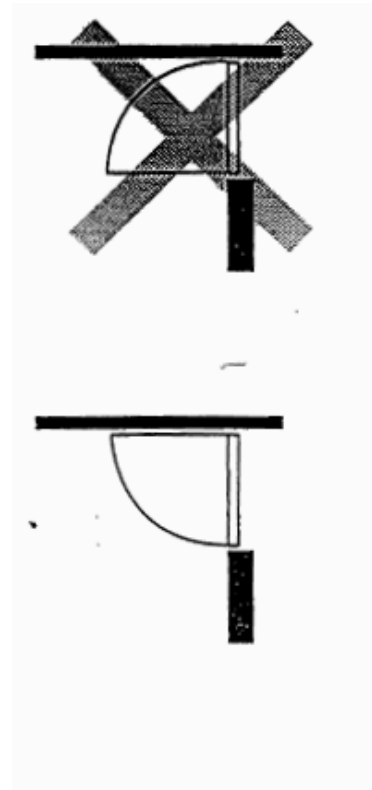
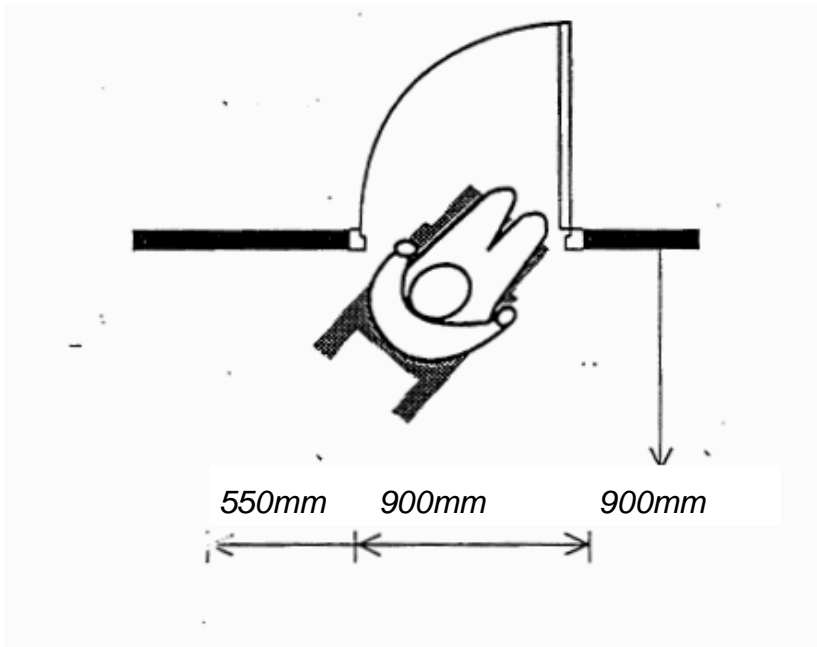
Inside buildings, doors hung at the corner of rooms give more manoeuvring space than doors opening towards the centre of the rooms.

All features such as letter boxes, bells and door handles should be set about 1 m above the ground, and for ease of use lever handles are preferred to knob handles. Self-closers, if fitted, should not be so strong that access by the elderly or by a disabled person is hindered.

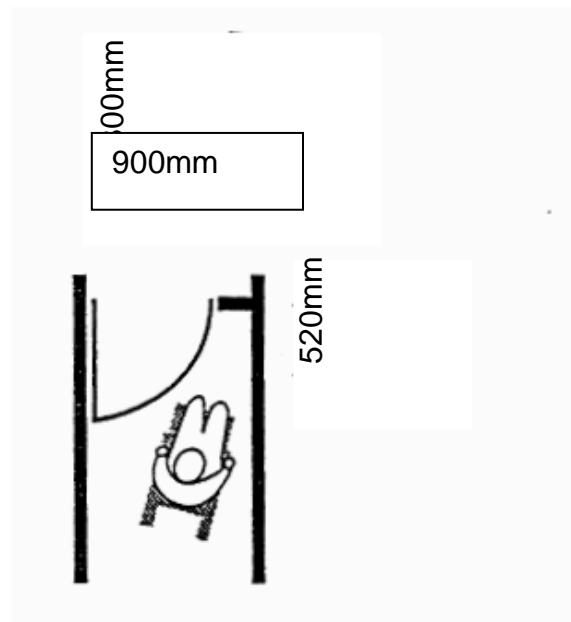
Glass visibility panels in doors



## Clear Space Requirements



## Wheelchair approaches to doors

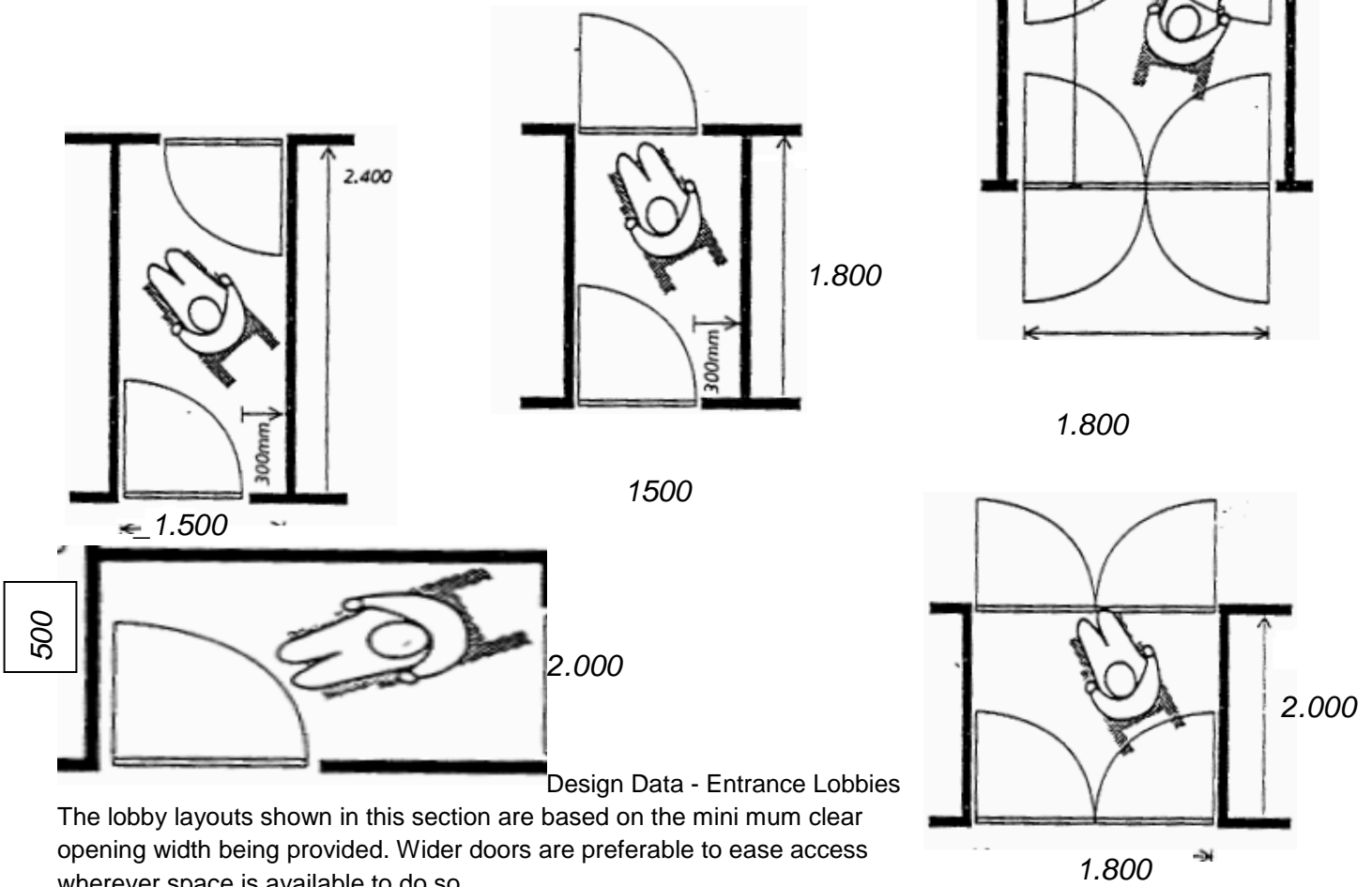


**ENTRANCES  
- DOORS CONTD.**

# DISABLED ACCESS STANDARDS 9

## ENTRANCES -ENTRANCE LOBBIES

Many public buildings have double doors at the entrance with a lobby between them to minimise heat loss. If this space is too small anyone with a mobility impairment can become trapped. Where right angled turns are involved, as occurs in some smaller shops and restaurants, additional space is needed.

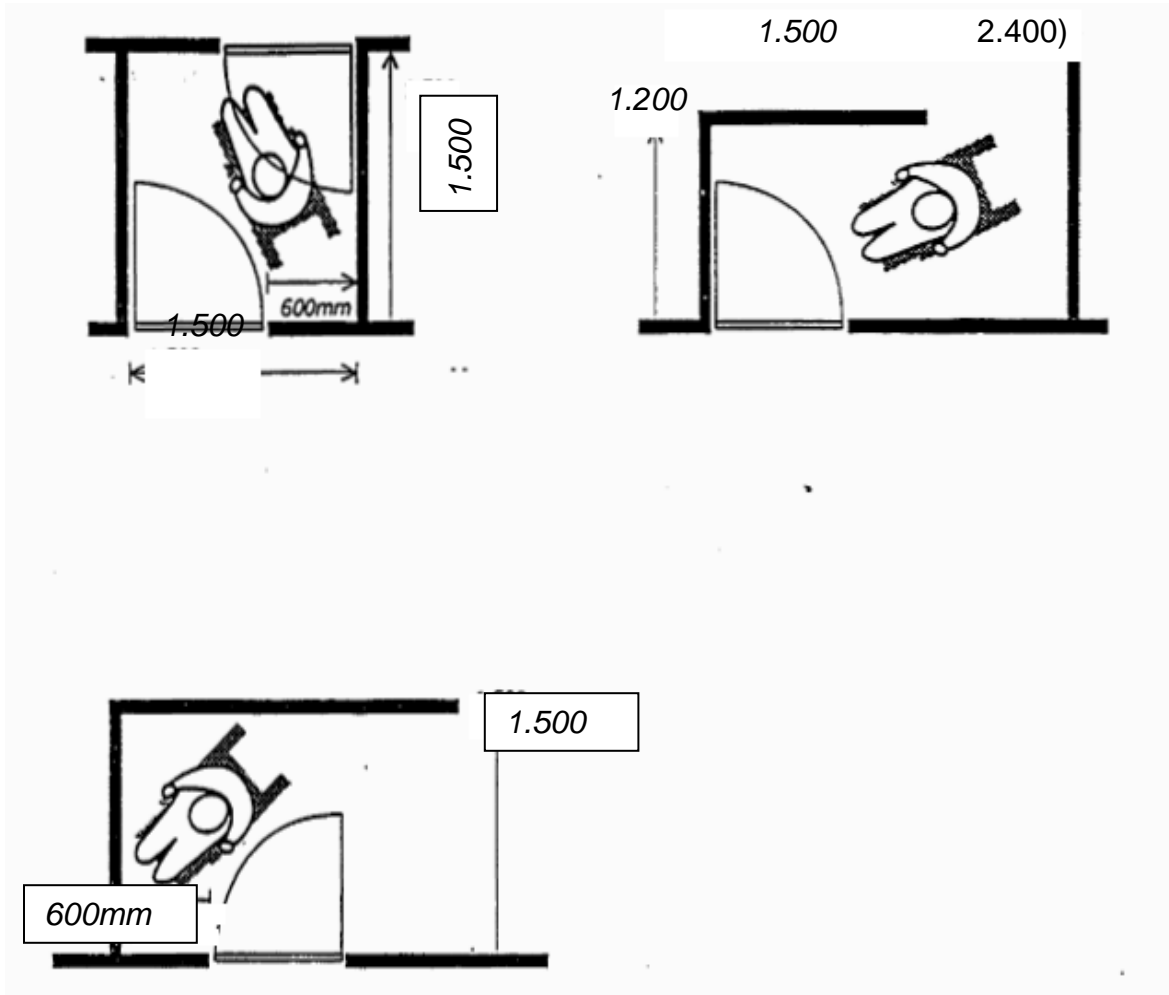


Design Data - Entrance Lobbies

The lobby layouts shown in this section are based on the minimum clear opening width being provided. Wider doors are preferable to ease access wherever space is available to do so.



## Alternative lobby layout



**ENTRANCES  
- ENTRANCE LOBBIES  
CONTD.**

# DISABLED ACCESS STANDARDS 10

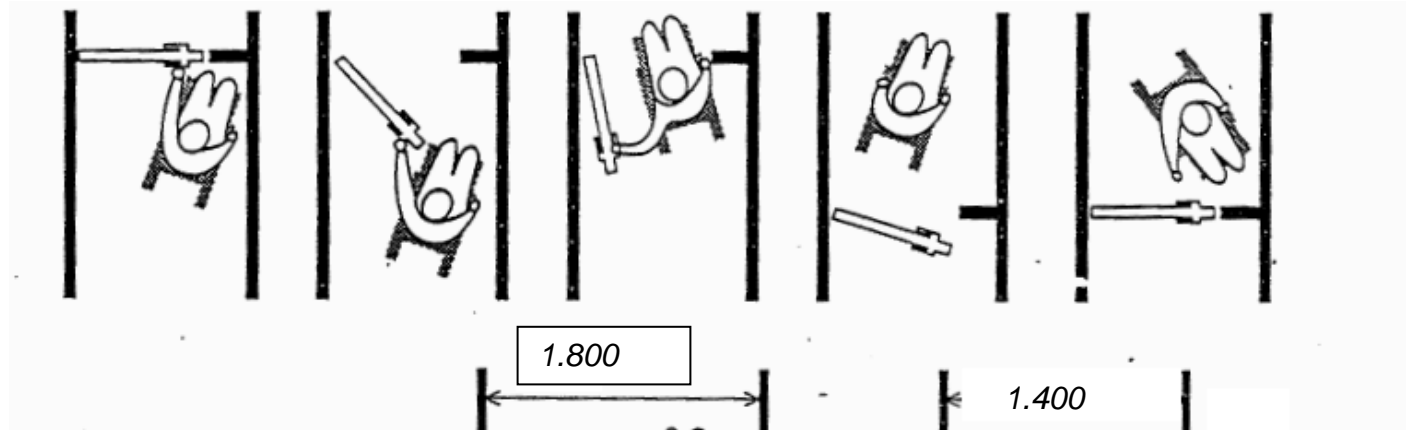
## INTERNAL FEATURES -CORRIDORS

Internal stairs and ramps are covered in their own section.

As-a general rule wheelchairs can turn through 360° in a circle diameter 1.5m, but the larger wheelchairs will require 1.7m. Corridors need to

allow for chairs to turn at least through 90 degrees and preferably through 180°. In measuring corridor widths, obstructions such as radiators must be allowed for. Where the corridor is likely to be in heavy use: corridors should be designed to the wider of the standard shown to allow wheelchairs to pass. -

Diagram showing the space required to open a door from a wheelchair, and how it is used



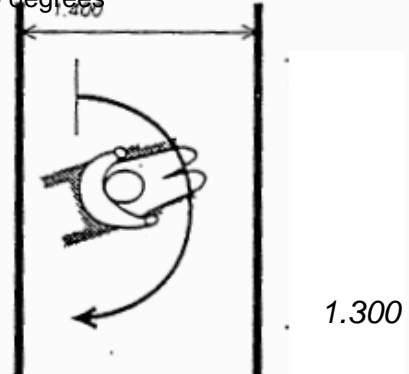
### Design Data - Corridors

Minimum corridor width for public buildings: 1.2m  
Minimum corridor width for heavy wheelchair use: 1.8m

Wheelchairs passing in a corridor



Wheelchair turning through 90 degrees



Wheelchair turning through 360°    Wheelchair turning through 180°



## INTERNAL FEATURES -LIFTS

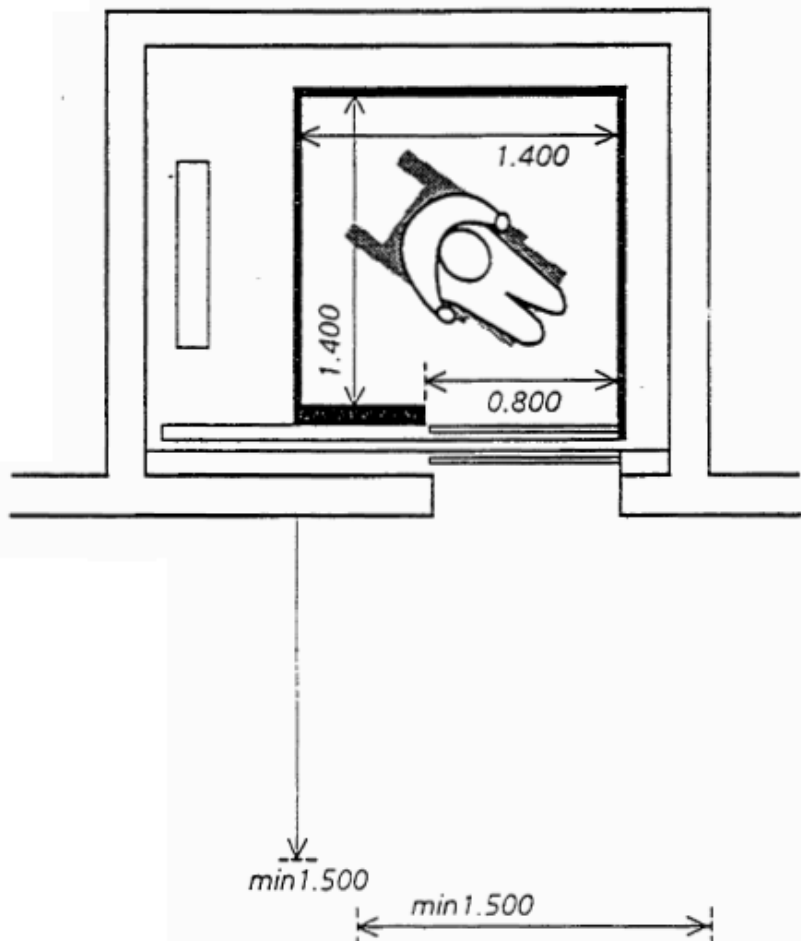
Lifts are the best method of vertical circulation for most people with disabilities. For safety, lifts should be self levelling at each floor and there should be sufficient unobstructed space in front of the lift to allow a wheelchair to approach without the need to turn. A bench or chair should be provided for people waiting for the lift. The call button should be within the reach of a person in a wheelchair.

The internal dimensions shown should be regarded as minimum sizes; where frequent use is likely to be made of a lift a larger size should be used as a wheelchair will occupy more space than a standing person. Allowance should therefore be made for space for a person accompanying the wheelchair.

Where lifts are passenger-operated the control panel should be accessible to people in wheel chairs. In small lifts it should be remembered that a person in a wheelchair may have to have their back to the door so that the control panel should be accessible and the floor indicator visible (in a mirror if

necessary) in this position. The door re-activating device for overriding the closing mechanism should be operated by a photo-eye or infra-red system, but not by door pressure.

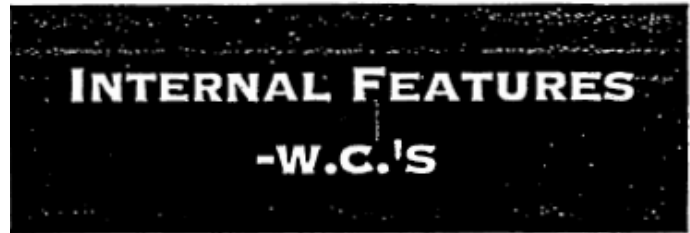
For the sensory impaired both audible and visual signals, indicating the doors are open should be provided. Controls should be identifiable by touch, with either the use of clearly identifiable raised symbols or letters.



**Design Data - Lifts**

- Minimum internal lift size: 1.4m x 1.4m
- Preferred internal lift size (catering for wheelchairs): 2.2m x 1.4m
- Clear opening width of doors: 800mm
- Clear space in front of lift door: 1.5m (preferred 1.9m)
- Lift control call panel button height: 900mm - 1.20m





Possible layout for a toilet cubicle

to a sliding or inward-opening door.

Toilets should be able to accommodate a wheel chair both alongside and in front of the pedestal. There are many different layouts of the cubicle that -are acceptable, and also different sizes of cubicle quoted as being adequate for wheelchair use. The information given here is intended to act as guidance, alternative layouts which may be found in other publications are also acceptable so long as the minimum cubicle size is observed.

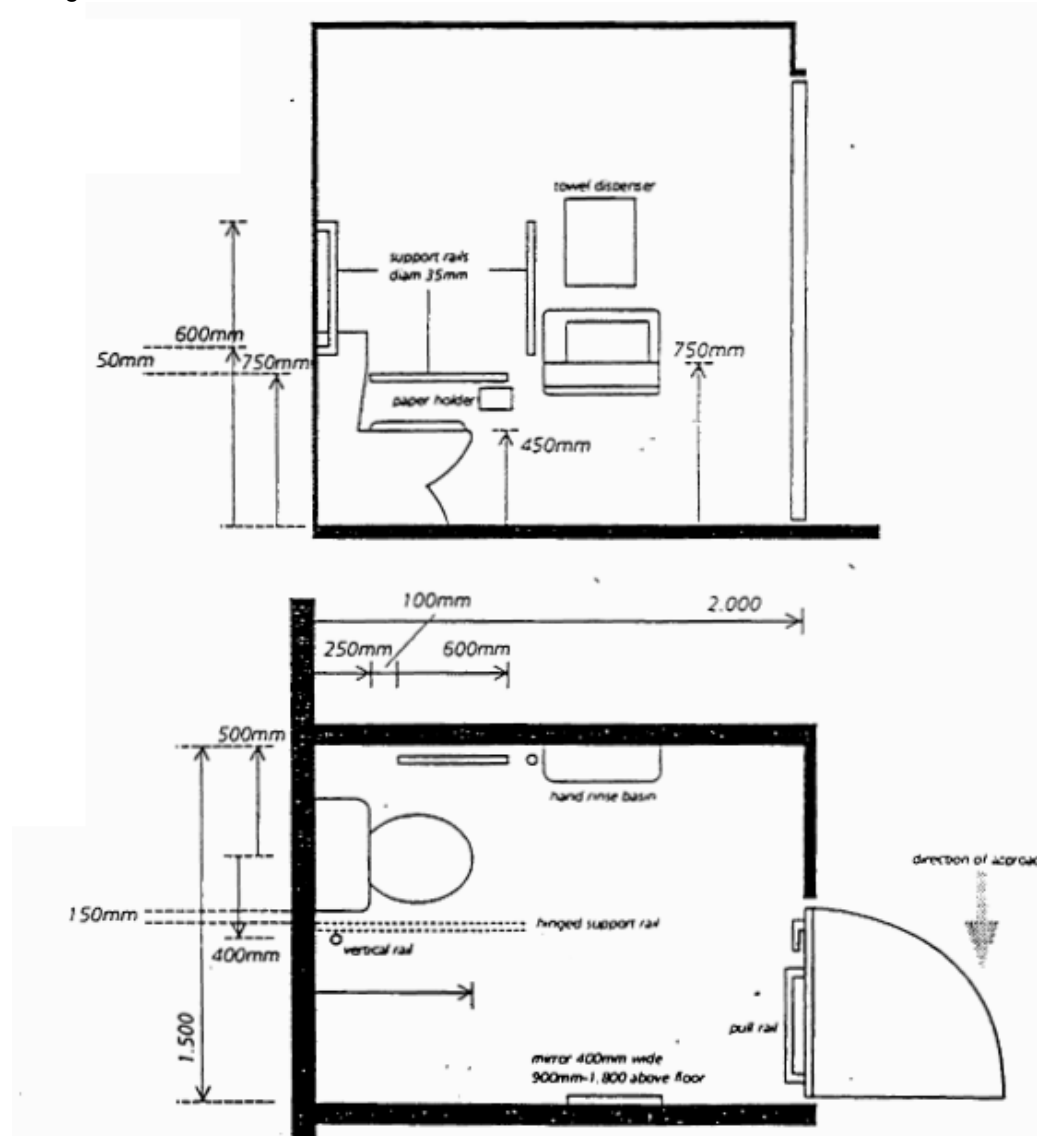
The basic principles to be observed in designing a toilet for use by the disabled are:-

i) Level access is essential. If there **is a ramp** the level platform at its head should be large enough to rest the wheelchair on whilst opening the toilet door.

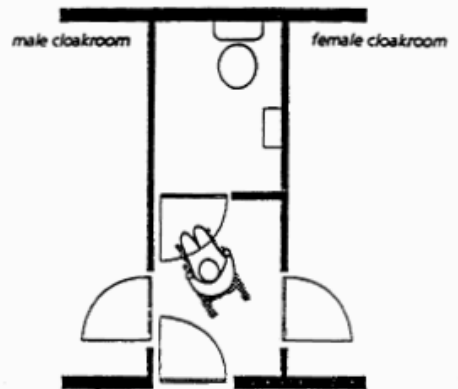
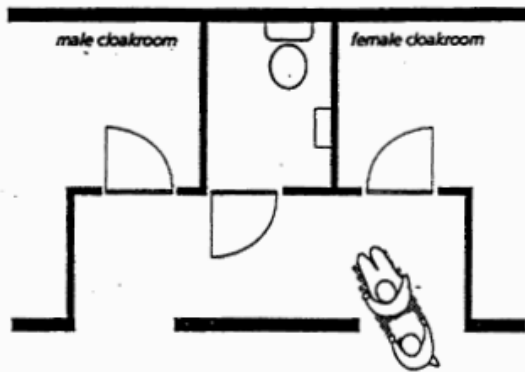
ii) Wherever possible the W.C. should be unisex, not entered through any adjoining male or female W.C. areas. This permits the person with a disability to be assisted by a member of the opposite sex if necessary. Any lobby should be at least 1.5m x 1.5m if one door opens in, or 1.5m x 2.0m if both of the doors open in (refer to the information on lobbies).

- iii) The compartment should be at least 2m x 1.5m. An out-ward opening door is preferred
- iv) The compartments' layout should allow transfer from a chair in front of or beside the W.C. pedestal. Handrails should not obstruct an able-bodied person assisting the disabled person.

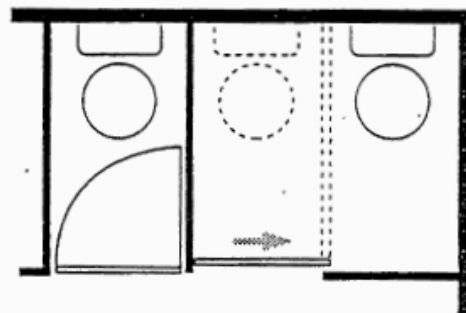
Design Data - Toilet Facilities







*Unisex access to a disabled toilet*



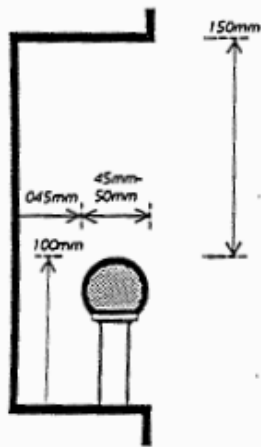
*Standard cubicles converted for people with disabilities by the removal of one w.c. and partition*

# DISABLED ACCESS STANDARDS 13

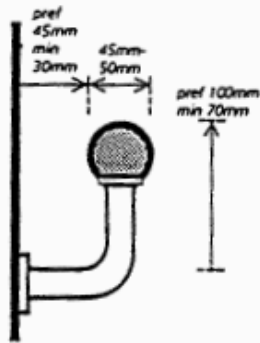
Handrails should be provided on both sides of steps and stairs to allow people to use their strongest arm for support. Handrails should be firm as people tend to grab anything that looks secure, and especially on steps the handrails may have a considerable strain placed on them. The cross section should be easy to grasp. The hand

## INTERNAL FEATURES -HANDRAILS

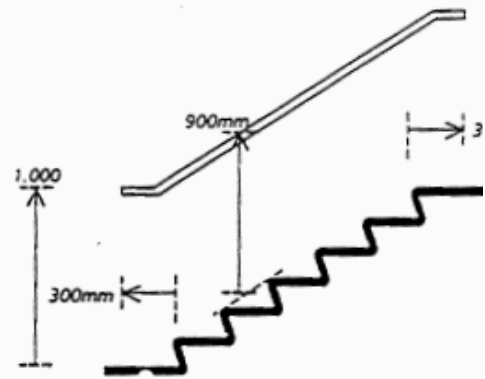
rail should extend for at least 300mm on the level at either end of a ramp, or steps. Handrails will be used as a guide by the visually impaired to locate the obstacle and to know where it begins and ends.



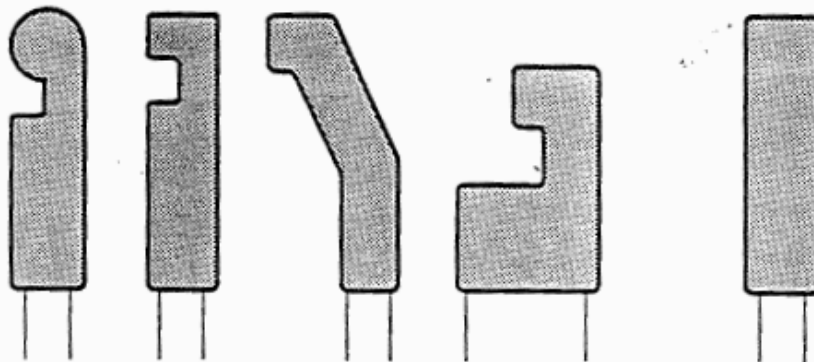
*Recessed handrail*



*Projecting handrail*



*Handrail positioning*



*Handrail sections*



Design Data - Handrails

Height of rail above ground level: 900mm

Diameter of cross section: 45 - 50mm



## OTHER DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

**Switches and Controls:** all light switches should, wherever possible, be level with door handles (1m above floor level), while controls for lifts and alarms should be no' higher than .20m.

**Windows:** should be easily opened by those with a limited use of their hands. In private dwellings, and public buildings where there is a view, the base of windows should be no higher than 760mm.

**Public Telephones:** people with disabilities often rely heavily on public telephones but are unable to use most of the conventional telephone boxes that have heavy doors. The hooded telephones now provided in many public buildings are better, and where a series of such telephones

are provided, one should be specifically adapted. Contact British Telecom or Mercury Communications for further advice.

**Balconies:** balconies need to be at least 1 .25m wide by 0.7m deep for a wheelchair user. if there is a raised threshold onto the balcony, additional depth may be necessary.

**Counters and Receptions:** where self-service information or reception areas feature some form of counter or desk, it is important that they are suitable for use by wheelchair users. This will mean that at least part of the counter should not exceed 800mm high. They should have space for the footplates of a wheelchair and the knees of the user, to be tucked underneath the counter top. A depth of 370mm is recommended.





### **The Blind and Partially Sighted**

The blind and partially sighted will benefit from the observance of the design standards in this series of leaflets, although some may prefer steps to ramps. However, certain additional points need to be borne in mind.

Unexpected obstructions should be avoided. This includes the avoidance of windows opening over paths and pavements, and the use of low awnings over shop fronts. Where obstacles do occur, such as bollards, low walls or street furniture, they should as far as possible be regularly spaced and may be surrounded by a tactile warning of their presence such as a change in surface materials.

For the partially sighted the use of colour change and contrast helps to identify obstructions, and in all cases light colours are preferred for public routes. Care should be taken to eliminate glare or dazzle as this can effectively "blind a partially sighted person.

In lifts, and within buildings generally, the blind may have to rely on tactile signs to find their way around. Raised lettering can help here. Echoes are an important guide to the blind, this should be borne in mind when floor coverings are specified.

### **The Deaf and Hard of Hearing**

Good sign posting outside and within buildings is essential for the deaf and hard of hearing, as is good lighting in places where conversations are likely to occur - particularly at enquiry points or in interview rooms - to assist lip reading. The installation of an induction loop in public halls, churches or waiting rooms (for example doctors' surgeries) where a public address system is in use should be allowed for at the design stage. This is not expensive to install even if left until the building is complete, and is very easy to incorporate in the design of new buildings.



\* Further information on an 'induction loop' and similar infra-red systems are available from the Access Officer on 01142 734197



## LEGISLATION

### Introduction

if you are intending to undertake any work to a building or an area of land, or to change the use of land or buildings, you should ensure that you comply with the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Acts, and the Building Regulations. This leaflet describes the legislation and what requirements might be statutorily placed on you.

### A. TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING LEGISLATION

The context for the provision of access for disabled people in the environment is set by: the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act (1970 CSDPA), its Amendment Act (1976) and the Disabled Persons Act (1981) (DPA). Not only does this give the impetus to the Town and Country Planning Acts but it also stands alone. Circular 10/82 issued by the Department of the Environment, is also relevant.

The 1970 and 1976 Acts, while stating the aim that buildings should be accessible to the disabled, relied almost entirely on the good will of developers, as the scope for enforcement of the legislation was almost virtually non-existent and no local authority department was charged with responsibility for ensuring compliance with Acts. However, even within this vague situation much could be achieved by a local planning authority.

The 1981 Act, like its predecessor, a Private Members' Bill, received all-party support and changed that situation by inserting a new clause, 29A, into the Town and Country Planning Act

(1971) (now superseded by



Section 76 of the Town and Country Planning Act (1990) concerning access, thus bringing disabled access arrangements within the purview of planning authorities. The subsequent Circular (10/82) confirmed that in certain circumstances the provision of access could be a material consideration.

### Summary

In summary, the current position in law is as set out below:

- (i) Any person undertaking the provision of - any building to which the public are to be admitted must make the appropriate provision for the needs of disabled people visiting the building. This covers means of access to and within the building, parking facilities and sanitary arrangements (S4 of CSDPA 1970, S6 of DPA 1981).
- (ii) 'Provision' is not defined, but can be taken to include not only the new construction of, but also the conversion of buildings (paragraph 3.8, Circular 10/82).
- (iii) Provision should be made in places of education (including schools, colleges and universities), offices, shops, factories, railway premises and other places of employment summarised in (i) above, CSDPA 1970 as amended by the CSDPA (amendment) 1976.
- (iv) Access arrangements are a material consideration when a planning application is determined. (Town and Country Planning Act (1990) S76 and DPA (1981) S6).



For further information the following publications should be consulted:

**"General Specification for Roads to be Adopted as Public Highways"-April 1992, Design and Building Services, Sheffield City Council.**

**"Code of Practice and Guidance Notes for Establishment and Operation of Licensed Premises", 1992, Dept of Environmental Services and Standards.**

"Designing for the Disabled" by Selwyn Goldsmith RIBA Publications - 4th edition, 1 976

"British Standard Code of Practice for Access for the Disabled to Buildings" BS 5810, 1979. British Standards Institute, London 1979.

"Planning for the Disabled in the Urban Environment", Central Council for the Disabled, 1969.

"Housing for People who are Physically Handicapped", Circular 74174 - Department of the Environment.

"Providing for Disabled Visitors" - English Tourist Board, 1981.

"Providing for Visitors with Impaired Vision" English Tourist Board, 1981.

"Access in the High Street" - Centre on Environment for the Handicapped, 1981.

"Installing a Loop System" - Royal National Institution for the Deaf, 1977.

"Use of Dropped Kerbs and Tactile Surfaces at Pedestrian Crossing Points" -Department of Transport Disability Unit Circular, 1/91 1992.

These notes are issued for guidance only, any further information and advice may be obtained from the Access Officer, Planning, Transport and Highways, Howden House, 1 Union Street, Sheffield, S1 2SH.

Remember, even though you may comply with the standards shown in these notes you may also need to obtain approval, where appropriate, under the Planning Acts or Building Regulations. So please check.

