



Supplementary Planning Guidance

No.12 Access For All

Adopted by Flintshire
County Council on 17th
January 2017



Purpose

It is Flintshire County Council's intention to prepare and keep up to date a series of Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) Notes which will provide detailed guidance on a range of development issues and topics. The purposes of these Notes are:

- To assist the public and their agents in preparing planning proposals and to guide them in discussions with officers prior to the submission of planning applications,
- To guide officers in handling, and officers and councillors in deciding, planning applications, and
- To assist Inspectors in the determination of appeals

The overall aim is to improve the quality of new development and facilitate a consistent and transparent approach to decision making.

Planning policies: the Flintshire context

The Development Plan

Under planning legislation, the planning policies for each area should be set out formally in the Development Plan. Flintshire County Council, as the Local Planning Authority (LPA), has a legal duty to prepare and keep up to date a development plan for the County, and the Flintshire Unitary Development Plan was adopted in 2011. The UDP provides broad policies together with allocations of land for all the main uses such as housing, employment and retailing, and will help to shape the future of Flintshire in a physical and environmental sense as well as influencing it in economic and social terms. The Plan therefore seeks:

- To help the Council make rational and consistent decisions on planning applications by providing a policy framework consistent with national policy and
- To guide development to appropriate locations over the period up to 2015.

The need for Supplementary Planning Guidance

Despite the Plan containing policies with which the Council can make consistent and transparent decisions on development proposals, it cannot in itself give all the detailed advice needed by officers and prospective applicants to guide proposals at the local level, such as house extensions or conversions of agricultural buildings. The Council's intention is to prepare a range of Supplementary Planning Guidance notes (SPG) to support the UDP by providing more detailed guidance on a range of topics and issues to help the interpretation and implementation of the policies and proposals in the UDP. The review of the Local Planning Guidance Notes will be undertaken on a phased basis and details of the available SPG's can be found on the Council's website. Where there is a need to refer to another SPG this will be clearly referenced. These SPG Notes are freely available from Planning Services, Directorate of Environment, County Hall, Mold, Flintshire CH7 6NF (telephone 01352 703228), at the Planning Services reception at County Hall and can be downloaded from the Planning Web pages www.flintshire.gov.uk/planning

The status of Supplementary Planning Guidance

Supplementary planning guidance can be taken into account as a material consideration in the decision making process. The National Assembly will give substantial weight to SPG which derives out of and is consistent with the development plan. In accordance with National Assembly advice the Council's suite of SPG's has been the subject of public consultation and Council resolution. The draft of this SPG was approved for public consultation on 13.06.13 (Council Minute no.6). The SPG was the subject of a public consultation exercise between 18.12.15 and 12.02.16. No comments were submitted to the Council therefore this final draft was approved by the Council on 17.01.17 (Council Minute no.8) for use as a material consideration in determining planning applications and appeals. A summary of the representations and the Council's response is set out in Appendix 5.

This document should therefore be afforded considerable weight as a material planning consideration.

No. 12 Access For All

1 - Background

1.1 - One of the fundamental principles of sustainable development is that services and facilities should be accessible to all regardless of age, gender and infirmity. In land use planning, one aspect of this is the principle of 'Inclusive Design'. The built environment can contribute to a more equal, inclusive and cohesive society if the places where we live and the facilities we use outside of our homes are designed to be accessible and inclusive.

1.2 - **The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA)** was first introduced in 1995 (with amendments and extensions in 2001 and 2005) and gave disabled people important rights not to be discriminated against in a range of areas. (Details of the definition of disability in the DDA can be found in Appendix 1). This included accessing everyday goods and services like shops, cafes, banks, cinemas and places of worship, access to public bodies and community buildings, and in relation to motoring, and transport infrastructure, such as railway stations and airports. This act still holds relevance, but was replaced in 2010 by the Equality Act (DirectGov) **The DDA 2005 introduced a Disability Equality Duty (DED)** on all public authorities to positively promote equality and opportunity for disabled people in all the public functions they carry out, and that includes those undertaken when receiving, considering and processing all planning and building regulation applications. Consideration for people with disabilities and organisations is necessary at the design stage and should form part of the design strategy in all development proposals. In particular, where higher levels of pedestrian traffic or public use is anticipated, then full wheelchair access should be provided.

1.3 - Physical accessibility of our buildings and spaces has improved over the last decade in response to the DDA, but many buildings remain inaccessible. Responses to disabled peoples' needs all too often involve provision of separate or special facilities rather than an integrated planning and design approach. Retrospective actions or afterthoughts, to gain Building Control approval often arise at the end of a project rather than as part of early design consideration. Making special provision for disabled people, rather than integrating their needs with all other users, often results in unsatisfactory



solutions. If people with disabilities are to participate more in mainstream society, which is their human right, the way society is organised and the design of the environment must improve, removing externally imposed barriers and promoting social inclusion.

1.4 - Furthermore, there is now a growing awareness of the strong influence that the design of buildings and spaces can have on wider social, cultural and economic inequalities. The Equality Act 2006 places a statutory duty on all public authorities to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment, and specifically to promote equality between men and women (known as the Gender Equality Duty (GED)). This obliges planning authorities to take gender equality into consideration, recognising the different patterns of use of space. As well as disability and gender, discrimination may take place on the basis of issues such as race, age, religion, belief, or sexual orientation. The consideration of all of these issues in the design of buildings and spaces will result in a more sustainable, equal and accessible built environment for all members of society.

1.5 - Inclusive Design is about much more than making special adaptations or providing separate facilities for disabled people. It is about designing and managing places and spaces in a way that ensures that they work for as many people as possible, not just certain groups. It is about removing the frustration and obstacles experienced by many users, including older people, children and families. Buildings and spaces designed to be inclusive will be safe, predictable, convenient, flexible, adaptable, sustainable and legible and will be useable by all of us. They will allow people to maximise their own individual abilities, and enables them to have full, equal, confident, independent and safe participation in everyday activities. Inclusive Design encompasses where people live and the public buildings they use, such as health centres, education facilities and libraries; and how they get around – neighbourhoods, streets, parks and green spaces and transport.

1.6 - The principles of Inclusive Design adopted by WG are that it:

- places people at the heart of the design process
- acknowledges diversity and difference
- offers choice where a single design solution cannot accommodate all users
- provides for flexibility in use
- provides buildings and environments that are convenient and enjoyable to use for everyone.

1.7 - application discussions, assessment of the site, design of the development, and followed by construction, aftercare and maintenance details. Early consultation with the planning authority is recommended to discuss appropriate landscape treatment particularly of large sites, sites in open countryside or sites such as parks and gardens of historic interest, sites within conservation areas or which form the setting of listed buildings.



1.8 - Inclusive Design must be considered from the outset of a project; it should extend from inception, through the planning process, detailed design, construction, occupation, management and operation. Genuinely Inclusive Design cannot be treated simply as a building regulations issue, to be considered after planning permission has been granted. For example, an approach to a building that offers a choice of either steps or a separate ramp may address accessibility and comply with the DDA, but designing the site levels so as to create a level approach would be a more truly Inclusive Design.

Access Statements

1.9 - Since June 2007 there has been a requirement for most planning applications and applications for listed building consent in Wales to be accompanied by an Access Statement. Appendix 4 gives details of which types of applications are affected. The Statement must demonstrate the accessibility of the proposal and illustrate how adopting good principles of Inclusive Design have informed and guided the application. An Access Statement is a material consideration that must be given regard to by the Local Planning Authority's development management staff in the process of determining an application for planning permission or listed building consent.

1.10 - Access Statements should not be seen as another chore to undertake in association with other 'more important' things to do in the application process. They can be critical to the overall success of the finished product, not to mention the speed, efficiency and cost-effectiveness of the application process. They can also be invaluable for considering design decisions and potential implications early in the project, reducing considerably the likelihood of costly re-design or re-work as the project progresses. A detailed guidance document entitled "Design and Access Statements in Wales: Why, What and How" (2008) has been developed by the Design Commission for Wales (DCfW) to assist those involved in writing and submitting applications for planning permission or listed building consent in Wales. All applicants and developers are advised to consult this document at the earliest stages of a project.



Policy

1.11 - The relevant national planning policy context is established in the Welsh Government (WG) publication "Planning Policy Wales" (PPW) 2016 – section 3.3: 'Ensuring Access for All'. In para 3.3.3 of PPW the Welsh Government advise 'When a new building is being proposed, an existing building is being extended or altered, or a change of use is proposed, developers should consider the need to make it accessible for all those who might use the building. The appropriate design and layout of spaces in, between and around buildings, including parking provision and movement routes, is particularly important in ensuring good accessibility'. Fostering social inclusion by securing a more accessible environment for everyone is a key policy objective (PPW para 4.4.3). Ensuring that transport is accessible to all is another objective (para 8.1.5).



1.12 - The WG document “**Technical Advice Note 12: Design**” (2009) provides more guidance in section 5.3 entitled “Inclusive Design”, and the guidance in “**Technical Advice Note 18: Transport**” (2007) paras 5.1 to 5.3 is also relevant. The WG leaflet for Design and Access Statements (July 2009) can be used to aid in the writing of these, as a Design and Access Statement became mandatory in June 2009.

1.13 - Relevant planning policy content locally can be found in the **Flintshire Unitary Development Plan (UDP)**. **Policy GEN1 General Requirements for Development** provides a broad policy background against which schemes will be judged, with the following extract being relevant:

“Development that requires planning permission and is in accordance with the Plan’s other policies, should be located on land, or within suitable buildings, which satisfies the following requirements: ...

e. the development should provide, where appropriate, safe and convenient access for pedestrians, cyclists, persons with disabilities, and vehicles, together with adequate and suitably located parking spaces and servicing/manoeuvring space; ... [and] g. the development should have, where appropriate, convenient access to public transport, and wherever possible is well related to pedestrian and cycle routes.”



1.14 - **UDP Policy D1 Design Quality** requires a high standard of design in all developments, which of course means Inclusive Design: **“Development will be permitted only if the applicants have demonstrated it incorporates the best possible standards of design with regard to the type of development, characteristics of the building, site and surrounding landscape and townscape.”**

1.15 - **Applicants must include a short written explanation with their planning application illustrating the design principles adopted prior to the drawing up of their proposal. This will illustrate how the proposal will fit within the existing surrounding landscape and townscape and improve the speed of the decision making process.”**

Other policies of the UDP’s Design chapter are also relevant and **Policy AC1 Facilities for the Disabled** specifically provides that: **“Development proposals will be permitted only if appropriate facilities are provided to meet the special needs of people with disabilities.”**

Wider input by the Council

1.16 - This guidance note aims principally to provide suitable guidance in connection with planning applications and applications for listed building consent. For further advice at an early stage, intending applicants should contact the Development Management Section of Planning Services, in County Hall, Mold on 01352 703234. The Council's Conservation & Design Officer (telephone 01352 703215) in the Environment & Conservation section can give advice on issues around historic buildings and conservation areas.

- Approval under the Building Regulations will also be required for most developments. Part M (Access to and Use of Buildings of Schedule 1 to the Building Regulations 2000 specifies minimum standards. Further advice can be obtained from the Building Control Section, telephone 01352 703631. In summary, reasonable provision must be made for all people to gain access and use the building, regardless of disability, age and gender. The Regulations also specify fire precautions in a building.
- The Council is involved in the TAIH partnership, which published its "North Wales Regional Transport Plan" in September 2009.
- Flintshire County Council's Assistant Policy Officer, Access (internal telephone 2131) gives advice to Council officers regarding the Council's own developments.
- Flintshire Access (telephone 01352 755546) aims to improve accessibility for people with disabilities. It scrutinises planning applications to check for compliance, and carries out surveys in Flintshire checking for dropped kerbs and ramp access where applicable. The Flintshire Disability Forum (same telephone number) has a more general role to support all disabled people, and can provide advice on disability-related matters.

British Standard BS8300:2001

1.17 - "Planning Policy Wales" cross-references to this Standard, "**Code of Practice for design of buildings and their approaches to meet the needs of disabled people**" (2010), produced by the British Standards Institute. It gives comprehensive technical advice on the design of new buildings and their approaches to meet the needs of disabled people, including the design of car parking, access routes, entrances, horizontal and vertical circulation, surfaces and communication aids, and facilities for residential and non-residential buildings. The recommendations also apply for assessing the accessibility and usability of existing buildings and, where practicable, as a basis for their improvement. The extent to which the recommendations apply to listed and historic buildings is determined on a case by case basis. It should be an essential reference document for both designers and developers. BS8300 applies to the following types of buildings:

- Transport and industrial
- Health and welfare
- Religious
- Residential, including dwellings
- Administrative and commercial
- Catering, entertainment and recreational
- Educational, cultural and scientific

Buildings open to the public

1.18 - Public buildings, whether used for employment, educational or other purposes, should provide inclusive access suitable for all employees, customers or visitors. This involves suitable:

- Reserved extra-wide parking facilities with appropriate markings (see Appendix 3 and Local Planning Guidance Note (LPG) 11 Parking Standards)
- Approaches to, around and into buildings
- Fixtures and fittings
- Facilities, including provision for physical and sensory impaired groups

Historic buildings

1.19 - Providing suitable accessibility for all users in historic buildings can be difficult to achieve. It should not be done if this means unduly affecting the special character of the building, but normally any new extensions to such buildings should themselves be fully accessible. Further advice is contained in “Overcoming the Barriers” (Providing Physical Access to Historic Buildings)” by Cadw (2002), and information about listed buildings generally in Flintshire will be found in Local Planning Guidance Note (LPG) 6 Listed Buildings in this series.



Housing

1.20 - Mobility housing is ordinary housing built to a certain basic standard so that it can be easily adapted to be lived in by most people with disabilities, including those confined to a wheelchair, without structural alterations. This recognises that a house is not a static entity and that in the course of its life many people, perhaps the same people, will live in it differently. Mobility housing goes further than simply facilitating access because it is expected to enable occupants who have reducing mobility to ‘stay-put’ longer in their own homes.

Parking and traffic management

1.21 - Suitable provision for all users must be made in alterations to traffic schemes and in parking arrangements, with access routes for permit holders and public transport (buses and taxis) and suitable parking bays and setting down points. Dropped kerbs should be flush with the road surface.

1.22 - For all non-residential development, applicants should keep in mind the Council's requirements (see Appendix 3) as follows:

- Size, number and identification of reserved mobility standard parking spaces
- Convenience of spaces in relation to buildings
- Access to and from parking areas
- Level, smooth and even surfaces

General advice is available in **LPG 11 Parking Standards**.



Provision for pedestrians

1.23 - The aim should be to provide an accessible barrier-free environment for all users, including disabled people, older people, children and families, with suitably laid out and sized footways (at least 1.8 metres wide), appropriately positioned street furniture (with stable seats where waiting is likely), bins and lighting which do not obstruct footways, and level and even surfaces. Any proposal for pedestrianising streets should make provision for parking for Blue Badge Holders.

Inclusive design checklist

1.24 - For meeting the needs of all people to access public services, and taking into account the Disability Discrimination Act and other relevant legislation and good practice, the following recommendations apply:

- External signage with clear colour contrasts and symbols;
- Good outside lighting around car parks, bus stops, footways and entrances;
- Designated parking spaces with appropriate markings and signs at driver's head height;
- Flush dropped kerbs (gradient with a maximum ratio of 1:10) to level well-maintained paths with clear signs;
- Level entrances, or ramped where this is not possible (retrofit);
- Surfaces, both internal and external, should be firm, non-slip and well-laid;
- Changes in level should be defined by means of a colour contrast, textured surface, kerb or low rail;
- Handrails on both sides of steep ramps, stairs and steps, which continue 300mm beyond the steps;
- An automatic door opening device at the main entrance;

- External doors with a level threshold and a minimum clear opening width of 800mm, with easy to grip handles at relevant height;
- Internal signage with clear colour contrasts and symbols;
- Wheelchair and pushchair user friendly entrance doormat;
- Good lighting levels throughout the building;
- Sensible use of décor, for example with bold colours to pick out doors, light switches, handrails and stairs;
- Accessible reception desk/counter with low level area;
- Induction loop system at all reception points, training and meeting rooms;
- Fire alarms to include audio and visual information;
- Unisex accessible toilets with all fixtures and fittings and emergency pull cord;
- Baby changing facilities, where appropriate;
- Facilities at suitable heights, including IT, telephones, work surfaces, notice boards;
- Lifts to all floors with audio and Braille instructions, with fixtures and fittings at appropriate heights;
- An accessible level or ramped ground floor fire exit, with clear signage and evacuation procedure, safe refuge points for all upper floors and signage.

Appendices 2 and 3 give more detailed advice and guidance.

Specialist advice

1.25 - **The National Register of Access Consultants (NRAC)** is a resource for building owners, occupiers, developers or planners seeking advice on an inclusive environment. It helps them to select reputable consultants.

Appendix 1: The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and 2005

The definition of disability under the Act covers a much larger group of people than is commonly thought. It is fairly complex but in essence a person is regarded as disabled for the purposes of the Act if he or she has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to day activities. In this context, 'Physical impairment' includes sensory impairments; 'Mental impairment' includes learning difficulties and an impairment resulting from or consisting of a mental illness; 'Substantial' means 'more than minor or trivial'; and 'Long-term' is defined as 12 months or more. Some people are automatically covered by the definition: those with cancer, multiple sclerosis, HIV infection or a severe disfigurement. There are special provisions for people with progressive or recurring conditions.

The Act made it unlawful for employers (with over 15 staff) and providers of services to the public to discriminate against disabled people by treating them less favourably for a reason related to their disability, or by failing to comply with a duty to provide reasonable adjustments to the physical features of their premises to overcome physical barriers to access. In deciding what is reasonable, both the costs and the practicality of any adjustment and the financial resources of the employer or service provider would be considered.

In terms of the physical environment, the DDA does not in itself have any performance based requirements, nor does it offer advice on technical issues or specifications – therefore, it is not possible to have a 'DDA compliant' building or product. Designs may be to the latest good practice guidance, but it is how the environment is actually used in practice that may ultimately decide if duties imposed under the DDA are being met.

The DDA 2005 introduced a duty on all public bodies to promote equality of opportunity for disabled people. This means that they must take account of the needs of disabled people as an integral part of their policies, practices and procedures, and not as something separate or as a tag-on. They must have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination and disability-related harassment;
- promote equality of opportunity and positive attitudes to disabled people; and
- encourage disabled people to participate in public life.

These duties apply to anyone carrying out functions of a public nature. If a public body is perceived as failing to comply with these duties then anyone can apply to the High Court for judicial review.

Appendix 2: Recommended Inclusive Design specifications

Site layout and connectivity

- Convenient access, both into the site from its boundaries to all new or extended buildings, and within the site
- Pathways should be sufficiently wide, free from obstacles and have clearly defined edges
- Routes from roads, bus stops and car parks should be signposted and well lit
- Sufficient provision and suitable location of mobility parking spaces (see Appendix 3)
- Appropriate located and signed dropping-off point
- External areas including car parks should be generally firm, level, even and free from loose stones etc.
- Attention should be drawn to street furniture using colour contrast and tactile surfacing
- General building layout
- Main facilities should be at main entrance level
- Routes from entrances to reception desks, lifts, stairs and toilets should be clearly defined and unobstructed
- Seating should be provided where waiting is likely, and should be fixed
- Public telephones, counters and checkouts should be accessible and usable by all, for example with lower wheelchair accessible counters

Entrances, doors and lobbies

- Automatic doors
- Canopies at non-powered doors
- Entrance doors to be clearly distinguished (by colour or details)
- Door closers adjusted to need minimum force
- Entrance lobbies light and spacious
- Space for wheelchair and pushchair users at waiting areas
- Flush thresholds
- Double doors each to have opening minimum of 800mm external and 750mm internal
- Single doors to have a minimum clear opening width of 800mm, with 830mm preferred
- Avoid use of revolving and heavy doors
- Glazed doors should be easily distinguishable
- Vision panel to give minimum visible zone of 900mm from floor level
- Door handles should be easy to grip and not cold to the touch

Corridors

- Width without passing bays 1.8 metres, with passing bays 1.5 metres
- Unobstructed space for approaching doors
- Splayed or rounded corners
- Where narrow or L-shaped, wheelchair turning circle of 1.5 metres diameter
- Recessed appliances and fittings
- Deep pile carpets and slippery tiles should be avoided

External ramps

In new developments, site levels should be designed to provide level access wherever possible. Where this is not possible, for example on steeply sloping sites, or when adapting existing buildings with steps, ramps will be necessary to enable wheelchair and pushchair users to overcome changes of level. Steps should also be provided for those who wish to use them (see below).

- Gradients: 1:20 is considered level and preferred; 1:15 is the maximum on ramps up to 10 metres long; 1:12 the maximum up to 5 metres long
 - Length: 5-10 metres for a 1:15 to 1:20 gradient; less for a 1:12 to 1:15 gradient
 - Width: 1.8 metres preferred; 1.2 metres minimum (1 metre unobstructed)
 - Level platform 1.8 metres long at the beginning and end of the ramp
 - On long ramps, a level platform of 1.5 metres minimum length at 10 metre intervals
 - Non-slip surface that is easy to maintain
 - Alignment of slopes straight, with turns on level landings
 - Landings level, clear of any door swing
 - Sides to have a raised kerb 100mm high where edges are open
 - Handrails for ramps over 2 metres long: two levels, both sides, continuous; top of upper handrails 900mm above ramp surface and 1 metre above landing surface; top of lower handrails 650mm above ramp surface and 750mm above landing surface; to extend 300-450mm beyond top/bottom of ramp with a closed end.
- Ramps are essential to enable wheelchair users and people with pushchairs to overcome level changes, but should be accompanied by steps for ambulant disabled people where steeper than 1:20.
 - In Part M of the Building Regulations, a gradient of 1:20 is considered level, 1:15 is adequate and 1:12 is the absolute maximum. The preferred gradient is 1:15 or less. The steeper the ramp, the shorter the length between level landings (see Figures 9 and 11).
 - Ensure 1000mm min clear width (see Figure 10).
 - Handrails: 45-50mm max outside diameter, to each side, continuous to ramps and landings (see diagram on p 16).
 - Handrails should be provided and formed from materials that are not cold to the touch, for example hardwood or nylon-coated steel.
 - The handrail should be easily distinguishable from its background for the benefit of people with sight impairments.
 - Avoid patterning which simulates steps, such as applied or inserted slip-resistant strips.
 - Surface materials should be slip-resistant, firmly fixed and easy to maintain.
 - In existing buildings where an extreme level change would require a long, circuitous ramp or where space is limited, a short-rise lift may be appropriate (see p 26 Platform lifts).
 - It is not recommended to use corduroy tactile warnings to indicate ramps or lift, as these are properly used to indicate the start of a flight of steps or stairs.

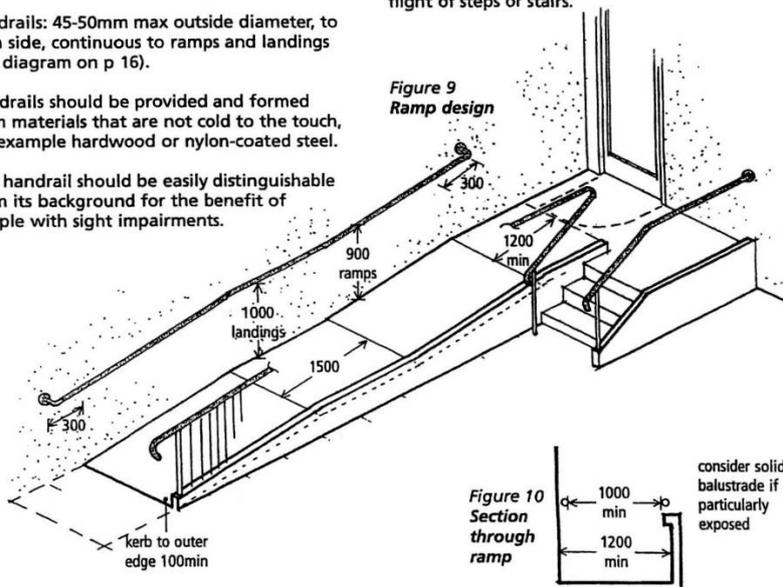


Figure 1 External Ramp

External Ramps

- Recommended gradients 1:20 or 1:15 (only use 1:12 where it is not practicable to use preferred gradients)

Handrails

These must be securely fixed, and to help visually impaired people they should contrast strongly with their surroundings. See also under 'External ramps'.

- Minimum 45mm from side wall/obstacles
- 50mm above bracket
- Easy to grasp; avoid hard metal surfaces externally because of temperature change

Toilets

They must be accessible, and dimensions within must be appropriate for independent use.

- Separate unisex toilet with minimum area of 1.5 metres x 2 metres
- Externally opening or sliding door with minimum width of 1 metre
- Emergency bell/alarm system including reset button
- Non-slip floor surface
- Unobstructed space of 750mm minimum alongside toilet for manoeuvring (from wall to edge of toilet pan)
- Colour contrasts between walls, main features, equipment and controls
- Located to provide the shortest, most direct route
- Provision at ground level and/or at the same level as other key facilities (entrances, receptions, waiting areas, refreshment facilities)
- Appropriate signing, with "disabled toilet" meaning one out of action and "accessible toilet" available for use by disabled people
- No baby feeding in toilets, for hygiene reasons

Lifts

- Minimum internal measurement of 1.1 metres wide by 1.4 metres deep
- Doors to have clear opening of 800mm minimum
- Controls halfway along side wall at 1.2 metres maximum height to the top button, with embossed digits desirable
- Braille and audio instructions regarding use of lift
- Adequate circulation space to lift door (approximately 1.5 metres turning circle or unobstructed space)

Steps

As outlined above, level access should be provided to building entrances as far as possible. When steps are provided, the following recommendations apply.

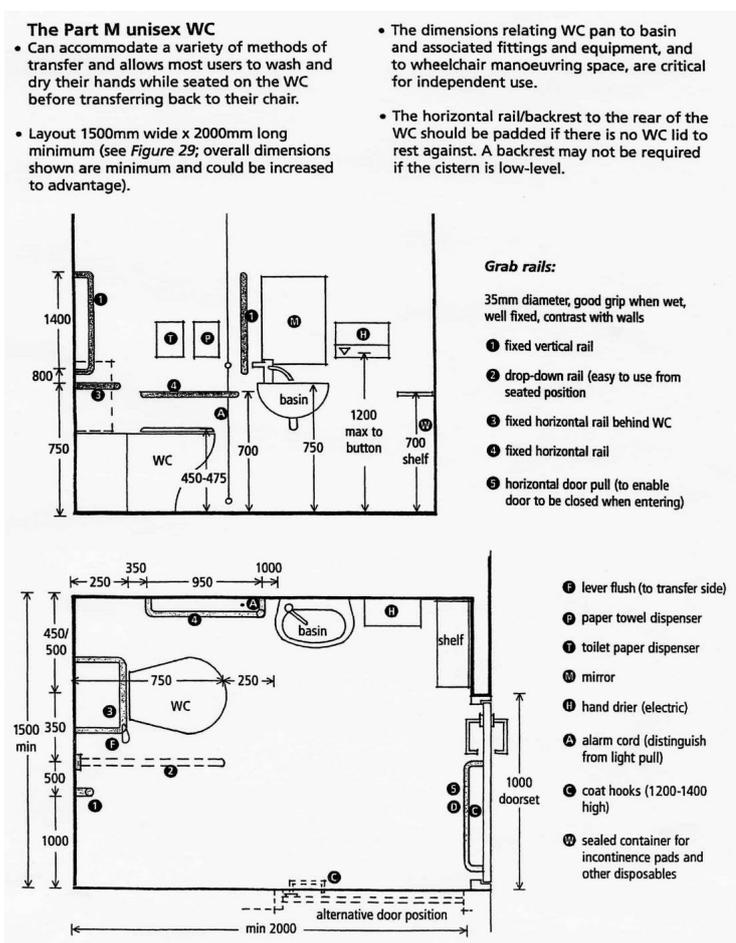
- Straight flights are easier to negotiate than curves or dog-legs
- Width 1.2 metres minimum, preferably 1.8 metres
- Goings of stairs minimum 280mm, risers a maximum 150mm
- Edges clearly defined
- Approaches clearly indicated

- Hard-wearing and non-slip materials
- Lighting should be provided to ensure that people do not have to negotiate steps in their own shadow

Signposting

- Information should be clear and unambiguous
- Sited at convenient heights Those low enough to be touched should incorporate Braille
- Letters, numbers and pictograms should contrast in colour and tone with the background of the sign
- Signs should be strongly contrasted in colour from the wall.
- Embossed letters, raised pictograms and direction arrows are helpful
- Written text should be in a mixture of upper and lower case letters
- Ensure there are no gaps in signage along the route to a facility

Figure 2 WC's



Appendix 3: Car parking requirements for people with specific requirements

Details of the Council's parking standards are set out in Local Planning Guidance Note 11, which expects 10% of all car parking spaces to be provided to 'mobility standard' (minimum width 3.6 metres) to meet the needs of people with mobility difficulties or of parents with young children. No less than 60% of these 'mobility standard' spaces are to be signed as being for the exclusive use of disabled people. The design of 'parent and child' parking bays should be based on the layout for disabled parking bays, to allow easy access for prams and pushchairs.

Off-street parking:

- Provide larger parking bays which enable people with reduced mobility or with young children to get in and out of their vehicles with the minimum of effort, wide enough for car doors to be fully opened and long enough for tail loading.
- Sign these mobility standard bays clearly from the car park entrance.
- Site these bays close to the entrances, within 50metres if uncovered and 100metres if covered.
- Identify these bays as being provided for disabled people or 'parent and child' only, as appropriate.
- Kerbs should be dropped between the parking area and footways to buildings for wheelchair or pushchair users.
- Pedestrian routes should be level.
- The car park surface should be smooth and even.

Figure 3 Off-street Parking

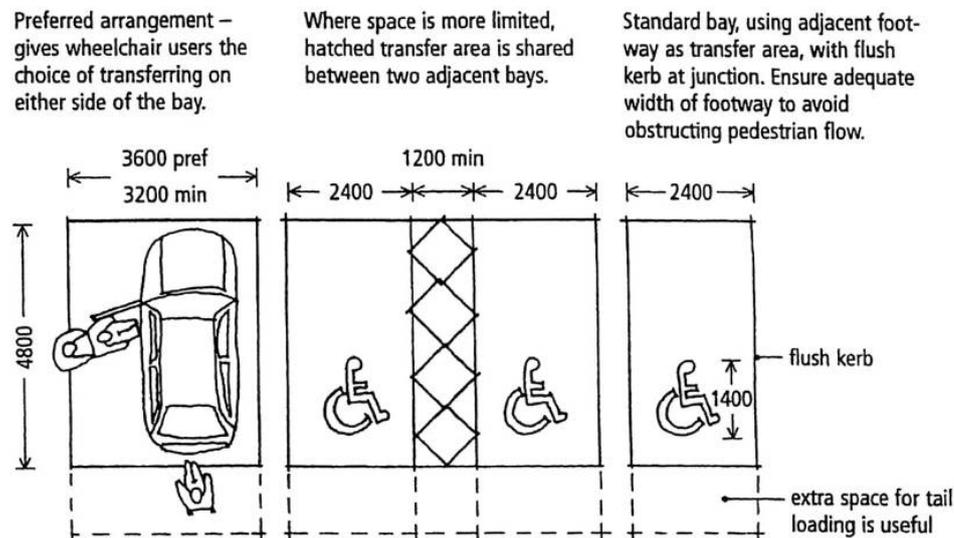
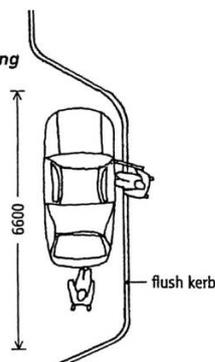


Figure 1 Accessible off-street parking bays

Figure 4 On-street Parking

Figure 2
On-street parking



Minimum recommended number of bays in off-street car parks		
Car park used for:	Car park size:	
	Up to 200 bays	Over 200 bays
Employees and visitors to business premises	Individual bays for each disabled employee plus 2 bays or 3% of total capacity, whichever is greater	6 bays plus 2% of total capacity
Shopping, recreation and leisure	3 bays or 6% of capacity whichever is greater	4 bays plus 4% of total capacity

(source: Reducing Mobility Handicaps, Institution of Highways and Transportation)

- Larger parking bays are required to allow people with reduced mobility to get into and out of their cars with the minimum of difficulty (see Figure 1).
- The location of accessible bays should be clearly signposted from the car park entrance.
- Bays should be identified as provision for disabled drivers or passengers only.
- Bays should be close to the entrances to the facilities the car park serves – within 50m if uncovered, 100m if covered.
- Bays need to be wide enough for car doors to be fully opened to allow disabled drivers and passengers to transfer to a wheelchair parked alongside and long enough to allow space for tail loading.
- Kerbs between the parking area and routes to buildings should be dropped to give access to wheelchair users.
- The car park surface should be smooth and even and free from loose stones.
- Layout of on-street parking bays is shown in Figure 2.
- All pedestrian routes within the car park should be level.

Grateful acknowledgement to Denbighshire County Council for figures 1 – 4

Appendix 4: Requirements for Access Statements

When is an Access Statement required?

Access Statements are required by legislation to accompany all planning applications (outline and full) except for:

- engineering or mineral operations;
- householder development (i.e. development of an existing dwelling house, or development within the curtilage for any purpose incidental to its enjoyment) (N.B. all new dwellings will require an Access Statement);
- material change in use of land or buildings provided that this will not necessitate access by an employee, or provision of services (including goods or facilities) to the public, such as change of use from public land to private garden. (In other words, a material change of use where there will be employee and/or public access will require an Access Statement).

An Access Statement is required by legislation to accompany all applications for listed building consent, except for applications for interior works.

Access statements are not required for applications relating to advertisement control, tree preservation orders or storage of hazardous substances. (These are not developments requiring planning permission as defined by section 55 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.)

An application for reserved matters is not an application for planning permission and, as such, an Access Statement is not a statutory requirement. However, it is good practice for an application for reserved matters to be accompanied by a 'progress statement' updating what changes, if any, have occurred since the original Access Statement was submitted at outline stage. Conditions may be applied to outline permissions requiring the submission of such statements.

Broad content of an Access Statement

Applicants and designers are advised to consult “**Planning and Inclusive Design (Access Statements): Final Interim Guidance**” by the Welsh Assembly Government (2007) and “**Design and Access Statements in Wales**” by the Design Commission for Wales (DCfW) (2008), which contain much more detailed advice as well as comprehensive bibliographies. The following is a summary of the advice contained within these two documents.

Essentially, the Statement should show **how the proposal addresses the principles of Inclusive Design** whilst responding to the existing topography of a site or, in an existing building, constraints caused by the fabric. **Clear illustrations** of how access to the site, the design of circulation routes around the site and between buildings, the materials used to form them, and the siting of buildings have been considered must be given. The length of the Statement will vary between projects.

Applications for **planning permission** or for **listed building consent** should:

1. Explain
 - the policy or approach to inclusive design, and
 - how any policies relating to inclusive design in the statutory development plan and relevant local design guidance have been taken into account.
2. Explain how any specific issues which might affect people's access to the development have been addressed.
3. Detail how features which ensure people's access to the development will be maintained.

In addition, applications for **listed building consent** should also:

1. Include a brief explanation of how the approach to inclusive design takes account of:
 - WO Circular 61/96 (Planning and the Historic Environment: Historic Buildings and Conservation Areas), and
 - BS 7913:1998 – the Principles of the Conservation of Historic Buildings.
2. In particular, a statement should include a brief explanation of how the policy or approach to inclusive design takes account of:
 - the special architectural or historic importance of the building;
 - the particular physical features of the building (including its architectural and/or historical significance) that justify its designation as a listed building;
 - the building's setting; and
 - the range of access solutions considered and reasons why the chosen solution is the best, both for improving access and for respecting the historic character of the listed building.