

## FOREWORD

As the County Borough's Equalities Champion, I am delighted and proud to give my personal commitment to our Disability Equality Scheme.

The Council has made progress towards mainstreaming the promotion of equality and the management of diversity into all policies, functions and service delivery.

It is a key aim of the Council to ensure that all our services and employment opportunities are available in a fair, equal and accessible way to everyone.

The Disability Equality Scheme provides a framework for action that will enable us to meet our moral and legal obligations. Wherever possible, we will work towards going further than the requirements of legislation in order to ensure the promotion of equality.

We will strive to eliminate individual and institutional discrimination.

With 1 in 4 people in Merthyr Tydfil having limiting long-term illness, levels of arthritis double of those in Monmouth, Conwy and Gwynedd, and physical health scores and mental health scores worse than average, we recognise that we cannot do this alone and so will make every effort to work closely with all our disabled population and other relevant partners in striving to achieve the actions detailed in the Disability Equality Scheme, we will regularly evaluate and review the actions so as to positively address issues as they arise. We are already making progress in doing so with the development of the Disability Advisory Group (DAG).

Cllr. Jeff Edwards  
Equalities Champion & Cabinet Portfolio Member  
For Corporate Centre

## INTRODUCTION

In 2004, the County Borough of Merthyr Tydfil produced its Community Strategy entitled 2020 that is designed to be the single, over-arching borough-wide strategy that will involve many key partners. It is designed to be a unifying point of reference for local communities who are developing their own community plans.

There are a number of themes that guide the Strategy culminating in a key message: *We all want to live in a better world*

Perhaps the most important of these themes is *People Power & Community Empowerment*. This is about social justice, about individual and social responsibility. Communities need to be developed, by helping people to become empowered, so that they may be more discerning and assertive about their community's needs. It is about becoming better informed and connected in order to bring about change.

The promotion of Equality is implicit in the Council's vision, *By 2010 Merthyr Tydfil will be a safe healthy and exciting place to live and visit. Our ambition is to become a sustainable, confident County Borough which recognises and promotes equality of opportunity and where people want to achieve in all aspects of their life, through work, leisure and learning.* The Council has been active in progressing its Equalities agenda.

Equalities Awareness raising sessions were held with Councillors, Directors, Heads of Service and key officers of the Authority.

From this exercise has come the commitment to progress through the five levels of the Equality Standard for Local Government.

The Equality Standard recognises the importance of fair and equal treatment in local government services and employment and has been developed as a tool to enable Authorities to mainstream race, the Welsh language, gender and disability, religion or belief, age and sexual orientation into Council policy and practice at all levels.

The Standard is a means to combat the institutional processes that lead to discrimination and which form part of the culture and administration and governance in Britain. Current assumptions and practices can set up barriers

that prevent access and discriminate against people. The common approach is important because it means the same framework can be used for addressing all disadvantaged groups. However, this should not lead to the view that race, the Welsh language, gender and disability religion or faith, age and sexual orientation can be dealt with as a single issue . the barriers will vary and each strand requires separate treatment.

In 2002, The Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) introduced the Wales Programme for Improvement (WPI) as a framework for public services in Wales. Its introduction places Continuous Improvement and Best Value at the heart of the process where the key feature requires the public bodies to:

Take action to promote equality of opportunity and access for all people, regardless of their gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, age, religion/belief or language preference+

To support this approach, WAG has encouraged local authorities to work to the Equality Standard for Local Government (ESLG). The ESLG is about developing a comprehensive framework that mainstreams equality into service delivery and employment, across all policies and functions. The Council's response to making progress has required each and every department to undertake an Impact Assessment exercise over the last two years.

With five levels to the Standard, the Council is aiming to achieve Level 5 by 2008. It has currently been assessed at Level 3.

The foundation for this progress is the adoption of a Corporate Equalities Plan that the Council did last year when it undertook the following processes:

- 1 Impact/Needs Assessment
- 2 Systematic consultation (still requiring some work)
- 3 Progress monitoring (in development)
- 4 The identification of Equality Champions
- 5 All supported by commitment & resources

This process has greatly assisted the production of this Disability Equality Scheme.

It is Merthyr Council's aim to ensure that all our services and employment opportunities are available in a fair, equal and accessible way to everyone.

Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council (called the Council in this Scheme) was formed on 1 April 1996 following re-organisation of Local Government in Wales. The County Borough comprises an area of 11,054 hectares and has a population of approximately 56,995. Within this population approximately 6,900 people were claiming Disability Living Allowance in August 2004. This is 12.5% of the population. However, from Social Services Statistics Wales 2002-03, there were 428 people identified as Sensory Disabled (0.8% of the Total Population), 37.3% of the 2001 Population had a limiting Long-Term Illness (2001 Census) and in 1998, 13.3% of the population had an eyesight difficulty and 19.4% had hearing difficulties. These latter two compare with 8% and 12.7% respectively for Wales as a whole. In addition, 4,761 people had disabled vehicle badges in 2003 (8.6% of the total population) and 2,015 people who were physically or sensory disabled were receiving MTCBC services in 2003 (3.6% of the population). In addition again, 225 people were registered with learning disabilities in 2003 (0.4% of the population).

The Housing division have adapted 167 properties throughout the Borough since 2002 to make them more accessible. Adaptation works vary from level access showers, ramps, stairlifts to conversions of rooms i.e. store room to shower room. There are also 45 Accessible houses (bungalows) as part of the Council's stock. The Council also works in partnership with the local housing association to improve the provision of accessible housing in Merthyr.

There are a number of pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) throughout the Schools in the Borough:

The Number of pupils with a statement of SEN in mainstream schools maintained by the authority in 2003 . 2004 was 30.

The Number of pupils with a statement of SEN either in a special class or receiving specialist resource provision at mainstream schools maintained by the authority in 2004 . 2005 was 39.

The number of pupils with a statement of SEN in special schools maintained by the authority in 2004 . 2005 was 124.

The HR & Development department have made several attempts at achieving a complete staff profile. To date 64% of the staff have returned the equal opportunities monitoring form with 1.9% of the staff returning the form identifying themselves as having a disability.

### Promoting Disability Equality Duty in Merthyr;

Under the Act, disability is defined as ~~a~~ A person has a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

The aim of this Equality Scheme is to facilitate the removal of barriers for disabled people. This includes all people who may not automatically define themselves as disabled but who nevertheless face discrimination their everyday life because of their impairment.

### Multiple discrimination

The Council recognises that discrimination and disadvantage are compounded for many disabled people because they are female, older or from ME communities, or who may be gay, lesbian bisexual or transgender. The diversity of disabled people's experiences is valued and acknowledged and reflected within this Scheme. We aim to ensure that their concerns and the specific problems with discrimination that they face are fully addressed in the DES.

The Medical and Social Models of disability are different ways of approaching how we think about and act towards disabled people. Most of us see disabled people as having medical problems that need to be cured if possible. The dominant idea is that disabled people's lives are restricted by their "impairment" and that medical professionals are important people in their lives. This way of thinking is named (in a critical way), as the "Medical Model of disability". The "Social Model of disability" created by disabled people themselves, is a challenge to this. It describes "disability" not as a medical issue but as one where disabled people face daily barriers in society, for example, in the way we design and build our towns and cities, the way we organise our social activities and in the attitudes that we perpetuate, which favour non-disabled people over disabled people.

People influenced by the Medical Model see disabled people as pitiful, tragic and

needing medical treatment. If a cure is impossible, then they believe society ought to care for disabled people, generally in residential institutions and hospitals. This way of thinking is criticised for disempowering disabled people. They are seen as "the problem", having problems and experts are seen as in the best position to determine whether they live or die, have treatment or not and how and where they spend their lives.

This ideology pervades most societies and is evident in the way we think about disabled people, behave toward them and how we fail to allow them access to education, leisure, work and relationships.

People who are influenced by the Social Model believe disabled people face discrimination daily. Their skills and attributes are overlooked, their potential is limited by prejudice and they are excluded by society.

The Social Model identifies the barriers, behaviours and attitudes that cause problems for disabled people. Disabled people are empowered by the Social Model because it helps them to recognise and overcome the barriers of society.

Merthyr Tydfil CBC is totally committed to the Social model of disability.

Merthyr's approach

The Council appointed Councillor Jeff Edwards as its Equalities Champion as there was a need for such a post to tackle the subject of equalities from a political viewpoint. Councillor Jeff Edwards agreed to the verbal contract in September 2003 and has been very active in his role.

As well as a dedicated political Equalities Champion, Merthyr has a number of dedicated Officers to drive forward this agenda. There are Officers in Estates who are leading on making our buildings accessible. A Disability team based within integrated adults and children's services. The Communications team is leading on corporate standards to make information more accessible, and a Equalities officer with overall corporate responsibility for driving the agenda forward.

Although we have these dedicated officers in place, it is everyone's responsibility to take on board the requirements of the DDA.

Involving service users

The Council has involved its service users in the development of this Scheme. It has held a number of open forums with disabled people at various venues throughout the County Borough. See Appendix 1. Throughout the consultation process for this Disability Equality Scheme (DES) the Council engaged with people with various and multiple disabilities to gain an insight as to what minor and major adjustments would significantly improve their daily activities. From these open sessions the Council have gone on to form focus groups. It is our intention to use these groups to monitor in partnership with the Council how it delivers on the DES and will become a part of the planning process.

The Council, following these sessions, will ensure that customers have access to all information regarding news, policies etc. It will in partnership with the communications team take onboard that people require information in many formats. Further developing corporate standards will meet the need of all customers.

All departments are able to provide information in accessible formats required by individuals e.g. Large print, Braille, audio etc. Staff in some departments are also able to communicate via British Sign Language (BSL).

## Disability Equality Duty (DED)

### General Duty

The DED is an important duty aimed at promoting DE across the public sector. The Act imposes a general duty on Public authorities to have due regard to the need to

- 1 Promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons;
- 2 Eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Act;
- 3 Eliminate harassment of disabled persons that is related to their disabilities;
- 4 Promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons;
- 5 Encourage participation by disabled persons in public life and to take steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons.

### Specific Duty

Sets out the framework that will assist Authorities in meeting their General Duty. These duties ensure publication of a DES including an Action Plan involving disabled people in producing a Scheme and action plan, demonstrate they have taken actions in the Scheme and achieve appropriate outcomes, reporting on progress, reviewing and revising the Scheme.

How Merthyr is developing its Scheme;

In developing the Scheme we have made every effort to engage a wider section of our population as possible. Disability groups associated with Integrated Adults Services and Integrated Children's Services, individuals, orgs etc.

Strategic aims

- 1 Ensure successful delivery of the access strategy
- 2 Ensure all the issues raised in the consultation process are addressed
- 3 Work in partnership with MADF and the Council's disability advisory group to ensure that we meet all aspects of the general and specific duties.
- 4 Further promote the social model of disability.

Making the DES work;

Using our strategic aims as a framework we want to ensure real outcomes and tangible improvements for disabled people in Merthyr.

How?

We will achieve this by conducting regular and robust impact assessments as policies and functions are reviewed, renewed and developed by working closely with the Disability Advisory group. Via close joint working by the DAG and Equalities Officer meeting a minimum of four times a year to monitor progress of the DES, the Council will continue to develop and improve its service delivery, progress and problems will be reported back to Councillors and Directors at the QBR's. See Appendix 2.

By promoting further positive action strategies to encourage disabled people in to work by providing work experience opportunities and work in partnership with Job Centre Plus on the Want to Work Scheme.

What are we doing?

## Current Good Practice . Council Wide

The Council has achieved the Positive About Disability Scheme and ensure the use of the guaranteed interview commitment as part of the recruitment and selection process

All departments are able to provide information in a range of formats

A number of departments have staff who are BSL proficient

The Council has an overarching Access Strategy with individual departmental action plans

## Integrated Adult Services

### Service User Development Groups:

- 1 Older Persons
- 2 Disability
- 3 Mental Health
- 4 Carers

## Major Consultation exercise on Health, Social Care & Well being Strategy

All information provided in a range of formats e.g. Braille, in large print and audio tape and is available at a wide range of outlets including local libraries, hospitals, G.P. surgeries, all Council offices, all voluntary sector organisations

All services are accessible and include type-talk, loop systems, minicom and a number of staff who are BSL proficient

Work is underway in partnership with All Wales Officers Group to raise awareness amongst customers with Learning Difficulties of the Complaints procedure

Work is underway to engage more young people and other underrepresented groups in the service planning and performance processes

## Integrated Children's Services

Child Health & Disability Team members all BSL proficient

All services are accessible and include type-talk and mini-com

Service user groups are an integral part of the planning process

An Accessibility Briefing & Guidance booklet is being developed

## Library Services

Library staff have undertaken training in serving customers with specific needs

Improvement has been made to Braille signing, promotion of stock, service specific activities and general access

## Customer Community Services

### Leisure

Improved accessible parking and automatic doors on Rhydycar and Aberfan leisure facilities

Integrated access shower facilities in Aberfan

In-pool gym facilities available at Aberfan

Integrated Fitness Initiative (IFI) accredited Fitness Equipment at Rhydycar

Induction Loop system at Aberfan

Accessible showering facilities at Dolygaer Outdoor Pursuits Centre

Ease of access for all is ensured at all major events including provision of specific transport to sites

## Development of Access and Integration Strategy

## Employment of a Disability Sport Development Officer (DSDO)

All holiday play-Schemes off a fully integrated service to children with specific needs

Liason with Sandbrook Day Centre and Comfort House to provide a twice-weekly programme of activity

Liason with Greenfield School to provide regular sporting and swimming activity programme

Liason with DSDO and British Para Olympic Team to provide a year's free training for a local athlete in the British Team, as part of their Elite Athlete programme

Liason with Merthyr School of Dance to encourage more children with Learning Disabilities to participate

## Museums

Upgraded physical access, improved signage and website upgraded

Induction loop system at reception

Access and Outreach project underway

What are the issues in Merthyr?

From the Consultation process there are 4 key areas;

- 1 Transport
- 2 Access . Health and Consumer premises
- 3 Attitudes
- 4 Children's respite

Many of those who took part in the Consultation process said that they did not want their life to be dictated by public transport. They wanted accessible transport to be readily available to suit them in how they chose to live their life.

At the moment, the DDA covers public transport services (e.g. access to stations and ticket facilities), but not public transport vehicles. However, new regulations

are creating standards that must be met by all new vehicles. These ensure that new public service vehicles, rail vehicles and newly licensed taxis have to be accessible to disabled people. The regulations also state that disabled people must be able to travel in safety and reasonable comfort. Facilities for people with, for example, impaired vision and mobility difficulties must be provided. The dates of the introduction of these duties vary according to the type of vehicle:

- Taxis: all new taxis should now be made accessible. All vehicles should meet the requirements by the year 2012.
- Buses and coaches: all new single-decker buses should now be accessible. All double-decker buses should now also be accessible. All vehicles will have to comply with the regulations at a later date.

Rail vehicles: all new rail vehicles that have come into service after 31 December 1998 will have to comply with the regulations.

The Council has 84 Accessible parking bays situated throughout the Borough and a number of these are specifically for wheelchair users only.

All those who attended the consultation sessions spoke of how inaccessible some Health surgeries were. Many experienced difficulties in and around the local shopping areas.

The Council in partnership with the Multi Agency Diversity Forum and the Town Centre Partnership will work together to overcome these obstacles.

People's attitudes were also a factor in the consultation sessions. Many felt they were ignored, dismissed and made to feel inferior. The group and the Council feel that education is a factor in this and it was agreed that an awareness raising campaign should be run throughout the schools in the Borough.

Children's respite was also something that caused individuals and carers problems. It is the Council's intention to look into how we can develop these services and improve support to parents, guardians and carers of those young persons with disabilities.

## Action plan 2006-2007

Merthyr Tydfil CBC . Disability Equality Scheme . 2006-2009			
Objective	Action	Target	Timescale
Monitoring			
Scheme	Quarterly meetings with the DAG	Assess progress on the strategic aims.	Quarterly
Staff	Update staff profile	100% response rate	February 2007 . November 2007
Service users	To identify and address any service issues	Improve customer satisfaction	Annually
Access strategy	Monitor improvements	An accessible Merthyr	Quarterly
Consultation			
Continue to engage and extend membership of the DAG	Quarterly meetings and regular access to the Equalities Officer	Maintain, support and develop the DAG	Quarterly.
Regularly engage with the wider disabled population, their carers and other support organisations.	Promote participation in developing the Scheme	Improved understanding and communication of wider population.	Quarterly.

Merthyr Tydfil CBC . Disability Equality Scheme . 2006-2009			
Objective	Action	Target	Timescale
Awareness raising			
Staff Training	Develop and roll out an e-learning package	All staff	April 2007-December 2009
Launch of DES	Awareness raising events across the County Borough	Staff and Merthyr Communities	December 2006-March 2007 (planning). April 2007 . Launch
Town Centre Campaign	Address access issues in all retail and market outlets	Accessible shopping for all	January 2007 pending annual review
Campaign via the Multi Agency Diversity Forum (MADF)	To highlight and address access issues raised in the consultation with partnership organisations such as Health	Accessible facilities for all	Annually

N.B. As this is an organic plan that involves disabled people throughout the County Borough of Merthyr Tydfil, we will be working on a year to year basis.

## **Appendix 1**

We would like to invite disabled people, to an open forum to discuss:

“Physical Barriers

“Access to information

Thursday 9th November

3 sessions:

- 10.30 . 12 at the Integrated Children's Centre, Pentrebach
- 3.30 . 5 at Aberfan Community Centre
- 6.30 . 8 at the Bessemer Hotel, Dowlais

Monday 20th November

1 session:

- 1pm . 2.30pm at Rhydycar Leisure Centre

For more information, and to book your place;

Tel: 01685 725076 or e-mail: [consultation@merthyr.gov.uk](mailto:consultation@merthyr.gov.uk)

As well as these open sessions the Council held one to one consultation session over the telephone.

## **Appendix 2**

### **QBR's (Quarterly Business Reviews)**

Quarterly Business Reviews (QBR's) is a performance management tool that has been introduced to monitor the progress and performance of all Service Areas across the Authority on a regular (quarterly) basis.

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## Appendix 3

### MERTHYR TYDFIL COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

#### Access Policy

As a Council we are committed to adopt policies and practices which address the discrimination experienced by Disabled people and we are working to ensure that wherever possible our existing buildings are gradually made accessible.

To achieve this objective we have produced the following strategy which forms the basis of our Access Policy and which sets out how we define accessibility and the process by which we expect to achieve practical measures for improving access

This Policy has been produced after consultation and agreement with our Accessibility Group and should provide clarity not just on technical specifications but also on the process of achieving access improvements both on new build and refurbishment projects. Proper implementation of the Policy should allow us to establish best practice in inclusive design which immediately benefits Disabled people and also improves access for all, in the wider context of service delivery which is at the core of current legislation and our own values as a customer facing organisation.

All Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council new build, building refurbishment or access improvement works should comply with this policy. We also recommend the use of the policy as a guide in regeneration projects and by agencies and organisations which are funded, supported or licensed by the Council.

#### Disability Discrimination Act 1995

The Disability Discrimination Act requires employers and service providers to make reasonable adjustments to provide disabled people access to services and employment. Under this Act it is unlawful to offer a Disabled person a service which is not as good as the service offered to a non-disabled person. Service providers are required to remove physical obstructions which make their services inaccessible to Disabled people. They must also provide equipment, such as induction loops, which make it possible for Disabled people to access their service.

## **Disability.**

The Council subscribes to the following definitions of disability

A Disabled person is someone who experiences discrimination on the grounds of physical or sensory impairment, learning difficulty, emotional or mental distress.

Disability is not caused by an individual's particular impairment but the way in which Society fails to meet their needs

The Council also recognises that people are disabled by a broad range of barriers which exist in Society and that the causes can be informational, organisational, environmental and attitudinal.

### **Access**

Access is commonly perceived as a physical problem relating to an entry or way in. More importantly for Disabled people access represents the right of all people, Disabled and non-disabled, to use all facilities and services provided by the Council without discrimination. Good access entails removing barriers which prevent the full and equal participation of all Disabled people in Society, and is fundamental to social inclusion.

Good access benefits not only those groups who have identified themselves as Disabled but also other groups such as older people, parents and carers with pushchairs and those who are temporarily unwell.

Access is no longer concerned only with the removal of physical barriers, which may restrict movement, but includes consideration of other factors such as lighting, acoustics, colour contrast and signage to help provide a friendly and welcoming environment.

### **Process**

In response to its duties and responsibilities the Council has commissioned a full professional DDA Audit of all buildings it currently owns. This audit identifies the areas where access standards are deficient and provides budget costings to remedy such deficiencies.

The process which the Council intends to follow in the strategic implementation of the Access Policy will be determined by 2 significant factors

#### Annual available budget

The total amount needed to be spent on all Council buildings to achieve the required access standards is not affordable in any one financial year and will probably need to be spread over a 3 to 4 year period. This financial constraint will inevitably lead to an annual assessment of what can be achieved in any one year on the basis of available funding.

#### Prioritisation of access works

The priority the Council assigns to each building, or group of buildings, will be based broadly on

- a. The importance of the building from a public/Council perspective. In this context a building such as the Civic Centre is seen as a flagship building and should be granted the highest priority.
- b. Those buildings with a high public usage. This group will include almost all leisure facilities along with the Tourist Offices, the Registrars Office and other Council run offices with a high and constant degree of public usage.
- c. All other Council operated buildings providing public access to a limited extent. Priorities within this departmental group will probably be determined by the departments themselves based upon a broad range of criteria.
- d. Other urgent groups. This category is recognised as applying to any Council operated public building which, for whatever reason, has an urgent and over-riding need for an immediate solution to an accessibility problem. This group would rank alongside (a). as being of the highest priority.
- e. As a supplement to existing extension or refurbishment schemes where additional funding may be required to enhance access works.
- f. To provide an incentive for match funding of larger schemes where the larger scheme introduces significant improvements for disabled users. In this situation the amount of funding committed would be based broadly on the cost to the Council of upgrading access facilities to the existing building.

In general terms therefore the annual assessment of the works planned to be implemented will be based upon a combination of priority and urgency within the approved funding available

The Council is also actively involved in monitoring the buildings it leases to ensure that the owners of those buildings we occupy but do not own are

providing disabled access to the required standards within an appropriate timescale.

## Access statements

Where access improvements of a physical nature are delayed, for whatever reason, it is the Council's intention to put in place for each building a published management programme which will

1. Identify the outstanding access works required
2. Set out the proposed timetable for commencement of works.
3. Establish the management assistance available to disabled users until such time as access improvements have been completed.

It is important to point out that management procedures should always be such that a positive commitment exists to assist Disabled people at all times even when access arrangements have been completed to a suitable standard.

## Procedure

The following procedures will become a rolling programme of works as the annual assessment is produced at the start of each financial year and the strategy relating to the implementation of works can be established. In most cases the pathway from the audit consultation to the final completion of works should be logical and straightforward but in the cases of urgent need some stages may be combined or omitted.

These stages should be progressed for each building. At completion of the works the building should be signed off as being fully accessible.

1 Consult full DDA audit and prepare an access brief in consultation with site users and Departmental Staff and/or plan appraisal from Consultant.

2 Provide access brief to relevant Building Services Department to draw in further expertise as needed.

3 Provide detailed specification (for Tender preparation if necessary) and obtain costings

4 Compare costings to budget to ensure that the funding committed in the annual assessment is not significantly exceeded..

5 Plan phasing of improvements integrating whenever possible with repair and maintenance programme.

6 Implement improvements

7 Sign off building.

8 Monitor and maintain improvements.

The importance of stage 7 ~~S~~igning off is crucial as a demonstration of the Councils record of and commitment to equality in access. Within the Establishment Index of our public buildings it is intended to record all buildings properly ~~s~~igned off as being fully accessible in compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

## Facilities Management

It may be possible to achieve some access improvements during ongoing repair and maintenance programmes. For instance, when redecoration takes place the colour contrasts can be improved particularly between door and frame, and frame and surround.

Conversely some planned improvements can create new problems for access for example when new doors are fitted with a difficult to operate door closer or with inadequate visibility zones.

Planned improvements to existing buildings should be checked against and comply with the required standards.

It is also important to ensure that any access improvements are maintained and that any future repairs or alterations do not compromise the improvements previously made.

## TECHNICAL STANDARDS

### Appropriate Legislation and Guidance

Any improvements to existing buildings and designs for new buildings are encouraged to work to the best practice guidance available.

The following are the main sources of reference

- The provisions in the Approved Document M (2004) of the Building Regulations.
- BS8300: 2001 Design of Buildings and their approaches to meet the needs of Disabled people. Code of Practice. .

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