



CABINET – 1 AUGUST 2001

**AUDIT OF COUNCIL BUILDINGS
DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION ACT (DDA) IMPLEMENTATION
FOR 2004**

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to consider the implications to Council buildings with public access, arising from the implementation of legislation in 2004.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 From January 2004 the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 will require all organisations who provide goods, services and facilities to the public to make them accessible. Organisations including this Council will have a legal duty to take reasonable steps to remove, alter or provide a means of avoiding physical features to overcome physical barriers to access.
- 2.2 Organisations are undertaking premises audits to anticipate this legal requirement well before 2004 to enable any necessary works to be programmed and implemented in good time.
- 2.3 The Corporate Disability Group (CDG) has established a programme of audits of Council buildings which the public have access to and in which employees work.

3. PHYSICAL FEATURES

- 3.1 Physical features include anything arising from the design or construction of a building to its fixtures, fittings, furnishings, equipment or materials. In fact any physical element or quality of land in the premises are covered whether temporary or permanent.
- 3.2 Examples of physical features would include:
- | | |
|------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| ▪ An approach to or exit from a building | ▪ Reception areas |
| ▪ Stairs | ▪ Toilets |
| ▪ Car parking | ▪ Floor surfaces |
| ▪ Entrances | ▪ Seating |
| | ▪ Telephones |

- Signs
- Lighting
- Alarms
- Doors

There are many more.

4. AUDITS OF COUNCIL BUILDINGS

4.1 Audits of several buildings have been undertaken:

- Lymington Town Hall
- Ringwood Public Offices
- Visitor Information Offices at Lyndhurst, Lymington and Ringwood
- Dibden Golf Course
- Recreation Centres at Totton, Ringwood, Lymington, Applemore and New Milton
- Fordingbridge, Hythe and New Milton Local Information Offices
- Public conveniences
- Appletree Court

4.2 The Corporate Disability Group were helped in the Audit of Appletree Court by a group of customers and residents. They were able to give the Council practical assistance and knowledge of what people with disabilities experience when arriving, entering and moving around the building. This meant in the audit of the building it was possible to take account of the specific needs of the:

- blind;
- the partially sighted;
- those with hearing impairments;
- those where British Sign Language was their first language;
- those who lip read;
- those who use wheelchairs;
- those that use guide dogs and dogs for the disabled; and
- of carers.

The Corporate Disability Group is immensely thankful to these customers for their help and are pleased to know they will be happy to assist the Council in the future on related projects.

4.3 Audits are planned for

- Chapel and cemetery at Pennington
- Depots including Marsh Lane and Clay Meadow as part of a rolling programme

4.4 The audits have been undertaken against a checklist which is felt to be a reasonable and realistic interpretation of the requirements in 2004. It is also understood that what will be regarded as 'reasonable steps' for a large public organisation serving a wide range of customers will be more than that expected from a small sole trader shop.

4.5 It is felt it is unnecessary to include the results of all the audits in this report. However, the results of the audits of Appletree Court, Lyndhurst, Town Hall, Lymington and Public Offices, Ringwood are

attached as Appendix 1 to provide an understanding of the range and type of works necessary to comply with the Act in public buildings. Some of the works have been implemented. Details of works suggested for other buildings can be obtained from Richard Eldred, Property Services Manager.

- 4.6 Where possible the identified works have been added to the corporate buildings planned maintenance programme and included into the expenditure plans process.
- 4.7 Services should be aware of the requirements to take similar steps for publicly accessible areas within their responsibility.

5. CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 The DDA requires organisations providing goods, services and facilities to the public to remove, alter or avoid physical barriers.
- 5.2 Audits have been undertaken to identify any necessary works.
- 5.3 Where possible works have been planned as part of the corporate buildings planned maintenance programme.
- 5.4 Services should be aware of any requirements within their responsibility.

6. CONSULTATION WITH DEPARTMENTAL MANAGEMENT TEAMS

- 6.1 The comments of DMT's on this report have been sought.**
- 6.2 The comments received support the recommendations and welcome the steps taken to programme works within the Council's expenditure plans.**

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The intention of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 was for organisations to prepare for the changes operable from 1 January 2004 by including necessary works in any repair and maintenance programmes or schemes. This is the approach adopted by the Council. Therefore although there will be costs arising from the works identified by these audits the costs have and will continue to be part of the programmed budgets for buildings maintenance already part of this Council's expenditure plan process.

8. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Any steps taken to improve the accessibility of services should have a positive effect on the Environment.

9. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are none arising from the report.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 That the necessary works arising from the Audit of Council Buildings be supported for inclusion in the expenditure plans and;

10.2 That services be encouraged to identify and undertake other necessary works to ensure compliance.

For further information

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Background papers

None with changes to the DDA from January 2004.

DL/HR/CDG/DMT030701

AUDIT OF COUNCIL BUILDINGS DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION ACT 2004

APPLETREE COURT, LYNDHURST

Visitor's Car Park

- Improvements to signage
 - at entrance to car park
 - over main entrance
 - above disabled bays
- Car parking for visitors with a disability
 - insufficient bays
 - relocate at main entrance
 - visible markings on ground

Entrance to Main Reception

- Markings on automatic doors
- Less steep ramp
- Hand rails in contrast colour
- Improved lighting

Main Reception

- Improved lighting
- Contrast between carpet and seating
- Lines on walls to show extent of floors
- Improved signage
- Installation of loop system
- Notice board relocated at main door in contrast colours
- Contrast colour to edge of counter and lower height in part
- Provide plain backdrop to behind of counter
- Good lighting over counter
- Mark bottom of stairs and risers

Cashier

- Improve signage (tactile)
- Install glare free glass at an angle
- Contrast colour to edge of counter
- Improve lighting

Toilet

- Improve signage (tactile) inside and out
- Contrast colour to edge of door and handle
- Raise toilet seat and replace with contrast colour
- Hand rails in contrast colour
- Contrast colour between paper and holder

Public Telephones

- Hoods in contrast colour
- Improve lighting
- Improve signage (tactile)
- Add shelf
- Indicate minicom for use in reception
- Sign phones suitable for hearing aids

Interview Room

- Improve signage
- Contrast colour to edge of door and handle
- Improve lighting
- Put blind at window
- Contrast between furniture and chairs
- Loop system
- Reduce clutter and fixed table

Corridors

- Contrast colour to edge of all doors and handles
- Sign on glass doors to indicate presence
- Print on signs to be legible size
- Hand rails to be contrast colour

Committee Room 1

- Sign for loop system

Ramp by Committee Room 2

- Reduce angle of ramp
- Hand rails to be contrast colour

Housing Reception

- Signs repeated at standing eye level
- Hearing loop and sign
- Sign to indicate disabled parking area

Planning Reception

- Larger print on signs
- Contrast colour on edge of counter and lower height in part
- Hearing loop and sign
- Move signs for toilet

Entrance to Planning Reception

- Signs including opening hours
- Contrast colour for handrails
- Improved lighting
- Coloured edges to steps

Council Chamber

- No sign for loop system
- Layout not conclusive for people with disabilities

Landing

- Improved lighting
- Non-reflective glass in notice boards

Staircase

- Edges of steps not marked
- Contrast colour for handrails
- Improved lighting
- No handrail at base of stairs

Fire Alarms

- Need flashing lights/vibrating pagers
- Evacuation chairs

Signage Throughout

- To be improved

PUBLIC OFFICES, RINGWOOD

External

- Road markings of path and pedestrian crossing to be repainted
- Create two parking bays for use of people with disabilities

Entrance to Building

- To be ramped from the right
- Remove bell for use of people with disabilities
- Automatic entrance doors

Reception

- Secure loose information racks
- Visible reception signs
- Induction loop to be installed
- Rearrangement of some leaflet displays

Interview Room

- Improved lighting
- Loop system

Wedding Room

- Loop system

Corridors

- Automatic fire doors
- Flat flooring and entrance to rooms

Rear Entrance

- Add handrail
- Bell or intercom system

Upper Floors

- Inaccessible due to steep floors - would require lift if to be used post 2004

TOWN HALL, LYMINGTON

External

- Improved road markings and tactile surfaces

Entrance to Building

- Automatic entrance doors
- Glass doors marked to show presence

Reception

- Variable height to counter
- Improved signage
- Improved backdrop behind counter
- Toilet with facilities for use by disabled people
- Induction loop
- Minicom
- Big button public phones at two different heights
- Improved marked seating
- Wider walk ways

Cash Office

- Secure queuing restraints
- Induction loop
- Variable counter height

Beyond Public Area

- Evacuation chairs
- Flashing lights to fire alarm
- Improved signage
- Loop system to committee and conference room
- Handrails in contrast colour
- Coloured edges to steps