



STEPPING OUT

Technical and legislative guidance on Disabled Access - from Movement Management.

Issue 3: September 2000

Editor's Welcome

Well here we are again, at the beginning of a new academic year, and everyone can breathe a sigh of relief now that the children have gone back to school! This, our third issue of Stepping Out will concentrate on the ways in which the Disability Discrimination Act is set to affect education. Changes in government legislation mean that schools are to be included in the Disability Discrimination Act. This means that Local Authorities and schools must work together to determine what needs to be done in order to achieve maximum inclusion for disabled pupils in British schools.

The Disability Discrimination Act and Part M of the Building Regulations are central issues to take into account when considering measures to be taken to improve disabled access. This issue's leading article outlines the principal differences between these pieces of legislation, so as to avoid any confusion that may arise. In keeping with the educational theme of this issue, it also includes an article about the Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education, and an application story covering the vast differences made by the platform lift installed in St. Thomas' Early Learning Centre in Birmingham. Details of our new Customer Care Centre are given on page four, together with some background information about Home Improvement Agencies.

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Produced by:
Movement Management, 123 Abbey Lane, Leicester LE4 5QX
Tel: 0116 225 2100 Fax: 0116 261 0397
Visit our website - www.moveman.co.uk.

Please note that this newsletter is produced for the benefit of all those people involved in improving access to public and private buildings. While its content is well researched, we can accept no liability for any errors or omissions. The views expressed are not necessarily those of Movement Management. For more information contact Rosie Gray at Axis on 01572 724932.

THE DDA AND PART M - THE FACTS AND WHAT THEY MEAN

During the past few weeks we have seen a number of articles in the press confusing the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) and Part M of The Building Regulations.

One particular article had the headline 'Meeting the Part M Deadline'. It went on to say that Part M "would ensure access for wheelchairs" and that the deadline to meet the requirements of Part M is 2004. The writer in this instance was actually confusing the time frames of the DDA and the requirements of Part M.

Therefore, we would like to take the opportunity to clarify this issue and highlight the different roles of the DDA and Part M.

The Disability Discrimination Act which became law in 1996 has made it unlawful for service providers to treat disabled people less favourably for a reason related to their disability. When the Act became law it contained two specific deadlines: October 1999 from which time service providers have to make reasonable adjustments for disabled people, such as providing extra help or making changes to the way they provide their services; and 2004, by which time service providers will have made reasonable adjustments to the physical features of their premises to overcome physical barriers to access.

The second deadline of 2004 is the date by which adjustments to properties, such as the installation of platform lifts,

hand rails, ramps, audio/visual facilities etc. have to be made, assuming the requirements of the act can be met in the meantime by providing additional temporary facilities.

Approved Document M (commonly referred to as Part M) is a section of the English and Welsh Building Regulations and principally applies to new buildings. It is not part of the DDA but is relevant to architects and contractors on new build projects and certain extensions as it is the document that gives the definitive specification of the buildings features which provide access for disabled people. For example, if a passenger carrying lift is to be installed then it must be suitable for use by the less able and Part

M gives design criteria to comply with. Part M then can also be a useful reference point if, as a service provider, you have to make adjustments to the physical features of your existing premises to comply with the DDA.

In summary then the DDA sets out to prevent discrimination against disabled people, and includes the stipulation that physical barriers to their enjoying equal access should be removed by 2004. Approved Document M clearly specifies the dimensions and construction standards of features that can be used to improve access for disabled people. As a service provider you and your staff must comply with the DDA, and as an architect or contractor your building must comply with the requirements of Document M.



*"Approved Document M is not part of the DDA."
Derrick Beck - General Manager Movement Management*



THE CENTRE FOR STUDIES ON INCLUSIVE EDUCATION (CSIE)

The Government has already committed itself to a **£100 million three-year programme** to improve access to schools. Proposed legislation will place new duties on schools and colleges, which were excluded from the terms of the Disability Discrimination Act passed by the Tories in 1995.. They will be required to increase access for disabled pupils to school premises and the curriculum and ensure disabled people are treated fairly...

Express and Star -
Wolverhampton, 14th
December 1999

Education was excluded from the 1995 Disability Discrimination Act. But in response to a report by the Disability Rights Task Force - which also covers transport, housing and health - a Bill will be introduced to close the loophole. Schools will no longer be able to exclude children from trips or prevent diabetic pupils from eating in class. Where necessary they will have to install wheelchair ramps, handrails in staircases, and induction loops for children with impaired hearing...

TES - The Times Educational Supplement,
17th December 1999

Shops, offices and restaurants in the United Kingdom could have to spend as much as **£600 million** in the next 4 years to make their premises more suitable for disabled people, estimates the Department of Education and Employment. **Bangor Chronicle** - 18th May 2000

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The Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education (CSIE) is a British charity working for the inclusion of all children with disabilities and learning difficulties in mainstream schools.

Established in 1982, the Centre provides information and advice concerning inclusive education and related issues. The Centre believes that all children have the right to learn together - not be devalued, discriminated against or excluded because of disabilities or learning difficulties.

Mainly funded by donations from trusts and foundations, core activities of the Centre include:

- Advice on good practice, summaries of law and conference reports.
- Collection of information from schools, colleges, parent groups, government and other organisations.
- Publication of regular analysis of LEA trends in special school placement.
- Organisation of conferences.
- Provision of information on legislation.
- Working closely with and supporting parents, disabled adults, campaign groups, families and schools in their efforts to promote inclusive policies.
- Submitting evidence and commentaries to central and local government.

The Centre recently issued a leaflet outlining the sources of funds available to help schools develop inclusion, including physical access.

Linda Shaw, co-director at the Centre says: "Substantial funds are now available to help schools become more inclusive. We hope they will not miss this opportunity to make the learning environment better for everybody"

The Schools Access Initiative (SAI) supports capital projects to help local education authorities (LEAs) improve access to mainstream schools for pupils with disabilities.

Linda Shaw says: "For the period 2000 to 2001, the total amount of funding available through the SAI is £30 million. Allocations to LEAs varied between £10,000 and £690,000. Individual and voluntary aided schools received between £1,000 and £140,000. The budget for the Schools Access

Initiative is expected to increase to £50 million in 2001-2002."

Projects which meet the required criteria for support can involve:

- 1) enhancing the continuation of access, e.g. planning better transition arrangements between primary and secondary schools, or turning a secondary school into a centre for a group of feeder primary schools;
- 2) reducing travel time for pupils by making a nearer school accessible;
- 3) improving physical access to the school e.g., set down and pick up points, ramps, handrails and lifts;
- 4) improving physical movement around the building;
- 5) improving access to the national curriculum e.g., specialist furniture and equipment;
- 6) improving accommodation within the building e.g. toilets for disabled pupils, and sound proofing for pupils with hearing difficulties.

All community, voluntary aided, controlled and foundation schools, including nurseries are eligible for funding. Projects enabling the partial inclusion of special school pupils into a mainstream school are eligible. Projects are very much determined by each LEA's access policies and priorities.

The DfEE expects LEA's to consider:

- a) the capacity of a school to take advantage of the access improvements, including the school's current SEN policy;
- b) the degree to which the new facilities may be used by the wider community.

Schools should approach their LEA between September and December each year. LEA's must bid for an allocation by February and the DfEE usually announces allocations at the end of March. The projects must be completed within the financial year for which support is given. More expensive work can be carried out by a phased project over two or three years.

For further information about the CSIE contact Linda Shaw, on: 0117-923 8450. Or visit the charity's website at <http://inclusion.uwe.ac.uk>.

For further details about the Schools Access Initiative contact Keromang Khoboko or Susan Humphreys, SEN Division, DfEE, on: 020 7925 5199.

HOME IMPROVEMENT AGENCIES WILL HELP OLD AND DISABLED PEOPLE

The majority of disabled and older people want to stay in their own homes for as long as possible. Care & Repair agencies provide advice and practical assistance to enable clients to achieve this aim and remain independent, safe and comfortable.

Care & Repair services are client led and the small agency team, consisting of surveyor, casework and administrator acts with respect for the client's wishes and needs.

The majority of potential clients are usually concerned that they cannot afford to pay for adaptations themselves. They do not know who to ask or what to ask for and they are frightened of being ripped off by cowboy builders. They do not understand the technical jargon and are concerned about the hassle and disruption. Acting as agents for their client, HIAs try to reduce the problems.

All clients are visited in their own homes and their problems, requirements and fears discussed in complete confidence. The team's caseworker checks that welfare benefits are being claimed and that income is otherwise being maximised. The client is also put in contact with all

other agencies which can offer assistance. The caseworker then works with the client to identify all possible sources of finances to pay for works carried out. This might be in the form of grants, loans, equity release or the client's own funds.

The team's surveyors then visits the client to assess their needs in relation to the physical characteristics of the property and the client's disability. As far as possible, elements of disrepair are addressed as well as the need for adaptation or extension to meet the needs of physical, or other, disability. The team liaises with health professionals, occupational therapists and local authorities and employs a creative approach to meeting the particular requirements of each individual.

Once the extent of proposed works is agreed with the client, the surveyor draws up plans and a specification and obtains statutory consents e.g. building regulations approval. The surveyor has considerable experience in designing for the disabled and will discuss individual needs with the Occupational Therapist and specialist suppliers of lifts, shower enclosures, and other fixtures and fittings.

The client is also assisted in the choice of suitable contractors from a list of local, vetted and monitored firms. The building work is monitored and all liaison with the contractors and specialist suppliers carried out by the agency on behalf of the client.

On completion, the surveyor inspects the work with the client and all other interested parties to ensure compliance with regulation and good practice. The agency also deals with queries and problems and assists in ensuring that all payments are made.

Clients usually have a long relationship with the agency staff and call upon them time and time again for assistance when their needs change or they have further problems with their property.

There are over 200 agencies in England and similar schemes exist in Wales and Scotland. Details of a local agency can be found through the local council or Foundations, the national co-ordinating body for HIAs, on 01457-891909.

Our thanks to Jane Keningley of Hanover Housing Group for her help with this article. She can be contacted on 01962 841911

Despite requirements under the DDA to remove physical barriers and make adjustments to buildings by 2004, the Post Office admits some of the 18, 500 outlets **will not be fully accessible**..."The Federation of Sub-Postmasters is keen to comply", says Baker, but he adds "I am concerned about the potential cost. We need to do it in a way which does not threaten post offices."

Disability Now - June 2000

The new **Disability Rights Commission (DRC)** opened its doors for business on 25th April with a new helpline (0845 7622633) for disabled people, employers and businesses who need help or advice on discrimination issues..

Newton News - April 2000

in the news

NEW CUSTOMER CARE CENTRE

Maintaining high standards and continually improving customer service has always been a top priority for Movement Management. We are therefore delighted to announce that we are now able to provide our customers with an even better service thanks to a new Customer Care Centre recently created by our parent company, Otis.

Derrick Beck, General Manager at Movement Management says: "As Movement Management is part of Otis and is also located in the same Leicester-based premises, we are in the enviable position of having access to the highly sophisticated service facility that supports a hugely successful multi-national organisation such as Otis."

Otis has invested over a million pounds to transform a 1940s machine shop into a state-of-the art facility which will enable the company to take customer

service levels to new heights.

Operational since last April, the new centre provides 2200 square metres of office space and employs 170 people who are responsible for all aspects of UK services such as providing technical advice, assisting with repairs and procurement of labour and materials. The centre also provides support with purchasing, parts warehousing and distribution.

Derek Beck continues: "Although primarily created for Otis, Movement Management customers have access to exactly the same impressive resources and support. Key personnel are fully acquainted with Movement Management's business and are trained to provide the same high level of service to meet our customer's specific needs."

The contact number for our call centre is 0845 3001232. Call this number for all service issues on any Movement Management product.