



# STEPPING OUT

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

Issue 6 : November 2001

## Editor's Welcome

**W**elcome to Stepping Out six. This issue focuses on the work of the Riding for the Disabled Association incorporating Carriage Driving. For many years, the RDA has promoted the beneficial effects of riding as a form of therapy. Its work is now carried out nationwide, through its 600 associated groups. We feature an installation of one of our Companion Prestige lifts at the RDA centre in Scropton, Derbyshire. Also in this issue we take a look at the impact of proposed new legislation on the care homes market. The Government has introduced a new regulatory body, the National Care Standards Commission. The NCSC will monitor care standards against a number of national minimum standards. The Government's objective is to improve the quality of care provision nationwide. Something with which we wholeheartedly agree. Some of the standards, however, are seen as a threat to the continued survival of many care homes. Concerning access, the NCSC recommends the use of passenger lifts, where appropriate. It is their definition of a passenger lift which is causing the controversy. Finally, we publish the results of a survey, conducted by our parent company, Otis. This highlights the continuing confusion surrounding the Disability Discrimination Act. We urge the Government to make more information available.

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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](http://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 Shirley M insballat Axis on 01572 724932.

## CONTROVERSY OVER NEW CARE STANDARDS ACT

**F**rom April 2002, independent care services in England and Wales will be regulated by a new body. The National Care Standards Commission will take over this role from some 100 health authority units. The Government's objective is to raise the consistency and quality of care services standards. The NCSC will regulate independent health care providers against a series of national minimum standards. The first set of standards applies to homes providing accommodation, nursing and personal care for older people. Home owners across the country are, however, concerned by the implications associated with implementing some of the standards.

Most controversy centres on the standards relating to the living environment. In particular, standard 22.2 states, "Service users must have access to all parts of the service users communal and private space through the provision of ramps and passenger lifts, where required to achieve this." In itself, this statement does not present a problem. It is the NCSC's definition of a passenger lift that does. The NCSC states, "A passenger lift

is a vertical means of transport between floors. A chair/stair lift is not a passenger lift." Many care home owners, whose buildings are already equipped with chair/stair lifts, interpret this to mean that they will be required to install a conventional eight person passenger lift. Naturally, some fear that the constraints of their building will make this impossible and drive them out of business.

However, there is an alternative solution that meets the NCSC's minimum standard. For many years platform lifts have been used to provide an alternative means of access, for the less able, to premises offering services to the public. The Disability



A platform lift could well be the solution the Care Home owners need.

Discrimination Act has led to a recent upsurge in the installation of platform lifts, as owners and operators modify their premises to comply with this legislation.

A platform lift complies with the NCSC definition because it is a means of vertical transport between floors. Unlike a passenger lift, a platform lift has no lift car. It consists of a platform which moves within a stationary shaft. Most platform lifts are supplied as completely self-contained units,

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# HOW PLATFORM LIFTS DIFFER FROM PASSENGER LIFTS

John Prescott has been accused of blocking a disabled parking bay with his Jaguar outside his favourite Chinese restaurant. The Deputy Prime Minister left his car partially over the bay outside Mr Chu's China Palace in his Hull constituency.

Mark Baggle, 41, who uses a wheelchair had to park elsewhere on arriving....

**Daily Telegraph**  
27th July 2001

Businesses are failing to make their web sites accessible to people with disabilities and could be violating discrimination legislation, according to a new survey. The study examined the web sites of the FTSE 100 companies and found 94 per cent failed to meet basic criteria for design....Existing disability discrimination legislation does not specifically deal with the issue of web site accessibility.....but John Gooday of the Employers' Forum on Disability believed a test case might soon be brought.

**Financial Times**  
17th July 2001

Gayant Mistry became the first domestic player in 12 years of competition to win a main draw men's title at the British Open Wheelchair Championship in Nottingham.

**Daily Telegraph**  
30th July 2001

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**T**hose with experience of platform lifts will be aware that they operate in a completely different way to a passenger lift because they are designed to transport the less able. In this article we look at some of the differences and the legislation which governs their use.

Historically, conflicting regulations have caused confusion. Building regulations, British and European standards have all influenced platform lift installations. British Standard code of practice - BS 6440 and International standard ISO 9386 are commonly consulted documents. However, these are only guides to good practice and have no legal standing. The most important document is the European Machinery Directive, 98/37/EC. This is a legally binding document, to which platform lift design must conform. A CE mark, the users guarantee that the lift is safe and fit for the purpose, can only be applied to the lift if the requirements of the Machinery Directive are satisfied.

One of the main differences between a platform lift and a passenger lift is in the operator controls. BS 6440 states that "user controls should be simple and safe, should not require two hands and should be located between 800mm and 1100mm above landing or platform level." This ensures that the lift can be controlled from all operating positions. Like other relevant standards, it also stipulates that controls for "up" and "down" should be of the maintained command type. This means that the lift should only move if there is continuous pressure on the appropriate button. This is quite simply a safety device and ensures that the lift can not start until the passenger is ready. On our Companion Prestige platform lifts, these pushbuttons are tactile so that people with visual impairments can use the lift.

Approved Document M is a section of the UK building regulations which deals with access and facilities for disabled people. Like the Machinery Directive, compliance with Approved Document M is mandatory. Specific requirements, relating to lifts, stipulate that tactile indication on or adjacent to lift buttons is provided for lifts, in particular those which serve three or more floors. Sadly not all platform lift suppliers can

claim compliance with this and several other requirements of Approved Document M.

All the relevant standards limit the travel speed to 0.15 metres per second. While this is not particularly fast, there is still potential for accidents when the lift comes to a sudden stop on reaching its destination. To avoid this we have incorporated a "soft start/stop" facility into our lifts so that the platform gradually decelerates over the last 100mm of travel, so avoiding a sudden stop.

The standards are very specific about the dimensions for clearances between the lifting platform and adjacent walls because unlike a passenger lift a platform lift has no lift car. In addition, the upper edge of the L shaped platform should be fitted with a sensitive edge. This should bring the lift to a complete stop if contacting an obstruction or if somebody inadvertently leans on the platform edge. Our policy is to extend the sensitive edge around the complete perimeter of the platform. Potential accidents, resulting from clothing or body parts being trapped are, therefore, totally eliminated.

## NEW CARE STANDARDS ACT

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do not need a wall or additional structure for support and usually require little or no modification to the existing building. This makes them unobtrusive and their installation very cost effective. They may well be a more practical solution for many care home owners.

Platform lifts, especially those that travel more than two metres, have to comply with a host of national building regulations and EEC legislation to ensure their safety. Features such as platform size, travel speed, controls and emergency procedures are governed by the legislation. Whilst this legislation is aimed at the needs of the disabled, it is, arguably, equally valid for the care services environment.

It may be that care home owners need not contemplate closing their homes, because of not being able to comply with standard 22.2. A platform lift would appear to offer a viable means of achieving compliance if a conventional passenger lift is not feasible.

# NEW PLATFORM LIFT FOR SPECIALIST DISABLED RIDING CENTRE

Alistair Darling proposed last week "to make awards of incapacity benefit for fixed periods. So that at the end of the award we can review the claim and offer more help and support where appropriate. . . In future, being out of work should be seen as a temporary, not permanent, state of affairs."

The proposal is highly ambitious. If this government can direct many of the 2.4m disabled claimants back into jobs it will be applauded by everyone - not least the 400,000 disabled people who feel they could work if an opportunity were available.

**Financial Times**  
10th July 2001

Disabled people face shorter delays when waiting to be assessed for home improvements. A £500 "golden hello" and the building of links with colleges are being introduced to recruit more occupational therapists and tackle care-staff shortages in Leicester.

**Leicester Mercury**  
14th August 2001

Jeremy Clarkson thinks it is strange that there are handicapped parking spaces outside skating rinks. Well, Bristol Ice Sledges for the Disabled provide lightweight aluminium sledges so disabled people can use the city's rink.

**The Sun**  
28th March 2001

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**A** Derbyshire Riding Centre has recently improved facilities for its disabled members and visitors with our help. We have recently completed the installation of a Prestige platform lift. This is the second time that we have supplied a wheelchair lift to a specialist disabled riding centre.

Scropton Riding Centre is a founder member of the Riding for the Disabled Association (RDA), a registered charity with more than six hundred groups. The centre's aim is to give disabled people the opportunity to enjoy a positive and enjoyable form of therapy.

Scropton was the first purpose built RDA centre in the country. Almost three hundred disabled riders benefit from its facilities every week. The centre relies upon charitable donations to cover the feed and grooming costs of the twenty horses and ponies stabled there. Instructors are specially trained to ensure that riders receive professional tuition, tailored to their personal needs.

The platform lift was installed to enable the riding centre to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act. At the same time, the lift had to meet the requirements of part M of the England and Wales building regulations. John Ward, Project Coordinator at the centre explains. "I had seen Movement Management's platform lifts at several other locations. I was impressed by their design and the fact that they comply with part M. When we needed to provide access for the disabled to the centre, I approached Movement Management to help us."

The lift was specified to give disabled access to the upstairs viewing gallery, some 2.57 metres above the ground level in the centre's indoor riding school. It also stops at

the disabled rider loading platform. From this point, a special hoist is used to help the rider on to the horse. John Ward continues. "The loading platform is only one metre above the ground. As we are no longer allowed to lift the disabled adult riders and we could not install a ramp, we are delighted that the new lift can serve the loading platform hoist, as well as the viewing gallery." To ensure sufficient clearance in front of the lift, the loading hoist had to be



**Platform lift installed at Scropton Riding Centre**

repositioned. We were happy to cover the cost of the modifications, in recognition of Scropton Riding Centre's charitable status. A gesture that John Ward appreciated. "Movement Management performed very well throughout the contract. We were extremely thankful for their generous gesture in paying for the work to the hoist." he said.

The Prestige is a free standing platform lift, requiring no additional supporting structure. It runs on a single phase 240 volt electricity supply and has a lifting capacity of 400kg. The lift height is limited to a maximum of nine metres. As with all our products, the Prestige complies with all relevant legislation and its platform is large enough to accommodate a wheelchair user and attendant. At Scropton, the lift is equipped with voice indication at the three levels and tactile push buttons, making it suitable for use by the visually impaired. It is also fitted with a full range of emergency escape features in the event of power failure.

# RDA - MAKING A DIFFERENCE

**R**iding is my favourite hobby. It allows me to do so much more than I can under my own steam. These are the words of just one of the 25,000 disabled people who enjoy the experience of riding or carriage driving every week. Such enjoyment is made possible by the work of one very special charity, the Riding for the Disabled Association Incorporating Carriage Driving (RDA).

The RDA is a federation of over 600 Groups, located throughout England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Established as a charity in 1969, its aim is to give disabled people the opportunity to ride and/or carriage drive to benefit their health and well-being.

The benefits of riding as a form of therapy are increasingly being recognised by professionals working in health and education. The exercise helps to improve muscular control, teaches balance and coordination, as well as being a tremendous morale booster. Horses and ponies offer a unique freedom to people

with physical and mental disabilities, enabling them to discover the pleasures of genuine mobility. Something that most of us take for granted.

As well as promoting the therapeutic side of horse riding and carriage driving, the RDA offers disabled riders of all levels the opportunity to join in various social events. These include riding holidays and national competitions. These activities

bring a new dimension to the lives of those restricted by disability.

None of this would be possible without the exceptional work of 14000 volunteers. These people willingly give up their spare time to ensure that RDA groups, around the



UK, continue to offer disabled riders and carriage drivers the opportunity to experience such a positive form of therapy. The RDA relies on charitable donations to carry on its exceptional work. There are a number of ways in which the public can offer their support.

To learn more, the RDA can be contacted at their head office:

Riding for the Disabled Association,  
Incorporating Carriage Driving  
Lavinia Norfolk House  
Avenue R  
National Agricultural Centre  
Stoneleigh Park  
Warwickshire  
CV8 2LY  
Tel: 024 7669 6510

Or visit their very informative web site at [www.riding-for-disabled.org.uk](http://www.riding-for-disabled.org.uk)

## OTIS CALLS FOR MORE CLARITY ON THE IMPACT OF THE DDA

**O**tis, our parent company and the world's leading lift and escalator manufacturer, has recently announced the results of a nationwide customer survey on awareness of the implications of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA).

Otis surveyed a cross section of customers involved in the building maintenance management sectors. Over 120 responses were received. The results show widespread confusion as to the impact of the DDA. More than half of the respondents (54%) did not think that they understood the full implications of the legislation. 86% of those surveyed also felt that the Government had not provided the industry with enough information on the potential impact of the DDA. The legislation looks set to have a serious impact on all building owners and managers. In basic terms, the act makes it illegal for service providers to discriminate against others on the grounds of disability.

Owners and managers must act fairly to all and make reasonable provisions to allow access to not only

public areas, but also the work environment. It would be wrong to deny access to certain parts of a centre on the basis of disability, just as if you operate a business it would be wrong to deny employment because the prospective candidate could not access the building in its current state.

Derek Smith, Technical Sales Support Director at Otis commented, "We carried out this research because of the major consequences this new legislation could have for so many of our customers. It is very worrying that such a high proportion of responses indicate concern about the level of information that has been made available."

Derrick Beck, our General Manager, says of the survey, "Movement Management is committed to working in partnership with its customers and is making its experts available to provide consultation and advice to those that need it."

For more information on how the DDA could affect your business, please contact us via our website:

[www.moveman.co.uk](http://www.moveman.co.uk)

Disabled athletes are already threatening to boycott the Paralympic Games in Beijing in 2008 because of China's appalling human rights record. Cambridge University graduate Chris Holmes, a blind swimmer who has won nine Paralympic gold medals for Britain, said yesterday that if he was selected he would not compete in Beijing. "It is the land of human wrongs," he said. "The only positive side of it is that it could improve things. Prior to Seoul in 1988, there was a lot of talk of things improving and the Games acted as a focal point there."

Daily Telegraph  
17th July 2001

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