

# Disability Rights Commission

## Goods and Services

# What do guest accommodation owners need to know?

What you should know about the law and disability



**Making rights a reality**

## **The Disability Rights Commission**

The Disability Rights Commission (DRC) is an independent body, set up by an Act of Parliament, which has the goal of creating a society where disabled people and those with long-term health conditions can participate fully as equal citizens.

We work with the voluntary sector, the business community, Government and public sector agencies to achieve practical solutions which benefit disabled people and society as a whole.

There are around 10 million people with rights under the Disability Discrimination Act in Great Britain. The legal definition of disability covers people with physical, sensory, communication and intellectual impairments, and people with mental health and other long-term health conditions such as diabetes, epilepsy, cancer, multiple sclerosis, HIV and schizophrenia.

Under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, disabled people have the legal right to fair treatment in employment, in education and as customers of services. Most duties of the Act are now in force. A new Disability Discrimination Act received royal assent in 2005. This will create a duty on public bodies to actively promote disability equality from December 2006 as well as closing some of the loopholes in the previous act.

The DRC has offices in England, Scotland and Wales and can support both those with rights and those with responsibilities under disability legislation. For further details of how we can help you please contact our Helpline – contact details can be found on the back cover.

In 2007, a new Commission for Equality and Human Rights will begin its work. This body will have responsibility for the activity currently undertaken by the DRC.

# Contents

<b>Foreword</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>1 About this guide</b>	<b>3</b>
Introduction	3
Why read this guide	3
What the law says	5
What does the DDA expect you to do?	6
Reasonable adjustments	7
<b>2 Making your business accessible</b>	<b>11</b>
Evaluating the customer journey	11
Publicity materials	12
Dealing with phone enquiries and bookings	15
Check in and arrival	18
Guest rooms	20
Dining room and bar facilities	23
Checking out and guest feedback	25
Your buildings	26
<b>3 Getting you started</b>	<b>31</b>
What to do now	31
<b>4 Further contacts</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>5 Acknowledgements</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>6 Feedback</b>	<b>39</b>
Feedback about this guide and your experience	39

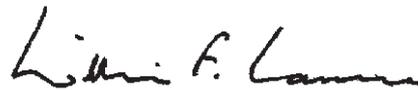
# Foreword

This booklet is the result of a co-operation between the public and private sectors to help smaller guest accommodation businesses take the necessary steps to become as accessible and inclusive to as many visitors as possible. With legislation like the Disability Discrimination Act requiring action, it is now vital for businesses to do as much as is reasonably possible.

In an industry which is often seen as diverse and fragmented, this booklet represents real partnership in action by its producers Tourism for All UK (TFA) and the Disability Rights Commission (DRC). The TFA is an independent charity now recognised as the key umbrella group for those in the industry and the public sector seeking to deliver accessible tourism. The DRC is an independent body established by Parliament to promote and enforce the implementation of law concerning the rights of disabled people. We wish to thank all those who have assisted in this publication, particularly members of the Inclusive Tourism Partnership, the consultative group jointly hosted by ourselves. This publication is also available on the DRC website [www.drc-gb.org](http://www.drc-gb.org) and the TFA website [www.tourismforall.info](http://www.tourismforall.info)



**Bert Massie**  
Chairman,  
Disability Rights Commission



**Sir William Lawrence Bt. OBE**  
Chairman,  
Tourism for All UK

# 1. About this guide

## **Introduction**

This guide is for those who own and run guest accommodation. It is designed to help owners of small hotels, bed and breakfast or self-catering accommodation better understand how they can meet the requirements of disabled guests. It is not aimed at those who own or operate large hotels, or large self-catering sites, although the principles for these are similar. At the same time, it also explains how the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995 and 2005 affects the way guest accommodation services are delivered.

This guide has been produced by the Disability Rights Commission (DRC) in partnership with representatives from the industry. The DRC works to help disabled people gain their rights under the DDA, and to help employers and service providers meet the requirements of disabled people.

## **Why read this guide?**

Meeting the requirements of disabled customers is an important part of any business agenda. In particular, it is important to recognise that:

- The disability market represents a major potential source of income. It has been estimated that over 10 million disabled people in Britain have a combined spending power of over £50 billion per annum. Disabled people therefore represent an important source of revenue for guest accommodation as leisure visitors and, increasingly, as business users.

**'I am a deafened adult. I would like to see more induction loops installed by service providers. If an induction loop is not installed then it is difficult for me to enjoy the service provided as listening can be a lot harder.'**

**Aidan**

- The Disability Discrimination Act means that guest accommodation providers have to make reasonable adjustments to the way in which they deliver their services so that they better meet disabled peoples' requirements. Disabled people are increasingly using the DDA when they believe that their rights have been ignored or contravened.

This guide is intended to provide guidance on how to meet the requirements of disabled customers. Many small hotels, guest houses and self-catering providers will already be doing much to address the requirements of their disabled guests. Some owners will be familiar with guests who regularly use their services and who also have disabilities. It is important to recognise that the vast majority of disabled people are not wheelchair users. Much more common are impairments such as hearing impairments, visual impairments, heart conditions or restricted mobility. This is not to say that the requirements of wheelchair users do not need to be considered, but to highlight the fact that meeting the requirements of disabled people is more than having an adapted room for wheelchair users. It is also important to recognise that many disabled people who use accommodation require very little or no additional changes.

It is also important to note that whilst specialist providers continue to cater specifically for the requirements of disabled

customers, most disabled people prefer to use non-specialist services.

This guide also contains practical suggestions and illustrations about ways to improve the quality of service offered to disabled customers. It is made on the assumption that all people who run guest accommodation want every guest to have an enjoyable and comfortable stay, including disabled guests.

**'The cottage is spacious and the alterations have not interfered with its character. We make every effort to make reasonable adjustments.'**

**Lesley Wilson, Wilson Holidays**

## **What the law says**

### **Who is a disabled person?**

The Disability Discrimination Act uses a broad definition of disability that embraces people with a range of impairments. Examples include:

- people who are blind or partially sighted
- people who are deaf or hard of hearing
- people who have heart conditions
- people who have epilepsy
- people who have problems with continence
- people who have insulin dependent diabetes
- people who have Down's syndrome

- people who have dyslexia
- people who have arthritis
- people who are wheelchair users
- people who have experienced mental health problems
- people who have learning disabilities
- people who have multiple sclerosis (MS)
- people who have cancer
- people who have HIV.

These broad definitions mean that a good proportion of existing guests may fall into the definition used in the Act. Remember, not all disabilities are immediately obvious or visible.

### **What does the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) expect you to do?**

The DDA states that service providers can no longer discriminate against disabled people.

Since 1995, it has been illegal to refuse to serve somebody on the grounds that they have a disability. For example, it would be illegal to refuse to take a booking from a guest simply because they had a disability. There have been a number of cases that have already been won under this part of the legislation. For example, a group of people with learning disabilities were each awarded damages because a pub landlord refused to serve them. This section of the Act also covers deliberately providing a poorer quality of service to disabled people by, for example, taking longer to serve a disabled person breakfast, or applying terms that are

unreasonable. Other examples may be asking for a higher deposit from a customer because they have a disability or charging a disabled guest more than a non-disabled guest.

## **Reasonable adjustments**

The DDA expects employers and service providers to make **reasonable adjustments** in order to better meet the requirements of disabled people. Deciding what is reasonable includes a number of key factors. It is important to take the resources of the organisation concerned (financial, human and physical) into account. For example, a major hotel chain or large holiday campsite may need to respond differently to the requirements of their disabled guests than a business run by a sole proprietor. This does not mean that small businesses can ignore the requirements of the legislation. However, it does indicate that the law recognises different approaches can be used which reflect the size and nature of a particular business. It is also important to recognise that the law does not expect organisations to have to respond to unreasonable requests.

### **What do we mean by reasonable adjustments?**

Any measures that can help disabled people enjoy the service as much as a non-disabled person.

There is a code of practice which covers goods, facilities and services available from the Disability Rights Commission (DRC). This code is not the law but can be used by the courts to determine cases. The code also states that service providers must anticipate the likely requirements of disabled guests and not just respond to requests from individuals.

The code can be downloaded free of charge from the DRC website [www.drc-gb.org](http://www.drc-gb.org) or purchased from The Stationery Office – see page 32 for contact details.

Since 1999, service providers have been expected to provide **auxiliary aids** and services to disabled customers and to amend their policies, practices and procedures so that disabled people can better access their services.

An auxiliary aid may include having an **induction loop** system on the television in a communal lounge so that hard of hearing guests can access the television. An auxiliary service could include serving a guest breakfast in their room if they were unable to access the dining room due to a physical barrier such as steps. A change in policy could include allowing a disabled customer to park their car nearer the accommodation unit so that they have less difficulty when arriving or leaving the premises or, amending a no dogs policy so that guests with **assistance dogs** are permitted.

Changing practice and procedure could be something as simple as making sure that cleaning staff remember to leave visually impaired guests belongings in the places they were left when tidying a room.

Since October 2004, the DDA expects service providers to remove, alter or provide a reasonable means of avoiding any physical barriers to accessing and using their premises. This includes examining the way colour is used so that better contrasts are created for visually impaired guests and providing better access for disabled people who are wheelchair users.

### **What do we mean by auxiliary aid?**

This is something that can assist a customer with communication and support.

For example:

- a well situated light at reception to help someone read more easily
- a pen and writing pad to help communicate when it is difficult to hear
- an easy to follow website
- a fax machine, minicom phone or induction loop at reception.

### **What do we mean by induction loop?**

This is usually a system of wiring from a microphone to an area such as reception or the TV lounge. Within this area a customer who uses a hearing aid can set this to only pick up the microphone thereby cutting out any background noise.

### **What do we mean by assistance dog?**

These are usually associated with guide dogs for blind people but there are several types of specially trained dogs that are collectively called assistance dogs. Some are trained to 'hear' for key noises, and others can help with tasks such as picking up items.

Since October 2004, the employment requirements of the DDA have also changed. Previously, the DDA only applied to employers with 15 or more full time staff. However, the employment provision now applies to all employers. Further information about the employment requirements is available by calling the DRC Helpline – details are at the back of this booklet.

Accommodation providers should be thinking through their services from the perspective of individual disabled guests by critically evaluating services from their perspective and considering what additional aids, changes to day-to-day practices or physical changes could be made to better accommodate the requirements of these guests. It also means giving reasonable consideration to requests for additional services made by disabled visitors. For example, a person who is diabetic may ask to store insulin in the fridge. Responding positively to such a request is considered a reasonable adjustment.

The next section of this guide illustrates many ideas which are considered reasonable adjustments. In addition to the illustrations, there are boxes which define terms used, and suggestions on how changes made can improve service for everyone.

## 2. Making your business accessible

### **What do we mean by accessible?**

This is more than just providing ramps etc. Access can be achieved by taking often low-cost measures making all aspects of a service accessible.

For example:

- making leaflets accessible to a blind person
- making the reception area accessible to a deaf person.

### **Evaluating the customer journey**

Most disabled customers will utilise a service in much the same way as non-disabled customers. However, at different stages of the customer journey, different requirements may arise and every business is different. What follows is a broad analysis of the range of things a business may need to consider.

The illustrations shown are provided by businesses who have already taken steps to make their accommodation more accessible. The results of measures taken are high quality, look attractive and are welcoming for disabled and non-disabled customers alike.



### **Making changes Inclusive**

#### **Hand rails**

Providing good hand rails outside and inside not only helps people who need extra support, but it can also help blind and partially sighted customers who may benefit from an extra guide to steps or the internal layout of corridors.

### **Publicity materials**

Many businesses fail to maximise on attracting disabled guests by failing to ensure that their publicity materials address the requirements of disabled customers. At its simplest level, this could be a general statement saying that your business welcomes enquiries from disabled customers and that you are happy for guests to discuss any additional requirements they have with you directly. Other considerations may be:

## Glan y Gors



### Self Catering Cottage

[General Information](#) [Price List](#) [Booking Form](#) [Terms & Conditions](#)

Glan y Gors self catering cottage is situated opposite Snowdon in the breath-taking Snowdonia National Park. Recently renovated, the cottage is spacious, comfortable and full of character; ideally situated for discovering beautiful North Wales.

Children and pets welcome.  
National Accessibility Category 2  
[Email Us](#)

Website hosted by [EISSE](#)

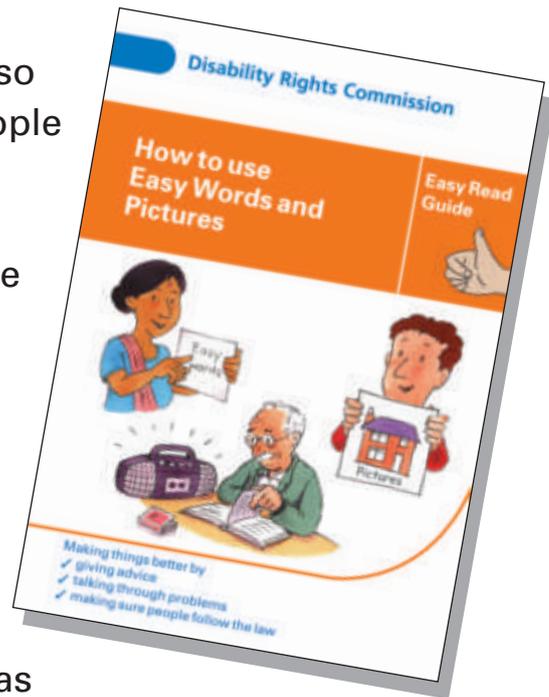
## Website

Is your website accessible? There are easy ways to make web pages more accessible for disabled customers. For example, the font size used for text could be increased to benefit customers with a visual impairment. Equally the colour contrasts used may be difficult for somebody with a visual impairment to navigate. It is also helpful if your website contains information about any additional facilities that you may have that will benefit disabled customers. If you have particular services that you can provide for disabled guests, mention them. Information about physical access should also be included

## Publicity leaflets

As with the web, these need to be available so that customers with a visual impairment can read them. Again they need to contain information about the facilities and any particular provision that can be made for disabled guests. Using **Plain**

**English** is considered good practice generally, but will also be of particular benefit to people with a learning disability. Including a fax number or email address will also enable people who have difficulties using the telephone such as people who have speech impairments or people who are hard of hearing to make bookings. One simple measure is to provide brochure text in **large print** as standard so it assists all readers.



### **What do we mean by Plain English?**

This means using simple, clear language which improves understanding of the information provided.

### **What do we mean by large print?**

Use a larger font (14 point size) and sans serif typeface in your information. This is more legible for people with a visual impairment; Arial or Univers are good fonts to use.

### **Making Changes Inclusive Easy-to-understand written information**

Providing easy-to-understand written information is preferred by most of the population.

## **Making Changes Inclusive**

### **Large print**

By using large print, you not only help people who are partially sighted, you make it easier for anyone who needs reading glasses.

## **Tourist Information Centres (TIC)**

It is important that you let your local tourist information centre know about any facilities that you may have. They may also be able to advise on how to set out more detailed statements on accessible facilities. You can also inform your TIC of any changes made to improve the quality of provision for disabled guests. Your local TIC will also be able to advise you about any training that is being provided to help you better meet the requirements of disabled people. For example, 'Welcome All' or similar training offered by national and regional tourist boards. You can also send details of your facilities to Holiday Care, the information service for disabled travellers, now part of Tourism for All:

Holiday Care  
7th Floor  
Sunley House  
4 Bedford Park  
Croydon CR0 2AP  
Telephone: 0845 124 9971  
Website: [www.tourismforall.info](http://www.tourismforall.info)

## **Dealing with phone enquiries and bookings**

Many guests will book their accommodation directly or make enquiries prior to confirming their booking. Some disabled customers may be reticent to discuss their requirements with

## **Making Changes Inclusive** **Flexible booking procedures**

Setting up flexible booking procedures with other local providers helps avoid just turning away disabled customers when your own facility is already occupied. It also provides other sources of equipment, etc. when customers have last minute requirements.

you or be unaware of the fact that you may be willing to make changes. One way to overcome this problem would be to ask all guests if they have any particular requirements and then give an example.

Using questions like 'Do you have any particular requirements that I need to know about, such as being vegetarian, having a disability, wanting to arrive early, etc?'

This is considered to be an **inclusive** approach and may help disabled guests to state their requirements without feeling they are asking for something out of the ordinary. By showing a keen attention to detail, it also means that all guests receive a higher quality of service and this will be appreciated by everyone. At the same time, it allows guests the opportunity to quiz you further. For example, a guest with mobility impairments could then ask about how you are able to make provision for their requirements. It is worth noting that providing this interchange can avoid you offering a service which does not meet their needs.

## **What do we mean by inclusive?**

In this guide, inclusive refers to changes that can help more people than you think.



### **Making Changes Inclusive** **Extra space in an accessible bedroom**

The extra space available in an accessible bedroom makes this an ideal room for other bookings when a wheelchair user is not staying.

It may be that you have one or two rooms that have been adapted to meet the requirements of disabled guests or that certain rooms are more suitable for guests with disabilities. Deciding how you allocate rooms is of particular importance. It may be that you wish to hold these rooms back until all other rooms have been allocated. This will help you to have the maximum flexibility when allocating rooms. The extent to which you can re-allocate rooms will depend upon the size of your establishment and the nature of any pre-arranged bookings that have been made. Having an appropriate room allocation policy will help you better meet the requirements of individual guests and the requirements of the DDA. In addition, it may mean you can pick up short notice bookings and so gain more valuable trade from disabled customers.

One feature of rooms that are well adapted is that they are also likely to be attractive to any non-disabled guest, thereby remaining an important part of your available accommodation.

## **Check in and arrival**

Your first direct contact with guests is likely to be at check in. If the booking has been made in advance, and you have followed the suggestions made thus far, you should already know about any additional requirements that your guests may have. However, it is worth highlighting any particular facilities you have so that all guests are aware of these. For example, if you have an induction loop in the lounge, you could have a relevant sticker on display showing this facility. You can also mention this to everybody at check in. If you have a general awareness of local services and facilities (eg pubs) which are accessible to disabled people, this information may also be useful at this point.



**This reception desk is suitable for wheelchair users.**

If you require guests to complete a registration form it may be that some guests will need help. For example, somebody who has arthritis may have problems gripping a pen. If you have a check in desk but no lower counter, you could provide a clipboard so that guests can complete registration details more easily. You could also provide a magnifying sheet for guests who are visually impaired so that they can complete any registration forms themselves, if this is their preference.

### **Making Changes Inclusive** **Drop counters**

Having drop counters as part of reception, etc. not only helps wheelchair users, it also helps people with restricted growth and it makes deliveries easier and safer.

In addition, it is worth considering the following:

- always talk directly to the guest concerned and avoid checking requirements through partners or carers if they are also with them
- if your guest is a wheelchair user and you wish to engage in a long conversation, consider pulling up a chair for yourself so that you maintain eye contact or taking a few steps back
- be prepared to write down information for deaf and hard of hearing guests if they have difficulty understanding you (or vice versa)
- be prepared to complete forms on behalf of guests with visual impairments or learning disabilities
- offer assistance as opposed to automatically assuming that somebody will need this by asking 'Would you like help?'. Do not be offended if your offer of help is declined

- remind guests that they should let you know if there is something you can do to meet any particular requirements they have.

Where appropriate, it is also worth confirming any reasonable adjustments. For example, if your dining room is not accessible you may wish to confirm that you are able to serve meals elsewhere, for example, in the guests' own room.

### **Making Changes Inclusive**

#### **Easy-to-read wall signs at head height**

Using easy-to-read wall signs installed at head height will assist people who are partially sighted and make it easier for anyone who might have difficulty being understood particularly during busy reception times or when a guest asks for directions.

A further issue which is best covered at this point is any additional support that might be needed in the case of fire or another emergency. Having agreed any measures with the guest, make sure that these are clearly but discreetly conveyed to others who need to know.

### **Guest rooms**

Once guests have checked in you will probably show them to their rooms. Guests who have difficulties carrying heavy items may benefit from the offer of additional assistance. Once a guest has been shown to their room, it is important that you check the room meets their requirements, or if there is anything additional that they may need. For example, somebody who has difficulties standing at a wash basin may benefit from the provision of a stool they can sit on whilst washing.

This will also give guests a chance to explain any particular requirements, for example, any additional dietary requirements they may have. It may be worth checking with guests that they have everything they need a short period after they have checked in. Again, this approach is consistent with best practice for all guests and not just disabled customers.



### **Making Changes Inclusive** **High backed chair**

A well placed high backed chair with firm arms not only helps people who have difficulty walking, it also helps a wheelchair user transfer into it. The chair is useful for anyone who might feel tired as they wait to enquire, or whilst they are getting around.

If the accommodation is self-catering then it is important at this stage to check the customer's access to all the facilities. For example, is kitchen equipment within reach? Can the bathroom fittings be used with ease, safety and comfort? Take time to explain how any services and adaptations are used and be flexible. For example, be willing to rearrange furniture, equipment like a microwave, or storage of cutlery.

In the bathroom it may be necessary to also provide a shower chair, or additional non-slip matting.



**An example of an accessible kitchen in self-catering accommodation.**

It is also worth reinforcing particular services that you provide in any in-room information. For example, it is worth highlighting information about the availability of Ceefax/Teletext on televisions and subtitles for the benefit of deaf and hard of hearing viewers if either room, or TV lounge has this facility. You can also provide information about fire evacuation procedures and what to do if people have any additional requirements. In-room information needs to be available in accessible formats - either in large print (14pt using a clear font), Braille or on audio cassette. If this is not possible, you could read the information to guests who have

a visual impairment or have a spare magnifying glass available for loan. A large, clear typeface will, however, benefit all guests.

## **Dining room and bar facilities**

Ideally the dining room should be accessible to all guests. This may simply involve ensuring that there is sufficient room for disabled people who are wheelchair users, or who have restricted mobility, to move between tables. You may also need to take into account the requirements of people who are visually impaired, including navigation for people using assistance dogs. This may require temporarily moving obstacles out of the way or thinking carefully about seating arrangements. Ordinarily, it may not be possible for guests to reserve particular tables at breakfast. This may, however, be entirely appropriate if this means that a disabled guest is better able to use your service.



**Taking simple measures can make most dining rooms more accessible.**



**Individual tables can be made more accessible, by using blocks or re-arranging chairs.**

You should also consider serving guests directly instead of assuming everyone can use self-service facilities. For example, this may mean serving a guest at their table if they have indicated that they have difficulty carrying things, especially food and drink.

All guests should be given the same opportunity to use communal facilities. For example, it would be discrimination under the DDA to refuse to allow a person with a facial disfigurement or a guest with learning disabilities to use the dining room. Deliberately positioning guests away from others would also be likely to be viewed as discriminatory.

Finally, as mentioned earlier, guests may require some information, such as menus, in alternative formats. If this is not possible then staff may have to read menus to guests. Equally staff could tell a visually impaired guest about the range of drinks available at a bar. It should be possible to serve somebody at a table who can not carry their own drinks, or provide drinks in another part of your accommodation, if the bar is not wheelchair accessible.

## Checking out and guest feedback

At departure, it may be that some changes to standard practice need to be made when settling accounts. For example, if a guest cannot access the reception area you could consider presenting the guest with their bill in their room. If you cannot provide a bill in large print you may need to consider reading the bill out to guests to guarantee its accuracy. It is a good opportunity to use check out time as a way of gaining feedback about the quality of provision. Were any additional requirements met? Would the guest consider returning again?

**'Many guests have commented on how our easy to use facilities have helped them to have a comfortable and peaceful holiday.'**  
**Maggie MacAlpine, Crathie Holidays**

Often the feedback received from disabled guests will be no different to that given by non-disabled customers. It is pointless having a totally accessible hotel or guest cottage if the quality of the service provided has been insufficient.

**'In providing an accessible experience for all guests, the attitude of management is as important as the removal of physical barriers. The right attitude beats training, hands down.'**  
**James Brown, The Narrows**

Like anybody else, disabled guests expect courtesy, clean rooms, good cooking and so forth. Consequently if you fall down in any of these areas you are just as likely not to gain repeat custom from disabled guests as from non-disabled guests.

## Your buildings

A great deal of attention has been given to the implications of the 2004 built environment requirements of the DDA. Since 1 October 2004, it has been necessary to have taken reasonable steps to have removed, altered or avoided physical barriers to your facilities or accommodation. The following tips should help you better address potential changes to your premises.

### **Making Changes Inclusive Ramps**

Ramps, when accompanied by steps and a good hand rail, assist everyone. As well as wheelchair users, they help those who need extra support or guidance on steps, and can help people with wheeled luggage, prams or shopping.



### **Firm, level paths**

Providing firm, level paths and routes not only makes it easier for wheelchair users, it removes any potential hazards for people to trip over, eg broken surfaces.

- Many people offer **access audits**. There is a national standard for access auditing which is overseen by the Centre for Accessible Environments.

### **What do we mean by access audits?**

Ideally, an access audit should be an independent, professional survey of your property and procedures. This is so that you can provide your service to disabled people on the same terms as non-disabled people.

The Centre for Accessible Environments have a register for access audits. The National Register of Access Consultants guarantees a minimum standard of competencies that are independently assessed and also means that the consultants will work to high professional standards. Others, including local disability groups, may offer to survey your premises. Whilst this may be helpful the ideal position to be in is to have an access audit undertaken by an NRAC auditor. You should be wary of anyone offering to make your business 'DDA' compliant (for example, building companies).

### **Contact details for the CAE and the NRAC:**

Centre for Accessible Environments  
70 South Lambeth Road  
London  
SW8 1RL  
Telephone/textphone: 020 7840 0125  
Fax: 020 7840 5811  
Email: [info@cae.org.uk](mailto:info@cae.org.uk)  
Website: [www.cae.org.uk](http://www.cae.org.uk)

As the DDA works on the basis of reasonable adjustments, there is no absolute level of compliance that can be achieved.

- **The DDA demands reasonable not unreasonable adjustments.** It is unlikely that you would be expected to make changes that are beyond your resources or that are impracticable. The technical constraints of your accommodation, fire regulation and health and safety factors all need to be taken into account. Ultimately you may have to provide alternative means of delivering the same service rather than totally reconfiguring your premises. However, you will need to show why such changes are not possible and evidence your decisions, rather than simply rule out these changes as being too costly or prohibitive.



**An example of an accessible toilet.**



**Good contrast and lighting help everyone.**

- **Think beyond a narrow definition of disability.** Clear colour contrasts between doors and walls will benefit people with visual impairments. Pictogram signage will help people with learning disabilities. Hearing or **induction loops** and text phones will benefit hard of hearing and deaf customers. None of these measures require major physical changes to premises and can be provided relatively cheaply.
- **Look for local help and advice.** Organisations of disabled people in your area will be able to put you in contact with disabled people locally. It should then be possible to seek the views of disabled people about any changes that might be helpful. This should be undertaken alongside any access audit that you have arranged.

- **Once you have made changes make sure they do what you intended.** If you provide accessible parking bays make sure that these are reserved for disabled guests. Induction loops and other auxiliary aids should be regularly tested. Regardless of the changes made, you should also keep these under continual review as technology and practices do change over time. Plan the changes to be made and incorporate improvements for disabled customers. It may be that you are already planning to redecorate or upgrade facilities. If so, try to incorporate improvements for disabled guests. For example, if you are upgrading bathroom facilities, look at how these can incorporate improvements for disabled customers, eg by the addition of hand rails. If you are planning new publicity materials, make them accessible. A great deal of time and money can be saved by thinking through the requirements of disabled guests when carrying out general improvements to your business.



**Making areas more accessible does not have to change the character of a room.**

# 3. Getting you started

## What to do now

These suggestions are not definitive but will help you to get started.

After you have read Section Two, you can start planning by following simple steps like the ones below:

- assess what you know about your business so far and how it already meets many requirements
- start to highlight what you can already do in your publicity or on your website
- make contact with those who need to start advising you further; your local tourism office, local trade associations, if you are part of one, and any local recognised groups of disabled people
- use the self assessment kit from the National Accessible Scheme (available from VisitBritain - see page 33)
- make a plan for the future based upon what you can do at each stage (what you can start doing straight away, what will need to be done in the medium term, eg during the next low-season)
- obtain a quality access audit through a recognised specialist organisation (NRAC) as soon as practical
- when making minor changes use customer feedback and contacts with local groups of disabled people to check out

how changes will help disabled customers. Before making larger changes consult with local groups of disabled people and specialists such as the local access or building control officer

- remember lots of minor improvements can make a big difference very quickly
- consider suitability for participation in the National Accessible Scheme to promote your business and the work that you have completed.

**Codes of Practice can be purchased from:**

The Stationery Office (TSO)  
PO Box 29  
Norwich  
NR3 1GN  
Telephone: 0870 600 5522  
Fax: 0870 600 5533  
Email: [book.orders@tso.co.uk](mailto:book.orders@tso.co.uk)

# 4. Further contacts

## 1. **Holiday Care**

7th Floor, Sunley House  
4 Bedford Park  
Croydon  
Surrey  
CR0 2AP

Telephone: 0845 124 9971  
Textphone: 0845 124 9976  
Fax: 0845 124 9972  
Email: [info@holidaycare.org](mailto:info@holidaycare.org)  
Website: [www.holidaycare.org](http://www.holidaycare.org)

## 2. **VisitBritain, covering English tourism**

Thames Tower  
Blacks Road  
London  
W6 9EL

Telephone: 020 8846 9000  
Fax: 020 8563 0302  
Website: [www.visitbritain.com](http://www.visitbritain.com)

## 3. **VisitScotland**

Quality and Standards  
Thistle House  
Beechwood Park North  
Inverness  
IV2 3ED

Telephone: 01463 716996  
Email: [qa@visitscotland.com](mailto:qa@visitscotland.com)  
Website: [www.visitscotland.com](http://www.visitscotland.com)

#### **4. Wales Tourist Board**

Brunel House  
2 Fitzalan Road  
Cardiff  
CF24 0UY

Telephone: 029 2049 9909  
Fax: 029 2048 5031  
Website: [www.visitwales.com](http://www.visitwales.com)

#### **5. Regional Contacts for NAS Scheme in England**

##### **North of England**

(Covering Cumbria, Cheshire, Greater Manchester, Lancashire, Merseyside, Yorkshire, Cleveland, Durham, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear)

##### **Quality Assurance Unit**

312 Tadcaster Road  
York  
YO24 1GS

Telephone: 01904 707961  
Website: [www.yorkshirevisitor.co.uk](http://www.yorkshirevisitor.co.uk)

##### **East of England**

(Covering Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Norfolk and Suffolk)

Toppesfield Hall  
Hadleigh  
Suffolk  
IP7 5DN

Telephone: 01473 822 922  
Fax: 01473 823 063  
Email: [information@eetb.org.uk](mailto:information@eetb.org.uk)  
Website: [www.visiteastofengland.com](http://www.visiteastofengland.com)

### **Tourism South East**

(Covering Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Hampshire, Oxfordshire, Isle of Wight, East Sussex, Kent, Surrey, West Sussex)

Tourism South East  
40 Chamberlayne Road  
Eastleigh  
Hampshire  
SO50 5JH

Telephone: 023 8062 5400

Email: [enquiries@tourismse.com](mailto:enquiries@tourismse.com)

Website: [www.visitsoutheastengland.com](http://www.visitsoutheastengland.com)

### **Heart of England Tourism**

(Covering Herefordshire, Worcestershire, Shropshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire, West Midlands)

Larkhill Road  
Worcester  
WR5 2EZ

Telephone: 01905 761100

Fax: 01905 763 450

Email: [info@visitheartofengland.com](mailto:info@visitheartofengland.com)

Website: [www.visitheartofengland.com](http://www.visitheartofengland.com)

### **South West Tourism**

(Covering Bath, Bristol, Cornwall, Devon, Somerset,  
Gloucestershire, Dorset, Wiltshire, and the Isles of Scilly)

Woodwater Park

Pynes Hill

Exeter

EX2 5WT

Telephone: 01392 360050

Fax: 01392 445112

Email: [post@swtourism.co.uk](mailto:post@swtourism.co.uk)

Website: [www.swtourism.co.uk](http://www.swtourism.co.uk)

### **6. Disability Rights Commission**

DRC Helpline

Freepost MID 02164

Stratford upon Avon

CV37 9HY

Telephone: 08457 622 633

Textphone: 08457 622 644

Fax: 08457 778 878

Website: [www.drc-gb.org](http://www.drc-gb.org)

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Worcestershire.

The Narrows, Portafeery, County Down.

Hardwick House, Scarborough.

Glan y Gors, Carnarven.

Ford Abbey Hotel, Puddleston Leominster, Herefordshire.

# 6. Feedback

## **Feedback about this guide and your experience**

Readers are invited to submit their ideas and suggestions about quality service to disabled customers. Please also let us know how useful you found this guide.

Please forward comments to:

Practice Development  
Disability Rights Commission  
2nd Floor  
Arndale House  
Arndale Centre  
Manchester  
M4 3AQ

Telephone: 0161 958 2195

Fax: 0161 958 2001

Textphone: 0161 958 2002

Email: [good.practice@drc-gb.org](mailto:good.practice@drc-gb.org)

Reference: GA Mini Guide

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**SP9**

 **Telephone** 08457 622 633

 **Textphone** 08457 622 644

**Fax** 08457 778 878

**Website** [www.drc-gb.org](http://www.drc-gb.org)

 **Post** DRC Helpline  
FREEPOST  
MID 02164  
Stratford upon Avon  
CV37 9BR

You can email the DRC Helpline from our website:  
[www.drc-gb.org](http://www.drc-gb.org)



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