

Accessible Homes

Building Regulation Guidance Note

ACCESS AND FACILITIES FOR THE DISABLED TO NEW DWELLING

Reasonable provisions must be made for access into a new dwelling and for the use of the building to at least a limited extent. In addition, reasonable provision of sanitary facilities must be made normally on the level where daytime living occurs.

The aim is to provide accessible housing. The requirements do not seek to address the special needs of an individual disabled person resident in the property. The main aim is to allow people to remain in their homes for longer should their mobility reduce late in life.

- **The Approach to the Dwelling**

An accessible approach is required to the building from the edge of the curtilage of the plot to the principal entrance. The principal entrance is best defined as the door most likely to be approached by a visitor to the premises hence; no access is required to the rear of the property or any other entrance.

A level approach with a gradient of up to 1:20 is preferable but it is accepted that the same level of accessibility will not be provided in each case. Where this cannot be achieved a ramp can be provided with a gradient up to 1:12.

This surface of the approach should be firm and even and its width is to be not less than 900mm. The point of access should be reasonably level and the approach should not have crossfalls greater than 1:40.

Normally pedestrian access will be provided for visitors from the edge of the plot, however where the accessible route utilises the driveway this should be of sufficient width to enable someone to pass without being obstructed by a parked car.

Figure 1 – Plot Gradient

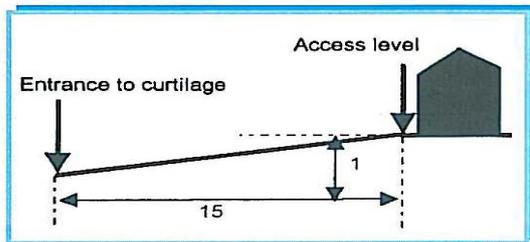
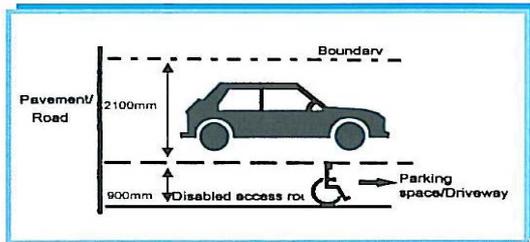


Figure 2 - Parking/Access



- **The Entrance Door**

The detail around the entrance door is critical both in terms of provided accessibility and preventing the ingress of water. The external area immediately adjacent the door should always be level (max gradient 1:20). Hence, where a ramp is used a landing must be provided.

In order to ensure water run off there needs to be a slope of between 1:60 and 1:40 away from the threshold. The threshold bar should be no higher than 15mm and if over 5mm high it should have rounded edges when approached from either side. In all but the most sheltered locations an adjacent gully is also likely to be needed to protect the entrance. In most circumstances this can drain away at the sides.

Having arrived at the entrance door the clear width of the opening should be no less than 775mm. This is measured between the doorstop and the face of the door; the weather board and door furniture can project into this width.

- **Internal Circulation**

Inside the dwelling reasonable access must be provided to all rooms and a room containing a w.c. All internal doorways require a clear opening of not less than 750mm (measured between the doorstop and the face of the door). The corridor/passageway width is required to be not less than 1.2 metres this can be reduced to 900mm when clear doorway widths are increased to 800mm. Short obstructions (no more than 2 metres in length) such as radiators are permitted to obstruct passageways provided a clear width of 750mm is maintained however the space required opposite doorways must not be obstructed and this should extend 200mm either side of the door.

- **Controls and switches**

Switches and socket outlets should be located in an accessible zone between 450-1200mm above floor level in all habitable rooms regardless of where they are located within the dwelling. These accessible controls will include light switches, power sockets, TV and telephone points as well as doorbells and entry phones. Items such as thermostatic controls, fused switches and consumer units need not be considered.

- **WC Provision**

A w.c is required to be provided on the same storey as the front door so that there is no need to negotiate a stair to reach it from a habitable room. An accessible w.c must be provided with an outward opening door in order to provide access to anyone who falls over within the room. The w.c compartment should provide a clear space for wheelchair users to access the w.c. and the washbasin is positioned so that it does not impede access.

Figure 3 - Clear Space for Frontal Access to WC

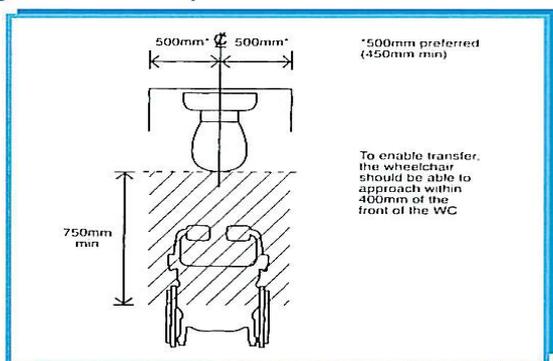
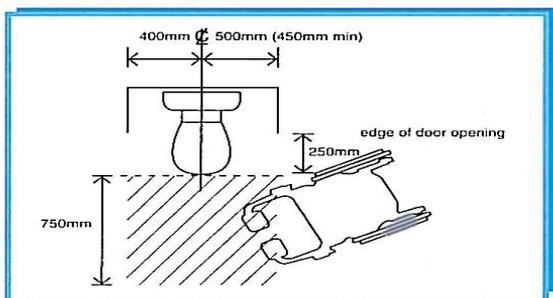


Figure 4 - Clear Space for Oblique Access to WC



- **Please Note**

For further information on all access related matters please ring (01325) 406214 and ask for a Building Control Surveyor.

Translation Information

If English is not your first language and you would like more information about this document, or if you require information in large print or Braille or on tape, please contact (01325) 406214.

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