



The Implications of Document M (Access & Facilities for the Disabled) M1/M3

Buildings other than dwellings

Suitable sanitary accommodation should be available to everybody, including wheelchair users, ambulant disabled people, people with babies/small children and people encumbered by luggage. In multi storey buildings consistent location of toilets on each floor can help people with learning difficulties to locate these facilities easily.

A number of issues need to be considered when designing sanitary accommodation for people with visual or hearing impairments, people with learning difficulties and people whose lack of tactile sensitivity can cause them to be injured by touching hot surfaces. Specifically;

- Taps and WC doors should be operable by people with limited strength or manual dexterity and doors to cubicles should be capable of being opened if someone has collapsed against them whilst inside the cubicle.
- Any heat emitters are to be screened or have their surfaces kept at a temperature below 43°C.
- To prevent scalding, hot water temperatures are not to exceed:

Wash basin: 41°C
Shower: 41°C
Bath: 44°C
Supervised Bath: 46°C

Provision of toilet accommodation

Toilet accommodation needs to be suitable for all people who use the building. For disabled people, suitable toilet accommodation may take the form of a specially designed cubicle in separate-sex toilets, or a self contained unisex toilet.

For wheelchair users in particular, a self-contained unisex toilet is the preferred option, and wheelchair accessible unisex toilets should always be provided in addition to wheelchair accessible unisex toilet washrooms.

In buildings where there is only space for one toilet, it is to be of a wheelchair accessible unisex type.

Wheelchair-accessible unisex toilets

Wheelchair users should be able to approach and use the sanitary facilities provided within a building. The user should be able to adopt various transfer techniques independently or with assistance, and a finger rinse basin and other accessories should be positioned so that wheelchair users can wash and dry their hands while seated on the WC.

Support rails should be provided, including a 'drop-down' rail on the open side and a fixed support rail with an optional additional 'drop-down' rail on the wall side.

As some disabled people may need to use a toilet more frequently than other users, when considering the location of a wheelchair accessible toilet, the time needed to reach the toilet is important.

Toilets in separate-sex washrooms

Ambulant disabled people should have the opportunity to use a WC compartment within any separate-sex toilet washroom. This compartment should be fitted with support rails and should be adequately sized to accommodate people who use crutches, or those who have impaired leg movements.

It is important that the WC pan in this compartment can accept a variable height toilet seat riser to accommodate some ambulant disabled people who find it difficult to use a standard height WC.

Where separate-sex toilets can be accessed by wheelchair users, it should be possible for them to use both a urinal, where appropriate, and a washbasin at a lower height than is provided for other users.

Wheelchair-accessible changing and shower facilities

In buildings where changing facilities are associated with showering facilities, many disabled people will be content with using open shower areas, however sub-divisions or preferably individual self-contained accommodation is preferred*. Any combined facility should be divided into distinct 'wet' and 'dry' areas.

*If the individual self-contained accommodation contains a WC, it should not be the only wheelchair accessible toilet accommodation.

Wheelchair-accessible bathrooms

In buildings other than dwellings, wheelchair users and ambulant disabled people should be able to bathe either independently or assisted by others. The relationship of the bath to other sanitary fixings and to the space required for manoeuvring is therefore critical. Providing a choice of layouts allowing left-hand and right-hand transfer, will meet the needs of many disabled people and help maintain their independence.

M1/M4- Dwellings

WC provision in the entrance storey of the dwelling

The primary objective is to provide a WC** in the entrance storey of a dwelling, so that there should be no need to negotiate a stair to reach it from the habitable rooms on that storey. If the entrance storey contains no habitable rooms, it is reasonable to provide a WC on

either the entrance storey or the principal storey.

** The WC may be located in a bathroom.

MORE DETAILED GUIDANCE ON APPROPRIATE SANITARY AND OTHER FITTINGS IS GIVEN IN BS8300.

**For full details on this and all Building Regulation documentation visit:
www.odpm.gov.uk**

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