

## **PROPERTY AND REGENERATION**

### **CIVIC OFFICES – ACCESS APPRAISAL SUMMARY**

**DATE: 27<sup>th</sup> September 2017**

**ISSUE : No.01**

**Introduction**

The Equality Act became law in October, 2010. It replaced previous legislation (such as the Disability Discrimination Act 1995) and ensures consistency in what employers and employees need to do to make their workplaces a fair environment and comply with the law.

All buildings constructed after 1994 must comply with Approved Document M of the Building Regulations – Access to and use of buildings. Part M sets out minimum requirements to ensure that a broad range of people are able to access and use facilities within buildings.

All buildings occupied by Neath Port Talbot CBC are routinely surveyed, to assess their suitability for disabled users to access facilities and services, and to identify any reasonable adjustments to be undertaken. The survey identifies where the building fails to comply with the relevant legislation, ascertains what work is required to remove physical barriers and indicative costs to undertake the work. Buildings are graded on an A-D basis:

A	Fully Accessible Building. Compliant with DDA.
B	Largely Accessible Building. Largely compliant with DDA but some works still required.
C	Largely Inaccessible Building. Non-compliant with DDA requirements but could be made so subject to extensive works.
D	Inaccessible Building. Non compliant with DDA requirements and cannot be made so at reasonable expense if at all.

The access survey examines the following areas in a systematic approach, from entry to the building, within the building and to means of escape in an emergency. A survey template is included in Appendix A.

- 1 Approach, routes and street furniture
- 2 Car parking
- 3 External ramps (approx. £2.5K per 100mm rise)
- 4 External steps
- 5 Entrances
- 6 Reception areas and lobbies (if necessary)
- 7 Corridors
- 8 Internal doors
- 9 Internal ramps
- 10 Internal stairs
- 11 Lifts – If no lift available, new installation will cost around £40K
- 12 Platform lifts and stairlifts
- 13 WCs: general provision
- 14 WCs: wheelchair users.
- 15 Internal surfaces
- 16 Facilities
- 17 Wayfinding
- 18 Lighting
- 19 Acoustics
- 20 Means of escape

The following report is a summary of the findings from access audits undertaken at Port Talbot Civic Centre, Neath Civic Centre and The Quays.

## **Port Talbot Civic Centre – Access Grade B**

Port Talbot Civic Centre was constructed in 1987, prior to the introduction of any significant legislation to improve access for disabled people.

The main areas identified in the report where access is inadequate are:

- 1 Approach, routes and street furniture – The building is located on a sloping site, presenting inherent access issues for disabled users travelling from the front of the building to the rear.
- 2 Car parking – Disabled parking spaces and a setting-down point should be located close to the building entrance.
- 3 External ramps – Entrance ramps are marginally too steep to comply with modern standards.  
  
Ramp to rear entrance is too steep / long. The change in level is circa 2½-metres and would warrant a platform lift to comply with current standards.
- 4 Reception areas and lobbies – The main reception desk is compliant, however, other service counters will need to be assessed by their relevant sections to determine if the service is affected.
- 5 WCs: general provision – The general toilet facilities does not provide sufficient ambulant provisions.
- 6 WCs: wheelchair users – There are several disabled toilets located within the Civic and Princess Royal Theatre. Accessible toilet facilities should be located next to the general toilet facilities. There are no disabled toilets to the lobby area to the first and second floors.
- 7 Wayfinding – Signage is not available in braille form.
- 8 Acoustics – No induction loop system located to the Committee Rooms
- 9 Means of escape – Several of the final exit doors egress on to steps

Works undertaken in recent years to improve accessibility to the Civic:

- New accessible toilet facility located to 2<sup>nd</sup> floor adjacent to members room;
- Lift car adaptations to provide improved facilities for users with hearing issues, sight issues or in wheelchairs;
- Call points within refuge areas to enable wheelchair and ambulant users to obtain help in an emergency;
- Improvements to external steps and handrails to the building perimeter;
- Improvements within accessible toilets for users with colostomy issues;
- Improved induction loop system to The Chamber;
- New automatic doors to The Princess Royal Theatre;
- Visual fire alarm indication to Committee Rooms.

## **Neath Civic Centre & The Quays – Access Grade A**

Neath Civic Centre was constructed in 2005 and The Quays constructed in 2009. Both buildings were built to comply with Part M of the Building Regulations and aside from operational issues (change of use of certain rooms), the buildings are designed to be fully accessible for disabled users.

# APPENDIX A

## Access Audit Template



## **BUILDING ACCESSIBILITY APPRAISAL**

Property Name: \_\_\_\_\_

UPRN: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Survey:        /        / 2017        Name of Surveyor:        STEVE LEWIS  
\_\_\_\_\_

### ***Condition Grading:***

- A     →     Fully Accessible Building. Compliant with DDA.
  
- B     →     Largely Accessible Building. Largely compliant with DDA but some works still required.
  
- C     →     Largely Inaccessible Building. Non-compliant with DDA requirements but could be made so subject to extensive works.
  
- D     →     Inaccessible Building. Non compliant with DDA requirements and cannot be made so at reasonable expense if at all.

**ACCESSIBILITY GRADING**





<b>1 Approach, routes and street furniture</b>		<b>Cost</b>	<b>£</b>
1.1	Access route length ( <i>reasonable walking distance of public Highway, public transport and car park</i> ). Adequate seating?	<i>Comments:</i>	
1.2	Pathways – free of kerbs, sufficient width, even surfacing, slip resistant, free from obstruction ( <i>bins, bollards, etc</i> ), steep?		
1.3	Sufficient landmarks and signage to aid orientation? Segregation between pedestrians and traffic?		
1.4	Adequately lit?		
<b>2 Car parking</b>		<b>Cost</b>	<b>£</b>
2.1	Disabled parking bays clearly signposted from car park entrance? Sufficient number? Setting down points?	<i>Comments:</i>	
2.2	Disabled parking identifiable, to the correct dimensions and adequately lit? Smooth surfaces ( <i>free of stones</i> )?		
2.3	Is parking close to building and access route to entrance acceptable ( <i>drop kerbs and tactile warnings</i> )?		
2.4	Does parking bay allow enough space for transfer to wheelchair? Enough room for tail loading?		
<b>3 External ramps (approx. £2.5K per 100mm rise)</b>		<b>Cost</b>	<b>£</b>
3.1	Ramp accompanied by steps for ambulant disabled people ( <i>if rise is greater than 300mm</i> )?	<i>Comments:</i>	
3.2	Ramp wide enough ( <i>1500</i> ), suitably graded, suitable handrails ( <i>at 900-1000</i> ), non-slip surface and protected edges?		
3.3	If no permanent ramp, is a portable ramp, platform lift present?		
<b>4 External steps</b>		<b>Cost</b>	<b>£</b>
4.1	Are there visual and tactile ( <i>corduroy</i> ) warnings at top and bottom of steps ( <i>400 mm from steps; 1200 x 800</i> )?	<i>Comments:</i>	
4.2	Is lighting adequate and well positioned?		
4.3	Correct tread length ( <i>280-425</i> ), riser heights ( <i>150-170</i> ); adequate width ( <i>1200</i> ) and identifiable nosings? Consistent?		
4.4	Landing large enough and provided at intermediate levels in a long flight? Suitable handrails each side ( <i>900-1000</i> )?		

<b>5 Entrances</b>			<b>Cost</b>	<b>£</b>
5.1	Main entrance clearly distinguishable from façade, easy to locate and clearly signed?		<i>Comments:</i>	
5.2	Is the door opening (750mm exist; 1000mm new) / lobby (1750 clear) wide enough and adequate opening space (300 clearance at door stile)? Outward opening doors clearly guarded?			
5.3	Level / flush threshold? Weather mat firm and flush? Weather protection (canopy)?			
5.4	Sufficient visions panel (500-800; 1.15-1.5)? Safety markings to glazing (850-1000; 1400-1600)? Sufficient access signage?			
5.5	Suitable height (750-1000) / type of door access system (for blind /mute users) and ironmongery (mobility)? Power assisted?			
<b>6 Reception areas and lobbies (if necessary)</b>			<b>Cost</b>	<b>£</b>
6.1	Clearly marked and sufficient quantity of signage (reception / main office; WC; lift; stairs)? Clearly viewed from external.		<i>Comments:</i>	
6.2	Reception desk suitable height?			
6.3	Surfaces suitable? Lobby doors suitable (same as entrance doors and provide 1750 mm clearance)?			
<b>7 Corridors</b>			<b>Cost</b>	<b>£</b>
7.1	Wide enough and free from obstructions (adequate space for wheelchair users to turn)? Recessed fixtures i.e. extinguishers?		<i>Comments:</i>	
7.2	Natural and artificial lighting avoiding glare and silhouettes?			
7.3	Suitable floor surfacing (slip resistant; bright / boldly patterned coverings avoided)?			
7.4	Directional, information and tactile signage provided and clearly visible?			
<b>8 Internal doors</b>			<b>Cost</b>	<b>£</b>
8.1	Glass doors – clearly visible when closed i.e.safety markings to glazing (850-1000; 1400-1600)?		<i>Comments:</i>	
8.2	Sufficient vision panels to view opposite side of door (500-800; 1.15-1.5)?			
8.3	Clear opening width (exist. 750–775, new 800–825); adequate opening space (incl .300mm to opening stile)?			
8.4	Handles easily gripped and operated? Light and easy to open? Appropriate door closer? Electromagnets linked to fire alarm?			

<b>9 Internal ramps</b>			<b>Cost</b>	<b>£</b>
9.1	Is there a ramp at any internal level change? Accompanied by steps where rise is greater than 300mm?		<i>Comments:</i>	
9.2	Wide enough and suitably graded with non-slip covering? Clearly signed / identifiable? Clear of door swings?			
9.3	Exposed edges protected to prevent accidents and suitable handrails?			
<b>10 Internal stairs</b>			<b>Cost</b>	<b>£</b>
10.1	Correct tread length (280-425), riser heights (150-170); adequate width (1200) and identifiable nosings? Consistent?		<i>Comments:</i>	
10.2	Suitable handrail each side (900-1000)?			
10.3	Landings big enough and provided at intermediate levels in long flight?			
10.4	Clearly identifiable signage (visual and tactile)?			
10.5	Adequate and well-positioned lighting?			
<b>11 Lifts – If no lift available, new installation will cost around £40K</b>			<b>Cost</b>	<b>£</b>
11.1	Passenger lift available in a building of more than 1 storey? Car dimension (1400 x 900) and openings (800) sufficient?		<i>Comments:</i>	
11.2	Support rails in car appropriately designed and positioned? Mirror to rear to aid wheelchair users to reverse (up to 900)?			
11.3	Adequate controls (in easy reach of users; distinguishable / visible from background), including emergency call?			
11.4	Voice indication of floor reached? Doors stay open for sufficient time / infrared override system?			
11.5	Floor indicator clear (visible from lift car i.e. "Floor 2") and call control within easy reach of all users?			
11.6	Lift location clearly defined by visual and tactile information?			
11.7	Sufficient unobstructed space for waiting and manoeuvring (at least 1500 x 1500 unobstructed landing space)?			
11.8	Alternative, suitable stairs?			

<b>12 Platform lifts and stairlifts</b>			<b>Cost</b>	<b>£</b>
12.1	Can platform lift / stairlift be conveniently and safely accessed ( <i>independent usage</i> )? Clear Instructions?		<i>Comments:</i>	
12.2	Easily identifiable / reachable controls for standing / seated users? Adequate platform (1250 x 800) adequately guarded?			
<b>13 WCs: general provision</b>			<b>Cost</b>	<b>£</b>
13.1	Lobby door light enough to open? Lobby sufficient size ( <i>1750mm clearance</i> )?		<i>Comments:</i>	
13.2	Slip resistant floor throughout?			
13.3	Fittings all easily distinguishable from backing ( <i>effective visual contrast</i> )?			
13.4	Compartment door controls all easily gripped and operated?			
13.5	Sufficient space (in general WC's) for ambulant disabled people to manoeuvre?			
13.6	Sufficient sanitaryware ( <i>WHB at accessible height; taps easily operated; low level urinal</i> ) and disabled ironmongery ( <i>grab rails; signage</i> ).			
13.7	Sufficient travel distance and clearly signed?			
<b>14 WCs: wheelchair users.</b>			<b>Cost</b>	<b>£</b>
14.1	Adequate Facilities? Large enough ( <i>2200 x 1500</i> ) to allow manoeuvring into position? Unobstructed ( <i>e.g. pipe boxing</i> )?		<i>Comments:</i>	
14.2	Hand and drying within easy reach of wheelchair seat?			
14.3	Sufficient travel distance and clearly signed ( <i>no further than able bodied</i> )? Are WC's labelled left or right handed, or peninsula approach?			
14.4	Adequate door ironmongery, lightswitches, sanitaryware, taps, grabrails and audible alarm?			
<b>15 Internal surfaces</b>			<b>Cost</b>	<b>£</b>
15.1	Floor surfaces suitable for wheelchair passage and unobstructed?		<i>Comments:</i>	
15.2	Distinguishable fittings/fixtures ( <i>no glare / reflection</i> )? Colours, tones and textures varied?			
15.3	Textured surfaces to aid orientation in people with impaired sight? Slip resistant floors; no bright / distracting coverings.			

<b>16 Facilities</b>		<b>Cost</b>	<b>£</b>
16.1	Sufficient / correct seating provided ( <i>armrests; different levels; where waiting likely</i> )? Adjacent areas for wheelchair users?	<i>Comments:</i>	
16.2	Service desks / counters: space on both sides for wheelchair users? Induction loops installed?		
16.3	Telephones: Fixed at a height that allows easy use by wheelchair users? Is there a textphone?		
<b>17 Wayfinding</b>		<b>Cost</b>	<b>£</b>
17.1	Overall layout of building reasonably clear and logical?	<i>Comments:</i>	
17.2	Signs in logical position, readable and identifiable? Available in tactile form? Maps / plans guides available or required?		
<b>18 Lighting</b>		<b>Cost</b>	<b>£</b>
18.1	Lighting designed and sufficient to meet a wide range of users' needs? PIR Activated booster? Adequately positioned (no dark areas)?	<i>Comments:</i>	
18.2	Workspaces: is lighting controllable and adjustable? Is fluorescent lighting installed only where it is unlikely to interfere with hearing aids?		
<b>19 Acoustics</b>		<b>Cost</b>	<b>£</b>
19.1	Acoustic environment for intended use? Background noise kept to a minimum?	<i>Comments:</i>	
19.2	Quiet and noisy areas separated by buffer zone?		
19.3	Environment free of unnecessarily obtrusive noise (e.g. heating units)?		
<b>20 Means of escape</b>		<b>Cost</b>	<b>£</b>
20.1	Ground floor exit routes as accessible to all ( <i>including wheelchair users</i> )? Vertical escape from upper or lower floors possible via fire protected lift with independent power supply?	<i>Comments:</i>	
20.2	If people with disabilities cannot completely evacuate the building, can they reach places of safety or refuges?		