

Working Together for Equality

Gibraltar Building Rules Approved Document R – Access to and use of Buildings

It is fundamental to people with disabilities that disability is recognised as an equality issue. Do not let yourself be a barrier to disability equality



MINISTRY OF EQUALITY

HM Government of Gibraltar

**“Gibraltar; everybody different,
everybody equal”**

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Note to readers:

The typeface, font (Arial 14) and left justification applied in this booklet has been used in order for the content to be legible to more readers. In addition, this booklet has been printed on matt paper in order to reduce reflective services. This booklet is also available electronically.

Introduction

Most of the building works in Gibraltar require Building Rules approval. This has to be in accordance with 'The Public Health Act'. These regulations are separated into different categories addressing all aspects of a building and are aimed at improving the environment in which we live in.

Approved Document R is a new set of guidelines that have been added to the Gibraltar Building Rules and are similar to the Approved Document M in the UK. The aim of these guidelines is to enable all people to gain access to buildings and use its facilities. The implementation of the following requirements will benefit society as a whole.

- R1: Access and use.
- R2: Access to extensions to buildings and other dwellings.
- R3: Sanitary conveniences in extensions to buildings other than dwellings.
- R4: Sanitary conveniences in dwellings.

Approved Document R applies to all new buildings and any refurbishment works that require an

application to be made to Town Planning & Building Control

There are also obligations under the Equal Opportunities Act 2006 and the Disability Act 2017 for the service providers and employers to consider barriers created by physical features which may inhibit the access and use of a building and its facilities. The Building Control Section within The Department of Town Planning and Building Control has worked in conjunction with the Ministry of Equality for the purposes of introducing this document.

This document should be considered solely as a guide to Approved Document R. For more technical information and further details on measurements and fittings please consult the approved document.

This booklet has been prepared by Building Control and the Department of Equality to provide a summary of what is required under Approved Document R

Basic Requirements

- Access to all parts of a building should be available to all, irrespective of any disability.

- Accessible sanitary conveniences should be made available in all buildings.
- If there are seating arrangements available there should be reasonable provision made for the seating of people with disabilities.

Access

The objective of the access requirements in the regulations is to provide reasonable provision within the boundaries of the building or plot to allow a person with disabilities to gain access to the building from the point of entry from outside the plot. In most cases this is possible by providing a level or ramped approach to the building.

By following the guidance on Approved Document R, the person designing would be assisted in achieving compliance. However, this is only intended to provide guidance since there may well be alternative ways of achieving compliance with the requirement. There is therefore no obligation to adopt any particular solution contained in this part if the designer wishes to meet the requirement in some other way, provided that the alternative solutions have the approval of the authority

that enforces building control.



These photographs show how a reasonable access to a building may be provided for wheelchair users.

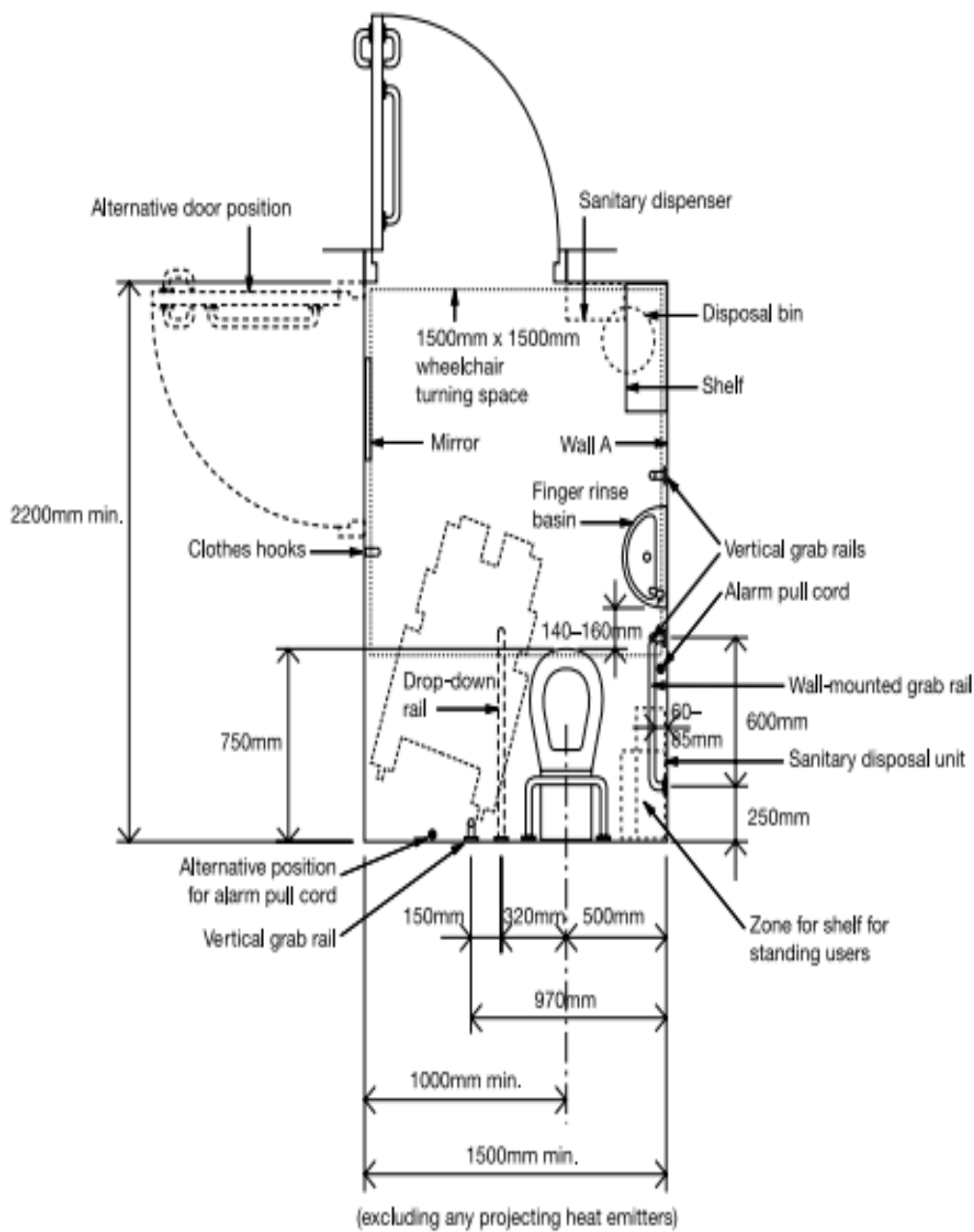
Sanitary Conveniences

Reasonable provision for sanitary conveniences should be made on the levels where activities occur. Accessible toilets must be provided for wheelchair users in a manner so as to allow them to enter, manoeuvre and exit the compartment.

There are different types of approaches to these compartments that will give the user reasonable access. The guidance on the Approved Document R will facilitate the designer in achieving compliance.



The above photograph shows a typical WC arrangement of fittings.

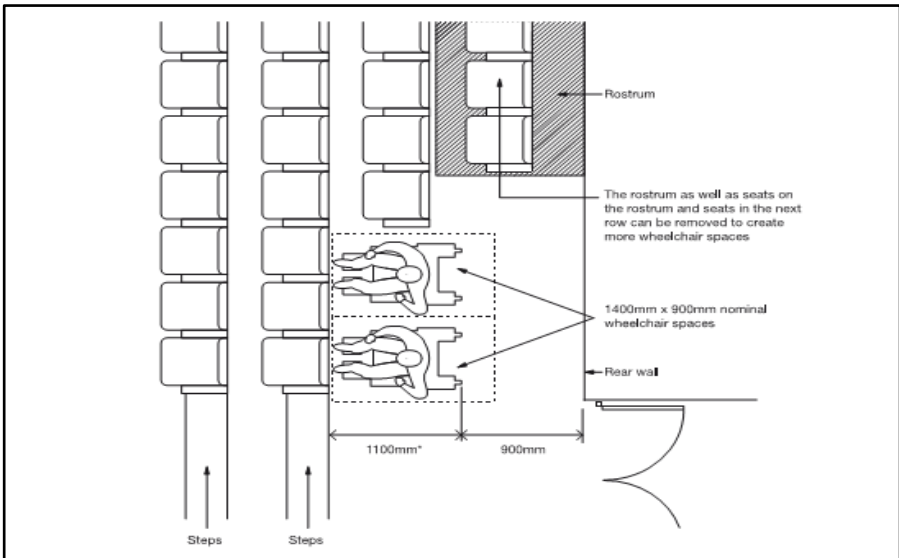


Note
 Layout for right-hand transfer to WC

Public Seating in Buildings

The Approved Document R will provide guidance and design considerations which need to be taken into account when building with seating facilities.

Wheelchair users and people with mobility or sensory impairment should be provided with spaces into which they can manoeuvre easily. This may be achieved by providing greater spacing between rows of seats. Care is therefore needed in the design and location of these seats.



Example of wheelchair space provision in a cinema or theatre as found in Approved Document R.

Lifts

A lift is the most common means of access to other levels in a building for wheelchair users. If a lift is provided it must be accessible to all.

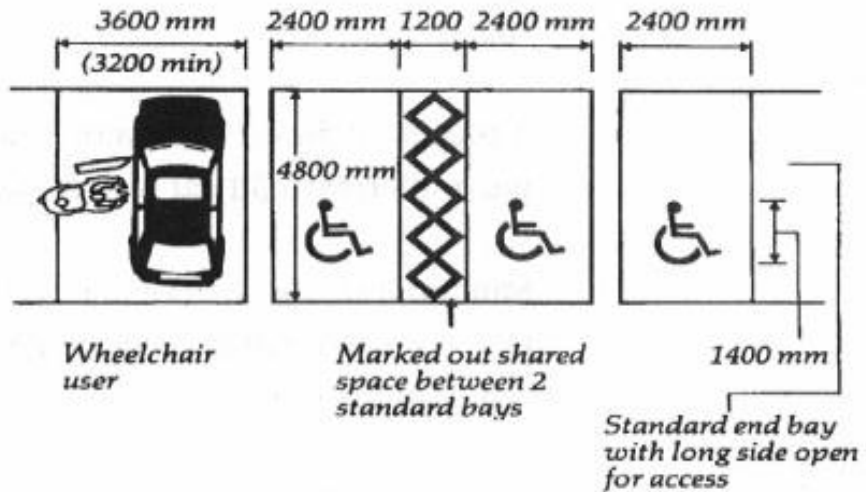
Parking

Buildings that provide parking facilities should take into account the needs of people with disabilities. People with mobility impairments should be able to alight from the vehicle close to the principal entrance in a way that is convenient for entry.

By following the recommendations in the Approved Document R, car parking requirements will be satisfied if:

- At least one parking bay designed for people with disabilities is provided close to the main entrance.
- The dimensions of the space are as shown on the diagram below.

- The surface of the area is firm and slip resistant.

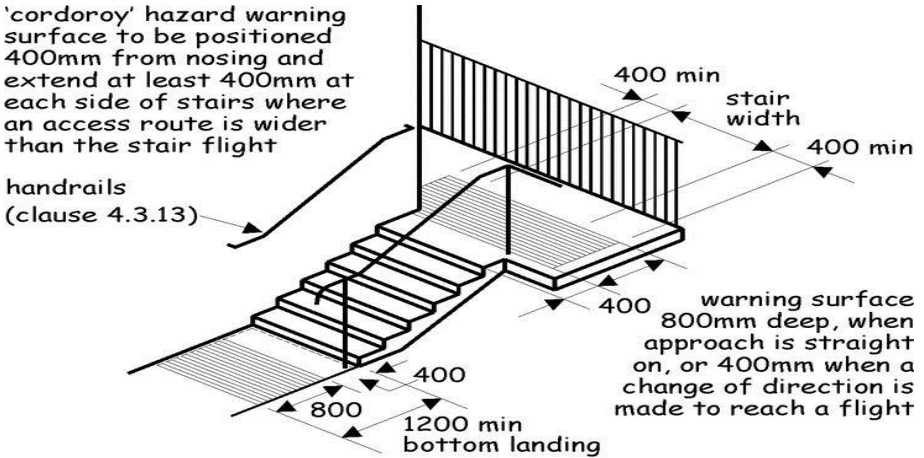


The location of the ticket machines should be positioned to allow wheelchair users its access.

Design Principles for Visually Impaired

When moving around, visually impaired people will seek and make use of tactile information underfoot, particularly detectable contrasts in surface texture. This can be used to convey important information about their environment, for example, hazard warning or the presence of an amenity. The use of blister

paving as a warning device close to a vehicular access route and corduroy warning surface at the top of a staircase is particularly helpful.



Aids to Communicate

Aids to communication is covered in the Approved Document R and includes design criteria such as signage, visual contrast, lighting and audible aids. The idea is to make provision for adequate aids of communication to assist people with visual or hearing impairment when accessing a building and to fully utilise the facilities within.

There are various types of audible aids that will satisfy the requirements of people who have hearing impairments such as clearly audible public address systems and visual aids.



Limits on Application

The requirement R1 does not apply to:

- An extension of or material alteration of a dwelling.
- Any part of a building which is used solely to enable the building or any service or fitting in

the building to be inspected repaired or maintained.

Requirement R2 does not apply where suitable access to the extension is provided through the building that is extended.

Requirement R3 does not apply where there is reasonable provision for sanitary conveniences elsewhere in the building, such that people occupied in, or otherwise having occasion to enter the extension can gain access to and use those sanitary conveniences.



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