

27 October 2025

CABINET – 4 NOVEMBER 2025

A meeting of Cabinet will be held at 6.00pm on Tuesday 4 November 2025 in the Council Chamber at the Town Hall, Rugby.

Members of the public may also view the meeting via the livestream available on the Council's website.

Dan Green
Chief Executive

A G E N D A PART 1 – PUBLIC BUSINESS

1. Minutes.

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 7 October 2025.

2. Apologies.

To receive apologies for absence from the meeting.

3. Declarations of Interest.

To receive declarations of –

(a) non-pecuniary interests as defined by the Council's Code of Conduct for Councillors;

(b) pecuniary interests as defined by the Council's Code of Conduct for Councillors; and

(c) notice under Section 106 Local Government Finance Act 1992 – non-payment of Community Charge or Council Tax.

Note: Councillors are reminded that they should declare the existence and nature of their interests at the commencement of the meeting (or as soon as the interest becomes apparent). If that interest is a prejudicial interest, the Councillor must withdraw from the room unless one of the exceptions applies.

Membership of Warwickshire County Council or any Parish Council is classed as a non-pecuniary interest under the Code of Conduct. A Councillor does not need to declare this interest unless the Councillor chooses to speak on a matter relating to their membership. If the Councillor does not wish to speak on the matter, the Councillor may still vote on the matter without making a declaration.

4. Question Time.

Notice of questions from the public should be delivered in writing or by e-mail to the Chief Executive at least three clear working days prior to the meeting (no later than Wednesday 29 October 2025).

Growth and Investment, Digital and Communications Portfolio

Nothing to report to this meeting.

Partnerships and Wellbeing Portfolio

Nothing to report to this meeting.

Finance, Performance, Legal and Governance Portfolio

5. Accounts Payable Invoice Automation Software (report to follow).

6. Protocol for flag flying and lighting of the Town Hall.

Communities, Homes, Regulation and Safety Portfolio

7. Works to make the Town Hall compliant with fire and accessibility regulations.

Operations and Traded Services Portfolio

8. Annual report of the Climate Emergency Working Group - October 2025.

Organisational change Portfolio

Nothing to report to this meeting.

The following item contains reports which are to be considered en bloc subject to any Portfolio Holder requesting discussion of an individual report

Nothing to report to this meeting.

PART 2 – EXEMPT INFORMATION

There is no business involving exempt information to be considered.

Any additional papers for this meeting can be accessed via the website.

The Reports of Officers are attached.

Membership of Cabinet:

Councillors Moran (Chair), C Edwards, Livesey, Mistry, O'Rourke and Robinson.

CALL-IN PROCEDURES

Publication of the decisions made at this meeting will normally be within three working days of the decision. Each decision will come into force at the expiry of five working days after its publication. This does not apply to decisions made to take immediate effect. Call-in procedures are set out in detail in Standing Order 15 of Part 3c of the Constitution.

If you have any general queries with regard to this agenda please contact Claire Waleczek, Democratic and Support Services Manager (01788 533524 or e-mail claire.waleczek@rugby.gov.uk). Any specific queries concerning reports should be directed to the listed contact officer.

Agenda No 6

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

Report Title:	Protocol for flags and lighting of the Town Hall
Name of Committee:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	4 November 2025
Report Director:	Chief Officer - Legal and Governance
Portfolio:	Finance and Performance, Legal and Governance
Ward Relevance:	N/A
Prior Consultation:	All Leaders' Group
Contact Officer:	Claire Waleczek, Democratic and Support Services Manager claire.waleczek@rugby.gov.uk
Public or Private:	Public
Report Subject to Call-In:	Yes
Report En-Bloc:	No
Forward Plan:	Yes
Corporate Priorities:	This report relates to the following priority(ies): ☐ A Healthier Rugby – To support people to live healthier, longer, and more independent lives. ☐ A Thriving Rugby – To deliver a thriving economy which brings Borough-wide investment and regenerates Rugby Town Centre. ☐ A Greener Rugby – To protect the environment and ensure the Borough adapts to climate change. ☐ A Fairer Rugby – To reduce inequalities and improve housing across the Borough. Corporate Strategy 2025-2035 ☒ This report does not specifically relate to any Council priorities but it is considered that a protocol for flags and lighting of the Town Hall be implemented.
Summary:	This report outlines a proposed protocol for flag flying and lighting of the Town Hall for adoption by the Council, as attached at Appendix 1. The proposed protocol sets out clear guidance on the display of flags on the Town Hall and public spaces, ensuring consistency, respect, and alignment with national standards and local values.

It also outlines a proposed procedure for requests for the Town Hall to be lit to mark national or local awareness days/weeks.

Financial Implications:

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

Risk Management/Health and Safety Implications:

There are no direct risk management or health and safety implications arising from this report.

Environmental Implications:

There are no direct environmental implications arising from this report.

Legal Implications:

Equality and Diversity:

An equality impact assessment is attached at Appendix 2.

Options:

To introduce a protocol to add clarity on flags to be flown at the Town Hall and how organisations can apply to have the building lit.

To continue without a protocol and deal with applications for lighting of Town Hall on an ad hoc basis.

Recommendation:

The protocol for flag flying and lighting of the Town Hall, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, be approved.

Reasons for Recommendation:

To ensure consistency with applications for lighting of Town Hall and to provide clarity on flags to be flown at the Town Hall.

Cabinet - 4 November 2025

Protocol for flags and lighting of the Town Hall

Public Report of the Chief Officer - Legal and Governance

Recommendation

The protocol for flag flying and lighting of the Town Hall, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, be approved.

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 This report outlines a proposed protocol for flag flying and lighting of the Town Hall for adoption by the Council, as attached at Appendix 1. The proposed protocol sets out clear guidance on the display of flags on the Town Hall and public spaces, ensuring consistency, respect, and alignment with national standards and local values.
- 1.2 It also outlines a proposed procedure for requests for the Town Hall to be lit to mark national or local awareness days/weeks.

2. Background

- 2.1 Flag flying is a symbolic act that reflects civic pride, national identity, and community solidarity. Local authorities are encouraged to fly flags on designated national days and to mark significant local, cultural, or commemorative events. The Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and the Flag Institute provide guidance on appropriate flag usage.
- 2.2 The Council wishes to adopt a Flag Protocol to provide clarity and certainty over which flags will be flown, and when the Town Hall is light, and to reduce the amount of Member and senior officer time spent dealing with ad hoc requests. The Council's protocol incorporates the best practice on nationality flags as well as flags that the Council has itself chosen to fly. Further the protocol offers flexibility moving forward to raise awareness and mark national or local events, themes and occasions.

3. Key Features of the Protocol

- 3.1 Designated flag flying days - these include national observances such as Armed Forces Day, Remembrance Sunday, and royal anniversaries.

- 3.2 Flag hierarchy and positioning – this ensures the Union Flag is flown in the position of honour at all times, with clear rules for multiple flags.
- 3.3 Half-masting guidance - this provides a clear procedure for mourning periods and solemn occasions.
- 3.4 Community representation – the protocol allows for the display of flags representing diversity and solidarity, subject to approval.
- 3.5 Maintenance and standards - flags must be clean, undamaged, and appropriately displayed.
- 3.6 Lighting of the Town Hall – a clear process for any requests.

4. Reason for Recommendation

The Protocol establishes consistency and transparency in decision making regarding raising flags and lighting the Town Hall.

5. Options

Cabinet could:

- (a) decide that it does not want a protocol for raising flags or lighting the Town Hall;
- (b) decide in principle, it does want to agree a protocol for raising flags and lighting the Town Hall but asks for the protocol at Appendix 1 to be reviewed further and brought back to Cabinet; or
- (c) agree the Protocol in Appendix 1 for flying flags and lighting the Town Hall.

Name of Meeting: Cabinet

Date of Meeting: 4 November 2025

Subject Matter: Protocol for flags and lighting of the Town Hall

Originating Department: Legal and Governance

DO ANY BACKGROUND PAPERS APPLY ☐ YES ☒ NO

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Doc No	Title of Document and Hyperlink
	Appendix 1 –Protocol
	Appendix 2- Equality Assessment

The background papers relating to reports on planning applications and which are open to public inspection under Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972, consist of the planning applications, referred to in the reports, and all written responses to consultations made by the Local Planning Authority, in connection with those applications.

☐ Exempt information is contained in the following documents:

Doc No	Relevant Paragraph of Schedule 12A

RUGBY BOROUGH COUNCIL**PROTOCOL FOR FLAGS AND LIGHTING OF THE TOWN HALL****1. Purpose**

Civic buildings are an important part of the local community, often acting as a focal point when local, regional or national events occur.

This protocol outlines the principles and procedures for flying flags on Rugby Borough Council buildings and designated public spaces. It ensures flags are flown with dignity, consistency, and in accordance with national guidance and local values.

Any national directive or protocol, such as that implemented upon the death of the monarch, will take priority over this protocol.

The protocol also outlines procedures for requests from local organisations/individuals to light up the Town Hall in support of local/national awareness days/weeks.

3. General Principles

- Flags must be clean, undamaged, and securely fastened.
- Flags will be flown in accordance with national and local planning regulations.
- Flags shall be flown from sunrise to sunset, unless illuminated at night.
- Flags must not be used for political, commercial, or religious promotion.
- Rugby Borough Council reserves the right to approve or decline requests to fly non-standard flags.
- Consultation will be interpreted as meaning genuine and reasonable efforts to consult.

4. Flag Locations

Flags may be flown at:

- the Town Hall, Rugby (three flagpoles)
- designated public spaces (e.g. Caldecott Park, war memorials)
- the flagpoles adjacent to the gyratory system

5. Designated Flag Flying Days

The Government encourages all UK government buildings in England, Scotland and Wales to fly the Union Flag at all times, which the Council has chosen to do. There are a number of designated days annually when the Union Flag should fly on UK government buildings. The list of days is

maintained and published by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and can be accessed on the www.gov.uk website.

The Council will follow guidance issued by the relevant Government department which sets out flag arrangements for national and local government buildings. This will inform when and how flags should be flown and for what duration.

Flags will also be flown on events/dates as outlined in Appendix 1 to the protocol.

7. Half-Mast Protocol

Half-mast means the flag is flown two-thirds of the way up the flagpole, with at least the height of the flag between the top of the flag and the top of the flagpole.

The Union Flag will only be flown at half-mast:

- on the death of the Sovereign or senior Royal. All other flags usually flown on the Town Hall building will be removed in accordance with national guidance
- during national periods of mourning
- as directed by HM Government or the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities

The Borough flag will be flown at half mast:

- on the death of an individual bestowed with Freedom of the Borough, Past Mayor, serving Councillor (including a serving Mayor or Deputy Mayor) and on the day of the funeral.
- on the death of the serving Member of Parliament representing the Borough and on the day of the funeral.
- on the death of serving armed forces personnel who are residents of the Borough and on the day of funeral.
- on the death of an officer of the Council who dies in service and on the day of the funeral.

Flags will usually be returned to full-mast at sunset or earlier if the Town Hall Superintendent is not available at sunset. Alternatively, it must be returned to full-mast first thing the following morning during a weekday. This would not apply on a Saturday morning - the flag should be returned to full-mast on the Friday and not left at half-mast over the weekend through to Monday morning.

8. Requests to Fly Other Flags

Community groups or individuals may request to fly a flag by submitting a written application to the Chief Officer – Legal and Governance at least four weeks in advance. Requests must:

- align with Council values and national guidance
- be non-political and non-commercial
- be approved by the Leader of the Council, after consultation with the Group Leaders and the Chief Executive.

9. Lighting of the Town Hall

Community groups or individuals may request for the Town Hall to be lit in support of national or local awareness days/weeks by submitting a written application to the Chief Officer – Legal and Governance at least four weeks in advance. Requests must:

- align with Council values and national guidance
- be non-political and non-commercial
- be approved by the Leader of the Council, after consultation with the Group Leaders and the Chief Executive.

10. Governance and Review

- This protocol shall be reviewed regularly in response to changes in national policy.
- The Chief Officer – Legal and Governance shall oversee implementation and ensure compliance.
- Any departures from the dates for flag flying in Appendix 1 to the protocol will be made by the Leader, after consultation with the Group Leaders and Chief Executive.
- Flags and lighting equipment will be retained by the Council's Asset Maintenance team. Town Hall Superintendents from that team are the only persons authorised to raise or lower a flag and to install lighting equipment.
- The decision to purchase any flag will be made by the Leader after consultation with the Group Leaders and the Chief Executive.
- The Asset Maintenance team is responsible for checking that the appropriate flag for a designated flag flying period is available and in appropriate condition in advance of it being required.

11 Further information on flag flying

For further information and reference to the flying of flags please see the links below:

['Flying flags: a plain English guide' - Government website](#)

[Union Flag flying guidance for UK government buildings](#)

[Flying Flags in the United Kingdom](#)

Flags to be flown on specific occasions

Event	Date(s)	Relevant flag and location
Remembrance Sunday	From launch date of the Royal British Legion's Poppy Appeal to sunset on 11 November	Poppy Appeal flag (Town Hall) Union Flag (Whitehall Recreation Ground) – for Remembrance Sunday Service only
Armistice Day	11 November	Poppy Appeal flag (Town Hall) Union Flag (Whitehall Recreation Ground)- for Armistice Day ceremony only
Armed Forces Day	Flown for the entire week up to and including Armed Forces Day in June	Armed Forces flag (Town Hall)
Battle of Britain Day	15 September – flag to be flown for whole week in which the day falls	Battle of Britain flag
Commonwealth Day	Second Monday in March each year	Commonwealth flag (Town Hall)
Pride Month	All of June apart from Armed Forces week	Pride flag (Town Hall)
Warwickshire Pride Festival	Usually held in August	Pride flag (Town Hall)
Local civic events (e.g. Annual Council, Freedom of the Borough ceremonies).	Dates of meetings/receptions	Borough flag (Town Hall)
Rugby World Cup and Six Nations tournaments	Dates confirmed by RFU	Flagpoles at gyratory system

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EqIA)

Context

1. The Public Sector Equality Duty as set out under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires Rugby Borough Council when making decisions to have due regard to the following:
 - eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and other conduct prohibited by the Act,
 - advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not,
 - fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.
2. The characteristics protected by the Equality Act are:
 - age
 - disability
 - gender reassignment
 - marriage/civil partnership
 - pregnancy/maternity
 - race
 - religion/belief
 - sex/gender
 - sexual orientation
3. In addition to the above-protected characteristics, you should consider the crosscutting elements of the proposed policy, such as impact on social inequalities and impact on carers who look after older people or people with disabilities as part of this assessment.
4. The Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) document is a tool that enables RBC to test and analyse the nature and impact of what it is currently doing or is planning to do in the future. It can be used flexibly for reviewing existing arrangements but in particular should enable identification where further consultation, engagement and data is required.
5. The questions will enable you to record your findings.
6. Where the EqIA relates to a continuing project, it must be reviewed and updated at each stage of the decision.
7. Once completed and signed off the EqIA will be published [online](#).
8. An EqIA must accompany all **Key Decisions** and **Cabinet Reports**.
9. For further information, refer to the EqIA guidance for staff.
10. For advice and support, contact:
Rebecca Ewers
Corporate Equality & Diversity Officer
rebecca.ewers@rugby.gov.uk
01788 533509

Equality Impact Assessment

Service Area	Legal and Governance
Policy/Service being assessed	Protocol for flags and lighting of the Town Hall
Is this a new or existing policy/service? If existing policy/service please state date of last assessment	This is a new protocol.
EqlA Review Team – List of members	Claire Waleczek, Rebecca Ewers
Date of this assessment	14 October 2025
Signature of responsible officer (to be signed after the EqlA has been completed)	Claire Waleczek

A copy of the completed and signed Equality Impact Assessment report, including relevant data and information to be forwarded to the Corporate Equality & Diversity Officer.

Details of Strategy/ Service/ Policy to be analysed

<u>Stage 1 – Policy to be analysed</u>	
(1) Describe the main aims, objectives and purpose of the Strategy/Service/Policy (or decision)?	The proposed protocol sets out clear guidance on the display of flags on the Town Hall and public spaces, ensuring consistency, respect, and alignment with national standards and local values. This aligns with the flags which are currently flown and would formalise this arrangement. It also outlines a proposed procedure for requests for the Town Hall to be lit to mark national or local awareness days/weeks.
(2) How does it fit with Rugby Borough Council's Corporate priorities and your service area priorities?	Although the protocol does not directly fit with Council's corporate priorities, it demonstrates best practice for local authorities to ensure alignment with local values.
(3) What are the expected outcomes you are hoping to achieve?	To provide clarity on flags that will be flown by the Council and the implementation of a procedure to process requests for the lighting of the Town Hall to mark national/local awareness days/weeks.
(4) Does or will the policy or decision affect: • Customers • Employees • Wider community or groups	The protocol may affect both employees and the wider community.
(5) Will the policy or decision involve substantial changes in resources?	The policy will not involve substantial changes in resources.
<u>Stage 2 – Evidence about user population and consultation</u>	As a minimum you must consider what is known about the population likely to be affected which will support your understanding of the impact of the policy, e.g. service uptake/usage, customer satisfaction surveys, staffing data, performance data, research information (national, regional and local data sources).

Appendix 2

(1) What does the data tell you about the groups this policy or decision impacts? Possible data sources: • national statistics/census data • local statistics • evaluations • analysis of complaints • user feedback • outcomes from consultation/community voice • Council published information, service data • District and Ward Profile – Warwickshire Observatory • Office of National Statistics • Fingertips health profiles • Indices of Multiple Deprivation • RBC Annual Workforce Equality Report	The Union Flag will continue to be flown every day which would encompass all nationally recognised days such as Royal Family birthdays. The protocol also proposes to continue to fly flags for Remembrance tide and Armed Forces week to recognise both the veterans and serving military personnel within our Borough. The protocol proposes to fly the Pride flag for Pride month and on Warwickshire Pride Festival. This demonstrates the Council's support for equality and diversity within the LGBTQ+ community.
(2a) Have you consulted or involved those groups that are likely to be affected by the strategy/ service/policy you want to implement? If yes, please state which groups were involved in the consultation and what were their views and how have their views influenced the policy/decision?	Any decisions that are a departure from the agreed dates and flags within the protocol will be considered by all political Group Leaders in consultation with the Chief Executive. This will help to mitigate any bias in decisions made. The draft protocol, as at Appendix 1, has been agreed in consultation with all political Group Leaders.

Appendix 2

(2b) If you have not consulted or engaged with communities that are likely to be affected by the policy/decision, give details about when you intend to carry out consultation or provide reasons for why you feel this is not necessary.	The draft protocol, as at Appendix 1, has been agreed in consultation with all political Group Leaders.		
<u>Stage 3 – Analysis of impact</u>			
(1) <u>Protected Characteristics</u> From your data and consultations is there any positive, adverse or negative impact identified for any particular group, which could amount to discrimination? If yes, identify the groups and how they are affected.	Protected Characteristic	Nature of Impact Positive, Neutral, Adverse (explain why)	Extent of impact Low, medium, high
	Age	N/A	
	Disability	N/A	
	Sex	N/A	
	Gender reassignment	Positive – Council support inclusivity for LGBTQ+ community	Low
	Marriage/civil partnership	N/A	
	Pregnancy/maternity	N/A	
	Race	N/A	
	Religion/belief	N/A	
	Sexual Orientation	Positive – Council support inclusivity for LGBTQ+ community	Low

Appendix 2

(2) <u>Cross cutting themes</u> (a) Are your proposals likely to impact on social inequalities e.g. child poverty, geographically disadvantaged communities? If yes, please explain how?	Description of impact	Nature of impact Positive, Neutral, Adverse (explain why)	Extent of impact Low, medium, high
	Socio-economic e.g.: child poverty, income level, education level, working hours/occupation, family/social support, access to good nutrition	Positive – in support of Armed Forces and veterans. Aligns with the Council's support of Armed Forces Covenant	Low
	Environmental e.g.: housing status, transport links, geography, access to services, air quality, noise pollution	N/A	
(3) Using the information gathered in stages 2 and 3, please describe how the policy/strategy/service will: a. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other unlawful conduct prohibited by the act b. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share and people who do not share a relevant protected characteristic c. Foster good relations between people who share and people who do not share a relevant protected characteristic	Offering an opportunity for residents or organisations to highlight specific awareness days/weeks through lighting of the Town Hall which may foster good relations and increase visibility.		
(4) Are there any obvious barriers to accessing the service? If yes, how can they be overcome?	Consideration of accessibility to applying for lighting of the Town Hall will be given.		

Appendix 2

(5) What Equality Monitoring Data will be collected to analyse impact? How will the Equality Monitoring Data collected be used? If no Equality Monitoring Data is being collected, why not? For support with this section, please refer to the Equality Monitoring Guidance.	Monitoring of online responses and any complaints received about the decisions made.
(6) Complete this section if any adverse impacts were identified in 3.1. Outline any actions that will be taken to remove or mitigate the adverse impacts identified in 3.1 to ensure that no discrimination is taking place. If removing or mitigating the impact is not possible, you may in certain circumstances, justify the discrimination. If that is the case, please give evidence for why justifying is possible in this case.	

<u>Stage 4 – Action Planning, Review and Monitoring</u>	
(1) Data analysis What does feedback from Equality Monitoring Data gathered tell you about impact on groups? Were there any unforeseen impacts (positive or negative)? The feedback/data should be used to inform your Action Plan in (2)	N/A

Appendix 2

If No Further Action is required then go to – Review and Monitoring (2) Action Planning – Specify any changes or improvements that can be made to the service or policy to mitigate or eradicate negative or adverse impact on specific groups, including resource implications.	EqlA Action Plan <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Action</th> <th>Lead Officer</th> <th>Date for completion</th> <th>Resource requirements</th> <th>Comments</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> </tbody> </table>					Action	Lead Officer	Date for completion	Resource requirements	Comments																				
Action	Lead Officer	Date for completion	Resource requirements	Comments																										
(3) Review and Monitoring State how and when you will monitor policy and Action Plan. Will you make any changes to the Equality Data that you are collecting or how you are collecting/using the data?																														

An Equality Impact Assessment on this policy was undertaken on 14 October 2025 and will be reviewed on 14 October 2028.

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

Report Title:	Works to make the Town Hall compliant with fire and accessibility regulations
Name of Committee:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	4 November 2025
Report Director:	Chief Officer - Communities and Homes
Portfolio:	Communities and Homes, Regulation and Safety
Ward Relevance:	All wards
Prior Consultation:	The Equality Officer, Leadership Team, Staff Survey 2024, Portfolio Holder and Liberal Democrat Housing Spokesperson
Contact Officer:	Peter Nicholas (Asset Manager) peter.nicholas@rugby.gov.uk
Public or Private:	Public
Report Subject to Call-In:	Yes
Report En-Bloc:	No
Forward Plan:	Yes
Corporate Priorities:	This report relates to the following priority(ies): ☒ A Healthier Rugby – To support people to live healthier, longer, and more independent lives. ☐ A Thriving Rugby – To deliver a thriving economy which brings Borough-wide investment and regenerates Rugby Town Centre. ☒ A Greener Rugby – To protect the environment and ensure the Borough adapts to climate change. ☒ A Fairer Rugby – To reduce inequalities and improve housing across the Borough. Corporate Strategy 2025-2035 ☐ This report does not specifically relate to any Council priorities but
Summary:	This report outlines a strategic investment in the Council's estate, driven by the need for long-term building viability. It proposes two key capital-funded programmes: a £0.185m refurbishment of the Town Hall's public

areas to improve accessibility and aesthetics, and the establishment of a recurring capital budget of £0.075m for ongoing fire safety compliance.

The overarching goal is to ensure the building remains a safe, accessible, and functional hub for all users while fulfilling statutory duties.

Financial Implications:

The financial proposals consist of two separate capital requests for addition to the General Fund capital programme:

A one-off capital budget of £0.185m is sought for the public area accessibility upgrades and refurbishment.

Additionally, a capital budget for the fire safety programme with an initial allocation of £0.075m for the 2025/26 financial year, followed by annual recurring allocations to be considered as part of budget setting.

Further details can be seen in Section 7.

Risk Management/Health and Safety Implications:

The plans proactively address and mitigate health and safety risks.

The proposed fire safety work includes the installation of fire-alarm interlocked hold-back devices on lift lobby doors to support fire safety. e, the second programme is entirely dedicated to a rolling fire safety initiative, which includes regular fire risk assessments and remedial actions such as fire door upgrades, improved detection systems, and enhanced compartmentation to ensure a safe environment for all building users and maintain compliance with relevant regulations.

The accessibility arrangements are currently inadequate and there are potential safety issues, particularly for town hall visitors with physical disabilities and sensory impairments.

Environmental Implications:

An environmental impact assessment forms appendix 1 to this report.

Legal Implications:

The recommendations made will ensure compliance with the requirements of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and the Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022.

The public area upgrades are also a direct response to a recent access audit, with works aiming to rectify issues and ensure the Council is discharging its legal duties to provide an accessible public building in keeping with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

Equality and Diversity:

An equality impact assessment forms appendix 2 to this report.

Options:

- 1) Approve the recommendations as written
- 2) Approve a reduced scope of works, delivering only essential safety and accessibility upgrades (e.g. hold-back devices and platform lifts), deferring aesthetic or non-critical enhancements to reduce immediate capital outlay.
- 3) Reject the Proposal No works are undertaken. Current deficiencies in accessibility, fire safety compliance, and public area condition remain unresolved, potentially impacting service delivery and user experience

Recommendation:

IT BE RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL THAT -

- 1) a General Fund supplementary capital budget of £0.185m be approved and added to the capital programme for 2025/26 for the Lobby and Entrance Upgrades, including fire-alarm hold-back devices;
- 2) a General Fund supplementary capital budget of £0.075m be approved and added to the capital programme for 2025/26 for the mandatory fire safety work allocated for the current year, with a rolling programme of funding such works to be considered as part of future budget setting; and
- 3) delegated authority be given to the Chief Officer (Communities & Homes) to implement the requested works.

Reasons for Recommendation:

To improve accessibility and safety in public and staff areas and to ensure ongoing compliance with the fire safety regulations through a planned and funded approach.

Cabinet - 4 November 2025

Works to make the Town Hall compliant with fire and accessibility regulations

Public Report of the Chief Officer - Communities and Homes

Recommendations

IT BE RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL THAT -

- 1) a General Fund supplementary capital budget of £0.185m be approved and added to the capital programme for 2025/26 for the Lobby and Entrance Upgrades, including fire-alarm hold-back devices;
- 2) a General Fund supplementary capital budget of £0.075m be approved and added to the capital programme for 2025/26 for the mandatory fire safety work allocated for the current year, with a rolling programme of funding such works to be considered as part of future budget setting; and
- 3) delegated authority be given to the Chief Officer (Communities & Homes) to implement the requested works

1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1 The report sets out the requirements for funding works to ensure ongoing fire safety and to improve disability access to the town hall.
- 1.2 The proposed upgrade of the Committee Rooms is long overdue. Their dated appearance is not reflective of a modern lace of business, and do not give a positive impression of the organisation.
- 1.3 Ongoing investment into the Town Hall has been limited since its future was called into question, several years ago.
- 1.4 This lack on investment cannot continue and regardless of the future of local government in Warwickshire, the Town Hall is likely to remain a key hub of public service for many years to come and therefore, investment is required to ensure the building remains fit for purpose and is legal compliant.
- 1.5 The report also outlines findings from a recent Accessibility Audit, which highlighted access works that are required to ensure that the building is welcoming for visitors, Elected Members and staff to enable them to access the public areas with dignity.

- 1.6 The Public Area Upgrade include the refurbishment and enhancement of the Committee Lobby, Committee Room and the entrance to the Council Chamber entrance. The proposed works include accessibility improvements, modernisation of finishes, and integration of fire safety measures such as hold-back devices linked to the fire alarm system.
- 1.7 The fire safety works are required to ensure continued compliance with the requirements of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and the Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022.

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 The Town Hall is a multi-functional public building that is accessed by a broad range of stakeholders including the public, Elected Members and staff.
- 2.2 Ongoing investment in the building has reduced over the years, as the potential future use of the site has been considered.
- 2.3 However, the downside to this is that the building is in decline, and investment is now needed to ensure that it remains safe, accessible and reflective of a modern local government organisation.
- 2.4 Whilst the future of local government is in the process of being reviewed, the town hall is likely to remain a public, political and civic hub as well as a workplace, for several years, if not longer. Therefore, it is important that the appropriate level of investment continues to ensure its safety, accessibility and appearance.

3.0 Proposed public area refurbishment – scope of works

- 3.1 The refurbishment of the Committee Rooms is essential as they are the very heart of our business. We want to take pride in our working environment. (See appendices 1 and 2 for audit findings).
- 3.2 These specifications are detailed in appendices 3 and 4 and include:
 - Refurbishment of the lobby and entrance to the committee rooms and Chamber
 - Entrance areas will include power-assisted doors and a platform lifts
 - There will be upgraded finishes such as floor coverings, lighting, furniture and signage.
 - This includes redecoration, improved AV systems, and enhanced accessibility and security features.
 - The introduction of bi-folding doors to Committee Room 1 will create a flexible, dual-meeting space, increasing the utility of the room beyond its current single-function capacity.

- The Council Chamber entrance will be modernised to improve accessibility and presentation.
 - Fire-alarm interlocked hold-back devices will be installed on lift lobby doors to support fire safety and smoke control.
- 3.3 These proposals are in response to the access audit findings identifying key physical barriers to entry and movement.

4.0 Proposed fire safety scope of works

- 4.1 These are to support the Council's legal duty under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and the Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022.
- 4.2 The proposal includes provision for regular fire risk assessments and associated remedial actions.
- 4.3 Works will cover fire door upgrades, improved detection and emergency lighting, compliant signage, enhanced compartmentation, and appropriate fire extinguisher provision.
- 4.4 These actions aim to reduce fire risks, ensure safety, meet insurance conditions, and maintain compliance.

5.0 Programme and Deliverables when refurbishing the committee rooms

- 5.1 There will be a lead in time to ensure procurement and contracts, as well as finalised quotes for the completion of works.
- 5.2 This will be followed for an onsite project duration of approximately 8 weeks:
- Week 1: Mobilisation and site setup
 - Weeks 2–7: Main refurbishment and installation activities
 - Week 8: Snagging, commissioning, and handover
- 5.3 The project will be co-ordinated and led by the Assets Team, utilising suitably competent, qualified and experienced contractors

6.0 Risk Management

- 6.1 As with any project, there will be emphasis on risk management through the maintenance of risks and issues logs
- 6.2 Contractor performance will be closely monitored, particularly to ensure the safe access and egress of all building users for the duration of the works. As part of this they will; also, be required to submit Risk Assessments and Method Statements detailing systems of work.
- 6.3 There will be phased working and out-of-hours scheduling to minimise disruption

- 6.4 Compliance checks will be made throughout, in respect of fire safety standards, building regulations and accessibility requirements
- 6.5 A 10% contingency has been modelled into the budgets. This allows for the potential to come across potential and previously unforeseen risks that can often come about because of retrofitting work to older buildings.
- 6.6 There will be regular liaison with Legal and Democratic Services, IT, Communications, Fire Safety Officer, staff, and Members

7.0 Financial Implications

- 7.1 In respect of the public area refurbishment, a General Fund supplementary capital budget of £0.185m is requested for approval for 2025/26 for the Lobby and Entrance Upgrades, including fire-alarm hold-back devices
- 7.2 In respect of the fire safety upgrades, a General Fund supplementary capital budget of £0.075m is requested for approval for 2025/26 for the mandatory fire safety work allocated for the current year, with a rolling programme of funding such works to be considered as part of future budget setting
- 7.3 It is proposed that the combined capital request of £0.260m for 2025/26 for the above works be funded via borrowing, as there are insufficient General Fund capital receipts available at the time of writing the report.
- 7.4 The financial implications of borrowing are Minimal Revenue Provision (MRP) i.e. repayment of the loan principal plus interest due. Based on current PWLB rates of 5.11% over an assumed 10-year period, average MRP of £0.026m and interest of £0.013m would be payable annually. The actual costs would vary depending on the rates at the time and the length of the loan.

8.0 Conclusion

- 8.1 The proposed investment will ensure that the Council meets its statutory duties under the Equalities Act 2010 and the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and the Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022.
- 8.2 The works will also freshen up the dated fittings and appearance of the Committee Rooms, which are used by many stakeholders, including officers and Members to meet with those seeking to invest in the borough.

Name of Meeting: Cabinet

Date of Meeting: 4 November 2025

Subject Matter: Works to make the Town Hall compliant with fire and accessibility regulations

Originating Department: Communities and Homes

DO ANY BACKGROUND PAPERS APPLY

☐ YES

☒ NO

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Doc No	Title of Document and Hyperlink

The background papers relating to reports on planning applications and which are open to public inspection under Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972, consist of the planning applications, referred to in the reports, and all written responses to consultations made by the Local Planning Authority, in connection with those applications.

☐ Exempt information is contained in the following documents:

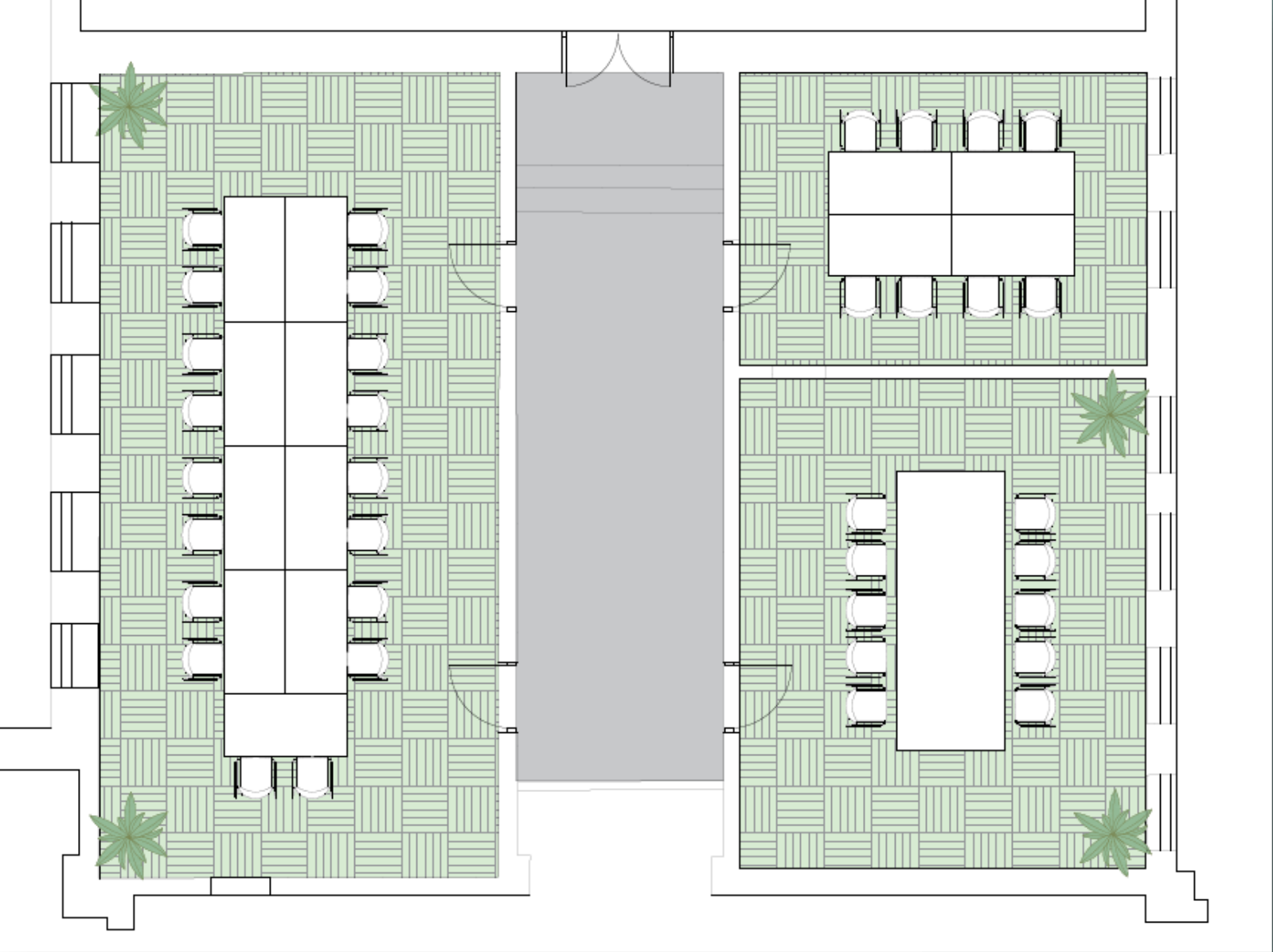
Doc No	Relevant Paragraph of Schedule 12A



PROPOSED MEETING SUITE REFURBISHMENT

Issue 1 -

PROPOSED MEETING SUITE REFURBISHMENT
GENERAL ARRANGEMENT

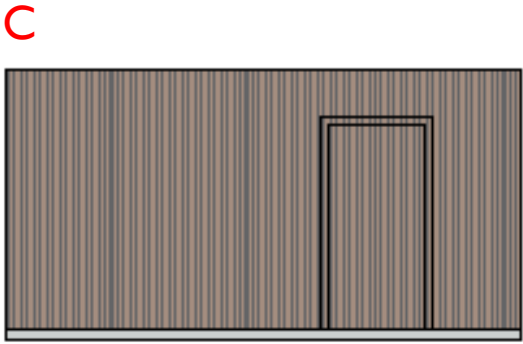
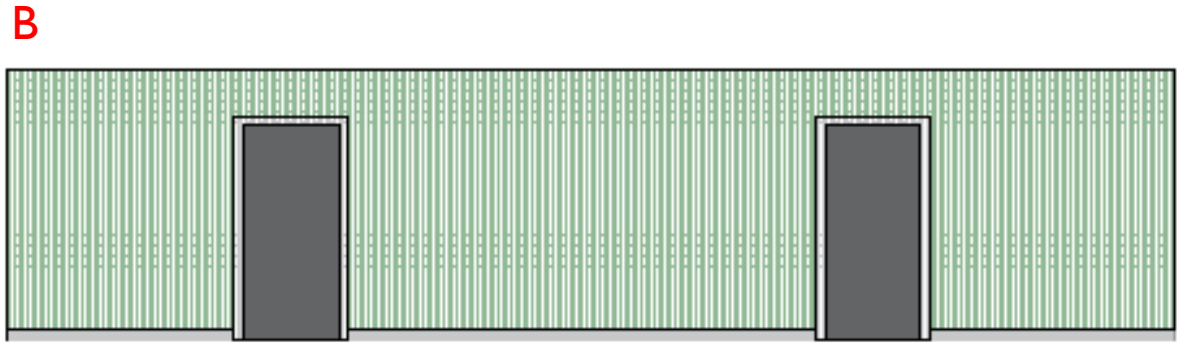
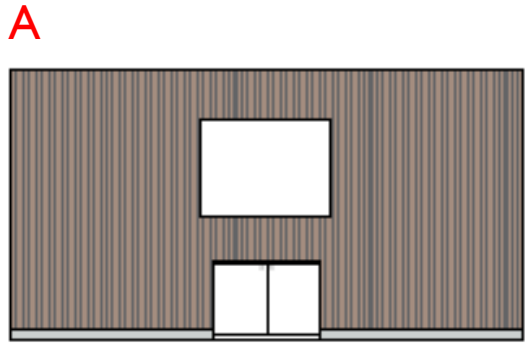


PROPOSED MEETING SUITE REFURBISHMENT COMMITTEE ROOM | EXISTING SPACE

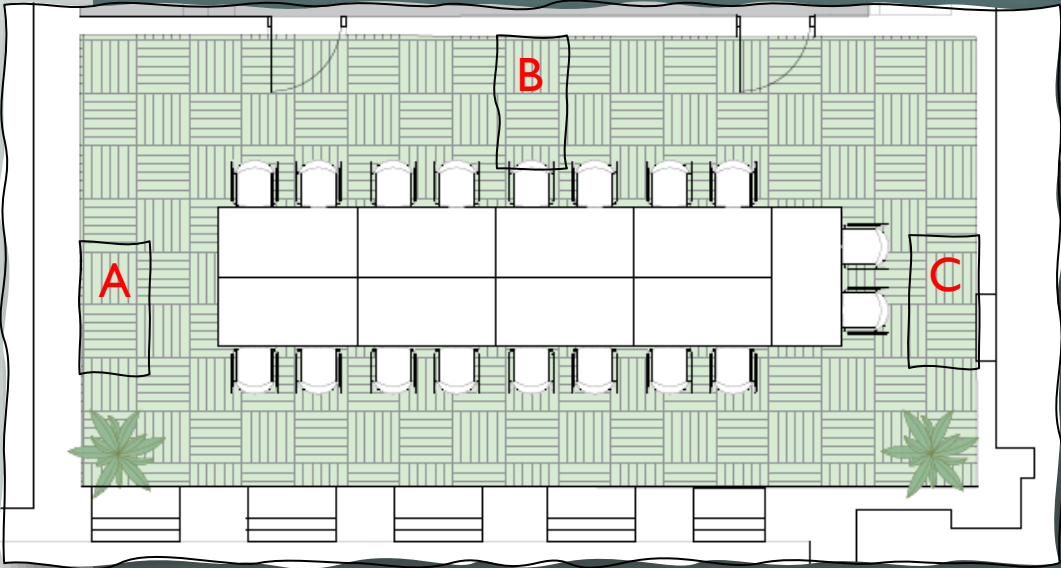


All doors to be vinyl wrapped to match GF
Door frames and all skirtings to be light grey
Existing excess services to be removed
1 x wall to be wallcovering
2 x end walls to be acoustic slatted wall
New carpet

PROPOSED MEETING SUITE REFURBISHMENT
COMMITTEE ROOM I



- A – To have acoustic slatted panel wall with inset TV
- B – Wallcovering to full length of wall
- C – To have acoustic slatted panel wall with hidden door panel



PROPOSED MEETING SUITE REFURBISHMENT
COMMITTEE ROOM 1

Walnut acoustic slatted wall

Shishu Stitch Ash



Mali



PROPOSED MEETING SUITE REFURBISHMENT COMMITTEE ROOM 2 EXISTING SPACE

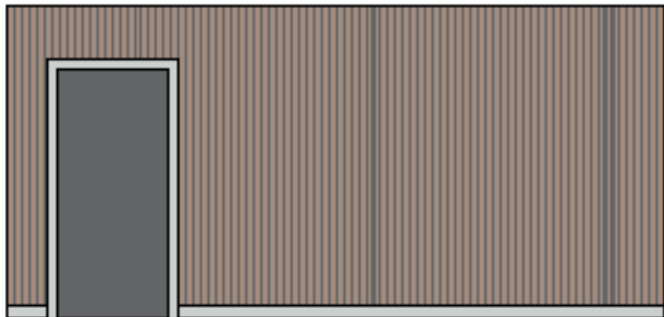


All doors to be vinyl wrapped to match GF
Door frames and all skirtings to be light grey
Existing excess services to be removed
1 x wall to be wallcovering
1 x wall acoustic slatted timber
New carpet

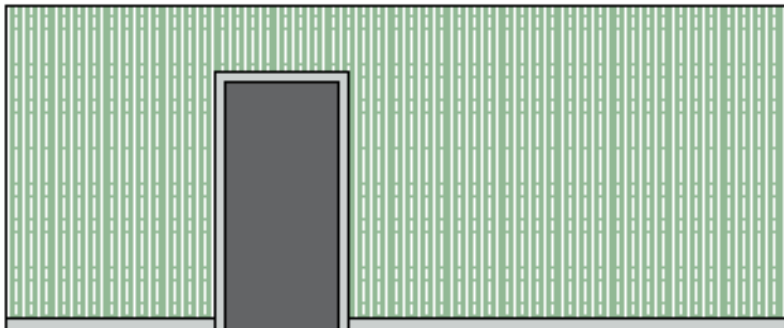
PROPOSED MEETING SUITE REFURBISHMENT

COMMITTEE ROOM 2

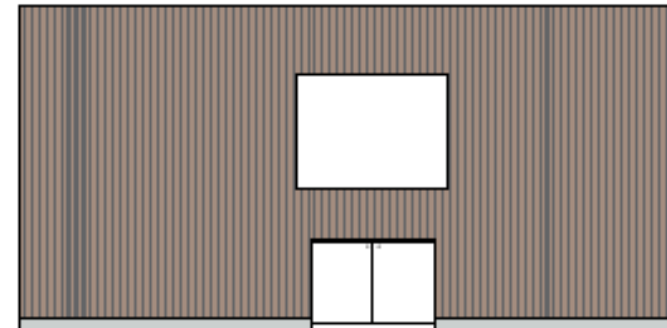
A



B



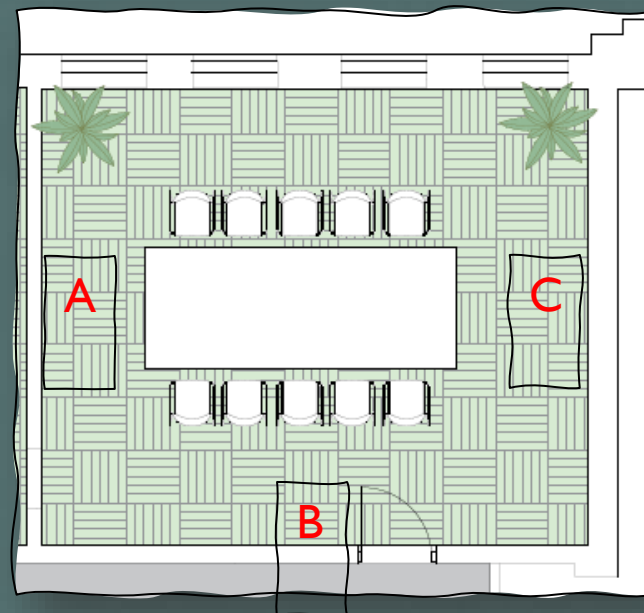
C



A – To have acoustic slatted panel wall with door panel

B – Wallcovering to full length of wall

C – To have acoustic slatted panel wall with inset TV



PROPOSED MEETING SUITE REFURBISHMENT
COMMITTEE ROOM 2

Walnut acoustic slatted wall

Mali 1140



Driftwood



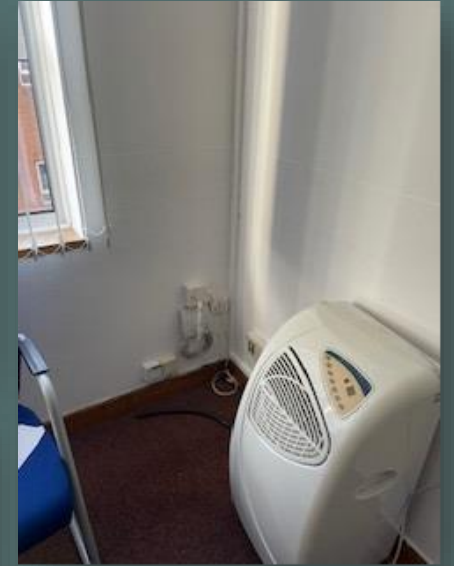
Shishu Stitch Ash



Option to keep
existing table

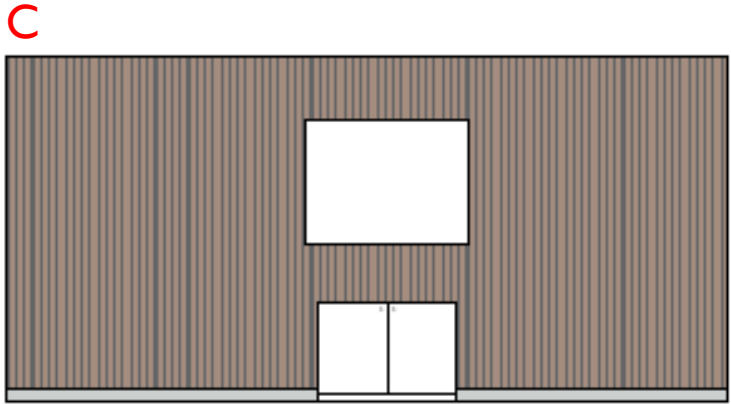
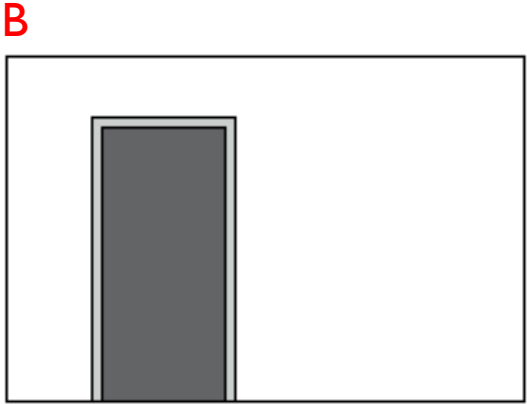
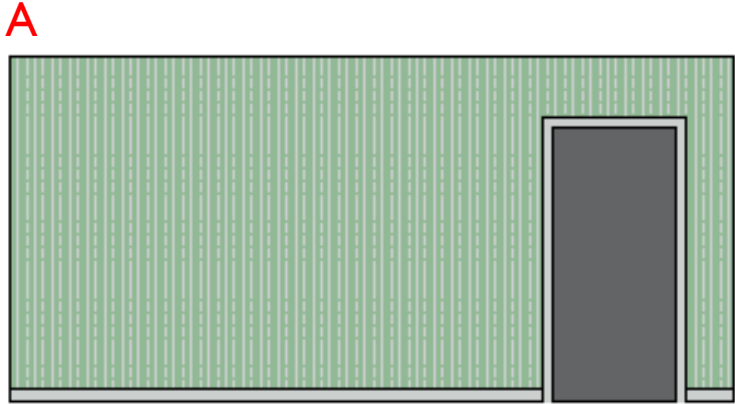


PROPOSED MEETING SUITE REFURBISHMENT COMMITTEE ROOM 3 EXISTING SPACE

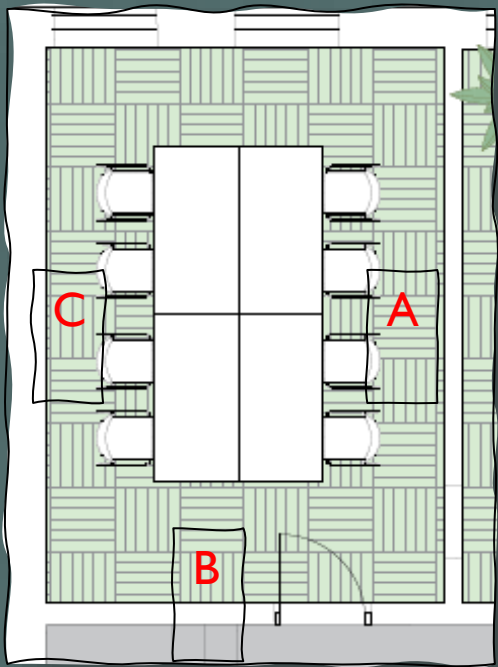


All doors to be vinyl wrapped to match GF
Door frames and all skirtings to be light grey
Existing excess services to be removed
1 x wall to be wallcovering
1 x wall to be acoustic slatter timber
New carpet

PROPOSED MEETING SUITE REFURBISHMENT
COMMITTEE ROOM 3



- A – Wallcovering to full length of wall
- B – To be a painted wall
- C – To have acoustic slatted panel wall with inset TV



PROPOSED MEETING SUITE REFURBISHMENT
COMMITTEE ROOM 3

Walnut acoustic slatted wall

Mali 1138



Driftwood

EGL19
Chromoly

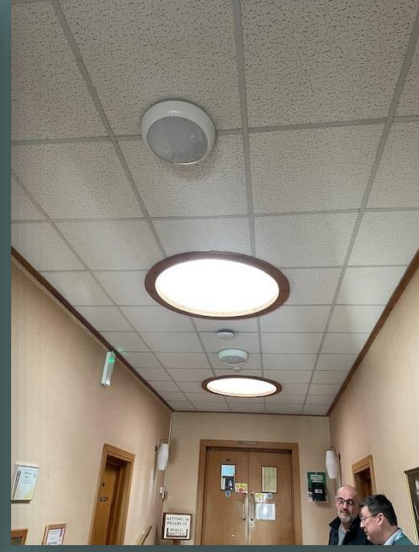
Shishu Stitch Ash



PROPOSED MEETING SUITE REFURBISHMENT COMMITTEE ROOMS LOBBY EXISTING SPACE



All doors to be vinyl wrapped to match GF
Door frames and all skirtings to be light grey
The 2 long walls to be wallcovering
New carpet
Propose DDA ramp lift to stairs
New ceiling tiles and new light fittings to wall and ceiling

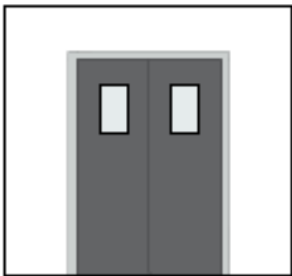


PROPOSED MEETING SUITE REFURBISHMENT
COMMITTEE ROOMS LOBBY

A



C

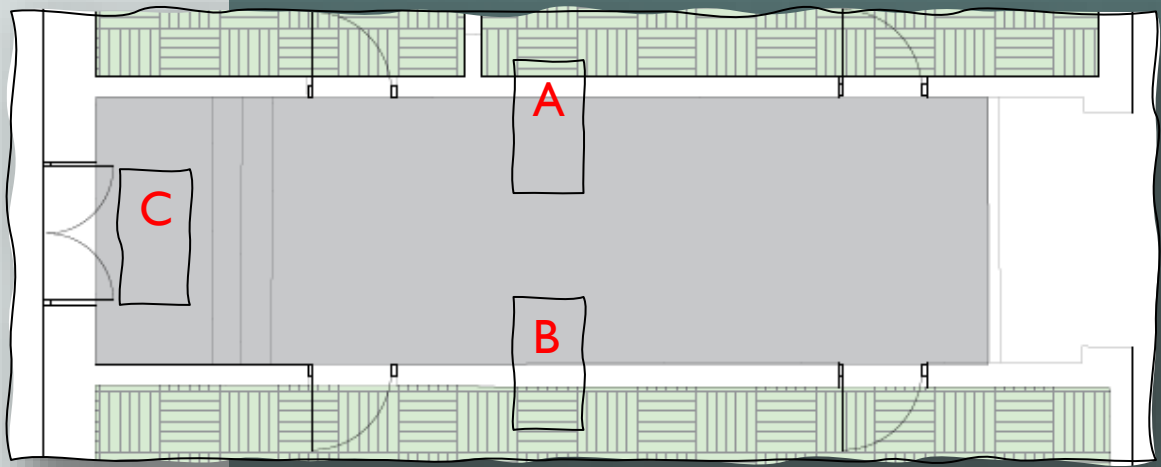


B



A – Wallcovering to full length of wall

B – Wallcovering to full length of wall



PROPOSED MEETING SUITE REFURBISHMENT
COMMITTEE ROOMS LOBBY

Mali



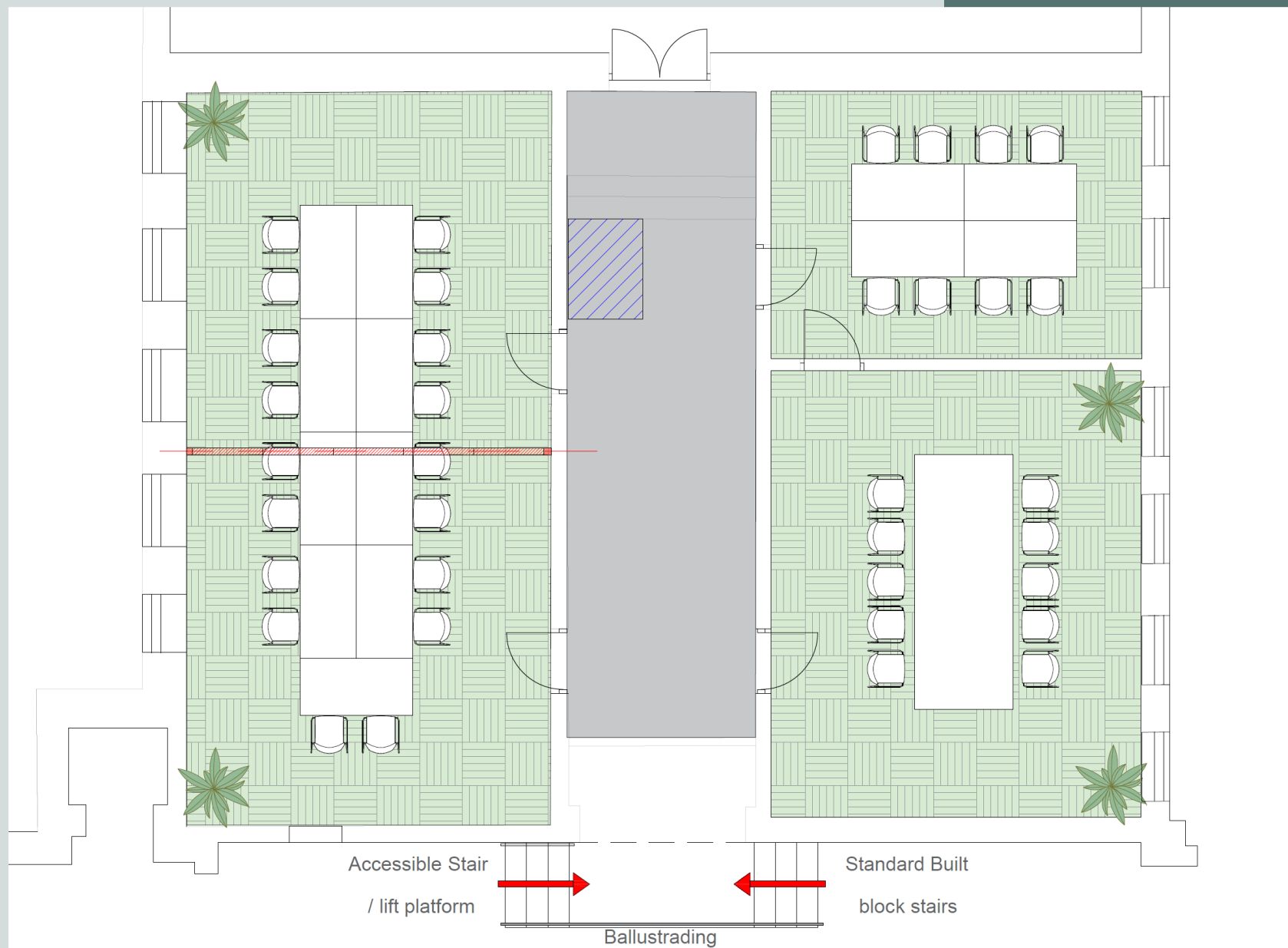
Zen Stitch Taupe



Concept ideas for lights

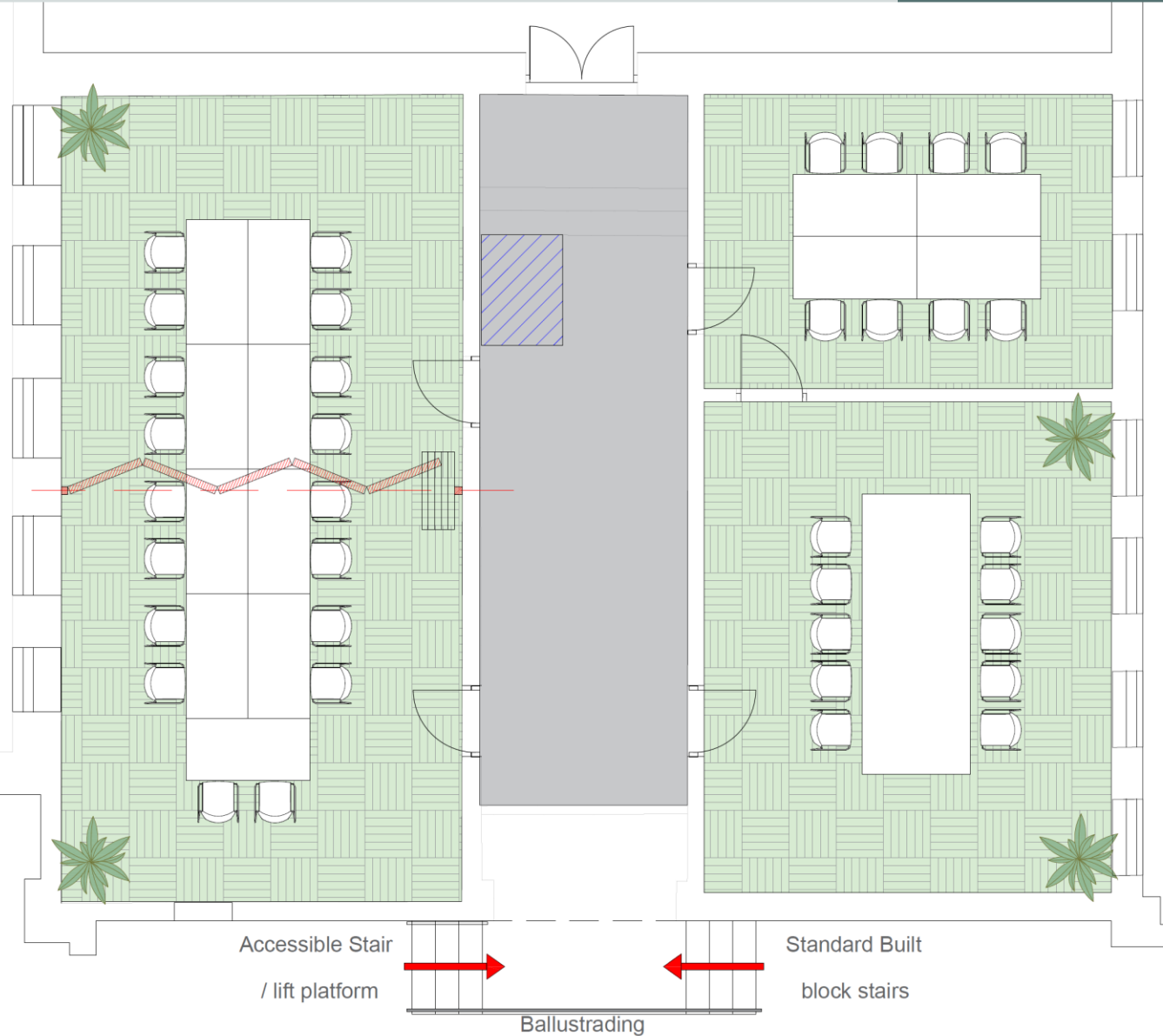


PROPOSED MEETING SUITE REFURBISHMENT GENERAL ARRANGEMENT



FOLDING WALL TO COMMITTEE
ROOM 1 , RELOCATION OF
DOOR TO TOP SECTION AND
POSITIONING OF ACCESSIBLE
RAMPS SHOWN

PROPOSED MEETING SUITE REFURBISHMENT GENERAL ARRANGEMENT



FOLDING WALL TO COMMITTEE
ROOM SHOWN IN STACKED
POSITION



Tech Lift 500

0.5m Steplift for your Home

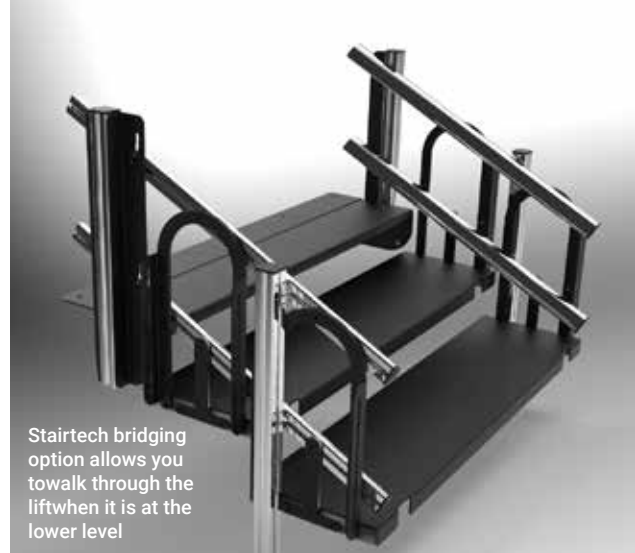
- Indoor or Outdoor
- Quick Delivery
- Competitively Priced
- One day installation
- 3 Year Warranty*
- Ultra Slim & Lightweight Design
- Easy to use
- No Specialist Builders Work Required



Features

Standard Features

Tech Lift 500 Platform Lift provides a practical solution to the challenge of vertical lift travels up to 500mm. It provides a safe and easy way to gain access to a property where stairs would otherwise prevent wheelchair access, into your home or gardens.



01

Suitable for outdoor installations at no extra cost (IP65 rated)

02

Ultra-slim due to scissor lifting mechanism

03

Aluminium (silver) Framework

04

Plexi-glass protective side panels

05

Aluminium platform flooring with Anti-slip strips

06

Powered folding ramp (no need for a pit)

Features

Delivery & Installation



Extremely quick delivery, usually from stock



No specialist builders' work required



Half day installation (to prepared area)



Can be relocated



Features

Optional Features

Protection

- Single swing manual gate at upper level

Landing Buttons & Hand-held Controls

- Wireless wall mounted call station:
 - 'Call' (1 button)
 - 'Call & Send' (2 buttons)
 - 'Call & Send' + key locking (2 buttons)
- Hand held key fob transmitter

Step Bridging Options

- Steplift Bridging Solution – Bridge one step up to 275mm deep
- Stairtech Bridging Solution – Bridge up to 3 steps

Lift Colour

- Pick a colour of your choice from the RAL colour chart.



Specification

Tech Lift 500: Technical Specification

Environment	Indoors & Outdoors
Lifting Height	30mm min - 500mm max (1.2" - 19.5" approx) / 2 stops
Platform Size	800mm (W) x 1250mm (L)
Footprint of Lift	1050mm (W) x 1429mm (L) (excluding any bridging step solutions)
Lifting Capacity (max)	250kg
Unit Weight	51kg
Travel Speed	25mm/sec max
Entrance Configuration(s)	Through Access
Top Door Type	Manual Single Swing – (optional)
Flooring Type(s)	Aluminium with anti-slip strips
Lift Colours / Finishes	Aluminium (silver) or RAL colour of your choice (optional)
Landing Push Buttons	Wireless
Fixing Method(s)	Floor Mounted (no specialist builders work required)
Power Supply Requirement	220v Single Phase, 10 amp
Noise Level	52 dB (A)
Conformity	EN-81-41:2010: Safety rules for the construction and installation of lifts
Warranty	3 Years* parts and labour (including two service visits in the first year)



Contact

Level Access Lifts Ltd

t: 023 8081 4924

e: sales@levellifts.co.uk

w: levellifts.co.uk

*Subject to the uptake of a maintenance contract with LAL for years two and three.
The warranty period shall revert to 12 months if no maintenance agreement in place.



Access Audit Rugby Town Hall Town Hall, Evreux Way, Rugby CV21 2RR

28th May 2025

About Access Ltd

63 Wilson Street
Anlaby, Hull
East Yorkshire HU10 7AJ

Office 01482 651101
info@aboutaccess.co.uk
www.aboutaccess.co.uk

Access Audits | Plan Appraisals | Access Statements
Training | Advice on Accessibility | Nationwide Coverage

Company No 4117369 VAT No 763 9300 21

Version: Original

About
Access 

...for an inclusive world

Version

Version	Reason for change	Issue date
Original		8 July 2025

Contents

Executive Summary	5	15 Public WCs	34
Introduction	8	16 Kitchens	40
The Report	9	17 Stairs	42
Terms and definitions	10	18 Lift	44
The Access Audit	14	19 Unity Hub	45
1 Approach	14	20 Council Chamber and Committee Rooms	45
2 Parking	15	21 Offices	47
3 Front entrance	18	22 Emergency evacuation	48
4 Staff entrance - stepped	20	Declaration	50
5 Staff entrance - step free	20	Appendix 1. Disability & Legislation	51
6 Delivery point	21	Appendix 2. Accessible parking bay	59
7 Reception	22	Appendix 3. Door CEW, opening force and door handles	60
8 Signage	23	Appendix 4. Door zones of visibility	61
9 Horizontal circulation	24	Appendix 5. Stairs and Reception Desk	62
10 Doors	26	Appendix 6. Lift	63
11 Staff toilets	30	Appendix 7. WC cubicles - Part T Building Regulations	64
12 Staff accessible WC and shower - basement	32	Appendix 8. Accessible WC for Independent Use - Plan	65
13 Staff showers	33	Appendix 9. Accessible WC for Independent Use - elevation	66
14 Staff accessible WC - 1st floor	34	Appendix 10. Accessible WC pan / wash basin and transfers	67

Appendix 11. Changing Place	68
Appendix 12. Tonal contrast	69
Recommendations by Priority	70

Executive Summary

This Disability Access Audit (the Audit) was carried out by NRAC consultant Ian Streets, during May 2025, at the request of Rebecca Ewers.

The purpose of the Audit is to identify barriers and make recommendations to improve accessibility to meet the generic needs of people with a wide range of impairments, including those with mobility, sensory or cognitive impairments.

The Equality Act 2010 is not compliance based and adherence to the advice contained in this report does not automatically demonstrate 'compliance'.

It is not possible to have a fully accessible building which will provide a barrier free experience for all. This is because everyone is different and, even where individuals have the same disability, they will have different access requirements. This means there are three aspects to minimising barriers and creating an inclusive workplace:

- Design and build the workplace and its features to be as barrier free as possible for as many people as possible
- Put in place management procedures and systems to maintain levels of accessibility and address those barriers people might still encounter
- Manage expectations and provide information to visitors to ensure they know what to expect and how to access specific help and manage

their individual requirements

However, implementation of our recommendations would be considered a key factor in demonstrating the meeting of the disability provisions of its duties under the Act and associated legislation.

The Audit was carried out via a series of observations and physical measurements which are based on: Approved Documents of the Building Regulations; Equality Act Codes of Practice; BS8300-1 and 2: 2018 Design of an accessible and inclusive built environment. External & Buildings. Code of Practice.

Where possible and reasonable to do so, improvements have been suggested which should lead to greater accessibility without impacting on the character of the building.

No single action will guarantee that a building meets the requirements of the Equality Act. However, in the course of this Audit the following features were deemed to be of particular high risk and should be addressed as a matter of priority.

External areas

There are two flights of steps to the rear of the building: one next to the car park and the path running alongside the building, and the other on the way to the rear staff entrance. These have no tactile warnings at the top and bottom, which they should have. As both are adjacent to a path,

Executive Summary (cont'd)

someone could encounter them unexpectedly.

Reception

The reception counter is at a single high height. Counters should have two levels to accommodate people of short stature, wheelchair users, and a high counter for those unable to use a low counter.

Toilets — public

In all toilets (public and staff), there is a warning of 'very hot water'. For people with sight loss, this is not helpful. The water temperature for handwashing should be no more than 43°C at the outlet, with circulating water no less than 60°C.

There are two single-sex toilets near reception. The female toilet is laid out as an accessible WC but lacks signage indicating this. Additionally, the corridor doors overlap the toilet door when open. Providing unequal door leaf sizes, with a narrower leaf next to the toilet, would resolve this.

Inside the female toilet, there is no 300 mm clear space on the latch side of the door due to boxing-in of services. This boxing-in should be reviewed to see if it can be reduced.

The male toilet has two urinals and an accessible cubicle. Locating an accessible WC within a single-sex toilet can cause difficulties if a user needs assistance from someone of the opposite sex — particularly

problematic in the male toilet, as it requires passing the urinals.

A key feature of an accessible WC is that a person seated on the toilet can reach the washbasin to wash and dry their hands before dressing or transferring back to their wheelchair. Both accessible toilets need changes to allow this.

Guidance recommends a unisex accessible WC. We suggest providing separate male, female, and accessible WCs.

Toilets — staff

The only toilet for staff use resembling an accessible WC is in the basement and includes an accessible shower. However, this room is also used as a store, which should be prohibited through policy.

The first-floor toilet, sometimes regarded as an accessible WC, has no signage indicating it is a toilet. The room is too small to be an accessible WC, and an alternative location should be found.

Lift

The lift lacks an emergency communication system. If the lift breaks down, it is vital that people inside can communicate and be reassured that help is on the way. A system with an inductive coupler is required.

Hearing enhancement

A loop system is provided in the Council Chamber and reception, but not elsewhere. In small rooms, portable systems are acceptable; in large rooms, a hard-wired system should be installed. The choice should reflect privacy needs — for example, in Committee Rooms, induction loops may not be suitable due to overspill, an audio-over-WiFi system may be preferable.

Quick wins

Several quick wins have been identified. These should be prioritised, as they are typically low-cost adjustments that can significantly improve accessibility.

Introduction

This report has been made for and on behalf of the Rugby Borough Council and carried out by About Access Ltd. The report may only be copied with the consent of About Access Ltd and must not be reproduced in any other format.

The Audit:

- Was carried out following a site visit involving visual inspection and measurement. The weather was a mix of heavy showers and sunshine.
- Assessed the current state of accessibility and usability of the buildings by people with a range of impairments.
- Gives an opinion of the building at a single point in time, highlighting areas for improvement and prioritising action.

About Access Ltd has taken all reasonable steps to interpret the Acts, Regulations and Approved Codes of Practice. Courts of Law can only interpret these. No guarantees can be given that during any subsequent visit by inspectors with statutory powers other non-compliances may not be found. About Access Ltd will not accept any responsibility for any loss arising as a result.

Description

The building has three levels, basement, ground and 1st floor. Public have general access to the ground floor reception area and meetings rooms. The first floor is the council chamber where public have access. On this floor there are also other council departments not for public access. There is a gallery to the council chamber with access from the level above but this is not used.

The building provides lift access to all floors.

There is parking next to the building but this is not specifically for use by staff and visitors using the council offices. At the front there is further parking along with accessible parking. All parking is chargeable except Blue Badge holders who get 3 hours free.

The Report

The report contains descriptions of how the physical features and other elements of the building are found at the time of the visit. Recommendations are made within each section. The priorities should be read in context of the report.

The priorities are: -

1. This item causes a major barrier to access or may be a health and safety issue and should be given immediate consideration or action. For example, entry to a building may be difficult so the recommendation to overcome this should be acted on immediately.

Time scale – action recommended immediately.

M. This item centres on management of the building or policy.

Timescale - This requires immediate action even if there is no issue at present a policy/procedure should be developed ahead of issue arising.

2. This item causes a less significant barrier to access. For example, modification may be needed to an existing feature, e.g. signage.

Time scale – As soon as practicably possible for the recommendation.

3. This is a feature that presents a barrier to access, but it is felt reasonable for improvements to be carried out as part of general day-to-day maintenance.

Time scale – In relation to the recommendation this could be as routine works or when next decorating.

P. These are works that can be regarded as a project. They generally require a plan to be developed and will take longer than previous recommendations to carry out.

QW. Quick Wins are works that can be regarded as easy to do because little cost or effort is required. This will be put along side a Red recommendation.

Terms and definitions

Access: approach, entry, horizontal and vertical movement or exit., including in cases of emergency.

Accessible route: any route that is used to approach a building or to move between buildings or within a building.

Accessible: capable of being independently accessed and used.

ADM: Approved Document of the Building Regulations

Audio over WiFi: A system where a person connects their smartphone to WiFi to receive room audio (via installed equipment), which the phone then streams directly to their hearing aid or cochlear implant.

BS8300: BS 8300-1 & 2: 2018 Design of an accessible and inclusive built environment. External & Buildings. Code of Practices. This is UK based guidance for designing to meet the needs of disabled people.

Blister pedestrian crossing surface: form of tactile paving whose surface has parallel rows of flat-topped blisters (domes) to warn people who are blind or partially sighted of the proximity of a carriageway at pedestrian crossing points and other access points to a carriageway. NOTE The paving is installed at the dropped kerbs of both controlled and uncontrolled crossings. The colour of the paving is red for controlled crossings (e.g. signal-controlled and zebra crossings) and generally buff at other crossings.

Controlled door closing device: a device that is capable of closing a door from any angle and against any latch fitted to the door.

Corduroy hazard warning surface: form of tactile paving, the surface of which has raised ribs to warn people who are blind or partially sighted of a potential hazard ahead. NOTE The ribs, spaced at 50 mm centres, are installed at right angles to the direction of travel.

Desire line: shortest or most easily navigated pedestrian route.

Emergency exit device: exit device intended for use in situations where people are familiar with the emergency exit and its hardware, having prior knowledge of its operation, and therefore a panic situation is unlikely to develop.

Enclosed vertical lifting platform: vertical lifting appliance with enclosed liftway, a speed not greater than 0.15 m/s, a carrier which is not completely enclosed, and primarily intended to permit the access of persons with limited mobility.

Evacuation lift: conventional passenger lift used as part of the evacuation sequence for persons with disability and persons requiring assistance, which has appropriate structural, electrical and fire protection and is capable of being taken under control by a trained and authorized person.

Firefighters lift: conventional passenger lift with fire protection

Terms and definitions (cont'd)

measures, including controls that enable it to be used under the direct control of the fire and rescue service in fighting a fire.

Flight (Steps and ramps): a continuous series of steps or continuous ramp between two landings.

Footway: A path running alongside a vehicle route which is for the sole use of pedestrians.

Going (Steps and ramps): horizontal distance between two consecutive nosings, measured along the walking line; horizontal distance between each end of a ramp.

Glare: In this context, glare is brightness that is excessive and uncontrolled. The effects of glare on vision can range from slightly uncomfortable to disabling. The degree of discomfort depends on a person's sensitivity to glare, which can vary a great deal. For example, the effect of ageing on eyes means older people are more sensitive to glare. 'Discomfort glare' is the irritation or pain caused by an overly bright light source. 'Disability glare' refers to a reduction in visibility caused by intense brightness.

Handrails (Steps and ramps): component of stairs, steps or ramps that provides guidance and support at hand level. NOTE A handrail might form the top rail of guarding (balustrading), be supported independently from guarding or be supported from a wall.

Illuminance: amount of light falling on a surface, measured in lumens per square metre (lm/m²) or lux (lx)

Impairment: This is the result of a person's condition. For example, a person with arthritis in the hand could be said to have impaired manual dexterity.

Inclusive design: approach to the design of the environment, including buildings and their surrounding spaces, and managed and natural landscapes, to ensure that they can be accessed and used by everyone.

Landing (Steps and ramps): level platform or part of a floor at the end of a flight of steps or a ramp flight or slope.

Level (Steps and ramps): gradient not steeper than 1:60.

Light reflectance value (LRV): total quantity of visible light reflected by a surface at all wavelengths and directions when illuminated by a light source. NOTE Surfaces that differ sufficiently in LRV can be distinguished from one another by people who are blind or partially sighted.

Manifestation: permanent markings or features within areas of full-height transparent glazing, glazed walls or screens, fully glazed doors or glass doors, which help to prevent collisions by making the glazing more visible to building users.

Non-enclosed vertical lifting platform: vertical lifting appliance

Terms and definitions (cont'd)

having non-enclosed or partially enclosed liftways, a carrier which is not completely enclosed, a speed not greater than 0.15 m/s, and intended for use by persons with limited mobility.

Nosing (Steps): front edge where the riser and tread of a step meet or landing and riser.

Panic bar: exit device intended for use where panic situations may arise in public areas where the public are admitted and are not familiar with its surroundings. These operate by pushing the bar to unlock.

Passenger lift: lifting appliance with operating speeds greater than 0.15 m/s, for any travel distance, and intended for the transport of persons or persons and goods.

PEEP: Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan, is a documented plan of how a disabled person is going to safely evacuate a building in the event of an emergency and the assistance that they will require. It will describe the route and method of evacuation. Especially when a person would usually use a lift to move between floors and these are not available during evacuation and when evacuation routes through a building are different to those regularly used. PEEPS should be developed for disabled staff, regular disabled visitors to the building and disabled visitors who are not known.

Ramp: one or more inclined surfaces with a gradient no shallower than 1:20 and no steeper than 1:12.

Refuge: area that is both separated from a fire/smoke by a fire-resisting construction and provided with a safe route to a storey exit. This is a place of temporary safety.

Rise (Stairs): vertical distance between the horizontal upper surfaces of two consecutive treads or between a tread and a floor or a tread and a landing. The distance between the level surfaces a foot is placed upon.

Slope: inclined surface with a gradient steeper than 1:60 but no steeper than 1:20.

Stair width: The distance between walls, balustrade or upstands whichever is closer to the useable surface of the stair.

Sign board: this is the surface of a sign that text is placed on. There should be tonal contrast (70 points LRV difference) between the text and the sign board and between the sign board and its background.

Title Case: title Case is where the first letter of each word is a capital letter followed by lower case letters. This is recommended because people read by word shape and find it easier to read signs or instructions given in Title Case rather than CAPITALS, where all letters are the same height.

Tonal contrast: perception of a difference visually between one surface or element of a building and another by reference to their light reflectance values (LRV). Think of this as how the colour would look if it

Terms and definitions (cont'd)

were converted to greyscale.

Tread: Horizontal part of a step. The area the foot is placed upon.

Unisex (WCs): designed for all with or without assistance.

Way-finding: means of ensuring that someone can find their way, avoid obstacles, and know when they have reached their destination.

Wheelchair stairlift: appliance within the scope of BS EN 81-40 for transporting a person in a wheelchair, between two or more landings by means of a guided carriage moving in an inclined plane.

The Access Audit

Ref	Current Findings	Recommendation	Priority
1	Approach		
1.1	Dropped kerbs and tactile paving have been provided at most street crossing points. However, some of the tactile warning is failing and could lead to a tripping hazard. 	Renew the blister paving where it is failing on Westway.	2
1.2	There are a number of dropped kerbs at crossing points close to the roundabout. However, tactile warning has not been provided. 	Provide tactile paving to the crossing points close to the roundabout.	3

Ref	Current Findings	Recommendation	Priority
2	Parking		
2.1	To the front of the building there are 4 accessible parking bays. These measure between 2.9 - 3.7 m wide with a length of 4.5 - 4.8 m long. Accessible parking bays should measure 2.4 x 4.8 m with hatching of 1.2 m wide to the side and rear. This gives an overall dimension of 3.6 m x 6 m. None of these parking bays show the hatching to the side or rear. This is important as it helps guide people to park within the bay and leave space to the side to allow doors to be fully opened. There is also no wall or post mounted signage advising of the bays. This helps people more easily identify the bay when entering the car park but also when the ground painted markings are covered for example by snow. 	Remark the accessible parking bays to meet with guidance. Best practice is that the 1.2 m wide hatching is applied to both sides of the bay.	2
	 An accessible bay at the front of the building.		

Ref	Current Findings	Recommendation	Priority
2.2	For any blue badge holders staying longer than 3 hours have to pay. There is an option to pay with your phone however not everyone wants to or can do that. Access to the pier machine if not accessible due to the high kerb. There is an alternative route but this is long and would not be obvious until arriving at the pay machine.  High kerb to the pay machine.	Provide a dropped kerb at the pay machine.	2
2.3	The path running alongside the building from the front to the rear car park has a short rise flights of steps off it. There is no warning at the top of these steps that there is a sudden change of level. Steps should have corduroy tactile warning to the top and the bottom along with tonally contrasting nosings, none of these features have been provided.  The steps at the side of the car park.	Provide corduroy tactile warning to the top and bottom of the steps along with tonally contrasting nosings.	1

Ref	Current Findings	Recommendation	Priority
2.4	There are some accessible parking bays to the large rear car park which are located on a slope. The slope runs from side to side and has an indicative gradient of 1:14 which makes it a ramp. Being on a slope can mean pushing the car door up they inclined making it heavy. It can also mean that a wheelchair may roll. Accessible parking bays should be located on level ground.  The accessible parking bay is located on an incline.	Relocate the accessible parking bays to level ground.	1
2.5	The accessible parking bay measures 3.6 m x 4.5 m. The hatchings to the bay have not been shown. The bay should measure 2.4 x 4.8 m plus 1.2 m wide hatchings to the side and rear.	Remark the bay to meet with guidance including the addition of a wall or post mounted sign.	2
2.6	It is not known how many parking spaces there are in total. However, there are a total of 12 accessible parking bays. Guidance recommends that there should be a minimum of 6% of the total parking identified as accessible parking bays. There should also be 1 parking bay for each member of staff that requires an accessible bay.	Review the car parking to ensure there is a minimum of 1 accessible bay for each member of staff that requires 1 plus 6% of the total car parking capacity.	2

Ref	Current Findings	Recommendation	Priority
2.7	The car park has a rough and uneven surface which can lead to people tripping.  An example of the car park surface.	Make good the surface of the car park to remove tripping hazards.	1
2.8	At present there is no electric vehicle charging. However, if EV charging is provided accessible charging points should be included.	If or when EV charging is provided, ensure there is at least 1 accessible EV charging point.	3
3	Front entrance		
3.1	The front public entrance has steps and a step-free access route up to the doors.		
3.2	Step-free route: this has a gradient which is shallower than 1:20 which means it is not a ramp. There is signage at the foot of the entrance steps advising of its location.		

Ref	Current Findings	Recommendation	Priority
3.3	Steps: these have handrails and tonally contrasting nosings. However, there is no tactile warning to the bottom of the steps. The tactile warning at the top does not meet with current guidance. The paving starts approximately 430 mm from the nosing of the top step with approximately 420 mm wide corduroy warning. The depth of the corduroy warning should be 800 mm.  Corduroy warning only at the top and not laid to guidance.	Provide corduroy tactile paving to the top and bottom of the steps that meets with current guidance.	1
3.4	The double leaf outer doors are held in the open position when the building is open. There is a set of automatic glass sliding doors in the lobby. When entering the building the manifestation of the Council's crest is obvious. However, when exiting the building this manifestation is less obvious. Best practice for manifestation is that it is of 2 totally contrasting colours. This then allows for 1 colour to be lost in the background and the other should still be visible.  Manifestation is not obvious when leaving the building.	Add a 2nd totally contrasting colour to the manifestation.	2

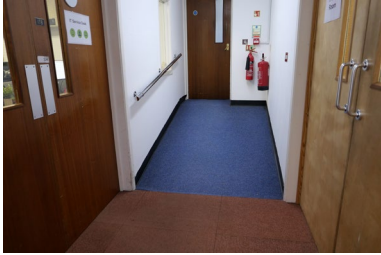
Ref	Current Findings	Recommendation	Priority
4	Staff entrance - stepped		
4.1	This entrance is accessed from the rear car park and reached via a flight of three steps down to the door. The steps have tonally contrasting nosings to help people with sight loss detect the change in level, but there is no tactile warning surface. This gives advanced warning of a sudden change of level.	Provide tactile warning to the top and bottom of the steps.	1
4.2	The door provides a clear effective width of 755 mm. This is less than the recommended of 1000 mm for entrance doors and associated lobby doors. Increasing the width is not seen as feasible due to the internal layout.	Provide signage advising of the alternative entrance associated with the ramp.	1
5	Staff entrance - step free		
5.1	This entrance has a slope with a 90° turn in it. The gradient is shallower than 1:20 which means it is not a ramp.		

Ref	Current Findings	Recommendation	Priority
5.2	The door has a round twist handle. This requires the user to pinch and twist their hand to grasp and turn it.  The handle cannot be used with a clenched fist.	Provide a handle that can be operated with a clenched fist.	1
5.3	The door is heavy to open. The recommended force required to open a door is 30 N from 0° closed to 30° and then 22.5 N from 30° to 60°. As a rule of thumb, if the door can be pulled open easily with a little finger it will probably be acceptable.	Reduce the door opening force to meet with guidance.	2
6	Delivery point		
6.1	The gradient up to the entrance doors is approximately 1:10 for 2570 mm. Although this entrance is for deliveries anyone wanting to access the bar area and cannot use steps will have to enter via this entrance if in Planning, Property, Parks or Sports & Recreation. Another areas the lift will provide step-free access.  Delivery point entrance ramp.	Provide a ramp that is no steeper than 1:12.	2

Ref	Current Findings	Recommendation	Priority
7	Reception		
7.1	The reception area is directly in front of the entrance doors. The word 'reception' is written on the glass doors, which are automatic sliding doors sliding doors.	We recommend that additional 'Reception' signage is added to reinforce what is already provided as it could be missed.	QW
7.2	On the doors into the reception area there is a sign stating that no dogs except guide dogs. This should be removed and replaced with text along the lines of assistance dogs only.	Replace the guide dogs only sign with assistance dogs only.	QW
7.3	The reception desk has a single height of 1160 mm. It is recommended that two heights are provided for people of short stature and wheelchair users at the low section and a higher section for people who could not use a low section.	Provide a reception desk with two heights and a knee recess to the lower section. The heights should be 950 - 1100 mm and 760 - 800 mm.	2
7.4	There are some open booths with desks that customers can use. None of these have a rise and fall desk.	Provide a rise and fall desk to the reception area. Best practice.	3
 Booths that customers can use.			

Ref	Current Findings	Recommendation	Priority
7.5	Interview room opposite reception: this and interview room 3 are the largest interview rooms. The space between the desk and the wall on the customer side measures 1120 mm. This is not enough space for a wheelchair user to manoeuvre. Interview room with insufficient space to the customer side.	Move the desk further away from the wall to provide increased space. Chairs will need to be removed as and when required.	M
7.6	Interview room 3: this has space to move, it will just require the chairs to be moved to provide space.		
7.7	None of the interview rooms have an induction loop or other hearing enhancement system.	Provide a hearing enhancement system to the interview rooms.	1
8	Signage		
8.1	At the reception area the word 'RECEPTION' is written in all upper case and next to it is a screen with 'WELCOME TO RUGBY BOROUGH COUNCIL'. Text should be written in Sentence Case (first letter in upper case and the rest lower case) as it is easier to read for some people.	Provide text to way finding and instructions in Sentence Case.	3

Ref	Current Findings	Recommendation	Priority
8.2	In the basement the lift is hidden from view as it is in a room. Signage should be provided outside the room identifying the lift location.	Provide signage in the basement identifying the lift location.	QW
9	Horizontal circulation		
9.1	The floors provide a firm and even surface. Around the main central staircase the floor is of a light cream coloured stone with a thick black band. This band can give the illusion to people with sight loss or cognitive impairments of a change in level or something to be avoided. Altering this is not seen as reasonable. Outside of these areas the floor covering is carpet.   The thick band at the bottom of the steps could be confusing to some people. A band in the floor between the entrance door and the reception area.	Should the opportunity ever arise consider removing the black band.	3
9.2	The lighting outside these toilets is poor, there should be a minimum of 100 lx at floor level. The illumination of the area should be even, avoiding pools of light and dark.	Provide even illumination of the lighting to the corridor outside these toilets.	2

Ref	Current Findings	Recommendation	Priority
9.3	Just outside the IT Service Desk in the basement corridor there is a ramp. This has an indicative gradient of 1:4 for 2.2 m. No ramp should be steeper than 1:12. However, due to the doors to rooms either side of this corridor extending the ramp is not feasible as it would pass across the doors into the rooms.  IT Service Desk ramp.	For staff and others that find this ramp too steep management procedures should be in place, for example meet the person concerned at an accessible location.	M
9.4	The IT Service desk ramp should contrast tonally with the top landing, it does not. It does contrast with the bottom.	When the opportunity arises provide contrast between the incline and the top landing.	3
9.5	The IT Service Desk ramp has a handrail to one side only. A second handrail should be provided to the opposite side of the present one.	Provide a handrail to the right side when going up.	1

Ref	Current Findings	Recommendation	Priority
10	Doors		
10.1	The doors to the interview rooms, the Unity Hub in the reception and offices have high vision panels. Vision panels should allow people to see and be seen beyond the door. Vision panels start at more than 1000 mm above the floor.	Provide doors with vision panels that start at 500 mm above the floor and extend upwards for at least 1000 mm.	3
10.2	The corridor doors next to the ground floor female toilet overlap with the toilet door when open. Using unequal door leaf sizes to prevent this overlap should be considered. Corridor door overlaps the female toilet door.	Investigate ways to avoid the corridor door overlapping the female toilet door.	1

Ref	Current Findings	Recommendation	Priority
10.3	The lobby door to the staff side entrance with the slope has a high vision panel. This should start at 500 mm above the floor as this allows people to see and be seen beyond the door.  High vision panel.	Provide a vision panel starting at 500 mm above the floor and extending upwards for at least 1000 mm.	2
10.4	The doors to the IT area in the basement all have high level vision panels starting at more than 500 mm above the floor.	Provide vision panels to doors starting at 500 mm above the floor.	3
10.5	The doors from the circulation areas where members of the public have access have access control on them. This takes the form of a wall mounted card reader. The door in the corridor to the left of reception has the reader located between the recycling bin and the door. The bin is blocking access to the reader.  Card reader is obstructed by the bin.	Reposition the recycling bin.	QW

Ref	Current Findings	Recommendation	Priority
10.6	Double leaf doors in staff-only areas typically provide a clear effective width of 650 mm, below the recommended 800 mm. While they are held open on alarm-linked catches, any impact on evacuation should be addressed in relevant PEEPs.	Ensure this is reflected in a person's PEEP if relevant.	M
10.7	The doors in circulation routes are typically heavy to open. The recommended force required to open a door is 30 N from 0° closed to 30° and then 22.5 N from 30° to 60°. As a rule of thumb, if the door can be pulled open easily with a little finger it will probably be acceptable.	Reduce the door opening force.	2
10.8	Kitchen 40: the door into this kitchen provides a clear effective width of 660 mm, less than the recommended 800 mm. This will be an issue to wheelchair users and others with walking aids. Increasing the width is not seen as feasible without moving the door or the wall.	Investigate increasing the clear effective width to the door.	3
10.9	The doors associated with access to the Council Chamber and Committee Rooms all exceed the recommended opening force.	Reduce the door opening force.	2

Ref	Current Findings	Recommendation	Priority
10.10	The door to the Committee Rooms and Council Chamber has an access control reader positioned at 1360 mm above the floor, making it unreachable for wheelchair users. The exit button is at a similar height and further obstructed by fire extinguishers below it.  Card reader and exit button are in inaccessible locations and heights.	More accessible than the present location would be to place the reader on the frame of the door. Look to reposition the fire extinguishers. Readers should be no higher than 1200 mm above the floor.	2
10.11	The doors into the Committee Rooms provide a clear effective width of 750 mm, this is the absolute narrowest a door should provide, 800 mm is the recommended. There is an issue around the rooms opposite the top ramp as the access width on the approach to the room is 865 mm because of the ramp. This coupled with the narrow door will make access for a wheelchair difficult to impossible.	The options to consider are to use another meeting room when a wheelchair user is attending away from the ramp or move the ramp. Long-term planning would be to increase the doors clear effective width.	M
10.12	There are double doors into the Chamber, these provide a clear effective width of 620 mm, less than the recommended of 800 mm. The option is to provide unequal sized doors leaves or have the doors opened for someone who cannot pass through a single leaf or power the doors to both leaves open..	Increase the door clear effective width or open the doors or have power operated doors.	1

Ref	Current Findings	Recommendation	Priority
11	Staff toilets		
11.1	This applies to <u>all staff and public</u> toilets. The wash hand basins have a notice advising of very hot water. A person who has no sight will not be able to observe this notice. Water temperature for hand washing should not exceed 43°C at outlet with a circulating water being no less than 60°C.  Notice advising of 'very hot water'.	Restrict water temperature to the maximum recommended for hand washing.	1
11.2	Toilets are fitted with white seats and lids. This makes it difficult for a person with sight loss to identify if the seat is up or down against the white of the pan or the lid. Providing tonally contrasting seats and lids helps.  Toilets fitted with white seats and lids with a white WC pan.	When replacing the seats/lids do so with a tonally contrasting seat.	3

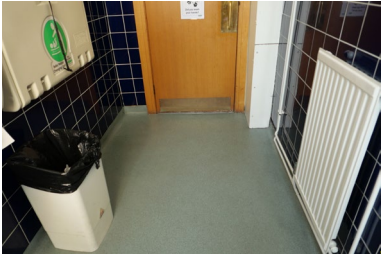
Ref	Current Findings	Recommendation	Priority
11.3	There are no cubicles suitable for ambulant disabled people. Each facility should provide at least 1 cubicle with an outward opening door and support rails.	Provide at least 1 cubicle per facility suitable for ambulant disabled people.	2
11.4	Where urinals have been installed the front edge is typically at 620 mm above the floor. It is recommended that one is provided at 500 mm above the floor.	Provide 1 urinal with the front edge at 500 mm above the floor.	3
11.5	Sanitary ware in toilets should provide good tonal contrast against the background it is seen against. The following facilities did not provide that: female WCs - 8, 30, 73 & 77; male WCs - 10, 31, 78 & 113.	Provide good tonal contrast of 30 points LRV difference between sanitary ware and its background.	3
11.6	Cubicle door locks should be easy to operate with a clenched fist, they should not require the user to pinch or twist their hand. Some cubicles have small thumb turns.	Provide cubicle locks that can be used with a clenched fist.	2
	 Cubicle lock in room 8, female WC.		

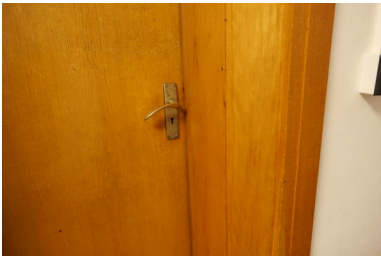
Ref	Current Findings	Recommendation	Priority
12	Staff accessible WC and shower - basement		
12.1	In the basement there is a combined accessible WC and shower. The room is being used as a storage area.	Ensure showers and toilets are not used as storage areas.	M
12.2	The room measures 2400 x 2500 mm which meets with current guidance.		
12.3	The WC pan is fitted with a white seat and lid. In an accessible WC there should be no lid as this can interfere when a person transfers from their wheelchair to the toilet. Also the seat and WC pan do not contrast as all are white. To help more easily identify the seat it should contrast tonally against the white of the pan.	Remove the WC lid and provide a tonally contrasting seat.	QW
12.4	Paper towel and soap dispenser to the toilet have been provided. However, the paper towel dispenser is too high putting it out of reach.	Provide a paper towel dispenser within reach of the WC pan and no higher than 1000 mm above the floor.	QW
			
	Paper towel dispenser is out of reach.		

Ref	Current Findings	Recommendation	Priority
12.5	The light switch is a pull cord. This has poor tonal contrast against the back ground it is seen against.	Provide a pull cord with good tonal contrast and a fob that can be easily found.	QW
12.6	There is no emergency pull cord next to the WC pan. There is a cord but this is located next to the shower. A red emergency pull cord should hang down on the side wall nearest the WC pan but behind the horizontal grab rail. The cord should be placed in line with the front of the WC pan. There should be red pull bangles at 100 mm and 800-1000 mm above the floor. A reset button should be provided on the same side wall within reach of the WC pan. This is so that it can be cancelled if activated in error.	Provide an emergency pull cord.	1
12.7	The shower area has a missing drop-down rail. There should be a second drop-down rail next to the vertical rail on the wall with the shower controls.	Provide a drop-down rail on the side wall with the shower controls.	2
13	Staff showers		
13.1	These are located in the basement and are currently not available for use. There are discussions about converting this area in to an adult changing place.		

Ref	Current Findings	Recommendation	Priority
14	Staff accessible WC - 1st floor		
14.1	This is located between the male (Rm113) and the female (Rm114) WCs. The room measures 1830 x 1495 mm, this is smaller than the recommended size of an accessible WC 1500 mm x 2200 mm. Also the wash hand basin is in the transfer space. This room can not be identified as an accessible WC.  the door even advertising it as a The self contained toilet on the 1st floor.	Provide an accessible WC to this floor.	3
15	Public WCs		
15.1	The lighting outside these toilets is poor, there should be a minimum of 100 lx at floor level. The illumination of the area should be even, avoiding pools of light and dark.	Provide even illumination of the lighting to the corridor outside these toilets.	2

Ref	Current Findings	Recommendation	Priority
15.2	These are located next to the reception area. The female toilet has no sign advertising it as an accessible WC (AWC). The male toilet is signed as an accessible WC. The issue is that the AWC in the male toilet leaves females who need an AWC wondering where to go? There is also the question of a man requiring the use of the AWC but needs assistance from his carer who is female, what should they do, especially as to reach the accessible cubicle you have to pass by the urinals! Ideally there should be 3 toilets, male, female and a unisex accessible WC.	In the meantime provide signage to the female toilet advising it is an accessible WC, however, take note of 10.2. Best practice is to provide 3 toilets, male, female and a unisex accessible WC	1
15.3	As there is no unisex accessible WC one should be considered along with separate male and female toilets. In not providing this you may be in breach of your Public Sector Equality Duty.	Consider providing a male, female and unisex accessible WC.	2
15.4	Female WC: the door into the room provides a clear effective width of 800 mm. However, the corridor door overlaps this by approximately 65 mm, this reduces the door clear effective width to 735 mm. Less than the recommended 800 mm. See 10.2		
15.5	Female WC: the room door opens into the toilet. However, as the room measures 1500 mm wide x 3490 mm long, this is not seen as an issue as there is manoeuvring space within the toilet to clear the door swing.		

Ref	Current Findings	Recommendation	Priority
15.6	Doors should have a minimum of 300 mm clear space between the leading edge of the door and the nearest return wall/corner. Because of what appears to be boxing-in of services this space is not available. This space is used by wheelchair users in particular to reach the door handle.  There is no clear 300 mm to the latch side of the door.	Investigate if the boxing in can be reduced in size or consider rehanging the door so the hinged side becomes the latch side?	2
15.7	Female WC: the pan is fitted with a white seat and lid. In an accessible WC there should be no lid as this can interfere when a person transfers from their wheelchair to the toilet. Also the seat and WC pan do not contrast as all are white. To help more easily identify the seat it should contrast tonally against the white of the pan.	Remove the WC lid and provide a tonally contrasting seat.	2
15.8	Female WC: there are 2 support rails missing. One on the back wall next to the drop-down rail, however, there is a window there. The second is above the wash hand basin, there should be one to each side.	Provide the missing rails. The one to the back wall may require further brackets across the window.	2

Ref	Current Findings	Recommendation	Priority
15.9	Female WC: paper towels are out of reach from the WC pan. It should be possible to reach the soap and paper towel dispensers from the WC pan so that a person can wash and dry their hands. The dispensers should be wall mounted and easy to operate one-handed.	Provide paper towels within reach of the WC pan.	QW
15.10	Female WC: there is a sanitary bin in the transfer space. This will impede a wheelchair user wanting to use this space when transferring.	Ensure staff understand that the sanitary bin should be positioned between WC pan and the nearest side wall.	QW
15.11	Female WC: this room contains a drop-down baby change table. It is not recommended to provide these in accessible WC except in the smallest of establishments, then the room size should be increased and a standing height wash basin should be added.	Make available a separate baby change room.	P
15.12	Male WC: the door is set in a thick wall with a depth of 435 mm from the wall to the face of the door, this should be no more than 200 mm. This is to allow easy access to the door handle.	Consider providing a power operated door.	2
	 The reveal to the door is thick.		

Ref	Current Findings	Recommendation	Priority
15.13	Male WC: the urinals at the front edge are 670 mm above the floor. It is recommended that one is lowered to a height of 500 mm.	Lower a urinal to 500 mm above the floor.	2
15.14	Male WC: there is no modesty screen between the urinals. These can be used to rest walking aids on or take support from as well as providing decency.	Provide a modesty screen between the urinals.	2
	 The urinals are high with no modesty screen between them. There is also poor tonal contrast between the sanitary ware and the surface it is mounted upon.		
15.15	Male WC: there is poor tonal contrast between the sanitary ware/support rails and their background. There should be 30 points LRV difference.	Provide good tonal contrast between all sanitary ware and support rails against their background.	3
15.16	Male WC: the accessible cubicle meets with the minimum size.		
15.17	Male accessible WC cubicle: the pan is fitted with a white seat and lid. In an accessible WC there should be no lid as this can interfere when a person transfers from their wheelchair to the toilet. Also the seat and WC pan do not contrast as all are white. To help more easily identify the seat it should contrast tonally against the white of the pan.	Remove the WC lid and provide a tonally contrasting seat.	2

Ref	Current Findings	Recommendation	Priority
15.18	Male accessible WC cubicle: the distance between the front of the WC pan and the edge of the wash hand basin is 250 mm. The wash hand basin is too far from the WC pan. People are not able to wash their hands while seated on the WC, which is essential. The recommended distance between the nearest edge of the wash hand basin and the front of the WC pan is 140 – 160 mm.	Reposition the wash hand basin closer to the WC pan.	1
15.19	Male accessible WC cubicle: paper towels are out of reach from the WC pan. It should be possible to reach the soap and paper towel dispensers from the WC pan so that a person can wash and dry their hands. The dispensers should be wall mounted and easy to operate one-handed.	Provide paper towels within reach of the WC pan.	QW
15.20	Male accessible WC cubicle: there is only 1 vertical support rail to the wash hand basin there should be one to each side.	Provide a second vertical support rail to the wash hand basin. Further support brackets may be required due to the window.	2
15.21	Male accessible WC cubicle: the emergency pull cord is positioned in the transfer space to the toilet with the rest button high up on the rear wall out of reach from the WC pan. A red emergency pull cord should hang down on the side wall nearest the WC pan but behind the horizontal grab rail. The cord should be placed in line with the front of the WC pan. There should be red pull bangles at 100 mm and 800-1000 mm above the floor. A reset button should be provided on the same side wall within reach of the WC pan. This is so that it can be cancelled if activated in error.	Reposition the emergency pull cord and reset button.	1

Ref	Current Findings	Recommendation	Priority
15.22	Female and male AWC: mirrors have been provided but these start too high up. Mirrors should start at 600 mm above the floor and extend upwards for 1000 mm.	Provide mirrors starting at the correct height.	QW
15.23	Female and male AWC: shelves have not been provided. There should be two, one next to the WC pan and the other at the opposite end of the room out of the manoeuvring area.	Provide 2 shelves.	QW
16	Kitchens		
16.1	These are all similar in their design, it is the room size that changes.		
16.2	Counter tops are typically around 930 mm above the floor. For people of short stature and wheelchair users these can be too high for them to use. In refreshment areas there are three options to consider for the counter height: a fixed low counter and high counter; a height adjustable counter; or a counter height of 850 mm.	Provide a lower section of counter the option taken will be dictated by the room size and space available. A counter height of 850 mm is deemed as acceptable for both standing and seated users.	3

Ref	Current Findings	Recommendation	Priority
16.3	A wall mounted water boiler is provided. This has a tap height typically at 1440 mm. This will be able out of reach to people of short stature and wheelchair users. A water heater should, wherever possible, be installed as a free-standing unit with controls not higher than 1200 mm from the floor. If installation of a water heater above a work surface is unavoidable, it should be located such that the controls are not higher than 1150 mm from the floor.  Water boiler out of reach.	Provide a water heater at the recommended height.	3
16.4	Microwave ovens are provided to kitchen areas.. It is important for safety and using the oven that there is a worktop that is clear of the door swing and that you don't have to move around an open door when putting items in or taking them out.  Rm 112: no counter free of a door swing. Kitchen in the bar.	Ensure there is unobstructed access to a worktop associated with a microwave oven.	2

Ref	Current Findings	Recommendation	Priority
16.5	Kitchen 40: the light switch is not obvious as it is small, located within the door frame and provides no tonal contrast.	Increase the tonal contrast between the light switch and the door frame.	2
16.6	Kitchen 40: the kitchen is narrow with little manoeuvring space. The fridge doors are hinged so that when opening you have to pass the fridge door and then pull it open. Having doors that opened towards the side wall would give improved access for all.	When replacing the fridges select ones that have the door hinged on the left.	3
	 Having fridge doors opening the opposite direction would improve access.		
17	Stairs		
17.1	The stairs from the lift lobby on the 1st floor up to the Chamber gallery have no tonally contrasting nosings. I am informed that the gallery is no longer in use.	If the gallery is put back into use, tonally contrasting nosings should be added.	3
17.2	There is a short rise flight of steps leading up to finance. These have open risers which are not recommended as it is possible for people to get their feet caught on the underside of the step above.	Infill open risers.	2

Ref	Current Findings	Recommendation	Priority
17.3	Steps to finance: there is no step-free alternative route up to this area. A portable ramp is available, however, this cannot be deployed by the wheelchair user. A more permanent solution should be found.  Steps up to the Finance Department.	There are a couple of options to consider, there may be others. These include turning these steps into a 'sesame; style lift. This is where the lift is hidden and the treads of the stairs convert into the lift. Another option would be to extend the steps to increase the top landing and insert a short rise platform lift to the side.	2
17.4	At basement level, there are four steps without handrails. Handrails should be provided on both sides to ensure that individuals who rely on a handrail, especially those who can use only one side of their body, can receive support in both directions of travel.	The stairs are narrow, before installing handrails check with Building Control they wont impede emergency egress.	2

Ref	Current Findings	Recommendation	Priority
18	Lift		
18.1	The lift provides no mirror to the rear wall. This is used by wheelchair users to see if anyone is behind them, doors opened or closed and the floor level .  Rear wall to the lift has no mirror.	Provide a mirror to the rear wall starting at 900 mm above the floor.	2
18.2	There is no floor level signage to the floor landings or the reveals of the left doors. There should be signage that is easy to see from within the lift car showing the floor level reached.	Provide clear floor level signage that is visible from within the lift car.	2
18.3	Lift car controls should have the ground floor/exit button in green and protruding, making it easier to identify.	Provide the exit level button green and protruding.	2
18.4	There is no emergency communication system within the lift. There should be an intercom along with an inductive coupler for use during an emergency.	Provide an emergency communication system.	1

Ref	Current Findings	Recommendation	Priority
19	Unity Hub		
19.1	This does not form part of the audit as it is operated by a third party. However, it can form part of the evacuation route from the reception area. See emergency egress.		
20	Council Chamber and Committee Rooms		
20.1	These are on the 1st floor, there are 2 sets of steps up to it from the 1st floor circulation route. Portable ramps have been installed and left set up. The ramps have an indicative gradient of 1:6 for 2.43 m. Ramps even portable ramps should be no steeper than 1:12. Steeper than this can make them more difficult to use and have the potential to cause a wheelchair to tip over or ground out with the foot plates. Extending the bottom ramp is not feasible as it already projects in to the circulation space. The only way this could be reduced is by altering the starting point and putting a turn in. There is space to extend the top ramp.  Ramps up to the Committee Rooms and Council Chamber..	Investigate options to reduce the gradients of the ramps.	2

Ref	Current Findings	Recommendation	Priority
20.2	The Council Chamber has an induction loop with signage advising of its presence. However, there is nothing for the Committee Rooms. Induction loops may not be appropriate for these rooms due to overspill where the signal can leak out of the room and people with suitable hearing aids and cochlear implants may be able to listen in. There are other systems that will give privacy such as radio or infrared, there is also audio over WiFi	Provide a hearing enhancement system to the committee rooms.	1
20.3	Council Chamber: there is no accessible seating for Council members as all the seating is fixed with a fixed height desk in front. The second row up from the floor of the Chamber have step-free access to them, all others there is at least one step to access them. The Chair's bench is also raised by two steps. For Council Members having a seat to the centre back row that could be removed is an option, however, this may not work along party lines. A ramp should be made available to access the Bench.	Investigate making one seat of the centre back row accessible or removable. Have a ramp available for the Bench.	2
	 The centre back row could have one seat that is removeable for a wheelchair space.		

Ref	Current Findings	Recommendation	Priority
21	Offices		
21.1	Powered rise and fall desks were found in the offices. Not all desks have this capability. One desk was seen being raised using blocks.  An example of a desk raised up on blocks.	Provide powered or manually adjusted rise and fall desks.	2
21.2	Some offices are fitted with push button security locks, for example room 43 Control Centre and life line office. This style of lock requires the user to have good manual dexterity.  Provide door locks that do not require good manual dexterity.	Provide room locks that can be used without the need to have good manual dexterity. This can be done as and when required by a member of staff.	3

Ref	Current Findings	Recommendation	Priority
21.3	Induction loops or other hearing enhancement systems have not been provided to meeting rooms. Board style meeting rooms should have a hard-wired system installed and smaller rooms say 6 person a portable system would be suitable. Common practice is to use an induction loop but audio over WiFi is starting to emerge and should be considered. This is more secure than an induction loop.	Provide a hearing enhancement system for meeting rooms.	1
22	Emergency evacuation		
22.1	Double leaf doors in staff-only areas typically provide a clear effective width of 650 mm, below the recommended 800 mm. While they are held open on alarm-linked catches, any impact on evacuation should be addressed in relevant PEEPs.	Ensure this is reflected in a person's PEEP if relevant.	M
22.2	Unity Hub: this for part of the evacuation route from the reception area. To get to this point there is a stepped and step-free route. It would not be unreasonable to expect this to be the same. However, due to the topography of the site this exit is the top of an evacuation staircase. There is also a high threshold to the exit door.	Ensure accessible egress routes are signed.	1

Ref	Current Findings	Recommendation	Priority
22.3	The external emergency staircase has no tonally contrasting nosings identify the step edges, these should be provided. Nosings should be readily apparent, slip resistant and 30 points LRV difference, on all treads and risers. On treads they should measure 50 – 65 mm and on risers they should be 30 – 55 mm.	Provide tonally contrasting nosings to the step edges.	1
22.4	An evacuation chair is provided for those unable to use stairs, but it may not suit everyone due to confidence, medical reasons, or the need for trained assistance to transfer safely.	Ensure PEEPs or GEEPs take account of people who cannot use an evacuation chair.	M
22.5	The evacuation of all building occupants is a management responsibility and appropriate risk assessments, including evacuation, must be in place. For specific disabled employees it may be relevant to provide them with a personal emergency egress plan. A separate strategy will be required for visitors.	Assess current management strategies, take advice from a suitably competent person if necessary, and upgrade the means of escape provisions to meet, or exceed, current (minimum) standards.	M

Declaration

We can confirm this access audit has been undertaken by Ian Streets NRAC
Consultant of About Access Ltd.

Signed

Ian Streets

Ian Streets NRAC Consultant

Date 8th July 2025

Appendix 1. Disability & Legislation

Who is a disabled person?

A disabled person is defined as someone who has a mental or physical impairment that has a substantial effect on the ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Impairments are listed as:

- Mobility
- Doing something with your hands
- Physical coordination
- Continence (controlling your bladder and bowels)
- Ability to lift, carry or move everyday objects
- Speech, hearing or eyesight
- Memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand or
- Perception of the risk of physical danger.

Substantial means that it is more than minor or trivial.

Impairment covers, for example, long-term conditions like asthma or diabetes and conditions that come and go. Mental impairments include mental health conditions (e.g. bipolar disorder, depression), learning difficulties (e.g. dyslexia) and learning disabilities (autism or Down's

syndrome).

Making Adjustments

We at About Access take the view that it is physical features and policy that make people disabled. For example, a building with a flight of steps at the entrance will not be accessible to a person who uses a wheelchair. But by providing a ramp of suitable design, a wheelchair would then be able to enter the building. It is the steps that are disabling not the fact that the person uses a wheelchair.

There are three options to consider when making adjustments.

- Change the way things are done, formal or informal policies, and rules.
- Physical features:
 - Remove,
 - alter,
 - avoid a physical feature
- Provide auxiliary aids or services.

Requirement 1: change the way things are done. An organisation has rules about the way it carries out its business, which could have been written or adopted on the basis of 'that's the way we've always done it'. These rules may be a barrier to a disabled person.

Appendix 1. Disability & Legislation (cont'd)

These rules may have to change or be dropped so that they no longer make it unreasonably difficult for a disabled person to use the service or amenity.

Requirement 2: consider physical features that are disabling. Where features are disabling then making adjustments should be considered in the following order:

- Remove the feature
- Alter it so that it no longer has the disabling effect
- Avoid the feature

Provide a reasonable alternative method of making the service available to disabled people.

Requirement 3: provide auxiliary aids and services if this would let disabled people use the organisation's services.

The type of auxiliary aid or service will depend on what the organisation does or offers. Where equipment is offered, it must be in working order, maintained and staff must be trained in its use. Also, the need for back-up service should be considered. The type of auxiliary aid would typically be a hearing enhancement system - induction loop.

Adjustments

In most environments, reasonable adjustments have to be made to remove physical or any other types of barrier – created by policies or attitudes for example – that could make it difficult or impossible for disabled person to use or access the building.

The aim of making the adjustment is to ensure that a disabled person (e.g. someone who may be deaf or visually impaired or have difficulty in walking) can use the building or service to a standard as close as reasonably possible to the standard usually offered to a non-disabled person.

What is seen as reasonable will depend on the type of service being offered.

Things to consider are:

- Would the suggested steps be effective in improving accessibility?
- Is it practical to take the recommended steps?
- How much disruption will be caused while making the adjustments?

Appendix 1. Disability & Legislation (cont'd)

Types of Discrimination

Direct

This occurs when someone receives worse treatment than someone who does not have a disability. For example, a person is asked to leave a restaurant because they have Tourette's Syndrome.

Discrimination Arising from Disability

This occurs when someone is discriminated against because of something connected with their disability and the unfair treatment cannot be justified. This differs from direct discrimination, where the discrimination results because of the disability. In 'arising from disability' the discrimination is because of something associated with the disability.

Discrimination will not be unlawful if it was not known or it could not have reasonably been expected to know that the person was disabled.

This means that reasonable steps should be taken to find out if someone is disabled or not, but care needs to be taken not to infringe on the disabled person's dignity or privacy.

Indirect Discrimination

This occurs because of rules, policy or practice that applies to all but puts people with particular impairments at a disadvantage when compared to a non-disabled person and cannot be shown to be justified and meet a legitimate aim in a balanced, reasonable and fair way.

Reasonable Adjustments

In most environments, reasonable adjustments have to be made to remove physical or any other types of barrier – created by policies or attitudes for example – that could make it difficult or impossible for disabled customers to use or access the services or information being provided.

The aim of making the adjustment is to ensure that a disabled person (e.g. someone who may be deaf or visually impaired or have difficulty in walking) can use an organisation's service to a standard as close as reasonably possible to the standard usually offered to a non-disabled person.

The duty to make changes is anticipatory. The organisation must think in advance about how people who have impairments may be affected in accessing their services and what could be done to remove any barriers.

If an organisation finds there are barriers to access for disabled people, then it has a duty to consider making changes to remove or adjust any barriers to access. It will be up to the organisation to consider if the adjustments are reasonable to make.

If barriers to access are identified and the organisation concerned believes they are not reasonable to remove, alter, avoid or provide the service by an alternative means, then the organisation should make a dated record of the reasoning along with any evidence to support this belief. The evidence could be:

Appendix 1. Disability & Legislation (cont'd)

- A letter from the local conservation officer stating that proposed changes to a listed building are not allowed
- A quote from a lift supplier giving details of installation costs.
- This information should also include a review date.
- An organisation has to do what is reasonable, which will depend on a wide range of factors. These include but are not limited to:
 - Cost
 - Disruption caused in making the adjustment
 - Resources, other than cost, available
 - The types of service being offered
 - Time needed to make adjustment.

Adjustments do not have to be made to make the building or service more accessible if it will lead to a breach of any other legal duties.

However, this is likely to be in exceptional circumstances and only where the other legal duties are very specific, and the service provider has no other choice.

The duty to make reasonable adjustment falls into three main areas.

Service providers can:

- Change the way things are done — the provision, criterion or practice
- Provide auxiliary aids and services
- Overcome a physical feature by
 - removing the feature, or
 - altering it, or
 - avoiding it, or
 - providing services by alternative methods.

What is seen as reasonable will depend on the type of service being offered, along with the size of the provider, taking into account the nature of the service and resources available to it.

Appendix 1. Disability & Legislation (cont'd)

Things to consider are:

- Would the suggested steps be effective in improving accessibility?
- Is it practical for the service provider to take the recommended steps?
- What is the financial cost of the recommendations?
- How much disruption will be caused while making the adjustments?
- What financial resources are available?
- How much has already been spent making improvements to access?
- What other resources (financial or otherwise) are available?

Evidence should be gathered for not making adjustments. For example, this could show the financial implications, disruption caused and the number of visitors affected. This evidence should be recorded and reviewed. It could then be part of a defence against a claim of discrimination.

Harassment

This is unwanted behaviour related to disability that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. This is unlawful treatment.

Victimisation

It is unlawful for a person to be treated badly if they:

- Make a complaint about discrimination or harassment relating to the Act, or
- Help another person make a complaint, or
- Are believed to have helped or complained.

This applies whether or not the person being treated badly is disabled.

Positive Action

Positive action toward disabled people is allowed; this can be used to target a particular group, in this case disabled people. Guidance states that under-representation of a group of people should not be assumed and that research is needed to confirm that they are.

Appendix 1. Disability & Legislation (cont'd)

Public sector Equality Duty

The public sector Equality Duty is Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.¹ It applies to public bodies listed in Schedule 19 of the Act.

Schedule 19 includes sections such as armed forces, broadcasting and local government. Examples of public bodies listed under health, social care and social security include: an NHS trust; a primary care trust; a special health authority; the Care Quality Commission, schools.

The Equality Duty ensures that all public bodies play their part in making society fairer by tackling discrimination and providing equality of opportunity for all.

General Duties

Under the Equality Duty a public body when exercising its functions must have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under the Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

It must consider its duties under the Act across its duties, as a service provider and an employer. For example, a hospital trust cannot ignore its duties to staff while meeting those to patients.

It must not directly or indirectly discriminate, harass or victimise anyone in relation to one or more protected characteristics.

Specific Duties

Specific Duties place further duties on public bodies to enhance performance of the General Duties. They must demonstrate their compliance with the Equality Duty and set themselves specific, measurable equality objectives.

A public body is required to:

- publish equality information to demonstrate its compliance with the general duties
- prepare and publish one or more equality objectives it aims to achieve under the general duties

Listed Buildings

The Equality Act does not override existing legislations such as Planning Permission or Listed Building Approval. However, this does not mean that listed buildings cannot be altered: many have already been altered numerous times through their history. We suggest you work with conservation officers and English Heritage to make any alterations that

Appendix 1. Disability & Legislation (cont'd)

you feel would be a benefit.

Saying 'the building has listed status, so we can't do anything' is not enough. Evidence that a particular change is not allowed should be obtained from the local conservation officer or English Heritage. Alternatives should then be sought to overcome the particular access issue.

Building Regulations

Building Regulations Approved Document M - Buildings other than dwellings 2000:2015 Edition (AD M) provides guidance on access and facilities for disabled people in non-domestic buildings and dwellings.

AD M also gives reference to Part K of the Building Regulations (Protection from falling, collision and impact) (Part K). Where there appears to be conflict between the guidance in AD M and Part K, AD M takes precedence.

Under the Equality Act it is seen as not reasonable for service providers, a public authority carrying out its functions or an association, to remove or alter a physical feature that has been provided in accordance with the design standards/objectives of AD M. This lasts for 10 years from when construction was completed, or the feature installed.

However, this does not mean there is a total exemption from the Equality Act. Features that are outside the scope of AD M may still require reasonable adjustment and reasonable adjustment in other ways, such

as policies should be considered when features do fall within the scope of AD M and are disabling.

Equality Act, Building Regulations, BS 8300 & Accessibility Compliance

The Equality Act is not about buildings or physical features. It is about not putting disabled people at a substantial disadvantage, and if physical features have a disabling effect, then reasonable adjustments need to be made to remove that effect.

The Equality Act covers buildings (irrespective of age) and sites. For example, this includes parks, whether used free or in return for payment or as a place of employment.

However, the Equality Act does not give guidance about design or where to get design guidance when looking to make environments accessible. It cannot therefore indicate whether a building or site complies with the legislation. The duty to make reasonable adjustment is an ongoing duty. Just because a building was designed to now an outdated piece of guidance, it does not mean it should not be audited (benchmarked) against the latest guidance.

Building Regulations apply to new builds and extensions. Building Regulations are lawful and compulsory, whereas deviation from the AD M is allowed, subject to approval, as this is only guidance. A physical feature

Appendix 1. Disability & Legislation (cont'd)

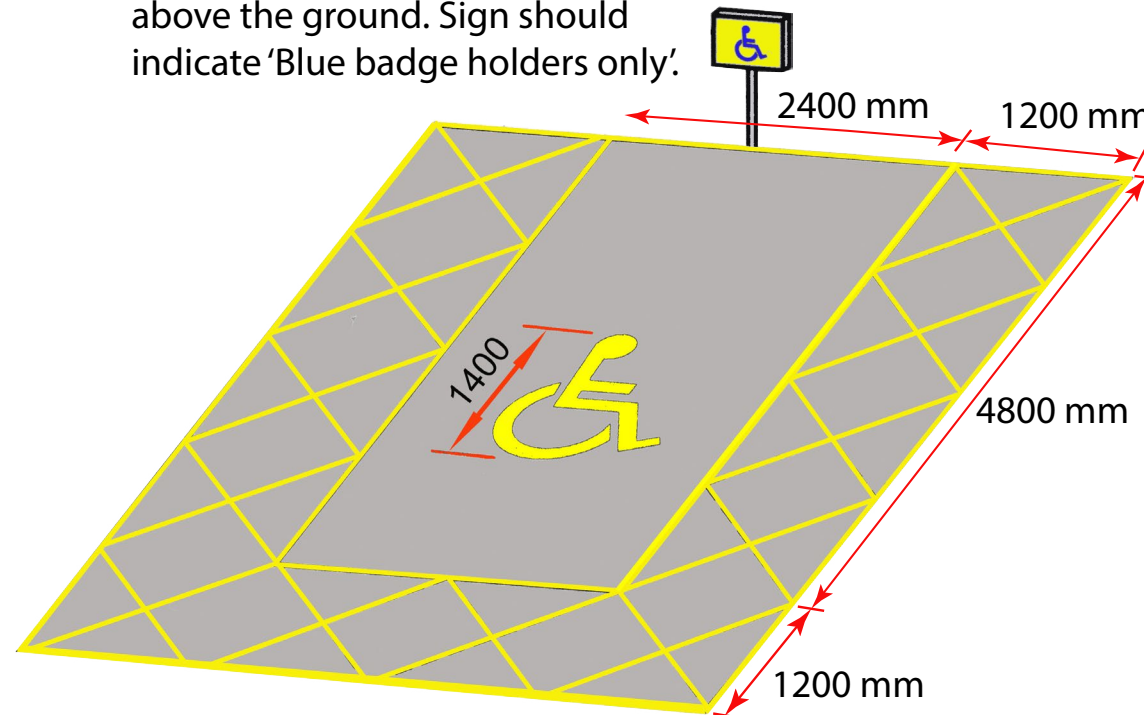
designed to meet building regulations or the AD M is not necessarily Equality Act compliant.

BS8300-1 & 2: 2018 Design of an accessible and inclusive built environment. External & Buildings. Code of Practices, is guidance only. It is frequently used as a benchmark to assess accessibility of the built environment and is seen as complementing AD M. It exceeds the scope of design features when compared to AD M. Following this guidance will not mean a building is Equality Act compliant.

The driver for making buildings and spaces accessible is The Equality Act 2010. This states that disabled people should not be put at a substantial disadvantage when compared to non-disabled people and where disabled people are put at a substantial disadvantage 'reasonable' adjustments should be made. The test of 'reasonableness' is not a single test; it is an ongoing duty. Best practice changes as does technology, guidance and cultural norms to name a few things. As an example, Approved Document M in 1999 stated an accessible WC should measure 1500 x 2000 mm, in 2004 it became 1500 x 2200 mm in 2018 BS8300-2 recommends 1700 x 2200 mm. What is important is that a feature is benchmarked against current best practice standards and then a test of reasonableness is applied, however, it is important to note that ultimately only a court of law can determine what is reasonable.

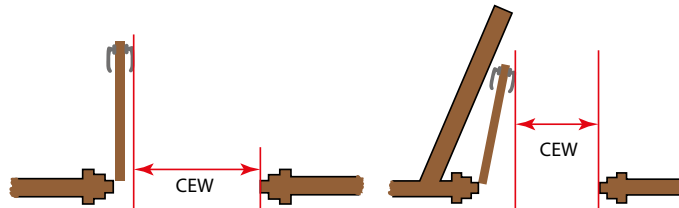
Appendix 2. Accessible parking bay

Sign with lower edge at 1000 mm above the ground. Sign should indicate 'Blue badge holders only'.

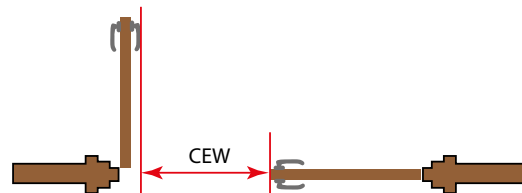


Accessible off-street parking bay

Appendix 3. Door CEW, opening force and door handles



Clear effective width is the width of the door opening when approached head on taking account of how far the door opens and any door furniture or other items projecting from the door.

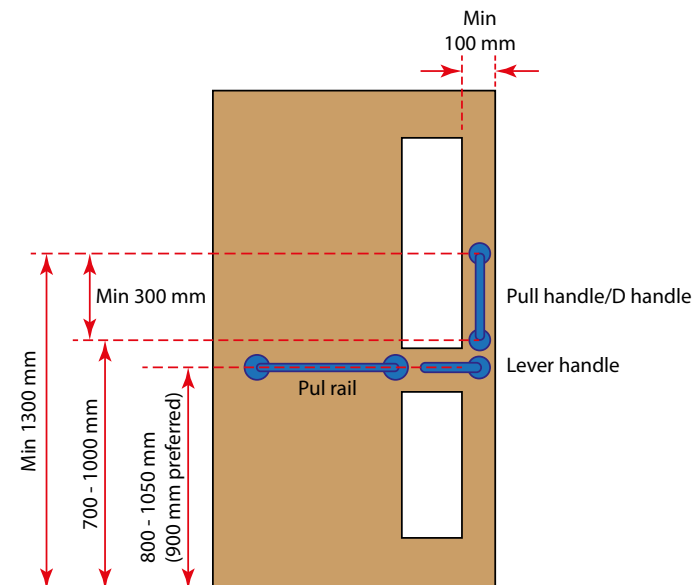
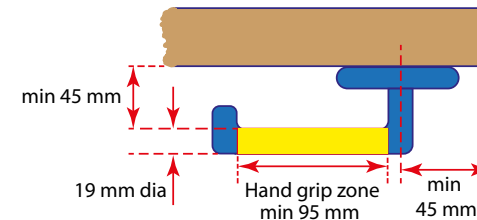
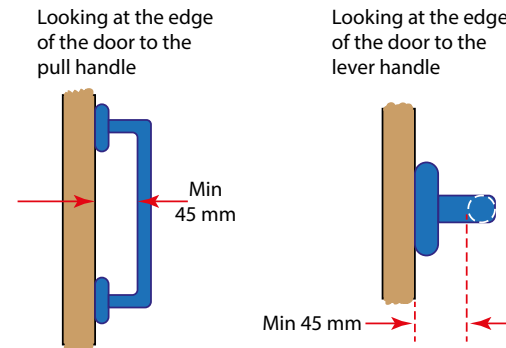
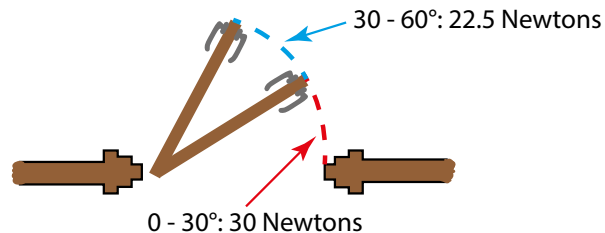


On double doors or doors of unequal width it is the main leaf in use. It is not with both doors open.

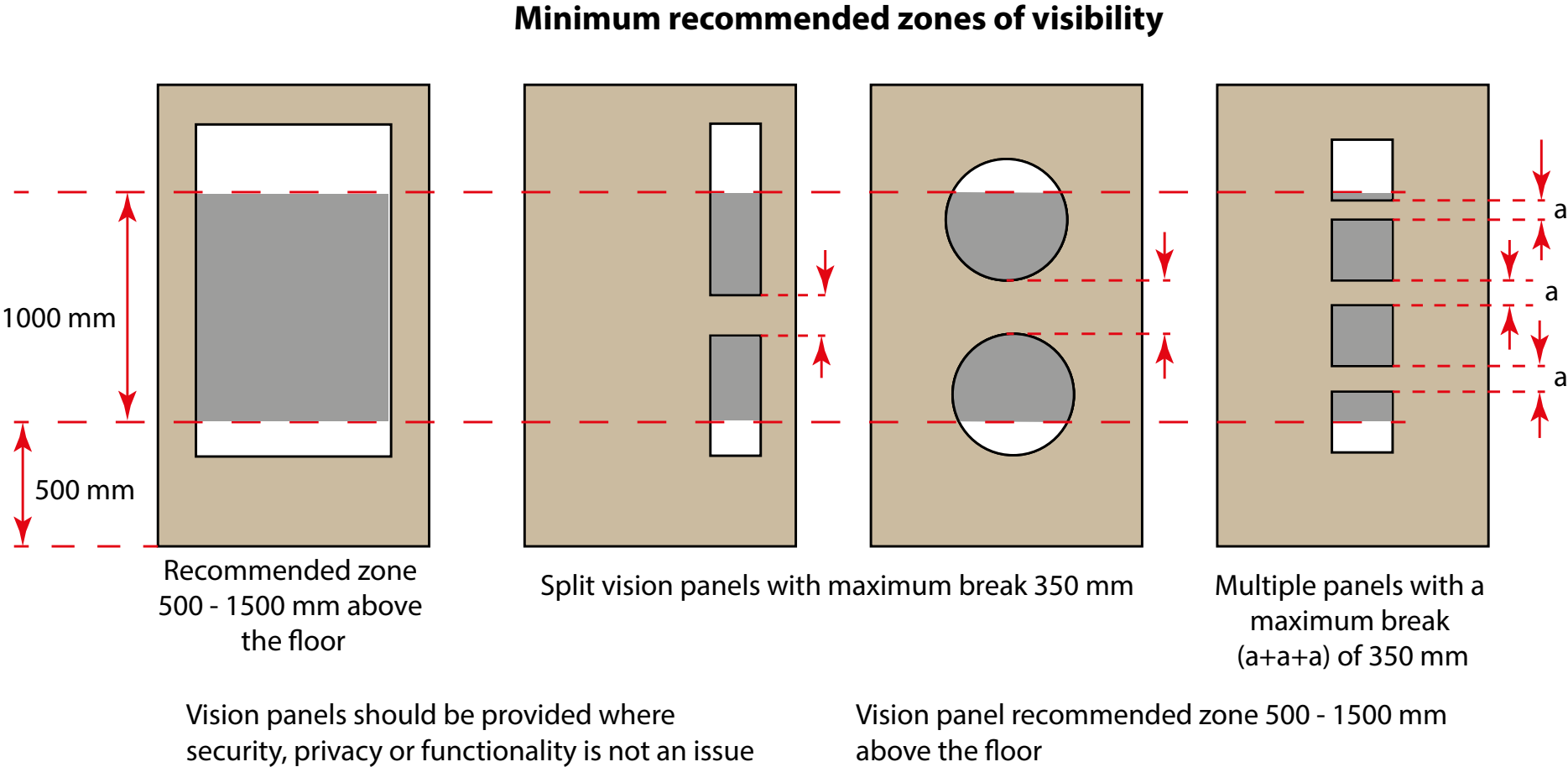
Where possible double doors should provide a double swing action rather than interlocking.

Corridors where unequal (1 ½) leaf doors are used, the full leaf should be placed on the same side.

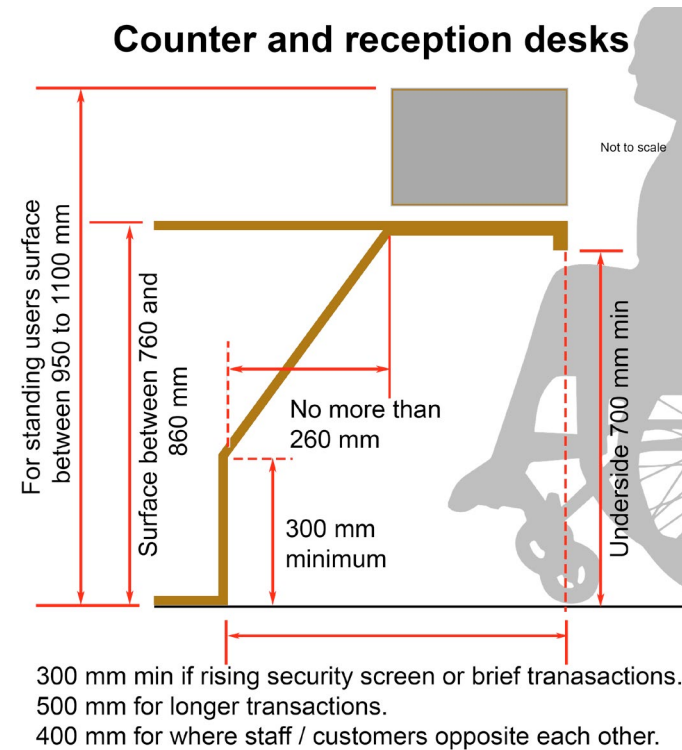
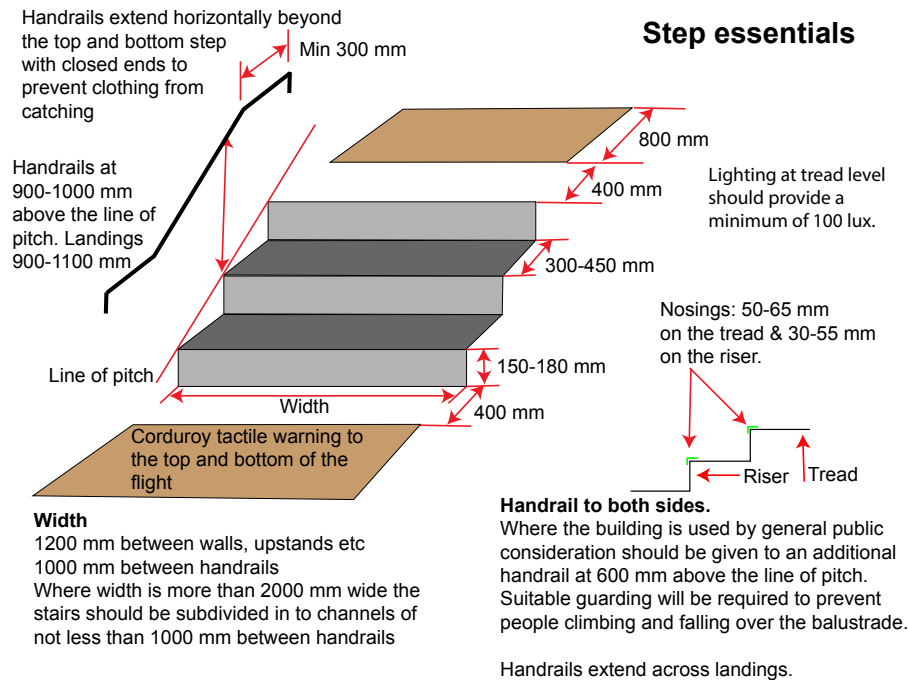
Door opening force



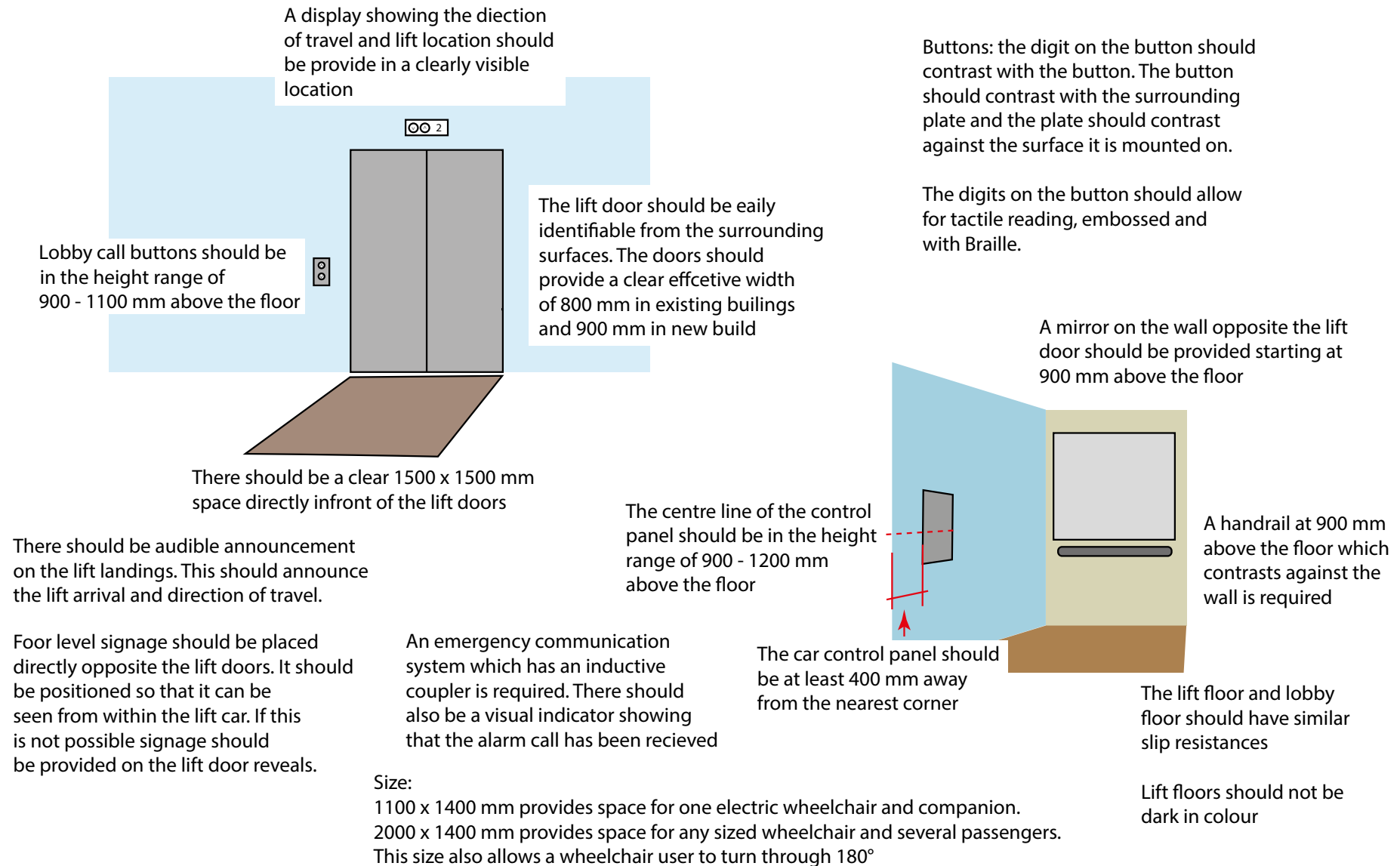
Appendix 4. Door zones of visibility



Appendix 5. Stairs and Reception Desk

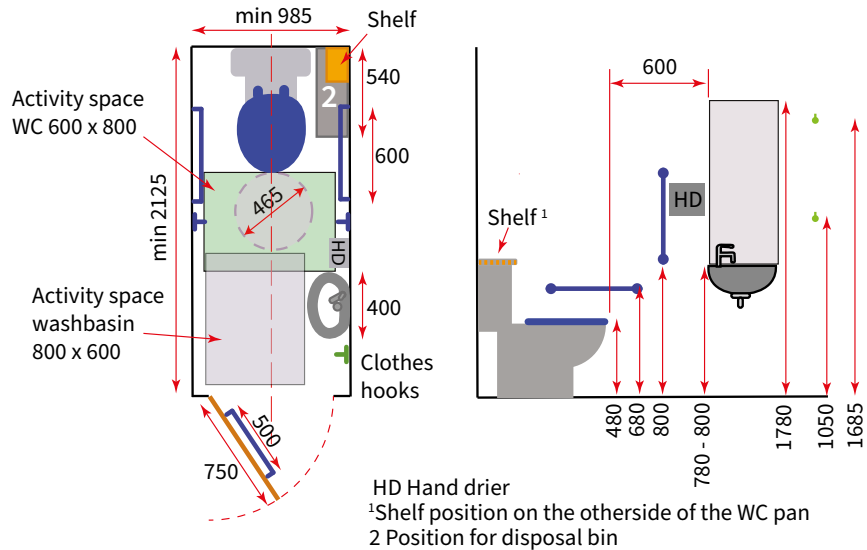


Appendix 6. Lift

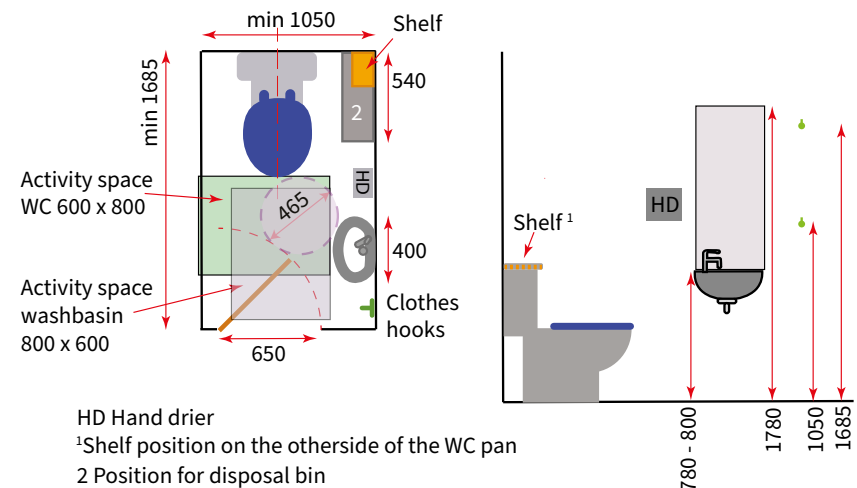


Appendix 7. WC cubicles - Part T Building Regulations

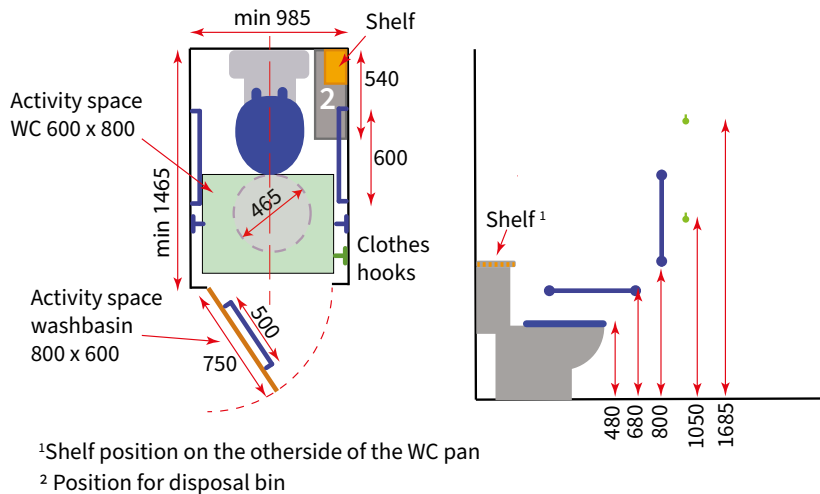
Type A - Fully enclosed self-contained ambulant universal toilet



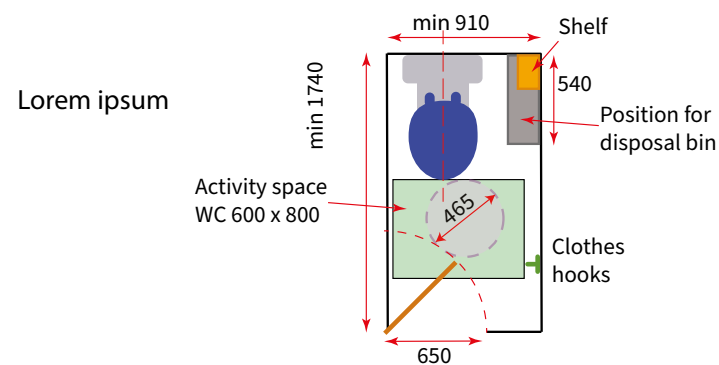
Type B Fully enclosed self-contained universal toilet



Type C - Ambulant single - sex toilet cubicle (not self-contained)



Type D - Single sex toilet cubicle (not self contained)

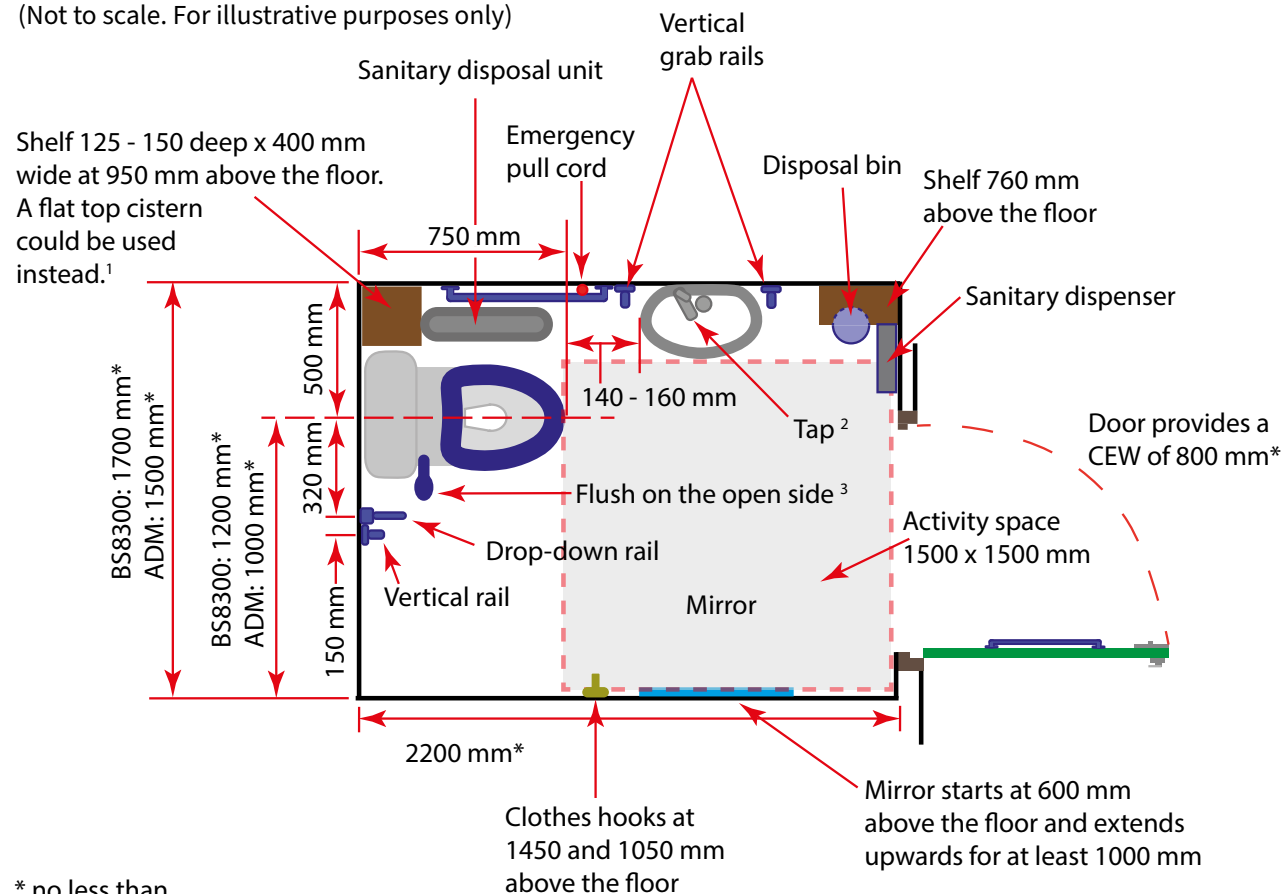


Not to scale for illustrative purposes only
All measurements in millimetres

Appendix 8. Accessible WC for Independent Use - Plan

Plan of accessible WC (left transfer)

(Not to scale. For illustrative purposes only)



¹ When a high or low level cistern is used a padded back rest and colostomy shelf (as shown) should be provided. Where a close coupled cistern is used and the lid is flat this could be used instead of the shelf.

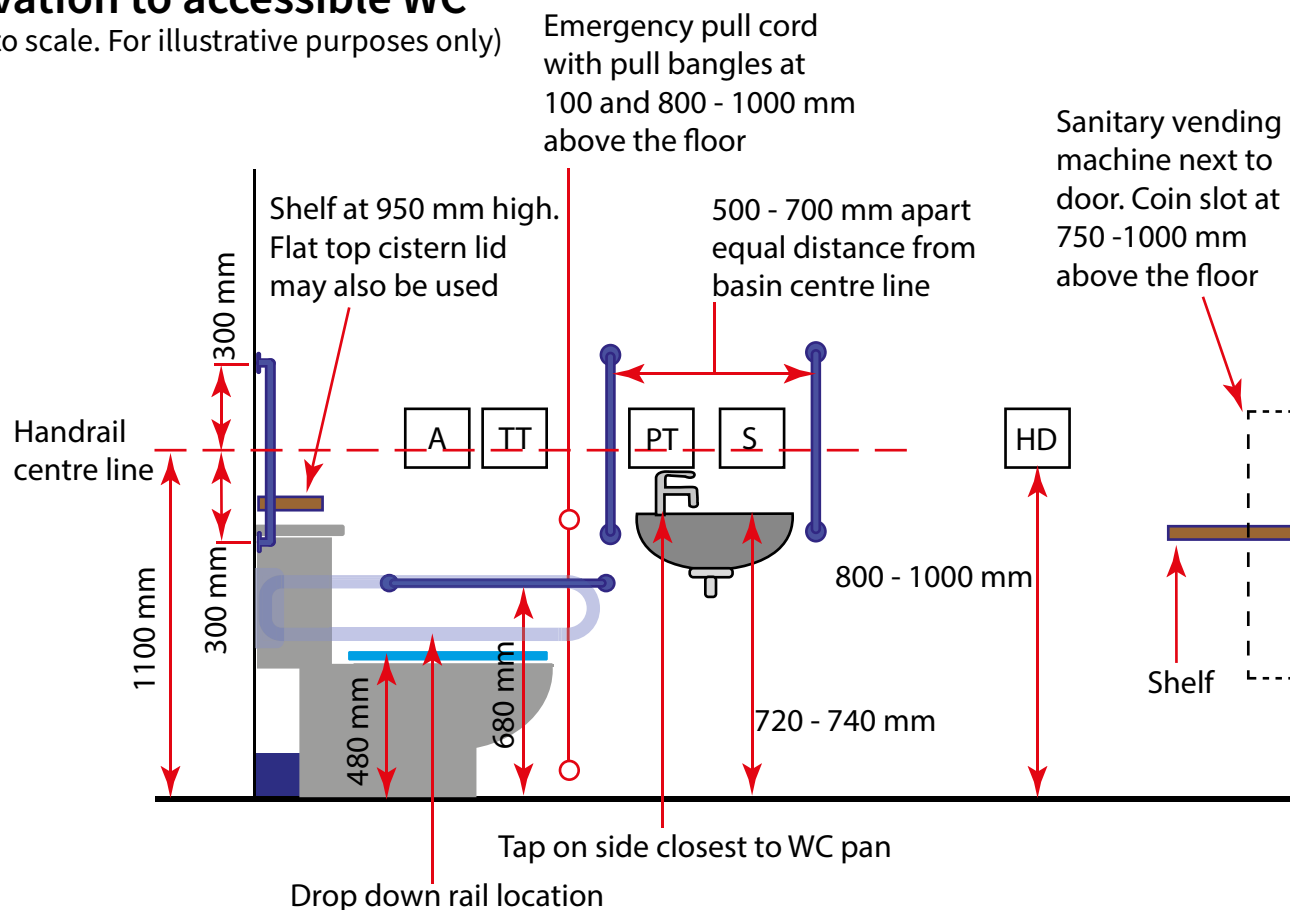
² The tap to the handrinse basin should be placed in the corner closest to the WC pan.

³ If the flush-handle is on the wrong side, many people will be unable to reach or use the handle and the WC will remain unflushed, which is unhygienic and causes embarrassment to users. It is imperative that the cistern flush-handle is positioned on the transfer side of the WC so that it can be reached by a person who has transferred back into their wheelchair. The handle should be spatula-shaped so that it is easier for people with reduced manual dexterity to use.

Appendix 9. Accessible WC for Independent Use - elevation

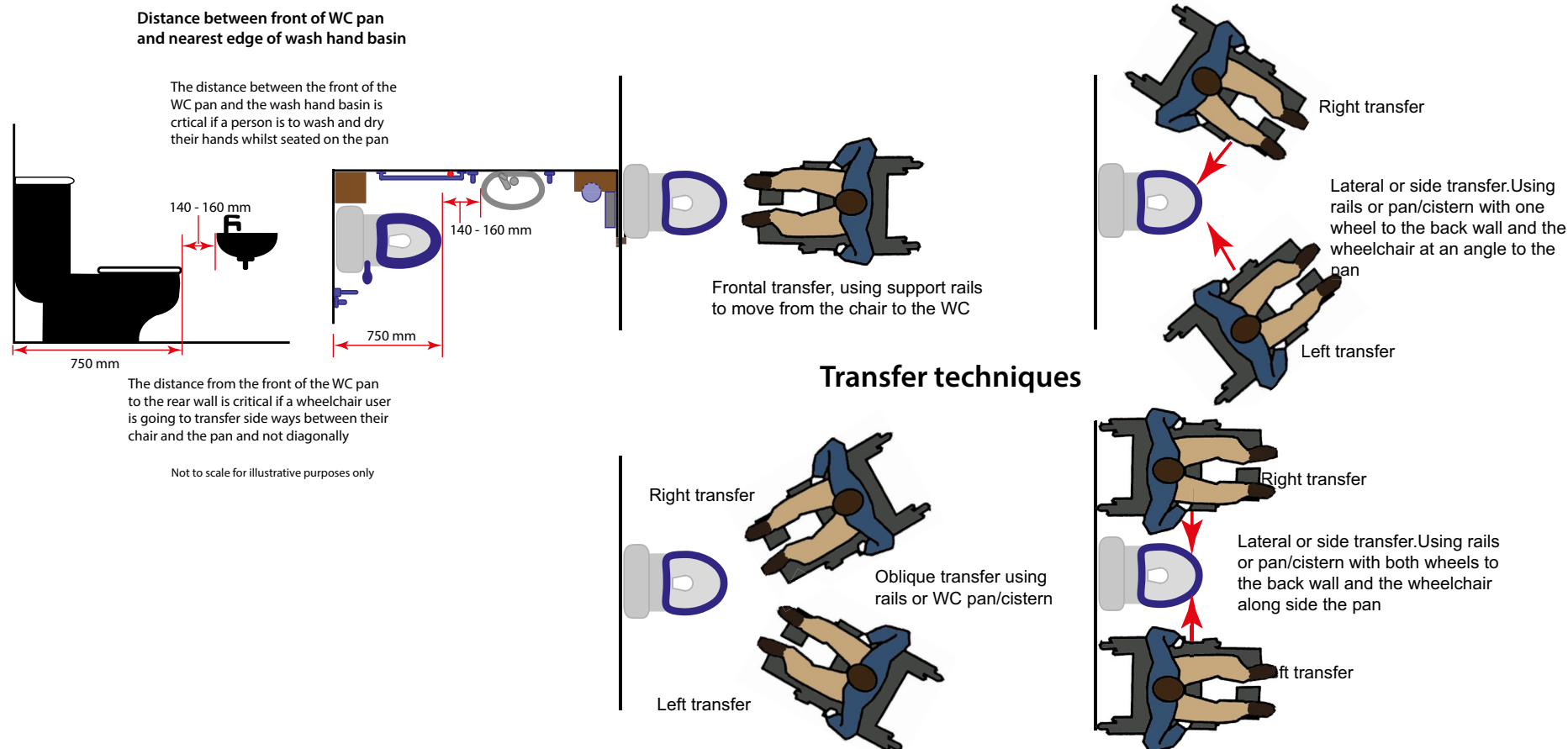
Elevation to accessible WC

(Not to scale. For illustrative purposes only)

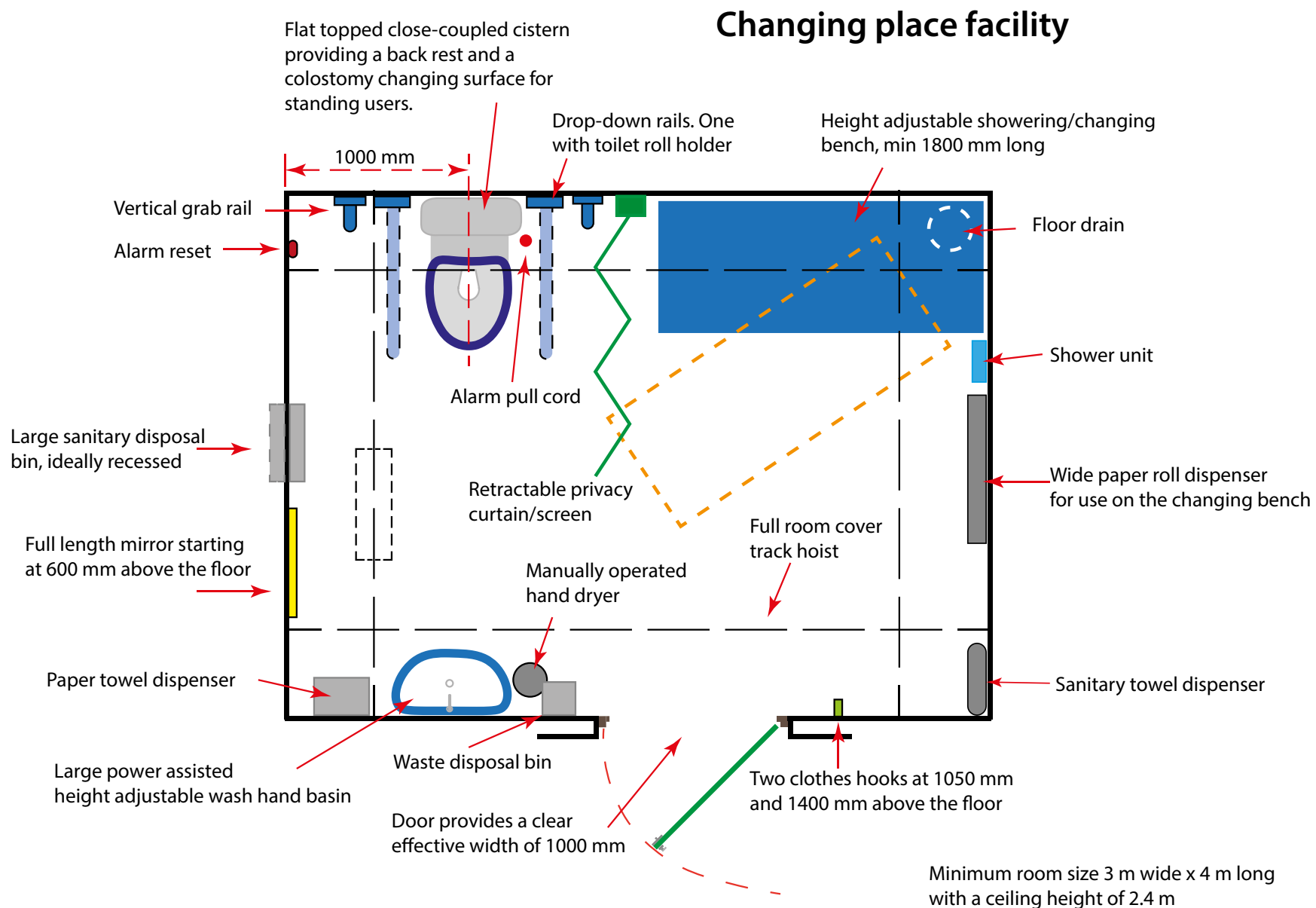


A - alarm reset TT - toilet tissue holder (individual sheets)
PT - paper towel dispenser S - soap dispenser
HD - hand dryer (down draught)

Appendix 10. Accessible WC pan / wash basin and transfers



Appendix 11. Changing Place



Appendix 12. Tonal contrast

Tonal contrast is not colour contrast. Tonal contrast strips away colours and is only interested in the tonal value of a colour.

LRV is the amount of light reflected by the colour. It has nothing to do with the colour. You can have two different shades of the same colour, red or blue for example but with a different LRV. The LRV will be a number between 0 for black and 100 for white. The darker the colour the lower the number and the lighter the colour the higher the number.

0 Black up to 100 White (assumed min 100lux)*

Tonal contrast is measured in the difference of LRV between two surfaces. For example in a corridor a mid-tone blue carpet may have an LRV of say 40 with the walls painted in magnolia having an LRV of say 75. The tonal difference is 75 LRV of the magnolia walls - 40 LRV of the blue carpet. This equals an LRV difference of 35 (75-40=35).

The table below shows what the LRV difference there should be between typical surfaces

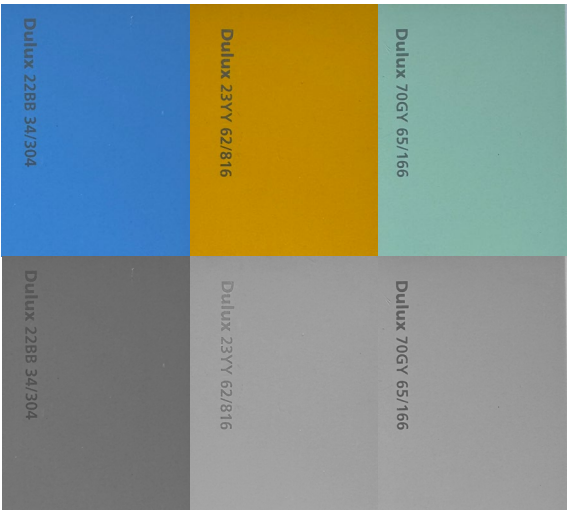
Required LRV difference between 2 adjoining surfaces

	+200 lux	-200 lux
Large areas: floors, walls, doors etc	20 points	30 points
Door furniture	15 points	
Text on signs	70 points	

Sanitary ware, support/handrails rails: there is no guidance other than there should be good contrast between the item and its background. We typically recommend 30 points.

Lighting plays its part, in that in areas where the illuminance levels are high (200 lx or more) a lower LRV can be used. Where the lighting is less than 200 lx there should be a greater difference in contrast.

*Some people may refer to the difference as points or %. 30 points = 30%, it is the same.



Sample swatches with the LRV values left to right: 34, 62, 65. The bottom row converted to black & white. This is far from perfect but gives you an indication as to the tonal contrast. The central and right samples have colour contrast but no tonal contrast.



Taking a photograph and converting to black & white gives an indication as to the level of tonal contrast. Here we have split half the photograph to B&W to show the level of contrast.

Recommendations by Priority

Reference	Current Finding	Recommendation	Priority
2 Parking	2.3 The path running alongside the building from the front to the rear car park has a short rise flights of steps off it. There is no warning at the top of these steps that there is a sudden change of level. Steps should have corduroy tactile warning to the top and the bottom along with tonally contrasting nosings, none of these features have been provided.	Provide corduroy tactile warning to the top and bottom of the steps along with tonally contrasting nosings.	1
2 Parking	2.4 There are some accessible parking bays to the large rear car park which are located on a slope. The slope runs from side to side and has an indicative gradient of 1:14 which makes it a ramp. Being on a slope can mean pushing the car door up they inclined making it heavy. It can also mean that a wheelchair may roll. Accessible parking bays should be located on level ground.	Relocate the accessible parking bays to level ground.	1
2 Parking	2.7 The car park has a rough and uneven surface which can lead to people tripping.	Make good the surface of the car park to remove tripping hazards.	1
3 Front entrance	3.3 Steps: these have handrails and tonally contrasting nosings. However, there is no tactile warning to the bottom of the steps. The tactile warning at the top does not meet with current guidance. The paving starts approximately 430 mm from the nosing of the top step with approximately 420 mm wide corduroy warning. The depth of the corduroy warning should be 800 mm.	Provide corduroy tactile paving to the top and bottom of the steps that meets with current guidance.	1

Reference	Current Finding	Recommendation	Priority
4 Staff entrance - stepped	4.1 This entrance is accessed from the rear car park and reached via a flight of three steps down to the door. The steps have tonally contrasting nosings to help people with sight loss detect the change in level, but there is no tactile warning surface. This gives advanced warning of a sudden change of level.	Provide tactile warning to the top and bottom of the steps.	1
4 Staff entrance - stepped	4.2 The door provides a clear effective width of 755 mm. This is less than the recommended of 1000 mm for entrance doors and associated lobby doors. Increasing the width is not seen as feasible due to the internal layout.	Provide signage advising of the alternative entrance associated with the ramp.	1
5 Staff entrance - step free	5.2 The door has a round twist handle. This requires the user to pinch and twist their hand to grasp and turn it.	Provide a handle that can be operated with a clenched fist.	1
7 Reception	7.7 None of the interview rooms have an induction loop or other hearing enhancement system.	Provide a hearing enhancement system to the interview rooms.	1
9 Horizontal circulation	9.5 The IT Service Desk ramp has a handrail to one side only. A second handrail should be provided to the opposite side of the present one.	Provide a handrail to the right side when going up.	1

Reference	Current Finding	Recommendation	Priority
10 Doors	10.2 The corridor doors next to the ground floor female toilet overlap with the toilet door when open. Using unequal door leaf sizes to prevent this overlap should be considered.	Investigate ways to avoid the corridor door overlapping the female toilet door.	1
10 Doors	10.12 There are double doors into the Chamber, these provide a clear effective width of 620 mm, less than the recommended of 800 mm. The option is to provide unequal sized doors leaves or have the doors opened for someone who cannot pass through a single leaf or power the doors to both leaves open..	Increase the door clear effective width or open the doors or have power operated doors.	1
11 Staff toilets	11.1 This applies to all staff and public toilets. The wash hand basins have a notice advising of very hot water. A person who has no sight will not be able to observe this notice. Water temperature for hand washing should not exceed 43°C at outlet with a circulating water being no less than 60°C.	Restrict water temperature to the maximum recommended for hand washing.	1
12 Staff accessible WC and shower - basement	12.6 There is no emergency pull cord next to the WC pan. There is a cord but this is located next to the shower. A red emergency pull cord should hang down on the side wall nearest the WC pan but behind the horizontal grab rail. The cord should be placed in line with the front of the WC pan. There should be red pull bangles at 100 mm and 800-1000 mm above the floor. A reset button should be provided on the same side wall within reach of the WC pan. This is so that it can be cancelled if activated in error.	Provide an emergency pull cord.	1

Reference	Current Finding	Recommendation	Priority
15 Public WCs	15.2 These are located next to the reception area. The female toilet has no sign advertising it as an accessible WC (AWC). The male toilet is signed as an accessible WC. The issue is that the AWC in the male toilet leaves females who need an AWC wondering where to go? There is also the question of a man requiring the use of the AWC but needs assistance from his carer who is female, what should they do, especially as to reach the accessible cubicle you have to pass by the urinals! Ideally there should be 3 toilets, male, female and a unisex accessible WC.	In the meantime provide signage to the female toilet advising it is an accessible WC, however, take note of 10.2. Best practice is to provide 3 toilets, male, female and a unisex accessible WC	1
15 Public WCs	15.18 Male accessible WC cubicle: the distance between the front of the WC pan and the edge of the wash hand basin is 250 mm. The wash hand basin is too far from the WC pan. People are not able to wash their hands while seated on the WC, which is essential. The recommended distance between the nearest edge of the wash hand basin and the front of the WC pan is 140 – 160 mm.	Reposition the wash hand basin closer to the WC pan.	1

Reference	Current Finding	Recommendation	Priority
15 Public WCs	15.21 Male accessible WC cubicle: the emergency pull cord is positioned in the transfer space to the toilet with the rest button high up on the rear wall out of reach from the WC pan. A red emergency pull cord should hang down on the side wall nearest the WC pan but behind the horizontal grab rail. The cord should be placed in line with the front of the WC pan. There should be red pull bangles at 100 mm and 800-1000 mm above the floor. A reset button should be provided on the same side wall within reach of the WC pan. This is so that it can be cancelled if activated in error.	Reposition the emergency pull cord and reset button.	1
18 Lift	18.4 There is no emergency communication system within the lift. There should be an intercom along with an inductive coupler for use during an emergency.	Provide an emergency communication system.	1
20 Council Chamber and Committee Rooms	20.2 The Council Chamber has an induction loop with signage advising of its presence. However, there is nothing for the Committee Rooms. Induction loops may not be appropriate for these rooms due to overspill where the signal can leak out of the room and people with suitable hearing aids and cochlear implants may be able to listen in. There are other systems that will give privacy such as radio or infrared, there is also audio over WiFi	Provide a hearing enhancement system to the committee rooms.	1

Reference	Current Finding	Recommendation	Priority
21 Offices	21.3 Induction loops or other hearing enhancement systems have not been provided to meeting rooms. Board style meeting rooms should have a hard-wired system installed and smaller rooms say 6 person a portable system would be suitable. Common practice is to use an induction loop but audio over WiFi is starting to emerge and should be considered. This is more secure than an induction loop.	Provide a hearing enhancement system for meeting rooms.	1
22 Emergency evacuation	22.2 Unity Hub: this for part of the evacuation route from the reception area. To get to this point there is a stepped and step-free route. It would not be unreasonable to expect this to be the same. However, due to the topography of the site this exit is the top of an evacuation staircase. There is also a high threshold to the exit door.	Ensure accessible egress routes are signed.	1
22 Emergency evacuation	22.3 The external emergency staircase has no tonally contrasting nosings identify the step edges, these should be provided. Nosings should be readily apparent, slip resistant and 30 points LRV difference, on all treads and risers. On treads they should measure 50 – 65 mm and on risers they should be 30 – 55 mm.	Provide tonally contrasting nosings to the step edges.	1
7 Reception	7.1 The reception area is directly in front of the entrance doors. The word 'reception' is written on the glass doors, which are automatic sliding doors sliding doors.	We recommend that additional 'Reception' signage is added to reinforce what is already provided as it could be missed.	QW

Reference	Current Finding	Recommendation	Priority
7 Reception	7.2 On the doors into the reception area there is a sign stating that no dogs except guide dogs. This should be removed and replaced with text along the lines of assistance dogs only.	Replace the guide dogs only sign with assistance dogs only.	QW
8 Signage	8.2 In the basement the lift is hidden from view as it is in a room. Signage should be provided outside the room identifying the lift location.	Provide signage in the basement identifying the lift location.	QW
10 Doors	10.5 The doors from the circulation areas where members of the public have access have access control on them. This takes the form of a wall mounted card reader. The door in the corridor to the left of reception has the reader located between the recycling bin and the door. The bin is blocking access to the reader.	Reposition the recycling bin.	QW
12 Staff accessible WC and shower - basement	12.3 The WC pan is fitted with a white seat and lid. In an accessible WC there should be no lid as this can interfere when a person transfers from their wheelchair to the toilet. Also the seat and WC pan do not contrast as all are white. To help more easily identify the seat it should contrast tonally against the white of the pan.	Remove the WC lid and provide a tonally contrasting seat.	QW

Reference	Current Finding	Recommendation	Priority
12 Staff accessible WC and shower - basement	12.4 Paper towel and soap dispenser to the toilet have been provided. However, the paper towel dispenser is too high putting it out of reach.	Provide a paper towel dispenser within reach of the WC pan and no higher than 1000 mm above the floor.	QW
12 Staff accessible WC and shower - basement	12.5 The light switch is a pull cord. This has poor tonal contrast against the back ground it is seen against.	Provide a pull cord with good tonal contrast and a fob that can be easily found.	QW
15 Public WCs	15.9 Female WC: paper towels are out of reach from the WC pan. It should be possible to reach the soap and paper towel dispensers from the WC pan so that a person can wash and dry their hands. The dispensers should be wall mounted and easy to operate one-handed.	Provide paper towels within reach of the WC pan.	QW
15 Public WCs	15.10 Female WC: there is a sanitary bin in the transfer space. This will impede a wheelchair user wanting to use this space when transferring.	Ensure staff understand that the sanitary bin should be positioned between WC pan and the nearest side wall.	QW

Reference	Current Finding	Recommendation	Priority
15 Public WCs	15.19 Male accessible WC cubicle: paper towels are out of reach from the WC pan. It should be possible to reach the soap and paper towel dispensers from the WC pan so that a person can wash and dry their hands. The dispensers should be wall mounted and easy to operate one-handed.	Provide paper towels within reach of the WC pan.	QW
15 Public WCs	15.22 Female and male AWC: mirrors have been provided but these start too high up. Mirrors should start at 600 mm above the floor and extend upwards for 1000 mm.	Provide mirrors starting at the correct height.	QW
15 Public WCs	15.23 Female and male AWC: shelves have not been provided. There should be two, one next to the WC pan and the other at the opposite end of the room out of the manoeuvring area.	Provide 2 shelves.	QW
7 Reception	7.5 Interview room opposite reception: this and interview room 3 are the largest interview rooms. The space between the desk and the wall on the customer side measures 1120 mm. This is not enough space for a wheelchair user to manoeuvre.	Move the desk further away from the wall to provide increased space. Chairs will need to be removed as and when required.	M

Reference	Current Finding	Recommendation	Priority
9 Horizontal circulation	9.3 Just outside the IT Service Desk in the basement corridor there is a ramp. This has an indicative gradient of 1:4 for 2.2 m. No ramp should be steeper than 1:12. However, due to the doors to rooms either side of this corridor extending the ramp is not feasible as it would pass across the doors into the rooms.	For staff and others that find this ramp too steep management procedures should be in place, for example meet the person concerned at an accessible location.	M
10 Doors	10.6 Double leaf doors in staff-only areas typically provide a clear effective width of 650 mm, below the recommended 800 mm. While they are held open on alarm-linked catches, any impact on evacuation should be addressed in relevant PEEPs.	Ensure this is reflected in a person's PEEP if relevant.	M
10 Doors	10.11 The doors into the Committee Rooms provide a clear effective width of 750 mm, this is the absolute narrowest a door should provide, 800 mm is the recommended. There is an issue around the rooms opposite the top ramp as the access width on the approach to the room is 865 mm because of the ramp. This coupled with the narrow door will make access for a wheelchair difficult to impossible.	The options to consider are to use another meeting room when a wheelchair user is attending away from the ramp or move the ramp. Long-term planning would be to increase the doors clear effective width.	M
12 Staff accessible WC and shower - basement	12.1 In the basement there is a combined accessible WC and shower. The room is being used as a storage area.	Ensure showers and toilets are not used as storage areas.	M

Reference	Current Finding	Recommendation	Priority
22 Emergency evacuation	22.1 Double leaf doors in staff-only areas typically provide a clear effective width of 650 mm, below the recommended 800 mm. While they are held open on alarm-linked catches, any impact on evacuation should be addressed in relevant PEEPs.	Ensure this is reflected in a person's PEEP if relevant.	M
22 Emergency evacuation	22.4 An evacuation chair is provided for those unable to use stairs, but it may not suit everyone due to confidence, medical reasons, or the need for trained assistance to transfer safely.	Ensure PEEPs or GEEPs take account of people who cannot use an evacuation chair.	M
22 Emergency evacuation	22.5 The evacuation of all building occupants is a management responsibility and appropriate risk assessments, including evacuation, must be in place. For specific disabled employees it may be relevant to provide them with a personal emergency egress plan. A separate strategy will be required for visitors.	Assess current management strategies, take advice from a suitably competent person if necessary, and upgrade the means of escape provisions to meet, or exceed, current (minimum) standards.	M
1 Approach	1.1 Dropped kerbs and tactile paving have been provided at most street crossing points. However, some of the tactile warning is failing and could lead to a tripping hazard.	Renew the blister paving where it is failing on Westway.	2

Reference	Current Finding	Recommendation	Priority
2 Parking	2.1 To the front of the building there are 4 accessible parking bays. These measure between 2.9 - 3.7 m wide with a length of 4.5 - 4.8 m long. Accessible parking bays should measure 2.4 x 4.8 m with hatching of 1.2 m wide to the side and rear. This gives an overall dimension of 3.6 m x 6 m. None of these parking bays show the hatching to the side or rear. This is important as it helps guide people to park within the bay and leave space to the side to allow doors to be fully opened. There is also no wall or post mounted signage advising of the bays. This helps people more easily identify the bay when entering the car park but also when the ground painted markings are covered for example by snow.	Remark the accessible parking bays to meet with guidance. Best practice is that the 1.2 m wide hatching is applied to both sides of the bay.	2
2 Parking	2.2 For any blue badge holders staying longer than 3 hours have to pay. There is an option to pay with your phone however not everyone wants to or can do that. Access to the pier machine if not accessible due to the high kerb. There is an alternative route but this is long and would not be obvious until arriving at the pay machine.	Provide a dropped kerb at the pay machine.	2
2 Parking	2.5 The accessible parking bay measures 3.6 m x 4.5 m. The hatchings to the bay have not been shown. The bay should measure 2.4 x 4.8 m plus 1.2 m wide hatchings to the side and rear.	Remark the bay to meet with guidance including the addition of a wall or post mounted sign.	2

Reference	Current Finding	Recommendation	Priority
2 Parking	2.6 It is not known how many parking spaces there are in total. However, there are a total of 12 accessible parking bays. Guidance recommends that there should be a minimum of 6% of the total parking identified as accessible parking bays. There should also be 1 parking bay for each member of staff that requires an accessible bay.	Review the car parking to ensure there is a minimum of 1 accessible bay for each member of staff that requires 1 plus 6% of the total car parking capacity.	2
3 Front entrance	3.4 The double leaf outer doors are held in the open position when the building is open. There is a set of automatic glass sliding doors in the lobby. When entering the building the manifestation of the Council's crest is obvious. However, when exiting the building this manifestation is less obvious. Best practice for manifestation is that it is of 2 totally contrasting colours. This then allows for 1 colour to be lost in the background and the other should still be visible.	Add a 2nd totally contrasting colour to the manifestation.	2
5 Staff entrance - step free	5.3 The door is heavy to open. The recommended force required to open a door is 30 N from 0° closed to 30° and then 22.5 N from 30° to 60°. As a rule of thumb, if the door can be pulled open easily with a little finger it will probably be acceptable.	Reduce the door opening force to meet with guidance.	2
6 Delivery point	6.1 The gradient up to the entrance doors is approximately 1:10 for 2570 mm. Although this entrance is for deliveries anyone wanting to access the bar area and cannot use steps will have to enter via this entrance if in Planning, Property, Parks or Sports & Recreation. Another areas the lift will provide step-free access.	Provide a ramp that is no steeper than 1:12.	2

Reference	Current Finding	Recommendation	Priority
7 Reception	7.3 The reception desk has a single height of 1160 mm. It is recommended that two heights are provided for people of short stature and wheelchair users at the low section and a higher section for people who could not use a low section.	Provide a reception desk with two heights and a knee recess to the lower section. The heights should be 950 - 1100 mm and 760 - 800 mm.	2
9 Horizontal circulation	9.2 The lighting outside these toilets is poor, there should be a minimum of 100 lx at floor level. The illumination of the area should be even, avoiding pools of light and dark.	Provide even illumination of the lighting to the corridor outside these toilets.	2
10 Doors	10.3 The lobby door to the staff side entrance with the slope has a high vision panel. This should start at 500 mm above the floor as this allows people to see and be seen beyond the door.	Provide a vision panel starting at 500 mm above the floor and extending upwards for at least 1000 mm.	2
10 Doors	10.7 The doors in circulation routes are typically heavy to open. The recommended force required to open a door is 30 N from 0° closed to 30° and then 22.5 N from 30° to 60°. As a rule of thumb, if the door can be pulled open easily with a little finger it will probably be acceptable.	Reduce the door opening force.	2
10 Doors	10.9 The doors associated with access to the Council Chamber and Committee Rooms all exceed the recommended opening force.	Reduce the door opening force.	2

Reference	Current Finding	Recommendation	Priority
10 Doors	10.10 The door to the Committee Rooms and Council Chamber has an access control reader positioned at 1360 mm above the floor, making it unreachable for wheelchair users. The exit button is at a similar height and further obstructed by fire extinguishers below it.	More accessible than the present location would be to place the reader on the frame of the door. Look to reposition the fire extinguishers. Readers should be no higher than 1200 mm above the floor.	2
11 Staff toilets	11.3 There are no cubicles suitable for ambulant disabled people. Each facility should provide at least 1 cubicle with an outward opening door and support rails.	Provide at least 1 cubicle per facility suitable for ambulant disabled people.	2
11 Staff toilets	11.6 Cubicle door locks should be easy to operate with a clenched fist, they should not require the user to pinch or twist their hand. Some cubicles have small thumb turns.	Provide cubicle locks that can be used with a clenched fist.	2
12 Staff accessible WC and shower - basement	12.7 The shower area has a missing drop-down rail. There should be a second drop-down rail next to the vertical rail on the wall with the shower controls.	Provide a drop-down rail on the side wall with the shower controls.	2
15 Public WCs	15.1 The lighting outside these toilets is poor, there should be a minimum of 100 lx at floor level. The illumination of the area should be even, avoiding pools of light and dark.	Provide even illumination of the lighting to the corridor outside these toilets.	2

Reference	Current Finding	Recommendation	Priority
15 Public WCs	15.3 As there is no unisex accessible WC one should be considered along with separate male and female toilets. In not providing this you may be in breach of your Public Sector Equality Duty.	Consider providing a male, female and unisex accessible WC.	2
15 Public WCs	15.6 Doors should have a minimum of 300 mm clear space between the leading edge of the door and the nearest return wall/corner. Because of what appears to be boxing-in of services this space is not available. This space is used by wheelchair users in particular to reach the door handle.	Investigate if the boxing in can be reduced in size or consider rehangng the door so the hinged side becomes the latch side?	2
15 Public WCs	15.7 Female WC: the pan is fitted with a white seat and lid. In an accessible WC there should be no lid as this can interfere when a person transfers from their wheelchair to the toilet. Also the seat and WC pan do not contrast as all are white. To help more easily identify the seat it should contrast tonally against the white of the pan.	Remove the WC lid and provide a tonally contrasting seat.	2
15 Public WCs	15.8 Female WC: there are 2 support rails missing. One on the back wall next to the drop-down rail, however, there is a window there. The second is above the wash hand basin, there should be one to each side.	Provide the missing rails. The one to the back wall may require further brackets across the window.	2
15 Public WCs	15.12 Male WC: the door is set in a thick wall with a depth of 435 mm from the wall to the face of the door, this should be no more than 200 mm. This is to allow easy access to the door handle.	Consider providing a power operated door.	2

Reference	Current Finding	Recommendation	Priority
15 Public WCs	15.13 Male WC: the urinals at the front edge are 670 mm above the floor. It is recommended that one is lowered to a height of 500 mm.	Lower a urinal to 500 mm above the floor.	2
15 Public WCs	15.14 Male WC: there is no modesty screen between the urinals. These can be used to rest walking aids on or take support from as well as providing decency.	Provide a modesty screen between the urinals.	2
15 Public WCs	15.17 Male accessible WC cubicle: the pan is fitted with a white seat and lid. In an accessible WC there should be no lid as this can interfere when a person transfers from their wheelchair to the toilet. Also the seat and WC pan do not contrast as all are white. To help more easily identify the seat it should contrast tonally against the white of the pan.	Remove the WC lid and provide a tonally contrasting seat.	2
15 Public WCs	15.20 Male accessible WC cubicle: there is only 1 vertical support rail to the wash hand basin there should be one to each side.	Provide a second vertical support rail to the wash hand basin. Further support brackets may be required due to the window.	2
16 Kitchens	16.4 Microwave ovens are provided to kitchen areas.. It is important for safety and using the oven that there is a worktop that is clear of the door swing and that you don't have to move around an open door when putting items in or taking them out.	Ensure there is unobstructed access to a worktop associated with a microwave oven.	2

Reference	Current Finding	Recommendation	Priority
16 Kitchens	16.5 Kitchen 40: the light switch is not obvious as it is small, located within the door frame and provides no tonal contrast.	Increase the tonal contrast between the light switch and the door frame.	2
17 Stairs	17.2 There is a short rise flight of steps leading up to finance. These have open risers which are not recommended as it is possible for people to get their feet caught on the underside of the step above.	Infill open risers.	2
17 Stairs	17.3 Steps to finance: there is no step-free alternative route up to this area. A portable ramp is available, however, this cannot be deployed by the wheelchair user. A more permanent solution should be found.	There are a couple of options to consider, there may be others. These include turning these steps into a 'sesame; style lift. This is where the lift is hidden and the treads of the stairs convert into the lift. Another option would be to extend the steps to increase the top landing and insert a short rise platform lift to the side.	2
17 Stairs	17.4 At basement level, there are four steps without handrails. Handrails should be provided on both sides to ensure that individuals who rely on a handrail, especially those who can use only one side of their body, can receive support in both directions of travel.	The stairs are narrow, before installing handrails check with Building Control they wont impede emergency egress.	2
18 Lift	18.1 The lift provides no mirror to the rear wall. This is used by wheelchair users to see if anyone is behind them, doors opened or closed and the floor level .	Provide a mirror to the rear wall starting at 900 mm above the floor.	2

Reference	Current Finding	Recommendation	Priority
18 Lift	18.2 There is no floor level signage to the floor landings or the reveals of the left doors. There should be signage that is easy to see from within the lift car showing the floor level reached.	Provide clear floor level signage that is visible from within the lift car.	2
18 Lift	18.3 Lift car controls should have the ground floor/exit button in green and protruding, making it easier to identify.	Provide the exit level button green and protruding.	2
20 Council Chamber and Committee Rooms	20.1 These are on the 1st floor, there are 2 sets of steps up to it from the 1st floor circulation route. Portable ramps have been installed and left set up. The ramps have an indicative gradient of 1:6 for 2.43 m. Ramps even portable ramps should be no steeper than 1:12. Steeper than this can make them more difficult to use and have the potential to cause a wheelchair to tip over or ground out with the foot plates. Extending the bottom ramp is not feasible as it already projects in to the circulation space. The only way this could be reduced is by altering the starting point and putting a turn in. There is space to extend the top ramp.	Investigate options to reduce the gradients of the ramps.	2

Reference	Current Finding	Recommendation	Priority
20 Council Chamber and Committee Rooms	20.3 Council Chamber: there is no accessible seating for Council members as all the seating is fixed with a fixed height desk in front. The second row up from the floor of the Chamber have step-free access to them, all others there is at least one step to access them. The Chair's bench is also raised by two steps. For Council Members having a seat to the centre back row that could be removed is an option, however, this may not work along party lines. A ramp should be made available to access the Bench.	Investigate making one seat of the centre back row accessible or removable. Have a ramp available for the Bench.	2
21 Offices	21.1 Powered rise and fall desks where found in the offices. Not all desks have this capability. One desk was seen being raised using blocks.	Provide powered or manually adjusted rise and fall desks.	2
1 Approach	1.2 There are a number of dropped kerbs at crossing points close to the roundabout. However, tactile warning has not been provided.	Provide tactile paving to the crossing points close to the roundabout.	3
2 Parking	2.8 At present there is no electric vehicle charging. However, if EV charging is provided accessible charging points should be included.	If or when EV charging is provided, ensure there is at least 1 accessible EV charging point.	3
7 Reception	7.4 There are some open booths with desks that customers can use. None of these have a rise and fall desk.	Provide a rise and fall desk to the reception area. Best practice.	3

Reference	Current Finding	Recommendation	Priority
8 Signage	8.1 At the reception area the word 'RECEPTION' is written in all upper case and next to it is a screen with 'WELCOME TO RUGBY BOROUGH COUNCIL'. Text should be written in Sentence Case (first letter in upper case and the rest lower case) as it is easier to read for some people.	Provide text to way finding and instructions in Sentence Case.	3
9 Horizontal circulation	9.1 The floors provide a firm and even surface. Around the main central staircase the floor is of a light cream coloured stone with a thick black band. This band can give the illusion to people with sight loss or cognitive impairments of a change in level or something to be avoided. Altering this is not seen as reasonable. Outside of these areas the floor covering is carpet.	Should the opportunity ever arise consider removing the black band.	3
9 Horizontal circulation	9.4 The IT Service desk ramp should contrast tonally with the top landing, it does not. It does contrast with the bottom.	When the opportunity arises provide contrast between the incline and the top landing.	3
10 Doors	10.1 The doors to the interview rooms, the Unity Hub in the reception and offices have high vision panels. Vision panels should allow people to see and be seen beyond the door.	Provide doors with vision panels that start at 500 mm above the floor and extend upwards for at least 1000 mm.	3
10 Doors	10.4 The doors to the IT area in the basement all have high level vision panels starting at more than 500 mm above the floor.	Provide vision panels to doors starting at 500 mm above the floor.	3

Reference	Current Finding	Recommendation	Priority
10 Doors	10.8 Kitchen 40: the door into this kitchen provides a clear effective width of 660 mm, less than the recommended 800 mm. This will be an issue to wheelchair users and others with walking aids. Increasing the width is not seen as feasible without moving the door or the wall.	Investigate increasing the clear effective width to the door.	3
11 Staff toilets	11.2 Toilets are fitted with white seats and lids. This makes it difficult for a person with sight loss to identify if the seat is up or down against the white of the pan or the lid. Providing tonally contrasting seats and lids helps.	When replacing the seats/lids do so with a tonally contrasting seat.	3
11 Staff toilets	11.4 Where urinals have been installed the front edge is typically at 620 mm above the floor. It is recommended that one is provided at 500 mm above the floor.	Provide 1 urinal with the front edge at 500 mm above the floor.	3
11 Staff toilets	11.5 Sanitary ware in toilets should provide good tonal contrast against the background it is seen against. The following facilities did not provide that: female WCs - 8, 30, 73 & 77; male WCs - 10, 31, 78 & 113.	Provide good tonal contrast of 30 points LRV difference between sanitary ware and its background.	3

Reference	Current Finding	Recommendation	Priority
14 Staff accessible WC - 1st floor	14.1 This is located between the male (Rm113) and the female (Rm114) WCs. The room measures 1830 x 1495 mm, this is smaller than the recommended size of an accessible WC 1500 mm x 2200 mm. Also the wash hand basin is in the transfer space. This room can not be identified as an accessible WC. Currently there is no signage on the door even advertising it as a toilet.	Provide an accessible WC to this floor.	3
15 Public WCs	15.15 Male WC: there is poor tonal contrast between the sanitary ware/ support rails and their background. There should be 30 points LRV difference.	Provide good tonal contrast between all sanitary ware and support rails against their background.	3
16 Kitchens	16.2 Counter tops are typically around 930 mm above the floor. For people of short stature and wheelchair users these can be too high for them to use. In refreshment areas there are three options to consider for the counter height: a fixed low counter and high counter; a height adjustable counter; or a counter height of 850 mm.	Provide a lower section of counter the option taken will be dictated by the room size and space available. A counter height of 850 mm is deemed as acceptable for both standing and seated users.	3
16 Kitchens	16.3 A wall mounted water boiler is provided. This has a tap height typically at 1440 mm. This will be able out of reach to people of short stature and wheelchair users. A water heater should, wherever possible, be installed as a free-standing unit with controls not higher than 1200 mm from the floor. If installation of a water heater above a work surface is unavoidable, it should be located such that the controls are not higher than 1150 mm from the floor.	Provide a water heater at the recommended height.	3

Reference	Current Finding	Recommendation	Priority
16 Kitchens	16.6 Kitchen 40: the kitchen is narrow with little manoeuvring space. The fridge doors are hinged so that when opening you have to pass the fridge door and then pull it open. Having doors that opened towards the side wall would give improved access for all.	When replacing the fridges select ones that have the door hinged on the left.	3
17 Stairs	17.1 The stairs from the lift lobby on the 1st floor up to the Chamber gallery have no tonally contrasting nosings. I am informed that the gallery is no longer in use.	If the gallery is put back into use, tonally contrasting nosings should be added.	3
21 Offices	21.2 Some offices are fitted with push button security locks, for example room 43 Control Centre and life line office. This style of lock requires the user to have good manual dexterity.	Provide room locks that can be used without the need to have good manual dexterity. This can be done as and when required by a member of staff.	3
15 Public WCs	15.11 Female WC: this room contains a drop-down baby change table. It is not recommended to provide these in accessible WC except in the smallest of establishments, then the room size should be increased and a standing height wash basin should be added.	Make available a separate baby change room.	P

This page is intentionally left blank

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EqIA)

Context

1. The Public Sector Equality Duty as set out under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires Rugby Borough Council when making decisions to have due regard to the following:
 - eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and other conduct prohibited by the Act,
 - advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not,
 - fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.
2. The characteristics protected by the Equality Act are:
 - age
 - disability
 - gender reassignment
 - marriage/civil partnership
 - pregnancy/maternity
 - race
 - religion/belief
 - sex/gender
 - sexual orientation
3. In addition to the above-protected characteristics, you should consider the crosscutting elements of the proposed policy, such as impact on social inequalities and impact on carers who look after older people or people with disabilities as part of this assessment.
4. The Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) document is a tool that enables RBC to test and analyse the nature and impact of what it is currently doing or is planning to do in the future. It can be used flexibly for reviewing existing arrangements but in particular should enable identification where further consultation, engagement and data is required.
5. The questions will enable you to record your findings.
6. Where the EqIA relates to a continuing project, it must be reviewed and updated at each stage of the decision.
7. Once completed and signed off the EqIA will be published [online](#).
8. An EqIA must accompany all **Key Decisions** and **Cabinet Reports**.
9. For further information, refer to the EqIA guidance for staff.
10. For advice and support, contact:
Rebecca Ewers
Corporate Equality & Diversity Officer
rebecca.ewers@rugby.gov.uk
01788 533509

Equality Impact Assessment

Service Area	Communities and Homes, Asset Maintenance
Policy/Service being assessed	Capital Project – Lobby & Entrance Upgrades (Committee Lobby, Meeting Rooms & Council Chamber) and Fire-Alarm Hold-Back Devices for Lift Lobby Doors
Is this a new or existing policy/service? If existing policy/service please state date of last assessment	New proposal – one off
EqlA Review Team – List of members	Peter Nicholas, Rebecca Ewers, Rebecca Govier.
Date of this assessment	31th July 2025
Signature of responsible officer (to be signed after the EqlA has been completed)	Michelle Dickson

A copy of the completed and signed Equality Impact Assessment report, including relevant data and information to be forwarded to the Corporate Equality & Diversity Officer.

Details of Strategy/ Service/ Policy to be analysed

<u>Stage 1 – Policy to be analysed</u>	
(1) Describe the main aims, objectives and purpose of the Strategy/Service/Policy (or decision)?	Rugby Borough Council aims to upgrade access to the committee lobby, committee rooms and council chamber at the Town Hall to create a fully inclusive, safe, and accessible environment for all staff, councillors, and members of the public.
(2) How does it fit with Rugby Borough Council's Corporate priorities and your service area priorities?	Rugby Borough Council demonstrates leadership in equality and inclusion , improving service delivery and upholding legal responsibilities under the Equality Act and building regulations. Upgrading access at the Town Hall visibly enacts the Council's corporate aims - supporting healthier, fairer, more inclusive civic spaces - while enhancing organisational effectiveness and inclusive service delivery for staff, members, and the community.
(3) What are the expected outcomes you are hoping to achieve?	• Enable full physical access - including power-assisted or automated entry points, safe compliant ramps, and appropriately sized doors - to ensure people with mobility impairments can move independently and with dignity. • Ensure inclusive participation - including the installation of hearing loop systems and other assistive aids so that individuals with hearing impairments can engage fully in meetings. • Reflect the council's Equality, Diversity & Inclusion commitments - ensuring workplace infrastructure aligns with its status as a Disability Confident employer and meets public sector equality duties, promoting fairness and accessibility for everyone.

(4) Does or will the policy or decision affect: • Customers • Employees • Wider community or groups	Yes — the proposed accessibility upgrades at Rugby Borough Council's Town Hall will have significant and positive impacts across key stakeholder groups: • Employees & Elected Members • Upgrades such as power-assisted doors, widened doorways, accessible ramps, lift access, and hearing loop systems will empower staff and councillors with disabilities to perform roles effectively, without physical limitations. • The improvements support Rugby Borough Council's commitment as a Disability Confident Employer, ensuring adjustments for equity and inclusion within the workplace. • Wider Community & Groups • Ensuring full accessibility aligns with the council's corporate outcome of 'Health and Wellbeing' by supporting independence and protecting the most vulnerable in the community. • It also demonstrates leadership under the 'Fairer Rugby' priority by actively reducing inequality and promoting inclusive civic engagement for all community members
(5) Will the policy or decision involve substantial changes in resources?	Yes - the proposed accessibility upgrades will involve substantial additional resources: • A capital request of £185,000 has been submitted to Cabinet to fund the full refurbishment of the Committee lobby, and meeting rooms to include installation of power-assisted doors, widened doorways, compliant platform lifts, and hearing loop systems to ensure full accessibility in the Town Hall. • While this is a one-off capital investment, there will also be modest ongoing revenue implications for maintenance, staff training, and servicing of new equipment.
<u>Stage 2 – Evidence about user population and consultation</u>	As a minimum you must consider what is known about the population likely to be affected which will support your understanding of the impact of the policy, e.g. service uptake/usage, customer satisfaction surveys, staffing data, performance data, research information (national, regional and local data sources).

(1) What does the data tell you about the groups this policy or decision impacts?

Possible data sources:

- national statistics/census data
- local statistics
- evaluations
- analysis of complaints
- user feedback
- outcomes from consultation/community voice
- Council published information, service data
- [District and Ward Profile – Warwickshire Observatory](#)
- [Office of National Statistics](#)
- [Fingertips health profiles](#)
- [Indices of Multiple Deprivation](#)
- [RBC Annual Workforce Equality Report](#)

An externally sourced Access audit resulted in the following: -

1. The doors into the Committee Rooms provide a clear effective width of 750 mm, this is the absolute narrowest a door should provide, 800 mm is the recommended. There is an issue around the rooms opposite the top ramp as the access width on the approach to the room is 865 mm because of the ramp. This coupled with the narrow door will make access for a wheelchair difficult to impossible.
2. The doors associated with access to the Council Chamber and Committee Rooms all exceed the recommended opening force.

User feedback from **Democratic Services** informs us that some members have had access issues into the Committee Lobby, rooms and the chamber itself.

Council members have raised serious concerns regarding access to key civic areas—including the committee lobby, meeting rooms, and council chamber—highlighting multiple non-compliant access features:

1. **Non–power-assisted doors** make entry difficult or unsafe for individuals with limited mobility, particularly those using mobility scooters or wheelchairs.
2. **Lack of adequate lift or platform lifts** means individuals cannot reach facilities adequately.
3. **Ramps in place are unsafe and not fit for purpose**—being steep, improperly surfaced, or lacking handrails.
4. **Doorway widths are too narrow**, restricting safe passage for wheelchair users and carers.
5. **No hearing loop systems or similar assistive listening facilities** are provided, creating barriers for hearing-impaired members, staff, and visitors.

These access shortcomings contravene **Part M of the Building Regulations**, which requires accessible entrances, corridors, lifts, door widths, and internal circulation space for disabled users. Moreover, the **Equality Act 2010** mandates that public authorities make “**reasonable adjustments**” to eliminate barriers that place disabled persons at a substantial disadvantage, including modifications to physical features and provision of auxiliary aids (e.g., hearing loops).

Furthermore, as a local authority, Rugby Borough Council is required under the Equality Act to maintain and implement an **accessibility strategy**, engaging stakeholders and allocating adequate resources to identified improvements.

(2a) Have you consulted or involved those groups that are likely to be affected by the strategy/ service/policy you want to implement?

If yes, please state which groups were involved in the consultation and what were their views and how have their views influenced the policy/decision?

Yes – we have coordinated with internal colleagues to ensure it is informed, practical, and aligned with Rugby Borough Council's governance and equality responsibilities:

- We have **liaised with Democratic Services**, who support scrutiny and ensure that councillor and public interests - especially around meeting access - are fully represented.
- Discussions have taken place with the **Equality Officer**, to ensure that all proposed improvements reflect the council's commitment under the Equality Act and its status as a Disability Confident Employer.
- The relevant **Chief Officer**, including senior leadership from the service area, has also been involved to consider resource implications, operational impact, and integration with corporate and service planning.

These consultations ensure that the strategy is robust, legally sound, and centred on the needs of staff, councillors, and visitors - especially those with lived experience of access challenges.

Yes - we have engaged proactively with external expertise in planning our strategy to upgrade the Rugby Town Hall committee rooms and enhance accessibility for public council meetings.

We have liaised with an independent **external access auditor**, who has conducted a full audit of the Town Hall. This audit has identified current barriers and provided clear recommendations, informed by standards under the Equality Act and best-practice guidance. Rugby Borough Council has recently committed to commissioning a full accessibility audit of the Town Hall as part of its Equality & Diversity work - so our engagement builds on that direction.

In short:

- We have consulted with an **external access auditor** and used their professional recommendations.
- We have considered evidence collected by internal groups, including stakeholder input.

(2b) If you have not consulted or engaged with communities that are likely to be affected by the policy/decision, give details about when you intend to carry out consultation or provide reasons for why you feel this is not necessary.	N/A		
<u>Stage 3 – Analysis of impact</u>			
(1) <u>Protected Characteristics</u> From your data and consultations is there any positive, adverse or negative impact identified for any particular group, which could amount to discrimination? If yes, identify the groups and how they are affected.	Protected Characteristic	Nature of Impact Positive, Neutral, Adverse (explain why)	Extent of impact Low, medium, high
	Age	Positive	Medium
	Disability	Positive	High
	Sex	Neutral	
	Gender reassignment	Neutral	
	Marriage/civil partnership	Neutral	
	Pregnancy/maternity	Neutral	
	Race	Neutral	
	Religion/belief	Neutral	
	Sexual Orientation	Neutral	

(2) <u>Cross cutting themes</u> (a) Are your proposals likely to impact on social inequalities e.g. child poverty, geographically disadvantaged communities? If yes, please explain how?	Description of impact	Nature of impact Positive, Neutral, Adverse (explain why)	Extent of impact Low, medium, high
	Socio-economic e.g.: child poverty, income level, education level, working hours/occupation, family/social support, access to good nutrition	Neutral	
	Environmental e.g.: housing status, transport links, geography, access to services, air quality, noise pollution	Neutral	

(3) Using the information gathered in stages 2 and 3, please describe how the policy/strategy/service will: - Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other unlawful conduct prohibited by the act - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share and people who do not share a relevant protected characteristic - Foster good relations between people who share and people who do not share a relevant protected characteristic	- The refurbishment is fully guided by an independent external access audit, ensuring that physical features - such as step-free access, hearing loops, clear visual signage and accessible furniture layout are compliant with the Equality Act and accessibility standards. - Any identified barriers that could inadvertently exclude people with protected characteristics (e.g. disability, sensory impairments) are systematically removed or mitigated. - Staff involved in Council meetings and public-facing events will receive updated training on accessibility and inclusion, aimed at preventing discriminatory or harassing behaviour. The environment and operations will support non-discriminatory access, meeting legal responsibilities and respecting dignity, privacy, and autonomy of all participants. - The upgrades remove structural obstacles that disproportionately affect residents with disabilities, sensory impairments, mobility challenges, or age-related limitations. - By making committee rooms fully accessible, the policy supports equitable participation: everyone can attend, contribute, and speak at meetings regardless of their physical or sensory needs. People with protected characteristics gain genuinely equal opportunity to engage in civic life. - The new design supports inclusive public participation, bringing together diverse groups in shared civic spaces - making public meetings more welcoming and representative. - Inclusive signage, clear wayfinding, assisted-listening aids and accessible seating encourage interaction across ability groups. - Ongoing engagement is planned post-implementation, inviting feedback from all residents - including disabled and non-disabled - to review how access improvements affect meeting experience and participation. Enhancing the council's physical and procedural accessibility fosters trust and mutual respect across diverse communities.
(4) Are there any obvious barriers to accessing the service? If yes, how can they be overcome?	Access for mobility/wheelchair users to lifts, committee lobby, meeting rooms and chamber. Hearing loop visibility

(5) What Equality Monitoring Data will be collected to analyse impact? How will the Equality Monitoring Data collected be used? If no Equality Monitoring Data is being collected, why not? For support with this section, please refer to the Equality Monitoring Guidance.	1. Analysis of SHE reports - including near misses or incidents - to flag any patterns linked to protected groups. 2. Feedback from councillors and stakeholders: - • Listening to people who know the area or community, like elected members or local representatives. • Using their insights to check if the numbers (data) make sense in real situations. • Hearing real-life stories or experiences that help explain what's really happening beyond just the numbers.
(6) Complete this section if any adverse impacts were identified in 3.1. Outline any actions that will be taken to remove or mitigate the adverse impacts identified in 3.1 to ensure that no discrimination is taking place. If removing or mitigating the impact is not possible, you may in certain circumstances, justify the discrimination. If that is the case, please give evidence for why justifying is possible in this case.	

<u>Stage 4 – Action Planning, Review and Monitoring</u>	
(1) Data analysis What does feedback from Equality Monitoring Data gathered tell you about impact on groups? Were there any unforeseen impacts (positive or negative)? The feedback/data should be used to inform your Action Plan in (2)	

If No Further Action is required then go to – Review and Monitoring (2) Action Planning – Specify any changes or improvements that can be made to the service or policy to mitigate or eradicate negative or adverse impact on specific groups, including resource implications.	EqlA Action Plan <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Action</th> <th>Lead Officer</th> <th>Date for completion</th> <th>Resource requirements</th> <th>Comments</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> </tbody> </table>					Action	Lead Officer	Date for completion	Resource requirements	Comments																				
Action	Lead Officer	Date for completion	Resource requirements	Comments																										
(3) Review and Monitoring State how and when you will monitor policy and Action Plan. Will you make any changes to the Equality Data that you are collecting or how you are collecting/using the data?	01/08/2030. This refurbishment is a one-off asset change, rather than an ongoing policy or service. Provided no major changes occur in how the space is used or accessed, a five-year review is proportionate.																													

Please annotate your policy with the following statement:

‘An Equality Impact Assessment on this policy was undertaken on (date of assessment) and will be reviewed on (insert review date).’

Rugby Borough Council

Climate Change and Environmental Impact Assessment

CONTEXT

In 2019 the UK Parliament set a commitment in law to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2050. Achieving this target will require considerable effort with public bodies, private sector organisations, the third sector and individuals working together to take action.

Rugby Borough Council declared a climate emergency in 2019 and the Council's Corporate Strategy (2025-2035) [link](#) sets ambitious outcomes in relation to Climate Change. These ambitions are further defined through the Council's Climate Change Strategy [link](#) and must now be progressed through the decisions which the Council makes.

It is therefore important that Rugby Borough Council gives due regard to climate change when making decisions. In the context of the Council's business, Climate Change includes greenhouse gas emissions, biodiversity, habitat loss and environmental destruction. When putting forward recommendations for decision, officers must assess how these recommendations are likely to influence our climate change commitments by completing the following Climate Change and Environmental Impact Assessment.

To help you complete this assessment, please see the following guidance on SharePoint [here](#).

A copy of this Climate Change and Environmental Impact Assessment, including relevant data and information should be forwarded to your Chief Officer for approval.

If you require help, advice and support to complete the form, please contact your Chief Officer.

SECTION 1: OVERVIEW

Portfolio and Service Area	Communities and Homes – Asset Maintenance		
Policy/Service/Change being assessed	Capital Project – Lobby & Entrance Upgrades (Committee Lobby, Meeting Rooms & Council Chamber) and Fire-Alarm Hold-Back Devices for Lift Lobby Doors		
Is this a new or existing Policy/Service/Change?	New change		
If existing policy/service please state date of last assessment	N/A		
Ward Specific Impacts	Building-wide benefits: The Council Chamber, Committee Lobby, adjacent meeting rooms and entrances serve all wards equally, so there are no direct ward-specific environmental or accessibility impacts to report. The works do not privilege or disadvantage any one ward. Accessibility improvements (e.g. platform lift, power-assisted doors, signage, hold-back devices) benefit all residents regardless of ward, directly addressing concerns previously highlighted by councillors from wards such as Eastlands about inadequate access at Rugby Town Hall		
Summary of assessment Briefly summarise the policy/service/change and potential impacts	1. Policy / Service / Change Summary • Project context: A capital-funded refurbishment of the Committee Lobby, adjacent meeting rooms, and Council Chamber entrance at Rugby Borough Council. • Change proposed: Installation of accessibility (power-assisted doors, platform lift), fire safety upgrades (alarm-linked hold-back devices), and improvements in aesthetics and functionality (new lighting, ceilings, flooring, signage, audiovisual systems). • Governance: Delivered over an 8-week programme under established Asset Maintenance team protocols, procurement and stakeholder engagement, underpinned by an Equality Impact Assessment.		
	2. Potential Impacts		
	Impact Area	Potential Impact	Mitigation / Benefit
	Accessibility & Inclusion	Access improvements benefiting all users borough-wide.	Eliminates barriers; supports inclusivity and compliance.
	Fire Safety	Enhanced compliance through hold-back devices.	Mitigates fire evacuation risk; increases occupant safety.

	Environmental Disturbance	Minor disruption from construction (noise, dust, waste).	Standard site controls (working hours, waste segregation, recycling).
	Resource Use & Waste	Disposal of existing materials; modest new material use.	Use of low-VOC finishes, recycling, energy-efficient lighting where possible.
	Aesthetic & Functional Upgrade	Improves usability and public perception.	Boosts public engagement and space usability across wards.
	3. Ward-Specific Perspective - Since the facilities serve the entire borough, no specific ward experiences distinct impacts or benefits. - All wards benefit equally from improved accessibility, safety, and public experience offered by the refurbished spaces. 4. Summary No significant environmental or social disbenefits identified at the ward level. Positive social impacts include equitable improvements in accessibility and safety across all wards. Environmental impacts are minimal, manageable, and incorporated within standard mitigation and sustainability practices.		
Completed By	Rebecca Govier		
Authorised By			
Date of Assessment	31/07/2025		

SECTION 2: GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner	Timescales
Scope 1 Emissions Direct emissions from council owned resources, for example through boilers or vehicles.	☒	☐	☐	The interior-focused refurbishments at Rugby Town Hall - comprising lobby upgrades, meeting room improvements, and new fire alarm hold-back devices - have no effect on Scope 1 emissions. None of the works involve direct combustion, process emissions, or fugitive sources linked to the council's operations.	None required		
Scope 2 Emissions Indirect emissions occurring at the location energy is produced for council activities. For example, electricity generation for council buildings.	☒	☐	☐	The refurbishment works at Rugby Borough Council Town Hall—comprising interior upgrades and installation of fire-safety devices— do not alter energy consumption patterns and have no impact on Scope 2 emissions.	None required		

SECTION 3: CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY

	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner	Timescales
Workplaces and the Economy	☐	☒	☐	Enhanced Employee Satisfaction and Productivity. Improved Safety and Reduced Disruptions. Revitalizing public spaces like the Town Hall can make them more appealing for hosting events, meetings, and conferences.	None required		
Transport	☒	☐	☐	The proposed upgrades are internal and do not involve significant changes to the external infrastructure. Therefore, they are unlikely to necessitate major alterations to existing transport networks or services.	None required		
Natural Environment	☐	☒	☐	The proposed upgrades to Rugby Borough Council Town Hall have the potential to positively impact the natural environment, particularly if sustainable renovation	None required		

	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner	Timescales
				practices, green infrastructure, and eco-friendly materials are prioritised. By carefully considering these factors, the project can contribute to environmental conservation and sustainability.			
Homes and Energy	☒	☐	☐	While the direct impact on homes and energy may be limited, the proposed upgrades to Rugby Borough Council Town Hall can serve as a catalyst for broader adoption of energy-efficient practices in the community. By setting an example and potentially influencing local housing trends, these renovations contribute to the overall goal of reducing energy consumption and promoting sustainability.	None required		
Waste, Resources and the Circular Economy	☐	☒	☐	The proposed upgrades to Rugby Borough Council Town Hall have the potential to positively impact waste management, resource efficiency, and the circular	None required		

	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner	Timescales
				economy. By adopting sustainable construction practices, the project can serve as a model for future public building renovations, contributing to environmental sustainability and resource conservation.			
Climate and Nature Positive Communities	☒	☐	☐	While Rugby Borough is advancing its ambition to become climate and nature positive - through community engagement, biodiversity programmes, and policy-driven partnerships - the specific refurbishment works at Town Hall do not support those aims. The internal improvements do not deliver nature-enhancing features, habitat creation, or climate resilience measures, and thus have no impact on the council's nature-positive community goals.	None required		
Adaptation	☒	☐	☐	The ongoing refurbishment of Rugby Borough Council's Town Hall, encompassing the lobby, meeting rooms, and	None required		

	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner	Timescales
				fire alarm hold-back devices, is primarily focused on enhancing service accessibility, operational efficiency, and public engagement. While these improvements contribute to the building's functionality and user experience, they do not specifically address climate adaptation strategies.			

SECTION 4: REVIEW

Where a negative impact is identified, the proposal and/or implementation can be adapted or changed; meaning there is a need for regular review. This review may also be needed to reflect additional data and evidence for a fuller assessment (proportionate to the decision in question). Please state the agreed review timescale for the identified impacts of the policy implementation or service change.

Review date	
Key points to be considered through review	
Person responsible for review	
Authorised by	

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

Report Title:	Annual report of the Climate Emergency Working Group October 2025
Name of Committee:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	4 November 2025
Report Director:	Chief Executive
Portfolio:	Partnerships and Wellbeing
Ward Relevance:	All
Prior Consultation:	Climate Emergency Working Group
Contact Officer:	Ellie Lawson, Climate Change Project Officer, ellie.lawson@rugby.gov.uk
Public or Private:	Public
Report Subject to Call-In:	No
Report En-Bloc:	Yes
Forward Plan:	Yes
Corporate Priorities:	This report relates to the following priority(ies): ☒ A Healthier Rugby – To support people to live healthier, longer, and more independent lives. ☐ A Thriving Rugby – To deliver a thriving economy which brings Borough-wide investment and regenerates Rugby Town Centre. ☒ A Greener Rugby – To protect the environment and ensure the Borough adapts to climate change. ☒ A Fairer Rugby – To reduce inequalities and improve housing across the Borough. Corporate Strategy 2025-2035 ☐ This report does not specifically relate to any Council priorities but
Summary:	Rugby Borough Council has taken action over the past two years to deliver climate change mitigation and adaptation in line with the Council's commitments, such as the 2030 targets listed within the Climate Change Strategy. This work has been overseen and guided by the Climate Emergency Working Group and the Annual Report

provides a summary of the various projects throughout 2024 and 2025.

Financial Implications:

The Annual Report sets out projects and initiatives that have been funded through the Council's Climate Change Reserve, external funding received to deliver projects and capital investment from the Council.

Risk Management/Health and Safety Implications:

The Annual Report sets out projects that have improved health and safety within the borough's green spaces, in particular active travel improvements with the improvement of path connectors on Council owned green spaces.

Environmental Implications:

The Annual Report sets out projects and initiatives that have been delivered during 2024 and 2025 for the benefit of nature recovery, energy efficiency, active travel and decarbonisation.

Legal Implications:

None arising from this report

Equality and Diversity:

The Annual Report sets out projects that have been delivered for the benefit of all Rugby residents and general population health.

Options:

1. That Council note the Annual Report

Recommendation:

The Annual Report of the Climate Emergency Working Group 2025, as at Appendix 1 to the report, be noted.

Reasons for Recommendation:

The Climate Emergency Working Group Annual Report 2025 sets out details of the initiatives Rugby Borough Council have delivered in line with the Corporate Strategy vision of "A Greener Rugby".

Cabinet - 4 November 2025

Annual Report of the Climate Emergency Working Group

Public Report of the Chief Executive

Recommendation

The Annual Report of the Climate Emergency Working Group 2025, as at Appendix 1 to the report, be noted.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Council's Corporate Strategy 2025-2035 confirmed a vision to achieve a more sustainable economy for all, where the natural environment, people and businesses are thriving.
- 1.2 The Corporate Strategy set out to deliver a fairer, better, greener Rugby with the below overarching priorities:
- Support people to live healthier, longer and more independent lives.
 - To protect the environment and ensure the borough adapts to climate change
 - Reduce inequalities and improve housing across the borough
- 1.3. As part of the Council's commitment to deliver its Corporate Strategy, a Climate Emergency Working Group was established and tasked with delivering on the Council's commitment to the Net Zero agenda and support the Council's Climate and Biodiversity Emergency declarations.

2. Climate Emergency Working Group Annual Report

- 2.1 The Climate Emergency Working Group are pleased to present its Annual Report 2025 (Appendix 1), outlining the projects and initiatives delivered in the last 18 months in delivering its corporate objective of "A Greener Rugby".
- 2.2 The Annual Report provides Councillors and residents a comprehensive overview of the projects undertaken utilising the Climate Change Reserve, external funding successfully secured and strategic processes introduced in to the Council's day-to-day operations. These are highlighted under the below headings:
- Workplaces and the Economy
 - Transport
 - Natural Environment
 - Homes and Energy

- Waste, Resources and the Circular Economy
 - Climate and Nature Positive Communities
 - Adaptation
- 2.3 The Annual Report includes a final 'Looking Forward' section, setting out the next steps the Climate Emergency Working Group are focused upon in support of delivering climate-centric projects and connecting all Council services to delivering on its commitment to A Greener Rugby.

3. Conclusion

- 3.1 The Council are committed to delivering on its Corporate Strategy and the Annual Report of the Climate Emergency Working Group sets out the successes and projects being delivered to achieve a Greener Rugby.
- 3.2. It is the recommendation of this report that the Annual Report of the Climate Emergency Working Group be noted.

Name of Meeting: Cabinet

Date of Meeting: 4 November 2025

Subject Matter: Annual Report of the Climate Emergency Working Group

Originating Department: Chief Executive Office

DO ANY BACKGROUND PAPERS APPLY ☐ YES ☒ NO

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Doc No	Title of Document and Hyperlink

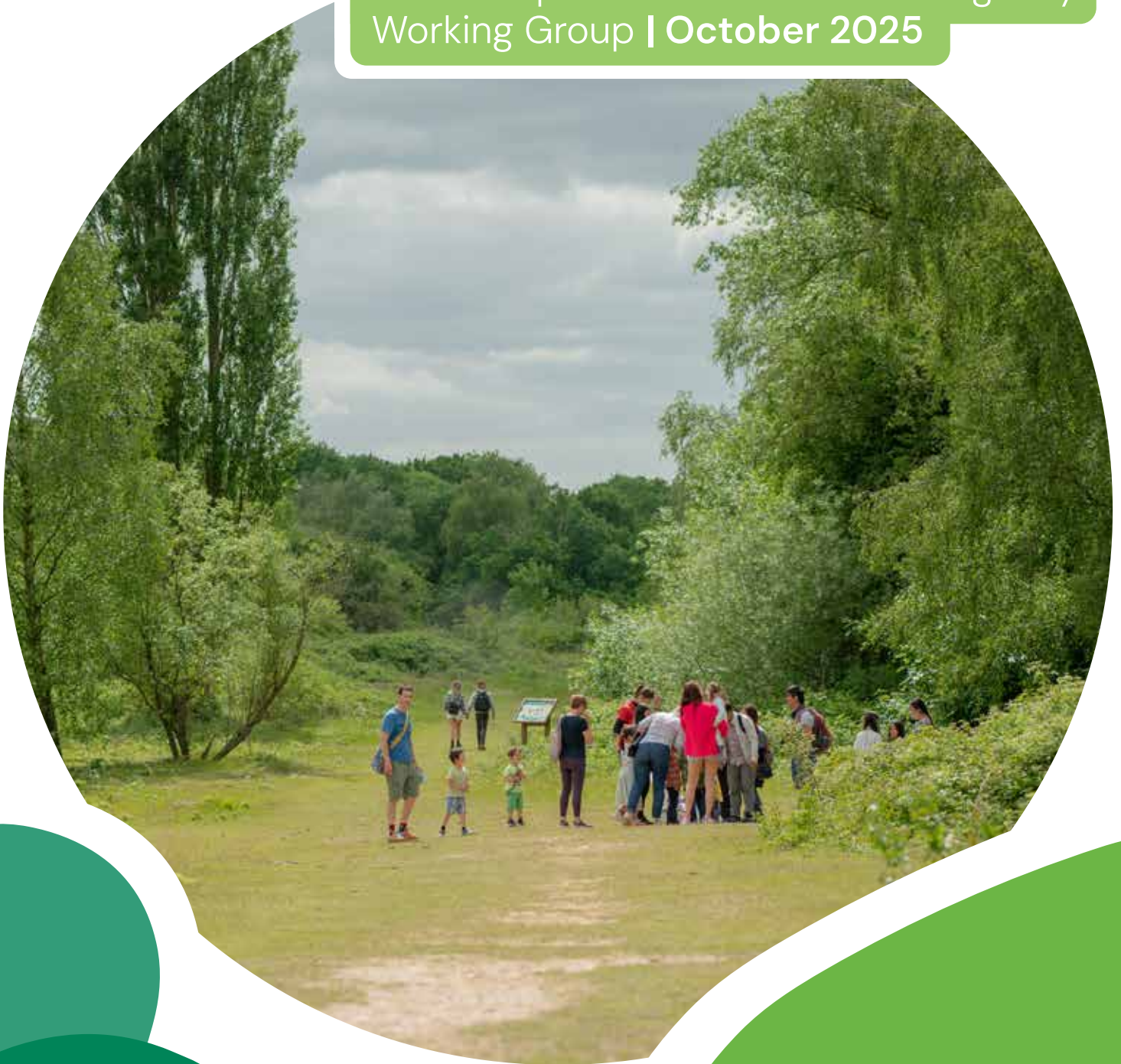
The background papers relating to reports on planning applications and which are open to public inspection under Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972, consist of the planning applications, referred to in the reports, and all written responses to consultations made by the Local Planning Authority, in connection with those applications.

☐ Exempt information is contained in the following documents:

Doc No	Relevant Paragraph of Schedule 12A

Delivering a Greener Rugby

Annual report of the Climate Emergency Working Group | **October 2025**





Introduction

I am delighted to introduce Rugby Borough Council’s Climate Emergency Working Group’s annual report. The report highlights some of our achievements throughout 2024 and 2025. It gives details of the initiatives which we have delivered in line with our Corporate Strategy vision of **“A Greener Rugby”**

I hope that you enjoy reading this report and please do contact the Council if you have any queries or if you have any suggestions for our work plan for 2025/26.



Cllr Alison Livesey
Climate Emergency Working Group

Workplaces and the Economy

Rugby Borough Council aims to lead by example when acting on climate change. This includes considering ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and environmental impacts across all services.

By demonstrating the Council's dedication and ambition, we can encourage the Borough at large to become more sustainable. Going forwards, there will be an exploration of strategies to support a green economy outside of the Council's own actions.

Climate Change and Environmental Impact Assessments

The Council has introduced a new and improved Climate Change Impact Assessment for Cabinet and Council reports. These assist report writers and decision makers to fully understand the environmental impacts of the Council's activities. The assessments require officers to consider the resulting greenhouse gas emissions and connections to the Council's climate strategy. This process provides an opportunity to avoid or mitigate negative impacts and implement climate-friendly actions.

Alongside the new assessment, guidance and officer training has now been put in place.



Transport

Transport is the UK's biggest emitting sector, accounting for 28% of the UK's domestic emissions. This is also true for Rugby Borough Council, where the fleet contributes around 40% of emissions (based on analysis completed for the Council's 2021 Carbon Management Plan). In response, the Council set a goal to transition to a low carbon fleet and is actively developing strategies to achieve this objective.

From a Borough-wide perspective, the Council continues its efforts to encourage and enable active travel (walking and cycling). A shift from using cars for short journeys would not only reduce emissions but have significant wellbeing benefits for residents in terms of exercise, increased access of green spaces, and reduction in noise and air pollution.

Fleet Decarbonisation

Work is continuing to explore the most environmentally sustainable options for the Council's vehicle fleet. This includes assessing emerging technologies, alternative fuels, and strategies to reduce emissions in line with the Council's climate commitments.

Following the successes of procuring the Council's first electric vehicles (Grounds Maintenance and the Mayoral Car), work has now focussed on the rest of the fleet including the larger vehicles such as waste collection vehicles. This has involved exploring alternative fuel options such as electric and hydrogen powered vehicles, as well as the use of Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) as an interim solution. HVO offers an immediate way to reduce emissions by up to 85% while the Council continues to assess longer term, viable technologies for a full fleet transition.

This work will now feed into the fleet replacement programme to ensure that sustainable alternatives are fully considered before any vehicle procurement decisions are made. Given the rapid pace of change in the industry, available options will need to be reviewed on an annual basis. The Climate Emergency Group will maintain oversight of this process to help ensure alignment with the Council's environmental objectives.



Parks Connector Network

Since 2020, the Council has laid more than 6.5km of new or improved pathways for the Park Connector Network. This is a collection of 'green' travel corridors across the borough to encourage walking and cycling.

The latest expansion of the network connects the cycle path at Brownsover's Crowthorns to Clifton-upon-Dunsmore, resurfacing and widening a 1.4 kilometre stretch of pathway in poor and muddy condition and sections damaged by flooding from the River Avon.

Following a partnership with the Environment Agency to gain the necessary approvals, the works were funded from Section 106 contributions and the Council's health and safety budget.

The Council has also installed eco-friendly, solar-powered lights on the network's paths to make it accessible all year round.



Natural Environment

The environment and climate change are interlinked. Protecting and enhancing Rugby's green spaces will contribute to mitigation efforts and support the borough in adapting to climate change. This will be achieved through increased carbon sequestration, temperature regulation, shade provision, and improved water absorption. These projects also contribute to the Council's objectives on increasing biodiversity and improving residents' quality of life.

Warwickshire Natural Capital Investment Strategy

In July 2024, the Council adopted a jointly commissioned Warwickshire, Coventry, and Solihull Natural Capital Investment Strategy (NCIS) as the basis for utilising natural capital funding across the sub-region. The NCIS provides a mechanism for delivering biodiversity action. It explores the potential use of resources to achieve the best support for biodiversity across the sub-region.

Within Rugby it offers the opportunity to identify and fund investment in a range of natural assets to bring about benefits for biodiversity, flooding, and carbon sequestration. It has led to the selection of Strawberry Fields as key site for investing in the natural environment.



Wildflower Highways

The Climate Emergency Working Group funded a project to expand the wildflowers on highway verges across the borough.

For this project, the Council's Parks and Open Spaces team identified 8 new locations that were appropriate and accessible for specialist machinery to carry out the ground works. These sites were prepared and seeded over a 2-month period by the external contractor and included:

- 1 Avon Mill Recreation Ground & Traffic Island**
- 2 Dunchurch Road – Shakespeare and Goldsmith**
- 3 Dunchurch Road – Cock Robin verges**
- 4 Hilmorton – High Street – Greens**
- 5 Hilmorton – Lower Hilmorton Road**
- 6 Hilmorton – Crick Road – Railway Bridge site**
- 7 Bilton Road – Westfield Road splitter**
- 8 Rainsbrook Crematorium – Scattering areas**

The creation of wildflower verges complemented the Council's Pollinator Strategy, which commits to planting species that support the recovery of pollinators throughout the Borough. This has the following benefits to Rugby's communities:

- The meadows provide a far greater range of habitats and are a valuable source of nectar for pollinating insects
- They are more biodiverse than grass verges, helping to reduce declines/extinction of plant species, as well as providing food sources necessary for supporting local wildlife. For example, some plants were selected to promote a specific species, and the range of plants selected ensure food sources are available for most of the year
- The meadows help sequesterate CO₂ and capture dust particles, improving air quality

- The reduction in regular mowing means there is less fuel consumed to maintain these sites – helping reduce the Council's carbon footprint
- They provide a green corridor through Rugby, connecting green spaces to provide a larger habitat for birds, small mammals, reptiles and amphibians



Free Trees for Farmers

The Council has partnered with the Warwickshire Wildlife Trust on the Free Trees for Farmers scheme. This involves allocating a fund that can be used to cover the cost of tree packs requested by local farmers, resulting in the planting of native trees species on their land. The Warwickshire Wildlife Trust share guidance to help with this process, and the provided tree guards are all biodegradable.

The project is coordinated and delivered by the Warwickshire Wildlife Trust and has been run successfully with Warwick and Stratford-upon-Avon District Councils for 4 years. Due to economies of scale and the role played by Warwickshire Wildlife Trust, the scheme has a low cost per tree.

Free Trees for Farmers was supported by the Climate Emergency Working Group as it provides a positive engagement with a group that have a major impact on the local environment. As well as being an opportunity to plant thousands of trees beyond the limitation of Council owned land, contributing to an increase in the Borough's tree canopy cover. 25 farmers have requested trees through the scheme and will receive them in the new year.



Nature In Focus: Rugby

This was an event held in July 2025 in partnership with the Warwickshire Wildlife Trust. It was an opportunity to come together to discuss the state of nature, what is currently being done for nature, and what people would like to see. Speakers included Rugby Borough Council's Acting Chief Executive, Dan Green; Warwickshire Wildlife Trust's Director of Landscape Recovery, Ian Jelley; and Tom Heap, television and radio reporter known for BBC Countryfile and BBC Radio 4's Costing the Earth and The Climate Show. There was also representation from local environmental groups on tables around the room. This included Garden Organic, The Eco Hub, Litter Busters, Rugby Wildlife Group, Swift Valley volunteers, and Friends of Diamond Wood.

Following 126 registrations, approximately 100 people attended on the day. The event received largely positive feedback, with appreciation for the opportunity to ask the Council questions and explore nature topics in a room of people passionate about the issue. Whilst there were discussions on the conflict between development and environmental goals, and a push from the public to be more ambitious, several of the suggestions covered work already done by the Council. This has fed into the overall aim to improve communication on Council initiatives.

Throughout the day, there were many comments about the importance of these events for bringing people together. It helps groups to share resources and knowledge, as well as reducing feelings of an insurmountable challenge. So, the Climate Emergency Working Group is continuing to consider how the Council can enable local networking and promote climate issues at future events.



Homes and Energy

Most buildings in the UK use gas as the primary heating source, a significant contributor to greenhouse gas emissions. This is compounded by the majority also relying on energy from the grid. Whilst the UK has made strides towards renewable energy (wind, solar, and hydroelectric), it only accounted for 38% of electricity generated in the past year.

Homes and energy are a key focus point for the Council's decarbonisation work. The Council has projects targeting both social housing and private homeowners to enable retrofitting. This provides support and helps simplify what can be an expensive and confusing process. As well as the climate impacts, these initiatives reduce heating costs and help weather-proof buildings, reducing damp and mould. This is beneficial for residents' health and improves the buildings resiliency to climate change.

Solar Panels and LEDs at Leisure centre

The Council was successful in obtaining over £187,000 from the government's Swimming Pool Support Fund for environmental improvements at the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Centre (QDJC).

This included £128,748 to fund the installation of Photo Voltaic (PV) panels, with £56,673 to be used to replace the remaining fluorescent lighting at the site with LED lighting.

These interventions will significantly reduce energy consumption and operating costs for the operator, supporting the centre's sustainability. Combined, the two interventions will provide a reduction in consumption of approximately 131,084Kwh per year to the centre, whilst using renewable energy.



Recognition for Energy Efficiency Work - Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) Wave 2.1

The Council joined forces with energy firm E.ON to deliver the project, which secured a £1.086 million grant from Wave 2.1 of the government's Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) to improve the efficiency of 112 social homes in the borough. This was then match funded by the Council to ensure the work could be carried out free of charge for tenants.

Improvements were focused chiefly on Wimpey No-Fines properties, built in the Long Lawford and Rokeby wards in the 1950s. These properties were selected due to their construction type, with solid concrete walls making them harder to heat.

To date, energy efficiency measures installed at the properties have cut energy bills by an estimated total of £18,970, while the project looks set to cut household energy consumption by approximately 558.152kWh.

The project was shortlisted in the Large-Scale Project of the Year (>250K) category at the West Midlands Energy Efficiency Awards and recognised as Highly Commended.

Comments from 2 tenants on the energy efficiency measures on their properties. Mr Gulliver was one of our tenants who received External Wall Insulation in the SHDF Wave 2.1 scheme:

"During the last winter, we had the heating on for an hour in the morning and the house retained the heat the whole day"

"The property looks a lot more aesthetically pleasing"

Mr Gulliver, Long Lawford.



Another tenant, Ms Jones, who had the air source heat pump installed on her property mentioned:

"I'm always in credit with my energy bills"

"I have no complaints, the air source heat pump warms up my home quickly"

Ms Jones, Rokeby.



Warm Homes: Social Housing Fund (WH: SHF) - Wave 3 Grant

The Council has secured a grant of £10.7million via the government's Warm Homes: Social Housing Fund – Wave 3 to improve the energy efficiency of up to 1,000 social homes by 2028. The grant has been match-funded by the Council.

The works will enable social homes with an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of D or below to be improved to a minimum rating of C. This will be done through the installation of measures such as loft and wall insulation, solar PV panels, and both air and ground source heat pumps. This is in line with the government's target of all social homes having an EPC rating of at least C by 2030.

This project will reduce energy consumption in retrofitted homes, with benefits including lower energy bills, fewer instances of damp and mould, and a reduction in carbon emissions.

Bulk EPC Programme

As part of the stock condition survey project, over 460 EPCs were produced on Council owned social homes between August 2024 and January 2025. EPC assessments were prioritised for those properties with no existing EPC data and expired EPCs in order to fill data gaps and allow the Council to make investment decisions based on accurate and up-to-date data.

This data has been used to highlight the worst-performing homes (with an EPC rating of D or below) which can now be targeted for energy efficiency improvements via the WH: SHF Wave 3 scheme.

Making our homes more energy efficient for our residents, and for our future.

Warm Homes: Local Grant

As part of the Midlands Net Zero Hub (MNZH) consortium, the Council has secured an indicative allocation of £814,000 via the Warm Homes: Local Grant (WH: LG) scheme to improve the energy efficiency of privately owned and rented properties in the Rugby borough. The scheme will be delivered between 2025 – 2028.

This will see eligible households in the borough benefit from the installation of fully funded energy efficiency measures, including loft and wall insulation, heat pumps, and solar PV panels. This will help to reduce energy consumption, household bills and carbon emissions for privately owned and rented homes.

ECO4 and GBIS Flex

The Energy Company Obligation (ECO) 4 is a government energy efficiency scheme designed to tackle fuel poverty and help reduce carbon emissions. It supports the installation of energy efficiency measures in the homes of private homeowners and tenants who are considered to be in fuel poverty. This done by requiring medium and large energy suppliers to promote measures that allow vulnerable households to heat their homes.

The Great British Insulation Scheme (GBIS) is also a government energy efficiency scheme to address fuel poverty. It delivers improvements to least energy efficient homes and differs from ECO 4 by focusing on a single intervention, versus a "whole house" approach. The "flex" component allows participating local authorities, including Rugby Borough Council, to refer households they consider to be vulnerable who might not meet the standard criteria.

The Council can refer private homeowners and tenants to these schemes. This requires an eligibility assessment for each applicant households. The Warwickshire based energy advice charity, Act on Energy, has been procured to provide this service on the behalf of the Council, until the scheme ends 31st March 2026. They were chosen for their extensive expertise and experience. This partnership has been funded through the Council's Climate Reserve.

Waste, Resources and the Circular Economy

Waste is a major contributor to emissions and environmental damage. The average person in the UK throws away over 400kg of waste per year, including food scraps, plastic, and textiles. Not only does the disposal of these items have an impact, but the increasing demand for replacement products adds strain on resources and contributes to the loss of green spaces.

The Council has committed to ensuring that the borough's waste is disposed of correctly and as sustainably as possible. To minimise impact, there is also an exploration of opportunities to reuse items and help establish a circular economy.

Sherbourne Recycling Limited

This year saw the first anniversary of the opening of Sherbourne Recycling Limited – the first local authority owned and operated Materials Recycling Facility in the country.

Rugby Borough Council, along with seven other Councils from the West Midlands, are shareholders of Sherbourne Recycling Limited. This means that the Council partially owns the company and can ensure that it continues to meet the high levels of environmental standards which the Council is committed to.

Sherbourne fulfilled its aim of powering the plant through 100% sustainable energy sources and ensuring that all materials processed are redistributed in the UK, rather than overseas.

With innovation being key to Sherbourne's operating practices, it was great to see the introduction of flexible plastics processing within this first year.

In addition to processing flexible plastics, the facility's advanced AI learning capabilities allow it to adapt to new materials, enabling a wider range of recyclables to be collected and sorted.

The team is actively seeking buyers for these materials to expand the types of items the facility can accept and recycle.



Recycling Performance Improvement

Over the past year, the Council has achieved a significant improvement in its recycling rates, with a 4% increase compared to the previous reporting period. This progress places Rugby among the top performers nationally, ranking as the 10th most improved recycling authority in England.

This achievement directly contributes to the objectives set out by the Council's Climate Emergency Group, which prioritises measurable reductions in carbon emissions and a shift toward more sustainable resource use. However, there continues to be relatively high levels of contamination in the recycling collected from Rugby. A current focus is understanding the reasons for this data and developing a strategy to reduce contamination, whilst continuing to improve the recycling rate.

The increase in recycling reflects ongoing efforts to enhance waste services, improve public engagement, and expand the range of recyclable materials collected. By reducing reliance on landfill, cutting associated greenhouse gas emissions, and supporting a more circular local economy, this positive trend demonstrates tangible progress in delivering on the Climate Emergency Group's strategic commitments.



Climate Emergency Working Group

Food Waste Collection

The Climate Emergency Working Group has maintained an oversight role in supporting the Council's move towards meeting the government's requirement for weekly domestic food waste collections by July 2026.

This has included decisions regarding the most appropriate types of vehicles, collection caddies, maximising recycling rates and reconfiguring the Hunters Lane Waste Depot.

The introduction of food waste collections is expected to significantly reduce landfill-bound waste and associated emissions, contributing to the Council's waste reduction and recycling ambitions. Public engagement and education efforts will begin in late 2025 to support a smooth and effective rollout.

Alongside the rollout of food waste collections, the Council will actively highlight the environmental benefits of composting food waste at home. This will be supported by community schemes such as the Garden Organic Community Champions project. Composting offers greater advantages than relying solely on food caddies for collection. It reduces landfill waste, cuts methane emissions, and returns valuable nutrients to the soil, thereby supporting a circular local economy. To build on the improved recycling rates, the Council will work closely with residents and partners to promote food waste composting as the first and preferred option while encouraging residents to reduce the amount of food waste they produce.

The Working Group will continue to support these initiatives to ensure successful implementation.



Climate and Nature Positive Communities

Communities are an essential component for delivering climate impact. It is not possible to achieve the scale of the change needed without support and participation from across the borough.

The Council is committed to engaging with residents about the activities taking place. This provides opportunities for feedback and co-design. There are also initiatives aimed at raising awareness of climate and environmental issues and how people can take individual action. Rugby has a strong third sector, powered by passionate volunteers. This is something the Council is proud of so, where possible, helps support this work. This has been seen through the funding given to local charities from the Climate Reserve.

Garden Organic: Community Champions Project

The Climate Emergency Working Group agreed to fund a new partnership between Rugby Borough Council and Garden Organic. Garden Organic promote organic growing and composting, citizen science and research, and seed conservation through a Heritage Seed Library.

This project focuses on delivering a Rugby Community Champions scheme. This involves training and supporting volunteer champions to engage with Rugby Borough residents on sustainable gardening techniques. In the first year, 14 volunteers have joined this programme. Garden Organic have produced resources to support the Champion's work and be distributed to groups throughout Rugby. This included the production of three toolkits: growing with biodiversity in mind, tree planting and maintenance advice, and sustainable planting options for raised beds.



Garden Organic also hosted 10 community workshops and webinars on associated topics, such as home composting. They have been very involved in community outreach, attending various events and supporting the Council to deliver the Rugby in Bloom celebrations.

This work will continue over the next year, with the recent approval of a second grant by the Climate Emergency Working Group.



Rugby Eco Hub

The Climate Emergency Working Group provided funding to help to initiate the Borough's first Eco Hub, which aims to support and promote climate action and sustainable living at the community level. The Working Group saw this is an opportunity to reach beyond the Council's own networks. The Hub will enable change within the community that is led by the community. Beyond climate action, it also helps to bring people together and promotes stewardship of the local area.

As a result of this funding, the volunteer committee was able to secure premises at the Betts Hall and began operating in 2024. The Eco Hub also recently registered as a UK charity.

The Eco Hub has been gradually growing its membership since opening, with over 380 subscribers to the newsletter and an average of 55 weekly visitors. They deliver a variety of services, including a 'Library of Things' and a community garden and kitchen. They also host a variety of community events. Their twice monthly repair cafe is one of the top performing in the country for number of repairs.



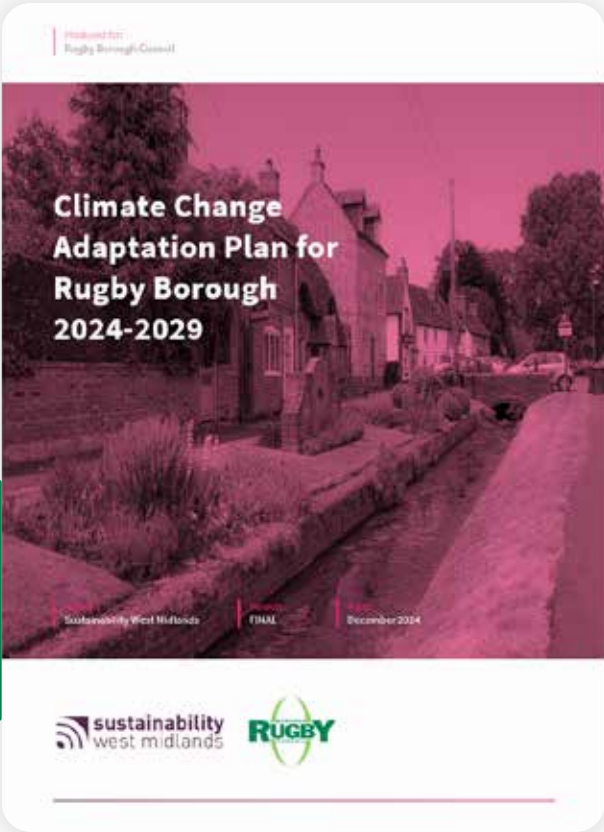
Adaptation

Climate adaptation refers to the work done in preparation for the environmental changes brought on by climate change and efforts to minimise the impact it has on people or a given area. In the coming decades, Rugby Borough is expected to see hotter and drier summers and an increase in heavy rainfall in winter. This means there is likely to be more instances of extreme weather, specifically droughts and flooding.

The Council has taken steps to understand the risks facing the Borough and identify priority areas for action. A major concern is limiting the everyday effect on residents and staff, maintaining quality of life and ensuring that services continue to be delivered safely and effectively.

Climate Adaptation Plan

The Council worked with external specialists, Sustainability West Midlands, to produce a Climate Adaptation Plan. This was adopted by the Council in February 2025, and work has begun on delivering the actions identified. The plan will be published in Autumn 2025 alongside the launch of the Community Resilience Project (see Looking Forwards for details), showcasing how the Council is already taking action in response to the Adaptation Plan.



The plan sets out the climate change adaptation actions that should be considered for implementation by decision makers in Rugby Borough. It also details how the Council can partner with other organisations to support and encourage greater ambition. This will ensure that the borough’s natural environment, people, infrastructure, buildings and businesses are prepared for the impacts of climate change.



Climate Adaptation World Cafe

The Council held a Climate Adaptation World Café event on Saturday 9th November 2024 in the Benn Hall, Rugby.

The event took the form of an inclusive discussion, in which participants explored the impact of climate on the borough, what their goals were for climate adaptation, and how this might be achieved.

Approximately 100 guests attended the event including John Slinger (MP for Rugby) and Mary Creagh (MP for Coventry East and Minister for Nature). There were also numerous organisations present, such as Garden Organic, Warwickshire Wildlife Trust, Warwickshire CAVA, WALC, Warwickshire County Council and Rugby First.

An outcome report was produced and considered by Council when adopting the Climate Adaptation Plan. The actions identified within the outcome report were incorporated into the Climate Adaptation Plan in advance of Council consideration.



Looking forward

Throughout 2024 and 2025, the Council has developed and delivered a numerous climate-centric projects under the guidance and support of the Climate Emergency Working Group. These have been varied and cross-sectoral, demonstrating the connection between climate change and all Council services.

This report shows the progress towards Rugby Borough Council's climate commitments and details the co-benefits these initiatives provide beyond climate impact. However, there is still a long way to go and significant emission reduction to be achieved. This includes the implementation of many more interesting projects, such as:

- **Progress Review of the Climate Strategy** – Rugby Borough Council completed its Climate Strategy in 2022, setting 2030 targets and a detailed action plan. As it has been several years and halfway to 2030, the Climate Emergency Working Group determined that a review of the strategy was needed. This will provide understanding of which actions have been achieved, why certain actions may not have happened, and if all targets are still relevant. This process is currently being undertaken.
- **Rugby River Champions** – The Council has partnered with researchers at the University of Birmingham to set up a water quality citizen science project in the borough. This will include the University hiring a Volunteer Coordinator to train and organise groups to collect data on the environmental health of water sources. The scheme will give residents opportunities to get involved in their local area, promoting environmental stewardship and community involvement. The information collected will provide valuable data to support the Council's engagements with external stakeholders, such as the Environment Agency and Severn Trent. It has received a two-year grant from the Climate Emergency Working Group.
- **Community Resilience Project** – The Climate Emergency Working Group recently approved a proposal from the Council's Safety and Resilience team that will engage with communities, particularly Parish Councils, on preparing for emergency situations. Delivered over two years, the Council will work with communities to develop a resilience plan for their local area. This work will be incentivised and supported by the offering of up to £500 in equipment from a pre-approved list, following the completion of a plan. The first cohort will be targeted at communities in flooding hotspots.

- **EV Charging in Car Parks** – The Council is beginning to explore the possibility of working with an EV charger provider to install charging points in Council owned car parks. The demand for electric vehicles continues to rise, with the Zero Emission Vehicle mandate requiring manufactures to increase the proportion of electric vehicles each year before ending all sales of new petrol and diesel vehicles in 2030. Concerns around the ease of charging is a major barrier to adoption, so by installing chargers the Council would be enabling uptake in Rugby. This will also support the Council's air quality improvement goals.
- **Nature Programme for Schools** – Young people are a priority engagement group for the Climate Emergency Working Group, as they will be the decision-makers of the future. Children are also a great way to engage with entire households, as they share what they have learnt and ask questions to family. This has led to the exploration of connecting with schools to deliver activities focused on climate change and nature. One such project in development is a forest-school type programme delivered by Rugby Borough Council's Play Ranger team.

