



Doc M offering from Edward Steel & Craig Ltd

In May 2004, the Government introduced the latest revisions to the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) in its continuing efforts to promote access for all regardless of ability. Most notably, Part M of the Building Regulations now requires that all suppliers of goods and services must remove all physical barriers where deemed reasonable.

As part of the Guild of Architectural Ironmongers (GAI) training and ESC's ongoing membership, we are well versed in all aspects of the Doc M guidelines; from wheel chair access through to colour contrast.

A Doc M package provides a single source for the basic fixtures and fittings to equip a disabled persons' WC facility, as required under Approved Document M to the Building Regulations. It advises that sanitary facilities in commercial, public and some residential buildings must be adapted for use by people with physical or visual impairments (including wheelchair users), learning difficulties, those who lack tactile sensitivity and those with babies, small children or luggage.

Just some of the aspects taken into consideration include:-

- WC designed for wheelchair access
- Back support cushion for improved comfort
- Basin offering improved access
- Concealed cistern for hygiene and access benefits
- Grab rails and seat coloured for contrast
- Thermostatic valve to help prevent scalding

However Doc M covers far more than bathrooms. Buildings must have design considerations with effective clear width and visibility requirements for access.

Two examples are:-

- 1) People with visual impairment should be in no doubt as to the location of glass entrance doors.
- 2) Design considerations for sleeping accommodation should aim to be convenient for all people.

Doc M affects every aspect of a design. These aspects and many more can be fulfilled through our knowledge and experience in not only Doc M guidelines, but also years of architectural hardware projects involving Doc M, DDA and BS8300 standards.

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