

# Guest Ability

Signposts to Accommodating People of all Ages and Abilities

CUSTOMER SERVICE, RESTAURANT, PARKING, AMENITIES



COMMUNICATION, BEDROOM, SIGNAGE, INFORMATION, POOL

Produced by:



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## Disclaimer

This book has been compiled by the Independent Living Centre of WA (Inc) and should be considered a resource document only. The intent of this book is to guide the reader and raise general awareness of access and customer service issues. Rather than providing all embracing answers and detailed solutions to accessibility issues. Whilst care has been taken by the Independent Living Centre of WA (Inc) in preparing this book, the organisation does not accept responsibility or liability for the results of specific action taken on the basis of this information, or for any errors or omissions.

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# Foreword

**F**or the past forty years my family, including my late husband Sir David have been actively contributing to Tourism and to people with disabilities.

I therefore am delighted to be able to contribute in some way to this worthy project. The book “GuestAbility” should prove to be of tremendous value to those providing tourist accommodation as well as to those who ultimately benefit, people with disabilities.

Sir David will long be remembered because he created the ministerial position for Tourism. Such was the importance that he attached to the new portfolio that he retained responsibility while Premier of Western Australia to ensure it received full recognition. Western Australians will also remember that he had a heart for people with disabilities. The Sir David Brand Centre for young people with Cerebral Palsy stands as testimony to his commitment.

I have continued to actively support both of these areas of interest. Whenever and wherever I am able to be supportive, I do. Even though health does limit my participation I try to contribute as in serving on a committee for the Sir David Brand Centre. I try to officiate at the annual Sir David Brand Tourism Awards.

I cannot help but applaud this initiative that will impact on Tourism and people with disabilities. It is this sort of endeavour that gives me faith that there is an exciting future for all Australians,

Lady Doris Brand

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# INTRODUCTION

## ***About this book ...***

**This publication has been written for you – as the owner or manager of an accommodation facility, whether it is a small motel, chalet, bed and breakfast facility, farm stay, backpacker hostel or camping area.**

It is designed to assist you to better understand how you can meet the requirements of guests of all ages and abilities, and welcome them as a potential new market.

The information and layout of the book is not designed to be prescriptive in that it does not provide specific details and dimensions on things such as door widths or ramps that would be suitable for wheelchair users. Whilst these details are of course important, this book responds to your need to know about these issues by providing you with a reference point to find out the technical details for these design features. This book provides guidance on how to meet the needs of guests with disabilities; using principles of good access for all, highlighting examples of dignified and equitable access while simultaneously acknowledging the need to provide sensitive design solutions. The other main focus of the book is on customer service. The Independent Living Centre and Recreation Network know that to meet the needs of people with disabilities all organisations must be able to provide both of these elements.



## **The genesis and Journey**

**The Independent Living Centre of WA (ILC) and Recreation Network were successful in attaining an 'Access Improvement Grant' to produce an accessibility guide for the tourism industry. Funding for the grants was provided by the Disability Services Commission and administered by ACROD.**

**The partnership between the ILC and Recreation Network, who have links with NICAN, recognised the possibility for and coincided the launch of this book at the 'Out of the Blue ... Valuing the Disability Market in Tourism' conference to be held in Perth in September 2004.**

## The information gathering and research process for this publication included the following strategies:

- 👉 Networking and contacts at tourism / disability functions
- 👉 Researching statistical information from experts in the field in both the disability and tourism sector
- 👉 Gathering feedback from people with disabilities to assist in ascertaining features that are particularly important to them when deciding on holiday destinations or when making recommendations to other potential tourists with disabilities
- 👉 A literature search for projects with a similar focus
- 👉 Significant research to discover what individual accommodation facilities have to offer people with disabilities
- 👉 A field trip to explore first hand what is already available in accommodation for people with disabilities in an area from Perth to Margaret River. This three day trip included stops in Mandurah, Harvey, Myalup, Bunbury, Busselton and Margaret River. Specific features that would be useful for guests with disabilities were photographed and are featured within the publication

Findings from the field trip were mixed and it was wonderful to visit so many places that are committed to meeting the needs of their guests with disabilities. Although many of these places had some fabulous features it was not possible to find anywhere that had the whole access package. The concept of providing continuous wheelchair access to all areas of a facility, and meeting the needs of people with disabilities other than wheelchair users was generally not well understood.

The photographs used in this book simply illustrate one or more great access feature/s - while there may be other features within the photo that do not provide good access solutions! In addition, not all photos meet the requirements of the Australian Standards on Access and Mobility. When designing your new facility or refurbishing an established one, you may copy a concept, however you will need to seek professional advice on specific technical details.

**See the Resource and Network section at the end of this book for more detail.**

## WHAT DO WE MEAN BY ACCESSIBLE?

You have no doubt heard the expression 'Accessible Accommodation' or 'Accessible Facilities'.

Consumer John Brown says,

"When a hotel just puts a ramp at its door and then claims to be disabled friendly, its not on. I just need honesty when I'm looking for somewhere to stop, if there is a 2 inch step from room to balcony, tell me. Finding out you cannot access the pool area to sit with your family, or finding there are a few steps to be carried up and down every time you went to your room is unacceptable despite the promise of staff helping out."

Clearly then, accessibility is more than just ramps, wider parking bays and larger toilets ....it's not just about the structure of a building! It also includes things such as customer service, the design of furniture, or communicating in a different way.

For people like John there are many ways that you can significantly improve people's holiday experience by improving access - and some of these just fall under the heading of 'good customer service'. This will be useful to many guests, including those with a disability.

**Ensuring that your accommodation is accessible and consequently providing a more enjoyable experience for your guests does not have to be difficult or expensive !**

Following are examples of simple things that can be done:

- ✓ Making menus and leaflets available in easy to read large font in black and white for those with low vision
- ✓ Providing a portage service available on request
- ✓ Having a variety of chair styles available for those of varying stature and physical capabilities

## WHY DO IT?

There are several reasons why those involved in providing accommodation should ensure that they meet the needs of people with disabilities. These are:

### ✓ MEETING A GROWING MARKET NEED

Some of these statistics may be surprising to the tourism industry (RRL 21, RRL 22). Did you know that:

- ☞ In 1981 there were 15% of Australians with a disability. In 1998 19.5% of the Australian population or 381,500 people have a disability?
- ☞ 15% of Australians of working age have a disability?
- ☞ One in three people knows someone with a disability, either a family member, friend or work colleague?
- ☞ 93% of people with disabilities live in the community either independently or with family or friends?
- ☞ 88% of disabilities are invisible?
- ☞ Percentage of people aged 15 - 64 with disabilities employed in 1998 - 53% ?
- ☞ By 2021 the number of people in Western Australia with a disability is expected to increase by more than 200,000 people due to the aging population?
- ☞ **People with disabilities have a disposable income of \$26 billion per annum?**

These figures, along with the knowledge that the 'baby boomers' are tomorrow's ageing generation, leads us to believe that this group of customers represents a major potential source of income for the tourism industry.

### ✓ UNIVERSAL DESIGN

This is a term which has been around for some time and is used to describe the design of products and environments that can be used by all people.

The intent is that well designed buildings can be used by all and will not require any alteration or

special features for people with disabilities. The great thing about this concept is that if you build using the principles of Universal Design, your facility will work well for all people such as parents with prams, older people, those who are frail, children and visitors who may not speak English. (RRL 20)

### ✓ LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

Anyone who is building new accommodation or upgrading existing facilities is required by law to comply with the Building Codes of Australia. The implications of these requirements and changes will be outlined below.

## WHERE DO I START?

**Everybody will be at a different stage in providing the facilities and services we describe in this book so we have made some suggestions to help you get started.**

Why don't you start, RIGHT NOW, by thinking about what you DO provide for guests with disabilities. At the end of this book there is a self assessment checklist that will be a good guide in this process. See the 'NICAN New Accommodation Entry for Database' form at the end of this book.

- The things you already offer can be highlighted in your promotional material, such as brochures and website. (Don't forget to make sure this information is accessible to all!) Remember that minor improvements can make a big difference very quickly, but don't forget to let people know what you offer. It may be wise to engage the services of a person with considerable knowledge, such as an Access Consultant, because any structural changes will need to meet the current legislative requirements.
- You will find it very useful to network, and share information with other people in the industry and the disability sector. Contacts for some of these organisations are listed in the Resources and Networks section at the back of this book.
- Ask for feedback from all guests. Remember many guests may have a disability that is not obvious or may have wanted to bring a family member with a disability.
- When you have gathered the information, come up with an action plan that lists simple changes through to longer term more complex alterations that may require additional resources. This is a particularly useful strategy if you are planning new works or refurbishment, as you can then make sure these meet everybody's needs. Including

details such as cost and a timeframe, will make the plan more meaningful and will allow you to give potential guests useful information about future visits. No one expects you to make all aspects of your existing premises fully accessible overnight, but having a staged plan will give you a focus and provide your guests with some assurance that you have their interest at heart.

- As you read this book it will be apparent that the customer service aspect of this process is extremely important, therefore some training may be necessary for your staff, on topics such as how to offer assistance, what questions to ask potential guests and even what equipment people will expect to have on site.

Remember that minor improvements can make a big difference very quickly, but don't forget to let people know what you offer.

## **WHAT THE LAW SAYS**

Some people may feel a bit 'bullied' by legislation and the negative ramifications that could possibly arise if legal action is sought. However, this law works to protect you and the future success of your business. Section 23 of the Disability Discrimination Act of Australia (DDA) makes it unlawful to discriminate against people with a disability, or their associates, in relation to access to, and use of, premises that the public enter or use. Anyone discriminating against people with disabilities could be faced with the possibility of a complaint being lodged against them. This Act of Parliament means that guest accommodation providers must make adjustments to the way they deliver their services to better meet the needs of people with disabilities. People with disabilities are increasingly using the DDA when they believe that their rights have been ignored or contravened. It must be said that most people will appeal to the reasonable nature of business owners before they resort to using the law.

For additional information on how the DDA describes disability and what this law could mean for you and your business go to the following web site and follow the disability links:

[www.hereoc.gov.au](http://www.hereoc.gov.au)

The Building Codes of Australia (BCA) sets out information on the mandatory structural access requirements for all new buildings and refurbishments. The minimum level of access required under the BCA for any facility will depend on the classification of that building. It is advisable to contact the Building Department of your local

government authority to determine the 'class' of your building / facility before any alterations or new work is undertaken. It is important to note that these inclusions are legal requirements and therefore not optional. As the disability legislation and associated BCA requirements may change it would be extremely wise to check so that you are aware of the latest requirements.

Note also that the requirements of the BCA only relate to the structure of the building and are considered by many to be very minimal. It would be judicious to investigate what else needs to be done as there have been occasions where designers / builders and owners have met the minimal BCA codes and still found themselves faced with a complaint under the DDA. If you are in any doubt that your facilities or services measure up in the areas of equity and dignity you would be wise to seek professional advice. Please refer to the Resources and Networks section at the end of this publication for details of Access Consultants and other appropriate organisations.

In addition to the above Acts and Codes there are a number of Australian Standards (AS) which are the technical documents providing information on how to design and construct all sorts of amenities to meet the needs of people with a range of disabilities. These Australian Standards are often updated and it is anticipated that 2004 will see a new version of Australian Standard 1428.1, the minimum standards that must be adhered to under the Building Codes of Australia.

In the near future a new document 'Disability Standards on Access to Premises' will be available from the Australian Building Code Board providing a more streamlined approach which intends to eliminate discrepancies between all the present standards, codes and acts. Requirements within this 'Access Standard' will be mandatory for new buildings and it is anticipated that compliance with this document will give some certainty against a complaint being lodged under the Federal Disability Discrimination Act.

## **WHO ARE YOUR CUSTOMERS WITH DISABILITIES?**

All of your guests are individuals with varying needs. This is no different for your customers with disabilities. To ensure you understand exactly what your customers with disabilities require it is important to ask for any specific requests and be clear and honest about your ability to meet their needs.

Remember that not all disabilities are apparent, so the numbers of visitors with disabilities that you have at any given time will probably be more than you think! Disabilities such as low vision, difficulties in hearing and even some mobility disabilities will be 'invisible', but guests may still require certain features to allow them to fully participate and enjoy their stay ... enough to provide you with return business and recommend your facility to their friends.

There are however many commonalities in types of disabilities and their requirements. For the purposes of this book disabilities have been grouped in the following manner:

## PHYSICAL

**Walking** - This group will include guests who use a walking aid such as a stick or frame or are able to walk unaided but could be slow, have difficulty bending, be unsteady on their feet or become easily fatigued. As a suggestion for individuals with these physical issues, well designed seating at regular resting points may be useful. Those with walking aids will generally require more space to move around, and flat even terrain with ramps where changes in level occur. It is interesting to note that some of the people in this group can more easily manage steps than a ramp.

**Arm or Hand Disability** – Some of your guests who have disabilities (such as arthritis) may have restricted arm movements or have difficulty turning and grasping objects. You can assist this group by providing amenities such as lighter doors, handles and switches that are easy to operate, as well as services such as courtesy portage.

**Wheelchair and Scooter Users** – These visitors are possibly the most obvious and as owners and operators you will be aware of the need for ramps instead of steps, wider doors and larger bathrooms. Remember that these guests will want to enjoy all of your facilities! Sometimes wheelchair users have a range of other needs that can not be so easily anticipated. These could be in the form of impaired ability to control their body temperature or a tremor of some part of the body.

Battery powered wheelchairs are generally larger and require more circulation space than the manual style, and scooters (often known as 'Gophers') are generally bigger again with even larger turning circles. Most users of scooters can walk short distances so may use these outside

only. Some scooters can be quite small and these may be used indoors.

## VISION

**Blind** - People who are classified as blind can have up to 10% vision however it can be assumed that they will require all their information in some other form than visual. Moving around may be carried out with the aid of a guide dog or using a cane that is used to detect objects and spaces around them. (Guide dogs will of course need to be accommodated). Other environmental cues that assist are sounds and smell, a change in temperature, or the 'feel' of being in a certain type of environment, such as a small room or windy corridor. Providing environments with many non visual cues will assist people with a vision impairment orientate themselves. There are many examples of how you could do this throughout this book.

Individuals who are blind will be unable to read the information that you provide, so offering this in 'alternative formats' such as an electronic form that could be used with voice output software on computers, audiotape, Braille and even 'tactile' documents and signs (letters that can be detected when touched) will be helpful. Guests will have specific formats that will suit their needs - it is important to ask.

**Low Vision** - Most people with a 'vision impairment' have some vision that they can use if the information is delivered in a certain format and environments are designed in a certain way. Larger print, good colour contrast, and plain fonts for all of your written information will all be of assistance to this group of guests. Environments that visually highlight important elements such as doors, switches and furniture, and of course good lighting will help those with low vision.

## HEARING

**Deaf** - Technology such as flashing light alarms for safety, and teletext enabled televisions are essential to a safe and enjoyable stay with you. If you organise public functions you will need to consider how deaf people can participate, and it may be necessary to engage an Auslan interpreter.

**Hard of Hearing** - Again technical aids which improve communication will be useful for guests who may be hard of hearing. These could be in

the form of headphones for televisions in sitting rooms and bedrooms. For public areas such as restaurants and meeting rooms, tables in a quiet area (to reduce background noise) and the capacity for increased lighting (to enhance lip reading), will allow those who are hard of hearing to participate.

## COGNITIVE

People with cognitive impairments include people who acquired a brain injury through a stroke or an accident, memory loss or confusion associated with dementia, or people who have been identified as having developmental delay in childhood. Some of your guests may have difficulty with processing information, or interpreting detailed or complex information and will require it to be provided in a format that is friendly, logical, easy to read and understand.

You may notice that some elderly people who are experiencing memory loss or cognitive changes may have difficulty finding the right words when talking to you, may be overwhelmed or distressed in areas that are highly stimulating such as a restaurant or may become easily disorientated, particularly at night time.

Any industry jargon can sometimes be daunting for those who have limited language skills and may not have the confidence or the skills to make enquiries.

## CARERS

Although most travellers will want to be independent, some guests with disabilities will travel with and require the assistance of carers or family members.

When you know a guest who has a disability is planning to stay with you, find out if they are travelling alone or with a companion and never presume or anticipate the relationship. Carers may require an adjoining room or a separate bed in the same room. This group of people is also another market!

## Resource Reference List (RRL)

Throughout this book references are made to other resources that have been researched during the writing of this book. These resources are listed at the back of this book in the Reference Resource List, and the individual references are indicated throughout this book like this example - RRL 3.



### Australian Standards References

At the end of each section, the pertinent Australian Standards Reference (AS) is listed. This will direct you to the appropriate and current Australian Standard which applies to that section.

# ON ARRIVAL -

## Signposts and Signs... "Where is this Leading?"

**S**ignage at the entrance to your property boundary may be the first contact your guests have with you. Everyone, including people with a disability will benefit from well designed and appropriately located signs.

Signage will remove the need for deaf people to ask directions and engage in difficult face to face discussion. Wheelchair users need signage that is not too high and has circulation

space in front so they can approach the sign and read. Customers who are blind may require information in large print or alternate formats such as Braille, raised tactile or audio format. Large simple fonts and good colour contrast will be easier to read for those with low vision.

Keep signs and information simple and use symbols that assist those people who have difficulty interpreting large or complex amounts of information and visitors who have English as a second language.

### Good Signs

- ✓ Entrance sign well placed by the roadside so it is obvious to the motorist, easy to read, provides sufficient time for turning into your property and clearly identifies the driveway into your property
- ✓ Logical and predictable in location and style
- ✓ Clear, unambiguous information (RRL 1)
- ✓ Located next to, not obstructing pathways
- ✓ Simple font with a mix of upper and lower case, rather than all capitals is easier for some people to read
- ✓ Font in colour contrast to the sign
- ✓ Matt finish, which does not reflect light or produce glare
- ✓ In a position where it can be easily read by people using wheelchairs as well as those standing
- ✓ For a sign or map that people need to get close to read, put a hard ground surface in front of it to enable wheelchair users and people with low vision to get close enough to read



### Use of Symbols

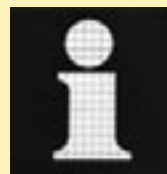
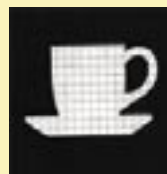
- ✓ Easily recognisable symbols eliminate the need for lots of words



- ✓ International symbol for deafness is used to identify facilities specifically for people who are deaf or have a hearing impairment



- ✓ International symbol of access is used to identify accessible facilities



- ✓ Other standard and commonly recognised symbols

## Location and Access

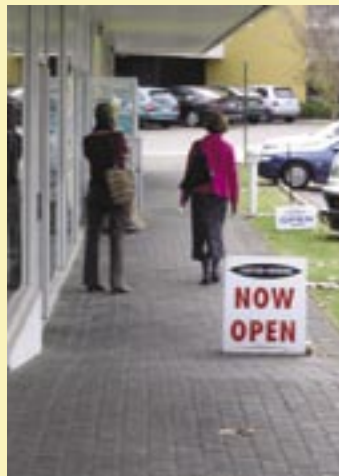
- ✓ Remember to keep shrubs and trees trimmed back from signs



- ✓ Any overhead signage must be high enough that people don't bump their heads, but low enough to be seen and read



- ✓ On major routes and at all main decision making points (eg path junction)



- ✓ If placed on the path, a sandwich board may reduce the width of the path and may be an unseen hazard for someone with low vision



### Key Reference:

- AS1428.1 and AS1428.2 details all aspects of good signage as described in this book.

This Arial font is easy to read, *this one is difficult!* & so is this one... but this Comic Sans is really good, and so is this Helvetica!!

**Signs that use red and green colour contrast cannot be read by people who are colour blind.**

**A sign in good colour contrast to its background is easy to read!**

# ON ARRIVAL - Parking..... how and where?

**A** parking bay that is for the exclusive use of people with disabilities (accessible parking) is required to be wider than a normal bay and close to the main entrance or attractions within your facility.

A wheelchair user needs a wider bay to get in and out of the car from either side; a person who can't walk long distances requires a closer bay.



The parking bay needs to be on flat even ground so that the wheelchair is stable when it is being transferred into. Those travelling in a van designed to transport people seated in a wheelchair will need room at the back or side to deploy a hoist. An ideal position would have minimal passing traffic to ensure safety for your guests unloading wheelchairs or luggage.

## Accessible Parking Bays

At least one accessible parking bay needs to be provided at each of your accessible villas / rooms as well as public amenities. An accessible bay is –

- ✓ Wider than a standard bay
- ✓ Flat and even with a hard surface
- ✓ Located in a safe place close to the main entrance

An accessible bay has -

- ✓ A sign at the head of the parking bay that displays the international symbol of access.
- ✓ A level transition or a kerb ramp from the bay to the path with no lips or steps



- ✓ The position of the kerb ramp must be safe and not where it can be obstructed by parked cars

**T**he term 'disabled' is not considered by many to be appropriate when used in the context of 'disabled parking'. Why? The parking bay is not disabled! The universal access symbol itself is sufficient to alert people that the bay is reserved for ACROD permit holders. Should you need to describe the parking bay, the term 'accessible' is preferred.

## Drop Off Bay

When you use a wheelchair it is not really possible to put up an umbrella and run when alighting from your car in the rain. For this reason larger resorts or hotels may benefit from providing a covered drop off bay at the reception or restaurant. In addition, this design reduces the pressure on the accessible parking bay, as the driver is then able to park in a standard parking bay. A seat in the undercover area will allow people to wait for the driver in comfort.



## Covered Parking

Covered parking at your accessible villa will provide weather protection for your guest who needs extra time to transfer from their vehicle and unload luggage or equipment. It must have a roof that is high enough to accommodate a modified van with a raised roof, or a roof mounted wheelchair hoist.



### Key Reference:

- AS1428.1 and AS1428.2 details font type, sign size and height for signage used at accessible parking bays.
- AS2890 details requirements for accessible parking bays.

**B**e mindful that some modified vehicles may not be possible to valet park, should you offer this service.

Vehicle modifications such as hand controls may be difficult to use for the uninitiated. Covered, secured accessible parking with an accessible pathway into the (hotel) foyer is required where valet parking is offered. (RRL3)

# ON ARRIVAL -

## Getting Around ... "I've parked, now how do I get in?"

**O**n arrival people with disabilities often find they can get to their room but are not able to access many other facilities such as the reception area. All guests staying at your accommodation need to be able to move from their car to all services and any amenities or features you may have to offer.

Some people with disabilities who are able to walk may prefer to use stairs rather than a ramp, so there is no necessity to remove existing stairs. Wheelchair users of course, will require a flat path or a ramp.

Ramps should be as close as possible to the steps avoiding 'going the long way around' to any destination. Any path to be used by a wheelchair user must have any step, however small, eliminated. This can often be achieved by levelling the ground or putting in a small step ramp.

People with low vision are assisted by high levels of lighting and colour contrast between the path and surrounds. A wall, change in ground surface texture or an environmental landmark may assist those who are blind or have low vision to identify paths of travel and their location.

### Path Essentials

- ✓ Level, even, slip resistant path surface
- ✓ Where it is not possible to provide a paved path in more rural locations, compacted grass and removal of loose stones on gravelled paths will assist
- ✓ Provide a flat cross slope or camber. Where the cross slope is too steep a wheelchair user has to exert significantly more energy to travel in a straight line



- ✓ This path is wide and has regular passing spots and rest areas

### How can I Improve my External Paths?

- ✓ Lit for night use
- ✓ Lighting is well positioned adjacent to paths
- ✓ Good colour contrast with the adjacent ground
- ✓ Overhead obstacles such as tree branches are removed to prevent accidents for those with low vision



- ✓ Level ground on either side of the path to prevent accidents should a pedestrian stray off the path— this eliminates the need for kerbs along the path edge



- ✓ Grates run perpendicular to the direction and have a narrow gap so that wheelchair tyres and walking sticks do not get stuck



### Key Reference:

- AS1428.1 has the technical requirements for pathways, stairs and all types of ramps.

- ✓ Furniture, such as seats or bollards located next to, not obstructing the path



- ✓ This covered walkway illustrates weather protection for anyone who may have difficulty moving quickly



- ✓ This raised walkway from reception to the accessible room can eliminate the need for ramps

## Ramp Essentials

- ✓ Installed in addition to stairs



- ✓ A gentle and consistent slope
- ✓ A slip resistant surface (for example brushed concrete, bitumen, block or brick paving, reeded timber decking)



- ✓ Handrails installed at the correct height on both sides of the ramp
- ✓ Kerbs on both sides of the ramp prevent wheels from running off the edge

**W**hen using temporary barriers (eg around hazards) ensure they are easy to see and reach to ground level so that someone who has low vision or is blind can detect them with a cane.





- ✓ Regular landings on longer ramps, at a change of direction and at doorways



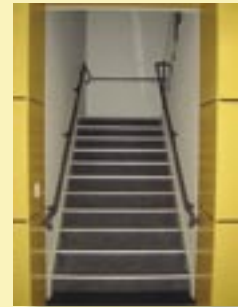
- ✓ A threshold ramp will overcome a small step at a doorway



- ✓ To overcome a higher step at a doorway you will need to provide a ramp with a landing at the doorway. This will assist manual wheelchair users to rest on a flat surface while they open the door. It is difficult to open a door in a wheelchair when you are on a slope.

## Stair Essentials

- ✓ Consider installing handrails, at the correct height, on both sides of the stairs
- ✓ Consistent step height (rise) and depth (going) are easier to negotiate
- ✓ Colour contrasting strips at the front of each step edge will assist those with low vision
- ✓ Closed risers reduce the risk of tripping or catching the foot under the step



## Boardwalks

- ✓ Raised boardwalks are an excellent way to provide access through bush and sloped or uneven terrain
- ✓ Timber deck ramps and boardwalks need small gaps between the boards, and the boards need to be laid perpendicular to the direction of travel
- ✓ Laying reeded decking will provide some slip resistance



## Environmental Cue

Environmental cues are particularly useful for people who are blind, have low vision, or who have difficulty remembering where to go.

Cues that rely on a range of senses, such as sight, touch and sound will be useful depending on the guests' disability. Useful environmental cues could include – water features, raised garden beds, or statues. For example... 'follow along this path until you get to the fountain, then turn left'

Remember - where a water feature intrudes into a path of travel ensure there is a kerb or low wall to prevent someone walking into the water.



# ON ARRIVAL - Talking with your Guests

**F**irst impressions are said to be the most enduring, so you know that your first contact with your guests will need to be a positive experience. Often the first experience a customer may have of your accommodation facility will be via your web page, email or via the telephone. To gain a good reputation right from the start, you must present a professional, customer focused approach that values the person and their accommodation requirements, not their disability.

When talking with a person who has a disability, consider the person first, not their disability (RR6). This also applies when speaking about a person with a disability. Words that demean, degrade, stereotype or depersonalise a person obviously will not earn you repeat business! (RR5). Phrases that recognise the person first are encouraged, such as ...a person with a

disability (RR6). It's even better to refer to the person and not their disability at all.

Similarly, when talking about a facility that may be used by a person with a disability, the term accessible is preferred, rather than 'disabled' or 'special' (eg 'disabled parking bay' or 'disabled toilet'). The reason being, the lift, toilet, parking bay is accessible to people with disabilities ... the facility itself is not 'disabled'!

As a good business person, you are aware that your attitude can also affect how your words are interpreted and treating people with pity, sadness or as a child, is not acceptable. Your organisation will be remembered in a negative way if a staff member is talking to your customers' carer or guide dog, rather than the person. If it is more appropriate to communicate verbally with the carer / companion - your visitor will let you know.

## Good Communication Strategies

- ✓ Remember: the person first, not their disability
- ✓ Speak to the person as an adult, not a child
- ✓ It is not necessary to mention a person's illness or disability unless it is pertinent to the conversation, or their specific access requirements
- ✓ There is no necessity to ask personal details (eg 'what happened to you?', or 'are you still receiving treatment?')
- ✓ Notify potential guests of all modes of communication available to them to contact you – phone, fax, email
- ✓ Pull up a chair if you are going to be speaking at length to a wheelchair user - as this helps establish eye contact and is more personal



- ✓ Speak to the person directly, not their carer or accompanying person



- ✓ Provide good lighting where conversations are held, such as the reception counter. This will aid those who lip read or rely on facial expression as conversation cues
- ✓ Better hearing card is on display at the counter. This will inform guests that staff are familiar in communicating well with a person who is hard of hearing

## The following phrases are considered acceptable to your untapped disability market:

- ☺ A person with a disability (not invalid, special, handicapped, brave, afflicted, suffers from...) (RR4)
- ☺ A wheelchair user (not wheelchair bound or confined)
- ☺ A person who uses a wheelchair / cane / walking stick
- ☺ A person who is blind
- ☺ A person who has a vision impairment or has low vision (not visually impaired)

## When a person has difficulty speaking to you...

- ✓ Stay relaxed and take your time – re-check and clarify; use gestures; point; or ask if you should write down what you are saying
- ✓ Have a pen and paper available for people to communicate when the spoken word or hearing is difficult
- ✓ Do not shout!
- ✓ Reduce background noise (turn off TV)
- ✓ Encourage the person to take their time
- ✓ Phrase questions so that the person can answer 'yes' or 'no'



- ✓ Some people may rely on a communication device to converse with you face to face or may use the services of the Australian Communication Exchange



### Key Reference:

Three resources were very useful in bringing together the above information:

- *What is Dysphasia (RRL 16)*
- *Communicating well with somebody with impaired speech (RRL 15)*
- *A Way with Words (RRL 6)*

# ON ARRIVAL -

## Checking in...How to welcome all guests

**To ensure all guests receive an equitable and fuss free check in, an entrance and reception area that is accessible to all is a great place to start. This section will tell you what that means.**

When a person travels who has a disability or illness, be mindful that they may need to bring extra equipment with them (walking frame, scooter, shower chair or commode), an extra vehicle, a carer or a communication device. You may be asked if you can arrange the hire of equipment on their behalf, or if you would be willing to accept delivery of equipment prior to your guest's arrival. A familiarity or sense of ease with such items or requests would undoubtedly be appreciated by your guests.

All people travel in a variety of circumstances and this does not differ for people with a disability. They may request a family room, a double room, a room with adjoining room (for a carer) etc. Offering a variety of accommodation options, or being flexible with furniture arrangements inside your accessible room may

make the difference between someone choosing your accommodation or another's.

An initial question to ask...

Whether a person books in via email or phone, you may wish to ascertain if they have any needs that you could accommodate to make their holiday as enjoyable as possible.

*"Does anyone in your party have any specific needs you would like us to accommodate such as requiring vegetarian food, an early check out or late arrival? If anyone has a disability or children / infants we would be pleased to discuss our variety of accommodation options that may suit you best" (RRL12)*

An open and inclusive question like this allows your guest to ask you any questions comfortably, knowing you are willing to accommodate their needs if you can. Ensure that you are very specific about what you can offer. If a guest expects a feature, no matter how small, it may be the important factor that enables them to have an independent and enjoyable holiday.

### Essential features of your main entrance

- ✓ Main entrance is level and covered or protected from weather (rain and wind)



- ✓ Doorway is sufficiently wide enough to accommodate wheelchairs in a comfortable environment



- ✓ Door is light to operate and has an easy to grip handle such as a D handle or lever handle
- ✓ Remove thick, loose door mats from all entries / doorways / halls



- ✓ A map or directional sign may be a useful addition

## Essential features of your reception desk

- ✓ The reception desk has a lowered section with good clearance underneath to accommodate wheelchair user knees / footplates and allow good eye contact
- ✓ Good lighting and acoustics



- ✓ Some seating with a firm seat, backrest and armrests



- ✓ Any public telephone can be reached by a wheelchair user, has volume control and a shelf to rest papers / phone book



### Key Reference:

- AS1428.1 details all aspects of level entrances, wide doorways and easy to open doors.
- AS1428.2 provides diagrams and dimensions of clearances and heights of counters and seating appropriate for your reception area.

## How can I improve Checking in?

- ✓ Provide all staff with disability awareness training so they are comfortable in assisting people with disabilities
- ✓ A Better Hearing Card will provide information for staff and advise visitors of your great customer service. (See Resources at the end of this book)
- ✓ Provide brochures that detail accessible features /facilities in the vicinity (RRL 12)
- ✓ Assist with carrying luggage when required. A simple sign gives your guest who needs assistance an opportunity to ask for portage without necessarily feeling they are asking for something special



- ✓ Brochures are at about table height, with no furniture in front to obstruct access

# BEING ACCOMMODATED - Room to Move inside

**C**reative design can overcome the challenges of hilly sites. For ease of access inside and directly outside the villa, room or cottage, the ideal scenario would be...level pathways and corridors throughout; sufficiently wide doorways and corridors to accommodate wheelchair access. Older facilities find this impossible

to achieve, but with new buildings creative design can overcome these challenges.



## Corridors



- ✓ The most accessible layout is one with open spaces and as few passages as possible
- ✓ In a new building chamfering the inner corners may assist in increasing available circulation space and minimise wall damage (RRL 13)
- ✓ Wide enough to accommodate a wheelchair, with sufficient space for a wheelchair to turn corners or turn into a room off the corridor
- ✓ Well lit, even in the day if the corridor is dark

## Doors and Doorways

- ✓ Doorways need to be wide enough to allow a wheelchair to pass through



- ✓ If required a threshold ramp at a door lip will improve access for a wheelchair user



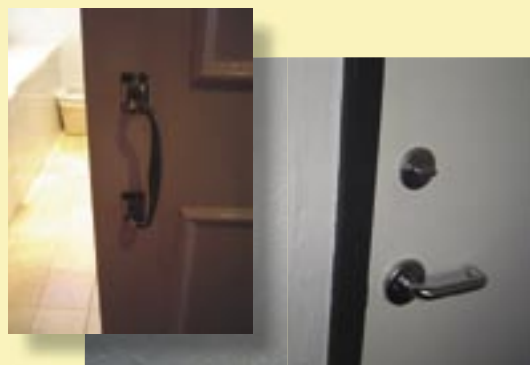
- ✓ Doors that are light to open and slow to close. This gives someone who walks slowly enough time to get through the door and not get 'hit from behind' as the door closes on them



- ✓ Enough space on the side of the door for a wheelchair user to approach the door, reach the handle and then move through the doorway

## Door Handles

- ✓ Easy to grip door handles are best
- ✓ Lever or 'D' shaped door handles are ideal. Avoid key pad entry, circular door handles, high door handles or small snibs

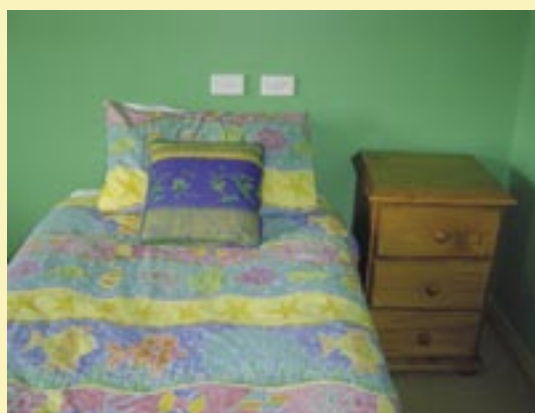


## Switches

- ✓ Large, easy to use rocker switches work well for all including those with arthritis – priority areas for their use are the common rooms such as the lounge, bathroom, toilet and the accessible bedroom



- ✓ Raised power points in the key areas where access is required to electrical appliances will prevent people having to bend to floor level to plug in a hair drier or turn on a heater



- ✓ Placing bedroom lights above the bed is useful for all. This means they can be reached by guests who cannot easily get up to turn off the light when ready for sleep
- ✓ Lowering light switches slightly places them in reach of all, including wheelchair users



### Key Reference:

- AS1428.2 provides guidelines on reach ranges, circulation spaces and turning circles.
- AS1428.1 provides guidelines on doorways and door hardware.

# BEING ACCOMMODATED – Bedroom

**P**eople travel in a variety of circumstances - singles, couples, or families. This does not differ for people with a disability. Some travellers with disabilities will be totally independent whilst others may require assistance with most daily tasks.

It is important to keep in mind that people may travel with their partner or family (who they are able to share a bed or facilities with) or a carer (may require a separate, but adjacent room).

It may be that the person with a disability can share a bedroom but requires a separate bathroom due to the time it takes to shower and change. Rather than making assumptions about a guest's requirements, ensure that you ascertain individual requirements and decide whether these can be met. Providing flexible furniture arrangements within rooms will assist you in meeting most guests needs.

## The Essential Features of an Accessible Bedroom

- ✓ Switches for lights, TV, fan within reach of the bed
- ✓ Telephone beside the bed for easy reach
- ✓ Hard surfaces or low pile, firm carpet makes it much easier to push mobility aids
- ✓ Make sure it looks like any other bedroom, you are not creating a hospital!
- ✓ Task lighting without glare at the bed, desk and dressing table



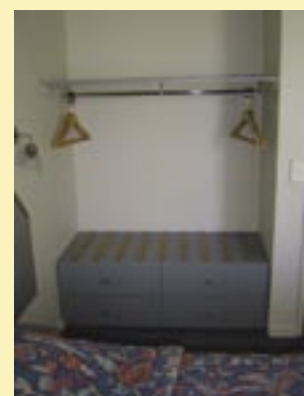
- ✓ Remote for TV, CD, DVD, air conditioning / heating; with remote down low enough to be reached by all



- ✓ Circulation space within the bedroom to accommodate people with equipment such as wheelchairs or walking aids

## Enhancements to Improve the Accessibility of your Guests Bedrooms

- ✓ Dual height closet rods (RR2) and a lowered shelf (RR3)
- ✓ Storage area for equipment (hoist, wheelchair, commode)
- ✓ A well designed chair will provide a place to rest or sit to dress



## The Bed

- ✓ Bed is high enough with a firm mattress – making it easier to get on and off – this will assist people who have difficulty standing (RR3)
- ✓ Good clearance under the bed to accommodate the legs of a transfer hoist if required



- ✓ This king size bed comprises two singles – provides you with the opportunity to arrange the room to suit your guest's needs

## Appreciating the View



- ✓ Low sill windows and a bed positioned to make the most of the view out of the window will be greatly appreciated by your guest who requires rest periods or may be waiting for assistance



- ✓ Low manual winder to allow the window to be opened from the seated position



### Key Reference:

- AS1428.2 provides guidelines on reach ranges, circulation spaces in bedrooms and requirements for beds and mattresses.

## Reaching from a Wheelchair

A wheelchair user will have limitations in how high or low they can reach. Accessible accommodation will have light switches lowered (to around door handle height) and power points raised high or low or where they can be reached.

To prevent the need for the person to get out of bed to turn off the lights, two way switches within reach of the bed are recommended as well as providing remotes for TV and air conditioning (stored of course within reach!).

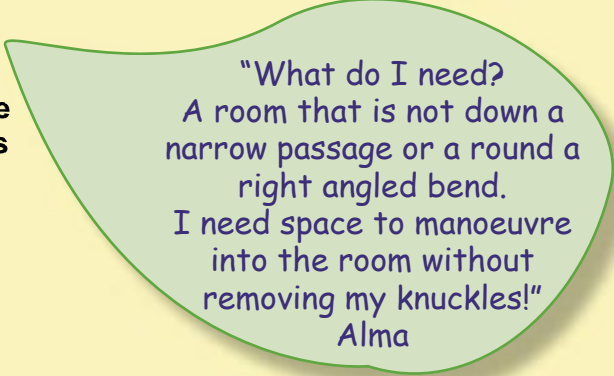
Overhead cupboards, a high wardrobe rod or power points located in the far corner of the kitchen bench may be too far for a wheelchair user to reach.

Professional advice from an Access Consultant will help you problem solve these subtle issues from the planning stage of a refurbishment or when planning a new facility. For more detail about Access Consultants see the 'Resources and Networks' section at the end of this book.

**An accessible bedroom is, for the most part, designed to accommodate the needs of people who have a physical or mobility disability. People with memory loss, a communication or vision impairment will, in most circumstances, not require the features described in this section, but may need other features. These may include:**

- ✓ A flashing light or a vibrating alarm will alert your guest who has a hearing disability of a door knock, phone ring or phone message
- ✓ Teletext enabled TV provided in guest rooms and public areas will provide enabled guests who are deaf or hard of hearing to select captioning if they require it
- ✓ Assistive listening devices (neck loop, headphones) with appropriate amplifiers and connections (such as TV listeners) will enable your hearing impaired guests to listen to their TV or radios
- ✓ A strobe light or a vibrating pager will alert a person who has a hearing impairment or is deaf of an emergency, such as when the fire alarm is activated
- ✓ Vibrating bed pad for alarm clock
- ✓ Telephone with large numbers for people with low vision
- ✓ Emergency procedures available in alternative formats (large print, taped audio)
- ✓ Telephone with amplifier and telecoil coupler
- ✓ Visual prompt such as a sign to indicate the location of the toilet within the guests' room (to assist with night time disorientation)
- ✓ Easily identifiable signage indicating the location of the public toilets within the common or public areas of your accommodation / tourist complex

**You may not be aware your guest requires these features; however by informing potential guests of what you do have available it provides them with the opportunity to request what they need (RRL 18).**



*"What do I need?  
A room that is not down a narrow passage or a round a right angled bend.  
I need space to manoeuvre into the room without removing my knuckles!"  
Alma*

# BEING ACCOMMODATED –

## Bathroom

**In responding to enquiries from your guests, the question of bathroom facilities will undoubtedly arise. For a person with a physical disability, access into the bathroom may be a high priority.**

Features that will be of particular importance are the amount of space and level access through the whole room including into the shower as well as the inclusion of grab rails, adequate lighting or heating and a vanity with space underneath to accommodate knees for a wheelchair user. The

appeal of your accessible bathroom will not only be the accessible features, but the avoidance of the 'hospital' or 'sterile' look – this will be your challenge! Remember, people with disabilities travel by themselves, or with their spouse, family or carer and bathroom requirements may differ for each person! Providing a bathroom that complies with circulation space, fittings and fixtures as documented in the current Australian Standards on Access and Mobility allows the majority of wheelchair users to shower and toilet.

### An Accessible Bathroom – Essential Requirements

- ✓ The toilet is located within the bathroom maximising circulation space
- ✓ Increasing available space for manoeuvring allows a person to move freely from toilet to basin to shower over a level floor surface without obstruction
- ✓ Sufficient space is required in front of and at the side of the toilet pan as people transfer from wheelchair to toilet in many different ways. The level transition into the shower recess can also be part of the circulation space around the toilet
- ✓ You may wish to consider an emergency call button in the bathroom, however you may need to organise a staff member to respond
- ✓ Slip resistant floor surface
- ✓ Towels, mats, robes, coat hooks are within reach to someone who is seated
- ✓ You may wish to consider an additional bathroom for family members
- ✓ Tasteful, without looking like a hospital - it is a holiday!
- ✓ Consider having available an easily recognisable toilet sign and symbol which can be placed on the toilet door to assist with orientation of your guest who becomes disoriented at night



"The apartments feature bathrooms with each bedroom (accommodating the need for a bathroom for a carer or the rest of the family)" Kylie



## The Doorway

- ✓ Wide doorway – either sliding or hinged



- ✓ If an in-swinging door is used, hinges that allow the door to be opened or removed in the case of an emergency is desirable

- ✓ A sliding door is ideal as even when open it allows more space for circulation within the room

- ✓ Lever door handles are best (avoid circular handles)
- ✓ Should you have an 'occupied' indicator on the shower / toilet door, ensure the snib is easy to reach and has a large grip



## The Shower

- ✓ It is a mandatory BCA requirement that the shower recess and grab rails meet the minimum requirements of the current Australian Standards on Access and Mobility
- ✓ Flush access into the shower recess (avoid the tiniest lip or step down)
- ✓ Adequate and well designed floor drainage (avoid puddles or wet and slippery bathroom floors)
- ✓ Shower curtains are preferable to screens as they allow more flexible space and don't intrude into the circulation spaces



- ✓ A hand shower that can be reached whether sitting or standing is required. Using a sliding bracket on a vertical grab rail ensures the hand shower can be altered in height to suit the guest
- ✓ Fold up shower seat or a stand alone height adjustable shower seat. Some guests may prefer a free standing seat with back and arm rests for added stability
- ✓ Consider the necessity for some storage space for a wheeled shower commode or shower chair
- ✓ A shelf and hook to keep clothes and toiletries dry and within reach

## The Toilet

An accessible toilet will have:

- ✓ A higher than normal pan for ease of getting on and off



- ✓ Set out further than normal from the back wall to allow an over toilet commode
- ✓ Space around the toilet for different transfer styles

- ✓ An easy to use flush button that is easy to reach
- ✓ A toilet roll holder that can be easily reached and dispenses paper one handed
- ✓ Consider an emergency call button



- ✓ It is a mandatory BCA requirement that the toilet pan, grab rails, emergency call button and paper dispenser are installed to meet the minimum requirements of the current Australian Standards on Access and Mobility

## The Basin

- ✓ The basins waste pipe returns to the wall or floor in a position that does not encroach into circulation space needed for wheelchair footplates. Either pipe through the rear wall or off set through the floor will suffice. This is demonstrated in the two photos below:



- ✓ Off set waste pipe



- ✓ Plumbed through the rear wall



- ✓ Shelves / cupboards are within reach
- ✓ Mirror located so it can be used both by those who are seated or standing



- ✓ Uncluttered underneath the basin (no bins)
- ✓ Good colour contrast between benches and cupboards (horizontal and vertical surfaces) will assist those with low vision

## Temperature and Safety

Some people, as an inherent part of their disability, have difficulty controlling their own body temperature and require the air temperature around them to be set at a comfortable level. They may therefore ask you if a heater is provided in the bathroom or if heating and cooling is available in the bedroom / living area.

Others could have poor sensation in their legs (as well as little or no voluntary movement). They may ask you if have thermostatically controlled

water in the shower, or whether you are able to manually adjust and set the water temperature, to prevent a hot water scald. Insulation of any hot water pipes that are located under the sink is a safety requirement in an accessible bathroom to prevent an accidental burn.

For a guest with poor vision, memory loss or poor sensation in their hands, having taps that clearly mark if they are hot or cold (by words or coloured discs) is important.



### Key Reference:

- AS 1428.1 outlines the mandatory requirements for bathroom and toilets, including doorways, floor drainage, grabrails, toilet pan and basin.

# BEING ACCOMMODATED – Kitchen and Laundry

**W**hether you offer a self-contained apartment or tea and coffee making facilities, access and safety will be of key importance. At many accommodation sites visited, wheelchair access was provided throughout the villa with limited access within the kitchen. In many instances there was space for a wheelchair to move around the kitchen but benches were normal height with no

clear space underneath. Although this design does not allow full access for wheelchair users it will be suitable for people travelling with a carer.

For many wheelchair users, good circulation space and under bench clearances will be a priority to prepare food. Consider reach ranges over bench tops or into appliances such as ovens, microwaves and washing machines.

## A Wheelchair Accessible Kitchen

- ✓ Slip resistant flooring
- ✓ Circulation space to allow a wheelchair to manoeuvre
- ✓ Under bench clearance in at least two sections – the sink and at least one workbench. This will enable a wheelchair user to fully utilise work surfaces
- ✓ Benches that have uninterrupted flow will allow a person to rest and slide dishes from one area to another. This can help a wheelchair user who cannot carry a filled, hot casserole while pushing their wheelchair
- ✓ Working surfaces that are heat resistant will not be damaged when dishes are slid across
- ✓ Where full under bench access is not provided a toe recess under the cupboards for wheelchair footplates will allow wheelchairs to get closer to the bench to prepare food or drinks



- ✓ A kitchen that provides full wheelchair access

- ✓ This kitchen provides generous circulation space

## Here's a terrific idea! –



**Under bench clearance (that is, no shelves) can be provided behind normal cupboard doors. Mobile baskets can then be stored and easily be removed, should a wheelchair user require access.**



## Key Reference:

- **AS1428.2 provides guidelines on reach ranges, circulation spaces and kitchen layout.**

## Sink

- ✓ Taps are within reach – lever or capstan style are preferred



- ✓ Wheelchair clearance under the sink. This will require a shallow sink, and drainage and the plumbing should be located at the rear of the sink
- ✓ Any exposed hot water pipes or hot surfaces (underside of sink) need to be insulated

## Appliances



- ✓ Controls for electric appliances to be at the front or side. This means they can be accessed without having to reach across hot plates or gas flame
- ✓ The top of the stove – the glass surface or the top of the gas trivet should align with the bench, so that pots can slide directly from the stove onto the bench
- ✓ Good colour contrast between controls, hot plates and bench top assists those with low vision



- ✓ Fridge and oven doors open out next to clear bench space



- ✓ Ideally, the middle shelf of the oven should align with the kitchen bench, again allowing hot dishes to be placed directly onto the bench from the oven

- ✓ Auto ignition gas burners assists guests with reduced coordination as there is no need to coordinate lighting a match and turning the gas dial

## Cupboards and Storage

- ✓ Easy to grip door handles
- ✓ Drawers are more readily accessible than deep cupboards



- ✓ This communal kitchen storage area can be easily accessed by all

- ✓ Knee clearance with shallow shelves in the pantry in an accessible kitchen

**Higher overhead cupboards will be difficult for a wheelchair user to reach up into. A mix of storage areas in the kitchen is ideal.**

## Switches and Power Points

- ✓ Power points are near the front of the bench, within reach. Avoid positioning them in a far corner
- ✓ Light switches, fan and range hood switches are lowered to be within reach of a wheelchair user

*"I need light switches and power points at about shoulder height. I need to charge my scooter batteries." Alma*

## Laundry

No one wants to do the laundry on holidays, however features that will assist wheelchair users to carry out laundry tasks are:

- ✓ Front loading washer and drier at bench height is ideal
- ✓ Controls to the front rather than the rear of the appliances
- ✓ Side opening doors on white goods allows users to get closer
- ✓ Fold down ironing board at bench height
- ✓ Provide one lowered clothes line
- ✓ At least one front loader washer and drier in communal laundries
- ✓ One section of lowered bench in the communal laundries

## Gripping, Turning and Opening

**S**ome guests with disabilities such as arthritis may have weak hands, poor hand coordination or be unable to grasp. Turning or manipulating door and cupboard handles, switches or taps can be difficult. Using lever or D shaped door handles, capstan or lever taps throughout your facility will help many of your visitors. Regular maintenance of door closers and hinges ensure any door closers are not too heavy to open and close slowly. Maintenance of taps and using easy to turn tap washers (such as quarter turn washers) will go a long way to helping people who have difficulty due to reduced strength in their hands.

# BEING ACCOMMODATED – The Lounge Area - Getting Comfortable

**S**oft, spongy, or long pile carpet can be difficult surface for guests to push a wheelchair, hoist or walking frame over. The sponginess acts as a brake to the wheels and can also make turning and maneuverability difficult. A living area that has a hard floor surface or a short pile carpet with a compact firm underlay and good circulation space will go a long way to assisting a person with a mobility disability.

The flexibility of having a height adjustable, firmer lounge chair that can be moved into rooms if requested, will provide choice to those who are frail or find it difficult to get out of a chair. The lounge area must be spacious enough to accommodate a wheelchair, with moveable task lighting, firm comfortable seating with armrests and remote controlled entertainment.

## The Lounge Room

- ✓ Choice of firm, high lounge chair
- ✓ Remote controls for TV, air conditioning to have big buttons, simple design and good colour contrast and to be stored down low where they can be reached from a sitting position
- ✓ Cordless style telephone extension so the phone can be used from anywhere within the room
- ✓ Task lighting, preferable moveable



- ✓ Under table clearance for wheelchair users at work desks, computer terminals, tables
- ✓ Teletext enabled TV in the communal lounge and guest room
- ✓ Headphone, neck loop and TV listening device to be available on request will assist a person who is hard of hearing

- ✓ Good circulation space in the room for a wheelchair or walking aid
- ✓ Avoid loose mats and rugs as they are a tripping hazard and impede maneuverability of a wheelchair



## Key Reference:

AS1428.2 provides guidelines on reach ranges, circulation spaces and dimensions of seating and tables.

## Task Lighting

**P**eople with low vision may benefit from having task lighting to read or sew. Additional lighting at the reception or restaurant counters will assist a guest who lip reads. Removal of background 'visual clutter' and reflective surfaces behind the counter will also assist people with reduced vision see staff more clearly.

# BEING ACCOMMODATED - Outdoor Living and Enjoying the Views

## Getting Outside

- ✓ An easy to open door that has D or lever style handle
- ✓ Ample circulation space around the door (not cluttered with furniture)
- ✓ Level access through the doorway, avoid mats
- ✓ A sliding door can be an access barrier as the door runner acts as a step. This can be overcome by providing a threshold ramp on both sides of the door. Alternatively, recessing the track into the concrete pad at the point of construction will eliminate this problem
- ✓ A small shelf at the doorway can be used to rest a tray while the door is opened
- ✓ A slow, self closing slider that can be disengaged if required, will help visitors who may be slow to move

## Enjoying the View

All guests, whether sitting in a wheelchair or standing will want to enjoy and share any views you have made an effort to display.

- ✓ Lowered window sills or sliding doors are useful strategies
- ✓ Position the room to maximise the views as some people may need to remain sitting inside
- ✓ When outside – make sure any balustrades are not in a position that blocks views for those who are seated
- ✓ Good sight lines from inside the villas and from the balcony



- ✓ Both these villas are accessible to wheelchair users – the view is elevated and access is great via a rear entry on the higher side



## Paving



- ✓ Level and even paving without loose stones, trip hazards or water pooling etc
- ✓ Avoid pavers with rounded or chamfered edges, these can trap narrow wheelchair tyres or walking aids
- ✓ Reeded timber decking should be laid with minimal gaps between the timbers; and the timbers laid perpendicular to the main direction of travel
- ✓ Cobblestone type paving requires a greater effort for wheelchair users to traverse, and could be painful to some conditions

# BEING ACCOMMODATED –

## Safety and Emergency

**Providing accessible accommodation implies safe egress as well as access into your property. Along with mandatory safety requirements the following suggestions are made to assist in the safety of your guests with disabilities.**

Emergency egress for people with disabilities will require a combination of an accessible building structure and fail safe procedures. Fire safety doors may be too heavy for some people to open and stairs are often the only practical means of emergency egress from an upper level.

### Features that will assist people with disabilities in an emergency situation include:

- ✓ A wide doorway with an easy to grip door handle or push bar
- ✓ Level exit to the outside or to a safe haven - large enough to accommodate a wheelchair
- ✓ Easy to comprehend emergency instructions displayed in the room – enhanced by simple language and easy to recognise symbols or images
- ✓ Walking your guest through emergency exits or procedures could be offered as part of your emergency egress strategy
- ✓ For a person with low vision provide large print information, or inform the person verbally of safety procedures
- ✓ Have flashing smoke alarms or portable vibration pagers available for people who are deaf or hard of hearing to alert them to the emergency situation as an audible alarm may not be heard
- ✓ Providing a device that enables a light to flash when a visitor knocks on the door will alert guests who are deaf to an emergency situation, or when a visitor arrives
- ✓ Locate fire extinguishers / blankets in an easy to reach and logical position in the accessible unit
- ✓ Install an emergency call button that can be reached from sitting, standing and the floor level, next to the shower and toilet. Make sure procedures are in place that the calls are attended to either by management or your guests carer, as appropriate
- ✓ Resources for purchase or more information about safety equipment for people who are deaf, hearing impaired, blind or have low vision are detailed at the end of this book in the Resources and Networks section



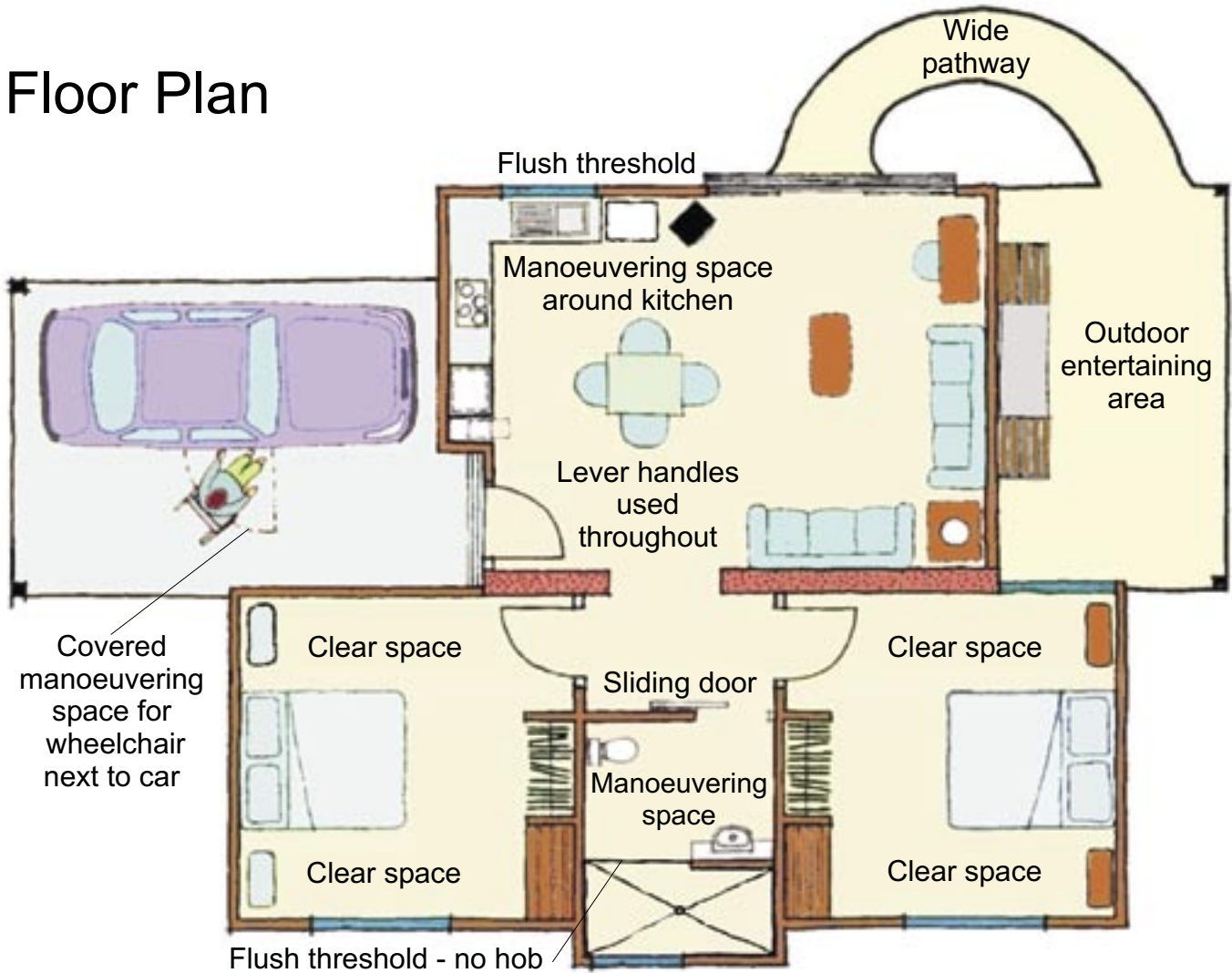
### Level Access

**To safely and independently operate a wheelchair or walk with a walking frame or stick, level paths and level entrances are required at all doorways. This is called 'level access' and it is needed at all doorways. Mats should be avoided and loose rugs removed. A mat is not suitable to 'bridge the gap' where there is a door lip and a purpose built small ramp may be necessary.**

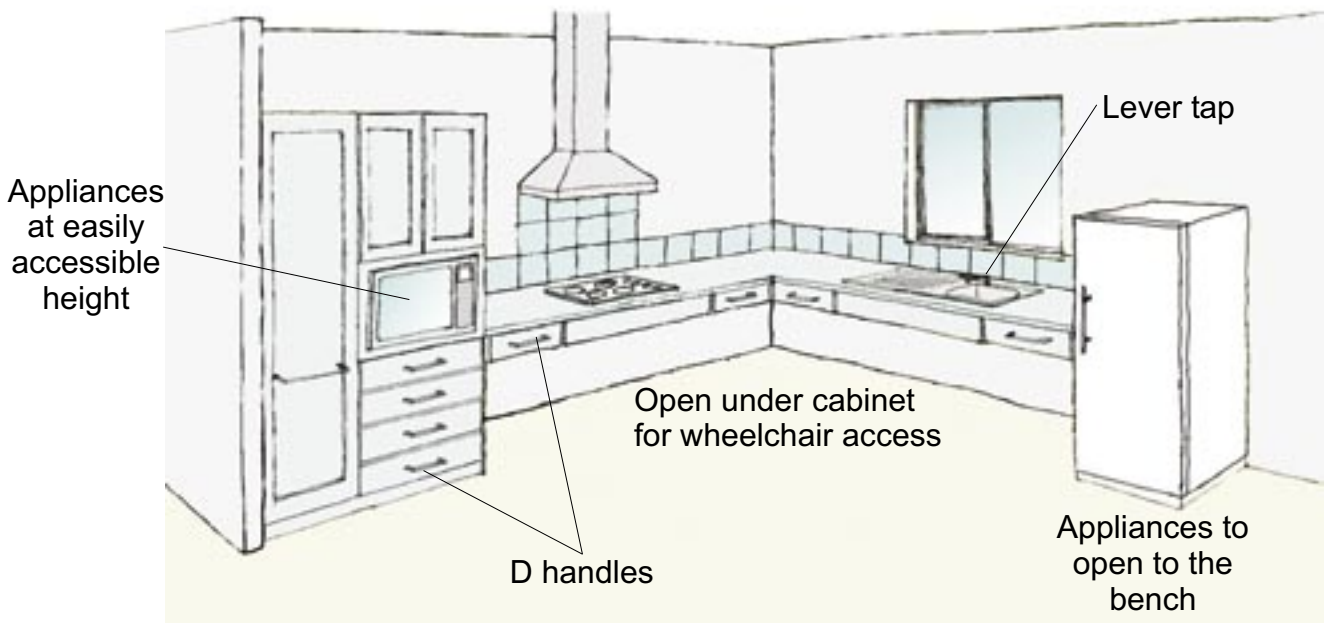
**It is much better to provide a built in ramp, however in some circumstances a portable ramp may be the only solution. Any portable ramp must be stable and well maintained.**

# Example of an Accessible Holiday Unit

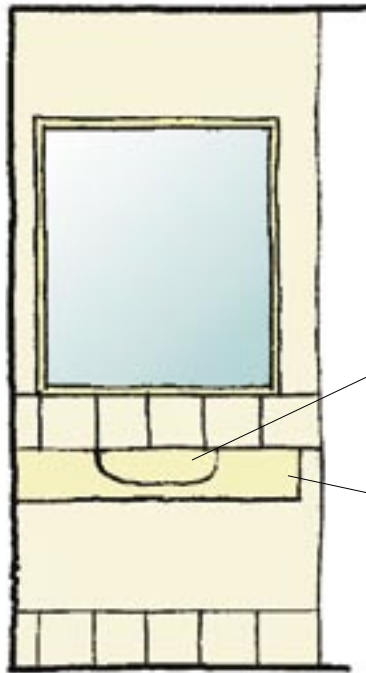
## Floor Plan



## Kitchen



## Bathroom



Semi-recessed basin and waste pipes offset to the floor or piped through the wall gives additional knee-space

Height of top for easy access

## Shower

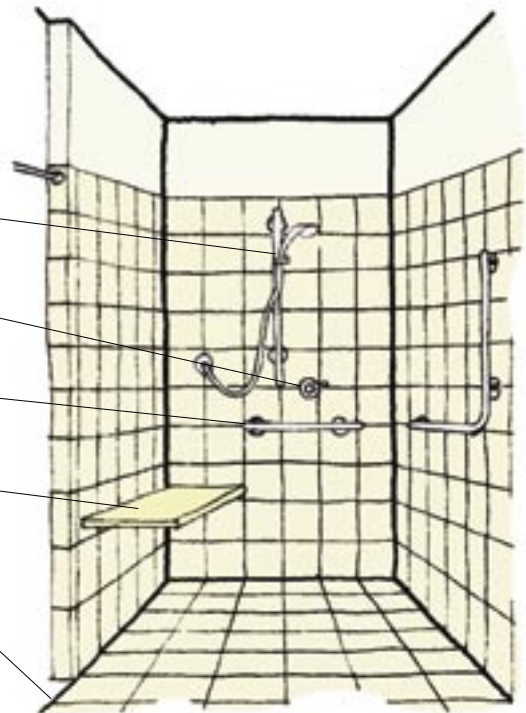
Hand-held adjustable shower

Lever handle mixer

Grab rails

Folding seat

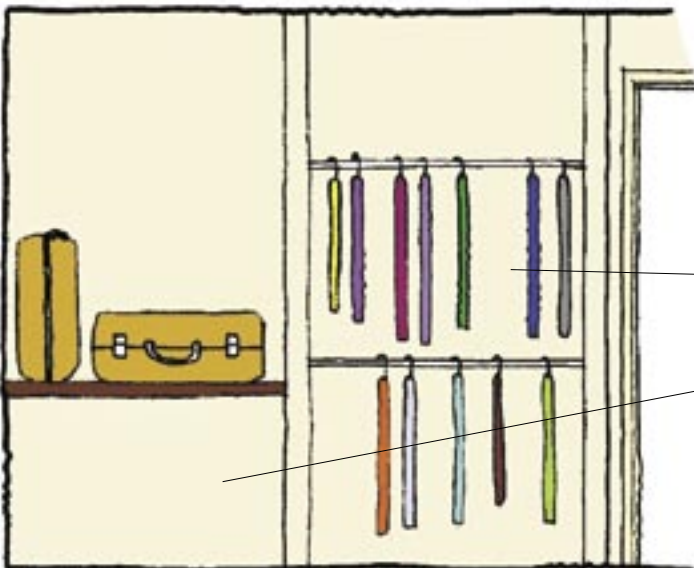
Flush threshold - no hob



## Cupboards

Easy access hanging space

Knee-space under bench



# USING THE ONSITE FACILITIES - Recreation Areas

## Public Toilets

When a public toilet is provided it is also your responsibility to provide an accessible toilet for those who require more space and / or handrails. Features include:

- ✓ The accessible toilet to be unisex to allow a carer of the opposite sex to assist
- ✓ Located in the same vicinity as other toilets
- ✓ Easy to read signage directing customers to the toilet
- ✓ It must meet the minimum requirements of the BCA and Australian Standards on Access and Mobility



### Key Reference:

- **AS1428.1 sets out the minimum requirements for a public, unisex accessible toilet.**

## Garden Paths



- ✓ Paths need to be level and even - avoid loose pavers and damaged, uneven or unsafe surfaces
  - ✓ Circular paths that travel in one direction eliminate the need for people to pass each other (RRL 1)
  - ✓ Signage which displays direction, distance and terrain will assist people make informed choices about their ability to use the path
  - ✓ Pathways that follow the lie of the land may be naturally steep. Try and provide an alternate path that has a gentle gradient. A balance between gentle gradient and a path that is not too long to fatigue those with mobility disabilities can be a challenge. Professional advice may be required
  - ✓ Where grass is the only option make sure it is a compact variety and that the grass is kept low
- ✓ Paths need to be wide and have a stretch of level land to either side of the path

## Accessible Barbecue

- ✓ At least one barbecue should be accessible for people with disabilities (RRL1). This means a level and even path to and in front of the cooking surface and a lowered cooking surface that a wheelchair user can reach
- ✓ An electric or gas barbecue is preferable, to eliminate the need to collect firewood (RRL1)



- ✓ Knee clearance underneath the cooking surface with sufficient clearance for wheelchair footplates will allow the wheelchair user to cook at the BBQ face on. Alternatively, the wheelchair user could work side on to the BBQ
  - ✓ Push button control located at bench height, rather than down low
  - ✓ A bench or table nearby to rest utensils / food on
- ✓ This barbecue has cooking surfaces at two heights – suiting people either sitting or standing, short or tall. It is on a firm surface and would work well for most wheelchair users.

## Boardwalks

- ✓ Boardwalks can overcome problems of traversing rough, damp, uneven terrain
- ✓ The same principles of paths apply to boardwalks - level and even
- ✓ Boardwalks require an edge and handrails if raised off the ground
- ✓ Reeded timber decking requires the slats to run perpendicular to the direction of travel. Gaps between boards to be minimal - to avoid entrapment of mobility aids or tripping
- ✓ Use temporary boardwalks to provide access to lawn / garden areas, for example for concerts, weddings (RRL1)



## Key Reference:

- AS1428.1 provides guidelines on requirements for accessible pathways and doorways, plus suitable width and pathway surfaces.
- AS1428.2 provides guidelines on sight lines.
- AS1428.2 provides clearances and heights for seats, drinking fountains and barbecues.

## Park Bench Seats

Outdoor seating provides an opportunity for people who may get easily fatigued to rest.

- ✓ Park bench seat requires armrests, a good seat height and a backrest
- ✓ Set the bench next to a path, but not obstructing the path
- ✓ Provide a level space next to a park bench seat to allow a wheelchair user to sit next to other guests
- ✓ A raised planter that is a little higher than a standard park bench can double as a perching seat



- ✓ A wheelchair accessible drinking fountain located next to a path with a firm surface underneath - for wheelchair access



- ✓ A great park bench!

## Picnic Table

- ✓ At least one picnic table should be accessible. This must allow wheelchair access to at least one end or side and provides knee and wheelchair footplate clearance underneath
- ✓ Connected to a path on a hard, level surface
- ✓ Ideally protected from the weather



**A** well maintained, wide, level and even pathway to and throughout your recreation areas will allow all guests regardless of their physical abilities to participate in recreation together. Lighting will enable access to the facilities both day and night.

## Playground

People who frequent playgrounds are not just the kids but also parents and grandparents who enjoy the pure delight of watching their children play. Consider the requirements of - a parent with a pram supervising siblings on the playground equipment; a child with a disability enjoying the play equipment or a parent or carer

with a disability participating in the pleasure of watching their children play. Each of these scenarios requires a level of accessibility to the playground. A firm and level pathway up to and within the playground with a sheltered seating area will go a long way to improving the participation for parents and carers.

- ✓ Firm level path into the playground and seating area
- ✓ Seating with armrests and backrest, in the playground
- ✓ Shade and weather protection



"For adults in wheelchairs who have small children it is nice to get as close to water and playground facilities as possible" Kylie



- ✓ Drinking fountain and bins are next to a path



- ✓ Accessible to ambulant and wheelchair users

## Pool

Do you have a pool? Most domestic sized pools will not be fully accessible to all, there may however be some simple changes you could make right now, or factors you could consider if you are planning a new pool.



- ✓ Ramp access into the pool improves access for people who have mobility difficulties or who need the use of a pool chair to enter the water
- ✓ Everyday wheelchairs cannot go into pool or beach water. Provide a pool chair (usually PVC, self draining style) that can be used by all. This would provide a wonderful service for your guests with disabilities and marketing strategy. A private transfer area such as a change room and storage area for the persons wheelchair will also be required
- ✓ Where a choice is available, getting in and out can be made easier by using steps with handrails rather than a ladder
- ✓ Tiered seating area provides both an area to sit and gentle step access into the pool – enhance with handrails (RRL3)

## Pool (continued)

- ✓ Pool hoists can be retrofitted to the pool edge of existing pools. Although a beach or ramped access is preferable, a hoist with a sling may provide access for some individuals with higher dependency needs who could not use a pool chair. Be aware that some people with disabilities find a hoist an undignified way to get into the pool
- ✓ Storage area nearby for pool hoist or pool wheelchair
- ✓ Colour and texture contrasting pool edge which is non abrasive and is slip resistant will provide a visual and tactile cue to people with low vision (RRL 1; RRL 3)

**A** range of simple to complex play equipment is commercially available that accommodates the needs of many children with a mobility disability. The provision of a playground that is accessible to children with mobility difficulties can be enjoyed by all.

## Beach

Beach access for your accommodation will be enhanced with a wheelchair track being provided down to the shore. This can be lifted in poor weather and laid out in the summer months.

- ✓ A wide, even and level path from the car park to the change rooms and beach side will provide access for all (RRL3)
- ✓ Roll out; slatted style mats are available to provide an accessible path of travel onto the beach sand. They do however require regular maintenance to remove drifting sand
- ✓ A PVC pool chair which does not corrode in salt water and is stored nearby the beach will enable a person who is a wheelchair user to more fully experience the beach



"One of our days out was spent at Meelup Beach where there is lots of shade and all necessary wheelchair facilities. A jellyfish stung my daughter and a lady came up and doused her with vinegar. She was very unimpressed but relieved in a short time. Days like this I usually cant be involved due to access, it was so nice to be part of a family activity I usually miss out on." Kylie

- ✓ This beach wheelchair has large tyres for easier manoeuverability on sand

## Change Room

- ✓ Provide a change room near the pool or beach to allow people to privately change and transfer into a pool chair if required
- ✓ Current Australian Standards on Access and Mobility detail the mandatory requirements for the circulation spaces required in a combined shower/ toilet area

# USING THE ONSITE FACILITIES –

## Retail Outlets

**T**he principles of accessible parking near the main entrance, level even pathways and level access through the main entrance also apply to retail outlets.

The following are additional points that will allow people with disabilities to visit and spend money in your shop!

### Interior

- ✓ Make sure the signs meet all the principles discussed before
- ✓ Provide adequate circulation space to and around merchandise to allow wheelchair and walking aid maneuverability so that customers can appreciate your wares
- ✓ Remove obstructions that project into walkways within the shop (eg displays, boxes, loose carpet, mats etc) to avoid accidents
- ✓ Remove spills and slip hazards as they happen



- ✓ All products can be reached from both the seated and standing position. Upper shelves that are out of reach can replicate produce displayed on lower shelves

### Customer service

- ✓ Have a policy that assistance is available if required by any of your customers
- ✓ Offer to porter purchases to hotel room (RRL 14)

### Counter

- ✓ Lowered section to allow access for wheelchair users, with clearance for knees and footplates
- ✓ Provide a cleared section for someone to rest a cheque book, sign a credit card slip (RRL 14)
- ✓ Display the Better Hearing Card

### Change Room

- ✓ Large enough for a wheelchair user – this may be easily achieved by providing a dividing curtain between two smaller change rooms. Remember there may also need to be room for an assistant or carer
- ✓ Lowered coat hooks
- ✓ Shelf to hold handbag, clothes etc
- ✓ A call bell, within reach of someone sitting or standing
- ✓ If there is a swing door make sure it meets the requirements already described and has a larger turn snib and locking device

# USING THE ONSITE FACILITIES – Restaurants, Wineries and Events

**W**elcoming the person with a disability to your restaurant may mean making small changes to the structure of your restaurant or the way in which your services are offered. Time and patience while ordering a meal, or assistance to carry a tray may be the simple gestures that will mean repeat business for you! (RRL11)

As you would know, having available the choice of where to sit is so important when dining at a

restaurant - the choice of alfresco, inside or non smoking dining is as important to a person with a disability as to anyone else. Ensuring a choice of eating areas is available to all makes good business sense.

If you have a restaurant as part of an accommodation facility, offering to provide room service may be desirable to your less mobile guests. Or, offering to reserve a table should your guest find one that meets their specific needs may be appreciated eg a quiet table for someone who is hard of hearing.

## Good Features of your Restaurant or Cafe

- ✓ Slip resistant flooring, with spills cleared quickly
- ✓ Signs such as opening hours should meet the requirements discussed previously
- ✓ Provide good clearance around tables, this allows access for wheelchair users and prams
- ✓ Good clearance under tables – four corner legs rather than splayed or a central pedestal provides better access for wheelchair users



- ✓ This table provides access for a wheelchair at two sides of the table

- ✓ Seating with armrests and high backrest
- ✓ Moveable tables and chairs provides flexibility of space
- ✓ Even paving

## Menus and Blackboards

- ✓ Offer the menu in a large print format
- ✓ Laminated menus to have a matt rather than gloss surface
- ✓ Chalk board menu – will work well if the signage principles are followed (RRL11)



## Self Service

- ✓ Self serve food, crockery and cutlery are easy to reach (RRL3)
- ✓ Offer table service or assistance if required
- ✓ At least one tray slide to be at bench height for ease of reach for a wheelchair user or even an older child



- ✓ This self serve table is accessible to all!



- ✓ Additional bench space or gap next to the self serve to allow money and goods to be exchanged

## Winery



Just like restaurants, your winery may need to make some simple changes in order to make a big difference to the wine tasting cultural experience for a person with a disability. The ability to provide good access, easy to read information and a welcoming approach is the key to great service.

- ✓ Lowered service counter to enable a wheelchair user to be seen, spoken with and served

**A**ll of your guests, including those with disabilities, will want to enjoy everything your facility has to offer.

They will expect to join their friends and family in wine tasting, barbecuing and enjoy a pool side snack.

Makes sure they can move between all of these facilities independently. They will tell their friends and come back again!

## Having a Conference or Special Event?

- ✓ Make sure the invitation includes a section where participants can identify specific needs, ie AUSLAN interpreter
- ✓ Temporary signage directing people to meetings or conferences should be easy to read, in a logical location with a clearly marked arrow pointing in the right direction
- ✓ Registration table should have enough clearance underneath to accommodate a wheelchair user, plus have chairs so people can sit while filling out paperwork
- ✓ A height adjustable lectern with task light
- ✓ Good lighting to illuminate the face of an AUSLAN interpreter and to assist participants who are hard of hearing to lip read
- ✓ Good lighting and a portable induction loop at the registration table
- ✓ Ramp access to raised stage / platform
- ✓ Portable or permanent hearing augmentation system with signage to indicate it is available and where it is located (RRL 2). These can be hired - see the Resources and Networks section at the end of this book
- ✓ Portable hearing augmentation systems can be moved to smaller meeting rooms
- ✓ An accessible toilet is nearby
- ✓ Seating has a backrest and armrests
- ✓ Removable seating and tables, to allow access for wheelchair users

## A Garden Wedding or Function?

Provide a temporary boardwalk over uneven ground and vehicle access where the walking distance is long. A stable chair, located on level ground in a protected area will assist frail guests.

**AUSLAN Interpreter:** An AUSLAN interpreter uses knowledge of AUSLAN sign language to interpret between deaf and hearing people. They provide simultaneous translations of conversations and speeches in a range of situations such as conferences. Contact the WA Deaf Society for further information.



"Events that accommodate the needs of everyone in the community will be the most successful, in terms of attendance, participation and public relations."

*Creating Accessible Events (RRL 17)*

# USING THE ONSITE FACILITIES – Camping and Farmstay

**T**he accessible features discussed for recreation will also apply to your camping ground or farmstay. Accessible parking bays near a camp and caravan or cabin site; plus a choice of accessible

accommodation. Firm, even, level pathways should connect accessible accommodation sites, communal facilities and recreation areas.

## Good Features of a Camp Ground

- ✓ At least one unisex accessible toilet and shower that is installed in accordance with current Australian Standards on Access and Mobility and the BCA
- ✓ Communal kitchen and laundry facilities to have clearances and access for wheelchair users, as described earlier in this publication
- ✓ A raised camp fire and / or accessible barbecue
- ✓ A camp or caravan site that is close to the communal facilities and connected to a hard surface could be given as a preference to people with disabilities. This will allow those who need to use the toilet during the night some safety over a shorter distance

## Good Features of a Farmstay

- ✓ Pathways to all your features are wide, even and level so that all guests can get close and personal to the farm animals and farm experiences
- ✓ A set of temporary ramps may allow you to provide access from ground level onto the back of a truck – for farm tours!
- ✓ Ask your guests what they would like to see and experience – they are a great source of information!

# SHOWCASING YOUR FACILITY – Advertising Pays Off

**O**ur experience when travelling the South West of Western Australia was a sense that the full market was substantially untapped. It became apparent that people with disabilities were missing in the equation. A plethora of terrific accommodation places were found that cater in some way for people with different abilities.

The missing link was letting the community; particularly people with disabilities know what accessible facilities YOU are able to provide.

Make sure that any information provides easy to follow and specific information about your accessible accommodation in a format that is easy for those who have difficulty reading or interpreting information. Simple considerations such as –

- ✓ Increase font size and use a simple to read font
- ✓ Increase colour contrast
- ✓ Reduce gloss – use a matt finish on brochures
- ✓ The use of plain English is considered good practice and will particularly benefit people who have a learning disability, those who have difficulty understanding complex information and even people who have English as a second language
- ✓ Display the international symbol of access or deafness, where appropriate

It is important to provide this information to the general public in hard copy brochures and electronic advertising. In addition there is a terrific opportunity to market your accommodation in the disability market place. Many disability and seniors' specific resources and websites exist in which you can advertise to let people with disabilities know what you have to offer! (RRL 11 and RRL 5).

"I think the greatest thing that shows what a great holiday we had is the fact that we went back the next year and talked three other families into joining us."  
Kylie

## Through your Website

As we are all aware in this rapidly changing world, a website provides the opportunity to sell your accommodation globally. Not only can you provide unlimited information (so you can provide all the necessary details of the accessible features of your accommodation); but also the opportunity exists to provide photos, a virtual tour, and a means for potential guests to contact and converse with you via email.

Extensive use of pictures or a virtual tour will give your potential guests the opportunity to decide for themselves whether the level of accessibility and the features you provide will meet their needs.

Remember that this medium is perfect for those with a vision impairment as it can become accessible with voice output software.

## Through your Brochures

The principles that applied to your signage and website also apply to information you publish, including your brochures (RRL 12).

### But, is your website accessible?

The principles that applied to your brochures and signage (such as large, colour contrasting, easy to read font) also apply to information you publish via the web. There are numerous websites that now deal with the 'accessibility' of the web itself and a couple of great resources include:

<http://trace.wisc.edu/>

<http://www.hreoc.gov.au/>

<http://www.e-bility.com/index.php>

<http://www.w3.org>

Why not include on your website links to other local accessible attractions, local carer and babysitting organisations, local hire service for medical / rehabilitation equipment, etc.

# MEETING THE NEEDS of your Guests with Disabilities

By now you are ready to put pen to paper to tell everyone about the accessible features YOU have. You just need the right words to say.

Here are some pointers to get you started:

## ? Who is your accessible room / chalet / villa most suited to:

- An independent wheelchair user;
- A wheelchair user and carer; group bookings;
- A family with a child or adult that has a mobility disability

## ? Which parts of the resort are accessible:

- Restaurant, gym, pool, barbecue, room (bathroom, kitchen, bedroom, balcony) - or all !

## ? In what way are the facilities accessible:

- Use descriptive words to let people with disabilities know the type and level of access your accommodation can provide. It may be best to describe your accessible features, so that your guests can judge for themselves what would best suit their needs.
- Suggest a telephone call to ensure there is no misunderstanding about the type of accessible accommodation you are able to offer.

• Our chalet is located on the ground floor and has level access throughout. This includes access to the balcony and front verandah which has views across the valley. There are two bathrooms, one off the larger bedroom and is fully accessible for wheelchair users. The kitchen is full height.

• The parking area next to the chalet is under cover, the paths throughout the grounds and to all the animal pens around the farm are sealed, and have gentle slopes. We are happy to hire in any equipment you may need. Please feel free to telephone to discuss your requirements with us.

• An accessible bathroom with a higher than normal toilet pan, grab rails, basin with underneath clearance, lowered light switches, height adjustable shower chair, hobless wheel in shower and hand held shower hose.

• A kitchen that has been designed for wheelchair access which has under bench clearance at one workbench and at the sink, a self igniting gas stove and a microwave oven on the bench top.

• Please don't hesitate to ask us if you wish to borrow a large number or volume control telephone, vibrating alarm clock, height adjustable lounge chair, a shower chair, travel cot or high chair.

# REFERENCE RESOURCE LIST (RRL)

- (1) Sport and Recreation Victoria, *Sport and Recreation. Access for All*. Villamanta Publishing Service Inc (Melbourne)
- (2) Salmen, John.P.S., *Accommodating All Guests*, The American Hotel and Motel Association, Universal Designers and Consultants (Washington DC, 1994)
- (3) Davies,TD. and Beasley,KA. *Design for Hospitality. Planning for Accessible Hotels and Motels*. Nichols Publishing / Paralyzed Veterans of America (USA, 1988)
- (4) Web Article - *Disability Awareness Kit. A Training Resource for Public Library Customer Service Staff* Produced by Victoria State Library.
- (5) WA Deafness Council *Hearing Their Needs: Attitudes and Trends in Creating Accessible Accommodation for People who are Hearing Impaired or Deaf*. A Survey conducted by WA Deafness Council with support from Disability Services Commission, WA Deafness Council (Perth 2004)
- (6) Queensland Government *A Way with Words. Guidelines for the Portrayal of People with Disabilities*
- (7) City of Swan *Guide to installing an Accessible Toilet*. Edition 1t City of Swan (Perth 2002)
- (8) AS 1428.1, 2001 – *Design for Access and Mobility – General Requirements for Access – New Building Works*.
- (9) AS2890.1, 1993 – *Parking Facilities – Off-street Car Parking*.
- (10) Open 4 All, 2004 – *What it means to you. A guide to service providers*, UK (Disability Rights Commission, 2004)
- (11) Open 4 All, *Bringing the DDA to life for small shops – Café Case Study*, UK (Disability Rights Commission, 2004)
- (12) SP9: DDA 1995 - *What do Guest Accommodation Owners need to Know*. Disability Rights Commission (Manchester UK 2004)
- (13) Building Commission, *Victoria Welcome. Design Ideas for Accessible Homes*, Building Commission (Victoria 2002)
- (14) Open 4 All, *Bringing the DDA to life for small shops – Newsagency Case Study*, UK (Disability Rights Commission, 2004)
- (15) Independent Living Centre of WA, Technology. *Communicating well with somebody with impaired speech*, Independent Living Centre of WA (Perth 2004)
- (16) Independent Living Centre of WA, Technology. *What is Dysphasia?*, Independent Living Centre of WA (Perth 2004)
- (17) Disability Services Commission *Creating Accessible Events* Access Improvement Branch, Disability Services Commission (Perth 1998)
- (18) Deafness Forum of Australia Policy Position. *Hearing Access in Hotels, Motels and other Similar Accommodation* (ACT 2003)
- (19) Deafness Forum of Australia Policy Position. *Hearing at Events and Meetings in Venues and Meeting Rooms* (ACT 2003)
- (20) Centre for Universal Design, <http://www.design.ncsu.edu/cud>
- (21) Disability Services Commission. [www.dsc.wa.gov.au](http://www.dsc.wa.gov.au) <<http://www.dsc.wa.gov.au>
- (22) diversity@work <http://www.work.asn.au/disability/info/statistics.cfm>

# RESOURCES AND NETWORKS

## AUSTRALIAN COMMUNICATION EXCHANGE (ACE)

This organisation is dedicated to empowering those who are Deaf or have a hearing, speech or communication impairment, to obtain access to the telephone and other telecommunication networks. The National Relay service is operated by ACE.

Phone 1800 555 660  
TTY 1800 555 630  
Email [feedback@aceinfo.net.au](mailto:feedback@aceinfo.net.au)  
Web [www.aceinfo.net.au](http://www.aceinfo.net.au)

## ASSOCIATION OF CONSULTANTS IN ACCESS, AUSTRALIA INC. (ACAA)

ACA Aust is a national membership-based professional association for people working to achieve accessibility of the built environment for people with a disability. It is the peak national body for access consultancy in Australia and a major partner in advancing equity of built environmental accessibility for people with a disability.

Phone (03) 5221 2820  
Fax (02) 5221 2820  
Email [terryoz@deakin.edu.au](mailto:terryoz@deakin.edu.au)  
Web [www.access.asn.au](http://www.access.asn.au)

## THE INDEPENDENT LIVING CENTRE OF WA (INC.)

The Independent Living Centre of Western Australia (Inc.) is a non-profit community service organisation which provides impartial, expert advice on equipment, and resources for people with disabilities, their advocates, carers and service providers. The ILC offers a hire service for specialised equipment to assist people with disabilities.

Phone (08) 9381 0600  
Fax (08) 9381 0611  
Email [enquiry1@ilc.com.au](mailto:enquiry1@ilc.com.au)  
Web [www.ilc.com.au](http://www.ilc.com.au)

## DISABILITY RIGHTS COMMISSION (UK)

UK based Disability Rights Commission (DRC) whose chief aim is to stop discrimination and promote equality of opportunity for disabled people.

Web [www.drc-gb.org](http://www.drc-gb.org)  
Web [www.drc.org.uk/open4all](http://www.drc.org.uk/open4all)

## HUMAN RIGHTS AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION

The goal of this organisation is to foster greater understanding and protection of human rights in Australia and to address the human rights concerns of a broad range of individuals and groups, including disability discrimination.

Phone (02) 9248 9600  
Fax (02) 9284 9611  
TTY 1800 620 241  
Web [www.hreoc.gov.au](http://www.hreoc.gov.au)

## PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES (WA) INC

A consumer managed organisation which represents and advocates for the rights and equity of all Western Australians with a disability - physical, intellectual, psychiatric and sensory. PWD website lists a range of accessible accommodation and restaurants.

Email [info@pwdwa.org](mailto:info@pwdwa.org)  
Web [www.pwdwa.org](http://www.pwdwa.org)

## RECREATION NETWORK

Recreation Network is a small dynamic and creative organisation, which responds to the individual needs of people with a disability who wish to become involved in community recreation.

Phone (08) 9443 8788  
Fax (08) 9443 8799  
Email [info@rec.net.au](mailto:info@rec.net.au)  
Web [www.rec.net.au](http://www.rec.net.au)

## NICAN

NICAN is information on recreation, tourism, sport and the arts for people with disabilities and supports an Australian society where any recreational opportunity values diversity, supports freedom and choice and strengthens inclusive communities. Accommodation that offers accessible facilities can list on the NICAN website after completing a checklist.

Freecall/TTY 1800 806 769  
Phone (02) 6285 3713  
Fax (02) 6285 3714  
Email [info@nican.com.au](mailto:info@nican.com.au)  
Web [www.nican.com.au](http://www.nican.com.au)

## ASSOCIATION FOR THE BLIND

Association for the Blind is able to produce material in alternative formats such as large print, CD, audio tape, Braille. A comprehensive resource for information about blindness and low vision.

Phone (08) 9311 8202  
Freecall 1800 658 388  
Fax (08) 9361 8696  
Email mailbox@abwa.asn.au  
Web www.abwa.asn.au

## DISABILITY SERVICES COMMISSION

The primary focus of the Disability Services Commission is to make a positive difference to the lives of people with disabilities, their families and carers. DSC provides extensive information through their comprehensive website regarding issues of access and universal design, including the Access Resource Kit.

Phone (08) 9426 9200  
Fax (08) 9226 2306  
TTY (08) 9426 9315  
Freecall 1800 998 214  
Email dsc@dsc.wa.gov.au  
Web www.dsc.wa.gov.au

## WA DEAFNESS COUNCIL

The societies aim is to empower deaf people in WA to achieve equality of opportunities and independence in all aspects of life. WA Deafness Council can be contacted for further information about deafness resources and AUSLAN.

Phone (08) 9441 2677  
TTY (08) 9441 2655  
Fax (08) 9444 3592  
Email wadeaf@wadeaf.org.au  
Web www.wadeaf.org.au

## DEAFNESS FORUM LIMITED

Deafness Forum is the peak body for deafness in Australia. The Deafness Forum represents all interests and viewpoints of the Deaf and hearing impaired communities of Australia (including those people who have a chronic disorder of the ear and those who are DeafBlind). It offers a comprehensive service and website providing extensive information.

Phone (02) 6262 7808  
TTY (02) 6262 7809  
Fax (02) 6262 7810  
Email info@deafnessforum.org.au  
Web www.deafnessforum.org.au

## STANDARDS AUSTRALIA

There are Standards on Access for people with disabilities. Most commonly AS1428.1 and AS1428.2 are referred to. These are available through Standards Australia.

Phone 1300 65 46 46  
Fax 1300 88 82 58  
Email sales@sai-global.com  
Web www.standards.com.au

## ALZHEIMER'S AUSTRALIA WA

An organisation whose purpose is to provide representation and support, while advancing the interests of individuals with dementia and their carers, at a personal, community and political level. The website provides information about Alzheimer's disease plus links with a range of resources.

Phone (08) 9388 2800  
Dementia helpline 1800 639 331  
Email alzwa@alzheimers.asn.au  
Web www.alzheimers.asn.au

## CARERS ASSOCIATION OF WA

Carers WA is a non-profit community based organisation and registered charity dedicated to improving the lives of the estimated 200,000 family Carers living in Western Australia. Part of the National Carers Association, they are the peak body recognised both state and federally, as the voice of family Carers, representing your interests in the Western Australian community. Their website provide information about the role of and support for, carers.

Phone (08) 9444 5922  
Fax (08) 9444 8966  
Freecall 1800 242 636  
Web www.carerswa.asn.au  
Email info@carerswa.asn.au

## POSITIVE AGEING FOUNDATION OF AUSTRALIA

The Positive Ageing Foundation of Australia (PAF) is a self-funding not-for-profit organisation dedicated to the research and promotion of successful ageing. The Foundation works across the government, business, and community sectors. Their website has many useful links, publications and information.

Phone (08) 9286 5600  
Fax (08) 9286 5601  
Email info@positiveageing.com.au  
Web www.positiveageing.com.au

# Self Assessment Checklist NICAN sample

This is a guide only and should not replace professional advice as Australian Standard information may change.

Date ..... **NEW ACCOMMODATION ENTRY FOR DATABASE** - (ID: # \_\_\_\_\_)

ACCOMMODATION NAME

STREET ADDRESS

POSTAL ADDRESS

Phone

Fax

Email

Internet

Freecall

TTY number

Contact title (eg PROPRIETOR/MANAGER/OTHER)

Name(s)

Name of recognised tourist area (eg Gold Coast)

Are you in the centre of a city

In the metropolitan area (within 20km) of a city

HOW MANY ROOMS/UNITS DO YOU HAVE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES ?   
(not your total number of rooms)

ARE THESE? 1 BEDR'M UNITS  2 BEDR'M UNITS  MOTEL ROOMS  OTHER

HOW MANY BEDS IN EACH ROOM? \_\_\_\_\_

TARIFFS : ROOM ONLY \$  1 B'ROOM UNIT \$  2 B'ROOM UNIT \$  OTHER \$

Is there discount for longer stays? \_\_\_\_\_

**ACCESSIBLE ROOM FACILITIES (Please circle or highlight):** Air conditioning, clock radio, colour TV, cots available, en-suite, electric blanket, fans, hairdryer, heaters, microwave, mini-bar, phone (STD, ISD, TTY), private balcony, refrigerator, self catering (ie separate kitchen), tea and coffee making, toaster, video, waterbed, OTHER (please list) \_\_\_\_\_

**ACCESSIBLE AMENITIES (Please circle or highlight):** wheelchair accessible airport shuttle, babysitting, barbecue, business service, conference facilities, wheelchair accessible courtesy bus, dry cleaning, fax service, laundry, parking, pets welcome, photocopying service, room service, safety deposit, sauna (ie door wide enough & room for wheelchair inside), swimming pool (eg beach type access), spa (eg beach type access) OTHER (please list) \_\_\_\_\_

**OTHER NOTES:** (Any details you would like to add about grounds, surrounding areas, nearby town facilities, activities) \_\_\_\_\_

Accessible means able to be used by a person with a disability, eg shuttle bus with a ramp, controls for fans, heaters, microwave and tea/coffee facilities are within reach and located between 900-1100mm high.

**PLEASE ANSWER ALL OF THE QUESTIONS ON THE BACK OF THIS SHEET**

# Self Assessment Checklist NICAN sample

This is a guide only and should not replace professional advice as Australian Standard information may change.

**NOTE:** Please tick **ALL** questions "YES" or "NO" and provide dimensions and sketches where appropriate. We do not make an assessment, but record all the access dimensions on the NICAN database.

	Y	N		Y	N
<b>Reception:</b>			<b>Bathroom/toilet (cont)</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the entry to the reception area free of steps?</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the door easy to open with one hand from a wheelchair – no heavy springs or closer?</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If not, is there a ramped access (at a ratio of 1:8 for one step, or 1:14 for 2 step height or more)?</li> <li>Or, is there a lift?</li> <li>Is there clear signage?</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is there space to manoeuvre a wheelchair (min 2500mm x 1900mm)? If not what space is available please sketch a diagram.</li> </ul>		
<b>External access to bedroom or unit:</b>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is there space beside the toilet for transfer (950mm)?</li> <li>Is there a grab rail within reach beside and behind toilet? At a height of 800-810mm?</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is there a wheelchair accessible parking bay (3200mm min width with 2500mm height clearance and gradient less than 1:33)?</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Which facilities are useable from a seated position?</li> <li>Switches &amp; power points 900-1100mm</li> <li>Mirror 900–1850mm x 350 width</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If access from carpark or street has steps, is there a ramp (no more that 1:8 for one step height, or 1:14 for 2 step height or more) (essential)</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is there knee space under the handbasin (at least 680mm to the floor) without a cupboard or other object?</li> <li>Are the taps lever type or sensor taps?</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can the room be accessed by an internal lift?</li> <li>Is there a clear space at the doorway entry into the room of min 1500mm x 1500mm?</li> </ul>			<b>Shower:</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is there clear space inside the room at the doorway to manoeuvre a wheelchair (at least 470mm from door latch to corner or object.)</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the shower recess area entrance level and free of hobs, steps or sliding door tracks</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the clear door opening provide at least 800mm clear space (870mm wide door) (essential)</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is there a clear entrance into the shower at least 800mm min?</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the door have lever handle and is easily opened with one hand from seated position (handle between 900-1100mm above floor level)?</li> <li>If a door closer is fitted is the force to open relatively light (no more that 1.95kg)?</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the shower recess wide enough to manoeuvre chair (min 1100mm x 1160mm in shower), plus a minimum 1400mm x 1400mm space outside shower?</li> </ul>		
<b>Bedroom or unit (internal spaces):</b>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is there a shower seat?</li> <li>Fold down <input type="checkbox"/>? or Freestanding <input type="checkbox"/>?</li> <li>If there is no seat, can you provide one?</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is there clear space between furniture in the room to turn a wheelchair (min 2070mm x 1540mm)?</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are there grab rails in the shower at between 800mm and 810mm?</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is there space beside the main bed for transfer (minimum 800mm)?</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is there a hand held shower nozzle within reach from a seated position?</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can the bed and other furniture be moved to provide 2070mm x 1540mm alongside one side of the bed (for hoist transfers)?</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are the taps between 900mm and 1000mm high?</li> <li>Are the taps lever type?</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What is the height of the main bed ____mm. Can it be raised if necessary?</li> <li>How much space is there under the bed (eg for a hoist) ____mm (150mm min)</li> </ul>			<b>Restaurant:</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the fire alarm audible and visual?</li> <li>Are coathanging spaces within reach from seated position ie 1100mm?</li> <li>Are tea making facilities within reach from a seated position (table or bench 750-850mm)?</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the access to restaurant free of steps or thresholds?</li> <li>Does the restaurant have an accessible toilet? If not is there one nearby? (Location _____)</li> </ul>		
<b>Bathroom/toilet:</b>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the clear door opening space wide enough (800mm min)?</li> <li>If there is no restaurant, is room service available?</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the door provide 800mm min clear opening width (870mm door) ?</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are there any food outlets nearby which are accessible, or can deliver meals?</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is there any lip or step between bedroom and bathroom greater than 5mm?</li> </ul>					

PLEASE RETURN FORM TO: NICAN INC, PO BOX 407, CURTIN ACT 2605. FREECALL NO: 1800 806 769

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Beach Chair photo (page 41) courtesy of NICAN -  
Photographer Hayley Anderson 1999, FreeWheeling

**All the helpful staff, managers and owners of the following  
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Heritage Trail Lodge, Margaret River  
Redgate Farmstay, Witchcliffe  
The Noble Grape, Cowaramup  
Taunton Farm Holiday Park, Cowaramup  
Surfpoint Resort, Margaret River  
Dolphin Discovery Centre, Bunbury  
Harvey Hills Farmstay, Harvey  
Indian Ocean Retreat, Myalup  
Mandurah Quay Resort, Mandurah  
Mandurah Gates Resort, Mandurah  
Westoby Plantation, Canarvon  
Hay Shed Hill, Willyabrup  
Karri Mia Resort, Denmark  
Monkey Mia Dolphin Resort, Shark Bay  
Clairault Winery, Willyabrup  
Mandalay Holiday Resort, Busselton  
Abbey Beach Resort, Busselton  
Whalers' Cove Villas, Dunsborough  
Dunsborough Central Motel, Dunsborough  
Deep Woods Estate, Yallingup  
Riverglen Chalets, Margaret River

# NOTES

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