

SPECTRUM Centre for Independent Living



Centre for
Independent
Living CIC

Access Inquiry – SCC Scrutiny Committee

Overview of the accessibility challenges
experienced by Disabled People in
Southampton & Good Practice

Ian Loynes, Chief Executive, SPECTRUM

Think you know Disabled People ... Think Again



About SPECTRUM

- SPECTRUM CIL is a User Led Organisation, run and controlled by Disabled People
- We work to promote Independent Living and the meaningful inclusion of Disabled People into the community.
- Established in 1984 and based in Southampton

About Disabled People

By 'Disabled People' we mean people with:

Physical Sensory Intellectual
Psychological Emotional Age Related
Hidden Impairments

We therefore include people living with long term health conditions, people with learning difficulties, mental health system users and survivors, cancer survivors and those living with HIV and AIDS as well as Older People



Overview: Access for Disabled People in Southampton



Compared to many places, Southampton is general a good place to work and live for many Disabled People

However, significant challenges remain, particularly for less well 'understood' Disabled People (i.e. People with ADHD)



The City Council does not 'learn' – people come and go within the Council who have or gain expertise with respect to access

- But that knowledge is lost when that person leaves
- The City Council needs to acquire knowledge and standards and **PASS** this on to new staff
- Left & Right hand oblivious and often don't learn from each other



Knowledge is Power:

Accessible Information

- The City currently has no **Accessible Information** standard.
- Commonly (even in Social Care) people are sent information when the City ‘knows’ that person needs information in a particular format
- Even adopting a basic minimum standard will ensure information is accessible to the **majority**
 - **San Serif Font – at least 14pt**
 - **Clear contrast to background and no background graphics**
 - **All meetings will be held in accessible venues**

Access to 'public' places & buildings



- **Homes:**

- Disabled People want their homes & friends / neighbours accessible
- All new & rebuilds build to lifetime homes standards

- **Public buildings**

- Should be accessible to the 'public' – even Disabled People!

- **Public places (Parks & Streets)**

- Accessible design (street furniture - contrasts, signage)

- **Shopping & Entertainment Places**

- Hearing loops standard, staff training, steps!
- Council has enormous power
 - Leases / Landlord / Planning

Access to 'public' places & buildings



- **Public Transport**

- Trains: Generally Good;
- Buses: Should do better; Taxi: Awful

- **Parking Places**

- Quantity & placement
- Suitability: Most Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles are rear entry and large
- Monitored & allow public reporting

- **Shopmobility Schemes**

- Two in City Centre, none anywhere else

- **Toilets**

- Larger Public Places should have **Changing Places** provision

Access to 'public' places & buildings



- **Access Audits**

- E.g. SPECTRUM did Access Audit for City Centre in 2020 – local people



- **Planning Permission**

- Awareness of improving access is Poor in Planning Dept
- Common for access to be worsened when pubs / restaurants / entertainment venues updated
- Appears to be zero monitoring
- Little appetite for Improving access

Legislation / National guidance relevant to the Accessible Southampton Inquiry

Equality Act 2010

- The Act makes it unlawful to discriminate against someone on grounds of: disability, amongst other characteristics
 - Direct discrimination; Indirect; Harassment; Victimisation
- Principle of: **Reasonable Adjustments**
- Provides a right to access goods, services and facilities
- Employers are liable for the actions of it's employees

• **Building Regulations Part M (2015 updated):**

- Provides guidance to access, use of buildings and facilities for Disabled People. Covers the ability to move through a building, including to toilets and bathrooms.

• **Public Sector Disability Equality Duty 2011**

- Requires that public authorities have an ANTICIPATORY duty
- Duty to consider & think about how their policies or decisions affect people who are protected under the Equality Act
- Commonly delivered via Equality Impact Assessments (Badly)

Good Practice

- Ask the Disabled People of Southampton – They have a lifetimes experience – much better than any ‘Expert’
 - **37,500 Experts by Experience in Southampton**
- Our Access Audit for Go! Southampton had a section on Good Practice and good advice. I’ll make that available
- Example:

InclusiveDesign.scot/what-is-inclusive-design/

The Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) in Scotland has published a guide on the principles of Inclusive Design as it relates to the built environment. The key principles outlined are:

**Inclusive – Responsive – Flexible – Convenient –
Accommodating - Welcoming – Realistic**

Q&A?



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