



## 1. About Inclusive Design

### Definition

Inclusive Design is the design of an environment so that it can be accessed and used by as many people as possible, regardless of age, gender and disability. An environment that is designed inclusively is not just relevant to buildings; it also applies to surrounding open spaces, wherever people go about everyday activities. This includes shops, offices, hospitals, leisure facilities, parks and streets. Inclusive design keeps the diversity and uniqueness of each individual in mind. To do this, built environment professionals should involve potential users at all stages of the design process; from the design brief and detailed design through to construction and completion. Where possible, it is important to involve disabled people in the design process.

### The Principles of Inclusive Design

The Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) published and promoted the principles of inclusive design as it relates to the built environment:

- **Inclusive** – so everyone can use it safely, easily and with dignity
- **Responsive** – taking account of what people say they need and want
- **Flexible** – so different people can use it in different ways
- **Convenient** – so everyone can use it without too much effort or separation
- **Accommodating** for all people, regardless of their age, gender, mobility, ethnicity or circumstances
- **Welcoming** – with no disabling barriers that might exclude some people
- **Realistic** – offering more than one solution to help balance everyone's needs and recognising that one solution may not work for all

## 2. Scottish Legislation & British Standard

This section provides of an overview of current legislation and policy related to inclusive design in Scotland.

There are legal obligations for employers and service providers to make reasonable adjustments to improve access for disabled people. These legal requirements can be found in the Equality Act 2010.

The Equality Act came into force on 1 October 2010. The Equality Act brings together over 116 separate pieces of legislation into one single Act. Combined, they make up an Act that provides a legal framework to protect the rights of individuals and advance equality of opportunity for all.

The Act simplifies, strengthens and harmonises legislation to provide Britain with a discrimination law which protects individuals from unfair treatment and promotes a fair and more equal society.

The nine main pieces of legislation that have merged are:

- the Equal Pay Act 1970
- the Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- the Race Relations Act 1976
- the Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- the Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
- the Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006
- the Equality Act 2006, Part 2
- the Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007

#### Building Regulations – Technical Handbooks

In Scotland, access requirements are also integrated in the Building Regulations. The Technical Handbooks provide guidance on achieving the standards set in the Building (Scotland) Regulations 2004 and are available in two volumes, Domestic buildings and Non-domestic buildings. Each handbook covers seven sections; Structure, Fire, Environment, Safety, Noise, Energy, Sustainability.

[Download the Technical Handbooks.](#)

#### British Standard 8300

BS 8300: 2009+A1:2010 looks at the design of buildings and their ability to meet the requirements of disabled people. By offering best-practice recommendations, this standard explains how architectural design and the built environment can help disabled people to make the most of their surroundings. BS 8300: 2009+A1: 2010 looks at how some facilities, such as corridors, car parks and entrances, can be designed to provide aids for disabled people. It also demonstrates how additional features, including ramps, signs, lifts and guard rails, can be installed.

How does it work?

The requirements set out within BS 8300, covers a range of disabilities and the use of public buildings by disabled people who are residents, visitors, spectators or employees. This standard's recommendations include parking areas, setting-down points and garaging, access routes to and around all buildings, as well as entrances

and interiors. It also covers the relevant routes to all the facilities that are associated with these buildings.

[Purchase BS 8300: 2009+A1:2010.](#)

### **3. Benefits of Inclusive Design**

There are a number of benefits that can be achieved from designing environments to be inclusive in Scotland. These benefits can have a positive impact on individuals, businesses and society as a whole.

#### Independent Living

Inclusive Design ensures that disabled people are not forced out of their community and are encouraged to live an independent life. The Scottish Government is committed to enabling independent living for disabled people by ensuring the right housing and support is in place. This includes the ability to adapt houses to make them suitable for those with reduced mobility and other needs. [Housing Adaptations](#) and [Housing Support Services](#) can reduce the risk of accidents at home and also reduce need for home care or long-term admission to a care home.

#### Aging Population

The National Records of Scotland (NRS) estimate that the population of Scotland will rise from 5.35 million to 5.70 million by 2039. During this period the population will age significantly, with the number of people aged 75 and over increasing by 85%. It is also estimated that the age of householders over 65 will increase by almost 54%. With people living longer this means that there is an increase in the number of disabled people in Scotland. By designing environments to be inclusive this can ensure that older generations can stay as active members of their communities.

#### Businesses – ‘The Purple Pound’

The Government state that nearly one in five people in Scotland have a disability. Labelled ‘The Purple Pound’, the combined spending power of disabled people in the UK is estimated at £249 Billion each year. It is therefore extremely beneficial for businesses in Scotland to adopt an inclusive approach to design as it increases the number of potential customers. The benefits of inclusive design for businesses are not just financial; it can also improve public relations and enhance customer satisfaction.

Under the Equality Act 2010 businesses are required by law to make a reasonable adjustment for disabled people. There are a number of measures that businesses can introduce to make a public environment more inclusive:

- Doorways wide enough for wheelchairs, mobility scooters and walking frames
- Removing clutter from corridors and aisles
- A lowered accessible counter
- Printing menus, leaflets and brochures in at least 14 point

- Clear signage
- High visibility contrasting coloured material corners, steps, and edges

### Social Inclusion – Everyone Benefits

The benefits of inclusive design are wide-ranging and can lead to greater social inclusion in Scotland. Social inclusion enables disabled people to fully participate in society. An environment that is designed to be inclusive promotes equality and makes life easier and safer for everyone.

### **Disability Equality Scotland**

The website is hosted by [Disability Equality Scotland](#). We are a membership-led charity working to make life more accessible, equal and inclusive for disabled people in Scotland.