

Considerations and specification of 'Changing Places' assisted accessible toilets

BS8300: 2009

Design of buildings and their approaches
to meet the needs of disabled people
Code of Practice

Equality Act 2010

Building Regulations Approved Document M 2013



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14.5million people in the UK are disabled – **15% of the population.**

Over 90% of them suffer from a physical or mental disability that affects mobility, continence and/or physical co-ordination – issues that impair their ability to undertake basic personal hygiene without the help of a carer.

Potential users of a Changing Places toilet:

- 1.5million wheelchair users
- 6.5 million people who have either bladder or bowel incontinence
- 3.8million adults morbidly obese
- 1.5million people with a learning disability
- 1.2million people living with stroke
- 62,000 amputees
- 30,000 people with cerebral palsy
- 13,000 people with acquired brain injuries
- 8,500 people with multiple sclerosis
- 5,000 people with motor neurone disease
- 8,000 people with spina bifida
- 120,000 people with a stoma

Statistics show the UK's registered disabled population has a combined annual spending power of between **£80- £200billion**. Figures released by *VisitEngland* show overnight trips made by, or accompanied by, someone with a health impairment or condition account for £2billion per annum. Disabled people account on average for 20% of a business' customers.

They also reveal that 83% of disabled people 'walked away' from inaccessible or unwelcoming businesses, or made a conscious decision NOT to visit somewhere if they believed there were not suitable, clean toilet facilities for them.

The concept of a Changing Places toilet was born out of the need to accommodate people who need the help of at least one carer, to enable them to go 'out and about' locally or further afield. Current 'disabled' (Document M type) toilets are often unsuitable, being too small, or not having appropriate equipment.

BS8300:2009 Design of Buildings and their Approaches to Meet the Needs of Disabled People – Code of Practice

The Standard sets down good practice for accessible building design in premises to which the public have access. It advises that disabled people should be able to find and use suitable toilet accommodation no less easily than non-disabled people. The time taken to reach a toilet is an essential element to be taken into account in its siting.

The Standard further recommends that any larger building where the public have access in numbers of where visitors might be expected to spend longer periods of time, should have a Changing Places facility.

A Changing Places toilet aims to meet the needs of people who need a carer to assist, and provides as a minimum:

- The right equipment i.e. a height adjustable adult sized changing bench, height adjustable wash basin, shower and shower seat, and track or mobile hoist system
- Enough space, to enable maneuvering for the disabled person and up to two carers, for a centrally located (peninsular) toilet with room either side for carers, and a screen or curtain to allow some privacy
- A safe and clean environment, ie wide tear-off paper to cover the bench, a large waste bin and a non-slip floor.

Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 replaces the Disability Discrimination Act. Under it, service providers are required to make reasonable changes – including to the built environment – where a disabled customer or potential customer would otherwise be at a substantial disadvantage; previously, such changes were only required if it would have been impossible or unreasonably difficult for the person to access or use the service.

The Equality Act 2010 requires that service providers must think ahead and take steps to address barriers that impede disabled people. You should not wait until a disabled person experiences difficulties using a service.¹

¹Government Equalities Office Equality Act 2010 Disabilities Quick Start Guide

Those changes should comply with the legal and 'good practice' guidelines outlined above.

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Toilet accommodation needs to be suitable, not only for disabled people, but for all people who use the building.

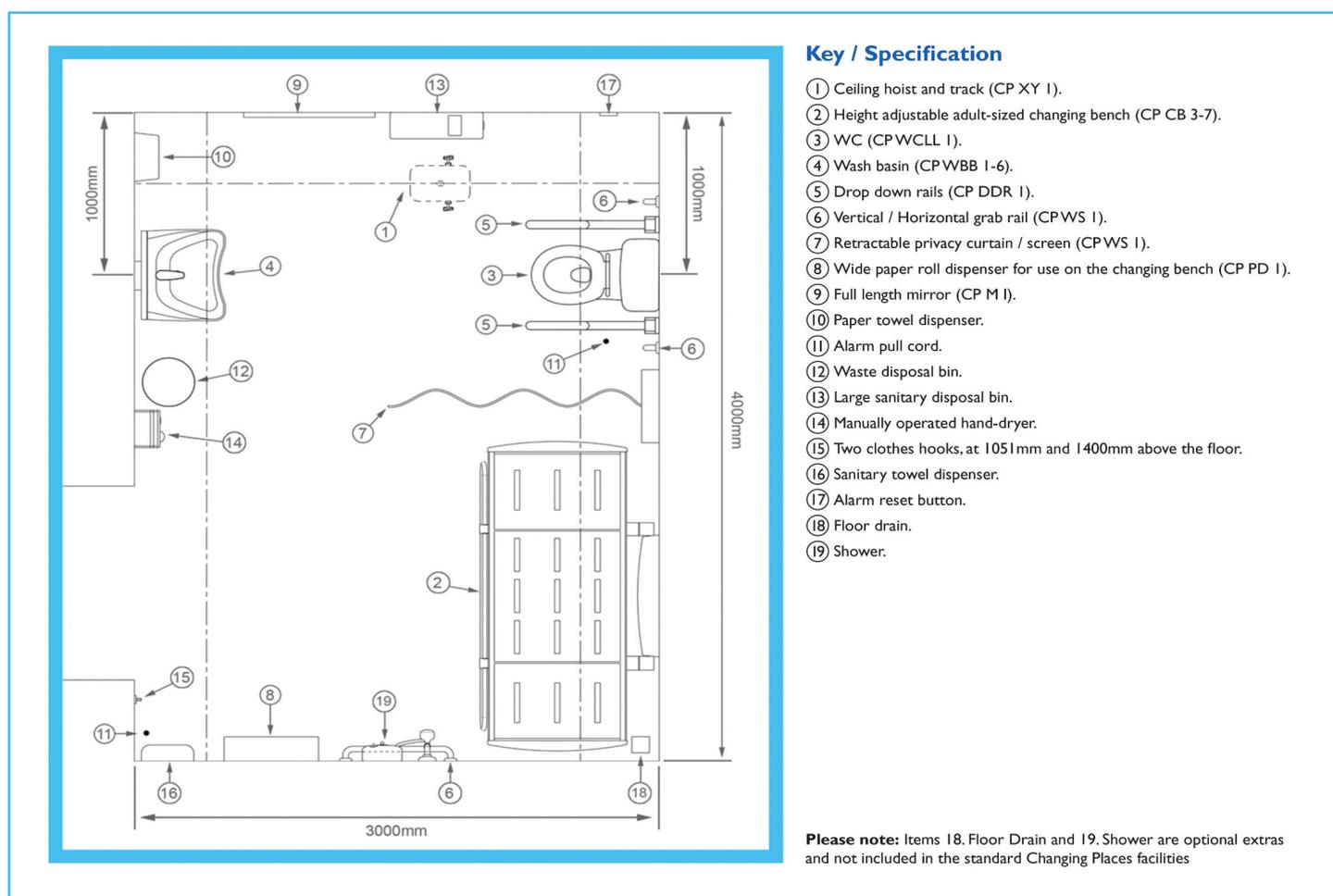
Some disabled people need to use a toilet more frequently than other users. The time needed to reach a wheelchair-accessible toilet should therefore be kept to a minimum when considering the location of unisex toilet accommodation.

In large building developments, separate facilities for baby changing and an enlarged unisex toilet incorporating an adult changing table are desirable – a Hygiene Room or 'Changing Places' toilet (see above, BS8300:2009).

Changing Places specification

As a minimum, under British Standards (BS8300:2009) a Changing Places toilet should be 12m², and include:

- peninsular WC
- wash basin, preferably height-adjustable
- changing bench, adult sized, height-adjustable
- wide tear-off paper roll for the bench
- tracking hoist
- privacy screen
- waste bin
- non-slip floor
- shower/floor drain (managed settings only)



In addition to the specialist equipment, standard accessible toilet features such as an emergency alarm and grab rails must be provided.

Many organisations choosing to install a Changing Places toilet further choose to replace the standard WC with a 'wash and dry' (automatic) toilet. The in-built douching and drying of a wash and dry toilet enhance independence and dignity for the user, and improve hygiene for the user and their carer(s).

The Clos-o-Mat Solution

Established over 50 years ago, Clos-o-Mat is the UK's largest and longest-established specialist supplier of disabled toileting equipment.

Clos-o-Mat has a proven and established track record in the provision and maintenance of Changing Places toilets, and is now the UK's premier choice for a Changing Places facility.

It is unique in offering – in-house – full design advice, supply, installation, commissioning and maintenance of the full ambit of standard, and complimentary, equipment for a Changing Places toilet (or Hygiene Room).

The company has already undertaken dozens of Changing Places installations, including:

- Wembley Stadium
- National Exhibition Centre
- Cadbury World
- Marwell Wildlife
- Gatwick Airport
- Birmingham Airport
- YMCA
- IKEA
- Trafford Centre
- Bullring
- Wetherspoons (Velvet Coaster; Blackpool)



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