

Information Sheet



24. Accessibility Issues

The definition of Accessibility is the degree to which a product, device, service, or environment is available to as many people as possible. It is also considered to be the "ability to access".

The Equality Act 2010 states that disabled people should have equal access to education, employment, goods, services, facilities and transport. The Act also made it unlawful for service providers, landlords and other persons to discriminate against disabled people. Service providers have had to take reasonable steps to remove, alter or provide a reasonable means of avoiding an obstacle which makes it difficult for disabled people to use a service. These are called 'reasonable adjustments'.

Services can include anything that is providing a service to the public, whether it is free or there is a charge. It includes retailers, public amenities such as parks and railway stations and organisations providing advice. For a full list of what would be considered a 'service' under Equality Act, please refer to the Equality and Human Rights Commission (www.equalityhumanrights.com), Equality Act guidance on the UK government website (www.gov.uk) or the CAB website (www.adviceguide.org.uk).

What is considered a reasonable adjustment for a large organisation like a national or multi-national organisation may be different from what is a reasonable adjustment for a small local shop. It is about what is practical for the individual service provider and what resources the business may have. They are not required to make adjustments if they are unaffordable or impractical because these would be deemed unreasonable.

Example of reasonable adjustments in **employment** could be:

- Having workspace in an accessible environment. For example, having a lift to a floor above ground level, adequate space to access individual's desk, specialist chairs and desks.
- Adaptations to allow employee to use work-related equipment. For example, wrist rests, screen readers, specialist software to allow individual to use computer.
- Flexible hours, length of shifts.

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Employers who display the 'Two ticks' logo on their job adverts and applications forms have demonstrated that they are committed to employing disabled people.

Examples of reasonable adjustments in **services** could include:

- Installing an induction loop for people who are hearing impaired.
- Providing disability awareness training for staff who have contact with the public.
- Providing larger, bolder signage for people with impaired vision.
- Putting in a ramp at the entrance to a building which has steps.
- Having a disabled-access toilet.
- Having a fully accessible website for people with disabilities.

There are a number of groups across Cheshire East that campaign for accessibility for people with disabilities. They campaign and raise awareness with the public and service providers about potential access issues and how to improve in Cheshire East.

The logo for Macclesfield Accessibility Group features four stylized cartoon faces (two women and two men) above the text 'Macclesfield' in a large, green, sans-serif font, with 'Accessibility Group' in a smaller, green, sans-serif font below it.	<p>Macclesfield Accessibility Group Is managed by: Disability Information Bureau, Pierce Street, Macclesfield, Cheshire SK11 6ER. Telephone 01625 501759. Email: Info@dibservices.org.uk.</p>
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For more information and guidance on accessibility please contact the Disability Information Bureau.

If you are aware of any other access groups operating in Cheshire East, please let us know so we can update our material.