

Code of practice for

Access for the disabled to buildings —

(Formerly CP 96-1)

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Foreword

This British Standard code of practice is a revision of CP 96:1967 “Access for the disabled to buildings: Part 1: General recommendations”. The intention was that CP 96-1 should be used in conjunction with subsequent Parts giving recommendations for particular types of buildings. As it happened, organizations and individuals concerned with disabled people and the accessibility of public buildings immediately endorsed CP 96 in its Part 1 form, and subsequent Parts were not prepared.

The BSI committee responsible for CP 96 has taken the opportunity of this revision to reissue it as a single document, to make it more concise, to update its recommendations in line with metric practice and to clarify how it can be used in practice. The code concentrates on the essential provisions that need to be incorporated in buildings to ensure that they are conveniently usable by disabled people. It does not pretend to be comprehensive.

In the case of certain building types which are financed in the UK from public funds, for example health, welfare and educational buildings, the government departments concerned recommend standards of provision and design including those for disabled people. In certain instances their recommendations are more stringent than those in this code, and reference should be made to the appropriate departments e.g. the Department of Health and Social Security, and the Department of Education and Science.

A British Standard does not purport to include all the necessary provisions of a contract. Users of British Standards are responsible for their correct application.

This code of practice represents a standard of good practice and takes the form of recommendations. Compliance with it does not confer immunity from relevant statutory and legal requirements.

Summary of pages

The document comprises a front cover, an inside front cover, pages i and ii, pages 1 to 14, an inside back cover and a back cover.

This standard has been updated (see copyright date) and may have had amendments incorporated. This will be indicated in the amendment table on the inside front cover.

Section 1. General

1 Scope

This code details the basic architectural provisions that need to be incorporated in new buildings to make them convenient for use by disabled people, including those dependent for mobility on wheelchairs and those affected by hearing or sight impairments. It is concerned primarily with the movement by disabled people into and around buildings and, except in cases of emergency, out of buildings.

While the recommendations have been prepared for application to new buildings, they can be used as guide-lines for the adaptation of existing buildings. They are applicable to all buildings that disabled people may use as members of the general public, as visitors, or for purposes of employment. Domestic housing, which is covered in BS 5619, is excluded.

Building types to which the recommendations of the code may be applied include:

- a) transport and industrial buildings (e.g. rail, road, sea and air travel buildings and associated concourses, car-parking buildings and factories);
- b) administrative and commercial buildings (e.g. official administration buildings including courts, offices, banks, post offices, shops, department stores and public service buildings including fire, ambulance and police stations);
- c) health and welfare buildings (e.g. hospitals, health centres, surgeries and residential homes);
- d) refreshment, entertainment and recreation buildings (e.g. restaurants, public houses, concert halls, theatres, cinemas, conference buildings, community buildings, swimming pools and sports buildings);
- e) religious buildings;
- f) educational, cultural and scientific buildings (e.g. schools, universities, colleges, zoos, museums, art galleries, libraries and exhibition buildings);
- g) residential buildings other than domestic housing (e.g. hostels, hotels and residential clubs).

The recommendations also apply to spaces between buildings.

2 References

The titles of the standards publications referred to in this code are listed on the inside back cover.

3 Definitions

Precise definitions of the term “disabled people”, “wheelchair users” and “ambulant disabled people” as they are used in this code are in effect determined by the parameters of the recommendations. For the purposes of this code the following definitions apply.

3.1 disabled people

people with a physical, hearing or sight impairment which affects their mobility or their use of buildings

3.2 ambulant disabled people

disabled people who are able to walk but who may depend on prostheses (artificial limbs), orthoses (calipers), sticks, crutches or walking aids

3.3 wheelchair users

disabled people who depend on a wheelchair for mobility

NOTE Recommendations in this code for wheelchair users cater for people using:

- a) attendant-propelled wheelchairs for indoor use, or indoor and outdoor use;
- b) powered wheelchairs for indoor use, or indoor and outdoor use;
- c) wheelchairs with main propelling wheels intended for indoor use, or indoor and outdoor use.

3.4 access

“access” is deemed to mean access to and use of facilities, and egress except in cases of emergency

3.5 accessible area

an area to which disabled people, including wheelchair users, may gain access

4 Interpretation of the code

For purposes of practical application this code may be referred to as “BS 5810, Access for the disabled to buildings”.

Where, in respect of the construction of a particular building or buildings, the client, building manager, architect or other responsible person requires that the building or buildings should be accessible to disabled people, the instruction “This building should comply with the requirements of BS 5810, Access for the disabled to buildings” will be taken to mean that provision is to be made for disabled people including wheelchair users, i.e. that all relevant recommendations under the headings “Approach” (clause 6), “Internal planning” (clause 7) and “Lavatories” (clause 8) are observed. The supplementary “General design recommendations” (clause 9) should be observed wherever appropriate.

External approach steps and internal staircases for general use should conform to the recommendations of this code, but unless recommendations for level or ramped approach (6.2) and lift provision (7.3) are observed, the requirements of the code will not be held to be satisfied; the use of the term “areas to be accessible” in the code implies the observance of this principle.

5 Relationship of the code to Building Regulations¹⁾ and British Standards

This code deals with access to and use of buildings by disabled people, in which respect it is more specific than associated British Standards (e.g. BS 5395 “Code of practice for stairs”) or the Building Regulations 1976 (e.g. Part H “Stairways, ramps, balustrades and vehicle barriers”). There are areas where the building regulations are more comprehensive than this code, e.g. in respect of the guarding of stairways and ramps.

Recommendations in this code for approach steps (6.3) and internal staircases (7.7) distinguish between external and internal stairs, whereas BS 5395 does not. On the other hand, BS 5395 distinguishes between semi-public and public stairs; this distinction is not affected by disability criteria and is not therefore made in this code.

This code does not cover the provision of means of escape in case of fire, which is dealt with for certain buildings in CP 3:Chapter IV-1, CP 3:Chapter IV-2 and CP 3:Chapter IV-3²⁾.

For maintained educational establishments advice about access, which needs to be considered in parallel with emergency escape, should be sought from the Department of Education and Science.

¹⁾ The reference here is to the Building Regulations 1976 (SI 1976 No. 1676) applicable in England (outside Inner London) and Wales. The relationship of the code to regulations elsewhere in the United Kingdom is similar.

²⁾ CP 3: Chapter IV, Parts 1, 2 and 3 are being revised as Parts of BS 5588.