

LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE - 26 APRIL 2004

FROM THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES

REPORT TITLE: Disability Discrimination Act – Fourth Progress Report

FOR ACTION

NAME OF WARDS

None Specific

FP REF: Cor-03/04-56

1. SUMMARY

As with previous reports this fourth progress report summarises the steps being taken by the Council to improve access to services for people with disabilities as required by Part III of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. It also includes references to Part IV of the Act on education, which began to come into effect in September 2002, and to new disability legislation in the form of a draft bill, published in December 2003, which the Government aims to have on the statute book before the next election. This report particularly focuses on the progress for making council buildings and other key services accessible for disabled people to meet the 1st October 2004 DDA deadline. It also reviews the advances made across the Council with the I&DeA/Grass Roots disability awareness scheme and outlines other key areas of progress.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the progress outlined in this fourth progress report is noted.
- 2.2 That developments and initiatives, in line with the Disability Discrimination Act, to improve service delivery for people with disabilities in the areas indicated in this report are brought forward in future progress reports.

3. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 The capital allocation for schemes in line with the Disability Discrimination Act for 2003/4 was £363,000. During 2003/4 an additional £238,000 was available to be spent as part of the Schools Access Initiative. Together this takes capital allocation in 2003/4 to around £600,000. This figure will tend to be an understatement as some access work was undertaken automatically as part of new schemes rather than as a result of specific DDA allocations. For example, Environmental Services had an allocation of £1.5m for pavements and roads in 2003/4 some of which would have involved crossing improvements. A further £470,000 DDA capital allocation has been made for 2004/5 to which £367,000 of schools access money can be added. Again further work will be undertaken as part of new schemes.

4.0 STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 In general terms there are no overall staffing implications arising directly from this report although, as noted in previous reports, some of the access initiatives - such as training - will have an impact on the way in which staff provide services. As schemes to improve access are implemented, the employment of staff with disabilities is being facilitated in line with the Disability Discrimination Act.
- 4.2 More specifically, a Welfare to Work Co-ordinator has been in post since April 2003. The role of the Welfare to Work Co-ordinator was defined by the Welfare to Work Joint Investment Plan, published in 2001, primarily to co-ordinate and support the implementation of the JIP, which outlined how services should be developed in partnership to meet the employment needs of disabled people. In addition, the post-holder is responsible for working with officers across Brent Council to champion and improve the working conditions and employment opportunities for potential and existing disabled employees. Funding is being sought to secure the post long-term. A summary of the Welfare to Work Co-ordinator's activities and those of Human Resources are set out in section 7.8.
- 4.3 In addition, the Council's Corporate Diversity Team was established in August 2003 to provide support services across the full range of equalities issues. A summary of the Team's activities relating to disability issues is included in the body of this report (see section 7.7).

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) makes it unlawful to discriminate against disabled persons in connection with employment and the provisions of goods facilities and services. A detailed statement is contained in Appendix A.
- 5.2 The duty to make reasonable adjustments to improve access to services is already in force and the duty to make adjustments to physical features of premises to improve access by disabled persons comes into force in October 2004.
- 5.3 The Special Education Needs and Disability Act 2001 (SEN) and the Special Education Needs and Disability Act 2001(Commencement No 5) Order 2002, which brings the remainder of the act into effect, amends the DDA so as to make it unlawful for schools to discriminate against disabled pupils.
- 5.4 Failure to comply with the DDA is unlawful and an aggrieved person may bring an action against the Council in the County Court. The court may order compensation against the local authority if it is satisfied that the local authority has failed to comply with the statutory duty. Failure to comply with the provisions of the SEN may lead to an action being brought against the local authority in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal which may make a declaration that the local authority has discriminated against the applicant.

5.5 The Government published a new draft disability discrimination bill in December 2003. Currently the bill is going through a pre-legislative scrutiny and consultation process to which the Government will respond after April. If the proposed changes are accepted, new disability legislation will follow within one to two years. The main aims of the draft bill as it stands are to introduce a general duty on public authorities to promote disability equality (similar to the Race Relations Amendment Act), to widen the definition of disability (e.g. to include with HIV, multiple sclerosis, and cancer) and extend the DDA to cover most public sector activities. There are also proposals relating to rented property, transport and private clubs.

6.0 DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Diversity implications are an integral aspect of this report. Reference to the establishment of the Corporate Diversity Team is made in paragraph 4.4 above and their activities in respect of disability are covered in section 7.7 below. Because of the nature of the report it focuses directly on the implications arising from work around disability equality. Members of the Corporate Diversity Team will however, be attending a forthcoming event hosted by Maria Eagle MP to launch a new guide from the Disability Rights Commission on the information and access needs of the disabled black, minority and ethnic community. Officers will then report back on the implications to the DDA Working Group and this should help the council better consider the needs of the whole community including BME service users.

7.0 DETAIL

7.1 In common with previous Annual Progress Reports, this report deals primarily with those aspects of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) which affect the Council's delivery of services to disabled people. The existing statutory duty for the Council to make its services accessible was extended to cover education services from September 2002 and by October 2004, the Council will be required to make reasonable adjustments to public buildings and other physical features which inhibit access for disabled people. (See above and Appendix A for a summary of the main provisions of the Act)

7.2 Co-ordination of the Council's plans and initiatives continues to be undertaken through the Disability Discrimination Act Working Group established in April 2000 by the Corporate Management Team. This Group, sponsored by the Director of Corporate Services and chaired by the Head of Property Services, meets three times a year and comprises representatives from Council service areas and from Voluntary Sector partners. (See Appendix B for details).

7.3 Members may want to know that a report Corporate Management Team in January this year it was agreed that:

A detailed review of progress on buildings' accessibility would be undertaken by Management Teams in each service area to maximise progress by 1st October 2004.

Service Directors would seek to make alternative arrangements for the users where public buildings cannot reasonably be made accessible,

Service Area, services and units would complete a brief schedule of arrangements for access to services and information and take steps to address areas of weakness, ready for 1st October.

Information and publicity would be prepared regarding accessibility across the Council to be circulated to the public for 1st October.

That the DDA Working Group continues to monitor progress and highlight issues in the run up to 1st October.

Principal Areas of Progress

7.4 The integrated approach to improving services for disabled people noted in previous Annual Progress Reports is being maintained. Improvements are being sought not just to facilitate physical access to Council premises, but also to the quality of the service provided whether or not disabled people wish or are able to visit council offices, and via the level of staff training. The integrated four-fold approach to service improvement covers: access to buildings/public spaces (e.g. ramps, automatic doors, dropped kerbs, tactile paving); access to services (e.g. induction loops, signage, welfare rights home visits); access to Information (e.g. audiocassettes, large print, Braille, Council's Web site); and staff training (both general awareness, and more specialist – e.g. for front-line staff).

7.5 Since last year's Progress Report, the Diversity Team has been established, the Welfare to Work Co-ordinator has taken up their post and further progress has been made with the implementation of initiatives and specific schemes. Key aspects of these developments are summarised in the remainder of this report. (Other details of progress in 2003/4 and plans for 2004/5 reported by services are set out in Appendix C in line with the above four-fold approach.) In view of the October 2004 DDA deadline, attention is first turned to the progress being made to improve access to buildings open to the public and then to developments in other aspects of the Council's service as follows:

- Access to buildings open to the public, schools, physical environment)
- The cross-Council disability awareness training (I&DeA scheme)
- Corporate Diversity Team activities
- Welfare To Work Joint Investment Plan and HR
- Guidance and Publicity proposals for October 2004

7.6 Access to Buildings Open to the Public, Schools, Physical Environment)

Council Buildings:

- 7.6.1 As reported last year the Council spent over the first three years of the programme towards compliance with the Act by October 2004 some £2,400,000 on DDA works to its buildings. A further £363,000 was allocated for the year 2003 /04, with a further £ 470,000 in 2004/ 05.
- 7.6.2 Currently there are some 36 buildings open to the public which have passed the authority's standard of acceptable access (being more than 60 % compliant either with Part M of the Building Regulations or Best Practice guidelines). These 36 buildings include the major, most heavily visited offices such as the Town Hall, Brent House, Mahatma Gandhi House, Chesterfield House, The Willesden Green Library Centre etc. A further 28 public buildings are due to meet this standard by October 2004, bringing the total to 64.
- 7.6.3 In addition, there are a further 7 buildings due to be compliant in the months after October. Typically such buildings are subject to plans for more major schemes of renovation, involve funds from outside bodies such as Sports England or the Learning Skills Council - but which, when complete, will provide accessible facilities. There are 5 BACES premises in this category - which come under separate Special Education legislation requiring compliance by September 2005 – plus a sports pavilion and a youth & community centre, taking the overall total of accessible buildings to 71.
- 7.6.4 An additional 18 buildings are, for various reasons, either not planned to be compliant or will not be compliant in the foreseeable future. They include, for example, the Grange Museum (due to be relocated to the Willesden Library site). Other buildings in this category are subject to new PFI schemes (such as the one for the Willesden Sports Centre, closing in March this year and to be demolished shortly thereafter), or are under investigation for major new development; in either case the new buildings will need to be DDA compliant. In some other instances the building may be due for demolition or plans for compliance are in abeyance because the future use of a short life property is under review, the building is vacant or because the lease is due to expire with little prospect of renewal. (Certain community and social service uses fall into this latter category.)
- 7.6.5 There are at the time of writing around some eleven further buildings where, in some cases, access works are in progress but where the compliance position, or the responsibility for ensuring that compliance, is in the process of being clarified. For example the service at the Vale Farm and Charteris Sports Centres is provided by a contractor whose capital programme is being verified. Similarly, the situation with certain sports pavilions – where development work is awaiting the release of 'section 106' Town Planning funds and some youth and community and social services premises - is also being looked into. In other instances the question of the public use of some buildings is being urgently reviewed – for example in the case of certain

properties transferred to BHP. The objective is for most if not all of these remaining buildings open to the public to be accessible by October or soon thereafter - with options or reasoned statements available in respect of those which may not be. To this end monthly meetings are taking place between Corporate Property, the relevant staff from Service Areas and the Council's access consultants.

Schools:

- 7.6.6 As mentioned above schools are subject to separate disability legislation requiring education premises to be accessible by September 2005. There is an ongoing programme of school physical access improvement work – funded from the Government's funded Schools Access Initiative - to meet this legislative timetable. In 2003/4 the Council received £238,000 of this funding with a further £367,000 expected to be available in 2004/5. The programme includes provision of lifts to upper floors with expenditure also targeted to improve facilities at schools housing Special Education Needs units (e.g. Oakington Manor, Mora, Kingsbury High, Kingsbury Green) with pilot surveys to establish DDA compliance. – (see Appendix C 1 (a) and (b) for details.) In addition guidance has been issued about organising accessible meetings and steps are being taken for schools to develop matching accessibility plans which the Education Service is progressing.

Physical Environment:

- 7.6.7 The Transportation Unit continues to make good progress with access improvements to the physical environment. By the end of March 2004 around 95% of pedestrian crossings were due to be made accessible - up from 81% a year ago. The level of funding for 2004/2005 will enable the programme to be completed and 100% of controlled crossings will be accessible. Access improvements will also be carried out as part of other physical works on the highway - for example the implementation of local safety schemes, traffic management schemes, safer routes to school and town centre schemes.

7.7 Disability Awareness Training – I&DeA Distance Learning Scheme

- 7.7.1 As reported last year, the extension during 2003 of this scheme to all Council staff was seen as an important initiative designed to help make Council's services more responsive to the needs of disabled people. The significance attached to staff awareness has been underlined by NHS Executive Research of 1000 Disabled People which concluded that: 'The largest single barrier identified by disabled people who participated in this research was that of inappropriate staff attitudes and behaviour.' Members may recall the I&DeA training pack – which requires participants to read a workbook and then take an automated interactive telephone quiz - was well received in a Brent pilot and had been the subject of similarly favourable reports from other public bodies and national private sector companies. It was introduced to raise basic disability awareness more

widely across the Council and complement specific disability training undertaken by front-line services with high levels of contact with the public - such as the One Stop Shops, libraries and cemeteries. (Appendix C Section 4 has details of other training initiatives.)

- 7.7.2 Launched council wide with a letter from the Chief Executive to all staff (attached to the mid-January 2003 payslips) plus other publicity in Brent Matters, posters etc, some 2,200 staff have taken part with around 200 more in Social Services, who embarked on the scheme later than other services, yet to participate. Reaction by staff to the scheme has been encouraging judging by the results of the evaluation questions to which participants are asked to respond at the end of the telephone quiz. In a sample of units taking part a large majority of staff (around 80% or more) indicated the scheme had helped them to provide a better service and obtain a good understanding of the DDA (around 75% and over), while approaching two thirds had enjoyed the scheme as much or more than face to face training. Since September 2003 new staff joining the Council have taken part in the scheme as part of the rolling programme of Corporate Inductions. Steps to ensure staff employed by Council contractors are aware of the needs of disabled people are being explored.

7.8 Corporate Diversity Team Activities

- 7.8.1 Established in August 2003 to provide support over the full range of equalities issues, the Team have introduced Equality Impact Assessment training across the Council and, having worked closely with CMT on the adoption of the Equality Standard for Local Government, the council has now achieved level 1 of the Standard in less than a year. Both of these initiatives tackle a range of equality issues, including disability. A member of the Team sits on the DDA Working Group to ensure its activities are co-ordinated with other Council and voluntary group initiatives.
- 7.8.2 Information about disability matters and services has been published on the Team's web pages - including legislation, services supporting disabilities and a list of useful links to local voluntary sector organisations. The Team have also reported on news from the national disability agenda in its quarterly newsletter 'Kaleidoscope', which is emailed to the top 250 managers in the Council and elected members. In addition, the Team has recently reviewed 'Disability Confident' - an interactive learning resource - for People Management magazine (the magazine of the Institute for Personnel and Development).
- 7.8.3 Future plans of the team include working with Social Services on the council's Guide to Accessibility to make it more widely available and reviewing with the Translation/Interpretation Service including the provision of their services for disabled people. The Team will also be supporting the work of Brent Association of Disabled People in a consultation project on accessibility in the borough.

7.9 Welfare To Work Joint Investment Plan (JIP) Co-ordinator & Human Resources

- 7.9.1 Appointed in April 2003, the JIP Co-ordinator has worked with external agencies, council services and service users to promote independent living and social inclusion for disabled people. Developments with external bodies have included the adoption by the Priority Action Group for people with physical and sensory impairments of a proposal to provide a “One Stop Skills Shop” service in collaboration with organisations such as BADP, College of North West London and London On-Line. The Co-ordinator has also participated in a number of other Forums (e.g. the Employment Support Forum, the Transitions Group, the Priority Action Group for APD and Sensory Impairments and the Mentoring Committee) to promote a coordinated approach by Brent Council and its partners to the improvement of employment opportunities for and independence of disabled people.
- 7.9.2 Within the Council the interests of both potential and existing disabled employees are being advanced in collaboration with the Corporate Diversity Team and HR. In particular, the JIP Co-ordinator has promoted a higher profile for the Disabled Staff Forum with external speakers resulting in higher levels of attendance and recommendations for action - for example, a proposed HR training programme for managers and front-line staff on workplace and service provider attitudes to mental health.
- 7.9.3 Over the next year further initiatives are planned by the Co-ordinator to confront disability matters, highlight the aspirations and concerns of disabled employees and promote good council practice. A Disabled Staff Forum is due to deal with the issue of ‘disclosure’ and in June 2004, Brent Council in association with BADP will host a “Life Opportunities and Employment” conference with the objective of establishing a successful network of relevant stakeholders who can take a lead in promoting independent living, education, training and employment opportunities for disabled people. A number of high profile disabled speakers will be contributing to the event - including David, Morris Senior Co-ordinator Disability and Equality at the Greater London Authority and Peter White, the BBC disability correspondent and broadcaster.
- 7.9.4 At the same time Human Resources has continued its relationship with the Employers Forum on Disability, and the latest Annual Workforce Monitoring Report illustrates that the number of disabled people in the Council has remained stable. Good news in terms of retention. In addition, a number of staff with a disability are participating in the April 2004 – March 2005 mentoring scheme which HR will be monitoring.

8.9 Guidance & Publicity Proposals for October 2004

8.9.1 Since 1999 when DDA provisions relating to access to goods and services came into effect, a number of corporate communications and guidelines for council services have been produced covering information, printed matter and organising accessible meetings. In 2004/5 the Corporate Diversity Team, in conjunction with Corporate Communications and the Welfare to Work Co-ordinator, will be revising the current information and issuing new corporate standards that will include meetings, training and signage. The aim is to consolidate appropriate practices and standards into an information pack, which will be posted on both the Intranet and Internet and made available to partnership organisations and the public. It is anticipated that the information pack will be ready for launching through the Improving Brent programme and as part of a programme of publicity for October 1st 2004 when the remaining aspects of the DDA as it currently stands will come into force.

8.10 Key Aspects of Service Area Delivery

8.10.1 Services with a high level of contact with the public, such as the One Stop Shops and Libraries, have fairly fully developed policies and practices and other services, such as BACES and Transportation, have been developing theirs. Significant developments are summarised below.

One Stop Shops

8.10.2 As previously reported all six One Stop Shops have a range of facilities and services to meet the needs of disabled people developed in line with its access audit action plan. Over the last year a number of additional improvements have been implemented.

8.10.3 Automatic doors have been installed at Kingsbury and Kilburn locations – the latter will alert customers that the automatic door opens outwards – and all OSS glass entry doors have a yellow visibility strip. Inside the OSSs there is now better signage with more use of symbols to make customers aware of the facilities available. Similarly, there has been an improved use of symbols on information leaflets. Induction loops systems at all locations have been upgraded and are now equipped with continuous testing equipment and portable loops have been purchased to improve accessibility at other work positions.

8.10.4 The interpreter request service - in operation for around 18 months - has received very positive customer feedback. The service is now available on the 4th Tuesday in the month at the Town Hall. At the same time the OSS audio tape for blind customers is to be made available via a dedicated information line covering opening times, facilities available, use of the service, surgeries and service performance. Customers with further enquiries will, from May 2004, be connected to a Customer Service Officer.

- 8.10.5 The OSS service is currently reviewing access arrangements in its reception and waiting areas with the Council's access consultant and will continue to monitor accessibility and training issues in partnership with Social Services via the Disability & Mental Health User Forum. (Other details of the OSS service improvements are in Appendix C.)

Library Service

- 8.10.6 Previous progress reports have detailed the range of physical and service access improvements undertaken at Brent libraries - including the installation of automatic doors, accessible WC's, induction loops, adaptive technology to help disabled people use the library service and maintaining the Council's web site links to specialist disability organisations. The service intends to continue to identify improvements to meet the needs of disabled people in consultation with access organisations and has recently established a Library Service Disability Working Group, representing staff across the service to develop a 'disability plan'. This plan will involve the production of a disability statement and include: - further assessments of the needs of, and ways to promote the service for, disabled people; developing a communications plan - using newsletters; arranging events at which aspects of library provision for disabled people will be demonstrated: arranging family learning sessions for disabled parents; organising mental health awareness training; and identifying further buildings improvements not covered by 2000 audits. (Other details of Library service improvements are in Appendix C)

Transportation Service - Communications

- 8.10.7 The Transportation unit, in addition to their programme of access improvements to pavements and in town centres will, over the next year, continue to implement its Disability Communication Action Plan to improve access to information. The strategy is particularly aimed at improving communication with disabled customers and is intended to complement the cross-council I&DeA/Grass Roots training initiative. The Transportation Service Communication Action Plan includes a programme for offering documents in larger font sizes, instructions about the use of type faces, advice for arranging public meetings and exhibitions including information about accessible venues, installing a Mincom service, the provision of Documents in audio or Braille format and training staff in the use of clear English up to 'crystal mark' standards.

Trading Standards

- 8.10.8 Trading Standards has similarly introduced across the board access improvements. In addition to a wheelchair access ramp to their building, a designated parking bay has been created, a disabled WC installed and a 'mobile display unit' (used for exhibitions like the Brent Respect Festival) has wheelchair access. Apart from physical access a number of improvements have been made to improve access to the service itself. Two induction loop systems have been purchased - one is portable for use at meetings or home visits, the other is installed in an interview room. All leaflets are available in

large print with some offering advice for elderly people on, for example, mobility aids. To facilitate contact with disabled customers the service has a Minicom, offers home visits and has taken steps to ensure its web pages can be read by web-site reading software. Further improvements are planned based on a DDA audit of the service.

Brent Adult and Community Education Service (BACES)

- 8.10.9 Improvements to the seven main sites in Brent include improved signage, provision of disabled WC's at certain centres and the introduction of better lighting. During 2004/5 the installation of lifts at two centres is planned. In March 2004 the Service is undertaking a DDA audit on its main buildings as well as a condition survey and five-year maintenance programme. Capital funds are received from the Learning and Skills Council specifically for bringing the building up to a standard that meets DDA requirements. In 2004 / 2005 the service hopes to receive upwards of £250,000 for planned works. Service improvements include further installation of induction loops, large screen computers in teaching rooms, additional ramped external access, and alterations to reception areas. A BACES working party reviews disability requirements and has produced a Disability Statement for students - the next revision is due Summer 2004. This statement, entitled Disability on the Agenda – Choices and Rights covers advice and help for disabled people on how to join a course and the support facilities available - including equipment and services (such as Braille printers, induction loops and booking sign language interpreters).

Voluntary Sector Involvement & Feedback

- 8.10.10 The voluntary sector has continued to make a positive contribution to the DDA Working Group during 2003 (see Appendix B for members) and promises to be particularly active, especially in the lead up to October 1st 2004, working the Welfare to Work Coordinator helping to promote good practice and new initiatives. In particular, the Brent Access Group is being re-launched and is working together with BADP and the Council to host a Consultation Day to be held on April 29th at Brent Town Hall focusing on risk and evacuation procedures across Brent buildings, especially those most commonly used by the community at large. Further joint working is envisaged with the Diversity and Communications Teams on the integration and updating of corporate standards on accessible print, meetings, training programmes and signage and with the One Stop Shops on the possibility of developing of a dedicated helpline for disabled people.

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- 8.10.11 Further details of access improvements reported by services are set out in Appendix C - including developments under the Schools Access Initiative mentioned earlier in this report.

9 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Details of Documents:

1. DDA First Progress Report to Cabinet 9 April 2001/Corporate Deciding Committee 8 May 2001
2. DDA Second Progress Report to Corporate Scrutiny Committee 10 April 2002 and Corporate Deciding Committee 17 April 2002
3. DDA Third Progress Report to The Executive 28 April 2003
4. Report to Corporate Management Team 16 June 2000 (establishing DDA WG)
5. Report to Corporate Management Team 6 September 2001 (Equalities Action Plans 2001 onwards and Service Development Plans 2002/3 onwards)
6. Reports to Corporate Management Team 21 March 2002, 5 September 2002 and 24 July 2003 on Council wide use of I&DeA disability awareness scheme.
7. Report to Corporate Management Team 29 January 2004 – Building and Key Service Compliance – 1st October 2004.
8. Minutes of Disability Discrimination Act Working Group
9. Access Audit of Brent Council Buildings - Amey Property Services and subsequently Vectra Property Consulting for Brent Corporate Services (November 2000 plus updates)

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Disability Discrimination Act

Summary of Relevant Provisions

The Later Rights of Access to Goods, Facilities & Services)

Who is covered by the DDA?

A disabled person is covered by the Act if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. People who have had such a disability in the past are also covered.

Responsibilities of service providers under the Act

The DDA makes it unlawful for service providers to treat disabled people less favourably than they would treat other people, for a reason related to their disability, when offering or providing goods, facilities or services. Less favourable treatment is not unlawful if a service provider can show that in their reasonable opinion one of the five conditions set out in section 20 (4) of the DDA has been satisfied. It does not matter whether the service is paid for or free of charge. . The five conditions briefly are as follows:

- The treatment is necessary in order not to endanger the health or safety of any person (including the disabled person)
- The disabled person is incapable of entering into an enforceable agreement or of giving an informed consent, and for that reason the treatment is reasonable in that case
- The treatment is necessary because the provider of services would otherwise be unable to provide the service to members of the public
- The treatment is necessary in order for the provider of services to be able to provide the service to the disabled person or to other members of the public
- The difference in the terms on which the service is provided to the disabled person and those on which it is provided to other members of the public reflects the greater cost to the provider of services in providing the service to the disabled person.

What duties already apply to service providers?

The first rights of access came into effect in December 1996 and placed a duty on service providers not to refuse service to disabled people; offer a worse service; or offer service on worse terms for a reason related to the person's disability.

What duties will be placed on service providers?

Service providers will be required to make reasonable adjustments for disabled people so that they can use the service. The duty to make reasonable adjustments applies when access to a service is impossible or unreasonably difficult. This duty is being introduced in two stages.

From 1 October 1999

Service providers will be required to:

- make reasonable adjustments to policies, procedures or practices which exclude disabled people (for example, exempting working dogs from a "no dogs" policy in a restaurant);
- provide auxiliary aids and services (such as providing information on cassette or installing a portable induction loop) to enable or make it easier to use a service; and
- where a physical feature is a barrier to service, finding a reasonable alternative method of delivering the service (for example, it might be reasonable for a shop owner to bring different items on display to a place that the disabled person could access).

Service providers are not, at present, required to do anything that would mean making a permanent alteration to, or which would have a permanent effect on, the physical fabric of premises, fixture, fittings, furnishings, furniture, equipment or materials when providing an auxiliary aid. That requirement will take effect from 2004. However, the Act does not prevent service providers from taking the requirements of the 2004 provisions into account at an earlier stage. Indeed, it might be more effective and economical to adopt such an approach.

From September 2002

- Part IV of the DDA covers publicly funded Education as clarified in The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Act 2001 (SENDA). Privately funded education is largely covered by Part III. In summary the provisions are:
- 1st September 2002 - Duty not to discriminate
- 1st September 2003 - Duties to provide auxiliary aids and services
- 1st September 2005 - Duty to make physical adjustments

From 2004

Where there is a physical feature that makes it impossible or unreasonably difficult for a disabled person to make use of a service, service providers will have to take reasonable steps to remove, alter or avoid it (for example, by installing a permanent ramp to enable wheelchair users to gain access to premises previously reached only by steps) if the service cannot be provided by a reasonable alternative method.

DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION ACT WORKING GROUP

The Working Group meetings are chaired by the Head of Corporate Property Services. They are attended by the Director of Corporate Services, who is the CMT sponsor for disability, by representatives from Service Areas, the Councils Access Consultants and representatives from the voluntary sector listed below.

Voluntary Sector Membership as at February 2004

NAME	ORGANISATION
Andrea Richardson	VI Brent
Pauline Latchem	Brent Deaf Peoples Ltd
Simon Hesselberg	Brent Deaf Peoples Ltd
Karen Appleby	MS Society
Sarah Kawol	MS Society
Coleen Bartlett	MS Society
Geraldine Quinn	Brent Association for Disabled People
Leo Morgan	Brent Association for Disabled People
Vicki Raymond	Brent Access Group /CHC
Karen Shook Disability Services Advisor	Bent Primary Care NHS Trust & BAG
Jenny Ball	Brent MENCAP
Elcena Jeffers	Elcena Jeffers Foundation
Richard Downes	Brent Advocacy Concerns

Disability Discrimination Act

Schedule of Schemes & Services

(Main developments reported by services)

Each of the following four sections is divided:

- (a) Completed/Started 2003/4 and...**
- (b) To be Started/Introduced 2004/5**

1. ACCESS TO COUNCIL BUILDINGS/PUBLIC SPACES

(e.g. ramps, automatic doors, dropped kerbs)

2. ACCESS TO SERVICES

(e.g. induction loops, signage, welfare rights home visits)

3. ACCESS TO INFORMATION

(e.g. audiocassettes, large print, Braille, Website)

4. STAFF TRAINING

(General awareness, or more specialist)

1. ACCESS TO COUNCIL BUILDINGS/PUBLIC SPACES

(a) Completed/Started 2003/4

Council Service	Facility	Notes
Brent House OSS	General	Access audit conducted for Brent House to be revisited for proposed changes at the location.
Library Service	Automatic doors installed in: Cricklewood, Ealing Road, Harlesden, Kensal Rise, Kilburn, Kingsbury, Neasden, Preston, Tokyngton, & Town Hall libraries.	Willesden Green library already has automatic doors
Library Service	Public toilets at Kingsbury library adapted for wheelchair access.	
Schools:		
Leopold	Access Works	Rear Entrance Ramp
Kingsbury High School	Improvements to acoustic environment for Hearing Impaired	Works to both Upper and Lower Schools
Mora Primary		C/F to 04/05
Feasibility Studies	14 Surveys to update database	Preparation for 04/05
Malorees Jnr.	Access Lift and Ramp	
Lyon Park Jnr.	Stairclimber	Include Training
Barham Primary	Link Ramp	
Wembley Manor	Access Works	
Mt. Stewart	Access Ramps	
Northview Primary		C/F to 04/05
Uxendon Manor	Access Ramp	
Sudbury Primary	Level 4 Access Survey	Use as a Pilot for DDA
BACES:	Improvement to Reception area.	
	Surveys of all Buildings	All buildings for DDA
	Hearing loops	4 buildings
	Ramps	2 buildings
	Disabled Access improvements and Categorized lighting	2 sites

1. ACCESS TO COUNCIL BUILDINGS/PUBLIC SPACES

(b) To be Started/Introduced 2004/5

Council Service	Facility	Notes
Harlesden OSS	Pick up / drop off point outside building	Outstanding – to be addressed as part of the proposed location changes
Library Service	Automatic doors to be installed at Barham Park library	Installation at Barham Park library - grade 2 listed building subject to planning permission from English Heritage
Library Service	Harlesden library – lift to first floor LearnDirect Centre	Due by April 2004
Library Service	Accessible toilets	Public toilets at Harlesden library to be adapted for wheelchair access.
Library Service	Install step-nose edging on stairs	
Library Service	Implement other short and medium term 'important' access improvements to all Library Service buildings.	As identified in 2000 Access Audits (A1s and A2s) - Subject to capital approval
Schools:		
Roe Green Infants & Juniors	Access Works	Include preparatory work for Lift in 08/06
Barham	Access Works	
Wykeham	Access Works	
Malorees	Access Works	Include new front screen
Northview	Remodel front entrance & create disabled toilet	C/F to 03/04
Mora	Improve acoustic and visual environment	C/F to 032/04
Schools & Access Surveys x 14	Update database & inform future programmes	
Kingsbury Green	Access Works & sound field equipment	Include lift modifications & acoustic works & other necessary equipment
College Green	Improve acoustics	
Kingsbury High School	Improvements to tactile signage	
Oakington Manor	Access Works	Discuss details with school
Oliver Goldsmith	Works to improve visual environment	
BACES:		
	Disabled toilet at Carlton Centre	Part of Refurbishment of Carlton Centre
	Ramp to John Kelly huts	To be completed in Summer
	Lift at Craven Park and Winkworth Hall	Bid into LSC for funding for 04 / 05
	Lowered light switches	3 sites

2. ACCESS TO SERVICES

(a) Completed/Started 2003/4

Council Service	Facility	Notes
One Stop Shop – general	Welfare Rights – home visits	Suspended due to reduced staffing levels. Telephone interviews conducted where appropriate or alternative arrangements made.
One Stop Shop – general	Consultation on access to services for deaf people	Regular review meetings continue to take place.
One Stop Shop – general	Interpreter Service	Now relocated to the Town Hall One Stop Shop on 4 th Tuesday in the month 2-5pm.
One Stop Shop – general	Improve access for disabled customers	Continual review with other council service areas and external agencies.
Harlesden OSS	Induction loop system	New system installed
Town Hall OSS	Seating arrangements incorporate higher level chairs and chairs with arms	Completed.
Town Hall OSS	Induction loop stickers to be visible on desks	Completed
Town Hall OSS	Induction loop system	New system installed
Town Hall OSS	Improve signage at entrance to location	Completed
Town Hall OSS	Induction loop stickers to be visible on desks	Completed
Brent House OSS	Induction loop systems	New system installed
Brent House OSS	Improve signage at reception	Signage improved, but will be reviewed in light of proposed changes at location
Willesden OSS	Notification of loop system availability	Completed
Willesden OSS	Freephone shelf too high	Completed
Kingsbury OSS	Double entrance doors	Automatic doors installed
Kingsbury OSS	Reception desk too high	Completed
Kingsbury OSS	Induction loop system not working	Completed
Kingsbury OSS	Chairs have no arms	Completed
Kingsbury OSS	Low level tables in waiting area have sharp edges	Completed
Kingsbury OSS	Improve signage	Completed
Placements, Triangle House	Access to Disabled WC	Light switch, door lock etc modified for easier access.
Placements, Triangle House	Interviewing facilities	Provided on the ground floor.
Placements, Triangle House	Home visits	Offered to all service users – foster carers, adopters
BACES:	Portable Hearing Loops	Now available
	Signage – all buildings	All sites
	Large computers in teaching rooms	2 sites

2. ACCESS TO SERVICES

(b) To be Started/Introduced 2004/5

Council Service	Facility	Notes
One Stop Shop – general	Conduct service audits for OSS locations and Contact Centre	Will complete template on a quarterly basis
One Stop Shop – general	Improve monitoring of disabled users of the service	Establish how this can be achieved using E-shop. To be progressed.
Town Hall OSS	Disabled WC Triangular ring pulls linked to audible/visual alarm over WC door and main reception	Outstanding
Town Hall OSS	Tactile male and female signs for WC facility	Outstanding – liaising with Facilities Management
Town Hall OSS	Power assistance to one set of the main entry doors	Outstanding – liaising with Facilities Management
Social Services Placements, Triangle House	Front door access	Intercom access completed, automatic self-opening door entrance required.
Social Services Placements, Triangle House	Access to Disabled WC	Change WC seat and wash basin to low level type - Core Property progressing.
Social Services Placements, Triangle House	Reception area - Induction loop system	Work in progress by the Core Property Team for installation.
Social Services Placements, Triangle House	Rail handles at the entrance ramp	Rail handles to be fixed at the entrance ramp - work in progress.
Library Service	Changes to shelving configuration	Programme of reconfiguration has started in Preston library. - will improve internal access to reference, study and ICT facilities.
Library Service	Induction loops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Induction loops installed on all main library counters and enquiry desks. • Portable induction loops now available on the mobile library and the Play and Learn bus. • Portable loops are available at Harlesden and Willesden Green Library Centre for use in rooms used for events.
BACES	Flooring – Winkworth Hall	
	Improved signage – fire	All sites
	Lowered area of reception desks	Two sites

3. ACCESS TO INFORMATION

(a) Completed/Started 2003/4

Council Unit/ Service	Facility	Notes
One Stop Shop – general	Information on audio cassette	Assess need and provide information upon request – progress being reviewed
One Stop Shop – general	Information in Braille	Assess need and provide information upon request – progress being reviewed
One Stop Shop – general	Welfare Benefits Service	Helping people in the borough claim benefits to which they are entitled – ongoing – see Access to Services
One Stop Shop – general	Intranet and Internet access	OSS updated web pages. Information available about service provided, offices, opening times, surgeries held, Welfare Rights, Interpreter Request Service/Card etc.
Social Services Placements, Triangle House	Video tapes	Video tapes available on services
Social Services Placements, Triangle House	Foster Carers newsletter, Adoption newsletter, Information booklet	Translated as & when needed; large print on request.
Social Services Placements, Triangle House	Special requirement	This is referred to in all correspondence.
Social Services Placements, Triangle House	Advertising materials.	Children with disabilities are included in adverts; posters, radio, video adverts.
Corporate Services	Council Web Site access standards	Web pages based World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) & RNIB guidelines.
BACES:	Large print facilities at reception areas	All sites
	Induction Loops	All sites
	Disability statement produced	
Library Service	Continue to develop the Library Service web pages	The Library Service web pages feature services specifically aimed at disabled people. E.g. parking bays for disabled people, adaptive ICT services,
Library Service	Large print version of “Customer Promise”	
Library Service	Links to 85 disability	Links redesigned to include various new

	websites from Brent's web pages	categories – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cerebral Palsy for people with cerebral palsy • Deaf & hearing impaired people • Diabetes • Disfigurement • Dyslexia • Dyspraxia • Epilepsy • Learning impairment • Mental Health • Miscellaneous • Multiple Sclerosis • Organisations • Speech impairment • Transport • Visually impairment • Website Access Guidance and Standards
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3. ACCESS TO INFORMATION

(b) To be Started/Introduced 2004/5

Council Unit/ Service	Facility	Notes
One Stop Shop – general	Explore use of IVR technology for improving access to information	Improved arrangements will be implemented May 2004
One Stop Shop – General	Improve use of symbols to promote accessibility of services available to disabled customers.	Ongoing use of symbols in leaflets and signage.
Library Service	Service information on audio cassette	
Library Service	Large print version of "Customer Comments and Suggestions Form"	
Library Service	Links to disability websites	To be developed as a result of consultation with access organisations.
BACES	Disability statement produced	Next edition August 2004
	Improved telephone system	All sites

4. STAFF TRAINING

(a) Completed/Started 2003/4

Council Unit/Service	Facility	Notes
Council-Wide	Disability Awareness (I&DeA/Grass Roots scheme)	I&DeA scheme launched Council-wide January 2003 – most staff covered.(see main report). New staff participating via Corporate Inductions from Sept 2003
Placements, Triangle House	Equalities Training	Service Unit Managers completed training; 1 st line managers training –
Placements, Triangle House	Disability Forum	SUA attends.
Placements, Triangle House	Carers Training	Includes equality & diversity – ongoing.
Placements, Triangle House	Supervision & Appraisal – staff; new staff interviews	Equalities discussed and monitored -
Library Service	Induction loop training	Front line staff in all service points trained in their use
BACES	Working party set up to review DDA requirements	Staff from each area offered
	Deaf Awareness	
	Risk Assessment Training	

(b) To be Started/Introduced 2004/5

Council Unit/Service	Facility	Notes
Council Wide	Disability Awareness (I&DeA/Grass Roots scheme)	Monitor progress of new staff involved via Corporate Inductions
Council Wide	Access Audit Training	Initiative to be reviewed later in 2004 in light Impact Assessments
One Stop Shop – general	Specialist Disability Training	Identify other areas of specialist training that may be required for frontline staff.
Council Wide	155 staff to complete Disability Awareness (I&DeA scheme)	To be completed by September 2004
Library Service	Deaf Awareness	Feasibility of training designated staff in British Sign Language to be investigated.
BACES:	Specialist training to meet DDA requirements	DFES and Learning and Skills Council
	Risk Assessment Training for key staff	10 staff to be trained