

Integrated Housing Adaptations Team

Advice for Self-Funding Disabled Facilities Adaptations

Access to and from properties

An access adaptation might be required if a person is unable to access the property safely, either independently or with an appropriate level of assistance, using a prescribed mobility aid such as a walking stick or frame if appropriate.

Desired outcome

To enable the person to enter and leave the property safely, independently or with an appropriate level of assistance from either a formal or informal carer.

Examples of adaptations

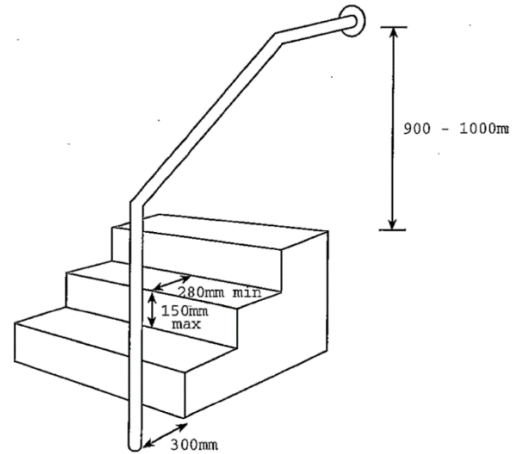
- handrails and steps,
- paths,
- ramps.

1) Handrails and steps

- i) A handrail may be sufficient to meet the person's need if there is only one step, and the person is able to reach the doorframe.
- ii) Consider the height and position of handrails needed when both entering and leaving the property.
- iii) The appropriate height of handrails may often be determinable by where the person currently holds onto the doorframe.
- iv) Handrail position should not interfere with the doorhandles or locks.

Technical aspects

- a. Handrails should follow the pitch line of steps.
- b. Handrails typically are 900-1000mm in height but may vary according to individual needs.
- c. Handrails will normally be fixed to the wall of the property and into the ground by the bottom step.
- d. Handrails should extend at least 300mm beyond the bottom step.



2) Paths

- i) Paths need to be wide enough for the person's intended use, for instance, to mobilise along the path with a walking frame or wheelchair.
- ii) Consider the person's safety at the edge of paths – handrails or upstands may be needed depending on the person's needs and the ground condition or slope at the sides of paths.
- iii) Path width should be a minimum of 900mm, which is the recommended British standard for a single dwelling where no turn is required. A larger area may be required where turns are involved.

3) Ramps

- i) A ramp is considered because the person is a wheelchair user or is likely to become a wheelchair user in the foreseeable future.
- ii) However, a mobile person using a wheeled walking aid may also manage a gently sloping ramp more easily than a series of steps.

Technical aspects

- a. The ramp gradient should be no steeper than 1:12. For public buildings, a gradient of 1:20 is advisable as it is suitable for most people. However, for many wheelchair users a gradient of 1:15 may prove satisfactory over a relatively short distance. The steeper the gradient, the more difficult the ramp is to negotiate and the greater the risk to the person using it.
- b. Widths of ramps should be 900mm minimum where no turn is required.
- c. Slip resistance and even surface is required.