

DDA

Disability Discrimination Act 1995

Besam offer a range of products, which will assist access into and around premises and can help with compliance of the DDA. Please contact the Besam Sales office on 01932 765888 for further information.

The DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION ACT Part III Provision of Goods and Services places a duty on all service providers to remove or alter physical features in their buildings that make access to services impossible or unreasonably difficult for a person with disabilities. The service can be chargeable or free and provided by the public, voluntary or private sector.

From October 2004 Service Providers:

- Should have made reasonable adjustments to physical features of their buildings.
- Disabled people will have a right to claim against any service provider that has not made such reasonable adjustments.
- It is anticipated that initial courts cases will provide an indication of what is "reasonable".

What are "Physical Features"?

The act covers physical features arising from the design or construction of the building.

Features on the approach to, exit from, or access to the buildings plus temporary or permanent fixtures, fittings, furniture, equipment and materials.

Features from the design of construction could be external or internal, for example:

- Steps
- Doors that are difficult or heavy to open
- Slippery surfaces
- Low contrast entrances
- Narrow door widths
- Inaccessible key pads and vision panels

What adjustments can be made?

Removal of the feature/barrier, alteration of feature/barrier and provide means to avoid the feature/barrier.

These could include:

- The provision of ramps, lifts and automatic doors.
- Widening of narrow access routes.
- Providing colour contrast to entrances.
- Repositioning handles, control switches and access systems.
- Adding auxiliary aids such as induction loops, large print signs, information on audio tape.

If 'reasonable adjustments' are not possible then the same service can be provided by alternative means - i.e. at an alternative location.

What is Discrimination?

Discrimination occurs when a disabled person is treated "less favourably" than someone else for a reason relating to their disability.

Treatment that would be classed as less favourable includes:

- Refusal to provide a service
- Offers a service on worse terms, e.g. higher price.
- Provide a lower standard.

A disabled person does not have to point to others who were treated more favourably than he or she was. It is still "less favourable" treatment if other would have been treated better.