

# Inclusive Design Brief

Part 1



# Introduction

The Crown Estate and Grosvenor have partnered with the inclusive design specialists Motionspot to raise the bar beyond designing to minimum standards. This three-way partnership aims to achieve the vision of developing “places that provide an equitable experience for as many people as possible.”

Both commercial portfolios cover regions where residents and visitors represent varied and intersecting disabilities, ethnicities, gender identities, sexual orientations, faiths, neurodiversity, age, and background.

Created by Motionspot and supported by evidence-based best practice and stakeholders' lived experiences, this Inclusive Design Brief provides practical inclusive design actions to create inclusive built environments across The Crown Estate and Grosvenor estates. The Inclusive Design Brief has been developed to go above and beyond the minimum standards of Building Regulations which whilst providing specific advice to enable physical and sensory access, do not reflect the full range of sensory processing and cognitive conditions, neurodivergence, nor the Protected Characteristics in the Equality Act.

It is intended that the brief will be used by internal development teams and their wider design teams (from design consultants, property managers, and planning teams to facilities management teams). The intention is for a collaborative approach that informs and supports decision making throughout the life of a development project, and the ongoing operation of the completed building.

The Inclusive Design Brief is split into two sections;

- Part 1 is an open-sourced document that we also encourage others to utilise to support the development of their own inclusive design approach. It contains guidance on developing a high-level design strategy and demonstrates how RIBA's Inclusive Design Overlay supports the whole project life cycle.
- Part 2 contains more detailed recommendations which go above and beyond minimum requirements of building regulations to consider how intersecting social characteristics impact peoples sense of belonging and experience of a space. These have been created specifically for The Crown Estate and Grosvenor.

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# Research and Engagement

The **Grosvenor and The Crown Estates Inclusive Design Brief** was developed in partnership with Motionspot a leading specialist in accessibility and inclusive design in the built environment.

It contains Inclusive Design prompts and provides clear and practical best practice recommendations for the design of buildings and public realm spaces to benefit the diverse community of people that use them.

The Inclusive Design Brief was developed in three principle stages:

- A comprehensive gap analysis review of relevant legislation, regulations, policies, and best practice guidance.
- A review of a selection of buildings and public realm spaces within Grosvenor and The Crown Estate commercial portfolios by inclusive design specialists at Motionspot.
- A series of pan-disability and lived-experience stakeholder engagement workshops engaging over 50 people.

## **Review of national and local policies and guidance:**

- National legislation and building regulations
- National and local policies and plans
- Published technical design standards
- Best practice design guidance

A gap analysis review undertaken by Motionspot identified where current legislation and guidance does not address the needs of many users, for example, people who are neurodivergent. It highlights additional opportunities for designers to go above and beyond minimum standards, particularly those with less well understood experiences such as mental health issues, hidden disabilities, intersectional conditions and complex disabilities and needs.

## **Site Visits:**

Motionspot highlighted common access and inclusion themes across a range of Grosvenor's and The Crown Estates Food and Beverage, Office, Retail, Public Realm and Hotel offers, many of which are historic environments. Tenant-managed areas such as internal office floors and fit-out restaurants and shop spaces were visited to understand transitions between tenant and landlord-managed areas, the latter of which is the focus of the Inclusive Design Brief.

## **Stakeholder Engagement:**

In 2023 Motionspot hosted five stakeholder workshops with 54 participants from Grosvenor and The Crown Estate community networks and the wider public. Participants represented diverse backgrounds with lived experience relating to age, disability, neurodivergence, sex, gender, sexual orientation, parental status, ethnicity, faith, social and economic background.

Workshop participants shared their lived experiences of using shops, offices, restaurants, and public realm spaces. They gave feedback on the undernoted elements:

- Approach and arrival
- Navigation, wayfinding, and signage
- Ramps and platform lifts
- Accessible entrances
- Internal spaces
- Horizontal and vertical circulation, lifts, and doors
- Human needs
- Design for senses
- Design for mind
- Attitudes, policies, and training
- Old and new buildings
- Physical safety and the perception of safety
- Digital information and technology

From their feedback it was evident that there was room for improvement in all these areas with key themes including the need for pre-arrival and real-time accessibility information, greater wayfinding and signage legibility, less visual and audible noise and more quiet spaces and quiet routes, improved provision of accessible and all gender toilets, and an enhanced sense of safety. Stakeholder contributions have been embedded as recommendations in Part 2 of the Inclusive Design Brief.

## Who Are We Designing For?

Designing inclusively recognises that there is no “one-size-fits-all” solution, however, by placing people at the heart of the design process, we can begin to understand the diversity of needs and make our buildings and public realm spaces more welcoming and inclusive.

Inclusive design should be equitable, flexible, simple, and intuitive. Spaces should minimise hazard, confusion, and discomfort. People should be able to find and use the features and facilities they need without barriers, regardless of a person’s age, disability, neurodivergence, mental health, sex and gender diversity, ethnicity, faith, belief, or background.

The total spending power of the Purple Pound – UK families with at least 1 disabled person including visible and non-visible disabilities – is approximately 274 billion annually. Businesses that lack basic accessibility are missing out. However, not only is physical accessibility like wheelchair access key to inclusive design, but considerations such as lighting levels and distribution, the types of facilities available, and visual and audible stimuli are also critical in creating comfortable, safe, and intuitive spaces for all.

If we consider how environments might be disabling in terms of how different people can locate, approach, enter, navigate around, and use a space and the features within it, we may design places to be more forward-thinking and responsive.

## The Equality Act 2010

People and organisations that own or manage buildings and facilities or provide services, employment or other provisions of the Act need to ensure that they do not discriminate against people with Protected Characteristics. This includes whether people can independently enter and access facilities within a building, and also relates to providing reasonable adjustments, for example by removing, altering, or avoiding a barrier for someone to get into or around a workplaces or prospective workplace, regardless of their background

### Protected Characteristics defined by the Equality Act 2010

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race
- Religion or Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

Unofficially, people have also included carers and parents to this list.

**“The ability to be spontaneous and to choose is important”**

Participant in the stakeholder workshops

1 in 4 UK residents (16 million) have a disability – 80% of these disabilities aren't visible.

(CSR Europe, "Disability: facts and figures" 2007)

# Applying the Inclusive Design Brief

The Inclusive Design Brief has been created to deliver buildings that go above and beyond the requirements of building regulations and as such it is expected that the minimum standards will be met in all projects.

Part 2 of this Brief provides additional recommendations which will further enhance the inclusivity of the built environment. These have been specifically created for The Crown and Grosvenor's estates.

## Principle Legislation

The Equality Act 2010, which superseded the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) in the UK (except in Northern Ireland), requires that 'reasonable adjustments' be made to the built environment to enable access to services and prevent discrimination against disabled people and those with any of the 9 protected characteristics. However, buildings themselves cannot be 'Equality Act compliant' or 'DDA compliant.'

For further information on the relationship between the Equality Act and the Building Regulations visit [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk).

## Building Regulations

**Approved Document M** (AD M) of the UK Building Regulations sets the **minimum requirements** to create access to buildings for a broad range of people. Approved document M applies to buildings or parts of buildings that are newly erected, extended, and undergo a material alteration or change of use, and **these minimum standards should be incorporated into all plans within Grosvenor's and The Crown Estate's portfolios as a baseline for accessibility.**

The same applies for **AD K** (minimum safety standards for internal and external stairs, ramps, guarding and glazing) and **AD B** (minimum standards for fire safety for buildings in England) and **AD S** (electric vehicle charge parking).

## Best Practice Guidance

Recommendations on inclusive and accessible design of buildings and the spaces within them should also be drawn from The **British Standards** such as **BS 8300** for best practice access and inclusion in the buildings and external environments and **BS 9999** in terms of fire safety in the design, management, and use of buildings.

PAS6463: Design for the Mind provides guidance on the design of the built environment for a neurodiverse society.

London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC)'s report on 'Safety of Women and Girls' outlines key interventions to create safe spaces.

## Historic Environments

Our historic environment is a shared amenity that should be enjoyed by everyone regardless of background, disability or difference. Owners, operators and managers of historic buildings or spaces should be aware that there are improvements they can make to make their spaces more accessible and inclusive.

Precedent examples show that it is possible to achieve level approach and entrance to and within a building, including doors, staircases, and lift installations, while conserving the historical integrity of a building and complementing, or even enhancing the character of a local area.

For examples of solutions in historic external environments that balance accessibility with heritage conservation, please refer to [Historic England Easy Access to Historic Landscapes](#).

For case studies of historic buildings that have been successfully adapted to meet the needs of visitors across a range of ages and backgrounds please refer to [Inclusive Design for Historic Buildings: Architectural Approaches to Accessibility](#)

For planned adaptations of historic environments towards access and inclusion, the National Planning and Policy Framework requires a 'Statement of significance and need' with consideration to historical aesthetics, archaeological interest and the building footprint. Further guidance can be found at [Historic England Statement of Heritage Significance advice note](#).

Where adaptations are not permitted in a listed building, an access strategy can be developed incorporating an access inclusion evaluation, explaining why access standards cannot be met and/or why the same level of access cannot be achieved for all user groups. **Access strategies evidence the provisions in place to lessen the impact on certain groups and create a more equitable experience for all.** Any limitations of the environment should also be clearly communicated online and on site, so that potential visitors can make informed decisions and plans about their visit.

# Inclusive Design Prompts

Grosvenor and The Crown Estate have committed to delivering an inclusive and welcoming estate.

To support this ambition the following 'prompts' should be considered at all stages of design development underpinned by the Inclusive Design Overlay to the RIBA Plan of Works (further technical detail can be found in Part 2 of this Brief).

Thinking about all building users but especially those with Protected Characteristics the design should be reviewed in respect of the user journey from approaching the building, to entering the building, to navigating through, and finally exiting the building.

Key themes to consider during this review are:

- Mobility and Ergonomic Access and Egress
- Basic Human Needs
- Multi-Sensory Considerations
- Health and Wellbeing

# Considering the Protected Characteristics, ask yourself the following questions:

## Approaching the Building

- Does the public realm which supports my use of the building enable safe and independent movement for all?
- Are visitors able to access information about the building, including navigation and available services (e.g. changing place) ahead of making their journey?

## Exiting the Building

- Does the building management system alert everyone in the event of an emergency without causing auditory pain, sensory overload or visual or epileptic triggers?
- Can I exit the building safely and independently, including during an emergency?

## Entering and Navigating the Building

- Can I independently and safely enter the building?
- Does the building environment feel welcoming to all, inspiring people to visit, work, socialise, relax and shop here?
- Can I navigate through the building without the need for assistance?
- Do the signage and wayfinding aids enable me to find my way around the building because they consider physical, sensory, language, sensory processing needs and differences?
- Are the contrast levels of finishes sufficient to achieve clear definition of key features around the building?
- Does the lighting design assist lip-reading and use of sign language?
- Can I independently use passenger and platform lifts? Are they designed to support both physical and sensory needs?

## Using the Building Facilities

- Can I access facilities to support basic human needs regardless of my sex, gender reassignment or identity?
- Are there facilities to support basic human needs if I feel uncomfortable or unsafe using spaces designated as male or female or if I require fully enclosed private toilets?
- Does the signage strategy inform me about the different building facilities and how they support me?
- Does the design enable everyone to fully benefit from all the building facilities, are there any spaces that some users cannot access/use?
- Does the design prevent visual confusion, disorientation, loss of balance and/or sensory overload?
- Does the design avoid exacerbating respiratory conditions, olfactory sensitivities, immunological conditions, and migraines?
- Does the building accommodate a range of support needs, sensory processing differences, use of assistive devices and to avoid triggering anxiety or PTSD?
- Are there quiet, uninterrupted respite options if I need it?
- Can I find areas that offer access to nature and natural features?

# In answering the previous questions, you should also consider...

## Have I involved people with lived experience in this review?

To ensure the building meets the needs of users and is fully representative of the society it is supporting, making everyone feel welcome regardless of personal characteristics or needs, you should involve stakeholders who represent those protected characteristic groups which will enable your design to accommodate current and future needs.

## Have I engaged specialist advice?

In line with the scope and size of the project, the design should be reviewed by an inclusive design consultant.

43% of disabled consumers said they have abandoned an in-person shop recently due to the barriers they experienced.

Business Disability Forum, 2022.

# Using the Inclusive Design Overlay

To support the delivery of an inclusive environment it is key that all stakeholders are aware of their roles and responsibilities at each of the RIBA Work stages as failure to complete an action during early stages of design can have a substantial impact at later stages.

The Inclusive Design Overlay to the RIBA (Royal Institute of British Architects) Plan of Work is a revolutionary new framework which equips and empowers built environment professionals to improve the inclusive design of the built environment. The outcome will be buildings and spaces that are inclusive for everyone, regardless of their human characteristics and identities such as age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil Partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual Orientation.

# Inclusive Design Lead / Internal Inclusive Design Champion

These steps can be undertaken by either an independent consultant or an internal Inclusive Champion depending on scale of project. Opportunities always exist to go above these steps e.g. running pilot projects, exploring external research to innovate on projects and utilising new products.

## Stage 0

### Strategic Definition

IF APPOINTED AT STAGE 0:

Review/support the development of the Inclusive Design Strategy and Project Brief.

Discuss with the Construction Team or Client any targeted inclusive design outcomes that may be better supported if the Construction Team signs up to 'Considerate Constructors Scheme' or similar.

Support the development a Plan for Use Strategy with the AM Team and Design Team.

## Stage 1

### Preparation and Briefing

IF APPOINTED AT STAGE 1: (Review actions under Stages 0 as appropriate)

Provide the PM Team, Design Team, and Construction Team with any relevant inclusive design knowledge and learning resources.

Understand the current and potential future users of the built environment and in conjunction with the Client and PM Team create a Communications Strategy.

Working with the Client and Design Team, assist the Construction Team identify and discuss any inclusive design constraints and opportunities emerging in the developing Inclusive Design Strategy to mitigate as far as practicable.

## Stage 2

### Concept Design

Embed in the Design Team and access proposed designs to undertake inclusive design reviews and feedback as required by Client.

In partnership with the Design Team set up and facilitate User Group engagement sessions to test designs and capture feedback.

In partnership with the AM Team undertake an inclusive design review of proposed Design Team drawings and specifications for maintenance elements.

## Stage 3

### Spatial Coordination

Undertake an inclusive design review of the proposed design schemes in conjunction with the Design Team and AM Team.

In conjunction with the PM Team, ensure inclusive design coordination is complete ahead of Planning application.

Support the Design Team to facilitate User Group engagement sessions and design review consultation sessions.

Support the Design Team develop the Design and Access Statement for the planning application.

Undertake an Inclusive Design Stage Outcome Review to demonstrate meeting the Strategy.

## Stage 4

### Technical Design

Support the Client set Inclusive Design Requirements within the tender brief and scope documents and support the evaluation process.

Ensure involvement in Design Team discussions and have access to all relevant design information.

Support the Design Team to facilitate User Group engagement sessions in conjunction with Client and Construction Team.

Support the Client to ensure designs and specifications are in line with Project Brief and Inclusive Design Strategy.

In partnership with the PM Team and Design Team, review the Construction Phase Plan raising any concerns ahead of site mobilisation.

In partnership with the Construction Team and the Design Team ensure training requirements to support construction is identified to enable toolbox talks ahead of the respective work starting.

Undertake an inclusive design review and an Inclusive Design Stage Outcome Review.

## Stage 6

### Handover

In partnership with the PM Team and AM Team facilitate a site visit to undertake an inclusive design audit in consultation with the User Group.

Support the PM Team to undertake an Inclusive design lesson learned review of the project.

Work with the PM Team to support Aftercare tasks in accordance with their scope of works.

Support the Construction team to ensure degradation of any activity around any partial occupations is managed to maintain access and safety.

Support the Construction Team to ensure site closure is managed around residents and users.

Undertake an Inclusive Design Stage Outcome Review to demonstrate meeting the Strategy.

## Stage 7

### In Use

Work with the PM Team to support Post Occupancy Evaluation reviews.

Support AM Team with Building User Guide review.

Undertake an Inclusive Design Stage Outcome Review to demonstrate meeting the Strategy.

## Further Information

Contact the team at  
Motionspot if you have any  
questions about the inclusive  
design recommendations for  
specific areas of buildings  
and public realm spaces.

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