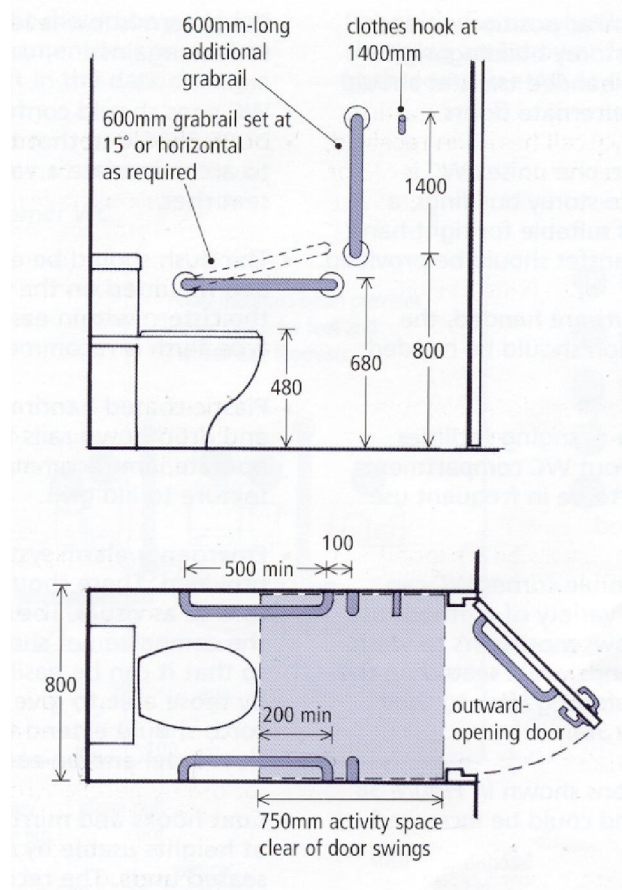


**COMMUNITY COUNCIL OF  
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There should be a range of sanitary facilities and depending on the size and use of your building these could include general provision, provision for ambulant disabled (i.e. with more room and grab rails) and fully accessible provision (i.e. wheelchair users). Further information on the provision, design and use of WCs are covered in more detail in CAE/RIBA Enterprises' Good Loo Design Guide and BS 8300.

*Figure 35*

**WC layout for  
ambulant disabled  
people**



*Figure 34*

**Standard WC**

**General guidance:**

- In general, there should be at least as many WCs for women as there are urinals for men, and in some building types, at least twice as many.
- Doors to rooms, cubicles and compartments should open outwards. If they have to open inwards they should not encroach on the useable space (Figure 34). Reduced swing doors could be used where space outside is restricted.

- Doors, particularly when open, should not obstruct emergency escape routes.
- Doors should be fitted with light action privacy bolts that can be operated by people with limited dexterity. If self closing, they should be opened using a force of no more than 20 newtons.
- Emergency release mechanisms which can be operated from the outside should be fitted to doors.
- For guidance on door handles and other ironmongery, see 'Internal Doors. Locks to cubicles should be operable by people with limited dexterity (i.e. flap over or very bulky easy slide which can be operated with a closed fist).
- Shiny ceramic tiles and floors should be avoided as they cause reflection and glare which can be visually confusing.
- Slip resistant flooring material should be used throughout.
- Fixtures and fittings within the WC compartment should be clearly visible using tonal contrasts.
- The height from the floor to the top of the WC seat is 480mm (for adults).
- Washbasin taps should be controlled by a lever operated, thermostatic mixer that delivers water at a temperature not exceeding 41C.
- Heat emitters should be screened or have their exposed surfaces maintained at less than 43C.
- Light switches with large push pads should be used in preference to pull cords.
- Emergency assistance alarm systems linked to a staffed area of the building should be provided; they should reach down to the floor (in case a person falls out of the wheelchair during transfer); have audible and visual indicators to confirm that an emergency call has been received; there should be a reset control reachable from the WC or from a wheelchair, along with a signal that is different from the fire alarm.
- The fire alarm should emit a visual and audible warning to occupants of WCs.
- Wheelchair accessible WCs should have at least one washbasin with its rim between 720 – 740mm above the floor and it should be within reach from a seated position on the WC.
- Paper dispensers should be designed to be operated by a single hand and they should be placed close to the hand basin at the appropriate height (Figure 36). Serrated toilet dispensers could be difficult for older people as the edges can damage skin and therefore should be avoided if possible.
- Male wheelchair accessible WCs should have at least one urinal with its rim set at 380mm above the floor, with two 600mm long vertical grab rails positioned at either side of the urinal (with centre lines at 1100mm).

- Privacy screens for urinals should be considered where grab rails are not provided.
- A low level urinal and wash basin for children and people of short stature in male WCs are recommended.

### **WC layout for people with ambulant disabilities:**

- At least one cubicle per range of WC compartments within separate sex accommodation should be provided which is suitable for those with ambulant disabilities (Figure 35).
- Grab rails should protrude no more than approximately 90mm so as not to restrict space within the cubicle. Ensure adequate knuckle space behind the rails.
- Doors should open outwards wherever possible, and be fitted with a horizontal closing bar on the inside face. If a door opens inwards, the 750mm long activity space should be maintained (Figure 35). The door should be designed so that it can be opened outwards in an emergency.
- WC pans should conform to BS 5503-3 or BS 5504-4 so that they are able to accommodate a variable height seat riser.
- A small shelf should be provided, if space allows; this may be helpful for people with a colostomy bag etc.
- Coat hooks should be placed 1200 – 1400mm from ground level.
- Where there are four or more WC cubicles in separate sex accommodation, one of these should be 1200mm wide for use by people who need extra space. Consideration should be given to installing a fold down table for baby changing. However, a fold down table in a wheelchair accessible toilet should not compromise the minimum space requirement.
- Where a larger separate sex WC can be accessed by wheelchair users, it should be possible for them to use both a urinal, where appropriate, and a wash basin at a lower height than is provided for other users.
- Guidance on layout and dimensions for wheelchair accessible compartments within single sex accommodation can be found below under 'The unisex accessible corner WC' and Figure 36.

### **The unisex accessible corner WC**

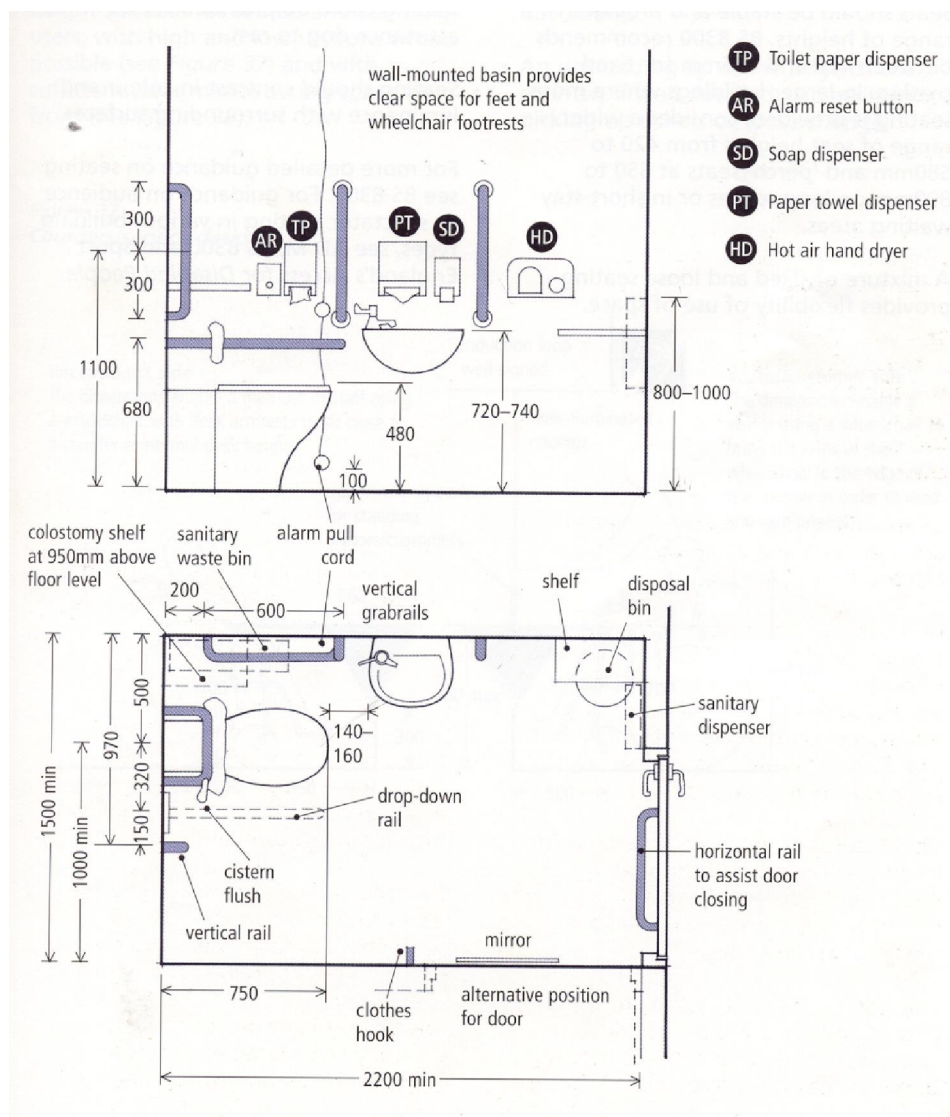
Wheelchair users use WCs in a variety of ways; including independently or with assistance. Transfer to the WC from a wheelchair could be from the front, side, or at an angle. Some may transfer backwards with assistance by removing the wheelchair back support.

- At least one wheelchair accessible unisex WC (Figure 36) should be provided at each location where sanitary accommodation is provided for use by customers, visitors or employees.
- The recommended number and location of wheelchair accessible WCs depends on the size and use of the building. A wheelchair user should not have to travel more than 40m on one level (except in circumstances where the access route is completely free of

obstruction such as doors which need to be opened) or more than 40m total horizontal distance using a passenger lift to get to the next storey up or down.

- Where there is space for only one WC in an existing building, it should be a unisex wheelchair accessible WC but wider (2000mm) than the standard wheelchair accessible compartment (1500mm) to accommodate a standing height in addition to a finger rinse basin.
- One compartment should be located as close as possible to the entrance and/or waiting/reception area.
- It should be located on direct, accessible routes that are free from obstruction and such that they do not compromise the privacy of users.
- If located in a similar position on each floor of a multi storey building, right handed and left handed transfers should be provided on alternative floors.
- Where more than one unisex WC is available in a single storey building, a choice of layouts suitable for right hand and left hand transfer should be provided.
- Where layouts are handed, the door configuration should be handed accordingly.
- Combining baby changing facilities within Part M layout WC compartments which are likely to be in frequent use should be avoided; likewise, a drop down baby changing facility in a wheelchair accessible toilet should not compromise the minimum space requirements (Figure 36)
- The unisex accessible corner WC can accommodate a variety of methods of transfer and allows most users to wash and dry their hands while seated on the WC before transferring back to their wheelchair (Figure 36).
- The overall minimum dimensions are shown in Figure 36; they could be increased to advantage; for example, when other fixtures are included (skirting) the overall floor dimensions are reduced (1700 – 2400mm).
- Doors should open outwards wherever possible and be fitted with a horizontal closing bar on the inside face. Where inward opening doors are unavoidable, additional space is required; it should be possible to open the door outwards in an emergency.
- The dimensions relating WC fitting in relation to basin and associated fittings and equipment, and to wheelchair manoeuvring space, are critical for independent use.
- The horizontal rail / back rest to the rear of the WC should be padded if there is no WC lid to rest against. A back rest may not be required so long as the cistern is low level and comfortable to lean against.
- WC pans should conform to BS 5503-3 or BS 5504-4 so that they are able to accommodate a variable height seat riser.
- The flush should be easy to operate and mounted on the transfer side of the cistern within easy reach. A lever type flush is recommended.

- Plastic coated hand rails and grab rails, and drop down rails that are easy to operate are recommended; in addition, textured grip aids should be considered. However, if these are to be fitted retrospectively, ensure that fixings are adequate to support full weight bearing.
- Emergency alarm systems should be provided. These should be audible as well as visual. The call signal outside the compartment should be located so that it can easily be seen and heard by those able to give assistance. Pull cords should extend to 100mm above floor level and be easy to grip (they are usually red, with a plastic triangle tied close to the floor).
- Coat hooks and mirrors should be fixed at heights usable by standing and seated users. The recommended height for a coat hook is 1200mm and for mirrors between 600 – 1600mm.



**Figure 36**  
**Unisex accessible**  
**corner WC**

- Fittings such as radiators, vending machines, sanitary disposal units, waste bins and drop down baby changing tables should be set at appropriate height and recessed where possible; they should not obstruct the transfer space or the area for manoeuvring.
- Sink plumbing returned to the wall, rather than to the floor, is preferred as this leaves more clear space below the hand basin for the wheelchair user.
- A boxing in of pipes should be carefully considered so as not to compromise the manoeuvring space.
- An emergency light should be provided within the compartment to ensure that a person is not left in the dark during a power failure.
- For further guidance, including wheelchair accessible showering and changing facilities and bathrooms see Part M or BS 8300.