



ONE STEP AHEAD

M1 - The Standard to help you accommodate older and less mobile guests

Department for Enterprise

Visit Isle of Man

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One Step Ahead - M1

The standard to help you accommodate older and less mobile guests

What is One step ahead? This standard isn't about disability – it's about helping you provide a more accessible business.

Introduction

Achieving this standard will open your business to a wide range of potential visitors – those who are less mobile, families, elderly guests. Practically all your visitors will benefit in one way or another. One step ahead is for Serviced, Self-Catering, Hostel accommodation and Campsites. It is the mobility entry level standard (M1) of the National Accessible Scheme (NAS) and is based on the needs of older and less mobile visitors – those who can happily climb and descend a flight of stairs but who will benefit from a few added services and facilities around your business.

Did you know?

Even if your business has steps to the front door or no ground floor bedrooms you can still achieve this standard. Also, along with your public areas, only one bedroom and bathroom have to be accessible for you to meet this level.

You didn't know? Then read on...

The perception is that accessibility is all about ramps and wide doors – it's not. This standard shows that providing and improving accessible facilities and services needn't be difficult and won't cost you the earth. You probably meet 80% of the standard already. Barriers to access are often about attitude and service – which are easy to rectify. Making sure you and your staff are confident to look after all visitors is therefore the perfect starting point to you achieving this level.



Its about helping you
provide a more
accessible business...





“Being NAS rated means that our customers know that their needs will be met... Displaying our rating gives customers a clear understanding of the facilities they can expect and the service they will receive.”

- Claire Pullen, owner Salmon River Apartments, Laxey

Your key benefits of participation

Stand out from the crowd

‘Stand out from the crowd’ by using the logo in your marketing.

Tips and advice

Tips and advice from one of our accessibility assessors who will visit your business.

Increase your business’s exposure

Visible under 'accessible accommodation' category on the visitisleofman.com website and search able under 'National Accessibility Schemes'.

Reach out to a new market

Providing accessible accommodation and displaying the NAS logo enables your business to be clearly identified by visitors requiring accessible accommodation visible under 'accessible accommodation' category on the visitisleofman.com website and searchable under 'National Accessibility Schemes'.

Action Plan

The assessment can help you to identify other things you can do.



Benefits for your visitors

Visitors are increasingly looking for reassurances up front. Extra ratings and awards show your customers that you care about quality and strive to stay one step ahead of the competition.

Visitors will spend twice as long searching and planning a holiday or short break than they do when considering a mortgage! For older and less mobile visitors this process is even more in depth because they need to be sure that they will be able to get around your business easily and enjoy the whole visitor experience as all your guests do.

Showing a commitment to quality and accessibility will give your business an advantage over others. Little extra touches will result in your guests recommending you to friends and visiting you again.

So what are you waiting for?

Just take these three easy steps...

- **Step one**

Take 15 minutes to read through the standard. This will give you a clear indication of what is required. You may be surprised that it's not as difficult to achieve as you thought.

- **Step two**

Use the checklist on pages 10-11 to walk around your business and check where you already meet the standard. At the same time note any changes required and add to your action plan.

- **Step three**

Waste no time and call the Tourism Team on +44 (0) 1624 695700 to start the application process.



Almost one in five people in the UK have a disability. One person in every 30 has a sight problem whilst one in six have hearing loss. With One Step Ahead we are talking about those who are a little less mobile – not necessarily those in a wheelchair.



(<https://www.dlf.org.uk/content/key-facts>)

Before your guests arrive

- Ensure emergency escape procedures are in place for all guests. Identify clear actions for you and your staff to assist less mobile guests.
 - Why not ask your local fire officer about getting less mobile guests out in the event of an emergency?
 - Make sure all external and internal routes are free from obstacles (or can be moved on request). Routes should have firm, well maintained surfaces e.g. Tarmac, concrete.
 - The designated accessible bedroom, bathroom and all public areas need to be clutter free, with any potential hazards removed.
 - Lighting inside and outside your business must be evenly positioned (non glare) so guests can identify any obstacles in the dark – e.g. car parking, routes to the entrance, corridors and public areas.
 - Let visitors know exactly what you have! Your access statement needs to be put on your website and be available on request.
 - Use the template on www.visitisleofman.com/ to make sure you are providing all the information required.
 - When you commission a new website or upgrade, make sure your designers are familiar with WAI's web accessibility guidelines – www.w3.org.uk.
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On arrival

- Make sure someone is on hand to offer assistance with luggage when requested.
- If you don't provide a car park, a dropping off point close to the main entrance (within 50 metres) needs to be made available and clearly signed. Where you do provide a car park, a reservable space with a width of 2.8 metres and within 50 metres of the main entrance is required. The accessible entrance needs to be clearly signed.
- Remember, designated disabled bays should not be used by staff or delivery drivers!
- At registration, a seat is needed for guests less able to stand. It will be appreciated by all tired guests after their journey.
- On arrival offer your guests a tour of relevant facilities. Don't forget to offer an additional key for the accommodation when there is more than one guest.
- Guests should be made aware of the evacuation procedures, if appropriate. For guests that may require assistance in the event of an emergency, keep a written record of their location on site.
- In larger businesses, signage to locate facilities needs to be clearly visible. In all businesses the fire evacuation point/s must be clearly identified.

Around your business

- One flight of stairs to reach accessible bedrooms and public areas is fine to meet this standard. But for guidance, the width should not be less than 750mm (approx. 2ft 6ins) and the depth should be more than the height. You can have steps to other parts of your business. A spiral staircase is unlikely to meet this standard. If your accessible bedroom and all public areas are on the ground floor, then the standard for stairs will not apply.
- If two or more flights of steps lead to the accessible bedroom or public areas a lift is required.
- Provide at least one handrail next to the steps or stairs (both sides are better) that's easy to grip. There should be enough space for a firm grip but your arm shouldn't easily slip through.
- If you provide a ramp, the gradient shouldn't be too steep e.g. no steeper than 1:8. If it is steeper, steps are also required. The ramp must be slip resistant and requires raised edges. On a permanent ramp, a handrail is required.
- Doors can often be barriers to many of us, particularly heavy doors. Make sure doors are easy to open and close. Handles on doors and drawers need to be simple to operate with minimal twisting.
“Regularly maintain doors to ensure they operate easily.”
- Rugs can look good, but they can be slippery underfoot and guests could trip. Rugs and mats should be avoided if not sunk into the floor.
- Tables need to provide support and be stable for people rising from their chairs e.g. a leg on each corner. Centre supports, if sturdy, will also provide the appropriate support.
- A selection of chairs with and without arm-rests provides choice. At the very least, place one chair with arms in accessible bedrooms and public areas.
- Are you or any of your staff available to offer assistance to guests? There needs to be someone who can help out, if requested.
- Where you provide public telephones make sure they can be easily reached and at least one has a seat.



If you provide a telephone in the accessible room a large button one would be useful...



Your accessible bedroom/s

- Ensure the bed has a firm surface and is not less than 450mm high (approx. 1ft 6ins). Folding, sofa or bunk beds are not acceptable within this standard.
- Ensure the bedroom provides clear space to walk around without bumping into furniture. Can the windows be easily reached by your guests and are they simple to open and close?
- Remember to provide a remote control for televisions in accessible rooms and public areas.

“Subtitles provided by Teletext are useful!”

- When positioning mirrors make sure they are easy to use while standing and seated to provide flexibility for your guests.

“If a hairdryer is provided it should be near the mirror.”

- Where you offer tea and coffee facilities in bedrooms and/or kitchen areas provide a cordless kettle at table level and close to an electric socket.

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"There is a huge market for disabled accommodation... [Accommodation providers] may be surprised at how easy it is to implement changes in their own holiday accommodation." .

Joey Dunlop Foundation



Your accessible bathroom/s

- Where an ensuite is not available the allocated bathroom must be close by on the same floor.
 - The floor surface needs to be non-slip (wet or dry) and a slip resistant bath/shower mat provided.
 - If there is a bath, a horizontal or angled support rail, minimum 450mm (approx. 1ft 6ins) in length (integral bath handles are fine) is needed, attached to the wall. In addition, a vertical rail positioned close to the tap end will assist your guests getting in and out of the bath.
 - Where you provide a separate shower, the shower tray must not be higher than 190mm (7.5ins) above the floor. To aid support provide a horizontal, vertical or angled rail close to the shower attachments. If you provide a bath and separate shower then a grab rail is only required in the shower.
 - If the shower temperature cannot be controlled, it should be limited to 41°C.
 - Remember to provide a shelf or soap dish for toiletries which can be reached whilst in the shower, whether standing or sitting.
 - Provide lever taps or lever attachments on the washbasin and bath and ideally the shower too.
 - Remember to position a clothes hook in a convenient place.
 - Make sure you have a toilet seat height raiser available on request.
“You could consider sharing equipment like toilet seat height raisers with other accommodation businesses.”
 - Where public toilets are available they should be kept unlocked (or a key provided to guests).
 - Provide a fixed horizontal support rail beside the toilet to assist with sitting and standing.
 - Position the toilet paper holder and a shelf or level surface within easy reach of the toilet. (If possible provide toilet paper that can be taken with one hand e.g. a tissue dispenser.)
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Yes, it takes a bit of time to think things through but most of the alterations needed cost very little at all...



Self-catering accommodation and campsites

What else do you need to think about?

- Make sure you provide a fire blanket positioned between the cooker and the exit. So it can be easily reached it should be no more than 1400mm (approx. 4ft 7ins) above the floor.
- Provide lever taps or lever attachments on at least one sink/washbasin.
- Where there are speed bumps en route to facilities and services, make sure there is a gap between the end of the speed bump and side of the road so that people can easily pass by.

Do you think your business could provide more facilities?

This standard is based on the needs of older and less mobile visitors. If you are able to provide facilities for visually impaired, hearing impaired and/or wheelchair users then you should request a copy of the main NAS standards booklet. Call Visit Isle of Man on 01624 695700 or download from www.visitisleofman.com/trade

What to do if you're building from scratch

Building from scratch presents a great opportunity to open your business up to a much wider market. If you are building new accommodation it will be subject to the requirements of a number of authorities including, Planning and Building Control, Fire Safety and Environmental Health. The contact details for each of these teams is on the back page of this document. Isle of Man Tourism advise you to contact the teams as early as possible for guidance and assistance.

You can find out more information and guidance by using the NAS standards booklet, which identifies standards for wheelchair users, visually impaired visitors and guests with hearing difficulties.

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Ideally... other steps you could take:

- Provide a dropped curb at the entrance to your business.
- Stairs and steps to be closed in with a height of no more than 190mm and depth not less than 250mm (approx. 7.5ins and 10ins).
- Door widths and space between furniture to be no less than 670mm – up to 850mm is best (approx. 2ft 3ins to 2ft 10ins).
- Provide a bathing board or seat – a free-standing bath stool is fine.
- Have a shower stool available.
- If you are fitting support rails and want to know the best height etc or you would like more ideas of additional improvements you can make, contact Isle of Man Tourism for the main NAS standards booklet. Call Visit Isle of Man Tourism on 01624 695700 or download from www.visitisleofman.com

One step ahead - your checklist

Use this summary version of the standard to walk around your business and check where you already meet One step ahead.

Before your guests arrive

- Emergency evacuation procedures and actions recorded
- External routes free from obstacles (or can be removed when required)
- External route with firm, well maintained surface
- All public areas free from clutter
- External lighting evenly positioned (non glare)
- Access statement completed – info on services and facilities
- Dropping off point
- If car park – reservable space width 2.8 metres and less than 50 metres (100m if covered) from entrance Accessible space and entrance clearly marked

On arrival

- Seating available at registration
- Tour of facilities offered and additional key to room/unit when two or more guests
- Evacuation procedures communicated to guest (if appropriate)
- Written record of guest's location and specific needs
- Accessible facilities clearly signed and fire evacuation points identified (if appropriate). Clear short words and sentences
- Entrance lighting evenly positioned
- Doors easy to open and handles easy to operate (easy grip, minimal twisting)
- Unobstructed routes
- Assistance with luggage available



One step ahead - your checklist

Use this summary version of the standard to walk around your business and check where you already meet One step ahead.

Around your business

- Maximum one flight of stairs to reach accessible bedroom and public areas
- Width of stairs/steps – minimum 750mm wide
- Depth of stairs/steps should be more than height
- Handrail next to stairs/steps, enough space for firm grip but not to allow arm to slip through
- If ramp – no steeper than 1:8; steps required if steeper
- If permanent ramp – handrail and raised edging required
- Lighting evenly positioned
- Routes free from obstacles (or can be removed when required)
- Doors easy to open and handles easy to operate (easy grip, minimal twisting)
- Rugs removed if required
- Sturdy tables e.g. leg at each corner
- At least one chair with arms (a selection is best)
- Assistance available for guests throughout their stay
- Remote control for public televisions, if provided
- A public phone easily reached with somewhere to sit

Accessible bedroom/s

- Doors easy to open and handles easy to operate
- Rugs removed if required
- Bed height not less than 450mm
- Wardrobe and drawers easy to open
- At least one chair with arms
- Clear space around furniture or ability to move on request
- Remote control where television provided
- Lighting evenly positioned
- Mirrors positioned for use when standing and sitting
- Kettle (where provided) at table height and close to socket
- Evacuation notice (where applicable) clearly positioned

One step ahead - your checklist

Use this summary version of the standard to walk around your business and check where you already meet One step ahead.

Accessible bathroom/s

- If no ensuite, bathroom to be on same floor
- Doors easy to open and handles easy to operate
- Floor surface non slip with non-slip bath/shower mat
- Horizontal rail above bath (minimum 450mm) and vertical rail towards taps (if no separate shower with support rail)
- Shower tray not higher than 190mm
- Grab rail by shower attachments
- If shower temperature cannot be controlled, limit to 41 °C
- Shelf or soap dish in shower – reached from standing or sitting
- Lever taps or attachments on washbasins and bath (shower if possible)
- Clothes hook in convenient space
- Toilet seat height raiser available
- Horizontal support rail attached to wall beside toilet
- Toilet paper and shelf in easy reach of toilet

Self-Catering and campsites

- Fire blanket in easy reach towards exit
- Lever taps or lever attachments on at least one sink/washbasin
- Gap between end of speed bumps and side of road



More sources of information

- **Planning and building control**

Isle of Man Government Department of Infrastructure. www.gov.im/categories/planning-and-building-control

- **Fire and Rescue Service**

Isle of Man Fire and Rescue Service <https://www.gov.im/categories/home-and-neighbourhood/emergency-services/fire-and-rescue-service/>

- **Environmental Health Unit**

Isle of Man Environmental Health <https://www.gov.im/about-the-government/departments/environment-food-and-agriculture/environment-safety-and-health-directorate/environmentalpublic-health-unit/>

- **Lighting Guidelines**

For more information on lighting look at the Chartered Institute of Building Services Engineers. www.cibse.org

- **RNIB Guidance**

Use RNIB guidelines on signage and symbols or Sign Design Guide by RNIB Access Consultancy. www.rnib.org.uk/professionals

- **Tourism for all**

Information provider to help disabled and older people to travel. www.tourismforall.org.uk

- **Access statement guidance**

Information on how to write an access statement, including a standard template to help you structure the statement. www.visitisleofman.com/trade

- **Easy does it**

Easy does it - simple, low cost changes to benefit you and your visitors. www.visitisleofman.com/trade

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The information in this publication is given in good faith and every effort has been made to ensure its accuracy. Visit Isle of Man can accept no responsibility for any error or misrepresentation. All liability for loss, disappointment, negligence or other damage caused by reliance on the information contained in this publication is hereby excluded.
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Department for Enterprise Business Development Team

The Business Development Team are responsible for a wide range of areas within Tourism. They work with the Events and Product Development sections within Visit Isle of Man to ensure that the Department's strategy of increasing the quality and standards of the visitor experience is maintained. Please contact any member of the team if you have a query or if you wish to discuss any aspects of your accommodation.

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