

Ramada Hotel and Suites
Coventry.

Strategic Level Access Statement
June 2012.



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Following a period of review of currently available plans and operating standards, including evaluation of customer and employee needs, the following outlines the strategic approach that Ramada Hotel and Suites Coventry will adopt. The provision of its services will be in such a way as to enable its customers to access those services in an inclusive and independent manner. The health, safety and welfare considerations the hotel is required to consider have been incorporated in the strategy outline.

Access Statement for Ramada Coventry, Underlying Philosophy:

The hotel is committed to a policy of equality, inclusion and accessibility in the delivery of its services to members of the public, and in the employment opportunities afforded to existing and future employees. Ramada Hotel and Suites Coventry fully recognises the diversity of cultural, religious and individual abilities of its customers and employees. The hotel will be active in ensuring that any potential sources of discrimination are addressed in both the physical attributes of the facilities it provides and in the management practices and procedures it adopts.

Ramada Coventry is committed to ensuring that the facilities it provides, uses and manages afford its customers and employees the opportunity to maximise their individual abilities and enjoy safe and, wherever possible, independent participation and access. The hotel's services to the public include the provision of sleeping accommodation and registration associated with this, the provision of food and beverage offerings and meeting room facilities.

Ramada Hotel and Suites Coventry acknowledges that the proposed development will address the company's obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) as employers (Part II) and service providers (Part III). Ramada Hotel and Suites Coventry recognise that the nature of the facilities provided by the company, together with the diversity of the people using the facilities, will place some unique obligations on them, both as employers and service providers. These obligations will be addressed by positive actions to maximise participation and level access to all facilities. These will include the appropriate communication of information, facilities and management practices in formats that meet the diverse needs of both customers and staff.

The Ramada Hotel and Suites Coventry will undertake the following steps to ensure service provision:

All designers will be encouraged to work to the latest legislation and good practice guidance on accessibility available at the design and construction stages. These will include, for example, BS 8300:2001 (Design of buildings and their approaches to meet the needs of disabled people), The Building Regulations Part B (Fire Safety), Part M (Access to and use of buildings) and Part K (Protection from falling, collision and impact), and BS 5588 - part 8 (Fire precautions in the design, construction and use of buildings).

Consultation:

Ramada Hotel and Suites Coventry are committed to a policy of obtaining information and first hand experiences from all guests in order that they meet the needs of current and potential users.

Operational Level:

Ramada Hotel and Suites Coventry will continually carry out programmes of review for compliance with legislation related to health and safety and fire precautions. The hotel will be committed to developing and enforcing on-going reviews of any issues relating to physical barriers, management practices and procedures that may affect accessibility. The hotel will also be committed to ensuring that a stringent level of inspection, reporting, feedback and action associated with those areas of health and safety and fire regulations it is responsible for, are applied and linked to an on-going accessibility strategy.

Effective On-going Management:

Regular access audits, linked to inspections for fire precautions, health and safety and risk assessment will be carried out by staff suitably qualified in accessibility and inclusion related issues. Accessibility issues that require on-going review will also be linked to the maintenance programme for the hotel.

Feedback on matters related to accessibility will be sought on a frequent and regular basis from the guests and, where appropriate, their visitors and other users of the site and staff.

Staff Development and Training:

Staff training in disability awareness, the testing and use of specialised equipment (such as induction loops, personalised lighting and communication equipment) will be undertaken as part of the hotels current on-going staff development programme.

Ramada Coventry is committed to undertaking a structured programme of regular reviews of new technologies; constructional developments and training to ensure that the on going and evolving obligations imposed by the DDA are met.

Specific features:

Car Park:

An appropriate number of disabled parking bays will be provided at a location as close to the main entrance of the hotel as is practical. Level access from the parking bay to the surrounding pathways will be achieved by means of dropped or flush curbs with adequate cross hatchings to avoid parked vehicles obstructing access. Disabled bays will be signposted to allow for easy identification on driving into the car park.

Entrance doors:

Entrance doors will be automatic sliding doors ensuring ease of access. For security and safety reasons the front door will be locked between the hours of 10pm and 6am and at other times the managers believes it to be in the interests of the safety and security of customers and employees. When the entrance doors are locked access can be gained by either an accessible card key system or accessible intercom system. The sliding doors will be appropriately marked to ensure it is obvious to users with clear markings between 1400mm and 1600mm. The hotel entrances will be well lit and clearly signed from the access route.

Reception desk:

The reception desk will be in sight of the entrances and readily identifiable as such by those with visual impairments and have adequate signage. The height of the reception desk has been given significant consideration, as there is a need to balance the health, safety and welfare needs of employees against those of the physically impaired guest wishing to check in. It is envisaged that the majority of reception employees at the hotel may on occasion have to work alone (Lone Workers).

A number of risk mitigation measures have been implemented in relation to lone workers in line with the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. Included within these measures is the maintenance of a physical barrier between the lone worker and any potential risk from persons entering the hotel. Clearly a conflict arises between these statutory duties and desk height guidance in Part M. The hotel has given due consideration to this matter within the context of the purpose for which a physically impaired person requires access to services when checking in.

In the process of checking into any Hotel there is no legal requirement for the customer to sign any registration document, only that the Hotel has the information required by the Immigration (Hotel Records) Order 1972 on record. This information is provided by the customer when making a booking and can be verbally confirmed on their arrival. In this regard therefore a physically impaired customer is able to register at the hotel without the need for a desktop area.

It is noted however that there is on occasion a requirement for customers to confirm credit card slips as a method of payment, clearly this currently requires a

surface on which to perform the task. To enable a disabled guest to perform this task the hotel has altered the reception area design to include an access from the back of reception area directly into the front of house reception area. This alteration enables the receptionist to bring a writing board to the customer; hence they are able to perform this short and straightforward task.

This is the same for a 'Chip and Pin' approach, which removed the need to sign the credit card slip in most cases. Again the hotel enables this to be achieved simply and within the principals and spirit of providing this part of the service in a non discriminatory manner and not compromising the independence of the individual in accessing those services.

Bedroom configuration:

Accessible rooms:

Following pre-determined requirements for accessible rooms it is evident that many provisions in design of the Ramada accessible bedrooms are adequate in meeting the needs of disabled customers. Through out the design process consideration has been given and a number of improvement opportunities have been identified and proactively accommodated. All cupboards and hanging areas to be at a reachable height between 400mm and 1400mm. Door frames and skirting have been offered in a different colour, emergency alarms inserted, door handles and switches have been placed at a correct height.

En Suite facilities:

Having sought advice the hotel will be providing all accessible bedrooms with roll in shower facilities. This is based on a rational that clearly shows close to 100% of wheelchair users are able to make use of roll in shower facilities independently. This is not the case where the provision is a bath. The bathroom layout will seek to achieve the same accessibility and manuverablity as is achievable in the diagrammatic representation of such a bathroom in Part M. Whilst the 'usability' of the room by the customer will remain the same, due to requirements of construction, in particular with regard to drainage etc, slight variations from the aforesaid representation will be evident.

Colour contrasting within the bathroom will be maintained to ensure ease of use by customers who are visually impaired.

Movement circulation within the building:

The hotel design team has considered the need to alter the dimensions of its bedroom and other corridor areas. The volume of wheel chair traffic potential at the hotel is limited by the number of bedrooms making provision for customers having disabilities requiring the use of wheelchairs. The layout and number of accessible rooms in the building configuration will not result in high wheelchair traffic in any corridor. As such the hotel does not require passing places within corridor areas.

Fire doors are required to maintain the fire compartmentation of the building will be of an automatic self-closing type, remaining open for the majority of time to facilitate ease of circulation, whilst closing automatically in the event of a fire alarm activation. Circulation areas in other parts of the building allow for free movement of wheelchair users.

Fire alarm:

Ramada Coventry considers the safety of its customers to be a key operational priority. To this end the hotel has considered the most effective means by which the safety of customers with physical impairments can best be met. In considering the most appropriate means to mitigate risks associated with fire we have looked predominantly the bedroom environment. On activation of the alarms our employee training will advise employees that aid must be offered customers with disability. Such customers will be advised to remain in their bedrooms until a member of staff have entered the room to aid them to exit the building. An evacuation chair will be located on the ground floor level of the fire fighting staircase for employees to use. All required training and maintenance will be provided as part of our on going training and preventative maintenance programme. Employees will then report to fire marshal at the assembly point

When customers with disability are using the public areas an employee will aid their exit from within the 'public area' environment to the correct location.

The public area environment (including reception area, bar and restaurant).

The bedroom environment:

The major part of a customer's time in a hotel bedroom is spent sleeping making any visual warning redundant. This fact has been key in consideration of fire alarm requirements within the bedroom environment. Accessible rooms will be provided with a visual indication of fire alarm activation. It has been acknowledged however that visual indication is of little value to customers who are blind or have sight impairment whilst they are asleep in particular. In order that we can more effectively target resources and meet the needs of sensory disabled customers we will have vibrating pager and pillow pad systems with an appropriate operational procedure for their use by customers. It should be noted that this system is also provided with a visual indication of activation. Such a strategic approach will ensure a more suitable system of alerting customers with sensory disabilities to fire alarm activations and ensure their ability to enjoy the services of the hotel in an independent fashion.

Bar and Restaurant.

The Bar and restaurant within the hotel shall be used for the service of food during breakfast, lunch and dinner and secondly, as a bar for a relaxing drink throughout the day.

Breakfast service at the hotel will consist of a self-service buffet. The breakfast served is hot and ambient. In considering the risks to customers in having a self-service hot breakfast it is evident that a foreseeable risk to small children from hot surfaces exists. For this reason we have sought to ensure that the buffet area is at a height whereby the risks to children are minimised so far as is reasonably practicable (Required under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999). Clearly in making this provision we have considered how disabled customers; in particular those reliant on a wheelchair would be able to avail themselves of the breakfast offered. In order to address this apparent conflict the Ramada Coventry will provide a waiter service for customers with disabilities.

The lunch and dinner service will be predominately waiter service however where a buffet option is preferred service will be provided to customer with disabilities.

Due to the interior layout, the bar counter is on the opposite side of the entrance lobby to the reception area and as such, each serves as a physical barrier for the safety and security of employees who will usually be female lone workers. The same issues apply in the bar environment as in the reception environment in this regard.

In order that the hotel can meet its safety obligations to its employees under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, as well as the service needs to disabled customers, waiter service will be in available to customers with disabilities.

Whilst it is acknowledged that no area of access on the bar is provided, the service of providing drinks requested by the guest can be achieved by an employee leaving the area behind the bar through the area provided and the safety issues for employees addressed in adopting the approach outlined.