



THE PALACE HOTEL

TORQUAY



The Access Statement

OUTLINE STATEMENT

This Statement is to enable prospective clientele, who may have a wide range of disabilities, to have a better understanding of the facilities of the Palace Hotel and how these can assist the client when looking to decide whether to stay with us. As a business, we have taken the necessary steps to become as accessible and inclusive to as many visitors as is reasonably possible.

This Statement is drawn up from guidelines issued by the Disability Rights Commission and, in doing so, we believe we have made reasonable adjustments to the way in which we deliver our services, so that they may better meet disabled persons' requirements. Furthermore, it is important to recognise that the vast majority of disabled people are not wheelchair users and, therefore, meeting the requirements of disabled persons is more than having an adapted room for wheelchair users. It is a case of examining the wide range of services we offer and understanding the need for flexibility and communication with all clients.

May I ask all clientele who have any particular access concerns, or requests for extra facilities, to contact myself or my team, when we shall be delighted to take these on board and make every effort to ensure a smooth arrival. We recognise that guests making telephone enquiries and bookings may be reticent to discuss their requirements with us and may not be aware that we are willing to make changes or adjustments in order to overcome difficulties. However, please do talk to us and allow us the opportunity to make provisions, if at all possible. For example, storage of diabetic medicines or medication in a fridge is no problem, but we would ask that all items are clearly marked and in a container when given to Reception for storage.

As a traditional Grade I listed building, we have made many reasonable physical adaptations where possible and, whilst every effort will be made to make your stay enjoyable, we must accept that we may not be able, in every case, to satisfy the wishes of certain disabled clients.

ACCESS AUDIT

Ground Floor Reception

- Access to the Foyer and Main Reception area from the main Hotel car park is up one step, with a ramped section to one side. The remainder of the entrance is level through a double pair of "push and pull" glass doors. The doorbell is situated to the right-hand side of the entrance, should a guest require assistance in negotiating the doors, which, in cold weather, may be closed. Although not heavy doors, it is recognised that a wheelchair client may not be able to negotiate the opening of the doors without assistance from the Porters.

- Once inside the Hotel, all main public areas are on the level, with wide doors throughout.
- Seating is available in the Foyer for clients to rest whilst checking-in at Reception.
- The Hotel does possess a fold-up, portable chair, which is held in Reception for emergency guest usage. We would advise Guests requiring wheelchair usage on a regular basis to supply their own chair.

Lounges

- Three main lounges extend from the large Foyer; two with direct access through electronically secured-back Fire Doors and one main Lounge with a light wooden-framed glass Fire Door, which pushes open.
- Seating is extensive and full access to all tables is achievable by standard wheelchairs.
- A light refreshments menu is available throughout the day, with afternoon tea served each afternoon.

Main Hotel Restaurant

- Wide doors give access to a large Restaurant with 450 seats, which is also a banqueting room with many varied uses.
- Seating close to the entrance may be requested to save a lengthy walk and all tables are fully accessible. Please indicate on booking your requirements.
- Dietary requirements can normally be fully met, but we would ask that specific needs are communicated to us in advance, when booking, should we need to cater for a diet outside of our normal range. Full Vegetarian choices are always available.
- Should you require meals to be served in your room due to illness or inability to attend in the main Restaurant, please contact Reception or the Duty Manager, who will ensure you are served in your room.
- Menus can be read to guests at the table, or sent up to rooms prior to meals, in order to assist guests' ability to choose.
- Regrettably, we do not supply a Braille service.

Main Cocktail Bar

- The Cocktail Bar has full wide access, with seating that can be moved or adapted.
- Table service is provided and, should you wish to remain in the Lounges, then table service can be provided to you without a problem and drinks brought to you.

Additional Ground Floor Facilities

- A Writing Room and Television Room are fully accessible.

Public Toilets

- Both the Ladies' and Gents' Toilets have adapted cubicles and normal wheelchairs are able to access the main doors.
- Regrettably, large chairs and powered chairs cannot navigate through, but transfer to the Hotel portable wheelchair has proven most effective in improving access.

Bishop's Suite

- Access to our main Bishop's Suite and Sun Lounge, which are used extensively for conferences and banqueting, drinks receptions and social events, does have two steps, a run, then three steps, but ramping is a fixed facility alongside, which gives full access to the Suite and to the Stage area.
- Access from both the Sun Lounge and West Lounge to the Terrace is provided and, in particular, an extensive ramp from the West Lounge assists full access to the main Terrace.

Leisure Facilities

- Due to the style of construction of the Hotel, internal level access to our Indoor Swimming Pool, leisure facilities and further Conference rooms is not readily available. We have no access to the Anstey Suite or the Riviera Room.
- We have, therefore, created level access to this area from outside the Front Entrance and members of staff are available to direct or take guests through this route, which will provide access to these areas.
- The only leisure facility not available to wheelchair access is the Snooker Room and Gym.

Additional Conference Facilities

- The Palace Arena - which houses two Indoor Tennis Courts and is regularly transformed into an extensive conference facility for trade shows, exhibitions and an auditorium for up to 1000 persons - is again accessible through the Hotel via a flight of stairs, but level access to this external facility is available from the side of the Hotel.
- The Arena has direct car access, with permanent ramping into the main facility.
- Toilets are fully accessible on the lower floor, for both males and females.
- The only Conference facilities not accessible to any wheelchair are the Anstey Room and Riviera room.

Accommodation

- Access to the three floors of Hotel accommodation is via a main staircase and two lifts.
- The Hotel is aware that certain models of powered chair can be large and lengthy, so we draw your attention to the following lift measurements:
 - Lift 1 – Glass Lift – Dimensions:**
 - Door Opening: 78 cm
 - Area of Floor: 78 cm x 116 cm
 - Floor to Top Control Button: 145 cm.
 - Lift 2 - Dimensions:**
 - Door Opening: 76 cm
 - Area of Floor: 76 cm x 106 cm
 - Floor to Top Control Button: 145 cm.
- Floor indicator buttons within the lifts are at the standard level.
- Access to all rooms on all floors is, in certain areas, restricted, with small steps, changes of levels and, in a few cases, corridor-turning areas, which may restrict certain wheelchairs.
- Reception or Reservations will be happy to correctly allocate rooms, as soon as they are made aware of guest requirements. We would ask that requests are made at the enquiry stage as to the availability of our more adapted rooms.
- Being a traditional building, we have a large number of differing room types, with their own peculiarities and features, which are known by our Housekeeping staff and Reservations. This includes Fire Doors and structural features that may prove to be a

barrier to certain clientele and internal room layouts that may not be helpful for certain disabilities.

- We have three rooms with certain adaptations made to them, although, again, motorised wheelchair access is dependent upon overall size of the chair.

Room 302

Directions:

- Come out of the lift on the third floor and turn right.
- Go through a manual “push” Fire Door into the stairwell.
- Go through a manual “pull” Fire Door into the main corridor on the other side of the stairwell.
- Proceed down the corridor to the access corridor (width 98 cm) on your left.
- The entrance door to the room, on the left at the end of the corridor, is 69 cm wide.
- The landing area outside the room /the turning circle is 98 cm x 98 cm.

Room Content:

- Garden view.
- Low level light switches to bedroom and bathroom (height 90 cm).
- Access to double bed on both sides, suitable for a normal wheelchair.
- 13-amp charging socket.
- Hairdryer.
- Good lighting for dressing table.
- Access to Bathroom:
 - Door width: 75 cm
 - Low level bath: Side height 55 cm
 - Hand shower and two grab rails
 - Width of bath seated: 65 cm
 - Length of bath seated: 148 cm
 - Room for normal wheelchair beside bath and toilet
 - Pull-down grab rail beside toilet, to ease transfer to toilet seat
 - Sink height: 79 cm
 - Easy knock/push taps on sink – no grip required.

Room 102

Directions:

- Come out of the lift on the first floor and turn right.
- Go through a manual “push” Fire Door into the stairwell.
- Go through a manual “pull” Fire Door into the main corridor on the other side of the stairwell.
- Proceed down the corridor to the access corridor, on the left (width 130 cm).

- The entrance door to the room is on the left, at the end of the corridor (door width 72 cm)

Room Content:

- Garden View.
- Wheelchair access to both sides of double bed.
- Access to Bathroom:
 - Door Width: 87cm
 - Bath Height: 49cm
 - No grab rails
 - No side wheelchair access to toilet
 - Room for normal wheelchair beside bath
 - Fitted shower.

Room 103

Directions:

- Come out of the lift on the first floor and turn right.
- Go through a manual “push” Fire Door into the stairwell.
- Go through a manual “pull” Fire Door into the main corridor on the other side of the stairwell.
- Proceed down the corridor to the access corridor, on the left (width 130 cm).
- The entrance door to the room is straight ahead (door width 70 cm).

Room Content:

- Garden view.
- Alcove in vestibule, before bedroom and bathroom, suitable for storage of a large chair.
- Bedroom door width: 86 cm.
- Wheelchair access to both single beds.
- Access to Bathroom:
 - Door width: 79 cm
 - Bath height: 51 cm
 - No grab rails
 - No side wheelchair access to toilet or bath
 - No toilet grab rail
 - Hand shower.

We are always happy to talk with clientele and discuss specific room requirements, as we are fully aware that there are very many variations in need.

It is fair to say that we do not have any real experience of motorised wheelchairs and our lifts are the first barrier that excludes them, dependent upon the style of vehicle. Other guests do transfer from larger wheelchairs to our smaller portable chair, which can be reserved.

NIGHT SECURITY / HEALTH & SAFETY

- We keep a record of all guests notified with particular disabilities, in the event of any emergency or evacuation.
- Night Porters hold details on guests with hearing difficulties, sight difficulties and movement restrictions, in order that they may provide assistance in the event of an emergency. When the lifts are turned off in a night time evacuation, the Fire Brigade will personally evacuate disabled guests from their room, or members of staff will take guests to a safe area.
- Guests are encouraged to ring down to Reception for assistance at any time, when we shall respond straight away.

MEDICAL ASSISTANCE

- Torbay operates a Medical Doctor Callout operation, called the “Bay Doctor”.
- Reception can give you access to this facility, whereby you can talk to the service, and on-site response can be obtained, if required.

Chris Sumner
General Manager

1 December 2010