

Wheelchair-accessible unisex toilets

Design considerations

5.8 Wheelchair users should be able to approach, transfer to, and use the sanitary facilities provided within a building. This requires the provision of a wheelchair-accessible unisex toilet. The relationship of the WC to the finger rise basin and other accessories should allow a person to wash and dry hands while seated on the WC. The space provided for manoeuvring should enable wheelchair users to adopt various transfer techniques that allow independent or assisted use. It is important that the transfer space alongside the WC is kept clear to the back wall. When transferring to and from their wheelchair, some people need horizontal support rolls. The roll on the open side is a drop-down roll, but on the wall side, it can be a wall-mounted grab roll (which is thought to give a more rigid handhold) set at a greater distance than normal from the wall or, alternatively, a second drop-down roll in addition to the wall-mounted grab roll where the grab roll is spaced at the maximum distance from the wall and therefore does not give the same degree of support.

5.9 A unisex toilet is approved separately from other sanitary accommodation. It is more easily identified than a wheelchair-accessible cubicle in a separate-sex toilet/washroom and, provided it is used only by disabled people, it is more likely to be available when required. This is particularly important as some disabled people need to use a toilet more frequently than other users. The time needed to reach a wheelchair-accessible toilet should therefore be kept to a minimum when considering the location of unisex toilet accommodation. In addition, a unisex toilet enables one or two assistants of either sex to assist a disabled person. Consideration should be given to installing a chemical sanitary waste disposal unit in wheelchair-accessible WC accommodation. Some wheelchair users find it difficult to use a standard-height WC seat and, for them, it is important that the WC pan can accept a variable height toilet seat riser. WC pans manufactured to the key dimensions given in BS 5503-3 and BS 5504-4 are considered acceptable.

Note: More detailed guidance on the various techniques used to transfer from a wheelchair to a WC, as well as appropriate sanitary and other fittings is given in BS 8300.

Provisions

5.10 Wheelchair-accessible unisex toilets will satisfy Requirement M1 or M3 if:

- a. one is located as close as possible to the entrance and/or waiting area of the building;
- b. they are not located in a way that compromises the privacy of users;
- c. they are located in a similar position on each floor of a multi-storey building, and allow for right- and left-hand transfer on alternate floors;
- d. when more than one unisex toilet is available in other than multi-storey buildings, a choice of layouts suitable for left-hand and right-hand transfer is provided;
- e. when it is the only toilet facility in the building, the width is increased from 1.5m to 2m and it includes a standing height wash basin associated with the WC;
- f. they are located on accessible routes that are direct and obstruction free;
- g. doors are preferably outward-opening and are fitted with a horizontal closing bar fixed to the inside face;
- h. any wheelchair user does not have to travel:
 - i. more than 40m on the same floor, unless a greater distance can be argued in the Access Statement on the grounds that the circulation route is unobstructed, e.g. by the installation of doors with hold-open devices;
 - ii) more than a 40m combined horizontal distance where the unisex toilet accommodation is on another floor of the building, but is accessible by passenger lift (if a lifting platform is installed, vertical travel to a unisex toilet is limited to one storey);
- i. the minimum overall dimensions of, and the arrangement of fittings within, a wheelchair-accessible unisex toilet, comply with Diagram 18;
- j. where the horizontal support roll on the wall adjacent to the WC is set with the minimum spacing from the wall, an additional drop-down roll is provided on the wall side at a distance of 320mm from the centre line of the WC;
- k. where the horizontal support roll on the wall adjacent to the WC is set so that its centre line is 400mm from the centre line of the WC, there is no additional drop-down roll;
- l. the heights and arrangement of fittings in a wheelchair-accessible unisex toilet comply with Diagram 19 and, as appropriate, Diagram 20;
- m. an emergency assistance alarm system is provided, complying with 5.4;
- n. the emergency assistance call signal outside the toilet compartment is located so that it can be easily seen and heard by those able to give assistance;
- o. an emergency assistance pull cord is easily identifiable (see 4.30(e)) and reachable from the WC and from the floor close to the WC;
- p. any heat emitters are located so that they do not restrict the minimum clear wheelchair manoeuvring space, nor the space beside the WC used for transfer to the WC;
- q. WC pans conform to BS 5503-3 or BS 5504-4 in terms of key dimensions in order to accommodate the use of variable height toilet seat riser (see 5.9);
- r. cisterns for WCs that will be used by wheelchair users have their flushing mechanism positioned on the open or transfer side of the space, irrespective of handing.

Diagram 19: Heights and arrangement of fittings in a unisex wheelchair-accessible toilet (looking towards wall A)

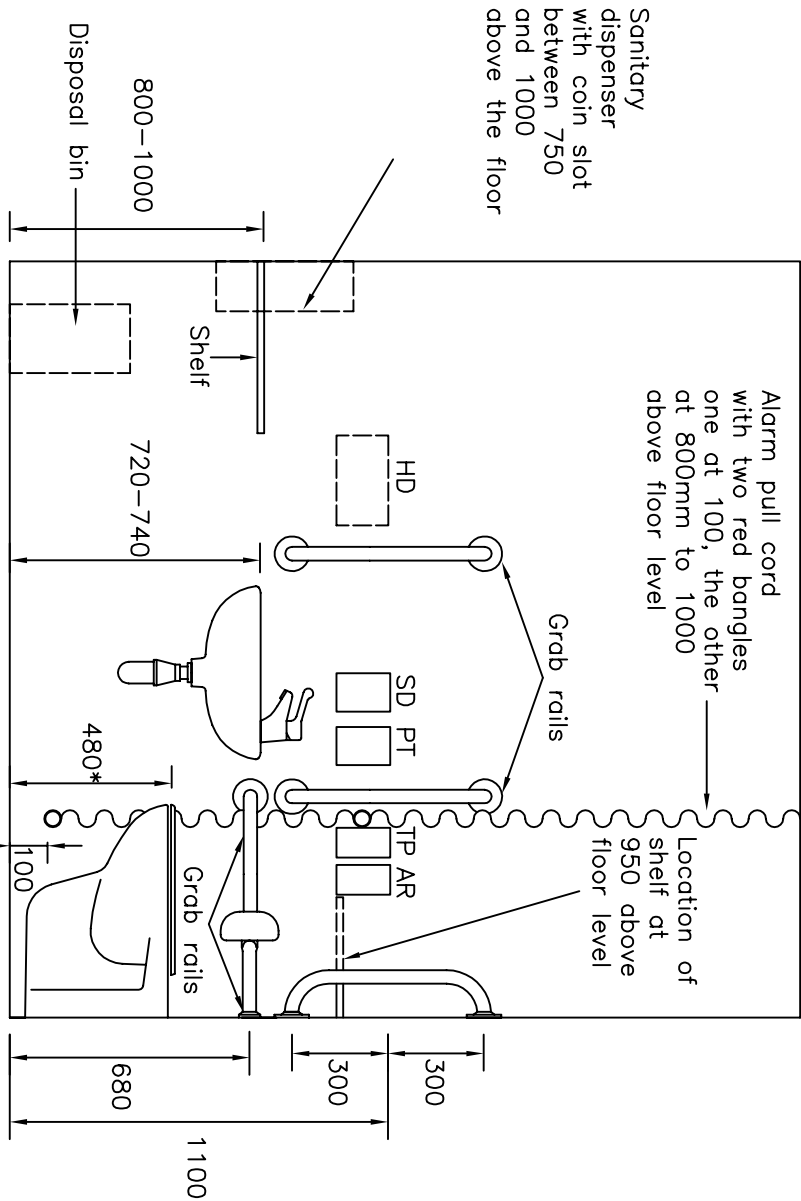


Diagram 18: Unisex wheelchair-accessible toilet with corner WC

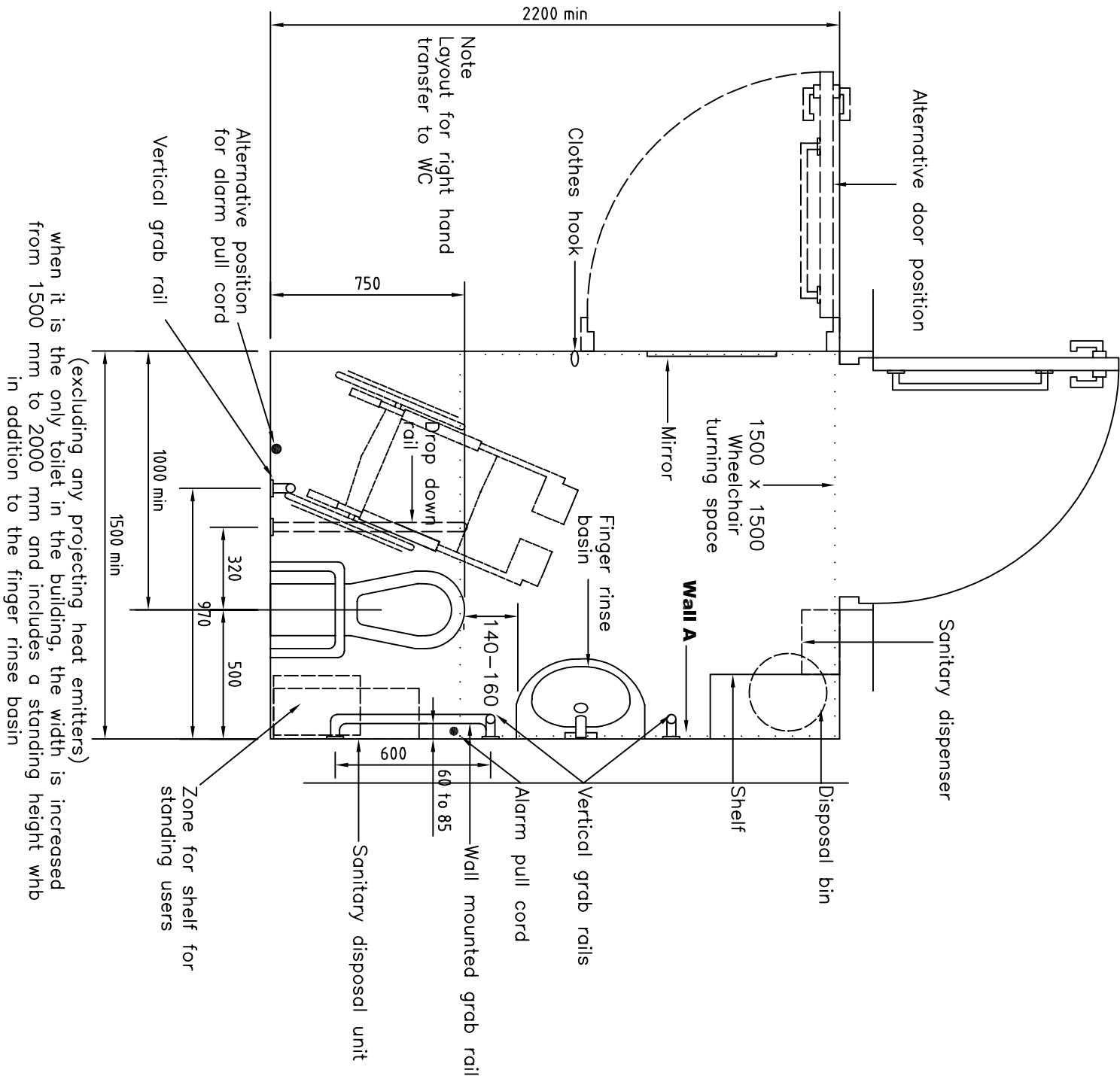
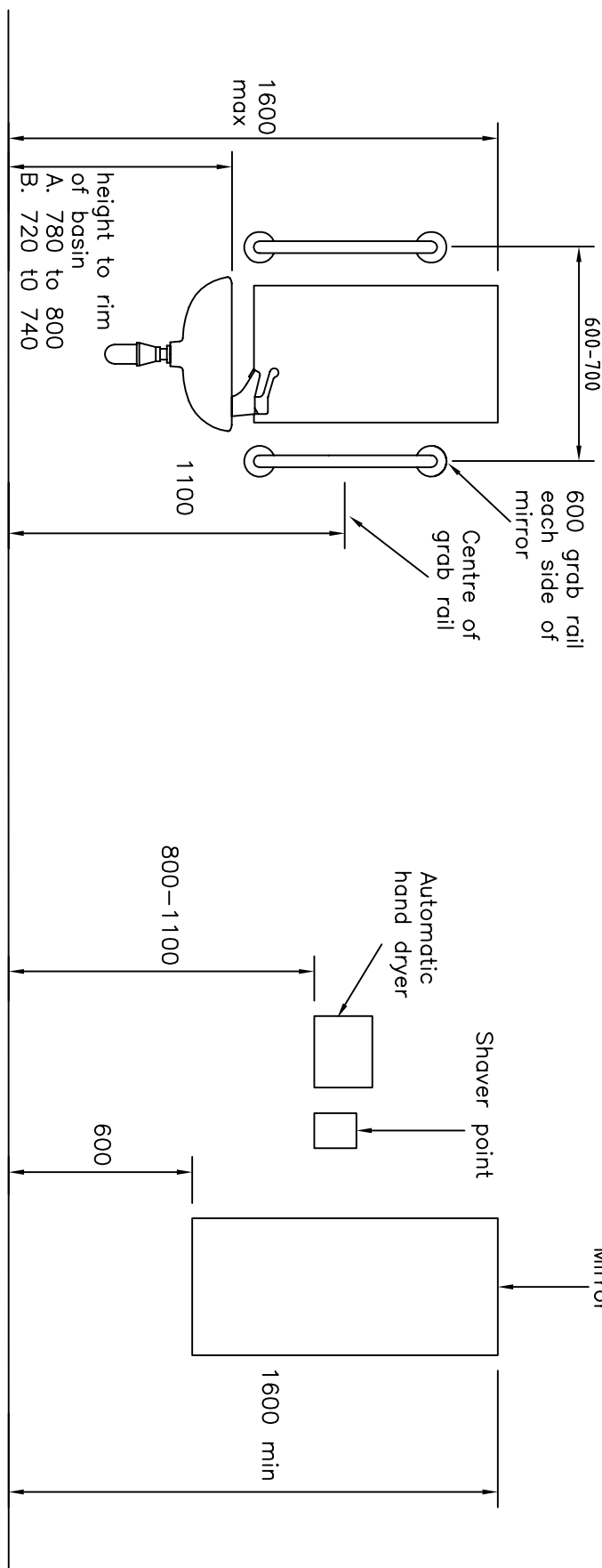


Diagram 20: Heights of various fittings in toilet accommodation



In addition, the toilet requires:

- An emergency alarm system within the compartment of the accessible toilet. The emergency assistance pull cord should be reachable from the WC and from the floor.

The emergency assistance call signal outside the toilet should be located where it can be easily seen and heard by those able to give assistance.

to give assistance.

accommodation must be designed to accommodate a variable height seat raiser.

- Any heat emitters should be located where they do not restrict the available manoeuvring space.

- The fire alarm system should have a visual and audible indicator that the fire alarm has been activated (Note that this is only required if a fire alarm is fitted in the building).

- The disabled persons toilet requires ironmongery i.e. grabrails which contrast visually with the walls and the toilets.

REVISIONS & PUBLICATION DATES	
PROJECT NUMBER / DRAWING NUMBER 2927/24/04	
CLIENT Mr F Smith R E Knowles Ltd c/o H & E Smith Ltd Broom Street Hanley Stoke On Trent ST1 2EH	
DRAWING TITLE Proposed Disabled WC	
DATE FIRST PUBLICATION DATE April 2024	DESIGNED BY Jon Bennett
SCALE - 1:200	PRINTED @ A2
PROJECT Unit 8 Knowles Industrial Estate Buxton Road Furness Vale Whaley Bridge High Peak SK23 7PJ	