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DESIGN AND DISABILITY:

The Square towncentre.

By

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We need to widen our minds as well as our doorways.
(*Ellen Stahl, 1992, p.11*)

INTRODUCTION

Minority groups are destined to fight the prejudices that exist against them. Being content with who one is, and striving to reach ones full potential can be made difficult in a world that only accepts those that succumb to its social conventions. The fight against racism, equality for women and for expressing one's sexuality has been a fight for recognition. That is what the disabled population is looking for, recognition and equal opportunity as a minority group.

Outlined in this thesis are some of the difficulties facing this particular group. How society conventions, tempered through fear and ignorance, place constraints on the daily living of disabled people. What are the responsibilities of the design world and why do people sometimes find themselves "*..disabled by design.*" (RCA, 1993, p.44) Too often in the past, the designer has focused on solving a particular problem without looking at the whole envelope. In relation to designing products to aid the disabled community, a situation has arisen that encourages differentiation. It is not necessarily the feelings of difference that people find hard to handle, but as Austin Carroll points out, "*..it is that of feeling different in a negative way.*" (Carroll, 1994)

This negative difference is a big step that must be overcome. Such is the subjective nature of the design industry that products manufactured tend to incorporate these theories. Products for the disabled say just

that, they highlight the differences between able-bodied and disabled people. Design and suitability is very important, there are questions of stigma attached to aids. In a historical context little thought has gone into the aesthetics of products that fulfil the needs of disabled people. Provided that the object/product is functional there is little need for anything else. (*Fig. 1*) The reasoning behind this lack of consideration is of course, money and political power. The needs of a minority do not have to be explored: little or no adverse pressure bears down on the designer. Such was the situation in the past. The disabled population was not as vocal and so could not exert any influence. Design and especially industrial design have always been considered of great importance to the capitalist machine. Spurred by the incentive to make money, mass-production fuels the design industry. But the small market and lack of demand has resulted in batch production for these 'special' products and little design or variety is offered. Of course this is not true in all cases, with such a lack lustre approach on behalf of the industry a number of professionals took an interest. Design groups sprang up whose portfolios dealt solely with the production of products for the disabled. *Ergonomi design* in Sweden dealt with such products (*Fig.2*) and *All Clear Designs* in England specialised in disability and the built environment. In more recent times the design field has become more altruistic and considerate to 'special' interests. Yet the main thread of the industry still works within the bands that target a specific market.



Fig. 1 An example of the functional solution to solving a problem for the disabled user. Homecraft 'Gripmate Holder.'

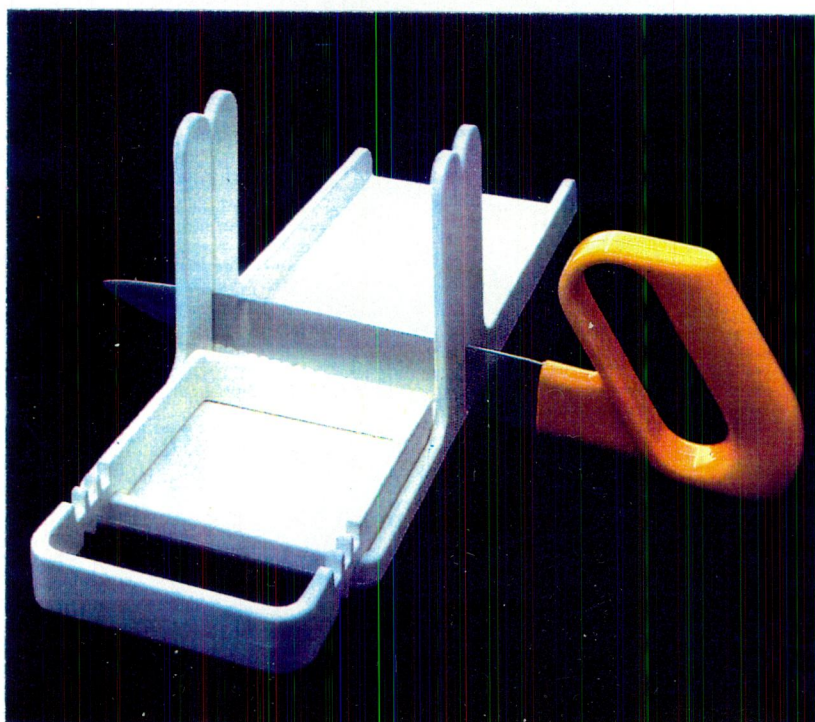


Fig.2 Fisker Knife, designed by Ergonomi design Gruppen. Careful consideration has gone into the ergonomics and aesthetics of the handle.

This thesis attempts to highlight the benefits to everyone of universal or barrier free design. The Square towncentre, in Tallaght is taken as an example of how the many varying aspects of disability can be dealt with, all the while not interfering with other people's use of the facility. The thoughtful and innovative features offered to the disabled customer show real consideration for their predicament. These features are outlined in a reply to a questionnaire that was sent to Monarch properties, property developers of the Square in Tallaght. They are welcome features that epitomise the core of transgenerational and barrier free design.

(Questionnaire and reply are found in App.C)

The introduction of such measures in the design of public buildings can only lead to a more integrated existence for those who are disabled. The lack of provisions of accessible services is socially debilitating. Anything that can be done to alleviate this problem should be dealt with now. Interestingly, the changing nature of the worlds population, with the estimation of 50 % of the European population being disabled by the year 2000, has made the industrial world more aware of the problems facing the disabled. By the year 2000 this 50 % will have become quite a power base in monetary terms. *(Earnscliffe, 1992, p.5)* It is this point more so than any other that makes the term 'barrier free design ' so compelling to the manufacturer.

It is not only physical limitations that restrict us to our homes and those whom we know. It is the knowledge that each entry into the public world will be dominated by stares, condescension, by pity, by hostility.

Morris, (Stahl, 1992, p.13)

PART I

Chapter 1. **SOCIAL ATTITUDE**

Introduction.

The difficulties incurred by the disabled today do not stem simply from physical barriers. As Morris has maintained, society's attitude can be just as damning. In an historical context the 'unfortunates' (as the disabled are sometimes referred to) were removed from society and placed in institutions. Within these institutions little could be done to break the monotony of life or stimulate the patient. Behind these walls they could be looked after without interfering with the daily living of mainstream society. The disabled persons were not given the right to choose but everything was decided for them. Their rights in an able-bodied society were neglected and down played and this situation still exists to this day. As Oliver puts it '*..other people still have the power to define, decide and provide for our needs.*' (Stahl, 1992, p15)

Fear and ignorance abound with the result that people with disability become segregated and segregation in itself leads to fear and mistrust, heightened undeservedly by superstition. Morris states quite clearly '*..disability frightens people..*' (Stahl, 1992, p13) it is something that can happen to them. Thus one can see where this 'hostility' arises from. As with most minority groups, being different can result in discrimination within mainstream society.

Representation.

The negative representation of the disabled in the media has a lot to answer for. Billboards or advertising campaigns tend to project an image of the brave sufferers, recipients of pity and charity with little autonomy - dependant on others and '*slaves to their medical condition.*' (Earnscliffe, 1992, p.20) Hevey explains that this sort of imagery leads to a commonly held belief that the disabled '*are not supposed to have rights and choices, only pity and charity.*' (Earnscliffe, 1992, p.20) In effect it is this sort of negative stereotype that allows for the manipulation of the emotions, stirring the conscience of the able-bodied society, with the result that the reinforcement of such beliefs is socially divisive.

In contrast with that view, there is also another form of oppressive disability imagery. This is illuminated in David heveys '*Tragedy Principle:*'

From Richard 3rd to James Bond villains, the principle has meant that disability has been portrayed as bodily impairments, as a social or personal flaw. (Earnscliffe, 1992, p.23)

Throughout our literary history, as far back as Greek mythology bodily impairments have signified flaws in a person's character; the mythological figure of 'Oedipus,' the legendary 'Captain Hook', 'Long John Silver' of Treasure Island and a more contemporary notable

'Darth Vader' of Star Wars. All of this imagery seeps into the

conscienceness with a subliminal effect. For a child such misrepresentation does influence their perception. Such translation of impairment signifying 'baddies' or evil is an injustice to the disabled population. When both contrasting views, pity and charity and flawed characters exist side by side a 'mish-mash' of sympathy, disgust and confusion descends on this minority sector.

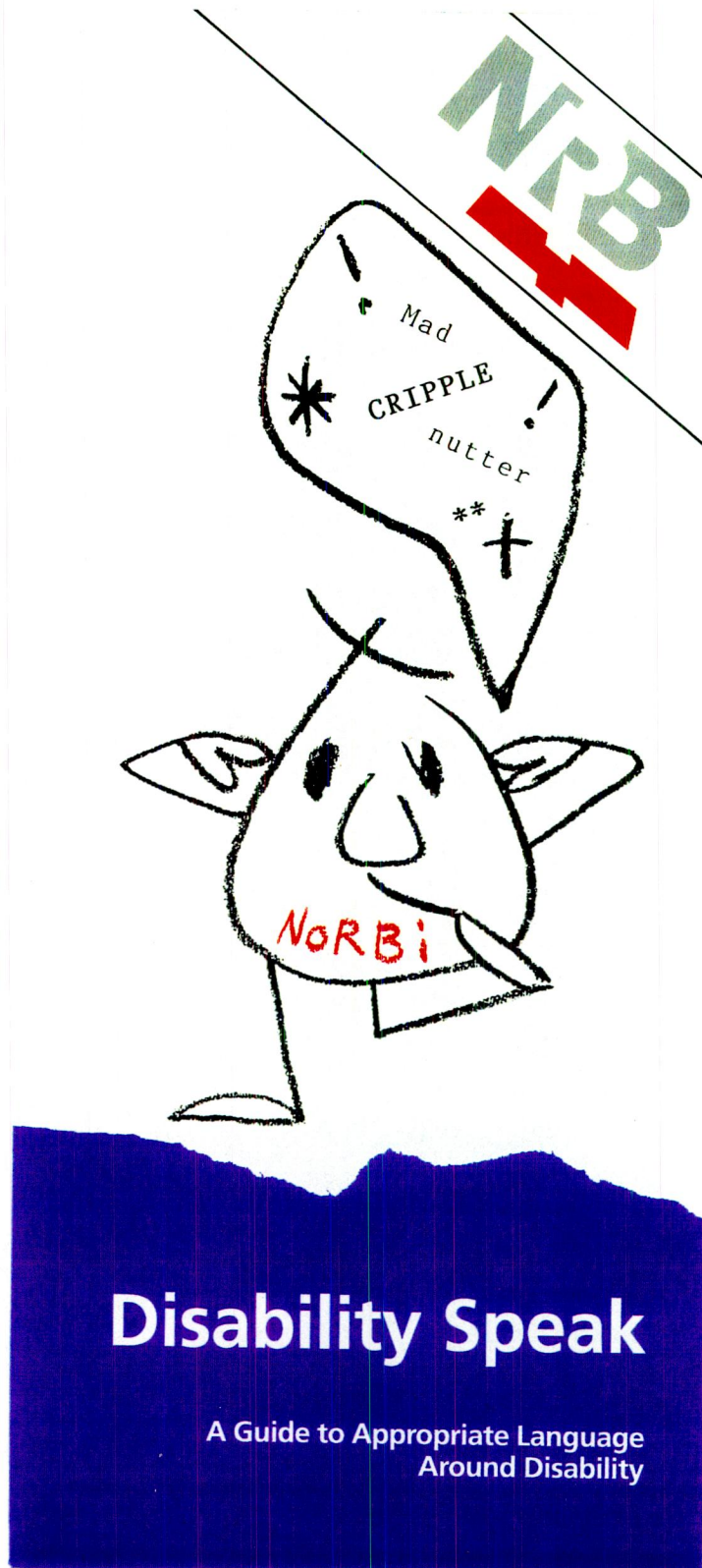


Fig. 3 Disability Speak Literature. Published by the NRB this pamphlet gives an indication of the 'minefield of words' surrounding the subject of disability.

Definition.

Back in the early 1980s WHO (World Health Organisation) distinguished between impairment (Functional limitation or disability as a result of injury) and handicap, which is the social consequence of an injury and or functional impediment. However in today's politically correct world the term 'Handicapped' is no longer acceptable. (Fig. 3) The language used to describe disability is important because the words used reveal one's attitude toward disability and now persons within this category are now termed disabled, impaired or challenged.

More often than not disabled persons are still referred to as 'handicapped.' It must be understood that the term 'handicap' is not a characteristic of the person but that it '*..rather describes a relationship between the person and the environment.*' (Maria Benktzon, 1990) If steps were one metre high then everyone would be handicapped! Keeping this in mind the responsibility has now shifted on to organisers both in the private and public sector, to cater to disability. It is this interface between man and environment that has now to be challenged.

Summary.

Fear, ignorance and misrepresentation have gone a long way to keeping the door closed on disability. That is not to say that other sectors of the community remain blind to the needs of the disabled, but that negative social attitude is debilitating and undermines the self esteem/confidence of the individuals who are trying to make headway in our society. In an NRB (National Rehabilitation Board) report dated Feb.94 many persons with disabilities maintained that '*... the negative social attitudes they incurred were foremost in limiting their opportunities.*' (NRB, p.4, 1994)

*It's a basic civil rights issue,..disability is only peripheral
- it's a social injustice. (NRB, Feb. 1994)*

Chapter 2. POLITICAL ATTITUDE

The NRB (National Rehabilitation Board).

(Taken from a report 'The situation regarding design and disability in Ireland ' during The European Design Project, Hotel Conrad Dublin, 1992)

The State funds the NRB which has the responsibility of dealing with disability issues. It was established by statutory instrument in 1967. Maureen Gilbert, head of independent living services NRB Dublin, maintains that the NRB do not have the expertise to '*set up and monitor a policy on design and disability.*' (Gilbert, 1992) In fact there is no policy on design and disability in Ireland. This organisation advises the Minister on all matters relating to rehabilitation and provide for certain services that are delivered to people with disability. The NRB's mission statement reads:

NRB's mission is, on behalf of the State and in consultation with people with disabilities, to enable and empower people with disabilities to live the life of their choice to their fullest potential. (Gilbert, 1992)

Although it had no legal clout the NRB published guidelines and standards in relation to access for the disabled in 1988. These publications were very detailed but were only taken on board by conscientious proprietors. There was a need for legislation which did not arrive until 1991.

Legislation.

Little attention has been paid to the disabled in terms of access legislation. The 1991 Building Regulations, Part M was the first real attempt to cater to the problems of accessibility. However the first reference to people with special needs surfaced in the Local government Act 1963.

Local Government Act 1963

Section 86. Public Health Acts 1878, 1890.

Building Control Act 1990

Section 3. Sub-section 2.

Building Regulations 1991

Part M.

(Information relating to these acts can be found in App.B)

The Local Government Act 1963.

The Local Government Act 1963 was ridiculous with reference to the special needs section. Section 86 detailed that the purpose for which building regulations may be made under the Act are set out in the Public Health Acts 1878, 1890 and so were confined to matters of public health and safety and not therefore to people with special needs. What this Act did introduce was the building regulator/officer. It was up to this person to accept or reject proposals or adaptations made for persons with disabilities. Nothing in the Act was adequate for dealing

with disabilities, no guidelines were set down - the fact that the two earlier Acts were drawn up in the last century emphasised the lack of any proper attention being paid to the disabled.

Building Control Act 1990.

Under this Bill the Minister was given the right to make regulations in relation to providing for special needs. This legislation eventually led on to the Building regulations 1991. An interesting point to note is that this Bill was passed in 1984 yet it was not until 1990 that it became law. Tom O'Donaghue of the Government publications office could not give any reason for the six year delay in making this bill law.

Building Regulations 1991.

The arrival of the 1991 regulations was met with great relief. As mentioned this document laid out exact measures in the refitting and building for access for the disabled. These technical specifications were set out to ensure the health, safety and welfare of persons and to cater to the special needs of the disabled persons. In effect this document harmonised European standards, directives and incentives.

Community Care Verses Institutions.

If one takes into consideration the past history of the disabled population, one would realise that the legislation correlates with society's view of the disabled at those particular times. Before, the disabled were removed from society to institutions where they were looked after. Their independence was taken from them. In this situation they had little or no political clout. Others decided how their needs should be provided for. This situation was a complete violation of a basic civil right although it was not seen as such at the time. As a result the disabled persons were being '*systematically treated as a group not quite capable of independently making it's own contribution to improving it's quality of life.*' (Shape, 1991, p.16)

With this grievance and as a result of research which proved this institutionalisation as being bad practise, the Government has been looking closely at community care. Cut backs in health have seen the demise of the institutions and the introduction of independent living is seen as a necessary and vital alternative. And so the policy objective is to achieve, as is possible, independence in the community for people with disabilities. This would include living at home, in sheltered housing rather than institutional care. According to IWA (Irish Wheelchair Association) statistics, 89% of IWA members are living outside of residential care. (IWA, 1994, p.72) As this is the case it is

also important that accessible services be provided to compliment such policies.

When IWA members were asked to prioritise their needs/difficulties 42% advocated the need for improved services, 21.3% called for the need to overcome physical barriers, 10.8% felt that a positive public attitude change was necessary, 5.5% called for equal access to education and training and another 5.5% looked for an improvement in social contacts. (*IWA, 1994, p.4*) This is why the implementation of Part M of the building Regulations is so important. Under this legislation new buildings and extensions must be built in accordance with the technical guidelines given. These measures in themselves would make some headway into the improvement of services, public attitude, access, and social contact. Should the owner not implement this legislation, then they become liable under the law! This situation however should not have to exist. With just a little planning at the beginning of a project, buildings would be made accessible with little or no extra cost.

...(Design) is always a compromise, but it is a compromise which is best realised by the study of man at his weakest. Alvar Aalto, (Penton, 1990, p.70)

Introduction.

Design has been seen by many as an effective tool for improving the quality of people's lives. Aalto's opening quotation encapsulates the altruistic nature of one of the greatest exponents and teachers of design this century. His claim of design as '...a compromise best realised by the study of man at his weakest,' reinforces the powerful and perhaps leading role that design has in shaping a future world that is considerate and safe. In truth however, products have tended to be manufactured to a specification of the mythical average man - and in doing so fail to meet the needs of a great majority.

Design for the Average Man.

Design for the average person is a fallacy - he/she does not exist. In the past representative samples of the population have proved that 50% of measures will be greater than the average and 50% will be less, (*Goldsmith, 1976, p.117*). This implies that only 50% of potential users will ever be satisfied by these measures.

Then considering how this data is computed, it can be noted that those who are not in peak physical condition also lose out. The majority of the data collected is done so courtesy of the military. The reason for this is obvious with such an abundance of people. But these people are in peak condition, they work and train hard. The question one must pose is how do these dimensions translate to the outside world? Certainly, they give some indication but by accepting this data one is again ruling out a large number of the population.

Little consideration is given to the old, infirm or disabled. Without a willing effort on behalf of the designer such minority groups are being neglected.



Designed to support

Support rails and seats to assist disabled, infirm and aged persons in the toilet and bathroom environment.

Made from solid nylon with corrosion resistant steel core rails for strength, complete with concealed, vandal resistant and secure fixings. Hygienic and non-receptive to bacteria. HEWI products are easy to clean, and their smooth rounded shapes feel, and are visually, pleasing to the user. Full range available in 13 colours.

*Fig. 4 An example of good design
practise where functional
preformance and aesthetics are
combined.*

Present Day Attitudes.

More often than not the finds of the specific groups such as the old, or the disabled are forsaken for aesthetics. In the design of a product or building certain criteria must be fulfilled. Objects are designed on the grounds of function, safety , durability, convenience and aesthetics.

Although these criteria exist the final design will be quite a subjective result - such is the nature of the industry. This in itself can lead to a vanity of sorts, where more importance is placed on the aesthetics of the object. By doing so the design may not respond as in other areas such as function or convenience. The challenge for the designer is to ensure that each criteria is dealt with in an objective and thorough manner. (Fig. 4)

The quest for a product with better appearance can result in one with reduced functional performance, but really good design could optimise both. (AD. Shipley, 1992, p.4)

But the subjectivity that exists leads back to the social attitude that is prevalent, as that will influence the designer and the manufacturer.

Richard Seymour a prominent industrial designer did make comment on this social exclusion at a conference on ageing in London.

We live in a society where older people, up until recently were regarded as something that shouldn't be spoken of just as disabled people are still considered that way. (RCA, 1993, p.18)

This is the kind of attitude that the disabled population are fighting

against, blatant discrimination and lack of recognition. It is shameful that this situation exists. Oftentimes designs that satisfy the needs of the disabled minority can also be shaped in such a way so that able-bodied people can also use it without disadvantage and it is this mindset that has to be explored.

Outlook

More and more emphasis is now being placed on 'universal design' or 'barrier free design.' In the past a gulf has existed between those who designed for special needs and those who did not consider the special need sector as part of their market. Industrial design in particular has often been referred to as the 'right arm of capitalism,' and so, is market led. The difficulty for people with disabilities is to gain access to that market place.

Disabled people are a potentially large part of the market....yet a lack of accurate and accessible information remains a powerful deterrent. (Earnscliffe, 1992, p.16)

The 1991 building regulations will ensure that physical access is granted, so it will only be a matter of time before these people are seen and accepted as a consumer power.

'Barrier free design' or 'design for the broader average' makes sense. Earlier in this paper the point was raised that community care systems will become more frequent. Doing away with institutional care implies that services within the community must be accessible. In effect this type of government policy is forcing a number of the disabled population out into the market place, creating the need for accessible information , buildings and products. According to Shipley this is why 'design for the broader average is so seductive' in effect, '...it banishes

marginalisation and brings the needs of people with disabilities into the mainstream.' (Shipley, 1992, p.4)

It is also seductive for other reasons. Economic ideology is a prerequisite in today's world. The '80s saw an emphasis on fashion, success, yuppieism, the insatiable greed of materialism. The previous decades broached the subject of special needs with much enthusiasm, but little action. The economic ideology prevailed. July 1990 heralded the introduction of a civil rights charter in the U.S. (ADA) Americans with Disabilities Act. Recognising disability issues as being civil rights issues, this charter was the first of its kind in the world. The reason it came about however, is due to the ageing population and subsequent shift that will come about in that disposable income bracket.

If the environment is barrier free..the disabled persons degree of dependence can be reduced or eliminated. (NRB, 1990, p.2)

PART 2.

Chapter 4. ACCESS

People with physical disabilities encounter difficulties during everyday living. More often than not such difficulties are intensified by environmental barriers. Access is the key to integration, and it does not simply mean gaining physical entry to a building but should also encompass the use of all facilities within that building. As J. Dean, a member of the Royal town planning institute, Leicester maintains:

It is not only the physical environment we need to address but also the need to promote the whole idea of access and better design. (Dean, 1987, p.8)

The past saw people who were sympathetic to the situation but little was done to alleviate the problem. The disabled minority were fighting the prejudice that existed - access was not considered necessary. The 1991 Building regulations have now ensured that access for people with disabilities is seen as a right and not an afterthought. From the introduction of these regulations, designers, architects, builders and developers have to view access as an integral part of the design/building process and for the first time ever, not doing so could be actionable.

The cost factor has often been argued in support of non-accessible buildings. This has been challenged on many fronts. John Penton in his

address 'Design for a broader average' argued the principal of historical costing. In doing so he referred to the introduction of insulation standards in the U.K. in 1973. Thereafter it became unacceptable to provide buildings that were not properly insulated. This point claimed Mr. Penton "*..was analogous to the issue of accessibility.*" (Penton, 1990, p.180) In other words it will soon become unacceptable to provide buildings that are not accessible. Political pressure is being brought to bear as access has become a civil rights issue.

The focus for the access problem tends to fall on wheelchair users, this can be justified somewhat due to the fact that this group tend to suffer most and encounter more difficulties. One must realise that if a wheelchair can gain access then so to, can most others. Wheelchair disabled are not the only ones who experience difficulties in an unfriendly environment. People with varying limb functions, others who need aids to assist their mobility, women that are pregnant or who are hampered by shopping, luggage or small children, and the elderly that may be frail, each of these sectors experience difficulties in an environment that has been designed to the extents of the 'average man.' If one pieces these groups together then they become far greater than a mere marginalised group. Niamh O Doherty, access officer with the NRB maintains that this group of people "*..constitute more than 25 % of the population.*" (O'Doherty, 1992, p.2) This number is only going

to increase in time with an aging population. According to Victor Papanek *"..some 95% are disabled or will be disabled in some way in our lives."* (Papanek, 1990, p.1) Whether one has a permanent or temporary disability, an inaccessible environment will alienate and isolate the disabled person. Seductive as the term, 'barrier free design' is, it offers the best solution to the needs of the market place, as catering to the needs of a specific disability could lead to difficulties for another group with conflicting needs.

It is socially and commercially negligent not to consider, support or use this universal approach to design. By reducing the dependency of the individual they become free to make their own choices. Access gives one that freedom. In 1987 the CEH Published a report on the contribution of the architect. This report highlighted certain difficulties encountered when attempting to include access in the design brief. The problem was threefold: firstly there was a lack of understanding as to what accessibility means in terms of details, steps, fittings, levels. Secondly there was a difficulty in realising why so many buildings were inaccessible. Lastly, and this is getting back to existing prejudices, there was *"..a general disbelief that there were disabled people who wanted to visit banks, see solicitors, be employed, shop and enjoy leisure pursuits."* (J.Thorpe, 1987, p.13)

*From the moment the disabled people arrive at the Square, they
will be completely self sufficient. (Don Nugent, 1990, p.3)*



Fig. 5 The Square towncentre insignia.

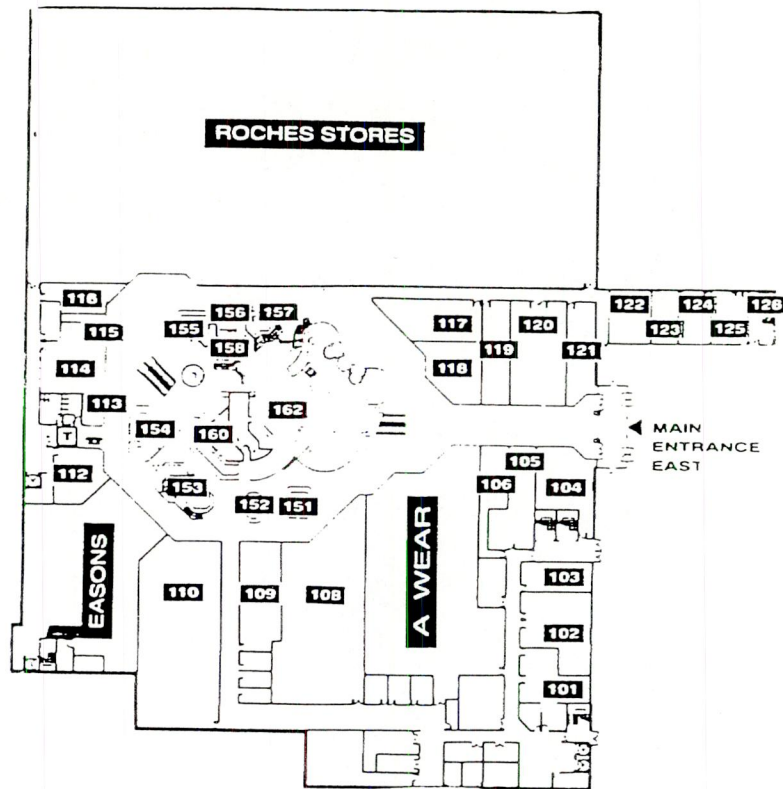
PART III CASE STUDY

Chapter 5. **THE SQUARE TOWNCENTRE, TALLAGHT.**

The Square towncentre in Tallaght is one example whereby the needs of the disabled are being brought into the mainstream. Four years of intensive research, planning and design followed by twenty two months of building, saw the completion of this giant centre. Traditionally building designs were modelled on the abilities and needs of the average man. In the case of the Square in Tallaght, representatives of Monarch Properties claim that their strengths are based on an inherent *'..ability to fully asses the needs of the markets they wish to serve.'*

(App.C) An obvious inclusion in this market was the need to cater to people with disabilities. What Monarch Properties sought was a design for the broader average.

The Square towncentre opened in 1990, an £85 million development that was set to 'change the face of Irish retailing.' What it offered the general public was a complete shopping experience with 5 major stores, 135 shops, 9 restaurants and a 12 screen cineplex. (Fig. 6-8) All the retail services necessary for daily living were present with the inclusion of leisure activities such as the UCI (United Cinemas International) facility and the Atari expo. A complete shopping experience was condensed into the one area. With a floor area of 44,880 m² the Square towncentre is the largest shopping complexes in the country.

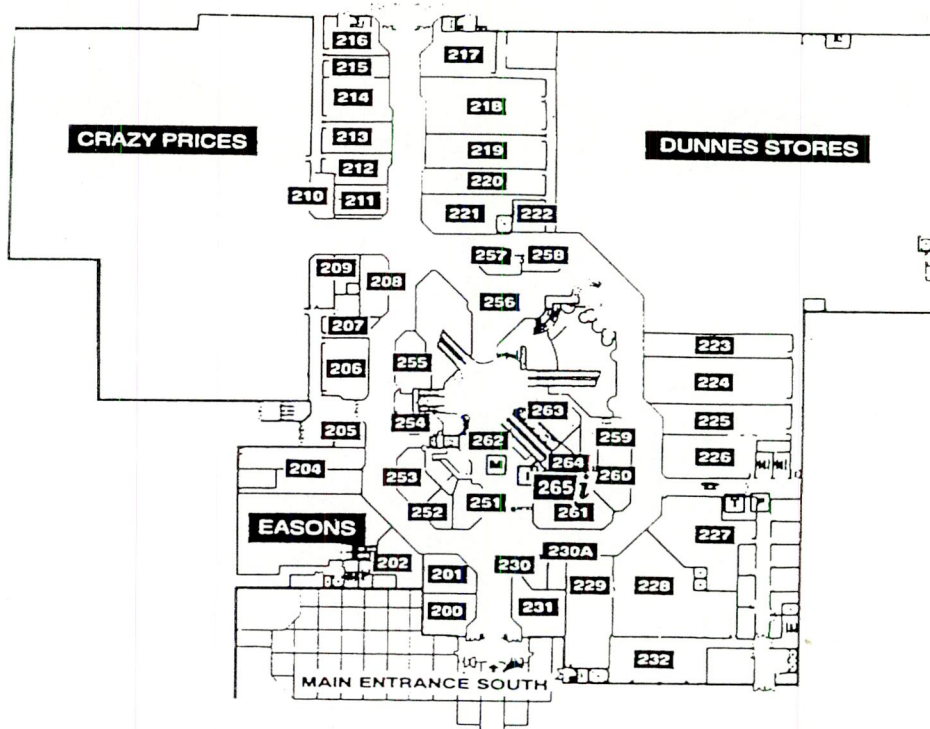


LEVEL 1

- | | | | |
|-----|---------------------------------|---------|---------------------------------------|
| 101 | • Early Bird Bookmakers | 120 | • Jody Ryan |
| 104 | • Market Fresh Fruit & Veg | 122 | • Regency Dry Cleaners |
| 105 | • Sheels Butchers | 124 | • Douglas Newman Good Estate Agent |
| 106 | • Sacs Bag Shop | 125 | • Post Office |
| 108 | • Heatons | 126 | • A.I.B. Bank |
| 109 | • Vive Footware | 151 | • Juice Bar |
| 110 | • H.C.R. Family Care Superstore | 152 | • Market Fresh Fruit & Veg |
| 112 | • All Rooms, Gifts | 153 | • Just Brilliant, Fashion Accessories |
| 113 | • Gullivers Travel | 154 | • Flower World |
| 114 | • Peter Mark | 155 | • Mannings Hot Bread Shop |
| 115 | • The Nut Keg, Health Foods | 156 | • Spectra, Film Processing |
| 116 | • Dixon Hempenstall, Optician | 157 | • Forte, Ice Cream Parlour |
| 118 | • Magic Boutique | 158 | • The Chocolate Suite |
| 119 | • McManus Footwear | 160/161 | • Marron's Food Hall |
| | | 162 | • Graham O'Sullivan, Restaurant |

MAIN ENTRANCE NORTH

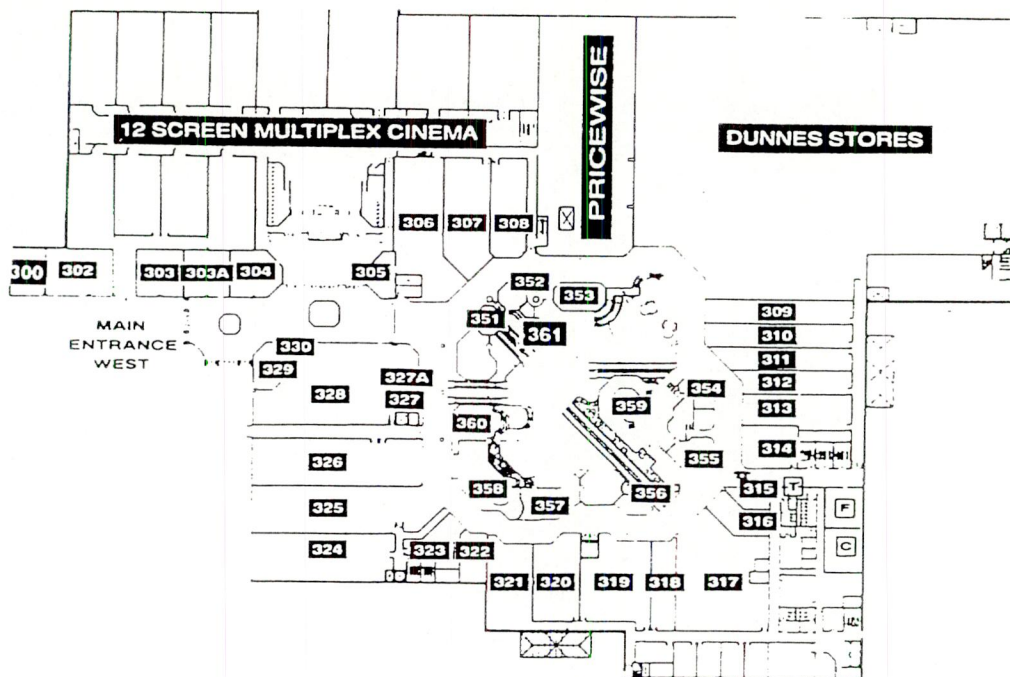
Fig. 6 The Square floor plan 1.



LEVEL 2

200	• Thom EM	226	• Copper Box, Tailors
202	• Smile, Ladies Fashions	227	• Hickeys Fabrics
205	• Angelique, Costume Jewellery	229	• Our Price Music
206	• Peter Mark	230	• Associates, Fashions
207	• Goldsmiths Jewellers	230a	• Cenoura Children's Wear
208	• Benetton	231	• Pyramid Glass & China
209	• Educational Building Society	232	• Rathgar Furniture
210	• Bank Of Ireland	251	• Copa Cabana, Leather & Suede
211	• Diffney for Men	252	• Peeps Lingerie
212	• Spring Wools	253	• Bridal Boutique
213	• Clarks Footwear	254	• Lipstick, Fashions
214	• H.C.R. Chemist	255	• Susan Ross, Fashions
215	• Via Veneto, Footwear	256	• Bewleys, Cafe
216	• Lady Lisa, Fashions	257	• The Shirt Shop
217	• Linen 'N' Lace	258	• Montana Fashion Accessories
218	• Chicago, Fashions	259	• Apprentice T-Shirt
219	• Marathon Sports	260	• Club Denim
220	• Athena	261	• Belucci Mens Wear
221	• H. Samuel, Jewellers	262	• Flower World
222	• Fuji, Film Processing	264	• Aisling Crafts
224	• Lifestyle	264	• Banklink / Pass Machines
225	• Saxone, Footwear	265	• i Courtesy Desk

Fig. 7 The Square floor plan 2.



LEVEL 3

- | | |
|--|--|
| 300 • Banklink / Pass Machines | 325 • Pizza Hut |
| 302 • Rose Garden, Chinese Restaurant | 326 • Kentucky Fried Chicken |
| 304 • H.C.R. Chemist | 327 • Jet Stream Travel |
| 308 • Atlantic Home Care | 327A • The Sock Store |
| 309 • Tylers Footwear | 328 • McDonalds |
| 310 • FM Records | 329 • The Square Newsagents |
| 313 • Telecom Eireann | 330 • Family Tree, Heraldry |
| 314 • Sheepskin Shop | 351 • Accessorise, Fashion Accessories |
| 315 • Books Unlimited | 352 • From Me to You, Gifts |
| 317 • Tommy's Wonderland of Value | 353 • Pied Piper, Childrens Wear |
| 317 • Happy Events, Childrens Boutique | 354 • RTV |
| 318 • Hallmark, Cards | 355 • Elle Fashions |
| 319 • Harry Moore, Hi-Fi | 356 • Deborah Joy, Gift Ware |
| 320 • E S B | 357 • The Golden Croissant |
| 321 • Bob Bushnell, Lighting | 358 • Forte Soda Fountain |
| 322 • Rivals, Jeans Shop | 359 • Margey's Restaurant |
| 323 • Goodebodies, Natural Health | 360 • Lipstick, Fashions |
| 324 • Xtra Vision | 361 • 2FM Radio |

Fig. 8 The Square floor plan 3.

Monarch Properties.

(References to this section will be found in a questionnaire delivered to Monarch Properties and its subsequent reply. Both of these documents are to be found in App.C)

Many questions were put to the developers Monarch properties, Harcourt St. Dublin, in relation to 'access for the disabled,' in the Square towncentre. Pat Lafferty the chief architect with Monarch Properties revealed that all consideration was given to cater for people with disabilities during the initial planning stages. Other research acquired from the CEH has shown that neglecting to consider access in these initial stages is common, and resultant ad hoc measures taken are frequently sub-standard or prove very costly.

The reasoning behind this consideration was detailed by Mr Lafferty, seeing that the disabled community make up a part of the shopping public, it was necessary to give real consideration to their needs. Mr. Lafferty was asked if Monarch Properties specifically sought an architect that had experience in designing for access. This did not transpire to be the case. The priority had been to choose an architect that would be capable of designing a complex that was commensurate with the highest modern day standards. One of the leading Irish architectural firms, Burke, Kennedy, Doyle was employed to design the

building. Monarch Properties met with and discussed their plans with the NRB on a number of occasions. The NRB duly made recommendations, some of which were accepted in the final design of the towncentre. They (Monarch Properties) should be commended for being willing to include an outside body such as the NRB and for taking on board some of the recommendations made to them.

Clear and careful planning ensured there was no difficulty in receiving planning permission from the local authority. Mr. Lafferty pointed out that access for the disabled had been catered for throughout the development.

On the question of whether or not making the building accessible was disruptive or costly, Monarch Properties replied in the negative. The completion of an accessible building was considered very effective in terms of the increase in the number of shoppers that visited the centre. The fact that the Square towncentre offered such a complete shopping experience, enticed disabled shoppers from all around the country. This is especially true at Christmas time when specifically equipped buses visited the centre.

The provision of access to a building should not hamper or be considered a burden on the shoulders of the designers. Adequate and informed planning can ensure that the building is made accessible



Fig.9 One of the many disabled parking bays that are provided. Adequate signage is supplied to designate the zone.

without sacrificing aesthetics.

APPROACH TO BUILDING

Access and use -

Reasonable provision shall be made to enable disabled people to have safe and independent access to a building and to those parts of which it is appropriate. (Department of the Environment, 1991, p.3)

Car Parking Facilities.

Many disabled people have their own private transport which may be adapted to suit their particular disability. This vehicle offers a freedom from the confines of their situation in terms of getting them from A to B with little difficulty. For a wheelchair user, the use of a car is emancipating as it is difficult if not impossible to use public transport.

The Government recognises the importance of the vehicle in the daily lives of disabled people and so certain concessions are offered to the disabled car owner and the families of disabled passengers. VAT on new cars can be reclaimed so too can VAT on petrol. There is a financial and social incentive and a basic need to own a car. This would lead to a situation where a higher percentage of disabled persons own cars and though that may get them from A to B it is important that location B is accessible.

The location of these parking bays in relation to the building is of great importance. In Tallaght at each of the four entrances designated parking

*Fig.10 The award winning
'Hotline'. The disabled
driver can call for
assistance using this device.*

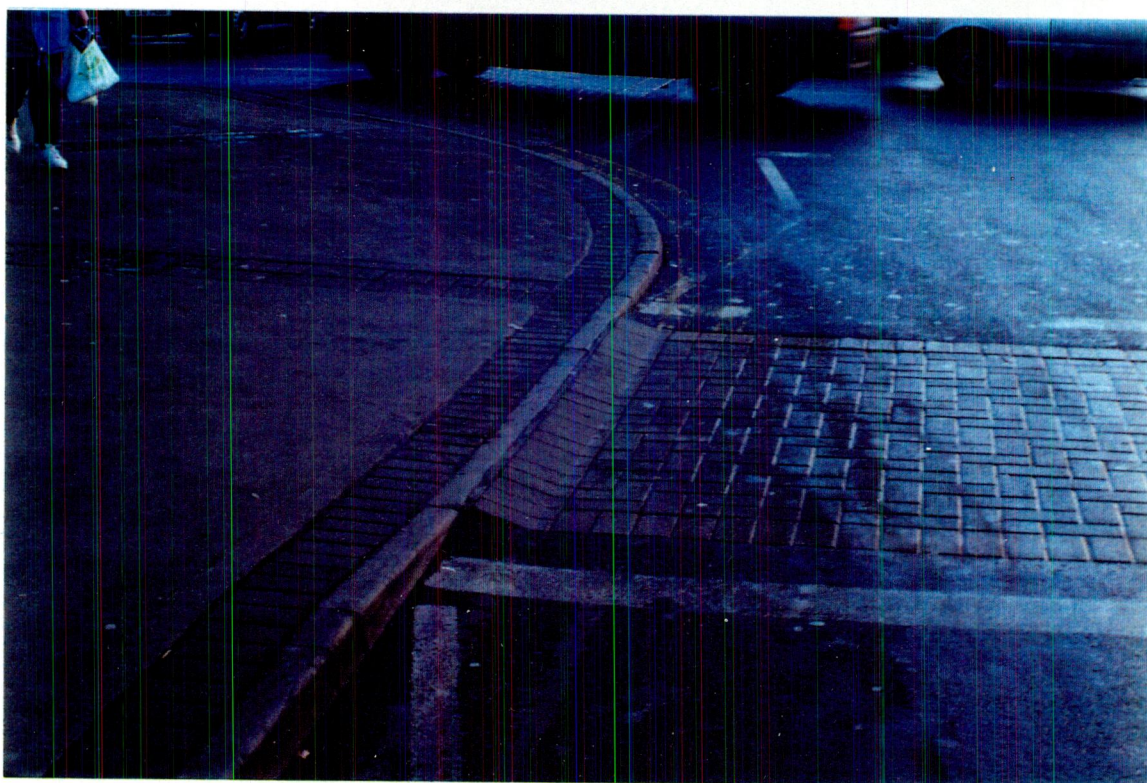


Fig. 11 Shown above are the necessary drop kerbs that provide access to the building.

spaces have been provided. The area around each bay is level and their proximity to the building ensure that the users do not have to travel long distances to get inside.

Certain guidelines and criteria exist in relation to the provision of disabled spaces. Being close to the entrance is one. Each bay must be designated as a disabled parking space (*Fig. 9*) with adequate road markings and signage supplied - as is the case in the Square. Standard lengths and widths exist to ensure that there is enough room for the driver to remove himself and his/her chair from the car. Very importantly drop kerbs are to be provided adjacent to these parking bays. In fact such attention was given to the disabled driver in the towncentre that the Square received an award from the NRB - in recognition for the attention to detail. The provision of the hotline, (*Fig. 10*) or special call button at the designated bays means that the drivers have a direct line to security should assistance be needed.

Access to Building.

Drop kerbs (*Fig. 11*) are provided throughout the exterior of the building. Although they are not specifically provided to aid the disabled, they do allow for ease of access for the disabled person, the fully loaded trolley and the children in buggies. The fact that management have to deal with a large volume of people ensures that the routes from carpark to building do not form a maze of obstacles



Fig.12 Automatic doors aid the pedestrian flow also making it easier for those in wheelchairs who wish to gain access.



Fig.13 Above highlights the provisions laid on for the elderly and disabled. The lifts offer access to all levels in the centre.

that impede the able-bodied, disabled and visually impaired. So in terms of dealing with the approach to the building the Square towncentre has made the necessary provisions. The parking bays are well lit and well signposted. Also the routes from car park to door are not minefields waiting to up-end the user.

ACCESS IN BUILDING

Automatic doors. (*Fig. 12*)

It is recommended that at least one entrance to a building be accessible to wheelchair users. (p.15, NRB, 'Access for disabled 1.'). At the Square towncentre all of the four entrances area accessible.

Each entrance has an automatic sliding door facility which is operated by an electronic beam. Such systems are recommended for use in public buildings. These types of electronic doors do away with the difficulties often incurred due to the weight, orientation, fittings and ironmongery of regular doors. The advantages of the electronic doors is that they aid the pedestrian flow into and out of the building. Each entrance has a minimum of 2 double electronic doors and also outward opening doors, these of course are a safety measure in the event of a power supply failure. People with child buggies, shopping trolleys or those who are infirm, or lack mobility, all have severe difficulty in making their way through swing doors.

*Fig. 14 To the left
is an example of
the travolators, an
accepted means of
transport for those
in wheelchairs.*

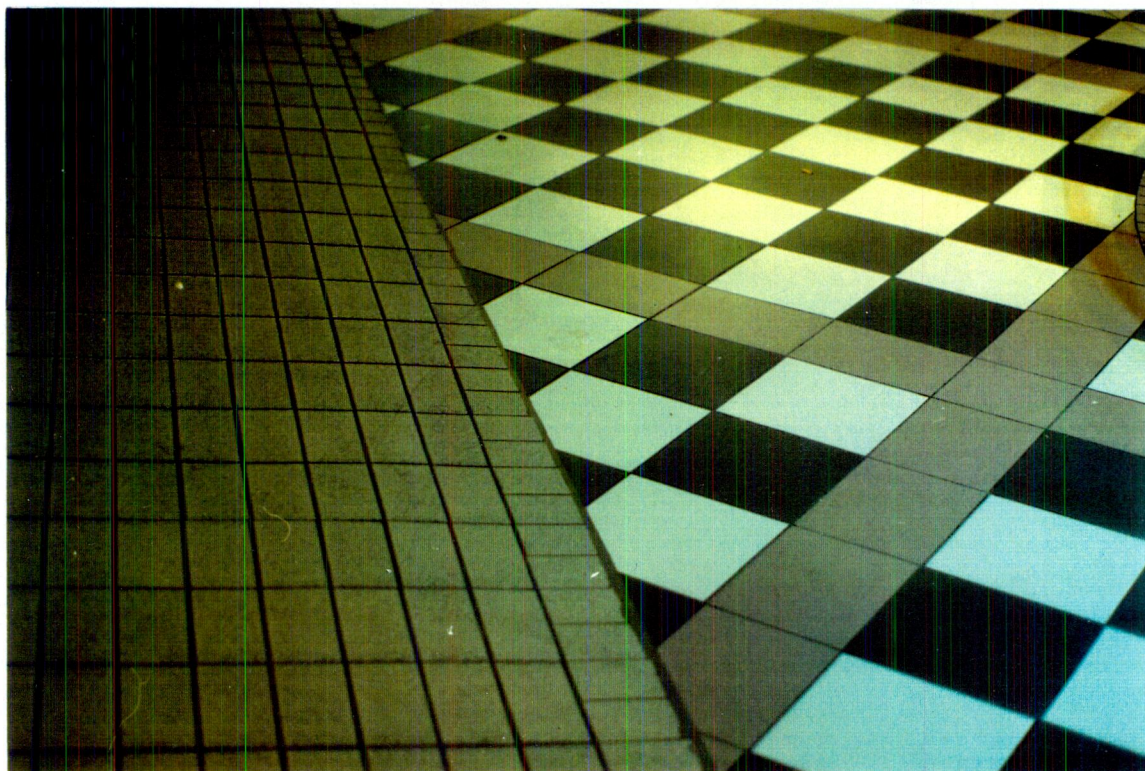


Fig.15 Above is an example of the textured surfaces warning of graduations. level.

Lifts. (Fig. 13)

Inside the centre itself many facilities exist to aid the shoppers to circulate. 'The Square' is extremely large with over 130 shops, 9 restaurants and a 12 screen cineplex, it incorporates three different levels. Access to each level is provided through different means, the obvious and most noticeable being the glazed elevators which offer a panoramic view of the centre with it's 50^{ft} waterfall, winter garden and aquarium. Each elevator is marked with an international disabled sign. There are porters provided at busy times that ensure preference is given to those who need to use the elevators. Each elevator is able to carry four wheelchairs comfortably, with standing room for attendants. These facilities are not specifically for the disabled but are of benefit to everyone, and as mentioned earlier a broader spectrum of the population is catered for.

Travolators. (Fig. 14)

The other means of transport between levels is the travolator. Four of these devices are provided in 'The Square'. They are similar to escalators but are ramped rather than stepped. These devices are an accepted means of transport for persons with shopping trolleys and buggies and also for those in wheelchairs, providing that brakes are applied. Each travolator has a disabled symbol on it . It is a simple and

effective means of transporting people but there is one criticism:- the emergency stop button is not accessible to those in wheelchairs or those who do not fit the extents of the average man. In the event of an emergency one would have to be of adequate stature and reach to press the button.

Ramps.

Undulations or gradations within levels are catered to with the introduction of ramped and stepped areas. Both ramps and steps create their own problems, particular attention must be given to providing handrails in both incidents as a support and security measure. Textured warning surfaces (*Fig. 15*) indicate a change to the visually impaired with non - slip surfaces for added security. The ramps are necessary to compliment the design features of the undulating levels.



Fig.16 The stairs versus steps analogy. Products designed and produced to aid the integration of disabled people can oftentimes benefit everyone.

CIRCULATION WITHIN BUILDING

All the previous elements that have just been discussed in 'Access in Building,' aid the traffic flow. Of the four entrances, South, East and North, allow access to level 1 and 2, the West entrance allows access to level 3. Automatic doors open from the appendages to the main mall. Once inside, the external aisleways are large and spacious, not unlike the American style of mall. The travolators and lifts compliment numerous stairwells to ensure people move between levels.

Interestingly enough much more people make use of the mechanical transport. The general populous are more than willing to take the easiest route. The same can also be said of the ramp and stepped areas that cater to slight gradient changes. Observation reveals that more often than not people will use the ramp rather than the stairs. Professor Dieter Philippen, MSc.Bsc, highlighted the important point that products / technology designed and produced to aid the integration of the disabled are oftentimes of benefit to everyone.

Barrierfree accessible technology originally thought to solve integration problems of disabled people, proved to become a type of advanced technology and design understanding that would improve efficiency ...(Philippen, 1992, p.3)

This belief holds true in the simple example of the stair versus the ramp. (Fig. 16)

Fig.17 The exception to the rule, 'Awear' has a stepped feature that makes certain areas of the store inaccessible.



Fig.18 Disabled toilets and adequate signage are provided on every level.

FACILITIES PROVIDED

Enclosed Area.

In terms of the overall level of facilities provided 'The Square' towncentre must be complimented. The centre is large and spacious, with an extremely large number and varied portfolio of shops and services, all of which exist within an enclosed area. This high concentration of shops means that the wheelchair bound or the ambulant disabled persons do not have to race around from shop to shop in adverse weather conditions . As has been maintained throughout this paper this feature is of benefit to everyone not just those with mobility difficulties.

Accessible Shops.

Most shops are accessible, there may be steps to one entrance but access can be gained from another entrance. The only exception is 'Awear' which has a stepped feature that divides the mens and ladies sections. (*Fig. 17*) The result is that those who are in wheelchairs cannot browse through the whole store. In terms of accessibility throughout the rest of the centre, some members of staff have been given disability awareness training.

Disabled Toilets.

Disabled toilets are provided on all levels. (*Fig. 18*) Instead of providing one disabled toilet in both male and female blocks, a unisex

*Location of shops are
set in relief.*

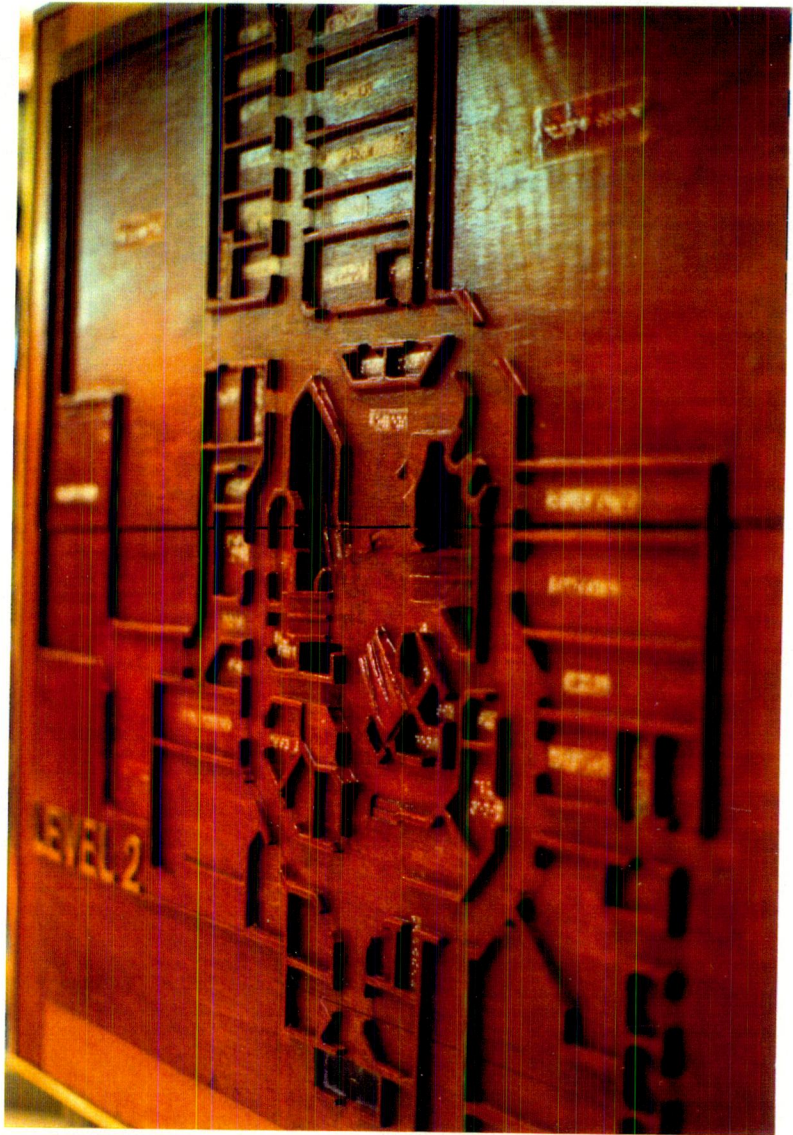


Fig. 20 Phones are set at different levels to ensure assessability.

toilet is offered. These have their own separate entrance which is recommended under the NRB guidelines (*NRB, 1990, p.12*). To provide a separate unisex facility is the preferred solution in the instance where assistance is necessary. Privacy difficulties may be presented in a male / female block if assistance is being given by someone of the opposite sex.

Phones.

Attention to detail is very well looked after in the Square. Each block of phones has one phone that is placed at a lower level. (*Fig.20*)

Those persons who do not fall within the 'average man' band can have difficulties using such devices, due to their positioning.

Wheelchair users are especially prone to discrimination in this area. If the phone has been placed in a 'regular' position, the receiver cable is not long enough for comfort, forcing the person to sit precariously on their chair. There may also be difficulty in reading the dialling buttons and seeing the small on-screen display. Interestingly, as with the 'ramps versus the steps' scenario, able-bodied people may use these phones and they are not inconvenienced by them in any way.

Other Facilities.

In 1990, when the centre first opened, the Square manager Don Nugent claimed that " *the centre has been designed with the customer in mind.*" (*Nugent, 1990, p.15*) All courtesy desk staff and some shop

staff have received special training in dealing with the disabled community. This type of training is extremely important as it effects changes in attitude. The difficulties that were due to contemporary social attitude have already been discussed in the first part of the paper. It only takes one member of staff without disability awareness to *"..negate the effort and investment made by colleagues and management."* (Earnscliffe, 1991, p.74) This is especially true of any business where there is a high turnover of staff.

Should the need arise wheelchairs can be made available for disabled persons. A loop facility is provided in the cinemas for those with hearing problems, ensuring their enjoyment of the movies on view. Braille maps (Fig. 19) can also be found adjacent to the courtesy desk. Throughout the store accessible facilities are sign posted. The centre itself displays the international symbol of 'Access for the Disabled', this indicates that people with disabilities have access to all facilities on equal terms . The symbol can only be granted by the NRB and permission to display it is based solely on compliance with the minimum criteria set forth by the rehabilitation authority.

Monarch Properties were sent a questionnaire in which they answered a number of questions on access and disability. Listed in App.3 is information on the facilities provided for the disabled shopper.

SHOPMOBILITY.

Shopmobility is a programme that was set up fifteen years ago in the U.K. Under this scheme shopping centres provided facilities such as scooters or wheelchairs to their customers. Later adaptations were being made to entrances and the provision of drop kerbs, the environment was becoming more 'user friendly'. It is estimated that 100 of these schemes will be introduced by 1995, mainly in Britain but one is coming on line in Northern Ireland. (Euromedia, 1994, p.57) This scheme has been seen as a great success. The provisions set out in this scheme are similar to what already exists in 'The Square ' towncentre.

Summary.

In recognition of its standard of accessibility the Square towncentre has received the International Symbol of Access. (*Fig. 21*) The attention to detail can be seen in the provision of the phone and the 'hotline' in the car park, these facilities have also lead to recognition from other sectors. The centre was awarded the 'HELIOS' award by the commission of the European communities for the high level of access for the disabled community. Not only that, but the Square towncentre also received an award at the 'Fourth Building Design Awards' 1992. The centre was a joint winner along with the UCI cinemas which is located in the complex.(Category 1. A new building open to the public which has access facilities for the disabled.) The aim of this competition is to promote a more widespread acceptance by building



Resolution of Rehabilitation International January 1978.

Requests all governments to recognise that all new construction of public buildings, transport and facilities, should permit equal access to all members of the community. The basic principles of barrier - free design should be observed as well in construction of the public areas of all dwellings, in some of the dwellings themselves, and in recreational facilities. Existing buildings and facilities should be adapted whenever possible to conform to these same principles;

Appeals to all concerned to seek the widest possible use of the symbol in the manner specified in this resolution, and to avoid any use of the symbol that is not in accord with these policies and thus does not respect the intent of the assembly to assist in protecting the human rights of disabled persons;

Requests the member organisations of Rehabilitation International and all co-operating national and international bodies, including especially organisations of disabled people, to make the contents of this resolution known, using all available channels of communication

Fig. 21 International access symbol.

owners and architects of the need to cater for a disabled population.

The need for such is not surprising as 95% of qualified architects have received no specific training in designing for access.(Earnscliffe, p.46)

This competition was run on an all Ireland basis in conjunction with Disability Action, The Royal Institute of Architects of Ireland, Royal Society of Ulster Architects and both Departments of the Environment, North and South. The criteria under which the building was judged was:

The quality of access provided for people with disabilities having regard to the range of disabilities being catered for - wheelchair users, ambulant disabled, elderly and people with visual and hearing disabilities. (NRB, 4th Building Awards.)

The proof of how successful the Square is as an accessible shopping centre does not lie in the amount of awards it receives. More importantly the question is, do disabled people take advantage or find it useful and beneficial? Patrick Lafferty in 2.1 of App.C outlined that yes the Square towncentre does attract disabled shoppers, "*..particularly at Christmas, when..buses for transporting the disabled visit the centre.*" (App.C) Making the Square accessible was not disruptive or costly. Planning for access has benefitted the person with the heavy shopping trolley, with the child in the buggy, just as much as it does those that are wheelchair bound or the ambulant disabled. The provisions made for the disabled are part of the centres over-riding concern with customer satisfaction.

There are of course, negative factors, although these tend to relate more to the public services rather than private enterprise. The location of the centre results in transport difficulties. If the disabled person does not have a car, then specially equipped buses will have to transport the shoppers. This kind of measure can be taken at special times such as Christmas but for the rest of the year it would be an expensive luxury. Presently, the public transport system does not provide for disabilities, and all that can be done is wait for them to come up to speed.

A disabled person runs the risk of isolation in the community and segregation from other people. (Faughnan, 1977, p. 52)

Part IV.

Chapter 6 **INTEGRATION.**

Integration is a term that refers as much to attitudes and acceptance as it does participation. Without it, as mentioned previously, people become isolated from the community, they lack contact with other people. The IWA claim that 50% of their members '*..are not involved in normal social activities outside the home.*' (IWA, 1994, p.5) More often than not this lack of contact is brought about "...
by the presence of architectural barriers." (Faughnan, 1977, p.52)
and a lack of understanding of the problems affecting the disabled person in the community.

Again it must be stressed that 'the disabled 'can include the ambulant disabled, the elderly, the very young, pregnant women, the visually impaired, the hearing impaired and those with learning difficulties. It is important that some thought and consideration should go into adequate signage and visual representation . Information is the key to access, in terms of what's on, where it's on, how to get there and what type of facilities are available. Physical barriers are not the only things that hinder a person. What is necessary is a comprehensive overview of all needs which in itself can only benefit the greater majority of the population.

The Square towncentre in Tallaght has tackled these problems. The

existence of an accessible building with varying facilities and services means that the disabled community can come to shop, pay their bills, dine , drink coffee and go and enjoy a movie. Monarch Properties have created a focal point within the community that offers an escape from the 'architectural barriers' and the social constraints that have alienated the disabled community for so long.

The way the aging process is perceived, both by older people themselves and by younger people who design, advertise, and market products and services is of paramount importance in determining how we , as a society respond to demographic change, and whether we embrace age or continue to turn away from it. (RCA, 1993, p.11)

Chapter 7. **DEMOGRAPHICS WITHIN EUROPE**

The Western world is aging. Education, advances in medicine and the drop in fertility rates indicate that the year 2000 is going to signify the silver age. When one looks at the demographics within Europe one can get a better picture of this scenario.

The year 2000 will see somewhere in the region of 115 million people aged between 50 and over. (*RCA, 1993, p34*) The pattern that exists in Europe is likely to repeat itself again throughout the world Third world countries influenced by Western advice and expertise are destined to follow the same path. Fears of overpopulation which have already surfaced in international talks will eventually take hold. The birth rate is set to decline and so too, the ratio of young is to old. Presently, Ireland is the only exception to the rule in Europe, whereby birth rates outnumber those of deaths. This will not continue as trends indicate a falling off of births. What this means in terms of design is that more consideration will be offered to the ergonomics of the grip, strengths necessary to operate objects, eyesight, stretch, reach all of which will take on an added importance. Graphic design too, will have to consider the older user. It may be difficult to see the need for such measures but it becomes a matter of consequential stages. At this point problems of integration begin to appear. Poor visual presentation of information or a complete lack of visual presentation is "...the worst enemy of social integration." (*H. Langer, 1992*)

The results of which could be that these people end up confined to their homes disabled by the lack of design consideration. As the situation exists today, older people are rendered disabled because public transport, buildings and spaces have not been designed with them in mind.

Thankfully things are changing, these statistics have injected a new impetus into catering for an ageing society. In September 1993 the International Renaissance Conference was held in Glasgow. This conference underlined the fact that marketers now have to respond to a larger older market sector. For the designer, considering the needs of the older person will help to create better design for all.

Design and Design development only makes sense if it benefits people and not to celebrate design. (Philippen, 1992, p.1)

Chapter 8. THE FUTURE OF DESIGN AND DISABILITY

What is now being called for in the design process is an interdisciplinary approach - another form of integration. By ensuring cooperation between architecture, engineering and design, a more cohesive and universal result will surface. (*Philippen, 1992, p.2*)

The convergence of both social factors and commercial self interest have the greatest influence on the introduction of barrierfree design. Change and innovation are consumer led, without the demand such change would not be worthwhile. The gamble is recognising and identifying who and where the market is.

The middled aged of today are the first generation who really knew how to spend their disposable income, and will continue to do so into their later years. In time they will make up the largest consumer base, and so are destined to be targeted by the marketing people.

This has also resulted in a critical analysis of past design practise and from this, Roger Coleman of the Royal College of Art has drawn the conclusion that many people have found themselves to be, on many occasions, "*.. disabled by design.*" (*RCA, 1993, p.44*)

The importance of accessibility as a means of social integration, has turned up many design strategies for older people. These strategies

would also include those with disability.

Universal design is a method by which the number of users of a product or building is maximised and this has come to the fore. It attempts to undermine the need for separate controls, access or adapted solutions and so negates these sometimes discriminatory measures. An interdisciplinary approach, that takes into account a broader average of the market can only benefit the user and lead to a more successful product.

CONCLUSION

The designer has the ability to effect change. By catering to the needs rather than the wishes of the user, design can be used as a tool for improving the quality of people's lives. It is not enough for governments to simply recommend that those with disabilities be catered to through design. What is needed is legislation, thereby forcing the design world to take account of such groups. Without political 'clout', the designer and more importantly the manufacturer will take the most efficient and cost effective route, even though a little more time and effort would ensure wider use by a broader spectrum of the population. This situation is analogous to the stairs versus ramps scenario; people will take the easy way out.

Design must look at the whole envelope, it is not just a problem - solving activity catering to just one aspect of the situation, but solving a problem in the context of its whole surround. A 2^{ft} by 2^{ft} window in an enclosed room does solve the problem of gaining access to the room, but it does not allow one to do so with ease or comfort. The homecraft gripper product (*Fig. 1*) satisfies the functional requirements of the device but completely lacks any aesthetic input. The Square towncentre in Tallaght, is one example of the necessary detailing involved in providing for the needs of the broader average. Where necessary, particular devices (*Fig. 10*) are provided to aid the disabled user. Each stage from car park to cash desk is accessible

benefitting not only the disabled person but also the young, old, infirm, pregnant or over burdened user. Access is the key to integration, by making a building or product indiscriminately accessible one does away with the '*...feeling of being different in a negative way.*' (Carroll, 1994) A more holistic approach to design for human factors will help to ease the social ills that plague the disabled people, and so unlock the door to a more integrated community.

The elements of the social, political and design equation are never constant, affecting one element could result in a transformation in the others. Design may be consumer led and the cynic will argue that this economic ideology is a sell out to the social conscience but however it comes about, Universal, Barrierfree - or Design for the Broader Average is a step in the right direction.

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Appendix A.

National Rehabilitation Board.

1. What we do?

2. Disability Speak.

3. Access.

NRB's Mission is,

on behalf of the State
and in consultation with people
with disabilities,
to enable and empower people
with disabilities
to live the life of their choice
to their fullest potential.

In order to achieve this, NRB

- identifies and advises on the needs of people with disabilities and the policies and services required to meet them
- develops, provides and co-ordinates services
- sets, monitors and enforces national standards
- promotes recognition of rights and equality of opportunity.

For Further Information

If you would like more information please contact any NRB centre. Our addresses are listed overleaf and we welcome any queries you may have.

NRB Centres

HEAD OFFICE	24/25 CLYDE ROAD, DUBLIN 4 Telephone: (01) 668 4181 Fax: (01) 660 9935
DUBLIN WEST & SOUTH	24/25 Clyde Road, Dublin 4 Telephone: (01) 668 4181 Fax: (01) 668 5029
DUBLIN NORTH	44 North Great Georges Street, Dublin 1 Telephone: (01) 874 7503 Fax: (01) 874 7490
MIDLANDS	MULLINGAR The Manse, Castle Street, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath Telephone: (044) 40219/41056 Fax: (044) 42897 DUNDALK 58 Anne Street, Dundalk, Co. Louth Telephone: (042) 32913 Fax: (042) 37081 CAVAN Cathedral Road, Cavan Telephone: (049) 31780 Fax: (049) 32525 TULLAMORE High Street, Tullamore, Co. Offaly Telephone: (0506) 41262 Fax: (0506) 51523 CORK 101 North Main Street, Cork Telephone: (021) 272762/270423 Fax: (021) 272935 TRALEE 21 Pembroke Street, Tralee, Co. Kerry Telephone: (066) 23292 Fax: (066) 24810 KILKENNY 75 John Street, Kilkenny Telephone: (056) 65176/64212 Fax: (056) 64211 WEXFORD 100 North Main Street, Wexford Telephone: (053) 24363/24354 Fax: (053) 46319 WATERFORD 4 William Street, Waterford Telephone: (051) 72431 Fax: (051) 76575 CLONMEL 2-3 Emmet Street, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary Telephone: (052) 23486/23211 Fax: (052) 23211 LIMERICK Perycourt, Upper Mallow Street, Limerick Telephone: (061) 319779/314270 Fax: (061) 412977 GALWAY 10 Ely Place, Galway Telephone: (091) 63567/62111 Fax: (091) 62114 SLIGO The Lodge, Knappagh, Strandhill Road, Sligo Telephone: (071) 62809/62459 Fax: (071) 69716 CASTLEBAR Humbert Mall, Main Street, Castlebar, Co. Mayo Telephone: (094) 22834 Fax: (094) 21963 LETTERKENNY Port Road, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal Telephone: (074) 21103 Fax: (074) 23019
SOUTH	
SOUTH EAST	
WEST	
NORTH WEST	

National Rehabilitation Board



NRB/G1-5/95

NRB
who we are
and what we do

If you are a person with a disability or if you are someone whose decisions affect the lives of people with disabilities or if you are interested in disability issues

You should know about NRB

NRB is the government body

- providing services to people with disabilities
- advising the Minister for Health, public authorities and other organisations providing services to people with disabilities
- working to create awareness of disability issues and to put them on the agenda of decision-makers

- If you are an architect, a town planner, an engineer, a developer or builder
- If you are involved in the design of buildings or streetscapes.
- If you run a B&B, a hotel or a guest-house.
- If you want to make your premises and other public buildings accessible.

You need to know about Access for people with disabilities

Why?

Because badly designed buildings and streets mean that people with physical disabilities, people with mobility difficulties, people who are blind or deaf, are not free to move around easily. Parents with buggies, small children and elderly people may also find it difficult to move around.

Information And Advice

- NRB provides information and advice on:
 - the design of new buildings and streets and the adaption of old ones
 - how footpaths, ramps, pedestrian crossings, lifts, toilets, bathrooms etc. should be built or adapted to facilitate people with disabilities

- the safety aspects of buildings e.g. what features should be available for people with disabilities in case of fire
- meeting the needs of visually and hearing impaired people when designing or adapting buildings by the use of helpful lighting, clear signage etc.
- what current legislation can mean for building design, safety, transport and other areas.

Want to get involved?

Why not enter NRB's Access Competitions?

- The Building Design Awards
- The NRB/Irish Wheelchair Association Access Award in the Tidy Towns Competition

or join your local access group – details from your local NRB centre

For Further Information

If you would like more information, please contact any NRB Centre. Our addresses are listed overleaf and we welcome any queries you may have.

Mind your language!

Cripple
Victim

Handicapped
Retarded

What do you think of when
you hear these words?

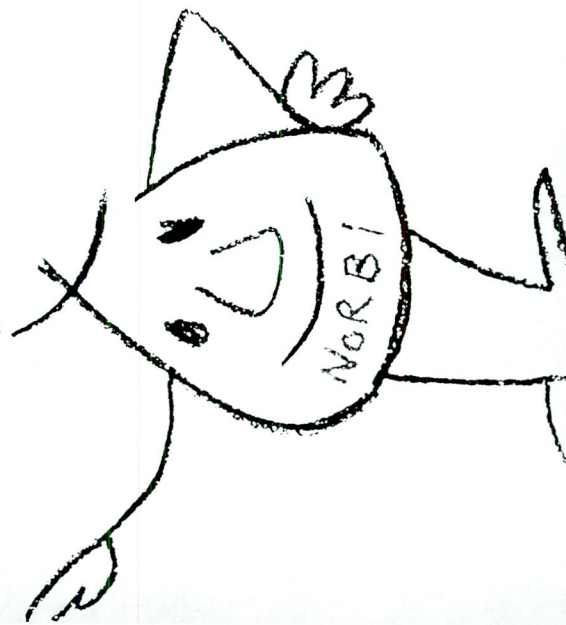
Now try:

Wheelchair-user
Disabled person
Person with a learning disability

See the difference?

The language we use to describe
disability is important because the
words we use reveal our attitude
towards disability and disabled
people.

Inside are some guidelines to help you
be clear when talking or writing
about disability.



National Rehabilitation Board

NRB Centres

HEAD OFFICE

24/25 CLYDE ROAD, DUBLIN 4
Telephone: (01) 668 4181 Fax: (01) 660 9935

DUBLIN WEST & SOUTH

24/25 Clyde Road, Dublin 4
Telephone: (01) 668 4181 Fax: (01) 668 5029

DUBLIN NORTH & DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTRE

44 North Great Georges Street, Dublin 1
Telephone: (01) 874 7503 Fax: (01) 874 7490

MIDLANDS

MULLINGAR The Manse, Castle Street, Mullingar,
Co. Westmeath
Telephone: (044) 40219/41056 Fax: (044) 42897

DUNDALK 58 Anne Street, Dundalk, Co. Louth
Telephone: (042) 32913 Fax: (042) 37081

CAVAN Magnet House, Farnham Street, Cavan
Telephone: (049) 62533 Fax: (049) 32525

TULLAMORE High Street, Tullamore, Co. Offaly
Telephone: (0506) 41262 Fax: (0506) 51523

SOUTH

CORK 101 North Main Street, Cork
Telephone: (021) 270423 Fax: (021) 272935

TRALEE 21 Pembroke Street, Tralee, Co. Kerry
Telephone: (066) 23292 Fax: (066) 24810

SOUTH EAST

KILKENNY The Parade, Kilkenny
Telephone: (056) 65176/64212 Fax: (056) 64211

WEXFORD 100 North Main Street, Wexford
Telephone: (053) 24363/24354 Fax: (053) 46319

WATERFORD 14 Gladstone Street, Waterford
Telephone: (051) 72431 Fax: (051) 76575

WEST

CLONMEL 2-3 Emmet Street, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary
Telephone: (052) 23486/23211 Fax: (052) 23211

LIMERICK Perrycourt, Upper Mallow Street, Limerick
Telephone: (061) 319779/314270 Fax: (061) 412977

NORTH WEST

GALWAY 10 Ely Place, Galway
Telephone: (091) 63567/62111 Fax: (091) 62114

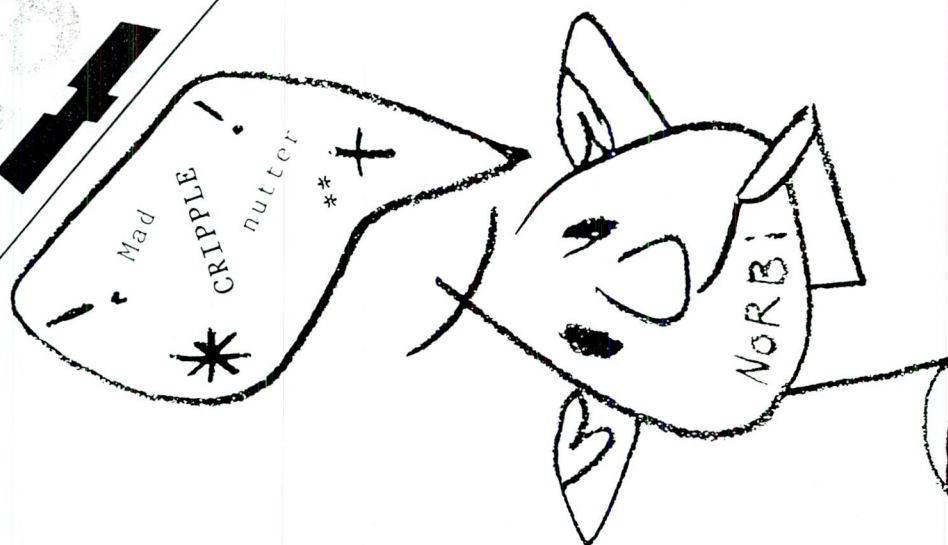
SLIGO The Lodge, Knappagh, Strandhill Road, Sligo
Telephone: (071) 62809/62459 Fax: (071) 69716

CASTLEBAR Humbert Mall, Main Street, Castlebar,
Co. Mayo

Telephone: (094) 22834 Fax: (094) 21963

LETTERKENNY Port Road, Letterkenny,
Co. Donegal

Telephone: (074) 21103 Fax: (074) 23019



Disability Speak

A Guide to Appropriate Language
Around Disability

Words shape attitudes – so watch what you say!

When talking to people with disabilities, or when talking or writing about people with disabilities:

- *never identify people solely by their disability e.g. he's a spastic. Instead say a person with a disability or if you know the name of the disability say a person with... if that's relevant;*
- *choose non-judgemental words which give an accurate description;*
- *avoid using words and terms such as the following*

Victim of – people aren't victims of disability. Say instead a person who has or person who experienced or person with...

Cripple, crippled, spastic – the image conveyed is of a twisted and useless body. Not very nice and not true! Say instead person with a disability.

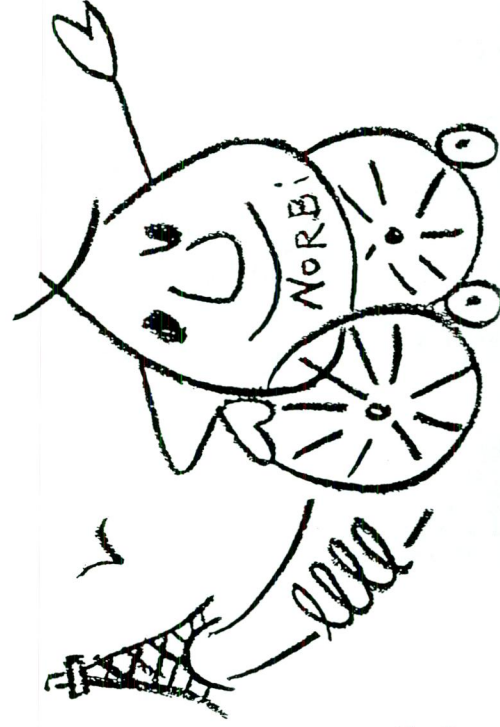
Afflicted with, suffers from, sufferer – most people with disabilities don't see themselves as afflicted or suffering. Say instead a person with (e.g.) multiple sclerosis, cystic fibrosis etc.

Handicapped – people with disabilities want to be called people with disabilities *not* the handicapped.

The disabled – people with disabilities are not all the same as this term implies. Use either people with disabilities or disabled people.

Normal – when used as the opposite of disabled implies that someone with a disability is abnormal. Who wants to be labelled abnormal? Say instead non-disabled or able-bodied person.

Wheelchair-bound, confined to a wheelchair – for people who use them wheelchairs mean freedom, a way to get around, not confinement. So say uses a wheelchair or wheelchair-user.



NRB's Mission is

on behalf of the State and in consultation with people with disabilities, to enable and empower people with disabilities to live the life of their choice to their fullest potential.

In order to achieve this, NRB

- identifies and advises on the needs of people with disabilities and the policies and services required to meet them
- develops, provides and co-ordinates services
- sets, monitors and enforces national standards
- promotes recognition of rights and equality of opportunity.

For Further Information

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National Rehabilitation Board



If you are a person with a disability or if you are someone whose decisions affect the lives of people with disabilities or

if you are interested in disability issues

You should know about NRB

NRB is the government body

- providing services to people with disabilities
- advising the Minister for Health, public authorities and other organisations providing services to people with disabilities
- working to create awareness of disability issues and to put them on the agenda of decision-makers

Services Nationwide, we provide a range of free services to people with disabilities, their families or advocates and others whose work affects the lives of people with disabilities.

Our services include:

- Advising on building legislation, promoting transport and safety initiatives that improve access for people with disabilities
- Creating awareness of the importance of good building design, so people with disabilities can move around easily
- Hearing testing and the fitting and repair of hearing aids for school children and eligible adults
- Information and advice on equipment and suppliers for people with disabilities
- Information about services and financial supports available to people with disabilities and where to find them
- Library – major collection of books, journals, videos, newspaper cuttings on and about disability
- Training and employment – helping people with disabilities find the right training or the right job – helping people who become disabled to keep their job or retrain for a new one

Standards We encourage organisations providing services to people with disabilities to meet best standards and practice. We provide advice and training for people working with people with disabilities.

EC Policies and Programmes We co-ordinate Irish applications for EC structural funds. We provide advice and information on EC affairs to other Irish agencies involved in disability issues. We influence EC policies and programmes on disability to reflect Irish concerns.

Disability Awareness We raise awareness of disability issues among decision-makers and the general public through conferences, competitions, courses, groupwork sessions and influencing the media.

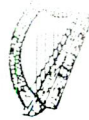
Research and Development We conduct and commission research into disability and rehabilitation. We promote post-graduate research through a scholarship scheme.

Publications NRB Report, our quarterly journal, covers news and views on disability issues. Our leaflets, brochures and reports are available generally, on request, in braille and on tape.

Appendix B.

Legislation.

- 1. Local Government Act 1963.*
- 2. Building Control Act 1990.*
- 3. Building Regulations 1991.*



AN BILL E UM RIALÚ FOIRGNÍOCHTA, 1984
BUILDING CONTROL BILL, 1984

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

General

The purpose of the Bill is to provide a new statutory basis for regulations for the control of building. At present, the power to make building regulations is provided by section 86 of the Local Government (Planning and Development) Act, 1963. The purposes for which building regulations may be made under that Act are those set out in the Public Health Acts, 1878 and 1890, and are confined, therefore, to matters of public health and safety. Since the enactment of the 1963 Act, a number of factors, including the need to extend the purposes for which building regulations may be made, e.g. to cover energy conservation, the efficient use of resources in building, the encouragement of good building practice, etc., and the need to provide for the operation of a certification system of building control have made the power available under section 86 inadequate. *Section 3* of the Bill will provide the necessary flexibility in regard to the purposes for which building regulations may be made while *section 6* will enable the administration of the regulations to be based on a certification system.

The Bill designates certain local authorities, viz. those which are fire authorities under the Fire Services Act, 1981, as building control authorities. These authorities will have functions in relation to the control regulations to be made under *section 6*, will deal with applications for dispensations from and relaxations of building regulations made under *section 4*, will be empowered to inspect a building under *section 10* and to serve an enforcement notice under *section 7*, to apply to the High Court for orders under *section 11*, and to bring summary proceedings for certain offences under *section 16*. The Minister's functions under the Act will relate mainly to the making of building regulations (under *section 3*) and building control regulations (under *section 6*). He will also have power, under *section 5*, to dispense with or relax any requirement of building regulations in relation to any specified class of building operation, works or material and to prohibit, under *section 12*, the use of specified materials or forms of construction, etc., if he is satisfied that such use would be a danger to public health or safety or would contravene any provision of building regulations. He may also appoint, under *section 13*, a Building Regulations Advisory Body to advise him on matters related to building regulations and to provide such advisory services as he may from time to time specify.

Section 1 is an interpretation section and defines a number of terms used in the Bill. "Building" is defined as including part of a building and power is taken to prescribe any class or classes of structure to be a building for the purposes of the Act.



AN BILLE UM RIALÚ FOIRGNÍOCHTA, 1984
BUILDING CONTROL BILL, 1984

4723
- 5 JUN 1990

Mar a ritheadh ag Dáil Éireann
As passed by Dáil Éireann

24-28 CLYDE ROAD DUBLIN 7

ARRANGEMENT OF SECTIONS

71537

Section

1. Interpretation.
2. Building control authorities.
3. Building regulations.
4. Dispensation or relaxation of building regulations.
5. Dispensation or relaxation in relation to specified works or material.
6. Building control regulations.
7. Appeals
8. Enforcement notice.
9. Application to District Court in relation to enforcement notice.
10. Service of enforcement notice.
11. Powers of inspection by authorised persons.
12. Order of High Court in relation to buildings and works.
13. Power to prohibit the use of certain materials etc.
14. Building Regulations Advisory Body.
15. Authenticity of documents.
16. Offences.
17. Penalties.
18. Orders and regulations.
19. Expenses of Minister.
20. Expenses of building control authorities.

(4) Building control authorities may make arrangements for the joint performance of any of their functions.

(5) Where it appears to the Minister that an agreement under section 59 of the Local Government Act, 1955, ought to be made between two or more building control authorities for the purpose of any of their functions, he may, after affording an opportunity to the authorities concerned to make representations to him, require those authorities to enter into such an agreement, and the Minister may direct that any such agreement shall contain such terms as he may specify and the authorities concerned shall comply with any directions given under this subsection by the Minister.

3.—(1) The Minister may, for any of the purposes specified in subsection (2), make regulations (in this Act referred to as “building regulations”) in relation to all or any of the following—

- (a) the design and construction of buildings;
- (b) material alterations or extensions of buildings;
- (c) the provision of services, fittings and equipment in, or in connection with, buildings;
- (d) buildings as regards which any material change takes place in the purposes for which the buildings are used.

(2) Building regulations may be made for all or any of the following purposes—

- (a) making provision for securing the health, safety and welfare of—
 - (i) persons in or about buildings, and
 - (ii) persons who may be affected by buildings or by matters connected with buildings;
- (b) making provision for the special needs of disabled persons in relation to buildings;
- (c) making provision for the conservation of fuel and energy in relation to buildings;
- (d) making provision for securing in relation to buildings the efficient use of resources;
- (e) making provision for the encouragement of good building practice; and
- (f) making provision for such other matters as appear to the Minister to be necessary or expedient and are specified in the regulations.

(3) In addition to the provisions of any regulations made for the purposes of subsection (1) (d), there shall be deemed to be a material change in the purposes for which a building is used if, on or after the operative day—

- (a) a building, being a building which was not originally constructed for occupation as a dwelling, or which, though so constructed, has been appropriated to other purposes, becomes used as a dwelling.

STATUTORY
INSTRUMENTS



STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS.

S.I. No. 306 of 1991.

BUILDING REGULATIONS, 1991.

5339

(Pl. 8496)

PART L

CONSERVATION OF FUEL AND ENERGY

L1. A building shall be so designed and constructed as to secure, insofar as is reasonably practicable, the conservation of fuel and energy.

Conservation of fuel and energy.

PART M

ACCESS FOR DISABLED PEOPLE

M1. Reasonable provision shall be made to enable disabled people to have safe and independent access to a building and to those parts of the building to which it is appropriate to have access.

Access and use.

M2. If sanitary conveniences are provided in a building, reasonable provision shall be made for disabled people.

Sanitary conveniences.

M3. If a building contains fixed seating for audience or spectators, reasonable provision shall be made for disabled people.

Audience or spectator facilities.

M4. In this Part "disabled people" means people who have an impairment of hearing or sight or an impairment which limits their ability to walk or which restricts them to using a wheelchair.

Definition for this Part.

M5. This Part does not apply to dwellings.

Application of this Part.

SECOND SCHEDULE

Article 13

FORM OF APPLICATION FOR A DISPENSATION FROM, OR A RELAXATION OF, A REQUIREMENT OF BUILDING REGULATIONS

BUILDING CONTROL ACT, 1990

Application for Dispensation from, or Relaxation of, Building Regulations

To
(Insert name of building control authority)

Official Use
Received on
Ref. No.
Entered in Register on

Application is hereby made under Section 4 of the Building Control Act, 1990 for the grant of a dispensation from/relaxation of/ the requirement(s) of building regulations as specified below in connection with the works shown on the accompanying plans.

1. Nature of proposed building or works

2. Address of premises or location of site

Appendix C.

Questionnaire.

1. Questionnaire to Monarch Properties.

2. Reply to Questionnaire.

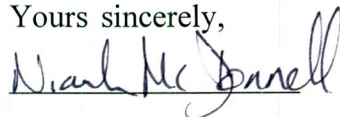
QUESTIONNAIRE TO BE DELIVERED TO MONARCH PROPERTIES.

The following is a list of question relating to 'access' in 'The Square,' Tallaght. The answers would be of great benefit to me in my Thesis, 'Design for disability,' taking the Square in Tallaght as a case study.' I would be very grateful for any help in this matter.

1. Was disabled access a real consideration in the plans for 'The Square'?
2. If yes, why did Monarch properties considerate it so important?
3. When looking for an architect, did Monarch Properties specifically search for one that had experience in designing for access?
4. Did Monarch properties seek approval/help from the NRB (National Rehabilitation Board) or other such bodies on the question of access?
5. Were there any difficulties in receiving planning permission or approval on the grounds of accessibility - were the requirements coordinated/designed into the project from the outset?
6. Did Monarch Properties feel that making the building accessible wa disruption or costly?

Thank you for your time,

Yours sincerely,



Niamh McDonnell

Monarch Properties Services Ltd.

Directors:

Philip P. Monahan
Dominick Glennane
Edward Sweeney
Patrick J. Lafferty
Noel Murray

Monarch House, 57 Harcourt Street, Dublin 2.
Telephone: 01-478 4200 Fax: 01-478 4414



INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT

9th December 1994

Ms Niamh McDonnell,
Department of Industrial Design,
National College of Art & Design,
100 Thomas Street,
Dublin 8.

The Square Towncentre, Tallaght – Access for the Disabled

Dear Niamh,

I refer to your fax dated 6th inst. enclosing questionnaire, and comment as follows:

1. Catering for the disabled was a real consideration in drawing up our plans for The Square.
2. Monarch considered it important for the following reasons:
 - 2.1 Disabled people make up a substantial proportion of the shopping public, and by giving real consideration to their requirements, The Square has been able to attract disabled shoppers from all over Ireland, particularly at Christmas, when specially equipped buses for transporting the disabled, visit the centre.
3. Monarch Properties did not specifically search for an architect as it had experience in designing for access for the disabled. What Monarch did was to employ one of the leading architects in Ireland, with vast experience in all ranges of building design – including design for the disabled. The main priority in choosing an architect was that he/she would be capable of designing an overall complex to the highest modern day standards, expected by all shoppers.
4. Monarch met on a number of occasions with the National Rehabilitation Board and other such bodies, who viewed our plans, and many of their recommendations were taken on board in the final design.
5. There was no problem in obtaining planning permission on the grounds of accessibility. Access for the disabled was fully catered for throughout the development.

Cont'd...

6. Monarch Properties did not feel that making the building accessible was either disruptive or costly. Overall it was very effective, as it increased the number of shoppers visiting the centre by making it accessible to the disabled.

In recognition of the high level of access provided for the disabled at The Square in Tallaght, the centre was awarded the 'HELIOS Award' by the Commission of the European Communities, for access for the disabled. It also received other numerous awards for disabled access and facilities.

Among the facilities provided are the following:

1. Braille maps and plans of the shopping centre for those with restricted vision.
2. Also large format Braille maps were provided adjacent to the courtesy desk.
3. All courtesy desk staff and staff in the various shops were given special training in catering for the disabled.
4. Wheelchairs are made available for the disabled.
5. A special 'call' button is provided at the disabled parking bays, where disabled shoppers traveling in a car alone can call for assistance.
6. Disabled toilets are provided on all levels.
7. The loop facility is provided in the cinemas for the hard of hearing.
8. Lifts are provided to allow access to all levels of the shopping centre.
9. All shops are accessible to the disabled.

I hope this information is of benefit to you, but should you wish to discuss it further, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Kind regards.

Yours sincerely,
MONARCH PROPERTIES SERVICES LIMITED



Patrick J. Lafferty
CHIEF ARCHITECT

