

LICENSING (SCOTLAND) ACT 2005

GUIDANCE FOR COMPLETING A DISABLED ACCESS AND FACILITIES STATEMENT

Introduction

1. The Scottish Government is committed to promoting and protecting equality and human rights for disabled people. Our aims are to remove the barriers that isolate and exclude the individual and to achieve full equality and human rights for disabled people in Scotland. One of the five ambitions contained in *Fairer Scotland for Disabled People*¹ is that places are accessible to everyone so that disabled people can participate in Scottish society as full and equal citizens.
2. The requirement for individuals to include a Disabled Access and Facilities Statement along with an application for an alcohol premises licence will help ensure that disabled people can access information about the accessibility of a venue before visiting it. It is hoped that the process of writing a Disability Access and Facilities Statement will raise awareness amongst applicants of the accessibility of their premises and action they could take to improve this.

Legislation

3. The Criminal Justice and Licensing (Scotland) Act 2010² (the "2010 Act"). received Royal Assent on 6 August 2010. Section 179 of the 2010 Act amends section 20(2)(b) of the Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005³ (the "2005 Act") to require applicants for a premises or provisional premises licence to provide a Disabled Access and Facilities Statement (the "statement"). Section 179 also sets out what the statement is to contain.

Background

4. Section 179 of the 2010 Act originated from the 'Barred' campaign which sought to make accessibility information about licensed premises publicly available to make it easier for disabled people to find out about access and facilities of such premises. George Foulkes MSP lodged the provision as a Stage 3 amendment and it was supported by the Scottish Government.
5. Section 20(2)(b) of the 2005 Act currently requires that an application for a premises licence be accompanied by an operating plan in the prescribed form, a layout plan, and the certificates required by section 50(1) of the 2005 Act (in respect of a provisional premises licence section 45(10) of the 2005 Act provides that the certificate should be read as that required by section 50(2)).
6. The Premises Licence (Scotland) Regulations 2007⁴ (the "regulations") currently provide for the prescribed forms to be completed in respect of the premises licence/provisional premises licence application at Schedule 3 and the operating plan at Schedule 5. These regulations will need to be updated to include

¹ : <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0051/00510948.pdf>

² <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2010/13/contents>

³ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2005/16/contents>

⁴ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2007/452/contents/made>

provision for the disabled access and facilities statement and the prescribed form required under section 179 [this draft guidance is work in progress and subject to change].

Guidance

7. This non- statutory guidance is primarily to assist applicants in completing the required statement however, we hope that Licensing Boards, the Police, Local Licensing Forums, Licensing Standards Officers, and the licensed trade and their representatives may also find it useful.
8. The guidance should be read in conjunction with the relevant legislation, and the relevant accompanying documents for the 2010 Act⁵. This guidance should not be seen as a replacement for independent legal advice.

About the disabled access and facilities statement

9. The statement should contain clear information about how accessible the venue is for disabled people. It should also describe the facilities and/or any other provision made on (or in connection with) the premises for disabled people.
10. The purpose of the statement is to ensure that disabled people can access information about the accessibility of a venue before visiting it. It is good business practice to ensure that premises are accessible and welcoming to all customers.
11. The process of writing a statement should also raise awareness amongst applicants of the accessibility of their premises and action they could take to improve access to their premises.
12. Failure to provide this statement is not a ground for refusing an application. Rather it would mean that the premises licence application would be incomplete. The application could not therefore be considered by the Licensing Board as it would not be a valid application. A premises application which is accompanied by the statement would require to be determined by the Licensing Board in the normal way.

Consideration of the statement

13. Local Licensing Boards are likely to wish to be satisfied that applicants have given consideration to what access and facilities they have for disabled people and have described them fully in their statement rather than merely listing them. They will also have to bear in mind that some premises may have no such access or facilities and that this does not mean that a licence should not be granted.
14. In completing their statement, it is important for applicants to demonstrate that they have given full and proper consideration to the accessibility of their premises. It is particularly important to consider that disability extends beyond

⁵ <http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/Bills/16193.aspx>

people with mobility difficulties and wheelchair users and includes:

- People with mental health problems and/or psychological difficulties
- People who are blind or partially sighted
- People with learning difficulties/disabilities
- People who are deaf or hard of hearing
- People who use British Sign Language
- People with long term illnesses
- People with an acquired brain injury

15. It is important for applicants to have an understanding of the full range of barriers that disabled people experience in order to understand how accessible their premises are. It may therefore be advisable that those who do not have a basic understanding of disability equality undertake disability equality training and/or have their premises access audited. It is best practice for training and access audits to be carried out by disabled people.

Other sources of information

16. Further information is available from website sources such as Disability Equality Forum ⁶ (formerly Scottish Disability and Equality Forum), Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities⁷; Independent Living in Scotland⁸; Capability Scotland⁹, Glasgow Disability Alliance¹⁰ and Equality and Human Rights ¹¹.

17. The Access Panel Network Scotland website¹² contains a directory of Local Access Panels¹³. Local Access Panels may be able to provide advice and can also carry out Access Audits and advise on adaptations to make premises more accessible.

18. Euan's Guide¹⁴ is a disabled access review website. Venue representatives can register with Euan's Guide and provide details about how accessible their premises are to the public. The public can also share their reviews and experiences of premises on the website.

⁶ www.disabilityequality.scot

⁷ <https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities.html>

⁸ <http://www.ilis.co.uk/home>

⁹ <http://www.capability-scotland.org.uk/>

¹⁰ www.gda.scot

¹¹ <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/scotland/>

¹² <http://accesspanelnetwork.org.uk/>

¹³ <http://accesspanelnetwork.org.uk/directory-panels/>

¹⁴ <https://www.euansguide.com/>

19. In 2012 The British Beer and Pub Association published accessibility guidance in outlining best practice for pubs – ‘*An open welcome Why being accessible is good for your pub*’. This was updated in 2016 - ‘*Pubs are for everyone – 'Why being accessible is important*’¹⁵.

20. Visit Scotland also provides information in relation to Accessibility Guides¹⁶.

Commencement

21. The outstanding provisions at section 179 of the 2010 Act are to be fully commenced on [Date to be agreed] by the Criminal Justice and Licensing (Scotland) Act 2010 (Commencement No.14 and Saving Provision) Order 2017 [this draft guidance is work in progress and subject to change].

22. The transitional and consequential amendments to existing legislation as a result of the provisions at section 179 of the 2010 Act are detailed below.

Transitional provisions

23. The transitional and savings provisions contained in the commencement order provide that section 179 of the 2010 Act does not apply to applications made prior to the commencement date. This means that alcohol premises which are either already licensed or have a completed application submitted or under consideration prior to section 179 coming into force are not required to provide a statement [this draft guidance is work in progress and subject to change].

Consequential Amendments

24. A result of implementing section 179 of the 2010 Act, the regulations which provide for the premises licence application form required to be updated, to include a prescribed statement form. These revised regulations¹⁷ come into effect at the same time as the provisions in section 179.

¹⁵ <http://s3.amazonaws.com/bbpa-prod/attachments/documents/uploads/24453/original/BBPA%20Access%20Report%202016%20final.compressed.pdf?1485793591>

¹⁶ <https://www.accessibilityguides.org/>

¹⁷ To be inserted when available