

Accessibility for All

Introduction

Gravesham Borough Council is committed to ensuring accessible services to all. Accessibility covers all access channels, for example telephone, personal visit, email and website.

For each access channel consideration needs to be given to those who find it difficult or are unable to communicate effectively.

Examples of who might experience difficulties in accessing our services include those with disabilities, learning difficulties, mental health issues, hearing and/or visual impairments.

This is not an exhaustive list and it would not be possible to list the solutions required for each difficulty or barrier. However this procedure sets out options for how accessibility for all can be provided.

Further information and advice can be sought from the Service Manager, Customer & Theatre Services on 01474 33 73 60.

Written literature

All literature produced must follow the corporate brand and style guidelines which take into account recommendations set out by the RNIB such as the size and type of font to ensure readability. Plain English guidance must also be followed. The Council's style guide and writing for the web guidance can be found on the intranet: <http://gbcstaff/intranet/document-store/documents/?mdocs-cat=mdocs-cat-7&mdocs-att=null>

Private appointments are to be made available to any customer who requires assistance with reading written literature or completing forms. Arranging and conducting the appointments will be the responsibility of the department producing the literature or requiring the information.

If necessary, literature can be reproduced in different formats, including audio, Braille and language translations e.g. Hindi, Urdu. The production/translation fees are the responsibility of the department producing the literature.

Spoken information

Gravesham Borough Council recognises the diversity of the community. An internal interpreter list is available which details officers who have language skills. These officers can be called upon to assist with initial enquiries either face to face or by telephone. However, when the subject is more involved or of a technical nature, professional interpreting services should be sought through Medway Community

Translations on 01634 33 12 86. The fees for interpreting services will be the responsibility of the department.

In the case of those with a hearing impairment (which is used as a general term to refer to people with all degrees of hearing impairment) portable loop systems can be arranged through Customer Services. Some locations are already fitted with permanent loop systems.

In some cases, it may be necessary to arrange for a qualified Sign Language interpreter to assist.

The council also has a minicom unit within the Customer Contact Centre. The number is 01474 33 76 17.

Physical barriers

Remodelling has been undertaken to take into account recommendations from the RNIB and Gravesham Access Group. These adaptations include keeping the main areas clear and free from obstructions with improved signage, accessible interview areas/rooms, wheelchair access and accessible toilets.

It should be recognised that an individual person can experience more than one barrier and arrangements should be made accordingly.

For further information on accessible services, please contact: Anita Tysoe, Service Manager, Customer & Theatre Services - 01474 33 73 60

Anita Tysoe
Service Manager
Customer & Theatre Services
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