

**TO: ACCESS ADVISORY PANEL  
10 NOVEMBER 2015**

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**ACCESS IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME PROGRESS REPORT  
Director of Corporate Services**

**1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The Council has a continuing commitment to fund access improvements to its' public buildings through the capital programme. Schools and other educational buildings are not included in this programme and are dealt with separately.
- 1.2 The Councils' performance is measured on the percentage of authority buildings open to the public in which all public areas are suitable for and accessible to disabled people. Performance against this indicator is reported in the Corporate Services Quarterly Service Report. This report is intended to inform Members of the panel of our progress in this regard.
- 1.3 In addition to the buildings against which that performance indicator has been previously measured, the Council has chosen to expand the range of buildings to be considered for improvement. These now include those associated with adult social care services and non-school buildings associated with childrens' services. Access audit information has already been gathered for these properties and a programme of works is now beginning to be implemented.
- 1.4 Beyond those additional buildings, the Council also intends to undertake access audits of other operational buildings. This will become the first step in extending the benefits of access improvements to all staff and visitors to our properties.

**2 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

Publically Accessible Buildings List

- 2.1 The list of buildings that were deemed publically accessible was originally created to enable reporting to central government of progress against Best Value Performance Indicator 156. The Council is no longer required to report against that performance indicator but has chosen to maintain the list as a good measure of our own progress.
- 2.2 Changes in the Councils' property portfolio prompted a review of the list of buildings considered as being required to be publically accessible, which has seen some properties removed and others added. These changes to the list means that our outturn as a percentage is not directly comparable with those reported in previous years. A copy of the current list of publically accessible buildings is appended to this report.

2014-15 Programme

- 2.3 Last year saw the completion of a wide range of improvements to Bracknell Leisure Centre. As part of that project, we took advantage of a consultation service offered by the RNIB, which helped inform decisions particularly around colour schemes.

## Unrestricted

- 2.4 We completed improvements at some of our operational buildings including Bracknell Family Centre at Wick Hill Cottage and the childrens respite care unit at Larchwood.
- 2.5 We were also able to help with some improvements to lifts at South Hill Park.

### 2015-16 Programme

- 2.6 This year we are undertaking the last of the currently planned works at our publically accessible buildings. Works will start imminently at North Ascot library and, when complete, will bring our outturn in this regard to 94.7%, representing 36 of the 38 buildings on the current list.
- 2.7 The two remaining publically accessible buildings are the car parks at Charles Square and High Street. These buildings are in the process of being assessed and no definite requirements for improvement have yet been identified.
- 2.8 Amongst our operational properties, improvements have either been completed or are in hand at the Youth Service accommodation in Portman Close, the Youth Offending Service in Binfield Road, Bracknell Open Learning Centre, Sandhurst Youth Centre and The Willows Childrens Centre in Priestwood.
- 2.9 Changes to usage have meant that two additional buildings have been brought into corporate use – the Margaret Wells Furby Centre in Great Hollands and the premises that the New Hope drug action team have relocated to as a result of the town centre works. Both of these properties will require access audits completing to determine whether any improvement works are required.

### Proposals Beyond 2016

- 2.10 The proposals for next year comprise a modest programme of improvements to two of our childrens centres and some further works to Wick Hill Cottage.
- 2.11 With the exception of any works that may be required in those properties for which access audits are outstanding, those proposed works will draw to a close the Councils' Access Improvement Programme for individually targeted works.
- 2.12 Whilst our records do indicate the need for further improvement works in a range of different properties, their nature is such that they can only be undertaken as part of much more significant refurbishment or alteration works. These records will therefore be combined with our general condition survey data and considered as part of future planned maintenance or refurbishment schemes.

### Background Papers

Publically Accessible Buildings List – November 2015

### Contact for further information

Darren Burgess, Principal Building Surveyor, Property Services, Corporate Services  
Tel. 01344 355184

[darren.burgess@bracknell-forest.gov.uk](mailto:darren.burgess@bracknell-forest.gov.uk)