

Is your lift
safe, accessible
and **easy to use** by all?



This guide will help you to assess the safety, accessibility and ease of use provided by your lift.

introduction

There are more than 200,000 lifts used daily in the UK and almost 50% were installed more than 25 years ago. These older lifts were installed to the safety and accessibility standards appropriate at the time. Such lifts no longer meet today's recognised acceptable levels of safety and accessibility.



A modern lift has changed in many ways compared with its 25-year-old counterpart. Most of the changes cannot be seen by the user, so people think all lifts are the same but this is entirely wrong. New technologies and social expectations have led to today's state of the art lifts for accessibility.

It is essential to provide a safe means of vertical transport for all lift users, including disabled, elderly persons and others unable to safely use stairs.

Even if you think your premises rarely receives visits from people with disabilities, look around and you will find a number of persons who have poor sight or maybe difficulty in negotiating stairs due to an injury, or just shortness of breath.

Furthermore, the life cycle of a lift is longer than most other forms of transportation and building equipment, which means that lift design, performance, safety and accessibility fall behind modern technologies. If existing lifts are not upgraded to modern standards, the number of problems related to accessibility will, at best, remain unchanged and will no longer answer today's expectations regarding accessibility and design for all.

Litigation has become an increasingly popular route for any person injured whilst travelling in a lift. Tripping whilst using a lift or being struck by a closing door are events that are common on many older lifts that do not incorporate modern drive controls or door detection systems. Failing to upgrade lifts will almost always result in successful litigation for the claimant, and the associated high defence costs for the owner.



In an attempt to address this issue a document was published in 2008 named EN/TR 81-82. It is designed to help owners, authorities and lift designers/manufacturers to find practical solutions and ways of applying sensible improvements to existing lifts to ease accessibility and use by persons including those with disabilities.

This LEIA guide has been produced taking into account the best practice provided in the UK Building regulations and EN/TR 81-82. It divides the key areas of concern in to three; **Safety, Access and Ease of Use.**

Remember that improvements in ease of use or safety improve the situation for all users and not just those with disabilities.



If you use this document to determine the ease of accessibility and safety provided by your lift and find the lift less than satisfactory you should contact your lift service provider and ask them for further advice:

safe for users

If people can gain access to the lift they need to do so in safety. Amongst the most frequent accidents is impact between lift users and the doors or tripping over a step caused by the lift failing to level properly. You can easily check the following:



- 1 Ride in the lift and observe the accuracy of the floor levelling with different passenger loads in the lift. Does the lift stop within +/- 10mm of the floor with all loads?
- 2 Power operated doors should reverse automatically without impacting passengers. If you move between the doors do they reverse smartly out of the way?
- 3 If the lift is relatively small - less than 1100mm wide or 1400mm deep - it will not be possible for a wheelchair user to turn around with ease, if at all. They will have to reverse out of the lift and will need to be able to see what is behind them. Is there an aid such as a mirror on the rear wall to assist?
- 4 A good level of lighting is essential on landings and in the lift car. It needs to be bright enough to allow persons to clearly see without being too bright. Is the lighting bright enough in your view?
- 5 In the event of a power failure, users of the lift need to be able to see the controls and alarm button. Does the lift car have a working emergency lighting system?
- 6 There are many lifts in operation today where either the walls of the lift or the doors are made of clear glass. Such arrangements may pose a serious risk to users with less than perfect sight. Clear glass should be obscured or provided with a suitable manifestation to enable it to be easily seen. Are there areas of unmarked glass at and below eye level?
- 7 If persons become trapped they need to be able to summon help even if they do not know their location or are unable to speak clearly due to a speech impediment. Does the lift have an Alarm Communication system that will inform a rescue service of its location and need for assistance?

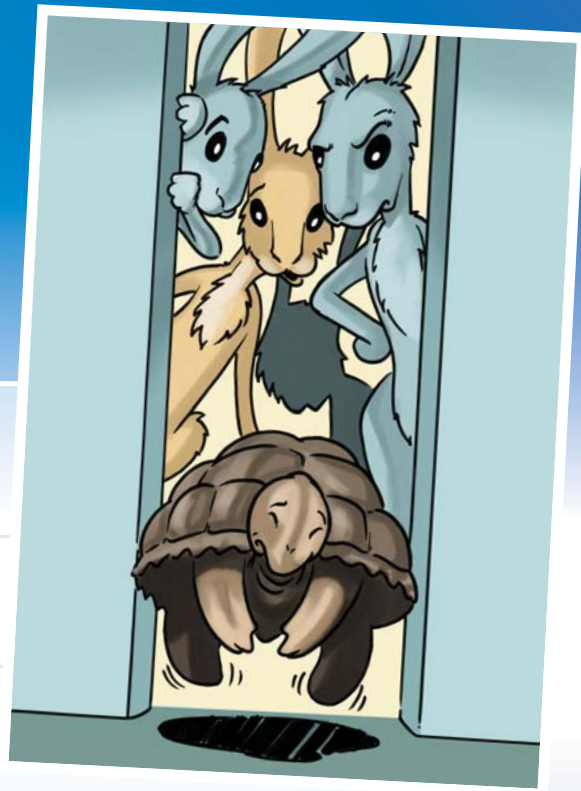
accessible for all

The most fundamental question is, can those requiring use of the lift gain access to it and its controls?
The following questions will resolve this issue.

- 8** Is there a clear unobstructed route to the lift landing?
- 9** On arrival at the lift is there a clear, obstacle free landing in front of the lift doors that is at least 1500mm x 1500mm?
Note: a larger lift size may be required where large (type C) motorised wheelchairs are in use.
- 10** Is the entrance to the lift (lift door) at least 800mm wide?
- 11** Is the lift car at least 1100mm wide x 1400mm deep?
- 12** Are the lift landing buttons located adjacent to the lift landing doors and at a height of 900mm to 1100mm from floor level and at least 500mm from any adjacent corner?
- 13** Once inside the lift car are the car controls at least 400mm from any adjacent corner?
- 14** As many people do not have the strength to open doors manually are the doors power operated?
- 15** To help persons with serious sight issues to locate the lift, do the landing doors contrast in colour with their surrounding walls?



easy to use



- 16** To assist all users, are the car controls located between 900-1200mm from the floor? ✓ ✗
- 17** To assist all users, do the controls on the landing and in the lift car contrast in colour with their surroundings? ✓ ✗
- 18** To assist those with partial sight are the markings on buttons and other controls of a raised tactile type? ✓ ✗
- 19** Does the lift have a position indicator that also announces the floor the lift is at? ✓ ✗
- 20** Does the lift announce its arrival before it opens its doors at a floor so as to give waiting users time to move to the lift? ✓ ✗
- 21** Is the floor covering in the lift of a similar colour to that on the landing?
Note: it should not be a very dark colour. ✓ ✗
- 22** Is the lift car provided with a handrail at least on one wall, of 35mm to 45mm diameter located at approximately 900mm above the floor? ✓ ✗
- 23** Once the doors are fully open do they stay open long enough for slow moving users to enter? ✓ ✗
- 24** Are the interior panels of the lift car of a low reflective type to reduce glare and confusing reflections? ✓ ✗
- 25** When a landing or car button is operated does it give the user an audible bleep to indicate it has been operated? ✓ ✗
- 26** If the lift is in a building with a number of elderly persons is it provided with a tip-up seat for those with limited stamina? ✓ ✗
- 27** Is the lift alarm button easily identifiable by means of a yellow tactile bell symbol? ✓ ✗
- 28** In certain types of premises an induction loop may be beneficial for some users where an alarm communication system is fitted. Ask your lift service provider if the alarm communication system needs such a device or if they already have a means of controlling the volume in the alarm system remotely. Does the communication system have remotely adjustable volume? ✓ ✗
- 29** If persons with disabilities have access to the building do you have a suitable plan to evacuate them in the event of an emergency?
It is a legal requirement to have in place such a plan addressing the safe evacuation of all users. ✓ ✗