



**Corks Lane
Hadleigh
Ipswich IP7 6SJ**

**MEDIA RELEASE
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**DISCRIMINATION AND DISABILITY ACT: "ACT NOW ON LISTED
BUILDINGS" SAYS BABERGH**

By October 2004 all buildings which provide a service to the public, such as offices, banks, shops, council offices, libraries, village halls and tourist attractions, will need to prove that their service is accessible to all members of the community, including those with a disability.

The Discrimination and Disability Act 1995 is being implemented in stages and the provision for equality of access into and from public buildings is included within the next tranche of changes.

Clare Vint, Babergh's Conservation & Design Officer, believes that "because making a building accessible can be quite time consuming, it is vital think about the necessary changes and their implications NOW!"

"For example, there may be a variety of permissions and consents that are needed in order to make changes to a building. Owners may require planning permission, listed building consent, conservation area consent, building regulations and/or permission from County Highways".

Typical alterations could involve owners having to lower doorsteps or create a ramp, maybe even widening the front door and altering internal levels. Restaurants and pubs will also need to consider alterations to their WC facilities. Various standards must be applied to these alterations and we recommend asking for advice as soon as possible.

As Ms Vint emphasises "the whole process from assessing the need to do works to completion of works could take up to 9 months!"

Listed buildings require special treatment and can be exempt, providing that it can be demonstrated that all aspects of the Act have been considered. Owners also need to be aware that listed building consent is required for most works to both the inside and outside of the building. ENDS

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