

Inclusive Design Principles

Creating inclusive places



Foreword

Nearly 1 in 5 people in the UK have some form of condition or impairment. For many of these people, the places where they live, shop and work don't always make life easy. Research by Purple, the disability charity, found that 75% of disabled people and their families report walking away from a business because of poor accessibility or customer service.

Women often navigate public spaces with heightened awareness of personal safety which influences where they choose to go, how they get there and what time they go there. Research by the Greater London Authority found that 80% of women said they avoid certain areas due to poor lighting and design. And the London Mayor's office for policing and crime found that 69% of women say they are less likely to go out after dark.

And while no design team sets out to create places that exclude certain parts of society, perspectives on what makes 'good design' are undoubtedly impacted by the life experiences and biases of its creators. The Architects Registration Board's equality, diversity and inclusion survey reports that less than 1 in 3 architects are female and black architects make up only 1% of the profession. These points demonstrate just how much the places where we live, work and spend our time are intrinsically woven into who we are, and how we live. The impact a place has on an

individual's life, their potential and their happiness is profound.

For the property industry, this is a huge responsibility, and a huge privilege to be a part of. Collectively we create the homes where people live, the spaces where they work, the places where they shop. We build and run the cinemas, the bars and restaurants, the parks where children play, where families stroll and communities mingle. These are the places where life happens.

But we haven't always got it right, and some places act as a barrier rather than an enabler to life — because people don't feel seen or heard, through design that hasn't considered their needs or because they simply don't feel safe.

So, how do we stop this from happening? By being deliberate in creating inclusive places. And that's exactly what this document is intended to do. Through these principles we're recognising that inclusive places are essential to delivering successful places and giving our teams, our consultants and our service partners the inspiration and tools they need to help deliver on this commitment.

The next few pages provide the stepping stones towards ensuring the places we create are enablers of life.



Introduction

“Inclusive design seeks to create buildings and environments that welcome everyone, regardless of their characteristics or identity. Inclusive design aims to remove the barriers that create effort and separation, and enables everyone to participate equally, confidently, and independently in everyday activities.”

The Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA), 2023.
Inclusive Design Overlay to the RIBA Plan of Work



Inclusive design

Inclusive design is the practice of creating spaces that are accessible, useable, and welcoming to a wide range of people.

This means recognising that some people experience more barriers than others. These barriers arise when their particular needs haven't been considered or designed for and are often related to protected characteristics such as age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy and sexual orientation, but can also be related to other factors such as body size or language.

Inclusive design gives us ways to design for diverse, evolving human needs, experiences and realities from the outset. This approach puts people at the heart of the design process. It acknowledges diversity and difference, offering choices where universal solutions aren't feasible and supporting flexibility in use where possible.

We have an ambition to create places that are truly inclusive. To achieve this, our designs, our way of working and our teams must be aligned to this goal. Therefore, our inclusive design principles address the places, processes and knowledge and skills required to deliver truly inclusive spaces that are fit for the 21st century:

1 Inclusive places

Design and deliver spaces that are safe and accessible and provide amenities and activities that accommodate different needs and experiences. This means creating spaces where a wide range of people feel a sense that this space is truly for them.

2 Inclusive processes

Engage people with different lived experiences to ensure their needs are integrated into all design, delivery and management decisions. This means communicating openly with the communities you're designing for, listening to their voices and removing barriers to participation. This includes monitoring changing community needs once the asset is in-use.

3 Inclusive knowledge and skills

Provide ongoing education and training for teams on how to deliver inclusive design and operations, as well as fostering a culture of communication, learning, and listening. Take action to ensure a range of perspectives and lived experiences are represented in your teams.

A guide to using this document

Purpose

This document offers insights and inspiration about how to design, develop and manage places that are truly inclusive. It's not a comprehensive checklist or action plan, but is instead a tool to foster imagination, creativity, and ambitious thinking about how best to deliver places that are accessible, useable, safe and welcoming for as many people as possible.

As well as offering an overarching framework and ideas for key actions to try in your projects, this document points to resources that offer more comprehensive guidelines on specific topics and considerations.

Structure

The document is structured across three key inclusive design principles: inclusive places, inclusive processes and inclusive knowledge and skills. Each of these are split into three to four sub-principles that give more detailed insight into the fundamental ideas, alongside a suggested list of activities and considerations that you can incorporate into your projects, and case studies that provide practical examples of where these ideas are already working.



A guide to using this document



This is just the starting point, we take ownership of the outcomes across our places

Project teams and the communities you work with are the experts in determining the most suitable approach to work with the specific needs of the site and its local people. Therefore, it's within your control and expertise to determine how best to integrate the inclusive design principles into your projects and how best to inspire your colleagues to prioritise inclusion.

While everyone has accountability for inclusion, the project lead is responsible for ensuring all relevant stakeholders are made aware of these inclusive design principles and that this guidance is referred to throughout the lifecycle of the scheme, (see: [RIBA Inclusive Design Overlay](#) for further guidance on embedding inclusive design into every stage of the project lifecycle).

There's no one-size-fits all design solution

The lived experiences, needs and realities of people dwelling in and moving through the built environment are incredibly wide ranging and are sometimes at odds with one another. This is a normal urban condition and is not something that needs to be fixed.

It's the role of development and management teams to understand these differences, how to include those who have previously been excluded, and to make informed decisions about how diverse needs can be most equitably attended to.

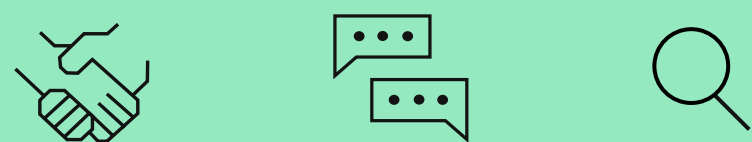
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1 Inclusive places



Introduction

Inclusive places are designed and delivered with a diversity of experiences and needs in mind. This is not simply about physical accessibility, but includes people's emotional wellbeing, the availability of amenities and activities that meet their needs, and a sense that this space is truly for them.

1.1 Accessibility



1.2 Amenity and activities



1.3 Sense of belonging



1.1

Accessibility

Can everyone access the space?



Prioritise design considerations that help create safe and accessible spaces and that can accommodate a variety of needs, supporting choice for all users. This includes going above and beyond legislative design guidance to design and deliver places that promote mental and physical health and enable independence, dignity and ease of use for everyone who spends time in our places.

Try this:

1. Apply the '[Principles of inclusive design](#)' to every design decision. These are tried and tested principles to support inclusive and accessible design.
2. Consider conflicting needs and test your design solutions against a variety of needs and experiences.
3. Design for simple and intuitive use and navigation. Consider a multitude of communication needs including neurodiversity, visual impairment and language differences.
4. Evaluate accessibility beyond the building, estate, and site boundaries, and if appropriate invest in accessibility for the wider area and routes to your site.
5. Design spaces that are connected to active and accessible transport infrastructure offering appropriate step-free access, segregated cycle lanes, ramps, dropped kerbs etc (see: Sections 4 and 5 of both [BS 8300-1:2018](#) and [BS8300-2:2018](#) for more detail on strategic considerations).
6. Minimise excessive noise, provide suitable visual contrast, and specify lighting to support people with sensory impairments and neuroprocessing differences (see: [PAS 6463: 2022 Design for the mind, Neurodiversity and the build environment](#) for guidance on neurodiversity-inclusive design).
7. Remove unnecessary physical barriers such as trip hazards, narrow doorways and high steps.
8. Offer a variety of accessibly designed signage and wayfinding (see: [The Sign Design Guide](#)).
9. Ensure high levels of maintenance to signal the place is cared for (see: Annex A of [BS 8300-1:2018](#) for exterior spaces and Annex A of [BS8300-2:2018](#) for interior spaces).
10. Continue to capture feedback from users on how well the building and spaces meets their needs.
11. Undertake (at least) annual accessibility reviews of operational assets.
12. Assess potential suppliers on their ability to deliver accessible and inclusive designs, for example when tendering for any contracts related to the design of spaces (including wayfinding, lighting, interior design etc.) and digital tools.

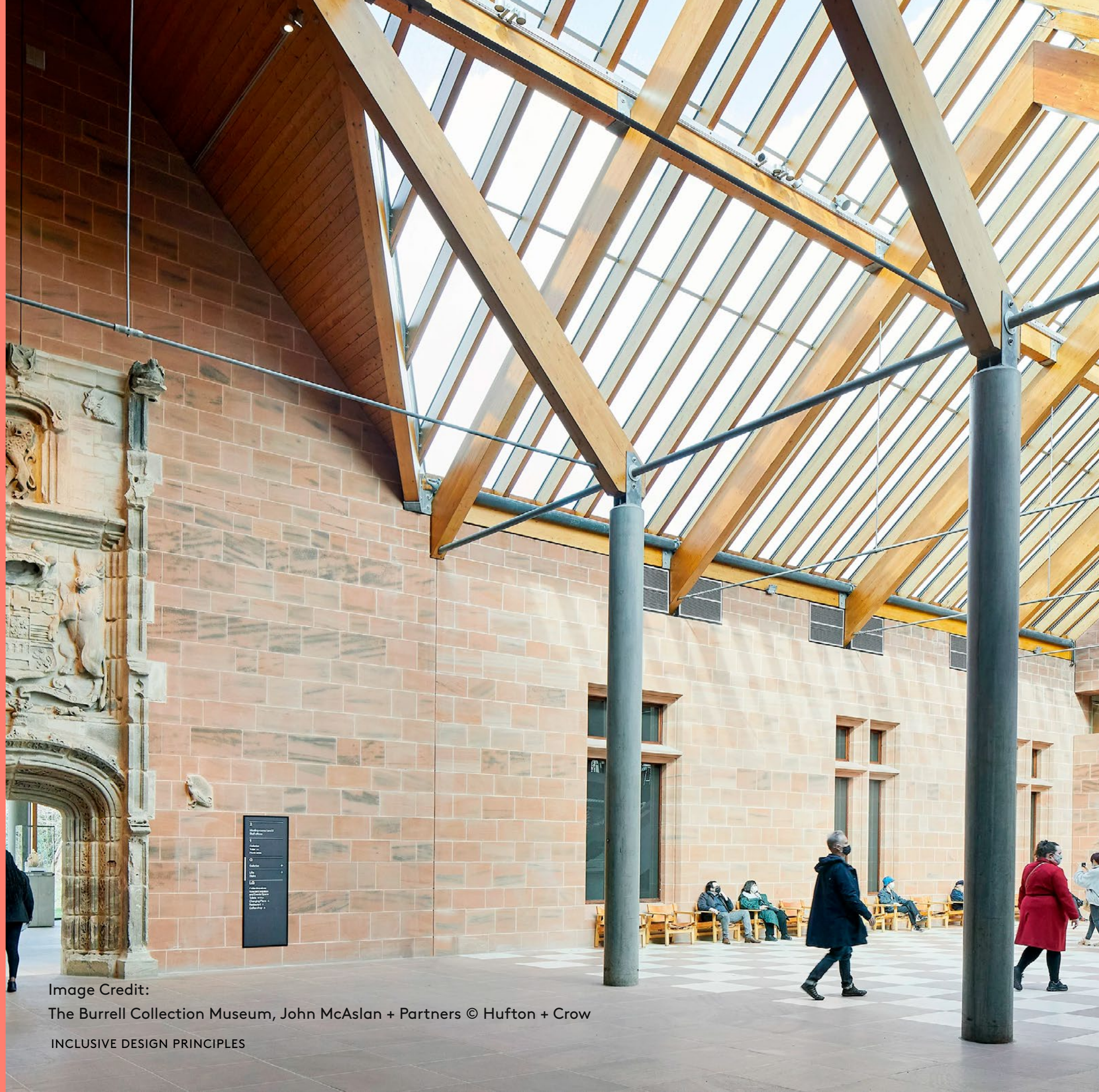


Image Credit:

The Burrell Collection Museum, John McAslan + Partners © Hufton + Crow

INCLUSIVE DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Case study — Accessibility

The Burrell Collection, Glasgow, UK

The Burrell Collection, a museum housing the art collection of Sir William Burrell and Constance, Lady Burrell, which belongs to the people of Glasgow, has been re-designed to ensure accessibility.

The 2022 multi-award winning project by John McAslan + Partners refurbished the Grade A listed building that was completed in 1983, making it the first museum in Scotland with two Changing Places toilets, alongside nine additional accessible toilets and an accessible lift.

The museum also provides additional facilities including breastfeeding rooms, baby changing facilities, quiet rooms, a fridge for medications on request and water fountains. A wider step-free entrance welcomes guests inside the building whilst beautiful landscaping around the museum provides space to wander, play or simply sit and take in the setting of Pollok Country Park.

By listening to the barriers often experienced by people with physical and sensory disabilities', the galleries and displays have been designed to make sure everyone can access them. By including a wide range of community groups to assist with how a work of art's story is told, the museum have introduced British Sign Language, captions and ten languages in the digital displays.

Additionally, the Burrell Collection offers learning and community spaces and indoor picnic areas that are free to use. These aspects make the building and collection a truly welcoming space, giving people a sense of belonging.

INCLUSIVE PLACES

1.2

Amenity and activities

Do we have amenities that support use for a diverse range of people?



Design amenity, uses and activities that promote equal opportunities to participate in all aspects of the development. Examples of inclusive amenities include gender neutral toilets, multi-faith spaces, breastfeeding rooms, drinking fountains, and accessible playgrounds.

Try this:

1. Propose uses that meet the needs of the wider community, with specific attention to people from under-represented and marginalised communities.
2. Include options for affordable services and activities.
3. Include spaces for rest, respite, and play that are free to use. Support with access to free amenities and services such as toilets, playgrounds and drinking water fountains.
4. Seek opportunities to include valued local provision (nurseries, community spaces, local independent restaurants, religious and cultural facilities) in the development of new masterplans.
5. Activate existing assets through programmes and events catered to a diverse group of people. This can include a variety of initiatives such as temporary art exhibitions by local artists from under-represented groups - in offices, shopping centres and public realm.
6. Consider how amenity availability changes over a 24 hour period and whether appropriate provisions are made for those working in or using the development over night and other non-peak hours (including toilets and healthy food options).
7. Consider opportunities to make private amenity spaces available for public access and community use beyond conventional business hours.
8. Provide activities and events that represent members of staff, customers and the wider community. Offer temporary space to support activities for local community and faith groups.
9. Consider providing shared inclusive amenities such as breastfeeding rooms and multi-faith spaces in new developments, or appropriate service provision to enable these options in future.
10. Implement an access management plan that describes how the development is used and maintained, outlining the required staff training, adaptations, auxiliary aids and staff assistance.
11. Gather customer feedback and engage the people using the space to understand their needs and inform its ongoing curation and activation.



Image Credit:
Drinking Water Fountain, Join the Pipe © Geraldo Vallen
INCLUSIVE DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Case study — Amenity and activities

Drinking water fountains, Landsec retail destinations, UK

UK adults use approximately 7.7 billion single-use water bottles annually. In 2018, Landsec launched the “Refill Me” campaign across their retail destinations to encourage customers to adopt sustainable practices and reduce reliance on single-use plastic bottles. Under this initiative, guests could refill their water bottles free of charge at participating restaurants and cafés. Instead of purchasing new bottles, they could simply visit one of the brands listed on their website and fill up with cold tap water.

However, guest feedback revealed that queuing in cafés for refills was inconvenient and not meeting the needs of guests with long term health conditions or disabilities. Additionally, many guests felt uncomfortable asking for free water without making a purchase.

To address this, Landsec installed easily accessible water fountains throughout their centres. Collaborating with Join The Pipe, a worldwide community of tap water enthusiasts, Landsec have started the implementation of free water stations both inside and outside their centres. This not only supports sustainability but also benefits disabled guests, guardians or parents, and those who prefer quiet spaces over crowded cafés.

1.3

Sense of belonging

Do people feel like this is their space?

Create spaces where a wide range of people feel welcome, a sense of belonging and ownership. These spaces are welcoming with uses, art and other features that people can recognise themselves in, sending the signal that they are welcomed, recognised and valued.



Try this:

1. Make a record of what you have done to directly include the lived experiences, needs and realities of the consulted community groups in the development process.
2. Safeguard and celebrate existing community facilities and community networks through your designs wherever possible.
3. Include third spaces such as libraries, cinemas, theatre, youth centres, clubs etc. in ground floor active units.
4. Design activation programmes, communications and uses that represent the diverse identities, traditions, and values of the people you are designing for.
5. Include artwork that celebrates and memorialises diverse identities and signals the presence of community and local cultures. Give existing local community the power to select these or co-design them. Be aware that some types of art in the built environment can have detrimental effects on people with neuroprocessing differences (see: [PAS 6463:2022 Design for the mind](#)).
6. Establish ground floor uses and frontages to provide natural surveillance over 24 hours. CCTVs and security guards can sometimes reduce the useability and quality of spaces and minimise the sense of belonging for some people.
7. Consider partnership with other experienced groups (including local community groups and charities aligned to protected characteristic groups) to help identify measures to increase sense of belonging and shared spaces.
8. Where including public uses, consider spaces which are flexible in use and adaptable to increase appeal and keep operational costs down to ensure long term viability. Involve management and operations teams at the outset to ensure the space is used by diverse groups.
9. Offer people using your spaces the opportunity to provide feedback on the space, its maintenance and activation.



Image Credit:
Mayfield Play Yard, Studio Egret West © Studio Egret West

INCLUSIVE DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Case study — Sense of belonging

Mayfield Park and Mayfield Play Yard

Mayfield Park is the first new city-centre park to be created in Manchester for over 100 years. Designed by Studio Egret West, the 6.5 acre park provides a sequence of spaces connected by a meandering river.

The extensive engagement carried out through the design process emphasised the desire for a Mancunian park. This Mancunian authenticity is achieved through a strong reuse strategy which helps to root the design in its industrial heritage.

The need for inclusive play became a central subject in the early co-design workshops. This was further encouraged by the Council who requested to ‘design a play area that children want to return to again and again!’.

Since opening in September 2022, the Play Yard has become a major attraction, serving as the main equipped play area. Here, ‘communal play’ was encouraged by Manchester City Council’s Accessibility Officer, leading to the creation of a play area that integrates accessible features rather than isolating them. Accessible swings are grouped together to include facilities for older children, younger children, and people with accessibility needs. Level changes and routes around the play area are all designed within accessible gradient recommendations.

Additional play features supplement the main play chimneys and include balancing routes, recessed trampolines, accessible tunnels, talking tubes, and telescopes. Furthermore, publicly accessible washrooms are provided near the main play space, extending dwell times in the park for families, children, elderly people and people with additional needs.

Play is not confined to the Play Yard. It is also implemented in the wildscape and in the large lawn area, fostering everyday play, ball games, and group gatherings. The park also includes integrated power and stage foundations for formal community events. The large scale open space was a key component of the brief which originated from people’s desire to have an area to play frisbee.

Inclusive places – resources

[Principles of Inclusive Design. They include You, Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment, 2006.](#)

The following key points are from CABE’s 2006 publication The Principles of Inclusive Design - They Include You, which also gives more detailed explanations of each point. Inclusive design:

- Places people at the heart of the design process;
- Acknowledges diversity and difference;
- Offers choice where a single design solution cannot accommodate all users;
- Provides for flexibility in use; and
- Provides buildings and environments that are convenient and enjoyable to use for everyone.

Design of an accessible and inclusive built environment parts one and two: External environment and Buildings - Code of practice [BS 8300-1:2018](#) and [BS 8300-2:2018](#)

BS 8300:2018 provides more recent and detailed guidance about the external environment (volume 1) and internal provisions of buildings other than dwellings (volume 2) than Approved Document M, which outlines the statutory guidance for the access to and use of buildings. BS 8300 Volume 2 has a significantly broader scope than Approved Document M, Volume 2, in which the approaches to buildings are the only part of external environments that are covered. The British Standard includes guidance on features such as public art, water features and temporary external events.

[Sign Design Guide+: a guide to designing inclusive wayfinding information, Peter Barker, June Fraser and Andrew Barker, 2024.](#)

As well as being the main reference for accessible signage and wayfinding design, this guide features information about how different people navigate through and understand the environment.

[PAS 6463:2022 Design for the mind. Neurodiversity and the built environment](#)

Table 1 of PAS (Publicly Accessible Standard) 6463:2022 lists considerations about the needs of people with sensory processing differences at all stages of the design process. The document also includes helpful guidance about art, quiet and sensory rooms, biophilic design, and helpful commentaries about how neuroprocessing differences affect people’s understanding of the built environment. Despite the guidance of PAS 6463:2022 and previous documents about designing for neurodivergence it is rare that a single solution works for all occupants of a building and therefore the Principles of Inclusive Design should be applied and a choice of environments made available where possible.

[Making London Child-Friendly – Designing Places and Streets for Children and Young People, Publica for Mayor of London GGbD, 2020](#)

Making London Child-Friendly highlights how the design of the built environment can increase opportunities for young people to become happier and healthier, by becoming independently mobile within their neighbourhoods and the city. The guidance examines best practice examples and identifies a range of recommendations for built environment practitioners to consider. The four lenses of the inquiry – policy, participation, management and design – promote an integrated and holistic approach to independent mobility: the freedom to occupy and move around the public realm without adult supervision.

[Safety in Public Spaces: Women, Girls and Gender Diverse People, Publica CIC for Mayor of London GGbD, 2023](#)

Commissioned by the Greater London Authority, Publica CIC designed this handbook to support urban development practitioners to take action towards gender inclusion in their public realm projects. It lays out key principles of safety and gender inclusion and offers a set of practical actions that can be taken by project teams, from project initiation to project use. These actions go beyond traditional responses to safety such as policing and lighting, centring meaningful engagement with women, girls, and gender-diverse people as the essential tool to make public spaces safer and more inclusive.

2 Inclusive processes



Introduction

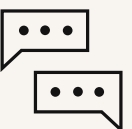
Inclusive design processes refer to the steps taken to ensure that a diversity of experiences and needs are incorporated into all design, development and management decisions.

This means conducting effective community engagement and supporting participation while ensuring key decisions are communicated transparently across the project life cycle. This includes regular analysis and action that monitors changing community needs and how assets are used during and after project delivery.

2.1 Community engagement and participation



2.2 Transparency and inclusive research



2.3 Regular performance analysis of projects and assets



2.1

Community engagement and participation

Is engagement embedded in the design process?



Design teams should strive to understand the diversity of local people's experiences, needs and realities, and incorporate their perspectives and requirements into the project plans and designs. Specific consideration should be given to understanding and removing the barriers that might prevent people from fully participating in design and management processes.

Try this:

1. Liaise with Landsec's Social Impact team to conduct research and a local needs analysis to understand the socio-economic and cultural demographic data of the local population and identify their specific needs. Review the findings and identify gaps to use as a basis for the design. Assess along the way. (See: [Sustainable Development Toolkit](#) and [Community Charter](#)).
2. Referring to the local needs analysis, work with Landsec teams (such as Social Impact and Local Operations) to develop extensive stakeholder mapping and identify who the project teams should be engaging with.
3. As part of your wider community consultation activity, focus on inclusivity to ensure the needs and priorities of the communities impacted are taken into account. Being part of meaningful and carefully designed engagement can bring long lasting skills and confidence to participants.
4. Consider forming an inclusivity panel for larger projects: involve diverse representatives from the local community (including Landsec community partners) in the development and review of the project brief and the project as it develops. The panel can help bring lived experience perspectives into decision-making and planning processes.
5. Identify and take action to remove barriers that may exclude diverse groups from participating in or influencing the design process. These barriers can be physical, social and cultural, psychological, communicational or technological.
6. Co-develop an inclusivity statement with local communities that includes a list of deliverables and commitments that the project is held accountable for in the long-term. This should be meaningfully incorporated into the Inclusive Design Statement written for the development (see: [Community Charter](#)).
7. Implement engagement methodologies that provide an accessible environment for all participants. Consider diverse working hours, caring responsibilities, mobility needs, neurodiversity and physical accessibility.
8. Provide financial compensation to recognise everyone's contribution and cover the cost of transportation and services, such as childcare, required by all participants to partake in the engagement programme.



Case study — Community engagement and participation

Lewisham design code champions', Lewisham, London

The Lewisham Design Code Champion group is made up of a cohort of local residents and representatives to help develop the Design Code for the masterplan scheme. This outlines the redevelopment plans of the existing 1977 Lewisham Shopping Centre into a mixed-use retail space, public meadow, music venue, cultural hub and up to 1,700 homes. The design champions are an integral part of understanding the various community dynamics of Lewisham and will act as a sounding board throughout the project.

Participants are paid for their time, and all expenses including childcare and travel, are covered by Landsec to ensure inclusivity. The project had over 300 applications for 17 spaces and encouraged diversity in background as well as thought and experience. This led to a huge contribution of innovative ideas derived from local people, from the material used in the project to the public realm design for the scheme. This has directly influenced the designs for the masterplan.

Landsec will be rolling this out across all masterplan projects as an example of learning from local people at the same time as equipping them with new skills.

2.2

Transparency and inclusive research

Are decisions, trade-offs and reasoning clearly communicated?



Development teams should adopt transparent decision making and consider how to most effectively communicate project and design decisions to the local community. Ensure that the experiences and needs of under-represented and marginalised groups are explicitly addressed in design decisions and the communication of them.

Try this:

1. Communicate key project decisions and trade-offs through creative and qualitative methodologies (regular engaging newsletters, forums, cultural events and celebrations).
2. Acknowledge the constant changing nature of communities and create opportunities at project gateways to re-evaluate community needs and priorities. Be prepared and allow time within programmes to adjust your plans and strategies accordingly.
3. Foster transparency in decision-making processes and communicate openly with the communities involved. Ensure key findings emerging from engagement directly inform the design and delivery of spaces that reflect the needs and lived experiences of the people who will use them.
4. Review your communication strategy to ensure key messages can be understood by a wide range of people. Consider incorporating graphic illustrations to make your communication visually engaging, accessible, and more memorable, and to assist people whose main language is not English. (see: [Dos and Don'ts on Designing for Accessibility, Karwai Pun for Home Office Digital, 2016](#)).
5. Conduct regular reviews, including surveys and audits, to identify, map and address barriers that may exclude groups from participating in or influencing the design process.



Case study — Transparency and inclusive research

55 Old Broad Street inclusive research, London

55 Old Broad Street in London, is a new mixed-use development, comprising high-quality office space, alongside artist studios and cultural space and the Grade II listed Victorian Bath House. As part of the consultation process, Landsec undertook an extensive engagement programme with local residents, cultural institutions and community organisations. This was informed by desk-based research which helped identify local needs and ensured the engagement programme was targeted in the right areas.

From this, Landsec curated a series of interactive creative workshops, employing a total of 31 artists from under-represented backgrounds. This process enabled Landsec to engage with a broad range of respondents and capture of a true understanding of the issues being faced in the city and how the future development could address these in a meaningful and sustainable way.

The development plans have responded by dedicating space which will be free or affordable to use by the public, addressing a desire to diversify cultural and amenity offers within the city, whilst also providing activities for local workers which offer an alternative to alcohol-based socialising.

Across all Landsec development projects, the Commonplace platform is used to contact those who would like to receive updates, to ensure an ongoing line of communication and transparency in the development process.

2.3

Regular performance analysis of projects and assets

Does this space continue to satisfy diverse needs in the longer term?



Ensure project decisions and outcomes are continually reviewed against current needs, and that actions are taken to address the gaps identified. Ensure that analysis is particularly targeted to include groups who experience the greatest barriers to accessing and enjoying these spaces.

Try this:

1. Ensure the development manager/project lead takes responsibility for championing inclusion throughout the project lifecycle and appoint a suitably qualified inclusive design consultant to go beyond minimum accessibility requirements (p. 15 of the [RIBA Inclusive Design Overlay](#)) and provide technical advice on delivering inclusive design.
2. Include criteria when tendering for external suppliers/consultants on how they will support the ambitions set out in this document and demonstrate their ability to deliver inclusive design solutions.
3. Undertake an equality impact assessment to understand the impacts of your proposed project/development on different protected characteristic groups. Take action to mitigate any potential negative impacts and maximise positive impacts.
4. Track the project efficacy throughout design, build and operation, gathering feedback through surveys, dashboards, focus groups and other engagement methods. Use these to make informed decisions about how to manage and activate the space delivered.
5. Conduct regular reviews to find and remove barriers that may deter groups from accessing and participating in the life and activation of existing assets. Use these as an opportunity to celebrate what has already been achieved and explore possibilities for improvement to go above and beyond statutory regulations.
6. Collect and disaggregate data across categories such as age, disability, gender, religion and ethnicity to identify the gaps and inequalities experienced by each group and inform decisions on space regeneration, management and programming.
7. Ensure data collection methods are accessible to a wide range of people, for example considering those with limited time to contribute, the potential for exclusion with digital-only options, and the need to use accessible formats and data-collection tools.



Case study — Regular performance analysis of projects and assets

Retail costumer feedback: 'Share Your Thoughts' survey

Landsec operates a guest feedback survey across all retail assets. Known as 'Share Your Thoughts', the survey encourages guests to share their experience and suggest one improvement to enhance their visit. With the support of the Business Disability Forum and the Landsec data protection GDPR team, the survey was updated to capture feedback on the experience and perspectives of disabled and neurodiverse guests with long term health conditions and/or a disability. The survey encourages guests to share their experience and suggest one improvement to enhance their visit. Through the survey, Landsec was able to measure the experience from the perspective of guests with additional needs. The results highlighted the need to enhance the sensory experience of the assets, particularly catered to accommodate neurodiverse guests and people seeking a calmer environment.

As a result, Landsec launched sensory backpacks and programming of quiet hours across all retail destinationscentres. Today, Quiet Hours takes place every week and involve various adjustments such as lowering music volume, dimming in-store lighting, minimising background noise, reducing tannoy announcements, and controlling strong odours. Similarly, the sensory backpacks are available for collection at guest services and contain toys, ear defenders, and communication tools tailored to support every guest's journey. The objective of this initiative is to provide the optimal experience for Landsec's neurodiverse guests.

Inclusive processes – resources

[The Inclusive Design Guide, Inclusive Design Research Centre, OCAD University, 1994 - to date](#)

Started in 1994, this ever-evolving guide provides a supportive framework to develop bespoke inclusive design processes that can be applied to digital design, design of services, the built environment, and physical products. The tools and techniques outlined in the guide can be applied to a variety of processes such as workshops, meetings, conferences, and even daily interactions with one another.

[Engagement Overlay to the RIBA Plan of Work, RIBA, 2024](#)

The Engagement Overlay to the RIBA Plan of Work gives architects, other built environment professionals and members of the wider project team a framework for meaningful stakeholder engagement at every stage of a project. The Engagement Overlay intends to raise engagement standards across the industry as well as set out for the first time what an exemplar engagement process should look like.

[The RIBA Inclusive Design Overlay, RIBA, 2023](#)

The overlay is a resource to support better long-term inclusion and access outcomes for everyone involved in the procurement, design, management, maintenance and use of the built environment. It introduces inclusive design within five key team roles; Client, Project Management Team, Design Team, Construction Team and Asset Management Team. These are key roles as they have the greatest influence over the inclusive design strategy, application and deliverability and therefore success in the overall outcomes. The overlay highlights when and why to engage with an Inclusive Design Lead (Consultant or Champion) on projects and outlines the purpose of their role and remit.

[Safety in Public Spaces: Women, Girls and Gender Diverse People, Publica CIC for Mayor of London GGD, 2023](#)

Commissioned by the Greater London Authority, Publica CIC designed this handbook to support urban development practitioners to take action towards gender inclusion in their public realm projects. It lays out key principles of safety and gender inclusion and offers a set of practical actions that can be taken by project teams, from project initiation to project use. These actions go beyond traditional responses to safety such as policing and lighting, centring meaningful engagement with women, girls, and gender-diverse people as the essential tool to make public spaces safer and more inclusive.

[Dos and Don'ts on Designing for Accessibility, Karwai Pun for Home Office Digital, 2016](#)

General guidelines and best design practices for making services accessible in government. Currently, there are six different posters in the series that cater to users from these areas: low vision, D/deaf and hard of hearing, dyslexia, motor disabilities, autistic people and users of screen readers.

Inclusive processes - Landsec resources

[Community Charter](#)

The charter sets out how Landsec works with the people and organisations where they operate. It was developed by Landsec in collaboration with residents, charities, and community champions, drawing on some of the best practice in the sector. The commitments that Landsec make to their communities and standards to which they are held to account are: Listening and understanding, Being present and relevant in the communities in which they operate, Involving and empowering, and being held into account.

[Landsec Sustainable Development Toolkit](#)

The toolkit outlines Landsec’s commitments in sustainability, which is to enhance the health of Landsec environments and improve the quality of life for the people, customers and communities involved in their projects today and for future generations. Live Well is Landsec’s commitment to creating opportunities and inclusive places to change lives and supporting communities to thrive by creating opportunities and tackling local social and economic issues, creating inclusive places and improving wellbeing.

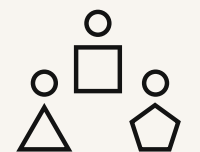
3 Inclusive knowledge and skills

Having inclusive Inclusive knowledge and skills are needed in design and operations teams to ensure inclusion is a key consideration in all design, development and operational decisions.

These skills and expertise can be developed by providing regular education and training for teams on inclusion and inclusive design.

Teams are best equipped to deliver inclusive outcomes when they include diverse and representative lived experience in their make-up and are working in a culture of open communication, learning and listening.

3.1 A diverse team



3.2 Education and training on inclusive design principles



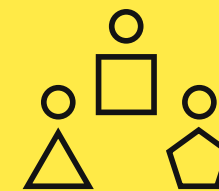
3.3 Inclusive behaviours and culture



3.1

A diverse team

Do we represent the communities we're catering for?



Lack of diversity in teams affects the way we design and activate spaces and limits who we think about, which can lead to biased design outcomes regardless of the designer's intent. Actively recruit and include diverse talent within design and development teams to ensure a range of perspectives, experiences and realities are represented.

Try this:

1. Assess whether project teams represent the people they are creating a space for. Ask the following questions:
 - Have you conducted an expansive local needs analysis at the outset of the project?
 - Who are you designing and activating a space for? Have you identified the people that will use this space/attend this event/use this service? Have you engaged with them to understand their needs?
 - Does the current project team, including external consultants, represent the proposed communities who will use this space, service or event?
 - If not, have you sought additional support from relevant community groups or people with lived experiences to enhance the project team's knowledge and insights?
2. Procurement is an effective way to enhance diversity in project teams. Conduct a fair procurement process for every project to support employment across local communities. Take positive action (see: [Positive Action in the Workplace](#)) to employ people from under-represented backgrounds, particularly at more senior levels.
3. Work with the Community Advocacy lead to implement criteria in tendering processes to help ensure appointed consultants have a defined strategy for community engagement and representation throughout the project.
4. Connect communities more directly with the benefits of developments, aligning with Section 106 obligations (where applicable) for regeneration schemes, design, activation and operation projects.



Image Credit:

What makes a place?; creative consultation workshop involving young people in Cambridge's Guildhall

© Cambridge Curiosity and Imagination

Case study — A diverse team

Hartree, Cambridge — Creative consultation

Hartree is a new development in the heart of North-East Cambridge. It will include 5,600 homes, shops, workplaces, education, community and leisure facilities, and open spaces across 48 hectares of land. Here, Landsec U+I alongside partners TOWN and landowners Cambridge City Council and Anglian Water, are developing a vision for the new urban quarter in North-East Cambridge.

Central to this vision is a focus on creating a community that has been shaped by many and is open and inclusive, including children and younger people. Alongside local arts charity Cambridge Curiosity and Imagination, Landsec U+I engaged with children in two local schools and younger people more generally, including carers and those living in poverty, on their views on what makes a successful place that fulfils their needs.

These creative workshops explored various aspects of creating a child-friendly environment, including the importance of safe public spaces and the concept of 'social streets' and play streets' that promote interaction between users. This has resulted in the development of a Child-Friendly Strategy for Hartree, over and above planning requirements, which will strategically embed the needs of young people in the project, considering them to be equal stakeholders in the emerging new neighbourhoods.

The team's work with Speak Out Cambridgeshire (part of VoiceAbility - one of the UK's largest providers of advocacy and involvement services for health and wellbeing) provided a deeper and more personal understanding of disabled people's experiences of the built environment, and especially the importance of Changing Places facilities and well-designed homes for wheelchair users and their families. To support us while we build teams that represent the diversity of the places we build and operate in, you can take action to bring many more people into the design process, which will make it a richer and better place.

3.2

Education and training on inclusive design principles

Do we know how exclusion works?



Encourage knowledge exchange and organise training to build understanding and expertise on how exclusion works in society and how this plays out in development and operational processes. This will help equip team members with the knowledge required to identify and address exclusion when it happens, embed inclusive design principles across all decisions, and create a culture of inclusion in the project.

Try this:

1. Equip development and operations teams with the tools to acknowledge bias and recognise exclusion as a result of mismatches between people and experiences. Build awareness on Inclusive Design Principles through training sessions and by providing educational materials (see: Resources).
2. Encourage a culture of continuous learning by ensuring adequate time and resources are dedicated to upskilling teams on this topic and building confidence in talking about inclusion. Support internal knowledge-sharing on lessons learnt, lived experiences, feedback, and evolving best practices across different business areas.
3. Induct new team members and external consultants to Landsec's purpose, the Inclusive Design Principles, and key internal educational resources around inclusion.
4. Adopt training formats that engage with experts and groups that have directly experienced exclusion, paying them for their time and contributions. Encourage listening sessions that bring design teams in front of under-represented groups. This will make it easier to design, deliver and operate places that respond to their needs.
5. Connect with relevant subject matter experts to capture any relevant customer feedback from previous projects. Similarly, connect with the community engagement team to capture community feedback.
6. Keep the project team up-to-date with leading practice on inclusive design and policy updates, sharing updates in project briefings and relevant internal meetings.



Case study — Education and training on inclusive design principles

Landsec Aspire disability inclusion training

Landsec Aspire is a unified team of Service Partners with a strong culture and customer service mindset, working in partnership with Landsec across their managed office portfolio in London. The team includes 14 partners working across eight workstreams, from front of house to security and urban gardening. Where service partners would usually work in competition with one another, Aspire fosters a collaborative environment to share learning and best practice.

Aspire Service Partners play a crucial role in helping Landsec deliver inclusive workplaces. Their team members are on the front-line, interacting with customers, tenants, and guests every day. Front of house service partner 'Rapport' were identified as having high-quality annual disability inclusion training and were asked to deliver this training to the Landsec Aspire team, with plans to extend this to all Aspire colleagues who interact with guests including security staff, cleaners and urban gardeners. Content includes:

- Promoting equality and inclusion for everyone who comes to a Landsec building
- Increasing understanding of disability include non-visible disabilities
- Understanding and challenging common misconceptions about disability
- Identifying practical tools for positive change and improving confidence in assisting customers and guests

The training involves a comprehensive approach, including a site visit to an office asset. During this visit, delegates experience the asset from a guest's perspective, paying attention to aspects such as signage, textures, and available facilities. They also observe interactions between guests and staff members. After the site visit, delegates participate in a classroom session to discuss the issues they identified and brainstorm solutions. This discussion can cover a wide range of topics, from practical improvements in wayfinding to the role cleaning staff can play in supporting guests.

Through sharing training across service partners, Landsec Aspire aims to empower all team members to deliver exceptional and inclusive services. By sharing best practices and fostering a collaborative environment, Aspire ensures that all guests, especially those who might experience barriers to inclusion, receive a positive and welcoming experience.

3.3

Inclusive behaviours and culture

Do we foster empathy, reflection and adaptability in our working environments?



Foster a culture of communication, learning and listening amongst staff, partners and suppliers. Learning to listen and collaborate ensures a range of perspectives are genuinely understood. Creating environments where difference is welcome, where people feel free to express themselves and their aspirations helps to ensure these can be included in design and operation decisions.

Try this:

1. Promote an understanding of different cultures and backgrounds within the team and the communities you are working in, encourage team members to attend relevant diversity events and participate in community engagement activity.
2. Encourage active listening among team members. This involves fully concentrating, understanding, responding, and remembering what is being said. Active listening helps team members feel heard and ensures a range of perspectives are genuinely listened to and understood.
3. Provide opportunities for critical reflection by allocating time for individuals and teams to review their work, challenges and successes. This can be done through regular team meetings, one-on-one check-ins, or dedicated reflection sessions.
4. Encourage a culture where constructive feedback is welcomed and supports learning. Feedback should be specific, timely, and focused on behaviours rather than personalities. This helps individuals learn and grow and feel comfortable saying things that are not working.
5. Offer support and resources that help individuals prioritise their wellbeing. This can include flexible work arrangements.



Case study — Soft Skills

Landsec Aspire

Landsec Aspire is a unified team of over 600 people from 14 service partners, working collaboratively across 8 workstreams in Landsec's managed office portfolio in London.

Aspire is designed to enhance the experience for all customers and guests who come to Landsec offices, while prioritising the wellbeing and development of its team members. Aspire's structure and range of workstreams create a 'One team' culture, dedicated to continuous improvement and a supportive work environment. This includes:

A unified induction - All Aspire colleagues participate in an induction which sets out the aim of Aspire: "to create a collaborative team with a strong culture, a clear vision and a customer service mindset, working together to bring Landsec's values to life every day."

Wellbeing support and resources for all team members - Everyone who works for Aspire, regardless of the service partner they work for, has access to the 'HALO' health and loyalty offering which includes access to an employee assistance programme and virtual GP, alongside core benefits such as minimum London Living Wage and paid sick leave beyond statutory requirements.

Recognition of diversity - Aspire celebrates the diversity of the team and their customers through interviews with different team members each month in Aspire magazine, and recognition of diversity dates such as Black History Month and International Women's Day.

Recognition of team members - Through monthly 'player of the month' features in Aspire magazine, and annual Aspire awards, colleagues are recognised for demonstrating Landsec values including 'Inclusiveness – being caring, open and progressive'.

Apprenticeships grounded in the local community - Every year, Aspire Service Partners each provide an apprenticeship to someone from a socially disadvantaged background, working with local charity partners to recruit apprentices from the local community.

Aspire Academy - The Aspire Academy gives team members access to regular personal education and development sessions, including training sessions that benefit team members' day-to-day lives such as language classes, mindfulness and money management.

Inclusive knowledge and skills – resources

[Microsoft Inclusive Design Guidebook, Microsoft, 2016](#)

This manual is a comprehensive introduction to the world of inclusive design. The toolkit is made to be retrofitted to a team’s goals, providing guidance to practice new skills, develop new concepts, or create a prototype to help shift design thinking toward universal solutions.

[Essential principles for creating an accessible and inclusive environment for clients, developers, and contractors, Construction Industry Council, 2018 Update](#)

The second edition of the Essential Principles Guide for Creating an Accessible and Inclusive Environment supports and guides clients, developers and contractors to achieve high standards of access and inclusion in all projects. It sets out six guiding principles that can be applied from project inception and strategic definition, through preparation and brief setting, procurement and tender processes to appraisal of final outcomes. It provides clear guidance for those people and organisations who own or pay for construction projects – those with the power and authority to demand inclusion in their schemes.

[Equality Act 2010, UK Public General Acts, 2024 Update](#)

The Act is civil rights legislation that protects the rights of people with the nine protected characteristics to not be discriminated against. It protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society. The implementation of the Equality Act in 2010 replaced previous, separate anti-discrimination laws with a single Act. The 2024 update strengthened and clarified certain aspects of the Equality Act 2010.

[Positive Action in the Workplace, Guidance for Employers, UK Government, 2023](#)

This guidance is intended to help employers understand how they can use the positive action provisions in the Equality Act 2010 appropriately to remove barriers to diversity in their workforce and enable equality of opportunity. It is focused on the use of positive action in the workplace, including in recruitment and promotion.

[The Supporting Diversity Handbook, Mayor of London GGBD, 2021](#)

The handbook is a tool for advocacy, communication and action on the barriers to equality diversity and inclusion (EDI). It brings together research, examples of leadership and recommendations that can be applied at all career stages. The Mayor believes the built environment sector should reflect the diversity of London itself and his commitment and leadership on this agenda aims to create an environment which gives people from all backgrounds equal opportunities.

[Handbook for Gender-inclusive Urban Planning and Design, World Bank, 2020](#)

The Handbook sets out practical approaches, activities, and design guidelines that show how to implement a participatory and inclusive design process that explores the experiences and uses of the city from the perspective of all citizens. It also gives clear, specific design guidelines, appropriate for and adaptable to all regions, for a range of planning fields. Case studies of successful gender-inclusive projects from around the world show how simple design measures can dramatically increase agency and wellbeing for disadvantaged groups and gender minorities.

Internal resource: [Landsec Community Charter](#)

The charter sets out how Landsec works with the people and organisations where they operate. It was developed by Landsec in collaboration with residents, charities, and community champions, drawing on some of the best practice in the sector. The commitments that Landsec make to their communities and standards to which they are held to account are: Listening and understanding, Being present and relevant in the communities in which they operate, Involving and empowering, and being held into account. All consultants appointed to project teams must read and understand the charter, and all briefs developed for design, social value, comms and engagement consultants must include how they will respond to the charter in their proposals.



Landsec

For more information,
visit [Landsec.com/InclusiveDesign](https://landsec.com/InclusiveDesign)

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Written and produced by Publica.
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