

# **DEMENTIA FRIENDLY COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT TOOL (DFC-EAT) HANDBOOK**

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**RESOURCE 5**  
**Environmental  
Design Resources**

**May 2021**



**Dementia Training Australia**





Dementia  
Training  
Australia

# DEMENTIA FRIENDLY COMMUNITY - ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT TOOL HANDBOOK

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## **RESOURCE 5**

### **Environmental Design Resources**

May 2021

This resource is No 5 in a set of seven Environmental Design Resources.



# DEMENTIA TRAINING AUSTRALIA

# ENVIRONMENTAL

# DESIGN RESOURCES

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# INTRODUCTION

This handbook is Resource 5 in a set of seven Environmental Design Resources. The purpose of this handbook is to assist users of the Dementia Friendly Community – Environmental Assessment Tool (DFC-EAT) to systematically review and create better environments for people living with dementia.

This handbook includes minor updates to the original DFC-EAT Handbook published in 2017, and the addition of Part 4 to provide information about applying the design principles.

There are four parts in this handbook:

- Part 1** 'Key Design Principles' contains a description of key design principles.
  - Part 2** The 'Dementia Friendly Community – Environmental Assessment Tool' introduces the DFC-EAT and provides directions for its use.
  - Part 3** 'Using the spreadsheet' contains a guide to scoring the DFC-EAT and showing the results graphically. It includes a planning template to assist planning for change.
  - Part 4** 'Applying the principles' provides information about the questions contained in the DFC-EAT and outlines design considerations for each of the questions.
- 
- Appendix 1** Dementia Friendly Community – Environmental Assessment Tool' (DFC-EAT)
  - Appendix 2** DFC-EAT Planning Template



## RESOURCE 5

**Dementia Friendly  
Community  
- Environmental  
Assessment Tool  
Handbook**

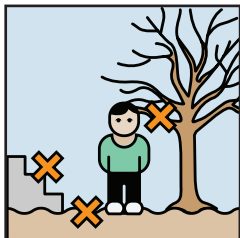


# **PART 1** **KEY DESIGN PRINCIPLES**

## PART 1

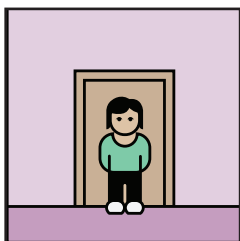
# KEY DESIGN PRINCIPLES

### 1. UNOBTUSIVELY REDUCE RISKS



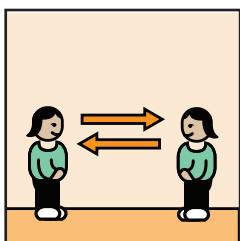
People with dementia require an internal and external environment that is safe and easy to move around if they are to continue to pursue their way of life and make the most of their abilities. Potential risks, such as steps or small changes of level, must be minimised and clearly marked. All safety measures must be unobtrusive as obvious safety features or barriers can lead to frustration, agitation and anger or apathy and depression.

### 2. PROVIDE A HUMAN SCALE



The scale of a building can affect the behaviour and feelings of a person with dementia. The experience of scale is influenced by three key factors; the number of people that the person encounters, the overall size of the building and the size of the individual components (such as doors, rooms, corridors and foyers). A person should not be intimidated by the size of the surroundings or confronted with a multitude of interactions and choices. Rather, the scale should encourage a sense of wellbeing and enhance the competence of a person.

### 3. ALLOW PEOPLE TO SEE AND BE SEEN



The provision of an easily understood environment will help to minimise confusion. It is particularly important for people with dementia to be able to recognise where they are, where they have come from and where they can go. When a person can see key places (such as the approach to the entry, the entry and the destination) they are more able to make choices and see where they might go. Buildings that provide these opportunities are said to have good visual access. Good visual access opens up opportunities for engagement and gives the person with dementia the confidence to explore their environment.

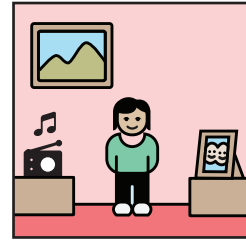
### 4. MANAGE LEVELS OF STIMULATION - REDUCE UNHELPFUL STIMULATION



Because dementia reduces the ability to filter stimulation and attend to only those things that are important, a person living with dementia becomes stressed by prolonged exposure to large amounts of stimulation. The environment should be designed to minimise exposure to stimuli that are not specifically helpful to the person with dementia, such as unnecessary or competing noises and the sight of signs, posters, advertising, merchandise and clutter. The full range of senses must be considered. Too much visual stimulation is as stressful as too much auditory stimulation.

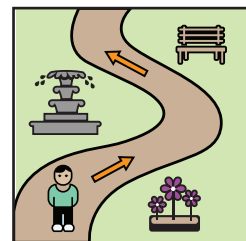
## 5. MANAGE LEVELS OF STIMULATION - OPTIMISE HELPFUL STIMULATION

Enabling the person with dementia to see, hear and smell things that give them cues about where they are and what they can do, can help to minimise their confusion and uncertainty. Consideration needs to be given to providing redundant cueing i.e. providing a number of cues to the same thing, recognising that what is meaningful to one person will not necessarily be meaningful to another. Using text and image in signs is a simple way to do this. Encouraging a person to recognise a business or shopfront by highlighting the entry, using distinctive finishes and indicating the services/items that are available is a more complex one. Cues need to be carefully designed so that they do not add to clutter and become overstimulating.



## 6. SUPPORT MOVEMENT AND ENGAGEMENT

Purposeful movement can increase engagement and maintain a person's health and wellbeing. It is encouraged by providing a well defined pathway, free of obstacles and complex decision points, that guides people past points of interest (such as a building entry or place to sit) and offers opportunities to engage in activities or social interaction.



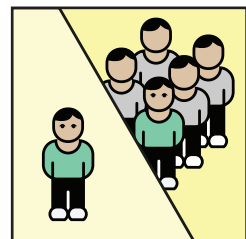
## 7. CREATE A FAMILIAR PLACE

A person with dementia is more able to use and enjoy places and objects that are familiar to them from their early life. The environment should afford them the opportunity to maintain their competence through the use of familiar building design (internal and external), furniture, fittings and colours. Toilets, hand basins and taps for example, need to be clearly recognisable, so that people living with dementia are able to use them easily.



## 8. PROVIDE A VARIETY OF PLACES TO BE ALONE OR WITH OTHERS

People with dementia need to be able to choose to be on their own or spend time with others. This requires the provision of a variety of places in a public building, so that there is an opportunity to withdraw from larger places and be on one's own or in a smaller place with a few others. These places should be provided in the internal and external environment.



These principles are an extension of work first published in 1987 [1] and continued in 2003[2].

### References

1. Fleming, R. and J. Bowles, Units for the confused and disturbed elderly: Development, Design, Programming and Evaluation. *Australian Journal on Ageing*, 1987. 6(4): p. 25-28.
2. Fleming, R., I. Forbes, and K. Bennett, Adapting the ward for people with dementia, 2003. Sydney: NSW Department of Health.





## RESOURCE 5

### Dementia Friendly Community - Environmental Assessment Tool Handbook



## PART 2

# THE DEMENTIA FRIENDLY COMMUNITY - ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT TOOL (DFC-EAT)

## PART 2

# THE DEMENTIA FRIENDLY COMMUNITY - ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT TOOL (DFC-EAT)

### INTRODUCTION TO THE DFC-EAT

The Dementia Friendly Community - Environmental Assessment Tool (DFC-EAT) was developed to provide a systematic framework for reviewing public and commercial buildings and identifying areas for improvement. It is organised around design principles and the key parts of the journey a person takes when visiting a building. These principles are evidence based (refer to Resource 1 of the Environmental Design Resources for more information).

A copy of the DFC-EAT is provided at the back of this handbook (Appendix 1).

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This assessment tool was developed under the auspices of Alzheimer's Australia by a team of people from the University of Wollongong, Kiama Council, individuals living with dementia and their carers. The testing and refinement of the tool was supported by a grant from the Dementia Collaborative Research Centre – Assessment and Better Care based in the University of New South Wales.

### BACKGROUND

Across the world there has been a growing recognition of the need to make our communities more supportive of people living with dementia. If we are to succeed in doing this, we need to be able to identify how public and commercial buildings help (or hinder) people living with dementia to carry out the normal tasks of life: shopping, paying bills, visiting the doctor etc. The DFC-EAT has been developed to help with identifying the problems that people living with dementia may face in using buildings, such as shops, banks, libraries and medical practices. By using the DFC-EAT, settings may be improved and we can learn how to design and maintain more supportive public and commercial buildings in the future.

### THE FOUNDATIONS OF THIS TOOL

There has been considerable research into the design of residential aged care facilities for people living with dementia, but limited research into the design of public and commercial buildings used by people living with dementia. This research was reviewed in 2016 and the results used by a team that included people living with dementia, their carers, a town planner, mapper, architect, graphics designer, occupational therapist, physiotherapist, psychologist and community development officers to develop this tool. The questions have been organised around eight of the principles of design used in the Environmental Assessment Tool (EAT) (Fleming, Forbes and Bennett 2003)<sup>1</sup>. A detailed description of the development and systemised testing of the DFC-EAT is available (Fleming, Bennett, Preece and Phillipson 2017)<sup>2</sup>.



## THE IMPORTANCE OF THE JOURNEY

This tool differs from others in Dementia Training Australia's suite of Environmental Design Resources as it focusses on a journey. This recognises that a person will usually have a particular destination in mind as they move through the community. It is important not only to design the destination to be dementia friendly, but also the way to and from it.

## USING THE DFC-EAT

The questions in the DFC-EAT cover the journey to and from the destination where the person living with dementia will complete their task (such as make a purchase, choose a book, pay a bill, etc). It begins with the **approach to the entry**, then the **entry space**, continues along the **route to the destination**, examines the **destination** itself, and then covers the **route from the destination** to the exit.

The assessment may be carried out by one person, but as an important part of the assessment process is to stimulate discussion about the strengths and weaknesses of the setting it is better carried out by two or more assessors who are involved in developing a plan to improve the useability of the building. Different perspectives will add value to the assessment.

Whenever possible key stakeholders, e.g. users of the building who are living with dementia, managers who have the authority to bring about change or 'champions' who wish to stimulate a discussion about improvement, should be involved. Ideally all assessors should complete the tool at the same time to reduce the impact of changes in weather/other conditions.

The assessment is carried out by the assessors simulating a visit to the building to carry out a particular task. It involves walking up to the building, through it to the place where the task will be completed and then walking to the exit. It can be very useful to take photographs to illustrate the good and the bad points of the building. They will help to explain your findings to others.

## GETTING STARTED

The DFC-EAT is designed to be used by a non-design professional and can be completed by any person visiting the setting.

Some key steps have been identified as valuable when using the DFC-EAT:

1. Be familiar with the key design principles

It is important that the person completing the DFC-EAT is familiar with the key design principles underpinning the assessment tool (refer to Part 1 of this handbook). Attending or watching a presentation by a person who is experienced in using the principles is a good way of gaining an understanding of the principles. To find out more, go to [dta.com.au](http://dta.com.au).

2. Be familiar with the DFC-EAT

Prior to starting the assessment, users should familiarise themselves with the DFC-EAT by reading it thoroughly. If a group of people is completing the DFC-EAT there are two ways to approach this:

- a. The group completes the assessment together and the answers are determined by consensus. This encourages discussion, familiarises more people with the design principles and facilitates ownership of the results of the assessment.

- b. A number of people complete the assessment independently and they meet afterwards to discuss their results and agree on the best answers. A discussion about the different scores can be part of this process.
- 3. Undertaking the assessment

To complete this tool successfully you will need to:

- a. Begin by defining the purpose of the visit to the building and therefore the destination (e.g. going to choose a library book).
- b. Agree the specific route to be taken to and from the destination and whether column 2 '**Entry space**' is to be completed at all. You may wish to record the route as a sketch or with photos for future reference.  
If the building provides a variety of destinations, as in a library, it may be necessary to repeat parts of the assessment for a number of different destinations to gain a full picture of the strengths and weaknesses of the building. If you decide to choose a large print book, for example, then the destination is likely to be different from going to seek some information. On the other hand, you may wish to only assess one part of the journey through the building: perhaps you only want to be sure that the person living with dementia is enabled to get from the entry to a particular destination. In that case you would only use the '**Route to the Destination**' column and the '**Destination**' column once.
- c. Start the journey outside the building, at about 20 metres from the entrance.
- d. Complete each of the five columns in the DFC-EAT in order of the journey from **approach to entry**, through the **entry space, route to the destination**, complete the task at the **destination** and then return via **route from destination** to the exit.

It is important to ensure that the questions are answered as accurately as possible. Spending time in the setting and observing daily life will help generate a feel for the place. Some questions are best answered by sitting in a central position and others by moving around. If the correct answer is not obvious, ask someone who knows the building well. If in doubt as to the intent or aim of the question, refer to Part 4 of this handbook where information about each question is provided.

It may be that on the day of the visit something is happening that is unusual and not representative of a typical day. Speaking to the building manager (or the liaison person) of the setting can be a good way to double check the significance of the differences the event is causing.

## SCORING THE DFC-EAT

As an assessor you are asked to record the extent to which you agree with a set of statements under each principle. These statements describe different aspects of the building that you are assessing. The table below summarises the available scoring in the DFC-EAT.

Disagree	0	0% to 33%
Partially Agree	1	34% to 65%
Agree	2	66% to 100%

Indicate your agreement with statements in the assessment tool by writing 0, 1 or 2 in each box, where 0 = Disagree; 1 = Partially Agree; and 2 = Agree.

It may be helpful to think of these scores as representing a range of agreement (rather than a simple yes or no) with 'Agree' indicating above 66%, 'Partially Agree' representing a band of agreement from 34% to 65% and 'Disagree' not necessarily indicating total disagreement but representing a band of agreement below 34%.

## RESULTS OF THE DFC-EAT

Scores can be summarised on the tool under the key aspects of the journey: **approach to the entry**, the **entry space**, the **route to the destination**, the **destination** and the **route from the destination**.

Alternatively, the results of the DFC-EAT can be entered into an Excel spreadsheet. For more information about scoring refer to Part 3 of this handbook.

1 Fleming, R., Forbes I., Bennett, K. (2003) *Adapting the ward for people living with dementia*. Sydney, NSW Department of Health.

2 Fleming, R., Bennett, K., Preece, T., Phillipson, L. (2017) The development and testing of the Dementia Friendly Communities Environment Assessment Tool (DFC EAT), *International Psychogeriatrics*, 29(2) pp303-311.



## RESOURCE 5

### Dementia Friendly Community - Environmental Assessment Tool Handbook



## PART 3 USING THE SPREADSHEET

## PART 3

# USING THE SPREADSHEET

### ENTERING THE DATA

The scoring of the DFC-EAT is best carried out by using an Excel spreadsheet which is available from Dementia Training Australia at [dta.com.au](http://dta.com.au). This enables the total scores to be calculated automatically and to be displayed in comparison with the results of assessments of a variety of places e.g. supermarkets, libraries, council buildings.

As the score is entered, the cell in the spreadsheet will change colour. Items that have scored 0 (Disagree) are flagged in red, and those that scored 1 (Partially Agree) in amber. Those that scored 2 (Agree) are shown in green. It may be more convenient to complete a hard copy of the DFC-EAT and then transfer the scores to the spreadsheet.

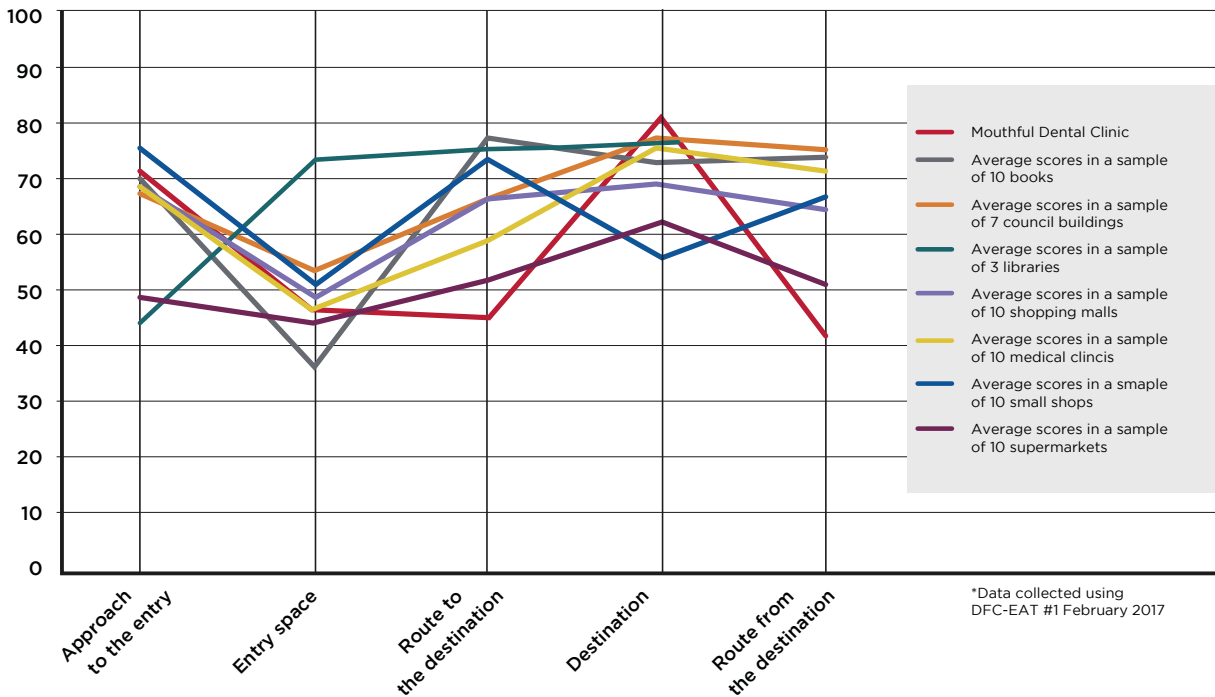
### DISCUSSING THE RESULTS

In the DFC-EAT the scores represent a range of agreement (rather than a simple yes or no). 'Disagree' does not necessarily indicate total disagreement but instead represents a lower range of agreement (below 34%), and so these items need to be prioritised for improvement. Conversely, 'Agree' represents a higher range of agreement (above 66%), so these items need to be prioritised less than others where scores indicate more improvement is possible.

The spreadsheet will assist in identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the building being assessed. Those items that have red scores associated with them are those that, in the rater's opinion, have the greatest room for improvement. The graphical comparison of the results shows how the building that has been assessed compares with a sample of other buildings of the same type and highlights the main areas of concern.

The sample comprises 10 sets of six types of buildings, 60 buildings in total\*. The locations of the sets of buildings were selected to cover the range of metropolitan areas to small regional towns. Each set comprised a bank, shopping mall, medical facility, council building, small shop and a supermarket.

In the following example, it is clear that the Mouthful Dental Clinic presents some problems for people with dementia once they enter the building and make their way to their destination (the reception desk). These problems seem to repeat themselves as the person leaves the building (route from the destination). The Clinic can also be compared to the average scores of 10 medical clinics, to indicate possible areas for room for improvement.



## PLANNING CHANGES

After you have completed the assessment, you can use the information to inform a discussion with key stakeholders about how the built environment can be improved to better meet the needs of people living with dementia. The principles outlined earlier should inform the discussion. The principles are not a set of rules that are to be applied in the same way every time. There are many ways in which the DFC-EAT questions can be responded to. How the design principles are best interpreted will depend on the particular context of the setting. Geographic location, climate, site, culture, socioeconomic background and lifestyle are just some of the things that will influence the responses to the principles. They will be applied differently in different settings and in response to a range of needs.

It is recommended that the discussion begins with consideration of the graph which provides an overall picture of the strengths and weaknesses of the building. This will help the stakeholders to see the building through the lens of the design principles and to discuss how the building performs in relation to other similar buildings.

A more detailed discussion of future improvements can be stimulated by reviewing each Disagree response (shown in red in the spreadsheet) and discussing it in response to four key questions:

- **Current: 'How can we re-use what is there?'** 'Can we improve this situation by using our existing resources differently?' There might be some chairs available, for example, that can be used to furnish a small, quiet area where a person having difficulty in dealing with levels of stimulation can sit for a while.
- **Short term: 'What can we do in the short term?'**, which may mean 'What can we do with a small amount of money?' or 'What can we do as part of our planned maintenance works?'
- **Medium term: 'What can we do in the medium term?'** i.e. 'What can we do at the end of the financial year when there are some funds left over? Can we plan to allocate some money in next year's budget to achieve this change? Can we apply for a grant or contact the local service organisation?'



- **Long term: ‘What can we do in the long term?’** ‘Does this need to be put into the capital works budget? Does this need to be the subject of ongoing strategic planning and fundraising?’

Once all the items that had a ‘Disagree’ response have been discussed, the amber (Partially Agree=1) items should be considered.

The results of a structured discussion like this can be recorded in the DFC-EAT Planning template as illustrated below.

**DFC-EAT Planning template (full scale version in Appendix 2)**

KEY DESIGN PRINCIPLES									
		Unobtrusively reduce risks	Provide a human scale	Allow people to see and be seen	Manage levels of stimulation - reduce unhelpful stimulation	Manage levels of stimulation - optimise helpful stimulation	Support movement and engagement	Create a familiar place	Provide a variety of places to be alone or with others
<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>ISSUES</b>				Lots of displays on route				
	How can we re-use what is there?				Remove some displays				
	What can we do in the short term?				Review use of displays (purpose, type, no. size)				
	What can we do in the medium term?				Provide storage for displays that are used occasionally				
	What can we do in the long term?								



## RESOURCE 5

### Dementia Friendly Community - Environmental Assessment Tool Handbook



## PART 4 APPLYING THE PRINCIPLES

## PART 4

# APPLYING THE PRINCIPLES

This section is organised around the key design principles contained in the DFC-EAT (refer Part 1) and the questions that relate to each principle (refer Appendix 1).

Each question in the assessment tool is discussed. Under each question there is a brief statement of what is important and why, and some key design considerations. For most items three categories follow: Ensure, Avoid and Consider. These give suggestions and examples of design responses, problem areas to avoid, and items that may be considered depending on the particulars of a project and the people who will live there.

Some questions are found under more than one principle and some information is duplicated. This section has been designed so that each question stands alone, allowing the reader to use it as a reference document rather than being required to read it from beginning to end.

### 1. Unobtrusively reduce risks

People living with dementia require an internal and external environment that is safe and easy to move around if they are to continue to pursue their way of life and make the most of their abilities. Potential risks, such as steps or small changes of level, must be minimised and clearly marked. All safety measures must be unobtrusive as obvious safety features or barriers can lead to frustration, agitation and anger or apathy and depression.

<b>1.1</b>	<b>All areas are free from dark shadows or bright glare</b>
<b>BACKGROUND</b>	<p>People's eyes generally take time to adjust to changes in lighting levels, and an older person may have difficulty when transitioning between internal and external areas, for example from a darker building into bright sunlight and vice versa. Natural and artificial lighting should be designed to avoid glare and provide even lighting throughout the building to ensure that people can see easily when moving along their journey and transitioning between spaces. If glare can be controlled, it will help people living with dementia feel more comfortable in the space.</p>

#### ENSURE:

- Windows and glazed areas are fitted with adjustable screening to control glare and natural light levels
- Curtains/screens can be easily operated

#### AVOID:

- Highly reflective surfaces and finishes e.g. flooring, furniture and paintwork
- Sudden changes in lighting levels e.g. from inside to outside, room to room

- Window furnishings that cast striped shadows and affect depth perception for a person living with dementia e.g. vertical blinds

**CONSIDER:**

- Using light paint colours around windows to reduce glare
- Controlled lighting systems such as dimmer switches that can be manually adjusted if required
- The position of light fittings to minimise shadows and glare

<b>1.2</b>	<b>All areas are well lit</b>
<b>BACKGROUND</b>	Lighting plays a key role in making a place easy to navigate and creating a pleasant journey for people living with dementia. Well-designed natural and artificial lighting will increase the usability of an area and ensure that people are able to see their next destination and what is available there at all times. A well-lit approach (day and night) enhances visibility and safety, enabling people living with dementia to clearly define an entry/destination and easily see signage instructions for entry.

**ENSURE:**

- Sufficient natural and artificial lighting of all areas during day and night
- Lighting is designed to provide even coverage
- Windows and glazed areas are fitted with adjustable screening to control glare and natural light levels

**AVOID:**

- Sudden changes in lighting levels from inside to outside, room to room
- Glare from natural and artificial lighting sources

**CONSIDER:**

- Lighting that uses dimmers, task lighting for reading in smaller areas that can be manually adjusted if required (refer 8.1)
- Location and orientation of windows
- The use and installation of automatic sensor lights as they may confuse and deter a person from using the space if areas are left in darkness and/or if bright lights suddenly turn on

<b>1.3</b>	<b>All areas can be accessed without need to negotiate steps/stairs</b>
<b>BACKGROUND</b>	Many older people including people living with dementia use mobility aids. Providing step-free access inside and outside enables a safe, continuous travel route. This includes travelling from a bus or parking area to a building entrance, from the foyer to a passenger lift. Thresholds should be flush between the internal and external surfaces. Where steps are unavoidable, alternative access such as ramps need to be co-located with existing steps (refer 1.5).

**ENSURE:**

- Ramps are placed near steps/stairs to provide step-free access when level changes are unavoidable
- No uneven surfaces outside or inside
- Path gradient and surface is suitable for use of mobility aids

**AVOID:**

- Any minor changes in levels e.g. ridges, hobs, small steps

**CONSIDER:**

- Design of threshold between internal and external surfaces to avoid a change in level maintaining adequate protection from weather
- Providing passenger and/or platform lifts near the main travel routes

**1.4****All changes in surface levels are safe. Consider clear marking of level changes, illumination, presence of handrails and non-slip surfaces****BACKGROUND**

A fall can result in a significant injury and so it is important to create an environment which minimises the risk of slipping and tripping. Internal/external floor finishes need to be slip resistant, even when they are wet. An even path surface will reduce the likelihood of people tripping as they walk along. Travel routes should be free from undulations, ragged edges and obstructions. Along the travel route, handrails should be located to enable left- and right-arm use to assist easy transition at any changes in levels such as steps or ramps.

**ENSURE:**

- Changes in levels are clearly marked with colour or texture
- Changes in level are well lit with handrails available
- Clear differentiation between horizontal and vertical surfaces
- Maintenance of floor surfaces – check for fraying, cracking, obstructions, debris

**AVOID:**

- Strong contrast between changes in floor surfaces as these can result in the floor being perceived as a step or hole (refer 4.8)
- Uneven and undefined path edges
- Obstructing handrails with fixtures and furnishings
- Metal handrails that are too hot or too cold to touch

**CONSIDER:**

- Avoiding unnecessary changes in floor/path finishes at doorway thresholds (refer 4.8)
- For hard surfaces, the use of continuous materials such as concrete (rather than pavers which can become uneven and cause tripping)

## 1.5 Gradients of all ramped areas are safe for people using a wheelchair or walking aid

### BACKGROUND

To provide accessible entry for all, any ramps need to be either co-located with existing steps or replace the steps. It is not only important that ramps are used to respond to changes in level, but are of a suitable gradient for all users regardless of ability. If a ramp is too steep, it will be difficult for both the independent and support person (who may be pushing a wheelchair) to use them. Handrails should be available on both sides of a ramp to provide support for the person.

### ENSURE:

- Path gradient and surface is suitable for the use of mobility aids
- Handrails are well defined, contrast with background, fixed and comfortable to touch

### AVOID:

- External ramps near overhead trees and vegetation likely to lose leaves
- Soft floor finishes which can make ramps difficult to use with mobility aids and trolleys

### CONSIDER:

- Expanding landing areas at the top and bottom of longer ramps to provide a place for people to stop and have a rest

## 1.6 The way to the next stage of the journey is clearly visible and safely accessible. Consider ease of access to path, trip hazards at the edge of the path, slipperiness, evenness, width sufficient for two people to pass, and absence of obstacles on the path

### BACKGROUND

All travel routes within the journey should be safe, easily accessible and well maintained. Obstacles along internal and external travel routes can present hazards for any users regardless of their ability and can contribute to trips or falls. Externally, trees and vegetation can reduce path widths and headroom by hanging over and dropping leaves etc into the pathway. Internally, items such as furniture, fire extinguishers and wall-mounted items (e.g. signs/shelves) can be a hazard if they project into paths/travel routes. Many older people use mobility aids such as motorised or manual wheelchairs and rollers, or are accompanied by a support person; it is important that two people can walk together or pass each other along travel routes.

### ENSURE:

- Unavoidable obstructions and hazards (including level changes) are highlighted and adequately guarded
- Automatic sliding doors are used where possible



- Popular travel routes are wide enough for two people to walk or use wheelchairs and/or passing places are provided
- Regular upkeep and maintenance of walking surfaces and travel routes

**AVOID:**

- Narrow corridors with sharp turns
- Doors and windows that open into passing traffic reducing width of travel route
- Permanent obstructions in travel routes such as trees, signs, bus shelters, seating
- Using travel routes as storage or display areas e.g. stack of newspapers at the front door (refer 4.1)

**CONSIDER:**

- Designing locations for permanent furniture next to the travel route (not intruding onto it)
- Providing storage for temporary furniture and equipment such as parked motorised scooters, portable signs, café seating etc along travel route

<b>1.7</b>	<b>All manually operated entry doors/gates are easily operated e.g. have lever handles/push plates</b>
<b>BACKGROUND</b>	<p>Entrances to buildings and spaces should be easily accessible to all people regardless of their ability. Where automatic doors/gates are not available, manually operated doors/gates need to be designed to enable easy access for the person. All doors and door handles for public access should be clearly identifiable, easy to reach and easy to use.</p>

**ENSURE:**

- Entrance doors/gates are easy to identify and automated where possible
- All manually operated doors/gates (including emergency exits) are easy to use, with contrasting lever handles or push plates
- Gates/doors are located near turnstiles/revolving doors and available for alternative use at all times

**AVOID:**

- Operating controls, door handles that require the use of two hands
- Metal handles that may be too hot or too cold to touch
- Revolving doors

**CONSIDER:**

- Minimising the force required to open a door in the first instance and keep it open
- Delayed action door closers
- Protection from the weather when people are opening a door

## 2. Provide a Human Scale

### 2.1 The size and scale of the space allows a person living with dementia to feel comfortable and at ease e.g. not too large or too confined

#### BACKGROUND

It has been shown that small-scale settings are beneficial for older people living with dementia. A small, human-scale environment can be created in many ways and both the size of the space and its detailing are important. In larger buildings, smaller areas can offer comfortable areas for people living with dementia along their journey, such as a waiting room, enquiry desk, café and outdoor space.

#### ENSURE:

- The approach and building are designed and detailed to create a human-scale setting
- Smaller domestic-scale areas are created to complement larger spaces

#### AVOID:

- Undefined or large-scale detailing of the entry
- Repetition of colour, materials, furniture
- Long thoroughfares and corridors

#### CONSIDER:

- Using the design of the roof, the pattern of the windows and selection of colours and materials to reduce scale
- The best mix and use of specific areas/zones within the space
- A variety of furniture selection and arrangements so that not all furniture looks the same

### 2.2 The number of people in the space allows the person living with dementia to feel comfortable and at ease

#### BACKGROUND

It has been shown that small-scale settings are beneficial for older people living with dementia. Designing for a small number of people in an area is important in achieving a small-scale setting. Where a small group size is not possible, providing a smaller zone or a separate sitting place within a larger space where a person living with dementia can relate to fewer people is desirable (refer 8.1). This will also minimise the noise and distractions occurring within the area.

#### ENSURE:

- Settings and seating allow for small groups
- Small-scale areas are created in addition to large spaces e.g. a café/restaurant has smaller booths for dining available

- Breakout areas and seating nooks are included within open-plan layouts

**AVOID:**

- Larger undefined gathering areas

**CONSIDER:**

- Breaking up larger rooms and spaces with quieter rest areas (refer 8.1/8.2)
- Using furniture selection and arrangements to encourage small groupings

**3. Allow People to See and be Seen**

3.1	The entry/exit can be easily identified
<b>BACKGROUND</b>	A building entrance/exit that is clearly visible and easy to identify assists a person living with dementia to use the building and helps orientate them as they enter or leave a space. Conversely, if the entrance is difficult to locate this can create confusion for the person living with dementia and make them wary of continuing their journey. The entry and exit need to visually contrast with the rest of the building and/or adjacent surfaces e.g. contrasting door frame, design and décor.

**ENSURE:**

- The front entrance is clearly seen and identified e.g. by the size, design, use of colour and other architectural finishes
- A clear path of travel on approach
- The main exit door is clearly recognisable as a door and contrasts with adjacent walls

**AVOID:**

- Finishes which don't distinguish the entry/exit door from other doors and/or windows
- Reflections (and glare) at entry/exit

**CONSIDER:**

- Other features such as audio or olfactory to assist with identification of entry e.g. plants, water feature
- Lighting (day and night) to highlight the entry
- How clear lines of sight between routes to and from destinations can be created



### 3.2 The way to a toilet can be easily seen

#### BACKGROUND

Toilets need to be easily located and clearly recognisable. These rooms will be used frequently by everyone accessing the building. People living with dementia may have difficulty remembering where the toilet is and become anxious and distressed if unable to locate one readily. Toilets need to be provided close to the anticipated travel routes along the journey with clear visual or directional access and signage. Once within a room, the actual toilet, fixtures and fittings need to be easily recognisable and easy to use.

#### ENSURE:

- Toilets are located along the main travel routes, and close to outside areas
- Toilet door stands out from other doors e.g. contrast, colour, design and signage

#### AVOID:

- Obstructing the way to the toilet

#### CONSIDER:

- Using directional signage for toilets along frequently used travel routes
- How clear lines of sight between travel routes and toilets can be created

### 3.3 The next destination can be easily seen and identified e.g. enquiry desk, aisle, corridor, office, way back to exit

#### BACKGROUND

People need to see where they are going and where they have come from along the way. The next stage of the journey should be clearly signposted and easily accessible with clear and unobstructed travel routes to the entrance and exit. The journey should be as direct as possible providing access to the key destination, with travel distances minimising the chances of becoming lost or disorientated. An obvious counter/enquiry desk provides a first point of contact and orientation to the building and may also provide a place to sit and wait or rest. Identification of the next destination needs to be obvious at the major decision points along the journey.

#### ENSURE:

- Direct routes to destinations, with minimal travel distances and limited changes in direction
- Travel routes are well defined by the position of furniture and changes in floor coverings
- Landmarks assist wayfinding e.g. sculpture, pot plant along the travel route

**AVOID:**

- Obstructing routes with potential hazards such as steps, furniture and advertising displays
- Change in floor covering design along the travel route which may create the perception of steps or holes

**CONSIDER:**

- General transparency of building (planning, placement of windows, sill height, glazed doors)
- Using perforated screens, small inside windows and low walls to increase the transparency between rooms and areas

### 3.4 The final destination allows the person living with dementia to see all of the areas that they may wish to use

**BACKGROUND**

Ideally the key inside travel routes such as the entry, route and destination should be visually connected. This will mean that a person can easily see other places that will be of interest to them and can also see how they can go from one of these places to another, before eventually returning to the exit. The final destination (i.e. the purpose of the journey) should be clearly signposted and easily accessible with clear and unobstructed routes to both the entrance and exit. Providing shorter travel distances reduce the chances of becoming lost or disorientated.

**ENSURE:**

- The final destination is clearly visible and recognisable
- Use of materials, contrast and colour aids recognition of destination and associated areas

**AVOID:**

- Obstructing the views from one area to another
- Destinations in seldom-used parts of the building

**CONSIDER:**

- General transparency of building (planning, placement of windows, sill height, glazed doors)
- Using perforated screens, small inside windows and low walls to increase the transparency between rooms and areas

## 4. Manage Levels of Stimulation - Reduce Unhelpful Stimulation

Because dementia reduces the ability to filter stimulation and attend to only those things that are important, a person living with dementia becomes stressed by prolonged exposure to large amounts of stimulation. The environment should be designed to minimise exposure to stimuli that are not specifically helpful to the person living with dementia, such as unnecessary or competing noises and the sight of signs, posters, advertising merchandise and clutter. The full range of senses must be considered. Too much visual stimulation is as stressful as too much auditory stimulation.

4.1

**The space is free from distracting visual clutter i.e. notices, advertisements, objects, street furniture that are irrelevant**

BACKGROUND

Too much visual stimulation can be very distracting for people living with dementia, causing confusion and a lack of concentration. People can feel overwhelmed when faced with information which they are not able to process and understand. Notices and signs can become visual clutter when there are many of them, as they no longer stand out and catch peoples' attention. A room full of objects or furniture can make it difficult for someone to navigate and find what they are seeking. Product displays and advertising signs left along travel routes can reduce the width and the ambience of the route (refer 6.2). Excessive displays on a counter can make it difficult to see and engage with the person behind a counter or desk.

### ENSURE:

- People are able to focus on the most important objects in the room or area
- Signs are only used when other environmental cues or means of communication are inadequate
- All signs, advertising notices and product displays are current

### AVOID:

- Clutter resulting from product displays, advertising billboards, information and objects
- Displays and objects blocking travel routes and view of destinations
- Notices on windows or security screens blocking visual access

### CONSIDER:

- Regularly reviewing the environment for visual clutter including signs, billboards, advertising material and organisational notices
- Impact of placing advertising materials and notices next to wayfinding cues such as artwork
- Timing of deliveries to minimise interruptions and obstructions during designated public hours

<b>4.2</b>	<b>Signage provides simple essential information at decision points</b>
<b>BACKGROUND</b>	<p>The aim of signage is to provide key information, directions, locations and highlight safety. It should be used at decision points such as the entry to the building, and the entry foyer to enable a person to plan the route to their destination. Signage placement needs to be carefully considered, recognising that signs can have a negative impact if poorly located or overly complicated. Signs next to an artwork, for example, diminish the impact and ambience of the artwork and too many signs concentrated in one area can cause confusion. Providing signs that are easy to see, easy to read and easy to understand benefits everyone and enables the person living with dementia to plan their journey and retain their independence (refer 5.2).</p>

**ENSURE:**

- Signage locating a building/room is on the door of the building/room, not beside it, unless door is permanently opening or closing
- Signage is consistently located in the same positions at specific decision points
- Signs have clear colour contrast to background, using words and symbols with non-reflective coverings
- Sentence case wording is used e.g. Restaurant buffet/Toilet

**AVOID:**

- Complicated signage with lots of rules or instructions and multiple directional arrows

**CONSIDER:**

- Including maps or plans in signage
- Consistency in the colour, style and font of signage throughout the building
- Regular reviewing signage to remove unnecessary, redundant or damaged signs

<b>4.3</b>	<b>Entry to areas where a person living with dementia may be exposed to danger are not easily seen or accessed e.g. they are the same colour as the wall</b>
<b>BACKGROUND</b>	<p>The public has no need to access staff or professional services areas on their journey through the building. More importantly these may contain materials and equipment that could be harmful. It is important for the person living with dementia that attention is drawn only to those areas and doors that they are invited to access and that may lead to a destination or area of interest, rather than to those which may be locked, are irrelevant or present a potential danger.</p>

**ENSURE:**

- Doors to any staff- or professional-only areas do not look the same as doors to public areas
- Equipment areas are screened to reduce visual access e.g. air-conditioning units, distribution board, fire equipment

**AVOID:**

- Drawing attention to plant/service areas e.g. minimise signage, camouflage area

**CONSIDER:**

- Planning/locating staff or professional only areas away from public view

**4.4****Background noise is of a low level****BACKGROUND**

Hearing depends on a person being able to distinguish the type, location and quality of sounds. Because dementia reduces a person's ability to filter out competing sounds in the background and focus on what is relevant in the moment, the environment should be acoustically designed to minimise exposure to any unnecessary noise. This will include paying attention to the layout, equipment and furniture placement within the building, and also unusual circumstances on any given day such as road works or renovations causing the person living with dementia to lose focus on their journey and the purpose of their visit.

**ENSURE:**

- Background noise is minimal
- Use of vegetation and fencing to reduce external background noise
- Selection of internal finishes provides for absorption of noise (floor, wall, ceiling, doors)

**AVOID:**

- Locating plant rooms with constant background noise near public areas
- Competing televisions, digital displays and/or radios in public areas such as medical waiting rooms
- Use of public address systems with loud, abrupt noises such as music or announcements

**CONSIDER:**

- Locating staff-only areas away from travel routes to reduce impact of noise e.g. printers
- Providing an Assistive Listening Device (ALD) such as an induction loop for people who are hearing impaired

#### 4.5 Public address systems are used minimally and only when necessary

##### BACKGROUND

The noise from public address systems can be disturbing. They often give information accompanied by bells and lights which is not directed to the general public and so provide an unnecessary interruption for a person living with dementia on their journey, causing distraction and confusion. Older people with hearing loss are already disadvantaged and if spoken announcements are unclear then vital announcements (such as a train departure time) may be missed or misunderstood causing frustration and panic.

##### ENSURE:

- Public announcements are only made when absolutely necessary
- Public announcements are brief, clear and concise in content
- Public address system is of high sound quality
- Any music is low, providing background ambience only

##### AVOID:

- Loud music through the public address system
- Public announcements that are very loud or muffled

##### CONSIDER:

- Whether a public address system is required e.g. a personal staff paging system may reduce the requirement for general announcements

#### 4.6 There are no alarming or disturbing noises e.g. flapping doors, noisy automatic doors

##### BACKGROUND

Sudden noises including raised voices, doors closing or equipment starting up can distract and cause confusion for a person living with dementia. Some noises can be minimised through location of staff/service areas and practices within the building. It is important that doors can be closed quietly, and that door closers can be adjusted to close doors quietly. Functions relating to back-of-house services should be carried out unobtrusively. Staff areas such as the service entry should be screened and hidden so that they are not seen by the person living with dementia and instead their attention is focussed on their journey through the building (refer 4.3).

##### ENSURE:

- Doors close quietly
- Separate unobtrusive staff/service entry
- Shelter for doors to minimise impact of adverse weather conditions e.g. wind
- Equipment noise is not heard in public areas

**AVOID:**

- Door closers that are poorly adjusted
- Deliveries through areas at times of high public use
- Noise from service entry interrupting users e.g. building plant noise, dining servery doors

**CONSIDER:**

- If no separate service entry, using side gates and doors for deliveries
- Timing of deliveries to minimise noise during public open times
- Selection of finishes to provide for absorption of noise (floor, wall, ceiling, doors)

**4.7****There are no confusing odours e.g. bakery competing with a florist****BACKGROUND**

The sense of smell has an important role to play in providing stimulation, and as a cue needs to be used carefully so smells do not compete with each other or become overwhelming and confusing. People living with dementia may have positive or negative associations with certain smells and this may stop them from engaging or reaching their destination. This becomes more difficult in a public building where areas may be co-located for easy pedestrian access e.g. a dry cleaner/toilet at the entrance to a mall, on the travel route to the supermarket/cafes.

**ENSURE:**

- Competing aromas are not located in close proximity to each other along the travel route
- The presence of aromas and odours is regularly reviewed

**AVOID:**

- Commercial cleaning/repair services near food areas

**CONSIDER:**

- Providing a high level of ventilation – natural and mechanical

**4.8****Floor finishes do not have patterns with a high level of contrast****BACKGROUND**

A person living with dementia may perceive floor surfaces that have a high level of contrast between them as one floor surface which is next to a hole or step or barrier. This can lead to falls, anxiety and limit a person's ability to move about freely and remain independent. Patterns in floor finishes can have the same effect as people try to step over or around patterns or pick up objects from the floor surface.

**ENSURE:**

- Tonal contrast between different floor finishes is minimal
- Where contrast is used, it is used intentionally to guide a person e.g. by using a contrasting border in front of a cleaner's room to deter a person living with dementia from entering
- Clear tonal contrast between floors and walls

**AVOID:**

- Mats contrasting with floor surfaces, particularly at thresholds of the entry and exit
- Features in floor/path finishes such as bold insignias or patterns
- Strong contrasted complex patterns in floor/path finishes such as swirls, stripes, circles
- Patterns that look like real objects such as floral and leafy designs

**CONSIDER:**

- Using floor finishes to guide and direct people to places of interest and importance

## 5. Manage Levels of Stimulation – Optimise Helpful Stimulation

Enabling the person living with dementia to see, hear and smell things that give them cues about where they are and what they can do can help to minimise their confusion and uncertainty. Consideration needs to be given to providing redundant cueing i.e. providing a number of cues to the same thing, recognising that what is meaningful to one person will not necessarily be meaningful to another. Using text and image in signs is a simple way to do this. Encouraging a person to recognise a business or shopfront by highlighting the entry, using distinctive finishes and indicating the services/items that are available is a more complex one. Cues need to be carefully designed so that they do not add to clutter and become overstimulating.

**5.1**

**Cues, such as recognisable images or symbols, are positioned at decision points such as junctions and turnings along the journey to the next destination**

**BACKGROUND**

Cues such as images and symbols can provide prompts for people living with dementia to help them recognise where they are and what they should do along their journey. These can include aesthetic cues such as a tub of flowers or practical cues such as a taxi call station. It is essential to highlight cues that are likely to mean something for the person. This will encourage further movement along the travel route enabling the person to feel confident this is where they should be going.

**ENSURE:**

- The presence of multiple visual, auditory and olfactory cues at decision points



- Thoroughfares and corridors have identifiable parts
- Identification of a room/space from outside the door

**AVOID:**

- Using the same features in different thoroughfares and corridors
- Repetition of finishes and colours
- Cues being camouflaged by the background e.g. pastel coloured furniture against a light coloured wall

**CONSIDER:**

- Using practical features already in the building such as alcoves, seating, desks etc as landmarks
- Using colour, contrast, signage, photos, artwork as cues

**5.2****Signs assist the person living with dementia to complete the journey and task****BACKGROUND**

The aim of signage is to provide information, such as directions, locations and safety advice. It should be used at decision points such as the entry to the building, and the entry foyer to enable a person to plan the route to their destination. Providing signs that are easy to see, easy to read and easy to understand benefits everyone and enables the person living with dementia to plan their journey and retain their independence. Too much or poorly located signage can be confusing and can become unhelpful (refer 4.2).

**ENSURE:**

- Signage is easy to see and easy to read – size, text, graphics, symbols
- Wording in signage is familiar and easy to remember e.g. 'Toilet' instead of 'Change room' or 'Sanitary facility'
- Signage is consistently located in the same positions, especially at specific decision points
- Content has clear colour contrast to background, using words and symbols

**AVOID:**

- Using all upper case or lower case
- Signage with lots of rules or instructions
- Multiple directional arrows within signs
- Reflective coverings on signs

**CONSIDER:**

- Alternatives and additions to signage to aid wayfinding, such as planting, colour, texture, finish, images, artwork
- Regular review of signage to remove unnecessary, out of date or damaged signs

### 5.3 **Objects and/or furniture clearly show people that they are on the correct part of the journey**

#### BACKGROUND

If a person is unable to see a clear path, or their destination, it is unlikely that they will remain on the travel route. Objects and/or furniture can provide prompts for people living with dementia to help them recognise where they are and where they should be going. Highlighting these helpful stimuli encourages people to focus on the destination e.g. entering a room and finding a set of wash basins can indicate a toilet is close by.

#### ENSURE:

- Clear contrast between any objects and surrounds
- Objects are positioned at points where they can be easily seen
- Objects are used at points where the destination is unclear e.g. ornaments, plants at a T-junction

#### AVOID:

- Using the same features and furniture in different thoroughfares and corridors
- Furniture and objects being camouflaged by the background e.g. pastel coloured furniture against a light coloured wall

#### CONSIDER:

- Using cues that have a two-fold purpose e.g. seating can provide a wayfinding cue and practical respite along the journey

### 5.4 **The variety of materials and finishes present create an interesting journey to and from the destination and help the person living with dementia identify the stages of the journey (e.g. brick, timber, concrete, stone, grass)**

#### BACKGROUND

When a variety of materials is used, important stimuli can be emphasised, scale can be reduced (by avoiding repetition) and a more familiar environment can be created. The feel of different materials and surfaces can stimulate memories and give people living with dementia varied and rewarding experiences. Walking on tiles feels different to walking on carpet or timber. Different materials need to be used carefully so that they do not compete with each other or become overwhelming and confusing. This variety will aid the person living with dementia to identify the stage of their journey and the next decision point when moving to and from their final destination.

#### ENSURE:

- A variety of materials and finishes are used to create an interesting and varied environment
- A range of features are included along the journey

**AVOID:**

- Repetition of the same finishes and features in different parts of the journey

**CONSIDER:**

- Which materials and finishes are most relevant and meaningful in a particular context

**5.5**

**Olfactory cues are present that provide a variety of experiences and help identify the stages of the journey (e.g. smell of perfumed plants, bakery, café)**

**BACKGROUND**

Olfactory cues have an important role to play in identifying stages of a person's journey. The aroma of food cooking, for example, can stimulate taste buds and help people find their way toward a dining area. Olfactory cues need to be used carefully so that they do not compete with each other and become overwhelming and confusing. People may have positive or negative associations with certain smells and these need to be considered when using olfactory cues. Allergies also need to be taken into account.

**ENSURE:**

- Olfactory cues are included as well as visual and auditory ones e.g. scented plants on approach can complement audible rustling of leaves which indicates the path

**AVOID:**

- Multiple concurrent olfactory cues as this can be confusing e.g. bakery next to a florist

**CONSIDER:**

- How to change olfactory cues to reflect different times of day and seasons
- Regularly reviewing olfactory cues

<b>5.6</b>	<b>Auditory cues are present that provide a variety of experiences and help identify the stages of the journey</b>
<b>BACKGROUND</b>	<p>Auditory cues will aid the person living with dementia to identify the stage of their journey and the next decision point to and from their final destination. For example, the sound of a water feature can draw people to that particular area. There may be auditory cues that are used to encourage a person to actually locate their destination e.g. a vendor in a market calling out their wares. Auditory cues need to be used carefully so that they do not compete with each other or become overwhelming and confusing. People living with dementia may have positive or negative associations with certain sounds and so this needs to be taken into account when using auditory cues.</p>

**ENSURE:**

- Auditory cues are included as well as visual and olfactory ones e.g. a water feature in the foyer provides a visual cue as well as the sound of water cascading
- Unhelpful sounds are not confused with auditory cues e.g. a public address system regularly providing shoppers with promotional updates (refer 4.4-4.6)

**AVOID:**

- Multiple concurrent auditory cues as this can be confusing
- Repetition of the same auditory cues and features in different parts of the journey
- Noise e.g. machinery/music which masks auditory cues

**CONSIDER:**

- How to change auditory cues to reflect different times of day and seasons
- Acoustic measures that minimise the impact of noise
- Regularly reviewing auditory cues

## 6. Support Movement and Engagement

Purposeful movement can increase engagement and maintain a person's health and wellbeing. It is encouraged by providing a well-defined pathway, free of obstacles and complex decision points, that guides people past points of interest (such as a building entry or a place to sit) and offers opportunities to engage in activities or social interaction.

### 6.1 There are both shady and sunny areas along the journey

#### BACKGROUND

There will be times when sunshine is sought after and others when shade is required. Verandahs and covered portico areas on approach provide the opportunity to access the building without being unduly exposed to the weather, be it rain, sunshine or heat. Although sun and shade can be experienced within a building, e.g. under a covered dome within a mall, or alcoves with views to courtyards, this item applies to external sunny and shady areas only.

#### ENSURE:

- Places along the external travel route provide for sunshine and shade to be experienced

#### AVOID:

- Large surfaces and materials that reflect the heat of the sun e.g. concrete and brick walls
- Structures such as pergolas or external blind slats that cast shadows which may affect depth perception for a person living with dementia (refer 1.1)

#### CONSIDER:

- Direction of sun and wind to ensure that different areas can be used in different weather conditions/seasons

### 6.2 The journey is pleasant

#### BACKGROUND

Expected travel routes need to be laid out so that the person living with dementia can easily see their way forward and a pleasant journey does not become frustrating or a cause of anxiety. This will also give the person more confidence to explore their environment.

#### ENSURE:

- Key decision points are visually connected along the route
- Visual landmarks are in place to assist wayfinding such as furniture, objects, or specific features
- Rest areas with seating along the travel route (refer 8.1)
- Toilets are easy to locate (refer 3.2)

**AVOID:**

- Multiple decision points
- Hazards along travel route such as protruding objects and equipment (e.g. wall heaters), potholes, slippery or uneven surfaces (e.g. tree roots, rugs) (refer 1.6)

**CONSIDER:**

- Widening paths occasionally to provide sitting areas and places off the main travel route but without dead ends
- Using a variety of materials, furnishing and furniture along the journey
- Providing olfactory and auditory cues as well as visual experiences (refer 5.5, 5.6)

<b>6.3</b>	<b>Seating or nooks enable a person living with a dementia to sit and rest</b>
<b>BACKGROUND</b>	<p>A person walking within the community and visiting public spaces may become tired and need a place to rest. (This can help avoid a fall and injury.) The provision of seats and benches at frequent intervals along the journey, (both internal and external) is important. Seats can also be used as a resting place for bags or packages. Long thoroughfares and corridors can become intimidating without a place to rest along the way, and may deter a person from continuing their journey.</p>

**ENSURE:**

- Seating is provided at frequent intervals along the journey
- Seating has a good view of key areas, including destinations and outdoor spaces
- There is a variety of different seats; chairs should be at various heights and with/without armrests to accommodate differently abled people
- Seating contrasts with the floor and background

**AVOID:**

- Seating with sharp edges and rough surfaces
- Items and objects close to seating such as plants or columns that may obstruct the person's view of their immediate surroundings and destination

**CONSIDER:**

- How the selection of furniture can support a person to be on their own or in private conversation (refer 8.1)
- Whether ad hoc seating can be created e.g. steps leading up to a building, the flat external surface of a raised garden bed if other seating is not possible
- Widening paths occasionally to provide sitting areas off the main route

## 6.4 Spaces provide opportunities to participate in or observe activities of interest

### BACKGROUND

The goal of designing the circulation within a public building is usually not to keep people entertained, but to provide clear travel routes to their destinations. People living with dementia may not have a clear idea of what they are looking for, and may also have forgotten how to get to where they want to go. If places of interest are easy to see and there are clear landmarks along the way, the destination can be highlighted and make the journey more interesting. The journey should offer people opportunities to actively or passively engage with others and the surrounding environment. For example, having an attractive view to the outside gives people the opportunity to passively connect with outdoors and actively create a good conversation point (refer 8.1,8.2).

### ENSURE:

- Opportunities for participation are highlighted
- The travel route guides people past points of interest and participation such as reading a newspaper, watching children play
- Furniture arrangement encourages participation

### AVOID:

- Windows with high sill height that limits a person's view
- Thoroughfares and corridors with no view to other areas

### CONSIDER:

- Providing a close view, a medium view and a long view to areas of interest
- How furniture can be arranged flexibly to allow for active and passive participation

## 7. Create a Familiar Place

A person living with dementia is more able to use and enjoy spaces and objects that are familiar to them. The environment should afford them the opportunity to maintain their competence through the use of familiar building design (internal and external), furniture, fittings and colours. Toilets, hand basins and taps for example need to be clearly recognisable so that people living with dementia are able to use them easily.

## 7.1 The space is welcoming

### BACKGROUND

A familiar environment is one where people feel at ease and can visit without feeling uncomfortable either physically or emotionally. Such a space will help a person feel that they are still in control of a situation and are able to function effectively, rather than feeling isolated and out of place. As a result, people will be more able to use their remaining abilities to the full.



**ENSURE:**

- Building design, fittings and furniture are easily recognisable
- Destinations contain features that are easily identifiable such as a counter/enquiry desk
- Welcoming ambience through furnishings and finishes

**AVOID:**

- Unnecessary clutter such as excessive product display (refer 4.1)
- Loud background or unexpected noise (refer 4.4-4.6)

**CONSIDER:**

- How the scale of entry, entry spaces and thoroughfares can allow a person to feel comfortable and not overwhelmed (refer 2.1)

<b>7.2</b>	<b>The function of the space is obvious e.g. a foyer, a thoroughfare leading to a destination</b>
<b>BACKGROUND</b>	<p>If a person is no longer able to initiate an action or remember what a certain building, room or space is for, it is especially important that this information is received from the environment. Cues should reinforce the purpose of the area. Each space should have its own distinctive characteristics so that its use is clearly identifiable. For example, a foyer is a place to wait or prepare to go to a destination.</p>

**ENSURE:**

- That the purpose and identity of each area is easily recognisable
- The use of multiple design cues including furniture, room arrangement, furnishings and finishes to reinforce function

**AVOID:**

- Using the same colour schemes and furniture throughout a building or area
- Thoroughfares and corridors that do not have an indication of where they are leading

**CONSIDER:**

- How identity can be created e.g. by the use of different wall colours, artwork, fabric in a variety of rooms and spaces

## 7.3

**Architectural design features, including landscaping and furniture, are familiar and easily understood by a person living with dementia****BACKGROUND**

A familiar environment is one that is recognisable and meaningful to people living with dementia. This does not mean that a particular design style is preferred over another. Rather, it is important that design is explicit and things look like they are. The outside appearance, building scale, layout, room size and the selection of materials are all important in this regard, as is furniture. The presence of familiar furniture that is easy to access and use will not only help to create a warm and welcoming atmosphere, but will encourage people to use the places and enjoy them (refer 6.3).

**ENSURE:**

- Design features, such as the entry to a building, are easily recognisable (refer 3.1)
- Landscaping includes plants and features which are common in the neighbourhood
- A variety of furniture types i.e. several styles of chairs that reflect different design styles and eras
- Selection of typical fixtures and fittings that are easy to recognise and use e.g. cross head taps, lever door handles

**AVOID:**

- Abstract furniture e.g. a chair that does not look like a chair
- Experimental design e.g. objects that test new ideas

**CONSIDER:**

- The scale of approach, entry spaces and thoroughfares so a person feels comfortable and not overwhelmed (refer 2.1)
- Furniture that is appropriate for inside and outside and can be easily moved

## 7.4

**Colours and décor are familiar****BACKGROUND**

Colour plays a key part in creating the atmosphere of a building, or room within, as do the furnishings and decoration. If these are familiar to users then the whole room/building will be more recognisable. The colour palette will be influenced by the location, lighting conditions and its purpose within the space. Décor should be able to be identified without the use of colour, using contrast instead.

**ENSURE:**

- Colour selection and layout of rooms respond to the context and life experience of the expected clientele

**AVOID:**

- Dark colours in thoroughfares and corridors

**CONSIDER:**

- External materials, colours and signage that may have special significance to the use of the building e.g. sports teams, traditional colour combinations e.g. banks

## 8. Provide a Variety of Places to be Alone or with Others

People living with dementia need to be able to choose to be on their own or spend time with others. This requires the provision of a variety of places in a public building so that there is an opportunity to withdraw from larger places and be on one's own or in a smaller place with a few others. These places should be provided in the internal and external environment.

<b>8.1</b>	<b>Seating is provided to allow the person living with dementia to sit quietly by themselves or with a small number of others</b>
<b>BACKGROUND</b>	<p>People can do different things and feel different emotions when they sit alone or gather in a small group. Small spaces or nooks are an important way to give people many choices of seating. A variety of seating on approach, at entry or when leaving a building enables people to rest and sit quietly along their journey. Seating can also provide a resting place for bags and coats, without bending to the floor.</p>

**ENSURE:**

- Small seating areas for quiet conversation/interaction are provided at various stages of the journey and at the destination
- Sheltered seating outside and near the entrance to a building
- Sitting areas are located to take advantage of the internal view and have an attractive view to the outside

**AVOID:**

- Isolating seating areas so they are difficult to find or use and are separate from other parts of the building or amenities e.g. toilets, refreshments
- Metal seating that is too hot or too cold to sit on
- Wind and sun exposed seating and tables outside

**CONSIDER:**

- Location of seating for ease of physical and visual access
- Locating seating so it can also act as a landmark for wayfinding purposes

## 8.2

**The space promotes easy and comfortable interaction with people of different ages and interests****BACKGROUND**

People living with dementia should be able to choose to interact in different ways. Sometimes people may choose to spend time on their own or in a small group, or simply enjoy watching other people's activities along their journey. Certain activities are better suited to a more private setting, such as having a conversation. The environment needs to allow opportunities to gather in small groups in public and private so that people living with dementia can choose what is best for them.

**ENSURE:**

- Location of meeting rooms and gathering places so they are easily accessed by the wider community
- Small areas for quiet conversation /interaction are provided
- Sitting areas are located to take advantage of the view and have an attractive view to the outside

**AVOID:**

- Isolating the seating areas so they are difficult to find or use and are separate from other parts of the building or amenities e.g. toilets, refreshments
- Furniture arrangements that require everyone to be together
- Wind and sun exposed seating and tables outside

**CONSIDER:**

- Including spaces and places that encourage the wider community to come and use them for their meetings and activities
- Flexible furniture design and layout to suit different group sizes and preferences
- Planning layouts to include views of other areas for active or passive participation

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## RESOURCE 5

**Dementia Friendly  
Community  
- Environmental  
Assessment Tool  
Handbook**



# **APPENDIX 1** **DEMENTIA FRIENDLY COMMUNITY - ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT TOOL**

**VERSION 2.0** May 2021



# DEMENTIA FRIENDLY COMMUNITY - ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT TOOL (DFC-EAT) VERSION 2 May 2021

## SCOPE OF ASSESSMENT

<b>Destination and purpose of the visit:</b>	<p>Defining the purpose of the visit to the building will also identify the destination. For example, if the purpose of the visit to buy milk at the supermarket then this will also identify the aisle and refrigerator that contains the milk as the destination.</p> <p>If the tool is to be used for a number of different purposes/destinations then these will require separate assessments, noting that the approach to entry/entry space will usually stay the same.</p>
<b>Date: Time: Weather:</b>	<p>It is important to note these components because this can affect the responses to the statements within the tool and ultimately the results of the assessment e.g. late afternoon may produce shadows and glare that are not evident earlier in the day, clear skies compared to cloudy may affect visibility, and winter compared to summer may affect sun and shade.</p>
<b>Unusual circumstances:</b>	<p>This section takes into account unforeseen circumstances when undertaking the assessment, and relates to something that may affect the usual journey. For example, road works out the front of a building can mean a detour for walking traffic, and therefore the usual journey may be interrupted or extended.</p>
<b>Assessors:</b>	<p>Assessors should complete the tool at the same time using the same route to reduce the impact of changes in weather/other conditions.</p>
<b>Describe route to and from the destination:</b>	<p>To ensure consistency with results, assessors will need to agree on the journey and define the specific travel route to and from the destination. A simple sketch of the route can be helpful, as can photos of each specific part of the journey.</p>



## JOURNEY

<p><b>A. Approach to the entry</b></p>	<p>The approach commences a maximum of 20m away from the entrance. It includes the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• car park (if it is situated in front of /to the side of the building/space)</li> <li>• streetscape</li> <li>• footpath and the</li> <li>• outside of the entrance door as viewed from the approach.</li> </ul>
<p><b>B. Entry space</b></p>	<p>The space starts from inside the building at the entry door threshold and finishes at the inside of the entry space exit door or allocated entry space.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It may include an airlock space and/or a foyer separating the main area, e.g. entry into a supermarket before the checkouts.</li> <li>• In some instances there may not be a specific entry space e.g. in a small retail shop. In these instances: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the route to the destination (Column C) will commence from the entrance door threshold</li> <li>- the entry space column would not be completed (draw a line through the column so it is not accidentally completed).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>C. Route to the destination</b></p>	<p>The route commences at the end of the entry space and extends to the destination.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If no entry space then the route starts at the inside of the entry door threshold.</li> <li>• The route may (or may not) be a specifically defined aisle/corridor/path. For example, it could be part of a larger room leading to an information desk.</li> </ul>
<p><b>D. Destination</b></p>	<p>This is the place that has been defined as the purpose of the visit within the scope of the tool. It may be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a specific room e.g. waiting room or</li> <li>• a specific area e.g. a counter. In these instances the space immediately in front of and to the side of these areas should be considered as part of the destination.</li> </ul>
<p><b>E. Route from the destination</b></p>	<p>This is the route taken from the destination (Column D) to reach the exit from the building.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It includes the inside view of the exit door and the exit/entry space (if there is one).</li> <li>• Normally the route used in Column C would be retraced in the opposite direction back to the exit, however, in some instances: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- there may be specific directions to an alternative route that is obligatory exit e.g. the exit from a supermarket is usually separate to the entry as it takes the person via a checkout for payment.</li> <li>- there will be a more convenient exit route.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>In any case, there will be a different view leading back to the exit – do not presume the same score as the Column C.</p>

**DEMENTIA FRIENDLY COMMUNITY - ENVIRONMENTAL  
ASSESSMENT TOOL (DFC-EAT) VERSION 2.0 (May 2021)**



## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

<b>Location: Name &amp; address of building</b>	
<b>Destination and purpose of visit:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	
<b>Time:</b>	
<b>Weather:</b>	
<b>Unusual circumstances e.g. building/road works:</b>	
<b>Assessors:</b>	
<b>Describe route to and from the destination e.g:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sketch a plan of route</li> <li>• take photos</li> </ul> <b>NB:</b> <i>Assessors need to agree on the route before commencing the assessment</i>	

## DEMENTIA FRIENDLY COMMUNITY - ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT TOOL (DFC-EAT) VERSION 2.0 (May 2021)



KEY DESIGN PRINCIPLES	ITEM	SCORING LEGEND					
		A	B	C	D	E	
		APPROACH TO THE ENTRY	ENTRY SPACE	ROUTE TO DESTINATION	DESTINATION	ROUTE FROM DESTINATION	
1. UNOBTUSIVELY REDUCE RISKS	1.1	All areas are free from dark shadows or bright glare.					
	1.2	All areas are well lit.					
	1.3	All areas can be accessed without need to negotiate steps/stairs.					
	1.4	All changes in surface levels are safe. Consider clear marking of level changes, illumination, presence of handrails and non-slip surfaces. (Score 2 if no level changes)					
	1.5	Gradients of all ramped areas are safe for people using a wheelchair or walking aid. (Score 2 if no ramps)					
	1.6	The way to the next stage of the journey is clearly visible and safely accessible. Consider ease of access to path, trip hazards at the edge of the path, slipperiness, evenness, width sufficient for 2 people to pass, absence of obstacles on the path.					
	1.7	All manually operated entry doors /gates are easily operated e.g. have lever handles/push plates. (Score 2 where gates/doors are au-tomatic or not present)					
2. PROVIDE A HUMAN SCALE	2.1	The size and scale of the space allows a person living with dementia to feel comfortable and at ease e.g. not too large or too confined.					
	2.2	The number of people present in the space allows the person living with dementia to feel comfortable and at ease.					
3. ALLOW PEOPLE TO SEE AND BE SEEN	3.1	The entry/exit can be easily identified.					
	3.2	The way to a toilet can be easily seen.					
	3.3	The next destination can be easily seen and identified e.g. enquiry desk, aisle, corridor, office, way back to exit.					
	3.4	The final destination allows the person living with dementia to see all of the areas that they may wish to use.					
4. MANAGE LEVELS OF STIMULATION - REDUCE UNHELPFUL STIMULATION	4.1	The space is free from distracting visual clutter i.e. notices, advertisements, objects, street furniture that are irrelevant.					
	4.2	Signage provides simple, essential information at decision points.					
	4.3	Entry to areas where a person living with a dementia may be exposed to danger are not easily seen or accessed, e.g. they are the same colour as the wall.					
	4.4	Background noise is of a low level.					
	4.5	Public address systems are used minimally and only when necessary (Score 2 if not present).					
	4.6	There are no alarming or disturbing noises, e.g. flapping doors, noisy automatic doors.					
	4.7	There are no confusing odours, e.g. a bakery competing with a florist.					
	4.8	Floor finishes do not have patterns with a high level of contrast.					

**DEMENTIA FRIENDLY COMMUNITY - ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT TOOL (DFC-EAT) VERSION 2.0 (May 2021)**



KEY DESIGN PRINCIPLES	ITEM	SCORING LEGEND				
		A	B	C	D	E
		APPROACH TO THE ENTRY	ENTRY SPACE	ROUTE TO DESTINATION	DESTINATION	ROUTE FROM DESTINATION
5. MANAGE LEVELS OF STIMULATION - OPTIMISE HELPFUL STIMULATION	5.1					
	5.2					
	5.3					
	5.4					
	5.5					
	5.6					
6. SUPPORT MOVEMENT AND ENGAGEMENT	6.1					
	6.2					
	6.3					
	6.4					
7. CREATE A FAMILIAR PLACE	7.1					
	7.2					
	7.3					
	7.4					
8. PROVIDE VARIETY OF PLACES / ALONE / WITH OTHERS	8.1					
	8.2					
<b>Total Score / Maximum Possible Score</b>		68	68	68	60	70

## RESOURCE 5

### Dementia Friendly Community - Environmental Assessment Tool Handbook



## APPENDIX 2 DFC-EAT PLANNING TEMPLATE

# DFC-EAT PLANNING TEMPLATE

KEY DESIGN PRINCIPLES					
		Unobtrusively reduce risks	Provide a human scale	Allow people to see and be seen	Manage levels of stimulation - reduce unhelpful stimulation
ACTIONS	ISSUES				
	How can we <b>re-use</b> what is there?				
	What can we do in the <b>short</b> term?				
	What can we do in the <b>medium</b> term?				
	What can we do in the <b>long</b> term?				

KEY DESIGN PRINCIPLES					
		Manage levels of stimulation - optimise helpful stimulation	Support movement & engagement	Create a familiar place	Provide a variety of places to be alone or with others
ACTIONS	ISSUES				
	How can we <b>re-use</b> what is there?				
	What can we do in the <b>short</b> term?				
	What can we do in the <b>medium</b> term?				
	What can we do in the <b>long</b> term?				



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