

## English Folk Dance and Song Society

*Listed Building approval  
Statement*

*Disabled WC installation at  
Cecil Sharp House*

March 2013



Fig.1 South East Elevation

**Cecil Sharp House** 2 Regents Park Road, London NW1 7AY

<b>Contents</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>1</b>	
<b>Circumstances</b>	
Access provision within the building	<b>3</b>
<b>2</b>	
<b>Criteria for evaluating the WC location</b>	
Minimising impact for the Listed Building	
2.1 Navigation and routes	3
2.2 Extent of works required	3
2.3 Historic fabric	3
2.4 Cost impact	4
2.5 Achieving full access	4
2.6 Fire strategy	4
<b>3</b>	
<b>Conclusion and proposition</b>	<b>5</b>

## *1 Circumstances*

EFDSS has achieved independent access for the public and staff to all floors of the House. After evaluating a variety of locations for the lift access, the current location displaced existing WC facilities and allowed for two 'universal access' WC's to be provided on the Ground Floor. Following permission for lift related changes, access to all floors has provided the opportunity to review sanitary provision within the other public floor of the building – the basement. With practice and performance studios and the café on this floor, the provision of a third unisex disabled facility is considered by the EFDSS management as essential to their public offer, and to demonstrating their commitment to widening access to the House. Section 2 of this statement clarifies the consideration of how this new facility is located, its usefulness to users and impact mitigation to the Listed building.

## *2 Location*

### *2.1 Navigation and routes*

This section considers the strategic navigation of the building by users and staff, facilitated by the placement of the lift. It was considered essential that the new WC be located on existing public routes, allowing easy wayfinding signage and minimizing and structural or logistical re-organisation. Existing routes are not generous in width, located between structural walls, so a location away from the warren of service spaces to the North side of the building was logical. A redundant Shower enclosure that had been decommissioned many years ago, and is currently library overspill storage, is proposed as the new unisex disabled access WC.

### *2.2 Extent of works required*

The location of the WC should cause minimum intervention in the fabric, and cannot replace existing WC provision as the House is at the limit for its user capacity. It should allow for direct connection to existing services with minimal making good. The existing Doc M sanitary installation to the Men's WC on the Ground Floor is being removed due to the lift works - as the fittings are relatively new they will be relocated to the proposed new WC. The shower space is slightly larger than the required dimensions for this facility, is self-contained and adjacent to the existing Women's WC's with direct connections to water supplies and the sewer.

New works are highlighted in **RED** on the basement plan CSH 1102 1:50 A1. Externally a re-routed foul waste connection to the East elevation allows for the existing vent pipe to remain without its replacement in a larger diameter iron soil/vent pipe. The new connection into the existing SVP is indicated on CSH 1108 1:50 A1.

### *2.3 Historic fabric*

The impact on the building is limited to the opening of one door into the existing fire corridor, and the removal of a 150mm concrete slab to achieve a level access. The current enclosure has a water resistant lining that has been damaged at some point in its decommissioning and dates from the 1950 reconstruction of the building, as it was not shown on the original plans. One asset the shower contains is the upper section of the wall adjoining the Women's WC being of glass blocks, currently over-painted on the existing WC side. It is proposed to line out the damaged internal wall surfaces with water resistant plasterboard and decorate, but retaining visible the glass blocks, stripped of paint and cleaned.

The existing floor is screed, with a concrete shower tray. The new floor is proposed as tiling in a dark hue to contrast with the new sanitary fittings.

The new door matches the existing architraves visible on the corridor, the door leaf being the correct width for wheelchair access, painted to match the existing doors. The existing door from the library store will be retained in situ and locked, over-boarded flush within the new WC, so able to be reversed if required.

In addition to the new WC facility, a cubicle within the Men's Basement WC will be adapted to provide for ambulant disabled use, with the reversal of the existing cubicle door (which will be re-used in location) and the fitting of grab rails to the wall. An additional basin has been required by Building Control as part of ensuring the minimum provision for the number of users, and this will be located on the existing, modern vanity unit, which will be retained below the worktop.

### *2.4 Cost impact*

The works are funded through grants made available to develop access for all users and potential users of the building. The EFDSS management understand that the way in which the facilities are provided needs to fit within the context of a significant building, therefore the matching of the doorway and the restoration of the glass block are considered positive contributions to the character of the House, not simply the means of achieving required or desired provision.

### *2.5 Achieving 'Full access'*

The achievability of a full access building would require additional disabled WC facilities on the First and Second Floors, however there is limited scope for accommodating these facilities, which would only be for staff on these floors (as these floors are not generally accessible to the public). What this proposal does achieve is a fully accessible, full facility building for all users on the public floors.

### *2.6 Fire strategy*

The WC location is at the end of a corridor, with only the Women's WC beyond, so the door opening into the corridor does not impede escape from a habitable room. A smoke detector will be provided within the new WC.

## *2 Conclusion and Proposition*

The most logical, least damaging location for a new disabled access unisex WC has been found, positioned effectively for café and studio users, with minimal impact on either library storage or current WC provision.

The existing walls and ceiling to the redundant shower remain unaltered except for receiving a new surface lining.

The fabric that the installation replaces has no intrinsic value (floor slab, section of reconstructed masonry wall), whilst bringing back into use the beautiful glass block screen for the benefit of the new facility.

Text copyright is retained Arts Lettres Techniques 2013