

SURGEONS' HALL – INFORMATION ABOUT PUBLIC ACCESS

The Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh is committed to providing the best access provision possible for Fellows, members of the public, examination candidates and other visitors.

An Access Audit of the Historic Surgeons' Hall building was carried out in December 2003 detailing areas for access improvement. These recommendations have been included in an ongoing management plan and many have already been implemented.

Surgeons' Hall is an 'A' Listed building designed by William Playfair and was first opened in 1832. Conserving the historic fabric of the architecturally significant Surgeons' Hall is also part of our ongoing management plan. This sometimes leads to difficulties in implementing access recommendations as fully or as quickly as we would like. We are committed to consultation with user groups and heritage organisations where any conflict of interest may arise.

Two of the main public access improvements required for the building are:

1. New wheelchair-accessible reception area
2. Lift access to Museums

Due to the complexity and costs involved in making these changes to an A listed Building these improvements will be phased over 42 months between Jan 2005 and summer 2008.

1. Work is now complete on the new reception area.
2. Plans for a new lift have been designed and approved in principal by planning agencies and The Council of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh has approved the prioritisation of this work.

Finances permitting, it is planned to start work on the installation of a new stairwell and lift, giving access to all floors of Surgeons' Hall during the spring of 2008, due for completion in winter 2008.

In the meantime wheelchair access is possible to all museum areas except the gallery of the Museum of Surgery in the Jules Thorn Exhibition Hall. Any new displays planned for this area will include alternative virtual access materials and display.

Current wheelchair access to areas above ground level is by stair-lift and requires RCSEd staff assistance for use. Staff will prioritise public access but please accept our apologies if you have to wait until a member of staff is available to help. A fully accessible toilet is located on the ground floor of Surgeons' Hall.

We will be holding focus groups of representatives of Surgeons' Hall users. We welcome feedback from all members of the public and comment on how services can be improved. If you have any comment or complaint about access or any other issues please write to the Director of Heritage, Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh, Nicolson Street, Edinburgh, EH8 9DW or email: museum@rcsed.ac.uk