

Background

- Sponsored by Transport for London (TfL), BBC Workplace, Buro Happold and Forbo Flooring UK.
- Came into effect on 31 October 2022.
- Technical author = Jean Hewitt of Buro Happold.
- Compliance with a PAS cannot confer immunity from legal obligations.
- Believed to be the first standard that has been developed by a national standards body that provides built environment guidance for multiple sensory processing differences and conditions.

What is neurodiversity?

Neurodiversity is the term used to describe the variation in neurocognitive profiles across the whole population and the guidance in this PAS is about us all. It is not about one condition, difficulty or difference. The term recognizes the variety in the way we speak, think, move, act and communicate; that human brains are diverse and vary. Each one of us has a unique set of different connections with our billions of nerve cells. As a consequence, the way we interact with our environment can vary from person to person. It is dynamic and might change over time, for example, due to an incident such as brain injury, trauma, disease, stroke, an age-related condition or a change in mental wellness.

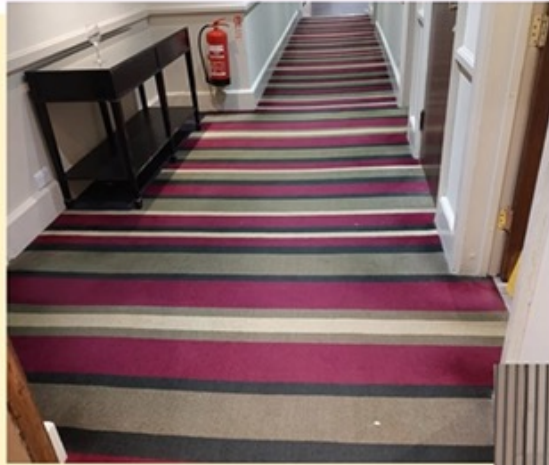
Neurological profiles can sometimes be collectively grouped as:

- a) neurotypical (someone fitting a majority neurological profile and is not neurodivergent);
- b) neurodivergent (someone who fits outside majority neurological profile and is commonly associated with autism, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia, dysgraphia and Tourette's syndrome – there is no definitive list of conditions associated with neurodivergence);
and
- c) neurodegenerative (whereby sensory processing differences develop over time through brain diseases, such as different forms of dementia or Parkinson's).

The PAS gives guidance on buildings and external spaces for public and commercial use, and residential accommodation for independent or supported living. The PAS covers:

- lighting;
- acoustics;
- décor;
- flooring;
- layout;
- wayfinding;
- familiarity;
- clarity;
- safety;
- thermal comfort;
- odour;
- preview of an environment; and
- other sensory design considerations.

Stage of project	Design for the mind activities
Strategic Definition (RIBA Stage 0)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish and document commitment to delivering an accessible, sensory-friendly and inclusive environment. • Identify someone on the management team to champion neurodiversity and inclusion. • Provide awareness to the design team about sensory and/or information processing differences and the principal areas of interest. • Confirm design team has understanding and knowledge of neurodiversity and disability.
Preparation and Brief (RIBA Stage 1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate the principles of Accessibility and Inclusive Design in the project brief. • Clearly state the requirement to follow this PAS as applicable to the environment. • Check access and inclusive design technical expertise secured with understanding of neurodiversity and sensory and/or information processing differences. • Establish user/consultation group(s) for early engagement to include people with lived experience of sensory differences. • For existing buildings, consider a sensory audit to identify what currently works well or needs adjustment.





Quiet spaces

A quiet space should be used to provide a calm environment with low stimuli where people find relief from stress and sensory overload. The space does not have to be silent but should be designed to create a mentally “quiet” environment that promotes relaxation.

Quiet rooms should be available to be used in solitude, providing a retreat to relax, manage anxiety and regain control. Where possible, a combination of secluded private spaces and shared calming environments should be provided.

Biophilic design

