



ACCESSIBILITY AT SCANDIC

**MAKING SURE EVERYONE
IS WELCOME IS EASIER
SAID THAN DONE.**

Scandic



DISABILITIES COME IN ALL SHAPES AND SIZES.

When we started working with accessibility, we had no idea how well our hotels were adapted to guests with disabilities but we know now. Our aim is for everyone to feel welcome at Scandic, whether they have a disability or not. Your comfort and safety on holiday or during a conference is very important to us.

Accessibility. Not always guaranteed.

A major hotel chain should be accessible even if you've a broken leg, have impaired hearing, use a wheelchair or for other reasons need a little extra consideration. Remarkably, that's not the case. We at Scandic have worked hard to make our hotels accessible for all. We have even employed a dedicated Accessibility Director

who has considered all the angles. Most of us know someone who has some kind of disability, even if we don't think about it every day. They need a hotel where they can hold meetings and stay without difficulty. As a part of this work, we've created a checklist of 159 points to ensure that we really are as accessible as we say. You can see on the following pages an excerpt from it.

WE ARE PROUD TO PRESENT OUR ACCESSIBILITY DIRECTOR.



Scandic's Accessibility Director Magnus Berglund with his assistance dog Dixi.

Magnus, when did you begin working with accessibility at Scandic?

I first stepped into the office with my rehab dog Ada in autumn 2003. The aim was for Scandic to attract more guests, to show that everyone's money was of equal value.

How did the idea of giving a presentation on accessibility to Scandic come about?

— I was working as a chef at a Scandic hotel, but I contracted a rheumatic disease in 1999 which put me on sick leave for a couple of years. In 2002 I was planning to travel, but my illness made walking difficult. So I began studying the websites of various hotel chains. I couldn't find any information on accessibility to help guests with

special needs. Then I came up with the idea of presenting this to Scandic's management team and showing how Scandic could attract more guests to its hotels by starting to work on accessibility issues. I was brought in to work full-time on accessibility in 2003.

What was the first thing you did in your new role as Accessibility Director?

— We began by hiring three wheelchairs for the office. Then all the team members got to spend two hours in a wheelchair to experience life from that perspective. We had the wheelchairs going around head office for three months. Being in a wheelchair is just one of many disabilities, but it's a great way to get people talking

about the issues. The team members quickly started noticing the shortcomings of existing solutions.

What questions came up during the process?

– Examples included: “How am I supposed to close the door to the disabled toilet?” (there was no extra handle for that purpose on the inside of the door), “Does the mirror have to be so high up?” and “How do I reach the coffee cups on the breakfast buffet?” One team member started worrying about whether her mother, who has impaired hearing, would be woken up by the hotel’s fire alarm.

How was the work structured after this experience?

– We began by drawing up our own standard and training our team members. The Accessibility Standard now comprises 159 points, 105 of which are compulsory for all the hotels. Whenever we refurbish or take over a new hotel, all 159 points are applied to that property.

How are the team members trained?

– We have a training programme that is conducted at all hotels, and when we open a new hotel or take over an existing one, we also take the training to them. There we go through everything from the reception of guests with disabilities and how we best provide them with customized service, and how we continuously work with our own standards.

What reactions have you had to your work, in Sweden and abroad?

– A few months after I started being responsible for accessibility issues, hotel managers got in touch to say: “At last we have someone to ask about these things!” We’ve also received a great deal of recognition for our work in the form of awards. This is clearly a hot topic in Europe, and we regularly receive requests to hold talks on our work in Swedish and international contexts. This is hardly surprising, as there are around 80 million people with some form of disability in Europe, and that is a huge market. We see our accessibility work as an investment.



Blind lunch at Scandic. *With the help of the senses other than your eyes, such as hearing, smell and taste, gives a better understanding of disability and how we should respond and serve a person with impaired vision.*

MORE WELCOMING THANKS TO 159 POINTS.

Scandic's standard

We were quick off the mark in drawing up our own standard and training our team members on its content. Today it comprises 159 points, 105 of which are compulsory for all the hotels. Whenever we refurbish or take over a new hotel, we follow all 159 points. The standard has been drawn up by carefully following the route taken by guests through the whole hotel from the car park onwards. It applies in all the countries in which Scandic operates and all our hotels websites explain the accessibility situation at their particular hotel. The standard makes us unique in the world.



ONE OF THE WORLD'S BEST INTERACTIVE TRAINING COURSES.

We want all our guests to enjoy the same high level of service, with or without a disability. In late 2013 we therefore launched an interactive online training course aimed at providing our guests with the optimum service, understanding and treatment. This course has now received several honours, not least in the Swedish Learning Awards, where it came out top in the category "Best e-learning organisation run for profit". It contains a number of tests and instructional videos, for example on how to treat a guest with impaired hearing, how to prepare and serve food to a guest with impaired sight, how to provide the best service to a guest in a wheelchair and how to clean and prepare an allergy room. The focus of all this is to ensure that all our guests feel happy and welcome.

The education is open to everyone via our website and is also a mandatory part of our introductory program for all employees at Scandic. In addition to the digital training course, we constantly conduct a training programme that involves us travelling around the hotels that are newly opened or have just been taken over. Here the team members get to learn all about different disabilities and our standard. Much of the time is focused on what each team member can do to improve accessibility in their

particular department. This can be anything from how the coffee cups are positioned so they can be reached from a wheelchair to understanding how a hearing loop works.



The alarm clock that hears the fire alarm.

If you have impaired hearing, a vibrating alarm clock is a smart idea. Ask us for one!



How many at your job would need a hearing loop?

In a group of 40 people one often expects that one person have impaired hearing. To give all participants the same conditions we have hearing circuits in all hotels.

ALL FOR SPORT AND PARASPORT.



Sport has always been close to our heart. We work with several parasport associations in the Nordic countries and we have been working actively on accessibility since

2003. This means that our hotels are adapted so that all sportsmen and women are offered the same high standard, whether or not they have a disability.

DOG@WORK.

As our Accessibility Director Magnus Berglund suffers from a rheumatic disease, he needs help with everyday tasks from his assistance dog Dixi. She has undergone specialist training at a school that trains up dogs to help people with various types of disability in their everyday life.

Tasks that Dixi can help with:

- Fetching clothes for Magnus in the morning.
- Picking up Magnus's stick if he drops it.
- Carrying Magnus's laptop bag, e.g. at the airport.
- Emptying the washing machine.
- Carrying bin bags.
- Fetching the TV remote control.

Together with Magnus, Dixi travels a lot. When she's not off travelling, she goes to the office and helps with tasks such as putting Magnus's laptop bag on his desk. Dixi is well known among Scandic's team members and likes to go to one of Magnus's colleagues for a play when she



doesn't have any jobs to do. Follow Dixi on her Instagram: **@dogatwork**.

Guide, rehab and service dogs are naturally always welcome at our hotels. To find out more, visit assistanshundskolan.se



IF YOU HAVE A BROKEN LEG, WE RECOMMEND OUR LOBBY.

We aim to make our receptions and lobbies a pleasant experience for everyone, including those with a walking stick, crutches, a wheelchair, a walking cane or a guide dog. We have therefore equipped them with the following features:

- Hearing loop in reception, clearly indicated by the hearing loop symbol. The hearing loop was invented to help people with hearing aids.
- Seating and tables in reception so that guests can sit down.
- Walking stick holders at the reception desk.

ROOM FOR ALL THAT LIKE TO HAVE IT COMFORTABLE.

It should feel safe and homely when you open the door to our rooms. Here are a few extra bonuses that you'll always find in our accessibility rooms:

- Height-adjustable bed.
- Telephone on the bedside table (along with a remote control).
- The bed is a little higher than in other rooms (at least 55 cm).
- There is a space of at least 80 cm beside the bed.
- The door width for the room and bathroom is at least 80 cm.
- A vibrating alarm clock and fire alarm is available on request.
- Hooks at different heights, reachable from a wheelchair.





A DELICIOUS BREAKFAST FOR EVERYONE.

Scandic has long been committed to creating an environment that is accessible to as many people as possible. Our work has previously concentrated on the physical environment and training our team members, but now the focus has been expanded to include the breakfast buffet at all our hotels in Sweden. We don't want breakfast to be a delicious experience just for a few people. It should be good for everyone. So when you wake up with us we hope you're hungry. We serve a breakfast buffet that is enjoyed by most vegans and allergy sufferers, as well as all the lactose lovers and

bacon enthusiasts. All so that you get a good start to the day. With us you'll find choices such as gluten and lactose-free products, and dairy-free options such as oat and soya-based breakfast products. The breakfast buffet also offers gluten-free bread and gluten-free muesli with tasty toppings. Since allergy issues have a different profile in different countries, there may be some variation. In Finland, for example, lactose-free is standard. But whatever you put on your plate, we hope you enjoy a delicious start to your morning.

AND FINALLY A BIT OF BRAGGING.

Zero Project, UN (2018)

Scandic received the prestigious Zero Project Award for its innovative accessibility work. The awards ceremony was held at the UN office in Vienna, where Magnus Berglund also was invited to talk about the company's world-leading accessibility strategy. Read more about the [Zero Project](#).

World Responsible Tourism Awards (2015)

Best accommodation for disability access. Jury statement: "Scandic was given the award for its work on integrating accessibility into all parts of its operation. The hotel chain's work also covers a broad spectrum of disabilities. The jury was particularly impressed with the way Scandic has shown leadership and promoted the issue of accessibility across the whole industry, for example via its interactive training course, which is open to everyone on the Scandic website."

British E-Learning Awards (2014)

Scandic's accessibility training won silver in the British e-learning Awards 2014, in competition with 250 international entries.

Andra utmärkelser:

- European Diversity Awards (2014)
- Best e-learning, Swedish Learning Awards (2014)
- Golden Wheelchair, Independent Living Centre (2015)
- Magnus Berglund is much in demand as a speaker at the UN, EU, UNWTO and at major international trade fairs such as ITB and World Travel Market.
- Scandic's accessibility work has been recognized in CNN, BBC and in general industry press, international and local press.