

Press release

A relaxing bath

Convenient and well laid-out bathrooms have long since stopped being the exclusive preserve of disabled-facility planning. Grab-handles and other practical items made of easy-to-grip stainless steel have now started to make bath time easier for everyone.

Most people suffer from mobility difficulties sometime in their lives – be it through pregnancy, an injury or, ultimately, encroaching old age. By the year 2030, a full one third of all the people in the western industrialised countries will be over 60 – up from today's level of one fifth. Even the simplest objects in conventional bathrooms and washrooms then start to look like insurmountable obstacles. Apart from supposing a blow to a person's self-esteem, this can also result in well-defined hazards to life and limb.

Independence adds to self-esteem

Anyone currently drawing up the plans of a residential or commercial property should spare a thought to people whose mobility is limited and include provision for appropriate bathroom facilities. If planning takes barrier-free concepts into account from the beginning, the project need not be any costlier than one of its more conventional counterparts. Indeed, the bathroom – where people are at their most intimate – is just the place where they wish to be free of any need for outside help. Independence in the area of daily personal hygiene is thus a great aid to self-esteem, a wish that is relatively simple to fulfil.

If artificial limbs need to be removed before taking a shower – for example – support and grab handles from Franke's CONTINA range provide the required level of safety. Fold-down or slot-in shower seats and back supports are likewise included in this selection of handle and rail fittings. Thanks to a toilet-roll holder

incorporated into the handle, there is now longer any need to go into the usual contortions to reach a badly-located conventional holder.

Good to look at and ergonomic

People with limited mobility still need to shave, put on make-up or do their hair – normally from a sitting position. Franke provides the right solution here with its large-surface tilting mirror, with a mechanism that is easy to operate when seated.

All CONTINA support and grab handles are made of high-quality rust-free stainless steel, with no dangerous sharp edges or corners. The brushed “finegrip” surface offers a slip-free grip – even for wet hands. Franke has even thought to provide these items with the ergonomically ideal diameter of 32 millimetres. Research has shown that this is the ideal size to ensure a correct grip, even for hands that are not as strong as they used to be.

Note also that the simple step of installing light-switches, doorknobs, handles and other fittings no higher than 85 centimetres above floor level removes a series of mobility barriers at a stroke. It should also be possible to operate curtains and roller blinds from a height of 85 centimetres. This 85-centimetre rule is a standard to bear in mind when planning barrier-free domestic and public facilities, although individual circumstances will of course often involve the consideration of alternative heights, especially when converting existing items.

So what’s the key to making life easier and safer where sanitary facilities are concerned? Examples include thermostatic taps with a 38-degree stop to prevent scalding, and outward-opening toilet and bathroom doors, which cannot be blocked in the event of a person falling unconscious behind the door. The use of efficient extraction and ventilation systems in toilets and washrooms helps prevent fungal growth and ensures that the air is sufficiently oxygenated and pleasant to breathe. This is of course in addition to the anti-slip floor surfaces – even when wet – and adequate lighting that are vital to any bathroom.

Wear-resistance and good design

A striving towards harmony and beauty is a basic tenet of the human condition. Stainless steel is – as a mere material – a classical example of toughness and beauty walking hand-in-hand. It is also hygienic, neutrally coloured and rust-free – offering both advanced functionality and aesthetic quality. Franke CONTINA stainless-steel mobility aids are fully at home in any well-designed bathroom. And they fulfil a vital role, making everyone's daily personal hygiene a pleasure once more.

Planning-phase information

DIN 18024, parts 1 and 2 (planning principles for public transport and park facilities, public buildings and places of work)

DIN 18025, parts 1 and 2 (planning principles for barrier-free domestic housing)

DIN 18022 (planning principles for domestic kitchen, bathroom and toilet facilities in new buildings)

DIN 4701, part 2 (rules for calculating the heating requirements of buildings)

DIN 18017, parts 1 and 3 (ventilation of bathroom and toilet facilities)

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