

Design Award for Design Matters

A national award for designing Accessible Kitchens went to Adam Thomas who is one of the kitchen designers for the Flackwell Heath based firm Design Matters. Adam's winning design is a kitchen that was installed for a full-time wheelchair user with advanced multiple sclerosis. The judges selected him for both his practical approach to the need for accessible and functional design as well as his eye for the aesthetics of the space which he treated in a contemporary style.

This year is the first time the trade magazine KBB Review has made an award in this category and it is important to the Kitchens, Bedrooms and Bathrooms industry because it shows they have woken up to the needs of over 10 million people with some degree of disability who live in the UK. And it clearly puts Adam and Design Matters in the forefront of designing for disabilities.

Adam is 42 and commutes from Great Missenden. He has worked with Richard Smithies, Design Matters MD, since he left school at 16. A road accident at age 18 left him with a spinal injury and the distinction of being Britain's only wheelchair user designing kitchens. As he and Richard became aware of the dire quality of the design and workmanship of the fittings provided for elderly and disabled people they decided Design Matters could do a much better job. How they progressed will be the subject of a future Grapevine article.