

Policy D7 Accessible housing

- A To provide suitable housing and genuine choice for London's diverse population, including disabled people, older people and families with young children, residential development must ensure that:
- 1) at least 10 per cent of dwellings (which are created via works to which Part M volume 1 of the Building Regulations applies) meet Building Regulation requirement M4(3) 'wheelchair user dwellings'
 - 2) all other dwellings (which are created via works to which Part M volume 1 of the Building Regulations applies) meet Building Regulation requirement M4(2) 'accessible and adaptable dwellings'.

- 3.7.1 Many households in London require **accessible or adapted housing** to lead dignified and independent lives. In addition, Londoners are living longer and with the incidence of disability increasing with age, older people should have the choice of remaining in their own homes rather than moving due to inaccessible accommodation. To address these and future needs, Policy D7 Accessible housing should apply to all dwellings which are created via works to which Part M volume 1 of the Building Regulations applies,³⁰ which, at the time of publication of this Plan, generally limits the application of this policy to new build dwellings.
- 3.7.2 Where any part of an **approach route** – including the vertical circulation in the common parts of a block of flats – is shared between dwellings of different categories (i.e. M4(2) and M4(3)), the design provisions of the highest numbered category of dwelling served should be applied, to ensure that people can visit their neighbours with ease and are not limited by the design of communal areas. For residential disabled persons parking requirements – see Policy T6.1 Residential parking.
- 3.7.3 To ensure that all potential residents have **choice within a development**, the requirement for M4(3) wheelchair user dwellings applies to all tenures. Wheelchair user dwellings should be distributed throughout a development to provide a range of aspects, floor level locations, views and unit sizes.

³⁰ This is governed by the Building Regulations 2010: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2010/2214/pdfs/ukxi_20102214_en.pdf and the Building Regulations &c. (Amendment) Regulations 2015: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2015/767/pdfs/ukxi_20150767_en.pdf

- 3.7.4 Standard M4(3) wheelchair user dwellings distinguishes between '**wheelchair accessible**' (a home readily usable by a wheelchair user at the point of completion) and '**wheelchair adaptable**' (a home that can be easily adapted to meet the needs of a wheelchair user). Planning Practice Guidance³¹ states that Local Plan policies for wheelchair accessible homes should only be applied to those dwellings where the local authority is responsible for allocating or nominating a person to live in that dwelling, otherwise M4(3) dwellings should be wheelchair adaptable.
- 3.7.5 As set out in Approved Document M of the Building Regulations, Volume 1: Dwellings, to comply with requirements M4(2) or M4(3), **step-free access** into the dwelling must be provided.
- 3.7.6 In exceptional circumstances the provision of a lift to dwelling entrances may not be achievable. In the following circumstances – and only in blocks of four storeys or less – it may be necessary to apply some flexibility in the application of this policy:
- Specific small-scale infill developments (see [Policy H2 Small sites](#))
 - Flats above existing shops or garages
 - Stacked maisonettes where the potential for decked access to lifts is restricted
- 3.7.7 If it is agreed at the planning stage (for one of the reasons listed above) that a specific development warrants flexibility in the application of the accessible housing standards M4(2) and M4(3), affected dwellings above or below ground floor would be required to satisfy the mandatory building regulations requirements of M4(1) via the Building Control process. M4(2) and M4(3) dwellings should still be required for ground floor units.
- 3.7.8 M4(2) and M4(3) dwellings should be **secured via planning condition** to allow the Building Control body to check compliance of a development against the optional Building Regulations standards. Planning conditions should specify:
- Number of dwellings per size typology (i.e. x no. of y bed units) which must comply with Part M4(2)
 - Number of dwellings per size typology (i.e. x no. of y bed units) which must comply with Part M4(3)(2)(a) wheelchair adaptable standards
 - Number of dwellings per size typology (i.e. x no. of y bed units) which must comply with Part M4(3)(2)(b) wheelchair accessible standards

³¹<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-optional-technical-standards>