

Appendix 2 - Lifetime Homes

'The concept of Lifetime Homes was developed in the early 1990s by a group of housing experts, including Habinteg Housing Association and the Joseph Rowntree Foundation. The group was formed because of concerns about how inaccessible and inconvenient many homes were for large sections of the population. Lifetime Homes was developed to ensure that homes are accessible and inclusive.

Lifetime Homes are ordinary homes designed to incorporate 16 Design Criteria (see below) that can be universally applied to new homes at minimal cost. Each design feature adds to the comfort and convenience of the home and supports the changing needs of individuals and families at different stages of life.

Lifetime Homes are all about flexibility and adaptability; they are not 'special', but are thoughtfully designed to create and encourage better living environments for everyone. From raising small children to coping with illness or dealing with reduced mobility in later life, Lifetime Homes make the ups and downs of daily living easier to manage.'

From the Lifetime Homes website - <http://www.lifetimehomes.org.uk/pages/lifetime-homes.html>

16 Design Criteria

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| 1. Car parking width | 9. Convenient bed-space |
| 2. Moving from the parking space to the home | 10. Accessible WC and potential shower |
| 3. Approach to the home | 11. Bathroom walls |
| 4. Entrances | 12. Getting upstairs - possibility for stair lift and future through floor lift |
| 5. Communal stairs and lifts | 13. Getting between bedroom and bathroom - potential hoist |
| 6. Doorways & hallways | 14. Bathroom layout |
| 7. Space to turn and move around | 15. Windows |
| 8. Living room | 16. Sockets and controls |

Lifetime Homes can be looked at as one model or approach to delivering 'accessible and adaptable' (comparable with Building regs M4(2) or 'Cat 2') and 'wheelchair user' dwellings (known as M4(3) or 'Cat 3'). They are seen as benefiting our whole society from those with medical or mobility issues to others who may develop them over time. The idea is that the more homes that are built to these standards, the longer they will meet the needs of the occupants. This is of interest on a wider social level with less need for hospital admittance, costly adaptations or moves into residential care. Social isolation is also reduced as more properties are also 'visitable' by those with particular needs.

As these requirements ask for certain sizes/layouts they are seen to add an extra burden on developers. Increased costs can affect the viability of a site and numbers of affordable housing are usually one of the first things that get looked at for savings. We haven't had clear, recent evidence to support the delivery of Cat 2/Cat 3 properties but it is something we are trying to resolve across the County as well as engaging with the joint NHS/GCC commissioning work on Housing with Care to influence development.

Our Local Plan initially included a requirement for 50% Cat 2 but this was removed following consultation feedback. There was a challenge from developers as they felt the increased costs involved with delivering certain standards would affect the viability of development. Viability modelling for the emerging Local Plan proved this to be the case in some instances. There was also a lack of specific evidence available to support the policy position on the standards however it is hoped that the forthcoming Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA or 'Lorna') conducted across the County on behalf of the 6 districts will provide some direction.