

6.0 **Accessibility**

- 6.1 The effectiveness of accessibility is determined by how easily a resident/visitor can approach, move through and leave a building.

Design requirements for creating a fully accessible environment common to all schemes include level access approach threshold, adequate door widths, circulation space in rooms and hallways, W/C at entrance level, adequate parking and lighting.

Acco drains to be provided at front and back door thresholds.

The detailed design requirements of a scheme will depend on accommodation type whether general needs, wheelchair users or supported housing. Accommodation requirements will be detailed in the Employer's Requirements or project specific design brief.

6.2 **Lifetime Home Standards**

Oaklee policy is where possible all general needs accommodation is to be designed to Lifetime Home Standards. The details of these are specified in the Department for Social Development Housing Association Guide, Building Regulations Part M-Lifetime Homes and Building Regulations Part R-Access and Facilities for Disabled People (see Section 3.0 Pages 7 to 10 of 19) and Part 3 and Appendix 1, Para. 4 and Annex C.

It is the responsibility of Consultants to ensure standards are incorporated into the final design and refer to the documents mentioned above for more detailed guidance.

The Housing Association Guide highlights 16 core Lifetime Homes standards for the basis of good design to create an accessible barrier free environment. These standards are common to all schemes unless otherwise stated.

Width of car parking spaces must be capable of enlargement to 3.3m.

The distance from car park to dwelling should be level access or gently sloping with a maximum gradient of 1:15.

Approaches to all main entrances should be level access or gently sloping with a maximum gradient of 1:15.

Main entrances should be covered adequate lighting provided (in accordance with Secured by Design recommendations).

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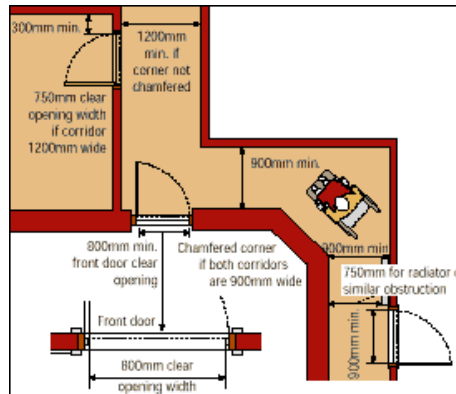
Wheelchair accessible lifts must be provided in apartment blocks.

Living rooms must be at entrance level.

Where ground floor bedroom accommodation is not provided layout must allow for an indication of a future bedspace.

A ground floor WC must be provided with provision for a level access shower.

External doorways must have a clear opening of 800mm. Internal doorways must have a clear opening of 800mm. Refer to diagram below (Meeting Part M and Designing Lifetime Homes, Joseph Rowntree Foundation 1999).



All stairs must be straight or L-shaped suitable to accommodate a future chairlift installation. A 700mm space must also be indicated for a through the floor lift no services are to be fixed in this designated space.

Provision must be allowed for a future hoist from one bedroom through to the bathroom.

Bathroom arrangement should maximise ease of access and use of fittings.

Bathroom doors must be outward opening.

Controls and light switches must be 1000mm from finished floor level.

Fully automatic heating systems and controls must be provided. Controls must be accessible for operation by disabled tenants.

All bedroom layouts must incorporate in following furniture dimensions whilst optimising ease of manoeuvrability within bedrooms.

Double Bedroom

2 bedside cabinets
double wardrobe (1200x600)
chest of drawers (1050x450)
dressing table (1350x450)

Single Bedroom

bedside cabinet
single wardrobe (600x600)
chest of drawers (750x450)

Access to rooms should be arranged from a circulation area and not from other rooms (the exception being a kitchen opening off a living room).
1500mm wheelchair turning circles must be illustrated in kitchens, dining areas and living rooms with adequate circulation elsewhere.

Oaklee endeavour through Lifetime Homes standards to provide accessible external and internal environments for user groups and visitors with limited mobility and offer choice whereby an occupier whose mobility needs change can remain in their home if they so desire.

6.3 Wheelchair accommodation

Full accessibility and ease of manoeuvrability should be provided in environment designed for wheelchair users.

There are specific space requirements for the design of wheelchair accommodation (refer to the relevant Part of the DSD Housing Association Guide). Over and above the standards for Lifetime Homes scheme design must incorporate the following:

Car parking spaces should be capable of enlargement to 3.6m

The gradient from the car to the dwelling plus approaches to all main entrances must be a maximum of 1:20.

All main paths should be 1200m wide.

All ramped areas should have handrails support at each side.

All rooms at entrance level must be wheelchair accessible showing turning circles of 1500mm.

There must be 1200m clear space in front of kitchen appliances.

Windows in habitable rooms at 800mm or lower to allow people in wheelchairs to see out and open windows

Internal and external doorways must have clear openings of 800m.

Corridors must be 1200m wide

There must be provision for wheelchair storage and a ventilated charging facility (RCD provided where appropriate).

Kitchen layouts designed to wheelchair standards must consider knee space and access to appliances from a wheelchair position.

In kitchens designed for wheelchair use, the underside of the sink and built in hob will be insulated to prevent the transfer to heat. Furthermore, electrical switches and controls for the built in hob etc must be provided on plinths located at the front of the worktop.

The Association must approve detailed kitchen layouts.

Consideration should be given to the kitchen layouts particularly when there may be a more able bodied person using the facilities as well.

Proprietary baths must have a non slip resistant base and a 400mm wide platform/transfer shelf at the head.

Level deck showers will be provided with thermostatic controls (TMV3) and must have a retractable (folding with legs) shower seat. Support rails are to be provided to all bathroom fittings. Transfer to the WC must be capable of either frontal, lateral or oblique.

6.4 Mobility Standards

The concept of Lifetime Homes should be reflected in all scheme designs.

Approaches to all main entrances should be level access or gently sloping with a maximum gradient of 1:15.

Where a flush threshold cannot be achieved they should not project more than 15mm above finish floor level.

Door sets and circulation spaces must be at least 900mm wide.

Level or ramped paths must not be less than 1200mm wide.

6.5 Supported Housing

Supported housing and elderly accommodation will incorporate the same broad principles of accessibility as general needs. Thought and innovative design is appreciated when designing internal and external layouts reflecting the needs of the client group and the working relationships between staff and residents.

Where Joint Management Partners are involved in a scheme they will be introduced at the first design meeting and will contribute as part of the design team. The specific requirements for supported housing schemes are very much dependant on the end user details of which will be outlined at initial scheme design through Oaklee and Joint Management Partners.

Statutory bodies will have an input into scheme design for supported housing such as RQIA and Environmental Health. It is the responsibility of Consultants to liaise with the relevant statutory authorities involved and ensure their requirements are incorporated.