

# Norfolk Supported Housing Guide

July 2021



**Norfolk** County Council

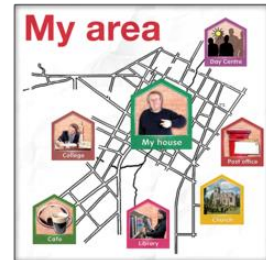
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# Why we need a guide



# Why we wrote this



We use this guide to design new supported living homes. It tells people that build homes what they should look and feel like.



We spoke to people, families and providers about what makes a good home. We included what they told us in this guide.



We will keep making this guide better, so please tell us what you think is important.



Please contact the Learning Disability commissioning team, even if what you want to tell us is about homes for people with other types of need:

[LDCommissioning@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:LDCommissioning@norfolk.gov.uk)

# The words we use



We use the word **home**. This can mean any type of home, including a flat, house or bungalow.



- In a shared home people share spaces, like a kitchen and a lounge.



- Some homes are groups of flats. There might be some shared spaces that all the flats can use.



- For some people a home might be a flat or house on their own

In **supported living** people rent or own their home.



They are helped to live as independently as possible.

# What people tell us is important



# Our Learning Disability and Autism Strategies



We use the word **strategy**. This is the same as having a **big plan**.



Homes are a priority in Norfolk's learning disability strategy "My Life, My Ambition, My Future"

It says that more people should have the right place to live.



Norfolk's Autism Strategy "My Autism, Our Lives, Our Norfolk" says that:



"Autistic people and their families/carers have spoken about the difficulties finding the right accommodation to meet their needs, which also enables them to live independently"



# How we asked people what they think



In 2020 people were asked what was important about where they live.



Over 600 people replied to us.



In 2021 we invited people to 4 workshops to talk about our plans to build more supported living homes. We also talked about a draft version of this guide.



More than 80 people came to the workshops.

We have included what people have told us in this document.



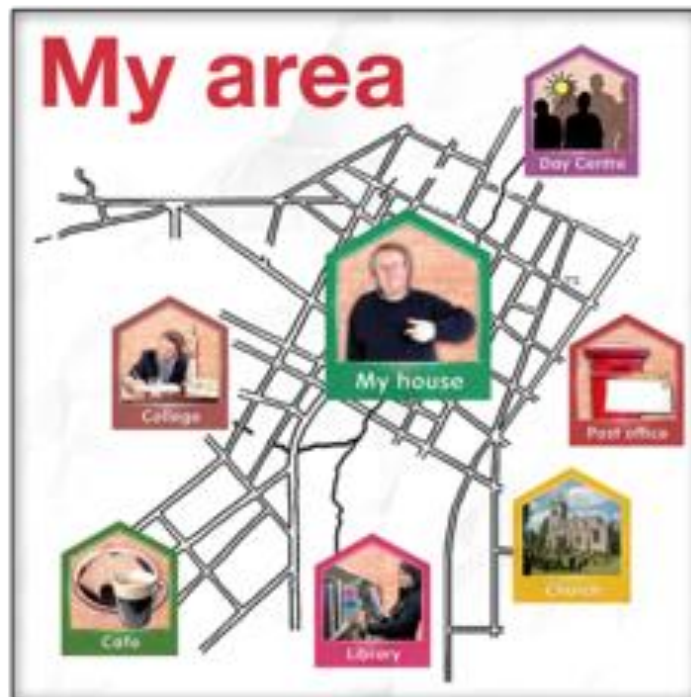
# What people tell us is important

People said that there are some important things in their choice of home. They want to:



- Live in their own home, with the support that they need
- Be part of their local community
- Feel safe where they live
- Choose who they live with
- Include their carers and families when choosing where they live

# Where people want to live



# Where?

Where homes are built is important. People told us they want to live in a place where they can:



- Do things close to where they live
- Go to their Doctors, or the local shop, or open spaces.



- Be near to transport, such as buses.
- Live where other people live.



- Live in homes that look the same as other homes nearby
- Be close to work, volunteering and day services.



- Have a nice view from their window.

# About the Homes



There will need to be different types of homes.



Single storey homes can be easier to get into. They are also good for people with physical disabilities.



Blocks of flats can be too noisy for some people.

However, many people are happy to live in a flat.



It is important that the design and layout of the homes means that they can be used in different ways, to meet a range of needs.

# How many new homes?

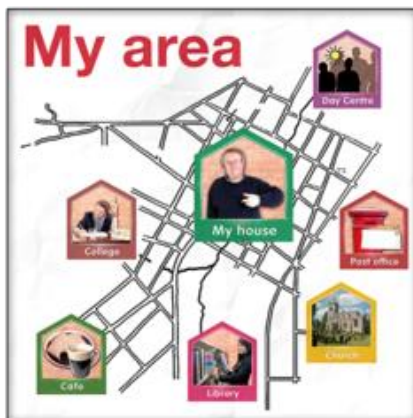


If the homes in a new scheme are grouped together, it must not feel bigger than the buildings near by.



The number of homes in each building is important.

- In most buildings there will not be more than twelve homes
- In some buildings there will only be up to four.

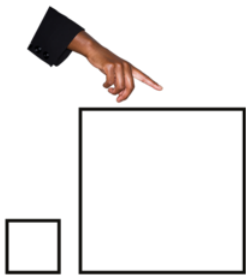


For services offering long term support it may be possible to include more homes. But it needs to be a really good location and close to the things that matter to people.

# Size of homes



New homes need to be flexible as they might be needed to support people with different types of needs.



New homes should be at least 54m<sup>2</sup>. This means the homes should feel comfortable with lots of space. It is larger than most new flats.



All homes should be designed to meet national standards for new homes.



Most homes will need to be built to meet a standard called the **M4 category 2 standard**.

Homes for people with physical disabilities should meet standards **M4 category 3a or b**.



# Inside the homes





# What is needed inside?



Rooms should be big enough for someone to be helped by a support worker, and to install hoists and other specialist equipment if needed.



Homes should reduce noise from inside and outside the home. This includes noise from air ventilation.



Quiet bedrooms are really important. Insulation and the ways the rooms are arranged should be used to create quiet spaces.



There should be space on the walls for pictures or posters that help people know what to do. This should be in the kitchen and by the front door.

# Kitchens



- All surfaces should be easy to clean.
- All cookers, fridges, hobs and other kitchen equipment should be simple and safe to use. Induction hobs are preferred
- There should be somewhere to do washing in the home or building.
- Kitchen cupboards need to be strong. Some homes need cupboards with locks.
- There should be enough space for someone who is using the kitchen to be helped.
- There should be isolation switches for appliances.
- Homes should have good air ventilation to reduce smells, but this should be quiet.

# Bathrooms



Bathrooms should be easy to use, and to keep clean and tidy.

Bathrooms should be large enough for someone to have help when they are using it.



This could be:

- Wet room
- Bath and shower
- Sensory bath or shower



Doors should open outwards and be able to be unlocked from the outside.



In some homes:

- Pipes should be hidden.
- Isolation switches should be located outside of the home.

# Safety and security



All homes must have an easy to lock front door. All doors should be simple to open



Homes will have technology to help people to see visitors and decide whether to let them in.

Support staff should be able to see visitors to the building



Some homes and buildings need cameras on the outside, and on the front entrance. They can be checked by support staff.



Homes must be designed for fire safety. A fire alarm with smoke and heat detectors must be fitted and serviced regularly.

# Technology



All homes should have a telephone line. There should be a plug socket next to the telephone line, for **assistive technology** equipment.



**Assistive technology** that is able to help people with support should be included in all homes.



There will be a good Wi-Fi connection everywhere in the building



Assistive technology should also be used to keep you safe if there is a fire.

# Decoration





# Doors



Entrance and front doors should be simple to open and not too complicated.



Door widths should meet national standards. This is wider for homes for people who use a wheelchair.



Glass doors should have safety glass fitted. All doors should be fitted with lever handles.

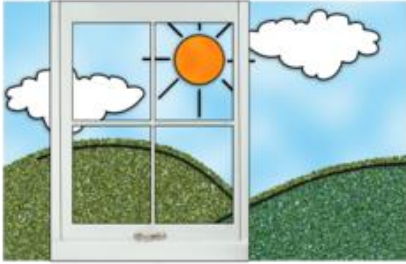


Doors should not slam shut.

Infection control will be considered for doors in the home.



# Windows



Day light is really important and all rooms will have good light.



People will be able to open windows.

Some homes need windows and doors that reduce noise.



Windows should have window locks.

Being able to open a window is good for reducing infections.



People want a nice view so they feel part of their community, even when they cannot go outside.

# Furnishing and decoration



Homes should look and feel comfortable. Some people describe this as feeling “homely”.



People will be able to choose how their home is decorated.



Some buildings will have spaces where everyone can meet. They will have furniture in so that people can feel comfortable.



Maintenance and repairs should happen quickly.



Short term homes will have furniture in already and feel homely (services where people will move on from).

Long term homes will not already have furniture in. People will bring their own furniture when they move in.

# Other fittings



New homes should all include good storage and somewhere to securely store medication.



There should be enough electric sockets so that wires can be hidden.

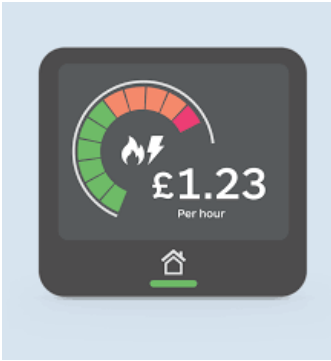


Lighting should be soft and bright

All light switches will be quiet

Flexible lighting, which means being able to change the level and colour of lighting, will be important in some homes

# Other Items



Homes should have their own meters for **utilities**, such as electricity, water and gas.



People will be able to control the temperature in each room.

Controls must be easy to use and heating must be responsive.



In some homes it may be needed to limit access to heating controls.

Support staff need to know if a home is too hot or too cold.



Reduce smells from materials for example glues used in construction

# Corridors, stairs and shared rooms

(Requirements if these are needed)



# Shared Spaces



People and families told us that some services will need spaces for people to do things together.

These spaces need to be well designed so that they are:

- Accessible to all
- Easy for support staff to manage
- Open and visible (you can see in to a room before you go in)
- Comfortable and attractive



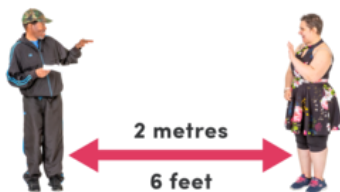
However, not all services will need shared spaces. It will vary with the type of need being met.



# Corridors and Lifts



Space within the building such as corridors, lifts and stairs, will be as large as possible, to provide personal space.



It should be possible to move around the building and keep away from other people



This may mean having passing spaces in **corridors**.



People should not need to gather at lifts and on stairs.

Corridors should not contain dead ends.



# Shared rooms and offices



In some buildings, shared spaces will need more than one exit.



Entrances to shared spaces are important. You should be able to see into a room before you go in.



Consider infection control through the building, including hand washing



If support is provided overnight, staff should have space for sleeping and cooking, ideally with natural light. They also need a bathroom.



Office space should include storage. This includes storage of medication.

# Staff spaces



Consider if staff changing areas are required and provide storage for **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**.

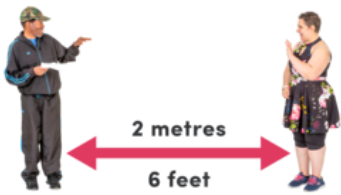


Make sure cleaning products can be stored safely.

# Outside spaces



# Outside space for tenants



- Outside spaces will be large enough to support social distancing.



- There should be space in the garden for relaxation and activities.



- Covered outside spaces are important so people can be outside in bad weather.



- Outside lighting will provide safety. There will also be a tap and electricity socket outside.



- Most homes will have shared outside space. Some will have their own garden.

- A shed or outside building will be needed.

# Paths and boundaries



Homes and buildings should have secure fences that are looked after. Gates that lead on to a public path should have a lock.



All paths should be wide and flat.



There should be level access from the front entrance to the street.



There must be somewhere to store the bins so that they do not block paths.

# Front entrance



Staff should be able to park near the home and have safe access at night.



There should be parking for tenants' cars and / or mobility aids.

There should be level access from the parking area to building or home entrance.



There should be a drop off space at the front entrance.



Consider hand washing or sanitising at entrances.



# Extra features





# Physical Disabilities (1)



All homes should meet the **M4(3) standard**. If the home is for a wheelchair user it should be **M4(3b)**.

This means that homes:

- Should be larger
  - Typically at least 62 m<sup>2</sup>
  - Bedrooms should be at least 13.5m<sup>2</sup>
- Layouts and room sizes should meet technical guidance standards,
- Fixtures and fittings should meet technical guidance for wheelchair users.
- Kitchen and bathroom layouts should meet standards for wheelchair users.
- In-built technology is important to support independence.

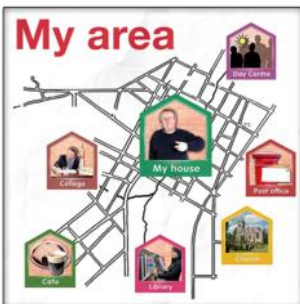


# Physical Disabilities (2)

## Inside:



- Wet rooms should be installed. However, being able to install adapted baths should also be considered.
- Where they are required, overhead tracking hoists should be fitted from bedroom to bathroom.



## Outside:

- The location of the home is very important. There needs to be good access to shops, transport and other places
- Lighting may need to be designed to meet specific needs. This is both inside and outside the building.



# Behaviours of Concern (1)



Homes for people with behaviours of concern need to be very well designed to ensure that they will meet people's needs



Materials need to be strong. For example, doors should be solid. All glass should be safety glass.



Sound is really important. New homes should be designed to reduce noise from inside and outside the home.



Developers need to think about fresh air and ventilation. It is important to be able to maintain fresh air and eliminate smells.

# Behaviours of Concern (2)

We encourage developers to use detailed guides available to support their design e.g. Enfield Supported Housing Guidance



<https://londonadass.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Design-guide-for-LD-and-challenging-behaviour-Supported-Housing-Guide-2....pdf>

These guides contain details developers will need to use. In this guide we have identified those that people and families tell us are most important



Buildings need to be strong. Internal walls should be designed to enable easy repair.



Maintaining the home is important. There must be plan to make sure repairs happen quickly.

# Behaviours of Concern (3)

The home should be free of 'clutter':

- All electrical sockets should be inside cabinets.
- You should not be able to see pipework.
- There must be enough storage



The building should be designed for sensory needs



- Being able to change the level and colour of lighting is important
- Being able to control the heat in each room is important
- The design should reduce inside and outside noise. Bedrooms must be quiet.



# Behaviours of Concern (4)



Bathrooms and kitchens need to be well designed:

- Pipes should be hidden
- Bathroom floors should be waterproof and include drainage
- All doors must have locks that are easy to use.
- Kitchen and living spaces can be separated.



Outside spaces that are easy to get to are important and each home should have direct access to its own garden with a secure boundary.

Cut outs and half walls in shared spaces will increase visibility and reduce risks.



# Other things



# Other things that are important to people

## Pets



Tenancies should not stop people from having a pet.

## Tenancies and Rents



Where Norfolk County Council capital is allocated, all rents should be within local housing allowance limits.



Tenancies are usually assured short hold.

We are exploring when an assured tenancy could be used.

# Background Information



# Technical



This document refers to national standards introduced in 2015.



The Building Regulations include something called “**Approved Document M**”.



This document sets out what accessible homes look like. It includes three standards:

- **M4(1) Category 1:** applies to all homes.
- **M4(2) Category 2:** for more adaptable and accessible homes.
- **M4(3) Category 3:** either wheel chair accessible or simple to adapt to make accessible.



All homes should meet the standards of M4(2) and some should be M4(3).

# Other Useful information

There are other documents that describe good homes.

Please take a look at:

[Living in the Community  
Housing Design for Adults with  
Autism](#)

[Enfield Supported  
Housing Guidance](#)

[Considering and meeting the  
sensory needs of autistic people in  
housing](#)