The Housing Needs of Physically Disabled People in Plymouth

This report examines a wide range of evidence and information (relating to Plymouth) regarding disability. There is no one, consistent way of measuring ‘disability’ across the various agencies who wish to measure it. The evidence and data sources are used in the report to assess disabled housing need (particularly wheelchair accessible specification housing for physically disabled people). The report explains and produces several methods of estimating the unmet housing needs of physically disabled people in Plymouth and quantifies those estimates for the City. It makes recommendations about developing a housing delivery programme for wheelchair user housing in Plymouth across the next 10 years and makes other recommendations regarding disabled housing.
With thanks to:

Sarah Macleod – PCC/Public Health for stats advice
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Sally Bragg – PCC ASC contract commissioner

Consultation groups
   Wheelchair User Contract Group
   Plymouth Area Disability Action Network
Executive Summary

This report examines a wide range of evidence and information sources concerning disability in Plymouth which is used to assess unmet housing needs of physically disabled people in Plymouth. The report looks at several different methods of estimating unmet disabled housing need in order to quantify the estimated overall levels of unmet disabled housing need in Plymouth. The report outlines the results of consultation events with disabled people and makes recommendations about developing a Housing Delivery programme for wheelchair user housing provision over the next 10 years.

There are an increasing numbers of people with physical disabilities living in Plymouth who need homes and facilities to meet their needs. Aware that there are a lots of types of disability, this report focuses on physical disability and what this means for housing need in Plymouth.

The 2011 Census identified that 10% of Plymouth's population (25,548 people) self-reported their day-to-day activities were ‘limited a lot’ by long-term health or disability problems. This is significantly above the national average of 8.3%.

The ageing population profile for Plymouth will have an impact, given that the prevalence of disability increases with age. It is anticipated that numbers of physically disabled people in Plymouth will increase, and in turn put further pressure on the city’s unmet housing need for physically disabled people.

By 2020 it is estimated\(^1\) that between 262 and 399 households in the city (with a disabled household member) will be living in unsuitable accommodation, having an unmet wheelchair user housing need, and will require adaptation measures to be able to remain in their home or will need to move to a suitable wheelchair accessible property.

Capacity of existing wheelchair accessible housing provision in Plymouth to meet these housing needs is limited by constraints on public spending, the suitability of existing homes, the affordability of suitable properties, and the rising demand from increasing numbers of disabled people for the resources available.

Whilst many people would like to remain in their existing homes, (251 Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) have been delivered each year over the past three years), this level of funding for adaptations to existing properties may not be sustainable in the future. For those able and willing to move to the social rented sector, there are limited wheelchair accessible lettings available and many of these will not meet the aspirations and demands of disabled people, or are not suitable to fully accommodate their needs.

\(^1\) Estimate variation depends on calculation method.
There are a number of requirements many disabled people want from their homes, whether by making alterations to their existing home, or by moving to more suitable housing. These include; ground floor accommodation, stair lifts or through floor lifts to access upper floors; level access to a walk-in shower or wet room; level access to the front door; sufficient room to move around in a wheelchair.

The report identifies a shortfall in the provision of suitable wheelchair accessible homes both in the affordable and private housing sectors. The evidence shows that there is unmet housing need for physically disabled people in Plymouth which could potentially be met by the provision of new suitably designed new homes. This evidence of disabled housing need will be used to support relevant planning application negotiations, policy development, strategic documents and funding bids.

The report outlines a 10 year delivery programme of wheelchair accessible dwellings both in the affordable and open market sector. The report has provided some estimates of the size and type of Housing Delivery programme that could be introduced to address the unmet wheelchair user housing need, for 330 households. The suggested Housing Delivery programme is based on Plymouth’s 2020 projected housing needs of physically disabled people. If the programme was implemented it could clear the backlog of demand for wheelchair user housing. Note that the Council would have to balance the actual size and shape of this programme with those responding to other priority housing requirements.
Table of Contents

Introduction ......................................................................................................................... 8

Overall research methodology .......................................................................................... 10

Assessing Plymouth’s wheelchair housing requirements .................................................... 11

Plymouth’s Population ........................................................................................................ 12

Older People in Plymouth ................................................................................................... 13

Health in Plymouth ............................................................................................................. 15

Life Expectancy in Plymouth .............................................................................................. 16

Employment Support Allowance - Plymouth ..................................................................... 16

Disability Living Allowance ................................................................................................. 17

MOD Personnel and War/Disability Pensions ................................................................... 18

Disabled Facilities Grants in Plymouth .............................................................................. 19

Children in Plymouth with Disabilities .............................................................................. 20

Strategic Housing Market Needs Assessment .................................................................... 21

Plymouth City Council Adult Social Care Market Position Statement ............................. 22

Affordable Disabled Housing Need (Devon Home Choice and Help to Buy South West) .... 22

Plymouth’s Wheelchair Housing Letting Data .................................................................... 24

Affordable Sector Supply in Plymouth .............................................................................. 26

Supported and Emergency Accommodation .................................................................... 26

Private Sector Supply .......................................................................................................... 26

Summary of Plymouth-based Evidence ............................................................................. 27

Calculating Wheelchair Accessible Disabled Housing Need for Plymouth ....................... 27

How the Current Housing Provision and Services Meet Needs ......................................... 31

Customer and Stakeholder Perspectives ............................................................................ 32

Wider Trends ....................................................................................................................... 32

Type of Disabled Housing Required .................................................................................. 33

Housing Delivery Programmes to Meet Need ................................................................... 34

Conclusions and Recommendations .................................................................................. 36

Recommendations .............................................................................................................. 38

Glossary .............................................................................................................................. 39

Appendix 1 ......................................................................................................................... 42
Disabled Housing Need Case Study No. 1
Household with Disabled Child – current Plymouth housing need client

“Hearing ‘we understand your difficulties but we can’t solve your housing problem’, is very demoralising. It is nice to know that when we’ve spoken to officers in the Council it isn’t just an automated response. It will be nice to move into our new specially designed home.”

Child M is a 12 year old girl with multiple and serious disabilities. Child M uses a large and complex reclining wheelchair which needs lots of manoeuvring space and has many other items of specialist equipment. She lives with her parent, two brothers and her sister. The family are currently living in a standard wheelchair adapted house which is not big enough, which means that the family are struggling to cater for Child M’s needs.

The family’s housing difficulties have been assessed by Occupational Therapists, Housing Officers and Technical Staff from the Adoptions Team and no solution has been found. The only option left was to build a specialist house, designed to accommodate Child M’s particular needs, including a larger bedroom space for Child M, larger circulation areas, and areas for equipment storage. Finding a solution to this problem has not been easy because so few new wheelchair accessible properties are being built.

Because of the level of housing difficulties for this family the case has been at the highest priority level for several years. Working closely with the Housing Delivery Team and Plymouth Housing Development Partners, it has been possible to make provision for a specialist house for Child M and her family, within one of the development sites in the City.

Child M’s family think that more homes should be built in Plymouth to wheelchair accessible standards. This would ensure that families with disabled children would have better places to live, making life much less stressful for parents, carers and children. We know that better disabled housing provision will benefit disabled people – but it will also benefit their families too.
Introduction

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires local authorities to make an assessment of the housing needs in their area, including for people with physical disabilities. This document outlines housing needs assessments for physically disabled people in Plymouth as required by the NPPF. Making sure there is the right provision of wheelchair user and other more accessible housing in Plymouth will have wider social and economic benefits. There is good understanding in Housing, Health and Social Care fields about the extent to which the right home will reduce on-going care, health and support inputs. Recently published consultation documents from the Department of Communities and Local Government on Housing Standards and Accessible Housing have also been taken into account.

In March 2014 The Plymouth Fairness Commission published a report with recommendations on ‘Creating the conditions for Fairness in the city’. This includes recommendations for Housing and recommendations that ‘...a full examination is carried out into the coverage of specialist housing provision in Plymouth, comparing what is available against known demographics of groups in need and including a full gap analysis.’ This assessment of the housing needs of physically disabled people in Plymouth forms part of the work recommended by the Commission.

Plymouth City Council’s Corporate Plan has a set of corporate goals and the statement under the banner of ‘Caring Plymouth’ is particularly relevant to this report/research: ‘We will promote a fairer, more equal city by investing in communities, putting citizens at the heart of decision-making, promoting independence and reducing health and social inequality.’ In order to put these principles into practice the Council has established a Fairness Commission which will be addressing the range of housing requirements of the City.

This study examines the housing needs of people with physical disabilities in Plymouth in 2013. It was undertaken by Plymouth City Council’s Housing Delivery team which forms part of Strategic Planning and Infrastructure. The evidence in the study will be used to inform planning application negotiations and policy development regarding wheelchair accessible disabled housing need. The evidence will be reviewed on an annual basis and will include update reports where appropriate. The aims of the study are:

- To quantify Plymouth’s wheelchair user housing need.
- To better understand how to meet the housing needs of people in Plymouth with physical disabilities, including the provision of more accessible forms of housing such as Lifetime Homes.

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2 Published on 15/09/2014
• To better understand the means by which appropriate wheelchair accessible housing for disabled people can be delivered in Plymouth.

• To obtain a robust evidence base to support the development of plans and strategies concerned with housing for people with physical disabilities in Plymouth.

The focus of this research is the physical structure and facilities of a home (rather than care and support issues). This stand-alone report for Plymouth City Council is one of a series of reports intended to inform the evidence base for the Plymouth Plan.

Plymouth – An Overview

Health
Health in Plymouth is generally worse than the national average and varies depending on an individual’s age and place of residence within the city. Statistics from the 2011 Census show that 6.5% of Plymouth’s population are in bad or very bad health (compared to the national average of 5.5%). Further information regarding health in Plymouth is set out later in this report.

Life expectancy
Data for 2009–11 shows that the average life expectancy in Plymouth for men and women combined is 80.3 years. This compares to the national average life expectancy of 80.4 years.

In deprived areas of Plymouth life expectancy is significantly lower than in more affluent areas. The lowest life expectancy in Plymouth (72.2 years) is in Devonport. The highest life expectancy (84.8 years) is in the Widewell area of the City.

Levels of deprivation
There are 17 Plymouth Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) which rank among the most deprived 10% in England. Of these more than half (nine) are in the most deprived 5% nationally, with one in the most deprived 1%. This latter LSOA is based in St Peter and the Waterfront ward, and is the fifth most deprived LSOA in the South West.
Housing tenure

In terms of tenure, the housing stock in Plymouth is shown below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tenure</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Owner Occupied</td>
<td>64,157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared Ownership</td>
<td>841</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social / Affordable Rented</td>
<td>21,095</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Rented</td>
<td>22,026</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living Rent Free</td>
<td>1,188</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total = 109,307 dwellings**

Fig 1. Source: 2011 Census

It is worth noting that Plymouth has a large number of military and ex-military personnel within its population, having a Royal Navy base and two Royal Marine barracks. There are specific housing pressures arising from this segment of the population, including increased demands for wheelchair accessible disabled housing arising from existing and former MOD personnel.

Overall research methodology

The methodology for the project comprised the following elements:

- A literature review of national, regional, local research, academic papers, data and statistics and best practice models.

- Collation and interrogation of existing data from directorates within Plymouth City Council, including data from; adult social care; occupational therapists; disability organisations; housing register; children’s SEN data; and the Strategic Housing Needs Assessments.

- Collation and interrogation of data from; Office of National Statistics, Department for Communities and Local Government; Department of Work and Pensions; Department of Health; and other government agencies including the Homes and Communities Agency.
• Collation and interrogation of specialist datasets including; POPPI (Projecting Older People Population Information system); PANSI (Projecting Adult Needs and Services Information).

• Focus groups with organisations specialising in disabled persons care, the Plymouth Housing Development Partnership and housing developers.

• Focus groups with residents and service users.

Assessing Plymouth’s wheelchair housing requirements

Habinteg and London South Bank University have derived a methodology for estimating the number and housing requirements of wheelchair users. By using local population data we have extended this methodology to provide estimates for Plymouth’s disabled population – see table in Appendix 1. Based on national statistics and assumptions, the data shows that in Plymouth in 2013 there were an estimated 3,237 households with wheelchair requirements. Of these, 8% (259 households) are estimated not have their wheelchair accessible disabled housing needs met.

The PANSI (Projecting Adult Needs and Service Information) and POPPI (Projecting older people population information system) websites provide useful information to enable population projections to be made. Using the PANSI and POPPI data sets for Plymouth, a 1% increase in the disabled population in Plymouth is predicted by 2020. As such, the number of households with wheelchair requirements is expected to rise to 3,269, and the City will be estimated to have an unmet wheelchair accessible disabled housing need of 262 households.

Given the generally poorer health and higher deprivation status of Plymouth, compared to the national averages, it is likely that the above projections from national data are an underestimate of the number of current and future wheelchair households and unmet disabled housing need in Plymouth.

This research document will review other available data sets and evidence of disabled housing need in Plymouth. Detailed locally based research will be used to produce more specific disabled housing need projections– to be considered alongside the nationally based assumptions.

Bearing in mind these estimates of unmet Wheelchair Accessible Disabled housing need, it is also worth noting that this type of housing is a very scarce resource in Plymouth. In 2012/13 there were only 14 available social housing lettings of wheelchair accessible accommodation, a decrease from 23 in the previous year. See Appendix 3
Plymouth’s Evidence Base for Wheelchair Accessible Housing Need.

In this section of the report we will review the ‘Plymouth specific’ evidence available for producing an alternative, Plymouth based, estimate of wheelchair disabled housing need.

Plymouth’s Population

In 2011 the usually resident population of Plymouth was 256,384 people.

The 2011 Census identified that 10% of Plymouth’s population (25,548 people) self-reported their day-to-day activities were ‘limited a lot’ by long-term health or disability problems. This is significantly above the national average of 8.3%.

The geographical variation in percentages of the Plymouth population whose day to day lives are ‘limited a lot’ is represented on the attached map – Appendix 4. Across the city there are some pockets where there are very high percentages of Plymouth residents reporting this level of problem.

Not all of those 25,548 people whose lives are limited a lot would be classified as disabled or in need of wheelchair accessible disabled housing; however a proportion will need wheelchair accessible disabled housing. Additionally, the majority of people living in Plymouth whose lives are ‘limited a lot’ would still benefit from a policy increasing the numbers of ‘Lifetime Homes’ in the city’s housing stock.
POPPI projection figures show that by 2020 Plymouth’s total population increase in the over 65 year old group will be 17%.

These increases are further pronounced, in those aged 85-89, where the population increase is projected at 22%, and for those aged 90 and over the increase is projected to be 44%. This is significant because older people are more likely to be living with health problems or disabilities.
Table 1: Projections of Plymouth’s population aged 65 years and over unable to manage at least one mobility activity on their own, 2014 to 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Plymouth</th>
<th>Over 65s unable to manage at least one mobility activity on their own</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td></td>
<td>8,235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td></td>
<td>8,392</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td></td>
<td>9,305</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. Source: POPPI

Note: The POPPI/PANSI websites are regularly updated. They contain a range of projected increases for the number of residents living in Plymouth with other medical and related conditions that may impact on housing mobility issues, though perhaps less directly than through physical disability indicators. For example, heart conditions may make walking up stairs difficult and necessitate stair lifts. Strokes can severely impair movement and sufferers may require ground floor or wheelchair appropriate accommodation.

Plymouth’s Disabled Working Age Population

Alongside the 2011 Census data\(^3\) (which details the numbers of people whose lives are ‘limited a lot’) it is possible to also use PANSI and POPPI statistics as the basis for prevalence rates of moderate and serious disability in Plymouth in 2012 and 2020.

Fig. 2: Projections of Plymouth’s disabled working-age population (18-64 years), 2014 to 2020

\[\text{This data shows that there are large numbers of residents aged under-65 who are living in Plymouth with disabilities, including people with severe disabilities who are more likely to need specialist housing.}\]

\(^3\) 2011 census data on disability (self assessed). This data will include a wide range of categories of disability – not just physical disability. We can however reasonably assume that some of those self declaring moderate or serious disability will be physically disabled.
In the longer term, taking account of projected increases, by 2020 there are estimated to be nearly 16,000 working age disabled residents living in the city.

Whilst being unable to work because of physical disability does not automatically equate to a requirement for housing-related adaptations or other solutions, there will be extensive overlaps between medical conditions such as heart and circulatory problems, strokes and diabetes, and a need for accommodation adaptations or single level accommodation. See also the Employment Support Allowance figures (page 16) which provide a useful measure of disability prevalence in Plymouth’s adult working-age population.

**Health in Plymouth**

Health in Plymouth is generally worse than the national average and varies depending on an individual’s age and place of residence within the city. Statistics from the 2011 Census show that 6.5% of Plymouth’s population are in bad or very bad health compared to a national average of 5.5%.

**Health in Plymouth is generally worse than the national average across all ages.**

Of the Plymouth population aged 50-64 years 10.9% are in bad or very bad health compared to the national average of 8.7%, and 17% of the population aged 65 years and over are in bad or very bad health, compared to the national average of 15.3%. The 2011 Census data regarding the health of the population in the city is represented in Fig. 3 below which shows health data for Plymouth.

**Fig. 3 Source: census 2011**
There are distinct variations in health across the neighbourhood areas of Plymouth depending on where someone lives. Contrasting area examples are set out in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plymouth neighbourhood area</th>
<th>% Population in bad or v. bad health</th>
<th>% over 65s population in bad or v. bad health</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peverell and Hartley</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stonehouse</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>24.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is possible that some account needs to be taken of these geographical variations in targeting locations for the provision of future wheelchair accessible disabled housing. Existing disabled residents needing to relocate to more suitable accommodation are likely to want to stay close to their existing support networks.

**Life Expectancy in Plymouth**

Data for 2009-11 shows that the average life expectancy in Plymouth for men and women combined is now 80.3 years. However, in common with the geographical variations in health, in deprived areas of Plymouth life expectancy is significantly lower than in more affluent areas. Variations are significant; the lowest life expectancy in the city (72.2 years) is seen in Devonport, while the highest life expectancy is in Widewell (84.8 years).

**Employment Support Allowance – Plymouth**

Employment and support allowance (ESA) is provided if a successful claimant’s ability to work is limited by ill health or disability. ESA replaced both incapacity benefit (IB) and income support (IS).

In February 2013 there were 8,600 individuals claiming Employment Support Allowance in Plymouth.

This evidence supports the census data showing that there are large numbers of disabled working age people living in Plymouth.

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4 Data taken from the 2009/10 JSNA Life Expectancy report
Disability Living Allowance

One of the most useful indicators of the prevalence of mobility-related disabilities in Plymouth is the take up of Disability Living Allowance (DLA). DLA is not currently means tested, so it captures a full range of disabled individuals (although not all will be physically disabled). Take-up can be analysed by severity of mobility difficulty (lower and higher).

Note: Disability Living Allowance is scheduled to be phased out between 2014-17 and replaced by another form of benefit support for disabled people (Personal Independence Payment). A change in benefit structure for disabled people will not change the profile of numbers of disabled people in Plymouth. Hence for the purposes of this research and calculating projections of wheelchair accessible disabled housing need, the current Plymouth DLA rates will be used as a predictor of wheelchair accessible disabled housing need for the city.

Disabled Housing Need Case Study No 2

Plymouth Household with Disabled Adult:

“What a lot of people don’t understand is that when you are disabled or in a wheelchair, you do need a lot more floor space. It is more tiring as a disabled person, being out and about dealing with the everyday issues of being disabled. When you get home you want that to be your place of peace and relaxation not more stress.”

Mark is an ex-Royal Marine who was injured during service in Afghanistan, which resulted in triple amputations. Mark has made a remarkable recovery and currently leads a very busy life – with the aid of prosthetic limbs. He prefers not to use a wheelchair at the moment. Mark lives with his family including three children.

Mark wants to construct a wheelchair-disabled adapted self-build house in Plymouth, in order to ensure that his house is ‘future proofed’ and meets his needs. The opportunity to Self-build offers an ideal housing solution – allowing him to incorporate precisely what he and his family need within the home. Mark is keen to be involved in making choices about how the home is designed, including the size and layout of the internal rooms and garage areas.

The Council is supporting the family with their self-build aspirations. As a housing option, self-build offers very promising potential to make provision for disabled housing needs in the City.

Disability Living Allowance
It is considered that those claiming the higher rate are the most likely to also require housing-related adaptations, or provision of specifically-designed wheelchair accessible accommodation to meet their housing needs.

In Plymouth, February 2013 there were 9,545 individuals claiming higher level DLA. This represented nearly 4% of the total population of Plymouth.

This is particularly significant given that the proportion of DLA claimants in Plymouth (Feb 2013) was much higher than the England average of 2.72%. Together with the other Plymouth based data outlined in this report, this DLA evidence provides a strong basis to support an alternative ‘Plymouth-based’ calculation of wheelchair accessible disabled housing need. Note also that over the last 10 years, the number of individuals claiming higher mobility rate DLA in Plymouth has been increasing.

The proportion of the population claiming higher rate DLA has increased from 3.23% in 2004 to 3.7% in 2013. See data sheet in Appendix 4. Using the current value (3.7%) it is estimated there will be 10,020 higher rate DLA claimants in Plymouth by 2020.

MOD Personnel and War/Disability Pensions

Plymouth has a number of military bases located within its boundaries, and a naval base which employs at least 5,000 people. There are a large number of military and ex-military personnel living in the City. One of the possible reasons as to why Plymouth has a higher than average rate of disability among its population, may be because of the prevalence of disability among the serving and post serving military personnel.

The MOD has published data on the location of armed forces pension and compensation recipients. These tables provide summary statistics on the number of people in receipt of an occupational pension under the Armed Forces Pension Scheme (AFPS), the number in receipt of on-going pensions under the War Pensions Scheme (WPS) and the number awarded compensation under the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme (AFCS). This data can be assessed by location – including data for the PL1 postcode which covers the Central area of Plymouth and data for the Plymouth Teaching Primary Care Trust area.

The data below is drawn from the most recent statistics relating to the Location of Armed Forces Pension and Compensation Recipients: 2011/12:
Table 3 Plymouth City Centre Service Personnel and Pensioners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>ALL AFPS</th>
<th>ALL WPS</th>
<th>Disablement Pension</th>
<th>ALL AFCS</th>
<th>AFCS in service</th>
<th>AFCS post service</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PL1</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>339,745</td>
<td>161,535</td>
<td>134,430</td>
<td>14,200</td>
<td>7,940</td>
<td>6,260</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 Plymouth Teaching Primary Care Trust - Service Personnel and Pensioners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>ALL AFPS</th>
<th>ALL WPS</th>
<th>Disablement Pension</th>
<th>ALL AFCS</th>
<th>AFCS in service</th>
<th>AFCS post service</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011/12</td>
<td>7,325</td>
<td>2470</td>
<td>2175</td>
<td>275</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>283,495</td>
<td>119,740</td>
<td>98,865</td>
<td>10,815</td>
<td>5,970</td>
<td>4,845</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Taking account of the fact that Plymouth City covers PL1 to 9 postcodes – the numbers of disabled service personnel city wide is expected to be much higher. Although we cannot profile a precise figure for the city as a whole, there are large numbers of serving and post serving military personnel living in Plymouth who have been awarded disablement pensions and compensation payments from the MOD. The data also shows the significant influence of the location of the regional teaching hospital in Plymouth, which attracts larger numbers of patients requiring more complex treatment, including disabled people and injured military personnel.

Disabled military personnel – both serving and post serving will benefit from the City’s efforts to increase the provision of disabled housing. Additionally, there are potentially opportunities to explore whether there are specific housing needs among this group of Plymouth’s disabled population.

**Disabled Facilities Grants in Plymouth**

There is a high level of demand for Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) by householders in Plymouth. Households with a disabled resident, whose home needs adaptation or alterations/extension can make an application to Plymouth City Council for DFG funding. DFG needs are assessed and verified by Housing Officers and Occupations Therapists. High levels of disabled housing need are demonstrated by the 363 successful DFG completions in Plymouth in the financial year 2012/13.

**Note:** DFGs are a means tested grant and are therefore not fully reflective of overall need, given that many households will be able to self-help.
There has been a significant increase in the demand for DFGs in Plymouth in the last three years as the data in Appendix 5 shows. The age range of DFG applicants is wide; including children and those of working age. However, the majority of successful applicants are over 65.

Lifestyle changes over the last 40 years have resulted in the increase of medical problems such as obesity, which is a concerning phenomenon in terms of DFG budgeting. Responding to the needs of morbidly obese DFG applicants can result in considerable additional expense because standard adaptation equipment often does not meet the added size and loading requirements. Property structures often also need extra reinforcement to cope with these additional demands.

**Children in Plymouth with Disabilities**

Some information is included in the DFG data on the number of children with disabilities that have specific housing needs. 15 of last year’s DFGs were awarded to households with disabled children. Evidence about the prevalence of physical disabilities in children living in Plymouth can be found from information on the register of Special Educational Needs (SEN) held by Plymouth City Council.
Children with physical disabilities represent a minority (5%) of those with SEN statements in Plymouth, but they are likely to also need suitable housing conditions in order to flourish at school.

Plymouth has a relatively high number of children with SEN statements on grounds of physical disabilities. The table below compares the Plymouth SEN statistics to the national average. In Plymouth children with SEN and physical disabilities totalled 186 pupils, representing 0.48% of all school age children in the city. This compares to a national average of 0.32%.

Table 5: SEN registered pupils with physical disabilities (2013)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plymouth</th>
<th>England</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>186 (0.48% of all pupils)</td>
<td>26,685 (0.32% of all pupils)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Graph showing % of all pupils who are SEN registered with physical disabilities, compared locally and nationally.](Image)

Fig 4. SEN registered pupils with physical disabilities, compared locally and nationally.

**Strategic Housing Market Needs Assessment**

The 2013 Strategic Housing Market Needs Assessment (SHMNA) reported on the state of Plymouth’s housing stock, projected economic and demographic changes for the City and other factors affecting Plymouth’s housing market. The research shows that a large part of the city’s identified future housing need, is due to the growing number of older households, many of whom will live with or acquire disabilities. New housing developments must be designed to take account of the housing needs of various household groups including older and disabled people.
This means not only adapting homes as older or disabled people’s needs change with age, but also designing in adaptability to some of the original dwellings. Similarly, neighbourhoods must be designed with residents of all ages and abilities in mind and offer services and amenities which are accessible to all. The SHMNA concludes that more housing choices (both mainstream and specialised) must be opened to disabled and older people, alongside better housing advice services to facilitate informed housing choices for disabled and older people.

The 2013 SHMNA (paras. 9.65 and 9.66) has highlighted concerns about the limited availability of affordable and adaptable homes for persons with disabilities. The SHMNA report recommends that these housing needs should be carefully considered – which is the purpose of this wheelchair accessible disabled housing report.

**Plymouth City Council Adult Social Care Market Position Statement**

With the growth in numbers of older people and increasing numbers of disabled people, demand for care and support services is rising. The projected increase in demand for housing related support services is shown in the table below. While not everyone with housing related support needs will require a disabled adapted dwelling, this data provides a useful context for considering the amount of disabled housing need in Plymouth. There is likely to be a correlation between the increasing need for housing related support services, and the increasing need for disabled adapted houses in Plymouth.

| Table 6. Extract from Plymouth ASC Market Position Statement 2011-13 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **People aged 65 and over unable to manage at least one self-care activity on their own, by age, projected to 2030. Activities include: bathe, shower or wash all over, dress and undress, wash their face and hands, feed, cut their toenails, take medicines** | 2010 | 2015 | 2020 | 2025 | 2030 |
| **Total population aged 65 and over unable to manage at least one self-care activity on their own** | 14,095 | 15,576 | 17,076 | 19,083 | 21,331 |

**Affordable Disabled Housing need (Devon Home Choice and Help to Buy South West)**

Plymouth has a city-wide affordable housing register, where housing allocations are managed under a choice based lettings system. The housing needs of households are assessed by a Housing Officer and Occupational Therapists (where required) and grouped under a priority banding system. **Note:** Affordable Housing is defined in the glossary.
Assessed priority banding need for housing adaptations and medical conditions are categorised into applicants who require mobility-related adaptations, or those that require purpose built wheelchair accessible disabled accommodation. Priority banding depends on the degree of seriousness of disability and the severity of the impact on housing circumstances.

A summary of the Plymouth housing register data from 2013 is provided in Fig. 5 below. It details the numbers of households where affordable housing applicants have mobility and physical disability related housing requirements and who need to be housed/re-house in wheelchair or part wheelchair accessible properties.

![Wheelchair Household Need in Plymouth](image)

**Fig. 5 Source: Devon Home Choice 8/10/2013**

The data clearly shows that there is a strong need for one-bed wheelchair affordable housing, but that there is also demand for larger, two and three bedromed properties.

Table 7: Wheelchair housing need categorised by housing need priority banding, 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Housing Priority Band</th>
<th>1 bed</th>
<th>2 bed</th>
<th>3 bed</th>
<th>4 bed</th>
<th>5 bed</th>
<th>6 bed</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>106</strong></td>
<td><strong>22</strong></td>
<td><strong>22</strong></td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
<td><strong>158</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Devon Home Choice 8/10/13*
Table 7: Wheelchair housing need categorised by housing need priority banding, 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Housing Priority Band</th>
<th>1 bed</th>
<th>2 bed</th>
<th>3 bed</th>
<th>4 bed</th>
<th>5 bed</th>
<th>6 bed</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>110</strong></td>
<td><strong>39</strong></td>
<td><strong>17</strong></td>
<td><strong>10</strong></td>
<td><strong>5</strong></td>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
<td><strong>182</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Devon Home Choice - 21/08/14  *See Housing priority band criteria defined in the Glossary*

Table 7 above shows that wheelchair housing need recorded on Devon Home Choice is relatively evenly spread across all priority levels of housing need. Also notable is the rising levels of recorded disabled housing need between 2013 and 2014. The current scarcity of available wheelchair accessible disabled properties within affordable housing stock, means that many of these households with disabled housing needs will remain living in unsuitable housing conditions for years.

In terms of demand for shared ownership disabled housing, data from ‘Help to Buy South West’ (August 2014) shows that 35 of 420 Plymouth applicants have a member of the household with a long term disability – which is 8% of applicants. Note that two of these shared ownership applicants with disabilities have a need for full wheelchair specification housing. This level of disabled housing need in the shared ownership housing sector is consistent with data/evidence of disabled housing need in both private and affordable rented housing sectors.

**Plymouth’s Wheelchair Housing Letting Data**

The Devon Home Choice lettings system has been analysed to identify whether the advertised available properties have been constructed or adapted to meet the needs of disabled people. Analysis of this data, presented in Appendix 2, shows what a scarce resource wheelchair adapted properties are in Plymouth. On average there are only 19 wheelchair accessible properties available on an annual basis. There is a large shortfall in available wheelchair accessible properties as compared to the assessed level of need for affordable wheelchair accessible housing requirements.

Data from Devon Home Choice in October 2013 shows the total number of affordable wheelchair accessible houses to be 158. By August 2014 this number had risen sharply to 182. With average available supply of 19 wheelchair accessible homes each year – current wheelchair accessible housing supply caters for only 12% of registered affordable disabled housing need. It is particularly clear in Plymouth that there is a substantial excess demand for appropriate disability-adapted affordable accommodation, compared to available year-on-year re-letting supply.
**Note:** Further research will be required to investigate why so many part-wheelchair accessible properties are not always being let to households with wheelchair housing needs. It is possible that decisions are location specific; wheelchair user households tend to want to stay within close distance of established support networks. It is also possible that so few suitable wheelchair need properties become available that people are disheartened with the bidding process. Finally, many of the ‘part’-wheelchair accessible properties may not be suitable for the specific household needs.
**Affordable Sector Supply in Plymouth**

The make-up of suitably adapted affordable housing stock will be a key determinant of how easy it is for mobility disabled people to access appropriate stock (the other one being rate of supply or turnover, noted above). We do not have detailed information on the quantity/quality of wheelchair accessible housing association stock in Plymouth. This information is required in order to better manage the disabled housing supply available in Plymouth.

Discussions have been held between Housing Association partners and the Council about the possibility of letting disabled properties on a temporary tenancy basis in order to allow for re-letting if the existing household no longer has a disabled housing requirement. No information is available as to whether such tenancy arrangements have been established and implemented.

**Supported and Emergency Accommodation**

Supported housing in Plymouth, in the form of Extra Care or Sheltered housing, is provided primarily for older people through housing associations, charitable organisations and private businesses. Much of this specialist housing provision for the elderly meets ‘Lifetime Homes’ (LTH) standards or is wheelchair accessible.

Among some of the examples of specialist or supported housing in Plymouth are: Support housing provision focussed on younger people with learning disabilities including the Woodlands Terrace site, which has Lifetime Homes and one pathway flat. The newly built George House Homeless Hostel has two disabled adapted rooms. Similarly the new Plymouth Women’s Refuge has two wheelchair accessible flats. Some of this supported housing is available on a direct access/emergency basis (see the glossary info on housing priority bands).

**Private Sector Supply**

The private sector has a role in meeting the housing needs of those with physical disabilities who can afford access to the sector. We know that there is wheelchair housing demand in the private sector because of evidence outlined in Appendix 5 regarding DFG applicants; 70% of applications are from owner occupiers. Many of these applicants would consider moving home to a suitably adapted house or flat – but the lack of supply in the private sector does not allow this choice and forces them to rely on adaptations.

**Self-build:** Plymouth City Council is helping to support self-build initiatives in the City. Self-build housing options have the potential to deliver bespoke housing for disabled people who are able to self-help and would who like to self-build. Self-build disabled housing options would allow people to design specific housing requirements into their house, and this could be a particularly attractive housing option for some disabled people.

We also need to take account of hidden disabled housing need (currently not expressed in evidence data because people are technically adequately housed in residential care settings, but are likely to be suitable for independent living if adaptable properties were
available). There is also disabled housing need that is not visible to the Council in the form of ‘self helpers’- households who have the financial resources or equity to resolve their own disabled housing needs by moving or paying for adaptations.

A snapshot view of a property website (comprising the majority of sales and letting agents in Plymouth) shows the scarcity of bungalows in the Plymouth area for sale and the fact that they are relatively expensive to purchase. There are very few residential units available in the private sector which would be suitable for alterations in order to provide assisted or exclusive accommodation for disabled – or older people / people with support needs in the Plymouth area (excluding the extra care and residential care sectors). See appendix 7 for samples of letting and sales research.

Summary of Plymouth-based Evidence

There are an increasing numbers of people with physical disabilities living in the city that need homes and facilities to meet their needs. In the future, the ageing population increase in the city will add further pressure to the existing demand for disabled housing.

Using Appendix 1 and national data assumptions, it is estimated that there are currently 259 households in the city with a disabled resident in housing need which is unmet, because they are living in unsuitable accommodation either require measures to be able them to remain in their home or move to a suitable property. The future profile of disabled housing need for the city indicates that by 2020, the number of disabled households in un-met housing need will have increased to 262.

However the evidence outlined above, shows that estimating from national data is likely to underestimate the amount of disabled housing need in Plymouth. Using a wide range of Plymouth based statistics, the prevalence rates of disability in Plymouth have been shown to be higher than the national averages. For the purposes of comparison an alternative calculation of disabled housing need is set out below and included within this research, in Appendix 6. This alternative Plymouth-based calculation has been undertaken in order to provide a more accurate wheelchair accessible disabled housing need estimate for Plymouth.

Calculating Wheelchair Accessible Disabled Housing Need for Plymouth

A model has been devised (below) in order to forecast the volume of wheelchair accessible disabled housing unmet need. The model is in part based on that developed by Habinteg and London South Bank University, to whom acknowledgementes are given, for estimating housing need among wheelchair users. Note: This calculation does not claim to be a definitive forecast of what the future may bring.
The assessment method is as follows:

**Step 1** - Use figures for numbers of claimants of high mobility rate Disabled Living Allowance for Plymouth

**Step 2** - Project these figures to 2020 by using ONS projections

**Step 3** - To estimate the numbers of disabled people in unsuitable accommodation, calculate 8% of the projections from Step 2 (the regionally adjusted figure from the Survey of English Housing (SEH) /Habinteg).

**Step 4** - Affordable housing wheelchair accessible lettings in Plymouth are then taken into account. The 2010-2013 average available number of affordable properties to rent which were suitable for people with physical disabilities was 19 per annum. This average number of lettings has been rolled out ‘flat’ across the predicted future years.

**Step 5** – Plymouth’s DFGs are then taken into account, based on the average number of DFG completions in Plymouth in 2012-13. Despite previous increases in spending on DFGs the longer term constraints on public spending have to be taken into account, hence a ‘flat rate average 2010-2013’ figure for future DFGs has been applied.

**Step 6** - A percentage based ‘adjustment for self-help’ has then been applied. This takes account of the fact that there will be a number of households with disabled residents who have adequate resources to resolve their own housing problems, without recourse to the public or social sectors. Housing tenure data from the 2011 Census shows that 60% of Plymouth residents own their own home. Assuming that this housing tenure balance is also reflected in the disabled population, it would mean 28% of disabled households would own their house outright – implying a significant amount of available equity. Hence a 25% self-help reduction has been applied to the remaining figures, netted off from those in unmet need.

**Step 7** – Having applied all of the supply factors and assumptions, the last stage is to calculate the Plymouth unmet wheelchair accessible disabled housing need figure.

The basic sum is:

- The number of people with physical disabilities in unsuitable accommodation
- minus those that will get a suitable social housing let
- minus those that will have needs fully met through DFGs
- minus those that can meet their own needs in the market place
= equals unmet wheelchair accessible housing need.

An explanation of the Plymouth-based Step by step calculation for unmet disabled housing need is outlined below:

**Step 1/2** – Numbers of higher level rate DLA claimants (Plymouth) and projections using ONS Population Projections, see Appendix 4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Higher rate DLA claimants</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total number</td>
<td>9,545</td>
<td>9,842</td>
<td>10,020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Step 3** – Apply Habinteg’s regionally adjusted assumption for the South West percentage of those from Step 2 living in unsuitable homes = 8%

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regionally adjusted unsuitable homes assumption</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total number</td>
<td>764</td>
<td>787</td>
<td>802</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Step 4** – Less the assumed level of wheelchair affordable housing lettings (this includes both fully wheelchair adapted and part wheelchair adapted dwellings) : Average rate between 2010-2013 = 19 per annum.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average annual affordable housing wheelchair lettings</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total number</td>
<td>745</td>
<td>768</td>
<td>783</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** This step assumes that the numbers of wheelchair affordable housing stock remains the same. See also analysis of the potential impact of increasing supply through housing delivery and policy intervention in Plymouth.

**Step 5** – Less the assumed annual rate of Disabled Facilities Grant delivery - average rate of DFGs completed between 2010-213 = 251 per annum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average annual rate DFG completion</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total number</td>
<td>494</td>
<td>517</td>
<td>532</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** comment regarding uncertainty of the continued levels of funding for DFGs in the future.

**Step 6/7** – Less assumed rate of self-help through own financial resources or equity, (not always visible to the Council) = 25%

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Self-help assumption</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total un-met disabled housing need in Plymouth</td>
<td>370</td>
<td>388</td>
<td>399</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above step by step process outlines a calculation of Plymouth’s unmet disabled and wheelchair user housing need, and forecasts this need to 2020. It has taken into account
Plymouth based evidence and applied assumptions for affordable housing lettings, disabled facilities grants and has made allowances for self-help.

**Note:** There is some uncertainty about the continuation of funding for DFGs at their previous levels, and if funding levels drop this could have a significant impact by increasing the level of unmet housing need for wheelchair users.

By using statistics relevant to Plymouth’s population, the evidence shows that Plymouth’s required numbers of new wheelchair accessible disabled housing for the unmet need in the city, are much higher than the figures produced using the national household statistics. See difference between estimates in Appendices 1 and 6.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disabled Housing Need Case Study No 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Household with older resident: Disabled Facilities Grant client</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“The idea of moving was difficult to begin with, but I am now excited about the prospect of getting out independently”

Mrs H is a 67 year old with Multiple Sclerosis, and is a permanent wheel chair user. She currently lives in a 3 bed house and is struggling to get out of the house because of the steep steps and slopes leading up to the outside of the property. Mrs H is unable to access adequate sleeping and washing facilities and is becoming isolated and lonely, stuck in the house for days at a time.

The scale of external works to make access to the house suitable for a wheelchair user was so extensive that this was both too expensive for the Disabled Facilities Grant process, and visually unacceptable to the Housing Association landlord. Following an assessment of the options for Mrs H, an acceptable disabled housing solution has been found in a nearby development under construction by Affinity Sutton Housing Association (a member of the Plymouth Housing Development Partnership).

Mrs H has been offered a smaller ground floor flat which better matches her housing need, and is suitable for a wheelchair user. Not only does this mean that Mrs H will be able to return to her active involvement in the local community – but the move will free up a family house for availability to a family on Plymouth’s Housing Register. Finding a solution to this problem has not been easy, because Mrs H was not keen to be disrupted by moving house. The fact that the new house is so close to her existing community support networks has helped to persuade Mrs H that this is the best option. She is now excited about the prospect of moving in to her new accessible home, which will allow her to re-gain independence and will also be much more thermally efficient, being of modern construction standards. Hopefully living in a smaller more thermally efficient property will result in lower fuel bills for Mrs H too.
How Current Housing Provision and Services Meet Needs

The capacity of the city’s existing housing provision for physically disabled people is limited in both private and affordable sectors. Whilst many people would like to remain in their existing homes, and 251 Disabled Facilities Grants have been delivered each year, funding for these grants may not be available in the future. For those able and willing to move within the affordable rented sector, there are limited lettings available and many of these will not meet the aspirations and demands of physically disabled people, or are not suitable to fully accommodate their disabilities. Private sector provision of disabled housing is restrained by market forces.

The limited availability of affordable wheelchair accessible properties is clearly shown in Fig. 6/7 (Page 25), which shows that in Plymouth on average there are only 19 available wheelchair accessible lettings per annum. There is new wheelchair accessible disabled housing provision being made in affordable housing through the work of the Plymouth Housing Development Partnership. See Appendix 8 for data on recent PHDP disabled housing delivery. In addition some disabled housing provision has been secured through negotiations with housing developers in s106 planning agreements.

The evidence of wheelchair accessible disabled housing need in Plymouth is outlined in this document and is intended to form the basis of future planning application negotiations and policy development for disabled housing requirements to ensure that in future these identified housing needs are met.
Customer and Stakeholder Perspectives

Quote from participant Marjory Corner: “Many disabled people are astonishingly independent. Housing needs to aid that independence.”

Consultation sessions (see Appendix 10) have confirmed the strong support for the provision of more purpose built wheelchair user housing of all sizes including family sized accommodation. It is important that housing for disabled people should be located near good transport hubs and close to shops/facilities. Several specific housing features were requested in the consultation notes in the appendices, including preferences of either ground floor accommodation, or communal lifts for upper floors. Other key factors are sufficient space throughout the property to move around in a wheelchair, including in the wet-room areas (allowing space for carers), consideration also need to be given to providing transfer space from the wheelchair, sufficient storage space for equipment and electrical sockets in the right place to charge equipment.

Wider Trends

The economic situation affects all sectors of the population trying to resolve their own housing needs, including those with a disabled family member. Plymouth has a strong growth agenda, and with an upturn in the housing market there will be opportunities for households to self-help, particularly if there is an increase in private sector provision of wheelchair accessible disabled housing.

Plymouth has an ambitious Housing Delivery programme that aims to build more homes on the City’s available land (the City’s Get Plymouth Building and Plan for Homes target the development of 1000 homes per year). There is scope to target the provision of increased wheelchair accessible housing as part of this ambitious development programme.

There are tensions arising from disabled housing viability considerations, because it is more expensive for developers to build wheelchair accessible homes. Typically they are 20% larger than general needs housing, in order to be sufficiently generous in space to enable occupation by people with physical disabilities. This particularly affects families with disabled children who need larger circulation spaces to allow more complex mobility chairs to be manoeuvred. The outcome of the recent government consultation on wheelchair accessible housing standards is awaited, which may include viability considerations.

Building upwards allows a higher density of homes, but upper floor properties can only be accessible if lifts are fitted (usually multiple lifts are required to ensure that disabled people are not stranded in their homes by a lift breakdown). Multiple lift installation is a high cost that most developers are unwilling to consider unless the development is specifically intended for older people.

Good health care and improved medical expertise means that more babies born with significant, often multiple disabilities are now surviving into childhood and adulthood.
This means there is a need to support more families to care for their disabled children by providing or enabling suitable homes that can later provide self-contained space that supports independence, as these children grow into young adults.

Welfare reform which limits housing benefit to under-occupiers will impact on those with disabilities who need additional space for medical supplies, equipment or simply in terms of circulation space. This will particularly affect families with disabled children and disabled adults under 65 years old. In the Affordable Housing sector, welfare reform implementation has already led to an increased demand for moves into smaller homes.

**Type of Disabled Housing Required**

On the basis of the national and Plymouth based estimates, there are currently between 259-370 wheelchair accessible disabled households in unmet need in the City. There are projected to be between 262 - 399 wheelchair accessible disabled households with unmet need by 2020. Full details of the estimate calculations appear in Appendix 1 and Appendix 6. Plymouth has a shortfall in the provision of suitable wheelchair accessible properties. The evidence shows that there is unmet housing need in all house sizes which could potentially be met by the provision of new disabled adapted homes. This research provides evidence to support relevant planning application negotiations, policy development, strategic documents and funding bids.

Based on the results of the 2013 SHMNA focus group and the more recent consultation sessions (see Appendix 10), the key ‘built in’ features that physically disabled residents require in any development programme are:

- level access entrances to homes, and most importantly, level access bathroom and washing facilities.
- Stair lifts (or through floor lifts) and reserved parking bays are next most important.
- ground floor accommodation
- stair lifts or through floor lifts to access upper floors
- sufficient space for example to manoeuvre a wheelchair
- storage space for specialist equipment and electrical sockets for charging
- level access to a walk-in shower or wet room (incl. sufficient space for a carer)
- level access to the front door/ garden
- Reserved parking bays (longer and wider)

Bungalows were overwhelmingly the most popular built form of disabled housing, although there is increasingly some acceptance of flats on ground floors or in small low-rise blocks. For those considering a house-move, being near to friends and family support networks are also major consideration.
Housing Delivery Programmes to Meet Need

As noted, the calculations take account of those housing needs that could be met by making adaptations allowing people to stay in existing homes. Allowance has also been made for self-help households making their own arrangements in the private sector. Some initial estimates are also made for potential programmes for new disabled housing supply, to help meet the outstanding unmet need that has been identified by the research.

Policy judgements will need to be made about how to balance the housing needs of people with physical mobility disabilities against those with other forms of disability, or in other forms of housing stress such as homelessness, overcrowding, poor conditions, and un-affordability. This prioritisation is a matter for local democratic processes.

The figures should therefore be treated as the answer to the question ‘if we were to attempt to address the unmet housing needs of physically disabled people in Plymouth overall, year on year, what new supply is required?’.

The figures in the table 8 represent a 10 year housing delivery programme design to make provision for Plymouth’s unmet wheelchair accessible disabled housing needs up to the year 2024. The suggested wheelchairs accessible disabled housing delivery figures take the mid-point between the ‘high’ and ‘low’ needs projection figures derived in Appendix 1 and 6. (Mid-point between 262 – 399 = 330).

Table 8 – Targeted 10 Year Programme of Disabled Housing Delivery 2014-24

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Open market (s106)</th>
<th>Affordable (s106)</th>
<th>Public land disposals and PHDP(see glossary)</th>
<th>Cumulative total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>120</td>
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<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>150</td>
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<td>2019</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>210</td>
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<td>2021</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2022</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2023</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2024</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>330</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The tenure breakdown of the target disabled housing programme illustrated is focussed on the affordable housing sector (including intermediate tenures for shared ownership), but also include an element of private sector provision requirement. Note also that Plymouth’s programme of public land sales offers a significant opportunity to deliver disabled adapted housing.

In practice the Disabled Housing requirements will specify either **wheelchair accessible** (usually in the affordable housing tenures where allocation policies for disabled household needs will apply) or **wheelchair adaptable** properties (usually in the open market tenures). This provision would align with the Approved Document M optional requirements for the delivery of Wheelchair User dwellings.

The target of 30 dwellings per year has been profiled in order to meet the majority of unmet disabled housing needs in Plymouth. The programme of delivery makes reference to ‘Get Plymouth Building’ and the ‘Plan for Homes’ forecast programme which outlines the ambition for the development of 1,000 homes per year. Disabled housing targets will need to be revised depending on actual delivery from year to year.

The profile of disabled housing delivery (both market and affordable) through s106 could be delivered by applying a 4% local planning policy requirement for disabled housing provision (wheelchair accessible or adaptable to be specified in each case) on all residential development schemes of 25 dwellings and over.

Plymouth’s disabled housing specification requires that properties are constructed to a disabled adaptable standard. Funding for any specialist equipment for the disabled person would be from other sources.

The suggested indicative wheelchair accessible/adaptable housing dwelling size profile for delivery is:

- 1 bed – 50%
- 2 bed – 25%
- 3 bed – 15%
- 4 bed – 10%

*see notes about households with disabled children and the requirements to include a reasonable degree of family sized accommodation.

Table 8 Illustrates that a large portion of Plymouth’s disabled housing delivery programmes have been profiled to be delivered by using public land resources and Housing Association/HCA support. Hence the s106 percentage requirements have been kept to a minimum of a 4% requirement, applied only to residential schemes of 25 dwellings or more (where economies of scale in the development will be significant). It is envisaged that these wheelchair accessible/adaptable disabled housing requirements
would be deducted from the Lifetime Homes policy requirements (given that they exceed LTH).

Assuming that 25% of disabled residents are able to afford their own home or self-help to make provision for their housing needs, then private sector disabled housing provision would meet a proportion of unmet disabled housing need, i.e. 65 units of the low estimate and 100 units of the high estimate. This would equate to a small (but much needed) percentage of market housing development over the next 15 years.

Housing delivery plans will need to take into account the new affordable housing funding arrangements, the redefinition of ‘affordable’, changes to housing benefit and the introduction of Universal Credit. In the context of more limited availability of public sector housing investment in future, this means that authorities and housing associations need to look further afield for resources, including considering schemes that have no grant element. Some areas for exploration include:

- Working with the private sector (perhaps through use of local authority land assets) to directly deliver disabled housing and to tap into potential private demand for high quality disabled appropriate accommodation.
- Working with housing associations and developers in order to maximise the use of S106 resources and zero grant developments.
- Accessing the New Homes Bonus and focusing this on disability-appropriate accommodation.
- Allocation of a capital funding assistance to support the delivery of wheelchair accessible disabled housing in the affordable housing sector.

Enhanced development programmes on their own will be inadequate to meet the housing needs of people with disabilities. A combined approach involving the most efficient use of existing social and private sector stock, enhanced support services designed to keep people with disabilities in their own homes, better targeting of allocations of social housing stock, and focussed use of Disabled Facilities Grant are all required alongside the development of new homes.

The above disabled housing delivery is required in addition to Lifetime Homes (or equivalent standard) intermediate level ‘more accessible’ housing provision, for those households that do not need full specification wheelchair user housing.

**Conclusions and Recommendations**

There are an increasing number of people living in Plymouth with physical disabilities, who need homes and facilities to meet their needs.

The ageing population profile for Plymouth will have an impact given that the prevalence of disability increases with age. It is anticipated that numbers of physically
disabled people in Plymouth will increase, and in turn put further pressure on the city’s unmet disabled housing need.

By 2020 it is estimated that between 262 and 399 households in the city with a disabled member will be in unsuitable accommodation, having an unmet wheelchair accessible housing need, and will require adaptation measures to be able to remain in their home or move to a suitable property.

Capacity of existing wheelchair accessible housing provision to meet these specific housing needs is limited by constraints on public spending, the suitability of existing homes, the affordability of suitable properties, and the increasing demand from increasing numbers of disabled people for the resources available.

Whilst many people would like to remain in their existing homes, (251 Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) have been delivered each year over the past three years), this level of funding for adaptations to existing properties may not be sustainable in the future. For those able and willing to move to the social rented sector, there are limited wheelchair accessible lettings available and many of these will not meet the aspirations and demands of disabled people, or are not suitable to fully accommodate their disabilities.

A proportion (assumed 25%) of the households will be able to pay for suitable adaptations themselves, or are able to self-help by finding an alternative property which meets their needs. However, there is an undersupply of accommodation of different types, sizes and tenures available in the private sector to meet the needs of people with physical disabilities.

Plymouth’s planning policies and emerging strategic documents requiring the development of new housing to meet the needs of people with physical disabilities are now being developed. Private sector provision is restrained by market forces, although more recently there is new provision (albeit very low numbers) being secured for affordable wheelchair accessible housing through s106 planning agreements.

There are a number of factors which many disabled people want from their homes, whether in their existing home, or by moving. These include; ground floor accommodation or stair lifts or through floor lifts to access upper floors; level access to a walk-in shower or wet room; level access to the front door.

Those considering a house-move mainly indicate a demand for bungalows, although consideration may need to be given to whether/how well these demands could be met through suitable, well-designed ground floor flats, or adapted houses such as those meeting Lifetime Homes standards. Being near to friends and family is a major consideration for many. Looking at the disabled housing need profiles, any new provision of homes for physically disabled people should be mainly one and two bedroomed dwellings, although there is also a need for larger disabled homes.
A shortfall in the existing provision of suitable wheelchair accessible properties has been identified, showing that there is unmet housing need for physically disabled people in Plymouth which could potentially be met by the provision of suitably designed new homes. This report also provides evidence to support relevant planning application negotiations, policy development, strategic documents and funding bids.

The report has provided some estimates of the size and type of programme that could be introduced to address unmet need for 330 households. The figures are based on 2020 projected housing needs of physically disabled people, and if the programme was implemented it would help to meet the City’s housing needs for physically disabled people. The council would have to balance the actual size and shape of this programme with those responding to other priority housing requirements.

Within the Target delivery programme outlined in table 8 above, 25% of new wheelchair accessible dwellings would be targeted to be private sector provision. Based on low and high estimates for the 10 year delivery programme, this equates to between 65 and 100 units. 75% of new wheelchair accessible dwellings would be built as affordable housing (between 197 to 299 units) - social rented, and/or other rented tenures such as affordable rented – intermediate affordable housing/shared ownership.

Recommendations

1. **Scrutinise allocation activity** Ensure that adapted and wheelchair homes are only let to those who need them; including letting of over 60s accommodation to younger disabled people including better use of the accessible housing registers.

2. **Draw up and update database of all affordable housing adapted /wheelchair stock.**
   
   Keep records of private sector stock that has benefitted from DFGs.

3. **Accessible properties to be constructed using the Plymouth City Council disabled housing design specification or new Part M building reg standards for wheelchair user homes** –. The specification is to an ‘adaptable’ standard – and actual adaptations costs such as specific bathroom equipment will need to be budgeted outside of the construction process. Consider any additional funding available to ensure viability and deliverability.

4. **Continue to implement existing planning policy for Lifetime Homes (or equivalent standard)**

   Lifetime homes are more suitable for adaptation and will be capable of contributing to a small proportion of the disabled housing need identified.

5. **Overcome barriers which discourage people moving to a more suitable property**

   Address concerns about the upheaval of moving, provide help with planning and moving, including advocacy through One Stop Shop service to explain and
discuss all housing options and offer a range of tenure options; home ownership/shared ownership/social rent/affordable rent

6. **Promote joint agency /partnership work**
   
   Promote preventative and early intervention investment, so that benefitting agencies (in particular health and social care) understand the value for money of investment.

7. **Further develop Major Adaptations/ DFGs Team**
   
   Working with local estate agents and on a system of recycling adaptations – stair lifts in particular. Work with Home Improvement Agencies (HIAs) to explore additional funding possibilities e.g. extending menu of services for self funders; social care and health investment.

8. **Introduce disabled adaptations stock condition survey and recording systems.**
   
   Record nature of adaptation and level (e.g. LTH, wheelchair etc.) Record nature of adaptation and level jointly with provider partners.

9. **Use publically owned land to meet disabled housing needs**
   
   Agree a partnership approach to how publically owned land can be used to improve the delivery of disabled housing and the viability of homes that are designed specifically for the needs of disabled people.

**Glossary**

**Affordable housing** – The National Planning Policy Framework defines affordable housing as follows: Social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Affordable housing should include provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision.

**Housing Priority band criteria** –

Band A = Emergency Housing need (normally submitted by another agency)
   
   Including - urgent health/wellbeing need; emergency housing disrepair; witness Protection; escaping violence/harassment – threat to life.

Band B = High Housing Need including statutorily homeless households, prevention of homelessness, lacking 2 or more bedrooms, high health and wellbeing need, high disrepair, move on from supported accommodation.

Band C = Medium Housing Need including medium health and well-being or house disrepair, lacking 1 bedroom, children (U8) over 3rd floor, moves for work.

Band D = Low Housing Need including low health and wellbeing/or house disrepair, shared facilities, access to children, notice to quit, no local connection to Devon.
Band E = No housing need – applicants with sufficient resources to meet housing needs in the private rented market, or adequately housed.

LSOA - Lower Layer Super Output Areas are a geographic hierarchy designed to improve the reporting of small area statistics in England and Wales. LSOA’s are a key building block for analysis of census data. The Minimum population for a LSOA is 1000 and the mean is 1500.

PHDP – Plymouth Housing Development Partnership. A group of Registered Providers (Housing Associations) working in Plymouth in partnership with Plymouth City Council to deliver affordable housing.

Wheelchair Accessible Housing – Housing which is designed to Plymouth’s disabled housing specification (see appendix 9)

Source documents:

DCLG Housing Standards Review - Sept 2014

Mind the Step – An Estimation of housing need among wheelchair users in England Habinteg / Southbank University 2010

POPPI and PANSI websites –

2013 Strategic Housing Market Needs Assessment – incl. Plymouth

Appendix List – Data sets of evidence listed:

Appendix 1 – Estimate of Disabled Housing Need – using National data sets
Appendix 2 – Wheelchair Households – Devon Home Choice – Oct 2013
Appendix 3 – Census – ONS Plymouth Disability data
Appendix 4 – Disability Living Allowance and Plymouth population projections
Appendix 5 – Disabled Facilities Grants 2010-13 - Plymouth
Appendix 6– Step by Step Plymouth Estimate of Disabled Housing Need
Appendix 7 – Open Mkt Wheelchair adaptable property availability (sales and letting)
Appendix 8 – PHDP Wheelchair Accessible Housing Delivery
Appendix 9 – Plymouth City Council Disabled Housing standard

List Data Sources

2011 Census – Plymouth data
ONS Health statistics
ONS Disability Living Allowance and Employment support Allowance statistics
Devon Home Choice Accessible Housing Register data
Major Adaptations team DFG data
JSNA Life Expectancy Report
IMD – Indices of deprivation 2010 summary report
MOD – SPVA - Location of Armed Forces Pension and Compensation Recipients: 2011/12:
Appendix 1 - Worked estimate of disabled housing need in England using Habinteg /South Bank methodology

1. Data from Survey of English Housing – determine total number of wheelchair user households in England – note indoor and outdoor wheelchair user categories
2. Findings from step 1 above adjusted to take account of overall household growth
3. Calculation of unmet indoor wheelchair housing need (based on no. of households stating need for specially adapted accommodation and that their current home was unsuitable)
4. Calculation of unmet outdoor housing need (based on no of households stating need for specially adapted accommodation and that their current home was unsuitable because it was not designed for wheelchair access or use).
5. Unmet wheelchair housing need overall.

Step 1 – Total number of wheelchair user households in England 2007/8 = 582,000
   Of which 153,000 were indoor wheelchair users, and 429,000 were outdoor wheelchair users

Step 2 – Adjustment for growth in the number of dwellings – 0.8% = 586,656
   Of which 154,224 were indoor wheelchair users, and 432,432 were outdoor wheelchair users

Step 3 – Unmet housing need for indoor wheelchair users 154,224 x 26% = 40,100

Step 4 - Unmet housing need for outdoor wheelchair users 432,432 x 18% (unsuitable homes and need for specifically adapted property) = 79,567 (subtotal)
   And 79,567 x 48% (plus design of homes unsuitable for wheelchair access/use) = 38,200

Step 5 Total unmet housing need for all wheelchair housing in England = 78,300

South West regional data for unmet housing need
Total number of SW households = 2,317,000
Total number of wheelchair user households = 58,352
% of SW households with wheelchair housing need = 3%

Total number of wheelchair user households with unmet housing need = 4,726
% of SW wheelchair user households with unmet housing need = 8%

Applying the national estimate to local authority area
Plymouth City Council has 107,892 households
Multiply total number of households by the regionally adjust % of wheelchair households – SW = 3%

107,892 x 3% = 3,237 wheelchair households in Plymouth
In order to calculate unmet housing need within this group multiply the number of wheelchair households by the regionally adjusted unmet housing need % - SW = 8%

Final Estimate = 3,237 x 8% = 259 wheelchair households with unmet housing need in Plymouth
Appendix 2
Available lettings records suitable for wheelchair households – Devon Home Choice

## No of properties advertised

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>04/10 - 03/11</th>
<th>04/11 - 03/12</th>
<th>04/12 - 03/13</th>
<th>04/13 to-date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wheelchair</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
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## Of which let to those requiring wheelchair

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wheelchair</th>
<th>04/10 - 03/11</th>
<th>04/11 - 03/12</th>
<th>04/12 - 03/13</th>
<th>04/13 to-date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bed need</td>
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<td>A   B   C   D   E</td>
<td>A   B   C   D   E</td>
<td>A   B   C   D   E</td>
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<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>5</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
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## No of properties advertised

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<th>Part Wheelchair</th>
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<th>04/11 - 03/12</th>
<th>04/12 - 03/13</th>
<th>04/13 to-date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
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</table>

## Of which let to those requiring part wheelchair

<table>
<thead>
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<th>04/10 - 03/11</th>
<th>04/11 - 03/12</th>
<th>04/12 - 03/13</th>
<th>04/13 to-date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bed need</td>
<td>A   B   C   D   E</td>
<td>A   B   C   D   E</td>
<td>A   B   C   D   E</td>
<td>A   B   C   D   E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 3 Mapped data from Census 2011
## Appendix 4 - Plymouth - Higher rate Disability Living Allowance claimants

Comparing historic data and population projects to predict future rates of disability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% total population receiving higher rate mobility award</th>
<th>95% CI lower</th>
<th>95% CI upper</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plymouth higher rate mobility award (Feb 2013)</td>
<td>9,545</td>
<td>3.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plymouth total population (2012 mid-year estimate, Census-based)</td>
<td>258,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England higher rate mobility award (Feb 2013)</td>
<td>1,455,460</td>
<td>2.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England total population (2012 mid-year estimate, Census-based)</td>
<td>53,493,70</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plymouth higher rate mobility award</th>
<th>Feb-13</th>
<th>Feb-12</th>
<th>Feb-11</th>
<th>Feb-10</th>
<th>Feb-09</th>
<th>Feb-08</th>
<th>Feb-07</th>
<th>Feb-06</th>
<th>Feb-05</th>
<th>Feb-04</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plymouth total claimants</td>
<td>9,545</td>
<td>9,520</td>
<td>9,315</td>
<td>9,275</td>
<td>9,065</td>
<td>8,805</td>
<td>8,570</td>
<td>8,315</td>
<td>8,130</td>
<td>7,880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plymouth population (ONS mid-year estimates, census based/revised)</td>
<td>18,755</td>
<td>18,295</td>
<td>17,795</td>
<td>17,420</td>
<td>16,875</td>
<td>16,240</td>
<td>15,500</td>
<td>14,950</td>
<td>14,400</td>
<td>13,705</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25310</td>
<td>25250</td>
<td>25120</td>
<td>24920</td>
<td>24750</td>
<td>24400</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
% population receiving higher rate award 3.70 3.69 3.63 3.65 3.58 3.49 3.41 3.34 3.28 3.23

Appendix 4 (Cont.) – Higher rate DLA claimants

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<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>England higher rate mobility award</td>
<td>1,455,460</td>
<td>1,451,500</td>
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<tr>
<td>England total claimants</td>
<td>2,723,440</td>
<td>2,672,280</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England population (ONS mid-year estimates, census based/revised)</td>
<td>53,493,70</td>
<td>53,493,70</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% population receiving higher rate award</td>
<td>2.72</td>
<td>2.71</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</table>

Population projections

Using February 2013 value of 3.7% receiving higher award and the ONS population projections estimated numbers of people in Plymouth receiving the higher rate award will be:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9657</td>
<td>9724</td>
<td>9787</td>
<td>9842</td>
<td>9890</td>
<td>9938</td>
<td>9979</td>
<td>10020</td>
<td>10057</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix 5 Plymouth Disabled Facilities Grants – 2010 – 13

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average Grant</strong></td>
<td>£ 8,080.60 as a %</td>
<td>£ 4,903.85 as a %</td>
<td>£ 4,632.09 as a %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>No. of DFGs by Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 15</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.30%</td>
<td>5.91%</td>
<td>4.13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 to 49</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15.50%</td>
<td>14.77%</td>
<td>13.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 to 64</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>19.25%</td>
<td>20.20%</td>
<td>16.80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 to 84</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>48.13%</td>
<td>46.31%</td>
<td>53.17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85 +</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12.82%</td>
<td>12.81%</td>
<td>12.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Owner Occupier</strong></td>
<td>124</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>66.31%</td>
<td>67.98%</td>
<td>71.63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tenant</strong></td>
<td>57</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30.48%</td>
<td>29.56%</td>
<td>27.27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unknown Tenure</strong></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.21%</td>
<td>2.46%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Cost Savings to Health Care Info

An hour’s home care per day costs £5,000 a year. At a national level, because of the large numbers and burden of revenue payments, the potential for savings is again in £millions: Adaptations that remove or reduce the need for daily visits pay for themselves in a time-span ranging from a few months to three years and then produce annual savings. In the cases reviewed, annual savings varied from £1,200 to £29,000 a year; Significant savings in home care cost are mainly found in relation to younger (including younger old) disabled people. Adaptations for older people will not routinely produce savings in home-care costs, because 83 per cent of those waiting for adaptations receive no homecare, whilst others are so frail that adaptations will not remove the need.
for care. In these cases, savings are still to be found but through the prevention of accidents or deferring admission to residential care, and in improved quality of life. - Heywood, F, et al. (2007) Better Outcomes, lower Costs: Implications for health and social care budgets of investment in housing adaptations, improvements and equipment: a review of the evidence, Office for Disability Issues.

### Service Streamlining

Lean processes have been developed over a period of 3 years removing unnecessary procedures, and utilising internal intelligence systems to speed delivery of adaptations to applicants. The service has seen a significant increase in demand over the last 24 months and has received additional funding from Health to assist in the delivery of DFG. Smarter methods of procurement have been adopted to reduce waiting times and average costs for customers and ensure consistency of quality of workmanship. Quality control methods have been engineered into to the process again to ensure continuity and consistency to customers.
## Appendix 6 - Plymouth Data - Estimate of Disabled Housing Need

### Step by step calculation method:

**Step 1/2** – Numbers of Higher level rate DLA claimants (Plymouth) and projections using ONS population projections – see Appendix 5.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Higher rate DLA claimants - Plymouth</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>9,545</td>
<td>9,842</td>
<td>10,020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Step 3** – Apply Habinteg – regionally adjusted assumption for the South West percentage of the above living in unsuitable homes = 8%

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regionally adjusted unsuitable homes adjustment</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>764</td>
<td>787</td>
<td>802</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Step 4** – Less the assumed level of Affordable Housing Wheelchair housing lettings (this includes both fully wheelchair adapted and part wheelchair adapted dwellings) – average rate between 2010 – 2013 = 19 per annum.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Av. Ann. rate AH wheelchair housing letting</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>745</td>
<td>768</td>
<td>783</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This assumes that the numbers of wheelchair AH housing stock remain the same. See also analysis of the potential impact of increasing supply through housing delivery and policy intervention in Plymouth.

**Step 5** – Less the assumed annual rate of Disabled Facilities Grant delivery - average rate of DFG’s completed between 2010 – 213 = 251 per annum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Av. Ann rate DFG completion</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>251</td>
<td>251</td>
<td>251</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>494</td>
<td>517</td>
<td>532</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
*Note comment regarding uncertainty of the continued levels of funding for DFGs in the future.

**Step 6** – Less assumed rate of self-help through own financial resources or equity, (not always visible to the Council) = 25%

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Self help assumption</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>less</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total of un-met disabled housing need in Plymouth</td>
<td><strong>370</strong></td>
<td><strong>388</strong></td>
<td><strong>399</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 7 – Sample of Private supply - sales and lettings information

Bungalow Sales in Plymouth

Find bungalows for sale in Plymouth, Devon

1-12 of 20 bungalows for sale found.

View as: List | Grid | Map

Results per page: 12 | Sort: Highest price

Location: Plymouth
Radius: This area only
Property: Bungalows
Bed: No min - No max
Price (£): No min - No max
Added: Last 14 days

Update Results

Create an alert for Plymouth or save this search

Filter your results

Property type:
- Detached bungalows (13)
- Semi-detached bungalows (8)
- Terraced bungalows (1)

Pre-owned & new homes:
- Pre-owned homes (20)
Bungalow lettings in Plymouth

- Rightmove

Find bungalows to rent in Plymouth, Devon

Change location and criteria

Location: Plymouth
Radius: This area only
Property: Bungalow
Beds: No min No max
Price: No min No max
Added: Anytime

Update Results

Filter your results

Property type:
- Detached bungalows (9)
- Semi-detached bungalows (1)

Furnishing:
- Unfurnished (9)
- Furnished (1)

Type of let:
- Long term (1)

Outside space:
- Garden (6)
- Parking (6)

Retirement properties:
- Non-retirement (9)
Recent and Future Profile Disabled Housing Delivery - Plymouth Housing Development Partnership (PHDP)

2011 – 2014 No’s of disabled units delivered in Plymouth
2014 – 2016 No’s of disabled units profiled for delivery in Plymouth

Wheelchair accessible disabled specification:
Completed units
2011/12 - 5 w/c spec units (George House/Whitleigh)
2012/13 - 2 w/c spec units (Womens’ Refuge)
2013/14 - 3 w/c spec units (Royal Marine)
Total - 10 w/c spec dwellings - over 3 years, average 3 per annum.

Wheelchair accessible disabled specification:
Profiled units (future delivery)
2014/15 - 1 w/c spec units (Former Astor ctr)
2015/16 - 3 w/c spec units (Downham/Chaucer)
Total - 4 w/c spec dwellings – over 2 years, average 2 per annum.

Nb All of the above wheelchair accessible dwellings were delivered on PHDP enabled sites via Housing Association development teams.

There are a number of extra care units which have been completed – and are profiled for delivery. These extra care units have specific letting criteria, regarding personal care requirements which limit the housing client group.

Also recently negotiated wheelchair accessible housing through s106:

2. Forder Valley – 8 no disabled specification affordable units (4 flats/4 houses). Not yet commenced.
3. Aberdeen Ave – 1 no disabled spec. open market unit (dwelling type to be confirmed at REM stage). Not yet commenced.
Appendix 9

Plymouth City Council
Disabled Housing Specification
Cover sheet

**Purpose**
The purpose of this document is to provide clear guidance about the required disabled housing specification – as agreed and approved below.

Agreed specification for ………………………………………………………………………

(Complete development site name/plots where applicable)

Client name/property (if known)…………………………………………………………
Date …………………

Signatories below:

PCC – Housing Enabling team
Name – capitals……………………………… Signature…………………………
Date……………………………………

PCC – Housing Options/Panel
Name – capitals……………………………… Signature…………………………
Date……………………………………
PCC – OT (on behalf of client)  Signature………………………
Name – capitals…………………… Date……………………………

Registered Provider/Developer  Signature………………………
Name – capitals…………………… Date……………………………

55
SPECIFICATION FOR DWELLINGS FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

In the case of conflict between this specification and any statutory requirement (eg planning permission/conditions, Building Regulations), the statutory requirement shall take precedence. Subject to that, no waivers will be allowed in respect of this specification except with the consent in writing of the City Council’s Housing Enabling team.

Note that the Enactment of new National Housing Standards regulations is anticipated to supersede these local standards – subject to National Government decisions in the future.

External environment and entrances

- Drop Kerbs
  - Provide sufficient drop kerbs at suitable locations around the property and surrounding approach to the development to provide adequate access for a wheelchair user.

- Car Port
  - Provide a carport for transferring to a wheelchair and negotiating the entrance in the dry.
  - Minimum dimensions - width: 3600mm – if possible 4500mm, length: 5800mm – if possible 6500mm, height: 2800mm.

- Ramps & Paths
  - Maximum gradient for ramps and paths over 5m in length: 1:20
  - Maximum gradient for ramps and paths under 5m in length: 1:15
  - Maximum gradient for ramps and paths under 2m in length: 1:12
  - Minimum width of all ramps and paths: 1200mm
  - Provide safety edges to all ramps and paths minimum: 100mm where there is a level difference between ramp and surrounding area.
- Level platform by entrances: 1500x 1500mm
- Surfaces to be smooth but slip resistant – tamped surface preferred.
- Handrail to one side of ramp 800 – 1100mm high.

- Scooter Store
  - Provide scooter store minimum size: 1200mm x 2000mm (vented)
  - Alternatively provide suitable charging point at the rear of the car port
  - Provide an internal wheelchair and hoist storage and charging area - minimum 1200mm x 800mm (vented).

- Gardens
  - Should be level with a paved area min 2400mm x 3600mm wide
  - Accessible clothes drying facilities. Paths should meet the standard above.
  - Rotary drier should be height adjustable.

**Internal environment**

- Entrances and internal doorways
  - All thresholds must be level
  - Lighting, with PIR detectors at all entrances.
  - Clear opening width: 850mm minimum (unobstructed)
  - Door locks to be easy to operate with one hand. Thumb turn internally.
  - Door handles to be lever type
  - Provide additional Spy hole 1100mm from the floor.
  - Provide a box to catch the mail under letterbox.
  - Make provision for installation of a remote controlled door opener as an adaptation on the main entrance door. (Main entrance door to be compatible with a remote control door opening system).
- Fire doors to have remote control door openers.
- Provide door intercoms from bedroom and main living area for the main property entrance and any communal entrance.
- Provide a door entry intercom system to give access to the properties front door and any communal door.

- Passages
  - For a straight passage minimum width: 900mm
  - To allow 90 degree turn minimum width: 1200mm
  - Next to main entrance: 1500mm x 1500mm

- Windows
  - Bottom of windows should be 810mm from the floor
  - Sills should be shallow
  - Lever handles positioned at the bottom of the window.
  - Any locking mechanism needs to be accessed from a seating position with minimum strength and dexterity.
  - Window over kitchen worktops to have remote opening.
  - Windows installed should be compatible with remote control window opening system.

- Components
  - Switches should be between: 700mm and 1000mm from ground.
  - Sockets should be: 600mm from the ground.
  - Meters should be between: 1200mm and 1400mm from the ground.
  - Heating controls should be between: 750mm x 1000mm from the ground.
  - Other internal features such as mirrors, hooks, shelving should be usable from a seated position
  - Heating should be adjustable and available on demand.
  - Residential sprinklers should be provided to all rooms within the accommodation.
Through floor lifts – sizes required will depend on wheelchair type. Powered chairs are now more common and therefore should be used as the default size measurement.

**Bedrooms**

- Minimum sizes: double: 3900mm x 4850mm, single: 3900mm x 3000mm
- The bedroom designed for the wheelchair user should be situated next to bathroom with a demountable partition to allow a ceiling track hoist to run from the bed to over the toilet and bath.
- Ceiling joists should be of sufficient size and strength to allow for possible fitting of ceiling track hoists. Any strengthening should allow for flexibility of track layout.
- Joists to run at right angles to anticipated direction of track travel.
- Fused spur outlet at ceiling level at one end of the anticipated position of track.
- Minimum four double sockets one either side of bed.
- Provide sensor light with remote control

**Bathroom**

- Properties with two or more bedrooms:
  - Minimum size: 2700mm x 3500mm
  - To include a bath and level access shower.
- Properties with one bedroom:
  - Minimum size 2700mm x 2500mm
  - To include a level access shower.

- All properties:
  - Toilets to be wide based, close coupled WC – with paddle lever flush
- Sufficient side transfer space allowance provided for WC
- Fused spur to allow for the installation of:
  - geberit or closomat automatic cleaning drying toilet
  - body drier
  - specialist bath
  - height adjustable washbasin
  - height adjustable shower seat
  - Additional wall mounted fan heater.
- Folding shower seat with legs – if necessary.
- Shower should be thermostatically controlled.
- Controls to be reached from a sitting position.
- Shower head on slide bar to allow adjustment suitable for a seated or standing person.
- Allow for two x 600mm rails and one drop down rail in shower
- Allow for one 600mm rail and one drop down rail by toilet
- Allow for one 600mm rail by basin.
- All walls in bathroom to have sufficient fixing points for flexible positioning of rails to suit individual requirements.
- Walls to have additional 18mm WPB plywood sheeting internally where timber. Metal stud use should be avoided because of difficulties/expense of subsequent alterations.
- Washbasin to be wall mounted on adjustable brackets with flexible plumbing and no pedestal.
- Provide lever mixer taps.
- Shaver socket next to washbasin, accessible from a seated position.
- Mirror to be long enough to be used from a sitting and standing position.
- Baths to be 1700mm long, of standard design and of sufficient strength to allow the fitting of specialist bath equipment.
  - Living room
    - Minimum size 4000mm x 4000mm.
    - Allow for sufficient dining area i.e. 2500mm x 2500mm if this is not provided in the kitchen or separate dining room.
    - Allow for a minimum of four double sockets.
  - Kitchen
    - All worktops should be on adjustable brackets to range from 700mm to 900mm.
    - The kitchen design should allow for knee clearance under the sink, hob and a section of work surface.
    - Separate hob and oven housing.
    - Oven should have a side-opening door and pull out shelf beneath.
    - Sink (of shallow design) should to be insulated underneath to protect the user.
    - Sink (of shallow design) should have lever mixer taps.
    - Provide a minimum 4 double sockets above worktop at an appropriate position for using the kettle, microwave, toaster and other labour saving equipment.
    - Corner units should have carousels.
    - Space and plumbing should be provided for a minimum of four standard sized white goods.
    - Wall cupboards should be fitted as low as possible but not to impede on space that may be required for equipment.
    - A minimum of 2.5m cubed should be provided beneath the worktop.
    - Provision of pull out ironing board preferred.

Early discussion is advised regarding any particular design features/requirements in addition to the generic disabled specification outlined above.

Any problems in complying with the specification details should be discussed as early as possible with the Housing Enabling team.
Appendix 10
Wheelchair Contract User Group (Group of 12), Millbrook centre – Estover

Consultation session 16/10/2014 - Notes

- Following a brief introduction by Amy Luxton to the background and purposes of PCC’s Disabled Housing Needs study, discussion was invited about the types of housing required and any specific features or factors that were important to be included within housing from a wheelchair user perspective.
- Quote: ‘Many disabled people are astonishingly independent. Housing needs to aid that independence.’ Marjorie Corner
- Discussion around the title of the study document. Alternatives including Accessible housing and Homes were floated. Conclusion – document title should be changed to ‘Wheelchair User Housing Needs in Plymouth’.
- Cautionary note that there is no typical wheelchair user – therefore general comments about this housing type will always need to be reviewed to consider the individual.
- Discussion around bungalows Vs Flats – provided specifically designed with all necessary features there was no objection raised to flatted accommodation – accepting that it was a more efficient use of land. It was also considered that there would be an optimum cluster group where residents could share support and housing experiences – but would not become an identifiable disabled housing group.
- Location of wheelchair user homes should be alongside good transport hubs with good access to shops. Need to be careful about general Plymouth gradients in terms of getting round.
- Noticeable pressure point in the lack of family sized wheelchair user accommodation available – note this is borne out in the more recent DHC data on 3 and 4 bed needs increasing.
- General dislike of through floor lifts which take up too much room and are too disruptive to house layouts.
• Turning circles and width of doorways critical to successful wheelchair user design. Wet-rooms need extra space – and toilets laid out with space either side of toilet to allow room for carers.
• Length as well as width of car parking space is important in order to protect disabled person at the rear of vehicle as well.
• Keysafes are important
• Much discussion about the strength of walls and ceilings to take adaptations and or hoists etc. What monitoring is done to check that the ceilings and walls are reinforced as they should be but also it would be helpful if a plan of the ceiling structure could be provided to illustrate the location of reinforced areas.
• Improved access – for example into communal areas = improved access for everyone.
• Many disabled people have lots of electrical equipment and therefore the provision of more Electrical sockets and in appropriate locations for charging is essential.
• Questionnaires and pre-paid envelopes supplied for further group distribution and post meeting feedback.

Plymouth Area Disability Action Network Group (Group of 10), Ernest English House, Plymouth - PADAN

Consultation session 24/10/2014 - Notes

• Following a brief introduction by Amy Luxton to the background and purposes of PCC’s Disabled Housing Needs study, discussion was invited about the types of housing required and any specific features or factors that were important to be included within housing from a wheelchair user perspective.
• Initial observation that not all wheelchair users are the same – as illustrated by those attending the meeting in a variety of sized wheelchairs including one flat lying. There is no typical wheelchair user – therefore general comments about this housing type will always need to be reviewed to consider the individual.
• Discussion around the need to avoid an isolated enclave of disabled housing – and options around cooperative housing models such as in Holland or Sweden where there are multi-generational housing options.
• Important to consider the accessibility of the environment around homes as well as internal.
• Doorway width and allowance for sufficient circulation space – within room, opposite doorways, transfer space from lifts and hoists.
• Essential to maintain good communication links between architects/planners and builders to ensure that what is built is actually suitable accommodation and specification for wheelchair users.
• Need to ensure that ceilings are strong enough for hoists and walls to attach adaptations.
• Concern about residential accommodation on upper floors – safety concerns about fire risk. Also concerns about rules around the installation of water based equipment such as dishwashers.
• Need to be careful about details of installations to assist wheelchair users, such as placement of buttons for automatic door openers.
• Close dialogue with Building Inspectors specifically requested. What monitoring will be in place to ensure that Wheelchair user or Lifetime Homes standards are implemented in practice.
• Presentation of document – general comment about Council documents - need to avoid the use of white text against a dark background (note this was not a format chosen in the draft) however observations about lightening the background behind case studies will be actioned.
• Concern about online consultation processes and the software not allowing consultees to tick boxes.
• Questionnaires and pre-paid envelopes supplied for further group distribution and post meeting feedback.
Plymouth City Council - Disabled housing needs – client consultation questionnaire

Please can you score the relative importance of Key Disabled housing features set out below from 1 – 5. Where:
1 = very important
2 = important
3 = neutral
4 = not very important
5 = not at all important

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disabled Housing feature</th>
<th>Level of importance Score</th>
<th>Any other comments</th>
<th>Feedback results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ground floor accommodation only.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 3 3 2 1 1 1 1= 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lift access to upper floor accommodation – for example within a block of flats.</td>
<td>Regular lift servicing</td>
<td></td>
<td>2 1 1 1 1 1 1= 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provision of through floor lift to access upper floors.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4 3 2 2 1 2 1= 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provision of stair lift.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4 3 1 2 1 5 2 1= 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Area</td>
<td>Importance Score</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sufficient space - for example to manoeuvre a wheelchair.</td>
<td>All rooms and doors</td>
<td>11111111=8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is there any location in which this provision is particularly important?</td>
<td>Outdoor spaces</td>
<td>11211111=9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storage space for specialist equipment.</td>
<td></td>
<td>11111111=9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level access to:</td>
<td></td>
<td>11111111=8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 - a walk-in shower or wet room</td>
<td>1 –</td>
<td>11111111=8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 – front door</td>
<td>2 –</td>
<td>21111111=9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 – garden</td>
<td>3 –</td>
<td>41211111=9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 – Bin Store</td>
<td>4 –</td>
<td>21211111=10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Layout of toilet and bathroom areas</td>
<td></td>
<td>11111111=8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reserved wider parking bays.</td>
<td></td>
<td>21111121=10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distance of parking space to building entrance</td>
<td></td>
<td>21321121=13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Wide doors and auto openers. Low counters in kitchen/bathroom. Handrails in passageways. Lower height utilities meters. Multiple lower elec. sockets required. Lighting and window openings. Ensure reallocation of specialist dwellings to disabled people not general needs letting. Accessible laundry areas. External washing provision</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please continue below, if you have any further comments

- User consultation essential
- PCC needs to check that properties actually comply with Lifetime Homes or Disabled housing standards – who verifies compliance?
- Ensure appropriate wheelchair user letting for initial and subsequent lettings
- Sufficient parking space for carers to park as well as resident
- Kitchen suitably adjusted

Number of questionnaires returned - 8