



Pathways to Accessible Housing



Pathways to Accessible Housing provides a model for local authorities to assess the housing and support needs of wheelchair users

A two-year research project looked at the housing and support needs of over 600 wheelchair users across nine urban, rural and city authorities.

The findings of the project have now been published:

Part 1: Policy context and research findings

Part 2: Planning model (with interactive CD)

"Pathways to Accessible Housing provides a vital planning tool for local authorities, allowing them to assess the housing, adaptation and support requirements of disabled people far more effectively than before."

Nick Raynsford MP, Minister for Housing and Planning



Pathways to Accessible Housing

"Supporting People depends on the availability of accurate planning data such as that produced by this method. It will complement the wider needs mapping approach being developed for the Supporting People programme.

I commend it to you as a very positive and practical step towards addressing the specialist housing needs of disadvantaged groups"

Bert Provan

Director of Housing Care & Support, DETR

Ordering the Guide

Part 1: £15

Part 2: £30

(Excluding VAT, P&P)

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Policy context

Pathways to Accessible Housing is an important new planning tool which local authorities can use to assess the need and provision of accessible housing, care and support services for wheelchair users in their area. It will also be of use to housing associations (RSLs) and private housing developers, health authorities and NHS Trusts, specialist voluntary agencies and organisations of disabled people. By providing housing planners and policy makers with better information, it will help to maximise the opportunities for developing appropriate housing, managing the existing stock of accessible homes and strengthening planning and funding partnerships as part of local housing strategies.

The model will help with the implementation of Supporting People by revealing the extent of hidden need for alternative accommodation (for example, among young adults living with their parents or middle-aged people in residential care homes) and for the support required to establish and sustain independent living. The model will also facilitate the Housing Green Paper's intentions in respect of flexible lettings policies by improving the matching of applicants to suitable properties.

Key findings

The research has identified some key issues:

- Existing information relating to the supply and ownership of accessible housing is fragmented and incomplete in most local authorities
- There are no standard definitions for accessible housing evident across the study areas
- 40% of wheelchair users aged 18 to 34 live with their parents or relatives
- In one authority, only 26% of wheelchair users live in fully accessible housing
- Children aged under 18 and their families are the most likely to live in housing with no adaptations, and this group expressed the most dissatisfaction with the design and layout of their homes

The planning model

The planning model uses surveys of wheelchair users and local housing providers to assess the local supply and demand related to:

- Wheelchair accessible housing
- Voids, and unsuitable lets
- Adaptations
- Sheltered and supported housing
- Care support

The model is accompanied by an interactive CD for data collection and analysis. The numerical analysis is complemented by discussions with individuals or groups of wheelchair users.

Outcomes

The Pathways to Accessible Housing model provides information on:

- People that need to move to alternative accommodation
- The need for adaptations
- The need for additional care and support
- The total unmet need for wheelchair accessible housing

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