

Planning Committee

2.00pm, Wednesday, 27 February 2019

Accommodating People Living with Disabilities

Item number	8.3
Report number	
Executive/routine	
Wards	All
Council Commitments	41

Executive Summary

This report seeks to inform the Committee how the planning process interacts with Housing and Building Standards on how development is managed in terms of accommodating people living with disabilities.

Accommodating People Living with Disabilities

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 It is recommended that Committee:
 - 1.1.1 notes the contents of the report; and
 - 1.1.2 discharges the remit set by the Planning Committee on 12 October 2017.

2. Background

- 2.1 On [12 October 2017](#) the Planning Committee approved the review of the Edinburgh Design Guidance. Part 5 of the decision was as follows:

'The Executive Director of Place to submit a report on how the planning process interacts with housing and building standards on how development is managed in terms of accommodating persons living with disabilities.'
- 2.2 Prior to the decision, discussion took place on a range of issues raised by the contents. One of the discussion areas was accommodating people with disabilities. Specifically, a number of questions were asked around the provision of accommodation for people with disabilities.
- 2.3 The questions raised were:
 - 2.3.1 how is the number of wheelchair accessible houses built in Edinburgh as part of the affordable housing investment programme derived, monitored and evaluated;
 - 2.3.2 given that 14% of households in Scotland include someone who uses a wheelchair or mobility aid, can we expect the new build supply of 20,000 affordable homes over the next ten years within Edinburgh to include a sufficient proportion of wheelchair accessible housing; and
 - 2.3.3 The Scottish Government has committed within its disability delivery plan (Action 62) to 'working with local authorities, disabled people, and other stakeholders to ensure that each local authority sets a realistic target within its Local Housing Strategy for the delivery of wheelchair accessible housing across all tenures and reports annually on progress.' Has such work been undertaken with the City of Edinburgh Council and what is the intention in relation to target setting for wheelchair accessible housing within the next City Housing Strategy.

3. Main report

Planning Context

- 3.1 The planning system aims to create successful places. Good placemaking should achieve developments that work for both able-bodied and disabled individuals.
- 3.2 Some 14% of households in Scotland include a user of a wheelchair or mobility aid. The Local Development Plan (LDP) identifies the level and location of new housing development to meet strategic targets but does not specify the degree to which it should be wheelchair accessible. However the LDP requires that any residential development or conversion of 12 units or more should include 25% affordable housing. The Council and housing association partners aims to provide 10% of its delivery programme as enhanced wheelchair accessible homes.

Building Standards

- 3.3 Scottish Building Standards govern the detailed construction of housing. These are set out in the Building (Scotland) Regulations 2004 and supporting guidance. The Technical Standards 2017 explain how to achieve the requirements of the regulations. These protect the safety, welfare and convenience of persons in or around buildings and includes accessibility for wheelchair users and people with mobility issues. The guidance provides minimum standards for all new housing and the Building Standards service ensures that these standards are achieved.
- 3.4 There are varying degrees of immobility and it is not possible to achieve accessibility to the ultimate level within the Building Regulations. It is recognised by the Scottish Government that the guidance in the Technical Standards may not be to the optimum standards that could be achieved should an applicant wish to construct a purpose-built accessible dwelling, e.g. there is no requirement to provide handrails (found commonly in commercial properties) around sanitary facilities in a dwelling.

Provision of Sufficient Wheelchair Accessible Homes

- 3.5 The majority of households in Edinburgh live in owner-occupied housing but data on the availability of housing in the private sector with an enhanced level of wheelchair accessibility is limited.
- 3.6 Turning to the public sector, the joint Council and housing association delivery programme seeks to incorporate a basic level of wheelchair accessibility in every new development of social rented housing with the aim of delivering 10% enhanced wheelchair accessible homes that incorporate larger space standards resulting in much larger footprints and flexible kitchens and bathrooms. Furthermore, the majority of new build properties delivered by the Council and its housing association partners are accessible for people of limited mobility, meaning particular housing requirements can often be met through allocation of a standard general needs property.

- 3.7 The next Edinburgh Health and Social Care Strategic Plan is currently being drafted and will include an updated Housing Contribution Statement. This reflects the renewed commitment, as set out in the Affordable Housing Supply Programme (AHSP) 7 June 2018 where 4,500 new affordable homes planned over the next 10 years will support health and social care priorities and will be monitored through the Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP). This includes wheelchair accessible housing.
- 3.8 In addition, the Council assigns and spends £500,000 annually on adaptations to existing properties in order to allow housing association tenants to remain in their own homes and live independently. This is administered through the AHSP.
- 3.9 The Council funds adaptations to Council Homes through the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and to private homes through the General Fund (GF).

Monitoring of Wheelchair Accessible Homes

- 3.10 The number of wheelchair accessible affordable homes delivered in Edinburgh is monitored through the SHIP. The core purpose of the SHIP is to set out strategic investment priorities for affordable housing over a five –year period. Each year, following submission to the Scottish Government, the SHIP is used by the Council to draft Strategic Local Programme Agreements (SLPAs) with housing association partners who deliver homes. This is reviewed and updated annually to ensure delivery remains on track.
- 3.11 The AHSP aims to incorporate 10% of every new development of social rented housing with wheelchair accessible homes.
- 3.12 Around 9% of the homes in the first two years of the current SHIP (2019-2024) are specifically designed for older people and those living with complex needs.

Housing Strategy Targets

- 3.13 The latest City Housing Strategy was approved by the Housing and Economy Committee on [2 November 2017](#).
- 3.14 This updated strategy includes the commitment outlined above to deliver 4,500 homes over the next 10 years to help meet health and social care priorities.
- 3.15 This continued engagement with health and social care partners is helping to inform the design and location of new homes and to monitor the delivery of wheelchair accessible and other specialist housing provision in order to meet the targets indicated above.

4. Measures of success

- 4.1 The numerical data provided allows the Council to compare and contrast against targets set.
- 4.2 This evidence is clear and a judgement on whether these targets are being met can be made.

- 4.3 If the targets fails to be met, the evidence can provide an insight for what solutions need to be enforced in order to resolve these issues.

5. Financial impact

- 5.1 There are no financial impacts as a result of the approval of this report.

6. Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact

- 6.1 There are no significant risks associated with the approval of the report as recommended.

7. Equalities impact

- 7.1 A full record of Equality and Rights Impact Assessment (ERIA) was completed for the Design Guidance Review report discussed at Planning Committee on [12 October 2017](#). This demonstrates that due regard has been given to Equalities and Human Rights.

8. Sustainability impact

- 8.1 There are no sustainability impacts as a result of the approval of this report.

9. Consultation and engagement

- 9.1 Formal consultations and engagements were not required in order to answer the questions raised from the Committee discussion on Thursday 12 October 2017.

10. Background reading/external references

- 10.1 [Planning Committee Minutes, Thursday 12 October 2017](#)
10.2 [Review of Edinburgh Design Guidance, Thursday 12 October 2017](#)

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11. Appendices

None.