

# Beyond regulations...

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# Policy changes on the way?

M4(1) Category 1: Visitable dwellings

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Regulatory  
minimum /  
default

M4(2) Category 2: Accessible & adaptable

M4(3) Category 3: Wheelchair user

a) adaptable (ready to tailor)

b) accessible (ready to go)



Optional,  
determined  
by planning  
policy or  
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***Exceptions? M4(1) Category 1: Visitable dwellings ?***

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# The new baseline? – an ordinary home with hidden superpowers



# Hearing from disabled people in West Midlands



***“Whatever experience you get in the outside world, everyone should be entitled to a safe and accessible home to get back to, it means everything.” WMCA Workshop participant***

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# Hearing from disabled people in West Midlands

“It was difficult to find this property in the location where myself and husband have support and we only have bedroom and we have not slept in the same room since 2010..”

“There was nothing suitable on the council housing list which is why we went into private, however its very expensive and worrying that they may sell.”

*“the living room could be bigger so he can take an active part in the living room, at the moment he just has to stop in on spot and stay there unless he wishes to leave the living room, the dining room could be bigger to make it safer for the rest of us, at the moment when we sit to the table one of my other children have to climb over my son to get to and leave the table.”*

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# Grey belt opportunities for accessible homes?

**INSIDE HOUSING**

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## Labour sets out golden rules for 'grey belt' with 50% affordable housing promised

NEWS 19.04.24 1.30 PM BY JAMES WILMORE

The Labour Party has unveiled its 'golden rules' for building on the so-called grey belt, which includes a stipulation that a site must target 50% affordable housing.

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Picture: Alamy

## Grey belt:

- Poor quality / ugly green belt land
- 'wasteland', old carparks etc.

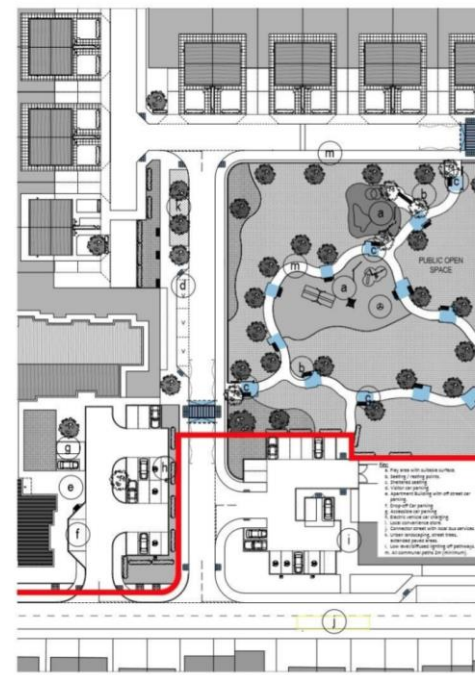


# The whole neighbourhood counts

*Over half the shops and restaurants have stepped entry. Cars parking on pavements can mean I'm forced to navigate in the roads to access the community.”*

*“In our cul-de-sac there are no paths in and out meaning you have to walk on the road which isn't suitable when you have a child with no danger awareness.”*

*I would prefer to live somewhere that is traffic free as pavement parking is a problem where I live... I have difficulties with access to my back garden from the outside entry as the path is often blocked . The alleyway is partly enclosed and dark .*



# Involve, involve and involve again

- Disabled people told us that 'consultation' at the start is not enough.
- Want to see disabled people have an opportunity to engage directly with policy makers to secure change – both in policy making and individual developments
- To be kept involved to know what has and hasn't been taken forward



# And then go back and check!

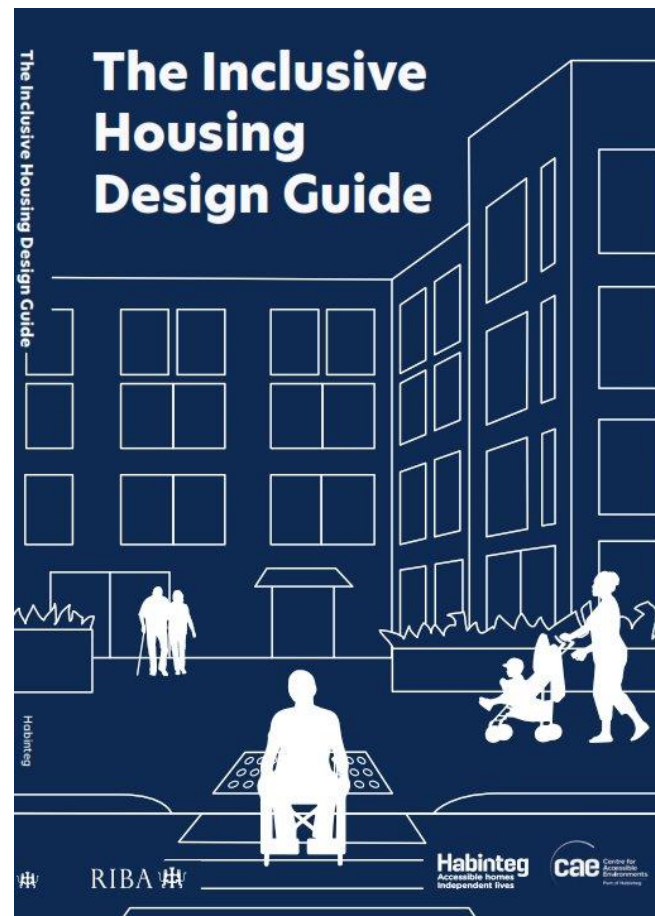
- Post occupancy / post adaptation evaluation is critical to getting it right for individuals

“The bathroom is partly adapted with walk in shower. Autistic son cannot tolerate the shower and must use an inflatable pool filled with shower head.” WMCA Survey respondent

- And to builds valuable knowledge for future projects.
-

# New Inclusive Housing Design Guide

- A RIBA/Habinteg partnership authored by Jacquel Runnalls, peer reviewed by Marney Walker
- Benefitting from a;
  - wealth of experience working with disabled and older people in their own homes and neighbourhoods
  - working knowledge of applying M4(2) and M4(3) in practice, from design concept to post occupancy evaluation



# What will you find?

<b>About the authors</b>	<b>VI</b>		
<b>Acknowledgements</b>	<b>VIII</b>		
<b>Foreword</b>	<b>IX</b>		
<b>Introduction and context</b>	<b>1</b>		
0.1 Using this guide	4		
0.2 Principles of inclusive design	8		
0.3 Occupational therapy and housing	11		
0.4 Regulation, planning policy and associated guidance	13		
<b>Part One</b>	<b>25</b>		
<b>Site layout, connectivity and outside amenities</b>			
1.0 Introduction	26		
1.1 Strategic site layout	27		
1.2 External access	28		
1.3 Communal amenities and outside space	35		
<b>Part Two</b>	<b>41</b>		
<b>Accessible and adaptable housing</b>			
2.0 Introduction	42		
2.1 Parking	43		
2.2 Communal circulation	47		
2.3 Principal private entrances and external doors	64		
2.4 Windows	75		
2.5 Internal circulation	78		
2.6 Storage	84		
2.7 Living/kitchen/dining	85		
2.8 Kitchens	88		
2.9 Bedrooms	94		
2.10 Bath/shower rooms	97		
2.11 Services and controls	113		
2.12 Lighting	117		
2.13 Finishes	120		
2.14 Private outside space	122		
		<b>Part Three</b>	<b>124</b>
		<b>Wheelchair housing</b>	
		3.0 Introduction	125
		3.1 Parking	126
		3.2 Communal circulation	134
		3.3 Principal private entrances and external doors	156
		3.4 Windows	172
		3.5 Internal circulation	176
		3.6 Storage	185
		3.7 Living/kitchen/dining	186
		3.8 Kitchens	189
		3.9 Bedrooms	207
		3.10 Bathrooms	211
		3.11 Services and controls	231
		3.12 Lighting	237
		3.13 Ceiling track hoists	241
		3.14 Finishes	242
		3.15 Private outside space	243
		<b>Glossary</b>	<b>247</b>
		<b>Bibliography</b>	<b>250</b>
		<b>Appendix 1 Good practice resources</b>	<b>253</b>
		<b>Appendix 2: Space standards comparison</b>	<b>259</b>
		<b>References</b>	<b>261</b>
		<b>Index</b>	<b>265</b>
		<b>Image Credits</b>	<b>270</b>

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# Detailed technical guidance

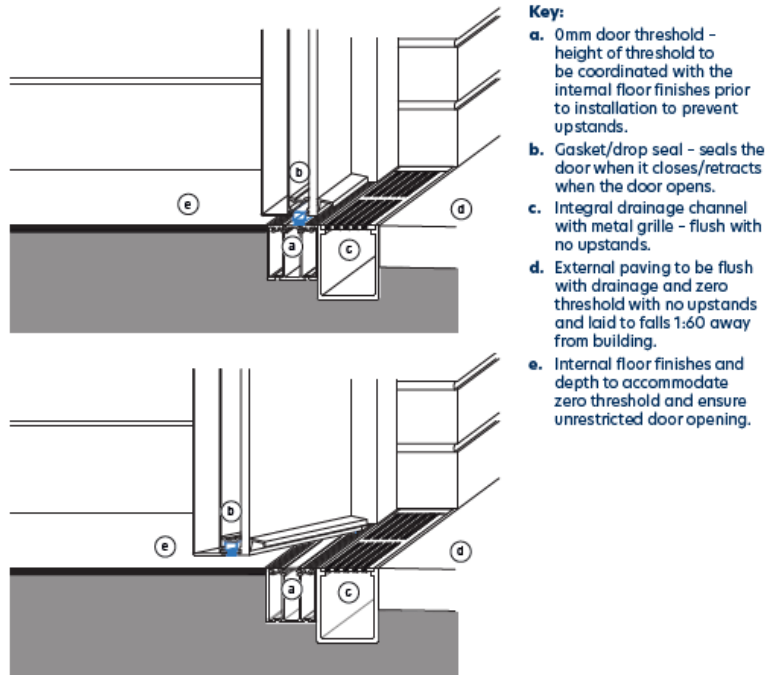


Figure 2.5 How to achieve a zero threshold

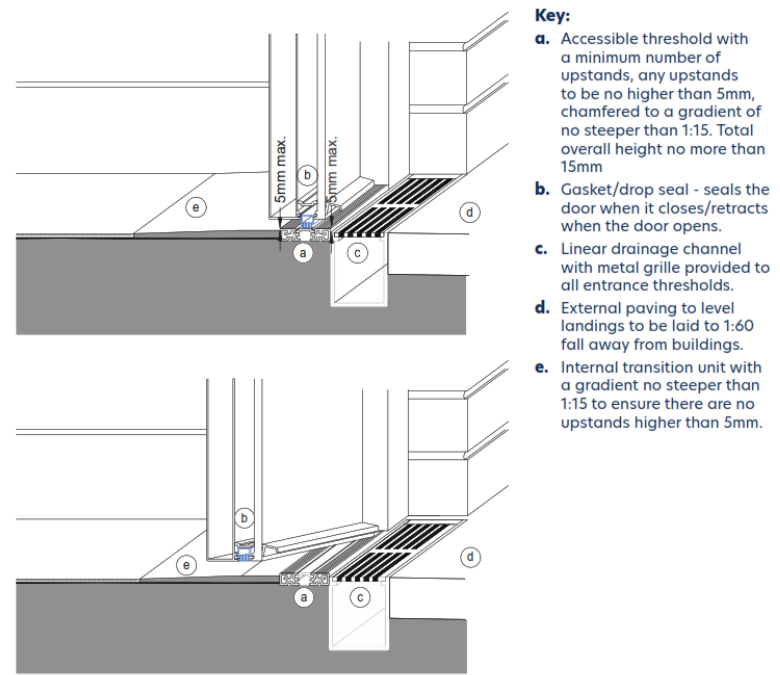
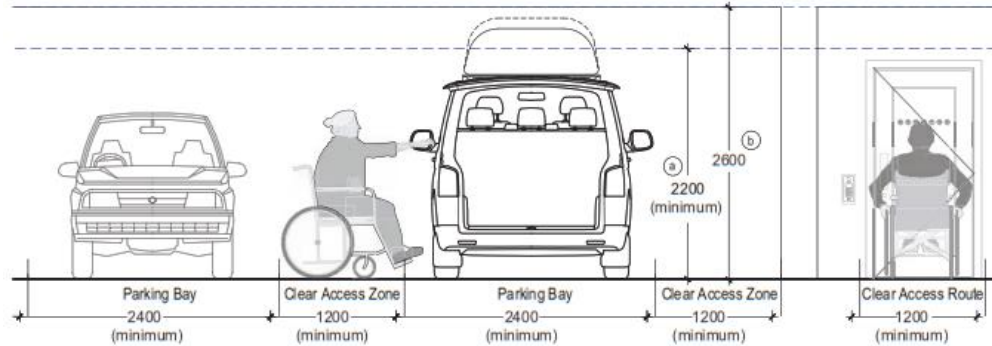
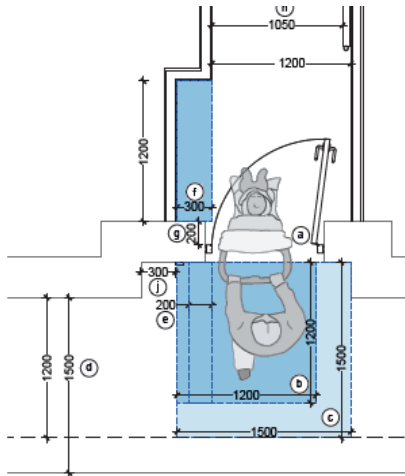
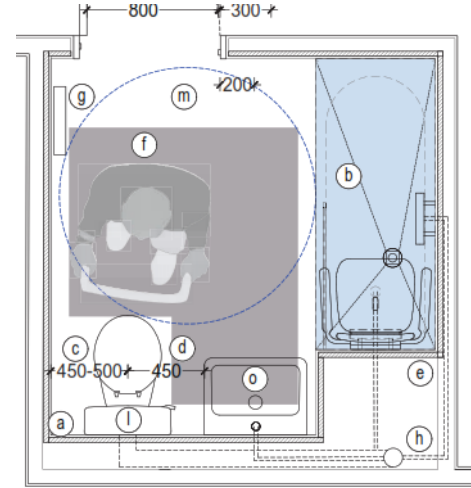
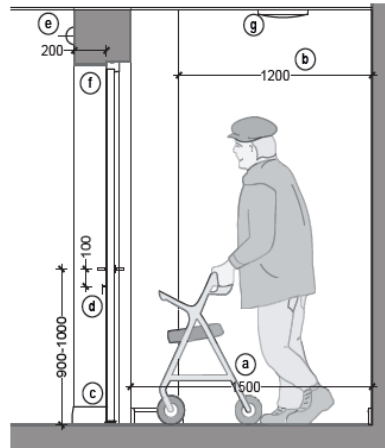
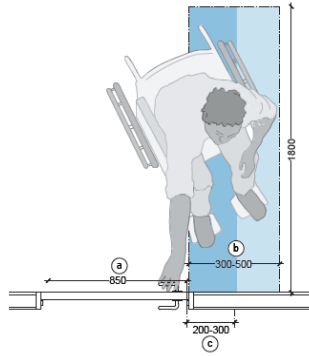


Figure 2.6 How to achieve an accessible threshold

# Scale drawings



# Insights and photos

## Insight: Impact of unsuitable lighting

Adverse effects from lighting can be an issue for people who experience sensory overload or have visual or cognitive impairments. They can be relatively easy to address if considered from the outset. This includes avoiding the use of single light sources that create pools of harsh light, reflection, glare and confusing shadows, and avoidance of abrupt changes from light to dark between rooms or different areas in a room. Lighting should not create flicker (visible and imperceptible) or buzz and hum from switches and lights. Levels and quality of light and colour temperature (warm/natural/cool) should be considered. Careful attention to lighting that is adaptable to individual requirements will assist with the following:

- wayfinding to enable people to use their home more easily
- reducing the risk of accidents, slips, trips and falls
- enabling activities in kitchens and bathrooms to be carried out more safely
- enabling people to lip-read and read sign language more easily
- creating calming or stimulating environments
- reducing disruption to regular sleeping patterns
- reducing distress from sensory overload that can impact on ability to function.



## Insight: Outdoor seating

Seating that provides a place to stop, rest and pause, and experience the health benefits of getting outside should be provided at regular intervals across the whole development. It can encourage people to get out of their home who might otherwise be unable to do so, due to limited mobility or standing tolerance, limited balance, shortness of breath or with poor stamina. Appropriate seating can encourage social interaction while also assisting a person who needs to pause and take time out, such as away from a busier communal space (Figure 1.6).



# Case studies

## CASE STUDY

### Wandsworth Council Regeneration Team new build balcony/patio doors

Balcony and patio doors are increasingly designed without external handles and/or sliding doors which are difficult to operate and automate. Some developers have also questioned M4(2) and M4(3) requirements for a door handle, even for extra care housing.

#### Impact of no external handle

- Adults and children cannot grip the edge of the heavy door frame, so cannot pull it open and could be stuck outside, unable to re-enter.
- Not having a handle is confusing and non-intuitive.
- Some developers/manufacturers offer a fingertip grip as an alternative, but these are not handles and are very difficult to grip and pull sideways.
- Most developers agree to fit cranked pull handles retrospectively, but this may not be possible on slim frame profiles and potentially negate warranties.



## CASE STUDY

### Accessible features in homes help people to live a more independent and fulfilling life

Habinteg tenant and disability campaigner Kerry Thompson lives in a wheelchair user home. Below, she explains how the accessible features in her home help her to live a more independent and fulfilling life.

‘There are many things I love about my accessible home that make it so I’m able to live independently.

All my doors are wide enough, so my wheelchair fits comfortably through and I have a large turning space in my living room to be able to navigate safely in my wheelchair. Another feature I love is that all my light switches and sockets are halfway up the wall. This makes it easier for me to reach them.

#### Kitchen

I also have some great features in my kitchen. I have enough turning space to be able to manoeuvre around safely. All of my work surfaces are at wheelchair height.

I’m able to reach the sink, kettle and hob. My arm strength isn’t that great, so I’m not allowed to cook. However, there is the possibility that if I did have the arm strength, I could cook. If something isn’t too heavy, I can manoeuvre my arm a little to put things on the sides.



Figure 3.15 Kerry Thompson in her garden

# Inclusive Housing Design Guide

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