

Our Ref. DU/GS/CC
Your Ref. Petition PE1554
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PE1554/Z

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Dear Ms Robinson

Consideration of Petition PE1554

I refer to your email of 1st April to the Council's Chief Executive requesting information relating to the above and our response is as follows.

What are the City Council's views on what the petition seeks?

The Council did consider a policy setting a target for a percentage of new homes to be "wheelchair accessible" as part of our Main Issues Report to the Proposed Local Development Plan. However as part of our research we moved away from setting a specific target. This was done on the basis that under the current building standards new dwellings are required to be designed with accessibility in mind. For example accessible kitchens and toilets are required in all new houses and allowance must be made for future provision of items such as accessible shower rooms and access to the upper floor.

Setting a mandatory target is a very onerous requirement on developers and could impact on the deliverability of housing targets, which the council are required to achieve, if a strong market for "wheelchair accessible" housing does not exist. The response to the Main Issues Report on this topic was also quite limited and very mixed, with views for and against the adoption of the policy. The Council has therefore framed its policy to require a mix of house type including those suitable for the elderly and people with particular needs.

What percentage of new build homes within your city council area are adapted to full wheelchair accessibility standards?

As it is not currently a planning policy to have houses "wheelchair accessible" we do not have a record of how many houses are designed in this way.

PETE LEONARD
DIRECTOR

How many people within your city council area are (i) on a waiting list for disabled friendly housing; and (ii) are accommodated with disabled friendly housing?

Aberdeen City Council has 212 sheltered and 279 general purpose properties which are adapted to wheelchair standard and have 66 applicants on the waiting list for wheelchair adapted properties. Due to demand, the level of voids in these types of properties is very low.

To provide additional support for our citizens the Disabled Persons Housing Service, which is funded mainly by the Council, provides specialist housing information, advice and advocacy services to local disabled people, their family and their carers. Its main aim is to ensure that disabled people are not socially isolated, increase awareness of housing options and ensure that disabled people are adequately housed.

Also the adaptations budgets for both council and private sector housing for the next two years (2015 - 2017) are £2.25million for council stock and £1.4m for private housing stock. RSL adaptations are funded directly from the Scottish Government through Stage 3. These funds allow the council and RSLs to respond to the needs of people who require access to fully wheelchair adapted properties.

I hope this information is helpful.

Yours sincerely

Donald Urquhart
Head of Housing & Community Safety