

PE1554/K

01 May 2015

Public Petitions Clerks
Room T3.40
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh EH99 1SP
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Dear Ms Sigrid Robinson

CONSIDERATION OF PETITION PE1554

Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to take action to ensure that all new homes in Scotland are built to fully meet all the Lifetime Homes Standards, with at least 10% of new homes built to full wheelchair accessibility standards.

I thank you for your notification of 1 April, regarding the consultation of the above petition and advise that this response from Midlothian Council to the requested information has been considered by officers from Housing Services and also Building Regulatory services.

▪ *What are your Local Authority's views on what the petition seeks?*

It is recognised that a significant number of adaptations are carried out annually to address the need for accommodation which meets the needs of households with a disability. For the last 10 years all housing built meet current building standards which address lifetime homes standards. Of Midlothian Council's Phase 2 housing programme, it is proposed that 12.5% of housing built will be specialist provision (including wet floor adaptation, wheelchair housing, complex care needs and extra care housing). However, the need for specialist provision will vary according to area so a national target might not be appropriate for all areas. In terms of private sector housing, a very low proportion of housing caters for specialist provision, such as wheelchair housing and it is anticipated that developers would be uncertain if developing specialist provision housing, such as a wheelchair house, would be profitable for them to build unless they or the purchasing household were able to access some form of subsidy.

- *What percentage of new build homes within your local authority area are adapted to full wheelchair accessibility standards?*

To meet building standards 100% of homes currently being built must address:

4.1 Access to Buildings - Every building must be designed and constructed in such a way that all occupants and visitors are provided with safe, convenient and unassisted means of access to the building.

4.2 Access within Buildings - Every building must be designed and constructed in such a way that;

1. in domestic buildings, safe and convenient means of access is provided within common areas and to each dwelling,
2. in dwellings, safe and convenient means of access is provided throughout the dwelling and
3. in dwellings, unassisted means of access is provided to, and throughout, at least one level.

We do not record full wheelchair accessible-designed homes in the private sector.

- *How many people within your local authority area are:*
 - (i) *on a waiting list for disabled friendly housing; and*
 - (ii) *accommodated with disabled friendly housing?*

Currently the housing waiting list has 628 households registered as having either an A or B medical (which does not always require specialist housing provision).

Stock which has been designed or adapted to suit a disabled household: 735 units, including 54 wheelchair houses. This is 11% of Midlothian Council's council housing stock.

If you have any queries in this submission do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Kevin Anderson
Head of Customer and Housing Services