

**PE1554/W**

Orkney Islands Council Email of 15 May 2015

Dear Sigrid

Apologies for the delay in our response.

1. We currently build to Housing for Varying Needs standard. Our understanding is that this is the Scottish equivalent to Lifetime Homes Standard and that it is rather more detailed than the English equivalent. In general terms Housing for Varying Needs allows a fair element of flexibility to allow for people who have developed a mobility issue either on a short or long term basis and that this standard is useful across our stock. Our calculations would suggest that building to full wheelchair accessible level would increase the cost though not significantly. We have calculated this cost increase to be around £2k - £3k.

The level of wheelchair accessible housing being suggested here is at least 10% of all builds. While this in itself may not be too high, care needs to be taken as this may not be desirable when building a small rural scheme for instance where there may be no demand for wheelchair accessible housing. In such a situation this would potentially have the effect of increasing costs and perhaps increasing the amount of land required as generally bungalows would have to be built. It would be useful to allow organisations to continue to base their plans around the level of housing need determined in their housing strategies and consequently in Asset Management plans.

2. At present Orkney Housing Association Ltd is the only provider of fully accessible wheelchair accommodation in the Orkney area. They have advised that this accounts for 8.16% of their rented housing stock. If amenity housing is also taken into account (which is level access but not fully wheelchair accessible) this equates to 31.8% of their housing stock.
3. i) The current waiting list shows 18 households waiting for wheelchair accessible housing and 168 households for amenity or level access. ii) Those accommodation within disabled friendly housing amounts to 57 wheelchair accessible housing and 233 amenity / level access. While the figures for wheelchair accessible housing refer only to Orkney Housing Association Ltd, those for amenity refer to both the Council and OHAL.

I hope that helps but let me know if you need any further information.

Frances Troup

Head of Housing and Homelessness, Orkney Islands Council