

Housing Factsheet I

Looking for a property?

This checklist was put together following discussion between disabled people, housing officers and occupational therapists. It covers the sort of things that a disabled person needs to think about before deciding on whether a new home meets their needs. Some of the points identified were by disabled people, who had learned the "hard way" from their experiences of living in properties that were not always accessible.

In some cases, the property may be adapted to make it accessible, but there may always be some things that cannot change.



It is probably not possible for anyone to find a property that fulfills all their wishes, but the checklist will hopefully help you to think about what is most important to you.

The Entrance

- Is the footpath/gate wide enough if you use a wheelchair or mobility aid?
- Can you access your dustbin?
- Can you get a wheely bin to the collection point?
- Is the entrance accessible for you and well lit?
- Can you see the path from the window?
- Would you be able to use the path/drive in bad weather?



Car Parking

- If you have a car or need to be picked up from home by car, is there a garage, carport or adequate parking close by?
- Is there a shared drive: are you likely to get blocked in?



Doors

- Can you easily open them and lock them? Are they wide enough for you?
- Which way are the doors hung: do these pose any access difficulties?

Fuel

- Heating: Is it sufficient and appropriate, is it affordable, can you control it?
- Is the fuse box in an accessible place?
- Are there sufficient electrical points?
- Can you reach/access all gas and electrical controls?



- If you have hearing difficulties, could you install an induction loop – is there a suitable electrical point?

Size

- Is the property big enough for you, your family and your furniture?
- Is there enough space to store equipment?
- If you have an electrical wheelchair, is there a suitable place to charge it?
- Can you turn off your burglar or fire alarm?
- Can you see out of the windows?
- Are the light switches at a suitable height?
- Would a partially glazed front door or spy-hole be helpful?



Layout

- Is it easy to get around the property? If you use a wheelchair can you turn easily? Will you be able to when your furniture is there?
- Make sure you measure rooms and your furniture?
- What is the area around the property like?

NOTE!!!

Is it accessible to you and are there adequate services to meet your needs: e.g. schools, shops, doctors, leisure facilities, friends, family, post office, pub?

Garden

- Can you maintain it or get it looked after?



Adaptations

- Is the property adaptable?
- It is easier to fit stair lifts to straight flights of stairs?



- If you need to adapt it before, or shortly after, you move in, will this be affordable? Do you need to find out about whether you will qualify for a grant? (You can get more information about this from the Disability Housing Service)
- If you are moving into a Local authority (Council) property, check whether the Housing Department will adapt it. Do you know how long this is likely to take?

NOTE!!!

You will need to contact your local Social Services Office to request an assessment of your need for adaptations to your home, whether you are wanting adaptations to a Local Authority (Council) house or help with adaptations.

If you are interested in a housing association property, talk to the association about their adaptations policy.

If you are interested in a privately rented property, ask the owner if they agree to adaptations to the property. Check if they will require you to organise and pay for them.

Bathroom

- Is the bathroom and toilet accessible and useable?
- Are any adaptations or equipment needed?
- Can you use the taps in the property?
- Could you fit a bath chair in the bath if you need one?

Kitchen

- Can you reach all the work services, sink and equipment?
If it is not, is it adjustable?
- If the cooker, fridge or washing machine is supplied as a standard item, are they suitable for your use?

