

Wheelchair Accessible Housing Targets**Report by Kevin Anderson, Executive Director - Place****Report for Decision****1 Recommendations**

It is recommended that Council;

- i. notes the findings of this report, and
- ii. approves the proposed wheelchair accessible housing targets, which are to be integrated into the next Local Development Plan for Midlothian.

2 Purpose of Report/Executive Summary

This report summarises the key points of 'Midlothian's Wheelchair Accessible Housing Target' which details the consultation and feedback which have enabled the target proposal.

Midlothian's wheelchair accessible targets will determine the number of wheelchair accessible homes which will be built during the course of the next five years in both social and market developments.

The proposal is to set a wheelchair accessible housing target of 20 per annum for the next five years; 10 will be social housing delivered by Midlothian Council/RSL partners and 10 should be provided by private sector developers.

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3 Background/Main Body of Report

- 3.1** All Scottish Local Authorities are required to set wheelchair accessible housing targets in accordance with the Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) Guidance 2021.
- 3.2** Setting wheelchair accessible housing targets in Midlothian is a required action as referenced in the previously council approved Midlothian Local Housing Strategy 2021-2026.
- 3.3** Local authorities can choose to have a single target, setting out the requirement for housing across all tenures or can distinguish requirements by tenure and / or sub area where this can be evidenced. The target(s) can be expressed as a number to be delivered over a period of time or as a % requirement of either the existing provision or as a % of all new housing provision within the area.
- 3.4** The provision of targets to support the delivery of Wheelchair Accessible homes means homes suitable for wheelchair users to live in and should, as a minimum, comply with the design criteria indicated as a 'basic' requirement for wheelchair users, as outlined in Housing for Varying Needs (HfVN) (column 'B' in 'Summary of Design Criteria').
- 3.5** The public consultation was carried out between Monday 28 February and Friday 25 March 2022. Midlothian residents were asked to complete an online survey and, if interested, attend online Microsoft Teams or Zoom discussion sessions. Paper copies were available to those who requested them and were made available in libraries and leisure centres. 105 residents completed the online survey and four residents attended the discussion sessions.
- 3.6** Setting a wheelchair accessible housing target of 20 per annum for the next five years would be a realistic target to address current and potential future shortfalls in the provision of wheelchair accessible homes. It is suggested that 10 will be social housing delivered by Midlothian Council/RSL partners and 10 should be provided by private sector developers.
- 3.7** In order to address constraints within the private sector the wheelchair accessible housing target will be set over the five year period and therefore 100 homes will be built between 2022/23 and 2027/28.

4 Report Implications (Resource, Digital and Risk)

4.1 Resource

There are no additional resource implications arising from this report.

4.2 Digital

None.

4.3 Risk

If the Council does not support the setting of wheelchair accessible housing targets, there will be negative consequences for wheelchair users in Midlothian.

4.4 Ensuring Equalities (if required a separate IIA must be completed)

Equality is central to all housing provision and housing services delivery. An Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) was undertaken on the Local Housing Strategy 2021-26 to ensure that the needs of local communities have been fully considered. The Wheelchair Accessible Housing Report reflects identified needs and draws on findings from the IIA when considering the implications flowing from the translation of strategic aims into housing policies.

4.5 Additional Report Implications

See Appendix A

Appendices

Appendix A – Additional Report Implications

Appendix B – Wheelchair Accessible Housing Targets

APPENDIX A – Report Implications

A.1 Key Priorities within the Single Midlothian Plan

Provision of increased affordable and privately developed wheelchair accessible housing will improve the quality of life for citizens and reduce the gap in health outcomes.

A.2 Key Drivers for Change

Key drivers addressed in this report:

- ☐ Holistic Working
- ☐ Hub and Spoke
- ☐ Modern
- ☒ Sustainable
- ☐ Transformational
- ☒ Preventative
- ☒ Asset-based
- ☐ Continuous Improvement
- ☐ One size fits one
- ☐ None of the above

A.3 Key Delivery Streams

Key delivery streams addressed in this report:

- ☐ One Council Working with you, for you
- ☒ Preventative and Sustainable
- ☐ Efficient and Modern
- ☐ Innovative and Ambitious
- ☐ None of the above

A.4 Delivering Best Value

The wheelchair accessible housing targets will result in homes which will deliver cost-effectivity, quality, sustainability and accessibility to meet both current and future customers' requirements.

A.5 Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders

The wheelchair Accessible Housing Target survey was advertised via social media, the Scottish Housing News website, libraries, leisure centres and Health and Social Care Partnership sources.

Consultation was undertaken in accordance with Scottish Government guidance including with the Scottish Government's More Homes Division, Housing Associations and the Midlothian Health and Social Care Partnership.

A.6 Impact on Performance and Outcomes

The setting of wheelchair accessible housing targets supports the outcomes set out in the Local Housing Strategy 2021-26.

A.7 Adopting a Preventative Approach

Setting wheelchair accessible housing targets will ensure the provision of suitable housing which will reduce hospital discharge times, housing adaptations and the financial resources required to provide more expensive care home type accommodation.

A.8 Supporting Sustainable Development

Good practice in relation to energy efficiency and sustainability is highlighted in the Local Housing Strategy and SHIP.