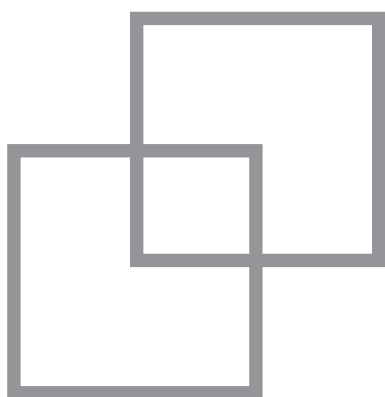


Maldon District Design Guide

Designing for Older Persons' Housing



MALDON DISTRICT
COUNCIL

**Technical Document to
Maldon District Design Guide
February 2017**



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1. Introduction

1.1. The purpose of this guidance

This document provides further guidance on the design of older persons' housing in the District. It draws on relevant planning policy and published guidance on the design of older persons' housing and forms part of the suite of technical documents that support the Maldon District Design Guide (MDDG).

Design is a material consideration within the planning process. This document provides guidance on how to ensure the design of new development meets the specific needs and aspirations for older people within the District.

The objective is to provide a better quality of life, health and well-being for older people and to ensure development within the Maldon district delivers the appropriate type of housing that meets projected needs. New developments, ranging from retirement housing to extra care housing, should be appropriately located and designed to be flexible, capable of adaptation, inclusive and accessible.

Reference should also be made to the Older Persons' Housing Strategy (December 2013) and the Maldon Housing Strategy (currently in preparation) which provide further information on the District's housing needs with particular reference to the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA).

This guidance should be read in conjunction with the Maldon District Design Guide (MDDG) which relates to all types of housing and should be used to inform design development and the preparation of planning applications.

1.2 The importance of good design

Maldon District is a predominately rural district with an ageing population, therefore, design is paramount in the delivery of appropriate housing to meet the needs of older persons. Surveys undertaken to inform the Older Persons' Housing Strategy identified that 70% of those surveyed would seek single level living, close to bus routes or shops, parking and gardens and identified design and location as important factors in the choice of future homes.

This guidance builds on the principles set out in the MDDG to ensure that people have the opportunity to live in a property that continues to meet their needs as they grow older and where they are not unduly restricted due to location or mobility.

By setting standards for future developments, and working in partnership with stakeholders, the District should see an increase in the choice available to older people looking to move whether this is to alternative general needs housing or to homes intended specifically for older people.

2. Policy context

2.1. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

2.1.1 What is an older person?

The NPPF recognises the older person and provides the following definition (Page 54 (Glossary)):

“People over retirement age, including the active, newly-retired through to the very frail elderly, whose housing needs can encompass accessible, adaptable general needs housing for those looking to downsize from family housing and the full range of retirement and specialised housing for those with support or care needs”. However, there is no age bracket that is specific to an ‘older person’.

2.1.2 Paragraph 159 states the local planning authority should:

“prepare a Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) to assess their full housing needs, [which].....should identify the scale and mix of housing and the range of tenures which ... addresses the need for all types of housing, the needs of different groups in the community (such asolder people.....)”

2.1.3 Paragraph 50 states local planning authority should:

“plan for a mix of housing based on current and future demographic trends, market trends and the needs of different groups in the community (such as older people.....)”

Running parallel with the requirement to deliver the appropriate mix of housing, and stated throughout the NPPF, is the core principle of securing high quality and inclusive design.

2.1.4 Paragraph 56 states:

“The Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people to live”.

The concept of using design codes to help in the delivery of high quality outcomes is set out at paragraph 59

2.1.5 Paragraph 7 - Sustainable development

The planning system strives to deliver sustainable development which includes the need to perform a social role:

“supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community’s needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being”

2.1.6 **Section 8** recognises:

“the planning system can play an important role in facilitating social interaction and creating healthy, inclusive communities”, particularly important to ensure older persons remain integrated within the local community..

2.2 Local Development Plan (LDP)

2.2.1 **Policy D1 – Design Quality and Built Environment**

Policy D1 sets out the criteria for high quality design to ensure that:

“new development is visually attractive, responsive to local character, helps to promote healthy communities, and creates buildings which are durable, adaptable, and function well within the surrounding area to create a safe and accessible environment”.

Paragraph 3.4 sets out the Council’s expectation that:

“all development [should] support the principles of inclusive design [and] ensure that new development can be used by all people. Design should also seek to reduce social exclusion within the District, and seek to improve people’s access to housing,required services and facilities.”

This criteria is reflected in the design principles set out in the MDDG and also forms the foundation for this guidance.

2.2.2 **Policy H2 - Housing mix**

Policy H2 states that:

“all developments will be expected to provide a suitable mix and range of housingparticularly the need for an ageing population”.

Paragraph 5.16 states:

“...The Council will require new development to incorporate a range of different housing types which contribute towards meeting the identified housing needs for different demographic groups in the District. ...The Council will also encourage development proposals which seek to meet the housing need of older people”

2.2.3 Policy H3 - Accommodation for ‘specialist’ needs

Policy H3 states that: *“Proposals for specialist needs housing such as homes for older people, people with disabilities, or homes for other specific groups who may require properties that are specifically designed and/or allocated will be supported ”*

Paragraph 5.21 states:

“Specialist housing may be required, but not limited to, meeting the needs of older people This could be achieved by providing a range of different types of housing including sheltered housing with care support, staffed hostels, residential care homes, wheelchair accessible housing or housing that is easily adaptable for wheelchair use, and generally homes for older persons ...”

2.2.4 Policy T2 – Accessibility

Policy T2 seeks to create an accessible environment for everyone and will include

“improving accessibility to buildings, streets and public spaces, particularly those with mobility impairments”

The LDP acknowledges that the ability of people to access key services and facilities can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities of all age groups.

3. Types of older persons’ housing

3.1 Housing categories

- 3.1.1 As discussed in section 2 above, the NPPF identifies older persons as people over retirement age. Without discussing this description in detail, it is acknowledged that ‘retirement age’ is flexible and can be extended to include the 55+ age group through to end of life.
- 3.1.2 As such, provision of housing for the elderly should be designed to meet all ages and abilities within this age group and should provide choices that allow them to be accommodated within their family home or move to a new home to meet their future needs as they grow older.

3.1.3 There are a number of different types of accommodation which fall within the category of older persons' housing. This guidance is applicable to the broad spectrum of housing provision for the older person and encompasses residential care, including retirement and nursing/care homes, as well as independent living. A document published by the Housing our Ageing Population: Panel for Innovation (HAPPI) in October 2014 categorised the types of housing provision into three groups:

- Mainstream housing
- Specialised housing
- Care homes

3.1.4 The table below sets out these three broad categories of accommodation referred to above and provides a brief outline of their functionality. New developments incorporating homes for older persons should be designed to be functional, adaptable, aesthetically pleasing and well located and should comply with the principles set out in the MDDG.

mainstream housing	specialised housing	care homes
Individual homes to buy or rent - not designated for any specific user group though Lifetime Homes includes age-friendly features and wheelchair housing is specially designed. Personal care, support, other services and amenities available within the community.  Planning: current use class 3 'dwelling houses'	Groups of homes (usually flats) to buy or rent - designated for older people (typically 55+). Personal care and support usually arranged or provided within the development together with shared facilities and activities.  Planning: currently classified as C2 or C3 - would a new class or classes be useful?	Residential care rather than independent living.  Planning: current use class 2 'residential institution'

FIGURE 4.1 "Mainstream, Specialised and Care-Home Housing: The Happi Spectrum (Add Footnote)
SOURCE: Ippr – For Future Living – Innovative Approaches to Joining Up Houses and Health
(Author: Bill Davies; Published 23/10/2014)

3.2 Use Class Categories

- 3.2.1 It is also helpful to understand how the different types of housing for older persons is differentiated in planning terms. The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) puts uses of land and buildings into various categories known as 'Use Classes'. There is some discussion on whether the older persons' housing would fall into Use Class C2 or Use Class C3. This is dependent on the type of housing and, for reference purposes, details of the categorisations are outlined below.

3.2.2 **Class C2: Residential institutions**

These include, amongst others, residential care homes, hospitals and nursing homes.

3.2.3 **Class C3: Dwellinghouses**

This class is made up of 3 parts, the relevant class being Class C3(a) which covers use by a single person or a family, domestic employees, a carer and the person receiving the care. In practical terms, the conventional concept of a self-contained home where people can live independently and exclusively within their own property, even though in the case of some elderly persons' housing, there may be communal facilities outside of their own personal property.

SOURCE: https://www.planningportal.co.uk/info/200130/common_projects/9/change_of_use

- 3.2.4 The provision of accommodation for the older person 'crosses' both Use Class C2 and Use Class C3. Whilst Class C3 comprise independent housing units, Class C2 is managed in a very different way and people do not have the same independence as they would in their own home. It is possible that on some sites there may be an overlap between the different categories, with some people occupying homes as owners, tenants or leaseholders (C3) alongside others who are accommodated on a more temporary basis in order to receive care or treatment (C2). This may be the case for extra-care housing with enhanced facilities to meet additional needs of residents if they become more frail, or to provide interim care and support for those recovering and undergoing a period of re-ablement. It is advised that when considering development, applicants should be explicit about the type of housing they intend to provide, including the proposed tenure and where appropriate, the method of allocating homes, and should refer to the HAPPI reports for more detailed information as well as the design guidance set out in the MDDG and this document and any further guidance that may be appropriate.

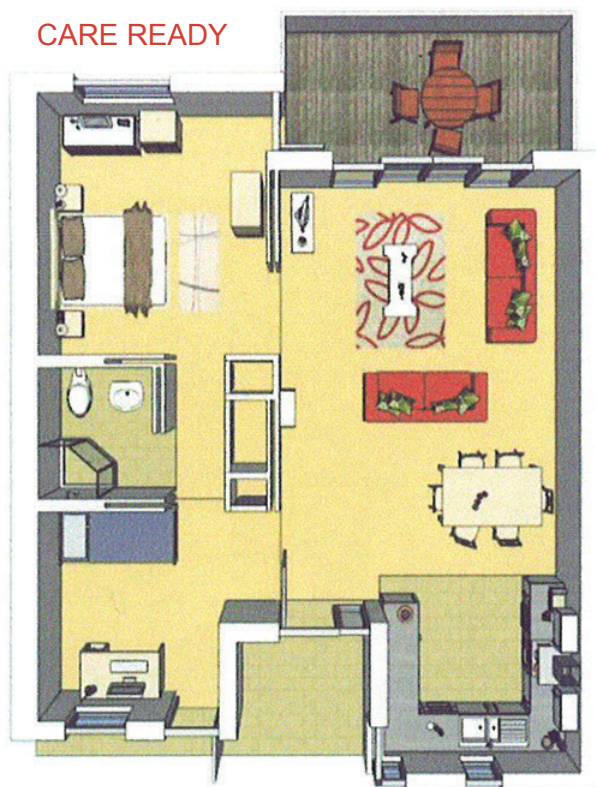
Further details can be found in: Planning Use Classes and Extra Care Housing Viewpoint 20 produced by The Housing Learning and Improvement Network (LIN) <http://www.housinglin.org.uk/AboutHousingLIN/>

4. Applying design guidance to new developments

4.1 What the Maldon District expects

4.1.1 The MDDG requires all residential development to be sustainable, inclusive and accessible, aesthetically pleasing and to promote high levels of social inclusion and meet the needs of residents.

4.1.2 Additionally, in order to provide adequate and sustainable housing for the older person, the development must offer an attractive alternative to the existing family home, and be capable of adaptation over time to meet changing needs. Additional space may be required to reflect the fact that in many cases people will be down-sizing from larger homes and in the future may need space for aids and adaptations. Through good design one-bedroom homes can be built to be better suited to possible future requirements such as the need to have an over-night carer, storage for mobility scooters and space to retain independence.



SOURCE: HCA Homes & Community Agency

4.1.3 The Council expects the design of proposals for elderly persons' housing to ensure a high quality of development which meets the principles set out in the MDDG. In particular, those principles relating to adaptability, and inclusive and accessible design, should take account of relevant guidance including:

- Guidance produced by HAPPI (Housing our Ageing Population: Panel for Innovation)
- Lifetime Homes Standards
- National Space Standards
- Town Planning and Dementia RTPi Practice Advice January 2017
- Inclusive Design for Getting Outdoors

5. Principles of design and outside space

5.1 The Maldon District Design Guide (MDDG)

As set out previously, the MDDG sets out clear principles to guide future development within the District and has been prepared in line with the LDP and NPPF requirements, local studies and strategies. This guidance supports the MDDG and whilst the whole document is applicable to all development, there are a number of elements that are pertinent to the design and delivery of housing for the older person, in particular:

5.1.1 Section A 04 – Key Design Objectives: Adaptability and Quality

Adaptability and Quality underpins the potential to deliver ‘lifelong’ housing by:

- anticipating the need for changes in buildings and outdoor spaces
- providing places that function well today, last for the future and are easy to adapt to changing requirements of occupants and other circumstances at any time, and
- providing buildings that can accommodate changing needs

5.1.2 Section C 16 – Inclusive and accessible design

A number of elements play a significant role in delivering inclusive design and accessibility. This section identifies important features that will guide delivery of housing for the older person, and seeks to ensure that:

- individual dwellings are designed to be flexible, capable of adaptation to meet the changing needs of residents in the future...
- the design of new dwellings takes into account Lifetime Home Standards

5.2 Housing our ageing population: Panel for Innovation (HAPPI)

5.2.1 A study undertaken by HAPPI (2009) identified ten key components for the design of housing for older people. Maldon District Council will expect these to be incorporated in all proposals including the development of elderly persons’ housing:

- Homes should have generous internal space standards
- Design of homes and shared spaces should ensure plenty of natural light in the home and in circulation spaces
- Buildings should avoid internal corridors and single-aspect flats and apartments should have balconies, patios or terraces and outdoor space
- To ensure adaptability, homes should be designed to be ‘care-ready’ to enable emerging technologies, such as telecare and community equipment to be installed

- Building layouts should promote circulation areas and shared spaces that offer connections to the wider context and avoid an 'institutional feel'. Imaginative use of shared balcony access to front doors and thresholds should be included to promote natural surveillance
- Multi purpose space should be made available with appropriate supporting facilities, which could serve the wider neighbourhood as a community 'hub', particularly where they are lacking in the existing community
- Homes should engage positively with the street and the natural environment should be nurtured through new trees and hedges. (further detailed guidance can be found in the Council's Landscape and Green Infrastructure Technical Guidance (February 2017))
- Homes should be energy efficient, well insulated and well ventilated to avoid overheating
- Provision for cycles and mobility aids should be made as well as additional storage both inside and outside the home
- Shared external areas such as 'home zones' that give priority to pedestrians should be considered

SOURCE: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/housing-our-ageing-population-panel-for-innovation>

- 5.2.2 A number of these recommendations reflect some of the key factors identified in local surveys undertaken as essential and important by older persons seeking a future home (see 1.2 above).

A further report: Housing our Ageing Population: Plan for Implementation (HAPPI2) Report (2012) provides further advice on improving the design and quality of specialist housing for the older person with the ten core design elements remaining in place

SOURCE: <http://www.housinglin.org.uk/topics/type/resource>

- 5.2.3 A recent report from HAPPI - Housing our Ageing Population: Positive Ideas HAPPI 3 Making Retirement Living a Positive Choice (June 2016) primarily focuses on issues beyond the design and construction of housing for older people. Whilst it explores best practice and service options, it reiterates the ten features identified in the 2009 HAPPI report set out above. This report also provides links to further studies, guidance and case studies.

SOURCE: http://www.housinglin.org.uk/topics/browse/design_building/happi/

5.3 Lifetime homes

- 5.3.1 The Lifetime Homes Standard establishes the principles of good design that maximise utility, independence and quality of life. Whilst Lifetime Homes has not been formally adopted by the Council, developers will be expected to take account of these design principles which provide particular benefits to older people and those with a physical impairment.

The Lifetime Homes design criteria are intended to provide accessible and adaptable accommodation for everyone, and over time, should allow older people to remain in their houses for longer and offer greater choice for independent living. The concept is based on five overarching principles:

- Inclusivity – the flexibility and adaptability within the design will meet a diverse range of needs over time
- Accessibility – inclusive design will provide convenient and independent access into and around the built environment (externally and internally)
- Adaptability – the original design should accommodate future provision for adaptation from the outset
- Sustainability – the accessibility, flexibility and adaptability will ensure long term demand and contribute to the creation of stable and popular neighbourhoods and communities
- Good value – carefully considered design, incorporating provision for adaptation, will give inherent flexibility and provide better value for the wider community in accommodating the changing needs of older people, thus reducing the future need for specialised housing.

SOURCE: <http://www.lifetimehomes.org.uk>

5.4 Technical Housing Standards – nationally described space standard (March 2015) published by Department for Communities and Local Government

- 5.4.1 This document deals with internal space within new dwellings and can be applied across all tenures. Whilst this is referenced for guidance only and has not been formally adopted by the Council, developers will be expected to take these standards into account in the design of new developments.

SOURCE: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/technical-housing-standards-nationally-described-space-standard>

5.5 RTPI Practice Advice (January 2017): Dementia and Town Planning - Creating better environments for people living with dementia

- 5.5.1 Whilst this document primarily discusses provision for people living with dementia, it provides useful design guidance on the provision of adaptable housing for the elderly in sustainable locations and the creation of an engaging living environment. The Guidance sets out the following key design principles to be considered in the design of new developments:

- A familiar environment where functions of places and buildings are obvious, and any changes are small scale and incremental
- A legible environment that provides a hierarchy of street types, which are short and fairly narrow with clear signs at decision points
- A variety of landmarks, with architectural features in a variety of styles and materials, e.g. trees and street furniture, to provide distinctions between areas
- Land uses are mixed with shops and services within a 5-10 minute walk from housing, and entrances to places are obvious and easy to use, and conform to disabled access regulations
- Open space is well defined with toilets, seating, shelter and good lighting with minimal street clutter. Background and traffic noise should be minimised through planting and fencing (this is covered in more detail in the Council's Assessing Air Quality & Emissions Impacts from Development, and Planning & Noise Technical Guidance)
- Wide, flat and non-slip footpaths with development orientated to avoid creating dark shadows or bright glare

Further information on this guidance, including links to summaries of expert advice on urban and housing design can be found in

"Dementia and Town Planning – RTPi Practice Advice January 2017 (endorsed by Alzheimers Society)"

SOURCE: <http://rtpi.org.uk/knowledge/practice/dementia-and-town-planning/>

5.6 Inclusive Design for Getting Outdoors (I'DGO)

- 5.6.1 It is recognised that access to safe outside space, with good views from inside the building as well as daily exposure to daylight, improves health. It is particularly important to ensure the design of housing for the elderly encompasses not only the aesthetics of the buildings themselves but also the provision of easy access to the outdoor environment. A well-designed outdoor environment will encourage older people to spend more time outdoors and the "experience" should be designed to meet their particular needs. This guidance supplements the MDDG which sets out the key elements to be included in the design of open spaces including accessibility and integration with the wider community.

Further detail can be found in "Inclusive Design for Getting Outdoors" – A research project funded by the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (2003-2013).

SOURCE: http://idgo.ac.uk/older_people_outdoors

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