

Chelmsford Local Plan  
Evidence Base Document  
Accessible Housing Need  
in Chelmsford

June 2018





# Accessible Housing Need in Chelmsford

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## **1. Introduction**

**1.1** In March 2015, within a Written Ministerial Statement <sup>(1)</sup>, the Government introduced a new approach to streamline housing standards across the country. They stated:

*‘New homes need to be high quality, accessible and sustainable. To achieve this, the government has created a new approach for the setting of technical standards for new housing. This rationalises the many differing existing standards into a simpler, streamlined system which will reduce burdens and help bring forward much needed new homes.’*

**1.2** This new approach included the accessible housing standards. These standards are featured within the Building Regulations Part M Volume 1 <sup>(2)</sup> and consist of three parts:

- M4(1): Category 1 – Visitable dwellings
- M4(2): Category 2 – Accessible and adaptable dwellings
- M4(3): Category 3 – Wheelchair user dwellings

**1.3** M4(1) is a compulsory regulation, whereas M4(2) and M4(3) are optional standards.

**1.4** The PPG <sup>(3)</sup> indicates that for a local authority to adopt regulations M4(2) and/or M4(3), they need to clearly evidence the need for the standard/s and consider the overall impact this will have on viability.

**1.5** This document aims to demonstrate the level of need for regulations M4(2) and M4(3) within Chelmsford to justify their inclusion within the City’s Local Plan for the period 2021-2036.

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(1)

Planning Update March 2015. <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/planning-update-march-2015>

(2)

The Building Regulations 2010, 2015 edition incorporating 2016 amendments. Part M - Access to and use of buildings. [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/540330/BR\\_PDF\\_AD\\_M1\\_2015\\_with\\_2016\\_amendments\\_V3.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/540330/BR_PDF_AD_M1_2015_with_2016_amendments_V3.pdf)

(3)

Housing: optional technical standards. Published March 2015. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-optional-technical-standards>

## **2. Why Implement Accessible Housing Standards**

**2.1** It is estimated that around 10% of the population of Great Britain struggle with mobility. This accounts for around 2.5 million households across the country <sup>(4)</sup>.

**2.2** Furthermore, of those who have mobility issues, a survey conducted by ComRes <sup>(5)</sup> found:

- 72% of respondents reported that the entrance to their home is not properly accessible
- 50% claimed their stairs were not wide enough for a stair-lift to be installed
- 52% reported that their doors and hallways were not wide enough for wheelchair use
- 63% stated that their bathroom is not large enough to fit a wheelchair in

**2.3** In recent years, the annual net additional dwellings in England have been steadily increasing with 217,350 additional dwellings reported in the year 2016-17<sup>(6)</sup>. Yet there is little evidence to suggest that the country is keeping up with reflecting the needs of the community within the new dwellings.

**2.4** It is widely considered that in fact there is a deficit in the availability of accessible homes across the country. Habinteg state:

*'[There are] 300,000 disabled adults having an unmet accessible housing need. The figures do not include families with disabled children and rely on self-reporting of accessibility and mobility needs, which often underestimate the number, so they should be taken as a bare minimum indicator of the true scale of need.'* <sup>(7)</sup>

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(4)

The Hidden Housing Crisis. Leonard Cheshire Disability. Published July 2014.

<http://www.leonardcheshire.org/sites/default/files/Hidden%20Housing%20Crisis%20July%202014.pdf>

(5)

Leonard Cheshire Disability Accessible Housing Survey. Published 15 July 2014.

<http://www.comresglobal.com/polls/leonard-cheshire-disability-accessible-housing-survey/>

(6)

Housing Supply; net additional dwellings, England: 2016-17. Department for Communities and Local Government.

Published November 2017

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/659529/Housing\\_Supply\\_England\\_2016-17.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/659529/Housing_Supply_England_2016-17.pdf)

(7)

Written submission from Habinteg (DBE0100). Published October 2016.

<http://data.parliament.uk/WrittenEvidence/CommitteeEvidence.svc/EvidenceDocument/Women%20and%20Equalities/Di-sability%20and%20the%20built%20environment/written/40858.html>

**2.5** Moreover, in a written statement from Age UK <sup>(8)</sup>, the charity encourage the implementation of accessibility standards referring to research from 2005-06<sup>(9)</sup> stating,

*‘it was estimated that over three quarters of a million people aged 65 and over needed specially adapted accommodation because of a medical condition or disability, and of these 145,000 of them reported living in homes that do not meet their needs. In 2016 these figures are likely to be higher... Affordable accessible homes, based on good design and construction standards, would make this easier and cheaper to achieve and will be increasingly important for the health and wellbeing of our ageing population. ‘*

**2.6** It is considered that developers are put off by the additional costs associated with ensuring a dwelling meets additional technical standards. The Department for Communities and Local Government <sup>(10)</sup> estimated average additional cost to ensure a dwelling is accessible and adaptable is between £520 and £940, whilst the additional average cost to ensure a dwelling is fully wheelchair accessible is between £7,764 and £23,052. These costs are minimal when compared to amount spent each year on adaptations around the home.

**2.7** Previously, Local Authorities were encouraged to implement “Lifetime Homes” – homes that would be accessible to all residents with the added ability to adapt features to meet additional needs. This was an optional standard consisting of 16 design criteria that *‘maximizes utility, independence and quality of life, while not compromising other design issues such as aesthetics or cost effectiveness’*<sup>(11)</sup>. These criteria ranged from increasing car parking space dimensions to facilitating an entrance for a wheelchair user. The concept first originated in the 1990’s due to concerns regarding inaccessibility issues arising in dwellings across the country.

**2.8** Implementing the Lifetime Homes standard is considered to have a great impact on spending costs within the country. ‘The Hidden Housing Crisis’<sup>(4)</sup> identified that a trip to hospital following a slip on the stairs at home costs an average of £1,800 and a hip fracture costs over £28,000 – both of which could be avoided if an initial small investment had been paid to ensure a dwelling meets the criteria of a Lifetime Home. It is estimated that unnecessary slips and falls are costing the NHS tens of thousands of pounds each year.

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(8)

Written submission from Age UK (DBE0156). Published October 2016.

[http://data.parliament.uk/WrittenEvidence/CommitteeEvidence.svc/EvidenceDocument/Women%20and%20Equalities/Di-sability%20and%20the%20built%20environment/written/41097.html#\\_edn3](http://data.parliament.uk/WrittenEvidence/CommitteeEvidence.svc/EvidenceDocument/Women%20and%20Equalities/Di-sability%20and%20the%20built%20environment/written/41097.html#_edn3)

(9)

Housing in England 2006/07: A report based on the 2006/07 Survey of English Housing. Communities and Local Government. Published September 2008.

(10)

DCLG publication of the Housing Standards Review – Cost Impacts. EC Harris Built Asset Consultancy. Published September 2014.

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/353387/021c\\_Cost\\_Report\\_11th\\_Sept\\_2014\\_FINAL.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/353387/021c_Cost_Report_11th_Sept_2014_FINAL.pdf)

(11)

Habinteg. Lifetime Homes Principles. <http://www.lifetimehomes.org.uk/pages/lifetime-homes-principles.html>

**2.9** The Lifetime Homes criteria are now largely reflected within the M4(2) Building Regulation <sup>(12)</sup> to further encourage their use within housing development across the country.

**2.10** There are several organisations across the country pushing for the adoption of standards M4(2) and M4(3) as the results will benefit both residents and central government. Habinteg Housing explain that by implementing accessible homes that meet Building Regulation M4(2) or M4(3), the country will be saving money in the long term whilst promoting independent living. They state:

- *'Accessible homes save the taxpayer money in the long term by cutting the cost of future adaptations if someone's needs should change*
- *Accessible homes can reduce the risk of accidents around the home and shorten the length of hospital stays*
- *Accessible homes mean individuals and families are less likely to have to leave their home to move to more costly supported housing or care facilities'* <sup>(13)</sup>

**2.11** The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) <sup>(14)</sup> states that Local Authorities need to:

*'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, but not limited to, families with children, older people, people with disabilities, service families and people wishing to build their own homes)'.*

**2.12** With the introduction of the two optional regulations within Part M of the Building Regulations, it is considered that in meeting this NPPF requirement, Local Authorities using these standards will be planning for the development of more efficient and sustainable dwellings. These dwellings will not only meet the needs of different groups within the community but will go a step further by providing them with additional independence, dignity and a higher quality of life than they are experiencing within their current dwellings.

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(12)

Accessible Housing Standards 2015 Briefing. Published June 2016.

<http://www.habinteg.org.uk/download.cfm?doc=docm93jjm4n1558.pdf&ver=1843>

(13)

Habinteg. Accessible Homes Independent Lives. <https://www.habinteg.org.uk/foraccessiblehomes>

(14)

National Planning Policy Framework. Published March 2012

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf)

### **3. Local Plan Policy Requirements**

**3.1** Within their Local Plan Pre-Submission Document <sup>(15)</sup>, Chelmsford City Council have proposed the following mix of M4(2) and M4(3) dwellings within development across the period 2021-2036:

*‘A) Within all developments of 10 or more dwellings the Council will require:*  
*i. the provision of an appropriate mix of dwelling types and sizes that contribute to current and future housing needs and create mixed communities; and*  
*ii. Each dwelling to be constructed to meet requirement M4(2) of the Building Regulations 2015 (accessible or adaptable dwellings), or subsequent government standard.’*

*‘B) Within all developments of 30 or more dwellings the Council require A)i and A)ii above, and:*  
*i. a minimum of 5% of new affordable dwellings should be built to meet requirement M4(3) of the Building Regulations 2015 (wheelchair user dwellings), or subsequent government standard.’* <sup>(15)</sup>

**3.2** Justification for the choice of this mix is featured throughout the remainder of this report.

**3.3** The PPG <sup>(3)</sup> states that should a local authority choose to implement higher accessibility, adaptability and wheelchair housing standards, they need to consider the overall impact on viability.

**3.4** Chelmsford City Council has considered the additional costs of building to higher technical standards M4(2) and M4(3) within the Local Plan Viability Study including CIL Review <sup>(16)</sup>.

**3.5** The analysis within the Viability Study shows that generally such schemes are viable, when considering the Council’s affordable housing requirements. From this, it can be taken that policies related to the adoption of higher technical building standards within the City Council’s Local Plan are unlikely to have adverse impacts on delivery.

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(15) Chelmsford Draft Local Plan. Pre-Submission Document (Regulation 19 – Publication Draft). Published January 2018.

(16) Local Plan Viability Study Including CIL Viability Review. Published January 2018.



#### **4. Overview of the Building Regulations, Part M, Volume 1**

**4.1** The 2015 edition of Building Regulations details Part M – Access to and use of buildings – in two volumes; Volume 1: Dwellings<sup>(17)</sup>, and Volume 2: Buildings other than dwellings<sup>(18)</sup>. For the purpose of this document, attention is directed to Volume 1.

**4.2** Volume 1 came into effect as of 1 October 2015 and consists of three accessible housing standards explained in more detail throughout the remainder of this section.

**4.3** Note that Part M, Volume 1 of the Building Regulations can apply to any new dwelling, so long as the standards are specified within the planning application. Student accommodation is excluded from this section as it falls under Volume 2 of Part M.

##### **i. M4(1): Category 1 – Visitable Dwellings**

**4.4** M4(1) is a mandatory regulation and sets standards to ensure dwellings are visitable. The extract below from the Building Regulations provides an overview of the requirement.

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(17)

The Building Regulations 2010, 2015 edition incorporating 2016 amendments. Part M - Access to and use of buildings. Volume 1: Dwellings

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/540330/BR\\_PDF\\_AD\\_M1\\_2015\\_with\\_2016\\_amendments\\_V3.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/540330/BR_PDF_AD_M1_2015_with_2016_amendments_V3.pdf)

(18)

The Building Regulations 2010, 2015 edition. Part M - Access to and use of buildings. Volume 2: Buildings other than Dwellings

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/441786/BR\\_PDF\\_AD\\_M2\\_2015.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/441786/BR_PDF_AD_M2_2015.pdf)

# Requirement M4(1): Category 1 – Visitable dwellings

This section of the approved document deals with the following requirement from Part M of Schedule 1 to the Building Regulations 2010.

Requirement	
<i>Requirement</i>	<i>Limits on application</i>
<b>Category 1 – visitable dwelling</b>	
<b>Access and use</b>	
<b>M4(1).</b> Reasonable provision should be made for people to—	Requirement M4(1) does not apply to:
(a) gain access to; and	(a) an extension to a dwelling; or
(b) use, the dwelling and its facilities	(b) any part of a building that is used solely to enable the building or any service or fitting in the building to be inspected, repaired or maintained.

## Performance

In the Secretary of State's view, requirement M4(1) will be met when a new dwelling makes reasonable provision for most people, including wheelchair users, to approach and enter the dwelling and to access habitable rooms and sanitary facilities on the entrance storey. Reasonable provision is made if the dwelling complies with all of the following.

- Within the curtilage of the dwelling or the building containing the dwelling, it is possible to approach and gain access to the dwelling.
- It is possible to gain access to the dwelling, or the building containing the dwelling, from the most likely point of alighting from a car.
- A disabled person who is able to walk is able to visit any dwelling in a building containing one or more dwellings.
- Visitors can access and use the habitable rooms and a WC within the entrance storey of the dwelling (or the principal storey where the entrance storey does not contain a habitable room).
- Where the habitable rooms and the WC are located on the entrance storey, access between them is step free.
- Wall-mounted switches and socket outlets in habitable rooms are reasonably accessible to people who have reduced reach.

Figure 1: Extract from Page 3 of The Building Regulations 2010, 2015 edition. Part M - Access to and use of buildings. Volume 1: Dwellings<sup>(17)</sup>

**4.5** The standard ensures an accessible, safe and convenient approach to the dwelling is provided; doors and corridors adhere to widths of 750mm or above, with external doors adhering to widths of 775mm or above; a WC is provided on the entrance storey (where the entrance storey has habitable rooms); and switches and sockets serving habitable rooms are 450-1200mm above floor level.

**4.6** These features provide a basic level accessibility and may cater for those who have reduced reach, and those with small pushchairs and small wheelchairs that are predominately used outdoors.

**4.7** This requirement previously featured within the 2004 edition of the Building Regulations as a mandatory standard. As such, Chelmsford City Council do not need to take any action regarding this requirement as post-2004 dwellings within the city comply with this standard.

ii. **M4(2): Category 2 – Accessible and adaptable dwellings**

**4.8** M4(2) is an optional regulation to be applied instead of M4(1) and not applied where M4(3) has been applied. The extract below shows how M4(2) goes beyond M4(1) to ensure a dwelling is both adaptable and accessible.

## Optional requirement M4(2): Category 2 – Accessible and adaptable dwellings

This section of the approved document deals with the following optional requirement from Part M of Schedule 1 to the Building Regulations 2010.

Requirement	
<i>Optional requirement</i>	<i>Limits on application</i>
<b>Part M access to and use of buildings</b>	
<b>Category 2 – accessible and adaptable dwellings</b>	
<b>M4(2) optional requirement</b>	Optional requirement M4(2)–
(1) Reasonable provision must be made for people to—	(a) may apply only in relation to a dwelling that is erected;
(a) gain access to; and	(b) will apply in substitution for requirement M4(1);
(b) use, the dwelling and its facilities.	(c) does not apply where optional requirement M4(3) applies;
(2) The provision made must be sufficient to—	(d) does not apply to any part of a building that is used solely to enable the building or any service or fitting in the building to be inspected, repaired or maintained.
(a) meet the needs of occupants with differing needs, including some older or disabled people; and	
(b) to allow adaptation of the dwelling to meet the changing needs of occupants over time.	

### Performance

In the Secretary of State's view, optional requirement M4(2) will be met where a new dwelling makes reasonable provision for most people to access the dwelling and incorporates features that make it potentially suitable for a wide range of occupants, including older people, those with reduced mobility and some wheelchair users. Reasonable provision is made if the dwelling complies with all of the following.

- Within the curtilage of the dwelling, or of the building containing the dwelling, it is possible to approach and gain step-free access to the dwelling and to any associated parking space and communal facilities intended for the occupants to use.
- There is step-free access to the WC and other accommodation within the entrance storey, and to any associated private outdoor space directly connected to the entrance storey.
- A wide range of people, including older and disabled people and some wheelchair users, are able to use the accommodation and its sanitary facilities.
- Features are provided to enable common adaptations to be carried out in future to increase the accessibility and functionality of the dwelling.
- Wall-mounted switches, socket outlets and other controls are reasonably accessible to people who have reduced reach.

Figure 2: Extract from Page 10 of The Building Regulations 2010, 2015 edition. Part M - Access to and use of buildings. Volume 1: Dwellings <sup>(17)</sup>

**4.9** This standard includes a wider range of features to ensure the dwelling is accessible to a wide range of residents. This includes step-free access into the dwelling; doors and corridors adhere to widths of 750mm or above, with external doors adhering to widths of 850mm or above; where there is a communal lift, the car is suitable for a wheelchair user and accompanying person; 1200mm of clear space in front of kitchen units; living space on the entrance level; a double bedroom with 750mm clear access zone; a step-free WC on the entrance storey; and switches and sockets have their centre line between 450mm and 1200mm.

**4.10** Additionally, to cater for residents with changing needs, features that are adaptable within an M4(2) dwelling include a car parking bay that can be widened to 3.3m; stairs meet strict standards to enable the installation of a stair-lift; all walls, ducts and boxing to the WC, bathroom and shower room are strong enough to support grab rails, seats and other adaptations; and provision for potential level access shower is made.

**4.11** The wide array of accessible and adaptable features within an M4(2) dwelling can benefit a variety of residents:

- Wheelchair users will benefit from the provision to widen a car parking space and level access entrance into the dwelling. They may also value the clear access zones in the kitchen and bedroom and the provision to install a level access shower. Where applicable, the provision of a communal lift with a car large enough for a wheelchair and accompanying person will appeal to wheelchair users
- Pram users, like wheelchair users, will also benefit from the provision to widen a car parking space and level access into the dwelling
- The blind/partially sighted may benefit from the level access into the dwelling and clear access zones, particularly if they use a cane or guide dog
- Those with short-term impairments, such as residents using crutches or residents having just had an operation, may benefit from having a living area on the entrance storey to avoid climbing stairs to additional storeys. Moreover, those who are relying on equipment for mobility – such as crutches or a wheelchair – will benefit from the clear access zones
- Those with reduced reach will benefit from the wall mounted switches and sockets
- Older people will benefit from the level access into the dwelling and provision to widen a car parking space. Also, as mobility deteriorates with age, the provision for a stair-lift, grab rails and a level access shower to be installed may appeal to this age group
- Those with reduced mobility will benefit from the level access entrance into the dwelling and clear access areas within the dwelling. They may also find that the provision for installation of a stair-lift, grab rails and a level-access shower suits their needs.

**4.12** These facilities can make significant and meaningful improvements to living conditions to these groups of people, providing them with a higher level of independence than would be available from an M4(1) dwelling.

**4.13** There are however limitations to M4(2). For instance, a dwelling with several storeys may not be appropriate for wheelchair users, and it is possible that internal doors may not be wide enough for all wheelchairs. Storage for prams, wheelchairs and any additional equipment for mobility may not be provided.

**4.14** Therefore, M4(2) dwellings are suitable as visitable dwellings for all people, but may not always be appropriate for those with additional needs.

iii. **M4(3): Category 3 – Wheelchair user dwellings**

**4.15** The final requirement, M4(3), extends beyond both M4(1) and M4(2) to ensure a dwelling either meets the needs of residents who use wheelchairs or can be easily adapted to meet this need. M4(3) is an optional regulation, implemented in place of M4(1) and M4(2). The extract below provides more detail on this optional requirement.

## Optional requirement M4(3): Category 3 – Wheelchair user dwellings

This section of the approved document deals with the following optional requirement from Part M of Schedule 1 to the Building Regulations 2010.

Requirement	
<i>Optional requirement</i>	<i>Limits on application</i>
<b>Category 3 – wheelchair user dwellings</b>	
<b>M4(3) optional requirement</b>	Optional requirement M4(3)—
(1) Reasonable provision must be made for people to—	(a) may apply only in relation to a dwelling that is erected;
(a) gain access to, and	(b) will apply in substitution for requirement M4(1);
(b) use, the dwelling and its facilities.	(c) does not apply where optional requirement M4(2) applies;
(2) The provision made must be sufficient to—	(d) does not apply to any part of a building that is used solely to enable the building or any service or fitting in the building to be inspected, repaired or maintained.
(a) allow simple adaptation of the dwelling to meet the needs of occupants who use wheelchairs; or	
(b) meet the needs of occupants who use wheelchairs.	Optional requirement M4(3) (2)(b) applies only where the planning permission under which the building work is carried out specifies that it shall be complied with.

### Performance

In the Secretary of State's view, optional requirement M4(3) will be met where a new dwelling makes reasonable provision, either at completion or at a point following completion, for a wheelchair user to live in the dwelling and use any associated private outdoor space, parking and communal facilities that may be provided for the use of the occupants. Reasonable provision is made if the dwelling complies with all of the following.

- Within the curtilage of the dwelling or of the building containing the dwelling, a wheelchair user can approach and gain step-free access to every private entrance to the dwelling and to every associated private outdoor space, parking space and communal facility for occupants' use.
- Access to the WC and other accommodation within the entrance storey is step-free and the dwelling is designed to have the potential for step-free access to all other parts.
- There is sufficient internal space to make accommodation within the dwelling suitable for a wheelchair user.
- The dwelling is wheelchair adaptable such that key parts of the accommodation, including sanitary facilities and kitchens, could be easily altered to meet the needs of a wheelchair user or, where required by a local planning authority, the dwelling is wheelchair accessible.
- Wall-mounted switches, controls and socket outlets are accessible to people who have reduced reach.

Figure 3: Extract from Page 23 of The Building Regulations 2010, 2015 edition. Part M - Access to and use of buildings. Volume 1: Dwellings <sup>(17)</sup>

**4.16** M4(3) features a vast range of facilities to ensure a dwelling is either wheelchair accessible or wheelchair adaptable. This includes a parking space with a clear access zone; step free access into and within the dwelling – which may include a through-floor lift or lifting platform where the dwelling spans multiple floors; corridors adhere to widths of 1050mm or above whilst doors adhere to widths of 850mm or above; switches and sockets with centre line 700-1000mm above floor level; provision of a level-access shower; and transfer and storage space for up to two wheelchairs.

**4.17** Moreover, where M4(3) dwellings are designed to be wheelchair adaptable, features that can be adapted include: kitchen worktops that can be adjusted in height; bathroom ceilings are strong enough to support installation of a hoist; and in non-communal dwellings with stairs leading to additional storeys, there is provision to install a stair-lift.

**4.18** As previously mentioned, M4(3) is primarily designed to benefit wheelchair users, ensuring they are able to make full use of their homes and all of the facilities within. However, it is considered that those who use prams, those with limited mobility, the blind/partially sighted and the elderly will experience the same benefits from M4(3) as cited under M4(2), providing a higher level of independence for this wide range of residents.

iv. **Comparing the Requirements**

**4.19** To highlight the key differences between M4(1), M4(2) and M4(3) the table below provides an overview of the key features of each requirement.

**Table 1: Comparison of features between the Accessibility Standards <sup>(17)</sup>**

<b>Feature</b>	<b>M4(1) – Visitable Dwellings</b>	<b>M4(2) – Accessible and adaptable dwellings</b>	<b>M4(3) – Wheelchair user dwellings</b>
Parking	<i>No regulated provision</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Where parking is provided, at least one standard parking space is able to be widened to 3.3m</li> <li>- Access to the dwelling from the parking space is step-free and gently sloping where it cannot be level</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Where a parking space is provided there is a clear access zone of 1200mm to at least on side and the rear</li> <li>- Access to the dwelling from the parking space is step-free and gently sloping where it cannot be level</li> </ul>
Doors and hallways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Minimum corridor clear width of 750mm</li> <li>- Minimum internal door width of 750mm and external door width of 775mm</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Minimum corridor clear width of 900mm</li> <li>- Minimum internal door width of 750mm and external door width of 850mm</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In communal facilities, external doors are power assisted where the force of opening the door is deemed too great</li> <li>- In non-communal facilities, the entrance doors are suited to be adapted to be power assisted</li> <li>- Minimum corridor clear width of 1050mm</li> <li>- Every door has a minimum width of 850mm</li> </ul>
Level Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The approach to a dwelling is step-free where possible</li> <li>- A stepped change of level within the entrance storey of a dwelling should be avoided</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Level access is provided to approach and enter the dwelling and within the entrance storey. This includes a stair-free access to a liveable area and WC</li> <li>- Where there is a communal lift, the car is large enough for use by a wheelchair user and accompanying person</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Step-free access is provided for every entrance to the dwelling – irrespective of storey</li> <li>- Approach to dwelling is level, gently sloping or ramped</li> <li>- Where there is a communal lift, the car is large enough for use by a wheelchair user and accompanying person</li> </ul>
Space in Habitable Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Within the entrance storey, there is a WC</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Within the entrance storey, there is a living area</li> <li>- At least one double bedroom has a clear access zone of 750mm or more to both sides and the foot of the bed</li> <li>- All single/twin bedrooms provide a clear access zone of 750mm to one side and the foot of the bed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- There is a minimum 1500mm turning circle inside the entrance area</li> <li>- There is a minimum clear access zone of 1500mm in front of and between all kitchen units</li> <li>- The principal living area is on the entrance storey</li> <li>- In wheelchair adaptable dwellings, the worktop within the kitchen can be altered in height</li> <li>- All bedrooms are accessible to a wheelchair user</li> </ul>

Feature	M4(1) – Visitable Dwellings	M4(2) – Accessible and adaptable dwellings	M4(3) – Wheelchair user dwellings
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A clear space of at least 1200mm is provided in front of all kitchen units</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The kitchen worktop has clear leg space underneath</li> <li>- Principal double bedroom provides 1000mm minimum clear access zone to both sides and the foot of the bed</li> </ul>
Bathroom Adaptations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- WC is provided on entrance storey (where entrance storey has habitable rooms)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Walls, ducts and boxings to the WC, bathroom and shower room are strong enough to support grab rails, seats and other adaptations</li> <li>- There is a WC and basin on the entrance level of a dwelling</li> <li>- Provision for a potential level access shower is made if not already provided</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Walls, ducts and boxings to the WC, bathroom and shower room are strong enough to support grab rails, seats and other adaptations</li> <li>- The ceilings within all WCs and bathrooms are strong enough to support an overhead hoist</li> <li>- There is a wet room with a WC, basin and a level access shower installed on the entrance storey</li> </ul>
Easy Reach Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Switches and sockets serving habitable rooms have centre line 450-1200mm above floor level</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Switches and sockets serving habitable rooms have centre line 450-1200mm above floor level</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Switches and sockets serving habitable rooms have centre line 700-1000mm above floor level</li> <li>- Remote door release facility is provided</li> </ul>
Wheelchair Storage and Transfer Space	<i>No regulated provision</i>	<i>No regulated provision</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dedicated storage for mobility scooters, where provided, is step free</li> <li>- Transfer space and storage for up to two wheelchairs is provided on the entrance storey. A power socket is provided in this space to facilitate charging (In wheelchair adaptable dwellings, this space may be labelled as general storage)</li> </ul>
Stair-lifts and Through-Floor Lifts / Lifting Platforms	<i>No regulated provision</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Within non-communal dwellings with multiple storeys, there is provision for a stair-lift to be installed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Within a wheelchair adaptable dwelling with multiple storeys, there is provision to install a through-floor lift or lifting platform</li> <li>- Within a wheelchair accessible dwelling with multiple storeys, there is a through-floor lift or lifting platform already installed</li> <li>- Where there are stairs within a dwelling, there is provision for a stair-lift to be installed</li> </ul>



## 5. Accessibility and Space Standards

**5.1** Within the Local Plan Pre-Submission Document <sup>(15)</sup>, Chelmsford City Council have outlined that all new dwellings will adhere to the Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS). These optional standards ensure that dwellings are constructed with appropriate internal space and storage areas. Full details of the standards can be found in the Governments paper ‘Technical housing standards – nationally described space standards’ <sup>(19)</sup>.

**5.2** It is considered that there is a strong link between space standards and accessibility standards. Julia Park, the head of housing for Levitt Bernstein, argues:

*‘If we are serious about meeting the housing needs of an aging population, reducing bed-blocking and cutting the cost of care, we have to recognise that accessibility and space must go together.’* <sup>(20)</sup>

**5.3** Possibly the first relationship between space and accessibility that comes to mind is the link to mobility. Having suitable internal space can enable those in wheelchairs or those using other mobility aiding equipment to have enough room to manoeuvre comfortably and safely around the dwelling.

**5.4** In terms of internal area, optional standard M4(2) – Accessible and adaptable dwellings, can comply within a dwelling that meets the minimum standards set out in the NDSS. However, M4(3) – Wheelchair user dwellings, would likely require slightly more internal space, particularly in the bedrooms, to ensure the clear access zones can be met.

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(19)

Technical housing standards – nationally described space standards. Published March 2015.

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/524531/160519\\_Nationally\\_Described\\_Space\\_Standard\\_\\_\\_\\_Final\\_Web\\_version.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/524531/160519_Nationally_Described_Space_Standard____Final_Web_version.pdf)

(20)

One Hundred Years of Housing Space Standards, What Now? Julia Park. Published January 2017.

[http://housingpacestandards.co.uk/assets/space-standards\\_onscreen.pdf](http://housingpacestandards.co.uk/assets/space-standards_onscreen.pdf)

**5.5** The implementation of the optional standards M4(2) would complement the NDSS with respect to bedroom sizes. Optional regulation M4(2) has the following requirement for bedrooms:

#### **Bedrooms**

**2.25** To enable a wide range of people to access and use them, bedrooms should comply with all of the following.

- a. Every bedroom can provide a clear access route a minimum 750mm wide from the doorway to the window.
- b. At least one double bedroom (the principal bedroom) can provide a clear access zone a minimum 750mm wide to both sides and the foot of the bed.
- c. Every other double bedroom can provide a clear access zone a minimum 750mm wide to one side and the foot of the bed.
- d. All single and twin bedrooms can provide a clear access zone a minimum 750mm wide to one side of each bed.
- e. It can be demonstrated (for example by providing dimensioned bedroom layouts, similar to the example in Diagram 2.4) that the provisions above can be achieved.

**NOTE:** For the purpose of demonstrating compliance with these provisions, beds should be of the size set out in the furniture schedule in Appendix D.

Figure 4: Extract from Page 18 of The Building Regulations 2010, 2015 edition. Part M - Access to and use of buildings. Volume 1: Dwellings <sup>(17)</sup>

**5.6** Specifications for bedroom sizes are set out in the NDSS as follows:

- c. in order to provide one bedspace, a single bedroom has a floor area of at least 7.5m<sup>2</sup> and is at least 2.15m wide*
- d. in order to provide two bedspaces, a double (or twin bedroom) has a floor area of at least 11.5m<sup>2</sup>*
- e. one double (or twin bedroom) is at least 2.75m wide and every other double (or twin bedroom) is at least 2.55m wide'*<sup>(19)</sup>

**5.7** The figures below show that both a single room and double room, set at the minimum dimensions to comply with the NDSS, can still accommodate a standard single and double bed respectively while achieving the 0.75m clear access zone rules set out in the M4(2) standards.

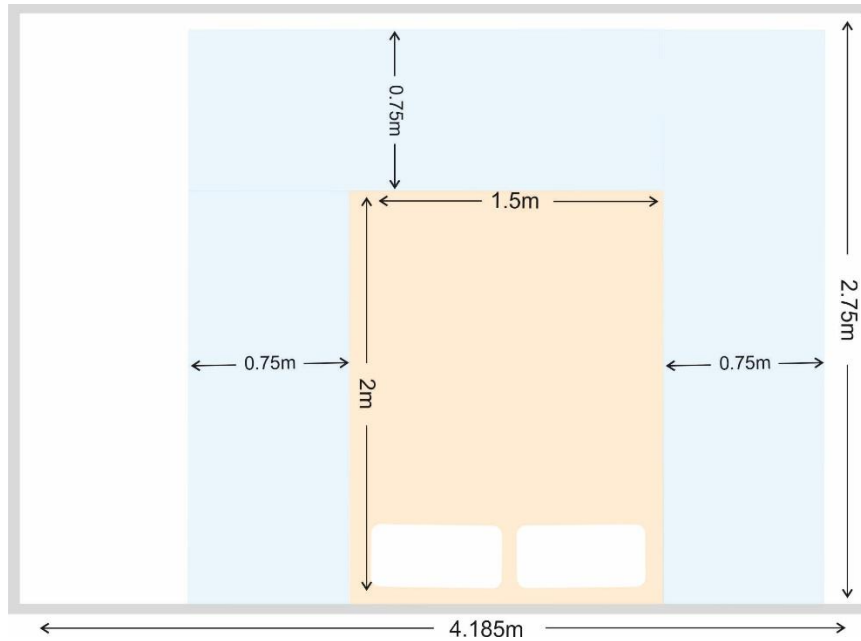


Figure 5: Example double bedroom meeting both NDSS requirements and optional standard M4(2). (Not drawn to scale)

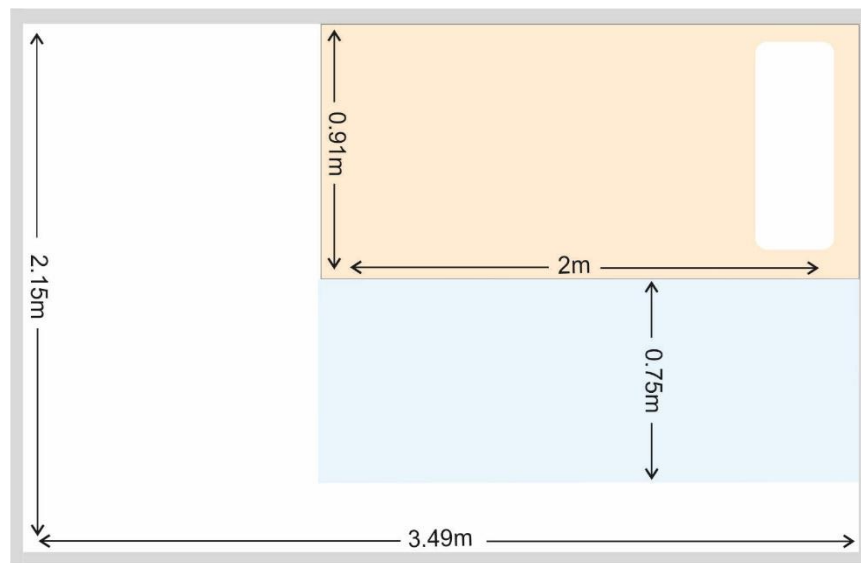


Figure 6: Example single bedroom meeting both NDSS requirements and optional standard M4(2). (Not drawn to scale)

**5.8** Note that within these drawings, the double and single bed sizes are as set out in Appendix D: Furniture Schedule, within Part M of the Building Regulations <sup>(2)</sup>.

**5.9** These drawings indicate that part 2.25 of optional standard M4(2) would be satisfied by compliance with the NDSS at no additional cost to developers.

**5.10** The adoption of M4(3) would complement the NDSS in terms of storage. The NDSS sets out that the minimum storage area per dwelling should be as follows:

**Table 2: Nationally Described Space Standards Storage Requirements <sup>(19)</sup>**

Number of bedrooms (b)	Number of bed spaces (persons)	Built-in storage(m <sup>2</sup> )
1b	1p	1.0
	2p	1.5
2b	3p	2.0
	4p	
3b	4p	2.5
	5p	
	6p	
4b	5p	3.0
	6p	
	7p	
	8p	
5b	6p	3.5
	7p	
	8p	
6b	7p	4.0
	8p	

**5.11** The extract below indicates that for dwellings designed to accommodate more than one person, the NDSS storage requirement satisfies part of optional regulation M4(3), again, at no additional cost to developers.

#### General storage space

**3.26** To make adequate provision for the storage of household items, general built-in storage space should comply with Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 Minimum area of general built-in storage						
Number of bedrooms	1	2	3	4	5	6
Minimum storage area (m <sup>2</sup> )	1.5	2.0	2.5	3.0	3.5	4.0

**Figure 7: Extract from Page 34 of The Building Regulations 2010, 2015 edition. Part M - Access to and use of buildings. Volume 1: Dwellings <sup>(17)</sup>**

**5.12** Provision of both space and accessibility within a home can have a great impact upon resident's wellbeing. With the adoption of both the NDSS and optional standards M4(2) and M4(3), Chelmsford City Council aspire to maximise city resident's quality of life.

## 6. Identifying Local Need

**6.1** In line with the NPPF, Chelmsford City Council have a responsibility to support ‘*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*’<sup>(14)</sup>.

**6.2** To successfully achieve this, the City Council have researched trends on a local, regional and national basis to effectively establish the level of need for accessible housing.

### i. The Prevalence of those in Need

**6.3** As identified in section 3, those likely to benefit from the adoption of optional standards M4(2) and M4(3) include wheelchair users, pram users, the blind/partially sighted, those with short-term impairments, those with reduced reach, older people and those with reduced mobility. To factor in as many of these groups as possible, data in relation to the disabled, wheelchair users, those 65 and over, and those living with children under 5 has been used to establish a level of need.

**6.4** To begin with, data collected from the 2011 Census<sup>(21)</sup> provide the following age group breakdown on a national and local basis.

**Table 3: National and Local Population Composition taken from the 2011 Census<sup>(21)</sup>**

Region	Total Population	0 – 15 years (% of total)	16 – 24 (% of total)	25 – 49 (% of total)	50 – 64 (% of total)	65+ years (% of total)
Chelmsford	168,310	31,307 (18.60%)	18,094 (10.75%)	58,715 (34.89%)	32,176 (19.12%)	28,018 (16.65%)
England	53,012,456	10,022,836 (18.91%)	6,284,760 (11.86%)	18,474,967 (34.85%)	9,569,364 (18.05%)	8,660,529 (16.34%)

**6.5** The table indicates that age group proportions across Chelmsford and England fell in line with one another in 2011, with the only key difference being that Chelmsford has a slight aging population compared with England. Population projections<sup>(22)</sup> for England and Chelmsford across the Local Plan period 2021-2036, shown below, indicate that the trends in growth across different age groups within Chelmsford are reflected within the national projection. This evidence enables us to use national population composition proportions as a relatively reliable estimate of the composition within Chelmsford.

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(21)

2011 Census. QS103EW – Age by single year. Office of National Statistics. <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/census/2011>

(22)

Population projections – local authority based by single year of age. Office of National Statistics.

<https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/query/select/getdatasetbytheme.asp?opt=3&theme=&subgrp>

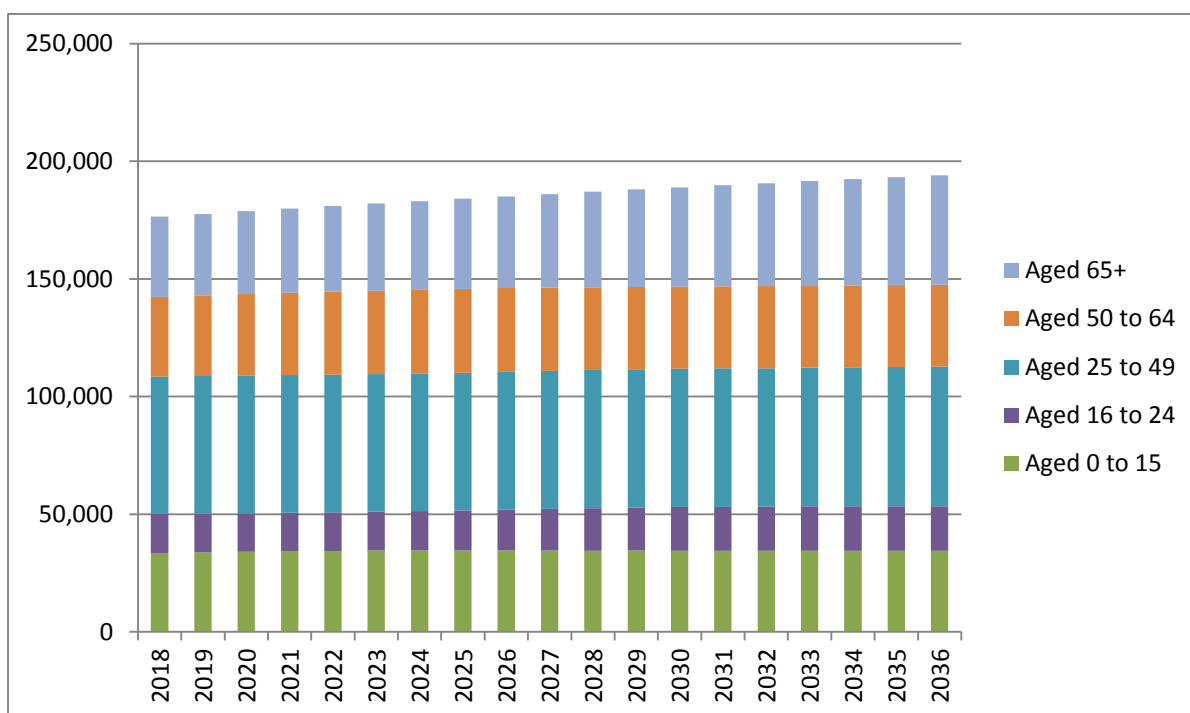


Figure 8: Population Composition for Chelmsford from 2021-2036 <sup>(22)</sup>

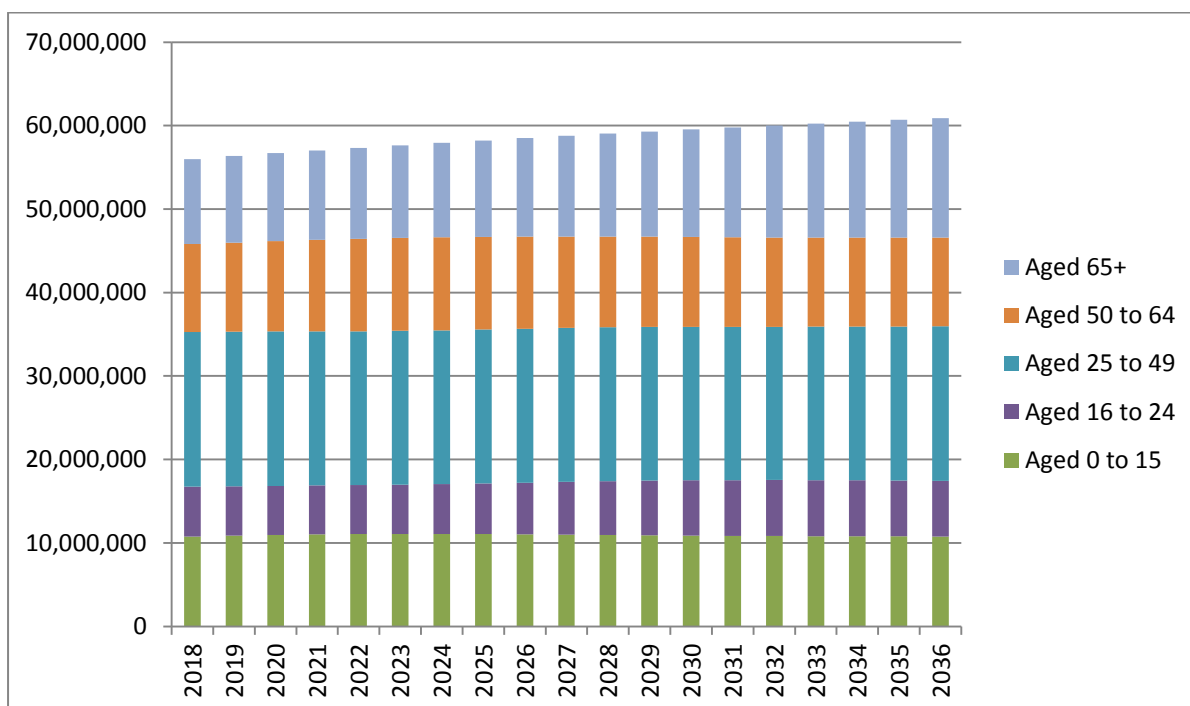


Figure 9: Population Composition for England from 2021-2036 <sup>(22)</sup>

**6.6** Looking at the proportion of families with young children, the figures above show that the number of residents under 18 years of age will not alter drastically. In line with this, subnational population projections <sup>(23)</sup> identify that across the Local Plan period; the number of residents under the age of 5 within Chelmsford will also not alter significantly, staying at around 10,000 each year. This represents around a quarter of the population of children within Chelmsford for each year. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update (SHMA) <sup>(24)</sup> estimates that by 2037, there will be 46,180 (32.51%) households with children in Chelmsford. This works out as approximately 11,545 (8.13%) to be households with children under 5 years old residing there. Note that this final figure exceeds 10,000 to likely account for cases such as separated families.

**6.7** On top of this, it is estimated that by 2037, 22.8% of accommodation for families with dependent children will need to be an affordable housing unit <sup>(24)</sup>. Again, taking a quarter of this figure, 5.7%, will be accommodation for families with children under 5.

**6.8** The adoption of M4(2) across all dwellings and M4(3) across affordable dwellings will have a great impact upon families with children of 5 years or less. The provision of level access and, in the case of M4(3) dwellings, storage suitable for prams would enable parents/guardians to safely manoeuvre children in prams into and out of the dwellings.

**6.9** Figures 8 and 9 identify that the proportion of over 65's compared with any other age group, is likely to increase. The raw data that these figures were created from indicated that by 2036, 23.96% of Chelmsford's population will be aged 65 or over (see Appendix 1).

**6.10** As previously mentioned, the elder demographic is highly likely to benefit from M4(2) or M4(3) compliant dwellings to aid with health problems in later life. Therefore, given that the figures forecast that nearly a quarter of the population of Chelmsford will be over 65, it would be prudent for Chelmsford City Council to implement the standards on significant amount of future housing.

**6.11** The SHMA <sup>(24)</sup> identifies that there are 14.5% of residents in Chelmsford who have a long-term health problem or disability. Data collected within the 2011-2012 English Housing Survey <sup>(25)</sup> estimate that 29.78% of all households have a residents with a long-term illness or disability.

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(23)

2014-based Subnational population projections. Office of National Statistics

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationprojections>

(24)

Braintree, Colchester, Chelmsford and Tendring Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update. Published December 2015.

(25)

English housing survey 2011: homes report. Published July 2013.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-housing-survey-2011-homes-report>

**6.12** The prevalence of disability varies considerably for different age groups. The table below looks at disability projections for those over and under 65 years of age within Chelmsford.

**Table 4: Disability Population Projections across Chelmsford** <sup>(24)</sup>

	2015	2020	2025	2030
<b>People in Chelmsford aged 65+ with a limiting long-term illness (millions)</b>	5,919	6,777	7,943	9,024
<b>People aged 18-64 with a serious physical disability (millions)</b>	2,434	2,543	2,609	2,598

**6.13** Perhaps unsurprisingly, table 4 above shows that the prevalence of disability is set to increase over the coming years and that the most susceptible to disability are the over 65's. Nationally, it is believed that with 45% of this age group are considered disabled <sup>(26)</sup>.

**6.14** The SHMA <sup>(24)</sup> indicates that as at 2015, 21.1% of households in Chelmsford are lived in by residents who are 65 years or older only. Additionally, it is predicted that the proportion of over 65's living alone will reach 38.0% by 2030, and that 14.5% of this older market will require affordable housing by 2037. Adopting the optional standards will greatly benefit this demographic.

**6.15** As an example, older residents who are living alone in affordable accommodation would potentially reside within an M4(3) dwelling. The facilities within this dwelling – stair-lift, level access shower and clear access zones in particular – will enable this demographic to manoeuvre freely and safely through their dwelling providing them with additional independence.

**6.16** As you may expect, as the prevalence of disability rises with age, so does the prevalence of mobility impairment. Data collected within the Family resource survey <sup>(27)</sup> indicates that of those considered as disabled, 51% have mobility related impairments.

**6.17** To study the prevalence of mobility impairment, the table below, created using data from the 2011 English Housing Survey <sup>(25)</sup>, looks at the proportion of wheelchair users broken down into age groups across the country.

**Table 5: Wheelchair users in England categorised by age** <sup>(25)</sup>

<b>Age band</b>	<b>% of wheelchair user population</b>
Under 60 years	25.3%
60-74 years	28.2%
75-84 years	26.3%
85 years or over	20.1%
All households	100%

(26)

Disability facts and figures. Official Statistics. Published January 2014.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/disability-facts-and-figures/disability-facts-and-figures>

(27)

Family Resource Survey: financial year 2016/17. Published March 2018.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/family-resources-survey-financial-year-201617>



**6.18** Table 5 shows that 74.6% of wheelchair users within England are over the age of 60.

**6.19** It is estimated that 726,000 households in England have one or more residents who are a wheelchair user <sup>(25)</sup>. This figure accounts for 3.28% of total households <sup>(28)</sup>.

**6.20** Supporting this data on a local level, in March 2018, Chelmsford's housing register had 3.66% of applicants categorised as a wheelchair user (see Appendix 2). Therefore, the assumption will be made that the prevalence of wheelchair users within Chelmsford can be estimated by national forecasts.

**6.21** It is uncertain how the use of wheelchairs will change in the coming few years. NHS Mid-Essex recorded an increase of 1.01% of patients registered on their wheelchair service between the end of 2016 and 2017 <sup>(29)</sup>. This suggests that Chelmsford should be prepared for an increase in wheelchair users across the local plan period.

**6.22** With the projected prevalence of long-term illnesses and disability (including mobility impairments) on the rise, it seems sensible to include the optional building standards to cater for this growing need.

**6.23** Data from the Local Authority Housing Statistics indicate that in the year 2015-16<sup>(30)</sup>, 2.19% of those on Chelmsford's waiting list for housing sought to move due to 'medical and welfare grounds, including grounds relating to a disability'. This increased up to 3.89% in the year 2016-17<sup>(31)</sup>, suggesting that each year, a greater number of residents need to move on medical and welfare grounds.

**6.24** Having M4(3) dwellings available within the affordable sector would likely reduce the number of applications on the housing register looking to move on medical and welfare grounds by providing residents with adaptable and accessible facilities – such as level access and provision for grab rails to be installed – to aid with any impairments.

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(28)

2014-based live tables. Live tables on household projections. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-household-projections>

(29)

NHS England. How we are supporting CCGs. <https://www.england.nhs.uk/wheelchair-services/nhse-role/#data>

(30)

Local Authority Housing Statistics data returns for 2015-2016. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/local-authority-housing-statistics-data-returns-for-2015-to-2016>

(31)

Local Authority Housing Statistics data returns for 2016-2017. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/local-authority-housing-statistics-data-returns-for-2016-to-2017>

**6.25** Additionally, within the month of April 2018, Chelmsford received 2,678 claims in Personal Independence Payments (PIP) <sup>(32)</sup>. These payments are issued to those between 16 and 64 who have long-term difficulties with daily living or getting around. This can include difficulty with preparing food, washing, bathing or using the toilet <sup>(33)</sup>.

**6.26** To highlight the level of PIP claimants in Chelmsford, 2018 forecasts <sup>(22)</sup> show that 61.74% of Chelmsford's population are aged between 16 and 64, and the PIP figures indicate that 2.46% of this age group claimed PIP within April 2018 within the city.

**6.27** Implementing the accessible standards would ease difficulties of those claiming PIP and likely reduce the number of claimants each month within Chelmsford. For example, an M4(2) dwelling would have the provision to install grab rails, a level-access shower and a stair-lift should the resident require these.

## **ii. Current Stock of Specialist Housing**

**6.28** With an estimated 41,900 adults in Essex suffering from a moderate or serious disability, Essex County Council recognises that there is a deficiency in sufficient accessible housing throughout the county. The County Council want to see an increase in adults with disabilities living in safe and stable homes <sup>(34)</sup>.

**6.29** In particular, as the population of over 65's increases throughout the county, it is estimated that there will be a 48% increase in those of this age group living independently and that Essex will have a deficit of 22000 supported or specialist housing units by 2030<sup>(35)</sup>.

**6.30** Within Chelmsford, supported or specialist housing includes sheltered and extra-care dwellings. These dwellings are generally allocated to the elderly or disabled, providing residents the opportunity to live independently but with a warden and/or 24/7 emergency call line.

**6.31** The SHMA <sup>(24)</sup> estimated that there will be a need for 1,382 additional specialist housing units by 2037 within Chelmsford. This is based on the assumption that the proportion of over 75's will not increase between 2014 and 2037, hence the predicted need is likely to be an underestimation. The table below details this information taken from the SHMA and indicates that there is a possibility the future requirement could in fact be even higher.

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(32)

PIP Claims in Payment. Table 5 – Caseload by Local Authority  
<https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/webapi/jsf/dataCatalogueExplorer.xhtml>

(33)

Personal Independence Payment (PIP). <https://www.gov.uk/pip>

(34)

Shaping Futures Market Position Statement. Designing services for the future 2015-2025. Published November 2014.  
[https://www.essex.gov.uk/Publications/Documents/Shaping\\_Futures\\_Market\\_Position\\_Statment.pdf](https://www.essex.gov.uk/Publications/Documents/Shaping_Futures_Market_Position_Statment.pdf)

(35)

Care Market Strategy 2017-21. Published November 2017. <https://www.livingwellessex.org/media/534088/care-market-strategy-2017-21.pdf>

**Table 6: Extract from page 148 of the SHMA Update <sup>(24)</sup>**

<b>Table 6.2b Specialist accommodation required in Chelmsford over the next 23 years</b>					
Type and tenure of specialist accommodation	Current profile (2014)	Future requirement based on current usage ratio of 123 per 1,000 people aged 75+		Future requirement based on increasing usage ratio to 170 per 1,000 people aged 75+	
		Profile 2037	Additional units required	Profile 2037	Additional units required
Sheltered housing	1,926	3,241	1,315	4,016	2,090
Extra care housing	72	139	67	693	621
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,998</b>	<b>3,380</b>	<b>1,382</b>	<b>4,709</b>	<b>2,711</b>

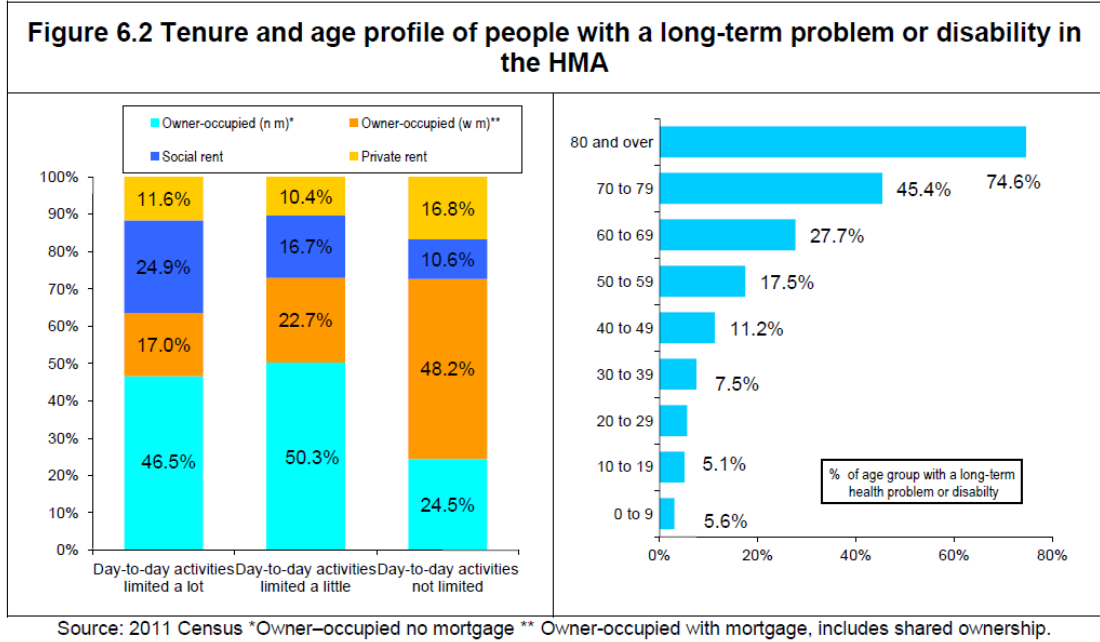
Source: The Housing Learning and Improvement Network' Strategic Housing for Older People tool, 2015.

**6.32** Many of those who are in need of specialist housing would also fit the demographic that would benefit from the implementation of the optional standards. Adopting M4(2) and M4(3) can ensure that those residing within specialist accommodation are have greater independence and the highest quality of life possible.

### **iii. Need Across Tenure**

**6.33** To gain a better understanding of the demographic who would benefit the most from the adoption of the optional standards M4(2) and M4(3), Chelmsford City Council have looked across tenures to identify trends in disability prevalence.

**6.34** The figure below, taken from the SHMA, December 2015 update <sup>(24)</sup> compares tenure and disability prevalence across the HMA. Note that the HMA covers Chelmsford, Braintree, Colchester and Tendring. Since these statistics are given as percentages, it is assumed that the percentage is a reliable estimate of the prevalence within Chelmsford.



**Figure 10: Extract from page 71 of the SHMA <sup>(24)</sup>**

**6.35** The figure above shows that those with a long-term health problem or disability that limits them a lot are more likely than average to reside within the owner-occupied (with no mortgage) or social rented sector. The figure also shows that disability is correlated with age – so as age increases, so does disability prevalence within the HMA area. This indicates that Chelmsford have a proportion of elderly and proportion who are living in owner-occupied or social rented housing that may well be interested in an M4(2) or M4(3) dwelling to assist in providing them with additional independence whilst living with their disability.

**6.36** The Government’s ‘Guide to available disability data’ provides a further breakdown to look at how wheelchair use varies depending upon tenure. The figure below is an extract from their paper <sup>(36)</sup>.

(36)

Guide to available disability data. Published March 2015.

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/416475/150323\\_Guide\\_to\\_disability\\_data\\_\\_\\_final\\_web\\_version.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/416475/150323_Guide_to_disability_data___final_web_version.pdf)

Disabled persons using wheelchair by tenure, 2007-08					
England		Tenure			All
	2008	Owner Occupied	Private Rented <sup>1</sup>	Social Rented	households
<i>Thousands (Percentage)</i>					
Disabled persons <sup>2</sup> using wheelchair		332 (2.3)	-	270 (7.1)	603 (2.8)
Total Households		14,628 (100.0)	2,982 (100.0)	3,797 (100.0)	21,407 (100.0)

Source: Housing in England 2007-08: a report principally from the 2007-08 Survey of English Housing, table 1.1 and table 1.27

<sup>1</sup> There are too few private renting wheelchair users in the sample to provide estimates for private renters alone.

<sup>2</sup> Persons with a long-standing illness, disability or infirmity.

**Figure 11: Extract from Guide to available disability data** <sup>(36)</sup>

**6.37** The figure supports the data taken from the SHMA in that the greatest prevalence occurs within owner-occupied and social rented accommodation. Under the assumption that these percentages can act as a suitable reflection of Chelmsford, this data again supports the need for the implementation of the optional standards.

**6.38** Looking at the comparison between market and affordable housing units, it can be deduced from figure 11 that only 1.89% of market households have a resident who uses a wheelchair. Affordable housing however has 7.1% of households with a resident who uses a wheelchair. This suggests that market housing may not have a great need for M4(3) dwellings but need a high proportion of M4(2) dwellings to cater for those with long term-health problems and disability; whereas affordable dwellings will need a mix of M4(2) and M4(3) dwellings.

#### **iv. Lack of Adaptations**

**6.39** On a national basis, the Government's Disability Facts and Figures 2014 estimated that:

- *'1 in 3 households with a disabled person still live in non-decent accommodation*
- *1 in 5 disabled people requiring adaptations to their home believe that their accommodation is unsuitable'* <sup>(26)</sup>

**6.40** Some may suggest that the solution to this problem is to move to a more accessible home. However, the Leonard Cheshire Disability <sup>(4)</sup> found that over half of those who have considered moving found it difficult to find suitable housing.

**6.41** The 2011-2012 English Housing Survey <sup>(25)</sup> found that of the households advised to install adaptations throughout the dwelling; around half lacked the required adaptations. The following table breaks this down to show the age groups and tenures that lack adaptations required.

**Table 7: Percentage of household lacking adaptations required broken down by tenure and age group <sup>(25)</sup>**

Age band		Tenure	
Under 60 years	57.0%	Owner occupied	50.9%
60-74 years	50.7%	Privately rented	54.2%
75-84 years	47.0%	Local authority	57.8%
85 years or over	45.1%	Housing association	42.9%

**6.42** Table 7 shows that there is a level of consistency across both age and tenure. Across all age groups and all tenures, around half of the households across England lack adaptations required. Below, Table 8 looks at specific adaptations to meet common needs.

**Table 8: Percentage of households with accessible facilities <sup>(25)</sup>**

Household Age Group	Room on entrance level suitable for a bedroom	Bathroom at entrance level	Level access
Under 60 years	50.7%	33.3%	16.6%
60-74 years	60.3%	41.2%	14.4%
75-84 years	69.0%	49.2%	17.8%
85 years or over	76.2%	58.7%	17.5%
All households	55.7%	37.7%	16.2%

**6.43** The table indicates that although there are a high proportion of properties with a room suitable as a bedroom on entry level, this proportion drops significantly when looking at properties with a bathroom at entrance level and level access. A particular example from the table is that there are 82.5% of households for the age group 85 years and older that do not have level access throughout their homes.

**6.44** Low rates of accessible facilities affect more than just the elderly. Those with short-term impairments (e.g. recovering from an operation) will find that lacking basic accessible facilities can have a great impact, reducing their capabilities within their own homes. Additionally, those with impairments may find they are unable to stay with friends or relatives whose homes are again not fitted with these basic accessible facilities.

**6.45** Lacking the accessible facilities detailed in Table 8 can have a great impact upon the quality of life and independence of residents with impairments. The Leonard Cheshire Disability <sup>(4)</sup> looked at case studies of residents living with a lack of adaptations explaining how some resorted to washing themselves in kitchen sinks, whilst others are unable to access additional storeys of their home.

**6.46** Since the English Housing Survey have not referenced that the prevalence of lack of adaptations varies across different areas within England, it can be assumed that the percentages in the tables above can apply to the housing stock within Chelmsford to some level of accuracy.

**6.47** However, comparisons between adaptations within affordable rent and social rent tenure nationally and within Chelmsford indicate that the city is performing worse compared with national standards.

**6.48** Looking at affordable rented units that meet wheelchair standards, as at 2016-17, the national average is 7.78% meeting the standards, whereas Chelmsford only have 0.61% meeting the standard <sup>(37)</sup>.

**6.49** For social rented units, 40.28% of units nationally are either fitted with aids or adaptations; 10.80% are designed to be accessible and 13.81% are wheelchair user friendly. Chelmsford, on the other hand, have only 19.15% of social rented units fitted with aids or adaptations; 0% designed to be accessible; and 4.79% that are wheelchair friendly <sup>(37)</sup>.

**6.50** Combining the comparisons between England and Chelmsford on adaptations within specific tenure and the data further above looking at the lack of adaptations required on a national basis, it is likely that there is a high need for accessible housing to be implemented. The introduction of optional standards M4(2) and M4(3) would likely reduce the number of dwellings requiring adaptations as residents who are in need of adaptations will have a greater opportunity to move into a property with the facilities they require or the provision to install facilities with greater ease and at a lower cost.

**v. Disabled Facilities Grant**

**6.51** Residents meeting eligibility criteria are able to apply for this grant to make improvements to their homes. Examples of improvements that Chelmsford City Council offer include: ramped access, graded floor showers, stair-lifts, room adaptations/conversions and through-floor lifts.

**6.52** The cost of installing all of these would be significantly reduced with the adoption of optional standards M4(2) and M4(3), thereby enabling more adaptations to be completed for the same sum of money.

**6.53** Below is a table detailing spending details of Chelmsford City Council's Disabled Facilities Grant over the past three years.

**Table 9: Chelmsford City Council's Disabled Facilities Grant Spend**

	<b>2015/2016</b>	<b>2016/2017</b>	<b>2017/2018</b>
<b>Total spend</b>	£726,949	£555,588	£445,787
<b>Number of grants paid</b>	167	131	76
<b>Average grant paid</b>	£4,352	£4,241	£5,865

**6.54** The table indicates that where the grant budget is decreasing there is a correlation in the number of grants paid. However, though the average grant paid dipped in 2016/2017, it rose significantly from 2016/2017 to 2017/2018 by 38.29%. Rising costs of average grants will mean that the Council will be able to help fewer households with adaptations in the future.

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(37)

Local authority level tables: 2016 to 2017. National Statistics – Social housing lettings in England: April 2016 to March 2017. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/social-housing-lettings-in-england-april-2016-to-march-2017>

**6.55** However, the following tables look at the possible savings that could be made by adopting optional standards M4(2) and M4(3).

**Table 10: Chelmsford City Council adaptations with M4(2) implemented**

	<b>2015/2016</b>	<b>2016/2017</b>	<b>2017/2018</b>
<b>Number of adaptations that may not have been necessary or would cost less to install within an M4(2) dwelling</b>	141	116	55
<b>Percentage of adaptations that may not have been necessary or would cost less to install within an M4(2) dwelling</b>	84.43%	80.92%	72.37%

**6.56** Examples of adaptations Chelmsford City Council offer that would not be necessary or would cost less to install within an M4(2) dwelling include ramps, stair-lifts and door widenings.

**Table 11: Chelmsford City Council adaptations with M4(3) implemented**

	<b>2015/2016</b>	<b>2016/2017</b>	<b>2017/2018</b>
<b>Number of adaptations that may not have been necessary or would cost less to install within an M4(3) dwelling</b>	159	126	72
<b>Percentage of adaptations that may not have been necessary or would cost less to install within an M4(3) dwelling</b>	95.21%	96.18%	98.63%

**6.57** In addition to the examples above, adaptations Chelmsford City Council offer that would not be necessary or would cost less to install within an M4(3) dwelling include graded floor showers, through floor lifts and closomat toilets.

**6.58** The tables above indicate that across all three years sampled, a minimum of 72% of adaptations would have been unnecessary or installed at a reduced cost had M4(2) been adopted, and a minimum of 95% of adaptations have been unnecessary or installed at a reduced cost had M4(3) been adopted.

**6.59** Given the estimated maximal additional costs of £940 for an M4(2) compliant dwelling and £23,052 for an M4(3) complaint dwelling, it seems prudent to implement these optional standards within the City of Chelmsford to reduce both the costs to make adaptations and reduce the overall demand for adaptations.

#### **vi. Calculating the Need for M4(2) and M4(3)**

**6.60** Taking statistical information from above, an appropriate level of need can be established for the adoption of optional standards M4(2) and M4(3) within Chelmsford.



**6.61** To calculate the need for M4(2), Chelmsford City Council have considered the following key statistics:

- As of 2011/2012, 29.78% of all households have a resident with a long-term illness or disability <sup>(25)</sup>. Under the assumption that this figure can act as a reliable estimation for Chelmsford, it can be deduced that 29.78% of all households would benefit from a dwelling that meets standard M4(2) as a minimum to aid with illness/disability needs
- As of 2015, 21.1% of Chelmsford's household have at least one 65 or over resident <sup>(24)</sup>, and 45% of this age group are considered disabled <sup>(26)</sup>. To avoid double counting with the point above, it is worth calculating an estimate of those who are over 65 years of age who do not have a disability or health problem. This works out to be a maximum of 11.61% of Chelmsford's households. However, this demographic would still benefit from an M4(2) dwelling as it would allow for adaptations as health deteriorates with age
- By 2037, approximately 8.13% of households within Chelmsford will have children of 5 years and under living there. This age group are the most prominent for pram use therefore, this group will benefit from the accessibility features of an M4(2) dwellings
- Based on 2011/2012 evidence, only 1.89% of market households have a resident who uses a wheelchair <sup>(36)</sup>, suggesting that market housing may not have a great need for M4(3) dwellings but need a high proportion of M4(2) dwellings to cater for those with long term-health problems and disability.

**6.62** The first and second points are likely to be underestimates. It has been seen that both prevalence of disability and proportion of over 65's are likely to increase in the coming years.

**6.63** It can be reasonably assumed that there is an immediate need for a minimum of  $29.78\% + 8.13\% + 11.61\% = 49.52\%$  of households in Chelmsford to be built to comply with optional standard M4(2).

**6.64** However, this figure does not take into account the greater need that market housing has for an M4(2) dwelling as this point deals only with the health and mobility of the population, not the accessibility of the existing housing stock within the city. It also does not account for the fact that of the housing stock lacking basic accessibility facilities, not only are the elderly affected but also those wishing to stay with friends and family, and those with short-term impairments among other groups. The need for M4(2) dwellings is therefore likely to greatly exceed estimations above.

**6.65** It is therefore not possible to calculate the exact need for M4(2) dwellings. However, Chelmsford City Council are keen to ensure that residents can maximise their capabilities around their homes, have high independence, and live with the highest quality of life possible. Additionally, the Council strive to provide new housing which is more flexible and sustainable.

**6.66** It can be calculated from the Chelmsford's 5 Year Land Supply Position Statement <sup>(38)</sup> that implementing the proposal set out within the Local Plan Pre-Submission Document <sup>(15)</sup> will result in around 92.36% of new dwellings to comply with optional standard M4(2). It is likely that this will be the maximum proportion as the calculation does not take into account the number of dwellings that will comply with standard M4(3), but this will highly likely meet Chelmsford's need with the additional benefit that those living in unsuitable accommodation currently will have a wider range of homes available to move to.

**6.77** To calculate the need for M4(3), Chelmsford City Council have considered the following key statistics:

- As of 2015, 14.5% of residents in Chelmsford have a long-term health problem or disability <sup>(24)</sup>. Of those considered as disabled, 51% have a mobility related impairment <sup>(26)</sup>. This indicates that an estimate of 7.25% of residents in Chelmsford have a mobility related impairment. It is likely that many within this demographic would benefit from living within a M4(3) compliant dwelling to aid with their mobility impairment
- As of 2018, Chelmsford City Council's housing register indicates that 3.66% of applicants are recorded as wheelchair users, who again would be interested in living within a M4(3) compliant dwelling (see Appendix 2)
- Data from 2011/2012 demonstrated that affordable housing have 7.1% of households with a resident who uses a wheelchair <sup>(36)</sup>. This suggests there is a significant need for M4(3) dwellings within affordable dwellings
- NHS Mid-Essex recorded an increase of 1.01% of patients registered on their wheelchair service between the end of 2016 and 2017 <sup>(29)</sup>. Chelmsford need to be flexible around to provide for an increase in need for wheelchair accommodation across the Local Plan period.

**6.78** Knowing that prevalence of disability is on the rise within Chelmsford across the Local Plan period, it is again likely that these statistics are underestimations.

**6.79** It can be reasonably assumed that a between 3.66% and 7.1% of affordable households in Chelmsford should be built to comply with optional standard M4(3) to account for households in the affordable sector who use a wheelchair and more recent information taken from the housing register. Flexibility is recommended to cater for the forecast aging population and prevalence in disability.

**6.80** Following the proposals made within the Local Plan Pre-Submission Document <sup>(15)</sup>, it can be calculated using the 5 Year Land Supply Position Statement <sup>(38)</sup> that 4.94% of all affordable housing units will comply with M4(3). This satisfies the identified range of 3.66% to 7.1%.

**6.81** Moreover, setting a minimum of 5% as wheelchair accessible/wheelchair adaptable dwellings within the affordable sector will provide a level of flexibility in the case where wheelchair prevalence increases within Chelmsford across the Local Plan period.

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(38)

Five-Year Land Supply Position Statement April 2018.

## **7. Conclusion**

**7.1** The evidence outlined in this report demonstrates that throughout the city, there is a need to apply the optional standards contained within the Building Regulations. These will have substantial benefits for many groups of the community including the older-people, families with young children and those with disabilities among others. It is expected that the need for the standards will grow with the increase in prevalence of disability and projected aging population of Chelmsford.

**7.2** Additionally, with the rising need of specialist housing throughout Chelmsford, it has been identified that the implementation of the optional standards will ensure residents within these dwellings have greater independence and greater quality of life.

**7.3** Data throughout the report has established a broad need across all tenures for standard M4(2) and a greater need within affordable housing units for standard M4(3). Moreover, the significant lack of required adaptations or accessible facilities throughout Chelmsford, especially within affordable housing units, highlights the urgency for the standards.

**7.4** Furthermore, it has been shown that adopting the optional standards would considerably reduce both the demand for and cost of adaptations made through the Disabled Facilities Grant, thereby enabling more adaptations to be completed within the same budget per year.

**7.5** Overall, the data provided throughout this report has clearly established that there is a significant and evidenced need to implement optional standards M4(2) and M4(3) within the City of Chelmsford and that the proposed proportions of M4(2) and M4(3) dwellings set out within the Local Plan Pre-Submission Document would help to meet this need.

## Appendix 1: Population Projections from 2021-2036

### Population projections - local authority based by single year of age

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area type local authorities: district / unitary (prior to April 2015)  
 area name Chelmsford  
 gender Total

Projected Year	All Ages	Aged 0 to 15	Aged 16 to 24	Aged 25 to 49	Aged 50 to 64	Aged 65+
2018	176,421	33,475	16,561	58,475	33,882	34,027
2019	177,579	33,743	16,428	58,528	34,309	34,570
2020	178,721	34,021	16,376	58,569	34,615	35,144
2021	179,857	34,243	16,394	58,445	34,979	35,793
2022	180,948	34,338	16,485	58,455	35,304	36,369
2023	182,016	34,519	16,584	58,420	35,423	37,066
2024	183,061	34,554	16,798	58,459	35,569	37,680
2025	184,067	34,635	16,982	58,517	35,634	38,300
2026	185,080	34,621	17,314	58,603	35,546	38,991
2027	186,056	34,614	17,674	58,665	35,275	39,828
2028	187,027	34,513	18,073	58,745	35,107	40,589
2029	187,968	34,527	18,311	58,792	34,906	41,433
2030	188,891	34,495	18,547	58,772	34,870	42,207
2031	189,778	34,478	18,667	58,788	34,840	43,005
2032	190,666	34,445	18,821	58,768	34,854	43,781
2033	191,534	34,472	18,820	58,967	34,734	44,544
2034	192,393	34,465	18,870	59,084	34,753	45,222
2035	193,230	34,457	18,881	59,228	34,847	45,818
2036	194,059	34,453	18,875	59,353	34,879	46,501

area type countries  
 area name England  
 gender Total

Projected Year	All Ages	Aged 0 to 15	Aged 16 to 24	Aged 25 to 49	Aged 50 to 64	Aged 65+
2018	55,997,687	10,760,651	5,978,047	18,528,816	10,532,954	10,197,202
2019	56,357,458	10,871,137	5,910,176	18,518,166	10,691,903	10,366,035
2020	56,704,735	10,958,824	5,880,612	18,501,062	10,837,033	10,527,168
2021	57,030,534	11,027,950	5,856,755	18,461,521	10,980,237	10,704,133
2022	57,344,179	11,064,518	5,860,679	18,442,673	11,079,622	10,896,733
2023	57,643,301	11,082,383	5,896,375	18,431,338	11,126,728	11,106,516
2024	57,937,185	11,074,830	5,963,947	18,441,581	11,132,592	11,324,202
2025	58,224,886	11,068,763	6,047,263	18,445,059	11,113,393	11,550,389
2026	58,505,621	11,048,393	6,157,586	18,446,551	11,055,434	11,797,633
2027	58,778,674	11,010,874	6,297,063	18,445,167	10,963,243	12,062,298
2028	59,043,478	10,953,388	6,441,646	18,445,307	10,867,731	12,335,501
2029	59,300,087	10,913,050	6,546,843	18,417,824	10,805,365	12,616,948
2030	59,548,763	10,884,187	6,626,597	18,373,238	10,767,306	12,897,409
2031	59,789,798	10,857,286	6,673,936	18,360,311	10,731,380	13,166,895
2032	60,023,814	10,827,945	6,707,855	18,368,858	10,691,118	13,428,129
2033	60,251,545	10,817,390	6,699,390	18,400,183	10,663,939	13,670,602
2034	60,473,778	10,800,730	6,701,908	18,433,388	10,632,155	13,905,739
2035	60,691,435	10,787,669	6,690,998	18,461,480	10,634,599	14,116,668
2036	60,905,483	10,779,344	6,663,990	18,504,430	10,620,376	14,337,402

Figures may not sum because of rounding.

## **Appendix 2: Chelmsford City Council Housing Register Statistics**

The below tables provide a breakdown of applicants needs based on mobility award as of March 2018.

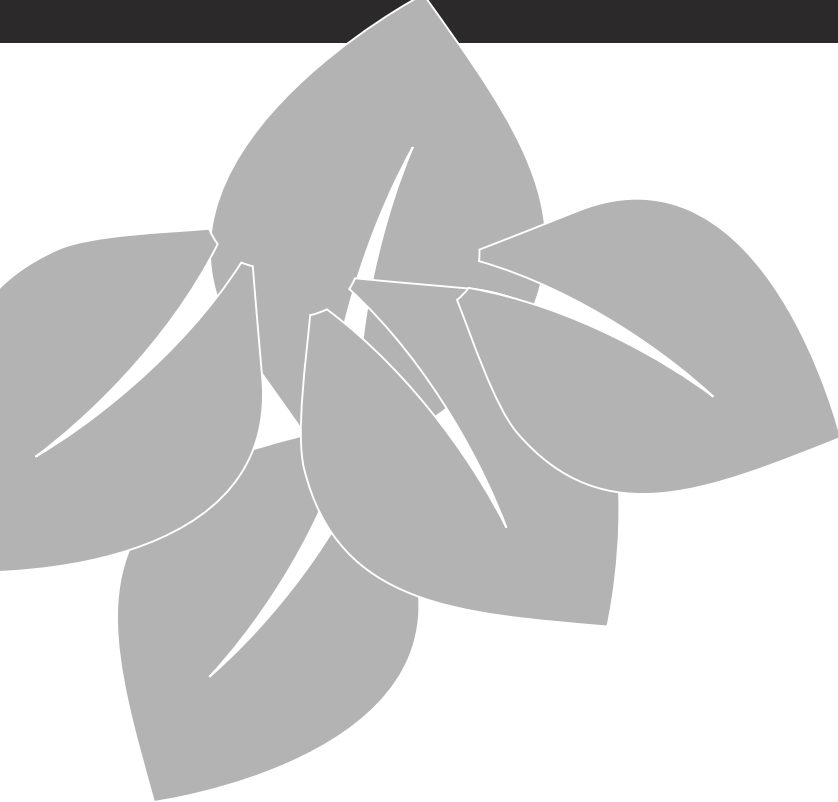
Mobility 1: Applicant is a full time wheelchair user.

Mobility 2: Applicant uses a wheelchair outdoors and has additional facilities (e.g. a walker) at home.

Mobility 3: Applicant can manage short distances. May require additional facilities at home.

	Number on Housing Register awarded Mobility 1	Number on Housing Register awarded Mobility 2	Number on Housing Register awarded Mobility 3	Total on Housing Register (Bands B1-B4a)
1 Bed	37	63	229	2,117
2 Bed	12	11	55	1,086
3 Bed	6	9	23	582
4 Bed	3	2	8	128
5 Bed	1	0	2	17
6 Bed	0	0	0	1
Total	59	85	317	3,931

	% of No. of Beds awarded Mobility 1	% of No. of Beds awarded Mobility 2	% of No. of Beds awarded Mobility 3	% of total on Housing Register
1 Bed	1.75%	2.98%	10.82%	53.85%
2 Bed	1.10%	1.01%	5.06%	27.63%
3 Bed	1.03%	1.55%	3.95%	14.81%
4 Bed	2.34%	1.56%	6.25%	3.26%
5 Bed	5.88%	0.00%	11.76%	0.43%
6 Bed	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.03%
Total	1.50%	2.16%	8.06%	100%



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