

Accessible design features in specialist older persons housing

Report to the Greater London Authority

**ASSESSING POTENTIAL DEMAND
FOR AND PROVISION OF
WHEELCHAIR USER DWELLINGS
M4(3), AND ANCILLARY FACILITIES
IN SPECIALIST OLDER PERSONS
HOUSING IN LONDON**

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KEY FINDINGS

- This study was carried out during 2017 and draws on published data sources and a survey of providers of specialist older persons housing. The information collected reflects the wide range of current practice in England and is not specific to London
- One of the key findings of the study was that there is a dearth of information about consumer requirements and impact on building management and development costs of the accessible features identified in this study. Further consumer research would provide more detailed information which could prove useful to both providers and local planning authorities.

Wheelchair user dwellings

- Both published data and the provider survey undertaken suggest that around 10-15% of residents in specialist older persons housing are likely to be long term wheelchair users with a further larger group with other mobility difficulties which may include the short-term use of wheelchairs, for instance when convalescing after coming out of hospital.
- The adopted London Plan sets a requirement that 10% of general needs housing should be provided to M4(3) wheelchair user standards (as per Part M vol. 1 of the Building Regulations), in part to meet the needs of the vast majority¹ of the older population who will continue to be housed in the general needs stock. **The evidence suggests that the need is just as great in specialist older persons housing and that the same requirement should be applied.**
- In some local authority areas providers are already providing 10% M4(3) wheelchair user dwellings to meet planning requirements, and they did not report that this made schemes unviable. They did comment that these larger units were among the most expensive in the scheme and they were often not occupied by wheelchair users.

Usage of mobility scooters

¹ Currently more than 90%

- Mobility scooters can for some people provide an alternative to the car or private transport for short trips. The mobility scooter market is growing rapidly with around 80,000 scooters sold every year. Research by RICA for the Department of Transport in 2014² put the number of UK scooter users at approximately 300-350,000 people.
- The provider survey suggested that in newbuild schemes 5-10% of units contain someone who uses a mobility scooter. In these schemes provision of scooter storage facilities varied depending on the nature of the scheme and its location but in urban locations for sheltered/supported housing schemes scooter storage provision averaged 15% of units.
- There was less information from providers about established schemes but where information was available in established schemes with an older age group of residents where scooter storage and access was in place scooter usage could be as high as 20% of dwellings. In these schemes scooter storage facilities amounted to 25-30% of units.
- **This study recommends a minimum standard of mobility scooter storage and charging facilities equivalent to 25% of dwellings (i.e. 1 mobility scooter storage and charging point per 4 dwellings), or the facility to show how this could be provided if needed. Scooter storage facilities should be provided in all developments regardless of location.**

Drop-off and pick up facilities

- Specialist housing schemes for older people should make provision for drop-off and pick up facilities, since dependence on lifts and taxis increases with age and trips out with family and friends become more important as a mechanism for reducing isolation and maintaining a level of independence. **Pick up/ drop off facilities are an important facility in specialist older persons housing schemes and should be provided.**
- Provider survey respondents also identified the need for ambulance and minibus parking near scheme entrances to facilitate emergency callouts, routine hospital trips and group social activities. **All schemes should provide an ambulance/minibus collection point.**

² "Mobility Scooters: a market study" May 2014 RICA

Visitor Car Parking

- Visitor parking was also identified as an important issue by providers. The importance of visits from family and friends, can become more important with age, as a mechanism for reducing isolation and maintaining a sense of personal identity and links to the wider community.

Where visitor car parking is provided this is typically in a ratio of 3-5 spaces for schemes of 30-50 units (i.e. equivalent to 10% of units). **Visitor car parking is important and should be provided to an appropriate level.**

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This study was commissioned to inform the draft London Plan. The study brief specified that it should ascertain:

- what accessible housing standards the industry is building specialist older persons housing to currently, relating in particular to the optional building regulations standards M4(2) accessible and adaptable dwellings and M4(3) wheelchair user dwellings.
- the likely percentage requirements/need for dwellings within specialist older persons housing built to the optional building regulation requirement M4(3) wheelchair user dwellings.
- to establish what ancillary built/ physical features (ancillary to the dwelling, in addition to Building Regulations M4(2) and M4(3) features, and which can be secured via the planning process) are required by residents in specialist older persons housing. Recommendations around what “level” these should be provided to, to ensure that older persons housing is suitable for older Londoners now and in the future. Specifically covering:
 - level of visitor parking required
 - provision of drop off and pick up facilities
 - level and design of mobility scooter storage and charging required by residents (i.e. proportion of units)
 - existing standards on the design of mobility scooter storage and parking
 - where possible, provide costings for scooter storage and other ancillary features (as above) in a specialist older people’s housing setting

1.2 The study draws on a review of published statistical data, a literature review and an exploratory survey of providers of specialist older persons housing in England, with particular emphasis on schemes in London and other urban areas. The survey was sent out through the Home Builders Federation (HBF), Association of Retirement Community Operators (ARCO), Retirement Housing Group (RHG) and the Association of Retirement

Housing Managers (ARHM) and encompassed developers, scheme managers, architects and cost consultants. The survey was conducted during May and June 2017 and focussed on recently completed schemes across all tenures, both sale and rental schemes were covered. An initial email was followed up by telephone calls with interviewer assisted responses. Not all respondents were able to answer all questions. The type of information held varied between different types of organisation.

- 1.3 Responses were received from 12 organisations: 8 providers, 2 architects, 1 cost consultant and 1 trade association. We are very grateful to all who took part in the survey.
- 1.4 The provider survey drew on information about completed schemes which reflect historic standards.
- 1.5 This approach was considered to be sufficient for the purposes of this study. We did not survey residents in specialist older persons housing and were not able to access the views of older disabled people who had considered a move to specialist older persons housing but had found that it did not meet their needs.

2. DEMAND FOR WHEELCHAIR USER DWELLINGS

Wheelchair usage by age of population

2.1 This study looks at demand for wheelchair user dwellings among residents in specialist older persons housing. It is important to recognize that there are a range of different types of specialist older persons housing offering different levels of care and support and catering to different client groups. This study distinguishes between:

- Age exclusive housing which typically offers a mix of houses and self-contained flats with some communal facilities and shared grounds paid for through a service charge.
- Sheltered/supported housing: self-contained flats/ apartments with communal facilities including a laundry and a common room, a site based scheme manager or in the case of social housing telephone support. No on-site provision of care services
- Extracare or assisted living schemes: self-contained flats/ apartments similar in layout to sheltered housing but with 24/7 onsite support, a wider range of communal facilities including a dining room serving at least one hot meal a day and access to on-site provision of care services

2.2 Residents in sheltered and extracare housing are typically older and more likely to have reduced mobility or higher care needs than those in age exclusive housing. However residents in all types of specialist older persons housing are likely to be aged 55 years or over, with the majority of residents in sheltered and extracare housing aged 75 and over when they move into the scheme and the majority of residents in established schemes likely to be aged 85 and over³.

³ Michael Ball Housing Markets and Independence in Old Age, CORE Affordable Rent - Supported Housing 2014/15 Strategic and Data Submission Report National Report, Provider survey,

- 2.3 Research carried out by the Papworth Trust⁴ reported that in 2013/14 there were 1.2m wheelchair users in the United Kingdom, 2% of the population. The same report commented that 72% of wheelchair users are aged 60 and over, a figure of 864,000 people. If we compare this figure with UK population aged 60 and over⁵ (14.9m) this gives a figure of 5.8% of the older population who are wheelchair users. The same calculation for people aged under 60 shows that 0.8% of the population are wheelchair users.
- 2.4 Data from the Living in Britain Survey 2001 reported in POPPI shows that in 2014 1.3 people in England aged 65 and over experienced mobility difficulties. The total population of people aged 65 and over in England as recorded in the same dataset was 9.4m. This gives a figure of 13.8% of the older population who experienced from mobility difficulties. When compared with the figure of 5.8% of the total older population who are wheelchair users, this suggests **that wheelchair users amount to just under 25% (24.8%) of all persons with mobility difficulties.**
- 2.5 The proportion of people with mobility difficulties increases with age. POPPI provides a breakdown which shows that whereas only 9% of people aged 65-69 are unable to manage at least one mobility task, this proportion rises to 35% of men and 50% of women aged 85 and over (see figure 2.1 below).

⁴ Disability in the United Kingdom Facts and Figures 2016

⁵ 1.1m persons recorded in the Annual Population Survey, Data is not available for persons aged 55 and over, reported age bands are 45-64 and 65

Figure 2.1: % of population unable to perform at least one mobility task

Age range	% males	% females
65-69	8%	9%
70-74	10%	16%
75-79	12%	21%
80-84	18%	29%
85+	35%	50%

Source *Living in Britain Survey 2001 table 29*

Note 1: definition of mobility tasks - going out of doors and walking down the road;

getting up and down stairs; getting around the house on the level;

getting to the toilet; getting in and out of bed

2.6 If we assume, as estimated in para 2.4 above, that the ratio of 25% of all persons with mobility difficulties who are wheelchair users applies across all age groups this gives the following ratios of wheelchair users:

Figure 2.2: Estimate of wheelchair users and persons unable to perform one or more mobility task by age

Age range	Males		Females	
	Unable to perform 1 or more mobility task	Potential wheelchair users	Unable to perform 1 or more mobility task	Potential wheelchair users
65-69	8%	2%	9%	2.25%
70-74	0%	2.25%	16%	4%
75-79	2%	3%	21%	5.25%
80-84	18%	4.5%	29%	7.25%
85 and over	35%	8.75%	50%	12.5%

2.7 It should be borne in mind that these figures are a snapshot. They record what proportion of older people used a wheelchair at a particular point in time. They do not fully reflect people who use a wheelchair for short periods of time, for instance on release from hospital. However the data does show a very significant increase in wheelchair usage as age increases. A woman aged 85 or over is more than 5 times more likely to use a wheelchair than her counterpart aged 65-69.

Movers into specialist older persons housing

- 2.8 Research carried out by Prof Michael Ball for McCarthy and Stone in 2011⁶ found that the core age of movers into older persons housing for sale was between 75 and 85, with 20% between 86 and 90. 74% of movers were female. Application of the above ratios suggests that on moving into specialist older persons housing 9.5% of movers are potential wheelchair users⁷.
- 2.9 Data provided by Retirement Housing Group based on resales of older persons housing suggests that the average length of stay in specialist older persons housing is 8 years, so within 8 years the core age of people in a scheme will be between 83 and 93. At this age (and assuming the ratio of males to females remains unchanged) 11.5% of residents are likely to be potential wheelchair users⁸.
- 2.10 Data from CORE⁹ looks at movers into supported housing for rent. The data relates to all movers into supported housing of whom older adults aged 60 years and over accounted for 72%. The core ages for older adults to move into supported housing were 75-79 years (15% of all older movers) and age 80 and over (42% of all older movers).
- 2.11 13.5% of lettings in 2014/15 and 16.5% of lettings in 2013/14 were to people who required a fully wheelchair accessible dwelling and a further 2% of lettings in 2014/15 were to people who required wheelchair access to essential rooms¹⁰. Some of these lettings will be to younger people who require a wheelchair user dwelling, but it seems unlikely that the proportion of older affordable renters requiring wheelchair user dwellings is less than the 9.5% -11.5% of leaseholders suggested in paras 2.6 and 2.7.

⁶ Housing Markets and Independence in Old Age

⁷ $((3 + 4.5) + (5.25 + 7.25) \times 3) / 4$

⁸ $(8.75 + (12.5 \times 3)) / 4$

⁹

¹⁰ Comparable data is not available for 2013/14

- 2.12 The provider survey suggests that 5-15% of residents in specialist older persons housing are wheelchair users and virtually no residents in age exclusive housing are wheelchair users.
- 2.13 There was considerable variation between providers in terms of unit sizes. All providers of both specialist older persons housing and age exclusive housing were developing to at least M4(2) standards and some of them to M4(3) standards. In some instances providers offered a hybrid product which was considerably in excess of M4(2) but not to M4(3). This product was described by one provider as:
- “M4(3) Lite: we design all our units so they can be lived in by someone in a wheelchair for a short time, but only a minority of units are built to full M4(3) standards.”*
- 2.14 Some providers had built 10% of units to M4(3) adaptable standards where local plan policies insisted on this. These units had not been marketed as wheelchair units nor had local authorities made any attempt to nominate wheelchair users as customers. Units had sold well because they were among the largest in the scheme, but typically none of them had sold to wheelchair users:
- “People are future proofing themselves by buying the largest unit they can afford
We are absolutely sure these particular units won’t be available when someone comes along who needs wheelchair user housing
But all our apartments are far more accessible than the average older house and we make sure that the common areas and corridors are wheelchair friendly”*
- 2.15 Those providers who routinely developed larger units which are M4(3) compliant had a history of building larger units and had not needed to adapt their product to meet M4(2) and M4(3) standards. Provision of larger units was part of their overall marketing strategy and they were not specifically marketing to wheelchair users.
- 2.16 **Costs:** M4(3) was estimated by one provider to add 10% to the size of a 1 bed apartment, taking it from 54 sq m to 60 sq m. This correlates with research by E.C. Harris for DCLG¹¹ which found that an M4(3) 1 bed apartment was 7 sq m larger than an M4(2) 1 bed apartment and an M4(3) 2 bed apartment was 13 sq m larger than an M4(2)

¹¹ Housing Standards Review Cost Impacts 2014

2 bed apartment. E.C. Harris estimated further costs as set out in Figure 2.3 below. These costs are England averages at 2014 prices and would need to be updated to London 2017 values.

Figure 2.3: Estimated build costs per dwelling of building to accessible housing standards as per Part M vol. 1 of the Building Regulations (EC Harris 2014)

	1 bed apartment	2 bed apartment	2 bed terrace	3 bed semi	4 bed detached
	Cost per dwelling (extra over current industry practice)				
M4(1)					
M4(2)	£940	£907	£523	£521	£520
M4(3)					
Adaptable	£7,607	£7,891	£9,574	£10,307	£10,568
M4(3)					
Accessible	£7,764	£8,048	£22,238	£22,791	£23,052

2.17 **Revenues:** Units were marketed on a £ per sq m basis so wheelchair units were among the most expensive and least affordable units in the scheme. There was no premium for units which were M4(3) accessible so additional costs shown in Figure 2.3 above would not be recouped through the selling price. These costs were however marginal for apartments (£157 per dwelling at 2014 prices).

Setting a level of requirement for the provision of wheelchair user dwellings in specialist older persons housing

2.18 Looking at the scale of wheelchair usage in specialist older persons housing as demonstrated by a range of sources there is a strong case that **at least 10% of dwellings in specialist older persons housing should be designed to be wheelchair accessible/adaptable and M4(3) wheelchair user dwellings (Part M vol. 1 of the Building Regulations) is the most appropriate design standard to achieve this.**

2.19 The adopted London Plan requires 10% of new build housing be provided to M4(3) wheelchair user dwellings standards, in part to meet the needs of the vast majority¹² of

¹² Currently more than 90%

the older population who will continue to be housed in the general needs stock. **The evidence suggests that the need is just as great in specialist older persons housing and that the same requirements for wheelchair user dwellings should be applied.**

3. ANCILLARY FACILITIES IN SPECIALIST OLDER PERSONS HOUSING

Drop off/ pick up facilities

- 3.1 Car usage and ownership diminishes as residents age. Only 26% of people aged 85 and over hold a driving license¹³ compared with 56% of those aged 75-84. Possibly for this reason, drop-off/ pick up facilities were identified as an important issue by providers. Dependence on lifts and taxis increases with age and visits and trips out can, become more important as a mechanism for reducing isolation and maintaining a sense of personal identity and a level of independence, and links to the wider community and neighborhood.
- 3.2 Survey respondents also commented on the need for ambulance and minibus parking near scheme entrances to facilitate emergency callouts, routine hospital trips and group social activities. **All schemes should provide an ambulance/minibus collection point with appropriate turning circle.**

Visitor parking

- 3.3 Visitor parking was also identified as an important issue by providers. The importance of visits from family and friends, can become more important with age, as a mechanism for reducing isolation and maintaining a sense of personal identity and links to the wider community. Where visitor car parking is provided this is typically in a ratio of 3-5 spaces for schemes of 30-50 units (i.e. equivalent to 10% of units).

Visitor car parking is important and should be provided to an appropriate level.

¹³ DVLA

4. MOBILITY SCOOTER STORAGE AND CHARGING FACILITIES

Usage of mobility scooters

- 4.1 Mobility scooters provide an alternative to the car or public transport for short trips, . The market is growing rapidly with around 80,000 scooters sold every year. Research by RICA for the Department of Transport in 2014¹⁴ put the number of UK scooter users at approximately 300-350,000.
- 4.2 The same research found that just under half of all scooter users (47%) are aged 65 and over, but only 11% are aged 75 and over. This equates to 38,500 mobility scooter users or 0.7% of the older population in 2014 – or 1 mobility scooter in a 100 unit scheme.
- 4.3 However residents in older persons housing are more likely to experience a mobility impairment than the general population of people aged 75 and over and they are also more likely to be aged 85 and over, at which point mobility problems are more likely to occur. The provider survey suggested that in newbuild schemes 5-10% of units contain someone who uses a mobility scooter. In these schemes provision of scooter storage facilities varied depending on the nature of the scheme and its location but in urban locations for sheltered/supported housing schemes scooter storage provision averaged 15% of units.
- 4.4 There was less information from providers about established schemes but where information was available in established schemes with an older age group of residents where scooter storage and access was in place scooter usage could be as high as 20% of dwellings. In these schemes scooter storage facilities amounted to 25-30% of units.
- 4.5 We were also quoted examples of 100% scooter storage facilities (i.e. one space per apartment provided adjacent to the apartment) though it was recognized that this was costly to provide and there were fire risk implications which needed to be taken into account.

¹⁴ “Mobility Scooters: a market study” May 2014 RICA

- 4.6 Age exclusive housing schemes (definition: see 2.1 above) do not generally provide scooter storage but are more likely to provide houses with garages and car parking, where the garage would be capable of providing scooter storage and charging.

Design and cost factors

- 4.7 Most providers opted for communal scooter storage and charging points. This was generally internal rather than external so as to allow people to access their scooter without being exposed to adverse weather conditions. In some cases several scooter stores were provided at different levels in the building.
- 4.8 Providers commented on the importance of ensuring that scooter users could travel safely from their apartment to the scooter store. In some cases people had a wheelchair for internal usage and a scooter for external usage (48% of scooter users also own a wheelchair according to RICA¹⁵). In other cases they used a tri-walker, walking frame or other mobility aids to get to the scooter store from their apartment. In either case provision should be made at the scooter store for storage of internal wheelchairs or walking aids when the scooter is in use.
- 4.9 Where scooters were allowed in buildings width of corridors and size of lifts were identified as issues. Corridor widths were identified as an issue where two residents both in wheelchairs need to be able to pass each other in the corridor (suggested dimensions were a width of 1650 mm with passing places or 1800 mm without passing places).
- 4.10 Provision and servicing of lifts is a contentious issue. It was suggested that lifts should be large enough to accommodate a stretcher in which case they will accommodate at least one mobility scooter (a 13 person stretcher lift was recommended by one respondent to the provider survey). Residents should have access to at least 2 lifts so that they are not stranded if 1 lift is out of action. Some respondents were concerned that this could increase build costs and suggested that fast response rates to maintain lifts and a 24 hour on site staff presence could mitigate any problems in the event of lift

¹⁵ Mobility Scooters a market study RICA 2014

breakdown, which was recognized as a high stress experience for both residents and staff. More research is needed to identify good practice on this issue and to pick up concerns about fire safety and evacuation.

- 4.11 **Costs of scooter storage provision.** Very little information was received on this point. Costs quoted ranged from zero (where this was seen as an additional communal area within the building) to £4,500 per space where specified external storage was provided. On the evidence of the provider survey it would appear that providers do not make any additional charges to scooter users to cover scooter storage and charging.
- 4.12 **Given that scooter usage has risen in recent years and seems likely to continue to rise we recommend a minimum standard of scooter storage and charging facilities equivalent to 25% of dwellings (i.e. 1 scooter storage and charging point per 4 dwellings) or the facility to show how this could be provided if needed. This policy should be kept under review as technology changes and more information becomes available about consumer preferences and scooter usage.**

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Wheelchair user dwellings

The adopted London Plan requires 10% of new build housing be provided to M4(3) wheelchair user dwellings standards, in part to meet the needs of the vast majority¹⁶ of the older population who will continue to be housed in the general needs stock. The evidence suggests that the need is just as great in specialist older persons housing and that the same requirements for wheelchair user dwellings should be applied.

B. Drop off/ pick up facilities

All schemes should provide an ambulance/minibus collection point with appropriate turning circle.

C. Visitor parking

Visitor car parking is important and should be provided to an appropriate level.

D. Mobility scooter storage and charging facilities

Given that scooter usage has risen in recent years and seems likely to continue to rise we recommend a minimum standard of scooter storage and charging facilities equivalent to 25% of dwellings (i.e. 1 scooter storage and charging point per 4 dwellings) or the facility to show how this could be provided if needed. This policy should be kept under review as technology changes and more information becomes available about consumer preferences and scooter usage.

• ¹⁶ Currently more than 90%

ANNEXE A: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS FROM PROVIDER SURVEY

- A1 The provider survey covered providers of specialist older persons housing in England, with particular emphasis on schemes in London and other urban areas and was sent to developers, scheme managers, architects and cost consultants. The type of information held varied between different types of organisation. An initial email was followed up by telephone calls with interviewer assisted responses. Not all respondents were able to answer all questions.
- A2 The survey was sent out through the Home Builders Federation (HBF), Association of Retirement Community Operators (ARCO), Retirement Housing Group (RHG) and the Association of Retirement Housing Managers (ARHM).
- A3 Responses were received from 12 organisations: 8 providers, 2 architects, 1 cost consultant and 1 trade association. We are very grateful to all who took part in the survey. The survey was exploratory and the information provided gives a snapshot of practices across the industry and should not be taken as a robust quantitative analysis of overall newbuild provision, for which more data would be required. The survey was conducted during May and June 2017.

Wheelchair users

- A4 The provider survey suggests that 5-15% of residents in specialist older persons housing are wheelchair users and virtually no residents in age exclusive housing are wheelchair users.
- A5 There was considerable variation between providers in terms of unit sizes. All providers of both specialist older persons housing and age exclusive housing were developing to at least M4(2) standards and some of them to M4(3) standards. In some instances providers offered a hybrid product which was considerably in excess of M4(2) but not to M4(3). This product was described by one provider as:
- “M4(3) Lite: we design all our units so they can be lived in by someone in a wheelchair for a short time, but only a minority of units are built to full M4(3) standards.”*

A6 Some providers had built 10% of units to M4(3) adaptable standards where local plan policies insisted on this. These units had not been marketed as wheelchair units nor had local authorities made any attempt to nominate wheelchair users as customers. Units had sold well because they were among the largest in the scheme, but typically none of them had sold to wheelchair users:

“People are future proofing themselves by buying the largest unit they can afford

We are absolutely sure these particular units won’t be available when someone comes along who needs wheelchair user housing

But all our apartments are far more accessible than the average older house and we make sure that the common areas and corridors are wheelchair friendly”

A7 Those providers who routinely developed larger units which are M4(3) compliant had a history of building larger units and had not needed to adapt their product to meet M4(2) and M4(3) standards. Provision of larger units was part of their overall marketing strategy and they were not specifically marketing to wheelchair users.

A8 **Costs:** M4(3) was estimated by one provider to add 10% to the size of a 1 bed apartment, taking it from 54 sq m to 60 sq m.

Mobility scooters

A9 The provider survey suggested that in newbuild schemes 5-10% of units contain someone who uses a mobility scooter. In these schemes provision of scooter storage facilities varied depending on the nature of the scheme and its location but in urban locations for sheltered/supported housing schemes scooter storage provision averaged 15% of units.

A10 There was less information from providers about established schemes but where information was available in established schemes with an older age group of residents where scooter storage and access was in place scooter usage could be as high as 20% of dwellings. In these schemes scooter storage facilities amounted to 25-30% of units.

A11 We were also quoted examples of 100% scooter storage facilities (i.e. one space per apartment provided adjacent to the apartment) though it was recognized that this was

costly to provide and there were fire risk implications which needed to be taken into account.

- A12 Age exclusive housing schemes do not generally provide scooter storage but are more likely to provide houses with garages and car parking, where the garage would be capable of providing scooter storage and charging.
- A13 Most providers opted for communal scooter storage and charging points. This was generally internal rather than external so as to allow people to access their scooter without being exposed to adverse weather conditions. In some cases several scooter stores were provided at different levels in the building.
- A14 Providers commented on the importance of ensuring that scooter users could travel safely from their apartment to the scooter store. In some cases people had a wheelchair for internal usage and a scooter for external usage (48% of scooter users also own a wheelchair according to RICA¹⁷). In other cases they used a tri-walker, walking frame or other mobility aids to get to the scooter store from their apartment. In either case provision needed be made at the scooter store for storage of internal wheelchairs or walking aids when the scooter is in use.
- A15 Where scooters were allowed in buildings width of corridors and size of lifts were identified as issues. Corridor widths were identified as an issue where two residents both in wheelchairs need to be able to pass each other in the corridor (suggested dimensions were a width of 1650 mm with passing places or 1800 mm without passing places).
- A16 Provision and servicing of lifts is a contentious issue. It was suggested that lifts should be large enough to accommodate a stretcher in which case they will accommodate at least one mobility scooter (a 13 person stretcher lift was recommended by one respondent to the provider survey). One respondent suggested that residents should have access to at least 2 lifts so that they are not stranded if 1 lift is out of action. Some respondents were concerned that this could increase build costs and suggested that fast response rates to maintain lifts and a 24 hour on site staff presence could mitigate

¹⁷ Mobility Scooters a market study RICA 2014

any problems in the event of lift breakdown, which was recognized as a high stress experience for both residents and staff. More research is needed to identify good practice on this issue and to pick up concerns about fire safety and evacuation.

- A17 **Costs of scooter storage provision.** Very little information was received on this point. Costs quoted ranged from zero (where this was seen as an additional communal area within the building) to £4,500 per space where specified external storage was provided. No information was provided to suggest that providers make additional charges to scooter users to cover scooter storage and charging.

Ancillary features

- A18 Car parking standards varied widely. Providers of age exclusive housing outside London typically provide 100% car parking and sheltered housing schemes outside London offer 60-70% car parking. Providers of supported or extracare housing in urban areas may provide more modest 25-30% carparking and there are examples of car-free living, with Battersea Place for instance offering zero car parking but providing a chauffeur and minibus service. In established affordable older persons housing in Outer London car parking provision can be as low as 10%. However scheme managers commented that where car parking provision is this low residents tend to park on the street once spaces within the scheme are full and this can also occur in new schemes with higher levels of car parking.
- A19 There are wide variations in provision of disabled persons car parking spaces, findings range from providers who make no provision for disabled parking, through to those who opt for 100% disabled car parking – or all the car parking spaces provided are larger than normal car parking spaces but not as large as a standard disabled car parking space. In older schemes where there are multiple empty spaces cars are often parked with a vacant space between them, providing de facto disabled access.
- A20 Visitor and drop-off car parking was identified as an important issue by providers. Dependence on lifts and taxis increases with age and visits from family and friends, who may also be disabled, become more important as a mechanism for reducing isolation

and maintaining a sense of personal identity. Where visitor car parking is provided this is typically in a ratio of 3-5 spaces for schemes of 30-50 units (i.e. equivalent to 10% of units).

A21 Survey respondents also commented on the need for ambulance and minibus parking near scheme entrances to facilitate emergency callouts, routine hospital trips and group social activities.

A22 One respondent commented that *for a standard space (2.4m x 4.8m) we generally allow between £3-3,500 per space, which takes care of the common accessways. A disabled space generally has an extra 1m width which is an increase of 42% which means the cost per space would rise to £4,600. This should also take care of extra width on footpaths to and from the parking spaces.*

A23 Individual respondents commented that some local councils required cycle parking and it was underused with cycle users averaging only 1-2% of residents.

There are very few cyclists amongst the residents of our schemes and the few that are, have probably cycled their whole lives.

The average age of our residents is c. 82 years and bearing in mind that balance and co-ordination start to deteriorate from 55 – 60 years which impacts on confidence and fear of falling off, together with coping as a cyclist with traffic this means that the low incidence of cycling is not surprising.