

London Accessible Housing Register

Training Manual



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Introduction

The London Accessible Housing Register (LAHR) has been developed to be an additional but integral component of choice based lettings (CBL) schemes. It is not a stand-alone register of accessible housing or people who require it, but a framework for collecting information on property access details and using these to assign a category to the property. The property categories developed and piloted for the LAHR are based on national design guidance. The property categories can be found on page 26 of this document. The property categories can then be used in all CBL scheme adverts to inform home seekers about the accessibility features of a property.

These guidance notes are designed to clarify the information that needs to be included during the assessment of properties. The accuracy of the information entered into the form is paramount to providing correct information to housing applicants.

Equipment

To carry out a property survey you will need a:

- sturdy metric tape measure
- list of basic property information (for example, a spreadsheet)
- property checklist form and/or electronic data collection tool

Properties that do not need surveys

As most flats within blocks are built to the same design, only a small number of properties in a block will need to be viewed. This means that the information for one flat could be replicated for each property that has the same number of bedrooms and layout.

Basic property information

Details to include on the spreadsheet are:

- **Unique Property Reference Number (UPRN):** This is the number used for Council Tax purposes which enables a property to be identified
- **Full address and postcode**
- **Number of bedrooms and bed spaces:** Indicate the number of actual bedrooms, not including alternative rooms that could potentially be used as bedroom spaces
- **Floor level:** Location of the property front door
- **Property type:** (House, flat, maisonette, bungalow)
- **Number of lifts servicing the property:** Indicate the number of lifts that can be used to access the property (note that some blocks have two lifts that serve alternate floors)
- **Details of major adaptations:** (If known)

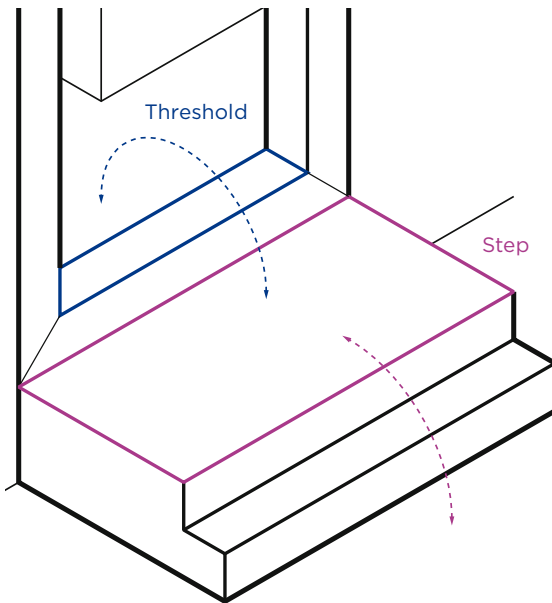
Taking measurements

Ensure that measurements are given in centimetres.

Steps and thresholds

Communal and property front door

The number of steps and the height of the threshold are critical elements for accessibility.



Steps and thresholds

- A *step* is something you put your foot on.
- A *threshold* is something you put your foot over.

Number of steps

- Where there is a communal front door before the property front door, count the total number of steps from the public path to the communal front door. Where the access is level, tick '0 steps'.
- For the property front door indicate the number of steps, height of threshold and door width as per the criteria for the communal front door.

Threshold height

- If a threshold is 1.5cm or less it meets the national accessible standards.
- Thresholds that are between 1.5 to 10cm are considered step-free.
- If the height of the threshold exceeds 10cm, this should be referred to as one step.
- Where there is a threshold situated on top of a step into the property, this is referred to as one step.

Ramps

Indicate whether there is a communal ramp to the main entrance and/or a dedicated ramp into the property.

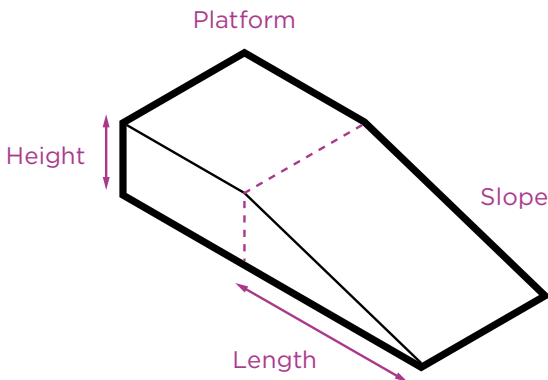
Ramp types are indicated below. Choose a type of ramp from the three types below. You should measure the length and height of the ramp to determine the gradient of the slope. If you cannot measure the length of the ramp it is sufficient to measure the length of the slope.

Indicate whether there is an adequate platform at the top of the ramp. This should be a level area of 1200mm x 1200mm clear of any door or gate swing.

Where there is more than one ramp, measure the ramp that is most accessible for example the least steep ramp.

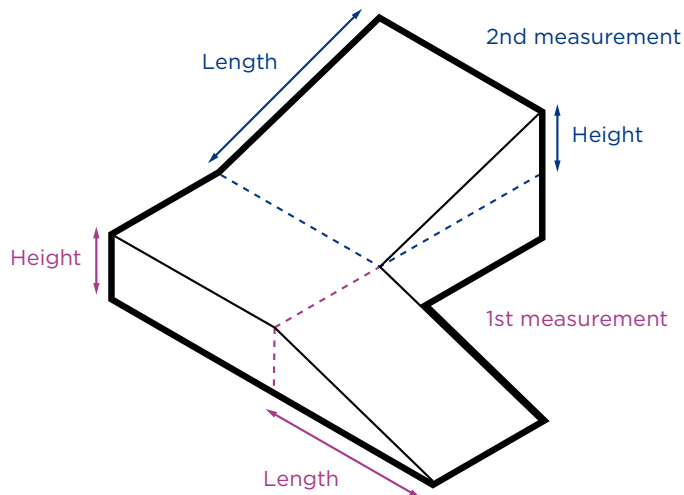


Diagram: How to measure a straight ramp



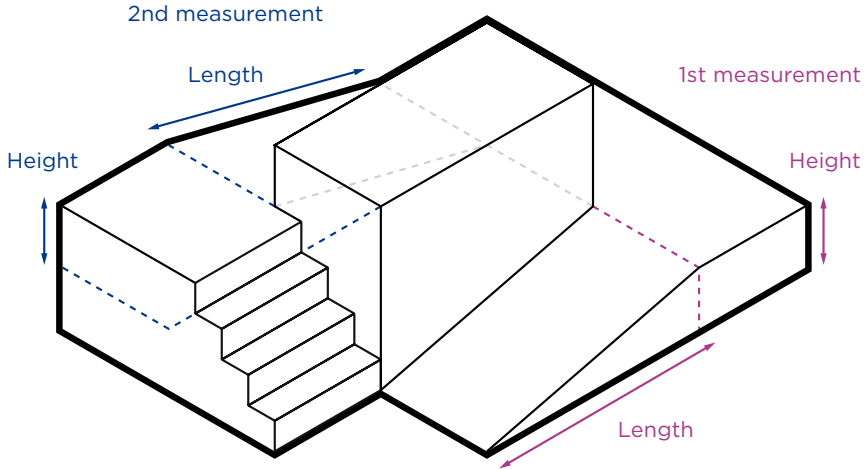
Measure the height and length of the ramp.

Diagram: How to measure a two section ramp

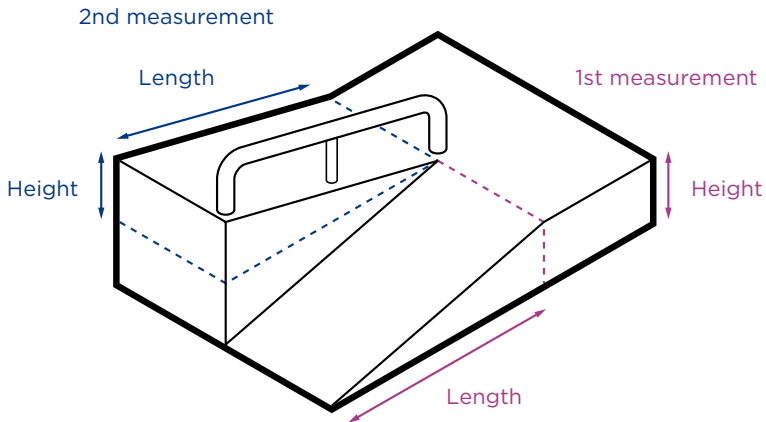


Measure the height and length of each section of the ramp.

Diagram: How to measure dog-leg ramps

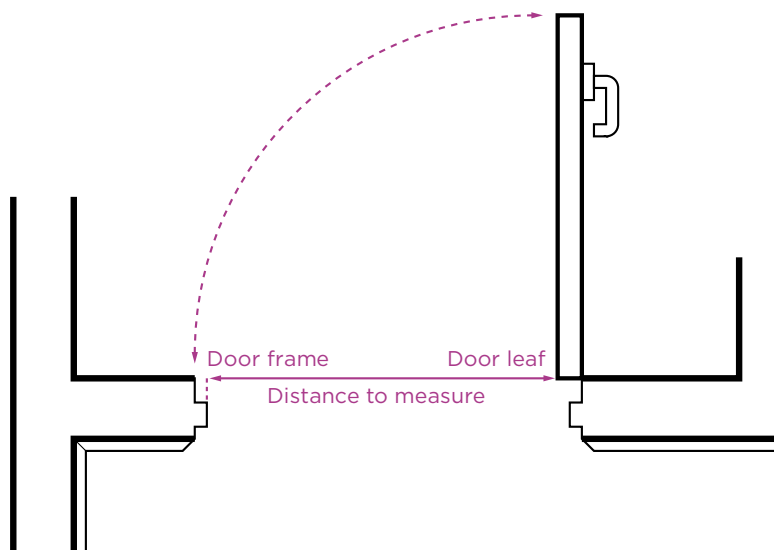


Measure the height and length of each section of the ramp.



Door widths

Measuring the width of a door is important to establish whether it is wide enough to let a wheelchair or walking aid, for example, a walking frame, through comfortably. The effective/clear door opening width is the clear space from the door frame to the door leaf when the door is open. Measure from door frame to door leaf to give the narrowest point when the door is open.



Do not measure from door frame to door frame as the depth of the door itself reduces the access space.

Note: Where the property is a studio, give the opening width of the living room.

Lifts

Measure the internal dimensions of the lift and the clear opening width of the lift door to identify whether there is sufficient space for a wheelchair. Where there is more than one lift, measure the lift that is larger and more useful to a resident. This is likely to be the lift that is closest to the property.

State the lift ID number as it appears on the control panel (if shown).

Note: In buildings that have more than one lift, these sometimes serve alternate floors so may not provide direct access to a property. In this case, there will be more than one lift servicing the block but only one servicing the dwelling.

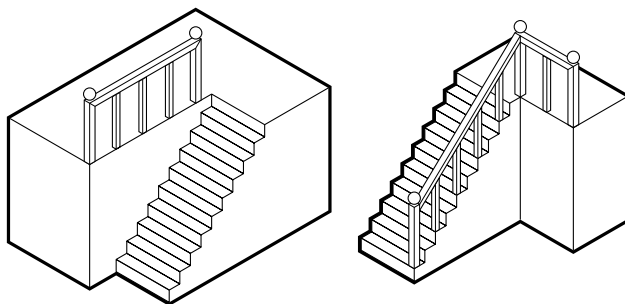
Internal steps

Indicate whether there are any internal steps (not including stairs). This could be one step leading to the kitchen for example. Where there are several steps in different locations throughout the property, give the total number of steps.

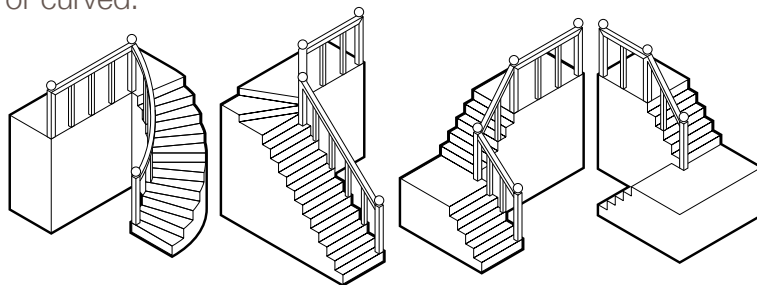
Internal stairs

To establish the width of the stairs, measure the distance between the banister rail and the skirting board. This will determine whether the stairs will take a stair lift. If the stairs are narrower than 70cm they are too narrow for a basic stair lift and the property will not be classified as accessible.

Indicate whether the stairs are straight:



or curved:

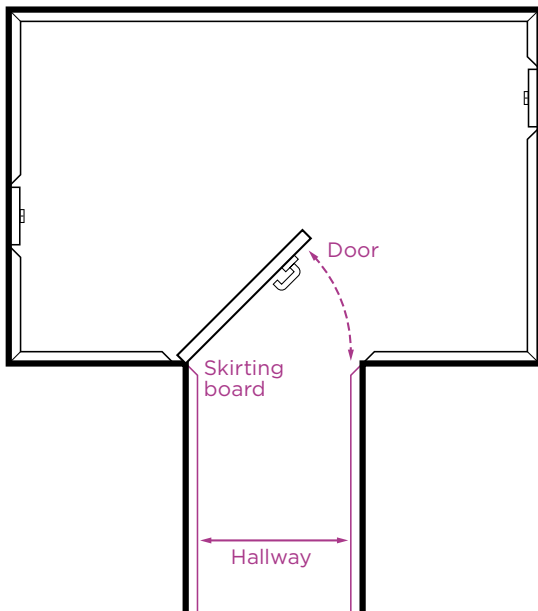


Specify whether there is at least 70cm at the bottom of the stairs clear of the door swing. This would give an indication as to whether there is sufficient space for a stair lift to stop at the bottom of the stairs.

Hallways

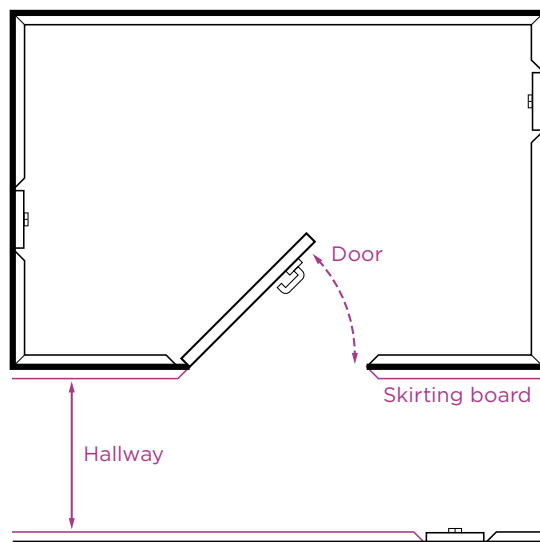
The width of the hallway will indicate whether there is sufficient space for a person to manoeuvre through the property. Measure the distance of the hallway from wall to wall at its narrowest point. Do not include any obstructions such as skirting boards and radiators.

Diagram Head on Approach



Head on approach is when the hallway is straight with one door at both ends and no doors along the length of the hallway.

Diagram Turn Approach

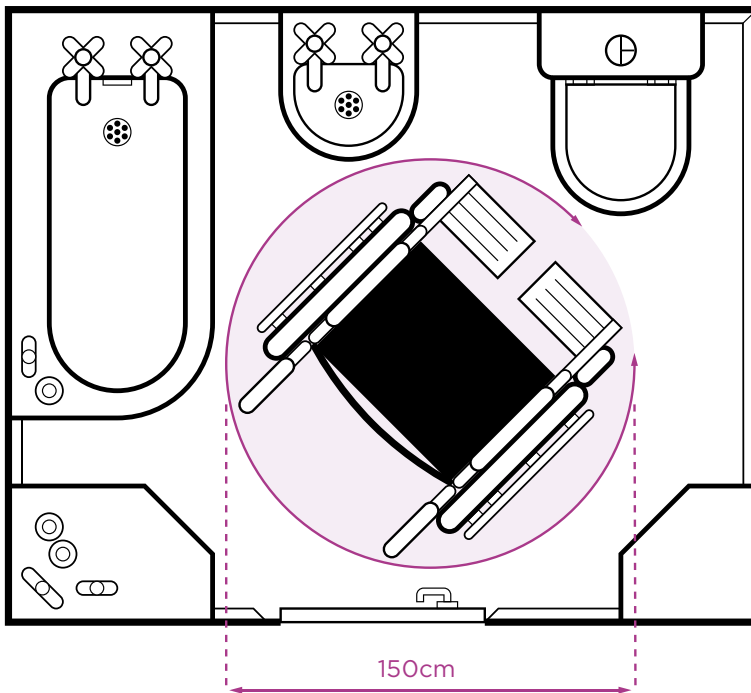


Turn approach is when the hallway has doorways turning off the length of the hallway.

Turning space

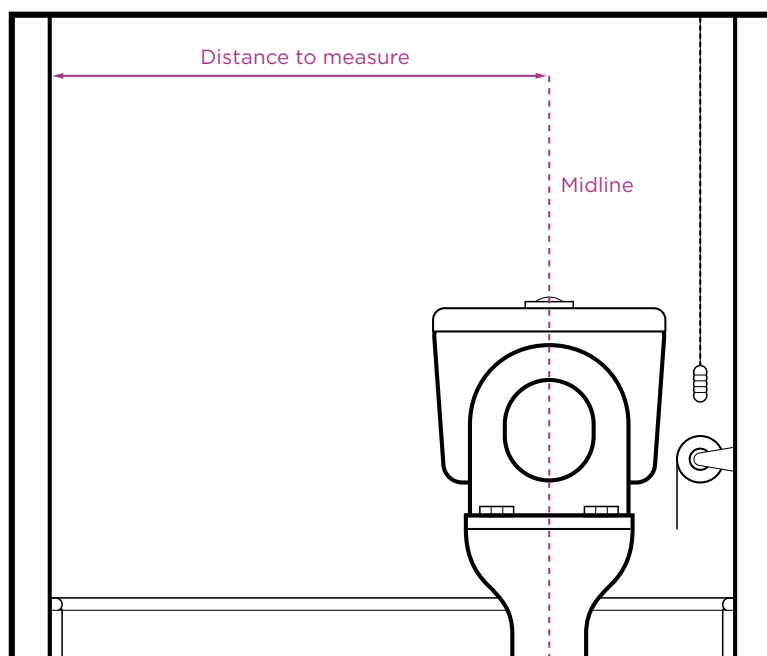
The turning space refers to the minimum space required for a wheelchair user to turn 180 degrees.

In the bathroom, the measurement should be taken with the door closed and could include the space underneath the sink.



Space between midline of toilet and side wall

Measure the distance from the midline of the toilet to the wall or nearest obstruction, for example sink or bath, to establish whether there is sufficient space for a wheelchair user to transfer sideways from their wheelchair to the toilet seat.



The proximity of the bathroom to the toilet provides vital information on the potential for adaptation. Note whether it is:

- combined with the toilet, or
- separate but next to the toilet, or
- separate and not next to the toilet.

If the bathroom is small but next to the toilet, there is potential for a knock-through creating a larger combined bathroom.

On the checklist you will need to indicate whether the property has:

- a room with a level access shower (L/A) only
- a room with a level access shower (L/A) and a bath
- a room with a bath and basin only.

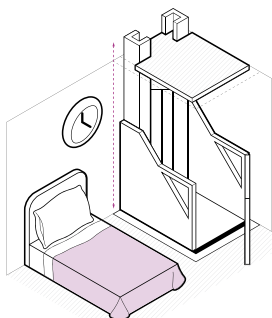
Disregard showers over the bath.

Identifying features

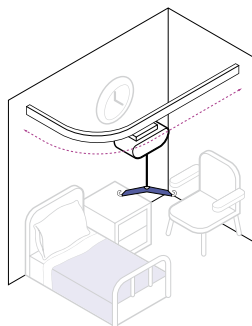
Adaptations

Indicate whether the property has any of the following major adaptations:

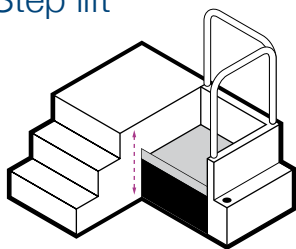
Through floor lift



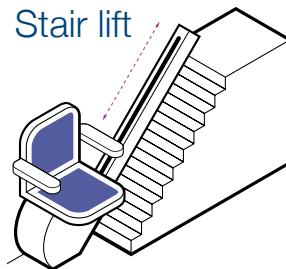
Ceiling track hoist



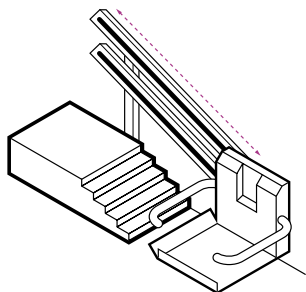
Step lift



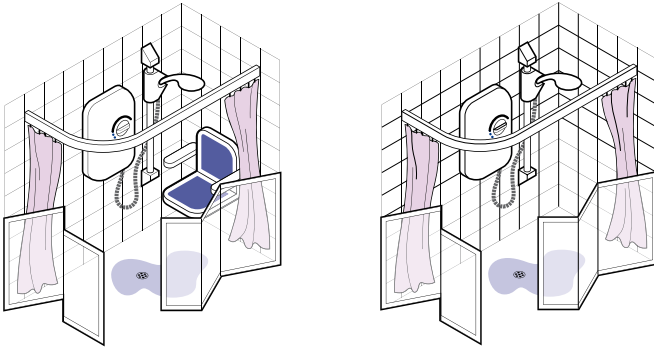
Stair lift



Platform (stair) lift



Level access shower (with or without seat)



Where there is a level access shower state in the comments section whether this is a shower tray or wet floor shower and the dimensions of the shower area.



Location of rooms

Indicate which facilities are on which level.

Where the property is a studio, make reference to the living room only.

Second exits and outdoor spaces

Indicate whether there is a second exit from the property to access the street. Provide details of the second access as this may be more accessible than the main entrance or it could be adapted to provide the principal access for a disabled person.

Indicate whether there are any steps to access the outdoor area (balcony or private patio/garden).

Wheelchair and scooter storage

Indicate whether there is space designated or which could potentially be used for storage of an unfolded wheelchair or scooter close to the front door. This could be a cupboard or open space, and should be at least 120cm x 70cm. In addition please indicate if a socket for charging a wheelchair is also available.

Wheelchair accessible kitchen units

Wheelchair accessible kitchens are very specific. The work surfaces are lower than standard as are wall cupboards. There is legroom under some work surfaces, the hob, sink and usually an accessible oven built into its own housing.

You will need to consider whether there is sufficient space to accommodate a dining table, clear of circulation space or whether the dining table will go in the lounge.

Parking

Indicate whether there is a covered car port, garage and/or allocated parking space close to the property. An allocated car parking space will usually be numbered and/or have the accessibility symbol.

Proximity to local shops and transport

Indicate whether there are any convenient shops or access to transport close to the property.

Get an idea of how many strides you do per metre. An average height person would probably have two strides per metre, so $100\text{m} = 200$ strides.

If the distance is less than 100m to a mode of public transport indicate whether this is to a bus stop, Docklands Light Railway (DLR), train or underground station.



Comments

Adaptability

Indicate whether you feel that the property could be adapted to improve the accessibility category. This could include installation of a ramp to overcome steps at the front door or widening doorways. Do not include the potential for the installation of a level access shower as most bathrooms could be adapted to accommodate this.

This is designed to give an indicator as to whether a property can be adapted and follow up from a surveyor and occupational therapist will be required when the property becomes void.

Other comments

Add any comments that you feel would be relevant to a potential housing applicant and/or allocations team staff member. This could include a recommendation for the property to be reviewed by a housing occupational therapist prior to advertising and the potential of any adaptations.

Replications

Only a small number of properties in the same block will need to be viewed as most flats within blocks are a similar layout/footprint.

If there are properties that have the same layout and number of bedrooms as the one that you have surveyed, the information can be replicated and used to assign a category to all those that are the same. If you are using a property survey form, the UPRN numbers for these properties can be entered on the last page of the form so that the replication of information can be automated.



Outcomes/LAHR categories

When you have collected the property information you should be able to calculate which LAHR property category it is. The property will meet the criteria for one of the following categories:

LAHR category	Description
A Wheelchair accessible throughout	Designed to meet the latest accessible housing design standards offering extra space and full access to all rooms and facilities. Step-free entry. If above the ground floor there will be at least two lifts. If there are any internal stairs, a through-floor lift or platform stair lift will be in place as well. Kitchen and bathroom will have space for a wheelchair to turn around. Wheelchair accessible kitchen units do not need to be present.
B Wheelchair accessible essential rooms	Designed to older wheelchair standards or significantly adapted to provide extra space and wheelchair access to the essential facilities of the property (that is, a bedroom, bathroom, toilet, living room and kitchen). Other rooms in the house such as additional bedrooms or bathrooms may not be wheelchair accessible. Step-free entry.
C Lifetime Homes	Designed to meet the space standards of Lifetime Homes. Main features include a step-free entrance and wide doorways and corridors.

D Easy access	Main features include a step-free entrance with wider doorways and corridors than general needs housing (but may not be as wide as category C properties).
E Step-free	General needs housing with no steps to enter the property. There is no requirement for internal dimensions of the property to meet any standards.
E+ Minimal steps	General needs housing with no more than four steps to enter the property.
F General needs housing	<p>Does not meet the requirements for other accessible housing categories. This property will have one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More than four steps to enter the property without a lift. • A change in floor level within one storey of the property (for example, one or more steps to enter the kitchen) • A flight of internal stairs with little prospect of adapting with a stair lift • A steep ramp or slope.
G The property has not yet been assessed.	If the outcome of an assessment is a G then it means that a certain measurement or tick box has been missed (if an electronic data collection method has been used).

What happens next?

Once you have collected the property information and established the LAHR category this will need to be uploaded to the property landlord's housing database and/or choice based lettings scheme. The LAHR category and relevant access information will then be displayed on property adverts when they become vacant thereby providing disabled people with accurate and consistent information on access features.

If a property is adapted after it has been assessed the property category may change. This is particularly the case if a through floor lift, ramp or extension are installed or if doors are widened. The property would require a re-assessment to determine whether the category has changed.

Further information

For further information on the London Accessible Housing Register visit:

www.london.gov.uk/priorities/housing/housing-need/lafr



