



EPOA
Essex Planning
Officers Association

Thanks to Chelmsford City Council

DESIGN OF HOMES AND HOUSING

HEALTHY PLACES GUIDANCE





Activity for all



Walkable communities



Connected walking and cycling routes



Multifunctional open spaces



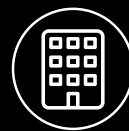
Co-location of community facilities



High quality streets and spaces



Appropriate infrastructure



Active buildings



Management, maintenance, monitoring and evaluation



Activity promotion and local champions

KEY FACTS

- Although rates are improving, 20% of homes in England were still deemed non-decent in 2016³³.
- Poor housing conditions exacerbate health conditions including respiratory illness, asthma and mental health conditions especially in our most vulnerable groups – older people and children^{15,34}.
- BRE in 2015 estimated that poor housing costs the NHS as much as the impact from smoking or alcohol³⁵.
- Poor health related to home design and housing can be categorised through homes being unhealthy, unstable and/or unsuitable³³.
- An example of this is that 93% of homes lack access features that support people with limited mobility³³.
- In February 2018, a national memorandum of understanding between multiple signatories including NHS, Local Government Association, Homes England, the Department of Health and Social Care and the Association of the Directors of Public Health was signed on how to improve health and care through homes³⁶. This gave clear direction that collaboration is required to improved health and housing.

How to encourage and improve homes and housing;

- The Essex Design Guide¹⁶ has several key themes around health and wellbeing. These should be considered when designing homes and open spaces. The guide includes active design principles, ageing, health and wellbeing, digital/smart technology and garden communities' principles. It supports building regulations part M4 category 2 for all developments³⁷.
- Think about how homes can be adapted for use over the lifetime. Can homes be made to adaptable and accessible?
- Affordability and home ownership is a major issue. Ensure an awareness of affordable homes requirements. Promote the various home ownership models that are available.
- Intergenerational living is important. Consider the ways in which different types of housing are designed and the timing of delivery. These factors can impact how communities develop and interact.
- When designing homes and spaces for older people, the Independent Living Design Guidance³⁸ from Essex County Council highlights key considerations such as housing design, communal space access, parking, transport, environmental considerations and smart technology for supporting independent living. These standards are for people of 55 years plus.



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■ The national planning policy framework 2018⁷ highlights Building for Life 12³⁹. This guide provides additional information on design standards and what to consider, including in developments and what to avoid.

■ Lifetime neighbourhoods⁴⁰, published in 2011, provides guidance and advice on how to support neighbourhoods to be inclusive and accessible across people's lives. This is a useful source and is referenced by the Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA) as part of their updated Garden Community principles⁴¹.

■ The NHS has been involved in supporting 10 'Healthy New Towns' sites across England. Guidance on their findings was published in September 2019⁴².



Thanks to C.Brown/David Lock Associates Ltd

References

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- 42 NHS England (2018) Putting Health into Place: Introducing NHS England's Healthy New Towns programme.