



Rt Hon Christopher Pincher MP
Minister of State (Minister for Housing)
MHCLG

30 June 2020

Dear Christopher Pincher MP,

We face an acute shortage of homes that are safe and suitable for older and disabled people. The response to the spread of coronavirus has meant that all of us are spending a huge amount of time in our homes. For millions of people this means being stuck in homes that are deemed hazardous to their health. As we rebuild our economy and as the building of new homes accelerates, we must remember that the homes we build now will be there for many decades to come and must be fit for the future, enabling people to live healthily and independently in their own homes.

Housing Made for Everyone (HoME) is a coalition of ten organisations calling for action to tackle the UK's acute and growing shortage of accessible homes. The coalition was founded by the Centre for Ageing Better, Habinteg Housing Association, Age UK, RIBA, Care & Repair England, Disability Rights UK, the Housing LIN, the National Housing Federation, the Chartered Institute of Housing and the Town and Country Planning Association.

We continue to welcome the government's commitment to bringing forward a consultation on the mandatory accessibility standards for new-build housing and we hope that this much anticipated consultation will be published imminently. Together we call on you to establish the design standard set out in volume 1 of the Building Regulations M4 Category 2 as the mandatory baseline for all new homes. This 'accessible and adaptable' standard is vital if we are to have homes that meet the needs of a growing number of disabled people and the demands of an ageing population.

Given the major disruption to construction, home building and the financial uncertainties that some smaller developers may face, it is understandable that some developers may be looking for flexibility in relation to their obligations. But, in order to achieve the adaptable and accessible high-quality housing that will help us to sustain good health and independence, with consequent savings for the health and care system, we must have in place planning and building rules to achieve this. As redevelopments of our high streets and town centres take place we also need robust regulation in place to ensure conversion from retail and commercial to residential will provide high quality homes that are accessible and adaptable. It would be disastrous if in the wake of this crisis, relaxed planning regulations contributed to a crisis in the availability of accessible homes.

We would be grateful for the chance to meet with you to discuss this further and how we can work with you to ensure the government's ambitious home building programme delivers the homes we need.

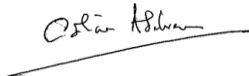
Signed, HoME coalition founding members:



Anna Dixon, Chief Executive, Centre for Ageing Better



Sharon Carter, Chief Executive, Habinteg Housing



Caroline Abrahams, Charity Director, Age UK



Sue Adams OBE, Chief Executive, Care & Repair England



Gavin Smart
Chief Executive, Chartered Institute of Housing



Kamran Mallick
Chief Executive, Disability Rights UK



Jeremy Porteus, Chief Executive, Housing Learning and Improvement Network



Kate Henderson, Chief Executive, National Housing Federation



Professor Alan M. Jones, President, Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA)



Fiona Howie, Chief Executive, Town & Country Planning Association