#### **DEPOSITING SMALL OBJECTS**

Being able to have small personal objects to hand without fear of losing them, favours use

**a** position in the surrounding area of the building suitable shelves or other places (maximum height from the ground equal to around 80 – 100 cm) where small objects can be left

**b** in the area immediately surrounding the building, place a small lockable tool store











#### TAKING CARE OF PETS, CULTIVATING FLOWERS AND PLANTS AND DEPOSITING SMALL OBJECTS Having external spaces available for dedicated to cultivating plants and taking care of pets encourages people to share these activities together outside the home

**a** reserve a part of the garden for looking after and walking small pets

Grounds outside the building



create small areas in the garden (elevated from the ground) for the cultivation of plants and vegetables, easily accessible for people with disabilities



**c** if possible, install a greenhouse for protecting plants and flowers in the cold seasons

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## **GUARANTEEING SURROUNDING AND** PERSONAL SAFETY

The design of the grounds must prevent the risk of possible accidents and transmit a sense of safety

- **a** make the surrounding area physically seperate from the urban context
- **b** install an antiburglar control and alarm system in the grounds
- c install a system which allows a senior citizen to call for help if unwell
- **d** avoid having dark areas in the grounds;
- e install a system of lighting which allows the recognition of people should they inadvertently remain outside
- install a system of lighting which provides an even f distribution of light without large differences in levels of illumination:







**GUARANTEEING SURROUNDING COMFORT AND** THE AESTHETIC QUALITY OF EXTERNAL SPACES The surrounding comfort and aesthetic quality encourages the use of external spaces stimulating a sense of belonging and community



- create a specific space, completely accessible, for a the collection of recyclable refuse (see requirement 1b, section c)
- adequately protect the arounds of the building from b possible external noise
- create a suitably large garden in the grounds which С is easily accessible for everyone
- in the area garden, use plants of varying height, bearing, colour and species ( arboreous and herbaceous types and shrubs)
- set out the garden so that it can be used in different e conditions: sunny areas and areas of shade



- f set out the garden so that it can be used all year: areas protected from cold winds in cold seasons and ventilated areas in the summer
- install a pergola or gazebo in the garden for rest and g relaxation

d

Grounds outside the building

#### **GUARANTEEING SURROUNDING COMFORT AND** THE AESTHETIC QUALITY OF EXTERNAL SPACES The surrounding comfort and aesthetic quality favours the use of external spaces stimulating a sense of belonging and community

- **h** provide items which make the space feel lively, things such as garden furniture, diverse types of fountain, the use of different colours and smells, plants of different species and size and medicinal plants
- install benches with a seating height between 40 and 45 cm from the ground and with armrests to facilitate sitting and standing up
- place the benches carefully with regard to the i sun's course, to the position of trees, to pedestrian pathways and to the principal resting areas for people

- **k** make pedestrian pathways sufficiently wide (min advised 120 cm with passing places) with easily recognizable paving for people with limited sight, and with homogeneous colours and curvilinear forms
- create an area in the garden for organizing open air lunches and barbeques









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## THE URBAN CONTEST





#### **SECTION D - THE URBAN CONTEST**

Contemporary urban contexts need to be educated in how to receive the fragile section of the population including elderly people: Constructing a city which is accessible, comfortable, healthy and safe is a great act of democracy and is no longer postponable.

Older people may have an ambivalent relationship with the urban context in which they live: they are often strongy tied to it by the memories of their life, but at the same time, their perception of the lack of security in the modern environment may make them feel insecure and defenceless. This stops many people keeping up beneficial social interaction with the wider community, particularly when these places are difficult to access and when services do not appear immediately available. In the past, the needs of the elderly felt completely at ease and integrated into the social life of the community. An urban context conceived and designed to suit elderly people will be a place for everyone, from the younger, "productive" people our dominant culture tends predominantly to consider, to all those, for one reason or another, who show some weakness, yet still provide indispensible values, knowledge and experience.

The urban context is discussed here in less specific terms than other sections of this guide. It is almost impossible to be specific because of the vastness and diversityity of urban environments and also because of the difficulty of talking about the specific needs of the elderly when they themselves are conditioned by the place under consideration. There are so many possible situations that it has been decided to focus attention exclusively on those elements directly correlated with residence. Common characteristics of urban areas have, therefore, been represented in a generalised way in order to express a set of comparable needs.





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#### **DESCRIPTIVE TITLES OF IMAGES:**

Section cover:

District Huertas, Madrid (Spain)

- District Bo01, Malmoo (Sweden)
- 2 District Bo01, Malmoo (Sweden)
- 3 Millenium Bridge, Londra (Great Britain)
- (4) Madrid (Spain)
- 5 District Bo01, Malmoo (Sweden)
- 6 District Bo01, Malmoo (Sweden)
- Munich in Baviera (Germany)
- 8 Munich in Baviera (Germany)
- Céramique district, Maastricht (Holland)
- **10** Barajas Airport, Madrid (Spain)
- (1) Baden Baden (Germany)
- (12) Olympic Park Munich in Baviera (Germany)
- (13) Céramique district, Maastricht (Holland)
- Hollerstauden district, Ingolstadt (Germany)
- **15** Buga Park, Munich in Baviera (Germany)
- (b) Castel Trauttmansdorff Gardens, Merano (Italy)
- 17 Railway station, Saragozza (Spain)
- Buga Park, Munich in Baviera (Germany)
- (19 Madrid (Spain)

## **REACHING OTHER AREAS OF THE CITY EASILY**

Making the city more easily accessible reduces the risk of the social segregation and marginalization of the individual

**a** make sure that there is a public transport service stop is within a radius of 400 metres from the building

- **b** make the public transport service stop easy for everyone to use:
  - -install raised kerbs for accessing the bus -install comfortable and easy to use seating at the stop
  - -protect the stop from the elements
  - -use models of bus with better accessibility (with lowering floors and vertically opening points of access)
  - -use models of bus with zones reserved for people with disabilities and safety devices
  - -allow supplementary stops when the bell is rung to limit walking distances
- **c** connect the area under consideration to the principal existing services via suitable pedestrian pathways and bicycle lanes
- **d** increase the number of resting areas near to the bus stop and any other transport services













## **GUARANTEEING URBAN COMFORT**

Contributing to the construction of a city for everyone is an important function for a local authority



a on the connecting route between the building and the principal existing services, ensure a generous number of benches with armrests and a seating height between 40 and 45 cm from the ground, litter bins, alternating zones between shade and sunlight, etc.



**b** organize pleasant and tranquil resting areas close to the most frequented areas

c eliminate any obstructions or physical barriers on the connecting route





**d** make pavements sufficiently wide to Ensure easy transit for pedestrians (minimum width 120 cm, 180 preferable)

## **GUARANTEEING URBAN COMFORT**

Contributing to the construction of a city for everyone is an important function for a local authority

e at intersections, provide crossings at the same height as the pavement (or dropped kerbs)

- **f** do not make pavements too high with respect to the road level, make them as linear as possible.keeping any street furniture in line to avoid confusion
- g provide short and simple walking routes
- **h** avoid drops in level along the route, when necessary (for example, in the connecting ramp between the road and the pavement) make sure that the gradient does not exceed 5%
- i use contrasting materials and colours to guide people along the route and signpost any hazards
- j position road signs and signs for principal public transport services in clearly visible positions;











## **GUARANTEEING URBAN COMFORT**

Contributing to the construction of a city for everyone is an important function for a local authority



k

urban fixtures such as sculptures, fountains and signs, can have a useful informative functions if placed along the route in easily visible situations

#### **GUARANTEEING SHORT JOURNEYS** TO REACH PRINCIPAL URBAN SERVICES Shortening pedestrian routes in the city encourages autonomy

a ensure that the building is less than 400 metres from the following indispensible services: food shops, cash dispenser, family doctor, chemist's

**b** ensure that the building is less than 400 metres from as amny as possible of the following necessary but not indispensable services: healthcare services; day centres and social centres, cultural and religious circles, newsagent's, public gardens and parks, post offices and banks

**c** ensure that the building is less than 400 metres from as many as possible of the following useful services: shopping centres, restaurants, cafes, allotments, bookshops and sport centres













## **GUARANTEEING PERSONAL SAFETY**

Feeling safe walking along roads in one's own city is an essential condition for autonomous access to its services and attractions



**a** provide protected crossings at intersections between pedestrian pathways and cycle lanes and main roads



**b** physically separate pedestrian pathways from those used by other forms of traffic (cycle lanes)



c position parking bays in such a way that it is possible to have direct access to the pavement and make them long enough so that they can be used by wheelchair users

## **GUARANTEEING PERSONAL SAFETY**

Feeling safe walking along roads in one's own city is an essential condition for autonomous access to its services and attractions

**d** create traffic islands in the centre of the road to allow crossing in two distinct parts

e create chicanes and road constrictions on sections of the road to limit the speed of vehicles

f make sure that traffic lights at crossroads are fitted with acoustic signals and devices for manual requests to cross

services and attractions









# the urbai context

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## **GUARANTEEING URBAN SAFETY**

#### Assuring a safe and united city





**a** provide sufficient lighting for as many urban routes as possible

eliminate nealected, run c

**b** eliminate neglected, run down areas along the route between the building and the principal existing services

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## **Country Annex**

The guidelines are expressed in general terms to convey the needs of elderly people. It was not felt to be either useful or practical to include detailed guidance on the dimensions and construction of each of the facilities mentioned. A wealth of literature already exists covering the subject from various perspectives and the publications listed below are a sample of those which provide detailed guidance on specific regulatory requirements and best practice. The list is not intended to be conclusive or even to suggest that these are the correct documents to use. It is simply an indication of some of the vast range of literature available.

#### - Wheelchair housing design guide

Guide to the design of housing to meet the needs of wheelchair users.

Detailed guidance on the space and facilities required in housing for wheelchair users. ISBN 1-86081-897-8 Cost: £40.00 Stephen Thorpe / Habinteg Housing Association

#### - Inclusive mobility

Guide to best practice on Access to pedestrian and Transport infrastructire.

Constructional details of foot ways, footpaths, pedestrain areas, car parking, bus stops, access to transport related buildings, associated signage, lighting and access to the countryside. Available electronically on http://www.dft.gov.uk/transportforyou/access/tipws/Cost: Free Mobility & Inclusion Unit, Department of Transport

#### - Sign Design Guide

#### Guide to inclusive signage

Guidance on the function and positioning of signage, language, lettering, layout, colouring, illumination and materials.Contains useful information about visual imapirment. ISBN 1-85878-412-3 Cost: £20.00 JMU and the Sign Design Society

#### - Building Sight

Handbook of building and interior design solutions to include the needs ofÊvisually impaired people. Guidance on inclusive design principles, site & exterior design, interior design, lighting, decoration, signage, sensory wayfinding, services & management. ISBN 1-85878-074-8 Cost: £25.00 RNIB - Royal National Institute for the Blind

#### - BS8300, 2001

Design of Buildings and their approaches to meet the needs of disabled people - Code of practice National British Standard giving very comprehensive guidance on design of buildings and their approaches to suit a wide range of disabilities. ISBN 0-580-38438-1 Available from www.bsi-alobal.com Cost: £200 (members £100) BSI - British Standards Institute

#### - Lifetime Homes Standards

Standards devised to ensure housing is adaptable to meet the changing needs of occupants throughout their lifetime.

Available on line at Êwww.lifetimehomes.org.uk Cost: Free Habinteg Housing Association / Joseph Rowntree Foundation

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# STAYING IN ONE'S OWN HOME



## Staying in one's own home

On the basis of comments from the work group as the project evolved, we considered it important to enhance the final version of the Guidelines by adding a new section dedicated specifically to the theme of refurbishing existing homes. Such an important choice however could risk creating some confusion if not properly explained and justified; in this brief introduction we will try to highlight some of the most important points.

The questions which may arise are numerous, but at least two would seem to appear central: a) why is it necessary to dedicate an entire section to the subject of refurbishment?, b) in what way does this section relate to the main guidelines? We will try to explain by also introducing a description of the communicative forms employed for the 5<sup>th</sup> section.

A)During the experimental phase of the draft versions for the guidelines, it was noted that there was a strong bias towards new construction, particularly with regard to the images present in the publication. This ran the risk of implying an intention (not intended by the writers) to give more emphasis to new works (linked, therefore, to the idea of people moving home) in contrast with the reworking of existing buildings ( strongly tied to the idea of remaining in one's own home).

The guidelines are not meant in any way to favour new construction over refurbishment, as demonstrated by the many images in the text showing refurbishment projects (e.g. the Mälteriets in Stockholm and "Giardino dei Semplici" in Bagnacavallo (Ra), etc.). But if the question has been raised it is possible that some readers may feel that such an intention exists. It must be emphasised that the entire aim of this work was, and still remains, to help to identify the greatest possible number of residential needs for the elderly so that **they can stay in their own homes for as long as possible**.

B) Historically, this form of housing directed at the elderly almost exclusive took the form of new buildings. Many lessons have been learned, however, and we mainly have to thank the elderly themselves for their comments and input. There are now numerous signs of a change of attitude, so much so that the refurbishment of existing housing is emerging as a significant proportion of the total number of homes created each year. It is probable that in the future this trend will strengthen and refurbishment projects directed at the improvement of living conditions in existing buildings will represent an enormously significant, if not the most important, sector. This is particularly true in those countries where there is a more rigid housing market (an elevated number of privately owned homes, high house prices and building land which is much more expensive than the cost of building work itself, etc.

C) In many countries the quota of the residential market for new constructions is by now decreasing and developers are looking towards projects directed at the renovation of existing buildings. One must also higher

consider that, in many areas, there are existing buildings with a historical value, in which there are often a proportion of elderly residents and where rebuild would not be permitted. One must, therefore, consider refurbishment projects as being fundamental to safeguarding the heritage and identity of local communities. In the future there will be therefore an enormous volume of adaptation and innovation which will need to be carried out in order to provide the appropriate accommodation necessary to satisfy the needs of elderly people whilst safeguarding buildings of historic value.

D) Contrary to the obvious assumption, the refurbishment of peoples' own houses often proves to be simpler than other projects. In many cases, indeed, the changes needed to make a home satisfactory can be carried out in a few significant steps, even if they need to be accompanied later by many smaller details. In such cases, great technical expertise is not even necessarily required: assistants, family members or the elderly themselves know the various possibilities (the guideline recommendations will help) can make some changes themselves without much cost. Admittedly, not all refurbishment projects are simple. There are cases indeed which require considerable work in order to make an elderly person's home comfortable, for example, when one has to install a lift in a multifloor complex.

But it is also true that the difficulty to be faced in the refurbishing is often less than that associated with a new building. Thoughts and solutions always remain focused on the single home and not on the wider scope that must be faced when designing a completely new building.

One of the reasons for adding this new section in the guidelines is to underline that the guide is applicable even in a conceptual context to the building restructuring. To demonstrate this, some real examples have been provided. It is not suggested that they will work for other buildings but they illustrate the applicability of the guidelines. In order to facilitate an understanding of the text, reference is made, in the explanation of the typical solutions adopted, to the whole set of needs (fundamental and specific) which are directly or indirectly involved in each single project.

Interest has been concentrated on three cases that stand out amongst the vast array of unsatisfactory situations which are common in existing buildings with regards to the needs of the elderly. These are:

- a) the absence of accessibility for homes positioned on higher floors;
- b) the lack of qualitative and quantitative location for services;
- c) making a kitchen/living room area functional

Obviously these examples do not represent the entire array of necessary improvements of homes for the elderly; that would require a work of hundreds of pages. Each of the cases examined, however, represent a recurring theme in everyday; we still find too many homes with these problems. These examples could therefore be of great interest to a large number of people. At the same time, they also allow us to show many

aspects which might be considered of secondary importance, as aspects that are often undervalued by the majority of operators.

We are very clear that the guidelines are recommendations for ensuring new and refurbished housing is particularly suitable and accessible for enabling older people to maintain their independence. Where it is not possible to meet all the recommendations of this guide, the most important overriding message is to make sure that potential residents of the building are fully involved in the design process at the earliest possible stage to ensure their specific needs are met as far as possible.

However, when considering refurbishment, if the nature of the building is such that it is not possible to meet the fundamental needs of older people, then consideration should be given to using the building for a different group of residents, and using another building or land to build homes that are more suitable for older people.

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## THREE EXAMPLE CASES FOR IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF ONE'S OWN HOME

The decision to present situations of some practical interest does not exempt us, however, from the duty to discriminate between the situations and possible solutions described. It would be impossible to cover all the possible solutions to every situation. Even the three analysed cases present such a vast number of complexities as to impede even the best intentioned from giving a comprehensive account. It cannot even be pretended that the examples given are necessarily typical but they do give an idea of a possible approach to the matter. In limiting the section to a very brief descriptive model, we can only present some example situations hopefully concentrating on those which are often found in the field of refurbishment.



bathroom to be restructured



building with barriers at the

entrance

stairs inside the home

kitchen without room for movement

steps inside a home





various buildings with stairs for entering the home



## 1. PROVIDING ACCESS TO OVERCOME DIFFERENCES IN FLOOR LEVELS

This problem is one of the most common problems that an elderly person has to face when they live on an upper floor of a building (a familiar case in urban centres). Resolving this problem is of vital importance for an elderly person's quality of life, so much so that if it were not possible it could lead to them abandoning the home altogether. At first sight such a drastic decision might appear an exaggeration but it really is that important not to have physical barriers. If someone is physically unable to use the stairs they are almost totally condemned to remain within the four walls of their home, often losing what remains of their ability to maintain relationships with consequent loss of their own self-esteem. Over time, this may engender serious degenerative processes which might be irreversible. In order to stop this happening or to put it off as long as possible it is necessary to modify the building so as to eliminate any physical barriers.

The usual way adopted for overcoming small differences in level is the use of a ramp (ideally with a maximum gradient of 5% - 1:20). For differences of level of an entire floor or more the best solution is that of installing an elevator or an elevating platform.

To show the various possible solutions in a restructuring project we will make reference to some typical building types which are normally associated with common problems and which require more or less similar solutions; thus being usable in many other cases.

## A building with steps placed before the main entrance

Α

This is a fairy common problem which occurs for several reasons: the need to have an imposing entrance with steps which separate the entrance door from the street, giving greater visibility (usually in historic buildings); buildings constructed on sloping ground which need to overcome differences in level; buildings which need to be higher out of the ground for reasons of protection against flooding and so on. In this example we will only present one case (the first which was brought to our attention) as the solutions to the problem all belong to the same family and fit the modalities indicated with few variations. Moreover, the case appears fairly interesting as it refers to a typical situation in existing buildings, especially older ones. The solutions for this particular case are relatively simple in that they are concerned with a specific problem to be resolved, but not with regard to the external situation. Often, in fact, the presence of a road makes it difficult to use a ramp.

Those parts relative to a ramp which require specific attention are usually the following:

- The access must be easy to see and use for those wishing to enter the building;
- The need not to interfere too much with the façade of the building (especially those of significant architectural value)
- the need not to create excessively long and extended ramps;
- the opposite need not to create ramps with excessive gradients, particularly in a situation where they are exposed to the elements;
- the need to position handrails at the correct height in order to suit different people;
- the need to visually differentiate the ramp from the horizontal walkway for the blind and those with impaired vision;
- the need to use anti-slip materials for the flooring especially for rainy and snowy conditions;
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pre-existing solution before project

solution after the project

an image of the prior solution(b)

- the need to keep a balanced relation between the length of the ramp and the plan metric encumbrance of the steps to be overcome;
- the need to avoid solutions with ramps higher than
  1.2 1.5 meters from the floor.

For this group of cases one often finds oneself with external constraints which require a considerable amount of planning (historic/architectural constraints) and in some cases also temporary solutions (made with easily removable materials when necessitated). For the request to eliminate architectural barriers from an existing building with entrance steps, some possible solutions could be those proposed in the following illustration. It is useful to point out, however, that for the correct installation of a ramp it is necessary to make reference to the laws and regulations in force in each country. (c.f.r. Country Annex).

However, one should always respect the fundamental needs indicated in the GL, specifically the following: Section C THE AREA OUTSIDE THE BUILDING requirement 4c, 4d, 4e, 4f B

#### A building with internal spaces on different levels superable only by one stairway

This is a fairy recurrent case found in determined types of building (semidetached, duplex with two or more floors, low cost buildings or for social housing, period houses, etc...) In the text we consider only two types of case which we consider sufficiently representative of the varied reality in existing buildings.

#### b1 the presence of steps in the communal parts of the building which present barriers before the home

The first type of case refers to a fairly common occurrence, particularly among dated, period buildings. The solutions for this particular case are relatively simple with regard to the specific aspects to resolve but it is worth noting the attention required to detail, especially in the case of buildings of an historical/architectural value. In most cases the best solution is still a ramp. Those parts relative to the ramp which require specific attention are normally the following:

- access must be easy to see and use for those wishing to reach their homes;
- the need not to interfere excessively with the internal image of the building (especially for those of high architectural value)
- the need not to create excessively long and extended ramps;
- the need to position handrails at different heights in order to favor multiple uses by people;
- the need to clearly indicate all the possible variations from a horizontal walkway for the very poor sighted and the blind;
- the need to use anti-slip materials for the flooring especially for rainy and snowy conditions;
- the need to keep a balanced relation between the length of the ramp and the internal corridors or entrance hall;
- the need to avoid solutions with ramps higher than
  1.2 1.5 metres from the floor.

internal steps of the communal area

steps in front of the entrance door of homes

steps in front of the entrance door of homes

steps before reaching the lift

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