

Dementia-ready housing criteria - February 2024

	Title	More information	Rationale
1	Front door that is easy to find, day or night.	Enable personalisation, e.g. using colour, house number plates, shelves, planters etc. Lighting should be enough to give definition on a visitor's face, find keys, give good colour rendering of door and other distinguishing features.	If houses look alike, it's easy to forget which one is home. Personalisation helps a house feel welcoming as well as easy to find, which promotes independence/exercise. Lighting also allows a resident to recognise visitors more easily at night. (DesHCA 'Designing for Lifetime' p.7)
2	Front door has step-free access. For new build properties, step-free access to all external doors.	Building regulations part M requires the principal entrance to have an accessible threshold on all new build properties. It requires other external doors to have an accessible threshold under M4(2) - Accessible and adaptable dwellings.	Falls are more common for those with dementia. Being able to get outside more easily promotes activity and social connection. (Alzheimer's Society 'Dementia-friendly Housing Guide', p.35-37)
3	Internal surfaces mitigate confusion	Colour tones and patterns that are not confusing on floors/walls. There should be no floor coverings/mats that contrast with surrounding surface. Limit shiny surfaces.	Dementia can change perception. Bold patterns such as stripes and zig-zags can be perceived as moving objects and highly contrasting floor tones may look like steps or holes. (King's Fund EHE Environmental Assessment Tool, 2020, Section 4)
4	Bathroom is easy to find	The door to the bathroom should be visible from a bedroom door.	Being able to find the toilet easily, especially during the night, helps people to retain independence and dignity. (King's Fund EHE Environmental Assessment Tool, 2020, Section 5)
5	Bathroom / WC locks aid rescue	Door can be unlocked from the outside in an emergency (coin slot as per Building Regs).	Falls in the bathroom and WC are common and being able to get help quickly is vital. (DesHCA 'Designing for Lifetime' p.17-20)
6	Good level of natural light in all rooms	Avoid pools of light and/or dark areas, stripes or shadows. Artificial light should not be needed during the daytime for working or reading, the vast majority of the time.	Exposure to natural light can assist in general wellbeing and in differentiating between day and night. It can also help to prevent falls. (Appendix 3 of the APPG document 'Housing for people with dementia – are we ready?' p.48)
7	View of nature in at least one habitable room	Habitable rooms are living, dining and bedroom areas. View of nature should include plants/trees (more than one species) and could be enhanced by bird-feeders etc.	Connection with the natural environment stimulates memory and can slow down the progression of the symptoms of dementia. (King's Fund EHE Environmental Assessment Tool, 2020, Section 2)
8	Access to an outdoor space that is easy to navigate	Private or communal garden or balcony that is hazard-free and convenient to access. Slopes and steps are easy to see. No strongly contrasting tones in paving materials.	Outdoor activity helps the brain process and coordinate. It increases intake of Vitamin D and exposure to natural light, reinforcing circadian rhythms which affect sleep, alertness and appetite. (Appendix 3 of the APPG document 'Housing for people with dementia – are we ready?' p.49)
9	Amenities and other homes within 1km	Range of shops, services and green spaces that are accessible comfortably and safely on foot.	People with dementia are less likely to drive. Having amenities close by is important for independence and provides a destination, promoting activity. (Greater Manchester 'Creating Age-Friendly Developments', 2023, p.7)
10	Active dementia champion within the housing organisation	Defined by the WY Dementia-ready housing taskforce role profile.	The Champion's role is to promote understanding of dementia throughout the organisation, making life easier for those living with (or awaiting a diagnosis of) dementia, and their carers. (Alzheimer's Society 'Dementia-friendly Housing Guide', p.13)
Sources: King's Fund EHE Environmental Assessment Tool, Appendix 3 of the APPG document 'Housing for people with dementia – are we ready?', Kirklees' Dementia Friendly Design Tool, DesHCA 'Designing for Lifetime', Alzheimer's Society 'Dementia-friendly Housing Guide', Greater Manchester 'Creating Age-Friendly Developments', Guinness Partnership 'Creating a Dementia Friendly Environment'.			