

Accommodation Strategy

Better Homes: Greater Choice



Mental Health Supported Accommodation Design Principles

(May 2017)

KCC expects there to be significant growth in supported accommodation for people with mental health needs as part of the Transformation Project, Your Life Your Home. KCC appreciates the opportunity to engage with any developer of supported accommodation for those with mental health needs at an early stage.

Design and spacing requirements

Foremost in design terms is the wish to provide non-institutional, homely and welcoming places. The housing must be visually attractive and fit well with the local community. Design should inspire all who live in and use it whilst making a positive statement in the community. It must function internally to give people the privacy and independence that they require and also facilitate the effective provision of care.

The design of the accommodation, selection of equipment, signage, internal colour and finishes and landscaping should enable the independence of people who have mobility problems, may be physically frail, or who may have a visual, hearing or cognitive impairment.

Artificial lighting must be non-institutional in style with suitable colour and intensity for tenants with visual impairments and/or dementia. To help improve security, layouts should encourage neighbourliness, natural surveillance and self-policing and create an environment that makes unobtrusive access difficult. Front accesses to apartments shall have means of providing visual identification of callers from the interior.

All apartments shall be acoustically separated from adjoining apartments or common parts to comply with the requirements for flats under the Building Regulations. Where common parts are required to be designed to facilitate future conversion into apartments, the relevant walls shall be constructed to need no further acoustic treatment.

It is essential in the design process to eliminate points where a cord, rope, or bed sheet can be looped or tied to a fixture in order to create a point of ligature, which may result in self harm or in extreme cases, loss of life.

Items that can be removed from their intended location by force, such as a wardrobe rail, could potentially be used as a weapon to self harm or harm others. It is best to minimise this risk through consideration during design.

KCC New Housing Acceptance Criteria

These criteria apply to supported housing through new build or conversion of existing properties.

Factors	Essential	Desirable
No of flats (if in a block or subdivided house)	<17	<9
Studio flats	35 m² minimum total size	40 m²
Flats (one bed)	45 m² minimum total size	60 m²
Flats (two bed)	55 m² minimum total size	70 m²
Bedroom size	10 m² minimum Minimum width 2.6 m	12 m² Minimum width 3 m
Bathrooms	Minimum 2.7 x 1.5 m	Ensuite Wet room with option to install a bath
Communal areas	Office area with some meeting space	At least one communal lounge/activity area
Parking	Sufficient to meet tenant mobility needs	Available off road parking for tenant and staff vehicles
Gardens/outside areas		Attractive outdoor space.
Staff Sleep in room(s)	7 m² minimum	
Rent Level	If above Local Housing Allowance rates, must have Housing Benefit officer involvement.	Meets Local Housing Allowance rates
Type of tenancy		Assured Tenancy or Assured Shorthold Tenancy