

PART B

Development Quality Requirements 2016

Proposed mandatory Standard & Guidance for new and rehabilitated housing in Wales using Welsh Government subsidy

DEVELOPMENT QUALITY REQUIREMENTS (DQR)

THE PROPOSED MANDATORY STANDARD AND GUIDANCE FOR NEW AND REHABILITATED DWELLINGS

PREFACE

Development Quality Requirements (DQR) sets out the minimum functional standards for new and rehabilitated general needs homes built by social housing providers.

The standards as laid down in The Housing (Wales) Act 2014, Part 4 protects public investment in social housing providers in Wales and safeguards the interests of their tenants.

In addition there is guidance that underpins the standard. The Welsh Government also encourages social housing providers and their consultants to look at other sources of good practice and guidance

The dwellings provided should be of good quality and meet the needs of tenants. The responsibility for producing well designed, good quality housing is in hands of the social housing providers and the consultants they employ.

Quality of homes is as much about the external layout as about the internal layout and it is important that use is made of all the good guidance available to designers e.g. Welsh Government Technical Advice Note (TAN 12), to ensure a high quality environment is created.

Standards guidance can only provide the basic building blocks and providers and consultants should exercise their responsibility as a client and as accountable bodies to take a critical interest in the housing they commission to ensure it is of the highest calibre.

All homes should be built to the standard but it is recognised that this is a more difficult goal to achieve where existing buildings are being converted or rehabilitated.

In this case providers should, if it practical and cost effective to do so, take all opportunities to meet the standard. Where this is not possible the homes provided should not disadvantage tenants and must provide adequate space and facilities for everyday living. A hierarchical approach should therefore be adopted ranging from this new build /rehabilitated homes standard to the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) as the minimum standard.

THE STANDARD FOR NEW AND REHABILITATED DWELLINGS

1. Homes should be flexible, responsive to the changing needs of the occupants and meet the changing needs of a variety of households who will occupy the building over its life.

This means;

1a. Homes meet Lifetime Homes Standards (LTH)

1b. Homes meet Housing Sight (RNIB)

1c. All houses have a shower (in addition to a bath) and are also provided with adequate space on the ground floor with plumbing, electrical and mechanical ventilation connections to allow for the future installation of a barrier free shower facility suitable for use by a person in a wheelchair. Homes with occupancy of 6 or more will have the barrier free shower facility installed.

1d. All flats and bungalows have a shower in addition to a bath and bungalows, ground floor flats and flats served by a lift have a bathroom designed so that it is capable of adaptation for use by a person in a wheelchair. Guidance

- Lifetime Homes Standards are published by the Habinteg Housing Association (direct@habinteg.org.uk) and designing homes to meet it will result in them being accessible and convenient for all tenants and more adaptable to long term needs. It will ensure homes are accessible for the young, the old, single people, families and those who acquire a physical impairment.
- Lifetime Homes Requirements are not aimed specifically at people with disabilities who may for example require a wheelchair but offer homes which are liveable in and visitable by a wide range of people.
- Homes should be designed so that:
 - Any shower (or space for a future shower), provided on the ground floor (entrance level) should be a minimum of 1.8m x 1.6m.
 - Flats with entrances three or more floors above the main entrance should be served by a lift that complies with LTH Standards. Discretion should be used in relation to homes incorporating split level access.
- Where homes provide accommodation for people with specific needs they should reflect current good practice. For example housing for some black minority ethnic (BME) groups should take account of the individual family needs and the needs of the ethnic community. The specific design requirements of the group should be considered so they can be sensitively incorporated into the layout of the home and the general environment. This is best achieved by working with the BME community organisations and individuals at the start of a project as they can advise on the needs of the different communities and assist with publicising the completed scheme to ensure full occupancy. A prescriptive approach should therefore be avoided as there is great diversity amongst the different BME communities and these communities are in the process of change

(Joana Jeffrey and Richard Seager (NHF 2011: Equality and Diversity Framework for Review and Action (3RD Edition), non-mainstream Housing Design guidance, Homes and Communities Agency January 2012.

- Housing Sight is published by the Royal National Institute for the Blind (add link) and will provide homes that are accessible to tenants and their visitors who have sight problems.

2. Homes should be Safe.

This means;

2a. Staircases are provided that minimise the chance of accidents.

2b. Kitchens and bathrooms are functional and help reduce the risk of accident.

2c. Homes are provided with sufficient, well located, convenient, electrical socket outlets.

2d. Road layouts and external amenity space provide a safe environment for adults and children.

2e Rear gardens are safe for small children to play in, are convenient to use and are easy to maintain and private.

2f. Car parking provision is conveniently situated, reflects the location and anticipated levels of car ownership. Guidance

- Staircases are a frequent source of accidental injury, particularly to elderly people and young children. Risks should be minimised by ensuring that;
 - Private stairs to flats have a maximum pitch of 35 deg. and are provided with handrails to both sides.
 - No doors open off the landing space at the head of the stair.
 - There are no tapered or winding steps
 - Stairs are adequately lit in accordance with ROSPA design guidance.
 - There are no winders, lighting fittings or ceiling hatches above the staircase.
- The risk of accidents in kitchens can be reduced by providing a well organised working area with adequate work surfaces for resting pans and food preparation and adequate space for appliances. Kitchens should be designed so that;
 - There is a work surface either side of the sink bowl one of which may be the sink drainer.
 - There is a work surface either side of the cooker.
 - The cooker is at least 100mm from a corner base unit
 - All work surfaces are at least 400mm long
 - A food preparation area is provided between the sink bowl or drainer and the cooker that is at least 1000mm long measured along its front edge in a straight line. If it has to be arranged around a corner one front edge must be at least 800mm long.
 - Spaces at least 620mm wide are provided for a cooker, a refrigerator, a washing machine and a tumble dryer.

- The cooker space is not in front of a window and cooker control units are offset to one side so they can be safely used without reaching over the hob.
 - Wall cupboards are positioned at least 150mm away from the cooker space and so that they can be used without reaching over the hob.
 - People passing through the kitchen do not have to enter “the work triangle”, an imaginary space formed by lines drawn between the cooker, sink, and fridge positions.
 - There is clear space of at least 1200mm in front of the cooker and 1000mm in front of other units and appliances to permit safe operation.
 - There are adequate and convenient storage cupboards for food, crockery and pots and pans as follows; 1.1m^{m3} in a two person home, increasing by 0.2^{m3} for each additional person.
- Wet surfaces in bathrooms are easy to slip on. Bathrooms should be designed so that;
 - A standard 1700mm bath with integral handgrips and slip resistant base is provided.
 - Walls are capable of providing secure fixings for additional grab rails and handles should they be needed.
 - Baths are not located beneath windows.
 - Washbasins do not overhang the bath.
- Enough conveniently located power sockets are provided in the kitchen to avoid trailing flexes with at least 3 double sockets above worktop level in addition to those at fixed appliance positions. In the remainder of the home the minimum provision should be;
 - Living rooms; 4 double
 - Dining rooms; 2 double.
 - Double / twin bedrooms; 3 double
 - Single bedrooms; 2 double
 - Further single sockets in halls and landings.
 - A TV aerial socket and telephone sockets in a suitable location on all floors and 2 TV aerial sockets where the home is single storey.
 - A weather-proof external power supply should be provided with secure access/control.
- Carbon Monoxide detection should be provided.
- Road layouts should be designed to reduce traffic speed particularly where children are likely to play. Children will inevitably want to play in the street and areas where this is likely should be clearly visible to drivers (see Manual for Streets TAN 12).
- Formal play facilities are best provided as part of a strategic approach to provision within a neighbourhood and any decision to provide play areas should be subject to consultation with the local authority.

- Where play areas are provided they should be overlooked by dwellings and safe (See SBD standards and ROSPA Design Guidance –CHECK REF)
- Private rear gardens should be designed so that;
 - They have a minimum usable area of 40^{m²} for houses and 30^{m²} for bungalows (excluding the space taken up by the shed) including a nominally level paved area of minimum of 3m x 3m, easily reached from the rear entrance. Discretion should be used on deciding usable area eg side access paths and some irregular shaped gardens may not be considered as usable.
 - No part of any additional useable area slopes toward the house more steeply than 1 in 8.
 - No part of the remaining area slopes away from the house more steeply than 1 in 12 (ideally 1 in 15)
 - There is a continuously surfaced access to the drying line and any garden gate to minimise the risk of tripping.
 - The boundaries between adjoining gardens are of minimum 1200mm high and built of nothing less substantial than timber close boarded fencing.
 - It has external service lighting that is switchable from inside the dwelling (in addition to any security lighting that may be required to meet SBD)
 - Where it is not possible to reach the rear garden without passing through the house a discreet refuse bin compartment is provided at the front.
 - Convenient access is possible from the main ground floor living space or kitchen.
- Careful consideration should be given to the provision of car parking to ensure it fits sympathetically into the general environment and reflects location and anticipated levels of car ownership. They should be designed so that;
 - No parking space is within 2m of a window.
 - Visitors' spaces are overlooked by as many homes as possible.

3. Homes should be Secure.

This means;

3a. Developments that are fully under the control of the social housing provider are designed to comply fully with Secured By Design (SBD) standards.

3b. Developments not fully under the control of the social housing provider meet as a minimum the Physical Security elements of SBD.

Guidance

- Secured By Design (SBD) is the police forces housing design security scheme (www.securedbydesign.com)
- The use of Secured By Design principles helps create Sustainable Communities and contributes towards a reduction in the level of crime and the fear of crime. It includes specifications for new and existing homes and has a positive impact on crime reduction by ensuring appropriate, tested products are used. It also provides designers with guidance on estate layout that will result in the incidence of crime being minimised.
- All developments that are fully under the control of the housing provider must comply fully with the standard but where this is not the case, for example individual homes or where they are “pepper potted” in a larger development not in the control of the housing provider, the Physical Security Elements (windows, doors, security lighting etc.) should be applied. In this case it is recognised that not all the guidance relating to site layout can be implemented and in conjunction with the police a risk analysis should be carried out and a strategy developed that will provide an appropriate level of security.
- The implementation SBD should form an integral part of the design development process and designers should consider the principles at an early stage well in advance of a formal application for planning approval. This should include consultations with the police architectural liaison officer.

4. Homes should be of sufficient size to meet the needs of the occupant, have a convenient layout for everyday living and have adequate circulation space.

This means;

4a. Rooms are large enough to take all the furniture that occupants can be expected to need.

4b. No excessively long narrow rooms.

4c. All bedrooms open off passageways

4d. Homes are provided with adequate facilities for washing, drying and airing clothes.

4e. Homes have a dedicated airing cupboard.

4f. Homes have adequate and convenient general storage.

Guidance

- Rooms need to be large enough to take the furniture which tenants can be expected to need, in a convenient layout for everyday living and with adequate space to move about. The shape of a room, the position of doors, windows, radiators and whether it is necessary to pass through a room to other parts of the home can greatly affect the amount of useable space it provides.
- Excessively long narrow rooms should be avoided and should be designed so that;
 - Single bedrooms have an average width of at least 2.1m
 - Living rooms have an average width of at least 3.1m (or 3.3m if it is necessary to pass through the room to other parts of the house.
 - Where kitchens are provided that are open plan to the living / dining space there should be no through route or door leading to another part of the house or to the outside within the kitchen space.
- Layout plans, to a scale of 1:50, should be provided showing suitable room layouts that demonstrate liveability appropriate to the occupancy level of the home. (Appendix A sets out the nationally accepted space standards and Appendix B provides Notional Floor areas to help designers demonstrate compliance.
- All homes should have suitable and robust drying facilities. Where provided externally they must be safe for the occupant to use, secure and free from trip hazards.

- All homes without access to an external clothes line have a space and power connection for a tumble dryer, positioned so that it can be vented directly to the outside air and situated in a kitchen or utility.

- Airing cupboards should be designed so that;
 - Where hot water storage is provided in the home the cupboards should have a minimum of 1m² of shelving.
 - In addition to the above, where no hot water storage is provided, it is heated.
 - Access is from a circulation space or bathroom.

- Storage in homes should be designed to provide;
 - A total capacity (including the airing cupboard and accessible under stair space but excluding any built in wardrobes, space taken up by mechanical / ventilation equipment and kitchen units*) of minimum 3^{m³} in homes for up to 3 people and 5^{m³} in large dwellings.
 - A tall cupboard suitable for storing brooms etc. opening off a passageway or kitchen/utility that is fitted with high level shelving for storage of cleaning materials out of reach of young children.
 - An external robust and lockable garden store minimum 2^{m²}(excluding flats with no private garden)
 - Access to the loft space for maintenance purposes only.

(*where a tall cupboard is provided as part of the kitchen storage any capacity over and above the minimum requirement for kitchen storage can count general storage)

APPENDICES

A. Space Standards

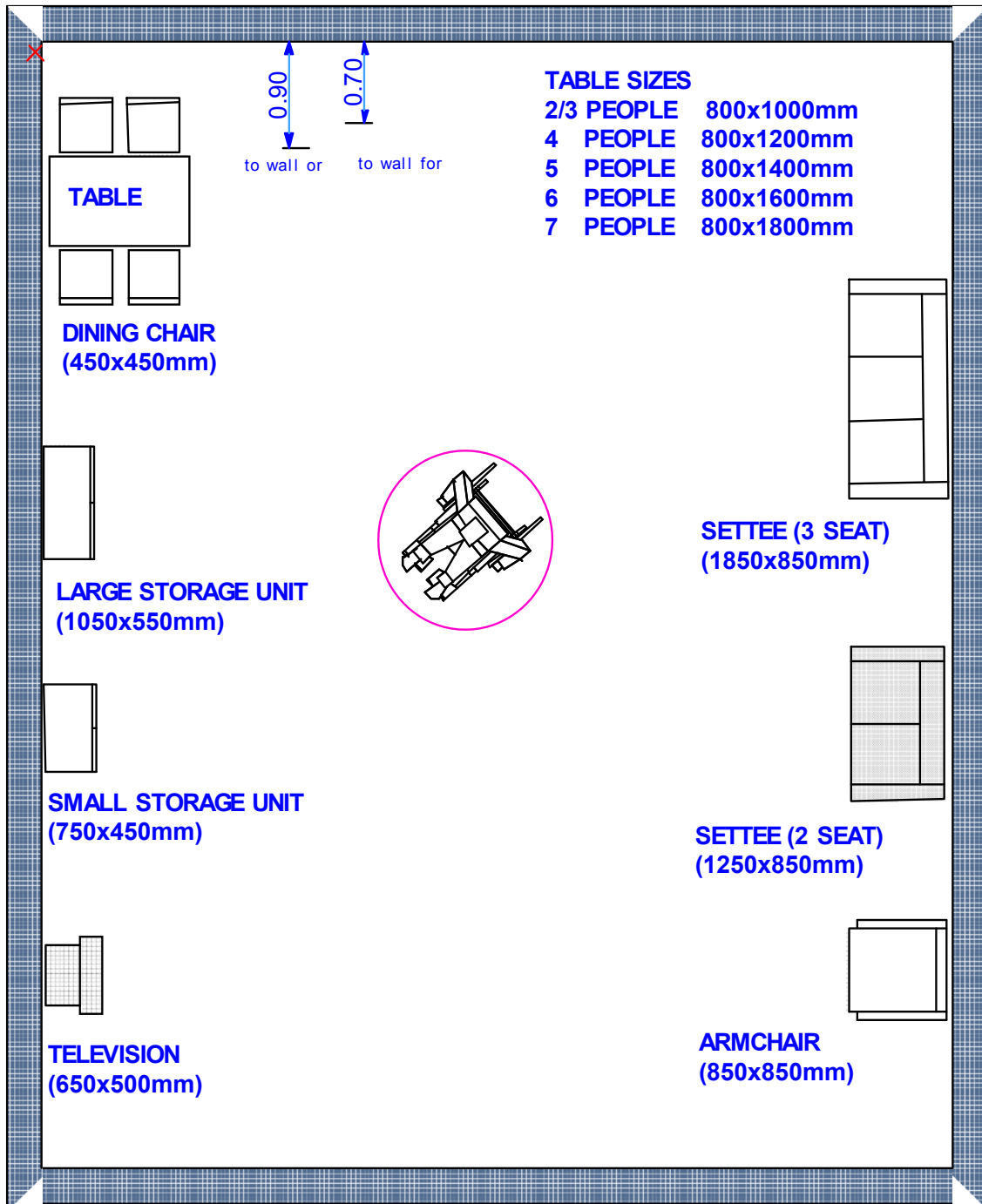
- **Living rooms**
- **Bedrooms**

B. Notional Floor areas

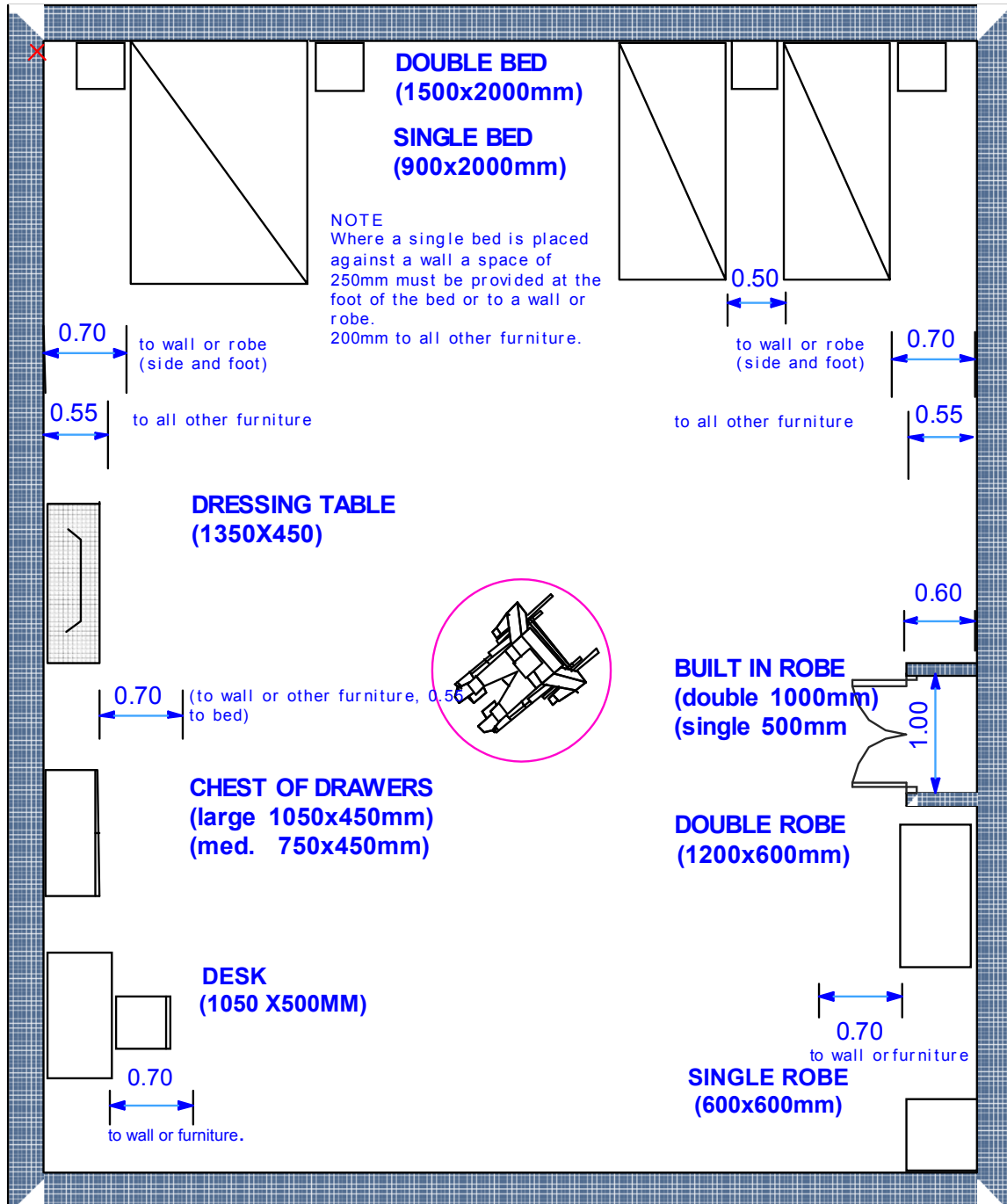
C. Additional Design Guidance

APPENDIX A
Space Standards

Living Rooms (n.t.s.)



Bedrooms (n.t.s.)



APPENDIX B

Notional Floor Areas (General Needs Homes)

Unit Type	Floor area-m ²
7P4B House 2 Storey	114
6P4B House 2 Storey	110
5P3B House 2 Storey	94
4P3B House 2 Storey	88
4P2B House 2 Storey	83
3P2B Bungalow	58
3P2B Flat (walk up)	65
3P2B Flat (common access)	58
2P1B Flat (walk up)	51
2P1B Flat (common access)	46
1P1B Bedsit	32

Notes

- Notional (or Net) Floor Area is measured to the internal finished surfaces of main containing walls on each floor, including private staircases, internal partitions, flues and ducts; it excludes external dustbin enclosures or stores, any porch open to the air or enclosed.
- The measurement of floor area of common access flats excludes the area of the communal stairs and circulation space.
- The measurement of floor areas of individual ground floor external access flats includes the area occupied by the staircase and entrance hall necessary to gain access to the first floor flat. The areas of the ground floor and upper floor flats (walk-up) shall be averaged in order to make comparisons against the notional floor areas shown above.
- The floor area in rooms where the ceiling height is less than 1.50m is excluded.

APPENDIX C

Additional Design Guidance

- The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (ROSPA)
<http://www.rospa.com/home-safety/resources/policy-statements/>
- Welsh Government Technical Advice Note (TAN)12:Design (2014)
<http://gov.wales/topics/planning/policy/tans/tan12/?lang=en>
- Manual for Streets (2007), (UK Government), Department for Transport
ISBN: 978-0-7277-3501-0
- Manual for Streets 2 (2010), (UK Government), Department for Transport.
ISBN: 978 – 1 4734-12859