Homes England

Guidance

Healthy Homes — a foundation for healthier and resilient communities

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Applies to England

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This publication is available at https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/healthy-homes/healthy-homes-a-foundation-for-healthier-and-resilient-communities

Part 1 — Introduction

Healthy Homes — a foundation for healthier and resilient communities is a concise set of core specifications and good-practice guidance. It is intended to be used by Homes England, their development partners, and design consultants involved in the funding, commissioning, development, planning, and design of new homes, to support the delivery of healthier living environments. It can also be used by other housing providers, developers, and design teams as guidance to inform good practice in the design of new homes.

What is a Healthy Home?

The design of new homes plays a crucial role in tackling a range of preventable health issues. Good indoor air quality, comfortable temperatures, natural light, and energy efficiency are all essential to creating homes that reduce the risk of respiratory illnesses, overheating, and stress-related conditions. A Healthy Home is a new dwelling — including houses, bungalows, apartments and other types of dwelling — that has been designed to support long-term physical and mental wellbeing, and to enable people to live active and fulfilling lives.

Accessibility and future-proofing are also fundamental principles of a Healthy Home. Residents should be able to adapt their home to meet the current and future needs of their household, ensuring that people of all ages and abilities can live comfortably and safely.

The guidance also covers neurodiversity, and the adoption of an ‘age-friendly’ design approach that supports residents and households to live independently throughout the different stages of their life. Beyond individual wellbeing, Healthy Homes support sustainability and affordability, helping to lower energy costs and reduce carbon emissions.

Beyond the home, wider environmental factors such as connectivity, access to green and play spaces, and access to community facilities make a significant contribution to the creation of healthier and more inclusive living environments. These issues are covered separately in ‘Building for a Healthy Life’ guidance already adopted by Homes England [footnote 1].

Methodology

Healthy Homes is based upon a literature review of evidence-based research, existing design guidance and standards, and the statutory requirements of The Building Regulations (2010). Where applicable, text from existing standards and guidance documents has been referenced or reproduced.

In addition to the literature review, a series of collaborative workshops were held by Homes England in spring 2025, bringing together a range of inclusive and healthy design consultants, policymakers, disability rights groups and charities, equality and diversity groups, local authority representatives, developers and registered providers. The outcomes of the collaborative workshops and literature review have informed the themes and specific guidance contained within Healthy Homes.

By its nature, the concept of a Healthy Home covers a broad range of topics. In line with recent research and good practice guidance, this includes factors that impact on mental and emotional health, physical health and healthy lifestyles —acknowledging that all these factors contribute to an individual's overall health and wellbeing. It also includes guidance on designing for neurodiversity, an area that has been addressed by PAS 6463 — Neurodiversity and the Built Environment [footnote 2].

Structure of Healthy Homes guidance

The Healthy Homes guidance is divided into 5 themes:

- inclusivity
- amenity
- efficiency
- comfort
- control

Inclusivity considerations include:

- accessibility
- visual contrast
- neuro divergent-friendly homes
- designing for diverse cultural requirements

Amenity considerations include:

- internal space standards

- ceiling heights
- drying space
- private outdoor amenity space
- outdoor storage
- dwelling frontage

Efficiency considerations include:

- building fabric and energy performance
- water consumption
- renewable energy
- energy metering
- upfront embodied carbon

Comfort considerations include:

- overheating
- ventilation and indoor air quality
- daylight
- aspect and views
- external noise
- sound resistance
- low-volatile organic compounds (VOC) internal finishes

Control considerations include:

- future adaptation and extension
- future maintenance and service charges
- personalisation
- dignity
- home user guides
- physical security

Healthy Homes is intended to be concise and is not an exhaustive guide to best practice across all 5 themes. It refers to other standards and guidance documents that provide further detail on specific areas including accessibility and energy efficiency.

Part 2 of this document sets out a series of specific design measures that are expected for new residential developments to meet the requirements of

Healthy Homes. These measures are categorised as either ‘core requirements’ or ‘good practice enhancements’.

Core requirements (detailed in Part 2) are required to be met to achieve Healthy Homes status.

Good practice enhancements are recommended for consideration on all projects as these represent a high-quality benchmark for healthy and inclusive design.

Part 2 also presents the statutory minimum requirements to be met by all residential development projects in England, as determined by the building regulations. This information is provided to give context to the Healthy Homes core requirements and good practice guidance, which are typically improvements above and beyond the statutory minimums.

For individual development projects, reference should also be made to statutory requirements as set out in local planning policy as these may vary from the core requirements or good practice enhancements set out in Healthy Homes.

Quality management

The successful delivery of Healthy Homes — from the conception of a project through to handover and ongoing management — requires consideration from the outset of every development project. The pre-design stages (commissioning, conception, and pre-planning) are typically the most important in terms of meeting the requirements, as these early stages are where crucial decisions are made, particularly regarding procurement and the composition of the project and, or, design team.

Reference should also be made to the Inclusive Design Overlay to the RIBA Plan of Work (2023) [footnote 3], which provides specific guidance for each main member of a project team across the RIBA work stages 1 to 7.

Important project tasks within the overlay that are relevant to Healthy Homes include:

- appointment of an inclusive design lead or inclusive champion with experience of housing projects to be involved across the RIBA work stages
- embedding the principles of inclusive design from the outset through the production of an inclusive design strategy
- mobilising a process of consultation with a project user group or groups at each RIBA stage including consultation and engagement with any specific

cultural groups within the local community

- undertaking inclusive design audits at key project stages (pre-tender, mid-build, and pre-completion) in consultation with the user group and design team
- carrying out post-occupancy evaluations and a ‘lessons learnt’ review at the end of the project

Healthy Homes and Passivhaus

Passivhaus is a well-established design and quality assurance system aimed at reducing energy demand, addressing the ‘performance gap’ of new buildings, and improving comfort levels for residents. There are several interconnected benefits associated with a Passivhaus approach, including lower energy costs, a constant supply of fresh air to eliminate condensation and mould risk, reducing risk of overheating, and creating a quieter internal living environment.

Achieving the Passivhaus standard in a UK context typically involves:

- accurate thermal modelling at design stage
- high levels of fabric insulation, including high-performance windows with insulated frames
- an airtight building fabric with very low thermal bridging in design and construction
- a mechanical ventilation system with highly efficient heat recovery (MVHR)
- a rigorous testing and compliance process to achieve certification that the required standards of design and construction has been achieved

There is significant overlap between a Passivhaus approach and the aims of Healthy Homes. Further guidance can be found in the following sections of this document:

- Part 2 — Section C — Efficiency
- Part 2 — Section D — Comfort

This includes guidance on how Passivhaus design principles should be applied if aiming to achieve the good practice enhancements. New development projects would not be expected to achieve full Passivhaus certification as part of this standard.

The Passivhaus Overlay to the RIBA Plan of Work [footnote 4] provides more detailed guidance on the implementation of a Passivhaus approach to

enable informed decision-making throughout a development project.

Fire safety

Approved Document B (volumes 1 and 2), is the government guidance to meeting Part B of Schedule 1 of the Building Regulations 2010. Amendments:

- were made in 2020, 2022, 2025
- will be made in 2026 and 2029

The wider legislative changes initiated by the Building Safety Act 2022 have had a significant impact on the design, construction, and management of new homes in England. This has included:

- the establishment of the Building Safety Regulator (BSR)
- regulation of the building control profession
- the separate processes for building control approval for higher–risk buildings (HRBs)
- additional duties and duty holders
- the creation of, and amendment of, legislation relating to ongoing management to maintain fire-safe residential buildings

Due to the changing regulatory landscape around design for fire safety, the complexity of the subject and how it is included in other guidance and standards, Healthy Homes deliberately excludes this aspect from the themes and core requirements.

It is noted that there are important interfaces between designing for fire safety and the creation of inclusive, accessible and safe places to live. This includes ensuring safe and dignified egress for all inhabitants and visitors, including those with physical impairments. This not only impacts on the design of physical escape routes but also impacts on communication systems and building management policies and procedures.

Part 2 — Healthy Homes requirements

Healthy Homes is divided into 5 themes, each of which covers a set of core objectives:

- inclusivity
- amenity
- efficiency
- comfort
- control

Inclusivity

Inclusivity objectives are designing:

- accessible homes for people of all ages and abilities
- for visual contrast
- neurodivergent-friendly homes
- for diverse cultural requirements

Amenity

Amenity objectives are:

- meeting minimum internal space standards
- meeting minimum ceiling heights
- providing space to dry clothes
- providing useable private outdoor space
- providing suitable areas for outdoor storage
- creating dwelling frontages that encourage social interaction and passive surveillance

Efficiency

Efficiency objectives are:

- reducing operational energy use and energy bills
- reducing water consumption

- collecting in-use energy performance data
- integrating renewable energy systems
- reducing embodied carbon

Comfort

Comfort objectives are:

- ensuring thermal comfort and mitigating or controlling overheating risk
- providing good levels of ventilation and indoor air quality
- providing good levels of daylight
- providing access to sunlight, views, and fresh air
- reducing noise disturbances from the external environment
- reducing noise disturbances within the home
- reducing airborne toxins from internal finishes

Control

Control objectives are:

- designing for future flexibility
- minimising the costs of maintenance and service charges
- promoting the personalisation of new homes
- designing for dignity
- enabling residents to operate and maintain their home efficiently
- ensuring homes are safe and secure

Summary of Healthy Homes core requirements

We show here where Healthy Homes core requirements exceed the existing statutory minimum requirements.

For full technical definitions and fuller descriptions read the section for each relevant theme.

> **a.1 — Accessibility**
> All new homes to meet the M4(2) standard of accessibility.
>
> **b.1 and b.2 — Internal space standards and ceiling heights**
> All homes to comply with the nationally described space standard.
>
> **b.3 — Drying space**
> All homes to identify a dedicated outdoor or indoor facility for drying clothes.
>
> **b.4 — Outdoor amenity space**
> All homes to provide a private outdoor space such as a balcony, terrace, or garden.
>
> **b.5 — Outdoor storage**
> At least 1 cycle storage space should be as easy to access as the car parking provision.
>
> **b.6 — Dwelling frontage**
> No ‘reds’ under Building for a Healthy Life guidance.
>
> **c.1 — Building fabric and energy performance**
> All homes to meet EPC A rating.
>
> **c.5 — Upfront embodied carbon**
> Carry out a whole life carbon assessment (WLCA) for both homes and wider development infrastructure following RICS WLCA, version 2, 2023.
>
> **d.4 — Aspect and, or, views**
> All homes to be designed to be ‘dual aspect’ wherever possible. At least 1 habitable room to receive direct sunlight during the daytime.

Inclusivity

An inclusive approach to design ensures homes are accessible, adaptable, and suitable for all, regardless of age or ability. This approach supports aging populations and diverse communities, fostering long-term, equitable living environments.

Inclusivity measures are:

a.1 — Accessibility

Statutory minimum requirement
Compliance with Building Regulations Approved Document Part M Category 1 ‘Visitable dwellings’.

The proportion of new homes to meet Part M Category 2 ‘Accessible and adaptable dwellings’ and Part M4(3) Category 3 ‘Wheelchair dwellings’ is subject to adopted local planning policy.

Healthy Homes core requirements
All homes to be at a minimum M4(2) Category 2 ‘Accessible and adaptable dwellings’ compliant in line with Approved Document M [footnote 5].

In addition, a proportion of new homes to meet Part M4(3) Category 3 ‘Wheelchair dwellings’ should be provided in line with local planning policy [footnote 6].

Healthy Homes good practice enhancements
In addition to the core requirements, all Part M4(2) Category 2 ‘Accessible and adaptable dwellings’, to be designed in accordance with the Habinteg Inclusive Housing Design Guide [footnote 7] enhancements.

All M4(3) Category 3 ‘Wheelchair dwellings’ to be designed in accordance with the Habinteg Inclusive Housing Design Guide enhancements.

Purpose of requirements and, or enhancements
To ensure choice and accessibility for people of all ages and abilities including physically disabled people.

a.2 — Visual contrast

Statutory minimum requirement
Approved Document M volume 1 provides no guidance in relation to this subject.

Non-statutory guidance for visual contrast within dwellings and communal circulation is provided in BS 9266:2013 ‘Design of accessible

and adaptable general needs housing'.

General guidance on visual contrast is provided in BS 8300 2018:2 'Design of an accessible and inclusive built environment' – Buildings.

Healthy Homes core requirements
No additional requirements beyond the statutory minimum.

Healthy Homes good practice enhancements
All communal circulation areas (that is to say, to apartment buildings) should provide visual contrast between key internal surfaces in accordance with BS 9266:2013 and BS 8300:2018.

This includes visual contrast between

- floors and walls
- doors and ironmongery
- walls and controls
- walls and signage

Purpose of requirements and, or enhancements
To assist people with visual impairment.

a.3 — Neurodivergent-friendly homes

Statutory minimum requirement:
Approved Document M volume 1 provides no guidance in relation to this subject.

Non-statutory guidance is provided in PAS 6463:2022 'Design for the Mind. Neurodiversity and the Built Environment'.

Healthy Homes core requirements
No additional requirements beyond statutory minimum.

Healthy Homes good practice enhancements
Design and development teams should demonstrate how appropriate community engagement has been undertaken, as outlined in the RIBA Inclusive Design Overlay [footnote 8], to identify specific cultural requirements. This may include:

a) The inclusion of an internal 'transitional space' (for example, hallway) in plan layouts to provide a buffer between external and, or, shared

circulation spaces and private habitable rooms.

b) Provision of logical and consistent plan arrangements (such as avoiding complex or disorienting layouts).

c) Where internal colours and finishes are specified to communal and circulation areas (for example, to apartment buildings), consider the use of low-gloss finishes, low chroma colours and avoid the use of strong patterns.

d) Dimmable lights and temperature controls should be provided to habitable rooms to allow residents to tailor their indoor environment to their sensory needs.

e) Where blinds are specified and installed to habitable rooms, these should be ‘blackout’ type to allow full control over internal daylight levels.

f) The consideration of incorporating smaller ‘retreat space’ — such as enclosed spaces or alcoves within homes where residents can retreat and self-regulate.

Refer to PAS 6463:2022 ‘Design for the Mind. Neurodiversity and the Built Environment’ for further guidance.

Purpose of requirements and, or enhancements
To assist neurodivergent people.

a.4 — Designing for diverse cultural requirements

Statutory minimum requirement
The Approved Documents provide no guidance in relation to this subject.

Healthy Homes core requirements
No additional requirements beyond statutory minimum.

Healthy Homes good practice enhancements
Design and development teams should demonstrate how appropriate community engagement has been undertaken (as outlined in the RIBA Inclusive Design Overlay [footnote 8]) to identify specific cultural requirements. This may include:

a) Separate cooking and dining spaces.

b) Larger kitchens to accommodate specific cooking and, or, eating conventions.

c) Flexible living spaces that can be adapted for large family gatherings.

d) Multi-generational house types or living arrangements.

e) Room arrangements that align with specific religious or cultural practices.

Purpose of requirements and, or enhancements
To ensure that new homes meet the requirements of the local community.

Amenity

Sufficient space and amenities promote residents' comfort and mental wellbeing, as well as improving the flexibility for households to host guests, additional family members, or pets. The provision of sufficient private outdoor space has also been demonstrated to have a beneficial impact on health and wellbeing. This helps to promote healthier living environments as well as improving a household's resilience if and when their circumstances change.

Amenity measures are:

b.1 — Internal space standards

Statutory minimum requirement
Compliance with the nationally described space standards (NDSS) and other space standards varies according to adopted local planning policy [footnote 9].

Healthy Homes core requirements
All homes to comply with NDSS.

Healthy Homes good practice enhancements
In addition to core requirements, the combined floor area of living, dining and kitchen spaces within Healthy Homes should meet the following minimums for the designed occupancy level:

- 1 person — 21 metres²
- 2 people — 23 metres²
- 3 people — 25 metres²
- 4 people — 27 metres²

- 5 people — 29 metres²
- 6 people — 31 metres²

Purpose of requirements and, or enhancements
To provide sufficient internal space and storage for comfortable, healthy living.

b.2 — Ceiling heights

Statutory minimum requirement
Compliance with NDSS and other space standards varies according to adopted local planning policy.

Healthy Homes core requirements
All homes to comply with NDSS (2.3 metres for 75% of the interior floor area).

Healthy Homes good practice enhancements
Healthy Homes should provide a minimum ceiling height of 2.4 metres for 75% of the internal floor area.

Purpose of requirements and, or enhancements
To provide sufficient ceiling height for comfort, ventilation, and daylighting.

b.3 — Drying space

Statutory minimum requirement
Approved Document Part F requires ventilation to a ‘wet room’, which is defined as a room used for domestic activities that produce significant amounts of airborne moisture.

Healthy Homes core requirements
Healthy Homes should identify a dedicated outdoor or indoor facility for drying clothes, of a size appropriate to the designed occupancy. Refer to the BREEAM Home Quality Mark (section 7.1) for recommended provision [footnote 10].

Healthy Homes good practice enhancements

As the core requirements.

Purpose of requirements and, or enhancements
To provide access to sufficient and convenient drying space; to reduce the effect drying clothes inside has on occupants' health and to the reduce amount of energy used.

b.4 — Private outdoor amenity space

Statutory minimum requirement
No statutory minimum requirements for new homes. Specific guidance may be applied through adopted local planning policy.

Healthy Homes core requirements
In line with 'Building for a Healthy Life' recommendations, provide private outdoor space such as a balcony, terrace, or garden to each home [footnote 11].

Healthy Homes good practice enhancements
In line with 'Building for a Healthy Life' recommendations, provide a private outdoor space such as a balcony, terrace, or garden to each home. The minimum area of private outdoor space is 5 metres² for homes with 1 to 2 bedspaces, with a minimum depth and width of 1.5 metres. An additional 1 metre² of outdoor space should be provided for every additional bedspace.

Purpose of requirements and, or enhancements
To enhance residents' mental health and wellbeing; to provide space for socialising, planting and growing food, and drying clothes.

b.5 — Outdoor storage

Statutory minimum requirement
Requirements for residential refuse and cycle storage typically determined by adopted local planning policy.

Healthy Homes core requirements
A variety of cycle parking should be provided to reflect the house and street type [footnote 12].

At least 1 cycle storage space should be as easy to access as the car.

Healthy Homes good practice enhancements
Homes should be designed to accommodate appropriate storage for bicycles, bins, and, where appropriate, mobility scooters. This space should be provided in addition to the minimum areas of private outdoor space.

A variety of cycle parking should be provided to reflect the house and street type [footnote 13].

If relying on rear garden storage solutions (for example, for terraces and townhouses), direct access to the street should be provided.

Where rear garden access is not feasible, secure covered storage should be provided in communal storage areas, appropriately sized private garages, or front gardens.

Where front garden storage is provided, it should be designed to be integrated into the frontage and avoid obstructing ground-floor windows.

Purpose of requirements and, or enhancements
To provide sufficient, practical, and accessible outdoor storage space.

b.6 — Dwelling frontage

Statutory minimum requirement
No statutory minimum requirements.

Specific guidance may be applied through adopted local planning policy.

Healthy Homes core requirements
No “reds” under ‘Building for a Healthy Life’ [footnote 14].

Healthy Homes good practice enhancements
In addition to the core requirements, design and development teams should demonstrate how frontages are designed in line with ‘Building for Healthy Life’ [footnote 15] ‘green’ recommendations including:

a) Providing defensible space and strong, robust boundary treatments.

b) Providing boundary treatments that add ecological value and, or, reinforce distinctive local characteristics.

c) Providing front garden spaces that create opportunities for social interaction.

d) Providing ground floor apartments and maisonettes with their own front doors and semi-private amenity spaces help to activate the street.

e) Providing terraces, balconies, or access decks that overlook street and increase natural surveillance.

f) Avoiding ‘left-over’ spaces, that is, those with no clear public or private function.

Purpose of requirements and, or enhancements
To encourage social interaction and passive surveillance.

Efficiency

Well-insulated homes with efficient heating and water supply systems help to ensure a comfortable indoor environment while reducing bills for residents. A highly efficient approach to housing design helps to improve wellbeing and address fuel poverty, while also aligning with the UK’s net-zero targets.

Efficiency measures are:

c.1 — Building fabric and energy performance

Statutory minimum requirement
Compliance with Approved Document Part L volume 1 to demonstrate compliance with the Building Regulations 2010, Schedule 1, Part L [footnote 16].

Healthy Homes core requirements
Homes should achieve EPC A rating (or updated equivalent New Building Performance Regime value).

Healthy Homes good practice enhancements
The space heating demand to be a maximum of 15 kilowatt-hour per metre² per year or peak heating load to be a maximum of 10 watts per metre² in accordance with the Passivhaus standard. [footnote 17].

Purpose of requirements and, or enhancements
To reduce carbon emissions and ensure homes are highly efficient to heat and to reduce associated heating costs and bills.

c.2 — Water consumption

Statutory minimum requirement
Compliance with Approved Document Part G (to demonstrate compliance with the Building Regulations 2010, Schedule 1, Part G).

The Building Regulations 2010, regulation 36 requires new homes to have a maximum estimated daily water consumption of 125 litres per person per day (LPPPD). This requirement can be reduced to 110 LPPPD, subject to local planning policy.

Healthy Homes core requirements
No additional requirements beyond statutory minimum

Healthy Homes good practice enhancements
The estimated water consumption of Healthy Homes should not exceed 105 LPPPD, in line with London Plan guidance.

Purpose of requirements and, or enhancements
To reduce excessive water consumption and to reduce associated water costs and bills.

c.3 — Renewable energy

Statutory minimum requirement
The Building Regulations 2010 Part 6 requires applicants to confirm their strategy which should ‘analyse and take into account’ the use of renewable energy systems [footnote 18].

Healthy Homes core standards
No additional requirements beyond statutory minimum.

Healthy Homes good practice enhancements
Design and development teams should demonstrate how potential for on-site renewable energy has been maximised through the massing,

orientation, roofscape and house-type design.

Purpose of requirements and, or enhancements
To reduce carbon emissions and to contribute to heating and lighting costs.

c.4 — Energy metering

Statutory minimum requirement
The rollout of smart meters is UK government policy and is now common practice for new homes.

Healthy Homes core requirements
No additional requirements beyond statutory minimum.

Healthy Homes good practice enhancements
Provide a smart meter to allow monitoring of:

- daily energy use
- annual building energy consumption
- energy generation from renewables

Purpose of requirements and, or enhancements
To provide feedback to residents on energy costs and renewable generation.

c.5 — Upfront embodied carbon

Statutory minimum requirement:
Approved Document L volume 1 provides no guidance in relation to this subject.

Healthy Homes core requirements
Carry out a Whole Life Carbon Assessment (WLCA) for both homes and wider development infrastructure following RICS WLCA version 2, 2023.

Detailed WLCA guidance and templates are available from Homes England on request.

Healthy Homes good practice enhancements
In addition to the core requirements, upfront embodied carbon (A1 to A5) for new developments should target a value of less than 400kg per metre³.

Purpose of requirements and, or enhancements
To reduce carbon emissions and ensure homes use natural resources efficiently.

Comfort

Thermal comfort, daylight and ventilation are essential aspects of Healthy Homes to reduce health risks and enhance residents' overall sense of wellbeing. Thermal comfort and ventilation are closely linked to the efficiency measures set out in the previous section, which work together to prevent common issues such as damp, mould and condensation. Another increasingly significant health risk in existing and new-build homes is overheating. This risk is likely to increase as a result of future climate change and is particularly significant for older and more vulnerable people. [footnote 19]

Comfort measures include:

d.1 — Overheating

Statutory minimum requirement
Compliance with Approved Document Part O to demonstrate compliance with the Building Regulations 2010, Schedule 1, Part O, for thermal comfort and indoor air quality [footnote 20].

Healthy Homes core requirements
No additional requirements beyond statutory minimum.

Healthy Homes good practice enhancements
Healthy Homes should be designed so that indoor temperatures do not exceed 25°C for more than 10% of the year, in accordance with the Passivhaus standard [footnote 21].

Overheating scenarios should be tested for a representative sample of homes for the following future (2050) scenarios [footnote 22]:

- a heatwave (Design Summer Year (DSY) 2)
- a prolonged summer (DSY 3)

In addition, the following passive measures should be considered for all homes [footnote 23]:

- shading systems (for example, external shades, balconies or overhangs) to south and west facades to prevent excessive solar gain during summer months
- natural shading devices such as tree planting adjacent to facades at risk of overheating
- the incorporation of thermal mass elements to external walls, floors or internal walls

Purpose of requirements and, or enhancements
To avoid or mitigate overheating and its associated health and wellbeing risks.

d.2 — Ventilation and indoor air quality

Statutory minimum requirement
Compliance with Approved Document Part F, to demonstrate compliance with the Building Regulations 2010, Schedule 1, Part F, for background and purge ventilation rates.

Healthy Homes core requirements
No additional requirements beyond statutory minimum.

Healthy Homes good practice enhancements
The preferred ventilation strategy for Healthy Homes is a high-efficiency (greater than 75% efficient) Mechanically Ventilated Heat Recovery (MVHR) system, designed in accordance with the Passivhaus standard [footnote 24].

In addition to the MVHR system, openable windows or louvre panels should be provided to habitable rooms to provide access to fresh air and purge ventilation.

Purpose of requirements and, or enhancements

To ensure sufficient levels of ventilation and fresh air within the home throughout the year while reducing heat losses.

d.3 — Daylight

Statutory minimum requirement
No statutory minimum requirement.

Specific guidance may be applied through adopted local planning policy.

Healthy Homes core requirements
No additional requirements beyond statutory minimum.

Healthy Homes good practice enhancements
A daylighting assessment should be carried out in line with BRE guidance, with habitable rooms to meet the recommendations of BS EN 17037:2018, ‘Daylight in buildings’ [footnote 25].

Daylighting assessments should be analysed together with overheating assessments to determine the optimal balance for glazing ratios to different building orientations.

Purpose of requirements and, or enhancements
To balance:

- daylight provision
- views out
- exposure to sunlight
- glare protection within the home

d.4 — Aspect and views

Statutory minimum requirement
No statutory minimum requirement.

Specific guidance may be applied through adopted local planning policy.

Healthy Homes core requirements

At least 1 habitable room within a Healthy Home should receive direct sunlight during the daytime [footnote 26] — preferably the living space and, or, dining space.

The location of the main living, dining space, and private outdoor amenity space within a Healthy Home should be optimised to make the most of the best views and the orientation.

Healthy Homes should be designed to be 'dual aspect' [footnote 27] wherever possible to improve access to daylight, views, and to facilitate cross ventilation. Where 'single aspect' homes are proposed, assessments must demonstrate that homes have adequate passive ventilation, daylight, do not overheat, and that homes do not rely on energy intensive mechanical cooling systems.

'Single aspect' homes with windows that only face north (that is, between north east and north west) should be avoided.

Healthy Homes good practice enhancements
As per the core requirements.

Purpose of requirements and, or enhancements
To improve residents' connection to the outdoors and overall sense of wellbeing.

d.5 — External noise

Statutory minimum requirement
Guidance on appropriate noise levels for new homes is provided in BS 8233:2014. This guidance is commonly referenced within adopted local planning policy, which may require a noise assessment (subject to site location).

Compliance with the Building Regulations 2010, Schedule 1, Part O also requires consideration of noise in relation to openable windows for ventilation purposes, particularly during night-time hours.

Healthy Homes core requirements
No additional requirements beyond statutory minimum

Healthy Homes good practice enhancements
Ventilation strategies and building fabric to be selected to provide appropriate internal noise levels.

Where possible, Healthy Homes should be designed to locate habitable rooms away from significant noise sources, including:

- busy roads, railways or nearby buildings that generate excessive noise
- circulation corridors, stairs, and lifts
- bin, cycle, and mobility scooter stores
- plant rooms and other noise-generating ancillary spaces.

Where this is not possible, design teams should demonstrate how external noise has been mitigated, such as the use of winter gardens or attenuated louvres.

Purpose of requirements and, or enhancements
To reduce noise disturbances within the home that impact on residents' health and wellbeing.

d.6 — Sound resistance

Statutory minimum requirement
Compliance with Approved Document Part E, to demonstrate compliance with the Building Regulations 2010, Schedule 1, Part E, for impact and airborne noise).

Healthy Homes core requirements
No additional requirements beyond statutory minimum.

Healthy Homes good practice enhancements
Where it is identified that residents are more vulnerable or susceptible to noise disturbance, an uplift to the minimum requirements of Part E should be considered. This includes party walls, party floors, and internal wall and floors. Refer to the BREEAM Home Quality Mark (section 4.4) for recommended impact and airborne noise targets [footnote 28].

Purpose of requirements and, or enhancements
To ensure adequate acoustic separation between rooms and homes.

d.7 — Low volatile organic compounds (VOC) internal finishes

Statutory minimum requirement
No statutory minimum requirements.

Healthy Homes core requirements
No additional requirements beyond statutory minimum.

Healthy Homes good practice enhancements
All internal finishes within a Healthy Home should be specified as low-VOC. This includes:

- interior paints and coatings
- sealants
- flooring materials

Purpose of requirements and, or enhancements
To reduce the potential risks from airborne toxins.

Control

Providing residents with a sense of control is key to fostering a sense of ownership, identity, and mental wellbeing. This section covers the ways in which residents might control how a home looks, operates, and can be adapted in future. This approach helps to create homes that support a diverse range of lifestyles and encourages sustainable communities.

Control measures are:

e.1 — Future adaptation and extension

Statutory minimum requirement
No statutory minimum requirement.

Healthy Homes core requirements

No additional requirements beyond statutory minimum.

Healthy Homes good practice enhancements
Design and development teams should demonstrate how future adaptability measures have been in considered in the design of Healthy Homes, including:

a) Potential for future changes to internal layout, for example, by minimising load-bearing walls within the layout.

b) Potential to combine or sub-divide bedrooms while maintaining access to sufficient daylight and ventilation.

c) Potential for creating a dedicated, contained home-working space [footnote 29].

d) For houses and bungalows, potential for future rear or side extension, for example, by locating incoming services and drainage away from potential extension zones.

e) For houses and bungalows, potential for extension into the roof space, for example, by considering the future location of additional stairs.

Purpose of requirements and, or enhancements
To provide flexibility to meet occupants' needs over a building's lifetime.

e.2 — Future maintenance and service charges

Statutory minimum requirement
No statutory minimum requirement.

Healthy Homes core requirements
No additional requirements beyond the statutory minimum.

Healthy Homes good practice enhancements
Design and development teams should demonstrate how measures to reduce maintenance and service charges have been in considered in the design process, including:

a) Reducing the areas of treated communal space within apartment blocks, for example, by using deck access strategies.

b) Considering robust and easy-clean finishes to communal areas within apartment block.

c) Considering future access and maintenance strategies, for example, roof outlet cleaning, photovoltaic (PV) access, window cleaning, and glass replacement.

Purpose of requirements and, or enhancements
To minimise the costs of maintenance and service charges for residents.

e.3 — Personalisation

Statutory minimum requirement
No statutory minimum requirement.

Healthy Homes core requirements
No additional requirements beyond statutory minimum.

Healthy Homes good practice enhancements
Design and development teams should demonstrate how personalisation measures have been in considered in the design, including:

a) Individualised front door colours.

b) Provision of front gardens or planting areas.

c) A window or display space adjacent to the front door for the display of personal items.

Purpose of requirements and, or enhancements
To create a sense of ownership; to assist people with neurological conditions or memory loss.

e.4 — Dignity

Statutory minimum requirement
No statutory minimum requirement.

Healthy Homes core requirements
No additional requirements beyond statutory minimum.

Healthy Homes good practice enhancements
Plan layouts should be designed to ensure that there is no direct line of sight from habitable rooms into bathrooms or shower rooms (excluding ensuites).

Purpose of requirements and, or enhancements
To maintain the dignity of occupants and visitors.

e.5 — Home user guides

Statutory minimum requirement
A home user guide is a requirement in line with guidance in the Building Regulations 2010 [footnote 30].

Healthy Homes core requirements
No additional requirements beyond statutory minimum.

Healthy Homes good practice enhancements
The home user guide should contain non-technical advice on ventilation, heating and domestic hot water, on-site electricity generation and staying cool in hot weather.

Purpose of requirements and, or enhancements
To enable residents to operate and maintain the home in a healthy and energy efficient manner.

e.6 — Physical security

Statutory minimum requirement
Compliance with the Building Regulations 2010, Schedule 1, Part Q.

Healthy Homes core requirements
No additional requirements beyond statutory minimum.

Healthy Homes good practice enhancements

> In addition to Part Q, Healthy Homes should comply with the requirements of Secure by Design Residential Guide - Section 2A 'Physical security for new homes' [footnote 31].
>
> It is recommended that design and development teams engage with the local architectural liaison officer (ALO) during the design process to determine any specific local issues and, or, recommendations.
>
> **Purpose of requirements and, or enhancements**
> To ensure the physical security of new homes.

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1. Building for a Healthy Life — Urban Design Group (https://www.udg.org.uk/publications/othermanuals/building-healthy-life)
2. Neurodiversity and the Built Environment — PAS 6463:2022 — BSI (https://www.bsigroup.com/en-GB/insights-and-media/insights/brochures/pas-6463-design-for-the-mind-neurodiversity-and-the-built-environment/)
3. Inclusive Design Overlay to the RIBA Plan of Work — RIBA (https://www.architecture.com/knowledge-and-resources/resources-landing-page/inclusive-design-overlay-to-riba-plan-of-work)
4. Passivhaus Overlay to the RIBA Plan of Work — RIBA (https://www.architecture.com/knowledge-and-resources/resources-landing-page/passivhaus-overlay-to-the-riba-plan-of-work)
5. In some specific circumstances, the provision of a lift to provide step-free access to upper floor apartments and maisonettes may not be achievable (as required for Part M Category 2 dwellings). Flexibility in the application of this guidance should be considered in the following circumstances: specific small-scale infill developments, flats above shops or garages, stacked maisonettes where the potential for decked access to lifts is restricted. A lift should always be provided in apartment developments greater than 4 storeys.
6. The proportion of M4(3) Category 3 'Wheelchair dwellings' may need to be higher where specific accessibility needs have been identified by the housing provider or local authority.
7. The Inclusive Housing Design Guide — Habinteg Housing Association (https://www.habinteg.org.uk/the-inclusive-housing-design-guide)
8. Inclusive Design Overlay to RIBA Plan of Work (https://www.riba.org/work/insights-and-resources/inclusive-design-overlay-to-riba-plan-of-work/)
9. Technical housing standards - nationally described space standard (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/technical-housing-standards-nationally-described-space-standard)

10. BREEAM New Construction Residential version 6.1 section 7.1 (2025) (.pdf) — BRE (https://files.bregroup.com/breeam/technicalmanuals/SD260-BREEAM-UK-New-Construction-Residential-Version-6.1-Technical-Manual.pdf)
11. Some specialist forms of housing, such as later living or co-living, may benefit alternatives to private amenity spaces. This may include from shared, clustered, or communal outdoor amenity spaces. Where alternatives to private amenity spaces are proposed, justification should be provided by design and development teams.
12. Refer to 'Car and cycle parking - What works where' - English Partnerships (.pdf) on Ipswich Borough Council website (https://www.ipswich.gov.uk/sites/ipswich/files/m-files/ncd42_-_car_parking_what_works_where.pdf)
13. Refer to 'Car and cycle parking - What works where' - English Partnerships (.pdf) on Ipswich Borough Council website (https://www.ipswich.gov.uk/sites/ipswich/files/m-files/ncd42_-_car_parking_what_works_where.pdf)
14. Building for a Healthy Life — Urban Design Group (https://www.udg.org.uk/publications/othermanuals/building-healthy-life)
15. Building for a Healthy Life —Urban Design Group (https://www.udg.org.uk/publications/othermanuals/building-healthy-life)
16. Approved Document Part L: Conservation of fuel and power (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/conservation-of-fuel-and-power-approved-document-l) is due to be revised in line with the 'Future Homes' Standard (FHS) in 2025.
17. Space heating and peak heating load in line with Passivhaus performance targets for a European climate. Enhancements above current Building Regulations are likely to be required to meet this target including levels of insulation, airtightness, low thermal bridging, and a high-efficiency MVHR system. Read What is Passivhaus? — Passivhaus Trust (https://www.passivhaustrust.org.uk/what_is_passivhaus.php).
18. The integration of renewable energy systems such as photovoltaic panels is also likely to be required for compliance with the Future Homes Standard (FHS).
19. Good Homes Alliance — Overheating in New Homes (2019) guidance (https://goodhomes.org.uk/overheating-in-new-homes)
20. Approved Document Part O (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/overheating-approved-document-o) includes a requirement for an overheating assessment via Simplified Method or Dynamic Thermal Modelling.
21. Space heating and Peak heating load in line with Passivhaus performance targets for a European Climate. Enhancements above current Building Regulations are likely to be required to meet this target including levels of insulation, airtightness, low thermal bridging, and a

high-efficiency MVHR system. Read What is Passivhaus? — Passivhaus Trust (https://www.passivhaustrust.org.uk/what_is_passivhaus.php).

22. TM 59 — Design Methodology for the assessment of overheating risk in homes (2017) — CIBSE (https://www.cibse.org/knowledge-research/knowledge-portal/technical-memorandum-59-design-methodology-for-the-assessment-of-overheating-risk-in-homes) 'DSY 2' is a short sharp heatwave and 'DSY 3' is a prolonged summer.
23. Avoiding summer overheating (2021) — Passivhaus Trust (https://passivhaus.uk/keeping-cool-avoiding-overheating-risks/)
24. Space heating and peak heating load in line with Passivhaus performance targets for a European climate. Enhancements above current Building Regulations are likely to be required to meet this target including levels of insulation, airtightness, low thermal bridging, and a high-efficiency MVHR system. Read What is Passivhaus? (Passivhaus Trust) (https://www.passivhaustrust.org.uk/what_is_passivhaus.php).
25. Site layout planning for daylight and sunlight: a guide to good practice (BR 209) (2022 edition) (Paid-for publication) — BRE (https://bregroup.com/store/bookshop/site-layout-planning-for-daylight-and-sunlight-a-guide-to-good-practice-br-209-2022-edition)
26. For the purposes this standard, design teams should demonstrate that at least 1 habitable room receives some direct sunlight for at least 1 hour on the Spring Equinox (around 20 or 21 March in the Northern Hemisphere). For larger developments this should be demonstrated using a representative sample of homes, including worst-case examples.
27. Refer to London Housing Design Standards (https://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/planning/implementing-london-plan/london-plan-guidance/housing-design-standards-lpg) - Appendix 3 - for definitions of 'single aspect' and 'dual aspect'.
28. BREEAM New Construction Residential Version 6.1 (https://breeam.com/en/web/bre-group/news/breeam-news-version-6-1-launched), section 4.4 (2025)
29. To avoid being counted as a bedroom under the NDSS, the floor area of the home-working space should be less than 7.5 metres².
30. Home user guide template and ventilation guide (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/home-user-guide-template)
31. Design guides — Secured by Design (https://www.securedbydesign.com/guidance/design-guides)