

# Accessible housing

## Building change

Geoff Penrose  
General Manager Lifemark



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# Let's talk Housing

Why don't we have more accessible houses

Presentation and discussion



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# Looking back

- First building regulations 1842 – focus on safety
- Single detached house on ¼ acre – low innovation
- First Million houses by 1960's
- “light switch location” for the trades not the user
- Accessible housing design 0-1%



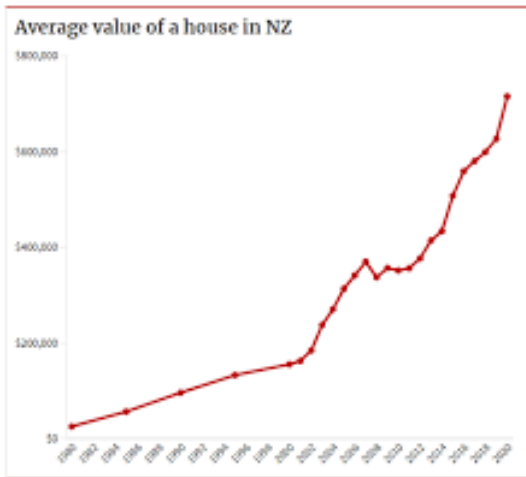
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# Second Million 1960's- 2020's

- House sizes sq m increased
- Deregulation – interest rates
- **Housing market became the property market**
- Building problems - leaky buildings – seismic strengthening
- Accessible housing design 1-2%



# Regulations that could .....but didn't

1. **Building Act 2004**: buildings must provide “reasonable & adequate provision for disabled people” but NO provision for residential buildings
2. **NZS 4121 2001: Design for Access & Mobility** does NOT apply to residential buildings
3. Resource Management: Can apply conditions for a new subdivision ...but conditions do NOT include accessibility
4. District Plans: Must comply with Building Act (s18) so can NOT impose conditions above the code ..such as accessibility

# What the private sector build:

## Hobsonville point

Access – steps into the house

Bathroom – located on 2<sup>nd</sup> floor

Circulation – narrow doorways,

This is what happens when master planning stops at the letterbox



# What the public sector build:

## 'Appalled': Kāinga Ora achieves only 10% of target for accessible new homes

Olivia Shivas (The D\*List)

March 06, 2023



Allyson Hamblett is “appalled” the Government agency is not meeting its target to ensure 15% of its new build state homes meet full universal design standards.



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# History repeats. Insulation

- 1946 first **R-values** published (Resistance material efficiency)
- 1960's Lobbying for insulation
- 1978 Wall and ceiling insulation regulations
- Updated constantly ....2019 Healthy home regulations
- EECA (Energy Efficiency Conservation Authority) est 1992 and since 2009 –nearly 400,000 insulation retrofits (\$350+ million)
- 60 years





# Human Rights Commission Enquiry 2021-2023

## RIGHT TO A DECENT HOME

To achieve our housing rights, these seven standards must be met

- A 'decent home' is affordable
- A 'decent home' is habitable
- A 'decent home' is accessible for everyone
- A 'decent home' has security of tenure
- A 'decent home' is located near schools, employment and healthcare
- A 'decent home' provides access to core services
- A 'decent home' is culturally adequate

# Building change: Four key actions

1. Definitions
2. Update the Building Act
3. Public housing targets
4. Council incentives



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# 1.a. Define our “A” value

## ABC

**ACCESS** - there is at least one level entry step-free access into the home

**BATHROOM** - there is a toilet located on the level of the home that you enter that has walls already reinforced to attach grab rails if (and when) needed

**CIRCULATION** - spaces for easy circulation are evident using features such as wider doorways and hallways



Universal Design is for everyone



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# 1.b. Define housing accessibility

Internationally there are housing regulations that start to define baseline accessibility...often called “visitable” housing

All share common “standards” relating to the ABC’s – about 15-20 standards in total and they are all measurable

“able to be adapted” wording in guidelines

Any voluntary requirements above the building code are NOT reviewed by Building Consent Authorities and not required for a code of compliance ...not measured = not actioned



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## 2.a.Update the Building Act

Lobby politicians and MBIE to update the Building Act or NZS 4121 to include accessible standards for residential housing

The new Lifemark 3-star rating standards have been developed to “slot” into newly developed regulatory standards.

These include 18 measurable standards for:

Parking, Pathways, Entrances, Interior doorways, Interior corridors, Bedroom space on entry level, Toilet specifications on entry level, Light switch and PowerPoint locations, Door hardware requirements.

Launched later in 2024



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## 2.b.Change the Building Act

A business case;  
Cost benefit analysis;  
Regulatory Impact Statement.

Starting points are the work done in Australia ..RIA ...270  
pages ..to change their construction code ..work in  
UK...work in Singapore on Universal design index ...

Needs champions to lead regulatory change

Timeframe ...3-5 years

Note: Building regulations will always be a minimum vrs  
best practice



## 3.a.Public Housing

There are 80,000 public houses

70,000 managed by Kainga ora -10,000 by Community Housing providers

Vision of CHA is “warm, safe, dry, affordable” ...no mention of accessible

No metrics on accessibility... this needs to change  
...what gets measured gets done



## 3.b.Public Housing

All new public houses should be accessible

Understand pipeline ..so set targets for 3-5 years' time

Many community housing providers mean well...but don't also must specify accessibility outcomes

Exemplars exist:

1. Accessible Properties require new homes to achieve a Lifemark 4-star rating
2. Tamaki Regeneration Company – require 80% of next 4 superlots (300 homes) to have a Lifemark 4 and 5-star rating





## 4.a.Councils

Will need to demonstrate a 30-year supply of housing

Change the conversation to include what type of housing is supplied

Analyse what is being built now ...provide evidence  
..show what is needed then plan what needs to be  
built...set targets.....offer incentives



## 4.b Councils that offer incentives



TCDC started 2016, offered increased site coverage... now 60% all new builds are Lifemark rated



Hauraki incentivise secondary dwellings

Absolutely Positively  
**Wellington City Council**

Me Heke Ki Pōneke

Wellington incentivise inner city redevelopment work through \$20M environment & accessibility fund

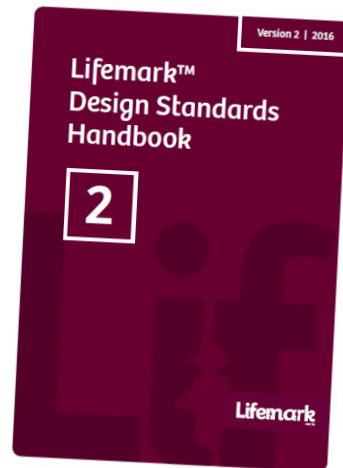


Hamilton incentivise with a reduction in development contribution for inner city developments



# Lifemark

- A division of CCS Disability Action
- Started work in 2008 in the retirement sector.
- Publish a voluntary set of standards in 2012, 2016 and 2024.
- We review, advise & assure using 3 levels of performance
- 3-star- baseline- aimed at young families
- 4- star- age in place – older people and intergenerational living
- 5- star- accessible+ - includes wheelchair users





Ron Mace 1942-1998  
*Design Pioneer and Visionary of  
Universal Design*

“The concept of designing all products and the built environment to be aesthetic and usable to the greatest extent by everyone, regardless of age, ability or status in life.”



GLOBAL ENABLEMENT AWARDS  
“The Most Outstanding Universal Design  
Innovator in the World” Winner, London, 2018



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# Results – last 16 years

- Retirement sector- largely adopted universal design
- 150 active projects at any time
- 600 dwellings every year (2% of all consents)
- We work on small and big projects, public and private sector.



# Tamaki Regeneration Company & Nuline homes

- Inclusive community development
- 10,500 homes over next 20 years
- SGA architecture
- All 18 homes in this Dunkirk neighbourhood development are Lifemark® rated –



*Tamaki Regeneration, Auckland*



# Palmerston North District Council

- Entire complex 85 homes
- Step free access. +
- Level entry shower/transfer space. +
- Open plan layout & wider doorways.



*Papaioea Place, elder housing.*



# Salvation Army

- New 52 apartment social housing development in Royal Oak
- 100% are Lifemark® rated
- 1 & 2 bedroom
- Step free access, lifts, UD



*Social Housing, Royal Oak, Auckland*  
*Client: Salvation Army*  
*Architect: DGSE*





# Kāinga Ora – Homes and Communities

Te Mātāwai, is the largest public housing development in Aotearoa to-date. 2024

276 apartments and mixed-use residence project.

60% are Lifemark rated 3 & 4 star



*Public Housing, Auckland city  
Client: Kāinga Ora  
Architect: MODE design*



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# Change the focus

From harm mitigation to health and well being

From homes that dont hurt you to homes that can help you



# Change the language

Standard doors and oversized doors become smaller doors and universal doors

Standard plans are either restricted housing plans or universal plans



# The third million .....2050's

- Intensification – multi–unit developments
- Limited or no car parking
- Current focus is affordability
- Refocus on accessibility or this is what we will get...



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Questions ...comments

[Geoff@lifemark.co.nz](mailto:Geoff@lifemark.co.nz)

[www.lifemark.co.nz](http://www.lifemark.co.nz)



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