

# The beauty of the perfect accessible home

Our advice on finding the perfect home for you.



# The hunt is on...

In this day and age, finding somewhere that you'd love to rent or buy that's also in your price range can be really tricky. Add a disability and a few additional requirements onto that and it can sometimes seem easier to find a needle in a haystack! As a wheelchair user myself with cerebral palsy, I spent years renting flats and bungalows that were 'almost' right for me. Some had the odd step, whilst others needed a few kitchen adaptations. More often than not, they were also in quieter residential areas and had a more elderly feel to them - nothing wrong with that at all but it's hardly ideal for a 20-something city girl!

When the time came to buy my own place, I certainly knew what I needed. An allocated parking space outside the property was a must, as was step-free access, a lowered kitchen and large bathroom, with room for me to transfer and space to shower. A fully equipped wet room would have also been an excellent addition, but I accepted that this would have to be a desirable rather than an essential, as would an accessible outside space. Well, when I moved to Glasgow, Scotland at the beginning of this year, I was granted one of those desirables (we can't always have it all, right?!)



My apartment is part of the Athlete's Village, built for the Commonwealth Games in 2014. A number of the homes had to be built to fully accessible standards as paralympians were to be staying in them! Fantastically, the buildings were then converted into residential homes - and I was lucky enough to get a property just perfect for me. There is unfortunately no wet room for me to enjoy, but I have a large parking space directly outside, landscaped greenery and a smooth path that leads to my step free doorway, a large bathroom, lowered kitchen AND a ramped patio for my back garden! It proved a true struggle to find somewhere just right for me, much like it took Goldilocks a few mouthfuls of porridge to naughtily find the right one, but it was absolutely worth the wait.

If you're wanting to do a bit of research for yourself, it might be worth looking at Lifetime Homes <http://www.lifetimehomes.org.uk/>, who have created a design criteria for adapted, accessible and flexible homes that suit everyone, included those who have disabilities that may change or worsen. These homes are particularly great as the way they are designed and built ensures that any changes that need to be made will be able to be done at the lowest possible price - making a disability or a changing condition less of a financial worry, too.

I love my wheelchair accessible home as it provides a way for me to feel proud of my identity and manage my own daily life, without extra financial burdens or a worry that I won't be able to cope on 'bad days'.

