

# BRIEFING



LIFETIME HOMES

27 February 2008

## Lifetime homes

### Introduction

Following the Government's announcement on Monday of its wish to see Lifetimes Homes standards adopted across the industry by 2013 we thought it would be helpful to provide you with a short briefing note on this issue.

For reference, the Government's press statement can be viewed via the link below:

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/news/corporate/702993>

This link also enables you to access the Government's policy document, "*Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods: A National Strategy for Housing in an Ageing Society*", of which the Lifetime Homes objective forms a part.

### HBF's response

We first learned of the CLG's intentions when we were contacted by the BBC on Thursday last week and asked for comment. We were astonished by this approach as CLG had not even mentioned their impending announcement to us let alone consulted us about their policy thinking. We immediately spoke to CLG and expressed our anger. Having established the CLG's policy position we then issued our own advance press statement at the weekend.

The full HBF press statement can be viewed via the link below:

<http://www.hbf.co.uk/HBF-Lifetime-Homes-not-a-panacea-09dfec6>

The HBF's Retirement Housing Group also issued a press release:

<http://www.hbf.co.uk/Retirement-Housing-Group-Government-proposals-on-Lifetime-Homes-need-to-focus-on-more-than-bricks-and-mortar-2246bff>

Early distribution of our press statement over the weekend to coincide with CLG's release ensured HBF was invited to comment actively on the Government's proposals on national broadcast media. Stewart Baseley took part in a discussion on the Radio 4 Today Programme and appeared on BBC Breakfast Television and John Slaughter participated in a debate on BBC2's Working Lunch programme. The Today and Working Lunch interviews can be accessed via the play again links below.

## **Stewart Baseley on BBC Radio 4 Today programme**

<http://www.hbf.co.uk/?id=2098>

## **John Slaughter on BBC 2 Working Lunch programme**

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/broadband/mediaplayer/players/bbc2/bb\\_wm\\_console.shtml?redirect=console.shtml&lang=en&nbram=1&nbwm=1&bbwm=1&bbram=1&bbcws=1&package=4588779&clip=wl\\_mon\\_250208\\_full](http://www.bbc.co.uk/broadband/mediaplayer/players/bbc2/bb_wm_console.shtml?redirect=console.shtml&lang=en&nbram=1&nbwm=1&bbwm=1&bbram=1&bbcws=1&package=4588779&clip=wl_mon_250208_full) (clip at 11mins 30secs)

HBF also took part in regional radio interviews on this subject and fed our views into a piece in the Financial Times on 26 February.

In all this comment we pointed out the potential adverse effects of a one-size-fits-all approach on Lifetime Homes, including the implications for affordability, when coupled with other Government objectives such as zero carbon. We also drew attention to the lack of adequate discussion with the industry on the Government's announcement.

Following the flurry of press coverage, Stewart Baseley has also written to Caroline Flint ([please click here to view](#)) expressing the industry's annoyance at both the failure of process that has occurred and the addition of a further unwelcome regulatory burden.

## **Background Information on Lifetime Homes**

Details of the 16 elements of the Lifetime Homes standard can be viewed via the link below:

<http://www.lifetimehomes.org.uk/>

The site content includes a diagram illustrating the standard, as well as an explanatory booklet.

In summary the 16 elements are:

- [Car Parking Width](#)
- [Access From Car Parking](#)
- [Approach Gradients](#)
- [External Entrances](#)
- [Communal Stairs & Lifts](#)
- [Doorways & Hallways](#)
- [Wheelchair Accessibility](#)
- [Living Room](#)
- [Entrance Level Bedspace](#)
- [Entrance Level WC & Shower Drainage](#)
- [Bathroom & WC Walls](#)
- [Stair Lift/Through-Floor Lift](#)
- [Tracking Hoist Route](#)
- [Bathroom Layout](#)
- [Window Specification](#)
- [Controls, Fixtures & Fittings](#)

**John Slaughter**

*Director of External Affairs*