

# THE RIGHT TO HOUSING FOR PEOPLE WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES



**Article 19 of the United Nations Convention On the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) enshrines the principle of Independent Living and the right of disabled people to choose where they live and who they live with on the same basis as everyone else.**

## POLICY CONTEXT

The Scottish Government believes that all people in Scotland should live in high-quality homes that they can afford and that meet their needs.

The Fairer Scotland Delivery Plan recognises the need for increased availability of affordable and accessible housing to support people to live independent lives.

Housing is integral to achieving the Keys to life strategic objectives of independent living, choice and control, active citizenship and a healthy life.

People with learning disabilities still face barriers to accessing suitable housing and support and can be denied choice about where they live, who they live with and the support they receive. Overcoming these barriers is crucial to people with learning disabilities enjoying their rights as equal citizens.

## OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR HOUSING

Research commissioned by SCLD and undertaken by Ipsos MORI highlighted a number of opportunities and challenges for people with learning disabilities accessing their right to independent living and suitable housing.

### OPPORTUNITIES

- Expanded housing options
- Enhanced advice and accessible information
- Accessible design
- Person-centred support and planning
- Support for community engagement

### CHALLENGES

- Availability of suitable housing
- Difficulties accessing housing advice
- Funding of housing support
- Welfare reform
- Legal barriers and restrictive attitudes

## KEY MESSAGES

### SUPPORT IN THE COMMUNITY

As the Coming Home report demonstrates, a number of people with learning disabilities and complex needs continue to be accommodated in out of area placements or health care settings for long periods. Access to and availability of suitable housing and appropriate support to live in the community are crucial to all people with learning disabilities fulfilling their right to independent living and accessing other human rights.

### STRATEGIC PLANNING

A strategic approach to planning for future housing demand and need for people with learning disabilities requires better joint working and a stronger evidence base. Improving local data collection and making more effective use of the existing data offers scope to improve strategic planning processes and delivery.

### PERSON-CENTRED APPROACHES

Local partnerships must deliver housing solutions for people with learning disabilities that reflect their diversity and support their right to independent living. This requires person-centred approaches focussed on choice, directed by personal preference and informed by an individual's level of need.

### HOUSING SUITABILITY

Local partnerships need to pay particular attention to housing suitability in assessing and meeting the housing needs and preferences of people with learning disabilities. Accessibility, including space for carers, accessible design, scope for adaptations and physical location can all be crucial to enabling someone with a learning disability to live an independent life.

### HOUSING OPTIONS

Local partnerships should provide appropriate and adequate housing information and advice and support for access to suitable housing to help people make informed choices. Local partnerships must take account of the contribution of all housing tenures in how people's needs are or could be met, including mainstream accommodation and the private rented sector as well as specialist accommodation and social renting.