

# The evolution of adaptation policies in Britain

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# Hard to see way through the tangle



# The statistical imperative

- **Population of UK aged 85 and over**

<b>1983</b>	<b>600,000</b>
<b>2008</b>	<b>1,300,000</b>
<b>2033</b>	<b>3,200,000</b>

- **Percentage with limiting illness 2008**

- **age 60-75**      **40%**
- **Age 75+**      **60%**

- **Type of housing Ages 65-84**

- **Owners 73%, Social renting, 28%,  
Private landlord, 5%**

Source: Office of National Statistics

# Contents

- A very short history
- Adaptations in England today (other UK countries all different).
- Evolution of understanding: the meaning of home; the nature of human need
- Evolution of evidence base: the ongoing international task
- Evolution of thinking: from responsive welfare to investment and strategic planning

# Once upon a time...



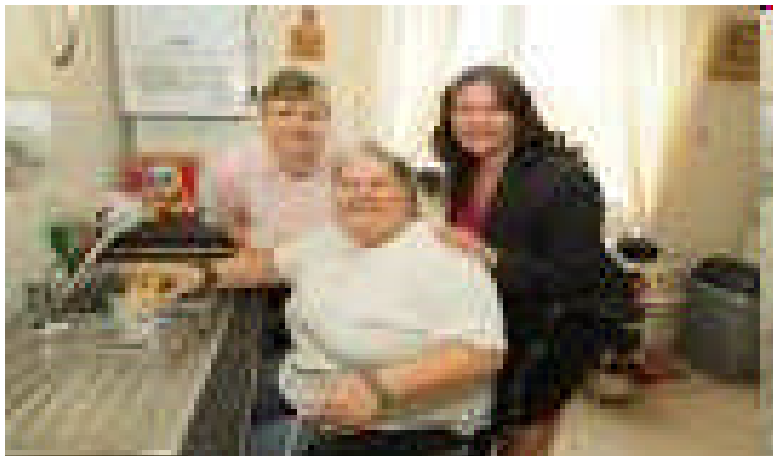
- Older people in England coped with an ageist environment as long as they could.

- And when they couldn't manage any longer..



- they became housebound at home, or entered residential care.

# But through housing adaptation...



- Many older people can remain at home and live a good and fulfilling life, despite mobility problems.
- What has been learnt about this, and what could be done better?

# A very short history

- 1948 foundation of Welfare State
- CSDP Act of 1970: very enlightened on adaptation and other rights. Duties on Social Care. Not adequately backed with funding.
- Thereafter, development largely unplanned
- 1980s Residential places grow 300%
- 1990s Care in Community (but housing forgotten)
- 1990s Housing grants, including mandatory grant for adaptations (DFG). Funding private sector only
- 2003 Community Care (delayed discharges) Act: stricter policies for Social Care to provide minor adaptations
- Situation 2010. Much overlapping and lack of clarity



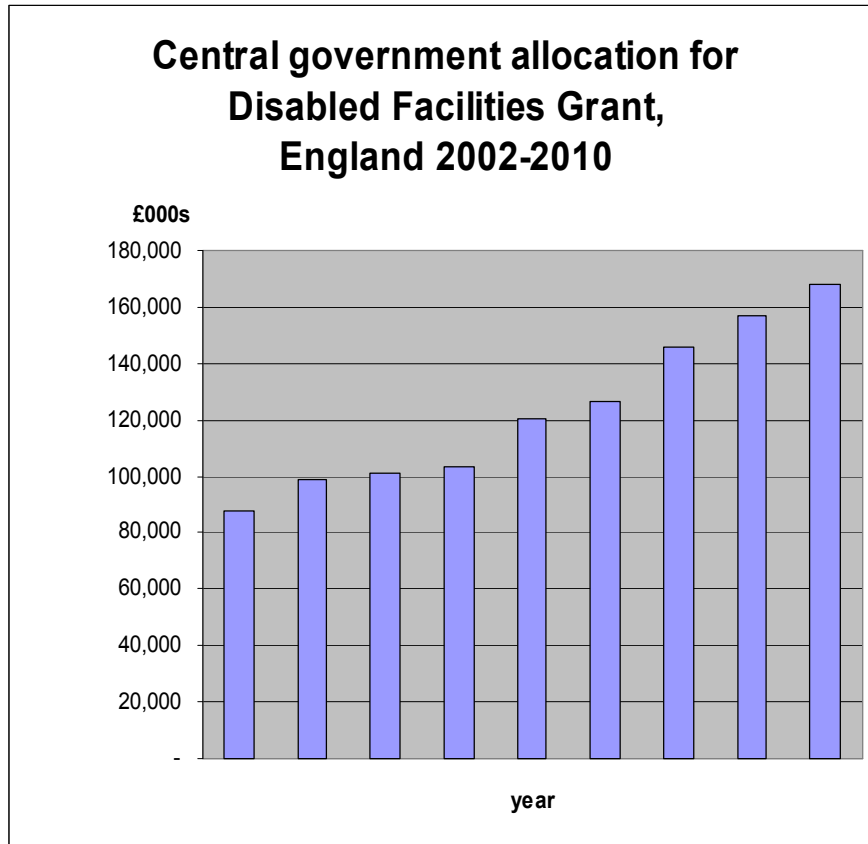
# Adaptations in England today

# The right to adaptations

- **Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996**
- Any disabled person in any accommodation\*, public or private is entitled (after a means test) to a grant for adaptations to their home to give them access to all normal facilities.
- This includes bedroom, living room, kitchen, bathroom and garden, improved heating and whatever is needed to allow them to care for someone else.
- These grants are administered by local housing authorities. They must decide that the work is necessary and appropriate, reasonable and practicable
- Maximum grant is £30,000 (€35,450)  
(Average £7,000 (€8,270))

\*including caravans and houseboats

# Rise in Government spending



- Shows rise in direct Government input to major adaptations from £88m in 2002 to £168m in 2010.

# Statistics

- The DFG programme helps about 40,000 people a year in England
- About 70 % of these are older people.
- These resources are insufficient to meet known need and many older people lose out.
- There are many other funding sources, but responsibility is unclear and the whole is not well coordinated (and here's a lesson!)

# All funding sources for adaptations in England, 2009

<b>Type of work</b>	<b>Source of funding</b>	<b>(£millions)</b>
<b>Major adaptations in private housing (DFGs)</b>	CLG: (the National Housing department)	<b>156</b>
<b>Major and minor adaptations in private housing (DFGs and other)</b>	Local housing authorities	<b>156</b>
<b>Major and minor adaptations Local authority Housing</b>	Local authority housing departments	<b>154</b>
<b>Major and minor adaptations Housing association homes</b>	Housing associations	<b>45</b>
<b>Minor adaptations (up to £1000)</b>	Social welfare authorities (via National Department of Health) + some local Health bodies	<b>103</b>
<b>Heating efficiency</b>	Department of Energy and Climate Change	<b>189</b>
<b>Total : all adaptations</b>		<b>£803</b>

# Other aspects of funding

- Under regulatory reform, local authorities now have considerable freedom to use money differently (but no more money).
- Many have introduced new simpler grants for adaptations for older people
- Best policies where there have been champions: Northern city traditions of municipal provision
- Research shows that housing for older people needs to include support services of all kinds (transport, housework, security, repairs) as well as physical structures.

# Evolution of understanding:

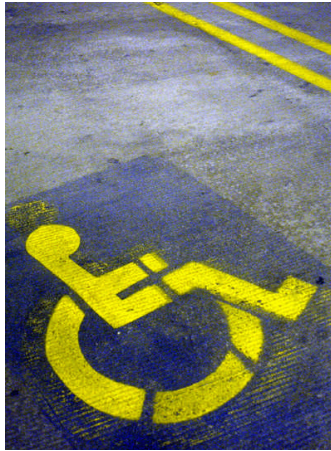
- the social model of disability
- the meaning of home
- the nature of human need

# The social model of disability

- Thinking from US 1970s and 1980s rejected the medicalised model of disability
- Social model says that disability is not an individual, medical problem. Society disables people by attitudes, law and environment, and has power to change this.
- Adaptations had been based on hospital equipment: functional but ugly
- Research showed ugly adaptations less effective: bad for mental health



# Impact of social model on us all



# The meaning of home

- Individuals identify themselves with their home
- An unadapted home can cause feelings of helplessness and depression
- A badly adapted home can reinforce helplessness and bad self-image
- A well adapted home can restore confidence and well being

# The nature of human need

- Traditional approaches to assessment give primacy to material needs (eating, toilet, washing, mobility).
- Models from disabled people suggest a different approach
  - Dignity
  - Recognition of values
  - Minimising barriers to independence
  - Having some element of choice
  - Being able to take part in society
- These different approaches will affect the adaptations and alter their effectiveness

# Preserving the meaning of home



- The problem of steps does not mean you have to spoil someone's pride in their home



# Evolution of evidence base:

The ongoing international task

# What do we know?

- English language search (2007) revealed that adaptations can
  - Improve quality of life
  - Improve mental health
  - Reduce health costs
  - Speed discharge from hospital
  - Reduce burden and risks to carers
  - Prevent admission to residential care
- Evidence is international and largely transferable

# Research issues continued

- In UK, £1,000 million a year on hip fractures
- Adaptations reduce the risk of falls, but full evidence needs still to be established. International issue.
- Need systematic approach and international cooperation.
- European CERTAIN project within EU programme 'Technology Initiative for Disabled and Elderly' (TIDE). Included Andrich et al 1998. New methods introduced for this research. Good foundations but continuity needed.

# Evolution of thinking:

- from welfare to investment
- the need for strategic planning



# From welfare to investment



- 2005. Prime Minister's Strategy Unit produced '*Improving the Life Chances of Disabled People*'
- Throws down gauntlet to Government
- Cases where lack of adaptations cost disabled people good jobs
- Services as investment, not welfare
- End to single department thinking. Spending by housing produces savings for health. Need for strategic thinking across old boundaries to achieve more preventative investment

# Need for strategic planning

- 2005, Review of the Disabled Facilities Grant programme
- Advice of very senior official: greatest need is for strategic approach to adaptations, linking housing, health, social care, education, employment and the Treasury
- Recommendation for this and for clear responsibility at government level put into report.

# Strategy continued

- Response in 2008: first ever '*National Strategy for Housing in an Ageing Society*'
- All the right words and some matching deeds.
- Increased budgets for adaptations (for 3 years only)
- Increased funding for Agencies to help older people with their housing
- Increased funding for 'handyperson' services to help them feel confident about maintaining their homes
- Reference to Lifetime Homes and 'inclusive design'
- Experimental projects (POPPS) reconnecting housing, health and care

# Where you could do better

- This strategy has no-one at ministerial level overseeing its implementation
- It is in some ways, just 'a piece of paper'
- It has not got itself embedded in the large scale Treasury and Housing strategies.
- Especially serious; excluded from 'Decent Homes' standard.
- Regions have continued to make housing strategies with no reference to the needs of older people.
- There has been no significant transferring of resources from health to preventative housing investment.
- Funding increases nowhere near increase in ageing population.

# Conclusion

- Some achievements to be glad of in England, but great opportunities to do better.
- Changing thinking about assessment very hard: takes long time to influence hard-pressed managers.
- There is a hunger amongst managers and policy makers for better evidence on benefits and savings potential of adaptations
- Inter-departmental disputes about funding responsibilities need to be resolved at highest levels, for they are wasteful and destructive
- The need to get suitable housing and adaptations embedded into core national strategies is the greatest challenge. .

