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1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), herein referred to as the “Authority”, is undertaking a procurement exercise to award a Contract to a Supplier to assess the current provisions in Approved Document B (ADB) regarding specialised housing (including sheltered and extra care housing for elderly and otherwise vulnerable residents) and care homes and review alternative approaches. The aim of this project is to ensure that ADB provides adequate guidance to meet the minimum requirements under Schedule 1 Part B of the Building Regulations. 2010.
- 1.2 The project will review and provide evidence and knowledge on the current provisions in ADB and also alternative policy options. The project will establish the current research knowledge and review it in view of modern building design approaches, technology, building use, and operation.
- 1.3 The project will develop robust data and evidence that enables MHCLG to support future policy decisions for possible improvements, simplification, and changes of guidance so that people can have confidence in regulatory standards.
- 1.4 The project should establish an expert Technical Steering Group to support MHCLG officials at a strategic decision-making level of the project and assist where necessary, steering the research program and providing feedback on the research methodology, as well as key deliverables and milestones throughout the duration of the project.

2. BACKGROUND TO THE CONTRACTING AUTHORITY

- 2.1 The Authority's aim is to help create great places to live and work right across the country and to back communities to come together and thrive. The Authority's responsibilities include:
 - Ensuring people throughout the country have access to affordable and high-quality housing
 - Providing opportunities for all parts of the country to thrive economically
 - Building integrated communities
 - Supporting effective local government
 - 2.2 Amongst its other interests, the Authority has also established the Building Safety Programme which is responsible for delivering the changes where needed to make the building safety system fit for purpose.
 - 2.3 The Building Regulations control certain building work – principally to protect the health, safety and welfare of people in and around buildings. Part B of Schedule 1 of the regulations relates to fire safety aspects of building design and construction and Approved Document B (ADB), the statutory guidance to the regulations which demonstrates how the provisions can be complied with.
 - 2.4 In response to Dame Judith Hackitt's review following the Grenfell tragedy in 2017 the Government has committed to a full-scale [review](#) of Approved Document B.
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- 2.5 The technical review started with a call for evidence which invited views on technical issues and further improvements that could be made to ADB. A summary of the findings from the call for evidence was [published on the 5 September 2019](#).
- 2.6 The findings were used to set a proposed agenda, terms of reference and programme for the review and to identify what research is needed to inform the review.
- 2.7 Through these findings stakeholder workshops, and advice from the Building Regulation Advisory Committee (BRAC), the department has identified specialised housing and care homes as an area requiring review. A key tenet of the guidance in ADB is that of inclusive design, which is mirrored in Approved Document M (access).
- 2.8 Older households are growing at a much faster rate than the rest of the population. The growth in older households will increase demand for social care, health care and place further pressure on specialised housing. Projections by London School of Economics and the Personal Social Services Research Unit have estimated 165,000 units will be required in England by 2030.
- 2.9 The elderly Advice Council have estimated that 90% of supported units for older people are sheltered housing, with the remaining 10% being for extra care. Specialised housing is also required for working age people including vulnerable persons, those with disabilities, those with mental health problems, those at risk of domestic abuse, people with drug or alcohol misuse needs, among others.
- 2.10 ADB already notes that additional fire protection measures may be required for sheltered housing, for example reduced maximum travel distances to comply with B1. There is a question as to whether the guidance should go further, given the current array of specialised housing approaches, and provide additional provisions for specific types of specialised housing to give designers greater clarity on how they could comply with the Building Regulations in these situations.
- 2.11 Compliance with ADB when designing a residential care home requires careful consideration of compartmentation, evacuation routes, type of evacuation (ADB provides guidance on phased horizontal evacuation), number of residents and their expected mobility/vulnerability, staffing and management practices.
- 2.12 MHCLG received a total of 81 separate responses regarding specialised housing and care homes during the Call for Evidence. The respondents questioned the existing approach and considered that strengthened provisions were needed:
- Sprinklers should be provided in housing for vulnerable people, regardless of building height;
 - Combustible materials should be banned from being used in the external wall construction of housing for vulnerable people, regardless of height;
 - More guidance on progressive evacuation approaches, particularly in care homes considering the realities of staffing, including recruitment and retention;



- More guidance for those receiving care in their homes which are not considered specialised housing or care homes, or in other modern care arrangements not currently recognised in ADB;
 - More guidance on mobility scooter storage, considering the battery fire risk and increasing use.
- 2.13 Response to the Call for Evidence also called for ADB to set out comprehensive guidance related to the inter-relationship of building standards and management of buildings in use. Research is required to better understand any disconnect between the provisions in ADB (and the principles which underpin them), and the practical realities and operation of buildings which are in-use.
- 2.14 Overall there is a need to review the provisions in ADB for specialised housing and care homes, to determine whether it is adequate, and explore potential alternatives which may better provide an adequate level of safety.

3. BACKGROUND TO REQUIREMENT

- 3.1 Fire safety in care homes is to a certain degree more reliant on effective management than other building types. There is a concern that modern management approaches, in conjunction with design and occupancy, are impacting the effectiveness of ADB provisions. Particularly regarding supported evacuation which is based on both physical provisions designed into a building and expected levels of management. Design solutions must be workable and realistic, therefore an understanding of how recommended provisions work in practice “on the ground” is required as part of the work. This should not be limited to care homes but be reviewed across the breadth of specialised housing for vulnerable residents also.
- 3.2 The Call for Evidence highlighted that fire and rescue services are encountering increasing numbers of callouts to vulnerable residents receiving care in their own homes. There is concern that these buildings do not have the enhanced fire safety provisions required in traditional specialised housing and there is a question as to whether ADB could/should provide guidance on this, potentially in line with recommendations for category 2 and 3 buildings detailed in ADM.
- 3.3 There is increased recognition that with an ageing population, age-related impairments are expected to become more prevalent in specialised housing and other residential properties distinct from care homes. This and the increased availability of mobility scooters have provided greater access to locations and buildings.
- 3.4 Concerns have been raised about the fire hazard presented by charging electrical scooters, present in buildings. There is a requirement to review whether ADB should provide guidance on how best to manage storage/charging of these aids in different building settings.
- 3.5 The ability of residents to remain in their homes or specialised housing for longer, before requiring higher levels of care has also raised the question of the appropriateness of escape distances in specialised housing, considering the potentially reduced mobility of some residents and current management/staffing approaches.



- 3.6 A key theme of responses to the Call for Evidence was the suggestion that sprinkler protection should be provided in all housing for vulnerable residents. Sprinklers are currently required in residential buildings more than 30m in height and the Department has recently consulted on reducing this height threshold to 18m, in conjunction with other fire safety measures in high-rise residential buildings. The question remains as to the efficacy and feasibility of requiring sprinklers in all housing for vulnerable residents regardless of other fire safety provisions and building height.
- 3.7 There are two objectives for this project and dependent upon approach and the supplier, these could be organised into two separate workstreams: 1) specialised housing + residential care and 2) care homes.

4. DEFINITIONS

Expression or Acronym	Definition
ADB	Approved Document B (Fire Safety) volumes 1 and 2
MHCLG	Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
Specialised Housing	Housing designed for vulnerable residents, whether that be a person with age-related impairments, disability, mental health conditions, or substance abuse issues.
Care Home	A residential building for the treatment, maintenance or care of vulnerable residents.

5. SCOPE OF REQUIREMENT

- 5.1 The overall scope of the project is to
- A) Provide a review of performance and effectiveness of the current provisions in ADB regarding specialised housing and care homes.
 - B) Provide evidence and further/alternative provisions to enable MHCLG to make informed policy proposals.
- 5.2 Establish costs benefits, and impact of alternative approaches not currently detailed in ADB or alternative guidance.
- 5.3 The scope of buildings are those covered by the Building Regulations and more specifically included in ADB. Uncommon buildings (e.g. fire engineered) are outside of the scope for this project.
- 5.4 At the completion of each milestone a suitable review will be carried out to ensure the suitability of research and allow for variations (improvements, expansion, and/or reduction). Such variations will be subject to formal change control where they include cost implications.
- 5.5 The supplier will establish facilities for face to face or video conference call meetings with MHCLG and other stakeholder groups as required to deliver updates and agree elements with the Authority, and as required to deliver the project objectives.



- 5.6 The supplier will work with the contract manager and other MHCLG suppliers when required to deliver project objectives, update meetings, and reports.
- 5.7 The Approved Document M (Access) is also under review and therefore relevant information gathered as part of this review will need to be accounted for.
- 5.8 It is expected that a review of purpose groups and trigger heights (including regarding the ban of combustible materials in and on the external walls of relevant buildings, including care homes) will be carried out under a separate research program. However, it is envisaged that review of the relevant purpose groups should not be excluded from this project.
- 5.9 The supplier is also expected to work collaboratively with industry, academia and government bodies and interest groups to collect and research knowledge related to the requirements.
- 5.10 The research will also be used to inform impact assessments for future consultation proposals where evidence suggests changes may be necessary to current statutory guidance in ADB.
- 5.11 The main output from the research will be an objective presentation of the results in the form of technical reports.
- 5.12 Each objective as laid out in the next section, is mandatory. However, the elements described that could contribute to achieving each objective is optional. It is for the supplier to define their approach in their bid and to justify the exclusion of any point in the requirement.

6. THE REQUIREMENT

- 6.1 The overall objective (objective 1) of this project is to review whether the provisions in ADB relating to specialised housing and care homes are sufficient to meet the functional requirements of Schedule 1 of the Building Regulations. There are two components to this:

1a) An initial scoping exercise, identifying current evidence, and providing an overarching appraisal across different types of specialised housing and care homes. This is expected to include:

- Review of different types and design approaches (including evacuation strategies) to specialised housing and care homes;
- Review of latest data on resident demographics/anthropometric data;
- Engagement of building owners/management, care regulators as well as resident groups to understand trends, social factors, and policy in this area;
- Engagement with relevant bodies such as local authorities and fire and rescue services regarding increasing trend of residents receiving care in general purpose residential buildings;
- Review of factors supporting relevant provisions in the guidance regarding specialised housing and care homes – maintenance, resourcing, management and training etc;



- Review of current research or evidence regarding residential care as well as specialised housing and care homes, including relevant case studies
- 1b) Review the current approach, including:
- Establishing the basis for current provisions in guidance;
 - Review current definition/ purpose group approach in ADB and actual use of buildings;
 - How provisions are used in practice and their effectiveness “on the ground”;
 - Scoping of wider regulatory environment and requirements in England identifying conflicts and consideration;
 - Review the current guidance in view of the current knowledge established in 1a;
 - Review approach considering wider changes to modern building design, construction, and changing demographics of residents, trends in management/staffing etc;
 - The supplier is expected to indicate the possible shortfalls in the existing fire safety guidance in ADB in relation to the results of the review.
- 6.2 The second objective (objective 2) of this project is to identify and analyse potential alternative approaches and develop evidence, understanding and knowledge for consideration in future policy development.
- International review of regulatory and design approaches with recognition of wider regulatory differences and context; -
 - Undertake research into alternative approaches, providing evidence through means such as practical evacuation drills, evacuation computer modelling, cost benefit analysis, and desktop reviews; -
 - Consider risks, costs and benefits of alternative approaches, including sprinkler provision.
- 6.3 It is expected that the supplier will set out their proposed approach to achieving these objectives, identifying key tasks involved in each.
- 6.4 The supplier will be expected to establish and provide secretariat services for a technical steering group who will periodically review progress of the project and monitor the research activities and outcomes for updating the methodology or reports. The contract manager of this project will represent MHCLG at these meetings.
- 6.5 The supplier will be expected to produce:
- 6.5.1 A proposed methodology report;
 - 6.5.2 Interim reports for each objective;
 - 6.5.3 Final report summarising findings across each interim report.
- 6.6 A contract break will be included between tasks identified for objective 1 and objective 2. Early termination of the contract using this contract break will be
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taken if the research at this stage points towards an early conclusion as determined by the Authority.

- 6.7 The supplier will be required to provide ad-hoc advice as requested by the Authority.

7. KEY MILESTONES AND DELIVERABLES

- 7.1 The supplier will provide and present to MHCLG the following specific deliverables;

- A proposed draft methodology consisting of a report (electronic and hard copy where appropriate) detailing the scope of the project, methodology, key deliverables and any preconceived risks.
- Draft interim reports (electronic and hard copy where appropriate) for each phase of the research including results/findings to data, detailed assumptions intended to underpin analysis along with any other issues identified and how these will be dealt with. Draft reports should also include indications of next steps the supplier will be taking and any proposed further research not previously agreed with the contract manager. Draft reports should be preceded by a face to face or video call meeting to update MHCLG and any relevant groups of stakeholders (e.g. steering group established as part of the research project).
- Final report (electronic and hard copy where appropriate) including all results/findings throughout the project, detailed assumptions intended to underpin analysis along with any other issues identified. The final report should be preceded by a face to face or a video call meeting to update MHCLG and any relevant groups of stakeholders (e.g. steering group established as part of the research project).

- 7.2 All reports (draft and final) should include a front cover and QA sheet including: the report title, the MHCLG and supplier reference numbers, the milestone identifier, the version number, the date, and checking/approving signatures. The front should be marked as a draft until an approved final version is requested by MHCLG. The front cover may be removed and replaced when reports are prepared for publication by MHCLG.

- 7.3 Final reports will be published on the GOV.UK website after review and quality assurance.

- 7.4 Research results/findings should be made available to any established stakeholder groups during the project.

- 7.5 Performance measures:

- Methodology agreed
- Technical Steering Group established
- Draft reports provided to agreed timeframe
- Final report provided to agreed timeframe
- Satisfactory Research output



7.6 The following Contract milestones/deliverables shall apply:

Milestone / Deliverable	Description	Timeframe or Delivery Date
1	Commencement date: Start Date	Within week 1 of Contract Award
2	Methodology agreed	Within 1-2 weeks of Start Date
3	Technical Steering Group established	Within 1-2 weeks of Contract Award
4	Objective 1a Draft Report provided	Within 4 months of Commencement Date
5	Objective 1b Draft Report provided	Within 7 months of Commencement Date
6	Objective 2 Draft Report provided	Within 13 months of Commencement Date
7	Final Report provided	Within 14 months of Commencement Date
9	Contract Completion	Within 14 months of Commencement Date

8. APPROACH (OPTIONAL)

8.1 MHCLG expects the supplier to determine their own approach and methodology. However, some of the considerations related to the objectives are discussed below for clarity;

Objective 1

Existing Buildings

8.2 The supplier will be expected to review the current provisions in ADB. This review should cover the wide range of building types designed to provide specialised housing for vulnerable residents, and care homes.

8.3 The supplier should provide a review based on a comprehensive understanding of the subject, considering evacuation drill data, information from past fire incidents, and previous research studies. The supplier is expected to provide a practical understanding of the topic by talking with designers, regulators, building owners/managers and residents.

8.4 The supplier will be expected to consider the wider operating environment of different building types including other regulatory requirements (e.g. access), operating challenges (e.g. staffing) and other factors which impact upon the provisions regarding specialised housing and care homes.

8.5 The supplier will be expected to consider the wider social contexts of specialised housing and care homes through engagement with various stakeholders, including residents.



- 8.6 The supplier will be expected to assess whether the rise in residential care may require additional consideration in ADB. If so, the supplier will be expected to suggest and analyse additional provisions.

Modern Design

- 8.7 The supplier is expected to analyse how modern building design trends, operating practices, construction techniques and usage affect the provisions in ADB for specialised housing and care homes.
- 8.8 New technologies such as electric scooters and mobile medical support equipment may have introduced risks and such changes to building usage should be considered.

Objective 2

- 8.9 The supplier should review other approaches/alternative provisions and provide the necessary knowledge and information for the department to make informed decisions about potential policy options.
- 8.10 Suppliers will be expected to analyse the approaches/alternative provisions in the context of different building designs and heights. Evidence and knowledge may be generated by modelling, surveys, costing, analysis, practical evacuation drills/exercises or other approaches as set out by the Supplier.

9. MANAGEMENT INFORMATION/REPORTING

- 9.1 The Authority requires a dedicated account management structure including a single point of contact for day to day enquiries, with a nominated deputy to act in their absence.
- 9.2 A detailed escalation procedure must be outlined, with named individuals outlined on an organogram provided by the supplier.

10. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

- 10.1 The supplier should present any proposed changes to the project methodology to the Authority during monthly update meetings with the Contract Manager.
- 10.2 Changes to the way in which the Services are to be delivered must be brought to the Authority's attention and agreed prior to any changes being implemented.

11. QUALITY

- 11.1 The supplier should operate under an appropriate quality management system, such as ISO (9000 series) or equivalent.

12. PRICE

- 12.1 Price Schedule Attachment 4 must be completed. The supplier is expected to provide sufficient detail for evaluation.
- 12.2 The total price for this Contract is expected to be a maximum of £130,000 (excl. VAT) and be completed within 14 months of commencement.



- 12.3 Prices are to be submitted via the e-Sourcing Suite by completing Attachment 4 – Price Schedule excluding VAT and including all other expenses relating to Contract delivery.

13. STAFF AND CUSTOMER SERVICE

- 13.1 The supplier should provide a sufficient level of resource throughout the duration of the Contract in order to consistently deliver a quality service.
- 13.2 The supplier’s staff assigned to the Contract should have the relevant qualifications and experience i.e. detailed knowledge of the construction industry, construction techniques, technology and design to deliver the Contract to the required standard.
- 13.3 The supplier shall ensure that staff understand the Authority’s vision and objectives and will provide excellent customer service to the Authority throughout the duration of the Contract.

14. SERVICE LEVELS AND PERFORMANCE

- 14.1 The Authority will measure the quality of the Supplier’s delivery by assessing each task, including meeting target dates, appropriateness of methodology, completeness of information and readability of reports. The Authority will take account of the views of any Technical Steering Groups and will provide feedback to the supplier.

KPI/SLA	Service Area	KPI/SLA description	Target
1	Delivery Timescales	Completion of Milestone to agreed timeframe	100%
2	Research output	Completion of research to agreed standard as set out in the contract	To be agreed with the Authority
3	Methodology	Proposal and agreement of appropriate methodology	To be agreed with the Authority

- 14.2 The supplier will be required to report regularly on progress toward achievement of targets. The supplier will need to explain how they will collect and record this information to maintain a fully evidenced audit trail. It should be noted that if a supplier fails to deliver contracted outputs, a performance review may apply which could lead to and early termination of the contract

15. SECURITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY REQUIREMENTS

- 15.1 There are no requirements for employees of the supplier to have any level of security clearance.
- 15.2 REDACTED.

16. PAYMENT AND INVOICING

- 16.1 Payment can only be made following satisfactory delivery of pre-agreed certified products and deliverables.



- 16.2 Before payment can be considered, each invoice must include a detailed elemental breakdown of work completed and the associated costs.
- 16.3 The Purchase Order (PO) number must be included when the Invoice is submitted.
- 16.4 Payment of invoices follows a process of checking and approval; timeframe is subject to agreement with the Contract Manager.

17. CONTRACT MANAGEMENT

- 17.1 Feedback of performance will be provided to the contractor at progress meetings and at the end of the project, to ensure the quality of research is maintained.
- 17.2 The contract manager for this project will act as the formal point of contact between MHCLG and the supplier.
- 17.3 The following will be agreed with the Contract Manager;
 - The outputs from the research (presentation, reports etc) and the proposed approach being taken by the suppliers to complete the research.
 - How progress will be fed back to MHCLG (including the frequency of face to face or video conference/telephone progress meetings with the suppliers).
- 17.4 Where outputs will be required and cleared by MHCLG, it will be important that the supplier is able to take into consideration the time for MHCLG to clear these outputs.
- 17.5 All data and supporting information used in draft or any interim reports and the final report will be provided to MHCLG in an electronic format at the end of the contract.

18. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- 18.1 The requirement can be undertaken by a single firm or a consortium.
- 18.2 In the case of a consortium, the Authority will enter into a contract with the lead contractor and all formal contracts between the Authority and members of the consortium should be made through the lead contractor. The lead contractor will be expected to enter into Service Level Agreements (SLA) with consortium members and these members will form part of the Steering Group when it is established.
- 18.3 The Supplier's liability is limited to 125% of the total charges payable under this Contract.

19. LOCATION

- 19.1 The location of the Services will be carried out generally at the supplier's offices, although there may be a need for some tasks to be undertaken at the Authority's office (currently 2 Marsham Street, London SW1P 4DF).