

29 January 2021

Hon. Vickie Chapman MP
Minister for Planning and Local Government
GPO Box 464
Adelaide SA 5001

Dear Minister Chapman,

I am writing in my capacity as Chief Executive of COTA SA to seek your support for the inclusion of mandatory accessibility standards in Australia's National Building Code.

In March this year there will be an opportunity to support the independence of thousands of older South Australians who cannot find accessible housing that meets their needs.

For over ten years, the voluntary Livable Housing Design Guidelines have failed to ensure adequate levels of accessible housing in Australia, with only 5% of new home builds complying since it was introduced in 2010.

As our population ages, the demand – and requirement - for accessible housing will increase. Older South Australians want to live and age at home with residential aged care a last resort for some at end of life.

Not only will greater access to appropriate housing support choice for older South Australians, it will also result in savings to government for health and welfare services because we can expect injuries to reduce, engagement in and contribution to local community to increase and people's ambition to be independent throughout their lives realised.

Older South Australians will benefit from accessible housing design but it is important for all South Australians that their housing remain fit for purpose throughout their lives.

2021 is high time to ensure we have a National Building Code for all Australians, no matter what stage of life or ability.

COTA SA urges you to ensure that mandatory accessibility standards are included in the National Building Code at the Building Minister's Forum.

This small reform will make a big difference and pay it forward for thousands of South Australians.

Yours sincerely,



Jane Mussared
Chief Executive