

adaptations policy

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1. Policy statement

- 1.1. As an organisation, we have the responsibility to fulfil our obligations in relation to the services we provide.
- 1.2. Through our Adaptations Policy, believe housing aims to provide a fair, transparent and easily accessible service to existing customers and new applicants. One that promotes choice to enable them to live in their home independently, for as long as possible, with privacy and dignity within all statutory and regulative requirements.
- 1.3. This policy applies to customers living in our social homes, including Housing Plus units, and their permanent household members. We will provide support to other customers (such as shared ownership and leasehold), by referring them to local Social Services teams for further guidance and assistance.
- 1.4. The policy is implemented in collaboration with our partners and other agencies to ensure a coordinated approach in the provision of adapted homes.

2. Policy aims

- 2.1. The key aims of the policy are to:
 - ensure customers and other permanent members of the household are aware of and assisted with all the options available to them, when accessing the service
 - provide an inclusive and individualised service for all customers and permanent members of the household
 - ensure that we make the most efficient use of our existing homes by matching customers with previously adapted homes
 - outline believe housing's approach to supporting customers who require major adaptations to their homes due to disability; it ensures that our homes remain inclusive, accessible, and supportive of independent living
 - cooperate with customers and appropriate local authority departments and other relevant organisations so that a housing adaptations service is available to customers where appropriate.

3. Scope

- 3.1. This policy applies to all general needs rented properties owned and managed by believe housing. It excludes leasehold and shared ownership.

4. Types of aids and adaptations

- 4.1. We categorise requests for aids and adaptations as either minor or major with the distinction being based on the nature and complexity of the work required.

5. Minor adaptations

- 5.1. Requests for minor fixed aids and adaptations will be accepted directly from customers and delivered by believe housing. If the cost of delivery is more than £1,000 then it is likely to be a major adaptation.
- 5.2. We will establish a dedicated annual budget for undertaking minor aids and adaptations and will aim to complete this work within our Repairs Policy next available appointment timescales.
- 5.3. Examples of minor adaptations:
- Internal/external grabrails
 - Additional banister rails
 - Visual smoke detectors
 - Lever taps.

6. Major adaptations

- 6.1. Requests for major adaptations, expected to cost more than £1,000 to deliver, will be referred to the local authority Adult or Child Social Care Team for an Occupational Therapist assessment of need and recommended works.
- 6.2. The customer will be required to make a direct claim to the relevant local authority for the works to be carried out through the Disabilities Facility Grant (DFG) scheme.
- 6.3. The relevant service provider will assess the requirement and suitability of the requested adaptation, with the support of an occupational therapist's report.
- 6.4. Where believe housing's consent is needed for major adaptations to be carried out then we will communicate our responses to the customer and the local authority. Our permission will not be unreasonably withheld.
- 6.5. Any major adaptation expected to cost more than £10,000 will be discussed with believe housing's Lettings Team to establish whether a transfer to a more suitable or already-adapted home is a preferred option.
- 6.6. Examples of major adaptations are:
- wet rooms
 - over-bath showers
 - level-access showers
 - ramps
 - stairlifts

- specialist door intercom systems.

7. Communication with customers

- 7.1. We are committed to ensuring that all customers and prospective customers are fully informed about our Major Adaptation Policy. Information will be made available through a range of accessible channels, including our website.
- 7.2. Additionally, we will signpost customers to their local authority for access to occupational therapists and DFG funding, where appropriate.

8. Repairs and maintenance of adaptations

- 8.1. Minor adaptations will be maintained in accordance with our Repairs Policy.
- 8.2. Major adaptations funded through a Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) are typically covered by a 12-month warranty. After the warranty period, believe housing will repair and maintain.
- 8.3. Any adaptations that require annual servicing will be arranged by believe housing.
- 8.4. All repairs to adaptations will be delivered in accordance with our Repairs Policy.

9. Customer-funded adaptation works

- 9.1. Customers who wish to undertake and fund their own adaptation works may do so, subject to obtaining prior consent in accordance with our Customer Home Improvements Policy.

10. Future allocation of adapted policies

- 10.1. We will endeavour to allocate our homes that are designed or adapted to meet specific needs where possible. Major adaptations will not be carried out until new customers have moved into their property as the needs of the customer and the design of the property will need to be assessed by an occupational therapist first.

11. Roles and responsibilities

Roles	Responsibilities
Director of Assets and Compliance, Director of Property Repairs, Director of Neighbourhoods	Will have overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy.
Neighbourhoods and Lettings Managers	Provide advice on the availability of any appropriate alternative accommodation available. Ensure our adapted stock is let appropriately based on individual's needs.

Major Repairs Manager	Promote awareness of the Adaptation Policy and associated procedure across the organisation. Ensure a periodic review of this policy and procedure is undertaken alongside key stakeholders. Provide clear information for all teams across the organisation.
Compliance Manager	Ensure that all relevant inspection and servicing regimes are put in place and undertaken at the appropriate intervals to ensure that we are meeting statutory and regulatory duties.
Major Adaptation Coordinator	Liaise with the local authority regarding proposed major adaptations. Post-inspection of a sample of works managing all quality and defects.
Lettings Team Leaders	Work with wider team and advertise available adapted properties. Work within and award properties supported by the two medical priorities, Band 1 and Band 2, which are contained within the DKO Lettings Policy. Work within other local authority lettings policies. Work in conjunction with occupational therapists.
Strategic Asset Manager	Update our internal asset management system upon completion of all major works. Ensure appropriate maintenance regimes are put in place for all fixed equipment in relation to safety and compliance.
Health and Safety Manager	Provide competent health and safety advice as stipulated in the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. Investigate any accidents and incidents involving equipment and adaptations with a view to highlighting opportunities for improvement.
Employees	Complete any equipment and adaptations-related training. Report any equipment and adaptations-related issues, or incidences to their line manager immediately.
Customers	Contact the relevant service provider to request major adaptations to their home. Request minor adaptations through self-service. Report any faults/defects in and around their home that may affect the equipment or adaptation(s). Follow any guidance supplied around equipment and adaptations safety in their home.

12. Monitoring and review

12.1. This policy will be reviewed every three years unless there is a significant incident, important change in circumstances or legislation that would warrant a review being carried out at an earlier date.

13. Links to other policies and procedures

This document should also be read in conjunction with:

- The Health and Safety Policy Statement
- Repairs and Maintenance Policy and procedure
- Asbestos Management Policy
- Durham Key Options Lettings Policy
- Asset and Place Strategy 2023-26
- Complaints, Compensation and Compliments Policy
- Assured (shorthold) Tenancy Agreement
- Lettings and Allocations Policy.