

Adaptations Policy

Version Number	4
Date Applies From	28/07/25
Policy Owner	Executive Director of Assets and Sustainability
Next Review Date	28/07/28
Strategy Link	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer focused, equitable services • Safe, well-maintained, sustainable and affordable homes

Key connected legislation/regulation:

Local Authorities have legal obligations to help people with disabilities who need home adaptations. Landlords have legal obligations to make reasonable adjustments to rented properties. We will comply with our responsibilities under the appropriate legislation where applicable to the service we are providing. Appropriate legislation and guidance are:

- The Regulator for Social Housing – Consumer Standards
- Defective Premises Act 1972
- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985
- Housing Act 1988 (as amended by the Housing Act 1966)
- Children Act 1989
- NHS & Community Care Act 1990
- Carers Act 1995
- Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002
- Housing Act 2004
- Equality Act 2010
- Care Act 2014
- Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015

Annual Checks

Policy owners should ensure that an annual check of hyperlinks, roles, and names is undertaken. These checks are in addition to formal review process. Please see Policy and Procedure framework guidance for further details.

UNCONTROLLED IF PRINTED

Introduction

This policy aims to enable customers, especially those with disabilities, to live independently and safely in their homes by modifying the home environment or providing necessary equipment. This policy ensures that individuals can perform daily activities, maintain their privacy, and feel dignified in their homes.

This will support the organisation's vision and mission which are to positively impact the lives of our social housing customers, to provide safe, well maintained homes and to deliver customer focused, equitable and efficient services

Scope of Policy

The aim of the policy is to:

- Support customers through the aids and adaptations process and work with our local authority partners, and other relevant organisations, to deliver the service.
- We will not unreasonably refuse an aid or adaptation request and will explain the reason for any refusal.
- We will ensure that all aids and adaptations work represent good value for money.
- Where we are unable to adapt the property, we will explain the reason and discuss options to meet the customer's needs.
- We will approve aids and adaptations for, and work with, eligible social and affordable rent customers and members of their household who require the service, where it is practical and reasonable to do so, in order to help them remain independent in their homes.
- We will not carry out or fund aids and adaptations where the property is shared ownership or the tenure is leasehold or where a Right to Buy or Right to Acquire application has been made.

Maintenance of Adaptations

- We will ensure that aids and adaptations are of good quality, meet the user's needs, provide immediate and potential future benefit for any user and minimise future maintenance costs.
- We will service and maintain electrical and mechanical equipment such as stairlifts, through floor lifts, hoists, rise and fall baths, stair climbers etc., where the local authority does not have a servicing and maintenance agreement in place with the customer.
- We will retain minor aids and adaptations, and we will, wherever possible, retain major aids and adaptations, when an adapted property becomes empty.
- We will seek to let adapted properties to potential customers who require the aid or adaptation. We will work with our partners to identify people who require housing that might benefit from the adapted property.
- We may refuse a request for a mutual exchange if the home is adapted for a support need that the incoming customer, or member of their household, does not have.

Minor Adaptations

- We will pay for, and install, any reasonable requests for minor aids and adaptations subject to funding availability.

- We will not require a report from an occupational therapist (OT) or other key professional for minor aids and adaptations, unless the service user has complex needs, in which case we reserve the right to refer the request to the appropriate Occupational Therapy Service.
- We will consider any adaptation under £3000 to be a minor adaptation except where the above condition applies.

Examples of minor adaptations are:

- Grab or hand-rails.
- Lever taps.
- Over-bath and standard shower cubicles.
- Small ramps or small steps to entrances.
- Moving power sockets.
- Changing door and window catches.
- Adjustments to or additional lighting.

The following will not be considered minor adaptations even if they cost below £3,000.

- Multiple adaptations.
- Stairlifts.
- Large ramps.
- External alterations not required for access to the home.

Major Adaptations

We consider adaptations costing in excess of £3,000 to be Major Adaptations. When we receive a request for aids and adaptation we will consider:

- Whether the work is necessary and appropriate to meet the needs of the person who requires it, taking into account any assessment made by a professional, such as an OT. We reserve the right to appoint a key professional to conduct this assessment.
- Whether the work is reasonable and practical, taking into account the age of the property, type and its condition.
- The affect the adaptation may have on the other residents of the building.

Whilst we will not unreasonably refuse a request for an aid or adaptation, we reserve the right to do so including in the following circumstances:

- It is not for the customer or a member of their household.
- The need has not been identified through an OT or similar assessment.
- The property is in disrepair or scheduled to be demolished.
- It is not physically possible or reasonably practical to alter the property in the requested way.
- It would have an adverse impact on other residents.
- The customer has recently (e.g. within one year) transferred from an adapted ForHousing property that meets their needs to another that does not without reasonable reasons to do so. The exception to this is where the customer's circumstances have changed significantly since the move.
- The request is for storage facilities or charge points for scooters or other electric mobility aids.

- It does not meet all planning and building regulation requirements, or there are legal or contractual reasons which prevents us from carrying out the adaptation or it would present a health and safety risk.
- Customers will need to apply for grant funding, e.g. DFG, to cover the cost where an aid or adaptation is required, unless they are able to self-fund the adaptation. We will offer assistance in making the application and work with the local authority, or funding authority, to help achieve the best solution for the customer.
- Where the customer is unsuccessful in obtaining grant funding for the whole cost of the aid or adaptation and/or where other funding cannot be sourced by the customer and this has been evidenced, we will, in exceptional circumstances, consider match funding or funding the whole cost of the adaptation. Each case will be considered on its own merits.
- We will restrict the total amount of funding that we provide for individual major adaptations (either through match funding or as the sole funding provider) to £5,000. In exceptional circumstances we may exceed this amount. 'Exceptional Circumstances' will be determined by an Adaptations Panel.

Resourcing

ForHousing will appoint an officer to manage the Adaptations Process.

ForHousing will set a specific budget each year for adaptation work.

The Adaptation Budget will be used to contribute to work that is requested from and carried out to our customers' homes. We will be guided by Occupational Health professionals as to the level of need of the individual requiring the adaptation.

Where major adaptations requests are received, and approved, ForHousing will contribute towards the cost to a value of 50% up to a maximum of £5,000 per request. Our approval will last for a period of 12 months for the work to be completed by the Local Authority. If the work is not completed and relevant handover information provided within that time period, we may request that the application is reviewed and new approval in sought, prior to us committing to the funding of work, to ensure it meets the best needs of our customer.

Should the annual budget be exceeded, we will explain the situation clearly to customers and work with them and their local authority to ensure there is funding available as soon as practicably possible within the next financial year.

We will ensure the effective use of resources and best practice, whilst continuously striving for improvement, achieving value for money and finding practical solutions to enable the maximum number of people possible to gain from the aids and adaptation service. This will include working in partnership and with other agencies, looking to match customers with properties that have existing major adaptations when they become empty and re-using minor adaptations, where possible.

Succession

ForHousing reserves the right to refuse requests for the removal of adaptations, pending condition, type of adaptation and lifecycle of the adaptation.

Where employees become aware that there are problems with effective operation of this Policy, they should report this to the Policy Owner.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

We value diversity and work to create an inclusive environment for our customers and colleagues, where everyone has access to the same opportunities. We welcome our responsibility to comply with equalities legislation and regulatory requirements that relate to equity, diversity and inclusion and aim to do more. Through our activities we aim to remove systemic barriers to equal opportunities and eliminate all forms of discrimination, harassment, and victimisation within our organisation.

We are committed to providing excellent customer services, which are fair, equitable and inclusive. As such, we will endeavour to understand and make any reasonable adjustments required for customers in line with ForHousing's Reasonable Adjustment Statement and the Equality Act 2010. Any reasonable adjustment provided will be recorded and kept under active review.

Implementation and Communication

ForHousing will endeavour to understand customers' preferred methods of communication and use that method as the default. Formal communication will be by letter, with a follow up using the preferred method..

Access to the policy will be through the internet, intranet and will be signposted to customers by ForHousing staff when contact from customers is not electronic.

Monitoring, Recording, Reporting

A suite of KPIs in relation to time to taken to undertake adaptations and customer satisfaction will be reported to the Homes Committee and the Strategic Investment Group.

Related Documents

- ForHousing Strategy
- Customer Strategy
- Resources Strategy
- Homes Strategy
- Asset Management Policy
- Quality Management System Policy Manual
- Repairs and Maintenance Policy
- Allocations Policy
- Equipment and Adaptations Procedure
- Reasonable Adjustment Statement.

Co-production

Service users were consulted within the service review which was the basis of the development of this policy. Additionally, peers were consulted to understand optimum working practices and how the service could be developed to the benefit of the service users.

Approval & Review History

With effect from 23/10/2024 the approval route for the Adaptations Policy is:

- SLT

Date	Version	Approved by	Detail
06.03.19	1	unrecorded	Previously ForViva Adaptions Policy V2
01.11.21	2	unrecorded	Added in appeals process.
04.04.22	3	EMT Representative	Expanded on detail within the appeals process.
29.07.24	3.1	n/a	Inclusion of Equity & Reasonable Adjustment Statement.
28.07.25	4	SLT	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Triennial review.• New policy template.