



PEAKS & PLAINS
Housing Trust



The Trust

Adaptations policy

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This policy aims to ensure the Trust meets our obligations as a landlord to support independent living for customers with disabilities.
- 1.2. This policy sets out our approach to major and minor adaptations and how we will fulfil the commitment in our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

2. SCOPE

- 2.1. The Trust, as a provider of housing services, will ensure its residents are dealt with fairly and equitably. The policy applies to Trust residents who require adaptations, alterations and enhancements to their homes as a result of illness or disability. We will do this by providing an efficient and effective adaptation service that provides value for money and meets individual needs.

3. LEGAL & REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

- 3.1. The Regulator of Social Housing expects social housing providers to make provision for adaptations under the Consumer Standards.
- 3.2. The Home Standard states:
Registered providers shall ensure a prudent, planned approach to repairs and maintenance of homes and communal areas. This should demonstrate an appropriate balance of planned and responsive repairs, and value for money. The approach should include responsive and cyclical repairs, planned and capital work, work on empty properties, and adaptations.
- 3.3. To comply with the new consumer standards we will recognise diverse needs. Taking into account the needs of those households who are vulnerable by reason of age, disability or illness, and households with children. We will assist tenants seeking adaptations and co-operate with relevant local authorities.

4. DEFINITIONS

- 4.1. **Disability** - Under the Equality Act 2010 a tenant will be classed as having a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on their ability to do normal daily activities.
- 4.2. **DFG** – Disabled Facilities Grant
- 4.3. **LAS** – Level Access Shower
- 4.4. **Major adaptation** – work typically over the value of £1,500. Including but not limited to level access showers, stairlifts, wet rooms, adapted toilets, adapted kitchens, door widening.

4.5. **Minor adaptation** – work typically under the value of £1,500. Including but not limited to internal and external grab rails, lever taps, light switch relocation.

4.6. **OT** – Occupational Therapist

5. **OUR POLICY**

5.1. This policy applies to tenants who require adaptations, alterations or enhancements to their home as a result of illness or disability. The adaptations or alterations may be required either for the tenant themselves, or a member of their permanent family who is a registered occupant at the property.

5.2. Requests for adaptations may be received directly from customers, support agencies and medical practitioners. This may necessitate a visit to the customer to carry out a full assessment and survey.

5.3. Major adaptations will not be carried out within the first 12 months of a tenancy (including a mutual exchange) unless the need for the adaptation request is a result of an unforeseen change in medical circumstances.

5.4. Where a property has previously received major adaptations, the incoming tenant will be required to provide a report from an Occupational Therapist or equivalent to confirm that they require the adaptations.

5.5. The Trust will set an annual budget for adaptations and seek to make the most efficient use of the budget. These budgets will fund the commissioning of works and the cost of the provision of the preventative maintenance and servicing of installations.

5.6. Major adaptations require a formal written assessment from an Occupational Therapist.

5.7. Major adaptation requests will be placed onto a waiting list which will be managed in date order. Requests will be prioritised outside of date order where a tenant needs an adaptation carried out to their home urgently; for example before they can be discharged from hospital.

5.8. Requests for major adaptations will be referred to the relevant local authority for match funding through mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant up to the maximum DFG value.

5.9. Adaptations in Trust properties whether funded by the Trust or DFG will be designed to cater for known needs as long as possible.

5.10. The Trust will make use of existing stock by promoting a transfer to a property that is empty and contains the adaptations the customer requires. The Trust will match empty properties with customers who require the facilities of that particular property. Customers will not be forced to move if they do not want to it is possible in certain cases that we will refuse to undertake alterations to a resident's existing property if suitable alternative accommodation is available.

- 5.11. The Trust will provide support and assistance for residents who are eligible for adaptations to move to properties that have already been adapted or are more suited to adaptations.
- 5.12. The weekly rent of a property will only be increased following completion of an adaptation if the work has resulted in additional rooms. This will be discussed with the customer before works start.
- 5.13 Some properties and communal areas will not be suited to the adaptation required. The Trust will ask residents to consider a transfer to another more suitable property in the following situations:
- Where the dwelling is structurally unsuitable for adaptation.
 - Where the medium or long term ability to let the dwelling is likely to be undermined.
 - Where excessive nuisance will be caused to the occupants of neighbouring properties.
- 5.13. The adaptation could affect fire safety or present a health & safety issue.
- 5.14. If a tenant fails to qualify for DFG funding, the Trust will meet 50% of the costs of the adaptation. In this case the tenant would be expected to fund the remainder of the costs up to a maximum of £3,250.
- 5.15. The maximum the Trust will contribute towards any adaptation is £10,000.
- 5.16. The Trust will ensure that each case is decided on its own merits. Individual case review will be informed and guided by Occupational Therapist advice.
- 5.17. The Trust will maintain records of adaptations offered and installed and service records for regular service intervals.
- 5.18. Adaptations the Trust will not consider are:
- Extensions
 - Alterations to outbuildings
 - Removal of walls
 - Through ceiling lifts
 - Lifting or hoisting equipment
 - Drop kerbs
 - Sound proofing
 - Replacing level access showers with baths
 - Hardstanding areas
 - Parking/storage facilities/charging/ramps for mobility scooters
 - Communal facilities, e.g. automatic entry doors, lifts
 - Electric vehicle charging points.
- 5.19. In cases where these may be required we will work in co-operation with the relevant local authority to provide permission for the work to be undertaken where appropriate.

- 5.20. The Trust will not undertake major adaptations to a property:
- Where the property is statutorily overcrowded.
 - If the adaptation would have a major impact on the future usability of the property.
 - If a suitable alternative adapted property is offered and refused.
 - If the home is scheduled for demolition or major refurbishment, within 2 years of the original request.
 - If the property is subject to a Right to Buy or Acquire application or is Rent to Buy
 - Where the property is on a private rental agreement
Where there is a significant breach of tenancy or pending legal action: e.g. a high level of rent arrears, anti-social behaviour, etc.

- 5.21. The Trust will:
- Support the provision of adaptations that help residents to enjoy independence, privacy and dignity.
 - Deal effectively and consistently with requests for adaptations for our customers; prioritising applications to ensure that funding is allocated to residents in the greatest need.
 - Seek external funding to assist with service delivery when appropriate.
 - Provide minor adaptations within a realistic and acceptable timescales as set out in our repairs service standards.
 - Ensure an appropriate maintenance service is in place for adaptations that have been supplied in the Trust's properties.
 - Promote choice to customers by offering a range of options.
 - Ensure the effective use of resources and the delivery of a value for money service.
 - Make our customers aware of the availability of the adaptations service and other options available to them.
 - Co-operate with relevant organisations to provide an adaptations service that meets residents' needs.
 - Promote the adaptation service as part of our support offered to all our residents.
 - Work with and monitor partner agencies to ensure customers receive an efficient referral and adaptation service.
 - Make best use of our existing stock by offering immediate transfers to customers who need adaptations where a suitable vacant property has those adaptations.
 - Endeavour to complete adaptations within 12 months of DFG approval being received subject to budget availability.
 - Consult with recognised residents' groups, community groups and other agencies such as Social Services and the relevant local authority on a regular basis to assess the effectiveness of this policy.
 - Set targets and carry out satisfaction surveys with customers who have received adaptations to ensure the service is delivered to a high standard.

6. EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

- 6.1. We recognise and value the diversity of our customers and we aim to continually review and improve the service we offer customers. We aim to reduce barriers to ensure that everyone has equal access to our services, including those set out in this policy and are committed to treating everyone fairly, complying with all relevant legislation under the Equality Act 2010.
- 6.2. We will offer practical support for customers who may require alternative or additional support to facilitate the delivery of this Policy.
- 6.3. An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed on this policy.

7. RESPONSIBILITIES

7.1. The Board

- 7.1.1. Overall responsibility to ensure an adequate aids & adaptation service rests with the Board with operational authority delegated to the Chief Executive.

7.2. Executive Management Team

- 7.2.1. The Executive Management Team will be responsible for the approval of the policy.

7.3. Executive Director of Operations

- 7.3.1. The Executive Director of Operations is responsible for ensuring that sufficient resources are provided and made available to provide an effective adaptations service.

7.4. Assistant Director of Development, Asset & Compliance

- 7.4.1. The Assistant Director of Development, Asset & Compliance will ensure that the policy, procedures, guidance and forms (electronic forms, databases or paper documents and registers) are maintained, reviewed, revised and audited in a timely manner.

7.5. Strategic Asset Manager

- 7.5.1. The Strategic Asset Manager will be responsible for:
 - Ensuring adequate processes and procedures are in place to manage the delivery of Major Adaptations.
 - Ensuring suitable and sufficient information, instruction and training is carried out.
 - Monitoring the performance of staff and contractors.
 - Updating of post installation property records and relevant certification(s).
 - Maintaining an up-to-date knowledge of legislative requirements and best practice.
 - Providing regular instruction and refresher training to maintain skills provide advice on the application of these procedures on an individual case by case basis.

7.6. **Repairs Manager**

7.6.1. The Repairs Manager will be responsible for:

- Ensuring adequate processes and procedures are in place to manage the delivery of Minor Adaptations.
- Ensuring suitable and sufficient information, instruction and training is carried out.
- Monitoring the performance of staff and contractors.
- Updating of post installation property records and relevant certification(s).
- Maintaining an up-to-date knowledge of legislative requirements and best practice.
- Providing regular instruction and refresher training to maintain skills provide advice on the application of these procedures on an individual case by case basis.

7.7. **Compliance Manager**

7.7.1. Compliance Manager will be responsible for:

- Ensuring adequate processes and procedures are in place to add serviceable components installed as part of an adaptation to servicing schedules.
- Ensuring suitable and sufficient information, instruction and training is carried out where there is a compliance serviceable element to the adaptation.
- Monitoring the performance of staff and contractors.
- Maintaining property records and relevant certification(s).
- Maintaining an up-to-date knowledge of legislative requirements and best practice.
- Providing regular instruction and refresher training to maintain skills provide advice on the application of these procedures on an individual case by case basis.

7.8. All staff and contractors shall comply with the Adaptations Policy and any associated procedures or guidance..

8. **MONITORING AND REPORTING**

8.1. Major adaptations will be monitored and reported at the Trust's Performance Monitoring Group. Six monthly reports on adaptations, including budget, grant received, length of waiting list,, tenants satisfaction and any other relevant issues with be provided to the Executive Team and to Board as part of the Investment Report.

9. **CONSULTATION**

9.1. The Trust's Challenge Group were consulted with regard to shaping a wider consultation exercise. The Trust then consulted with its entire customer base via a survey.

9.2. The survey data was reviewed and proposed policy changes as a result of the feedback received presented to our Challenge Group for further scrutiny.

9.3. Following this the proposed policy changes have then been through further consultation with Cheshire East our main partnering agency.

9.4. The policy has been through consultation with the Trusts management and senior leadership team.

10. REVIEW

10.1. The policy will be reviewed on a 3 year review cycle.

10.2. The policy will be reviewed sooner if there are major legal, regulatory or other changes which make this necessary.

11. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

- 11.1.
- Aids & Adaptation EDI impact assessment
 - Repairs Service Standards
 - Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy
 - Equality, Diversity & Inclusion impact assessment

POLICY INFORMATION

Policy Name:	Adaptations policy
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