



Adaptations Policy – DP15's and DFGs

Published January 2024

Review date January 2027

1. Aim and scope of policy

To work collaboratively with statutory and voluntary partner agencies to meet the needs of our customers, that may benefit from adaptations, in order to live safely and independently. We will do this by helping to provide and adapt accommodation suitable for their needs.

The policy does not apply to customers who are leaseholders / shared owners, market rental where we are not the freeholder, or in any tenure where we are leasing the property.

Customers who require adaptations to their homes should seek the advice and assistance of the local authority. The local authority will consider whether the customer is applicable for a Disabled Facilities Grant. In this instance, the local authority will fund and oversee the work themselves.

2. Definitions

- DFG – Disabled Facilities Grant
- DP15 – A form completed and provided by an occupation therapist detailing the recommended adaptations for the customer
- OT – Occupational Therapist

3. Policy

This policy confirms how we'll consider applications for our customers living in home within our ownership. All enquiries are managed in order of date received and progressed as a matter of priority.

We will make reasonable adjustments, known as minor adaptations, by carrying out these adaptations in our homes with our own direct labour. This will balance the needs of current, and future customers, the cost of the adaptations and the impact on the property.

Adaptations' can be defined as alterations to a property which materially improve the ability of disabled people to live independently. These adaptations can be minor, such as the fitting of grab rails, or major such as fitting a level access shower. We will consider carrying out minor aids and adaptation work or give approval for works to be carried out to our housing stock where; -

- it is at the request of our customer (either for them or for a member of their household) and/ or the work is recommended by a qualified Occupational Therapist (OT);
- the property is the principal home of the person who needs the adaptation;
- it is practical for the works to be carried out;

- there's available funding; and
- the work would not present us with extensive costs when the adaptations require removal (either during the tenancy, or at the end of the tenancy).

We do not expect all requests for minor aids and/or adaptations to be accompanied by a DP15 form (a form completed by an Occupational Therapist outlining what disabled adaptations and/or aids are required and the importance of these), depending on the nature of the request, we'll ordinarily be able to add aids and make improvements to the home where required.

FUNDING AND PERMISSION FOR DISABLED ADAPTATIONS WITH A VALUE LESS THAN £1,500;- (Minor Adaptions / DP15's)

Irrespective of the applicant's financial circumstances we'll meet, from our own resources, any requests for minor disabled adaptations to their property providing the total cost does not exceed £1,500 per customer, per year. This is capped for each request. Applications for minor adaptations, where we will meet the total cost of the adaptations, will be completed as soon as practically possible.

FUNDING AND PERMISSION FOR DISABLED ADAPTATIONS WITH A VALUE MORE THAN £1,500;- (Major Adaptions / DFG's)

Where works will cost more than £1,500 the OT should refer the request to the local authority for funding through a DFG. We will not make a financial contribution to work those costs more than £1,500.

Where the cost of work is likely to exceed the local authority financial limit for DFGs (currently £30,000), we will discuss their options on a case-by-case basis with the support of the local authority. If the applicant's required to contribute to the cost of the adaptations, the local authority will discuss with the customer directly.

Major adaptations that require significant structural changes to the building are likely to be refused as are works that are detrimental to neighbouring properties - unless no other option is available for the applicant and where this is most likely to be their lifelong home.

Where Building Regulation consent and/or planning permission is required this must be obtained prior to any work commencing and copies of any permissions/ discharge of conditions supplied to us by the local authority. Without the necessary consents and/or permissions we will not give permission for the work to go ahead.

PROPERTY CLASSIFICATION FOLLOWING ADAPTATION

Where the installation of an adaptation results in the loss of existing facilities (such as a bedroom), the rent chargeable will be reviewed. As part of this, the adaptations present will also be taken into account. Depending on the tenure of the property, the rent may be adjusted once it has been reassessed. Where this is not possible, the new rent will take effect at the point the property is relet if the adaptations on which the rent has been rebased remain.

MAINTENANCE AND REPLACEMENT OF ADAPTATIONS

Adaptations which are installed during a tenancy are the responsibility of the tenant for whom they were installed under their guarantee. We will take ownership of the equipment, once the warranties have expired. We will also take responsibility if the property is relet with the equipment present in the property.

Equipment which we have been notified of or identified as being present will be required to be serviced and maintained by us (where applicable). Where customers have their own arrangements in place, appropriate certification should be provided to us. Where we undertake servicing and/or maintenance of adaptations, a service charge will be applied which is payable by the customer.

If an adaptation is damaged and the damage to an adaptation has been caused by the customer, a member of their household or guest, they will be responsible for making this good or to pay any costs incurred by us, in carrying out such works (as per the tenancy agreement).

If the adaption is beyond economical repair, we will work with the customer to support them seek funding for the replacement.

RELET OF PROPERTIES

As far as practically possible we'll ensure that adapted properties are re-let to applicants who need the adaptations that have been made to a specific property. Where adaptations are still in a functional and useable condition, we'll advertise properties with these adaptations.

When properties are vacant, we may decide to remove disabled adaptations from the property. This will be determined by the condition of the adaptations present, whether there is a current need for these and the likely future cost to us, of these being present.

A request for a mutual exchange may be refused where the property has design features for the physically disabled and on the assignment, there would be no disabled person living in the property.

SUPPLY OF NEW ADAPTED PROPERTIES

We'll work closely with our local authority partners to ensure that where required and as far as practically possible new build housing schemes include a proportion of homes to meet the needs of residents with a disability on their housing registers. All new homes will be constructed to meet the current Building Regulation standards to ensure that people are able to access and use buildings and their facilities.

Recognising the challenges an aging demographic will bring, some new homes will be constructed with enhanced standards to provide accessible and adaptable dwellings, and there are also some homes that are constructed with additional requirements to be suitable for wheelchair users and those with mobility difficulties. The enhanced standards will generally be a requirement of the local authority planning permission for the homes.

4. Responsibilities

- Managing DFG requests and granting permission – Asset Major Works

- Reviewing and overseeing completion of DP15 work – Repairs Supervisors
- Policy Owner – Head of Asset Strategy & Delivery
- Approving Policy- Exec

5. Related documents

- Housing management Policy
- Tenancy Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Lettings Policy
- Mutual Exchange Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Disabled Facilities Grant Delivery – Department of Levelling Up, housing & communities

Co-Creation	This policy was co-created with our Customers in November 2023
Equality Impact Assessment	This policy underwent an Equality Impact Assessment in January 2024
Policy Author	Michelle Scrase, Major Works Manager
Policy Owner	Matt Bellamy, Director of Asset Strategy and Delivery
Approved by	Executive Team
Approved Date	January 2024
Published Date	January 2024
Review Date	January 2027