

Adaptations Policy

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POLICY ON THE PROVISION OF ADAPTATIONS

1. Introduction

The Association is committed to meeting the needs of rented customers through providing adaptations to their home, where possible and where funding is available. This will help enable our customers to enjoy greater independence, privacy and dignity and allow them to remain in their homes.

Through providing adaptations we will contribute towards:

- Assisting independent living
- Preventing customers from having to live in inappropriate housing
- Helping to reduce long stays in hospital, through allowing customers to return home
- Benefiting the ageing population
- Increasing the amount of housing stock suitable for people with reduced mobility and particular needs

Only applications for adaptations to social or MMR tenanted properties, owned by the Association or one of its subsidiaries, will be considered by us. Owner-Occupiers, Sharing Owners and Private Full Market rent tenants should seek advice regarding adaptations to their property from the local authority. In many cases the local authority may be able to provide grant assistance through their Scheme of Assistance. Where such works are being considered to a Kingdom Group owned property, written permission must be obtained from us before any work is carried out.

Where we lease properties, the relevant works will be undertaken in accordance with the terms of the lease and so this policy may not necessarily apply.

We are committed to sustainable development and will recognise sustainability aims and principles when implementing this policy. This will include, wherever possible, the use of sustainable materials, products and specification, which will maintain our properties to a high standard of energy efficiency.

We are committed to the principles of good corporate governance and sustainability and will endeavour to develop fair and consistent policies, procedures and practices.

In line with our commitment to equality and diversity, this policy can be made available in a variety of formats, including large print, translated into another language or other media. We will make any reasonable adjustments to assist you if you have a disability.

2. General Principles

Adaptations must be deemed to be essential to be considered by us and must be permanent changes to the structure, fabric, services or facilities provided by us in the property. The adaptation must be needed for the tenants or permanent residents of the property. The Association cannot provide mobile Aids or Equipment, which may be removed in the future for example mobile hoists or bathing aids. The Local Authority has the responsibility for this type of assistance.



Adaptations must also be recommended by an appropriately qualified medical professional, normally an Occupational Therapist, who will assess the needs based on the particular medical circumstances. Tenants who request adaptations directly through us will be referred to the local authority social work department or locality offices to request a visit and assessment from an Occupational Therapist.

When a tenant requires an adaptation to their property, the Occupational Therapy Service will be responsible for carrying out an assessment of need. The Association will require a written referral, which will confirm the agreed priority status and provide specific recommendations. Referrals can also be made by doctors or other suitably qualified health care professionals, however, in some cases we may still ask for an additional assessment by an Occupational Therapist to ensure we have enough information to assess if the adaptation meets the criteria to be taken forward.

The Association will normally process and provide all adaptations in accordance with the Occupational Therapist recommendations received. There may be exceptional cases where the Association feels the recommended works cannot or should not be undertaken. In these circumstances alternatives will be discussed between the Association, the Occupational Therapist and the tenant.

3. Eligibility

We will review adaptation referrals sent to us and decide if they are eligible to be taken forward. Adaptations that are not deemed essential cannot be funded and carried out by us. Adaptations are not deemed essential purely on the basis of the type of work being requested but on the specific illness or issues experienced by the individual concerned and on the level of benefit that the adaptation will have on these issues.

Where adaptations are not essential and so will not be done by us, tenants may wish to self-fund or seek alternative funding means to allow the works to be done, with the work being organised by the tenant or a third party on their behalf. In these cases written permission for the adaptation is required and must be obtained from us as Landlords, prior to any work being carried out. It is strongly recommended in these circumstances that written permission is obtained at the earliest opportunity to avoid tenants incurring unnecessary expenditure or abortive costs, should permission not be given.

In certain circumstances, we may consider that adapting the property is not the most appropriate option. The criteria influencing these circumstances could be financial, technical or for reasons relating to the present or future use of the property. In these situations, alternative options such as re-housing will be discussed between the Association, the Occupational Therapist and the Tenant.

4. Funding – General Adaptations

Limited funding is available to the Association through the Scottish Government for essential adaptations meeting defined criteria. Annually the Association will make a bid for this funding from the Scottish Government to cover the expected levels of referrals. It is not guaranteed that



the funding applied for will be obtained, for example applications for funding may be restricted by the Scottish Government.

In addition to this grant funding the Association may set aside additional funding for essential adaptations, meeting the same criteria, which may be used to augment the grant funding.

As funding each year is therefore limited it will be focussed on the most urgent adaptations, in the case of less urgent works this may result in delays or they may be deferred until funding becomes available, possibly into a future financial year when new funding is available.

5. Funding Major Adaptations

Limited funding is also available for major adaptations, however in this case funding is approved on an individual case by case basis from a limited budget made available for these by the Scottish Government.

Where we receive a supported referral for a major adaptation we will first fully review the eligibility of the application for grant funding under the Scottish Government Guidance and also look at any other possible solutions to the issues concerned, including rehousing in more suitable accommodation.

In certain circumstances, adapting the property may not be considered to be the appropriate option. The criteria influencing these circumstances could be financial, technical or for reasons relating to the present or future use of the property. In these situations, alternative options such as re-housing will be discussed between the Association, the Occupational Therapist and the Tenant.

Where it is decided that the major adaptations are the most appropriate route a funding application will be made to allow this to proceed. Depending on available funding this may need to be deferred into a future year when funding is available.

6. Monitoring

For referrals which are approved and taken forward timescales for completing the work, from the date the referral is received until completion, will be set and monitored.

In the case of major adaptations, due to their nature, they will not have set target timescales but will instead be monitored on an individual basis, based on the work required and the amount of design work and statutory permissions needed to allow the work to be taken forward.

Once the adaptations have been completed they will be maintained by us in accordance with our Reactive Maintenance Policy. Future replacement, where required, will be done in accordance with our planned maintenance policies and procedures.

The Housing Department will fully recognise the adaptations carried out to a property when considering subsequent allocations.

We will not normally increase the rent on a property or apply specific charges to the tenants for the provision, maintenance or replacement of adaptations, except in cases where the facilities



installed would normally incur increased rent levels. Or where the property has been extended or additional facilities have been provided that would normally incur additional charges under our rent policies.

7. Role of Asset Management Department

Lead responsibility for the implementation of this policy rests with the Asset Management Department.

The departmental staff will be responsible for the following:

- To develop and monitor procedures for the implementation of this policy.
- To monitor the effectiveness of the policy and produce reports for the Board of Management or Board of Directors.
- To implement effective liaison with other departments, to achieve high levels of customer service.
- To update programmes and provide the Finance Department with the necessary information for financial planning and budgeting.
- To undertake regular pre and post completion inspections.
- To update stock, maintenance and expenditure records following the completion of any work.
- To procure work cost effectively and in accordance with our procurement policy and procedures.

Housing Department staff will liaise with Asset Management when considering the eligibility of adaptation referrals and in reviewing and considering other housing solutions.

8. Complaints

If a tenant is unhappy with any aspect of the adaptation process, a complaint can be made in accordance with our Compliments and Complaints Policy in order to have their concerns investigated.

9. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed 5 years from the date of implementation, which will be the date the policy is approved by the Board of Management/Board of Directors, or earlier if deemed appropriate. In the event that this policy is not reviewed within the above timescale, the latest approved policy will continue to apply.

In reviewing the policy, feedback from customers about their satisfaction with the quality and effectiveness of repairs service will be taken into account.



KINGDOM HOUSING GROUP

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Policy drawn up with reference to:

- The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, 2010 & 2014
- SHGN 2001/02 Procedures for HAG Funding of Stage 3 Adaptations
- Procedures for Funding of RSL Adaptations, March 2012, Scottish Government

The regulations will be also recognised as part of the development and implementation of the relevant procedures and when contracts are awarded.

Reference made to the following sources and other guidance:

- Scottish Housing Regulator's Charter Outcomes and Standards
- Outcome and Standards 2 Communication; 3 Participation; 4 Quality of Housing; 5 Repairs, maintenance and improvements; 13 Value for Money

Prepared by: Alan Simpson; Director of Asset Management

Previous Policy: This policy supersedes the previous Policy on the Provision of Adaptations Policy, June 2000

Review Process:

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