

Aids and Adaptations Policy

Policy Implementation Checklist	
Policy Guardian:	Director of Property Services
Policy Author:	Asset Manager
Policy Title:	Aids and Adaptations Policy
Approved by Chief Executive on:	8 th December 2020
Approved by Linthouse Management Committee on:	8 th December 2020
Effective from:	9 th December 2020
Due for Review on	December 2023
Regulatory Standards of Governance and Financial Management:	<u>Standard 2:</u> The RSL is open and accountable for what it does. It understands and takes account of the needs and priorities of its tenants, service users and stakeholders. And its primary focus is the sustainable achievement of these priorities.2.2 The governing body recognises its accountability to its tenants and has a wider public accountability to the taxpayer as a recipient of public funds and actively manages its accountabilities. It is open about what it does, publishes information about its activities and, wherever possible, agrees to requests for information about the work of the governing body and the RSL.
Policy Linkages:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LHA Business Plan 2017-18 to 2019-2020 • Procurement Policy • Reactive Repairs Policy
Training Completed on:	
Posted on Website on:	

Staff Sign off as Read and Training Completed	
Management Committee Sign off as Read and Training Completed	

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Section 1: Introduction

1.1. Aids and Adaptations

1.1.1 This policy outlines our responsibilities in dealing with Aids and Adaptations.

1.1.2 The aim of this policy is to contribute to the effective maintenance of our housing stock, in enabling tenants to stay in their properties longer by adjusting to the property to suit the changing needs of the existing tenant.

1.1.3 **Note:** In this Policy, Linthouse Housing Association is referred to as “we”, “us” or “our”.

1.2 Scope of Policy

1.2.1 This policy applies to all new and existing tenants.

1.3 Equality and Diversity

1.3.1 We are committed to providing fairness and equality of opportunity in order to prevent discrimination in both the workplace and wider society. The Aids and Adaptations Policy will be applied in line with our Equality and Diversity Policy to ensure that no person is discriminated on the grounds outlined in the Equality Act 2010.

1.3.2 We will ensure our approach to dealing with requests for aids and adaptations takes into account the individual needs of our tenants and their households. Where required, appropriate arrangements will be made for communicating with our tenants to ensure the work is carried out properly.

1.3.3 This complies with the section of the Scottish Government’s Scottish Social Housing Charter dealing with equalities which states that social landlords must perform all aspects of their housing services so that:

“Every tenant and other customer has their individual needs recognised, is treated fairly and with respect, and receives fair access to housing and housing services.” (Outcome 1: Equalities).

1.4 Our Mission

1.4.1 The Aids and Adaptations Policy forms part of our mission to:

“deliver high quality and cost-effective housing services designed to meet the needs of existing and future customers. To work in partnership with others to create thriving communities that people want to live and work in”.

1.5 Our Vision and Values

1.5.1 Our vision is the creation and sustainment of lasting, unique, vibrant homes in stable, popular and ambitious urban communities. Our vision is underpinned by four core values which we apply to all areas of our business. These are:

- i. **Customer Driven**
- ii. **Honest**
- iii. **Accountable**
- iv. **Transparent**

1.6 Our Organisational Culture

16.1 Our **C.H.A.T** values as outlined, form the foundation of our **Listen, Hear, Act (L.H.A)** customer excellence and organisational culture programme. All staff receive training at induction on customer service standards and the organisational culture we promote. This includes reference to our Equality and Diversity Policy and a requirement to treat colleagues, tenants, contractors, service users, and any other stakeholders with dignity and respect.

1.6.2 The organisational culture we promote is based on finding solutions to suit customer needs regardless of individual differences We will:

1. **Listen** - We are committed to listening to those we do business with, be that our customers, staff, stakeholders, regulators or funders, to ensure that our responses are reflective of what people are saying to us.
2. **Hear** - Once we listen and understand the need/demand/offer that is presented, we will ensure that we fully understand what is being said.

3. **Act** - Whilst we will think about what we do, we want to be known for acting swiftly to deliver solutions and for always keeping our promises.

1.6.3 Our Customer Service Standards aims to ensure all our service users receive an excellent standard of service. The Standards help define what our customers can expect when contacting or engaging with the staff in our office. It is available on our website, direct from the office, or in other formats as required.

Section 2: Overarching Objectives and Implementation

This section outlines our overarching objectives and how we will implement these.

2.1 Linkage

Objective number 3 of our Strategic Business Plan relates to Providing Quality Homes in an attractive environment.

2.1.1 As part of this, LHA recognises that the physical needs of tenants and other household members can change during their tenancy. Many people with physical or sensory impairments would prefer to remain in their homes. Often, the use of aids or adaptations is the most effective way of realising this preference.

2.2 Scope and Objectives

2.2.1 Adapted properties:

- Assist independent living
- Reduce inappropriate housing conditions
- Reduce the risk of falls or accidents in the home
- Avoid the need for Home Care
- Avoid long term admission to a care home
- Help reduce long stays in hospital accommodation
- Benefit the ageing population
- Increase the amount of housing stock suitable for people with reduced mobility

2.2.2 The key objectives of the Aids and Adaptations Policy are:

- To ensure that LHA assist customers to remain in their present homes for as long as possible. The Association will consider carrying out repairs, improvements or adaptations to enable customers to live in comfort and safety in the community. This will be done with the recognition that a person's independence, privacy, confidence and dignity can be maintained
- To maximise all Glasgow City Council Development and Regeneration Services (DRS) grants and other available resources for adaptations, always having high regard for value for money (VFM)
- To ensure there are clear channels of communication and established joint working practices with our partners
- To comply with legal and statutory requirements in relation to the provision of disabled adaptations and ensure a high-quality appropriate design in relation to aids and adaptations
- To ensure that properties are clearly identified on a register so that best use can be made of these properties as they become available
- To manage in accordance with the Scottish Government's current advice
- Guidance on the Provision of Equipment and Adaptations 2009
- A Guide to Funding Major Adaptations 2010
- CSGN 2004/12 Housing for Varying Needs Design Procedures.

2.3 Adaptation Classifications and Types of Adaptations

2.3.1 Adaptation Classifications

The Scottish Government classifies Adaptations in three groups:

1. **Stage 1**

Design Features which are not specific to a condition or an individual and which are incorporated into the initial specification prior to construction or improvement.

2. **Stage 2**

Adaptations to a house to meet the needs of a tenant to whom the property has been allocated before, or close to, practical completion. These adaptations may be completed by the original contractor.

3. Stage 3

Works to adapt a property to suit the changing needs of the existing tenant, or of a new tenant, where these could not reasonably have been identified when the house was originally provided.

There are no separate specific policies for either Stage 1 and Stage 2 adaptations as these are dealt with as part of separate contracts.

Applications for Stage 1 and Stage 2 adaptations funding will normally be included in main scheme submissions. This policy focuses on Stage 3 Adaptations.

Stage 3 Adaptations are for individual tenants and are typically:

- replacing a bath with a level access shower
- Improving access to the home by widening doors or construction of a ramp
- Fitting lower level work surfaces to make, for example, the kitchen easier to use
- Installation of grab rails
- Installation of lever taps
- Non-slip Floorcovering

It should be noted that this list is not exhaustive and all appropriate referrals made via an Occupational Therapist (OT) or qualified medical opinion such as a doctors letter recommending the works will be considered by the association in order to meet the needs of the occupant.

Adaptations cannot proceed without either of the above.

2.3.2 Types of Adaptations Works

Within the above works, the nature of the main works envisaged are as follows:

Over Bath Shower Installations

The installations of an instantaneous electric shower, with DP pull switch within 400mm of the shower occupants reach, complete with all water and electrical service connections and all necessary ceramic tiling, grab rails, associated builder work and making good as instructed by the contract administrator.

Normal Shower Installations

The replacement of an existing bath with a shower tray and cubicle together with an instantaneous electric shower unit, with DP Pull switch within 400mm of the shower occupants reach, complete with all waste, water and electrical service connections and all necessary ceramic tiling and vinyl flooring , grab rails, wall mounted fold down seat, associate builder work and making good as instructed by the contract administrator.

Level Access Shower Installation

The replacement of an existing bath with a level access shower enclosure, together with an instantaneous electric shower unit, with DP Pull switch within 400mm of the shower occupants reach, complete water and electrical service connections, alteration of existing waste drainage and all necessary ceramic tiling and vinyl flooring, grab rails, wall mounted fold down seat, associated builder work and making good as instructed by the contract administrator.

Wet Floor Shower Area

The replacement of an existing bath by the conversion of a bathroom to a wet floor area comprising a waterproof vinyl floor membrane and skirting, together with an instantaneous electric shower unit, with DP pull switch within 400mm of the shower occupants reach , complete with all water and electrical service connections, alteration of existing water drainage and all necessary ceramic tiling, grab rails, wall mounted fold down seat, associated builder work and making good as instructed by the contract administrator.

Where requests for extensive aids and adaptations are made a meeting between the Technical Services Manager, Head of Customer Services, tenant and OT will be necessary before any approval can be given. This approval will be given in writing.

2.4 Funding for Adaptations

- 2.4.1 LHA will bid for annual funding allocation to cover the estimated costs of meeting requests and referrals for Stage 3 adaptation works. This will be submitted each year through the Strategy and Development Funding Plan (SDFP).
- 2.4.2 If the annual budget is fully spent and there remains further adaptations which have not been completed, LHA will request additional funding from DRS to meet the demand.
- 2.4.3 Adaptation works that are not the responsibility of other agencies, and that are agreed to be eligible for grant, will attract 100% grant.
- 2.4.4 Properties that have been subject to major adaptations will have any relevant Rent Setting Policy elements incorporated into the annual rent review.
- 2.4.5 Should budget be fully spent, the association will still consider minor adaptations funded from our own budget

2.5 Request for Adaptations

- 2.5.1 All applications for approval of funding of Stage 3 Adaptations must be based on specialist advice, or on medical opinion, and must comply with specialist recommendations.
- 2.5.2 This will routinely be in the form of a report from an OT.
- 2.5.3 Where a tenant makes a direct request to LHA they will be advised to contact the OT service. In exceptional cases, the Association may contact the OT service on behalf of the tenant.

- 2.5.4 LHA will aim to deal with all enquiries effectively and quickly.
- 2.5.5 The OT team are professionally qualified staff who will undertake a needs assessment of the tenant or family member, which may also include an independent medical assessment.
- 2.5.6 Tenants or members of their immediate households may wait some time (critical need 6 weeks and substantial need 12 weeks) for assessment as caseloads may be high. The OT team will inform the tenant of the outcome of the assessment and prepare a report for the Association.
- 2.5.7 At the time of any request, there can be a waiting list of Association tenants who have already requested an aid or adaptation.

Priority will be given to adaptations where the tenant is in hospital and the adaptation is a requirement for discharge to allow the tenant to return home.

- 2.5.8 All referrals from the OT will be discussed with Asset Management and Customer Services teams to enable consideration of the applicant's circumstances such as:

- the tenant's preference to transfer to a more suitable property or to remain in their home
- availability of suitable accommodation
- likely waiting time for alternative accommodation
- the feasibility of the adaptation in relation to the layout and structure of the property
- the implications of the adaptation work when the property becomes available for re-let.

- 2.5.9 Where transfer is a feasible option and provides an alternative to the provision of a high cost adaptation, then the option of transfer will be pursued.

2.5.10 The Association reserves the right to refuse to carry out an adaptation should it not be practical to carry out the work required.

Each case will be considered on its own merits but will be guided by the following:

- the proposed adaptation must be essential and/or reasonable
- the adaptation must be required for a permanent member of the household
- proposed adaptations should meet the long-term requirements of the tenant
- the tenant should be satisfied that the proposed adaptations meet their needs
- the work should offer value for money
- the work should be capable of being completed within a reasonable timescale
- the proposed adaptations should not be technically difficult to achieve and should not be undertaken to the detriment of the property, the area or surrounding residents
- the proposed adaptation should not contravene statutory requirements such as planning.

Should a tenant refuse to allow adaptations in their home, they must confirm their refusal in writing.

2.6 Instructing the Work

2.6.1 Once a referral has been received from the OT, the Association will acknowledge receipt of the referral within 7 working days.

2.6.2 Work will be carried out by LHA's appointed Stage 3 Adaptations contractor, awarded via Scottish Government procurement regulations.

2.6.3 Procurement methods will be in line with the current LHA Procurement of Goods, Services and Works Policy.

2.6.4 LHA will engage competent contractors to provide these adaptations.

2.6.5 The specification of works carried out will relate to the contract for the provision of Stage 3 Adaptations as completed as part of this tender process and is priced as per the associated schedule of rates.

- 2.6.6 This specification will be reviewed regularly in line with other contracts.
- 2.6.7 The contractor will, after investigation and agreement of the works, complete the works within a 10-day working period.

2.7 Maintenance of Adaptations

- 2.7.1 The defects liability period associated with any adaptation will be 6 months.
- 2.7.2 Work arising from snagging lists or noted as a contractual defect must be completed within two calendar months.
- 2.7.3 After this time, LHA will maintain and replace adaptations in accordance with the association's maintenance policy. Details of all completed work will be recorded on LHA's Asset Management System, Capita.

Section 3: Compliance and Complaints

The Asset Manager will oversee the adaptation process and ensure that the policy guidelines are complied with. Our aim is to get it right first time.

3.1 General Complaint Handling Procedure

- 3.1.1 LHA employ a complaint handling procedure that was established for housing associations throughout Scotland and developed by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman.
- 3.1.2 In accordance with housing law, we provide our tenants with thorough information pertaining to our complaint policy. Moreover, we also advise all service users on their right to complain.
- 3.1.3 A complaint is defined as:

“An expression of dissatisfaction by one or more members of the public about the housing association's action or lack of action, or about the standard of service provided by or on behalf of the housing association”.

Detailed information on how to make a complaint is readily available by request from our office or on our website (www.Linthouseha.com)

3.1.4 Tenants can also obtain advice and information from a local Citizens Advice Bureau, a solicitor, or a representative. If, for any reason, a tenant is unable to complain or appeal to the association formally then they may authorise a representative to write on their behalf.

3.2 Monitoring and Reporting

3.2.1 Where possible, 100% of all works will be followed up with a post inspection survey and any feedback received will be used in the review process.

3.2.2 We will look to carry out the inspection in conjunction with a representative from the contractor to ensure that works are signed off quickly and any issues are raised at the earliest opportunity.

3.2.3 Regular reports will be prepared regarding the level of funding received, the number and progress of works, and average timescales to complete.

3.2.4 The association's Asset Manager will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and will provide regular reports to the Association's Management Committee on adaptations on a quarterly basis.

3.2.5 The Association will monitor its performance against the following indicators which have been set by the Scottish Housing Regulator:

- The percentage of adaptations grant spent
- Percentage of approved applications for medical adaptations completed during the reporting year
- Average time to complete adaptations.

3.3 Data Protection

3.3.1 All information in respect of adaptation requests is treated as confidential and will not be passed onto or discussed with any person or organisation without the permission of the tenant.

- 3.3.2 This excludes any enquiries the Association makes to confirm information provided in the request.
- 3.3.3 If the associations Management Committee members are required to discuss an individual case, the identity of the tenant will be withheld.
- 3.3.4 All personal data used under this policy will be handled confidentially, in accordance with our obligations under Data Protection laws and LHA's Data Protection Policy and Procedures.

Section 4: Review of Standards and Repairs Services Policy

- 4.1 This policy will be reviewed **every 3 years** to ensure that the appropriate amendments are made. All staff and relevant third parties will be informed. Continuously subjecting our Policy to review will ensure that its effectiveness is maintained, and that feedback can be acted upon in a reasonable time frame.

Appendix 1: Equalities Impact Statement

TITLE OF POLICY:	
Strategic Outcome:	Support improvements in the quality of Housing Stock managed by LHA and to ensure Tenants can continue to reside in their properties for as long as possible
What is the purpose of the proposed Policy?	The purpose of the Aids and Adaptations Policy is to ensure that LHA assist customers to remain in their present homes for as long as possible.
Protected Characteristic Groups affected by the Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age • Disability
Who is the target audience of this policy or who is intended to benefit from the proposed policy and how? (ie. employees, service users, management committee etc.)	LHA Tenants
List any existing documents, evidence, research which have been used to inform the EqIA (this must include relevant data used in this assessment)	n/a
Has any consultation involvement been undertaken with the Protected Characteristic Groups to inform this assessment? (please provide details of who and how consulted)	n/a
What is the actual likely impact?	<p>LHA Tenants will be able to remain in their present homes for as long as possible.</p> <p>It will assist independent living, reduce inappropriate housing conditions, assist independent living and reduce inappropriate housing conditions</p>
How have you, or will you, put the Policy into practice, and who is or will be responsible for delivering it?	Asset Management and Appointed Contractor
How does the Policy fit into our wider or related policy initiatives?	Objective number 3 of our Strategic Business Plan relates to Providing Quality Homes in an attractive environment.
Do you have a set budget for this work?	Determined by Annual DRS Funding