



Havebury Housing Partnership

AIDS AND ADAPTATIONS POLICY

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Equality & Diversity Impact Assessment	March 2011, Status: High

1 Responsibility

1.1 The Operations Committee is responsible for approval and oversight and the Director of Operations and delegated staff are responsible for delivery.

1.2 Relevant legislation to aids and adaptations policy includes:

- The Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970 (sections 1&2)
- S.23 of the Housing Grants Construction and Regeneration Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010

2 Definitions

2.1 The Equality Act 2010 states that:

A person has a disability if:

- They have a physical or mental impairment
- The impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to perform normal day to day activities

‘Substantial’ means more than minor or trivial.

‘Long term’ means has lasted or is likely to last for at least 12 months (there are rules in the Act covering recurring or fluctuating conditions).

Normal day to day activities include everyday things like washing, eating, walking and going shopping.

3 Aims and Objectives

3.1 To deliver through efficient management of resources and finance aids and adaptations service for our tenants who have disabilities or increased physical needs because of age.

3.2 To enable the tenant to live safely and more independently, by adapting their current home or supporting them practically to move to more appropriate accommodation.

3.3 To deliver a customer centred, accessible adaptations service that informs, involves and offers choice to residents, wherever reasonable to do so.

3.4 To make the best use of our homes and available resources to provide flexible housing solutions that deliver value for money.

3.5 Ensures we meets our legal and regulatory obligations and operates in accordance with good practice guidelines

3.6 To work with partner agencies, as appropriate, to deliver the service

4 Policy Statement

- 4.1 We will allocate a budget as part of our annual capital programme for the purpose of undertaking aids and adaptations within its homes to enable tenants and other residents.
- 4.2 The 2002 Transfer Agreement (where Havebury was formed from the Local Authority) provides that we will meet our obligation to investigate and supply aids and adaptations for those residents in need from our own budgets.
- 4.3 We will consider all options in meeting the needs of a tenant with disabilities, including the option of offering a suitable alternative existing adapted property.

5 Legislation and Regulation

- The Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970 (sections 1&2)
- S.23 of the Housing Grants Construction and Regeneration Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- The Regulator for Social Housing Consumer Standards

6 Policy Detail

- 6.1 Major Adaptations will generally be defined as any adaptations that in total cost over £1,000 and could include (but is not limited to), wet rooms, stair lifts and access ramps. We are never required to alter or change the structure or exterior to a property.
- 6.2 Applications for major adaptation to our properties will be considered where there is a valid recommendation for such work to be carried out by a qualified professional. This qualified professional will generally be employed by Havebury, Suffolk County Council, the Health Authority, or their designated agents.
- 6.3 Before carrying out any work, the following will be considered:
 - a. The suitability of the property to accommodate the proposed structural alteration. For example where it is impractical to carry out the work due to cost, existing layout or planning or building regulations.
 - b. If the adaptation is significant enough to remove a bedroom from use, this would need particular consideration. This is because we would, under our bedroom size policy, need to reclassify that property to reduce bedroom numbers which would have implications both for our asset base and for our rental income

- c. Appropriateness of adaptations if the tenant has chosen to leave accommodation which is already adapted, either by mutual exchange or by a move.
- d. Availability of alternative existing accommodation that will meet the prescribed needs. If suitable adapted accommodation exists elsewhere, taking appropriate account of the tenant's circumstances, we will encourage and support a move to an alternative home. In addition to this, a managed move will be arranged if appropriate. (This is particularly relevant where level access showers are being requested in accommodation other than ground floor flats or bungalows.)

6.4 Minor Adaptations are defined as costing under £1,000 and include grab rails, for example.

6.5 Minor adaptations may be requested directly to us from the tenant, or on their behalf by any authorised representative.

6.6 Prioritisation

6.6.1 Generally all applications will be dealt with in date order. However, we recognise that there may be times when we must reprioritise or expedite works based on need.

6.6.2 Where we are likely to be required to meet the cost of the adaption and the budget is unlikely to be adequate to meet all application requests within the financial year, we will apply the following factors to ensure these limited resources are invested wisely: - : -

- a. whether there are any alternative facilities which could be used by the applicant in close proximity to their home. For example where there are applications for the installation of a shower in place of a bath in sheltered schemes, the application may be delayed if there are alternative adequate specialist facilities within the sheltered scheme.
- b. The time it has taken for the referral to reach us, so that the waiting times remain fair for all applicants.
- c. The urgency of the outstanding referrals and whether there is reasonable justification to prioritise based on need rather than date order.

6.6.3 Whilst it is our intention to invest our full annual budgetary provision in aids and adaptations, where it is clear that demand is likely to outstrip the budget, applicants will be advised of any delay in their application and the reasons for this action. Applicants will also be invited to consider if alternative funding arrangements or options can be explored.

6.7 Under Occupation

- 6.7.1 To help ensure that the individuals' personal needs are being met whilst at the same time maximising the occupancy level of our homes and hence supporting the wider housing need, the following criteria have been agreed with Local Authorities Councils:
- a. Where the household requesting the adaptation is under occupying the property, the Occupational Therapist (OT) or HHP representative visiting will provide advice both in respect of the specific property, but also in terms of the option to move to suitable alternative accommodation.
 - b. We will offer financial and practical support for households under occupying and moving to suitable alternative accommodation.
 - c. We will visit the tenant to discuss in more detail how we will offer support in moving to suitable alternative accommodation, as well as the adaptations (as necessary) that will be carried out at the alternative accommodation.
 - d. We will work with HomeLink (Choice Based Lettings scheme) to identify suitable alternative accommodation. The suitability of the accommodation will be both in terms of meeting the individual's physical needs as well as any reasonable specific needs in respect of location, for example schools or employment needs, as well as family and social support.
 - e. Efforts will be made to secure this alternative accommodation, and all cases will be reviewed every 3 months. This is to ensure all possible efforts are being made to identify all possible suitable alternatives, throughout all local providers, not just our homes.