



## **Adaptations Policy**

**Date Approved: 8<sup>th</sup> December 2021**

## 1. Introduction

This policy outlines Trafalgar Housing Association's principles that will be used in relation to the management of Adaptations.

It is THA's policy to respond wherever possible to adaptation requests for tenants or members of their family with a disability or a specific housing need. Any request will be considered in line with the availability of funding to carry out such work on an annual basis.

The Adaptations Policy has been set by the Management Committee of THA and will be operated by relevant staff of THA.

In relation to the Medical Adaptation process the Policy covers the following:

- Initial Referrals
- Referral Acceptance/Prioritisation/Refusal
- Targets
- Re-allocation of Adapted Property
- Quality Control & Customer Satisfaction
- Maintenance/Replacement /Removal Adaptation
- Funding
- Monitoring & Review

## 2. General Aims & Objectives

The Adaptations Policy aims to ensure that the Association effectively administers all referrals from a range of sources for adaptations that will enable disabled tenants and tenants with specific housing needs to continue to live in their home. A list of adaptation works carried out by the Association is contained in **Appendix 1** - this list is not exhaustive and other referrals maybe considered on a case-by-case basis.

The main objectives of this policy include:

- supporting the independence and dignity of tenants by undertaking adaptations to their existing properties to improve quality of life;
- acknowledging that in some instances construction type and financial constraints may prohibit the successful adaptation of a property;
- maximising grant funding available from the Scottish Government;
- ensuring that the Association carries out adaptations that are appropriate to the tenant's needs and therefore utilised to their full potential;
- ensuring that the Association makes best use of its housing stock and resources available by allocating vacant adapted houses to tenants with similar medical needs;
- having systems and procedures in place, which ensure that the medical adaptations process is carried out efficiently, effectively and economically for both Association and tenant;

- ensuring sure that policies, procedures and systems are reviewed regularly so that they are up to date and reflect current best practice guidance and legislation.
- responding promptly to referrals for adaptations.
- meet fully our legal obligations and Outcomes 1 and 11 as set out in The Scottish Social Housing Charter
- develop robust management information systems for monitoring and reporting performance in the Annual Return on the Charter which can be independently verified.

### 3. Legislation & Best Practice Guidance

THA will comply with all relevant performance standards or any targets set down to deliver adaptations to the homes of disabled people in order to meet their needs and statutory entitlements.

THA Adaptations Policy is consistent with our commitment to ensure equality of treatment for all tenants without discrimination or prejudice.

THA recognises that confidentiality is important to tenants and will treat their tenancy information in the strictest confidence under the Data Protection Act 1998.

### 4. Adaptations

#### **Referrals**

Referrals can be made in the following ways:

The Occupational Therapist Section of the Social Work Services who can identify and assess the need for all adaptations works. The Association will offer assistance to tenants to complete referral forms or provide details on the relevant persons to contact within the Social Work Services to arrange for an assessment to be carried out or make the initial telephone call to the OT Section on tenants' behalf.

Referral from a medical practitioner who is aware of the tenant's current needs and future requirements

Although the Association will not consider self-referrals from tenants, minor adaptations for items such as audio or visual smoke alarms for tenants with hearing or sight impairments can be requested by the tenant or a support worker acting on the tenant's behalf.

Each application is considered on a case-by-case basis by staff, with appeal to the Management Committee.

## **Referral Acceptance/Prioritisation/Refusal**

On receipt of the referral **Appendix 2** lays out the procedure carried out by the Association on processing the adaptation works from start to completion.

The Association will endeavour to carry out adaptation work that meets the long term needs of its residents, however it also recognises that there may be situations where it is not appropriate to carry out some forms of adaptation work. For example:

- If the tenant is on the transfer list and other more suitable accommodation is available.
- If the tenants needs are likely to change very soon and the proposed adaptations no longer meet the long term requirements of the tenant.
- The proposed adaptation should not contravene statutory requirements such as planning.
- It is not technically possible to carry out the adaptation.

If the Association refuses to carry out an adaptation, consideration will be given to addressing the tenant's needs with the provision of alternative accommodation within the Association's existing stock. In such an instance the Association will consult with the tenant and the OT, if applicable, to consider alternative housing options. The Association acknowledges the positive impact that adaptation work can have on improving a tenant's quality of life and will seek to arrive at a compromise where possible. Each set of circumstances will be considered on its own merit.

## **Targets**

The Association has set targets for completing adaptations; the start date for counting the target will begin once the Association has received the referral.

For minor adaptations such as handrails and smoke alarms etc, the target completion time is 10 working days

For major adaptations such as level access showers etc, the target completion time is 20 working days

## **Re-Allocation of Adapted Property**

Procedures for the re-allocation of an adapted property will be set out in the Association's Allocation Policy.

The Association will endeavour to make best use of its adapted stock by allocating/matching incoming households with such properties who require relevant adaptations.

At the ending of a tenancy and at a pre letting stage, it is the duty of the Association to ensure that the Social Work department is contacted to uplift any portable adaptive equipment that has been left in the house by an outgoing tenant.

## **Quality Control & Customer Satisfaction**

The Association's PSM will carry out a post completion inspection of the works to ensure they have been carried out to a high standard and that the tenant is able to make full use of the adaptation.

The OT, if applicable, will be notified that works are complete to enable them to carry out a post inspection of the works to evaluate whether the adaptation has achieved its aim.

The tenant(s) who have had the adaptation carried out will be encouraged to complete and return a satisfaction questionnaire to obtain feedback on the whole adaptations process.

## **Maintenance, Replacement & Removal**

The Association will maintain the costs associated with adaptations from the maintenance budget.

Given that the Scottish Government only requires competitive quotes for work above £3500, we will only ask for quotations where the adaptation where this is likely to be the case or if the adaptation involves work that is not normally undertaken by the Association's contractors; otherwise adaptations will be split between contractors from our approved contractors list.

Where renewal/replacement of an adaptation is required, the Association will attempt to obtain a new recommendation from the OT and make new application for funds.

## **5. Funding**

The Association receives Stage 3 Housing Association Grant (HAG) funding to assist with the provision of adaptations to tenants who have been identified as requiring assistance in the form of permanent medical adaptations to allow them to remain in their own home. This funding is based on the Association's requirements for the year ahead.

Expenditure on adaptations varies from year to year based upon the needs of individual tenants and also the availability of HAG. It is envisaged that THA could potentially spend significant sums on adaptations given the ageing population and other community care needs.

The PSM will monitor the demand and expenditure on adaptations throughout the year. Should additional funding become available the PSM will make an application as soon as possible.

## 6. Monitoring & Review

1. The PSM will be responsible for managing and monitoring the adaptations service.
2. THA will meet the reporting requirements by reporting to Committee on ARC performance targets on a quarterly basis.
3. Committee will be advised on an annual basis of the nature and cost of adaptations undertaken during the year.
4. All adaptations will be recorded on the computerised housing/maintenance system. A separate register will also be maintained which identifies all adaptations carried out by the Association.
5. The Association will publicise its Adaptations Policy through our website and through the tenant's newsletter.
6. The Adaptations Policy will be subject to review on a regular basis or as required by statutory, regulatory or best practice requirements.

## APPENDIX 1

### Eligible Adaptations (List not exhaustive)

#### External Adaptations

- Handrail at front or rear of dwelling
- Widening paths around property
- Modification or widening of steps
- Defining steps for people with visual impairment
- Outdoor lighting
- Paved areas for wheelchairs
- Carport or covered access to property
- Installation of ramp to front / rear access

#### Internal Adaptations

- Widening or re-hanging of doors
- Re-positioning of door locks
- Replacing door knobs etc

- Installation of door call, entry phone and door unlock systems
- Additional stair rail
- Alterations to windows
- Installation of stair lift
- Vertical hoist including reinforcing ceilings and provision of hoist track
- Provision of level access shower, adapted bath
- Alteration or relocation of taps, power supplies, lights, sockets and heating appliances
- Storage space for wheelchair
- Acoustic insulation
- Warning or alarm systems
- Non-slip or tactile surfaces
- Letter cages or delivery shelf
- Alterations to kitchen storage or equipment (excluding full re-design)

### **Major Works**

- Extensions or alterations to provide suitable bedroom or bathroom for a disabled person
- Vertical through floor lift
- Re-design of existing kitchen
- Creation of hard standings or other extensive external alterations

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **Adaptations Procedure**

- Tenant enquiry re Adaptation.
- Association receives completed referral – day one of adaptation process
- Association considers if adaptation works appropriate.
- Funding available & Adaptation appropriate.
- Inform OT work going ahead if applicable
- PSM & Contractor arrange date & time with tenant to inspect & schedule works.
- PSM instructs works
- On completion of works PSM inspect with OT if applicable - OT will arrange any further additional equipment at this stage e.g. shower chairs.
- Carry out Satisfaction Survey.
- Await Contractors invoice.
- Amend property Details on SDM System to show Adapted Property.
- Update Adaptations spreadsheet and claim funding from Scottish Government at next quarterly return.