

Policy and procedure

Aids and Adaptations

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Has this policy been signed off by the Client Forum (if applicable)?	Yes
Who does this policy apply to?	All Transform clients

Values

Respect <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Value diversity and fairness ▪ Act with honesty and integrity ▪ Treat people with care and compassion 	Empowerment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support the needs of each individual ▪ Encourage personal development and independence ▪ Provide safety, stability and security
Responsibility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work together, in partnership ▪ Take responsibility for our actions ▪ Continue learning and improving 	Excellence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide a first-class service ▪ Deliver excellent value for money ▪ Explore innovative ways of working

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POLICY

1. Introduction

- 1.1. An aid or adaptation is any equipment, fitting or modification provided in order to increase a client's mobility, personal dignity and independence. This therefore promotes an increased sense of wellbeing by improving quality of life in their own home. The Local Authority has a legal obligation to provide aids and adaptations. We are committed to working with our external local authority partners to facilitate their provision.
- 1.2. The need for an aid or adaptation may be identified by the client, their keyworker, a multi-agency worker or family member. Where an aid or adaptation may be required the following procedure would take place
 - We will view and assess each case individually in order to understand the needs and requirements of the client.
 - The Support Officer and the Maintenance Manager decide whether an Occupational Therapist or medical professional is required to specify adaptations to meet the client's needs
 - The Support Officer and Maintenance Manager will determine whether there is a statutory duty for the local authority to provide the adaptation.
 - Additional information may be required from an Occupational Therapist or medical professional.
- 1.3. By providing an aids and adaptations service, we are committed to doing everything reasonably possible to ensure clients and other permanent members of the household are adequately housed and to enable them to live independently in their own homes for as long as possible.
- 1.4. This policy aims to ensure that services are provided in a customer focused and cost-effective manner, which meet current and future needs of those using them.
- 1.5. This policy highlights Transform's commitment to our clients in line with our values:
 - To provide a service that supports our clients and other permanent members of the household to live independently in their home.
 - To ensure that we make best use of our existing housing stock.
 - To ensure clients and other permanent members of the household are aware of all the options open to them when accessing the aids and adaptations service.
 - To consider every adaptation request that we receive, providing a timely response regarding our decision.
 - To support as many eligible applications for adaptations as we can.
 - To use approved contractors to carry out and maintain all our adaptations.
 - To complete all major adaptations within 6 months of approving the request.
 - To carry out satisfaction surveys for any adaptations carried out to help improve our service.

1.6. This policy and procedure applies to all clients across Transform services.

2. Related Policies

2.1. This policy should be read in conjunction with the following Transform Policies and Procedures:

- Safeguarding
- Health and Safety Manual
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Repairs and Maintenance Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Compensation Policy
- Rent and Charge Setting Policy

3. Legislation and Guidance

3.1. This policy has been informed by the following legislation and guidance:

The Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996

3.2. The Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 sets out rules for when a Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) is mandatory – up to a value of £30,000, and subject to a means test. Local authorities are under a statutory duty under this Act to provide grant aid to disabled people for a range of adaptations to their homes.

The Care Act 2014

3.3. The Care Act 2014 requires that aids and minor adaptations (i.e. adaptations up to the value of £1,000) must be provided free of charge to eligible people with care and support needs.

3.4. We are committed to working with our local authority partners to facilitate the provision of aids and adaptations under these Acts. We also budget an annual sum for directly assisting minor and major aids and adaptations, subject to a financial assessment, for those who do not meet the criteria under the Care Act 2014. Transform makes provision for minor adaptations and for major adaptations for each year.

3.5. The following legislation has also shaped this policy:

The Equality Act 2010

Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970

NHS and Community Care Act 1990

The Human Rights Act 1998

The Mental Capacity Act 2005

4. Roles and responsibilities

- 4.1. The Director of Asset Management and Capital Development will have overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy.
- 4.2. Housing and Support Managers will ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are adequately trained to carry them out in relation to this policy

5. Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI)

- 5.1. The aids and adaptations service is provided as an inclusive and individualised service open for all clients and permanent members of the household. The service is provided with the aim of positively advancing equality of opportunity.
- 5.2. In particular, this service ensures that people with disabilities are able to maximise their independence and supports family life. We will endeavour to work with our clients and their families, partners and contractors to provide individual solutions using aids and adaptations, which could benefit our vulnerable clients.

6. Major and Minor Aids and Adaptations

- 6.1. Aids and Adaptations are split into two categories – minor and major. These distinctions are based on the nature and cost of the work required and do not correspond to the impact the alteration will have on the individual. Transform recognises that aids and adaptations can impact significantly on an individual's quality of life and ability to live with increased independence.

Major Aids and Adaptations

- 6.2. Major adaptations are those where there will be structural alterations to the property and/or if there is a significant cost. Examples of such work, but not restricted to, may be:
 - Level access shower to replace bath
 - Permanent ramp to a doorway
 - Thermostat controlled shower over the bath
 - Stair-lift
 - Internal structural changes to doors and walls
- 6.3. Requests for major aids or adaptations which have a significant cost will be referred to the relevant local authority for funding through the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) unless the client can finance the works themselves. Where the client is not eligible for DFG, the client will have to source other means of funding or Transform will consider alternative housing options. If the property is unsuitable for the adaptation because it is not feasible then moving the client to more suitable accommodation may be the only solution.

Minor Aids and Adaptations

- 6.4. Minor adaptations are defined as work that is not affecting the structure of the property and/or is not significant in cost. Examples of such work, but not restricted to, may be:

- Grab rails
- Key safes
- Rails and extra steps to doorways
- Lever taps to washbasin, sink and bath
- Removing internal door thresholds
- Additional electricity sockets for charging mobility scooters

PROCEDURES

7. Supporting Evidence

7.1. Supporting evidence from an occupational therapist will always be required for any requests for major aids or adaptations. Input from an occupational therapist may also be required for clients needing a large amount of minor adaptations. In some cases, we may require supporting evidence from other medical professionals.

8. Refusal

- 8.1. We may refuse requests for aids or adaptations on the following grounds:
- The property is not suitable for the adaptations specified by the occupational therapist
 - The works are not considered to be reasonable, i.e. over and above that specified by an occupational therapist
 - The adaptations of the property would significantly affect the opportunity of future lettings
 - The adaptation would involve the removal or alteration of a physical feature that would compromise other parts of the building
 - If the client is under occupying the property by one or more bedrooms
 - If there are possession proceedings against the tenant.
 - The cost of the works cannot be covered by a DFG grant or the tenant
 - If there are alternative adapted properties available that meet the individual's needs

9. Adapted kitchens and bathrooms

- 9.1. Where a kitchen or bathroom has been adapted, Transform will take responsibility for the maintenance and replacement of the facilities following the end of the warranty period.
- 9.2. Wherever possible we will replace items with like for like, but this is not always achievable where a fixture or fitting is non-standard or no longer available. In these circumstances, we will try and find the closest match available, but we will not undertake unnecessary works or full replacements simply for aesthetic reasons.
- 9.3. If a client has replaced fixtures or fittings themselves (such as tiling, flooring etc.), we are not responsible for any repair or replacement.

10. Specialist Equipment

10.1. We will not take responsibility for the insurance or replacement of specialist equipment such as stair-lifts, hoists and Clos-o-mats within self-contained accommodation. Where these works were originally funded by DFG, clients are encouraged to claim for a second DFG to fund the works. Transform would manage and fund the servicing of specialist equipment installed to ensure operational safety and compliance. We will consider automatic door entry systems to properties on a case-by-case basis depending on the specialism required and the agreement under the DFG.

11. Aids and Adaptations in Communal Areas

11.1. Where there is a collective need for an aid or adaptation within a communal area, we will consider these works in line with our Asset Management Strategy in order to maintain the value and function of the property. Any works must benefit more than one client.

11.2. These adaptations in communal areas will be funded, installed and maintained by Transform, but would then be service chargeable to all clients within the estate, block or scheme. A consultation process for any changes in service chargeable items would need to be carried out in line with our Rent and Charge Setting Policy.

12. Re-letting our properties

12.1. If a client leaves an adapted property, we will try to re-let it to a client whose needs best match the type of aids and adaptations in the property. The removal of any aids or adaptations will always be a last resort.

13. Timescales

13.1. The setting of time targets to deal with requests for housing adaptations is difficult because of the variations in the complexity and urgency of cases coming forward to the authorities. The legislation governing the mandatory DFG system stipulates that, once a full application for a grant has been received by an authority, a decision on it must be given within **six months**. In relation to the payment of grant, the date when this will be paid can be specified in the decision letter but that date may not be more than 12 months after the date of application.

13.2. Transform will always strive to achieve the fastest timescale that's safely possible. Staff will communicate timescales effectively with clients and those affected, keeping them up to date with regular updates.

14. Monitoring and Review

Policy Review Cycle

14.1. This policy is subject to a review every three years. Transform will undertake a formal review of this policy by no later than three years from the date shown above, or earlier, if significant changes and arrangements take place, or if legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require.

Appendix 1:

Local Authority Contact Details - Disabled Facilities Grants

Please use the links below to contact the relevant local authority for your service.

Local Authority	Disability Facilities Grant Service Website	Other contact details
Surrey County Council		
Guildford	https://www.surreyinformationpoint.org.uk/Services/5618	Guildford Borough Council Phone: 01483 505050 Email: customerservices@guildford.gov.uk
Reigate and Banstead	https://www.reigate-banstead.gov.uk/info/20402/grants/196/disabled_facilities	Reigate & Banstead Borough Council Environmental Health Phone: 01737 276417 Email: privatesectorhousing@reigate-banstead.gov.uk
Woking	https://www.woking.gov.uk/living-well/staying-independent-home/disability-services-and-funding/disabled-facilities-grant#:~:text=We%20have%20a%20statutory%20duty,floor%20of%20facilities%20or%20widening%20doorways.	Woking Borough Council Phone: 01483 743 668 Email: home.independence@woking.gov.uk
Surrey Heath	https://www.surreyheath.gov.uk/residents/communities-wellbeing/grants-funding/disabled-facilities-grant	Surrey Heath Borough Council Phone: 01276 707100 Email: contactcentre@surreyheath.gov.uk (link sends e-mail).
Spelthorne	https://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/article/16743/Disabled-Facilities-Grant	Spelthorne County Council Phone: 01784 448607 Email: dfg@spelthorne.gov.uk
Runnymede	https://www.runnymede.gov.uk/wellbeing-services/disabled-adaptations	Runnymede County Council Email: carerepair@runnymede.gov.uk
Elmbridge	https://www.elmbridge.gov.uk/using/help-with-adapting-your-home/	Elmbridge Borough Council

		Email: pshousing@elmbridge.gov.uk or careandrepair@elmbridge.gov.uk .
Waverley	https://www.waverley.gov.uk/Services/Housing/Private-sector-housing/Grants-for-private-housing/Disabled-Facilities-Grant	Waverley Borough Council Housing Team Phone: 01483 523372 Email: privatesectorhousing@waverley.gov.uk .
Tandridge	https://www.tandridge.gov.uk/Portals/0/Documents/Benefits-and-Support/Services-for-older-and-vulnerable-people/Disabled-Facilities-Grant-for-council-tenants.pdf	Tandridge Council Phone: 01883 722000 Email: customerservices@tandridge.gov.uk
Mole Valley	https://www.molevalley.gov.uk/home/benefits-grants/housing-related-grants/disabled-facilities-grant#:~:text=If%20you%20or%20someone%20living,for%20someone%20with%20a%20disability.	Mole Valley Council – Environmental Health Department Phone: 01306 885001 Email: env.health@molevalley.gov.uk
Epsom and Ewell	https://www.epsom-ewell.gov.uk/residents/communities-wellbeing/support-services/disabled-facilities-grant	Council Housing Grants Team Phone: 01372 732000 Email: HIA@epsom-ewell.gov.uk
Outside Surrey		
Sutton	https://www.sutton.gov.uk/-/apply-for-a-housing-grant#:~:text=Disabled%20Facilities%20Grant%20is%20a,work%20is%20reasonable%20and%20practical.	Sutton Council Phone: 020 8770 5000 and press option 5 and then 2.
Crawley	https://crawley.gov.uk/housing/private-housing/disabled-facilities-grants	Apply for an Occupational Therapist Assessment by West Sussex County Council: Phone: 01243 642121 Email: ot.connect@westsussex.gov.uk
Wokingham	https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/care-and-support-for-adults/assessments-and-support/adaptations-to-your-home-and-special-equipment-disabled-facilities-grant/	Wokingham Health and Social care Hub Phone: 0300 365 1234

