
Author**Title of Policy**Head of Repairs and
Maintenance

Aids and Adaptations

**Section**

Updated: April 2025

Operations

1. Policy statement

- 1.1. At Rooftop Housing Group (Rooftop) we are committed to providing a high-quality aids and adaptations service to enable our customers to live safely and more independently within their homes. Our aim is to enhance the quality of life for our customers by promoting active engagement with them, working with relevant stakeholders and by being a responsive landlord to contribute to the overall well-being of individuals and families.
- 1.2. For the purpose of this Policy, aids and adaptations are defined as items of equipment or special fixtures and alterations which improve access to a customer's home, improve a customer's mobility in and around their home, or help with daily living.

2. Statutory and Regulatory context

- 2.1. This document has been reviewed in line with the Regulator of Social Housing's (RSH) Safety and Quality Standard (April 2024) which states:
 - 2.1.1. **Adaptations** – "Registered providers must assist tenants seeking housing adaptations to access appropriate services".
- 2.2. Specific expectations are:
 - 2.2.1. "Registered providers must clearly communicate to tenants and relevant organisations how they will assist tenants seeking housing adaptations services".
 - 2.2.2. "Registered providers must co-operate with tenants, appropriate local authority departments and other relevant organisations so that a housing adaptations service is available to tenants where appropriate".
- 2.3. This Policy will comply with statutory, regulatory and legal requirements including, but not limited to, the following:
 - 2.3.1. The Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970 (sections 1 and 2). This places a duty on Social Services to assist disabled persons in obtaining suitable adaptations within their homes.
 - 2.3.2. Section 23 of the Housing Grants Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 provides for Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) administered by Local Authorities. This is mandatory for certain adaptations and means tested. Customers may also be required to contribute to the cost of the works irrespective of value (subject to a test of financial resources). Authorities also have powers to make discretionary grants.
- 2.4. Rooftop recognises its legal obligation to provide reasonable adjustments as specified by the Equality Act 2010 and other relevant legislation. The Equality Act 2010 provides a definition of a disabled person for the purpose of this Policy. It requires service providers to make 'reasonable adjustments' to services without which it would be impossible or unreasonably difficult for a disabled person to use the service/accommodation. Whilst this legislation refers to public spaces and does not govern the inside of a customer's home, Rooftop will take reasonable measures

to work towards ensuring both public and private spaces are accessible for all our customers.

3. Policy outline

- 3.1. This Policy sets out our approach to the provision of aids and adaptations in our homes.
- 3.2. The purpose is to set out the criteria by which we will assess all requests for aids and adaptation work and ensure consistency, clarity and fairness in our approach when dealing with requests.

4. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: Principles

- 4.1. At Rooftop we are committed to creating and sustaining a diverse and inclusive environment achieving positive outcomes for potential and existing customers, our colleagues and the wider community. Our commitments to our customers, colleagues and communities are detailed in our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy. We are an organisation that values diversity, champions equality and inclusion. We demonstrate this through the activities and the services we provide. This means living by, working to and acting on our Values.

5. Vulnerability: Reasonable Adjustments

- 5.1. There are occasionally circumstances where we need to consider working outside of the parameters of this Policy. This may be where there are several complexities present, or where customers have vulnerabilities that may lead us to make reasonable adjustments to the way we apply this Policy. In such cases, a referral should be made to the Complex Cases Review Group via the Head of Housing, where any approach outside of this Policy (and potentially other policies) will be considered and recorded, if agreed. This will always be considered in the context of the Assessing and Supporting Vulnerability Policy.

6. Data Protection: Principles

- 6.1. Rooftop recognises the importance of protecting the personal data of our customers, colleagues, contractors and other stakeholders and our commitment to compliance with data protection laws and managing personal data responsibly. As an organisation, we are committed to ensuring everything we do with personal data follows the principles of lawfulness, transparency, fairness and accuracy whilst minimising the amount of data we collect and only using it for specific, explicit and legitimate purposes until we no longer need it.

7. Objective

- 7.1. The aim of this Policy is to:
 - 7.1.1. Ensure the reasonable needs of disabled and/or elderly customers are prioritised and met accordingly, subject to the provision of available funding.
 - 7.1.2. Clarify eligibility requirements.
 - 7.1.3. Set out the criteria by which we will assess all requests and identify any limitations to the service.
 - 7.1.4. Clarify funding routes including statutory DFGs.
 - 7.1.5. Maximise all local authority grants and other available resources for adaptations, always having high regard for value for money.
 - 7.1.6. Balance the expectations of customers requiring adaptations and adopt best practice guidance where it is prudent to do so.

- 7.1.7. Ensure there are clear channels of communication and established joint working practices with our partners from local authorities in area of operation.
- 7.1.8. Comply with legal and statutory requirements in relation to the provision of disabled adaptations.
- 7.1.9. Comply with good practice guidance, including the Government's 'Delivering Housing Adaptations for Disabled People: A Good Practice Guide' and, where appropriate, consult with relevant bodies such as the Disability Rights Commission.

8. General approach

- 8.1. We will set aside a financial provision each year to enable adaptations to be undertaken to the homes of our customers who have or develop disabilities.
- 8.2. All customer requests for aids and adaptations will be assessed against housing need and suitability of the property for their family needs. In some cases, rehousing will be the most cost effective and practical solution. We will support a housing move to a suitably adapted property that could more easily be adapted in preference to substantially adapting an existing property.
- 8.3. We will actively seek to understand any specific needs in respect of adaptations to ensure the correct standard and type of home is offered. We will not offer a tenancy if a property is unsuitable or if it cannot be adapted reasonably and practically to meet the needs of a proposed new customer.

9. Eligibility

- 9.1. We will consider requests for aids and adaptation from customers who live in our rented homes (both social and affordable) owned by us.
- 9.2. Adaptations will not be funded by us for homes which:
 - Have a live Right to Buy, Voluntary Right to Buy or Right to acquire application.
 - Have a demoted or starter tenancy (* see below).
 - Are leasehold.
 - Are shared ownership.
 - Is a short life leased property.

* We will only approve minor adaptations for customers who are on a starter tenancy. In the case of major adaptations being required (usually funded via a local authority DFG) we will, in exceptional circumstances, approve these if they are fundamental in improving the household's current circumstances (we would require a full Occupational Therapist's report with supporting evidence).

- 9.3. We reserve the right to refuse to fund or provide permission for adaptations for several reasons including:
 - Where there is no record of the person requiring the adaptation being formally recorded as a customer in the relevant home.
 - Where the needs of the household could be more reasonably satisfied by the customer transferring to more suitable accommodation being provided by us or another housing provider.
 - Where the works are not appropriate for the property or appear unreasonable.
 - Where the customer is actively seeking rehousing.
 - Where there has been a serious breach of tenancy resulting in a legal notice being served.
 - Where the home is scheduled for demolition or disposal.
 - Where an alternative solution is appropriate, for example, using existing facilities or equipment.

- Where there is a request to provide additional living space but a suitable property is available in the locality.
- Where it is not suitable to adapt a property due to its age, condition, layout or structural/architectural characteristics.
- Under occupancy, where a single person or a couple are occupying a family house with more bedrooms than are needed.
- Where competing needs of family members cannot be met in a property.
- Where ramping a property would adversely affect the amenity for other prospective customers.

10. Types of aids and adaptations

10.1. We categorise requests for aids and adaptations as either minor or major with the distinction being based on the nature of the complexity of the work required.

10.2. Minor aids and adaptations

10.2.1. Requests for minor fixed aids and adaptations such as grab rails, handrails and lever taps will be accepted direct from customers and provided free of charge with trusted assessors available to provide advice and guidance around suitability and installation. To satisfy the minor aids criteria, any work will generally cost less than £1,000 although this limit may vary according to the local authority within which the property is located.

10.2.2. In some circumstances, delegated authority to officers will be approved for adaptations required up to the sum of £1,500 to enable a speedy resolution of a customers' needs. This will be assessed on a case by case basis and will enable a reduction in waiting times for DFG's and will deliver on our commitment enabling our customers to live safely and more independently within their homes and to enhance the quality of life for our customers by promoting active engagement with them, by being a responsive and caring landlord contributing to the overall well-being of individuals and families.

10.3. Major adaptations

10.3.1. Requests for major adaptations such as stair lifts, level access showers and access alterations expected to cost over £1,000 but capped at £30,000 (this amount may vary depending on the local authority), will be referred to an Occupational Therapist for an assessment of need and recommended works.

10.3.2. Where the request is for the installation of major equipment and adaptations or where the estimated costs exceed the threshold agreed with the relevant local authority, then the customer will be required to make a direct claim to the relevant local authority for the works to be carried out through the DFG scheme.

10.3.3. Under the DFG scheme, the local authority will be required to seek the approval from us to undertake the works which shall not unreasonably be withheld.

10.3.4. In circumstances where the recommended adaptations exceed £30,000, the case would have to be referred to a Panel comprising Rooftop and local authority representatives. In exceptional circumstances, top up funding may be considered where an adaptation will cost more than the maximum £30,000 under the DFG. Each case will require a recommendation from an Occupational Therapist, evidence that other long-term options have been considered and other funding options explored.

10.3.5. In certain circumstances where the adaptation requested does not meet the criteria of the DFG, for example car hardstanding, the case will be considered by the Executive Director - Operations on a case-by-case basis.

10.3.6. All adaptation work requires approval by Rooftop. With major adaptation work, we should be approached by the organisation completing the adaptation for permission prior to any work commencing. Where a customer wants to complete the adaptation work privately, they will need to request permission in writing to the Asset Investment Manager.

11. Funding

- 11.1. We will set an annual aids and adaptations budget. This is cost limited, but demand led. We will seek to maximise funding through the local authority DFG scheme whilst ensuring the provision of aids and adaptations to meet the needs of our customers is consistent and equitable.
- 11.2. In the case of hardship, we may have to exercise discretion in the authorisation of works without grant assistance where 'top up' funds are required.

12. Prioritisation

- 12.1. Where the number of applicants exceeds the available budget, a list will be maintained and worked through in date order. However, in exceptional circumstances and where the Occupational Therapist or hospital doctor recommends work should be completed as a matter of urgency in order to address an acute medical priority or to accelerate discharge from hospital, then the applicant's case will be placed above all others on the list.

13. Transfer and mutual exchange

- 13.1. It is at our discretion whether such a move can take place.
- 13.2. Following a major adaptation, we would normally expect the customer to remain in the property for a minimum of five years. Customers who choose to undertake a mutual exchange with another customer and, in doing so, move from an adapted home to one which needs adaptation would be expected to fund new adaptations themselves.

14. Maintenance, repairs and service charges

- 14.1. We will maintain and service all equipment and adaptations after the manufacturer's 12-month defects period covered by this Policy which have been installed by us or through the DFG scheme. We will also replace such equipment at the end of its useful life subject to confirmation of a continuing requirement and the availability of further funding, for example, if the original adaptation was paid for by a DFG the customer will normally be required to seek for a further DFG.
- 14.2. The rent and service charge of the property may be reviewed following an adaptation if the works completed have resulted in an additional bedroom at the property. Our approach to dealing with rent and service charges is set out in our Rent and Service Charge Setting and Management Policy.

15. Monitoring and accountability

- 15.1. Upon successful completion of the adaptation, customers will be contacted for their feedback to ensure the aids and adaptation process has been delivered effectively and met agreed timescales.

16. Complaints

- 16.1. Customers can progress any complaint through our Customer Complaints Policy.
- 16.2. Where this may relate to a partner organisation or other agency, the information will be passed on by us where possible or signpost the customer to the relevant organisation. We will use the learning from this as part of our service improvement.

17. Promotion of service

17.1. Aids and Adaptations will be promoted via our website and other social media outlets.

18. Review

18.1. This Policy will be reviewed every three years unless there are major changes in legislation or good practice.

19. Consultation

19.1. Leadership Team Sub-Group April 2025

19.2. Executive Team April 2025

19.3. Other (eg customers) N/A

20. Responsibilities

Responsible body

| | | |
|-------|--|---------------------------------|
| 20.1. | Formulation, amendment and approval of Policy | Executive Team |
| | Monitoring of Policy | Leadership Team |
| | Operational management of Policy/Policy author | Head of Repairs and Maintenance |
| 20.2. | Date of formulation of Policy | February 2007 |
| 20.3. | Dates of Policy reviews | April 2025 |
| | | April 2024 |
| | | October 2022 |
| | | March 2022 |
| | | March 2019 |
| 20.4. | Date of next review | April 2028 |

Associated documents

Internal – Rooftop policies and procedures

- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Repairs and Maintenance Policy
- New build standards
- Customer Complaints Policy
- Rent and Service Charge Setting and Management Policy

External

- Equality Act 2010
- Regulator of Social Housing Safety and Quality Standard (April 2024)
- Building regulations (2015)
- Delivering Housing Adaptations for Disabled People: A Good Practice Guide