



## **ADAPTATIONS POLICY 2016**

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Adaptations make properties more accessible and usable for people with a medical condition or disability and thereby enable them to maximise their independence in their own home. Adapted properties help the Association to create stable, sustainable and inclusive communities.

The Association is committed to carrying out adaptations to properties where these comply with the criteria set out in this policy and with that included in the Association's other relevant policies and procedures, and guidance from the Scottish Government, Clackmannanshire Council Social Services, Fife Council Social Services and The Scottish Housing Regulator.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

The Association will aim to achieve the following when undertaking adaptations:

- ✓ Enhance the independence of the tenant
- ✓ Specify the work in line with professional advice from Occupational Therapist and consultants and Housing Services
- ✓ Complete the work efficiently and competently
- ✓ Maintain communication between the tenant, Occupational Therapist, contractor and consultant and within the Association
- ✓ Secure grant funding promptly, where eligible
- ✓ Maintain a record of the work that has been undertaken
- ✓ Maintain the adaptation
- ✓ Secure resources for maintenance of the adaptation

### **3.0 ELIGIBILITY**

Adaptations to new and existing housing, which is owned and rented by the Association, are currently eligible for restricted funding from the Scottish Government where the adaptation is deemed essential.

Sharing owners and shared equity owners may be eligible for local authority improvement grants in the same way as other owner occupiers for adaptations to their properties. Owners will therefore be directed by the Association to the relevant local authority for assistance.

### **4.0 REFERRALS**

Referrals are received from the following sources:

- ✓ Tenant's General Practitioner (GP)
- ✓ Occupational Therapist (OT), who may be employed by a Health Board, Local Authority (LA) or other organisation such as an insurance company.

In the interest of consistency, the Association will require all referrals to be submitted on the Association's standard application, which application is available upon request

All Clackmannanshire and Fife Council referrals will follow the Association's Allocation Policy and assessment of needs and disabled adaptation provision

## **5.0 REFERRAL ACCEPTANCE, PRIORITISATION AND REFUSAL**

### **5.1 Referral Processing**

A site meeting may be required to enable the referral to be assessed. The Association will require an assessment to be carried out by an OT, if not already done so, to determine whether the requested adaptation is essential.

### **5.2 Factors for Consideration**

The Association will consider whether a proposed adaptation is reasonable or not. When considering whether a proposed adaptation is reasonable, the Association may consider the following:

- ✓ How effective the proposed adaptation will be in overcoming the disadvantage suffered by the tenant
- ✓ Whether it is possible and practical to implement the proposed adaptation
- ✓ The overall cost of the proposed adaptation incurred by the Association
- ✓ The Association's resources and size relative to the proposed adaptation

### **5.3 New Tenancies**

Following acceptance of a provisional offer of a new house by the prospective tenant, the Association will review the OT referral. Acceptance will follow the Association's standard allocation procedures in accordance with the considerations to be taken into account under this policy.

Whilst the Association will process all OT referrals promptly, certain referrals, such as from tenants awaiting hospital discharge, will be allocated a priority status by the referrer to allow the Association to target its resources and those of other public services with maximum efficiency.

### **5.4 Refusals**

The Association reserves the right to refuse to carry out an adaptation. Each case will be considered on its own merits but will be guided by the following:

- ✓ The proposed adaptation must be essential
- ✓ The proposed adaptation must be 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 period of time
- ✓ The Association's Head of Finance and Corporate Services should be asked to confirm that sufficient resources are available to fund the works
- ✓ There being no alternative and more suitable accommodation available
- ✓ The proposed adaptations should not be technically difficult to achieve and should not be undertaken to the detriment of the property, or the area or surrounding residents.
- ✓ The proposed adaptation should not contravene statutory requirements such as planning

A tenant must confirm their refusal in writing where they do not allow the Association to carry out an adaptation.

#### 5.5 Consent for adaptations by tenants

Under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006, tenants with Scottish secure tenancies or short Scottish secure tenancies with the Association may carry out adaptations to their properties. Before undertaking adaptations, tenants must obtain the Association's consent, which will not be unreasonably withheld.

### 6.0 **ALTERNATIVE ACCOMMODATION**

If the Association refuses to carry out the adaptation, consideration will be given to addressing the tenant's needs with the provision of alternative accommodation.

Accommodation may be provided:

- ✓ Within the Association's existing stock
- ✓ By the provision of new build accommodation
- ✓ By alternative landlords

The options will be discussed with the tenant and with the stakeholders.

### 7.0 **COMMUNICATION**

Communication channels will be clearly established and maintained within the Association and between the Association, the tenant and referrer, as set out in the procedures.

Tenants will be advised whether the work to be carried out in their home is a major or minor adaptation. Major adaptations require more co-ordination and are typically more expensive.

A user-centred approach will be adopted and the tenant will be given the following information:

- ✓ An Advice Sheet will be issued for Major and Minor Adaptations
- ✓ Confirmation of receipt of major adaptation request via OT
- ✓ Key contact person within the Association
- ✓ Clear communication of proposals and options
- ✓ Proposed start and completion dates
- ✓ Where the proposed adaptation will affect the rent charged on the property, the tenant must agree to accept the increase, which will take effect on the first rent debit after 4 weeks' notice of rent increase has been given. Four weeks' notice will usually be given at the point of completion of the adaptation

The tenant and the OT will also be given an opportunity to feedback on the adaptation, both the process and the work via a tenant satisfaction card.

## **8.0 PROCUREMENT**

Adaptations will be classified as either minor or major. Procurement will follow the Association's Corporate Procurement Policy.

## **9.0 BUDGET**

The Association requests and receives an allocation of grant funding each year from The Scottish Government which is based on the Association's estimated requirements for the year ahead. All adaptations are front funded by the Association and the grant is claimed upon completion of the work.

If our spend figures indicate that the budget is likely to be exceeded, the Association will request additional funding from the Scottish Government or other sources.

Where grant funding for a financial year has been exhausted and the Association has been unable to obtain funding from other sources the Association may create a waiting list of approved adaptations. Adaptations on the waiting list will be dealt with in the order they are entered onto the waiting list when sufficient further funding becomes available or the Association decides to instruct the adaptation at its sole discretion

Adaptations, which are classified as Essential by a qualified person such as an Occupational Therapist and which are expected to cost less than £100 will be completed with funding from the reactive maintenance budget

## **10.0 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

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

- ✓ Percentage of approved applications for medical adaptations completed during the reporting year.
- ✓ Average time to complete adaptations

## **11.0 COMPLETION**

The Association or its appointed consultant will carry out a post-completion inspection of all major adaptations to ensure that they have been carried out to the satisfaction of the Association and the OT. Post inspections of minor adaptations may be undertaken if they are selected during the random selection process. The tenant will also be encouraged to complete and return a satisfaction questionnaire.

## **12.0 RE-ALLOCATION OF ADAPTED PROPERTIES**

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

The Association will, as a last resort, consider the removal and storage of an adaptation if it cannot be matched to the incoming household.

## **13.0 MAINTENANCE**

The Association will maintain the adaptations and, where required or where it is considered value for money, will enter into maintenance agreements with the installer or manufacturer. Maintenance costs may be recouped by variations in rental charges charged to the residents.

Tenants of adapted properties will be provided, where necessary, with additional information for emergencies such as emergency numbers for out of hours service for specialist equipment.

The Association will compile information on renewal and repair timescales and costs for life cycle purposes.

## **14.0 REPORTING AND RECORD KEEPING**

All adaptations will be recorded on the computerised maintenance house record. A separate register will also be maintained which will also identify any regular maintenance work that is required on adaptations to keep them safe.

## **15.0 POLICY REVIEW**

This policy will be subject to review at least every 3 years.

Graeme Wilson  
Head of Customer Services

02 November 2017

Policy Review Consultation Process

Considered by the Management Team on	31 <sup>st</sup> August 2016
Considered by the Customer Services Committee on	10 November 2016
<b>APPROVED BY THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE ON</b>	<b>24 November 2016</b>
<b>Date of Next Review</b>	<b>November 2019</b>

APPROVED