

## Summary

The policy outlines our approach to the management of requests for aids and adaptations recommended by an Occupational Therapist (OT) for tenants or members of their household to restore or enable independent living for tenants and their families who may reside within a disabling environment.

## Effective date

1 October 2024

## Review

We will review this Policy every 3 years or when there has been an update to legislative, regulatory, best practice or operational changes.

## Version

Version 1.3

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## 1 Scope

This policy covers:

- All council Housing Revenue Account (HRA) dwellings including communal areas, sheltered schemes and houses in multiple occupancy.
- Local Authority Housing tenants and members of their household

Any reference in this policy to, 'we', 'our' or 'us' refers to Portsmouth City Council, Local Authority Housing.

Any reference in this policy to 'tenant', 'customer' or 'resident' refers to Portsmouth City Council Local Authority Housing secure tenants or members of their household.

## 2 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Outline our approach to the management of requests for aids and adaptations recommended by an Occupational Therapist (OT) for tenants or members of their household to restore or enable independent living for tenants and their families who may reside within a disabling environment.
- Ensuring we meet our statutory and legislative obligations.

## 3 Requesting aids and adaptations

The purpose of providing aids or adapting council housing stock is to restore or enable independent living for tenants and their families who may reside within a disabling environment. A 'one-size fits all approach' is not adopted in delivering adaptations and where proportionate works are tailored to meet individual needs and requirements.

A request for aids and adaptations can be made to the Occupational Therapists (OT) or directly to the Repairs Support team or the tenant's area housing office.

Occupational Therapist services are provided by the local authority to the areas as follows,

Portsmouth City Council:

- Paulsgrove
- Landport
- Buckland
- Somerstown
- Portsea

Hampshire County Council

- Leigh Park
- Wecock Farm
- Winchester
- Fareham
- Gosport

#### 4 Minor adaptation criteria

If the estimated cost of works is £1,000, or less, it is considered a minor adaptation (DP15).

Some typical examples of works that would fit within the scope of a minor adaptation are:

- Grab rail
- Ramp
- Widening doors for wheelchair access

As long as the minor adaptation is necessary and practical to undertake, it is free of charge to the tenant.

#### 5 Major adaptation criteria

If the estimated cost of works is more than £1,000, it is considered a major adaptation.

Some typical examples of works that would fit within the scope of a major adaptation are:

- Overbath shower
- Bathroom conversion to a wet room
- Extension for bedroom and/or bathroom
- Major internal reorganisation of accommodation
- Stair-lift
- Vertical through floor lift

All requests for major adaptation works must be assessed by an Occupational Therapist (OT) who will provide recommendations and specifications as necessary, including highlighting any high priority cases. During this assessment the OT may request assistance from a Building Surveyor and Housing Officer to assess the suitability of the property for adaptation.

Options to address the need include:

- Wait for existing suitable alternative accommodation to become available
- Wait for alternative accommodation that can be more practically adapted

- Adapt tenant's current dwelling/communal area

Major adaptations are subject to financial eligibility criteria, by a means test, to determine if the work will be fully funded or whether the tenant has to make a contribution, the area housing office will liaise with the tenant to establish an agreed payment profile for their contribution.

If the work is for a disabled child or to a communal area or the tenant is in receipt of housing benefit, then no means test is required.

Most tenants will want the council to organise the major adaptation works and take ownership. The relevant building repairs manager will organise the works using the appropriate building repairs resources, keeping the resident updated of timescales to complete the work as appropriate.

## 6 Disabled Adaptations Panel

The panel will be chaired by an Assistant Director and include appropriate Heads of Service from Buildings and Housing together with appropriate representation from the Occupational Therapy service and Housing Need and Supply service. The panel will meet monthly.

The Panel will be informed when any potential adapted properties:

- Adaptations are likely to exceed £30,000.
- Adaptations include a proposed extension to a property.
- The housing register does not meet the needs of occupants requiring adaptations.
- Complex or high priority cases, where support or advice or additional resources or better use of the stock is identified where collective agreement is needed.

The panel has a mandate to make fair, realistic financially sound documented decisions regarding adaptations to properties in the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) that it has been informed about to decide if any adaptations should proceed or not.

If works are agreed to proceed the panel will sign off the design, drawings and specification before works proceed.

The panel will hear any appeal by a resident regarding a decision to adapt a property or not, make decisions regarding any operational disagreement between Occupational Therapists, Housing Management and Building Surveyors or other interested parties regarding adaptation of a property.

The panel will have oversight of the process, changes to the legislation and effectiveness managing requests for aids and adaptations.

The panel will review the following key areas and implement changes required to processes, policies or communication to residents as appropriate:

- Our response and resources for requests for aids and adaptations including service measures for demand, capacity, end to end, quality, costs and customer satisfaction
- Training provided to staff and information provided to residents
- Record all aids and adaptations complaints to review any learning
- Review any other feedback escalated from the regular monthly operational meetings
- Changes to legislation, best practice, guidance or recommendations from reviews

## 7 Your Responsibilities

The tenant can organise the works themselves and maintain ownership on completion. Where a tenant wishes to organise the works themselves, the Improvements and Alterations policy will apply.

## 8 Your voice

We provide tenants a wide range of meaningful opportunities to influence and scrutinise the Landlord strategies, policies and services including the Resident Consortium together with repairs and maintenance focus groups.

If you would like to be included in future resident engagement focus groups and would like to know how to get involved, please contact us for more information:

You can contact our team by:

- Email: [housing.engagement@portsmouthcc.gov.uk](mailto:housing.engagement@portsmouthcc.gov.uk)
- Telephone: 02392 834835
- Website: <https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/.../resident-engagement/>

## 9 What have we done to make sure this Policy is fair?

We completed an Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) to consider the positive and negative impacts this Policy may have on people with protected characteristics under the [Equality Act 2010](#). This Policy should have direct and positive equality and diversity impacts.

## 10 Regulation and legislation

We recognise the variety of legislation, and we will continue to monitor relevant legal guidance. The list below reflects some of the existing legal framework and relevant publications:

- The Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996
- Housing Act 2004
- Care Act 2014
- The Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970
- Equality Act 2010
- The Disabled Grants (Maximum Amounts and Additional Purposes) (England) Order 2008

## 11 Related documents

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Local Authority Housing Landlord Policies, Strategies and Reports - [Housing policies, strategies and privacy notices - Portsmouth City Council](#)
- Tenancy Agreement / Leasehold Agreement
- The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities - Disabled facilities Grant (DFG) delivery - Guidance for Local Authorities in England (March 2022)

## 12 How to feedback

If you have any questions around the policy or would like to know more about its application, please contact the relevant service in the first instance.

You can get this policy in large print, Braille, audio or in another language by contacting your Housing Office.

### Compliments:

To help us provide the best service we can. We would like to hear customer views on the services that they use. If the customer is pleased with a member of staff or service, please let us know.

- Telephone: 02392 606383
- Email address: [HNBLandlordComplaints@portsmouthcc.gov.uk](mailto:HNBLandlordComplaints@portsmouthcc.gov.uk)

### Complaints:

If a customer is unhappy, they can refer to our LAH (Local Authority Housing) Landlord Complaints Policy.

- Online complaint form at [Make a housing complaint - Portsmouth City Council](#)
- Telephone: 02392 606383
- Email address: [HNBLandlordComplaints@portsmouthcc.gov.uk](mailto:HNBLandlordComplaints@portsmouthcc.gov.uk)
- [Landlord-Complaints-Policy-accessible.pdf \(portsmouth.gov.uk\)](#)

## Housing Ombudsman Service

If a customer is unhappy, they can contact the Housing Ombudsman Service for advice and guidance at any time.

- Online complaint form at [www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk](http://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk)
- Telephone 0300 111 3000
- [Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code](#)

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