



PEAKS & PLAINS
Housing Trust

The Trust

Adaptations Policy

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The Executive Management Team of Peaks and Plains Housing Trust ('The Trust') has approved this Adaptations Policy, to ensure that we meet our obligations as a Landlord and support independent living for customers with physical disabilities.
- 1.2. The Trust, as a provider of housing services, will ensure its residents are dealt with fairly and equitably. The policy applies to Trust residents who require adaptations, alterations and enhancements to their homes as a result of illness or disability. We will do this by providing an efficient and effective adaptation service that gives value for money which meets individual needs.
- 1.3. The Trust will set an annual budget for adaptations and seek to make the most efficient use of the budget. These budgets will fund the commissioning of works and the cost of the provision of the preventative maintenance and servicing of installations.

2. LEGAL AND REGULATORY OBLIGATIONS

- 2.1. The Regulator of Social Housing expect social housing providers to make provision for adaption under the Consumer Standards.

- 2.2. The Home Standard states;

2.2 Repairs and maintenance

- 2.2.1 Registered providers shall ensure a prudent, planned approach to repairs and maintenance of homes and communal areas. This should demonstrate an appropriate balance of planned and responsive repairs, and value for money. The approach should include: responsive and cyclical repairs, planned and capital work, work on empty properties, and adaptations.

- 2.3. **Compliance by staff and contractors**

- 2.3.1. Staff and contractors shall comply with the Adaptations Policy and any associated procedures or guidance and we shall encourage customers to be safe and responsible.

3. COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

- 3.1. This Adaptations Policy statement shall be:
 - Communicated throughout the organisation, and through relevant training understood by staff.
 - Made available to tenants, staff, contractors and stakeholders, as appropriate.
 - Formally reviewed and revised as necessary on a three yearly basis by the EMT, or earlier as required

4. GENERAL STATEMENT OF INTENT

- 4.1 This policy applies to residents who require adaptations, alterations and enhancements to their home as a result of illness or disability. The adaptations or alterations may be required either for the tenant themselves, or a member of their permanent family who resides in the property.
- 4.2 Requests for adaptations may be received directly from customers, support agencies and medical practitioners. This may necessitate a visit to the customer to carry out a full assessment and survey.
- 4.3 Major adaptations will not be carried out within the first 12 months of a tenancy or an exchange unless the need for the adaptation request is a result of an unforeseen change in medical circumstances.
- 4.4 Where a property has previously been adapted, the incoming tenant will be required to provide a report from an Occupational Therapist or equivalent to confirm that they require the adaptations.
- 4.5 The Trust will make decisions on major aids and adaptations that balance tenant expectations whilst operating within budgetary constraints.
- 4.6 Major adaptations require a formal written assessment from an Occupational Therapist (OT).
- 4.7 Major adaptation requests will be placed onto a waiting list which will be managed in date order. Request will be prioritised out of date order where a tenant needs an adaptation carried out to their home urgently, for example before they can be discharged from hospital.
- 4.8 Requests for larger scale adaptations will be referred to Cheshire East or other relevant local authorities for match funding through mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) up to the maximum DFG value.
- 4.9 Adaptations in Trust properties whether funded by the Trust or DFG will be designed to cater for known needs as long as possible.
- 4.10 The Trust will make use of existing stock by promoting a transfer to a property that is empty and contains the adaptations the customer requires. The Trust will match empty properties with customers who require the facilities of that particular property. Customers will not be forced to move if they do not want to, however it is possible in certain cases that we will refuse to undertake alterations to a residents existing property if suitable alternative accommodation is available.
- 4.11 The weekly rent of a property will only be increased following completion of an adaptation if the work has resulted in additional rooms. This will be discussed with the customer before works start.

- 4.12 Some properties and communal areas will not be suited to the adaptation required. The Trust will ask residents to consider a transfer to another more suitable property in the following situations;
- Where the dwelling is structurally unsuitable for adaptation.
 - Where the medium or long term lettability of the dwelling is likely to be undermined.
 - Where excessive nuisance will be caused to the occupants of neighbouring properties.
 - The adaptation could affect fire safety or present a health & safety issue.
- 4.13 If a tenant fails to qualify for DFG funding the Trust will meet 50% of the costs of the adaptation. In this case the tenant would be expected to fund the remainder of the costs. The maximum contribution we will contribute towards any adaptation is £25,000.
- 4.14 The Trust will provide support and assistance for residents who are eligible for adaptations to move to properties that have already been adapted or are more suited to adaptations.
- 4.15 The Trust will ensure that each case is decided on its own merits; individual case review will be informed and guided by Occupational Therapist advice.
- 4.16 The Trust will maintain records of adaptations offered and installed and service records for regular service intervals.
- 4.17 Adaptations that we will not consider are:
- Extensions or outbuildings
 - Through ceiling lifts
 - Drop Kerbs
 - Hardstanding areas
 - Parking/storage facilities/charging/ramps for mobility scooters
 - Communal facilities, e.g. automatic entry doors, lifts
- 4.18 The Trust will not undertake major adaptations to a property:
- Where the property is statutorily overcrowded.
 - If the adaptation would have a major impact on the future usability of the property.
 - If a suitable alternative adapted property is offered and refused.
 - If the home is scheduled for demolition or major refurbishment, within 2 years of the original request.
 - The property is subject to a Right to Buy or Acquire application or is Rent to Buy
 - Where there is a significant breach of tenancy, e.g. high level rent arrears, anti-social behaviour, etc.

5. POLICY PRINCIPLES

The Trust will :

- 5.1. Support the provision of adaptations that help residents to enjoy independence, privacy and dignity.
- 5.2. Deal effectively and consistently with requests for adaptations for our customers; prioritising applications to ensure that funding is allocated to residents in the greatest need.
- 5.3. Seek external funding to assist with service delivery when appropriate.
- 5.4. Provide adaptations within a realistic and acceptable timescale as set out in the service standards.
- 5.5. Ensure an appropriate maintenance service is in place for adaptations that have been supplied in the Trust's properties.
- 5.6. Promote choice to customers by offering a range of options.
- 5.7. Ensure the effective use of resources and the delivery of a value for money service.
- 5.8. Make our customers aware of the availability of the adaptations service and other options available to them.
- 5.9. Co-operate with relevant organisations to provide an adaptations service that meets residents' needs.
- 5.10. Promote the adaptation service as part of our support offers to all our residents.
- 5.11. Work with and monitor partner agencies to ensure customers receive an efficient referral and adaptation service.
- 5.12. Make best use of our existing stock by offering immediate transfers to customers who need adaptations where a suitable vacant property has those adaptations.
- 5.13. Endeavour to complete adaptations within 12 months of DFG approval being received subject to budget availability.
- 5.14. Consult with recognised residents groups, community groups and other agencies such as Social Services and Cheshire East on a regular basis to assess the effectiveness of this policy.
- 5.15. Set targets and carry out satisfaction surveys with customers who have received adaptations to ensure the service is delivered to a high standard

6 RESPONSIBILITY

6.1 Executive Director of Operations

6.1.1 The Exec Director of Operations is responsible for ensuring that sufficient resources are provided and made available to implement this Adaptations Policy.

6.2 Head of Asset and Compliance

6.2.1 The Head of Asset and Compliance will ensure that procedures, process maps and forms (electronic forms, databases or paper documents and registers) are maintained, reviewed, revised and audited in a timely manner.

6.3 Asset Manager

6.3.1 The Asset Manager will be responsible for managing and monitoring operational performance of adaptation including the following aspects of the systems and service:

- Ensuring adequate processes and procedures are in place to manage the risks arising from adaptations.
- Ensuring suitable and sufficient information, instruction and training is carried out.
- Monitoring the performance of staff and contractors.
- Ensuring that members of the public, staff and contractors are not unnecessarily exposed to risk.
- Ensuring appropriate risk assessments are undertaken and that regular review is carried out.
- Maintain property records and relevant certification(s).
- Maintain an up-to-date knowledge of legislative requirements and best practice
- Providing regular instruction and refresher training to maintain skills provide advice on the application of this policy and associated procedures on an individual case by case basis.

7 CONTROL AND ASSURANCE

7.1 The Adaptations Policy will be reviewed as follows:

- Three yearly;
- Where there is a change in legislation or guidance;
- Where there is a near miss, accident, significant ill-health or RIDDOR reportable incident affecting the systems or services.

8 ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

- 8.1
- Procedures and relevant process maps.
 - Health and Safety Policy Statement

POLICY INFORMATION

Policy Name:	Adaptations Policy
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