



# Ongo Homes

# Aids & Adaptations Policy

## September 2023

**Owner: Senior Asset Manager**

<b>Version No.</b>	<b>Purpose/Changes</b>	<b>Approval Date</b>	<b>Approved By</b>	<b>Suggested Review Date</b>
<b>7.0</b>	<b>Health Check</b>	<b>20/09/2023</b>	<b>HoST</b>	<b>September 2026</b>
6.0	Health Check	8/9/2020	HoST	September 2023
5.0	Health Check	December 2016	HoST	December 2019
4.0	Full Review	July 2015	Community Voice	July 2018
3.0	Health check	March 2014	Heads of Service team (HoST)	March 2016
2.0	Full review	February 2012	NLH Board	February 2014
1.0	New policy	September 2009	Operations Committee	September 2011

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## **1. Our policy is...**

1.1 To work with Local Authorities, the NHS and other relevant agencies to make sure the aids and adaptations carried out at tenants' homes is:

- Accessible, effective and efficient
- Co-ordinated
- Timely and transparent
- Promotes best use of resources

1.2 To fully recognise the diverse needs of our tenants and their family members who have disabilities.

## **2. It applies to...**

2.1 Everyone working for Ongo Homes (OH), our partners and our tenants.

## **3. Because we want to...**

- Support tenants and their family members to live independently within the community whilst making sure their homes remain comfortable, safe, suitable and sustainable for their personal use
- Consider the needs of our disabled tenants or their family members at an early stage in the decision-making process, including consideration of alternative housing options which may better suit their long term requirements
- Comply with all statutory and regulatory requirements in relation to disabled adaptations
- Ensure best use of housing stock, value for money and consideration of the longer term 'lettability' of our homes

## **4. We will...**

### **4.1 Tell you what we can and can't do**

4.1.1 We can:

- Provide signposting information about the aids and adaptations process
- As your landlord, we can give you permission in principal to pursue major adaptations

4.1.2 We can't:

- Assess your need or make decisions about entitlement – this is done by the relevant Local Authority and Therapy Services for the area you live
- Make decisions about who should get funding for adaptations
- Adapt a property just because you want us to

### **4.2 Tell you how the funding works**

4.2.1 Funding for aids and adaptations work will be through a Local Authority Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG).

- 4.2.2 Local Authorities have a statutory obligation to fund requests for aids and adaptations through DFGs, which are means tested meaning the customer may need to pay a contribution towards the cost.
- 4.2.3 Where a tenant receives a partial payment DFG from the Local Authority, Ongo may, in some cases, pay part or full payment up to a maximum of £2,000 of the tenant's contribution to avoid them not being able to have the work done at all. This will be managed on a case by case basis. Consideration will be given to the detail in section 4.3 and any tenancy breaches.
- 4.2.4 In some circumstances, where all other housing options have been exhausted (e.g. a move to a property that is more suitable), payment of the tenant's contribution over the £2,000 limit may be considered and approval from the Executive Leadership Team will be required. This will be in extreme circumstances and managed on a case by case basis.
- 4.2.5 Major adaptations are funded through DFGs following an Occupational Therapist (OT) assessment.
- 4.2.6 OH funding will be used for minor adaptations recommended by the Core Therapy Service (CTS).
- 4.3 **Not unreasonably withhold permission for major adaptations**
- 4.3.1 Where the adaptation is recommended and it is to be completed through a DFG, the Core Therapy Service must request principle authorisation for the works from us.
- 4.3.2 We will not unreasonably refuse consent for it to take place. However, we will consider a number of factors including:
- Whether the long term viability of the property would be adversely affected
  - Whether the adaptation would create under- or over-occupancy
  - Whether there are any live notices or ongoing court proceedings
  - The impact of the adaptation on rental charges and affordability for the tenant
- 4.3.3 If we refuse permission, we will support the tenants to find suitable alternative accommodation.
- 4.3.4 Where an adaptation will lead to change in rent, the tenant must confirm in writing that they understand and consent to this variation before permission for any adaptations is given.
- 4.4 **Plan for the future**

- 4.4.1 Where adaptations are necessary for our tenants and their families, we will always try to incorporate into our investment programmes where we can. This makes sure we provide good Value for Money and save on future costs.

## **5. Making sure we do what we say...**

- 5.1 The Head of Property is responsible for ensuring that all aids and adaptations are carried out in line with our policy.
- 5.2 We will monitor the following to track the impact of our approach to the aids and adaptations service:
- The performance against service standards and the targets set out in them
  - The cost of providing the service
  - The level of customer satisfaction with service

## **6. Other things to bear in mind...**

- 6.1 When reading this policy, you should also consider the following:

- Major and Minor Adaptations Procedures
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Maintenance Services Policy
- Tenure Policy
- Decant Policy
- Property Reclassification Procedure

- 6.2 The following legislation applies to this policy:

- [The Chronically Sick & Disabled Persons Act 1970](#)
- [The NHS & Community Care Act 1990](#)
- [S. 20 of the Housing Grants and Regeneration Act 1996](#)
- [Equality Act 2010](#)
- [The Mental Health Act 2007](#)
- [The Care Act 2015](#)

## **7. We'll look at this again...**

- 7.1 In 3 years time or sooner if anything changes.

## **8. What we mean...**

<b>Adaptation</b>	For the purpose of this policy an aid or adaptation is the provision of fixed equipment and /or modification to the property or associated land where there has been an identified need through the appropriate Therapy Service or Mental Health, Rehabilitation services etc. to enable customers to live safely and independently in their home.
<b>Minor Adaptation</b>	Any work carried out to a property that is generally not permanently fixed to a dwelling and does not prevent the property from being let as per original status, e.g. grab rail. Generally under £1,000 in value.

<b>Major Adaptation</b>	Any work over £1,000 in value and considered structural i.e. permanently fixed to a dwelling and which changes the usage and facilities within a property, e.g. level access shower.
<b>Occupational Therapists (OTs)</b>	They will make assessments of someone's needs within their home and advise on what aids and adaptations would help improve that person's ability to live in their home. There are a number of OT services – for example, Mental Health or Equipment Services.
<b>Decent Homes</b>	This is legislation that requires homes in the public sector (councils and housing associations) must be at a minimum standard which is considered to be warm, weatherproof and have reasonably modern facilities.
<b>Disabled Facility Grant (DFG)</b>	Grants are administered by the local authority to fund aids and adaptations. Grants are means tested and the customer must apply. Grants may be full or partial depending on the customer's income. Where means tested customers within the DFG process only receive a partial grant Ongo homes <u>will pay part or full payment up to a maximum of £2,000 of the tenant's contribution to avoid them not being able to have the work done at all.</u>