



# Aids and Adaptions Policy

<b>Overview:</b>	This policy sets out the criteria of how the association deals with aids and adaption requests.
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## **Aids & Adaptation Policy**

### **1 Aim of the Policy**

Adaptations are changes to a customers' home to help overcome practical problems when age or disability limits daily activities. Adaptations may include specialist equipment, extra fittings or alterations that enable vulnerable customers' and their families to overcome difficulties in their home and make them more suitable to their needs. ECBHA Ltd are committed to providing a flexible adaptations service to meet the needs of its customers for independence, privacy and dignity within their own homes. We aim to offer a service that is fair, responsive and reasonable and helps our customers to continue to live independently and comfortably in their homes for as long as possible, with the minimum intrusion or intervention.

ECBHA Ltd will also take into account the need to utilise properties effectively, particularly those which are already adapted, and target resources to properties which can be reasonably be adapted to provide an accessible home.

### **2 Policy Statement**

We aim to make all reasonable adjustments necessary to meet a vulnerable person's needs, where it is possible, practical and financially prudent/cost effective to do so.

We will only consider requests for major adaptations, including access ramps, that are supported by an Occupational Therapist Report.

As well as the person's needs, we will take in to account the property type, access, location, future adaptability, practicality and demand when assessing all major adaptation requests.

Adaptations will be assessed on an individual case by case basis.

Baths in houses and upper floor flats should be retained wherever possible and appropriate shower facilities incorporated if required.

We will not provide any adaptations for mobility scooters.

We will not fund any form of mechanical lift or hoist installations, including stairlifts, step lifts or vertical lifts. Residents will be directed to Local Authorities for assistance and funding via Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) applications.

We will not consider requests for vertical through floor lift installations without first seeking more suitable alternative accommodation and assessing the impact of the request on future letting of the property.

We will not carry out any adaptations if the property is under occupied by two or more bedrooms.

We will not unreasonably withhold permissions when customers ask to arrange and fund their own adaptations, however, proposals and details should be provided for approval and reinstatement conditions may apply to the resident to return the property to its original state.

We will not support funding for adaptations to properties managed by support agencies. Funding arrangements should be agreed in direct liaison between the support agency and the relevant local authority. ECBHA Ltd will not unreasonably withhold consent; however, proposals and details should be provided for approval and conditions may apply.

### **3 Monitoring, Delivery and Performance**

A limited budget is allocated for carrying out adaptation works each year, in addition grant applications will be made for Disabled Facilities Grants from the relevant local authority, wherever possible. This ensures that the maximum possible number of adaptations can be carried out. We will ensure our processes are cost effective and represent value for money in line with local authority partner grant conditions.

### **4 Funding**

Annual limited budgets are provided for minor and major adaptations.

Minor adaptations are smaller non-technical items (or work) that are usually fixed to a property and designed to meet a specific need. For example, items such as over bath shower installations, grab rails, lever taps, flashing light doorbells, kick plates, level access thresholds etc would be regarded as minor adaptations. Generally, items in this category will cost less than £2k and will be funded from the minor adaptations budget.

Major adaptations are larger specialist works or equipment installation. These can be level access or easy access shower solutions, specialist baths and toilets, adapted kitchens, structural alterations, stairlifts, hoists etc. Generally, items in this category will cost in excess of £2k and will be funded mainly by Disabled Facilities Grants, typically supported with 20% contributions from our major adaptations budget, with the exception of mechanical lifts and hoists. ECBHA Ltd maximum contribution will not exceed £5k in each individual instance.

If a customer is required to pay a contribution as a result of a local authority DFG test of resources, ECBHA Ltd will not contribute towards the tenant's eligible costs.

We will also consider other resources which may be available from charitable sources or health partner agencies.

ECBHALtd will not provide funding where an offer of suitable alternative accommodation has been unreasonably refused by a customer.

## **5 Priorities**

Adaptation requests will be prioritised initially on assessment need and urgency and then in date order. Installation will be subject to enough financial resources being available to make a contribution at the time of approval.

Major adaptations will generally take priority from Disabled Grant Funding availability and confirmation from the relevant local authority.

## **6 Eligibility & Approval Conditions**

The applicant must either be a tenant or a permanent member of a ECBHA Ltd household.

There must be a supporting assessment of need provided by an Occupational Therapist.

The applicant must have been an occupant in the household for at least 12 months to be considered.

It must be both practical and possible to create the requested environment at the property.

It must be financially prudent/cost effective to provide the adaptations recommended and the cost of the adaptations do not exceed 50% of the value of the property to be adapted.

The property must not have a potentially limited life such as those in designated clearance areas, or, is scheduled for major refurbishment.

The adaptation will not be likely to cause an obstruction or pose a potential risk.

There has been a substantial change in a person's condition or need, or a life limiting illness has been diagnosed since they first moved into the property.

The tenant does not have an active transfer application, Right to Acquire or Right to Buy application or is seeking a mutual exchange.

Prima Group is not seeking or considering seeking possession of the property for anti-social behaviour or rent arrears.

The tenant does not have debts to ECBHALtd greater than the value of 6 weeks gross rent and a repayment plan is in place at time of application and being maintained at point of approval.

The tenant has agreed to pay any contributions that may be applicable after a Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) test of financial means.

We reserve the right to refuse a major adaptation request if one or more of these conditions has not been met. If an applicant is dissatisfied with any

aspect of our adaptations service this will be dealt with through ECBHA Ltd complaints policy.

## **7 Installation**

Prima Group will work in partnership with the local authority to deliver adaptations to our customers.

Minor adaptations will be installed by ECBHA Ltd operatives or approved contractors at the discretion of the Repairs Manager. Major adaptations will be installed either by ECBHA Ltd approved contractor or a specialist contractor appointed by the local authority. This will be determined by the agreement in place with the relevant local authority.

In delivering any repairs or improvements in our properties, we will maintain the safety of our staff, contractors and customers as a priority and this may impact on how we plan and carry out the work. Depending on the circumstances, published timescales/response times might need to be changed

## **8 Rehousing**

If a person has an adaptation need and we are unable to adapt their home as outlined in this policy, we will provide advice and assistance to help them find more suitable / appropriate accommodation.

Where a person is under occupying and needs to move, we will offer to adapt an alternative smaller property rather than their current home.

## **9 Replacements and Removals**

We aim to leave in place non-recyclable major adaptations in our properties and utilise our adapted stock by matching them to an applicant's needs.

We will only consider removing a major adaptation if it is beyond repair, the property is no longer occupied by a person needing the item, the item is not practical for continued use, and where the future demand for the property would be limited with the adaptation remaining in position. This must not be less than five years from the date of installation, in line with Disabled Facilities Grant conditions, if applicable.

If a replacement component is required as part of our planned maintenance programme, or the existing adaptation is beyond repair, we will replace the adaptation on a like for like basis or consider alternatives which will better meet the tenant's needs with the relevant supporting documentation. This excludes mechanical lifts and hoists.

All information relating to adaptations will be held on the QL management system.

## 10 Servicing and Service Charges

We will ensure that customers are aware of any potential future service charge prior to commencing the works. We will set this information out to the customer in writing and will require the customer to provide signed confirmation that they are aware of the future service charge and that the payment of service charges is a condition of the works being undertaken. Where required a variation to the existing tenancy agreement will be provided for the customer to sign prior to work starting on site.

On expiry of the guarantee period serviceable adaptations such as stair lifts, hoists, bath lifts, step lifts and vertical through floor lifts will be maintained and serviced by one of our approved contractors throughout the remaining life of the adaptation in line with our obligations under LOLER Regulations.

We will apply a service charge to reflect the annual maintenance costs we incur, which the customer has responsibility to pay.

The legal rights of ECBHA Ltd tenants are set out in their tenancy agreement and this policy does not create any additional legal rights.

## 11 Monitoring

We will monitor the service and measure our performance against our service standards.


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