

AIDS AND ADAPTATIONS POLICY

Responsible Officer

Director of Property and New Business

Aim of the Policy

The Aids and Adaptations Policy aims to ensure that Phoenix Community Housing adapts homes so that tenants can continue to live independently and have privacy and dignity as their needs change. Below are examples of minor and major adaptations.

Minor Adaptations

- Single grab rails to front and back doors, toilets and bathrooms (*fitted on request by OT or in agreement with PCH*)
- Lever taps
- Safety glass
- Hand rails and stair rails (*fitted on request by OT or in agreement with PCH*)
- Equipment to open windows
- Flashing door bells/fire alarms
- Shower seats
- Key safe
- Over bath showers
- Small threshold ramps / half steps

Major Adaptations

- Modular ramps
- Driveways, parking areas or dropped kerbs
- Widening of door (if practicable)
- Stair lifts
- Through floor lifts
- Track hoists
- Level access showers
- Bath hoists (fixed) and replacement baths: low sides, level or corner

Phoenix will only carry out aids and adaptations work with the full agreement of the tenant and in consideration of their needs and that of their household.

This policy has been developed in consultation with Phoenix tenants that have used the Aids and Adaptations service, taking into account the Phoenix vision '*Together, we are building a better future for our Phoenix Community*' and our strategic priorities:

- Resident Leadership and Effective Governance
- Excellent Services Delivered efficiently with Openness and Empathy
- Growth in New Homes and Opportunities
- Sustainability and safety for our business, our community and our environment

Policy Statement

Phoenix will support tenants to live independently in their home and in accordance with the recommendations from Local Authority Occupational Therapy Teams or other organisations including the NHS, GP's and Private Occupational Therapists assessments.

Phoenix may carry out minor adaptations such as grab rails, lever taps, , shower seats, safety glass etc. without referral to the Local Authority Occupational Therapy Team so that tenants can receive adaptations as soon as possible.

Where appropriate, the Housing Management Team will make contact with tenants who have received an Occupational Therapist (OT) assessment to discuss the options for improved living including alternative accommodation, installing the OT recommendations where feasible and any additional items that Phoenix may consider appropriate.

Phoenix will adopt an individual needs based approach.

Policy Scope

This policy applies to all Phoenix Tenants and members of their household.

It does not apply to homeowners (including leaseholders) or non Phoenix tenants.

All requests from homeowners and non Phoenix tenants will be referred to the Local Authority Occupational Therapy Team so that an eligibility assessment can be carried out for financial assistance through a Disabled Facility Grant (DFG) or equivalent.

Phoenix will consider carrying out aids and adaptations works in communal areas where feasible and will consult with affected residents using those communal areas before proceeding with any proposal.

The Policy

Aids and Adaptations Service

Phoenix is committed to providing a high-quality Aids and Adaptations service that is responsive, flexible and efficient. We will:

- Set aside an annual budget for aids and adaptations and keep a waiting list for applications that cannot be funded within the financial year.
- Meet our transfer promises to tenants transferring from Lewisham Council in 2007 and L&Q Housing Association in 2021 (who were tenants of Lewisham Council on the 7th of July 2008).
- Carry out minor adaptations, where required, or as requested by Phoenix staff, such as grab rails, taps, key boxes etc. without a referral from the Local Authority Occupational Therapy Team. This is so that tenants can receive minor adaptations as quickly as possible. Any other

adaptations will not be carried out without a recommendation from the Local Authority Occupational Therapy Team, NHS, GP, Private Occupational Therapist.

- Review each request on its own merits and will work with residents to ensure that appropriate property adaptations have been identified and carried out. Where the requested adaptations cannot be undertaken then further options will be explored (see bullet point 4 below).
- Where appropriate, visit tenants who have received an Occupational Therapist (OT) assessment to discuss the options for improved living including alternative accommodation, installing the OT recommendations where feasible and any additional items that Phoenix may consider appropriate.
- Wherever practically possible, we will work with the Local Authority to try and match an applicant's needs to adaptations already fitted to an empty property and ask the local authority to give priority to reduce unnecessary removal costs.
- Where required and practically possible, we will remove specialist equipment from an empty property and store it for re-use.
- Evaluate and consider reasonable adjustments

Allocation of Adapted Properties

When an adapted home (or one considered suitable for adaptation) is advertised for letting, it will be clearly identified as such in the Homesearch Advert.

The shortlist of bidders who meet the criteria for the adapted/adaptable home will be passed to the Community Occupational Therapist, who will check whether the property meets the needs of the highest ranked bidder. If no applicable households bid, the local authority may contact eligible households, to identify an applicant who can make the best use of the property. This includes sheltered housing for the elderly, and homes suitable for disabled people.

A discretionary payment may be made to help those disabled residents facing financial hardship to move to an adapted property which meets their needs.

Major Works Programmes

Wherever practically possible, we will protect or replace existing adaptations where they are affected by planned works.

Where new minor adaptations are required in homes affected by the planned works we will consider providing these as part of the works programme where feasible.

Monitoring and review

This policy is monitored through Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and will be reviewed every three years or sooner whenever there are changes to legislation, good practice or other learning.

Equality and Diversity

Phoenix recognises that promoting equality is a fundamental part of Enhancing Life Chances. We will meet the requirements relating to equality and diversity laid down in the Equality Act 2010 by working to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between all of our residents, service users and staff.

We recognise our obligation under the Equality Act 2010 to make reasonable adjustments where a disabled person is placed at a substantial disadvantage in the enjoyment of their homes, compared to those who are not disabled.

This means Phoenix recognises the benefits to residents' rights and quality of life by being able to have Aids and Adaptations so that they can remain in their home. We will supply and fit Aids and Adaptation to homes so that tenants can live independently, have privacy and dignity as their needs change.

Legislation

The following legislation should be considered when implementing this policy:

- Equality Act 2010 (as amended 2014)
- The Regulatory Framework for Social Housing
- The Care Act 2014
- The Data Protection Act 2018
- The Coronavirus Act 2020

Reference to other documents and associated policies and procedures

- Allocations & Lettings Policy
- Chain Lettings Procedure
- Community Empowerment and Engagement Strategy
- Contactors, Suppliers & Services Providers Charter
- Customer Access Strategy
- Data Protection Policy
- Data Retention Guidance
- Equality and Diversity Charter
- Lewisham Housing Allocations Scheme
- Mobility Scooters Policy
- Phoenix Standards
- Reasonable Adjustments Policy
- Rechargeable Repairs Policy

- Responsive Repairs Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Void Management Policy
- Value for Money Strategy
- Vulnerability Strategy

Definitions

Term/acronym	Description
Resident	Includes tenants, freeholders, home owners and leaseholders.
Phoenix	Phoenix Community Housing.
OT	Occupational Therapist.
DFG	Disabled Facility Grant is a government grant to help towards the cost of making changes to your home so that you can continue living there.

Document Type:	Policy
Title:	Aids and Adaptations Policy
Author	Head of Planned Maintenance
Department Owned By	Property and New Business
Data Protection Impact Assessment:	No
Equalities Impact Assessment:	No
Approval Date:	2021-11-25
Approved By:	Board
Implementation Date :	2021-11-29
Status:	FINAL
Version No:	V5 revised November 2021
Last updated:	2021-08-04
Issue Date:	2021-11-29
File Path:	Aids and Adaptations Policy FINAL V5 July 2021 revised November 2021