

ADAPTATIONS POLICY

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Executive Summary:
<p>The adaptations policy helps us make best use of our properties and look at different options to meet the changing needs of our customers. We support customers to either move to alternative accommodation which better meets their needs, or through the installation of aids and adaptations in an existing home.</p> <p>We have a dedicated adaptations budget which is managed and allocated in a fair and equitable way through the application of this policy. This ensures we provide value for money and enables us to support customers to maintain their tenancy and their independence.</p>

Policy Grouping/Directorate	Customer & Community	
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Reviewed by Policy Team	Sarah Wilson - 6 th Jan 2025	
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Notes:		

1 Introduction and Aims

- 1.1 This policy outlines Rochdale Boroughwide Housing's (RBH) approach to the adaptation of homes to meet the needs of customers, whilst also making best use of our properties. Adaptations are delivered in partnership with Rochdale Borough Council's (RBC) Home Improvement Agency (HIA) and are funded through the RBH Adaptations Budget.
- 1.2 This policy applies to adaptations funded through this budget and supplied, fitted and serviced through the HIA. All adaptations installed in RBH homes remain the property of RBH.
- 1.3 The aims of the policy are:
 - To make the best use of RBH homes to meet the needs of customers requiring adaptations.
 - To make the best use of the adaptation budget to meet customer needs whilst ensuring value for money (VFM).
 - To ensure that customers applying for aids and adaptations are treated fairly and with respect.

2 Context

- 2.1 RBH is committed to ensuring that customers live in a safe, healthy home that meets their needs. Customers with disabilities or changing health conditions may face challenges in living comfortably and safely in their homes.
- 2.2 The Aids and Adaptations Policy is developed to address the growing demand for aids and adaptations that comes with an ageing population. This policy aims to ensure that all requests for aids and adaptations are handled equitably, efficiently, and in compliance with legal and regulatory requirements.
- 2.3 The transfer agreement between RBC & RBH in March 2012 (and subsequently updated) requires RBH to make an adaptations budget available for specific works and mirrors the scope of work under the Disabled facilities Grant.
- 2.4 Consumer Standards

This Policy contributes to RBHs compliance with the Safety & Quality Standard which states:

Adaptations

- Registered providers must clearly communicate to customers and relevant organisations how they will assist customers seeking housing adaptations services.
- Registered providers must co-operate with customers, appropriate local authority departments and other relevant organisations so that a housing adaptations service is available to customers where appropriate.

3 Values

- 3.1 The policy fits with the mutual values of RBH:

Putting People First: We listen with empathy, respond with compassion, and make it easy for our customers to access our services. We tailor our services to

the needs of our customers. We do this by visiting the customer in their home to assess their needs with them, and producing an agreed action plan.

Doing What We Say: We earn trust through honesty, integrity, caring and keeping our promises. We will give clear and realistic timescales regarding adaptations being installed or support with finding alternative suitable housing to meet our customers medical needs.

Delivering Quality: We invest wisely in our people and make it easy for them to deliver services and create places that our customers are proud to call home. We work with RBC to deliver aids and adaptations to the highest standard through the use of appropriately qualified contractors.

Open & Transparent: We are open and honest with our customers about what we can offer and if we are unable to adapt a property at reasonable cost within this policy, we will work with the customer to explore alternative options.

4 Policy Statement

- 4.1 RBH and RBC will jointly review and prioritise individual cases through a multi-agency adaptations panel meeting. RBC will present all cases requested to be brought to the panel by the Occupational Therapists (OT).
- 4.2 As part of the decision making, the panel will consider suitability of the current home, priority banding as determined by the OT, household composition if there is over or under-occupation, health and safety considerations and the availability of budget.
- 4.3 RBH will seek to ensure that cases are reviewed alongside RBC within three months of being referred by the OT.
- 4.4 RBH will provide housing options advice for customers who require adaptations. If an applicant is under occupying a property, or the property is assessed as unsuitable for the adaptations, alternative options will be discussed with the customer and presented back to a subsequent panel meeting.
- 4.5 RBH may not fund adaptations in under/over occupied homes, and instead will seek to support rehousing into properties that meet the needs of the household.
- 4.6 Customers can apply for consent to self-fund aids and adaptations they may require. Consent from RBH would be required.
- 4.7 Customers can apply for a Disabled Facilities Grant for aids and adaptations. The statutory duty for Disabled Facilities Grants sits with Rochdale Borough Council, and if awarded, consent from RBH would be required.
- 4.8 Rents and service charges for adapted properties will be in line with RBHs Rents & Service Charge Setting Policy, which is in line with the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) Rent Standard. Where there are adaptations requiring annual service and maintenance, a service charge will be payable to reflect the cost of this requirement.
- 4.9 Where the number of bedrooms in use has been reduced because of an adaptation, for instance a through floor lift has been installed, the rent charges will not be changed because of the reduction of useable bedrooms.

- 4.10 If an application is made to purchase a home that has been adapted, the property valuation will include the cost of any adaptations.
- 4.11 Where an application has been received to purchase a property, RBH will suspend requests for adaptations until the results of the application is known. No adaptations will be undertaken on any property subject to a successful application to acquire or preserved right to buy.
- 4.12 Where an application for an adaptation is refused on the feasibility of the work, the applicant can appeal the decision.
- Appeals must be set out in writing within 3 weeks of the decision, outlining the reasons for the appeal and any supporting information sent to RBH Aids and Adaptation Co-Ordinator
- If the applicant remains dissatisfied with the outcome after the decision has been explained to them, they can register a complaint through the RBH Complaints Policy.
- 4.13 Repairs will not be undertaken to adaptations using the adaptations budget in the following circumstances:
- Where the adaptation has not been agreed at the RBC/RBH adaptations panel
 - Where the adaptation has been funded and installed through a capital works programme outside the adaptations panel
 - Where the customer has funded and installed an adaptation themselves

5 Monitoring

- 5.1 This delivery of this policy will be monitored through the multi-agency adaptations panel meetings.
- The adaptations budget spend is reviewed monthly at RBH/RBC panel meetings and in-house with the Finance Team

6 Review

- 6.1 All RBH strategies, policies, service standards and procedures are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that they are 'fit for purpose' and comply with all relevant legislation and statutory regulations.
- 6.2 This policy will go through the full policy approval process every 3 years and will undergo a desktop review annually. This is to ensure that it is fit for purpose and complies with all relevant and statutory regulations.

7 Links with Other RBH Documents

- 7.1 This policy links to the following policies and strategies:
- RBH's Corporate Strategy 2024 -25
 - RBH Lettings Policy
 - RBC's Allocations policy
 - RBH Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Strategy

8 Inclusivity statement

- 8.1 We are dedicated to fostering an inclusive and equitable environment for all. We ensure that everyone is valued and respected. Our policies aim to be inclusive, and will comply with UK laws, including the Equality Act 2010, to create a diverse and supportive environment for people to thrive.
- 8.2 We understand not everyone absorbs information the same way. If you have any difficulty understanding or interpreting this document please email people@rbh.org.uk or call Freephone 0800 027 7769. We will work with you to ensure your individual needs are met.