Aids & Adaptations Policy

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Confidentiality	C1
Distribution list	HSH Operational Staff, HSH Board of Trustees, HSH Tenants
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1. Overview

Hawes Street Housing's (HSH) aim is to support tenants to remain living independently in their homes and carry out essential daily activities for as long as possible, where it is safe to do so. To enable this HSH may fund adaptations for its residents. The aim of this policy is to provide guidance and understanding of HSH's approach to the provision of adaptations.

2. Policy Scope

Under the terms of this policy, a person is regarded as being disabled if they have a physical, sensory or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities that have lasted for at least 12 months, or where the effects of which will last for at least 12 months, or which are likely to last for the remainder of a person's life.

The policy specifically refers to all disabled adaptations to properties managed by HSH.

'Minor works' refer to adaptations up to a value of £1,000 and/or works which do not include structural alterations. 'Major works' refer to adaptations over £1,000 and/or works which do include structural alterations.

The adoption of this policy will ensure that there is a fair and consistent approach to all residents' requests for adaptations in their homes. HSH has committed to improving service standards and will undertake regular tenant satisfaction surveys to ensure continual service improvement.

3. Regulatory and Legal Framework

This policy complies with HSH's duties under the following legislation:

- Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and 2005
- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Fire Safety Act 2021
- Building Safety Act 2022

4. Policy Detail

An adaptation is a change or alteration in or around your home to allow you to live more independently or allow you and/or your carer greater safety and mobility.

We want to make sure that your home is suitable for your needs. We understand that your needs may change due to illness or disability. As a result, you may require alterations to allow you to make the most of your home and we will support you to make the necessary applications to funding for major adaptations.

5. Funding of Minor Adaptations

Minor adaptations to HSH properties may be funded by the organisation and are classed as those costing below £1,000. Non-standard works will be considered on a case-by-case basis, determining whether they are eligible for minor works funding

Examples of minor works can include:

- Ramps – internal and external
- Hand and Grab rails
- Over bath shower
- Level taps
- Moving door handles
- Moving power sockets
- Banister rails
- Installing key safes

In exceptional cases, minor works funding for works above £1,000 may be awarded depending on the circumstances and works required and in line with HSH financial procedures. Some 'non-standard' works such as 'deep cleans' and house clearances may be eligible for funding to enable the works to be carried out, but may be subject to HSH's recharge policy.

6. Funding of Major Adaptations

Major adaptations require more substantial and expensive works. They will only be allowed following a professional Occupational Therapist (OT) assessment of need report. We will permit such adaptations wherever practical, reasonable and cost effective to do so. Whilst every case will be considered on its individual merits a key factor will be the long-term letting prospects for a property.

Examples of major adaptations can include:

- Lifting aids
- Stair lift installation
- Level access showers
- Wet rooms
- Widening of doorways
- Structural alterations

The **Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG)** is a means tested grant provided by Local Authorities to cover the cost of providing adaptations and access to essential facilities that enable a disabled person to continue living at their property. The local authority must be satisfied that the adaptation is "necessary and appropriate" to meet the person's needs and that the works are reasonable and can be done with regard to the age and condition of the property. DFG funded adaptation works **must not** be carried out until we have authorised any proposed works. We will complete approvals as soon as practical and inform the council of the outcome. In addition, we will inform the tenant of the outcome and in the even consent has been refused we will offer alternative options.

7. Declining Requests and Temporary Adaptations

HSH may decline requests for making aids and adaptations where we believe that this is not an effective use of resources or best value for money. For example, where it is not physically possible to alter the property in the requested way, the aid/adaption would involve large structural works or if an adaptation would present a health and safety risk. In this situation, we work with the tenant and, where appropriate, their occupational therapist to consider other options such as suitable alternative accommodation. The OT may provide a rehousing report to support this process.

8. Adaptations that will not be funded by HSH

We would not be able to fund the following:

- Portable equipment including; toilet seats, walking/toileting aids, portable shower seats, induction loops, portable heating or lighting etc.
- Assistive technology
- Removing adaptations, unless requested by an OT
- Scooter store, electric points for scooters and/or ramps for scooters
- Level access showers would not be replaced with a bath unless requested by an OT
- Fitting over bath showers unless requested by an OT
- Creating more than one entrance to the property
- Landscaping (unless essential for access)
- Decoration following minor adaptions
- Home extension or loft conversion
- Through floor lift if the property is under occupied

9. Asset Management and Record Keeping

We maintain accurate and up-to-date asset management data with relevant information about major aids and adaptations. These details are available to inform the management of allocations and lettings, and the maintenance of the adaptation itself.

10. Equality & Diversity

Hawes Street Housing are committed to fairness and equality for all regardless of their colour, race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, age, religion or belief, family circumstances or offending history, as referred to in our accompanying policies. Our aim is to ensure that our policies and procedures do not create an unfair disadvantage for anyone, either directly or indirectly.

Hawes Street Housing aims to meet the needs of its residents by providing an excellent service. However, occasionally things may go wrong and residents may wish to complain. Should the need arise to make a complaint, please refer to our Residents Complaints Policy.

11. Associated Policies & Guidance

- Tenants right to make improvements
- Repairs and Maintenance Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Allocations Policy

12. Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees to approve this Policy.

The Company Secretary is responsible for the monitoring and review of this policy.

The Hawes Street Housing Operations Manager is responsible for ensuring the implementation of this policy and supporting procedures for the maintenance of all necessary records on the CRM system to enable the compilation of regular reports on performance and for the monitoring of performance.

The Housing Officer of Hawes Street Housing is responsible for the day-to-day management and oversight of this policy.

13. Help & Advice

A Home Improvement Agency provides a range of services to help older people, people with disabilities and vulnerable people live safely and independently in their homes. This can include home visits to offer advice about changes to the property or liaising with the council or Occupational Therapist to complete Aids and Adaptations.

- Revival Home Improvement Agency - 0333 014 3389
- AskSara app available from: https://stoke.livingmadeeasy.org.uk
- Wellbeing support and advice from Carelink – 01782 810320 & www.saltbox.org.uk/carelink