

Cornwall Rural Housing Association Limited

Adaptations Policy

1. Policy Statement

- 1.1 The principal aim of this policy is to ensure all Cornwall Rural Housing Association (CRHA) customers with disabilities are supported to remain living independently in their homes.
- 1.2 CRHA will work in partnership with the Local Authority and other agencies to meet the needs of our customers who require aids and adaptations.
- 1.3 This policy statement sets out clear criteria specifying the level of service we agree to provide in relation to:
 - Aids and adaptations
 - Assistance and support we can offer
 - The way we will manage the service ensuring that value for money (VFM) is achieved.

2. Aims

- 2.1 This policy aims to ensure that services are provided in a customer focused and cost-effective manner, which meet the current and future needs of those using them. The aims of this policy are in line with our strategic vision of “Homes to make life better” and our Customer First, Commitment and People Focus values. It also adheres to the Safety and Quality Standard as imposed by the Regulator of Social Housing in particular:-
 - To provide a service that supports our customers and other permanent members of the household to live independently in their home.
 - To ensure that we make best use of our existing homes.
 - To assist our customers and other permanent members of the household to seek housing adaptations and to access appropriate services.

3. Legislation

- 3.1 There is a range of legislation relating to the necessity for and delivery of aids and adaptations, the main ones being:
 - Equality Act 2010
 - Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996
 - Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970
 - NHS and Community Care Act 1990
 - The Human Rights Act 1998
 - The Mental Capacity Act 2005
 - The Care Act 2014

4. Roles and Responsibilities

- 4.1 CRHA will meet the cost of minor adaptations recommended by an Occupational Therapist (OT) or similar professional up to £500.00 to install minor adaptations in our customers' homes.
- 4.2 The Tenancy Management Officer (TMO) and Property Services Officer (PSO) are responsible for assessing requests for aids and adaptations.
- 4.3 For major adaptations (lifts, level access showers etc) the TMO will assist the customer by making a referral to the Local Authority and/or discuss alternative housing options.
- 4.4 If a Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) is awarded CRHA will consider the proposed adaptation works and any possible implications on its asset base, future lettings and maintenance or servicing obligations before giving permission. Other considerations:
 - The scale of the works
 - Whether we already have an adapted or more suitable property available
 - The impact any alterations may have on the standard of the property
 - A focus to ensure that any decision is made in the customer's best interest
 - The cost of ongoing maintenance i.e. servicing of stairlift
 - Any current or future compliance responsibilities
 - The future letting of the property if the adaptation is retained i.e. offering the property based on suitability to the needs of potential applicants and or whether the property would need readapting in the future if there were no other customers with similar needs.
- 4.5 If a DFG is approved for any works to be carried out then permission is given in writing.
- 4.6 If a DFG is not approved by CRHA a full explanation is given to the customer, OT and funding body with a full explanation for the decision.
- 4.7 Our customers have the opportunity to appeal a decision if approval is not given. In these circumstances CRHA will co-ordinate a case conference inviting the customer/s, the OT and the funding body to discuss further. In some circumstances CRHA may request a risk assessment from the OT to ensure that the property is safe for the customer and any neighbouring properties.
- 4.8 If no DFG is available our customer/s will be asked to obtain a recommendation from an OT or other health professional detailing the scope of the works required and CRHA will consider whether an option exists for the works to be funded from a current or future major works budget.

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- 4.9 Where a property cannot be adapted to suit a customer's needs then priority letting will be given when a suitable property becomes available. Help and assistance will also be given to register on Cornwall Homechoice.
- 4.10 Upon termination of the tenancy it is the customers responsibility to ensure the adaptation is removed if possible. Where a stairlift has been fitted CRHA will contact Cornwall Council's Home Solutions team and request that the apparatus is recycled.
- 4.11 The Head of Homes and Customers will have overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy and the Property Services Manager will ensure the policy is embedded within the operational delivery of the adaptations and all team members are aware of their responsibilities.

5.0 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

- 5.1 This policy is inclusive to all our customers and permanent members of the household and provided with the aim of positively advancing equality of opportunity.
- 5.2 CRHA will endeavour to work with our customers and their families, partners and contractors to provide individual solutions using aids and adaptations, which could benefit our vulnerable customers.
- 5.3 CRHA aim to treat all customers fairly with respect and communicate in a way that meets their individual requirements.

6.0 Review

- 6.1 This policy will be reviewed every 3 years or sooner if there is a change in relevant legislation.

Policy Reviewed: May 2023
Policy updated: July 2024
To be Reviewed: July 2027