

Aids & Adaptations Policy

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1. Purpose

This policy will align with our commitment to providing high-quality, safe, and accessible housing as set out in the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008 and in accordance with the consumer standards. By establishing clear guidelines for the provision and management of aids and adaptations, we can better support residents

in maintaining their independence and improving their quality of life. This policy will help us deliver a consistent, fair, and transparent approach, ensuring that all residents have access to the necessary support and adaptations they need to live comfortably and securely in their homes. Furthermore, it will ensure that we remain compliant with both regulatory standards and best practices, while demonstrating our ongoing commitment to meeting the diverse needs of our community as set out in We Make Camdenⁱ.

2. Scope

This policy is relevant to all Camden Housing and Repairs staff, Adult Social Care providers, and contractors responsible for providing or supporting tenants with Aids and Adaptations services.

It is relevant to Camden social housing tenants and prospective tenants. The policy does not apply to private tenants and homeowners.

3. Definitions

Aids and Adaptations

Aids and adaptations refer to modifications and specialist equipment provided by a local authority to support residents with disabilities or mobility needs, enabling them to live safely and independently in their homes.

Aids are portable or non-fixed equipment that supports daily living and mobility. This includes items such as bath lifts, bath boards, hospital beds, recliner chairs, raised toilet seats, portable or threshold ramps, and mobile hoists.

Adaptations are permanent or semi-permanent physical alterations to a property designed to improve accessibility. These include grab rails, walk-in showers, ceiling track hoists, through-floor lifts, fixed ramps, widened doorways, and structural changes such as removing or adding walls or partitions to create accessible spaces.

Local authorities assess needs through Occupational Therapists (OTs) and may provide funding through Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) for non-council tenants or other housing support funds, such as the Housing Revenue Account or Capital Works for council tenants.

Definition of Disability

Under the Equality Act 2010, a disability is defined as a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out everyday activities.

Role of Occupational Therapists (OTs)

Occupational Therapists (OTs) are healthcare professionals who assess residents' needs for aids and adaptations in their homes following a referral. If Camden Council

engages an independent occupational therapist, they must be registered and listed in the Royal College of Occupational Therapists' Directory of Private Practitioners to ensure professional standards are met.

4. Roles and responsibilities

To ensure that we are compliant with the relevant Consumer Standard we are required to meet the following:

Safety and Quality Standard

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

Role	Responsibility
Director of Property Management	Provides strategic leadership and policy oversight, ensuring the policy aligns with broader housing and asset strategies. Oversees governance arrangements to monitor and drive implementation.
Head of Repairs and Operations	Leads the operational delivery of adaptations, ensuring works are scheduled, completed efficiently, and meet quality standards. Coordinates internal teams and contractors to support implementation.
Head of Adult Social Care (ASC) Neighbourhoods	Oversees integration with adult social care, ensuring assessments are timely, consistent, and person-centred. Ensures Occupational Therapy input drives the delivery of appropriate adaptations.
Head of Neighbourhoods	Ensures the objectives of the policy are delivered through the neighbourhood service delivery model. Provides leadership to ensure services are responsive to tenant needs and that housing officers are equipped to support the aims of the policy as part of holistic tenancy management.
Head of Allocations, Lettings and Private	Responsible for leading teams that manage housing allocations and accommodation services, including accessible and adapted homes. Ensures the Council meets

Housing Services	its statutory obligations and that allocations are carried out in line with the Housing Allocation Scheme, with adapted properties prioritised for those who require them.
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5. Policy statement

5.1 Referrals

Referrals for Aids and Adaptations are made by our Occupational Therapy Team who can assess and provide information to tenants to manage essential daily activities safely and independently. Occupational Therapists (OTs) assess the individuals' needs and provide recommendations to support their mobility and safety at home.

OTs can assist with difficulties related to:

- Getting in and out of the bath or shower
- Moving around the home, including using stairs
- Feeling unsafe at home, such as risks of falls or forgetting to switch off taps or cookers

Following an assessment, an OT may recommend:

- Alternative ways to manage daily tasks more easily
- Minor adaptations, such as grab rails to assist with bathing
- Major adaptations, including stairlifts and ramps to improve accessibility
- Advice and equipment to support both the tenant and carer

How to Get a Referral

Tenants experiencing difficulties with daily activities can request an OT assessment. Referrals can be made by contacting Adult Social Care, an OT will then assess needs under the Care Act 2014 and recommend suitable adaptations to enable the tenant to live more safely and independently. The OT will also need to consider the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 when considering major adaptations to the property.

Adaptations are approved by the OT based on the tenant's assessed needs and the suitability of the property.

Referrals for children's adaptations

Referrals for aids and adaptations for children in Camden are handled by the Children's Social Care Occupational Therapy (SCOT) service, which supports children and young people aged 0–18 with physical disabilities or health conditions that affect their daily living and independence at home. The SCOT team assesses individual needs and recommends appropriate equipment or adaptations to improve safety and accessibility. While referrals are typically made by health professionals, parents and

carers can also contact the team directly to request an assessment. The team works in partnership with families to ensure that all adaptations are tailored to the child's specific needs within the home environment.

5.2 Adaptions

We are committed to delivering both minor and major adaptations in a timely and efficient manner. By working closely with ASC professionals and maintaining open communication with tenants, we aim to enhance safety, accessibility, and overall quality of life through appropriate home modifications.

5.3 Minor Adaptions

A **minor adaptation** is a small-scale modification to a home that improves accessibility and supports independent living for residents with disabilities or mobility needs. These minor adaptations aim to ensure tenants can live safely, comfortably, and independently in their homes.

Minor adaptions are recommended to residents to be carried out by our repair's teams, following an assessment by our OT service. Minor adaptations are usually repairs that we can carry out using our in-house team and are lower cost (usually less than £1000), and this allows us to address these more promptly. Some examples could be:

- Grab rails
- Handrails
- Lever taps
- Some minor step adjustments
- Key safes outside a front entrance door

Service Standards

Service standards are defined benchmarks that outline the quality and performance levels for our services. They ensure consistency, accountability, and transparency in service delivery to our residents.

- **Completion Timeframe:** We will attend to minor adaptations within 35 working days from the date the repairs team receives the referral from the OT team, following the recommendation report being agreed upon by the resident.
- **Health and Safety Priority:** Where a referral is identified as impacting a tenant's health and safety, the work will be scheduled for the next available date, subject to the availability of the required trade specialisation (e.g., carpentry, plumbing).
- **Feasibility:** The feasibility of providing minor adaptations will be assessed on a case-by-case basis, considering factors such as listed building consent and property constraints. Where adaptations are not possible due to legal or

structural restrictions, we will support the individual in seeking suitable alternative accommodation through our allocations process (see 5.5) and available council stock. These minor adaptations aim to ensure tenants can live safely, comfortably, and independently in their homes.

5.4 Major Adaptations

A **major adaptation** is a larger-scale modification to a home that significantly improves accessibility and supports independent living for residents with disabilities or mobility needs. These repairs usually need to be carried out by our specialist in-house team, or one of our specialist contractors. They are higher value works (over £1,000) and take longer to arrange and deliver within our residents' homes. Some examples include:

- Adapted kitchens
- Ceiling track hoists
- Stairlifts
- Platform lifts
- Wet floor showers
- Level access showers
- Over-bath showers
- Major step adjustments including galvanised rails and majority of ramps
- Widening of doorways for wheelchairs

Service Standards

- **Completion Timeframe:** The assessment process, from the initial visit to the completion of the OT report and all required documentation, can take up to 3 months for an OT assessment to be completed, which may require a further feasibility visit with a surveyor before the final documentation is submitted.
- For larger-scale works involving specialist contractors—such as adapted kitchens or stairlifts—the process typically takes around 12–15 months from the point at which all parties agree to proceed. Work can begin once the tenant has signed the Adaptations Request Form and approved the proposed adaptations.
- The timeframes for works are influenced by the demand for major adaptations and the available annual budget. Sometimes works can be completed more quickly if additional funding is secured or the work is very urgent.
- The teams will work with the resident and understand their specific needs to minimise disruption to their home.
- **Health and Safety Priority:** Where a referral is identified as critical to the health and safety of a tenant, the work will be prioritised and scheduled as soon as possible. This is subject to the availability of the required trade specialisation (e.g., electrical, plumbing) and the complexity of the works.
- **Feasibility:** The feasibility of carrying out adaptations will be assessed on a

case-by-case basis and is subject to technical feasibility. Some adaptations may not be suitable due to a building's fire safety strategy (e.g. mobility scooter storage), technical barriers (e.g. altering floor levels for step-free access) or restrictions related to conservation or listed status. Additionally, factors such as structural limitations, cost implications, and building location (e.g. high-rise blocks or flats without lift access) will be considered. Where adaptations are not feasible, we will support the individual in seeking suitable alternative accommodation through our allocations process (see 5.5) and available council stock.

Work Prioritisation Process

At times, financial constraints and high referral volumes may prevent us from completing works for residents as quickly as intended. In such instances, we will prioritise applications based on the level of need to ensure that essential works are addressed promptly.

- 1. Assessment by Occupational Therapists (OTs) from Adult Social Care (ASC):**
 - OTs will visit and assess the needs of applicants to identify priority works based on health, safety, and mobility requirements.
- 2. Priority Identification:**
 - OTs can recommend to their manager that cases where urgent action is required should be prioritised.
- 3. Escalations and Timelines:**
 - For prioritised cases, we aim to start works within one month of receiving the referral, considering the nature of the work and the availability of specialised trades.
 - Routine works will follow the standard timelines outlined above.

5.5 Repairs

All repairs and ongoing maintenance of installed aids and adaptations will be carried out by the Council's Property and Repairs Team to ensure that modifications remain safe, functional, and fit for purpose.

Repairs to existing equipment follow our standard repairs policy: emergencies are addressed between 6 to 24 hours, depending on the issue, while we aim to complete non-emergency repairs within 35 days.

Scope of Maintenance

The Council's Property and Repairs Team will be responsible for:

- Routine maintenance: Regular servicing and inspections of adaptations such as stairlifts, hoists, and platform lifts to ensure continued safe operation.
- Repairs: Prompt response to faults, breakdowns, or damage to installed aids and adaptations, including grab rails, handrails, level access showers, and other accessibility features.
- Emergency Repairs: Priority response to urgent repairs where the failure of an adaptation poses an immediate risk to health and safety.

- Worn out adaptation: If the tenant's needs remain the same, we may consult with the Adaptations Team to obtain a quote for a like-for-like replacement. However, if the tenant's needs have changed, a reassessment will be carried out to determine the most appropriate solution.

Reporting Repairs

Tenants experiencing issues with their installed aids and adaptations can report repairs through the Council's designated Property and Repairs Team contact channels.

5.6 Adaptations in Communal Areas

Adaptations in communal areas are considered on a case-by-case basis. Communal spaces such as shared hallways and building entrances may impact multiple residents, the effect on all affected individuals will be considered as part of the decision-making process. In addition to resident impact, the feasibility of carrying out adaptations in these areas is carefully assessed. This includes practical considerations such as space, structural limitations, health and safety, and ongoing maintenance. Both resident feedback and feasibility will determine whether an adaptation can be approved.

5.7 Housing Transfers

Transfers to Alternative Social Housing

In cases where a tenant's current home does not meet their needs due to medical or accessibility reasons, a transfer to an alternative social housing property may be considered. The aim is to avoid unnecessary new installations, reduce delays, and make more efficient use of available homes.

If a tenant's medical condition is significantly impacted by their housing situation and adaptations are not a feasible solution, they may be eligible for additional priority points under the Housing and Health Related Needs category. All housing applications will be assessed against the London Borough of Camden's Allocations Schemeⁱⁱ.

Eligibility for Housing & Health Related Priority

Applications will be assessed by the Council's Medical Assessment Officer (or another authorised medical professional) to determine whether priority housing status should be granted based on medical and accessibility needs. To qualify, the applicant must demonstrate that:

- Their medical condition is being caused or worsened by their current housing conditions.
- Their current home cannot be reasonably adapted to meet their needs.
- Rehousing would significantly improve their health and wellbeing.

Priority Categories & Points Allocation

- Category 1 – 500 points will be awarded where the applicant's condition and housing circumstances have a serious impact on their health, and urgent rehousing is required.
- Category 2 – 150 points will be awarded where the applicant's condition and housing circumstances have a significant impact on their wellbeing, and rehousing is necessary.

Applications will be assessed within 21 working days, subject to the timely provision of supporting medical information. During this assessment period, applications will be placed on hold, and bidding for properties will not be permitted.

Accessible Housing Options

Following assessment, applicants will be provided with guidance on the types of properties they are eligible to bid for. These may include:

- Wheelchair Accessible Properties (fully or partially adapted).
- Lifetime Homes (designed with accessibility in mind).
- Easy Access Homes (featuring level approaches and wider doorways).
- Step-Free or Minimal-Step Properties.

Where a medical assessment confirms a need for a ground-floor property, priority will be given accordingly.

Direct Offers & Council Transfers

The Council may make direct offers of properties where it is in the financial or strategic interest of the housing authority this may include where adaptations are not feasible. Such cases will be subject to approval by an authorised officer.

Application Process

Tenants seeking a transfer due to medical or accessibility needs should:

- Request an Occupational Therapy (OT) assessment via Adult Social Care (ASC) (see 5.1).
- Apply for a medical assessment through the Council's housing application process.
- Provide supporting medical evidence from a GP or other health professionals.

Through collaboration with medical professionals and housing officers we will endeavour to ensure that tenants with specific health and mobility needs can access suitable housing that supports their independence, safety, and overall wellbeing.

6. Diversity, inclusion, and holistic services

We consider diversity and inclusion holistically, recognising the impacts of

intersectionality, multiple disadvantages and disproportionality, while also valuing the strengths and unique experiences of our residents. Our staff maintain an awareness of and respect for social and cultural differences, ensuring that our services are inclusive, accessible, and responsive to the diverse needs of the community and meet our commitments to 'We Make Camden'.

While our focus is on seeing the whole person, we are also mindful that some groups of residents may face disproportionate barriers to accessing services and support. For example, residents from minority ethnic backgrounds, LGBTQ+ communities, or those with invisible disabilities, such as Autism, may experience additional challenges. We are committed to addressing these disparities by fostering an inclusive approach that promotes equity, dignity, and empowerment for all residents.

This policy is not intended to be rigid. With appropriate consultation, our framework can be applied flexibly in the spirit of this policy.

7. Review

We will regularly seek feedback from tenants who have had Aids and Adaptations work. This feedback will be carefully reviewed, and we will take appropriate action to address any identified areas for improvement. Our commitment is to ensure that we continue to deliver an exemplary service, meeting the needs of our tenants effectively and enhancing their quality of life. Through ongoing engagement and service refinement, we will strive to uphold the highest standards in our Aids and Adaptations provision.

This document will be reviewed more frequently if required by changes in legislation, regulation, or the service.

8. Related documents

We Make Camden

Housing allocation scheme 2018 - Camden Council

Vulnerabilities Policy 2025

EqlA – Aids and Adaptations

9. Information and version control

9.1. Information

Title	Aids & Adaptations Policy
Document number	2
Author	Simon Rathborne, Housing Change & Policy Lead

Responsible officer	Gavin Haynes, Director of Property Management Chris Lehmann, Director of Adult Social Care Strategy and Commissioning		
Audience	Public		
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Approved by	Gavin Haynes, Director of Property Management		
Approval date	16/07/2025		
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9.2. Version control

Version	Date	Summary of Changes	Actioned by (role)
V.1	16 July 2025	Finalised Policy	Housing Policy and Change Lead

ⁱ [We Make Camden](#)

ⁱⁱ [Housing allocation scheme 2018 - Camden Council](#)