

The below table shows original budget position by year compared to outturn position over the period 2014-2018/19

	(,000)					
	Major		Minor		Stair lifts	
	Original Budget	Spend	Original Budget	Spend	Original Budget	Spend
18/19	525*		60		50	
17/18	450	440	50	42	60	60
16/17	450	580	150	83	60	137
15/16	450	580	150	36	60	117
14/15	312	668	75	55	45	60
TOTAL	2187	2268	485	216	275	374

Table 2 - Original Budget compared to outturn (,000)

Major Adaptation Requests

The vast majority of budget spend is on major adaptations. The below table details approved major adaptation requests for 2017/18. The approved works do not correlate with the spend detailed at table 2 for the year 2017/18 as not all approved requests were delivered in the year.

Type of Major Adaptation	Quantity
Level access shower	69
Over bath shower	14
External works e.g. ramps, steps etc.	16
Bathroom alterations	13
Kitchen alterations	4
Internal alterations	8
Doors	4
First floor toilet	3
Electrical	1
Door entry	1

Table 3 - Approved adaptation requests 2017/18

The below table details rejected major adaptation requests for 2017/18.

Type of Major Adaptation	Quantity	Refusal Reason
Ramps	3	Not feasible
Hardstanding	3	Did not meet criteria - e.g. parking close by
Extensions	4	High cost and offers made of suitable alternative accommodation

Table 4 - Rejected major adaptation requests for 2017/18

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Charnwood Borough Council

Adaptations Policy

**Draft Version 2.1
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Created/Amended by	Date Reviewed	Detail of Amendment	Version
Created by Ian Philp, Landlord Services Manager	November 2017	First draft	1.0
Amended by Ian Philp	December 2017	General amendments and clarifications Consulted SMT (Landlord Services)	2.0
Amended by P Oliver Head of Landlord Services	August 2018	Amendments following consultation with Asset Management Team, Housing Needs Team, and Corporate Improvement and Policy Officer	2.1

1. Introduction

Some of the Council's tenants are vulnerable and may require minor or major adaptations work to their home to ensure that they can continue to live comfortably, safely and independently in their homes. In some circumstances properties may be adapted to meet the needs of prospective tenants. An adaptation is defined as the provision of fixed equipment and/or modification to the property or associated land.

This Policy is designed to assist and support those tenants through the assessment and carrying out of adaptations work in eligible cases.

Occupational Therapists (OT) carry out assessment of needs in tenants' homes. Leicestershire County Council (LCC) have statutory responsibility for OT assessments and perform this service for the Council's tenants.

Assessment for adaptations will take into account the needs of individuals and their carers/households.

There is a range of legislation in relation to the necessity for, and delivery of, aids and adaptations, but the main ones are:

- Equality Act 2010
- Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996
- Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970
- Care Act 2014

Adaptations to Council homes are funded through the Housing Revenue Account. The budget for the Capital Programme for such works is determined on an annual basis and funds the following works:

- Minor adaptations

- Major adaptations
- Stair lifts

Council tenants are not eligible for assistance with Mandatory or Discretionary Grants through the Council's Private Sector Housing Grants Policy.

This Policy will be supported by clear operating procedures, standard forms and letters in order to achieve the objectives set out in Section 2.

2. Objectives of the Policy

The objectives of this Policy are:

- To support tenants and other permanent members of the household to live comfortably, safely and independently in their home.
- To ensure that tenants are aware of the options available to maintain and sustain independent living.
- To consider the needs of prospective tenants in the context of the Council's available housing stock and resources.
- To provide an accessible and cost effective adaptations service based on a fair and objective assessment of individual needs on a case by case basis.
- To support speed of decision making and minimise waiting times for adaptations work to be carried out.
- To make best use of the Council's housing stock and adaptation budgets.
- To give priority to adaptations work inside the home, and access and egress.
- To ensure the future proofing of the Council's stock.
- To ensure that appropriate technical consideration is given to recommendations for adaptations, and that statutory obligations in respect of building control and other relevant legislation are complied with.

3. Scope of the Policy

This Policy applies to all current tenants of Council-owned dwellings, and prospective tenants of the Council with a reasonable prospect of an offer of accommodation.

4. Policy Statement

There are two categories of Adaptations work: Minor and Major. This Policy covers both Minor and Major Adaptations work.

Minor Adaptations

This is generally works that cost below £500, and will be subject to an assessment and report from the OT at LCC.

Examples of minor adaptations are:

- Handrails at the front and/or rear entrance of the property
- An additional stair rail
- Grab rails
- Half steps
- Lever taps
- Key safes
- Fillet ramps (small internal timber ramp)

Major Adaptations

All other adaptations work costing £500 and over is classed as a major adaptation, and will only be carried out once a report has been received from the OT at LCC and after a subsequent decision has been made by the Council. Examples of major adaptations work are:

- Level access showers or other modifications to the bathroom
- Over the bath showers
- Major structural conversions
- Re-modelling of rooms and layout of the property
- Stair lifts/Vertical or Through floor lifts
- Concrete ramps for wheelchair use
- Shower screens
- Alterations to kitchen surfaces (i.e. lowering surfaces for wheelchair users)
- Installing patio doors in flats
- The widening of paths around the property
- Widening doors

Advice, Information and Support

Advice, information and support will be provided where tenants are considering what options are possible in relation to their individual circumstances.

Where tenant's request adaptations work, they will need to be referred to LCC for a full assessment. This can be done on a tenant's behalf by the Repairs and Investment Team or by the tenant directly contacting LCC.

Eligibility

Any Council tenant can apply for adaptations to their home either in person or via a member of their family, but it must be based on the LCC's eligibility criteria. The adaptation requested must meet the needs of the tenant or another permanent member of the household.

Assessment

The OT at LCC will contact the tenant to make arrangements to assess their requirements. This will be done in the tenant's home. Due to the nature of the works, if a joint visit is required by Repairs and Investment staff, this will be arranged.

Following the home visit, the OT will send an assessment report to the Council. This information will include a recommendation as to the works and materials required and an indication on the priority (i.e. urgent, ASAP, or standard).

The Repairs and Investment staff will be the key contact for tenants from this point onward.

Decision-making process

Minor Adaptations work of a standard nature will generally be approved and ordered if there is sufficient budget. Tenants successful in their application will be dealt with in date order within the priority recommended by the OT. Requests for Minor adaptations of a non-standard nature would generally require a survey by a Surveyor from CBC to assess feasibility for the works.

Major Adaptations work of a standard nature such as level access showers, over the bath showers, stair lifts, and ramps will generally be approved and ordered when they are received, subject to budget being available, and there not being any significant site complexities which would require a disproportionate level of resource to remedy.

Requests for Major adaptations of a non-standard nature would generally require a survey by a Surveyor from CBC to assess feasibility for the works.

Any decisions on Major Adaptations work, or where there is a case that requires more in-depth consideration, including, but not limited to those listed below will be referred for consideration by the Adaptations Review Panel.

- Major internal alterations/ external alterations
- Through floor lifts
- Hard-standings and dropped kerbs
- Adaptations with an estimated cost in excess of £7,000
- Adaptations with a non-standard design or concept

The Project Surveyor will present the case to the Adaptations Review Panel for consideration and decision.

The Adaptations Review Panel comprises:

- Repairs and Investment Manager
- Project Surveying Team Leader or Principal Officer - Investment and Programme Delivery
- Customer Liaison Officer
- Housing Needs Manager or Senior Allocations and Lettings Officer

The Council will generally not consider undertaking adaptations that meet the following criteria:

- The adaptation/s has an estimated cost in excess of £30,000.
- The adaptation involves the extension of a property.
- The property is of a non-traditional construction type and structural works are likely to be required e.g. installation of a through floor lift.
- The adaptation involves the installation of a level access shower at first floor accommodation where there is no existing lift.

While the circumstances of each case will be different in some aspects and will therefore have to be considered on the basis of individual need, the rationale for the decisions on major adaptations work will be based on the following considerations:

Tenant/Tenancy considerations

- The tenant's views and preferences
- The property to be adapted must be the main residence of the person who will benefit from the adaptations and likely to remain so in the foreseeable future.
- The current and likely future under or over occupancy of the property.
- Adaptations should address the immediate and longer term needs of the disabled person.
- If the tenants has moved from a property that would have been more suitable for their needs compared to the property and have deliberately worsened their circumstances.
- The type of tenancy held by the tenant: non-secure, introductory, secure tenancy.
- If there is an imminent risk of the tenancy ending i.e. through eviction or notice to quit.
- Any pending right to buy, transfer, or mutual exchange application

Property considerations

- The property type and its construction (such as prefabricated reinforced concrete properties).
- If the property is suitable for adaptation.
- If it is reasonable and practical to carry out adaptations.
- If space in the current property is being used to its maximum benefit
- If alterations can be made to the internal layout.
- The number of living rooms on the ground floor of the property.
- If the property has previously been adapted.
- If there are any existing adaptations to the property.
- If any existing adaptations can be recycled.

Other considerations

- If the works are supported (or not) by the OT.
- Where substantial work is recommended, the potential delays resulting from any planning and building regulations approvals and the design and completion of the works.
- The consideration of all other housing options.

- If there is another property empty that would be more suitable (rehousing option).
- Would the tenant and household have to be decanted on a temporary basis for the works to be completed (and, if so, is there suitable housing for the tenant to move to during the period of the works)?
- Full exploration of any viable alternatives.
- The budget available for adaptations work.
- The cost of the works.

The overriding principle in approving/refusing adaptations work will be that all options are explored to meet the specific needs of the tenant (and their household) requesting the adaptations work, including a transfer to more suitable housing particularly where this would prevent spending significant sums on major alterations to the existing home.

Post inspection of works

To ensure that adaptations work is carried out to the appropriate standards and to the satisfaction of the tenant, we will carry out:

- Post inspections on 100% of major adaptations work.
- Post inspection of 10% of minor adaptations work.
- After care visits by the contractor to the tenant on completion of the major adaptations work.
- Follow-up contact by the Customer Liaison Officer after 4 weeks from the completion of major works to complete a customer satisfaction survey and to check that there are no issues with adaptations work.

Procurement of works

All adaptations works will be procured in line with the current relevant Corporate, Financial and European Union Regulations and Requirements applicable at the time of processing the applications. Contract Procedure Rules will be adhered to unless it can be demonstrated that an exemption is required.

The current approach is:

- Stair lifts are completed by a specialist contractor.
- Other major adaptations work is carried out by the decent homes contractor.
- Minor adaptations work is carried out by the in-house Repairs service.

Complaints and Appeals Process

The priority given to tenants seeking an adaptation cannot be appealed against because it is based on the professional opinion of the OT.

Decisions on whether adaptations work is approved can be appealed through the Council's Complaints Scheme. Complaints will in the first instance be considered by

the Surveyor at Stage 0, and the Principal Officer - Investment and Programme Delivery at Stage 1.

If the decision to refuse the adaptations work is upheld at Stage 1 and the tenant wants to escalate the complaint, it will be referred to Stage 2 of the Complaints Policy for Corporate review.

In cases where the Adaptations Review Panel have already reviewed and made a decision on any requests for Major Adaptations work, the decision will be reviewed at Stage 1 of the Complaints Policy by the Head of Landlord Services. If the decision to refuse the adaptations work is upheld at Stage 1, and the tenant wants to escalate the complaint, it will be referred to Stage 2 of the Complaints Policy for Corporate review.

5. Performance monitoring, target setting and reporting

We will monitor performance using the following performance indicators:

- Satisfaction with the adaptations service
- Average waiting time for a decision on an adaptation request (from receipt of recommendation)
- Average time to carry out minor adaptations (following order of works)
- Average waiting time for major adaptations (following order of works)
- Average time to carry out minor adaptations (from receipt of recommendation)
- Average waiting time for major adaptations (from receipt of recommendation)
- % of minor adaptations completed within target
- % of major adaptations completed within target

Annual targets will be set on a team and individual basis.

We will report performance against the targets to the Landlord Services Senior Management Team for monitoring and review purposes.

We will compare our performance with that of other organisations, and we will seek to identify and implement good practice.

Equalities data will be captured for applications that are refused.

6. Multi-agency and team working

Meeting the needs of our tenants and helping them to live comfortably, safely and independently in their home will only be successfully implemented if there are effective relationships with other teams and agencies. We will strive to foster and nurture excellent relationships with such teams and organisations that include (but are not limited to):

- OT
- Adult and Children's Social Care
- Tenancy management and support teams
- Housing Needs Team

- Building Control and Planning
- External support agencies such as the Bridge, Citizens Advice Bureau

7. Training and development

In order to achieve the objectives of this Policy, staff must be suitably trained in this Policy and accompanying procedures. This will be achieved by a variety of methods including induction training for new employees, job shadowing, internal briefings on matters such as legislative changes, and internal and external refresher training.

Tenants will be made aware of this Policy using the Council's website, social media, tenants' newsletter and information leaflets.

8. Review of the Policy

This Policy will be reviewed every four years or at an earlier period if there are legislative, regulatory or corporate policy changes.

9. Responsibility and accountability

Responsibility for this Policy and any associated procedures lies with the Head of Landlord Services.

10. Other Policies

The following policies need to be taken into consideration in respect of this Policy:

- Equality Strategy 2016-20
- Choice Based Lettings Housing Allocations Policy
- Complaints Policy