



**Wythenshawe Community Housing Group (WCHG)**  
**Equipment and Adaptations Policy**

<b>Policy Name:</b>	Equipment and Adaptations Policy
<b>Status:</b>	Final
<b>Approved by:</b>	Board – May 2019 GLT – June 2020 – extension
<b>Drafted by:</b>	Penny Waller, Quality Assurance Team Leader
<b>Date approved:</b>	21 May 2019
<b>Date effective from:</b>	21 May 2019
<b>Customer consultation:</b>	Property Panel & TC – February 2019
<b>Next Review Date:</b>	July 2022

## **Equipment and Adaptations Policy**

### **1. Background**

- 1.1 Wythenshawe Community Housing Group (WCHG) recognises that disability can affect a person's ability to fully access their home and live independently. This policy sets out our approach to responding to the needs of customers in an efficient, responsible and culturally sensitive way.
- 1.2 WCHG will work in partnership with Manchester City Council (MCC) to provide an adaptations service funded by the Government funded Disabled Facilities Grant. We will deliver the adaptations service efficiently and in ways that provide value for money.

### **2. Scope**

- 2.1 The adaptation service is available to WCHG tenants who have been assessed by Manchester City Council as needing a minor or major adaptation installed at their home to facilitate independent living.
- 2.2 The Group will review all requests for adaptations to ensure the work is practical and that it is reasonable to grant Landlords consent for the work to be undertaken.
- 2.3 The provision of the adaptations service is subject to the availability of financial resources.
- 2.4 The provision of major adaptations is subject to no suitable re-housing options being available.
- 2.5 This policy applies to the role played by WCHG as landlord and as Lead Provider of adaptations in partnership with MCC for other Registered Providers (RP). This policy is subject to amendment if the current adaptations delivery model is changed by MCC.

### **3. Definitions**

- 3.1 An adaptation is an alteration or addition to a property, the installation of equipment or specialist equipment, to support someone's ability to live independently.
- 3.2 A minor adaptation costs less than £1000 to install.
- 3.3 A non-standard minor is an adaptation costing less than £1000 but one that may require a technical feasibility completing prior to installation, or some kind of specialist equipment ordering.
- 3.4 A major adaptation costs between £1000 and £50,000 to install and is eligible for funding through the Disabled Facilities Grant. (DFG)
- 3.5 DFG is a Government grant administered by MCC available to all regardless of tenure if eligibility criteria linked to AON is met.
- 3.6 Referrals are requests by individuals to be assessed for an adaptation to assist them live in their home independently.

## **4. Delivery**

- 4.1 WCHG will work in partnership with MCC to deliver the minor and major adaptation service in line with the Service Level Agreement (SLA) Provision of Major and Minor Adaptations.
- 4.2 WCHG will fund the installation of all minor adaptations that are received through the MSIL referral process. The target completion times are:
  - 5 working days for standard minors from date the request is received by WCHG.
  - 20 working days for non-standard minors from date the request is received.
- 4.3 WCHG will fund 40% of the cost to install a major adaption subject to available financial resources. Where WCHG is installing a major adaptation on behalf of another Registered Provider, they will collect the 40% contribution from the landlord, or MCC will provide 100% DFG funding.
- 4.4 The remaining 60% of the costs will be covered by the DFG claimed by the tenant, and this will be paid by MCC, directly to WCHG.
- 4.5 The target completion time for major adaptations is 6 months from the date the AON is received by WCHG.
- 4.6 Tenants retain the right to have the DFG paid to them and to appoint contractors to plan, design and install the adaptation, if they agree to comply with all quality, building and audit and selection of contractor standards, required by the DFG application process and WCHG. The intention to exercise this right must be stated in writing at the beginning of the installation process.
- 4.7 WCHG will ensure that all adaptation work is procured in ways that deliver value for money and efficient installation. This includes the option to use procurement frameworks, individual tendering and quotation exercises, the creation of an internal tendered framework and in-house teams.
- 4.8 WCHG will work with MSIL to recycle as many adaptations and specialist equipment whenever it is possible and practical to do so.

## **5. Criteria for not delivering Major Adaptations**

- 5.1 Adaptations will not be delivered in cases where the MSIL AON identifies that:
  - The tenants' need will be met most effectively through re-housing, in line with the Service Level Agreement with MCC. If the tenant is not suitably rehoused within 6 months, this decision will be reassessed.
  - The tenant does not meet the criteria for major adaptation, and therefore does not qualify for DFG.
- 5.2 In addition, adaptations may not be installed if:
  - The technical feasibility study proves that the proposals are not viable or practical. Under these circumstances WCHG will work with MSIL to identify alternative solutions.
  - The proposed adaptation will cost in excess of £50k. In addition all major adaptations that cost £30k or above will trigger an internal review of the case prior to Landlords consent for the work being given.
  - Multiple adaptations are recommended at the property.
  - If the landlord refuses to give consent for the work to be carried out when WCHG is working on behalf of another Registered Provider.

- 5.3 WCHG may refuse to grant Landlords consent for a major adaption in the following circumstances. In all such cases the Group will work with the tenant and MCC to identify an alternative re-housing option:
- If the property has been identified for demolition or major refurbishment.
  - When the tenant has a tenancy of less than 12 months.
  - When the tenant is not eligible for a DFG payment.
  - When the property is under occupied by 2 or more bedrooms
  - When a vertical lift has been requested
  - When there are current tenancy management issues such as rent arrears or anti-social behaviour that could lead to the tenancy not being sustainable.
  - When there are insufficient financial resources available, or it is not financially prudent to undertake the work.

## **6. Repair, Replacement and Servicing**

- 6.1 WCHG will assume all repairing responsibilities for the major and minor adaptations installed under this policy.
- 6.2 WCHG will arrange as necessary for all required servicing of equipment to be undertaken and reserve the right to recoup costs through service charges when appropriate.
- 6.3 When a major adaptation is still required by the tenant but beyond reasonable repair WCHG will fund a replacement from internal budgets.

## **7. Customer service**

- 7.1 The adaptations service has been designed to provide tenants with a service that is efficient in terms of cost and time taken, provides high standards of equipment and workmanship, and delivers excellent communication and support to the tenant during the process from referral to completion.
- 7.2 A suite of service standards to underpin the service has been agreed with tenants and performance against them will be routinely monitored and reported.
- 7.3 100% of tenants who have a major adaptation installed and 30% of those receiving minor adaptations will be asked to complete a satisfaction survey. This feedback will be used to monitor the quality of service provided and to identify any areas for improvement.
- 7.4 If a tenant is dissatisfied with any aspect of the service provided by WCHG and the situation is not resolved by the delivery team, the tenant can make a complaint under the WCHG Complaints policy.
- 7.5 WCHG will support tenants who are dissatisfied with the outcome of the referral process, and will discuss their case with MEAP. This may include requesting a second AON or considering potential re-housing options that maybe available
- 7.6 WCHG will promote the adaptations service across a range of media to ensure tenants are aware of it and understand how to access it.
- 7.7 The adaptation service delivery is underpinned by a comprehensive procedure guide and supporting work flow processes. Adherence to the procedures will ensure delivery of service standards and compliance with the SLA with MCC.

## **8. Rehousing**

- 8.1 Rehousing to a more suitable property will be considered in cases where major adaptations are required, to ensure such work is only undertaken when it is the most suitable and practical way to meet a tenant's need.
- 8.2 At the point a tenant is referred to MCC for an assessment, WCHG will assess the request and work with the individual tenant to identify a suitable re-housing option that will meet their needs.
- 8.3 WCHG will, where possible, re-let adapted properties to applicants who are waiting for adaptations, to reduce the number of adaptation removals.
- 8.4 Assistance to move to more suitable properties, such as paying removal costs, fitting new carpets, installation of white goods, may be offered to tenants, based on the specific case and the individual needs of the tenant.

## **9. Monitoring and Reporting**

- 9.1 WCHG will develop an annual resource plan in line with the budgeting process to ensure resources are in place to support delivery of the adaptations service.
- 9.2 WCHG will annually review the effectiveness of this policy.
- 9.3 The internal Key Performance Indicators will be monitored and reported against monthly.
- 9.4 WCHG will submit performance data to MCC in line with the requirements of the SLA and will review allocation of and DFG spend on a monthly basis.
- 9.5 WCHG will maintain its membership on the MSIL Board to ensure it has influence over the strategic direction and control of this service area.

## **10. Equality and Diversity**

- 10.1 WCHG will ensure that this policy is applied equitably to all tenants of WCHG and of other Registered Providers when acting on their behalf.
- 10.2 WCHG will ensure that it works in partnership with MSIL and will maintain the eligibility guidelines and principles they have developed.

## **11. Value for Money**

- 11.1 An overarching principle of this policy is to maximise the volume of adaptation work that can be delivered by WCHG from internal budget allocations and DFG grant payments.
- 11.2 Focus will be maintained on securing the most efficient procurement route for delivery of this work.

## **12. Related policies and procedures**

- WCHG Allocations Policy
- WCHG Void Policy
- WCHG Complaints Policy
- WCHG Data Protection Policy
- WCHG Equality and Diversity Policy
- WCHG Adaptations Procedure Guide