

Equipment and Adaptations Policy

2022 – 2025

Document control

Policy approval	Customer Services Committee, May 2022
Updating	Equipment & Adaptations Policy 2019 – 2022
New review date	March 2025
Responsible Executive Director	Executive Director of Property
Author	Head of Assets
Equality analysis completed	March 2022
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Version	5

Version	Date of review	Details of review
1	March 15	Conversion of existing policy into current template and track future revisions from this point forward
2	January 18	Review of policy
3	March 19	Changed to reflect arrangement put in place with KMBC.
4	April 21	New format
5	March 22	Policy review

1. Introduction

This policy outlines our approach to providing an adaptations service to customers that is accessible and fit for purpose. It will cover the following aspects of the services provided:

- Legal
- Funding
- Accessibility
- Delivery
- Alternative Accommodation
- Sustainable Service Delivery

We are committed to meeting the needs of our customers for independence and the ability to live comfortably in their own home. As per the Home Standard 2015, we adopt an approach of partnering with Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council (KMBC) to provide minor and major adaptation services that meet our customers' needs.

Minor adaptations and equipment will be provided in accordance with the *Minor adaptations without delay (2006)* guidance document published by the College of Occupational Therapists.

2. Scope

The implementation and scope of the policy applies and is applicable to:

Livv Housing Group	X
Livv Homes	
Livv Maintenance	
First Ark Social Investment (Operating as Livv Investment)	
All entities	

3. Compliance

The policy is in place in order to support:

Regulatory Compliance, in particular the Home Standard 2015, section 2.2.2	X
Legislative Compliance, in particular	X
Best Practice	

Section 2.2.2 of the Home Standard 2015 states:

Registered providers shall co-operate with relevant organisations to provide an adaptations service that meets customer's needs.

- Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970
- Disabled Persons Consultation and Representation Act 1970
- The Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 (Part 1)
- Minor Adaptations Without Delay (2006)

4. Policy Statement

Legal

Our customers have a right to consideration for disabled facilities under the following legislation:

- Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970
- Disabled Persons Consultation and Representation Act 1970
- The Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 (Part 1)

The service is provided to our customers through a partnership agreement between with KMBC.

Funding

Funding for major adaptations will generally be made up of 50% Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) and a 50% contribution from us. DFG funding is means tested and, if a customer does not qualify for grant funding, we have the following options to consider:

- Pay 100% of the cost of the adaptation
- Still pay a 50% contribution with the customer paying the other 50%
- Consent to the works but not make any contributory funding with the customer paying 100% of the cost.

Working with KMBC we will review, on an individual basis, any customer's requests for major adaptations who fail DFG means testing. This review will be to check if it is appropriate for us to change our approach to funding the work (as above). All decisions made will be discretionary.

All requirements for minor adaptations will be referred from KMBC to Livv Maintenance. This work will be 100% funded by us.

An annual budget will be identified which will be used as efficiently as possible to benefit the maximum number of people. A review of grant funding requests will be made at application stage ensure this is achieved.

Priority for support will be based on medical need as assessed by KMBC's Occupational Therapy team using the Fair Access to Care model. Applicant waiting lists will be managed by KMBC and reviewed with us to ensure appropriate funds are in place for the adaptation work required.

Accessibility

We will publicise the equipment and adaptations services available to customers and will seek to raise awareness of the support available to people requiring those services.

Although all adaptations will be requested via KMBC, we will provide help and support to any customer who enquires with us directly. We will ensure that our customer facing teams will have the correct information about how to start the assessment process both for minor and major adaptations.

Requests for major adaptations will be considered on the recommendation of a community or hospital Occupational Therapist or similar professional after carrying out an assessment of needs using the *Fair Access to Care* model.

Where a minor adaptation is required, assessment can be carried out by trained staff over the telephone in line with the '*Minor adaptations without delay*' guidance published by the College of Occupational Therapists

Delivery

We aim to assist with completing adaptations in the timescales stated in this section subject to budgetary constraints and any external factors that may impact the delivery of the service.

Minor Adaptations

Minor adaptations can be provided where a person is having difficulty in performing tasks essential for daily living or where mobility within the home is restricted. These works will be assessed immediately and completed within 28 days of application.

Minor adaptations include the provision of lever taps, handrails and grab rails and are delivered via the Care and Repair service provided by Livv Maintenance.

Major Adaptations

KMBC will provide Occupational Therapy services, select contractors and oversee all major adaptation works while we will jointly fund the major adaptations completed for our customers.

All major adaptations are reviewed by us at grant application stage. Steps will be taken to ensure that there are no suitably adapted properties available via the empty homes process prior to completing larger works such as extensions or through-floor lifts.

Quality inspections will be carried out while works are ongoing and through post-inspections. This inspection will be completed by Livv Maintenance on our behalf.

Where it is not technically possible, due to structure or layout, to carry out an adaptation in a property then suitable alternative housing will be sought that meets the customer's needs.

Alternative Accommodation

Working in conjunction with KMBC and customers, we will always review the availability of suitable accommodation or accommodation that has already been adapted before undertaking major adaptations.

Sustainable Service Delivery

Every effort will be made to ensure that the adaptation services provided are sustainable and provide the service required by customers. Minimising waste and ensuring works are undertaken only when required. We have in place

Stair Lifts – Stair lifts will be stored, refurbished and reused. The number of new stair lifts purchased will be kept to a minimum.

Use of adapted property – Processes are in place to match adapted vacant properties with suitable applicants from the adaptations database.

Extensions – Recommendations for the building of extensions will be assessed and alternative solutions investigated either at the existing property or through our new build programme.

Where the building of an extension is the only option, KMBC may seek additional financial support from us and/or the NHS Primary Care Trust for the area.

Maintenance – All equipment provided under the Equipment and Adaptations programme will be maintained through our Responsive and Planned Maintenance programmes. An annual programme of inspection of all stair and vertical lifts is in place.

5. Policy Outcomes

To ensure that the equipment and adaptation services provided to customers are accessible, fit for purpose and we maintain a strong partnership with KMBC for delivery.

6. Monitoring and Review

A budget will be allocated to jointly fund adaptations for our customers. This amount will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure we are helping meet demand.

In line with the Group's Policy Framework, this policy is scheduled to be reviewed every 3 years. Unless due to a change in Government legislation or regulatory requirements, then the review period will be brought forward in order to ensure compliance.

Performance of the service will be measured using KPIs relating to the delivery of adaptations from grant allocation stage through to completion. KPIs will be reviewed on an annual basis in conjunction with KMBC and tracked via our performance management system.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

The Policy Framework documents the approval routes for all Policies & Strategies, however under this policy the following teams/employees have the following responsibilities.

Executive Director's Team (EDT)	EDT have responsibility for final sign off of the policy
Director of Assets	Operational oversight of the funding of adaptations
Head of Assets	Operational responsibility for the delivery of adaptations
Asset Manager	Day to day liaison with KMBC and approval point for adaptations

8. Equality & Diversity

In order to comply with the Equality Act 2010, an equality analysis (EA) was completed as part of the policy review. Upon completing the EA, it was found that the implementation of the policy would support and encourage the aims of the public sector duty. The equality analysis was completed and approved March 2022.