AIDS AND ADAPTATIONS POLICY

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Business Information provided by Gloucester City Homes

DOCUMENTATION MASTER SHEET

Amendments to this Document are Detailed Below.

Version Number	Date Amended	Comments	Date Approved	Author	Approved By
01	21.12.2005	First Draft		GIH	
02	23.01.2006	Second Draft		GIH	
03	08.03.2006	Third Draft		GIH	
04	02.03.2006	Fourth Draft		GIH	
05	28.05.2006	Fifth Draft		GIH	
06	23.01.2007	Approved	21.02.07	JM	Services & Operations Committee
07	19.01.2010	Updated	Jan 2010	PT	Services and Operations Committee
08	26.07.2010	Updated	26.07.2010	PT	Customer Forum
09	19.08.2010	Plain English update		IH	
10	24.02.2011	Added Procedure and updated Policy	20.07.2011	IH	Customer Forum
11	19.09.2013	Minor Procedure Update	19.09.2013	MH	
12	23.12.2015	Contact details updated		KC	
13	12-03-2018	Split P & P	13-03-2018	SWT	NB
14	04.06.2021	Change to remove ref to DDA	07.06.2021	LC	MH
15	16/12/2025	Full review of policy	31/03/2026	CM	SLT

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OVERALL AIM/INTRODUCTION

GCH manage and maintain over 5000 properties in the locality of Gloucester. As a landlord and an employer, GCH are committed to help our customers with significant, long-term disabilities to remain in their homes and carry out essential daily activities or, if this is not possible or practical, support them to apply for more suitable alternative accommodation.

SCOPE OF POLICY

The aim of this document is to outline GCHs policies regarding the installation of medical adaptations within our properties.

SERVICE STANDARDS

Gloucester City Homes are committed to:

- Working with our residents to help our disabled customers to remain as independent as possible in their homes or, if this is not possible or practical, support them to apply for more suitable alternative accommodation.
- Keeping accurate and adequate records.
- Having competent persons appointed to manage and administer systems and measures in place.
- Having a suitable management system in place.

WHO IS CONSIDERED DISABLED UNDER THIS POLICY?

A person is regarded as being disabled if they have a medically diagnosed physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities within their home.

A long-term effect refers to disabilities:

- That are likely to last for the foreseeable future, of for the remainder of a person's life.
- We will normally only consider a request for aids and adaptations if the disabled person is named on the tenancy agreement or is a child who is permanently resident in the household.

Requests for major adaptations will not be considered where a Right to Buy application has been received. If a customer is registered for a move on Homeseeker, each application will be considered on its individual merits. The policy excludes residents who are leaseholders or part-owners of GCH properties. These customers would be encouraged to refer themselves for a Health & Social Care OT assessment.

In any case, all residents (including leaseholders) need our approval before any major adaptations to the property are carried out.

FUNDING AND PAYMENT

An OT can access basic equipment for adults on loan from Gloucester Equipment Service, which is provided free of charge to the customer, funded via Health & Social Care. More specialist equipment will require referral/signposting to Children's OT service or Adult's Health & Care OT Team.

When an adaptation is funded by another funding body, the OT, the funding body and Gloucester City Homes will all have to approve the works.

Minor adaptations

Gloucester City Homes will normally fund any minor adaptations up to a maximum of £1000.

We consider that approved minor adaptations are reasonable and practicable to install in any of our accommodation:

- If they can be carried out safely without affecting the structural stability of your home; and
- If required, have been recommended by an occupational therapist.

Minor adaptations include items such as (but are not limited to) –

- Grab rails
- Raised toilet seats
- Shower seats
- Lever taps
- Door handles
- Additional power sockets
- Additional Stair Rails
- Lowering light switches & raising floor level sockets (wheelchair users only)
- Raising floor-level sockets
- Smoke alarms for the deaf
- Replacing recessed or knob style handles to kitchen units' doors and drawers (people in Independent Living Schemes or mobility standard properties, and for people over 65 years of age only).

Once the minor adaptation has been assessed, we aim to complete the work within 28 working days.

Major Adaptations

Anything over £1000, is classified as a major adaptation and is expected to be subject to funding via Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) application to Gloucester City Council.

Major adaptations include items such as (but are not limited to) –

- Stairlifts
- Ramps
- Adjustments to steps i.e. additional concrete half steps
- Continuous rails (kee-klamp not permitted)
- Over-bath showers
- Level access showers / wet rooms (ground floor only)
- Low level shower trays
- Ceiling track hoists
- Vehicle hard standings
- Heating
- Through floor lifts
- Widening doorways
- Mobility standard kitchens
- Additional WC/wash facilities
- Extensions

For all requests for major adaptations, we will discuss with the customer whether the option of a move to alternative accommodation would better meets the needs of the disabled person. For example, we would not normally provide a level access shower to a first floor flat unless there was lift access to the first floor.

All requests for moving property are done via Homeseeker, which is managed by the Council.

If a tenant refuses a reasonable offer of alternative accommodation, we may refuse to undertake the requested adaptation(s).

Timescales for major adaptations can vary depending on the scale of work. Once the works have been agreed and all pre works planning has been completed, a project timescale will be provided to you by your project manager, through the Disabled Faciltieis Grant (DFG) team at Gloucester City Council (GCC)

As the homeowner, GCH reserves the right to refuse adaptations to a property if it does not feel it is the best use of housing stock. This is something GCH are within their right to do, even if a customer qualifies for a DFG. GCH does not usually approve a request if the property is too large for the household needs (under-occupation) or where a level access shower is needed above ground floor.

RESIDENTS INSTALLING THEIR OWN ADAPTATIONS

GCH will allow residents to make adaptations to their homes if they do not wish to go through the DFG route but only following a written request as per the Alterations Policy. Please note that customers may be asked to remove the alteration if they were to give notice on their tenancy.

If you install an adaptation in your home, certain adaptations will be subject to regular servicing and maintenance. As part of the alteration agreement, there may be service charges required for GCH to ensure that the equipment is safe in your home which customers will be required to pay.

ADAPTATIONS AND SERVICE CHARGES

There are certain alterations that will require regular servicing and general maintenance. If the alteration requires servicing and maintenance, this will be service chargeable to the customer. An estimated annual cost will be provided to the customer and will be serviced charged as per GCH Service Charge policy.

RESTRICTIONS

In accordance with the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996, we will only carry out adaptations that are reasonable and practicable for the property.

Major adaptations will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

The following works will generally not be funded via GCH or via Disabled Facilities Grant funding –

- Mobility scooter storage
- Ramps or adaptations specifically for mobility scooter access
- Mobility scooter charging points

For adaptations which are not feasible, we may advise the customer to seek more suitable alternative accommodation via Homeseeker application, to meet the long-term needs of the disabled person and/or make better use of the Social Housing stock in the area.

COMMUNICATION

Whether a minor or major adaptation is in progress for you in your home, we understand that this can be lifechanging and therefore communication about timescales is important during this time.

Gloucester City Homes will receive adaptation requests from community OT's and Gloucester City Council (GCC) asking for landlord permission to install a major adaptation. GCH will aim to make a decision on whether we approve an adaptation within 14 working days of receiving the referral.

If approval is declined, detailed reasoning of the reasons why and available next steps will be provided to you in writing, with information on how you can appeal this decision.

If approval for the adaptation is provided, your communication will come from GCC's Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) Team or your OT.

Once the works are completed, GCH will attend and post inspect the work to ensure quality and to update our records of the changes.

REPORTING

GCH will monitor adaptation work in line with our Contract Management Policy and Procedure.

APPEALS

If the customer is not satisfied with the decision and/or reasoning for the refusal of an adaptation, the customer has the right to appeal the decision.

The appeal must be formally received in writing within 14 working days of the decision notice, providing any further supporting documents that may be useful in the appeal. GCH will provide acknowledgement within 5 working days and a final outcome response will be provided within 28 working days of formally receiving the appeal.

The appeal will be carried out by a manager who was not involved in the original decision.

REVIEW

This policy will normally be reviewed triennially to ensure that it remains fit for purpose, unless an earlier review is required due to regulatoy, statutory or other requirements.