

<b>Policy Name:</b>	<b>Version:</b>	<b>3.0</b>
Aids and Adaptations Policy	<b>Date approved by Board:</b>	<b>Sept-2023</b>
	<b>Date of next review:</b>	<b>Sept-2026</b>

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This policy defines Fairplace Homes' approach to carrying out adaptations with the purpose of supporting customers to experience a good quality of life within their homes. This policy and the associated service will strike a balance between continuously improving levels of provision and customer service, making best use of housing stock and the need to achieve value for money.
- 1.2 As far as practicably possible, Fairplace will work with the local authority to support customers and enable them to continue to live independently within their home and community, ensuring that their home remains safe and convenient to use, whilst ensuring efficient management of resources.
- 1.3 Fairplace will develop a register of adapted properties so that, where possible, re-lets can be matched with customers' individual needs.
- 1.4 Fairplace will publish information on our website to provide detail on how customers can apply for adaptations.

## 2. Legal and Regulatory Requirements

- 2.1 The Regulator of Social Housing's Home Standard requires Registered Providers to 'co-operate with relevant organisations to provide an adaptations service that meets tenants' needs'.
- 2.2 The Equality Act 2010 states that "...landlords will be obliged to make certain reasonable adjustments if requested by the customer. Reasonable adjustments do not include the removal or alteration of a physical feature but do include providing auxiliary aids or services, changing practices, policies and procedures and/or changing the term of the letting."
- 2.3 In observing this policy, Fairplace will comply with all of the legal and regulatory expectations outlined in the following:
  - Equality Act 2010
  - The Disability Discrimination Act 1995, 2005
  - Community Care (Delayed Discharges) Act 2003
  - Housing Grants Construction and Regeneration Act 1996
  - Carers (Recognition and Services) Act 1995
  - NHS & Community Care Act 1990

### **3. Equality and Diversity**

- 3.1 We adhere to the provisions of the Equality Act 2010. Fairplace Homes does not discriminate against tenants or residents on account of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.
- 3.2 We work in accordance with our Equality and Diversity Policy, ensuring that appropriate advice and assistance is given to those disadvantaged in the community and/or with an assessed health and/or social care need that require support. This includes ensuring that adequate translation and interpretation facilities, easy to read material, induction loops etc. are available.

### **4. Policy Scope**

- 4.1 For the purpose of this policy, an adaptation is an alteration or addition to any aspect of a property which is provided in order to make it easier or safer for use by the customer. This may be the named tenants or relatives of the tenant where the tenants had caring responsibilities for them and they are permanent residents in the home.
- 4.2 This policy applies to Fairplace's Specialised Supported Housing (TCP) portfolio and its Intermediate Rent portfolio.

### **5. Funding and Types of Adaptations**

#### *Intermediate Rent*

- 5.1 Fairplace will carry out low-cost adaptations via the routine repairs budget. Requests can be logged as a responsive repair request without an assessment from an Occupational Therapist. Examples of simple aids include:
- Handrails
  - Grabrails
  - Lever taps
  - Simple/small ramps
- 5.2 For work valued at over £500 to an Intermediate Rent property, an assessment by the local authority occupational health team will need to take place. If the work is classed as a minor or major adaptation valued at over £500 Fairplace will seek funding / allowance from the Head Lessee.
- 5.3 If funding is made available, we will require a supporting letter with recommendations from an Occupational Therapist from the Local Authority. Once we receive the Occupational Therapist's recommendation, we will carry out an assessment for a number of factors:
- General suitability or practicality.
  - Where a large amount of work has been requested, whether a move may be more suitable.
  - Whether the works provide a long-term solution, particularly in a case where a large amount of expenditure is envisaged.
  - Whether the items should be provided by Social Services, e.g. bath or shower boards.

- 5.4 Following the assessment, we will inform you of the cost of the work and the timescale for completing the work. Major works will be completed within a maximum of 9 months, from the date of the assessment.

If the work is valued at over £500, tenants may need to raise funding themselves to either partly or fully cover the cost of the works, via Disabled Facilities Grants from the local authority or via other local charities.

*Transforming Care Partnership Portfolio*

- 5.5 Grants for adaptations under the Transforming Care Partnership Programme are applied for by Fairplace. Funding can cover adaptation of properties identified as supporting a particular client group. Fairplace will only apply for a grant on the basis of a particular need identified and not speculatively.

**6. Maintenance of adaptations**

- 6.1 Once adaptations have been installed, the association will maintain and repair these through its repairs and maintenance service to ensure they remain effective and in good working order. These works will be raised and delivered in accordance with the appropriate standard repair timescales (See Repairs and Maintenance Policy and Procedure).
- 6.2 Appliances provided at the time of the initial works will not be maintained by the association.
- 6.3 Due to the fact that some aids and adaptations require ongoing servicing and possible replacement in future years, Fairplace may have to apply a service charge for these items. This charge is set to reflect the cost of the actual service provided. We will always discuss any potential charges with you before going ahead with any work.

**7. Refusal of Adaptation Requests**

- 7.1 Fairplace are unlikely to approve the provision of a major adaptation where the benefit achieved for the resident is short term, or where it is not reasonable or practicable. Such circumstances may include:
- Where the customer is actively seeking rehousing.
  - When the adaptation requested is not structurally practicable.
  - When a major adaptation will not result in a significant benefit to the customer.
  - Where the property in question is scheduled for major refurbishment or other modification within the next two years
  - Where the tenancy is less than 12 months old
  - Where the tenancy is due to end within 12 months
  - Where the works are structural, and/or are likely to reduce the value of the property significantly
  - Where the property in question is under-occupied or over-crowded
  - Where the adaptation is highly specific and would render the property difficult to let to future tenants (e.g. a level-access shower not on the ground floor)

7.2 Where it is not reasonably practical to carry out the necessary adaptations to enable the customer to live independently in their own home, Fairplace will support the customer to find alternative accommodation which matches their housing requirement and need, making best use of existing stock. (Please see Allocations Policy).

7.3 Fairplace may also provide support with the cost of moving to a suitable property.

**8. Appeals and complaints**

8.1 Where a customer is not satisfied with a decision taken under this policy, they can appeal using the process outlined in our Complaints Policy.

**9. Related Policies**

9.1 This policy should be read in conjunction with Fairplace's:

- Allocations and Lettings Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Equality & Diversity Policy
- Neighbourhood and Communities Policy

**10. Policy Review**

10.1 This policy will be reviewed every three years.