Rolig Homes
Transforming Lives One Home at a Time

Aids and Adaptations Policy

1.0 Introduction

1.1 We want to help customers and household members live independently and safely at home. Aids and adaptations are reasonable adjustments to a person's home that make living safer and easier. This policy sets out our approach to aids and adaptations. It applies to all residents living in homes managed by Rolig Homes.

2.0 The Rolig Homes Policy

2.1 Our policy is that:

- We will support customers through the aids and adaptations process and work with our local authority partners, and other relevant organisations, to deliver the service.
- We will not unreasonably refuse an aid or adaptation request and will explain the reason for any refusal.
- We will ensure that all aids and adaptations work represent good value for money.
- Where we cannot adapt the property, we will explain why and discuss options to meet the customer's needs.
- We will approve aids and adaptations for and work with eligible customers and disabled members of their households where it is practical and reasonable to do so, to help them remain independent in their homes.

3.0 Background and policy

3.1 This policy supports the delivery of our strategic objective to provide great homes.

3.2 As a provider of supported housing, we must co-operate with relevant organisations to provide an aids and adaptations service that meets customers' needs. This means working with local authorities who have particular statutory duties to fulfil under the terms of the Housing Grants,

Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 and the Care Act 2014, as well as healthcare professionals and other agencies.

3.3 We also have legal responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010. This Act requires Rolig Homes to make reasonable adjustments, such as providing auxiliary aids, to assist a customer with a disability to live in a property.

3.4 As stated in their tenancy agreement, customers cannot make improvements to their home, such as adaptations, without our written consent. We will not unreasonably refuse an aid or adaptation request and explain the reasoning for any refusal.

3.5 An explanation of terms can be found at the end of the policy.

3.6 We will encourage customers to contact us if they need assistance or advice or if they require aids or adaptations to live independently and safely in their home.

3.7 We will carry out, where it is practical, person-centred fire risk assessments where we have become aware of customers at risk due to their physical disability, cognitive impairment or lifestyle. We will reduce risks as much as is reasonably practicable. This could include providing adaptations to customers.

Minor aids and adaptations

3.8 We will pay for minor adaptions such as grab rails or a raised toilet seat, and will install these. Any reasonable requests for minor aids and adaptations will be covered subject to funding availability.

3.9 We will not require a report from an occupational therapist (OT) or other key professional for minor aids and adaptations.

3.10 When we receive a request for aids and adaptation we will consider:

- Whether the work is necessary and appropriate to meet the needs of the person who requires it, taking into account any assessment made by a professional, such as an OT. We reserve the right to appoint a key professional to conduct this assessment.
- Whether the work is reasonable and practical, considering the property's age and condition.
- How the adaptation may affect the other residents of the building.

3.11 Whilst we will not unreasonably refuse a request for an aid or adaptation, we reserve the right to do so including in the following circumstances:

- It is not for the customer.
- The need has not been identified through an OT or similar assessment.
- The property is in disrepair or scheduled to be demolished.
- It is not physically possible to alter the property as requested.
- It would harm other residents.
- It does not meet all planning and building regulation requirements, or there are legal or contractual reasons which prevent us from carrying out the adaptation;

or

- It would present a health and safety risk.

3.12 Customers will need to apply for grant funding for major adaptions; i.e. stairlifts , from the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) to cover the cost where aid or adaptation is required unless they can self-fund the adaptation. We may offer assistance in making the application and work with the local authority or funding authority to help achieve the best solution for the customer.

3.13 Where the customer is unsuccessful in obtaining grant funding for the whole cost of the aid or adaptation and/or where the customer cannot source other financing and this has been evidenced, we will, in exceptional circumstances, consider match funding or funding the whole cost of the adaptation. Each case will be considered on its own merits.

3.14 If we cannot approve an aid or adaptation request, we will work with the customer(s) and, where appropriate, their OT and support networks, or other agencies to consider their options. This may include the customer moving to a suitable alternative property if available and appropriate.

4.0 Maintaining and utilising aids and adaptations

4.1 We will ensure that aids and adaptations are of good quality, meet the user's needs, provide immediate and potential future benefit for any user and minimise future maintenance costs.

4.2 When an adapted property becomes empty, we will retain minor aids and adaptations and, wherever possible, major aids and adaptations.

4.3 We will seek to let adapted properties to potential customers who require the aid or adaptation. We will work with our partners to identify people who require housing that might benefit from the adapted property.

4.4 We may refuse a request for a Management Move if the home is adapted for a support need that the incoming customer does not have.

5.0 Period of review

5.1 Our review programme is driven by service improvement initiatives, changes to legislation, regulation, evolving good practice or feedback from customers and other key stakeholders.

5.2 Typically we review policies on a three-yearly cycle. Key legal and regulatory references;

- Defective Premises Act 1972
- Landlord and Customer Act 1985
- Housing Act 1985
- Children Act 1989
- NHS & Community Care Act 1990
- Carers Act 1995
- Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002
- Housing Act 2004
- Equality Act 2010
- Care Act 2014
- Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 Related policies

Annex 1: Definitions

Term	Description
Adaptations	An adaptation is a reasonable adjustment, such as a physical or structural change, to a feature of a person's home that makes it safer and easier to move around and do everyday tasks. This includes: • Making the property safe for their use • Facilitating access to and from the property • Facilitating access to a room: o Used as the principal family room o Used for sleeping o Where there is a lavatory o Where there is a bath or shower (or both) or, o Used for the preparation and cooking of food • Facilitating access to and from a garden by a disabled occupant or making access to a garden safe for a disabled occupant (if the property has a garden as defined in the Housing Act 1996).
Auxiliary aids	An auxiliary aid is a piece of equipment or technology or change which would providing assistance to a person with a disability living in our homes. The following are considered auxiliary aids: • The replacement or provision of any signs or notices. • The replacement of any taps or door handles • The replacement, provision, or adaptation of any doorbell, • Changes to the colour of any surface (such as, for example, a wall or door) where this directly impacts a person's disability as assessed by an OT or other key professional.

Disability	The Equality Act 2010 describes a disability as a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on a person's ability to do normal daily activities.
Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG)	Means-tested grant (for adults and not children) provided by the local authority to help meet the cost of adapting a property for the needs of a person with a disability. To qualify for the grant, the adaptation must be necessary and appropriate as determined by social services (typically by an occupational therapist).
Minor adaptations	Works that do not significantly alter the structure of a property but assist a household to live more comfortably and are usually installed without needing an OT report. Typically works that cost less than £1,500 inclusive of VAT. This may include, but is not limited to: • Lever taps • Grab rails • Handrails • Steps (external).
Occupational Therapist (OT)	A health care professional who engages with customers (independently of Rolig) to assess their requirements to live a whole and active life. The Care Act 2014 statutory guidance specifically states that key professionals, such as OTs can conduct assessments, as these assessors would be appropriately trained to provide a comprehensive assessment.
Occupational Therapist Report (OT Report)	An assessment report detailing the person with a disability's requirements to help them achieve and sustain a level of independence corresponding to their needs and capabilities. In this instance, it relates to the adaptations required to a property.

Effective from	1 February 2025
Approved by	Nathan Stolborg
Approval date	31 January 2025
Policy owner	Matt Smith
Policy author	Matt Smith

Version history			
Version no.	**Date**	**Summary of change**	**Author and approver**
1.0	01/02/25	New policy	Matt Smith / Nathan Stolborg