Aids and Adaptations Policy

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose

Sapphire Independent Housing is committed to supporting residents with disabilities and long-term health conditions to live safely and independently in their homes wherever reasonably practicable.

This policy sets out Sapphire's approach to assessing and responding to requests for aids and adaptations to residents' homes.

1.2 Definition

An aid or adaptation is a change to a property which helps a disabled person to access or use their home safely and independently.

1.3 Principles;

We recognise that appropriate adaptations can:

- Promote independence and wellbeing.
- Enable residents to remain in their homes for longer.
- Reduce risks to health and safety.
- Support equality of opportunity for disabled residents.

2.0 Policy objective and scope

2.1 The objectives of this policy are to:

- Support residents to remain living independently wherever possible.
- Ensure requests are considered fairly and consistently.
- Make best use of Sapphire's limited financial resources.
- Work in partnership with local authorities and health professionals.
- Ensure adaptations are provided where reasonable, practical and financially viable.

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2.2 This policy applies to:

- General needs residents
- Supported housing residents .

2.3 The policy does not apply to shared owners or residents in temporary accommodation.

3.0 Aids and Adaptations

3.1 Minor Adaptations

Minor adaptations are adaptations costing up to **£1,000**, including:

- Grab rails
- Lever taps
- Small access ramps
- Additional handrails
- Door entry adaptations
- Lowered fittings
- Minor alterations recommended by an Occupational Therapist (OT)

3.2 Major Adaptations

Major adaptations are adaptations costing **more than £1,000**, including:

- Wet rooms
- Level access showers
- Stairlifts
- Through-floor lifts
- Significant access alterations
- Structural alterations to improve accessibility

3.3 Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG)

A Disabled Facilities Grant is a local authority grant that helps fund adaptations for disabled people. Eligibility and approval are determined by the relevant local authority.

3.4 Occupational Therapist (OT)

An Occupational Therapist is a qualified health professional who assesses an individual's needs and recommends appropriate adaptations.

4. Sapphire's Approach

4.1 Minor Adaptation Requests

Requests for minor adaptations may be made by:

- Residents
- Carers
- Family members
- Support workers
- Occupational Therapists
- Social workers
- Medical professionals

4.2 Assessment

Sapphire may request supporting evidence where necessary, including:

- An OT assessment
- Medical evidence
- Supporting information from health or social care professionals

4.3 Funding

Sapphire will normally fund minor adaptations up to a maximum value of **£1,000 per request**, subject to:

- Budget availability
- The adaptation being reasonable and practical
- The adaptation being appropriate for the property

4.4 Timescales

Where approved, Sapphire will aim to complete minor adaptations within a reasonable timeframe, depending on contractor availability and complexity of works.

4.5 **Major Adaptations**

Where the proposed adaptation is expected to cost more than **£1,000**, residents will normally be required to apply for a Disabled Facilities Grant through their local authority. Sapphire recognises that some residents may need assistance navigating the DFG process and will:

- Provide guidance on how to apply.
- Liaise with local authority partners where appropriate.
- Assist residents in obtaining necessary property information.
- Consider reasonable support for vulnerable residents throughout the application process.

4.6 Major adaptations will normally require:

- A formal assessment from a Local Authority Occupational Therapist; and
- Approval through the Disabled Facilities Grant process.

5.0 Property Suitability and alternative housing options

5.1 Sapphire may decline a major adaptation where:

- The property cannot reasonably be adapted.
- The works would compromise building safety.
- The adaptation represents poor value for money.
- Alternative housing would better meet the resident's needs.

5.2 Where adapting a property is not practical, Sapphire may discuss:

- Rehousing to more suitable accommodation via the local authority waiting list.
- Mutual exchange opportunities.

6. Maintenance and Repairs

6.1 Where Sapphire has funded and carried out the adaptation **it** will remain responsible for maintaining adaptations it has installed, subject to normal wear and tear and any manufacturer's warranty arrangements.

6.2 The responsibility for future maintenance of grant-funded adaptations will be considered on a case-by-case basis depending on:

- Ownership of the equipment.
- Funding arrangements.
- Legal obligations.
- Manufacturer warranties.

7.0 Void Properties

7.1 Adaptations will normally remain in place when a property becomes vacant unless:

- They are unsafe.
- They are beyond economical repair.
- Removal is necessary to meet the needs of future residents.

8. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

8.1 Sapphire is committed to ensuring that disabled residents are not disadvantaged in accessing housing services.

8.2 Requests will be considered in accordance with:

- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998.

9.0 Data management and Monitoring

9.1 Asset Information; Sapphire will maintain records of significant adaptations to assist with future allocations and ongoing maintenance planning.

9.2 Sapphire will monitor requests and outcomes to ensure decisions are fair, consistent and non-discriminatory.

10.0 Refusals and Appeals

10.1 A request may be refused where:

- The adaptation is not supported by appropriate evidence.
- The adaptation is unsuitable for the property.
- The adaptation poses a health and safety risk.
- Alternative solutions are more appropriate.
- Funding cannot reasonably be secured.

10.2 Residents who are dissatisfied with a decision may use Sapphire's Complaints Policy.

11.0 Legislative and Regulatory Framework

11.1 This policy operates within the requirements of:

- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Housing Act 1996
- Care Act 2014
- Disabled Facilities Grants legislation
- Relevant health and safety legislation

11.2 The Safety and Quality Regulatory Standard requires that registered providers must clearly communicate to tenants and relevant organisations how they will assist tenants seeking housing adaptations services. The standard also requires registered providers to co-operate with residents, the appropriate local authority departments and other relevant organisations so that a housing adaptations service is available to tenants where appropriate.

12.0 Policy Review

12.1 This policy will be reviewed every three years unless amendment is prompted by a change in legislation, operational requirements or resident feedback.

Policy Name:	Date Created:	
Aids and Adaptation Policy		
Approved By:	Date Approved:	September 2026
Department Director:	Last Review Date:	
Operations Director		
Linked Policies and Procedures:	Next Review Due: (+2 years)	September 2029
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy Maintenance Policy Lettings Policy Transfers and Allocations Policy Health and Safety Policy		

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