

Home Adaptations Policy

Policy Owner:	Executive Director Growth
Policy Lead:	Director of Property Services
Approved by:	Executive Team
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Contents

	Page
Purpose and scope of this policy	1
Policy	2
• How to contact us about home adaptations	2
• Minor adaptations (adaptations costing up to £1,000)	3
• Major adaptations	3
• Ongoing maintenance	4
• Refusing a home adaptation request	4
Definitions	5
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	5
Data protection	6
Related legislation and regulations	6
Related policies and procedures	6
Customer engagement	7
Document revision history	7

Purpose and scope of the policy

This policy applies to you if you rent or lease a home from us (either fully or through shared ownership) and you need home adaptations to make your home suitable for any older or disabled person / person with a disability who lives there, whether you or someone else.

It sets out how we'll assist by cooperating with you, appropriate local authority departments and other relevant organisations so that a housing adaptations service is available to you where appropriate.

As set out in the policy, if you're a leaseholder or shared owner, or you've started the process to purchase your home under the Right to Buy or Right to Acquire, and your request for assistance relates to adaptations inside your home, the only assistance we'll provide is to signpost you to a relevant organisation who may be able to help.

1. Policy

1.1 If you need home adaptations, we'll assist you in accordance with this policy. This assistance may include:

- Signposting you to a relevant organisation who may be able to help - This is the only assistance we'll provide if:
 - you're a leaseholder or shared owner, or if you've started the process to purchase your home under the Right to Buy or Right to Acquire,
 - and your request for assistance relates to adaptations inside your home.
- Applying to a relevant organisation on your behalf (with your consent)
- Establishing clear timelines with a relevant organisation for providing the adaptation, or
- Adapting your home or working in partnership with another relevant organisation (for example, local authority) to adapt your home.

1.2 We won't unreasonably refuse:

- permission for a reasonable home adaptation to be installed in your home (where the home adaptations service is provided by a third party), or
- your request for a reasonable home adaptation (where we provide an adaptations service)

1.3 Where we don't meet your request for a home adaptation, we'll consider whether it's appropriate to offer alternative measures in order to support you – for example, offering to transfer you to a home that's accessible or can be adapted to meet your needs.

1.4 If we undertake planned improvement works to your home, we'll proactively work with you to identify and address any need for home adaptations.

2. How to contact us about home adaptations

2.1 If you need to contact us about home adaptations, you can contact us:

- by telephone: 0300 323 0011
- by email: customer@moat.co.uk
- on our online portal [myMoat](#)
- on [web chat](#)
- by speaking to
- by writing to us at: Moat, Mariner House, Galleon Boulevard, Dartford, DA2 6QE

2.2 If you'd like to talk to us through social media, please remember that our pages are public. We want to keep your personal data safe so we might recommend that we switch to a safer channel. We'll still communicate digitally if that's what you prefer.

- 2.3 As long as you agree, we'll accept a request for assistance from anyone acting on your behalf. For example, this could be family members, MPs and other organisations such as the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) and Citizens Advice.
- 2.4 We'll make reasonable adjustments to accommodate your individual needs and comply with the Equality Act 2010. We'll provide an interpreter or British Sign Language interpreter if needed. Please tell us about any adjustments you need if we forget to ask.

3.0 Minor adaptations (adaptations costing up to £1,000)

- 3.1 Minor adaptations are adaptations costing up to £1,000 that can be carried out safely with a referral from an Occupational Therapist, Hospital Discharge Team, doctor or other medical professional or assessment by a Trusted Assessor, for example:
 - Grab rails, handrails, and stair handrails.
 - Flashing doorbells and smoke alarm alerts (for customers who are deaf or hard of hearing).
 - Window opening equipment.
 - Provision of suitable taps, door handles, banister handrails, sockets.
 - Internal / external door threshold ramps and alterations.
 - Door entry systems.
- 3.2 If you're a Moat tenant who needs minor adaptations (as defined above) to meet your needs and / or the needs of someone who lives with you, we'll either:
 - Arrange these for you and pay for them (as long as there's enough money remaining in our adaptations budget for the year), or
 - Signpost you to other organisations who may be able to provide them and, if you'd like us to, assist you to apply.

4.0 Major adaptations

- 4.1 Major adaptations are more expensive adaptations (adaptations costing over £1,000) and adaptations that require work of a more complex nature, such as:
 - stair lifts, through floor lifts, ceiling hoists and ramps
 - level access showers and wet rooms
 - toilets with an automatic flush
 - internal and external adaptation works to a home or garden to meet any disability-related safety and accessibility needs.
- 4.2 We'll only consider requests for major adaptations that are recommended by an Occupational Therapist. We won't make major adaptations in temporary accommodation.

4.3 If you're a Moat tenant who needs major adaptations (as defined above) to meet your needs and / or the needs of someone who lives with you, we'll:

- Assist you to get an Occupational Therapist if you don't already have one (by, for example, contacting the relevant local authority).
- Review the adaptations recommended by the Occupational Therapist and give our approval for the works to be carried out as long as doing so would be feasible, practicable, and reasonable.
- Agree with you what adaptations works will be completed, having made you aware of any potential service charge implications, who will complete them and who will pay for them. We may either:
 - Signpost you to other organisations who may be able to provide funding for the works and, if you'd like us to, assist you to apply – This may include applying to the relevant local authority for a Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG).
 - Pay for them (or contribute to the cost), if there's enough money remaining in our annual adaptations budget and carrying out the adaptations would be a cost-effective way to meet your needs.

Extensions

4.4 We'll only consider extending your home, or giving permission for an extension, if:

- Remodelling the existing layout is not feasible or financially viable,
- Rehousing is not considered appropriate, and
- It provides the most cost-effective solution.

4.5 Schemes involving extensions often require planning permission, building regulation consent and a detailed feasibility study and specification.

4.6 Any permanent increase to the size of a home may result in increased rent and council tax.

5.0 Ongoing maintenance

5.1 Where adaptations have been installed by us, or with our permission (which we won't unreasonably withhold), we'll maintain, repair and service them in accordance with relevant legal and regulatory requirements. You may be required to pay for relevant services, such as annual servicing and maintenance of lifts and stair lifts, through an annual service charge.

6.0 Refusing a home adaptation request

6.1 Where we don't meet your request for a home adaptation, we'll:

- Clearly confirm and explain to you our decision and the reasons for the decision in writing (and by another appropriate method if needed to meet your communication needs), and

- Offer alternative measures in order to support you, if possible and appropriate – for example, offering to transfer you to a home that's accessible or can be adapted to meet your needs.

6.2 The following are examples of why we might not meet your request for a home adaptation, but we'll always take your individual circumstances into account when making a decision:

- It's not possible to make the adaptations needed due to the characteristics of the building including age, location, internal layout, type of construction, surrounding buildings and ground conditions.
- Planning or building regulation restraints.
- We don't own the home (or the building the home's in) and it's not possible to make the adaptations needed due to clauses in the lease.
- Making the adaptations needed would have an unreasonably negative impact on the communal areas or on the property's future use and our ability to let the home to someone in the future.
- Where the installation of external adaptations in communal areas of flats would have a negative impact on other residents and their safety.
- It's likely that you'll be moving to a new home within a timescale that means that it's reasonable to not adapt your current home.
- You have more than one spare bedroom and we, or another registered provider of social housing, can offer you a home that will better meet your needs within a reasonable period of time.

Definitions

- **Major Adaptations:** Please see definition at start of section 4 of this policy.
- **Minor Adaptations:** Please see definition at start of section 3 of this policy.
- **Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs)** – You could get a grant from your council if you're disabled and need to make changes to your home. If you qualify for a grant, how much you get will depend on what adaptations are needed and on your household income and savings. At the time of writing this policy, the maximum grant for homes in England is £30,000 but some councils may give more. For more information, please see [Disabled Facilities Grants: Overview - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/disabled-facilities-grants-overview)

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

This policy will be delivered in accordance with our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy. An Equality Impact Assessment was completed for this policy and considered as part of the approval process.

Data protection

This policy will be delivered in accordance with our Data Protection Policy. A Data Impact Assessment was completed for this policy and considered as part of the approval process.

Related legislation and regulations

- **Regulatory Framework for Social Housing in England: Safety and Quality Standard and Home Standard** – The Home standard is a series of regulatory standards that must be met by all registered providers of social housing. It requires providers to cooperate with relevant organisations to provide an adaptations services that meets tenants' and their households' needs.
- Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970
- Children Act 1989
- Carers (Recognition and Services) Act 1995
- **Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996** – This Act sets out the duty and rules for providing mandatory Disabled Facility Grants (DFGs).
- The Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002.
- **Equality Act 2010:**
 - The Equality Act 2010 sets out what changes can and cannot be considered a 'reasonable adjustment' for a disabled person and the obligation for reasonable consideration of a tenant's request to carry out improvements or alterations at their own cost to remedy any substantial disadvantage they are placed under as a consequence of their disability.
 - The Equality Act 2010 defines a disabled person as someone who has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities. A long-term effect refers to impairments that have lasted at least 12 months, or the effects of which will last for at least 12 months, or which are likely to remain for the remainder of a person's life.
- **Care Act 2014** – This Act helps to improve people's independence and wellbeing. It makes clear that local authorities must provide or arrange services that help prevent people developing needs for care and support or delay people deteriorating such that they would need ongoing care and support.

Related policies and procedures

- Aids and Adaptations procedure (to be replaced by Home Adaptations Procedure)
- Compensation Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

- Homes Lettings Policy
- Lifts Policy
- Mutual Exchange Policy
- Priority Move Policy
- Repairs and Maintenance Policy
- Safeguarding Adults at Risk Policy
- Safeguarding Children Policy
- Service Charge Policy
- Temporary Moves Policy

Customer engagement

On 2 July 2024, we contacted our Customer Advocates to invite them to comment on a draft of this policy by completing a survey. The survey, which closed on 8 July 2024, asked the following questions, and invited them to provide comments:

- Did you find the policy clear and easy to understand?
- We are keen to remove jargon and buzzwords wherever possible. Were there any words, phrases, or sections that you feel we should change to ensure it is plain English?
- Thinking more generally about this policy, is there anything you would change or you think is missing?
- Would you support Moat's adoption of this policy?

All customers who responded said they found the policy clear and easy to understand and would support the adoption of the policy. No specific changes were suggested.

The draft policy that we invited our Customer Advocates to comment on has been amended following the consultation on the basis of legal advice received.

Document Revision History (Record of any changes made to the policy)

Date	Changes approved by	Details of changes made
11 October 2024	Executive Director of Customer Experience	Reference to 'Decant Policy' changed to 'Temporary Moves Policy'.