



Aids and adaptations policy

1. Purpose and scope

This policy sets out how Selwood Housing will deal with requests for aids or adaptations to a tenant's property. This may be a direct request or where a tenant has secured funding from an appropriate local authority.

This policy does not include aids or adaptations to a leasehold or shared ownership property. The tenant or leaseholder may need permission from Selwood but will be responsible for arranging their own adaptations.

Whether a resident can or cannot make improvements to their home will vary and be determined by their individual lease or tenancy agreement.

2. Underpinning principles

Selwood Housing recognises that from time to time tenants may require adaptations to their home for them to continue living there. We will work positively and proactively to facilitate aids and adaptations to our customers' homes where necessary

The aim of this policy is to ensure that:

- we help our tenants to enjoy their independence and continue to live in their homes with confidence, privacy and dignity by helping them to adapt their homes as their needs change (either directly or by signposting them to external agencies)
- there is a consistent approach to carrying out adaptations for all our tenants

Aids and adaptations are items of equipment or special fixtures and fittings, which may improve access to a tenant's home, improve a tenant's mobility in and around their home, or help with daily living. For



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example, this may involve the fitting of an additional rail to help climb the stairs or the replacement of a bath with a level access shower.

Selwood will also support any existing tenant with a move to a more suitable property that will accommodate their long-term needs in line with our lettings policy.

3. Policy details

Minor Adaptations

Minor adaptations are defined as any aids or adaptation which cost up to £1,000 (including VAT and any fees). Selwood Housing will carry out any minor adaptations up to the value of £1,000 in line with the guidance document "Minor Adaptations without Delay" (College of Occupational Therapy), as long as there is sufficient budget at the time of the application.

We will accept applications for small items (e.g. handrails and grab rails) both directly and through formal Occupational Therapist (OT) referrals. For larger items (e.g. ramps, showers) we will accept applications via a formal OT referral or by recommendation of a social worker, doctor or similarly suitably qualified person.

Major Adaptations

Major adaptations are defined as any aids or adaptation which cost more than £1,000 (including VAT and any fees). Where requests fall into this category the tenant will be advised to contact their local authority for assessment and to apply for an appropriate grant, such as a Disabled Facility Grant (DFG).



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Selwood will not routinely contribute towards the cost of any standard DFG works but may support individual schemes on a case-by-case basis.

Selwood will be involved in the review and identification of the most appropriate adaptation at the earliest possible stage to contribute to the identification of the most appropriate solution for all parties, and will attend case review meetings, site inspections etc. as necessary.

Where a bathroom is due for renewal and Wiltshire Council have identified a need for an adaptation Selwood will carry out the works, including any adaptations, as part of their planned bathroom renewal programme. The extra over-cost for the adaptations will be supported by a payment of £750 per bathroom by Wiltshire Council.

Selwood will not expect any tenant to contribute towards the base cost of a replacement bathroom. However Selwood will expect the tenant to make a contribution towards the extra over cost of the level access shower if, through means testing carried out by the Local Authority, a contribution is required.

Making the best use of our stock

Whilst Selwood will not refuse to give permission for any appropriate adaptation, we reserve the right to refuse significant adaptations where:

- a reasonable alternative property is available, or is likely to become available, in the near future;
- we feel the proposed works are inappropriate for the property concerned, and may devalue the asset; or
- the proposed adaptation may affect the ability to let this property in the future.



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Selwood will not unreasonably refuse permission for any appropriate adaptation. However, items such as through floor lifts would only be approved where every other reasonable option has been considered and discounted.

In support of this, Selwood will assist tenants with finding suitable accommodation by prioritising their application though a direct let in line with the criteria set out in the Selwood Lettings policy.

Selwood are prepared to contribute to the cost of an extension to a Selwood property where the cost exceeds the Council's maximum DFG contribution and where a move to alternative accommodation has been explored and no suitable alternative accommodation is/or is likely to become available. Selwood's contribution will be limited to a maximum of £15,000.

Selwood will consider each case on its own merits. However, Selwood would not normally support an extension to a property if this would result in the upper floor being made effectively redundant (e.g. construction of a ground floor bedroom and bathroom to accommodate a person living on their own) or a significant under-occupation of the property (e.g. single person living in a 3-bedroom property).

Servicing, maintenance and future use

Selwood will carry out the future maintenance and servicing of significant adaptations (e.g. stair lifts and level access shower rooms) at the end of their initial warranty period, to ensure that any installation within a Selwood property is appropriately and safely maintained.

The tenant must notify Selwood Housing on completion of the works and provide copies of all relevant electrical test certificates, warranties etc.



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If an item installed via a DFG becomes uneconomical to maintain the tenant will be required to apply for further DFG funding to replace that item.

We will always look to retain an adaptation once it has been installed.

We may also review the method of installation to support a simple and cost effective alteration in the future (e.g. the ability to simply re-instate a bath alongside a level access shower in family accommodation).

Sheltered housing

As part of our investment programmes our standard specification for bathrooms in Cat 2 sheltered accommodation will be for level access showers (or shower cubicles on upper floors).

Requests for wet rooms / level access showers in sheltered schemes following refurbishment

This policy applies only to tenants who were living in a sheltered scheme at the time of refurbishment of the scheme where a communal bathroom has been removed.

In these circumstances Selwood will install a wet room or level access shower with no requirement for the tenant to apply for a Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) to cover the cost of the work.

We will need a referral from an Occupational Therapist to confirm that the work is needed and make a recommendation as to the type of bathroom that is needed.

The work will be carried out as soon as possible but may take several months depending on the capacity of our bathroom team.



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4. Signposting

Other relevant legislation, policies and procedures:

- Alterations policy
- Equality and diversity strategy
- Minor adaptations without delay Part 1: A practical guide for housing associations (College of Occupational Therapists)

