

CLYDE VALLEY HOUSING ASSOCIATION

Medical Adaptations Policy

Policy Number M11

• Policy Prepared by	Kevin McGhee Housing Maintenance Manager
• Reviewed by Committee	August 2010
• Approved by Committee	August 2010
• Date of Next Review	August 2013
COMPATIBLE WITH:	
• Legislation	Yes
• Equality Policy	Yes
• Business Plan	Yes
• Performance Standards	Yes
• Tenant Participation Strategy	Yes
• Risk Strategy	Yes
• Statement on Openness and Confidentiality	Yes

Please Note

On request, the Association will provide translations of all our documents, policies and procedures in various languages and other formats such as computer disc, tape, large print, Braille etc. This can be arranged by contacting the Association's office.

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This policy outlines the broad principles that will be used by Clyde Valley Housing Association (CVHA) in the management of Medical Adaptations.
- 1.2 The Medical Adaptations Policy has been set by the Board of CVHA and will be operated by officers of CVHA.

2. Aims & objectives

- 2.1 The Medical Adaptations Policy aims to ensure that the Association effectively administers referrals from Social Work for medical adaptations that will enable disabled tenants to continue to live in their home.
- 2.2 The main objectives of this policy include:
 - supporting the independence and dignity of tenants by undertaking adaptations to their existing properties to improve quality of life;
 - acknowledging that in some instances construction type and financial constraints may prohibit the successful adaptation of a property;
 - maximising grant funding available from the Scottish Government;
 - ensuring that the Association carries out adaptations that are appropriate to the tenant's needs and therefore, utilised to their full potential;
 - ensuring that the Association makes best use of its housing stock and resources available by allocating vacant adapted houses to tenants with similar medical needs;
 - ensuring that systems are in place to enable the Association to comply with its duties in relation to medical adaptations;
 - providing a prompt, efficient and cost effective medical adaptations service;
 - operating an effective medical adaptations monitoring system;
 - having systems and procedures in place, which ensure that the medical adaptations process is carried out efficiently, effectively and economically for both Association and tenant;
 - ensuring that audit trails exist within the medical adaptations process;
 - ensuring that reporting systems are in place to promote feedback to monitor the medical adaptations process;
 - reviewing policies, procedures and systems regularly to ensure they are up to date and reflect current best practice guidance and legislation; and
 - responding promptly to referrals for medical adaptations.

3. Corporate fit

3.1. Legislation & best practice

- 3.1.1 CVHA will comply with all relevant legislation, regulations, performance standards or any targets set down by the Scottish Housing Regulator in terms of Medical Adaptations.
- 3.1.2 CVHA's Medical Adaptations Policy is consistent with our Housing Maintenance Policy Guide, Asset Management Strategy and Tenancy Sustainment Policy.

3.2. Equalities

3.2.1 CVHA's Medical Adaptations Policy complies with CVHA's Equality Policy to ensure equality of treatment for all tenants without discrimination or prejudice. At all times CVHA will therefore consider all customers, regardless of sex, faith or religion, race, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, mental or physical health, disability or marital status.

3.3. Confidentiality

3.3.1 CVHA recognises that confidentiality is important to tenants and will treat their tenancy information in the strictest confidence under the Data Protection Act 1998 and in line with CVHA's Openness and Confidentiality Statement.

3.4. Business Plan & risk management

3.4.1 CVHA's Business Plan reflects that medical adaptations are necessary to support the needs of tenants with particular needs who are living within a CVHA tenancy. We seek to promote tenancy sustainment and mitigate against business risk through managing medical adaptations in an efficient, effective and economic manner.

3.5. The Board

3.5.1 The Board, via the Operations Committee, will monitor the implementation of this policy to ensure that it is properly operated, that there is appropriate officer involvement in the processes used in managing medical adaptations, and that there is effective scrutiny of the Medical Adaptations Policy.

3.5.2 The Board will ensure that the Medical Adaptations Policy is meeting its intended objectives and that appropriate monitoring and reporting of activities takes place. In implementing its Medical Adaptations Policy certain functions are the responsibility of the Board or nominated committee, although staff have delegated authority to undertake many tasks. Examples of key functions / tasks are summarised below.

Function / task	Responsibility
Medical Adaptations Policy – review, amendment & approval	Operations Committee responsible for making recommendations to Board for approval.
Medical Adaptations Procedures – development, monitoring & review	Operations Director and Housing Maintenance Manager to develop operational procedures that reflect the principles set out within the Medical Adaptations Policy.

4. Medical adaptations

4.1 Context

4.1.1 Through the Common Housing Registers (CHR), in the first instance CVHA will explore housing options for a tenant to transfer to a home more suited to their needs before considering adapting their current home. Similarly where CVHA has a vacant adapted property it will use the CHR to seek to match a household whose needs match the property.

4.1.2 CVHA recognises that in many instances, such as where a tenant's household is expected to have long-term needs and where there are established support networks, there may be a clear rationale for investing in adapting an existing property. The assessment and prioritisation of such cases will generally be carried out by occupational therapists. A property will only be adapted where other housing options have been ruled out, where there is budget available, where it is technically possible to adapt the property economically and where adapting the property makes best use of the housing stock in terms of meeting current and future housing needs. CVHA will maintain details of adapted properties within its property database and ensure that such information is accessible to Housing Maintenance, Housing Operations and Asset Management staff.

4.2 Division of responsibilities

4.2.1 CVHA is responsible for permanent adaptations to tenanted properties, which include:

- level access showers;
- provision of ground floor WC / bathing facilities;
- installation of lever taps;
- provision of permanent access ramps;
- handrails (internal and external);
- alterations to window or door widths; and
- non-slip flooring.

4.2.2 The above list is not exhaustive and other referrals may be considered on a case by case basis. For example, minor works under the value of £150 may be instructed by the Housing Maintenance Manager and paid for via CVHA's response repairs budget where it is considered reasonable to do so and where funding permits.

4.2.3 Generally CVHA will not approve or fund property extensions or major structural works and will do this only in exceptional circumstances where all other options have been discounted and where the Asset Manager considers it reasonable within the context of the Asset Management Strategy. Where funding is secured from alternative sources for such works, CVHA will not withhold its consent unreasonably.

4.2.4 Social Work is responsible for the provision of items classed as temporary, including:

- specialist bathing equipment;
- raised toilet seats;
- stair / bath lifts; and
- removable ramps.

4.3 Assessments for adaptations

- 4.3.1 Assessments are carried out and prioritised by the occupational therapist, or medical officer in cases of central heating requests.
- 4.3.2 CVHA will maintain a list of applicants graded in priority order based upon the referrals received from the occupational therapist. Due to limited funding, it may only be possible to progress referrals above a minimum points level of 18. Where referrals fall below this minimum, they will be retained for reference and may be funded only if additional resources become available. However should a tenant's condition change whilst on the medical adaptations waiting list, their points may be reviewed and an updated referral submitted by the occupational therapist or medical officer.

4.4 Funding

- 4.4.1 CVHA receives Stage 3 Housing Association Grant (HAG) funding to assist with the provision of aids and adaptations to tenants who have been identified as requiring assistance in the form of permanent medical adaptations to allow them to remain in their home.
- 4.4.2 Expenditure on medical aids and adaptations varies from year to year, based upon the needs of individual tenants and the availability of HAG. However for investment planning purposes, given the ageing population and other community care needs, it is envisaged that CVHA could potentially spend significant sums on disabled and adaptations through Stage 3 HAG funding.
- 4.4.3 CVHA will request funding through its annual Strategy & Development Funding Plan (SDFP) submission to the Scottish Government. The assessment of funds required will be based upon current requirements and historic expenditure levels.
- 4.4.4 Medical adaptations will only be instructed where there is clear confirmation of funding / budget availability. The budget profile will be set to allow the management of spend as far as reasonably possible throughout the financial year, so that emerging urgent referrals can be considered. Where less resources are available than necessary, CVHA will consult with occupational therapists to consider alternative housing options, reduced specification or other priority cases that can be assisted within the funds available.
- 4.4.5 CVHA may choose to allocate resources for permanent medical adaptations to tenanted houses from its own response repairs budget or planned programmed renewals budget, where there is sufficient budget provision and a clear business case for such expenditure.
- 4.4.6 For new build developments CVHA will incorporate 'Housing For Varying Needs' (HFVN) standards. CVHA will also seek to engage with local authority partners early in the development process and, through the CHR, identify households with particular needs. Where reasonable, CVHA will endeavour to address any specific requirements at the initial design stage to ensure that those property types being constructed meet the requirement of the household and future generations. Any unidentified minor internal or external adaptations will be dealt with during the construction stage (with funding via Stage 2 HAG).

4.5 Value Added Tax

- 4.5.1 CVHA will claim VAT exemption where applicable. In such circumstances, tenants will be required to sign a VAT exemption certificate supplied by CVHA and this will be forwarded to the relevant contractor carrying out the adaptation works.

5. Monitoring and review

- 5.1 CVHA will publicise its Medical Adaptations Policy through our intranet and will routinely monitor the following:
- number and types of adaptations completed;
 - total expenditure and funding source; and
 - number and types of referrals on the medical adaptations waiting list.
- 5.2 CVHA will typically review its methodology for managing Medical Adaptations every three years or sooner if required by statutory, regulatory or best practice requirements.