

Aids and adaptations policy – version 6

Date approved for use: 19th August 2025

Scope

- 1.1 This policy is a Dimensions Group policy. This means it applies to all its subsidiaries as listed in **Dimensions Group company information**.
- 1.2 The policy is to be implemented by all colleagues with responsibilities for the housing management of accommodation where the tenancy or the licence is with the organisation, whether the building is owned or leased by Dimensions. If the property is managed on behalf of another registered provider or private landlord, colleagues will need to check the terms of the management agreement or tenancy and seek approval of the landlord for any adaptations.
- 1.3 The documents, forms and other policies mentioned in this policy can be found on the Hub (Dimensions intranet).
- 1.4 To go straight to the policy content click on the hyperlink section title below or go to the page:

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Policy statement

- 2.1 The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all relevant colleagues understand the organisation's statutory obligations in regard to adaptations for tenants and funding sources available for adaptations.
- 2.2 It explains how aids and adaptations can be funded via Dimensions Housing Property Team for Minor Adaptations, or the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) for Major Adaptations, and the permission needed for any alterations to buildings to adapt them for the needs of the tenants. Examples of aids are fixed

hoists, stair and passenger lifts, assisted baths and examples of adaptations are such things as ramps and wet rooms.

- 2.3 This policy is concerned with the roles and responsibilities of the Dimension's Operations colleagues, agents and Housing colleagues in delivering aids and adaptations. It is essential that decisions and details regarding aids and adaptations are systematically recorded and carefully monitored by all parties to demonstrate compliance, fairness, and accountability (on the Housing asset document files and data records, as well as onsite operations records). User guidance, and guidance on servicing and maintenance must be held on site and within Housing records accessible by maintenance colleagues.
- 2.4 There is no statutory responsibility for Homes England (HE) to fund adaptations or for Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) such as Dimensions to provide them for their residents. Dimensions will however consider minor adaptations up to a maximum value of £1000 per property, per year.
- 2.5 The statutory responsibility for funding adaptations is the duty of the welfare authority (under the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970 and the 1996 Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act).

The impact of not implementing this policy

- 3.1 Not meeting our responsibilities in relation to health and safety, may lead to:
 - danger to life
 - prosecutions
 - enforcement action, and
 - colleagues working at director level and above being held accountable for inaction or any incorrect actions that fall under their control.
- 3.2 Tenants may not be able to get around in their homes as well as they should or be able to use the facilities in their homes properly.
- 3.3 We may be criticised by the Health and Safety Executive who could take legal action to ensure our allocation of responsibilities is suitable. We may incur significant fines.
- 3.4 As a registered provider of social housing, Dimensions is regulated by the Regulator of Social Housing. It is part of the Regulator's 'Safety and Quality Standard' that Dimensions' homes should meet the 'Decent Homes Standard'. Should Dimensions' homes fall below this Standard, the Regulator may serve a

warning notice and require Dimensions to take steps to improve the quality of its housing. This would badly damage Dimensions' reputation and its ability to operate.

3.5 There may be an impact for colleagues and the organisation with our regulators, which may include:

- Local Authorities (LA)
- in England, the Care Quality Commission (CQC)
- in Wales, the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)
- The Charity Commission (CC)
- Health and Safety Executive (HSE)
- the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH)
- in Wales, the Regulator of Registered Social Landlords (RSLs)
- the Information Commissioners Office (ICO).

Policy content

Responsibilities

- 4.1 Dimensions' operations colleagues will help identify necessary adaptations required in the property in consultation with the tenants. If adaptations are identified, they must be agreed by the Housing Property Team, for example there maybe structural alterations needed to the building, so planning permission maybe needed and specialist contractors may also be needed to make sure the adaptation is done correctly.
- 4.2 We will support our tenants in getting all adaptations funded via the DFG application (in line with Occupational Therapist (OT) recommendations) where required and where no funding is available the matter will be escalated using the Local Authorities DFG Appeals Process.
- 4.3 Operations colleagues may also look for alternative funding for adaptations, like Home Improvement Agencies, NHS charities such as Independence at Home (see [Funding options](#)).
- 4.4 The Housing Property Team will assess whether it is reasonable and practicable to carry out the works, considering the age and condition of the property. Where there are concerns, the matter will be discussed with

Operations colleagues/or the Occupational Therapist (OT) to try and reach a solution.

- 4.5 The Housing Property Team will request OT reports, schedules of proposed works, and details of contractors who will install the adaptation and may request plans or ask for additional information.

Identifying the need for adaptations

- 5.1 All enquiries about aids and adaptations, please contact Dimensions Housing Property Team as applicable:
- tenants and operations colleagues - contact Dimensions Housing Hub or Tenancy Services Team RHA's (Regional Housing Advisor)
 - all medical and Local Authority referrals - contact Operations colleagues who will support tenants' application in progressing it to Housing Hub.
- 5.2 **Operations Team referral**
Operations colleagues may make a direct written request for approval for aids and adaptations to the Housing Property Team:
- major adaptation requests need to be accompanied by an assessment carried out by an OT. Minor adaptations, such as flashing doorbells, main entrance support rails or lever taps, can be referred directly to the Housing Property Team for review under our Minor Adaptations Fund in the first instance.
 - for minor adaptations, The College of Occupational Therapists have published a quick reference guide to the installation of minor adaptations. There is no need to obtain an occupational therapist's assessment for these. However, if it becomes clear at any stage in the process that the required adaptations are more complex than originally planned, the case should be referred to the Local Authority's Occupational Therapy service for a detailed assessment.
- 5.3 **Occupational therapists**
Local authority occupational therapists should be contacted in the first instance, as they are statutorily obliged to assess the needs of disabled people free of charge.
- 5.4 We recommend that private occupational therapists are commissioned only if there is likely to be a serious delay of more than six months and will be detrimental to our tenant being unable to sustain their independence.

Are works reasonable and practicable?

6.1 The Housing Property Team will assess that it is reasonable and practicable to carry out the relevant adaptation works. The following will be used to assess a DFG application:

- the quality-of-life benefit that could be achieved for the tenant
- the age of the building
- the condition of the building
- the potential impact on the fire safety of the building
- whether there is appropriate alternative accommodation available to the resident.
- the potential impact on other occupants.

If there are concerns that the works may not be possible, the Housing Property Team will feedback to the Operations Team.

6.2 Reasons why adaptation works may not be practical:

- the architectural and structural characteristics of the home make adaptation unsuitable
- planning controls, for example, the home being in a conservation area
- the physical restrictions of carrying out adaptations to older properties with limited access – for example, steep flights of stairs, making access for wheelchair use difficult
- unreasonable impact on other occupants.

6.3 Sometimes it is more practical to move the tenant to a more suitable property, than it is to adapt their current home. The tenant should be consulted around this and other options. Tenant's views should always be taken into consideration.

Funding options

7.1 Dimensions will support tenants through the process of attaining Disabled Grant Funding and any other funding that maybe available. The Operations Team along with the Housing Property Team will assist tenants in trying to maximise grant funding that maybe available to tenants by working with key stakeholders.

- 7.2 All adaptation requests should be made in consultation with the Housing Property Team. No works or alterations to Dimensions properties should be carried out without getting approval from the Housing Property Team.
- 7.3 **Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG)**
The framework governing DFGs is provided by the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996.
- 7.4 Local housing authorities have a statutory duty to provide grant aid to disabled people for adaptations to their homes. This aid can be given even if the resident is going to receive funding from other sources. Operations colleagues should always support the tenant in liaising with the local authority in the first instance to find out more details about availability of DFG. All works to the property, whether or not funded by DFG, count as alterations and Operations colleagues should consult Dimensions' Housing Property Team to carry out the works. Please note Permission will not be unreasonably withheld, as this permission is required as part of the DFG application.
- 7.5 **Discretionary Housing Powers**
The local authority has discretionary powers under the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) Order 2002 to fund adaptations. This funding can be used where DFG has not been granted or as a top-up to the funding already received.
- 7.6 **Social Services Community Care Funding**
Social services funding streams can also be used to increase the overall funding for an adaptation. With the powers under the Community Care Act 2003 it is likely that in practice adaptations costing under £1,000 will be provided free of charge using this legislation.
- 7.7 **Home Improvement Agencies (HIAs)**
HIAs are not-for-profit locally based organisations that assist vulnerable homeowners or occupants who are older, disabled or on low income to repair, improve, maintain, or adapt their home. HIAs offer practical help with building works. The service can help in raising money to cover the cost of the adaptations. The HIA may be able to act on the resident's behalf in negotiations with the local authority over grant aid and access to other services.

Further information can be found at <https://www-foundations.uk.com/> which has an HIA locator to help Operations colleagues find the local agency

for the resident. Please see guidance section below for further information offered by various stakeholders.

7.8 Dimensions Housing Minor Adaptation Fund

Dimensions Housing Property Team have ringfenced an annual fund of £20,000 from our Responsive Repairs budget to allocate to minor adaptation requests. The maximum sum for request is limited to £1000 per property, per year. A maximum of one request per tenant or three requests per shared housing property per year will be considered, with the exception of requests arising from a new tenancy.

Once the fund is depleted, no more requests can be accepted by the Dimensions Housing Property Team in that financial year, and alternative funding options should be used.

Adaptations delivered via this fund will be carried out by our maintenance contractors, or an approved supplier, and should be carried out within 28 days of being ordered.

7.9 Personal Funds

If the tenant is able to fund adaptations via their own means, or from family, we will still consider requests, however all major adaptations must still be assessed by the Local Authority's Occupational Therapist in the first instance.

Maintenance and servicing contracts

- 8.1 Some adaptations will require regular maintenance and insurance checks – for example, lifts and hoists, this is to make sure that the adaptation is safe for tenants and colleagues. To cover these costs, the Housing Team in Dimensions may have to set an additional service charge. So, this additional charge is reflected in the overall rent that is paid to Dimensions as the landlord. In market rent properties, the service charge is included in the rent, so servicing costs will need to be recharged to the tenant. Operations colleagues are advised that they consult their RHA, so the cost maybe included in any rent and service charge review. Dimensions Housing must ensure depreciation of the replacement of all equipment including fixed adaptations is accounted for in the service charge or budget.

Relevant legislation, guidance and related policies and templates

This policy and related procedures consider the following legal requirements and regulatory codes, standards, and guidance:

Legislation

- 9.1 Data Protection Act 2018
- 9.2 General Data Protection Regulations (UK-GDPR)
- 9.3 Equality Act 2010
- 9.4 Other guidance to refer to includes, but is not limited to:
 - Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970
 - Approved Document M: access to and use of buildings, volume 1: dwellings
 - The Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996
 - LOLER regulations (Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998)
 - In agency managed schemes (for another registered provider), the management agreement
 - Disability Discrimination Act 1995

Guidance

- 10.1 <https://wwwFOUNDATIONS.uk.com/>
- 10.2 [Disabled Facilities Grant \(Gov.UK\)](#)
- 10.3 <https://www.DISABILITYRIGHTSUK.org/resources/disabled-facilities-grants>
- 10.4 <https://www.WHICH.co.uk/reviews/staying-independent-at-home/article/disabled-facilities-grant-aqlgq7k7tsKl>
- 10.5 <https://www.SCOPE.org.uk/advice-and-support/disabled-facilities-grant-home-adaptations>

Group policies

- 11.1 Building maintenance
- 11.2 Data handling and protection
- 11.3 Acceptable use of technology

11.4 Confidentiality

11.5 Equality, diversity and inclusion

Related procedures, decision flowcharts, forms

12.1 Dimensions Housing Minor Adaptation Fund Application Form

Equality statement

- 13.1 Dimensions is committed to adhering to the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty. We aim to achieve this by promoting equality, respecting diversity and ensuring inclusion, eliminating unlawful discrimination for our colleagues and the people we support. Please see our **Equality, diversity and inclusion policy**.
- 13.2 We adhere to the Equality Act 2010 by promoting equality, diversity, and human rights by treating all people we support and employ fairly and equitably whatever their protected characteristic:
- age
 - disability
 - gender reassignment
 - marriage and civil partnership
 - pregnancy and maternity
 - race
 - religion or belief
 - sex
 - sexual orientation
- 13.3 At Dimensions we will not tolerate any forms of abuse or discriminatory behaviour towards our colleagues, people we support, family members or people we work with. We will always act and will not be by-standers.
- 13.4 The equality impact analysis (EIA) is available on request by emailing the Head of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

Data protection statement

- 14.1 This policy involves handling personal data. So, when carrying out any procedures this policy describes, our **Data handling and protection policy** should be consulted.
- 14.2 Our **Data handling and protection policy** is our promise to handle personal data correctly under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (UK-GDPR). It describes how to keep that promise. It balances everyone's rights to data privacy with the work we do.
- 14.3 For information on how we handle personal and sensitive data, please see our privacy notices.

Review

- 15.1 We will review this policy three years from its original publication. But if changes in legislation, regulation or best practice mean we need to, we will review sooner.
- 15.2 If the changes are big, we will equality impact analyse (EIA) the policy again and send out to consultation in line with our **Policy development and consultation policy**.
- 15.3 For smaller changes, we will update this same version. We will record this in the Version control section below.

Glossary

- 16.1 An explanation of words and terms that appear in this policy or the related procedures.

Term	Definition
DFG	Disabled facilities grants (DFGs) are grants provided by the local authority to help meet the cost of adapting a property for the needs of a disabled person.

Term	Definition
OT	Help people, such as those with disabilities, live independently. Occupational therapists evaluate and treat people who have injuries, illnesses, or disabilities. They help people meet goals to develop, recover, improve, and maintain skills needed for daily living and working and support in getting the appropriate DFG
Decent Homes Standard	Ensuring a property is in a reasonable state of repair, for example, like the roof, chimneys, and internal amenities such as kitchens and heating systems.

People and groups involved in writing and approving this policy

Policy owner:	Rich Lawson, Acting Head of Property
Policy Responsible Executive Lead:	Julia Ashley, Chief Housing and Commercial Officer
Approval level:	Dimensions Board via Finance and Resources Committee (FRC)
People and groups consulted:	Ian Gilders, Interim Director of Housing Mo Valli, Tenancy Services Manager Jon Knowles, Maintenance Manager Deborah Tempest, Housing Hub Manager Diversity Matters National Colleague Forum Policy Subgroup

Version control

Version number	Approved date:	Communication date:	Summary of changes
6	23 rd July 2025 (FRC) 14 th August 2025 (Board)	19 th August 2025	Reviewed and updated to latest Group policy standards and language. Whole policy updated including the glossary.

Next review due: August 2028