



**Provanhall Housing Association Limited**

**POLICY**

**Medical Adaptations**

**AUTHOR**  
Mark Quigley, Technical Services Manager

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| <b>DRAFTED</b> | <b>APPROVED</b> | <b>NEXT REVIEW</b> |
| November 2023  | November 2023   | November 2026      |

## **1. Introduction**

Provanhall Housing Association (PHA) is a community based not-for-profit organisation located in the Provanhall area of Easterhouse. The Association is run by an elected and voluntary Management Committee. Policies of the Association are agreed and approved by the Management Committee with the implementation of these policies the responsibility of staff.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Provanhall Housing Association effectively administers referrals from Social Work for medical adaptations that will enable disabled tenants to sustain their tenancy.

## **2. Policy Context**

Scotland's population is ageing. The number of people aged 75 and over is set to increase by 85% by 2039. It means that, by then, over 800,000 people will be over the age of 75. The Association must play its part to ensure the right support is available for older and disabled people so that they can live safely and independently in their own homes, for as long as possible.

Adaptations make an important contribution to supporting people to live safely, comfortably and independently at home. Examples of housing adaptations include:

- replacing a bath with a level access shower
- improving access to the home by widening doors or constructing a ramp
- fitting lower work surfaces to make the kitchen easier to use

These alterations are preventative measures. They help to reduce the number of emergency hospital admissions through falls and other accidents, and also reduce the need for home care or long-term admission to a care home.

PHA 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 can 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. The Association will maintain details of adapted properties within its property database and ensure that such information is accessible to the relevant staff.

Where appropriate, the Association will explore housing options for a customer to transfer to a home suited to their needs before considering adapting their current home. Similarly where PHA has a vacant adapted property it will seek to match a household whose needs match the property.

### 3. Policy Objectives

The Medical Adaptations Policy aims to ensure that PHA effectively administers referrals from Social Work for medical adaptations that will enable disabled tenants to sustain their tenancy. Our objectives include:

- providing a prompt, efficient and cost effective medical adaptation service.
- supporting the independence and dignity of tenants by undertaking adaptations to their homes so that they can sustain their tenancies.
- ensuring that PHA carries out adaptations that are appropriate to the tenant's needs and therefore, utilised to their full potential.
- acknowledging that in some instances construction type and financial constraints may prohibit the successful adaptation of a property and in such circumstances providing appropriate housing options advice.
- ensuring that PHA makes best use of its housing stock and resources available by allocating vacant adapted houses to tenants with similar medical needs.
- procuring appropriately qualified contractors to install medical adaptations.
- ensuring that systems and procedures are in place to so that PHA complies with its duties in relation to medical adaptations.
- operating an effective monitoring system, including audit trails and reporting systems that ensure compliance with the medical adaptations process.
- maximising grant funding available from the Scottish Government; and
- taking positive steps to inform and listen to tenants about continuous improvements to our medical adaptations service.

### 4. Legislation and Best Practice

The Association's Medical Adaptations Policy should be considered alongside relevant legislation; guidance and best practice, particularly the current editions of:

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| • Section 91(8) of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001                   |
| • The Housing Act Prescribed Housing Support Services (SSI 444/2002) |

In terms of the Scottish Social Housing Charter, the Scottish Housing Regulator has identified a number of key indicators relevant to medical adaptations by which it will measure landlord performance, including the following:

- Tenancy sustainment – tenants get the information they need on how to obtain support to remain in their home; and ensure support is available, including services provided by the landlord and other organisations.
- Value for money – tenants, owners and other customers receive services that provide value for the rent and other charges they pay.

Annual Return on Charter Reporting on following Indicators:

- 19: Number of households currently waiting on adaptations to their home.
- 20: Total cost of adaptations completed in year by source of funding.
- 21: Average time to complete adaptations.

## **5. Equal Opportunities**

Provanhall Housing Association is an equal opportunities organisation. The Association's Equality and Diversity Policy seeks to ensure that all suppliers are treated equally. The Medical Adaptations Policy will not unfairly discriminate against any suppliers, individual, or group of persons dealt with under the Policy on the grounds of:

- Race, ethnicity, national or social origin.
- Disability including physical, learning or mental health.
- Gender or marital status.
- Sexuality or sexual orientation.
- Religion, religious beliefs or opinions such as political opinions.
- Age, appearance or financial status.

PHA wishes to ensure there are no barriers in accessing its services. Relevant documents can be translated into a range of languages or formats on request. We will also make available translation services for those who wish more detailed information and to assist those who wish to make personal enquiries. For anyone with visual or hearing problems, documents can also, on request, be made available in larger print, on tape, in Braille or on any other format required.

All suppliers will be required to accept the association's Equalities Policy or to have developed policies of their own which are acceptable to PHA.

Any complaints received in relation to breach of this policy will be addressed via the Association's Complaints Policy.

*(Cross reference: Equality and Diversity policy, Complaints policy)*

## **6. Complaints**

The Association has a Complaints Policy and Procedure which explains how tenants or suppliers who are dissatisfied with the operation of any service PHA provides may make a formal complaint to the Association. This policy also includes an appeals process.

*(Cross reference: Complaints Policy)*

## **7. Delegated Authority**

The overall control of the Technical Services function rests with the Management Committee, however, delegated authority for monitoring and evaluating the performance of the development function has been passed to the Technical Services sub-committee.

*(Cross reference: Standing Orders)*

## **8. Responsibilities**

The Association 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.
- non-slip flooring.

The above list is not exhaustive and other referrals may be considered on a case by case basis. Generally PHA will not approve or fund property extensions or major structural works. Only in exceptional circumstances where all other options have been discounted and where the Technical Services Manager considers it reasonable within the context of the Asset Management Strategy will major works be considered. Where funding is secured from alternative sources the Association will not withhold its consent unreasonably.

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

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

## **9. Assessments for adaptations**

Assessments are carried out and prioritised by the occupational therapist, or medical officer in cases of central heating requests.

The Association will maintain a register of applicants graded as follows:

1. Priority.
2. Date received.

e.g. a moderate priority referral received the day before an essential referral will be ranked second of the two.

Due to limited funding, it may only be possible to progress referrals above a minimum grading. In this instance they will be retained for reference and may be funded where resources become available. However, should a tenants condition change whilst on the medical adaptations register, their grading may be reviewed and an updated referral submitted by the occupational therapist or medical officer.

## **10. Assessments for adaptations**

Provanhall Housing Association receives Stage 3 Housing Association Grant (HAG) funding to assist with the provision of aids and adaptations to customers who have been identified as requiring assistance in the form of permanent medical adaptations to allow them to remain in their home.

Expenditure on medical aids and adaptations varies from year to year, based upon the needs of individual tenants and the availability of HAG. PHA will request funding through an annual submission to the relevant local authority. The assessment of funds required will be based upon current requirements and historic expenditure levels.

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 urgent referrals can be considered. Where less resources are available than necessary, PHA will consult with occupational therapists to consider alternative housing options, reduced specification or other priority cases that can be assisted within the funds available.

For new build developments Provanhall Housing Association will incorporate 'Housing for Varying Needs' (HFVN) standards. PHA 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, PHA 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).

## **11. Value Added Tax**

Provanhall Housing Association will claim VAT exemption where applicable.

## **12. Policy Review**

The Policy and related procedures will be reviewed 3 years from the date of approval, or earlier should the need arise to reflect changing circumstances or changes in legislation or good practice standards. The next review will take place in November 2026.

## **13. Cross reference: Documents**

|                           |                                 |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Equalities Policy         | Complaints Policy               |
| Standing Orders           | Procurement of Suppliers Policy |
| Asset Management Strategy | Allocations Policy              |