



REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE POLICIES

No. 22 Medical Adaptations

FIRST PRODUCED: MAY 2015

REVIEW DATE: FEBRUARY 2019

NEXT REVIEW DATE: FEBRUARY 2022

POLICY MANUAL

MEDICAL ADPTATIONS

1. INTRODUCTION

This policy has been developed with due consideration of the joint Scottish Homes/SFHA document 'Performance Standards for Registered Social Landlords' and in particular, Section C on Maintenance.

Due recognition has also been given to the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations Good Practice Guidance Manual 'Raising Standards in Housing'. Specific consideration has been given to Section 7 on Maintenance.

Consideration has also been given to the Scottish Social Housing Charter in particular Charter Indicators:-

22 and 23.

2. POLICY AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Specifically:-

To ensure Angus Housing Association maintains its stock in accordance with all legal requirements and in accordance with an appropriate division of responsibility for adaptations between the association and the relevant local authority's social work departments.

To set out Angus Housing Association's Maintenance Policies to ensure value for money and high standards of customer service are achieved in all maintenance matters.

To ensure Angus Housing Association provides an efficient and effective adaptations service to our tenants.

To ensure that the Association maximises its funding from the Scottish Government and draws down funding timeously.

To ensure that the Association recognises the requirements of the Scottish Social Housing Charter and those Indicators directly related to the repairs service and to put in place policies and procedures that will assist with compliance.

Generally:-

Angus will respond positively to requests for medical adaptations from tenants with a disability or those with a specific housing need.

Requests for adaptations and alterations to property for the tenants from the local Councils' Social Work Department will be considered in accordance with the current Scottish Government Guidance Note SHGN 97/09 and SHGN 2001/02.

Angus will also consider requests and recommendations from other professional medical advisors, insofar as the advice from professional bodies is approved by Scottish Government for grant purposes. However, we will request that tenants approach Social Work's Occupational Therapists in the first instance for their assessments. Only if an Occupational Therapist cannot provide a recommendation, would we consider a report from an alternative Medical Expert, (for example, The Royal National Institute for Blind People).

3. FUNDING

In order to meet the demand for these requests, Angus will make applications for funding to the Scottish Government for Stage 3 Grant. This submission will take account historic records of type and volume of adaptations in order to satisfy an estimated demand in future years, plus any pipeline or back log of adaptations.

We will also consider adaptations as part of our New Build Developments and seek funding from the Scottish Government and identify the needs of prospective tenants ideally at design stage, but at least, well ahead of completion dates in order to incorporate the work in the contract itself.

After handover, we must exercise care if new tenants request adaptations soon after taking up new tenancies, on the understanding that any medical condition requiring an adaptation must be disclosed in their application. We must openly discourage any requests for adaptations within the first 9 months after taking up tenancies, unless the tenant or Occupational Therapist can demonstrate that their condition had changed.

Currently, the Scottish Government request separate submissions for general and major adaptations. If the Association have sufficient information on any pipeline or back log of major adaptations then this will form the basis of the submission. Otherwise, the Association will provide an estimate.

It is quite common for the Association to spend its allocation before the end of the financial year. In such circumstances we will request additional funding from the Scottish Government.

It has become standard practice for the Scottish Government to release their allocation around June each year. This produces a period of around three months where there is no funding available and consequently, no adaptations are implemented. During this period, the Association will progress with small scale, basic adaptations of no more than £500 in value, such as handrails, grab rails, thresholds, etc. Large scale works such as level access showers, etc. shall be put on hold until funds become available.

Whenever it becomes clear that funding will run out well before the end of the year, we will prioritise and target funding towards adaptations that will have a clear benefit in maintaining the tenancy, without compromising future maintenance and management issues. For example, we would generally prioritise:-

- a) Level Access Showers
- b) Overbath showers

It is important to note that the Association's funding for all Medical Adaptations is entirely supported by this grant. Consequently, Angus will, whenever possible, submit applications to the Scottish Government for additional funding whenever requested by them, or when the Association's funding runs dry.

Angus monitors the estimated and actual expenditure on a monthly basis and reports to Management Committee quarterly with the following details:-

- details of adaptation
- details of HAG claims
- expenditure details
- details of HAG claims
- details of HAG payments
- details of any major adaptations

We are also required to report annually to the Scottish Housing Regulator on the average number of days to complete adaptations from the date of receipt of the Specialist Report to the date that the adaptations were successfully completed. We will also report this data to the services delivery sub-committee annually. (Refer to Appendix 1)

4. PROCEDURES

Angus has in place procedures for dealing with Medical Adaptations, from initial contact from the tenant or Medical Expert through to application for grant and receipt of funding.

Procedures are in strict accordance with Scottish Government Guidance Note 97/09 and 2002/02. More specifically the procedures address the following:-

- Initial contact with the OT/Medical Expert
- Division of responsibilities for adaptations between Angus and Social Work Department
- OT's request and recommendation
- Unsuitable property
- Monitoring
- The Association's assessment of the request
- Requirement for quotations or issue of order for the work to proceed.
- Regular advice to the tenant
- Post inspection of the completed work
- Payment to contractors
- Submission of grant application to the Scottish Government

This list is not exhaustive and it has to be recognised that the procedures are a framework for the Association to work within.

We will review these procedures in the light of the evolution of GDPR in May this year.

It is also recognised that the introduction of the Association's Kypera system in 2016 will mean that the bulk of records and data relating to Medical Adaptations will be held centrally in the new IT system.

5. PROCUREMENT

The Association will follow the guidance laid down in the Scottish Government Guidance, albeit that we will entertain competitive quotations for work valued in excess of £5,000 (excluding VAT). This also reflects the Association's Financial Regulations.

6. MAINTENANCE RESPONSIBILITIES

The Association will be responsible for ongoing responsive maintenance on all medical adaptation installations. Procedures and priorities will fall within the criteria in the Day to Day Repairs Policy.

It should be noted that the Scottish Government will only provide funding once for adaptations to individual properties. Therefore, the Association will retain, as far as possible, large scale permanent adaptations such as over-bath showers, walk in showers, ramps, etc. at change of tenancy.

The exceptions are stairlifts. At changes of tenancy, Angus will attempt to locate tenants who will benefit from the installation. However, stairlifts will be stripped out and removed, recycled if feasible, if no such tenant can be found.

If sitting tenants request stairlifts to be removed, for example on the death of a partner, for whom the installation was provided, Angus will consider such a request favourably and arrange for its removal, but any resultant damage to decoration will be the tenant's responsibility.

Occasionally certain Adaptations may require ongoing regular maintenance and servicing, such as clos-o-mat WC's, stairlifts and hoists. In such circumstances, we will levy a service charge on the tenancy to cover the full costs of the maintenance.

7. CONFIDENTIALITY

The confidentiality of information provided to us will be respected at all times. Information will be processed on, in accordance with our registration with the Information Commissioner. The Association is registered under the Data Protection Act with the office of the Information Commissioner and we are the Data Controller for the purposes of the Data Protection Act.

The Association's Fair Processing Notice, (FPN), explains what information the Association collect, when it is collected and how it is used. For further information please refer to the Association's FPN.

8. POLICY REVIEW

This Policy will be reviewed on the following basis

- (i) Comprehensive planned reviews will be undertaken after 3 years.
- (ii) An interim review will be undertaken to comply with any new legislation or to address a specific issue.