

Adaptations Policy



Title:	Adaptations Policy
Person Responsible:	Asset Manager
EIA required	Yes
EIA Completed (date):	June 2020
Approved by:	Board
Business Strategy Objective:	All Themes
Approval Date:	November Board 2024
Links to other Policies:	Home Standard, Local Lettings Plan, Complaints Policy.
Review Date:	Three years, unless required sooner

Document management		
Version	Date amended	Amendments
1	02/11/20	New policy
2	19/04/2024	Update to comply with new Consumer Standards

1. Purpose

- 1.1 Lune Valley Rural Housing Association (LVRHA) is a registered provider (housing association) and was formed in 1989. We own and manage approx. 106 homes across a wide geography in the Lune Valley area. LVRHA is committed to providing excellent services, creating safe and sustainable communities and promoting pride in its neighbourhoods.
- 1.2 This document details Lune Valley Rural Housing Association (LVRHA) policy for dealing with requests for adaptations.
- 1.3 It is our policy to assist our tenants to live an independent lifestyle with dignity and remain in their homes wherever possible by making reasonable adaptations to their homes.

2. Regulatory and Legislative Requirements

- 2.1 This policy complies with the following legislation:
 - Equalities Act 2010 (as amended 2012)

- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985
- The Housing Act 2004 (including the Housing Health and Safety Rating System)
- RSH Safety and Quality Standard, April 2024

2.2 The Equality Act 2010 prohibits discrimination against people with the protected characteristics. Disability is one of the specified protected characteristics. Protection from discrimination for disabled people applies to disabled people in a range of circumstances, covering the provision of goods, facilities and services, the exercise of public functions, premises, work, education, and associations. Only those people with a disability, who are defined as disabled in accordance with section 6 of the Act, and the associated Schedules and regulations made under that section, will be entitled to the protection that the Act provides to people with a disability.

A person has a disability for the purposes of the Act if he or she has a physical or mental impairment and the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

This means that, in general:

- The person must have an impairment that is either physical or mental
 - The impairment must have adverse effects which are substantial
 - The substantial adverse effects must be long-term
- And
- The long-term substantial adverse effects must be effects on normal day-to-day activities.

2.3 The RSH Safety and Quality Standard stipulates that Registered Providers must assist tenants seeking housing adaptations to access appropriate services. The Standard also requires that providers;

- allocate homes that are designed or adapted to meet specific needs appropriately,
- clearly communicate to tenants and relevant organisations how they will assist tenants seeking housing adaptations services, and
- co-operation with tenants, appropriate local authority departments and other relevant organisations so that a housing adaptations service is available to tenants where appropriate.

3. Scope of Policy

3.1 This policy applies to all properties maintained, owned or managed by South Lakes Housing Association on behalf of LVRHA.

3.2 The policy ensures that LVRHA complies with the RSH Safety and Quality Standard as set out in paragraph 2.3.

4. Adaptations Policy

- 4.1 LVRHA will ensure that where a tenant requires assistance to live independently all properties will be assessed for suitability and reasonable adaptations are permitted within the property in line with the guidance below.
- 4.2 Where the cost of adaptation is less than £1000 the adaptation will follow the Minor Adaptation process and may not require the need to consult with an occupational Therapist referral. Examples of minor adaptations are fitting grab rails, additional handrails on stairs, fitting lever taps and removing a single step in an access route.
- 4.3 Where the cost of adaptation is greater than £1000 the adaptation will follow the Major Adaptation process and the tenant will be referred to an Occupational Therapist for specialist advice and guidance. Examples of major adaptations are ramps, stairlifts, through stair lifts and bath or shower conversions.
- 4.4 All applications for adaptations will be assessed based upon:
- if the works are necessary or appropriate.
 - the cost and extent of works;
 - the time it is likely to take to deliver the adaptation(s) proposed;
 - the extent of any family or other practical support;
 - the suitability of the client's home for adaptation (including the extent of any under-occupation or over-occupation);
 - the practicalities of adapting the client's home (taking into account both the site it sits on and its wider location);
 - the likely need for future adaptations;
 - the availability of, and eligibility for, suitable alternative accommodation; and
 - the extent to which the adaptation(s) make appropriate use of the funding available to Lune Valley Rural Housing Association;
- 4.5 All applications for major adaptations will be considered by the Board. A decision will be made within 60 days of an application being made, with the decision communicated to tenants within 10 days after the decision has been made.
- 4.6 Where an application is refused the reason for the refusal will be communicated and advice on other options communicated to the applicant.

- 4.7 Where an adaptation cannot be reasonably made an alternative property to meet the tenant's needs will be offered where Lune Valley Rural Housing Association have a suitable empty property as a priority case.
- 4.8 Where an application for an adaptation is approved minor adaptations will be completed by SLH (managing agent) on behalf of LVRHA within 30 days of approval and major adaptations will be completed within 60 days of approval (subject to statutory approvals e.g. Building Regulations approvals). with the decision communicated to tenants within 10 days after the decision has been made.
- 4.9 All adaptations works will be carried out in a sensitive manner appropriate to the tenants condition.
- 4.10 Major adaptations will maximise the use of Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) where applicable.

5. Appeals Procedure

- 5.1 Where an adaptation has been refused and the tenant is dissatisfied with the decision the tenant will have the right of appeal. An appeal must be made within 14 days of the decision.
- 5.2 Where an appeal has been made the Board will review the decision making process and the evidence provided by the tenant and give a final decision.
- 5.3 All appeals and refusals will be subject to equality monitoring.

6. Maintenance Performance and Performance Monitoring

- 6.1 Adaptation request decisions will be recorded and updated on the asset management database and will be retained for three years from the date the inspection is carried out.
- 6.2 Maintenance performance will be reported to the Senior Management Team on a quarterly basis.
- 6.3 All LVRHA customers have a right of complaint about the adaptations service. This is detailed in the LVRHA Complaints Policy.

7. Service Standards

- 7.1 LVRHA's service standards in relation to adaptations are:

- Wherever possible all adaptations will be completed within the timescales above (paragraphs 4.6, 4.9 and 5.1).

8. Monitoring & Review

- 8.1 We will use an electronic case management system with reporting facilities which will enable us to report against a range of performance measures
- 8.2 This policy will be reviewed by the Board every three years, or where there have been significant changes to regulation or legislation to warrant a further policy review. The Policy may also be reviewed sooner where there is a need to address operational issues or where best practice has evolved and there is a need to incorporate this.