

1. Background and objectives

- 1.1. Alliance Homes supports the Social Model of Disability and is committed to providing a transparent, equitable, efficient, and culturally sensitive service meeting identified needs for aids and adaptations. This service will be provided within the constraints of the resources available.
- 1.2. Alliance Homes provides an efficient, timely and personal adaptations service. This process is aided by minimising the installation of 'short life' major adaptations to family homes and offering incentive via downsizing grant and associate support to those households agreeing to move home. Adaptations to the home that can be recycled are prioritised.
- 1.3. Alliance Homes will:
 - Comply with legislative and regulatory requirements and work within the spirit of the "Adaptations without Delay - June 2019" guide published by the royal college of occupational therapists.
 - Ensure that customers with impairment or physical support needs are assisted to live independently in a dwelling that reduces disability - with adaptations completed in a timely manner.
 - Actively promote the service through all available means to ensure customers get the help they need.
 - Wherever possible, make best use of Alliance Homes' resources by matching existing adapted properties to customers and their families with support needs, when allocating such properties.
 - Work closely with partners at North Somerset Council and other local authorities to access the services of occupational therapists and Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) where appropriate.
 - Offer customers a degree of flexibility and choice in the style of adaptation available wherever possible and when funding arrangements allow.
 - Take account of the customers views when providing an adaptation to reach the best solution.
 - Use customer profiling to target information and budget projections to design future services.
 - Refer to its records and take appropriate action where a discrepancy indicates that any application may be fraudulent.

- Have regard to any ongoing legal proceeding when considering the assistance to be offered under this policy. In exceptional cases, we could withhold or delay our consent for an adaptation to be carried out pending the legal process outcome.

2. Policy detail

Definition

- 2.1. Throughout this policy document, any reference to "customer" should also be taken to apply to any member of a customer's resident family who has a need for an adaptation.
- 2.2. For the purpose of this policy and the related procedure, adaptation is an alteration or addition to any aspect of a dwelling which is provided to make it easier or safer for use by a person suffering from impairment.
- 2.3. The Equality Act 2010 states that "...landlords will be obliged to make certain reasonable adjustments if requested by the tenant. Reasonable adjustments do not include the removal or alteration of a physical feature but do include providing auxiliary aids or services, changing practices, policies, and procedures and/or changing the term of the letting."
- 2.4. Minor adaptation - an adaptation which needs little or no technical involvement e.g., grab rails. All requests for an adaptation are checked to establish if the request falls within College of Occupational Therapist guidelines to be a minor adaptation. Minor adaptations will be completed without the need for Occupational Therapist assessment. All other enquires will be subject to an assessment by an Occupational Therapist.
- 2.5. Major adaptation - a complex adaptation which needs more technical involvement in assessing the feasibility and sustainability of an adaptation within the property. e.g., level access shower facility.

Minor adaptations

- 2.6. Customers can access the service directly through a variety of ways e.g. letter, telephone (ACT), website, email or office visit; alternatively, access can be sought via support and advocacy agencies. The service is promoted by a range of leaflets which are available within all Alliance Homes customer access points and from the website.

Major adaptations

- 2.7. We do not maintain our own waiting list of customers requiring major adaptations. Rather, we will refer any customer requiring a major adaptation to the local authority for an assessment.

- 2.8. We liaise with the local authority in securing DFGs for our customers. In doing so, we will offer to act as agent for the customer in dealing with the DFG process.
- 2.9. Where appropriate we liaise with other statutory and voluntary agencies to ensure that the customer's needs are met.
- 2.10. We may consider, subject to budgetary constraints and the agreement of the Service Director, to undertake works without grant assistance where a local Authority Grant is discretionary or if an application for grant is rejected.
- 2.11. We may, following consultation with customers, North Somerset Council, and with the approval of the Senior Leadership Team, employ or commission our own Occupational Therapist to carry out assessments of need.
- 2.12. All requests for an adaptation are managed by the Complex Works department and communicated to all relevant departments in a timely manner.

Maintenance and service charges

- 2.13. We maintain all adaptations that we install (but not portable appliances provided by other agencies).
- 2.14. As long as they are still required by the customer, we will replace minor adaptations at the end of their economic life. This does not apply to major adaptations.
- 2.15. Alliance Homes Group may introduce a service charge where adaptations require a maintenance contract to be taken out to maintain/service equipment installed. e.g., stair lifts. Some installations may be by using the council's contractors, who would subsequently be responsible for any repairs within the 1-year warranty period. Following the expiration date of the warranty, it would then be Alliance Homes Group responsibility to repair and maintain them.

Planned maintenance and improvement programmes

- 2.16. Delivering adaptations as part of the Decent Homes Programmes are preferable where possible and will ensure Alliance Homes provide value for money.

'Lifetime Homes' and new developments

- 2.17. New properties designed and built on behalf of Alliance Homes for rent will be constructed wherever practicable to the "Lifetime Homes Standard" to ensure homes provide basic levels of accessibility to amenities.
- 2.18. Where feasible, we use our development programme to enter into partnerships with funding providing to build fully adapted accommodation for people with specialist needs.

Rehousing

- 2.19. Referring to Alliance's Lettings Policy, the Complex Works Manager responsible for Adaptations will work with tenancy officers to offer assistance to customers to support a move to suitable alternative housing, or housing appropriate for adaptation when current accommodation is unsuitable following an assessment by an Occupational Therapist.
- 2.20. We will look to temporarily accommodate Alliance Homes customers who cannot remain in their home while extensive adaptation or repair works are being carried out on their homes. This will depend upon the needs of the customer and the availability of a suitably adapted property being available at the time. The rental cost associated with the property will be added to the grant funding request wherever possible.

Choice Based Lettings

- 2.21. When available for allocation, all properties with adaptations are advertised under North Somerset Council's choice-based lettings scheme Housing Jigsaw, unless a management transfer is arranged for an Alliance customer who needs a move as opposed to receiving a DFG adaptation. They are advertised to ensure that they are offered to disabled applicants whose needs most closely match the property's facilities.
- 2.22. A disabled person who successfully bids for one of our properties will be offered an accompanied viewing with their Occupational Therapist to assess the suitability of the property and the extent of any necessary further adaptation.

Recycling of equipment

- 2.23. Where practicable, we will aim to reuse and recycle adaptation equipment to reduce the amount of waste going to landfill.

3. Monitoring, consultation, and review

- 3.1. The Home Improvements Manager will be responsible for implementation and revision of the policy.
- 3.2. This policy will be reviewed within 2 years of its approval.

4. Equality and diversity

- 4.1. This policy is subject to a periodic Equality Impact Assessment (EIA).
- 4.2. The purpose of such an assessment is to consider the effect of the policy regarding the recognised protected characteristics of equality and ensure that it does not unfairly impact any individual or group. The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity or other grounds set out in

our Equality and Diversity Strategy and Single Equality Scheme. Remedial action will be undertaken if a detrimental effect is identified.

- 4.3. The EIA also requires the policy author to consider whether the policy is likely to negatively impact on a person's Human Rights.
- 4.4. This policy and any other related Alliance Homes publications can be provided in other formats for those with visual, literacy or language difficulties.

5. Complaints

- 5.1. If you would like to raise a complaint in relation to this policy, you can do this by calling us on **03000 120 120** or emailing us at **act@alliancehomes.org.uk**.
- 5.2. All complaints will be handled in line with the latest Alliance Homes Complaint Handling Policy.

6. Associated documents

6.1. Company Policy

- Repairs, Maintenance and Cyclical Improvements Policy
- Customer Feedback Policy
- Lettings Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Safeguarding Policy

6.2. External

- Care Act 2014
- Carers (Recognition and Services) Act 1995
- Children Act 1989 (including 2004 addition)
- Equality Act 2010
- Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996
- Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002
- Community Care (Delayed Discharges etc) Act 2003
- National Service Framework for Older People (2001) DOH
- Home Adaptations for Disabled People (2013) Home Adaptations Consortium
- Adaptations without Delay (2019) Royal College of Occupational Therapists

7. Version control and approval dates

Approval stage	Date completed
Equality Impact Assessment completed	October 2024
EIA reviewed by specialist colleague within the People Team	October 2024
SLT review / approval	November 2024
Minor amend made to insert standard complaints section and format for external publication	June 2025
Next review date	October 2026

8. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Equality Impact Assessment.

Appendix 1: Equality Impact Assessment

An Equalities Impact Assessment must be conducted alongside the review of an existing policy or the creation of a new one.

1. Name the Strategy, Policy, Procedure or Function (SPPF) being assessed and name of author.

Adaptations Policy Alan Rogers HRS Service Director, Jonathan Baynham, Complex Works Manager

2. Aims of the SPPF being addresses.

- *Whose need is it designed to meet?*
- *Are there any measurable elements such as time limits or age limits?*

This policy sets out how Alliance Homes supports the Social Model of Disability and is committed to providing a transparent, equitable, efficient and culturally sensitive service meeting identified needs for aids and adaptations.

3. Who has been consulted in developing the SPPF?

- *Make reference or links to consultation/evidence documents.*

This is a current policy that is under review after Alliance Homes review processes. It has included feedback from colleagues across the organisation including Major Works, Home Repairs and Tenancy services

4. Does the SPPF promote equality of opportunity?

The policy promotes equality of opportunity across the protected characteristics as follows:

The policy safeguards the best interests of the customer in ensuring that they are able to live independently within their homes.

5. Identify potential impact on each of the diversity “groups” by considering the following questions:

(The list is not exhaustive but an indication of the sort of questions assessors should think about):

- *Might some groups find it harder to access the service?*
- *Do some groups have particular needs that are not well met by the current SPPF?*
- *What evidence do you have for your judgement (e.g. monitoring data, information from consultation/research/feedback)?*
- *Have staff/residents raised concerns/complaints?*
- *Is there local or national research to suggest there could be a problem?*

Protected Characteristic	No Impact	Negative Impact	Positive Impact	Information source/s*	Comments/Evidence
Race	X				There is no evidence of discrimination on the grounds of race
Disability	X				There is no evidence of discrimination on the grounds of disability
Gender	X				There is no evidence to suggest that this policy is discriminatory in relation to Gender.
Transgender	X				There is no evidence to suggest that this policy is discriminatory in relation to Transgender.
Sexual Orientation	X				There is no evidence to suggest that this policy is

Protected Characteristic	No Impact	Negative Impact	Positive Impact	Information source/s*	Comments/Evidence
					discriminatory in relation to Disability.
Religion or Belief	X				There is no evidence to suggest that this policy is discriminatory in relation to religion or beliefs.
Age	X				There is no evidence to suggest that this policy is discriminatory in relation to age.
Marriage and Civil Partnership	X				There is no evidence to suggest that this policy is discriminatory in relation to marriage or civil partnership.
Pregnancy and Maternity	X				There is no evidence to suggest that this policy is discriminatory in relation to maternity or pregnancy.
Rural Issues	X				There is no evidence to suggest that this policy is discriminatory in relation to rural issues.
Social Mobility	X				There is no evidence to suggest that this policy is

Protected Characteristic	No Impact	Negative Impact	Positive Impact	Information source/s*	Comments/Evidence
					discriminatory in relation to social mobility.

**Possible information sources for assessing impact or understanding issues related to target group, such as:*

- *Demographic data, studies of deprivation, statistics on health etc*
- *Results of consultations, results of equality monitoring data, complaints, customer feedback*
- *Information collected from partner agencies and groups, support groups, professional expertise, 'peer review', project leads/teams, inspection reports etc.*

Was there a negative impact identified in question 5? If yes go to question 6. If not go to question 7.

6. If "negative impact" identified in table (4) above, is it?

Legal	YES	NO
What is the level of impact?	HIGH	LOW

If it is not legal and/or high impact (i.e. If you have highlighted NO to legal and HIGH to impact) **then the document should be referred to Head of HR**

7. If positive impact has been identified in table (4) above, how can it be improved upon or maximised, either in this SPPF or others?

All customers in need of minor and major aids and adaptations will benefit from this policy. The policy is positive as it will ensure that all Home Repair colleagues are aware of the approach and responsibilities within Alliance Homes in relation to the rights of the customer in need of aids and adaptations required to live independently.

The policy ensures consistency of approach to customers of all protected characteristics.

8. Full EIA (or if you decide full EIA is not necessary but some changes should be considered)

- *Are there changes you could introduce which would make this SPPF work better for this groups of people?*
- *Is further research or consultation required?*

YES	NO
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9. Does this proposal have any human rights implications?

If yes, please describe (If necessary, please refer to the Alliance Homes Human Rights Policy)

The policy should ensure that customers are treated fairly, with dignity and respect.

It supports Article 8 (Right to respect for private life, family life and the home) by setting out a fair approach.

We apply this policy consistently across all customers so there is minimised risk in relation to Article 14 (Prohibition of discrimination).