

Adaptations Policy

Review: 2021/ 2022
Next Review: 2025



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1. Introduction

1.1 This policy sets out Rosehill's position in relation to adapting existing homes to meet the changing needs of occupants. Over time some occupants may find that their homes, in their current state, are no longer suitable for their or members of their family's needs due to health or age related problems.

1.2 We recognise that housing which meets occupant's needs can have a positive impact on health and contribute to independence, privacy and dignity. The aim of this policy is to seek to ensure that the provision of adaptations is a smooth and seamless process for our tenants. We will provide adaptations to our houses, based on assessed needs where appropriate, to enhance the quality of life for our tenants and other occupants.

1.3 The objectives of this policy are to:

- Increase the number of adapted properties
- Ensure an inclusive approach to meet people's needs
- Provide a speedy, efficient and effective service.

2. Legal and Regulatory Framework

2.1 Whilst this Policy sets out to explain Rosehill's approach to adapting homes it must do so in the context of legal and regulatory requirements. Therefore the following relevant legislation has been taken into account in the development of this Policy:

- Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and 2005
- Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968
- Chronically Sick & Disabled Persons (Scotland) Act 1972
- Disabled Persons (Services, Consultation & Representation) 1986
- Human Rights Act 1988
- Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, 2006, 2010 and 2014
- Building (Scotland) Regulations 2004 and subsequent amendments
- Equality Act 2010

2.2 The Scottish Social Housing Charter

2.2.1 The Social Housing Charter came into effect in April 2012 and this sets the standards and outcomes that all social landlords should aim to achieve when performing their housing activities. The Charter replaces the Performance Standards and the outcomes relevant to this Policy are:

1. Equalities

Social Landlords perform all aspects of their housing services so that every tenant and other customer has their individual needs recognised, is treated fairly and with respect, and receives fair access to housing and housing services.

2. Communication

Social landlords manage their businesses so that tenants and other customers find it easy to communicate with their landlord and get the information they need about their landlord, how and why it makes decisions and the services it provides.

3. Participation

Social landlords manage their businesses so that tenants and other customers find it easy to participate in and influence their landlord's decisions at a level they feel comfortable with.

4. Quality of Housing

Social landlords manage their businesses so that tenants' homes, as a minimum, meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) by April 2015 and continue to meet it thereafter, and when they are allocated, are always clean, tidy and in a good state of repair.

5. Repairs, maintenance and improvements

Social landlords manage their businesses so that tenants' homes are well maintained, with repairs and improvements carried out when required, and tenants are given reasonable choices about when work is done.

11. Tenancy Sustainment

Social landlords ensure that tenants get the information they need on how to obtain support to remain in their home; and ensure suitable support is available, including services provided directly by the landlord and by other organisations.

13. Value for Money

Social landlords manage all aspects of their businesses so that tenants, owners and other customers receive services that provide continually improving value for the rent and other charges they pay.

2.2.2 Social landlords are responsible for meeting the standards and outcomes set out in the Charter. The Scottish Housing Regulator is responsible for monitoring, assessing and reporting on how well social landlords, individually and collectively, achieve the outcomes.

2.2.3 In line with the regulatory principles, the Regulator's approach to monitoring landlords' achievement of the outcomes and standards in the Charter will be based on each landlord's performance information and their own assessment of their performance. Therefore, for each year ending on 30th September, we will be expected to:

- Measure and assess our performance in progressing towards or achieving the Charter outcomes and standards
- Provide the Regulator with some key performance information on our achievement of the outcomes and standards
- Report our performance to tenants and other service users who use our services.

3. Types of Adaptations

3.1 Temporary adaptations are those that may be removed from the property or reused elsewhere when no longer required for or by the person for whom they were provided. The funding for and installation of these types of adaptations is the responsibility of Glasgow City Council's Social Work Department. This work includes such things as temporary access ramps to front or back doors, track hoists, stair lifts and call entry systems.

3.2 Equipment provision such as raised toilet seats, shower seats, bath boards, and bed, chair and bath risers is the responsibility of Glasgow City Council.

3.3 Permanent adaptations are those that are intended to remain in the property and can include alterations to the structure of the property. These are funded by Rosehill through an allocation of grant monies received each year from the Scottish Government via Glasgow City Council along with an annual budget allocation of Rosehill's own funds. Rosehill's ability to carry out works is dependent on getting sufficient grant monies along with our own budget allocation each year to meet demand.

3.4 Permanent adaptations are further sub-divided into minor and major adaptations. A minor adaptation is defined as a change which does not affect the structure of the dwelling e.g. internal and external handrails, a shower over a bath, lever handles for taps, changes to door handles and so on. Major adaptations include things like widening door openings, alterations to kitchen layouts and cupboards, wet floor bathrooms, removing baths and installing level access showers, adding an extension and so on. A list of adaptations can be found at Appendix 3.

4. Referral Process

4.1 The adaptations process begins with an initial enquiry which can be made directly by the tenant, carer or a relative, by another agency or by Rosehill's staff.

4.2 **Self-Assessment:** Tenants and other occupants can self-assess for some minor adaptations such as hand-rails and lever taps. This type of adaptation will not be referred to the Occupational Therapy service but will simply be ordered and carried out by Rosehill. These sorts of adaptations will be charged against any grant monies made available to Rosehill. Tenants can obtain a form from our office for this purpose. All requests must be signed by the tenant even if the work is for the benefit of another occupier.

4.3 **Self-Referral:** Tenants can approach the Occupational Therapy Service direct to request an assessment for major (this includes showers over baths) adaptations. A major adaptation will not be carried out without an Occupational Therapy recommendation.

- 4.4 **Referral by Rosehill:** Our staff may identify a possible need for adaptations in consultation with tenants and their carers and or relatives. If these can be ordered directly as a self-assessment item we will advise the tenant accordingly and arrange for the relevant form to be completed. Where more complex needs are evident staff will request that a referral to the Occupational Therapy Service to carry out a full assessment of needs is made. In some cases some or all of these works can be instructed prior to the Occupational Therapy assessment. On receipt of the OT referral these works will be able to be claimed from the Scottish Government grant subject to available funding.

5. Occupational Therapy Recommendations

- 5.1 Social Work Services will forward their Occupational Therapist's (O/T) recommendation for a major adaptation to us using the agreed forms. Rosehill will instruct the work based on the priority given to it by the O/T. Critical Need works will be carried out in date order, followed by Substantial Need, then Moderate Need. (See appendix 1 for more detailed information on priorities as outlined by Glasgow City Council Occupational Therapy eligibility criteria). A lower priority job will only be carried out when there are no outstanding works in a higher priority. Should funding be exhausted prior to the year end works will be held in a queue until additional funding or the next year's funding becomes available. In the case of minor self-assessment adaptations part of the budget will be ring fenced for these on an annual basis.
- 5.2 In addition to the above, referrals are submitted from Hospitals to have adaptations carried out to a tenant's home which will enable the tenant to return home.
- 5.4 Rosehill will give priority to **hospital referrals**, where the need for an adaptation is keeping the person in hospital. The next priority will be given to referrals rated as Critical Need, then Substantial Need and finally Moderate Need.
- 5.5 In exceptional cases, there may be a need to decant the disabled tenant and their family. In such circumstances Rosehill will meet the reasonable costs involved.

6. Holistic Option Appraisal

- 6.1 In accordance with DDA legislation, we will take reasonable steps to ensure that our properties, including the common parts where we have full control, are adapted to suit the needs of disabled people. In the case of lower cost adaptations (less than £10,000) we will generally accept the judgement of doctors and O/Ts about the nature of the adaptations required. However, where high cost work would be needed to meet a disabled person's needs we will carry out a holistic option appraisal. This will assess whether alternative housing options would provide a better long-term solution for the individual and deliver better value for money.
- 6.2 An option appraisal must always be carried out where the cost of any works recommended are in excess of £10,000, or where the property may not be suitable for the individual or for other reasons such as the work not being technically feasible, or where the works would result in a reduction in the number of bedrooms available leading to overcrowding. The option appraisal should involve all relevant staff in Rosehill together with the disabled person, carers and relatives, the O/T and any other relevant professionals.
- 6.3 Where the outcome of the option appraisal is that the best solution would be a move to suitable alternative accommodation (which might be with another RSL) we will endeavour to carry out urgent minor adaptations if a move is likely to be at least six months away.

7. Rent Levels

- 7.1 We will review the rent on a house where major works are carried out to create additional room(s). The rent will be reviewed in line with our rent setting policy.
- 7.2 All maintenance costs arising from adaptations will be met in full by Rosehill.

8. New Tenants

- 8.1 Where an applicant who requires major adaptations to a property is being considered for a tenancy we will make a formal written request to the Occupational Therapy service for an assessment to be made. Any offer of housing will be conditional and will be confirmed only if the property is deemed to be appropriate with or without further adaptation.
- 8.2 On receiving the formal report we will inform the prospective tenant and tell them whether the property is suitable or not and we will either confirm the offer of housing or withdraw it.

9. Funding

- 9.1 Rosehill will, on an annual basis, make a bid to Glasgow City Council for grant funds (provided by Scottish Government) to carry out Stage Three Adaptations. Rosehill will also allocate up to £50,000 per annum of our own funds to top up any grant received. The amount of funding (both grant and Rosehill) made available will determine how many adaptations can be carried out in the year and the extent of such adaptations.
- 9.2 Once funding is approved, Rosehill will carry out Stage Three Adaptations until the level of expenditure on committed orders reaches the level of funding approved by Glasgow City Council and Rosehill. Should this situation arise, Rosehill will request additional funding from Glasgow City Council.
- 9.3 If additional funding is not forthcoming from Glasgow City Council, Rosehill will cease to process further adaptations until funding is available. Should this situation arise Rosehill will inform Tenants and OT's that this is the position, and that no new adaptation requests will be processed until further funding is made available. We may however seek the approval of the Management Committee for additional funds to meet the cost of adaptations where budgets are exhausted.

10. Future Lettability

- 10.1 It is Rosehill's aim where a major adaptation has been carried out to a property e.g. level access shower, ground floor bedroom conversion to incorporate a shower/toilet, etc to seek to retain the property for use by persons with similar requirements after the existing tenancy ends.

- 10.2 Rosehill reserves the right to limit the number of major adaptations throughout its stock in order to prevent houses becoming 'hard to let' due to lack of suitable cases.
- 10.3 Rosehill will endeavour to relet the house in its present condition, however, in exceptional circumstances, the Technical Services Manager in consultation with the Housing Manager has authority to remove major adaptations from properties where these either hinder re-letting or are deemed to be no longer meeting the needs of occupants. To facilitate best use of adapted stock, detailed records will be kept of all adapted houses and staff will consider these at the relet stage and seek, where possible, to utilise adapted properties for suitable applicants.
- 10.4 In the situation where the person for whom the adaptation has been fitted no longer resides in the property, but other family members continue to live there, one of the following courses of action will be undertaken:
- 1) Do nothing. If the adaptation is such that it can still be used by remaining family/household members e.g. level access shower then Rosehill will not remove the adaptation.
 - 2) However, if a request is made by the tenant to have such adaptations removed Rosehill will only do so if the tenant agrees to pay for the cost of removing the adaptation and reinstating the house to its standard condition. The arrangements for paying for such work are dealt with under the Rechargeable Repairs Policy. However, this charge will not apply if the adaptation has reached the end of its useful life as decided by the Technical Services Manager.
 - 3) If an adaptation is not suitable for use by remaining family/household members then Rosehill will arrange to have the adaptation removed at no cost to the tenant.

11. No Access Cases

Where an adaptation has been approved and the tenant fails to either engage or provide access to carry out the works Rosehill will follow the following procedure as detailed in Appendix 4.

12. Appeals Procedure

12.1 Where a tenant is dissatisfied that the referral for an adaptation has been refused then he/she can, in the first instance write to the Director, who in conjunction with the Technical Services Manager, will review the case. The Director will confirm their findings, in writing, to the tenant.

12.2 If the tenant is still unhappy he/she should then write to the Management Committee who will review the case and make the final decision which will be confirmed to the tenant in writing.

13. Performance Management

13.1 We set targets for the adaptations service as follows:

- Number of approved applications received
- Total number of days taken to complete adaptations
- Number of adaptations completed

13.2 The measures we use for these targets are in line with the requirements of the Annual Return we have to submit to the Regulator.

13.3 Our Management Committee monitors performance in relation to this along with other key performance information on a quarterly basis. In addition we compare our performance from year to year and against other RSLs.

13.4 We also undertake the following quality control measures to ensure tenants receive a high standard of adaptations service:

- Post Inspections
- Quality Satisfaction Surveys

14. Equal Opportunities

14.1 We are committed to ensuring equal opportunities and fair treatment for all people in its work. In implementing this Policy, we will provide a fair and equal service to all people, irrespective of factors such as gender, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, language or social origin, or other personal attributes.

15. Tenant Participation

- 15.1 We are a tenant focussed organisation and as such we are committed to involving tenants in all aspects of our work and ensuring that tenants are included, informed and consulted about decisions that have an impact on the way their homes are managed.
- 15.2 As part of this commitment we will involve our tenants in the development of our policies and seek feedback where appropriate. We will ensure that any significant changes to this Policy and other Policies which will affect our tenants will be the subject of consultation.

16. Risk Management

- 16.1 In all the key areas of our business we need to consider any risks which may arise. To this end we have in place a robust Risk Management Policy and from this flows our Risk Register. We have identified our “Top 10” risks which are regularly monitored by our Management Team and Audit Sub-Committee.
- 16.2 Key to the mitigation of the risks associated with adaptations is having a comprehensive policy in place to manage the adaptations. This policy sets out Rosehill’s approach to the undertaking adaptations.
- 16.3 To ensure we continue to manage the associated risks we will periodically review this Policy to ensure compliance with all legislative requirements and regulatory and best practice guidance.

17. Complaints Procedure

- 17.1 We aim to get things right first time and provide a good quality service to our tenants and other customers. However, we acknowledge that things can go wrong and that some tenants or other customers may be unhappy with the service provided.
- 17.2 We promote our Complaints procedure through our website and periodic articles in our newsletters. In addition, we initially issued all of our tenants with a copy of the new Procedure introduced in October 2012. This information leaflet is also issued to all new tenants as part of the signing up pack.
- 17.3 We are required to report specifically to both our Management Committee and the Scottish Housing Regulator on any complaints concerning equalities issues.

18. Data Protection

- 18.1 On the 25th May 2018 the legislation governing data protection changed with the introduction of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Following the UK's exit from the EU, and the end of the transition period which followed, the GDPR formed part of the retained EU law and became the UK GDPR which together with the Data Protection Act 2018 constitute the UK's data protection legislation.

19. Policy Review

- 19.1 This Policy will be reviewed at least every three years or sooner to ensure it continues to reflect current thinking and practice and to comply with legislative requirements and regulatory guidance.

Priority Rating

Critical Need

Serious physical and/or psychological harm which has or is likely to occur without action being taken;
Immediate risk of going into hospital or care;
Critical risk of skin breaking down;
Evidence of frequent falls / injuries when mobilising

Example:

Facilities to enable access to toilet
Specialist equipment/adaptation to avoid admission/re-admission and support discharge
Repair of equipment/adaptation to avoid risk to health and safety

Substantial Need

Serious physical and/or psychological harm which has or is likely to occur and that without action would lead to a critical band need;
Unable to carry out the majority of personal care tasks but has regular family/carer support;
Home environment/property unsuitable and prevents essential needs being met;
Requires specialist bathing facilities to help manage a medical condition

Example:

Needs for assisted access to bathroom/bedroom
Specialist bathing facilities to manage health condition
Specialist equipment/adaptation to avoid deterioration of health
Specialist facilities to assist children in normal day to day activity

Moderate Need

No immediate risk to health and safety;
Facilities required to prevent need for more costly alternative;
Unable to access bath but no medical reason for bathing

Example:

Specialist bathing facilities
Specialist equipment to support independence
Kitchen adaptation to enable independent cooking

Appendix 2

Timescales

	Action	Target Timescale
Information to tenant	Rosehill will inform the tenant and refer the outcome of the recommendation request following receipt of the proforma (e.g. to go ahead with the adaptation/register it as a request that cannot be currently funded/deferred approval/not feasible for a given reason)	Within 5 working days
Provision	Rosehill to register the request, carry out property and tenancy checks and inform the tenant and the OT of the outcome of the recommendation request	Within 5 working days of receipt of recommendation
Joint visit	Where Rosehill request Social Work Services to participate in a joint visit:- Void properties All other requests	Respond to the request within 2 workings days 5 working days for all other circumstances
Completion	Rosehill to notify SWS when adaptation completed	5 workings days from completion
Advice prior to letting	Where Rosehill requests advice from Social Work prior to letting a property and this requires a home visit, the OT will complete "Housing Request for an Assessment" form and return it to Rosehill	Within 15 workings days from the date of the written request

Eligible Adaptations (List not exhaustive)

External Adaptations

- Handrail at front or rear of dwelling
- Widening paths around property
- Modification or widening of steps
- Defining steps for people with visual impairment
- Outdoor lighting
- Paved areas for wheelchairs
- Carport or covered access to property
- Installation of permanent/ temporary* ramp to front/ rear access

Internal Adaptations

- Widening or re-hanging of doors
- Re-positioning of door locks
- Replacing door knobs etc
- Installation of door call, entry phone and door unlock systems
- Additional stair rail
- Alterations to windows
- Installation of stair lift*
- Vertical hoist including reinforcing ceilings and provision of hoist track*
- Provision of level access shower, adapted bath etc
- Alteration or relocation of taps, power supplies, lights, sockets and heating appliances
- Storage space for wheelchair
- Acoustic insulation
- Warning or alarm systems*
- Non-slip or tactile surfaces
- Letter cages or delivery shelf
- Alterations to kitchen storage or equipment (excluding full re-design)

Major Works

- Extensions or alterations to provide suitable bedroom or bathroom for a disabled person
- Vertical through floor lift
- Re-design of existing kitchen
- Creation of hard standings or other extensive external alterations

* These adaptations are provided via Social Work Services. Permission must be sought from Rosehill prior to installation.

Appendix 4

No Access Procedure

Appointment for Works or Survey

If after two telephone calls and two letters from the contractor no appointment has been arranged then the contractor will refer this case back to Rosehill.

Rosehill will then check for any circumstances with the tenant and advise the OT of the difficulty. If no circumstances known then Rosehill will try to make contact with the tenant via telephone and issue a letter advising the tenant to make contact within 7 days or the adaptation will be cancelled.

If no contact made adaptation will be cancelled and the request removed from the list. If the tenant subsequently wants the adaptation then they will have to start the referral process with the OT again.

Works

If after two no access visits to an arranged appointment the contractor will refer this case back to Rosehill.

Rosehill will then check for any circumstances with the tenant and advise the OT of the difficulty. If no circumstances known then Rosehill will try to make contact with the tenant via telephone and issue a letter advising the tenant to make contact within 7 days or the adaptation will be cancelled.

If no contact made adaptation will be cancelled and the request removed from the list. If the tenant subsequently wants the adaptation then they will have to start the referral process with the OT again.