

# **Aids & Adaptations Policy**

## 1. Policy Scope

This policy explains how we handle adaptations and aids in properties to meet tenants' needs. Adaptations may be needed for disabilities, health changes, or difficulties living at home, and our aim is to provide them quickly and efficiently.

This document details the help available for tenants' seeking aids or adaptations. Local authorities are mainly responsible for these modifications through the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG), and although we usually do not apply directly to statutory agencies, we assist residents who want to pursue a DFG application.

Aids and Adaptations will be in line with all relevant regulation and legislation including but not limited to:

- Equality Act 2010
- The Care Act (2014)
- Housing Act (1980) and (1995)
- Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023
- Regulator of Social Housing Consumer Standards 2024
- Regulatory framework for Social Housing
- National Disability Strategy 2021

## 2. Policy Standards

### Standard 1: Major Adaptations Consent

If a local authority requires consent for adaptations after an occupational therapist or similar healthcare professional assesses an individual's needs, we will not refuse permission without good reason.

### Standard 2: Minor Adaptations funded by Bernicia

When assessing minor works requests, the following are considered:

- Feasibility for statutory bodies or authorities to carry out the work.
- How well does the work support residents' needs to remain at home.
- Consistency with current or planned adaptations.
- Relevant supporting documents (e.g., from occupational therapists or care professionals);
- Budget availability.

### Standard 3: Consent for Aids & Adaptations at tenants' expense

Applicants may carry out aids and adaptations independently; provided permission is granted. Approval is subject to:

- Submitting complete details of the proposed work
- Providing plans and specifications if required

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- Ensuring compliance with Bernicia's standards or using a Bernicia-approved contractor
- Securing all necessary approvals (e.g., planning and building regulations) and sharing evidence with Bernicia
- Agreeing on future maintenance and service responsibilities with Bernicia

#### **Standard 4: Acknowledgement of adaptation request**

We respond to requests for minor adaptations within 7 working days, and aim to reply to major adaptation requests within 21 days once all required information is provided.

#### **Standard 5: Timescales**

Bernicia will aim to complete or fund all works within 30 days of the decision.

#### **Standard 6: Repairing responsibilities**

For structural adaptations like level access showers, modified bedrooms, or ramps, full repairing obligations begin after one year or the relevant warranty period, whichever is longer.

#### **Standard 7: Servicing charge**

In accordance with our legal responsibilities as landlord, we are required to regularly service and maintain major adaptations, including stair lifts. Consequently, we reserve the right to levy charges on tenants to recover the associated costs incurred.

#### **Standard 8: Financial Considerations**

Financial assistance is typically provided for minor aids and adaptations with costs up to £750. Applications exceeding this amount are subject to individual assessment by the Head of Retirement Living. This funding is not intended to supplement major adaptations supported by Disabled Facilities Grants or other external funding sources.

#### **Standard 9: Existing Adaptations**

Where a property is vacated and it includes major aids or adaptations, we will make every effort to allocate that property to an applicant who can fully benefit from the included features.

#### **Standard 10: Appeals**

Tenants, their representatives or local authorities, have the right of appeal on any decisions made on applications for aids and adaptations, whether major or minor.

## **Standard 11: Training and Awareness**

Bernicia will make sure that everyone involved in Aids & Adaptations, whether directly or indirectly, receives suitable training on this topic and the related documents. Records of all training and awareness activities will be kept.

**Version Number: V7.0**

**Effective From: March 2026**

**Applicable To:** All Bernicia Groups rented or supported accommodation. The policy relates to both major and minor adaptations.

**Associated Documents:**

The following resources support the Aids & Adaptations policy and Bernicia colleagues to deliver aids and adaptations.

- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Fire Safety Policy
- Tenancy Policy
- Anti-Social Behaviour Policy

**Equality, Diversity & Inclusion:** A desktop review form was completed in April 2026. Please contact the Governance team if you require a copy.

**Approved By:** Assistant Director, Supported & Specialist Housing

**Policy Author:** Head of Service (Retirement Living)

**Policy Owner:** Assistant Director, Supported & Specialist Housing

**Next Review: March 2029**

**Reference Number: POL-0016**

### 3. Change Control

Version Number	Effective Date	Amendment made by	Version approved by	Description of changes
V7.0	March 2026	Head of Service (Retirement Living)	Assistant Director, Supported & Specialist Housing	Funding upper limit for minor adaptations raised from £500 to £750

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