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Adaptations Policy

1.0 Aim / Purpose of the Policy

- 1.1 Coastline is committed to ensuring that all customers with long term conditions or disabilities can safely maintain independent living in their homes.
- 1.2 Where customers have disabilities Coastline colleagues will work with them and other agencies to arrange adaptations or a move to a more suitable home where this is more appropriate.

2.0 Background / Introduction

- 2.1 A high percentage of our customers have a disability or long term illness and Coastline are aware that poorly designed and equipped housing can create barriers affecting their quality of life.
- 2.2 This policy will be fully reviewed after 3 years but may also be revised in the interim as a result of feedback from customers or where there are legislation changes.
- 2.3 This policy statement applies to customers of properties owned by Coastline. It does not apply to leaseholders.

3.0 Legislation, Statutory Regulatory duties & references

- 3.1 We will ensure that all property adaptation services are completed in accordance with best practice and relevant policy and legislation, including the following:

- Landlord and Tenant Act 1954
- Housing Act 2004 – Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)
- Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018
- The Equality Act 2010 The Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998
- NICEIC Electrical Regulations
- The Electricity at Work Regulations 1989
- The Building Act 1984 & 2000: The Building Regulations
- The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 England and Wales
- Building Regulations 2010
- Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012
- Health and Safety at Work Act
- The Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations 1999
- The Energy Performance of Buildings (England and Wales) Regulations
- Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996
- Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) 2022
- Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970
- The Care Act 2014

- 3.2 Before a person can have an adaptation to their home they need to be eligible for registration under The Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970. The adaptation must be essential and necessary to enable a person to stay in their home. This step is necessary to ensure that an Occupational Therapist is able to provide clear guidance on the most appropriate adaptations according to need although as set out in this policy, there are certain minor adaptations where this is not required.
- 3.3 The Equality Act came into force from October 2010 providing a modern, single legal framework with clear, streamlined law to more effectively tackle disadvantage and discrimination. This Act gives disabled people rights in the area of:
- Buying or renting land or property, including making it easier for disabled people to rent property and for tenants to make disability-related adaptations
 - The Act requires public bodies to promote equality of opportunity for disabled people and
 - The Act requires Coastline to give due regard to taking steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities even if this means treating disabled people more favourably.

4.0 Main Principles / Policy Detail / Policy Statements Objectives / Principles

- 4.1 Coastline will comply with the Equality Act and strive to exceed the requirements when possible and reasonably practical.
- 4.2 Coastline will comply with the Housing Act 1985 (as amended) and the expectations of the Regulator of Social Housing..
- 4.3 Coastline customers are entitled to apply for [Disabled Facilities Grant \(DFG\)](#) through the Local Authority under the terms of The Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996.

5.0 The main principles

5.1 Minor adaptations

- 5.1.1 Coastline will take responsibility for minor adaptations to avoid delays in completing work. Minor adaptations are alterations or additions to a home costing up to £500 subject to this policy. In some exceptional cases this value may be exceeded with senior manager approval.
- 5.1.2 Coastline will organise and pay for a specified range of minor works (see appendix A), subject to available internal funds and budget provision, i.e. not exceeding £500 and limit as at 5.1 (above). Examples may include:-
- Grab rails
 - Handrails
 - Lever taps
 - Specialist Fire Alarm devices
 - EI optical detectors
 - Threshold removal
 - Path works
 - Steps and half height steps
 - Drop down shower seat
 - Key safes

- Raised WC's
- Window locks or window openers
- External lighting – for visually impaired customers

5.1.3 Coastline will seek the advice of an Occupational Therapist (OT) where necessary. In most cases Coastline will follow the guidance in '**Minor adaptations without delay – A practical guide and technical specifications for housing associations**' 2006 produced by the College of Occupational Therapists

5.1.4 At the outset Coastline and/or the Occupational Therapist will agree a timeframe for commencement and completion of work with the customer but these will generally be completed within 20 days.

5.2 Major adaptations

5.2.1 Major adaptations involve larger alterations to a property and will typically cost between £501 and £10,000 Examples may include:-

- Level access showers
- Ramps
- Stair lifts
- Through Floor Lifts
- Door widening
- Specialist parking facilities
- Door entry systems
- Wash dry WC's
- Hoisting equipment
- External rails and alterations

5.2.2. An Occupational Therapist assessment will be needed in all requests for major adaptations. The adaptations and advice service (Cornwall Council) may support a customer to make a Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) application. Further information is provided on the [Government Website](#).

5.2.3 Coastline will approve major adaptations where the work is reasonable and practical for the property and where all the necessary planning conditions and building regulations can be met.

5.2.4 Coastline will work proactively with Occupational Therapists, Local Authorities, Home Improvement Agencies and other organisations to help them complete the adaptations process as quickly as possible.

5.2.5 Where it is not practical to adapt a customer's existing home Coastline will work with the customer and partner agencies to find a more suitable home. Coastline may contribute funds to help with the move, subject to available internal funding availability.

5.3 Extensive Adaptations

5.3.1 Extensive adaptations are major adaptations which cost £10,000 or more. These often involve the provision of an extra bedroom or bathroom but may include other works.

5.3.2 Where it has been identified that extensive adaptations are required, initially a pre-approval is sought from the OT and the Improvement surveyor will complete a request form and review with the Lettings Manager who will then agree in principle, or decline permission.

Following this a meeting may be convened involving the Occupational Therapist, the customer, and relevant colleagues from Coastline's Lettings and Technical Services teams.

- 5.3.3 For Extensive Adaptations, Coastline will consider whether the work should go ahead, or whether an alternative solution can be found which will continue to meet the essential needs of the customer. Consideration will be given to whether any extensive adaptation work would prevent the best use of the current housing stock, would negatively affect the future lettability of the property, or would prove to be prohibitively expensive.
- 5.3.4 Before Extensive Adaptations are carried out to a property other options will always be considered. These options will include the possibility of better use of space within the existing footprint of the property, and the potential for re-housing as an alternative.
- 5.3.5 Major adaptations will not be carried out in cases where:
- The customer has a Right to Buy application
 - The customer is under-occupying the current property
 - The property is above ground floor level, and has no lift
 - The layout and/or location of the current property make it unsuitable
 - The works would negatively affect the future lettability of the property

In such cases, the customer will receive advice and assistance regarding their housing options and the alternatives open to them.

5.4 Re-letting adapted homes

- 5.4.1 Coastline will identify adapted properties at the earliest stage possible through pre-void visits, and record checks.
- 5.4.2 Coastline will work with partner organisations to identify new customers who need the adaptations in vacated properties.
- 5.4.3 Where a property could be easily adapted for a disabled customer Coastline will notify relevant partner agencies and comply where possible with any local procedures for reletting.

5.5 Specialist advice – occupational therapy

- 5.5.1 Where the advice of an Occupational Therapist is needed to identify the best solution/s for adaptations but the funding authority cannot respond within a reasonable timescale Coastline will, in such exceptional cases, consider commissioning a private assessment in order to progress the case.

5.6 Servicing, maintenance, replacement and recycling of equipment

- 5.6.1 Coastline will take responsibility for servicing and maintaining permanent adaptations. Note that this will not include lifting equipment such as stair lifts or hoists because these are removable and will remain the responsibility of the customer. Customers will be encouraged to take out extended warranties and servicing agreements for all lifting equipment. **Note** - At void stage if a stair lift is installed within the property it will be removed.
- 5.6.2 Step and through floor lifts are a permanent fixture and Coastline will maintain these adaptations once the guarantee period expires although they may also be removed at void stage if they are life expired and the property is to be re-let. The regular testing and maintenance of this equipment (under LOLER and/or PUWER) is specialist work so the

installation will be subject to agreement and completion of a tenancy variation by the customer and payment of a service charge.

- 5.6.3 Wherever possible Coastline will recycle unwanted and life expired equipment. Loan equipment left in a void property will be offered back to the;
Cornwall Equipment Loan Service
Unit 12, Victoria Business Park, Roche PL26 8LX

Telephone: 01208 269716

Email: communityequipmentloanstore@cornwall.gov.uk

Website: <http://www.cecops.org.uk>

They will make arrangements to collect the items from CSL storage yard at Drump Road, Redruth.

- 5.6.4 Stair lifts and hoists will be removed at void stage, because these are non-permanent fixtures which were provided to meet the specific needs of the previous customer.

5.7 Environmental and communal area improvements

- 5.7.1 When planning environmental and communal area improvements with customers Coastline will ensure that the needs of disabled customers and visitors are considered and met where possible.

5.8. New housing

- 5.8.1 Where possible and practical, for schemes where Coastline fully control the design process, Coastline will consider accessibility in the design and development of new homes. Giving careful thought to the design of new homes helps to ensure that they are as accessible and adaptable as possible.

- 5.8.2 Where a suitable alternative property becomes available within the customers existing or preferred location and an occupational therapist confirms that the property will meet the customers long-term needs, then Coastline may consider the alternative home a more appropriate option to understanding adaptations to the current home.

5.9 Budgets, record keeping and service monitoring

- 5.9.1 Coastline will maintain an annual budget, intended specifically for minor aids and adaptations work and associated costs. Coastline will monitor expenditure on aids and adaptations on a monthly basis.

- 5.9.2 A list of "Minor Adaptations Without Delay" activities is provided within Appendix A & B

- 5.9.3 At first point of contact Coastline will check if a customer has a disability and record this to alert colleagues. Details of adaptations will be recorded on Coastline IT systems to help all colleagues identify adapted homes as part of their routine work.

- 5.9.4 Where Coastline have completed adaptations for customers Coastline will ask how satisfied they are with the adaptations work Coastline have done via a customer satisfaction survey.

5.9.5 Coastline will use comments received from customers to review the way Coastline organise adaptations. Where a customer is not satisfied with the work completed Coastline will do all possible to put it right.

5.9.6 Colleagues that may benefit from additional knowledge will be trained on the aids and adaptations policy and procedures. Colleagues will be encouraged to join in with training offered by Local Authorities and other organisations where this will add value to the service.

6.0 Service Standards

6.1 Adaptations Without Delay will be delivered as part of the Repairs Service with performance levels mirroring the target priorities used.

6.2 Requests for adaptations will be answered within the corporate standard timescales at the time of the request. Where circumstances dictate that adaptations need to be prioritised colleagues will make best efforts to ensure that work can be completed as quickly as possible.

6.3 Information provided and held with reference to customers and their homes will be provided and securely protected to meet the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) Requirements at all times.

6.4 In line with the Group Equality and Diversity Strategy and Policy Coastline is committed to fulfilling wholeheartedly statutory and regulatory requirements to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and good relations between different groups and to maintaining an organisational culture which values people from all sections of the community.

7.0 Cross reference and links to other Policies

7.1 Coastline will cooperate with partner organisations to help achieve positive results for customers.

7.2 Coastline will ask partner agencies for feedback on our adaptations work when Coastline review this policy.

7.3 Colleagues will be encouraged to join in with training offered by Local Authorities and other organisations where this will add value to the service.

7.4 Coastline will ensure that examples of good practice and new ways of providing adaptations are shared within the Coastline Group and with partner organisations.

APPENDIX A

MINOR ADAPTATIONS COASTLINE WILL CONSIDER INCLUDE -

NOTE: only where costs are not in excess of £500

Rails

- Grab rails*
- Banister rails*
- Handrails to steps*
- Drop down shower seats*

Doors and windows

- Remove thresholds and make good* -
- Provide & fit doors
- Alter doorsteps
- Provide and fit door entry equipment (not door bells)
- Window locks or window openers
- Door entry systems

Plumbing

- Provide & fit lever taps*
- Raised WC's

Electrics

- Provide and fit optical type smoke alarms*
- Fire alarm devices
- Extend pull cord switches
- Lower light switches
- Raise electrical power points
- Provide & fit additional external lighting

Kitchens

- Minor alterations to kitchen units & sinks

Miscellaneous

- Concrete ramps
- Half steps
- Keysafes

The above list is not exhaustive

* = Subject to available budget, Coastline will install these adaptations without an OT's referral request; see appendix B.

APPENDIX B

MINOR ADAPTATIONS COASTLINE WILL INSTALL WITHOUT REFERRAL

Minor Adaptations at Coastline Housing

Disabled Adaptations (DAs) that can be fitted by CHL without an Occupational Therapist's referral -

1. Lever taps

- Lever taps to Wash hand basin
- Lever taps to Kitchen sink
- Lever taps to Bath

2. Grab handles:

- 300mm (12") Grab handle
- 460mm (18") Grab handle
- 600mm (24") Grab handle

3. Banister rails:

- Banister rail (Mopstick)

4. Galvanised rail (Kee Klamp) over external steps or along paths:

- Kee Klamp galvanised rail

5. Remove internal carpet thresholds

- Install carpet / flooring joiner trims

6. Optical Smoke detector

- In accordance with Coastline specification