



Equipment and Adaptations Policy

SER-POL-06

Version 4

Date approved: 12 OCT 2018

Approved by: Chief Executive

1. Introduction

- 1.1 As a community based registered provider Southway, in considering and providing adaptations, will listen to our tenants to provide flexible, quality services that balance needs with costs and benefits.
- 1.2 This policy outlines the approach Southway Housing Trust (Southway) will take to:
- Providing adaptations
 - Removing adaptations
 - Offering suitable re-housing options to existing Southway tenants
 - Allocating properties with adaptations to re-housing applicants
 - Allocating properties that can be adapted to re-housing applicants
 - Allocating new homes with adaptations.

2. Policy Statement

- 2.1 Southway will work in partnership with Manchester’s Service for Independent Living (MSIL) and other RP partners through the Housing Access Board, in the delivery of a cost effective and efficient adaptation service.
- 2.2 Southway, will aim to balance the need to enable tenants and their household members to remain independent in their existing homes alongside making best use of its housing stock.
- 2.3 Southway, working with MSIL and other RP partners will aim to “ensure that adapted properties within Manchester are reused where possible when they become void and that extra properties are only adapted when a re-housing option is not available within an agreed time limit” (Accessible Homes Policy Appendix 1).
- 2.4 Southway will support tenants whose homes are not suitable to be adapted or where the decision is to not provide the adaptation, to move to a more suitable property. This may include providing practical support to move.
- 2.5 Southway will work with partners to find new ways to support independent living through technology including but not limited to the use of telecare and telehealth products in addition to or instead of physical adaptations.

- 2.6 Southway aims to be flexible to meet the needs of tenants and applicants requiring adaptations within the scope of this policy.

3. Scope

- 3.1 This policy applies to all tenants who require adaptations, alterations and enhancements to their home as a result of illness or disability. The adaptations or alterations may be required for either the tenant themselves or a family member permanently residing at the property.
- 3.2 Leaseholders are outside of the scope of this policy. However, where a Leaseholder applies for an adaptation in a communal area, Southway will treat the request the same as that received from a tenant.

4. Definitions

- 4.1 A minor adaptation is an adaptation costing less than £1,000. These adaptations are not eligible for DFG and include for example; hand rails, grab rails and lever taps.
- 4.2 A major adaptation is eligible for DFG and may involve a permanent change to the structure of the property. Major adaptations include stair and through floor lifts, access ramps, wet rooms.
- 4.3 When adaptations work is carried out in a bathroom, if there is space to fit a bath as well as a walk in shower then the bath will be provided. This will improve the facilities available for families living in a home with adaptations and improve the future letting of the property.

5. Eligibility for Adaptations

- 5.1 All requests for adaptations at Southway properties will be assessed by Manchester's Service for Independent Living (MSIL), including for existing tenants who are downsizing, who may require a like for like adaptation to be fitted in their new home.
- 5.2 Southway will consent to the installation of adaptations in tenants homes based on the needs assessment and recommendations of MSIL, unless to do so would be contrary to this policy.
- 5.3 However, Southway will not normally give consent for major adaptations in tenant's homes in the following circumstances:

- The family or household member who requires the adaptation is not a permanent occupant at the property
- The property is under-occupied by one or more bedrooms
- The property is over-crowded under the Allocations policy
- A Notice to Quit or Notice of Seeking Possession has been served for breach of tenancy (other than rent arrears).
- A possession or injunction order has been granted for breach of tenancy (other than rent arrears);
- There are rent arrears and a repayment agreement has not been made OR
- There are rent arrears and a repayment agreement has been made but has not been adhered to for 13 consecutive weeks.
- There is a live Right to Buy or Right to Acquire application.

5.4 The Chief Executive and/or Strategic Director People and Places have delegated authority to provide a major adaptation to a tenant or one of their family members by overriding the above.

5.5 The Chief Executive and/ or Strategic Director People and Places have delegated authority to provide a major adaptation if there is no Disabled Facilities Grant available or if the cost of the works is in excess of the grant awarded.

6. Funding

6.1 Southway will fully fund minor adaptations, when there is no funding available from MCC.

6.2 The Trust will contribute 40% of the cost of major adaptations. The remainder of the cost will be funding through Disabled Facilities Grant managed by MCC.

6.3 If the cost of the adaptation is above £30,000 – the maximum allowed under DFG grant funding rules then Southway may consider funding the balance if no other accommodation is available, OR assist in obtaining discretionary assistance from a grant, loan or equity release, as per the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002.

- 6.4 Southway will not contribute to an adaptation when a means test has been undertaken by MSIL and the tenant asked to personally contribute to the adaptation.
- 6.5 Once adaptations are installed it will be the responsibility of Southway to carry out annual servicing (for example stair lifts) and any maintenance or replacement work that is required.

7. Allocations

- 7.1 Wherever possible, properties with adaptations will be prioritised for households with a need for those adaptations.
- 7.2 Properties that have an adaptation or that can be adapted to meet an applicants needs will be allocated in line with the MCC Accessible Homes Policy.
- 7.3 Southway will work with the Adapted Homes Team, at Manchester Move, to ensure they are let to applicants who will benefit from them and which adequately meets their needs.
- 7.4 Existing Southway tenants who need to transfer to a property with an adaptation or that can be adapted to meet their needs, will be required to register and bid on Manchester Move.

8. Removal and Recycling

- 8.1 Major adaptations will only be removed from properties in the following instances:
- Technical assessment that the adaptation is cannot be repaired or is beyond economic repair.
 - The property can not be let with the adaptation in, in particular where the adaptation was so specific to the needs of the previous occupant.
 - A stair lift that is no longer in use by the person assessed as needing it and leaving in situ would cause hardship to the other occupants.
- 8.2 If equipment is no longer needed and can be of help to someone else, it will be recycled; for example stair lifts.
- 8.3 Southway will not remove a wet room and replace with a bath.

9. Right to Improve

- 9.1 Tenants have the right to put in their own adaptations, such as a shower or stair lift. However, those improvements, adaptations, alterations or additions to their home must be completed with the permission of Southway Housing Trust. All necessary approvals such as planning and building regulations must be obtained.

10. Statutory and Legislative Framework

- 10.1 The Equality Act 2010 refers to the duty to make reasonable adjustments depending on; amongst other criteria; how practical the changes are, how much money and resources are available and the cost of making changes.
- 10.2 The legal principle for Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) is contained in the Housing, Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996. The availability of a DFG is dependent on all three of the following criteria being met:
- The works are necessary and appropriate, and
 - The works are reasonable and practicable to carry out; and
 - The applicant's means-tested contribution (except for children) is less than the approved value of the grant.

11. Right to Buy and Right to Acquire

- 11.1 For the purposes of Right to Buy and Right to Acquire applications an adapted property is defined in the following way:
- 11.2 The property must have features that are substantially different from those of ordinary dwelling houses and
- Is designed for people who are physically disabled and
 - Is one of a group of dwellings which it is the practice of the landlord to let for occupation by people who are physically disabled and
 - Is in close proximity to a social service or special facility provided wholly or partly for the purpose of assisting the occupants.
- 11.3 If ALL of the above criteria are met the application will be denied under Part B of the RTB2.

12. Equality and Diversity

- 12.1 This policy is intended to operate within the commitment to equality and diversity, including equal treatment regardless of race, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, with reasonable adjustments made where necessary in line with the DDA.
- 12.2 Any literature that is required relating to this policy will be made available in the format required by our tenants.

13. Performance Management

- 13.1 KPI's to be monitored will be agreed with MISL but annually and reported on a quarterly basis. These will include:
- Customer satisfaction with the adaptation, the service, and the contractor carrying out the works
 - % of major adaptations completed within six months from the date of the assessment of need
 - % of minor adaptations completed within agreed timescales

14. Policy Implementation

- 14.1 The Strategic Director of People and Places will have responsibility for ensuring that the policy is implemented.
- 14.2 The policy will be reviewed every three years.

15. Links to other Policies, Procedures and Strategies

- 15.1 This policy is aligned to the Accessible Homes Policy agreed by Manchester City Council and partner Registered Providers (RPs). RP partners within Manchester Move developed and agreed a new approach to accessing adaptations and accessible homes by developing an Adapted Homes Team, which was agreed by the Housing Access Board 09/08/2016. The policy has an overarching aim to ensure that tenants can live well and independently in the community.
- 15.2 All RPs are committed to making the best use of their current stock to ensure value for money from current and future investment. Ensuring that current

adapted stock can be re-let to those that need to ensure that citizens can live well at home is paramount to the Accessible Homes policy.

15.3 The full Accessible Homes Policy is attached as Appendix 1.

15.4 Other Policies and Procedures are:

- Customer Care (Everyone Matters) Policy
- Single Equalities Scheme
- Responsive Repairs Policy
- Asset Management Strategy
- Void Management Policy
- Allocations Policy
- Mutual Exchange Policy
- Equipment and Adaptations Procedure

POLICY REVIEW HISTORY	
<i>To be completed during each review</i>	
Previous versions (version number – approved by – approval date – title if different)	
V1 – Board – 03/09/2009 V2 – Board – 06/09/2011 V3 – Board – 05/11/2013 V4 – Chief Executive 12/10/2018	
Date of last EIA:	12/10/2018
Review lead by:	Jane Gant
Main points or amendments made and reasons	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Policy aligned to city wide Accessible Homes ▪ Reasons for refusing an adaptation clarified ▪ General tidy up and edit to remove procedural detail ▪ Policy objectives and scope included 	
Next review due:	Q2 2021/22
Approval level:	Chief Executive

**Adapted Homes Service
Within the Manchester Move Partnership
A Policy for Delivery**

Date approved: 2016/17

Approved by: Housing Access Board

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Registered Provider (RP) Partners within Manchester Move have an overarching aim to ensure that their tenants can live well and independently in the community; the aims of “Living Longer, Living Better” (LLLB) (the City’s policy for integrated health and social care) are at the heart of this.
- 1.2 The four main objectives of LLLB: improving health outcomes, improving service standards, financial sustainability and maximising independence are at the centre of an updated policy for the use of adapted homes in Manchester.
- 1.3 Manchester also prides itself on being an “Age Friendly City”. The policy states that “Our approach will be to provide the housing, support and adaptations, advice and guidance and age-friendly neighbourhoods that will preserve independence and allow older people to continue to make their valuable contribution to our communities”.
- 1.4 All RPs are committed to making the best use of their current stock to ensure that they can get value for money from current and future investment. Ensuring that current adapted stock can be re-let to those that need it to ensure that citizens can live well at home is paramount to this policy.
- 1.5 The aim of this policy is to ensure that adapted properties within Manchester are reused where possible when they become void and that extra properties are only adapted when a re-housing option is not available within an agreed time limit. This aims to ensure that the people of Manchester can live safe and well in their own homes and that registered providers can make best use of current housing stock.

2. The Policy in Context

- 2.1 The policy takes into account the applicable Legal and Regulatory Frameworks, Asset Management Policy and Business Plans of the RPs.

Applicable Law

- Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970
- Children Act 1989
- The NHS and Community Care Act 1990
- Carers (Recognition and Services) Act 1995 :

- Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996: Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant
- Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000
- Equality Act 2010
- The Health and Social Care act 2012
- The Care Act 2014

3. Manchester Context

- 3.1 Information available from the 2011 census shows that around 21% of RP tenants in Manchester were over 65 years of age (compared to only 9.5% of Manchester's population as a whole) of which 4.5% (of the total population) are aged over 75.
- 3.2 41% of people over 65 in Manchester live in a social rented home, 51% are home owners and 5% live in private rented accommodation.
- 3.3 10-15% of the social housing stock in Manchester has some sort of adaptation within it. This will range from properties with one adaptation to fully adapted properties. The availability of adapted properties varies across property types and in the past this information has been very difficult to track due to RP's holding their own data, however we can now get the current information from the Locata Lettings IT system, which will tell us how often properties have been advertised over the past 12 months and with what adaptations, this will help with providing information regarding availability of properties in the future.

4. Aims of the Policy

- 4.1 RPs in Manchester aim to support disabled customers through the Adapted Homes Service to live independently for as long as possible.
- 4.2 All of the Asset Management Strategies of RPs take into account the long term sustainability of their properties to meet the needs of most disabled customers. Their portfolios should be kept under continuous review to ensure that emerging and future needs can be met.
- 4.3 When they are planning to build new homes for rent RPs will look consider how bespoke adapted properties can be incorporated to meet specific and unmet needs, should funds be available. Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) or

other funds could be accessed and used for adapted new build properties if the property is allocated to someone with an assessed need.

- 4.4 Re-housing to a more suitable property will always be explored when an adaptation of more than £1,000 is suggested and this adaptation involves the removal, addition or alteration of a physical feature to an existing home.
- 4.5 Manchester Services for Independent Living (MSIL) will do this as part of their assessment of need and will be carried out by an assessment officer within this service.
- 4.6 Where a person is informed that their home will not, or cannot, be adapted their details will be passed to the Adapted Homes Service within Manchester Move if they wish to consider moving home.
- 4.7 This service maintains a register of people with medical needs and carries out medical assessments to identify individual requirements when an applicant applies for re-housing. The Adapted Homes Service will then seek to match properties that become available to the needs of customers to make the best use of adapted stock. Advice and support is provided to help customers to move to a more suitable property.
- 4.8 When re-housing is not considered a feasible option because of the lack of suitable alternative housing in the area a person is looking to live in, the RP, in conjunction with MSIL assessment service will consider if adaptations will be provided to the property in line with legal requirements and the AHS policy. This will focus on accessibility and the use of essential facilities such as access to bathing and sleeping facilities, as well as daily living tasks. MSIL will make the initial decision as it is their statutory duty to do so. An RP can refuse permission for works to go ahead if they have a valid reason to do so, if this is the case then support will be provided to re-house to a property that meets their needs.
- 4.9 Existing social housing tenants requiring adaptations where they cannot be (or a decision has been made that they won't be) delivered in the home that they are currently living in may be offered support to move to a more suitable property. (Subject to available budget to do so).
- 4.10 The Role of Manchester Move
- 4.11 Manchester Move has a role in looking at a range of Housing Access issues in the City and how these fit with other strategies and policies.
- 4.12 The Manchester Move service will work towards the following:

- A comprehensive understanding of the supply of adapted properties across the City.
- The creation of common protocols and procedures to make the allocation and letting of such properties fair, transparent and efficient.
- The promotion of re-housing through support in preference to further investment in adaptations where an alternative exists.
- The very best use of stock that has already been adapted.

4.13 Across 17 RP partners this work should not be underestimated however the vision of ensuring that partners make the best use of stock while ensuring the people can live independently for as long as possible are shared by all.

5. Adapted Homes Policy

5.1 Making the best use of Adapted Homes in Manchester

5.2 All Partners within Manchester Move are committed to providing their customers with excellent services. The following statements are ones that all RPs have signed up to:

- Make the best use of the portfolio of adapted properties
- Support disabled customers to move to alternative accommodation so they can live independently for as long as possible.
- Provide major adaptations where re-housing is not considered to be a feasible option (because of a lack of suitable alternative accommodation or an applicant is too ill to move).
- Fast track minor adaptations
- Comply with Equality Law considerations
- To deliver the best possible value for money and the utilisation of resources to meet these stated aims.

5.3 We know that re-housing options will be more readily available in some areas of the city than others (due to stock type and turnover). This will need to be taken into consideration by an RP as to whether they adapt a home.

6. Available Resources

- 6.1 For properties where the RP has agreed for the installation of an adaptation they will be liable for 40% of the cost of the adaptation, the council will pay the remaining 60%. RP's will set an annual budget for adaptations.
- 6.2 For properties managed by the ALMO and PFI stock, a capital budget will be set every year with 100% of the cost of the adaptation being met from this.
- 6.3 However these resources don't meet demand therefore it is imperative the service identifies adapted properties and that these are allocated to those people that need them most, making the very best use of existing stock.

7. Right to Buy (RTB)

- 7.1 Properties can be exempt from the RTB if they have features that are substantially different from those of ordinary dwelling houses and meet the following criteria:
- Is designed for people who are physically disabled and
 - Is one of a group of dwellings which it is the practice of the landlord to let for occupation by people who are physically disabled and
 - Is in close proximity to a social service or special facility provided wholly or partly for the purpose of assisting the occupants.
- 7.2 If all of the above criteria are met, the application will be denied under Part B of the RTB2. RPs should consider this when deciding on an application for Right to Buy.
- 7.3 To mitigate this RPs may wish to enter into a separate agreement with the tenant before the adaptations are made to the property, requiring the cost to be reimbursed or waiving their right to buy or right to acquire (if possible).

8. Disabled Facilities Grants

- 8.1 Mandatory grants provided by the Local Authority are available upon application. RPs would aim to assist their own tenants to move through the MM Adapted Homes Service but tenants are entitled to apply directly to the local authority for a Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) if they choose to do so. (Although RPs would still need to give permission before any works went ahead). This means that although a customer may have a DFG application

granted, ultimately and legally the RP, as the landlord can refuse permission for the adaptation to be carried out.

9. Needs Assessment

- 9.1 Customers have a legal right to an MSIL assessment and to apply to the council for a DFG (although an RP would still need to give permission before any works went ahead). At no point does this policy look to override that. With the permission of the customer, information may be shared between the RP, MM and MCC.
- 9.2 In considering requests for major adaptations RPs will normally have regard to agreed guidelines when making decisions on whether adaptations should be installed. There may however be cases where the guidelines may not apply or where miscellaneous requests are made that are not specifically mentioned in the policy.
- 9.3 RPs should use their discretion in these cases. Some RPs may also have their own internal policies about what adaptations they will carry out.
- 9.4 The recommended outcome following the needs assessment will be sent to the RP/ALMO/PFI contractor. The MSIL service will be very clear with the tenant that they are recommending what adaptations they may need, but will not guarantee at this stage that it will be provided within their current home.
- 9.5 The landlord (RP/ALMO/PFI) will make its decision, being mindful of this policy, as to whether they are giving landlord's consent for the adaptation to go ahead.

10. Re-housing

- 10.1 Re-housing will be explored when major adaptations (over £1000) are requested to an existing home and if internal alterations, additions or multiple adaptations are required. The AHS will seek to match empty adapted properties to the needs of those customers who will benefit from them.
- 10.2 If they are eligible for re-housing, assessed as having a medical need and it is judged that a suitable property could become available within a reasonable time frame (12 months) and would adequately meet the applicant's (and their family's) needs, re-housing will be offered as a solution and recommended by panel.

- 10.3 In accordance with Section 24(3)(a) of the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996) the Local Authority has the right to discharge duty if a suitable alternative property can be offered.
- 10.4 The term 'adequately meets the need' refers to both the customer's (and their family's) physical and mental needs, plus social support needs relating to locality (family support, schools etc.).
- 10.5 When considering re-housing and providing re-housing advice to MSIL, the Housing OT will use the following guidelines on locality and what is deemed an acceptable radius, and timescale until such a property will become available. For the purpose of this document, an acceptable radius will be defined by the OT on an individual case by case basis taking into account individual care and support needs. An acceptable timescale is defined as one that can be met before the customer's needs become urgent (as defined by the OT), or within the 6 month legal time frame that the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 stipulates a decision on all DFG applications must be made.
- 10.6 Advice and support will be provided to help tenants to move to a more suitable property through the Adapted Homes Service. This may include providing practical and financial support to enable people to move where this is required. Where re-housing is not considered to be a feasible option (because of a lack of suitable alternative homes or the person is too ill to move for example) and there is a legal or assessed duty the RP would normally consider if reasonable adjustments can be made to the property. This will focus on daily living tasks accessibility and the use of essential facilities such as adapted bathrooms.
- 10.7 In cases where multiple adaptations or internal alterations are recommended it may be more suitable for the applicant to move into a property that is already adapted to fully meet their needs. Especially where the current home cannot be adapted due to technical specifications.
- 10.8 In the main this policy intends to re-let homes with any type of major adaptation to those with a matched medical need on the housing register. However it is understood that some properties that are adapted may be let to applicants on the general register if applicants these cannot be matched.

11. Performance Indicators

- 11.1 A number of performance measures will be set for the service in conjunction with RPs for once a tenant has decided that they would like to explore

options around re-housing. RPs will agree a standard set of PIs for the undertaking of adaptations where they have agreed to do so.

12. Adaptations Panel

12.1 MSIL has panel meetings on a regular basis to assess all requests for adaptations and all initial decisions and recommendations will remain with MSIL in line with their statutory duty. However the panel will look at all available solutions that will meet the customer's needs and decide on which solution will be used, including re-housing. The Adapted Homes team will be involved with all cases referred to them, the Housing OT will attend the complex case panel. Therefore it is imperative that a full case is prepared and that the information required is procured prior to the meeting for discussion. This will include:

- Needs assessment and recommendations by Assessment Officer
- Technical information regarding the adaptations that would need to be carried out in the current home, following a tech visit from the RP
- Re-housing data to check if re-housing within 12 months is a feasible option. The Housing OT will take into consideration section 5.6 of this document.

12.2 However, even after a panel decision, an RP has the legal right and as the landlord to refuse permission for an adaptation to proceed. If this is the case the landlord would need to provide the tenant and panel with some justification of their decision. This may be due to the applicant having rent arrears, taking action for antisocial behaviour or technical difficulties.

12.3 The AHS OT will attend the regular meetings at MSIL to ensure there is sufficient knowledge regarding re-housing, property availability and property types.

13. Panel definition of “Too ill to Move”

13.1 Any customer that meets one of these criteria will be assessed for adaptations in their current home where this is feasible to do i.e. may have an end of life prognosis.

13.2 Dementia that is at a stage where moving would add to any confusion experienced therefore causing further distress and problems for the customer or carers.

- 13.3 Registered blind – The customer is very familiar with the home and local environment. Moving would mean ongoing hardship or additional risks because they would find it difficult to settle into a new environment due to their lack of vision.
- 13.4 Diagnosis of a condition where the condition is terminal with a very poor life expectancy.
- 13.5 Severe and enduring mental health problems that may be affected if the customer had to move (eg; CPN involvement /at risk of Section).
- 13.6 Customers with severe chronic respiratory problems who are on oxygen therapy for several hours a day who may not cope with the upheaval of moving because they do not have the necessary support to do so. However other options and support to move could be provided if it is thought that moving would assist the applicant medically.

14. Technical Considerations

- 14.1 To ensure that the best use of stock is being considered at all times the MSIL will have looked at the following issues when deciding about an adaptation:

15. Property

- 15.1 Re-housing to a more suitable property will always be explored first when major adaptations are requested.
- 15.2 Major adaptations will not usually be considered or approved in family-type properties that are under occupied by one or more bedrooms, this is to assist with freeing up much needed family type of accommodation.
- 15.3 Major Adaptations will not usually be considered or approved in properties that are overcrowded under the Council's allocations policy.
- 15.4 It is expected that adaptations will meet the needs of the tenant for at least five years from the date of installation.
- 15.5 However adaptations may still be fitted where:
- a person is too ill to move (as described in section 6.5)
 - a property is already partially adapted.
 - re-housing prospects are very poor in a required area.

15.6 These exceptions will be reviewed on a regular basis.

16. Lifting Equipment

16.1 Obsolete stair lifts and step lifts in existing properties will usually be replaced when still required subject to an assessment by MSIL to ensure assessed need has not changed.

16.2 Consideration will be given before fitting a curved bespoke stair lift, as these can be technically difficult to install and reuse.

16.3 Straight stair lifts will not usually be provided within external stairways in flats or maisonettes above ground floor.

16.4 Stair lifts will not usually be fitted in communal areas or in shared accommodation.

16.5 Vertical lifts will not usually be fitted in properties with less than three bedrooms as this reduces family type accommodation to single occupancy and can lead to the occupant requiring a move to a larger property if there family grows.

16.6 External stair lifts are not usually provided.

17. Bathing Facilities

17.1 Level access showers (LAS) are not usually fitted in flats above the ground floor or maisonettes unless served by a suitable communal internal lift.

17.2 LAS will not be fitted in houses, maisonettes or properties with poor external access. (This includes within the garden area of a property but also access to amenities in the immediate locality).

17.3 LAS may be fitted in properties where there is level external access or where one could easily be provided by the installation of a simple ramp to one external door – this may be the back door.

17.4 In some very exceptional cases level access showers may be fitted in properties with poor external access to meet the immediate needs of the tenant.

18. External Access

- 18.1 Normally only one external level access ramp will be provided to a property however the panel will consider a second ramp if access is required to the garden.
- 18.2 Handrails can be provided to external steps.
- 18.3 If the access height to a property exceeds 600mm (from the outside ground level to the top of the door threshold) or a ramp length of greater than 7.2 linear meters is required to create ramped access, then the property will be classified as unsuitable for a disabled tenant. All adaptations to this property will then be refused and re-housing offered as the most suitable solution to meet the applicants assessed needs. In such circumstances, adaptations would only be considered if there is a very low likelihood of a suitable social housing property becoming available within 6 months.

19. General

- 19.1 New adaptations will not be installed in a property if a tenant has recently (i.e. usually within the past two years) moved into the property and their needs have NOT significantly changed. It is the tenant's responsibility to disclose all medical information at the time of application for re-housing.
- 19.2 Baths will not usually be reinstated back into an adapted property when re-letting.(this is at the discretion of the RP and/or if a new tenant wishes to pay for the installation).
- 19.3 When making a decision on any application to adapt a social housing property, consideration will be given to the property's potential to meet the long term needs of a disabled tenant. If it is either not possible to adapt a property in accordance with the guidelines of this document, or if it is not structurally possible to adapt a property to accommodate the long term needs of a disabled tenant then all major adaptations will be refused and re-housing pursued as the most viable long term solution for the applicant. All cases will be considered on an individual basis.
- 19.4 While MSIL will also have taken all these issues into consideration the RP may wish to review in some circumstances.
- 19.5 Where re-housing is seen as the best option (and this discussion has been had with the tenant by the MSIL or RP) then the case will be passed to the AHS to make contact with the applicants (with their consent). It will be the responsibility of the RP to get a live MM application onto the IT system.

- 19.6 As the Adapted Homes Team will not have any technical members of its team, RPs will need to provide this advice as and when necessary. In the main this will mean providing a view if a property is suitable (ie: are there steps, could doors be widened if necessary). This will save a member of the
- 19.7 team having to travel long distances for a short visit to a property when this work can be done by the RPs.

20. “Support to Move” Scheme

- 20.1 Where customers agree to move rather than have adaptations undertaken to their current home, support may be available to help them to move. This is outlined in the “Support to Move” scheme at Appendix 1.

21. Monitoring

- 21.1 AHS will maintain an electronic record of all clients. It will contain all information from the date and time of the referral through to a conclusion of a case. This data will provide the information base for the monitoring of all aspects of the service. It will include:
- Name;
 - Address;
 - Demographics (age, sex, ethnicity, religion, language etc.);
 - Reason for referral;
 - Date of initial contact to AHS;
 - Date of referral (where they differ from contact/request);
 - Date of assessment for re-housing priority;
 - Information of necessary adaptations required;
 - Areas that a person wishes to live;
 - Any offers and refusals with details;
 - Journal entries regarding case management;
 - Dates of reassessment (every 6 months);

- Details of successful outcomes – including if RP has carried out further adaptations to make a property suitable (Inc. cost).
- 21.2 This information will provide the basis for performance monitoring of the service.

22. Appeal Procedure

- 22.1 There is an Appeals Panel for customers to appeal against the decisions made by the Adaptations Panel and this sits within MSIL. This ensures that MSIL meet their statutory duties.
- 22.2 If an RP is to refuse to undertake an adaptation then they would deal with any complaints under their own procedures.

23. RP New Build Programme

- 23.1 Where a RP is planning to build new properties for rent these plans should be shared at the earliest opportunity with the AHS and MSIL. The AHS will work alongside the RP to see if bespoke solutions can be found, especially for complex and long standing cases.

24. THE ADAPTED HOMES ‘SUPPORT TO MOVE’ SCHEME

- 24.1 The Adapted Homes Support Scheme will be exclusive to those RPs that chose to take part in it.
- 24.2 The scheme could help a tenant move if they are a tenant of a participating landlord and:
- They or a member of their household has a physical disability and has been assessed by the MSIL at MCC as in need of a property that has been adapted* to meet their needs;
- AND**
- The guidelines have been met to have their current home adapted but the tenant has chosen to move instead.
- OR**
- An existing tenant cannot have their home adapted and has chosen to move instead of staying put.

- 24.3 * By adapted, we mean a property that has one or more of the following adaptations:
- A step-lift
 - A stair lift or a through floor (or vertical) lift
 - A level access shower
 - A ground floor extension (intended for use by a disabled person)
- 24.4 Acceptance onto the scheme will be at the discretion of the RP/AHS and is subject to a home visit to discuss the current circumstances. All cases will be discussed with the re-housing staff and OT within the AHS.
- 24.5 A tenant will be eligible for consideration for properties that meet their established bedroom need and where they meet the other criteria set out by the RP. (I.e. certain properties have age restrictions on occupation, have restrictions on occupation by tenants with pets, and are advertised for applicants who classed as a Working Household).
- 24.6 We will always try to re-house tenants in an area of their choice in Manchester.
- 24.7 Where applicants find a new suitable property to move to and with the agreement of the RP, participants can opt to access a package of support-in-kind to an agreed value.
- 24.8 Support to move will be paid by the current landlord should the tenant be moving from one landlord to another.
- 24.9 Support-in-kind could include:
- Help with moving (e.g. a removals service, a packing and unpacking service, the disconnection and reconnection of major domestic appliances, telephone connection and mail redirection).
 - Access to a handyperson scheme to carry out small jobs in the new home. E.g. fixing curtain rails or reassembling furniture.
 - Limited decorating or access to extra decorating materials/vouchers.
- 24.10 This list is not exhaustive. As the purpose of the support scheme is to pay for any practical support a tenant may need to move to their new home, the RP would discuss the tenant's individual circumstances and needs.

24.11 Where a tenant needs an adapted property the suitability of the property must also be agreed with the AHS, this will be carried out when the decision is made regarding the assessment by MSIL and has been passed to the AHS.

25. Who is it for?

25.1 A disabled tenant or member of their household who requires an adapted property, does not currently live in such a property and has chosen to move instead of having their own home adapted.

25.2 People will not be able to apply if they:

- Are not a tenant of a participating landlord.
- Have a significant level of current or former tenant arrears, and have not made any arrangements to repay the debt
- Currently have a suspended possession order against them
- Have not maintained their tenancy in a satisfactory manner
- Have not maintained their home in a reasonable condition
- Are carrying out a mutual exchange