



WILLOW TREE

HOUSING PARTNERSHIP

Aids and Adaptations Policy

Version:	v2
Responsibility for the Policy	Head of Assets & Repairs
Date approved by Executive	October 2024
Date approved by Board (if applicable)	N/A
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1. Statement of Intent

Willow Tree Housing Partnership Limited (WTHP) aims to ensure, where possible, that the changing needs of tenants are taken into consideration throughout the life of their tenancy. Aids and adaptations to a home can support people to live independently, carrying out normal day to day activities.

2. Policy Objectives

WTHP aims to:

- Enable residents to live independently in their homes and to enjoy a good quality of life, privacy and dignity
- Provide a dedicated budget for aids and adaptations
- Work with its partners to maximise grant funding for aids and adaptations
- Make the best use of its housing stock

While there is no specific obligation on WTHP to fund aids and adaptations, WTHP recognises that it is good practice to do so. Therefore, WTHP will make a budget available each year for aids and adaptations. This budget will be based on the level of need within WTHP's stock and other financial constraints.

2.1 Minor aids and adaptations (less than £500)

WTHP will provide residents with minor aids and adaptations, such as lever taps, grab rails, handrails, simple ramps, door thresholds, steps and white lines to paths or stairs without the need for an assessment by an Occupational Therapist. Such work will not exceed £500.00 in any one property per annum.

2.2 Minor aids and adaptations (Between £500 and £1500)

WTHP will provide directly funded minor aids and adaptations between £500 and £1500 on the recommendation of a suitably qualified Occupational Therapist. This includes handrails, grab rails, work to fit over bath showers, ramps, moving electric sockets, charging points for a mobility scooter etc. The maximum funding under the minor adaptation's category is £1500 per property per year. External funding sources will also be investigated.

(Structural work will be declined for Rentplus properties unless Rentplus UK give their permission for the work to proceed).

Major aids and adaptations (over £1500)

WTHP will work with our partner organisations in accessing grant funding for any major adaptations. Funding may be provided by the local authority as part of the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG). WTHP staff will signpost residents in obtaining

funding from the local authority, if this is required.

WTHP will not make a contribution to any work funded by the DFG. However, WTHP will inspect work carried out using this funding to ensure that it meets the standards expected.

In general, WTHP will not unreasonably refuse permission for major aids and adaptations to its properties. However, WTHP may refuse permission for an aid or adaption if:

- The work is likely to make the property hard to let (or sell for a Rentplus property) once the current resident has left.
- Where major structural work is required and the needs of the household could reasonably be met by moving to another property.

2.3 Maintenance of aids and adaptations

The majority of aids and adaptations become the responsibility of the landlord to maintain, in which case WTHP will accept that responsibility. However, WTHP will not accept responsibility for maintaining stair lifts which will remain with the resident. In some cases, a service charge may be levied in order to ensure that an aid or adaptation is maintained properly.

2.4 Residents and works ineligible for aids and adaptations

WTHP will not fund aids and adaptations where:

- Residents are in temporary accommodation
- Residents have a probationary tenancy
- Residents do not have a long term disability (i.e. has lasted or will last for at least 12 months)
- The resident is a Shared Owner or leaseholder
- The resident is seeking to move
- The aid or adaptation is portable
- The property is a family property and is under occupied

It is recognised that in some cases a move to more suitable accommodation may be a more viable solution than carrying out expensive aids and adaptations work. Therefore, before any permission is given to carry out work costing more than £1500 the Housing Officer and Maintenance Officer will assess the property and consult the resident and Occupational Therapist to discuss the options where this is appropriate. The decision on whether to agree to any aids and adaptations work or whether a resident will be asked to seek a move will be made by the Operations Manager.

2.5 Allocation of properties

WTHP will make every effort to ensure that properties that have been significantly adapted for use by disabled people are allocated to someone who requires the adaptation. All adverts for letting of adapted properties will as far as is practicable contain details of the adaptations. In addition, WTHP will only allocate properties that meet the reasonable current needs of applicants. Therefore, if an applicant has needs that cannot be met by the property being allocated without significant adaptations, then the application will be refused, except in exceptional circumstances. This would include written agreement that the Local Authority will do the works.

Performance Standards

WTHP performance in providing aids and adaptations will be reported to the Board at least annually.

Reference Documents

External

- All legislation and guidance related to the adapting of properties within the social housing environment

Internal

- WTHP Allocations and Lettings Policy

When setting policy, the Willow Tree Housing Partnership will ensure a golden thread of best practice runs through all aspects of its operations in respect of equality, diversity and inclusion. It will seek to minimise adverse environmental impacts arising as a consequence of its work. This approach and all policies will be reviewed on their anniversary date or as new guidance or legislation is introduced, whichever occurs sooner.