

<b>Adaptations Policy</b>	
<b>Document Owner:</b> Supported Living Manager	<b>Document No:</b> ILS-PL-002
<b>Date Approved:</b> May 2023	<b>Review Date:</b> May 2026

## Contents

1.0	Introduction .....	1
2.0	Policy objectives, key performance indicators (KPI) and reporting.....	1
3.0	Definitions.....	2
4.0	Legislative, regulatory and strategic alignment.....	4
5.0	Responsibilities .....	4
6.0	Policy delivery .....	5
7.0	Consultation .....	9
8.0	Approval.....	9

### 1.0 Introduction

1.1 Beyond Housing recognises that each customer has individual needs and abilities, and some customers have additional support needs, therefore we provide an annual budget for minor adaptations to its properties to enable independent living, confidence, dignity and quality of life for customers and their families.

1.2 Beyond Housing provides accommodation across the borough of Scarborough and Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council area. There are existing agreements between both legacy organisations and the respective local authorities in respect of adaptation provision and financial thresholds.

### 2.0 Policy objectives, key performance indicators (KPI) and reporting

2.1 This policy details the type of adaptations which will be undertaken, the referral and assessment processes and performance information.

Beyond Housing aim to:

- Provide, or approve, relevant adaptations to help customers and communities succeed and thrive, through the provision of accessible homes, which meet their needs and enables independent living.
- Make best use of financial resources and Beyond Housing’s housing stock to meet customers’ adaptation needs.
- Work effectively with partner agencies to support customers to remain living independently.

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<b>Date Approved:</b> May 2023	<b>Review Date:</b> May 2026

2.2 Where adaptation works are more technically complex, and involve more detailed planning or manufacturing, and are not achievable within target timescales, exception reports will be produced for performance reporting.

2.3 The following performance is reported quarterly to the Supported Living Manager, with targets reviewed on an annual basis (as the service is subject to change, the targets will be amended accordingly), the SLM will liaise with operations internally regarding any underperformance or variation from targets:

- Percentage of all adaptations completed which are AWD
- Percentage of all minor adaptations completed within target.

Key Performance Indicator	Owner (job role)	Policy objective alignment
Referrals involving hospital discharge or palliative care – three working days	Adaptations Coordinator / R&M Team Leader	
Urgent referrals – ten working days	Adaptations Coordinator / R&M Team Leader	
AWD – ten working days	Adaptations Coordinator / R&M Team Leader	
Standard referral – twenty working days.	Adaptations Coordinator / R&M Team Leader	

### 3.0 Definitions

3.1 **Adaptations:** Works carried out to improve access to, and safe mobility around the home.

3.2 **Minor adaptations:** Adaptations which fall under the current financial thresholds applicable in each local authority area following an occupational therapy assessment.

(NB North Yorkshire Council area financial threshold is subject to annual RPI uplift), examples include:

- Grab rails and handrails
- Bannisters
- Half steps
- Door entry systems
- Lever taps

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<b>Date Approved:</b> May 2023	<b>Review Date:</b> May 2026

- Additional sockets
- Additional lights
- Key safes
- Ramps
- Door widening.

**3.3 Adaptations without delay (AWD):** Works from the above list which can be undertaken without an assessment from an occupational therapist (OT):

- Grab rails
- Lever taps
- Additional banister rails
- Key safes.

3.3.1 The current exception to the provision of minor adaptations, within the financial threshold (dependent on area), is to provide straight stair lifts, following an assessment of need from an OT, (subject to reasonable cost and budget provision); this additional offer from Beyond Housing is not obligatory, but an enhanced offer, and can be withdrawn at any time.

**3.4 Major Adaptations:** Adaptations which fall outside of the scope of this policy and include the following:

- Ramps (exceeding the local authorities threshold value)
- Level access showers/wet floor showers
- Curved stair lifts
- Through floor lifts
- Ground floor extensions
- Wash/dry toilets
- Over the bath showers
- Adapted kitchens.

**3.5 Disabled facilities grant (DFG):** The local authorities have an annual budget for undertaking major adaptations for residents in their respective areas, known as the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG). Customers wishing to access the grant would need to be referred via the relevant local authority. Access to this funding is subject to a number of factors including:

<b>Adaptations Policy</b>	
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<b>Date Approved:</b> May 2023	<b>Review Date:</b> May 2026

- An assessment of need
- A financial assessment
- Whether the assessed need can be met through the provision of specialist equipment e.g. bathing aids
- Considering whether the work is reasonable and practical
- Establishing that all suitable alternatives to meet the need have been pursued e.g. rehousing
- Consideration as to whether applicants have worsened their own circumstances
- Consideration given that the customer will remain living at the property for at least the next 5 years .

3.6 **Accessible properties:** Properties which have been designed, built or significantly adapted to meet the needs of people with physical or sensory disabilities.

3.7 **Extra care:** specially designed accommodation to meet people’s physical needs and/or health issues which provide 24-hour care and support.

#### 4.0 Legislative, regulatory and strategic alignment

4.1 Beyond Housing recognise that more disabled people live in social housing than any other tenure and recognise our responsibilities in ensuring our customers can remain living independently.

4.2 Beyond Housing are required to provide minor adaptations to enable customers to remain living independently in their own homes, as part of the Regulatory Framework for Social Housing (Landlords must understand tenants needs and cooperate with other organisations to provide a service to meet need).

4.3 There are existing agreements as part of the stock transfer arrangements between both legacy organisations of Beyond Housing and the respective local authorities in respect of adaptation provision.

4.4 The adaptation policy is aligned with the organisational purpose of helping our customers and communities succeed and thrive.

4.5 The policy underpins the organisational strategic objective of providing quality services to customers, through the provision of services to older and vulnerable people.

4.6 Requirements of the Equality Act 2010, the Human Rights Act 1998 and Care Act 2014 have been considered as part of the development and implementation of this Policy.

#### 5.0 Responsibilities

5.1 The **Chief Operations Officer**, through the **Supported Living Manager**, will be responsible for the effective implementation of the policy.

<b>Adaptations Policy</b>	
<b>Document Owner:</b> Supported Living Manager	<b>Document No:</b> ILS-PL-002
<b>Date Approved:</b> May 2023	<b>Review Date:</b> May 2026

5.2 The **Adaptations Coordinator(s)** are responsible for the processing and progression of referrals and works through the accepted local procedures.

5.3 Adaptation work is undertaken by Beyond Housing’s property and commercial operations operatives or an approved contractor.

5.4 The **Supported Living Manager** is responsible for ensuring inspections are carried out by the procured contractor, according to Lifting Operations & Lifting Equipment Regulations (LOLER) (and other relevant legislation as relevant locally).

5.5 **The Assets Services Manager** will ensure that the cost of servicing, maintenance and safety inspections, relating to the provision of lifting equipment, is met through an applicable service charge on the customer’s rent account, following notification by the adaptations coordinator of the installation of lifting equipment.

## 6.0 Policy delivery

6.1 Requests for adaptations which are within the AWD criteria (i.e. do not require a formal OT assessment) can be made directly by customers or colleagues and other professionals on their behalf via telephone or email.

	Scarborough	Redcar
Telephone	0345 065 5656	0345 065 5656
Email	<a href="mailto:aaa2@beyondhousing.co.uk">aaa2@beyondhousing.co.uk</a>  <a href="mailto:enquiries@beyondhousing.co.uk">enquiries@beyondhousing.co.uk</a>	<a href="mailto:Adaptations.co-ordinator@cchousing.cjsm.net">Adaptations.co-ordinator@cchousing.cjsm.net</a>  <a href="mailto:enquiries@beyondhousing.co.uk">enquiries@beyondhousing.co.uk</a>

6.2 Requests from customers which are within the AWD criteria can be made by phone or email, via the direct messaging facility on Me & My Home, or via the chatbot facility on the Beyond Housing website.

6.3 Requests for adaptations which require an OT assessment of need from Adult Social Care will be made by an OT or Social Care Assessor (with trusted assessor status) through a written referral to the relevant adaptation email facility (dependent on geographical location).

6.4 For more complex adaptations, support is provided for the adaptations service from property and/or assets and the local housing team where advice is required in establishing:

- Estimated costs of proposed works (particularly if this will exceed the DFG maximum threshold and a potential financial contribution would be sought from Beyond Housing)
- Whether the work is technically feasible
- Any implications which could impact the ability to re-let the property in the future

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<b>Date Approved:</b> May 2023	<b>Review Date:</b> May 2026

- Whether suitable alternative accommodation is available and has been discussed with the customer.
- 6.5 Major or complex adaptations are delivered through approved contractors engaged by the respective local authority area’s home improvement agency or housing adaptations team. Due to the nature and complexity of these adaptations, targets for completion are not applicable, and the timescale for completion of these works are controlled by the respective local authorities.
- 6.6 A 100% quality check of completed adaptation works funded via DFG is undertaken through a post inspection process by the respective local authority’s Technical Officer and signed off by the customer in receipt of the adaptations.

**6.7 Partnership working**

- 6.7.1 Cleveland Fire Brigade, North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service and other trusted assessors (such as sensory loss social workers) will refer customers, following an assessment of need in relation to customers who suffer sensory loss. This provides customers with the opportunity to have sensory loss alarms fitted by Beyond Housing which also provides value for money in terms of service delivery to customers, as well as the reduction of risk.
- 6.7.2 Adaptations outside of the scope of this policy and where the local authority have identified an assessed need for the adaptation, a request for permission to undertake the work will be received from the local authority’s Home Improvement Agency / Handyman’s Adaptations Team, or OT team.
- 6.7.3 The decision to grant permission is made by the adaptations service, with support where required from assets and the local housing team. A local database of adaptations will be maintained, and the relevant systems (such as housing management and asset software) updated.
- 6.7.4 Through established partnership arrangements, the local authorities’ adult services will be encouraged to provide advice and support when appropriate, where housing developments are being planned, to ensure specifications/designs are fit for purpose in terms of the needs of older and/or disabled residents.
- 6.7.5 Where possible joint working with local authorities will be undertaken to meet the needs of customers and make best use of housing stock, for example with the colocation of OTs in Beyond Housing (presently this exists in Redcar & Cleveland and is being explored in North Yorkshire).
- 6.7.6 Partnership liaison meetings will be held at least quarterly, between Beyond Housing’s adaptations team and each local authority areas housing adaptations team, with invitations extended to each area’s OT managers (or OTs with a housing specialism). These meetings will have an action tracker to progress works and cases, as required.

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<b>Date Approved:</b> May 2023	<b>Review Date:</b> May 2026

6.7.7 Due consideration will be given to requests to undertake adaptation works by charitable organisations, providing the proposed works will meet the customer’s needs and will be delivered at a suitable standard, support from the local authority’s OT team will be requested where appropriate, and support requested from technical officers as relevant.

## 6.8 Access to rehousing

6.8.1 As customers’ circumstances can change throughout the lifetime of their tenancy, if a household member is assessed as requiring major adaptations they will be encouraged to apply for a move to a more suitable property by making a housing application which will be considered within the common allocation policy.

6.8.2 Choice Based Lettings registers offer the opportunity to be considered for an appropriate alternative property, and also other properties across the respective local authority areas, which are owned or managed by a range of registered providers and local authorities.

6.8.3 Within the common allocation policy, in order to give reasonable preference based on an applicants’ level of housing need, a number of factors are considered. Most relevant to the need for adaptations is the following reasonable preference category:

- People who need to move on medical or welfare grounds, including grounds relating to disability.

6.8.4 As part of the application process, medical information and the assessment of other professionals will be taken into account to determine any priority awarded and also what type of property is required to best meet the applicant’s needs.

6.8.5 In order to make best use of housing stock, the advertising and allocation of accessible properties involve the following:

- Applicants with an assessed need are given priority over others without an assessed need
- Property adverts include a clear description of the accessible features of the particular property
- Identifying the most appropriate applicant in terms of the full circumstances of their needs.

6.8.6 Housing applicants with an assessed need for major adaptations can express an interest in a property which does not have the necessary adaptations; however, consideration as to whether it would be reasonable to provide the adaptations to the property will be given during the selection/allocation stage. Discussions will take place with the local authority’s OT team and

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home improvement agency/housing adaptations team as part of the decision making process, as applicable and where available. Additionally, consideration must be given to whether it would be deemed safe for an applicant to reside at the property prior to any DFG funded major adaptations taking place (as applicants are not eligible to access DFG funded adaptations until they are resident at an address).

- 6.8.7 Where a housing applicant with an assessed need for adaptations is selected for an offer of a property, input from the adaptations service, housing and, where appropriate, an OT, will be taken into account as to the suitability of the property.
- 6.8.8 In addition to properties available through the housing register, extra care schemes offer accessible accommodation, including the provision of major adaptations such as level access showers and wheelchair accessible facilities. Customers who are interested in extra care schemes can be assessed and, if eligible, can be nominated or held on a waiting list by the local authority and nominated via a panel meeting when a place becomes available.
- 6.8.9 In order to preserve adapted stock, reduce waste and the burden on the DFG, we will not ordinarily let an adapted property to anyone direct matched from the respective local authority area, unless a specific need for an adaptation is evidenced.
- 6.8.10 To preserve adapted stock, and reduce waste, all adapted stock will retain the adaptations and be re-let to customers assessed as requiring the adaptations currently in place.
- 6.8.11 Properties that have been subject to major adaptations will remain subject to The Right to Buy unless they meet all four criteria under section B of 'The Right to Buy' legislation.
- 6.8.12 Properties which undergo significant major/complex adaptations which may increase or decrease the number of bedrooms, will be subject to the 'Reclassification process' (further details on reclassification are noted in ILS-PR-014 Adaptations procedure).

6.9 A recycling process is in place with respect to domestic lifts purchased and provided to customers with the existing provider; any newly procured suppliers and installers across the geographical region (which Beyond Housing operates) will be expected to provide a recycling service, to reduce both costs and environmental impact

6.10 Consideration will also be given to whether it is financially viable to recycle minor adaptations equipment, this option will be exercised where feasible and may include leaving minor adaptations in situ for future lets or reusing new serviceable adaptations elsewhere.



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<b>Date Approved:</b> May 2023	<b>Review Date:</b> May 2026

- 6.11 Customers who are assessed as requiring adaptations outside of the scope of the policy can apply for Beyond Housing’s permission, through the service centre or their housing officer, to self-fund the works required. Typically this would be through the AM-PL-002 Customer Alterations and Improvements Policy.
- 6.12 Customers who are assessed as requiring adaptations outside of the scope of the policy and are to be funded through the Disabled Facilities Grant will have Beyond Housing’s permission to approve adaptations, applied for on their behalf, through the respective local authority’s home improvement agency/housing adaptations team.
- 6.13 Service information will be provided for customers via Beyond Housing’s website and Me and My Home; for colleagues via internal systems, and partner organisations through the Beyond Housing website.

## 7.0 Consultation

- 7.1 Internal consultation has been undertaken with Beyond Housing’s independent and supported living services, safety, housing, property and assets and development services managers and directors.
- 7.2 Consultation has been carried out with customers who have had minor adaptations carried out in their homes by Beyond Housing. This was done through a postal consultation survey to identify if the service met their needs and expectations and whether there were any areas which could improve, or the service offer could be extended.
- 7.3 External consultation has been carried out with Scarborough Borough Council and the Home Improvement Agency, and North Yorkshire County Council Occupational Therapist teams (North Yorkshire Council effective 01 April 2023) and Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council occupational therapy teams and Handyperson’s Adaptations Team.

## 8.0 Approval

Approval and revision Criteria	Information
Document written by:	Supported Living Manager
Document approved by:	Chief Operations Officer and Senior Leadership Team
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