

	Aids and Adaptations Policy
Policy statement	This policy outlines the commitment to support customers with disabilities or long-term health conditions by providing an aids and adaptations service. The measures set out in this policy aim to enhance the quality of life, increase independence, provide privacy, dignity and enable customers to live safely and independently within their homes.
Objectives	To set out a clear approach to managing requests for an aid or adaptation and to facilitate a flexible service that is implemented fairly and consistently and meets the needs of disabled or customers with a long-term health condition, in a timely and effective manner. To ensure value for money by working with colleagues across the business including voids (empty homes), repairs, customer (housing), lettings, and development. To maximise the use of external resources by sourcing expertise and Disabled Facilities Grant Funding (DFG) from statutory agencies, local initiatives, and the charitable sector.
Scope	The Aids and Adaptation service is provided for Paradigm Housing tenants, their partners or a member of their immediate family who have a disability, and for whom an aid or adaptation would enable them to live safely and independently in the home, and meet the assessment criteria defined by this policy This policy does not apply to Shared Owners and Leaseholders. These residents are responsible for the maintenance of their homes. They can access DFG direct from local authorities.
Policy	Definition of an Adaptation An adaptation is a change to a home which is specific to an individual's needs within a particular home and enables them to live independently in that home. Reasonable Adjustments A reasonable adjustment is a legal term defined by the Equality Act 2010. It is defined as to make an adjustment or make a physical change to premises or to change work practices to avoid or correct the disadvantage to a person with a disability. There is no prescribed list of reasonable adjustments; the adjustment will depend on a customer's individual needs. Requirements will be discussed with customers to reach agreement on what may be reasonable in the circumstances. We will encourage customers to alert us and provide us with information on their individual needs either at lettings stage, during the term of their tenancy, or at any point which may then require a reasonable adjustment to be made.

Requests for Aids and Adaptations for existing customers

We will provide a dedicated service that will assist customers to access the aids and adaptations service. Each request for an aid or adaptation will be considered on a case by case basis.

Customers may request aids and adaptations at any time by contacting our Customer Service Team. We will consider and discuss the benefits of aids and adaptations for customers where information or interaction with our customers indicates that it may be relevant and helpful to them.

A request for an aid or adaptation will only be considered if the person requiring the adaptation is either a Paradigm tenant, their partner or a member of the immediate family who permanently resides in the household or would be if the adaptation were carried out.

Aids and adaptations will be implemented for the purposes of one of the following: facilitating access, bathing, toileting, food preparation, and ensuring that any hazards arising from the needs of the customer and which are related to landlord obligations for the safety of the home are mitigated.

Aids and adaptations will not be intended for the purpose of recreation, therapy or aesthetic reasons.

Minor and Major adaptations

Any adaptation below the value of £1500 will be categorised as minor in line with the lower threshold of the Disabled Facilities Grant Scheme (DFG) and those over £1500 categorised as a major adaptation.

Aids and adaptations for prospective tenants

The Lettings Team, working with the Disabled Facilities Manager (DFM), where relevant, will carry out an assessment of the need for aids and adaptations of prospective tenants. This assessment will be carried out with the prospective tenant, either remotely, at a viewing or hospital visit to ascertain the suitability of the new property and their long term requirements.

Where the prospective tenant already has an assessment by an occupational therapist (OT), the customer will be offered the opportunity to ask the OT to attend the assessment including any viewing of the property if they are able to do so within the time specified for the viewing and acceptance.

If minor adaptations meet their needs, a job will be raised with the repairs team.

If major adaptations are required the DFM will consult with the customer, the OT and the Head of Lettings and Customer Support to determine whether the property is suitable or can be made suitable during the period when the customer will have to apply for Disabled Facilities Grant.

Assessing and agreeing the need for aids and adaptations

When a request for an aid or adaptation is made to us, whether by the customer themselves, or where a need is identified by a staff member, contractor, or other stakeholder, the DFM will carry out an assessment to determine whether an adaptation is required. We aim to do this within 10 working days of a request.

If the DFM determines that an adaptation is required, this will be undertaken up to the value of £1500 (minor adaptation).

A flexible approach to adaptations will be taken, and where requests do not qualify as an adaptation but will benefit both the customer and the community the DFM will recommend a course of action that they may pursue, which may include the resident carrying out work under our Home Improvement process.

The DFM will provide a confirmation to the customer specifying:

- What the decision is
- What adaptations have been approved
- Where adaptations have not been approved, what further options are available
- How to appeal this decision

Carrying out a minor adaptation

All minor adaptations that have been assessed and approved by the DFM will be carried out by the Repairs Team. We aim to complete this within 20 working days of the approval to the work.

Where works are potentially complex such as installing an over the bath shower, Senior Technicians [ST] will review the viability of the work from a technical perspective and if the works are deemed viable, will approve the works to go ahead. Customers will be advised of any appointment made to carry out the works.

Any works that are deemed by the DFM or ST to be unviable due to technical or logistical reasons or the cost exceeds the £1500 limit, then the DFM will discuss alternative options with the customer including whether to apply for DFG or other funding or support options. Further support may be available from our Tenancy Sustainment and Support Team.

Major Adaptions

A major adaptation will be determined by the OT or Local Authority (LA) and which will cost more than £1500 to carry out. The DFM will assist the customer in obtaining an assessment from an OT if they do not already have one, if they request this.

If the OT determines a major adaptation is required, it is the responsibility of the customer to apply for the DFG. The DFM will provide support to make that application when required.

Where a DFG has been awarded by the Local Authority, consent must be obtained from us to undertake the work. All requests will be considered jointly by the DFM and Surveying Services Manager.

Criteria for permitting major adaptations:

Each application for a major adaptation will be assessed, taking into consideration the following:

- Under-Occupancy. If the property is under occupied, we will look to find a more suitable/accessible property before carrying out adaptations. We will

	take account of whether the customer has or is likely to require a live-in carer. • <u>Future-proofing/Viability.</u> We will consider whether the major adaptation will ensure that the customer's long term needs are met and if the property can be further adapted to meet future needs if and when these are required. • <u>Alternative housing options.</u> We will consider whether suitable alternative properties are available. If structural work is proposed in an otherwise un-adapted property and where local housing option alternatives are available, be it via the local housing register, mutual exchange, management move list, we may encourage the resident to consider those alternative housing options. • <u>Adaptation standards.</u> All proposed works need to be agreed with our DFM in advance to ensure that we are able to maintain them. This includes the physical or technical suitability of the proposed adaptation for the specific property • <u>Ownership:</u> Where we do not own the property, we may be limited as to what works can be authorised and would require consent of the owner of the property. Approval of Major Works Where major works have been approved, the DFM will write to the customer to confirm this. This confirmation will be subject to DFG works being undertaken according to the following principles: • There must be no cost to Paradigm. • Works must be carried out by qualified people/contractors. • The works meet Building Regulations. • Approved materials are used. Refusal of Major Works Where we do not approve the proposed major works, the DFM will provide a written explanation of • the basis on which we have made that decision • what alternatives are available or what changes could be made to the works • what the appeal process is The alternatives may include other housing options, such as those provided through (but not limited to) • Local housing register, • Mutual exchange, • In some cases, an internal move (management move) in accordance with our policy and process. The CNO will provide the customer support throughout any of the above processes related to alternative housing. That means investigating and explaining each process, identifying sources of support, and assessing any suitable and alternative properties.
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	Through Floor Lifts will not usually be installed. When a need has been identified and no other option is available, formal approval will be required from the Assistant Director (Asset Operations) Where adaptations have been carried out without the required permission, the resident will need to submit an application for consent retrospectively. The adaptations will be assessed and inspected by our Surveying Services team to ascertain if they are satisfactory, and any required remedial works must be undertaken by the customer. Where works have been undertaken and do not adhere to the agreed plans, or do not comply with our requirements or present a health and safety risk, Paradigm may intervene immediately to make safe such works and seek recovery of costs from the customer. Administration of Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) DFG is a grant made by local authorities to qualifying individuals. Paradigm is not a party to the application process, has no obligations under the grant arrangement (other than to consent to the work being undertaken and the conditions applicable to that), and does not undertake the work that it funds. Where the customer will need to move out of the home temporarily whilst the work is carried out, it is the customer's responsibility to make arrangements for this. Construction Design and Management Regulations 2015 (CDM) CDM regulations cover all construction work, and specify required roles to be allocated with specific responsibilities. In the case of DFG funded adaptations, the applicant is the Domestic Client, and their obligations should be passed on to the Contractor / Principal Contractor. As Paradigm do not pay for DFG work, we are not the Domestic Client. Where different aspects of DFG works are carried out by different contractors, the requirement for a Principal Contractor and Principal Designer automatically apply. It is the Principal Contractor's role to co-ordinate and manage these works. Post-inspection of Major Works. All major adaptations works will be post-inspected by a Paradigm Surveyor. This is to ensure that the property remains safe, and that works have been carried out in the stated manner and to the agreed standards and terms. Where works have not been carried out to the required standards or specifications or do not meet Building Regulations, these adaptations may be required to be removed or be remedied before approval and sign off granted. Repairs and maintenance of Aids and Adaptations The repair, service and maintenance of all minor adaptations will be carried out in accordance with our Responsive Repairs Policy and repairs standards. For any major adaptations, the responsibility for repairs and maintenance in the first 12 months will be with the contractor who installed the DFG funded adaptation. Thereafter repairs and maintenance of major adaptations will be carried out as per our Responsive Repairs Policy and repairs standards.
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	If an Aid and Adaptations asset requires replacing at the end of its serviceable life, the DFM will engage with the customer as to their needs and assist them to apply for DFG to fund the replacement. Register of adapted properties A register of minor and major adaptations to our properties will be maintained by the DFM on completion of grant works or removal by voids on our central Asset Management database. We will use this information to make best use of our stock which will ensure that our Lettings Team are able to prioritise the property for customers requiring such adaptations. Appeals Where an application for assistance has been declined in relation to carrying out an assessment or approving works which would be a minor adaptation, or where permission to undertake a major adaptation funded by DFG has been declined, the customer may appeal and request a review of the decision. This will be considered by the Assistant Director (Asset Operations) In relation to appeals against the refusal of permission for major adaptations work, appeals will need to be submitted within the timescale established by the award of the DFG by the Local Authority, this is usually within a year from the date of the award, and while the grant application is open.
Equality & Diversity and Inclusion	Paradigm are committed to providing equal access for all customers to our adaptations service. We will provide a flexible approach to customers' needs such as allowing more time to answer the door for technicians, or arranging appointments in accordance with carer visits and hospital appointments. We will continue to support our customers who are digitally excluded ensuring we provide and promote multiple ways to request adaptations. Our adaptations service will reflect the diverse needs of the communities we serve, providing tailored solutions that respect individual preferences and cultural sensitivities. We will regularly review and monitor our aids and adaptations policy to ensure it remains inclusive, fair, and effective in meeting the diverse needs of our customers. As part of our programme of equality impact assessments, we have identified further measures including: • Improving our processes for applications for aids and adaptations so that we are better able to monitor and report on the outcomes, • Assessing the benefits of collecting tenant satisfaction data with the aids and adaptations service • Reviewing and improving the information we provide and how we provide it to reduce the barriers which potentially vulnerable customers face in accessing this service

Accountability and Responsibility	Executive Director – Property • Has overall responsibility for the Aids and Adaptations policy. • Responsible for dealing with appeals and make decisions on appeal outcomes. Deputy Director of Strategic Asset Management [DDSAM] • Oversees the review of the Aids and Adaptation policy in line with corporate objectives and legal and regulatory requirements. • Responsible for providing sufficient financial and staffing resource to implement the Aids and Adaptation service. Assistant Director (Asset Operations) • Work collaboratively across other areas of operations, i.e. Repairs, Development and Investment Works to harmonise the delivery of the Aids and Adaptations service. • Applying the Aids & Adaptation service fairly and consistently across the Group. • To review and make decisions on appeal outcomes. Asset Manager (AM) • To ensure the Aids and Adaptations are carried out within agreed timescales. • To monitor the spend and budget for aids and adaptations • Assessing requests from LAs for permission to undertake major adaptations. • Reviews quarterly reports of spending and reviews progress in delivery of Aids and Adaptation works • Audits the number of minor adaptation requests and delivery times Disabled Facilities Manager [DFM] • Assessing customers' needs for minor adaptations. • Carrying out Access Audits of Paradigm properties. • Providing advice about adaptations and accessible housing. • Assesses prospective properties for suitability in accordance with rehousing reports and customer needs. • Address disability issues across the Group, including Property Services, Lettings and Housing. • Maintain database of adaptations carried out in Paradigm properties. • Update Contract Support Coordinator of equipment that requires servicing by Paradigm to be included on service contract and passes electrical certification to Electrical Supervisor. • Support Local Authorities [LAs] in the administration of DFGs for Paradigm customers. Head of Lettings and Customer Support • Working with the DFM to ensure that assessment for aids and adaptations is carried out in a timely way • Advising the DFM on implications and options for prospective tenants where major adaptations may be required Customer and Neighbourhood Officers
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	• Providing advice, signposting and support for customers where requests for aids and adaptations have been declined or where alternative housing options may provide a more effective solution for their needs Local Authority [LA] • Provides assessment of Paradigm customers through Occupational Therapist. • Implements Disabled Facilities Grant scheme. • Manages Housing register Occupational Therapist [OT] • Carries out in-depth assessments of individuals' needs for adaptations. • Making recommendations for adaptations to Local Authorities and Housing Providers. Surveyor [S] • Provides technical and cost-based assessment of adaptations recommended by Occupational Therapists, as well as those adaptation jobs raised by Disabled Facilities Manager. • Post-inspects DFG works / major adaptations once they have been completed. • Feeds back details and specifications to the DFM. Surveying Services Manager [SSM] • Works with DFM and Asset Manager to assess requests from LAs for permission to undertake major adaptations. Senior Technician [ST] • Assesses viability of minor adaptations. Contract Support Coordinator [CSC] • Coordinates statutory servicing and maintenance of equipment installed by LAs via the DFG scheme Electrical Supervisor [ES] • Supervises new electrical equipment installed by LAs via the DFG scheme
Monitoring / Auditing and Controls	All reported requests for aids and adaptations are recorded on Frameworks – cases will be managed so that they can be monitored for completion of works or other progress, and outcomes for both minor and major adaptations, including post-inspection reports. The DFM, AM and SSM will jointly review all requests for major adaption works, evaluate them from a disability, property, and technical perspective, and either approve, amend or decline them The Asset Manager monitors performance in processing of DFG's to ensure that decisions are made and or alternative approaches are adopted in a timely manner. The Asset Management database provides a record of adaptations in each property. The DFM is responsible for updating it, upon completion of adaptation works and post-inspection by surveying team members.

	All major adaptations are post inspected to ensure that they comply with the adaptations standards and specifications of the adaptation. Six-weekly meetings take place between AD(Asset Operations), DFM and SSM
Cross References	• Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy • Lift Policy • Asset Management Strategy 2021-2026 • Void Standard • Responsive Repairs Policy • Improve your home process • Lettings Policy • Tenure Policy • Mutual Exchange Guidance • Investment Works process • Management Move Guidance • Customer Support Policy
Policy Owner	Executive Director – Property
Prepared by	Disabled Facilities Manager
Approved by	Executive Board
Date of Board approval	N/A
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Review date	May 2026
Version control	V4 supercedes v3 dated Sept 2022

Record of Amendments			
Date	Version	Approved By	Details of Amendments
Sept 2019	V2	Management Team	New criteria for DFG Since the previous version of Paradigm’s Aids and Adaptation policy was launched, and in line with the Asset Management Strategy 2017-2020, we have become more involved in the Disabled Facilities Grant

			Process. Whereas we only required Local Authorities to inform us of DFG works, we now require they provide specifications for our consideration, obtain our formal permission, and all works are subject to post-inspection. We have set out circumstances in which we will reasonably decline to permit works to proceed – see Criteria for permitting major adaptations.
Sept 2022	V3	Executive Board	Inserting guidance around the purposes of adaptations and principles for reasonable action. Updated in accordance with changes to Asset Management within the context of Property Services. Clarified Paradigm’s role in terms of administration of Disabled Facilities Grants. Provided a position statement on Construction Design and Management regulations 2015. Clarified Paradigm’s position for repairs post 12 months warranty of major repairs. Confirmed Paradigm’s position in terms of making reasonable adjustments, in line with Equality Act 2010.
Feb 2025	V4	Executive Board	Reviewed in line with Consumer Standard requirements. Added section related to provision of aids and adaptations for prospective tenants Added clearer process and standards for the information we provide in relation to the decisions made on applications for aids and adaptations Clarification that requirements for temporary alternative accommodation during works for major adaptations are the customer’s responsibility Set out measures we are taking in relation to equalities and diversity further to Equalities Impact Assessment