



Rural Stirling

Housing Association



Quality property
management services

GROUP ADAPTATIONS POLICY & PROCEDURE

Rural Stirling Housing Association, Stirling Road, Doune, FK16 6AA Registered as a Scottish Charity No. SC037849 Venachar Limited, Incorporated under the Companies Act (Company Number SC447415), Registered Office: Stirling Road, Doune, FK16 6AA	
Policy Name	Group Adaptations Policy and Procedure
Policy Category	Asset Management
Date Policy Reviewed	9 February 2023
Review Period	3 years
Next Review Due	February 2026
Equality Impact Assessment	Yes

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Rural Stirling Group (RSG) recognises that a number of its tenants will require adaptations to their homes in order to provide an enhanced quality of life and allow them to continue to live more comfortably in their homes for as long as possible.
- 1.2 Adapted properties help us to create stable, sustainable and inclusive communities. Adaptations make properties more accessible and usable for people to allow them to cope with advancing age, disability or caring responsibilities and thereby enable them to maximise their independence in their own home.
- 1.3 We are committed to carrying out adaptations to properties which comply with the criteria set out in this policy and with those included in the Association's other relevant policies and procedures, and guidance from the Scottish Government, Stirling Council Social Services, and The Scottish Housing Regulator. We will comply with all Legislation relevant to this Policy.

2.0 Scope

- 2.1 We aim to achieve the following when undertaking adaptations:
- Enhance the independence, privacy and dignity of the tenant;
 - Help reduce long stays in hospital;
 - Specify the work in line with professional advice from Occupational Therapist (OT) and consultants;
 - Involve the tenants and their carers' in the process and ensure their views are taken into account;
 - Complete the work efficiently and competently;
 - Ensure economy, efficiency, effectiveness and equity in the delivery of the Adaptations service;
 - Maintain communication between the tenant, Occupational Therapist, Contractor, Consultant and the Association throughout the process;
 - Secure grant funding promptly, when eligible;
 - Maintain a record of the work that has been undertaken;
 - Maintain the adaptation;
 - Secure resources for maintenance of the adaptation;
 - Aim where possible, to relet the adapted property to another tenant that could benefit from the improvements. The Association will maintain a register of adapted properties detailing the type of adaptation in each property and the cost of the adaptation.
- 2.2 We aim to meet our legal obligations and The Scottish Housing Charter Outcomes No1 and No 11:-

Outcome 1 : - Equalities

'Every tenant and other customer has their individual needs and rights recognised, is treated fairly and with respect, and receives fair access to housing and housing services.'

Outcome 11 :- Tenancy Sustainment

'Tenants get the information they need on how to obtain support to remain in their homes and ensure suitable support is available including services provided directly by the Landlord and by other organisations'

- 2.3 We aim to be responsive to the particular needs of applicants and the changing needs of existing tenants. We will adapt our properties appropriately to meet those needs and maintain comprehensive information about the adapted properties that we own.

3.0 Equality & Diversity Statement (Group Statement)

- 3.1 We will ensure that this policy is applied fairly and consistently. In implementing this policy, we will not directly or indirectly discriminate against any person or group of people because of their race, religion or belief, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, or any other grounds. Our commitment to equality and fairness will apply irrespective of factors such as age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, or other personal attributes.

This policy and any other Rural Stirling Housing Association (RSHA) publication is available in other formats e.g., other languages, Braille, large print, audio.

4.0 SHR Regulatory Standards

- 4.1 The SHR's regulatory framework sets out Regulatory Standards of Governance and Financial Management to be achieved by all Registered Social Landlords (RSLs). The Board accepts that it is responsible for ensuring that the Association complies with these standards. The standards of direct relevance to this policy are noted below:

- *Standard 2 – The RSL is open about and accountable for what it does. It understands and takes account of the needs and priorities of its tenants, service users and stakeholders. And its primary focus is the sustainable achievement of these priorities.*

5.0 Relevant legislation

- The Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968
- Human Rights Act 1988
- Building Standards (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2001

- Equality Act 2010
- The Housing (Scotland) Act 2014

6.0 Policy Details

6.1 Adaptations to new and existing housing owned and rented by the RSG are currently eligible for grant funding from the Scottish Government where the adaptation is deemed essential.

6.2 Sharing owners and shared equity owners may also be eligible for local authority improvement grants in the same way as other owner occupiers for adaptations to their properties. Homeowners will therefore be directed by us to Stirling Council for assistance.

6.3 Adaptations can be permanent or semi-permanent changes to a house and can be classified as follows: -

- Stage 1
Features in new build developments that help create a flexible design for all accommodation types to facilitate specific needs eg wet room bathrooms.
- Stage 2
Adaptations undertaken in a newbuild development to suit the tenant to whom it has been allocated. These usually require Scottish Government approval prior to instruction and are likely to be carried out by the Main Contractor towards the end of the contract, once the properties have been allocated.
- Stage 3
Adaptations that are necessary to alter the property to suit the changing needs of the tenant.

7.0 Referrals

7.1 Referrals can be received from a number of different sources but most often from:

- Tenant's General Practitioner (GP);
- Health and Social Care Practitioners.
- Occupational Therapists (OT's), who may be employed by a Health Board, Local Authority (LA) or other organisation such as an insurance company.

8.0 Alternative Accommodation

8.1 If we are unable to carry out the adaptation, consideration will be given to addressing the tenant's needs with the provision of alternative accommodation.

8.2 Accommodation may be provided:

- Within our existing stock;
- By the provision of new build accommodation;
- By alternative landlords.

8.3 All options will be discussed with the tenant and supporting agencies prior to decisions being confirmed.

9.0 Procurement

9.1 Adaptations will be classified as either minor or major works and will be undertaken in line with current Framework Contractors and/or specialist contractors when necessary.

10.0 Budget

10.1 We submit a bid and receive an annual allocation of grant funding from the Scottish Government based on our estimated requirements for the year ahead.

10.2 All adaptation works are front funded and the grant is claimed retrospectively from the Scottish Government upon completion of the works.

10.3 If our projected spend indicates that this annual budget is likely to be exceeded, we may request additional funding from the Scottish Government.

10.4 When the Adaptation grant funding for the financial year has been exhausted and hawse have been unable to obtain funding from any other source, we may create a waiting list of approved adaptations to take priority the following financial year. The waiting list will be processed in the order the jobs have been posted, when additional funding becomes available.

10.5 We may also decide to instruct the adaptation at our sole discretion and cost. Approval for the use of own resources will be sought in line with the RSG Schedule of Delegation.

11.0 Monitoring and Reporting

11.1 The Board of Rural Stirling Housing Association will receive regular reports on

Adaptations, detailing the number and type of adaptations requested and approved, the costs and how many were completed in that quarter.

11.2 The Association will monitor its performance against the following indicators which have been set by the Scottish Housing Regulator:

- The percentage of adaptations grant spent;
- Percentage of approved applications for medical adaptations completed during the reporting year;
- Average time to complete adaptations.

11.3 The Association will also monitor tenant's satisfaction and whether the adaptation met their requirements. This will be reported to the Board.

12.0 Completion

12.1 We will endeavor to carry out a post-completion inspection of all major adaptations to ensure that they have been carried out to the satisfaction of the Association and the OT.

12.2 Post inspections of minor adaptations may also be undertaken. All tenants will be encouraged to complete and return a satisfaction questionnaire.

13.0 Reallocation of adapted properties

13.1 When a house has been adapted for a wheelchair user, Housing Services Officers should endeavor to offer the property to a person who needs wheelchair accommodation. This may require liaison with OT's, other RSL's and Stirling Council to identify suitable applicants. Circumstances for the re-allocation of an adapted property is set out in our Allocation policy.

13.2 RSL's must demonstrate value for money in the delivery of procurement of housing adaptations and we will aim to reuse or recycle adaptation equipment wherever possible. We may, as a last resort, consider the removal and storage of an adaptation component, if it cannot be matched to the incoming household.

14.0 Maintenance

14.1 The Association will maintain the adaptations and, where required or where it is considered value for money, will enter into maintenance agreements with the installer or manufacturer. Maintenance costs may be recouped by variations in rental service charges assigned to the tenants.

14.2 Tenants of adapted properties will be provided, where necessary, with additional information for emergencies such as emergency numbers for out of hours service for

specialist equipment.

14.3 We will compile information on renewal and repair timescales and costs for life cycle purposes.

15.0 Record Keeping

15.1 All adaptations will be recorded within the computerised maintenance record. This will be updated to identify any regular maintenance work that is required on adaptations to keep them safe.

16.0 Related Documents.

16.1 This policy relates to the following documents:

- Asset Management Strategy
- Group Asset Management Policy Statement
- Adaptations Procedure

17.0 Review

17.1 We will review and update this policy every 3 years. More regular reviews will be considered where, for example, there is a need to respond to new legislation/policy or regulatory guidance.