

Grainger Trust Limited ('GT') Adaptations Policy

February 2025

1. Introduction and rational to the policy

This policy sets out Grainger Trust Limited (GTL)'s approach to carrying out adaptations to properties owned by the Trust. In doing so, we will comply with the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH)'s Quality and Safety Standard (2024), which requires Registered Providers to comply with the following outcome and expectations:

- To assist tenants seeking housing adaptations to access appropriate services.
- To clearly communicate to tenants and relevant organisations how they will assist tenants seeking housing adaptations services.
- To co-operate with tenants, appropriate local authority departments and other relevant organisations so that a housing adaptations service is available to tenants where appropriate.

We will also comply with the Equality Act 2010, which stipulates that "landlords will be obliged to make certain reasonable adjustments if requested by the customer. Reasonable adjustments do not include the removal or alteration of a physical feature but do include providing auxiliary aids or services, changing practices, policies and procedures and/or changing the term of the letting".

2. Definitions

An **adaptation** is an alteration or addition to any aspect of a property which is provided in order to make it easier or safer to use by a GTL customer.

A **minor adaptation** is an alteration or addition (or group of alterations and additions) which is expected to cost under £1,000 (e.g. grab rails). Lifecycle costs will be taken into account when reviewing whether an adaptation is considered to be minor.

A **major adaptation** is an alteration or addition which is expected to cost over £1,000. Major adaptations are typically funded through the local authority's Disabled Facilities Grant.

A **GTL customer** is an individual who lives in a property owned or managed by GTL. For the purposes of this policy, this includes a member of a GTL tenant's family or household member; throughout this policy, all references to "the customer" will include their family or household.

3. Policy statement (scope and aims)

At Grainger Trust our aim is to support customers to be able to reside within their homes by ensuring that we are compliant with legislation and that their homes are safe and meet their individual requirements.

Grainger Trust will:

- Provide a high-quality adaptations service which supports GTL's customers in achieving and maintaining a good quality of life within their homes.
- Strike a balance between continuous improvement of service provision and customer satisfaction, making best use of existing housing stock, and delivering value for money.
- Work with partner organisations, including the local authority, to support customers to continue to live independently within their homes and communities as far as practically possible whilst ensuring efficient management of resources.

Set an annual budget for supporting GTL customers in funding adaptations, and to consider levels of funding support on a case-by-case basis. The aim of the Adaptations Policy is to set out guidelines for how GTL will work to provide GTL customers with a home that meets their individual needs. This includes enabling adaptations which will support GTL customers with additional needs caused by long-term illness, disability or infirmity.

This policy applies to all GTL customers living in our rented accommodation. It does not apply to residents who own or part-own their property.

4. Policy

Our approach to agreeing and undertaking adaptations is outlined as follows:

Adaptation requests

A request for an adaptation may be submitted by a GTL customer, or those who are supporting or working with them. The assessment of an individual's need for adaptations is the statutory duty of the local authority; where a request is made, we will refer it to the relevant local authority team, who may arrange a visit and assessment by a qualified Occupational Therapist.

Minor adaptations

Where adaptations works have been assessed as necessary and are considered to be minor adaptations, GTL will consider funding arrangements. GTL has an annual allocation of £10,000 for supporting the funding of minor adaptations and will draw from this allocation at its discretion. We would expect the customer to cover any remaining costs. Once funding arrangements are agreed, the works will be scheduled by GTL within 3 months from the date of the agreement.

Major adaptations

Where adaptations works have been assessed as necessary and are considered to be major adaptations, GTL will support the customer in applying for available funding (e.g.

Disabled Facilities Grant). Once funding arrangements have been agreed, the customer must get permission from GTL before the adaptation can go ahead. When considering whether or not to give approval, GTL will consider a range of factors including the agreed funding arrangements, all relevant reports on the proposed works, and the remaining duration of the tenancy in question.

Once approval has been given, we would expect the local authority to arrange for these works to be undertaken directly. Where there is a significant delay, or where the local authority has refused a Disabled Facilities Grant, but funding has been secured nevertheless, GTL will work with the customer to explore options such as:

- Undertaking the works directly
- Identifying alternative solutions with the support of an Occupational Therapist employed by the local authority or NHS.
- Exploring the potential of moving to alternative, more suitable accommodation

Refusal of requests

GTL reserves the right to refuse any adaptation request; circumstances in which GTL would consider refusing a request include:

- Where the property is scheduled for major refurbishment or modification within the next 2 years
- Where the GTL customer occupying the property is actively seeking alternative accommodation
- Where the tenancy has not passed the probationary period
- Where the adaptation requested is not structurally feasible
- Where the property is under- or over-crowded
- Where the adaptation would render the property difficult to let to future customers

Where the adaptation would have a significant negative impact on the value of the home. Where a request is refused, GTL will work with the customer to find alternative accommodation which matches their housing requirement, making best use of existing stock. Where this is not possible, we will explore other options with the customer.

Maintenance of adaptations

Once adaptations have been installed, GTL will maintain and repair these through its repairs and maintenance service to ensure that they remain effective and in good working order. These works will be raised and delivered in accordance with GTL's Repairs and Maintenance Policy. Given that some aids and adaptations will require ongoing servicing and possible replacement in future years, GTL reserves the right to apply a service charge on these items. The charge will be set at a reasonable level that is reflective of the cost of the actual service provided. GTL will ensure that customers are

fully informed of any additional charges they may become liable for before going ahead with any adaptations.

Where an adaptation is no longer required

Sometimes changes in household composition may mean that an adaptation is no longer required, for example because the person requiring the adaptation has moved out. Where this is the case, and the tenant is still in occupation the household will not have to move until the end of their tenancy, however we will offer support to the household to voluntarily move-on to a non-adapted property so that the adaptation can be used for someone who requires it.

Where the change in household means that the tenant no longer occupies the property, the remaining household members will not have a right to occupy the property, and usually where the tenant no longer occupies GTL will require the household to move out. We will work with the relevant Local Authority to facilitate this process.

This policy applies to all GTL customers living in our rented accommodation. It does not apply to residents who own or part-own their property.

5. Appeals process

Where a customer is not satisfied with a decision taken under this policy, they can appeal using the process outlined in our complaints policy.

6. Communication of Policy

All employees must read, understand and comply with this policy.

7. References

The following legislation underpins this policy:

- Equality Act 2010
- The Disability Discrimination Act 1995, 2005
- Community Care (Delayed Discharges) Act 2003
- Housing Grants Construction and Regeneration Act 1996
- Carers (Recognition and Services) Act 1995 Carers and Disabled
- NHS & Community Care Act 1990
- Care Act 2014

8. Responsibilities

GTL has overall responsibility for general oversight of this policy.

Monitoring will be undertaken by the Portfolio Asset Manager to provide policy assurance.

GTL's property managers are responsible for ensuring those reporting to them are made aware, understand and adhere to this policy.

9. Associated policies

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the following GTL policies:

- Tenancy Policy
- Allocations Policy

10. Review of this policy

This policy will be reviewed every three years or when there is a change in circumstances, in work practices or the introduction of new regulation or legislation.

Document Owner and Approval

The Head of Grainger Trust is the owner of this document and is responsible for ensuring that this procedure is reviewed in line with the review requirements of Data Protection.

A current version of this document is available to all members of staff on the corporate intranet.

Document History

Policy Owner	Head of Grainger Trust
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