

Aids & Adaptations Policy

September 2025



Needs & Support Planning Policy	GEN025
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This policy should be read in conjunction with our:

- [Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy](#)
- Safeguarding Policy
- Needs and Support Planning Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This policy explains how Thame & District Housing Association (TDHA) use aids and adaptations to improve residents' quality of life and support their ability to live independently for as long as possible.
- 1.2 This policy supports our mission to:
- Provide comfortable, safe, and affordable homes for local people, deliver excellent services, and encourage residents to play an active role in their communities.
- 1.3 We recognise that people's needs may change over time due to age, disability, illness, or personal circumstances. Our role is to respond fairly and flexibly, making reasonable adjustments to homes and services so that all residents can thrive.

2. Purpose and Scope

- 2.1 The purpose of this policy is to:
- Set out how TDHA supports residents who need aids or adaptations.
 - Define the types of adaptations that may be provided in shared areas and individual homes.
 - Explain our approach to service adaptations where communication or access barriers exist.
 - Clarify how decisions are made, who is responsible, and when referrals to statutory agencies are required.

3. Adaptations in Shared Areas

- 3.1 TDHA recognises that accessible communal areas are important for independence, safety, and inclusion. Examples of aids and adaptations in shared spaces include:
- Lifts and stairlifts.
 - Automatic doors and door entry systems.
 - Handrails along paths and in gardens.
 - Key safes and other accessibility improvements.
- 3.2 When considering shared-area adaptations, TDHA must balance:
- **Accessibility** – supporting residents' independence.
 - **Cost** – ensuring affordability for the Association and residents.
 - **Security and convenience** – avoiding measures that compromise safety or cause difficulties for other residents.

- 3.3 Decisions about shared-area projects will normally be considered as part of the annual budget-setting process, unless urgent safety issues require earlier action.

4. Adaptations in Individual Homes

4.1 Identifying Needs

- 4.2 Adaptation needs are usually identified through:

- Annual Needs and Support Assessments carried out by scheme managers.
- Requests raised by residents, families, or carers at any time.

4.3 Examples of Small Adaptations

- 4.4 TDHA can often provide simple aids that make a big difference to daily living, including:

- Grab rails in bathrooms or along walls.
- Lever taps to replace hard-to-turn knobs.
- Raised toilet seats or support frames.
- Handrails on stairs.
- Easy-to-reach switches or socket adjustments.
- Small shower seats or non-slip flooring.

- 4.5 These are usually low-cost, quick to install, and enable residents to remain independent.

4.6 Initial Assessment

Where an issue is identified, TDHA staff will assess:

- The nature of the problem.
- Whether TDHA has the expertise to define a solution.
- Whether external advice is required (e.g. GP, Occupational Therapist, Social Services).

5. Decision Thresholds

- **Routine works (up to £200):** If TDHA can define the solution, work will be carried out as part of normal maintenance.
- **Intermediate works (£200–£500):** Referred to the Estates Management Committee (EMC) for decision.
- **Larger works (over £500):** Normally the responsibility of statutory agencies. TDHA will support residents in referrals and coordination.

6. Working with the Home Improvement Agency

- 6.1 [Home Improvement Agencies](#) are dedicated to helping older, disabled and vulnerable residents to live safely and independently in their own home. Most HIAs are funded or supported by local councils, and in many areas they deliver the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) process.
- 6.2 For more complex or higher-cost adaptations, TDHA will work with the local Home Improvement Agency (HIA), who have budgets. The HIA can:
- Arrange professional assessments, often through Occupational Therapists.
 - Support applications for [Disabled Facilities Grants](#) or other funding.
 - Manage contractors and ensure works are carried out to the correct standard.
- 6.3 The Home Improvement Agency also have a small repairs service where they charge residents £20 and they also provide *keeping warm grants*.
- 6.4 TDHA will help residents to access the HIA and will liaise with them to make the process as smooth as possible.

7. Resident Contributions

- 7.1 Where residents wish to self-fund improvements, TDHA may agree, subject to:
- Work meeting health and safety standards.
 - Future maintenance implications being acceptable.
 - Kitchen replacements allowing for a 60cm free-standing cooker (fitted ovens and hobs are not permitted).

8. Service Adaptations

- 8.1 Not all barriers are physical. TDHA recognises that residents may also face challenges in communication, access, or understanding. Where possible, we will:
- Use online translation tools to support residents with limited English.
 - Adjust written communications (e.g. larger fonts, different colours, avoiding block capitals).
 - Communicate in different ways – in person, at meetings, in writing, electronically, or by phone – to suit residents' needs.
 - Offer home visits where office access is difficult and it is safe to do so.
- 8.2 These adaptations are part of our commitment to inclusion and to helping residents remain connected and engaged with TDHA.

9. Responsibilities and Decision-Making

- **Residents, families, carers:** Responsible for informing TDHA of changing needs.
- **Scheme Managers:** Carry out annual assessments and respond to requests.
- **Property and Maintenance Team:** Deliver routine adaptations and liaise with contractors.
- **Estate Management Committee (EMC):** Make decisions on intermediate-cost adaptations (£200–£500).
- **Statutory Agencies (Social Services, Health):** Assess and fund major adaptations above £500.

9.1 TDHA will always explain the decision-making process clearly to residents and keep records of all requests and outcomes.

10. Monitoring and Review

10.1 The CEO will monitor requests for aids and adaptations and report periodically to the EMC to ensure:

- Decisions are consistent and fair.
- Resources are used responsibly.
- Residents are supported to live independently for as long as possible.

10.2 This policy will be reviewed every three years or sooner if legislation, best practice, or resident needs change significantly.

11. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

11.1 TDHA recognises that aids and adaptations have the greatest impact on residents with disabilities, health conditions, or language and communication barriers. We assess the scale of impact through support reviews, resident feedback, and professional advice, and prioritise changes that most improve safety and independence.

11.2 In making decisions, we balance individual needs with fairness to all residents, ensuring our approach reflects TDHA's values.