

Guildford Borough Council

Report to:	Housing Operations Board
Date:	12 March 2025
Ward(s) affected:	All
Report of Strategic Director of:	Housing, Communities & Environment
Report Author:	Annalisa Howson, Assistant Director of Housing
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Lead Executive Member:	Cllr Julia McShane
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Status:	Open
Key decision:	No

Draft Housing Aids & Adaptations Policy

1.0 Executive Summary

This report introduces the new draft Housing Aids & Adaptations policy which will be referred to the Executive for approval. The policy outlines the framework for providing housing aids and adaptations to support individuals with disabilities, older adults and those with mobility challenges.

2.0 Recommendation to Housing Operations Board

The Housing Operations Board is invited to consider the Housing Aids & Adaptations Policy and pass on any comments to the Council's Executive.

3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 To ensure that the Housing Service has documented policies to support community well-being, ensuring long-term sustainability while fulfilling legal and ethical obligations.
- 3.2 There are also specific expectations placed on the Council, as a social housing landlord, by the Regulator of Social Housing as part of the Safety and Quality standard to assist tenants seeking housing adaptations to access the appropriate service. Specific expectations include to:

- Clearly communicate to tenants and relevant organisations how they will assist tenants seeking housing adaptations services.
- Co-operate with tenants, appropriate local authority departments and other relevant organisations so that a housing adaptations service is available to tenants where appropriate.
- Allocate homes that are designed or adapted to meet specific needs appropriately.

4.0 Status of Report

4.1 This is an open report.

5.0 Strategic Priorities

5.1 This report supports the Council's priorities "A more inclusive Borough" and "decent and affordable homes" – by identifying residents' needs and shaping services.

6.0 Background

6.1 Guildford Borough Council (GBC) is committed to providing effective and efficient services while meeting all legal and contractual obligations.

6.2 The Housing Service has commenced a programme of work to review existing housing policies to ensure that housing services are being delivered in line with guidance and legislation, to respond to internal audit actions, and to provide the service with a firm foundation to deliver effective landlord services.

Summary of Policy

6.3 The policy aims to assist in the delivery of an aids and adaptation service that will be able to:

- Provide focus of supporting people to consider how their future needs can be met and live more independently, improving their day-to-day quality of life in and around their home
- Ensure that the reasonable needs of the Council's disabled tenants are prioritised, and appropriate aids and adaptations are provided. Additionally, that adapted properties are let taking into account the needs of the tenants
- Ensure integration between internal services and closer working with Surrey County Council's Adult Social Care and the Children with disabilities team
- Comply with the legal and statutory requirements in relation to the provision of disabled adaptations (e.g. Equality Act 2010)

- Maximise all available funding sources and ensure that the available budgets are used effectively and efficiently to maximise best use of Council housing stock and ensure that the needs of the tenants are appropriately prioritised.

6.4 The aim of the policy is to enhance independence, improve quality of life, and enable tenants to live safely and comfortably in their homes.

6.5 The draft Housing Aids & Adaptations Policy is attached as (Appendix 1).

7.0 Options

7.1 No other options were considered as this report is to seek approval on the new policy to meet legislative and regulatory requirements.

8.0 Consultation

8.1 Providing a range of meaningful opportunities for tenants to influence and scrutinise the landlord's strategies, policies, and services is a requirement of the Transparency, Influence, and Accountability Standard.

8.2 Consultation with TEG members on the Aids & Adaptations Policy yielded positive feedback, highlighting the clarity and comprehensibility of the policy.

8.3 The overall feedback on the policy was that TEG members were happy with the information contained in the policy, especially the level of service within it.

9.0 Key Risks

9.1 If the policies are not adequately communicated and implemented, it can lead to incorrect application of the policies, financial loss, and reputational damage on individual cases.

10.0 Legal and Governance Implications

10.1 The Council must comply with the Equality Act 2010 and the Human Rights Act 1998, ensuring that policies do not discriminate against individuals with protected characteristics.

11.0 Financial Implications

11.1 Any expenditure arising would be met through the established budgets.

12.0 Human Resources Implications

12.1 No implications, the aids and adaptations policy will be implemented by the existing team.

13.0 Equality and Diversity Implications

13.1 The policy aims to address E & D issues to enable tenants to live independently with appropriate adjustments and has a positive impact for disabled and older residents.

14.0 Climate Change and Sustainability Implications

14.1 There are no direct implications for Climate Change and Sustainability arising from this report. However, consideration for recycling, substantiality and energy efficiency will be given when works are completed.

15.0 Next Steps

15.1 Once policies are approved, procedures will be finalised, and training will be provided to officers.

15.2 The policies will be published on the Council's website.

16.0 Background Papers

16.1 None

17.0 Appendices

17.1 Appendix 1 – Draft Housing Aids & Adaptations Policy

Report clearance progress:

Finance	Jo Knight	26/02/2025
Legal & Governance	Michael Elford	Under review
Human Resources	Francesca Chapman	27/02/2025
Equalities	Ali Holman	27/02/2025
Strategic Director	Julian Higson	