

**Manchester City Council  
Report for Resolution**

**Report to:** Executive - 16 November 2016  
**Subject:** Adapted Homes Policy  
**Report of:** Strategic Director (Development)

**Summary**

The purpose of this report is to seek approval to establish a small specialist Adapted Homes Service team within Manchester Move which will help improve access to adapted homes for those people who are deemed in need of one. The report also seeks approval to a number of changes to our rehousing policy in order to improve the effectiveness of the new team.

The Executive is recommended to;

1. Approve the transfer of two MCC posts currently based within MSIL to the new AHS to which TUPE arrangements will apply.
2. Approve the funding contribution to create a further post to manage the service.
3. Note the Adapted Homes Policy developed and agreed by the Registered Providers within the Manchester Move Partnership and MSIL.

**Wards Affected** All

<b>Manchester Strategy outcomes</b>	<b>Summary of the contribution to the strategy</b>
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	This strategy will ensure Manchester has the right type of adapted housing making best use of current stock to support existing residents function within the local and sub regional economy.
A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	Access to and the availability of new and existing adapted homes will be well connected to employment opportunities and schools
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	Increasing the accessibility to adapted homes will provide the opportunity for Manchester residents to raise their individual and collective aspirations

A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	The right mix of quality energy efficient housing is needed to support growth and ensure that our growing population can live and work in the city and enjoy a good quality of life.
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	This strategy recognises the importance a balanced housing offer plays within a well-connected city and the neighbourhoods within it. It seeks to create neighbourhoods where residents will choose to live and their housing needs and aspirations are met.

### **Revenue Consequences**

Revenue costs are estimated at £130k of which £80k is existing costs met from Manchester Equipment and Adaptations Partnership (MEAP) and £50k is new investment from revenue budget growth provided in the Adult Social Care budget in 2015/16 which has been earmarked for this purpose.

### **Capital Consequences**

Capital expenditure on major adaptations is funded from the Disabled Facilities Grant of £5.746m and MCC HRA capital budget of £1m. There are no new capital costs resulting from this proposal and the intention is for the new Adapted Homes Service to improve the effective use of capital funding for major adaptations.

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### **Background documents (available for public inspection):**

Living Longer, Living Better" the City's strategy for integrated health and social care  
Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996

## 1. Introduction

Successive service reviews of access to already adapted homes and adaptations have found a disconnection between Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) assessments and the re-housing of applicants into already adapted properties. The review identified a number of processes that could be improved to make the service more efficient, these included improving the re-housing pathway into already adapted stock, improvements to the data collection of RP assets to identify adapted properties and how these properties are then matched to applicants and reducing the number of adaptations carried out unnecessarily.

The new Adapted Homes Service aims to make the best use of the portfolio of adapted properties and to support disabled applicants who are either on the re-housing register looking for an adapted home, or existing tenants who have been assessed as needing adaptations and are willing to move to alternative accommodation.

These aims are linked into the devolution agenda for health and social care in Greater Manchester where significant changes and savings need to be met with all public sector organisations playing their part in reform. Bringing together these services will streamline the process and make efficiencies financially and improve service quality and delivery times for applicants.

## 2. Adapted Homes Policy

Registered Provider (RP) Partners within Manchester Move have developed and agreed a new approach to accessing adaptations and adapted homes by developing a new Adapted Homes policy, this policy has been agreed by the Housing Access Board, the governing body of the Manchester Move partnership.

The policy has an overarching aim to ensure that tenants can live well and independently in the community – the aims of “Living Longer, Living Better” the City’s strategy for integrated health and social care are at the heart of this.

The four main objectives of LLLB are improving health outcomes, improving service standards, financial sustainability and maximising independence and these are at the centre of the policy for the use of Adapted Homes in Manchester.

All RPs are committed to making the best use of their current stock to ensure that they can get value for money from current and future investment. Ensuring that current adapted stock can be re-let to those that need it to ensure that citizens can live well at home is paramount to this policy.

*The full Adapted Homes Policy is attached as **Appendix 1** of this report*

## 3. Proposal

To ensure that aims and objectives within the policy can be achieved, the proposal is to create a redesigned re-housing service for people who need access to either adaptations or an adapted home. The service will be known as the “Adapted Homes

Service” (AHS). The service priorities will be to assist people to live as independently for as long as possible in their current home, find suitable adapted properties that are or could become available and by matching applicants from the re-housing register to already adapted homes.

The service will be delivered by Northwards Housing as part of the Manchester Move partnership. The service will be delivered by 2 nursing professionals; these posts will be transferred from MSIL with a further post created to manage the service.

To deliver its primary aims the AHS will work towards achieving the following:

- Maximise the use of already adapted stock.
- Establish a database of adapted properties across the city and also to collect management information in a consistent manner by making improvements to the “back office” IT system at Manchester Move.
- New delivery model including a financial model and performance management framework.
- Service offer in line with Living Longer Living Better framework to ensure people are supported to live independently for longer.
- A comprehensive understanding of the supply of adapted properties across the City.
- The creation of common protocols and procedures to make the allocation and letting of such properties fair, transparent and efficient.
- The promotion of re-housing through support in preference to further investment in adaptations where an alternative exists (as per policy)
- Provide major adaptations where re-housing is not considered to be a feasible option (because of a lack of suitable alternative accommodation or an applicant is too ill to move).
- Improve hospital discharge rates for people moving out of hospital into alternative accommodation.
- Fast track minor adaptations

This service will maintain a register of people with medical needs and will carry out medical assessments to identify individual requirements when an applicant applies for re-housing on medical grounds. The Adapted Homes Service will then seek to match properties that become available to the needs of the applicants.

This work should not be underestimated, however the vision of ensuring that partners make the best use of stock while ensuring that people can live independently for as long as possible is shared by the RP partnership.

## **2.1 Service Design**

New processes will be designed in full if the recommendations in this report are agreed. However it is envisaged that the service will be delivered by 1 city-wide Occupational Therapists (this will be a new post), and 2 existing nursing professionals to be transferred over from the current MSIL service. As Northwards is a different employer from the City Council it is assumed that the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 1981 (TUPE) will apply.

Formal negotiations with staff and the Trade Unions will begin following approval of this report.

The OT role is critical to the success of the service, with the post holder covering a number of key tasks and responsibilities to ensure that the service operates successfully:

- OT's generally have a greater understanding of housing and housing related issues, this will be helpful when discussing and assessing whether re-housing would be a suitable option, which could reduce the risk and number of complaints.
- OT's are able to offer longer term prognosis of disabilities and other health and life limiting conditions – this helps with the decision making process of whether to adapt properties when further adaptations are likely in the future, this can help to reduce costs as looking at the longer term needs may deem the adaptations not practicable, thus finding re-housing the best solution.
- OT's have a wider understanding of how technical equipment and adaptations can meet a person's needs, and are suitably qualified to carry out assessments when a person needs to transfer from one piece of equipment top another, (hoists, stair lifts, bathing equipment) ensuring equipment will meet the need. This also extends to property alterations e.g. door widening and wheelchair turning and access.
- Having someone who can offer a more robust assessment process can be used to QA and challenge other assessments carried out elsewhere, ensuring that adaptations are practicable and are only fitted to best suit a person's longer term needs.

OT's can also be used when planning and building Disabled Persons Units or extra care housing, to ensure any specifications are delivered to meet the desired outcome of the type of occupants.

The Adapted Homes Service will work in partnership with MSIL to ensure the best and most suitable outcome for the applicant, taking a holistic approach to the applicant's needs. This will start from the initial assessment for a DFG to considering alternative housing options.

Re-housing to a more suitable property will be explored when adaptations cost more than £1,000 and this adaptation involves the removal, addition or alteration of a physical feature to the existing home.

However re-housing will only become an option if a property is already available or if it is likely to become available within the 12 months following assessment. These discussions will take place on an individual case basis within panel meetings. MSIL will hold panel meetings on a regular basis to assess all requests for adaptations over £1000, the decision to award a DFG will remain with MSIL in line with their statutory duty. However the panel will look at all available solutions that could best meet the applicant's needs.

In accordance with *Section 24(3)(a) of the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996* the Local Authority has the right to discharge duty if a suitable alternative property can be offered.

Panel will include representation from the Adapted Homes Service to discuss re-housing options as well as representation from the RP's to offer technical feasibility advice on adaptation installation.

### **3.2 Benefit Realisation and Performance**

The Disabled Facilities Grant is a non-ringfenced capital grant which is part of the Better Care Fund to support independent living and comply with DFG regulations. The capital budget for 2016/17 was £2.967m from DFG for major adaptations to private sector housing and £1m MCC HRA capital funding for major adaptations to public sector HRA housing which includes stock managed by Northwards. In 2016/17 the DFG has increased to £5.746m and the £1m of MCC HRA capital funding continues to be available.

At the end of 2015/16 there were around 200 DFG assessments to be carried out with a waiting time from application to assessment of 4-6 weeks. Improving stakeholders' ability to identify and re-use adapted stock will save costs of installing adaptations and/or cost of removing adaptations when properties are offered as general lets. For example in 2014/15 156 properties out of 195 with a level access shower were let to general needs applicants. A sample of 20 recent lets to people in Band 1 of properties with adaptations already in place shows only 45% of adaptations were reused.

The average cost of major adaptations can range from £3,700 to £6,000, so if 50 of the 156 properties were matched and let to people who needed them then this could represent a capital saving of approximately £185k - £300k p.a. If the new service can re-use a further 10% of all existing adaptations, this would equate to approximately £400k – £650k p.a. capital expenditure saving across the public and private sectors.

Whilst there is more DFG funding available in 2016/17, the introduction of the AHS should make more effective use of this funding through a reduction in assessments due to more people being re-housed via the AHS than applying for funding. This means that innovative ways of using the capital grant could be explored to deliver other services and developments to support independent living.

### **3.2 Performance**

Performance measures have been developed for the new service and will be monitored by The MSIL Project Board to ensure improvement of performance and to forecast future savings.

*Adapted Homes performance Indicators are attached as **Appendix 2** of this report.*

### **4.0 Finance and Resources**

The total cost of the proposed service is estimated to be £130k which is made up of:

- Two existing full time Re-housing Visitors/Senior Assessment Officers with a total cost of £80k employed by the Council working for Manchester Equipment and Adaptations Partnership (MEAP).
- Housing Occupational Therapist (OT) to be recruited and employed by Manchester Move to manage the service and to ensure that the decision making process is quality assured with a estimated cost of £45k
- Administration of the service £5k

Funding of £80k will be provided from MEAP revenue cashlimit budget in Adults Social Care and a further £50k of new investment will be provided from Adult Social Care budget growth for investment provided in 2015/16 and earmarked for this purpose in the revenue budget 2016/17.

Two full time posts will be transferred over from the current MSIL service into Manchester Move under a TUPE transfer to Northwards Housing. Responsibility for ongoing pension liabilities will be considered by the Treasurer under the terms of the TUPE.

## 5. Conclusion

Executive is asked to approve the creation of the Adapted Homes Service and to note the Policy created and agreed between the RP partnerships. This would include the transfer of 2 posts and the creation of a further post to manage the service.

## 6. Key Policies and Considerations

**(a) Equal Opportunities** - This strategy and service will give a refreshed view of the letting of adapted properties and integrate the services within Manchester Move with the aim of offering a more joined up service to partners and customers – especially those with a disability that need to move home.

**(b) Risk Management** - The move for the AHT from MCC to MM will need to be managed closely and it will be critical to recruit the right manager for this team in order for this service to improve and integrate well into MM.

**(c) Legal Considerations** – The development of this strategy has taken legal advice when looking at certain policy areas. The DFG assessment process is not altered or interfered with in any way in delivering this strategy.

## **Adapted Homes Service – within the Manchester Move Partnership**

### **A Policy for Delivery**

#### **1. Introduction**

Registered Provider (RP) Partners within Manchester Move have an overarching aim to ensure that their tenants can live well and independently in the community – the aims of “Living Longer, Living Better” the City’s policy for integrated health and social care are at the heart of this.

The four main objectives of LLLB – improving health outcomes, improving service standards, financial sustainability and maximising independence are at the centre of an updated policy for the use of Adapted Homes in Manchester.

Manchester also prides itself on being an “Age Friendly City”. The policy states that “Our approach will be to provide the housing, support and adaptations, advice and guidance and age-friendly neighbourhoods that will preserve independence and allow older people to continue to make their valuable contribution to our communities”.

All RPs are committed to making the best use of their current stock to ensure that they can get value for money from current and future investment. Ensuring that current adapted stock can be re-let to those that need it to ensure that citizens can live well at home is paramount to this policy.

The aim of this policy is to ensure that adapted properties within Manchester are reused where possible when they become void and that extra properties are only adapted when a re-housing option is not available within an agreed time limit. This aims to ensure that the people of Manchester can live safe and well in their own homes and that registered providers can make best use of current housing stock.

#### **2. The Policy in Context:**

The policy takes into account the applicable Legal and Regulatory Frameworks, Asset Management Policy and Business Plans of the RPs.

##### **2.1 Applicable Law**

- Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970
- Children Act 1989
- The NHS and Community Care Act 1990
- Carers (Recognition and Services) Act 1995 :
- Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996: Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant
- Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000
- Equality Act 2010



- The Health and Social Care act 2012
- The Care Act 2014

## **2.2 Manchester Context**

Information available from the 2011 census shows that around 21% of RP tenants in Manchester were over 65 years of age (compared to only 9.5% of Manchester's population as a whole) of which 4.5% (of the total population) are aged over 75.

41% of people over 65 in Manchester live in a social rented home, 51% are home owners and 5% live in private rented accommodation.

10-15% of the social housing stock in Manchester has some sort of adaptation within it. This will range from properties with one adaptation to fully adapted properties. The availability of adapted properties varies across property types and in the past this information has been very difficult to track due to RP's holding their own data, however we can now get the current information from the Locata Lettings IT system, which will tell us how often properties have been advertised over the past 12 months and with what adaptations, this will help with providing information regarding availability of properties in the future.

## **3. Aims of the Policy**

RPs in Manchester aim to support disabled customers through the Adapted Homes Service to live independently for as long as possible.

All of the Asset Management Strategies of RPs take into account the long term sustainability of their properties to meet the needs of most disabled customers. Their portfolios should be kept under continuous review to ensure that emerging and future needs can be met.

When they are planning to build new homes for rent RPs will look consider how bespoke adapted properties can be incorporated to meet specific and unmet needs, should funds be available. Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) or other funds could be accessed and used for adapted new build properties if the property is allocated to someone with an assessed need.

Re-housing to a more suitable property will always be explored when an adaptation of more than £1,000 is suggested and this adaptation involves the removal, addition or alteration of a physical feature to an existing home. Manchester Services for Independent Living (MSIL) will do this as part of their assessment of need and will be carried out by an assessment officer within this service.

Where a person is informed that their home will not, or cannot, be adapted their details will be passed to the Adapted Homes Service within Manchester Move if they wish to consider moving home.

This service maintains a register of people with medical needs and carries out medical assessments to identify individual requirements when an applicant applies for re-housing. The Adapted Homes Service will then seek to match properties that become available to the needs of customers to make the best use of adapted stock. Advice and support is provided to help customers to move to a more suitable property.

When re-housing is not considered a feasible option because of the lack of suitable alternative housing in the area a person is looking to live in, the RP, in conjunction with MSIL assessment service will consider if adaptations will be provided to the property in line with legal requirements and the AHS policy. This will focus on accessibility and the use of essential facilities such as access to bathing and sleeping facilities, as well as daily living tasks. MSIL will make the initial decision as it is their statutory duty to do so. An RP can refuse permission for works to go ahead if they have a valid reason to do so, if this is the case then support will be provided to re-house to a property that meets their needs.

Existing social housing tenants requiring adaptations where they cannot be (or a decision has been made that they won't be) delivered in the home that they are currently living in may be offered support to move to a more suitable property. (Subject to available budget to do so).

#### **4. The Role of Manchester Move**

Manchester Move has a role in looking at a range of Housing Access issues in the City and how these fit with other strategies and policies.

The Manchester Move service will work towards the following:

- A comprehensive understanding of the supply of adapted properties across the City.
- The creation of common protocols and procedures to make the allocation and letting of such properties fair, transparent and efficient.
- The promotion of re-housing through support in preference to further investment in adaptations where an alternative exists.
- The very best use of stock that has already been adapted.

Across 17 RP partners this work should not be underestimated however the vision of ensuring that partners make the best use of stock while ensuring the people can live independently for as long as possible are shared by all.

#### **5. Adapted Homes Policy**

##### **5.1 Making the best use of Adapted Homes in Manchester**

All Partners within Manchester Move are committed to providing their customers with excellent services. The following statements are ones that all RPs have signed up to:

- Make the best use of the portfolio of adapted properties
- Support disabled customers to move to alternative accommodation so they can live independently for as long as possible.
- Provide major adaptations where re-housing is not considered to be a feasible option (because of a lack of suitable alternative accommodation or an applicant is too ill to move).
- Fast track minor adaptations

- Comply with Equality Law considerations
- To deliver the best possible value for money and the utilisation of resources to meet these stated aims.

We know that re-housing options will be more readily available in some areas of the city than others (due to stock type and turnover). This will need to be taken into consideration by an RP as to whether they adapt a home.

## 5.2 Available Resources

For properties where the RP has agreed for the installation of an adaptation they will be liable for 40% of the cost of the adaptation, the council will pay the remaining 60%. RP's will set an annual budget for adaptations.

For properties managed by the ALMO and PFI stock, a capital budget will be set every year with 100% of the cost of the adaptation being met from this.

However these resources don't meet demand therefore it is imperative the service identifies adapted properties and that these are allocated to those people that need them most, making the very best use of existing stock.

## 5.3 Right to Buy (RTB)

Properties can be exempt from the RTB if they meet the following criteria:

*property must have features that are substantially different from those of ordinary dwelling houses and*

- Is designed for people who are physically disabled and
- Is one of a group of dwellings which it is the practice of the landlord to let for occupation by people who are physically disabled and
- Is in close proximity to a social service or special facility provided wholly or partly for the purpose of assisting the occupants.

If ALL of the above criteria are met the application will be denied under Part B of the RTB2. RP's should consider this when deciding on an application for Right to Buy.

To mitigate this RP's may wish to enter into a separate agreement with the tenant before the adaptations are made to the property, requiring the cost to be reimbursed or waiving their right to buy or right to acquire (if possible).

## 5.4 Disabled Facilities Grants

Mandatory grants provided by the Local Authority are available upon application. RPs would aim to assist their own tenants to move through the MM Adapted Homes Service but tenants are entitled to apply directly to the local authority for a Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) if they choose to do so. (Although RPs would still need to give permission before any works went ahead). This means that although a customer may have a DFG application granted, ultimately and legally the RP, as the landlord can refuse permission for the adaptation to be carried out.

## 5.5 Needs Assessment

Customers have a legal right to an MSIL assessment and to apply to the council for a DFG (although an RP would still need to give permission before any works went ahead). At no point does this policy look to override that. With the permission of the customer, information may be shared between the RP, MM and MCC.

In considering requests for major adaptations RPs will normally have regard to agreed guidelines when making decisions on whether adaptations should be installed. There may however be cases where the guidelines may not apply or where miscellaneous requests are made that are not specifically mentioned in the policy.

RPs should use their discretion in these cases. Some RPs may also have their own internal policies about what adaptations they will carry out.

The recommended outcome following the needs assessment will be sent to the RP/ALMO/PFI contractor. The MSIL service will be very clear with the tenant that they are recommending what adaptations they may need, but will not guarantee at this stage that it will be provided within their current home.

The landlord (RP/ALMO/PFI) will make its decision, being mindful of this policy, as to whether they are giving landlord's consent for the adaptation to go ahead.

## 5.6 Re-housing

Re-housing will be explored when major adaptations (over £1000) are requested to an existing home and if internal alterations, additions or multiple adaptations are required. The AHS will seek to match empty adapted properties to the needs of those customers who will benefit from them.

If they are eligible for re-housing, assessed as having a medical need and it is judged that a suitable property could become available within a reasonable time frame (12 months) and would adequately meet the applicant's (and their family's) needs, re-housing will be offered as a solution and recommended by panel.

In accordance with *Section 24(3)(a) of the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996* the Local Authority has the right to discharge duty if a suitable alternative property can be offered.

The term '*adequately meets the need*' refers to both the customer's (and their family's) physical and mental needs, plus social support needs relating to locality (family support, schools etc).

When considering re-housing and providing re-housing advice to MSIL, the Housing OT will use the following guidelines on locality and what is deemed an acceptable radius, and timescale until such a property will become available. For the purpose of this document, an acceptable radius will be defined by the OT on an individual case by case basis taking into account individual care and support needs. An acceptable timescale is defined as one that can be met before the customer's needs become urgent (as defined by the OT), or within the 6 month legal time frame that the *Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996* stipulates a decision on all DFG applications must be made.

Advice and support will be provided to help tenants to move to a more suitable property through the **Adapted Homes Service**. This may include providing practical and financial support to enable people to move where this is required. Where re-

housing is not considered to be a feasible option (because of a lack of suitable alternative homes or the person is too ill to move for example) and there is a legal or assessed duty the RP would normally consider if reasonable adjustments can be made to the property. This will focus on daily living tasks accessibility and the use of essential facilities such as adapted bathrooms.

In cases where multiple adaptations or internal alterations are recommended it may be more suitable for the applicant to move into a property that is already adapted to fully meet their needs. Especially where the current home cannot be adapted due to technical specifications.

In the main this policy intends to re-let homes with any type of major adaptation to those with a matched medical need on the housing register. However it is understood that some properties that are adapted may be let to applicants on the general register if applicants these cannot be matched.

### **Performance Indicators**

A number of performance measures will be set for the service in conjunction with RPs for once a tenant has decided that they would like to explore options around re-housing. RPs will agree a standard set of PIs for the undertaking of adaptations where they have agreed to do so.

#### **5.6.1 Adaptations Panel**

MSIL has panel meetings on a regular basis to assess all requests for adaptations and all initial decisions and recommendations will remain with MSIL in line with their statutory duty. However the panel will look at all available solutions that will meet the customer's needs and decide on which solution will be used, including re-housing. The Adapted Homes team will be involved with all cases referred to them, the Housing OT will attend the complex case panel. Therefore it is imperative that a full case is prepared and that the information required is procured prior to the meeting for discussion. This will include:

- Needs assessment and recommendations by Assessment Officer
- Technical information regarding the adaptations that would need to be carried out in the current home, following a tech visit from the RP
- Re-housing data to check if re-housing within 12 months is a feasible option. The Housing OT will take into consideration section 5.6 of this document.

However, even after a panel decision, an RP has the legal right and as the landlord to refuse permission for an adaptation to proceed. If this is the case the landlord would need to provide the tenant and panel with some justification of their decision. This may be due to the applicant having rent arrears, taking action for antisocial behaviour or technical difficulties.

The AHS OT will attend the regular meetings at MSIL to ensure there is sufficient knowledge regarding re-housing, property availability and property types.

#### **5.6.2 Panel definition of "Too Ill to Move"**

Any customer that meets one of these criteria will be assessed for adaptations in their current home where this is feasible to do i.e. may have an end of life prognosis.

- **Dementia** that is at a stage where moving would add to any confusion experienced therefore causing further distress and problems for the customer or carers.
- **Registered blind** – The customer is very familiar with the home and local environment. Moving would mean ongoing hardship or additional risks because they would find it difficult to settle into a new environment due to their lack of vision.
- **Diagnosis of a condition were the condition is terminal** with a very poor life expectancy.
- **Severe and enduring mental health problems** that may be affected if the customer had to move (eg; CPN involvement /at risk of Section).
- Customers with **severe chronic respiratory problems** who are on oxygen therapy for several hours a day who may not cope with the upheaval of moving because they do not have the necessary support to do so. However other options and support to move could be provided if it is thought that moving would assist the applicant medically.

## 5.7 Technical Considerations

To ensure that the best use of stock is being considered at all times the MSIL will have looked at the following issues when deciding about an adaptation:

### 5.7.1 Property

- Re-housing to a more suitable property will always be explored first when major adaptations are requested.
- Major adaptations will not usually be considered or approved in family-type properties that are under occupied by one or more bedrooms, this is to assist with freeing up much needed family type of accommodation.
- Major Adaptations will not usually be considered or approved in properties that are overcrowded under the Council's allocations policy.
- It is expected that adaptations will meet the needs of the tenant for at least five years from the date of installation. \*However adaptations may still be fitted where:
  - - a person is too ill to move (as described in section 5.6.2.
  - - a property is already partially adapted.
  - - re-housing prospects are very poor in a required area.

These exceptions will be reviewed on a regular basis.

### 5.7.2 Lifting equipment:

- Obsolete stair lifts and step lifts in existing properties will usually be replaced when still required subject to an assessment by MSIL to ensure assessed need has not changed
- Consideration will be given before fitting a curved bespoke stair lift, as these can be technically difficult to install and reuse.

Straight stair lifts will not usually be provided within external stairways in flats or maisonettes above ground floor

- Stair lifts will not usually be fitted in communal areas or in shared accommodation.
- Vertical lifts will not usually be fitted in properties with less than three bedrooms as this reduces family type accommodation to single occupancy and can lead to the occupant requiring a move to a larger property if their family grows.
- External stair lifts are not usually provided

### 5.7.3 Bathing Facilities

- Level access showers (LAS) are not usually fitted in flats above the ground floor or maisonettes unless served by a suitable communal internal lift.
- LAS will not be fitted in houses, maisonettes or properties with poor external access. (This includes within the garden area of a property but also access to amenities in the immediate locality).
- LAS may be fitted in properties where there is level external access or where one could easily be provided by the installation of a simple ramp to one external door – this may be the back door.
- In some very exceptional cases level access showers may be fitted in properties with poor external access to meet the immediate needs of the tenant

### 5.7.4 External Access

- Normally only one external level access ramp will be provided to a property however the panel will consider a second ramp if access is required to the garden.
- Handrails can be provided to external steps
- If the access height to a property exceeds 600mm (from the outside ground level to the top of the door threshold) or a ramp length of greater than 7.2 linear meters is required to create ramped access, then the property will be classified as unsuitable for a disabled tenant. All adaptations to this property will then be refused and re-housing offered as the most suitable solution to meet the applicant's assessed needs. In such circumstances, adaptations would only be considered if:
  - There is a very low likelihood of a suitable social housing property becoming available within 6 months.

### 5.7.5 General

- New adaptations will not be installed in a property if a tenant has recently (i.e. usually within the past two years) moved into the property and their needs have **NOT** significantly changed. It is the tenant's responsibility to disclose all medical information at the time of application for re-housing.
- Baths will not usually be reinstated back into an adapted property when re-letting. (this is at the discretion of the RP and/or if a new tenant wishes to pay for the installation)

- When making a decision on any application to adapt a social housing property, consideration will be given to the property's potential to meet the long term needs of a disabled tenant. If it is either not possible to adapt a property in accordance with the guidelines of this document, or if it is not structurally possible to adapt a property to accommodate the long term needs of a disabled tenant then all major adaptations will be refused and re-housing pursued as the most viable long term solution for the applicant. All cases will be considered on an individual basis.

While MSIL will also have taken all these issues into consideration the RP may wish to review in some circumstances.

Where re-housing is seen as the best option (and this discussion has been had with the tenant by the MSIL or RP) then the case will be passed to the AHS to make contact with the applicants (with their consent). It will be the responsibility of the RP to get a live MM application onto the IT system.

*As the Adapted Homes Team will not have any technical members of its team, RPs will need to provide this advice as and when necessary. In the main this will mean providing a view if a property is suitable (ie: are there steps, could doors be widened if necessary). This will save a member of the team having to travel long distances for a short visit to a property when this work can be done by the RPs.*

## **5.8 “Support to Move” Scheme**

Where customers agree to move rather than have adaptations undertaken to their current home, support may be available to help them to move.

This is outlined in the “Support to Move” scheme at appendix 1.

## **5.9. Monitoring**

AHS will maintain an electronic record of all clients. It will contain all information from the date and time of the referral through to a conclusion of a case.

This data will provide the information base for the monitoring of all aspects of the service. It will include:

- Name;
- Address;
- Demographics (age, sex, ethnicity, religion, language etc.);

Reason for referral;

Date of initial contact to AHS

Date of referral (where they differ from contact/request);

Date of assessment for re-housing priority;

Information of necessary adaptations required

Areas that a person wishes to live

Any offers and refusals with details



Journal entries regarding case management

Dates of reassessment (every 6 months)

Details of successful outcomes – including if RP has carried out further adaptations to make a property suitable. (inc cost)

This information will provide the basis for performance monitoring of the service.

#### **5.10. Appeal Procedure**

There is an Appeals Panel for customers to appeal against the decisions made by the Adaptations Panel and this sits within MSIL. This ensures that MSIL meet their statutory duties.

If an RP is to refuse to undertake an adaptation then they would deal with any complaints under their own procedures.

#### **5.11 RP New Build Programmes**

Where a RP is planning to build new properties for rent these plans should be shared at the earliest opportunity with the AHS and MSIL. The AHS will work alongside the RP to see if bespoke solutions can be found, especially for complex and long standing cases.

## **THE ADAPTED HOMES 'SUPPORT TO MOVE' SCHEME: Appendix A**

The Adapted Homes Support Scheme will be exclusive to those RPs that chose to take part in it.

The scheme could help a tenant move if they are a tenant of a participating landlord and:

- They or a member of their household has a physical disability and has been assessed by the MSIL at MCC as in need of a property that has been adapted\* to meet their needs AND
- The guidelines have been met to have their current home adapted but the tenant has chosen to move instead. OR
- An existing tenant cannot have their home adapted and has chosen to move instead of staying put.

\* By adapted, we mean a property that has one or more of the following adaptations:

- A step-lift
- A stair lift or a through floor (or vertical) lift
- A level access shower
- A ground floor extension (intended for use by a disabled person)

Acceptance onto the scheme will be at the discretion of the RP/AHS and is subject to a home visit to discuss the current circumstances. All cases will be discussed with the re-housing staff and OT within the AHS

A tenant will be eligible for consideration for properties that meet their established bedroom need and where they meet the other criteria set out by the RP. (i.e. certain properties have age restrictions on occupation, have restrictions on occupation by tenants with pets, and are advertised for applicants who classed as a Working Household).

We will always try to re-house tenants in an area of their choice in Manchester.

Where applicants find a new suitable property to move to and with the agreement of the RP, participants can opt to access a package of support-in-kind to an agreed value.

Support to move will be paid by the current landlord should the tenant be moving from one landlord to another.

### Support-in-kind could include:

- Help with moving (e.g. a removals service, a packing and unpacking service, the disconnection and reconnection of major domestic appliances, telephone connection and mail redirection)  
Access to a handyperson scheme to carry out small jobs in the new home.  
Eg: fixing curtain rails or reassembling furniture.
- Limited decorating or access to extra decorating materials/vouchers.

This list is not exhaustive. As the purpose of the support scheme is to pay for any practical support a tenant may need to move to their new home, the RP would discuss the tenant's individual circumstances and needs.

Where a tenant needs an adapted property the suitability of the property must also be agreed with the AHS, this will be carried out when the decision is made regarding the assessment by MSIL and has been passed to the AHS. .

**Who is it for?**

A disabled tenant or member of their household who requires an adapted property, does not currently live in such a property and has chosen to move instead of having their own home adapted.

People will **not** be able to apply if they:

- Are not a tenant of a participating landlord.
- Have a significant level of current or former tenant arrears, and have not made any arrangements to repay the debt
- Currently have a suspended possession order against them
- Have not maintained their tenancy in a satisfactory manner
- Have not maintained their home in a reasonable condition
- Are carrying out a mutual exchange

**Appendix 2**

**Performance Indicators for an Accessible Homes Service.**

	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Data needed</b>	<b>Reported To:</b>	<b>Reported To:</b>
1	Number of People referred to the AHS from the MILS	Referrals recorded by AHS	HAB	
2	No of cases where rehousing priority is awarded.	Number of "Star" Med and Med A awards made by the AHS.	HAB	
3	Number of medical priority reviews carried out.	Data collected by AHS	HAB	
4	Number of people waiting to be rehoused/oldest outstanding application	Data collected by AHS	HAB	<b>ILS</b>
5	Number of people made an offer of a suitable property	Data collected by AHS	HAB	
6	Number of people rehoused	Data collected by AHS	HAB	<b>ILS</b>
7	% of advertised adapted voids that are let to an applicant who needs the adaptations	Locata	HAB	<b>ILS</b>
8	Value of adaptations in homes let to people with medical priority.	Data collected by AHS	HAB	<b>ILS</b>
9	Number of people moving into an "adaptable" property where adaptations can be made at a reasonable cost.	Locata/AHS	HAB	
10	Cost of adaptations made to "adaptable" homes for people waiting for a suitable property	Data collected by AHS from RPs	HAB	<b>ILS</b>
11	Length of waiting time from awarding of medical priority to rehousing.	Locata/AHS	HAB	
12	Number of people who have been assisted by the "Support to Move" scheme.	Data collected by AHS from RPs	HAB	<b>ILS</b>