

RMBC

Aids & Adaptations

Policy and Procedures

December 2015

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1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Council's Adaptations Policy aims to assist people in living independently through either the provision of equipment and/or adaptations in their current home or re-housing to a suitable property that meets their needs. Social Care and Housing Services work together in responding to the Care Act 2014 and help to prevent, reduce or delay care and support needs for customers by any of the above means.

This policy centres around the delivery of Adaptations, however adaptations are only one of the many options available and as such all alternatives will be considered when devising a solution to meet customer's needs.

- 1.2 The statutory duties of the Local Authority in connection with adaptations are mainly laid down in the following legislation:
- The Care Act 2014
 - Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970
 - NHS and Community Care Act 1990
 - Disability Discrimination Act 1995
 - Equalities Act 2010
 - The Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996
 - The Housing Act 1996
 - Housing Renewal Grants (Services and Charges) Order 1996

However, the Council must decide whether the applicant's needs can be best met through:

- Issue of equipment
- Adaptations
- Or
- Re-housing to suitably adapted accommodation.

The Council can discharge its duties under the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970 by any of these means.

2.0 Definitions

Adaptations are split into 3 categories:

- **Minor Fixings:**
Adaptations under £1000.00 in value.
An Occupational Therapist or other authorised person (see Appendix A.6) must recommend the adaptations required.
No financial assessment is required.
See section A4.0 for types of Minor Fixing.

Minor fixings should be completed within 7 working days from the date of order with the contractor.

- **Minor Adaptations:**

Adaptations under £1000.00 in value.

An Occupational Therapist or other authorised person (see Appendix A.6) must recommend the adaptations required.

No financial assessment is required.

Minor adaptations can involve a small amount of construction work.

See Appendix A3.0 for types of Minor Adaptations

Minor Adaptations should be started within 28 days from date of order with the contractor.

- **Major Adaptations:**

Adaptations over £1000.00 in value.

An Occupational Therapist or other authorised person (see Appendix A.6) must complete an OT35b recommending the adaptations required.

A further report (OT08) will be required for adaptations over £8,000.

A financial assessment is required.

Major adaptations may require a large amount of construction work.

See Appendix A2.0 for types of Major Adaptations. Major Adaptations are only concerned with providing works that have medical purpose.

Disabled Facilities Grant's do not provide, nor does the Adaptations Team facilitate, any works to improve the aesthetics or functionality of the property that have no direct medical benefit to the customer.

A decision on an application for Major Adaptations should be reached within 8 weeks from receipt of referral from an Occupational Therapist

Major Adaptations should be complete within 8 weeks from date of ordering. However this may fluctuate over time, the legislative timeframe within which a decision should be made on any DFG application is 6 months.

3.0 Eligibility

- 3.1 Eligibility is governed by legislation and therefore the policy reflects this. Further information on eligibility criteria and definition of terms can be found within the guidance notes on the "*Application for a Disabled Facilities Grant (D01)*" form".
- 3.2 The Council must be satisfied that the customer has a qualifying owner's interest or is a qualifying tenant. It is the applicant's responsibility to provide proof of this as part of their application. Failure to provide this will result in the application being declined.

3.3 A qualifying owner is one who has a freehold of a property or a minimum of 5 years remaining on the leasehold. If the leasehold is less than 5 years in duration, confirmation must be obtained from the freeholder of the property of what is due to happen at the end of the leasehold period. A qualifying owner must supply an owner's certificate and certify that it is the intention that the disabled occupant will occupy the premises for a period of at least 5 years. It is the applicant's responsibility to provide proof of this as part of their application. Failure to provide this will result in the application being declined.

3.4 A qualifying tenant is one who meets one of the following:

- Who is a secure tenant
- Who is an introductory tenant
- Who is a protected occupier under the Rent Act 1976
- Who is in occupation under an assured agricultural company within the meaning of Part I of the Housing Act 1988
- Who is an employee who occupies the dwelling or flat concerned for the better performance of their duties.
- An assured tenant of a Housing Association if suitable alternative accommodation cannot be sourced through the Housing Association.

With any tenancy, the landlord must give consent for works to be completed. Private sector tenants will be eligible if they are able to supply permission from the landlord and confirmation that it is the intention of the landlord to let the property to the disabled occupant for a period of at least 5 years.

In all the above scenarios, the Council must be satisfied that the applicant is either the owner or tenant and therefore will require either proof of ownership or proof of tenancy. If the applicant is under 19, then the parent/guardian is required to be the owner or tenant and will require either proof of ownership or proof of tenancy.

3.5 All applicants must prove that the property requiring adaptations is their permanent residence. A permanent residence is one where there is a likelihood that the applicant will not move from the accommodation for a minimum of 5 years. It is also accommodation where the applicant resides in every day as their permanent home. Failure to provide such proof of residence will result in the application being declined.

3.6 Where the applicant is under 19 and the household is split, investigation into who the legally responsible parent/guardian is must occur. Consideration will be taken of benefits claimed for the applicant and where the applicant resides predominantly.

3.7 There are circumstances where applicants may not meet the legal requirements.

If an applicant is not the owner or they are not named on the tenancy, they

may still be eligible if:

- The applicant is a partner of the owner/tenant.
A person is treated as a partner if:
 - They are married (regardless of genders)
 - They are not married, but are living together as man and wife.
 - They are of the same sex and registered as a civil partner.
 - They are of the same sex, but are living together as if they are in a civil partnership.
- The applicant is an immediate family member (parents, grandparents, adult children, grandchildren and siblings), who has lived with the owner/tenant for a minimum of 2 years continuously, immediately prior to the application **and** the main carer of the applicant is the owner/tenant.
A main carer is one who is defined as providing support on a daily basis and assists in daily functions such as personal care and domestic support.
- There are specific regulations surrounding members of the Armed Forces as defined in Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 as amended in 2008.

Cases outside the above requirements may be reviewed by the Adaptations Review Panel. (See section 8).

- 3.8 In order to be eligible to apply for DFG funding the OT should confirm that their recommendations will fully meet the need of any applicant living in a Council Property. If the recommendation will only partly meet the applicant's needs, it may be rejected and the OT asked to complete a further recommendation that takes account of all the applicant's medical needs, alternatively rehousing to somewhere that does meet all needs may be recommended.

4.0 Disabled Facilities Grants

- 4.1 Full details of Disabled Facilities Grants, conditions and eligibility can be found within the relevant legislation. At the time of writing the referenced material is the *Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996*.
- 4.2 Applicants who feel they may be eligible for a Disabled Facilities Grant can apply through Assessment Direct for an assessment of need. Once a recommendation has been made a financial assessment will be conducted by a Technical Officer. This is an income based 'means' test of resources (see Section 7).
- 4.3 If the applicant has a partner, then their combined income will be assessed jointly. Capital is included in the means test. The first £6,000 of savings is disregarded.

4.4 The award works as follows:

- If the applicant's income is less than the applicable amount the applicant will not normally need to contribute to the cost of the works (up to the maximum mandatory grant limit, see 6.5).
- If the applicants' income is more than the applicable amount, a proportion of the applicants' income will be used to calculate how much they could contribute towards the cost of the works.
- The applicable amount is the amount as seen by government as the requirements for the cost of living for the customer or household. Anything highlighted above the applicable amount is subject to a contribution.
- The applicable amount and any associated contributions are calculated through the Ferret system. (see section 7.0 for more information on Ferret)
- For a detailed explanation of the means testing procedure and exactly how a grant contribution is calculated please See Appendix A6.0.

4.5 The maximum amount of grant that a council can award is £30,000.00 per application less any assessed contribution from the applicant as per the *Housing Grants, Construction & Regeneration Act (1996)*. If the cost of the works exceeds this grant limit, it is the responsibility of the customer to fund the shortfall. The Adaptations Team have a responsibility to ensure that the funds are distributed fairly and that the limited amount of funds allocated are spent in such a way that maximises the number of people within the borough that can be helped each year.

4.6 The council may in very limited cases offer further funding up to a maximum of £5,000 by way of Additional Discretionary Funding. However in order for this to be awarded ALL the criteria covered in Section 14 must be satisfied.

4.7 The applicant may be eligible for alternative funding as per the *Care Act 2014* and in order to do so must have a community care assessment by Adult Social Care. Further details of which can be found in the relevant social care policy documentation.

5.0 Adaptations Process

5.1 Assessment Direct

The first line of contact for an applicant is Assessment Direct. The applicant can contact Assessment Direct with details of their specific case either via the internet or telephone. Assessment Direct act as a triage and cascade information to the Community Occupational Therapy Department. However

there are 3 exceptions to this:

- Where an applicant has been referred direct to a Housing OT by the Housing Options Medical Assessment Team to look into re-housing before adaptations are considered
- Where an applicant is referred to the Housing OT because they live in a Council property and the existing adaptations are no longer fit for purpose.
- Where an applicant is referred to the Housing OT from Assessment Direct as they are a Council tenant is in a situation of under-occupying a house and are requesting a Level Access Shower to a presently un-adapted property.

In these cases contact with Assessment Direct is not necessary.

5.2 *Occupational Therapist (or other assessing officer)*

5.2.1 Once received from Assessment Direct, cases are allocated to the relevant team. The current Service Level Agreement with the NHS and Adult Services states that applicants must be visited by an Occupational Therapist (or other assessing officer) within 28 days of receiving a referral.

5.2.2. During the assessment, the Occupational Therapist (OT) should firstly consider any equipment that may meet the applicants' requirements.

These may include, but are not limited to:

- Bathing Equipment
- Swivel Bathers
- Bath Board
- Bath Seat
- Shower Stool
- Raised Seats
- Perching Stools
- Commode

5.2.3. If equipment would not meet the applicants' requirements, the OT should then consider any minor fixings that may meet the applicants' requirements (see A4.0).

5.2.4 If minor fixings would not meet the applicants' requirements, the OT should then consider any minor adaptations that may meet the applicants' requirements (see A3.0).

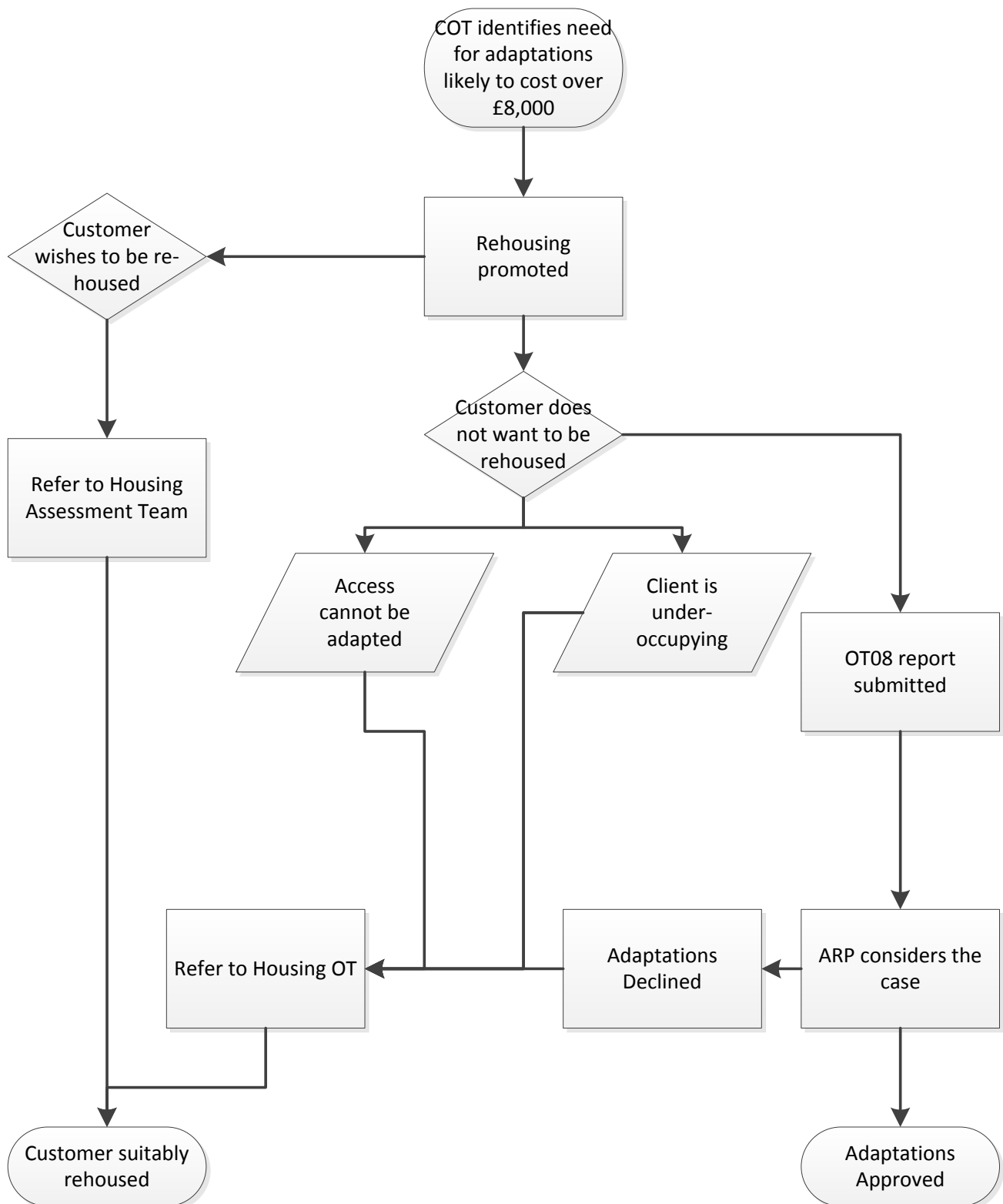
5.2.5 If minor adaptations would not meet the applicants' requirements, the OT should then consider any major adaptations that may meet the applicants' requirements (see A2.0).

Following an assessment of need, the OT or other Assessing Officer

may recommend provision of equipment, request a minor fixing and/or request a minor or major adaptation, if all these things are required as a result of their assessment.

- 5.2.6 If a major adaptation is requested, the standard procedure would then be for the OT to submit a referral to the Adaptations Team detailing their recommendations for potential solutions for long term need.
- 5.2.7 If the potential cost of adaptations totals more than £8,000, then re-housing **MUST** be investigated prior to considering major adaptations. Where appropriate, all applicants who require adaptations totalling more than £8,000 should be referred to a Housing Occupational Therapist to investigate rehousing as an appropriate solution.
- 5.2.8 Should the potential cost of adaptations total more than £8,000, it is expected that the OT should fully investigate all options that may relieve the customers' situation. The OT will note all potential solutions and any potential issues related to these solutions. They will also note the applicants' wishes. For example: An OT may assess an applicant as requiring ground floor bathing and bedroom facilities. Potential solutions to this issue may be re-housing, construction of an extension or conversion of existing rooms.
- 5.2.9 The applicant may not wish to be re-housed and this should be noted as well as any medical and social grounds to support this fact. Recommendations should be made to the requirement of the customer and not specifically to a solution unless the solution is limited to one option.
- 5.2.10 Once the OT has visited and completed their assessment, they should either request any equipment that has been identified to meet the needs of the disabled person or advise them of what equipment they may wish to purchase. The OT must assess whether the case is high risk or not and complete an Occupational Therapist Report (OT35b). On cases where the cost of works will potentially exceed £8,000, a full OT report is required (OT08).
- 5.2.11 Minor Fixing and Adaptation requests should be sent by the OT direct to the Contracts and Service Development Team by completing an OT30 and/or OT31 form. Minor Fixings should be complete within 7 days and Minor Adaptations started within 28 days.
- 5.2.12 Major adaptations should be sent through to the Adaptations Team by completing an OT35b form. An OT35a letter will be sent to the applicant. An OT35a letter is not confirmation that a Disabled Facilities Grant will be granted, it is simply to inform the customer that a recommendation has been sent through to the Adaptations Team.
- 5.2.13 The process for adaptations with a proposed cost of more than £8,000 can be seen in the Community Occupational Therapist Process Map.

Community Occupational Therapist Process Map for adaptations costing over £8,000

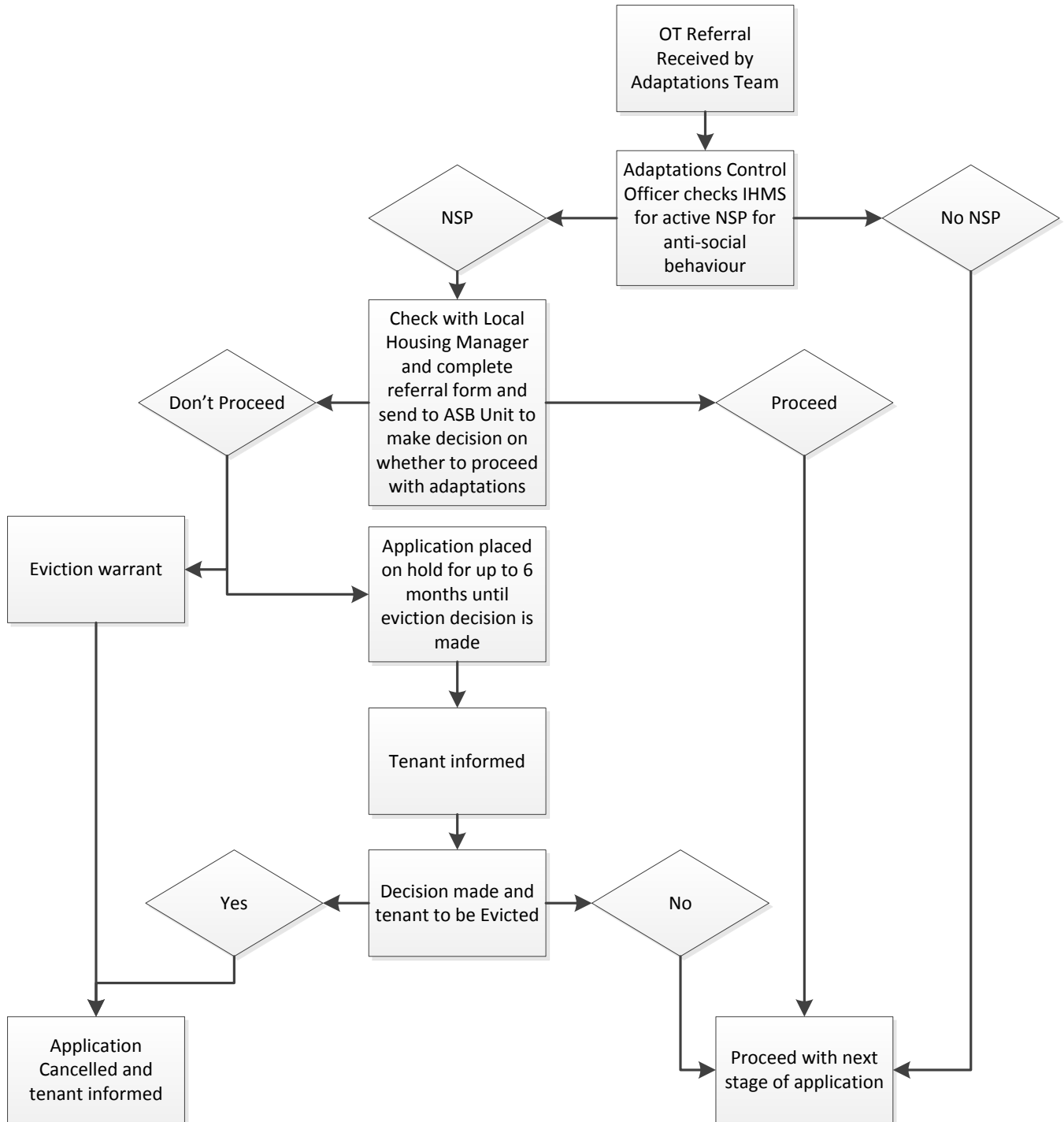


5.3 The Adaptations Team

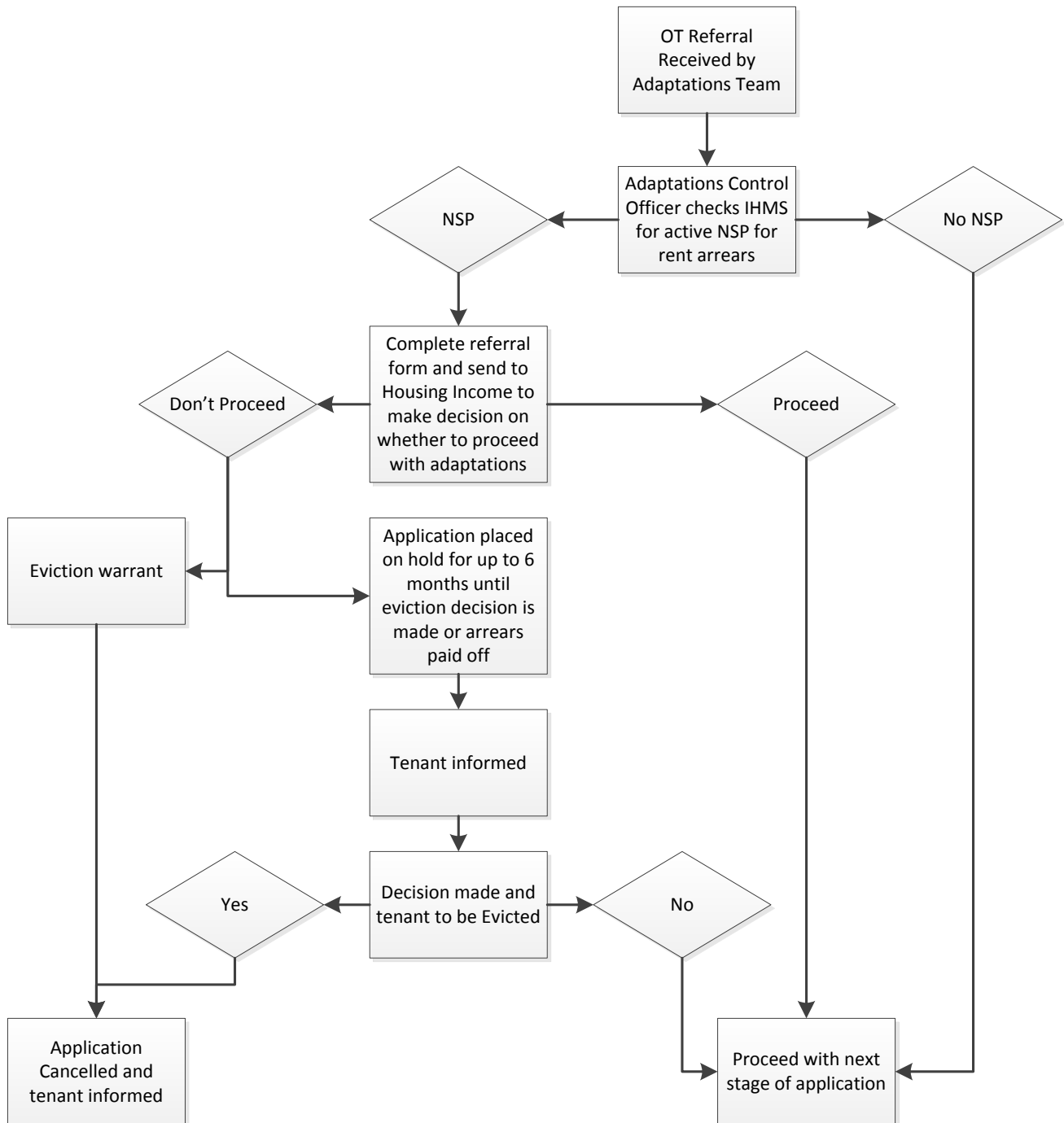
- 5.3.1 The Adaptations Team will write to the customer once they receive a referral confirming the request has been received, and indicating the process as to which is to be followed.
- 5.3.2 The Adaptations Team will inform applicants no later than 6 months after receiving the referral as to the decision of what work if any will commence.
- 5.3.3 The legal requirement is for the Adaptations Team to complete adaptations within 6 months of a Disabled Facilities Grant application being approved.
- 5.3.4 A Technical Officer will visit the site to look for potential solutions and gather information required for a means test (if necessary), refer to section 7.
- 5.3.5 The Adaptations Team are required to identify whether the property is either Housing Association, Owner Occupied, Privately Rented or Council Property.
- 5.3.6 If the property is not Council owned, then the customer must provide proof of ownership. This can also include a rental agreement to prove proof of occupation. A consent form will also be required in terms of rented properties which will be sent direct to the registered owner by the Adaptations Control Officer.
- 5.3.7 A Technical Officer is to investigate potential solutions. The Technical Officer will look at the most cost effective solution whilst maintaining that the solution is both reasonable and practicable.
- 5.3.8 If an architect is required, the Technical Officer should contact the architect to arrange for drawings to be completed.
- 5.3.9 For Council properties, the Adaptations Control Officer will make several checks on the tenancy to ensure it is sustainable. Checks will be made on all occupants for warning codes, and tenancy checks will be performed for pending rent and/or anti-social behaviour evictions. If any pending evictions are apparent, the adaptations will be refused. If tenants are in arrears (but not pending eviction) the application may be placed on hold until these arrears have been suitably reduced as defined by the Income Team. Each case will be assessed on an individual basis, considering adaptations required, arrears repayment

plan and urgency of the case. (see process maps 'ASB Checks' and 'Rent Checks' below).

Adaptation Process – ASB Checks



Adaptation Process – Rent Checks



5.3.10 An asbestos report is required for all property types. In the case of Council stock, the Adaptations Control Officer will check for an asbestos report and if no record is available, request one. This report will then be sent to contractors along with the order for the works. If it is a non-council property, the contractor completing the works will obtain the asbestos report and the cost of which will be added to the final DFG amount.

5.3.11 If asbestos is found then the relevant contractor will arrange for its removal, the cost of which is included within the DFG award.

5.3.12 If the contractor encounters any electrical faults as part of the adaptation works then one of the following will occur:

- If it is a Council property the relevant contractor is instructed to rectify the fault and charge the Council appropriately.
- If it is a non-Council property then rectifications must be paid for by either the home owner or landlord. If the rectifications are not made, then the adaptation will be cancelled.

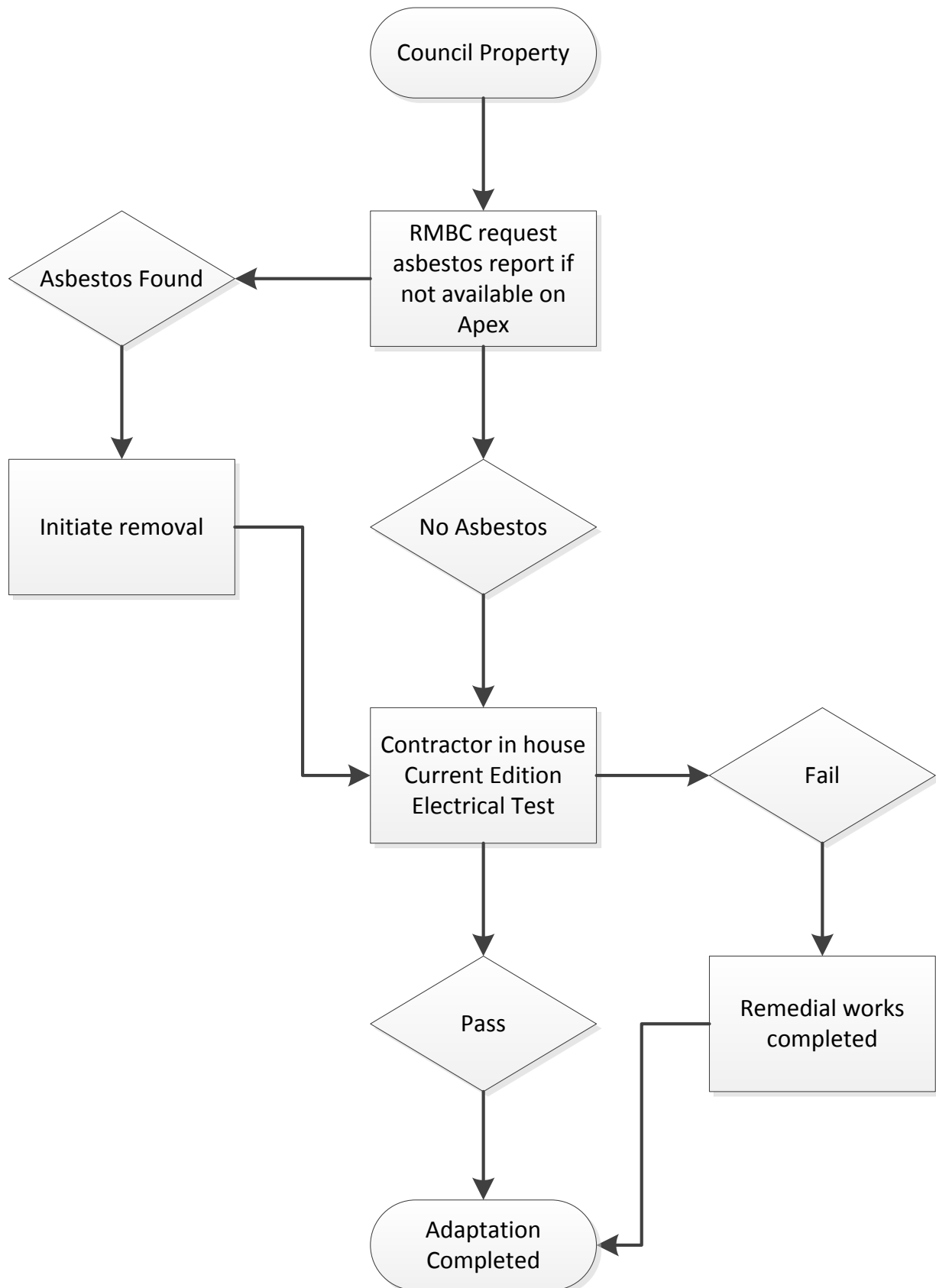
5.3.13 If any financial issues are raised then the Adaptations Team need to be informed. If these issues cannot be resolved then the adaptation will be cancelled. For example, a means test is conducted (see section 7.0) and it is found that a customer is required to contribute. If the customer disagrees with this then the adaptation will be cancelled.

5.3.14 If a customer is found to have a contribution towards the DFG, they have a period of 3 months to pay such monies, after this the application will be terminated.

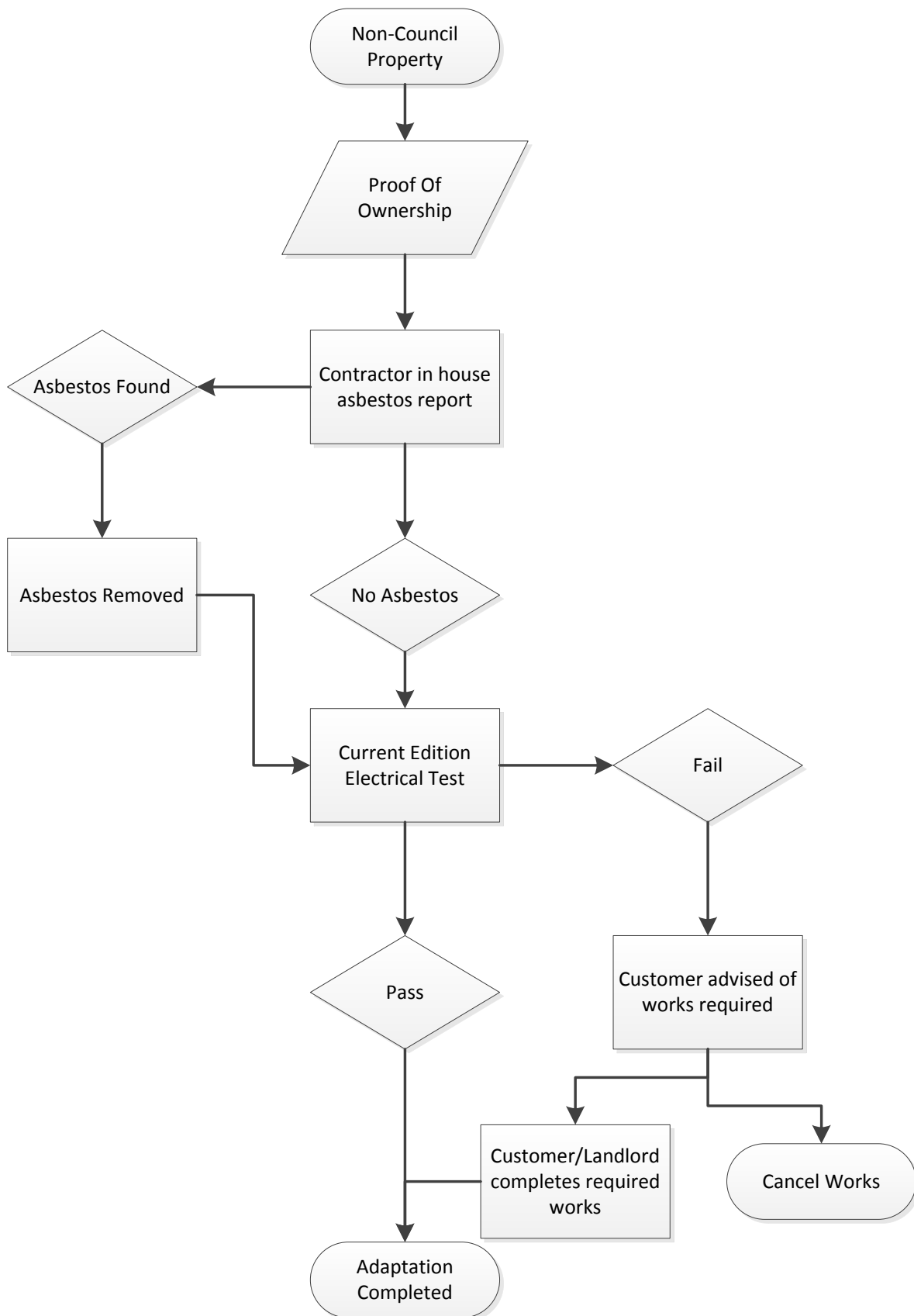
5.3.14 Once any financial issues are resolved or there are no financial issues, the relevant contractor is informed and the job is completed.

5.3.15 Process Maps 1a and 1b highlight the above process for each of the respective property tenures.

Adaptations Team – Process Map 1a – Council Properties

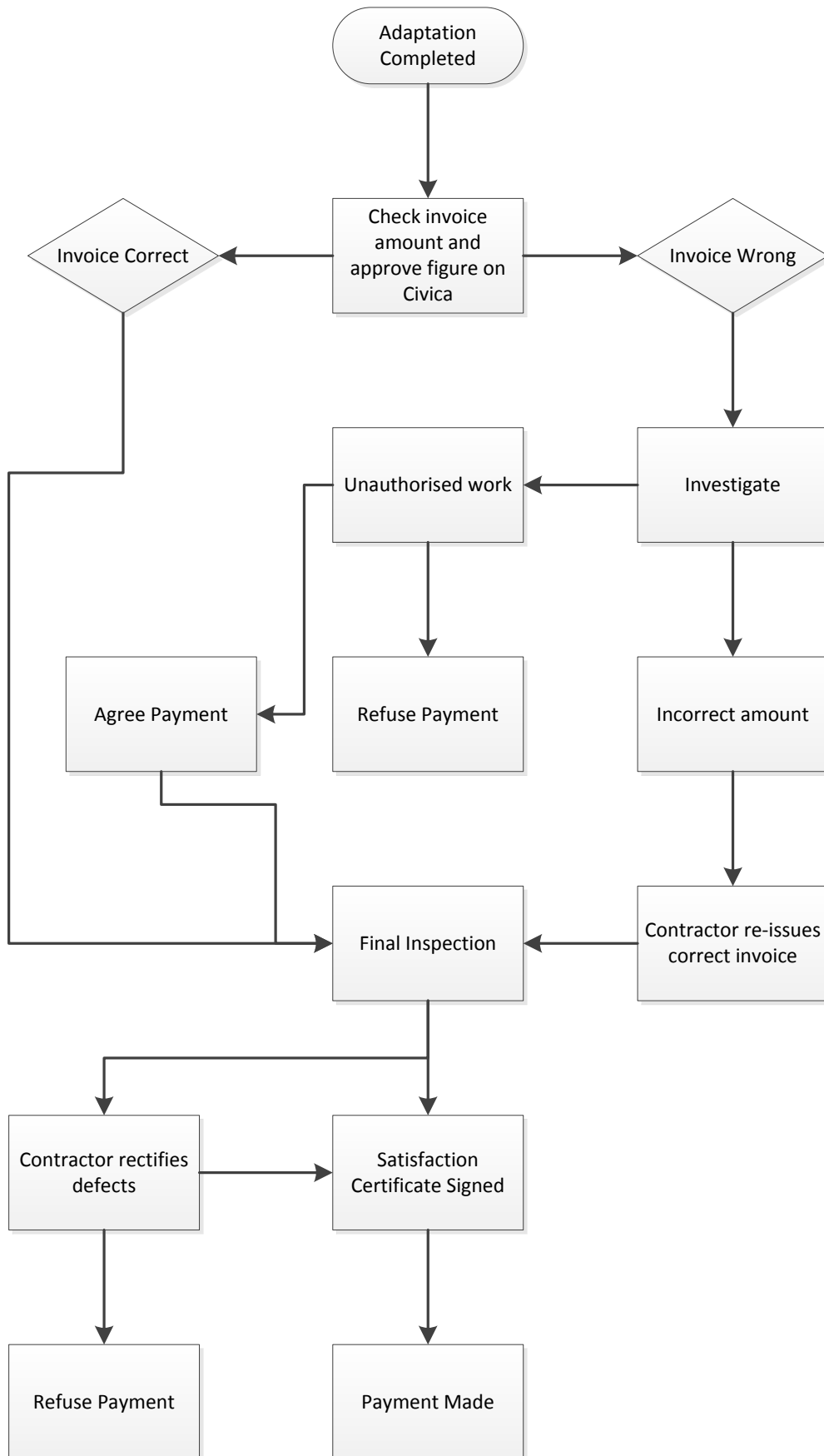


Adaptations Team – Process Map 1b – Non-Council Properties



- 5.4 No work can commence until any customer contribution has been paid in full.
- 5.5 Under no circumstances can any retrospective payments be made. The customer cannot start work on an adaptation and then re-charge it back to the Council. This is in accordance with the *Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 (Section 29)*.
- 5.6 Once the adaptation has been completed:
 - 5.6.1 The Adaptations Co-ordinator will check the invoice amount and approve the figures on Civica.
 - 5.6.2 If the invoice amount is incorrect then the Technical Officer is required to investigate to why this has occurred.
 - 5.6.3 If the wrong invoice has been issued then the invoice is returned to the contractor and they are required to rectify and issue a correct invoice.
 - 5.6.4 If unauthorised work has been completed then agreement to pay must be sought from the Adaptations Manager. The Technical Officer should gather supporting evidence from the contractor as to why this occurred. If the supporting evidence is not sufficient then any unauthorised work will not be paid for.
 - 5.6.5 Once the correct invoice amount has been input on Civica then a final inspection can occur. Initially this will be in the form of a telephone call. If the customer is happy then an on-site visit may not be necessary. If an issue is raised by the customer in terms of the work undertaken, then an on-site visit will be conducted.
 - 5.6.6 If any issues are raised, then the contractor is contacted by the Technical Officer and notified of any defects. It is the contractors' responsibility to rectify any defects. Payments will not occur until defects are resolved.
 - 5.6.7 If no issues are apparent or the issues have been resolved, then a Final Satisfaction Certificate is signed.
 - 5.6.8 Payment can then be made.
 - 5.6.9 Process Map 2 highlights the above process.

Process Map 2 – Adaptation Payment Process



6.0 Further Works and Changes of Circumstances

- 6.1 Occasions may arise where work is pending and a change in circumstances requires a further OT assessment. Should this occur, then the OT should inform the Adaptations Team.
- 6.2 If the work pending has not been started then it will not commence until the OT has submitted their further report.
- 6.3 The new work will then be added to the pending work to be completed as one job. The cost of all the works will then be added together to calculate the total DFG award, up to a maximum of £30,000.
- 6.4 If the pending work is a minor adaptation and the new work is either a major adaptation or another minor adaptation, but the cost of both works would mean that the work in total would equate to a major adaptation, then the adaptation should be treated as such and therefore means tested if required.
- 6.5 A Technical Officer may ask for a review of the works, if they believe alterations to the recommendation may be required. In such circumstances they should contact the OT who sent the referral or the OT Manager.

7 Means Testing

- 7.1 To make sure that the DFG grant goes to the people who need it most, the amount of grant awarded is decided by conducting a Test of Resources (Means Test). This is carried out in accordance with regulations laid down by the government. The test of resources is used to assess the level of a client's contribution towards the cost of eligible works and is based on a formula calculating a notional level of need (the amount the government says you need to live on each week) compared to the relevant person's income and capital.
- 7.2 As RMBC have their own housing stock, in the interest of fairness and equality, DFG legislation for eligibility is mirrored for council tenants, thus the financial assessment is applied to any applicant, regardless of tenure. The relevant multiplying factors however are somewhat lower for tenants than home owners (see Appendix A6.0 for more details.)
- 7.3 A means test will be carried out by the Adaptations Technical Officer and input into Ferret. It should be noted that a means test is **not** required for applicants under the age of 19.
- 7.4 Ferret is a Government accredited software programme that is utilised to formulate the outcome of a means test.
- 7.5 This is an income based test although there are certain pass porting benefits that would denote a means test as not applicable. These benefits include:

- Income Support
- Housing Benefit
- Employment Support Allowance (Income Related)
- Pension Credit Guarantee Credit
- Job Seekers Allowance (Income Based)

7.6 Certain benefits are ignored in the means test. These include:

- Disability Living Allowance / Personal Independence Payment
- Attendance Allowance or Constant Attendance Allowance
- Guardian's Allowance
- Any concessionary payment to compensate for the non-payment of Income Support, Disability Living Allowance, Attendance Allowance, Constant Attendance Allowance, Mobility Allowance or War Pensioners Mobility Supplement
- Any social fund payment
- Any benefit-related Christmas Bonus
- Any payment of Housing or Council Tax Benefit or Council Tax Transitional Relief
- Any payment made by the Secretary of State to compensate for the loss of Housing Benefit or Housing Benefit Supplement.
- Any resettlement benefit (this is arrears of unpaid benefit sometimes payable to people leaving hospital who were inpatients before April 1987)
- Any special War Widows Payment. These payments were introduced with effect from April 1990. The whole of such a payment is ignored. The recipient may also be getting an ordinary War Widows Pension.

7.7 The means test will **not** ignore the following benefits and they **will** be taken into account in the calculation:

- Employment and Support Allowance (contribution)
- Retirement Pension
- Severe Disablement Allowance
- Carer's Allowance (formerly Invalid Care Allowance)
- Incapacity Benefit
- Savings Pension Credit
- Maternity Allowance
- Childs Special Allowance
- Retirement Allowance*
- Disablement Benefit*
- Industrial Death Benefit*
- Unemployability Supplement*
- Reduced Earnings Allowance*
- Widows Pension*
- Benefits payable under the Industrial Injuries Scheme

Child Benefit, Statutory Sick Pay and Statutory Maternity Pay are all classed as income.

7.8 Once the information has been input into the Ferret system, a report is generated to detail the outcome. Following this, one of the 3 processes below will be followed:

- If there is no contribution the applicant will be informed verbally by the Technical Officer of the outcome and asked if they would like to proceed with the required works.
- If the applicant is required to make a contribution towards works, the Technical Officer will telephone the applicant and inform them of the contribution amount and will also confirm this in writing. This letter includes all the relevant information supplied by the applicant in terms of income. It is the applicants' responsibility to review this information and ensure that it is accurate. If it is accurate then the applicant will be asked to pay their contribution so work can commence. If incorrect, the applicant must inform the Technical Officer so the information can be recalculated.
- If the applicant is not entitled to any DFG assistance towards the works*, the Technical Officer will telephone the applicant to inform them, they will also confirm this in writing. This letter includes all the relevant information supplied by the applicant in terms of income. It is the applicants' responsibility to review this information and ensure that it is accurate. If incorrect, the applicant must inform the Technical Officer so the information can be recalculated. The letter will also offer one of 2 further options:
 1. If the applicant is a Council Tenant they will be informed of other Agencies who may be able to assist the applicant in providing the adaptations they require, though they will be required to fund such works themselves and contact their Local Housing Officer to arrange permissions.
 2. If the applicant is an Owner Occupier they will be advised to contact private contractors of their choice to obtain quotations for the works and will explain that the Adaptations Team can provide technical specifications that RMBC use.

*an applicant can also be defined as not eligible for any DFG assistance if the cost of works required is exceeded by their assessed contribution. For example an applicant requiring works costing £2,000, but who has a contribution of £3,000, would be deemed ineligible for any grant assistance towards the works.

7.9 A Council tenant will not be means tested in situations where an existing adaptation has broken down and cannot be repaired. Such cases are to be

referred to the Housing OT who will process the application in the same manner as detailed in 5.2, with the exception that the means test is negated to avoid any financial contribution by the tenant.

8.0 Adaptations Review Panel (ARP)

8.1 The purpose of the ARP is to expedite the evaluation of complex cases where major adaptations costing over £8,000 have been proposed. Membership of the ARP is limited to:

- Adaptation Manager
- Adaptations Co-ordinator
- Housing Occupational Therapy Manager
- Professional Lead Community Occupational Therapist Manager
- Specialists: including Technical Officers and Occupational Therapists (when required)

8.2 The ARP will not consider cases if housing options have not been explored prior to being presented to the panel (see section 14.3).

8.3 *ARP Process*

8.3.1 An OT08 form is completed by the OT. Details of the case are then subsequently passed to the Adaptations Team. A full evaluation of the case is undertaken including cost and feasibility studies alongside the OT and other relevant agencies.

8.3.2 The case officer prepares the respective case for submission with the appropriate documentation. The Adaptations Co-ordinator is provided with a summary detail of the case prior to presentation at the panel. The case is presented to the panel by the Community OT. Panel members then consider the information presented and discuss the case in order to facilitate a recommendation. In making its' decision, the ARP will look at all suitable solutions inclusive of re-housing (see section 14.3).

8.3.3 The review panel will look at all available solutions that will meet the customer needs and decide on which solution will be used.

8.3.4 If there is not enough information to make a reasonable decision, a request for further information will be made to the relevant source. Timescales for response will be agreed within the ARP.

8.3.5 Customers will be informed by letter as to the outcome of the decision from the ARP. Decision letters will be sent to the customer no later than 14 days following the ARP.

8.4 There is no appeals procedure to decisions made by the ARP. If a customer is unhappy with the decision that is made within the ARP, then they should follow the Council's general complaints procedure

(see section 20).

9.0 Authorisation Thresholds

9.1 The mandatory limit for adaptations is £30,000 per application in England. The following are the authorisation thresholds per Local Authority Officer:

- £0 - £8,000 Technical Officer
- £8,000 - £15,000 Adaptations Co-ordinator
- £15,000 - £30,000 Adaptations Manager

9.2 Above and beyond the mandatory limit, the Council is able to use discretionary powers to authorise further payments. However, any payments over the £30,000 limit will still come out of the same pool of funding. There is no additional funding for discretionary payments. This Additional Discretionary Funding is limited to £5,000 per application (see section 6.6).

9.3 All discretionary payments require authorisation from the Director of Housing. Any payments totalling more than £50,000 will require authorisation from the relevant Commissioner. It must be noted that the Council will investigate all other alternatives before considering discretionary payments (see section 14).

9.4 In the case of discretionary payments, a report will be submitted by the Adaptations Manager highlighting the individual circumstances and also the recommendations from the ARP.

10.0 Fees and Finance

Facilitation Fees

10.1 The Adaptations Team charges a fee to facilitate adaptations. This fee provides the finance to enable the service to operate.

10.2 For every major adaptation a 10% fee is charged to cover the costs of the Adaptations team. The same 10% fee applies to all minor adaptations and minor fixings. This fee is to support the project management of the adaptation from design to completion. The 10% is inclusive of the total amount of the adaptation and therefore is inclusive of any grant issued. The only exception to this rule is when a customer opts to appoint their own contractor, in which case a 5% fee is applied to cover the facilitation of the grant and associated admin costs.

The fee is incorporated into the total cost of the works and is to be paid as part of the DFG as per the *Housing Renewal Grants (Services and Charges) Order 1996*.

10.3 If a customer is eligible for a Disabled Facilities Grant, this can be used to cover the fees. It is important to note however, that if the cost of the adaptation is between £27,270 - £30,000, that there will be a requirement for the customer to pay additional monies.

For example:

An adaptation costing £30,000 would incur fees of £3,000 and therefore have a total cost of £33,000. The maximum DFG funding is £30,000 and therefore the customer would need to pay £3,000. This example is dependent on the customer passing a full means test and being awarded a nil payment toward the adaptation.

Architect Fees

- 10.4 In the circumstance where an extension or modular extension is required, or when complex internal alterations are required, architects will be used in accordance with legislation.
- 10.5 Where an architect is used, fees will also be incurred. Fees may vary, but the average cost is between £500 - £800. This fee works in the same way to the facilitation fee (see section 10.1).

Waiver of Fees

- 10.6 Through the personalisation agenda within Rotherham, customers may choose to arrange for works to be conducted themselves through contractors. However, initial visits and input will be required from the A&A Team.
- 10.7 In circumstances where a customer chooses to arrange their own works to be completed an administration charge of 5% will be applicable (rather than the normal 10%).
- 10.8 Customers who choose this option will be required to manage their own project.
- 10.9 If the customer has any issue with the contractor, then it is their responsibility to resolve the issue. If the Adaptations Team are required or asked to be involved then the applicable fee will apply.
- 10.10 Any unforeseen additional costs would need to be met by the customer and would not be met through the DFG.
- 10.11 Payments will be made directly to the contractor upon completion and will be deducted directly from any grant that is issued.
- 10.12 Interim payments can be made at the discretion of the Adaptations Manager.
- 10.13 Under no circumstances will the customer be given the award directly.
- 10.14 Customers living in Council Properties do not have the right to choose or appoint their own contractor. These works will be completed by RMBC's tendered or partner contractors. There are however 2 instances where the Adaptations Team have the right to exercise choice in contractor selection:

- When the use of a partner contractor would result in unnecessary financial hardship to the customer
Or
- When the works required from a partner contractor would exceed £5,000.

In either of these situations the Adaptations Team have the option of obtaining 3 quotations for the works from other RMBC approved contractors and the most competitive contractor used. This is to ensure both best value for money for RMBC and also minimise any expense to the customer.

Charges on Properties

- 10.15 The Council are able to add a legal charge to a privately owned property for the cost of the adaptation should the property be disposed of within 10 years. Where the applicant/customer or in the case of a child, their parent/guardian, are no longer the qualifying owner either by sale, donation or repossession, the property will be deemed as disposed of.
- 10.16 A legal charge will only be considered where the adaptation/s has increased the floor size of the property or added value to the property. Examples would include, loft conversions, extensions, out building conversions, multiple adaptations.
- 10.17 The Council will only consider adding a charge where the cost of the adaptation/s is more than £8,000.
- 10.18 Consideration does not mean that this is a blanket policy and every case will be judged on its own merits in terms of adding a charge. Full details of legal charges are available on the DFG application form.

VAT

- 10.19 As per *Notice 701/7 VAT Reliefs for disabled people August 2002*, the majority of works that are eligible for DFG funding are also eligible for zero rated VAT to maximise the available funding. For the purpose of this document it is acceptable to assume all works provided are eligible for zero rated VAT except bedroom extensions as per the above notice.

Eligibility for zero-rated VAT is limited to non-council owned properties, as the beneficiary for works in council properties is RMBC, and the funding does not come from the Capital budget, the VAT charged can be recovered. For non-council properties, the Adaptations Team will obtain a signed declaration from the applicant confirming the works are eligible for zero rated VAT and present this to the contractor when a works order is placed.

11.0 How decisions are made on adaptations and grant awards

- 11.1 Due to the demand for adaptations, the Adaptations Team will look at all

reasonable and practicable solutions to ensure that public monies are spent in a cost effective manner whilst maintaining the adaptation meets the customers' requirements. This is a key factor when reviewing major adaptations.

- 11.2 For non-council properties, if there is more than one adaptation solution that is deemed by the assessing Adaptations Officer as both reasonable and practicable then the most economical will be pursued. If the customer decides that they would prefer an alternative solution, then the cost of the proposed solution can be used toward the cost of the preferred option. However, if there are further costs then these would need to be met by the customer.
- 11.3 For council properties, the A&A Team will pursue the most reasonable and practicable (and thus cost effective) solution. If the applicant refuses the solution, it will be treated as such and the job will be cancelled.
- 11.4 Withholding and recalculating grants, and requesting repayment

As per the *Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 (Section 42)* the Council has the authority to withhold, request repayment or recalculate a grant that has been approved in the following circumstances:

- 11.4.1 If it is found that the amount of grant awarded was determined on the basis of inaccurate or incomplete information and exceeds that to which the applicant was entitled.
- 11.4.2 If it is found that the eligible works were started before the application was approved without the Council's knowledge.
- 11.4.3 The eligible works are not completed to the satisfaction of the Council within 12 months of the approval date as specified under *section 37 of the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996*, or any discretionary extended period the Council may allow under that provision.
- 11.4.4 If it is ascertained that the total of the cost of completing the eligible works and the costs incurred with respect to preliminary or ancillary services and charges, is or is likely to be lower than the estimated expense.
- 11.4.5 The Council ascertain that without their knowledge the eligible works were carried out by a contractor whom was not approved by the Council to carry out the eligible works or for any other reason listed within *Section 38 of the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act*.

In any of the above circumstances the Council has the right to:

- refuse to pay the grant or any further instalment of grant which remains to be paid, or

- make a reduction in the grant which, in a case falling within subsection 11.4.4, is to be a reduction proportionate to the reduction in the estimated expense;
- and they may demand repayment by the applicant forthwith, in whole or part, of the grant or any instalment of the grant paid, together with interest at such reasonable rate as the Council may determine from the date of payment until repayment.

12.0 Re-housing

12.1 See Section 14.3.

13.0 Refusals

13.1 All adaptations are subject to a Community Occupational Therapist assessment. Minor fixings and minor adaptations are seldom refused.

13.2 There are occasions where major adaptations will be refused. Some of these are determined under legislation.

13.3 *Under-Occupancy**

The parameters of Under Occupancy are defined within the Housing Benefit Regulations, the only exception being for the purpose of DFG applications, there are no age constraints on under occupancy.

If a customer is in a situation where they are under occupied and are requiring Major Adaptations the Council may choose to offer rehousing as the most appropriate solution to meet their assessed needs in the following circumstances:

- If the adaptation request is for a Level Access Shower in an under-occupied house. In this situation the tenant will be offered an alternative ground floor property which will meet their assessed needs.
- If the total cost of adaptations is over £8,000. In this situation the case must be presented by the OT to the ARP to discuss the individual case and determine the most reasonable and practicable, and necessary and appropriate solution.

In situations of under occupancy in council properties, adaptations falling into the above categories will not be considered unless:

- There are no suitable properties to meet the applicants assessed need within Council stock, or
- There are suitable properties within Council stock, but these are minimal and the likelihood of availability becoming apparent within a 6 month timeframe is very low.

Certain temporary adaptations can be offered to provide a short term solution. However, this would be investigated on a case by case basis and offered only in extreme circumstances.

In relation to customers who are in Council properties, those who are under occupying will be afforded reasonable preference to local accommodation as per the Allocations Policy.

** Please note that the under-occupancy criteria does not apply to applicants in Owner Occupied properties.*

13.4 *Mutual exchanges*

A customer who is residing in an adequately adapted property cannot mutually exchange to a property that does not have the specifically assessed adaptive requirements the customer needs.

Any mutual exchange must be authorised by a Housing Occupational Therapist as suitable, reasonable and appropriate to meet the customers' needs. If it does not, then the mutual exchange will not be allowed.

If two adapted properties are to be exchanged, then both properties must meet the needs of both households.

13.5 *Alternatives*

The Occupational Therapist will assess whether an adaptation is both necessary and appropriate.

By doing so, they will look at issues including but not limited to:

- Under occupancy
- Overcrowding
- Medical condition of applicant / household

Where an adaptation is not necessary and appropriate, the adaptation will be refused.

Similarly, the ARP may deem the recommended adaptations as not necessary or appropriate if rehousing can be offered that suitably meets the needs of the customer and can be provided in a reasonable (see section 14.3) timescale.

13.6 *State of the Property*

The state of the property is important and it must be deemed by the assessing Technical Officer as reasonable and practicable for an adaptation to occur.

In terms of the state of the property, the Technical Officer will look at issues

including but not limited to:

- Wear and tear
- Disrepair
- Electrics
- Plumbing
- Heating
- Environmental Health
- Structure including roofing
- Drainage

Where an adaptation is not reasonable and practicable to occur, the adaptation will be refused.

13.7 *Reports not Submitted*

All work needs to fall within the remit of the *Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996*. Therefore all relevant paperwork is required from all parties. Where adherence to the relevant Act has not occurred, an adaptation will be cancelled. Such paperwork may include but is not limited to:

- An asbestos refurbishment survey report or equivalent.
- A current Edition Electrical Test report.

13.8 The Adaptations Team will attempt to confirm proof of ownership of accommodation through the Land Registry. If this cannot be done, then the customer is responsible for proving ownership. If proof cannot be provided then an adaptation will be refused.

13.9 If the customer is a tenant, then they are required to provide proof of occupation. If this proof cannot be provided by the customer, then an adaptation will be refused.

13.10 If the property is not owned by the Council, then consent is required by the landlord or owner. If consent is not granted then an adaptation will be refused. Full consent is required and stipulations added by landlords will not be classed as full consent. The consent is for permanence of fixture and fitting.

13.11 Where a customer has been means tested and is required to contribute funds but declines to do so, the application will be cancelled.

13.12 If a customer withholds information that would normally be taken into account for a means test, an adaptation will be refused.

13.13 In the case of a split household where the disabled person is a child (under 16 yrs and a child who is in full time education under 19 yrs), adaptations will only be considered on one property.

The property where the parent who the child is dependent on resides will be given consideration for an adaptation. When deciding on which parent the child is dependent on, the following will be taken into account but is not limited to:

- Who the child resides with primarily
- Any Court Orders in place
- Who child benefit is paid to
- Agreements between parents
- The individual facts of the case

Other Refusals

13.14 Access

If the access height to a council 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 un-suitable for a disabled tenant. All adaptations to this property will then be refused and rehousing offered as the most suitable solution to meet the applicants assessed needs.

In such circumstances, adaptations would only be considered if:

- There are no suitable properties to meet the applicants assessed need within Council stock, Housing Association or the private rented market.
- There are suitable properties within Council stock, but these are minimal and the likelihood of availability becoming apparent within a 6 month timeframe is very low.

Such restrictions on adaptations is limited only to Council owned properties and does not apply to privately owned, rented or Housing Association properties.

13.15 Where a household is in a situation of overcrowding, the property will be deemed as being unsuitable for adaptations and therefore adaptations will be refused. However, if there is no suitable alternative accommodation within Council stock AND an adaptation would relieve the situation of overcrowding, then this may be considered as a solution.

13.16 For Council tenants, where re-housing is a potential suitable alternative to an adaptation and there is only one potential adaptation solution, consideration will be given to whether re-housing is a viable solution. Declining an adaptation may occur where suitable and appropriate accommodation is within Council stock that would meet the customers' needs.

13.17 Where the Council becomes aware that a tenant (council or not) may be facing eviction due to either antisocial behaviour or rent arrears. A stipulation of the DFG is that the applicant must confirm their intent to remain in the property for

a minimum of 5 years, and the landlord must confirm they will continue to offer the property to the applicant for let for the next 5 years.

13.18 Where the Council becomes aware that an owner occupier may be facing repossession of their property.

13.19 When making a decision on any application to adapt a Council property, consideration will be given to the properties 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 policy, or if it is not structurally possible to adapt a property to accommodate long term needs of a disabled tenant then all major adaptations will be refused and rehousing pursued as the most viable long term solution for the applicant. All cases will be considered on an individual basis.

13.20 Through Floor Lifts

Applications for through floor lifts in Council properties will be refused if the installation would result in a bedroom becoming unusable, thus reducing the number of bedrooms the property has. In such situations rehousing would be offered in accordance with the procedure detailed in Section 14.3.

14.0 Applications for Extensions

From time to time, it may not be possible to meet the needs of the disabled person within the footprint of the current property and so the Technical Officer may advise that an extension could be required. Occupational Therapists may, where no other alternatives exist, recommend the construction of ground floor facilities in order to meet the needs of a customer. When doing so the criteria set out in A2.1 must be satisfied and the following procedures must be adhered to;

For an extension request to be approved **ALL** the following criteria **MUST** be satisfied:

14.1 *Necessary and Appropriate:*

The OT must clearly demonstrate the customers need for the extension, and in doing so must rule out any alternative adaptation that may also suitably meet their needs.

The Adaptations Review Panel will assess the case and if any alternative solution is proposed this will be investigated prior to making a decision on the case. This could include, but is not limited to; other adaptations, smaller proposed extension or rehousing.

14.2 *Reasonable and Practicable:*

Refer to section 13.6

14.3 *Rehousing:*

Rehousing must be investigated at the point of identifying the need for an extension. This will be explored in full by a qualified Housing OT who will conduct a needs assessment in the customer's own home and open a housing application if they are eligible (as defined in the Allocations Policy). If a suitable property that adequately meets the applicant's (and their family's) needs is identified, and rehousing will not create any further care needs, this will be offered as the solution and the extension refused on the basis that the works are not necessary or appropriate to meet the needs of the disabled occupant (see above). 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. However this must be done in writing and whilst the property is still available for let in case the applicant changes their decision on whether to accept the property.

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 rehousing, 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.

14.4 *Under-Occupancy:*

Refer to section 13.3

14.5 *Customer Consent:*

As the provision of additional ground floor facilities may result in increased financial expenditure for the customer, before any decisions are to be made on the need to extend the property, the applicant must be duly informed of the implications an extension may have on rent, insurance, benefits, council tax, energy bills etc. This is to be relayed via the OT and Technical Officer upon their identification of need for an extension, and to be followed up with a letter from the Adaptations Team confirming this potential increased financial hardship, upon approval of the grant/works.

14.6 *Financial Assessment:*

Before any decision is made as to whether to approve an extension, a financial assessment (see section 7.0) must be undertaken to identify any required contributions the customer must make. If these are not acceptable to the customer for any reason, the application cannot be progressed.

If all the above criteria are satisfied the extension will be approved (subject to DFG regulation). Once works commence any open housing application will be cancelled by the Housing OT.

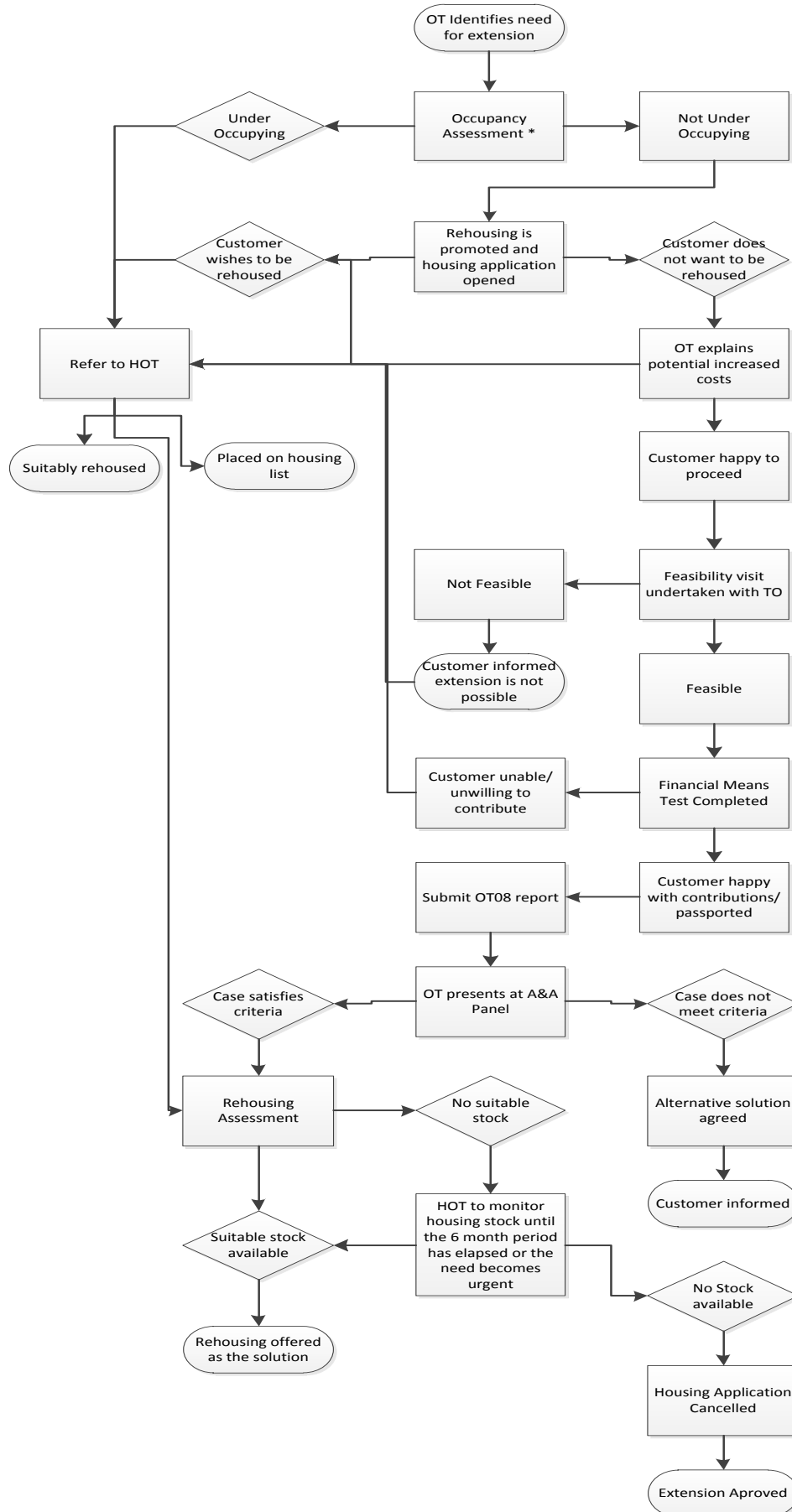
Once the above qualifying criteria for an extension are satisfied, an architect will be instructed to draw up the plans. These plans are then vetted by both an Occupational Therapist and a Technical Officer to ascertain whether a smaller scale project could be completed, providing it would still equally meet the customer's needs.

Similarly, to ensure costs are minimised, and to satisfy standing order requirements, the adaptations service will obtain a minimum of 3 quotations for the work, these will be from RMBC approved contractors.

There are 2 distinct variations to this quotation process for different property tenures:

- Non-Council Properties - The customer is entitled to obtain their own quotation from other non-RMBC approved contractors if they wish.
- Council Properties – As per the current partnering contract, all extensions proposed for council properties must be completed by a partner contractor. However this rule is void if the total cost of the extension exceeds £30,000 and would un-necessarily create financial hardship to the customer. In this situation the above 3 quotation process would be employed.

Extension Approval Process Map:



14.7 Extensions on Council Properties

As RMBC hold a stock portfolio of over 20,000 properties, extensions to council stock are seldom approved as rehousing is the usual solution offered. However if all the above criteria set out in sections 14.1 – 14.6 are met extensions may be approved. In these situations further interdepartmental agreement is necessary before an application can be approved:

14.7.1 The Adaptations Team will send proposed plans to the Housing Investment Service to confirm their consent to the works.

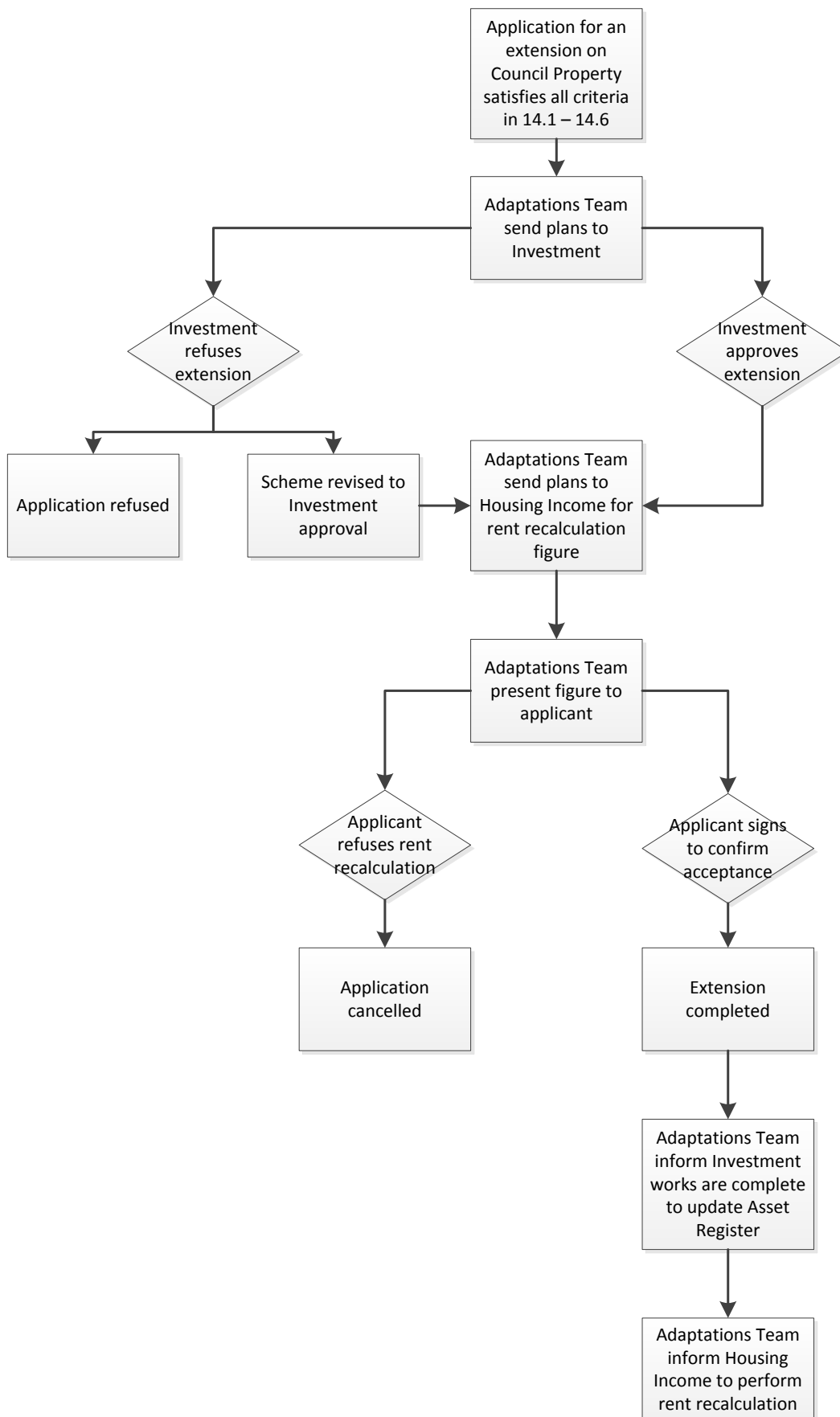
14.7.2 The Adaptations Team will send proposed plans to the Housing Income Service to confirm the rent recalculation that would be applied if the extension were to go ahead (if appropriate).

14.7.3 The applicant would then be required to sign to confirm they are happy for their rent to increase by the stated amount.

Provided all the above are satisfied, the extension can then be approved and it is the responsibility of the Adaptations Team to inform both the Investment Team and the Housing Income Team when the works are complete so that the rent recalculation can be applied and the Asset Register updated. Regardless of the type of extension, where a ground floor shower/bath room has been added, the property will always be reclassified as benefitting from an increase in number of bedrooms. Whether a bedroom has also been built or a second ground floor room has been converted into a bedroom. This is because a Council property with ground floor bathing facilities should also have an appropriate ground floor bedroom as well.

This process is detailed in the process map below:

Council Property Extension Process Map



15.0 Removal of Adaptations

15.1 *Void Properties*

Adaptations to void properties will only be removed following approval from the Adaptations Co-ordinator who will liaise with the Housing Occupational Therapist before making a decision.

15.2 Adaptations will not be removed unless:

- There are no suitable applicants requiring such adaptations on the Housing Register.
- They are not fit for purpose and beyond economical repair.
- Special circumstances

15.3 *Let Properties*

Consideration for removal of adaptations may occur after succession or assignment of a property unless:

- by either succeeding to the property or being assigned the property, the property will or has become under occupied (see 13.3); and/or
- any occupant has been assessed as requiring use of the adaptation; and/or
- the equipment can be re-used in another property (such as stair lifts)

Note that adaptations that can be re-used elsewhere may not be removed if significant alterations have been made to the property to make it specifically suitable for a disabled occupant. For example if a tenant is requesting a stair lift is to be removed from a property which also benefits from a level access shower and/or ramped access, then the request may be declined.

15.4 Rules for succession and assignment can be found within the Allocations Policy.

15.5 The Council may only remove adaptations installed in Council properties. Adaptations installed in non-council properties are the responsibility of the owner/tenant to remove. The exception to this rule is when modular ramps are installed, the Council (where instructed to do so by the applicant or their representative) may choose to remove these items at no cost to the applicant, provided they confirm they will cease ownership of such products and consent to RMBC recycling them. This does not impose duty on the Council to remove such products, rather it offers the ability to exercise choice if the Council feels the item could be of use to another disabled person in the borough.

15.6 When adaptations are approved to be removed from Council properties, the Adaptations Co-Ordinator will contact the relevant person responsible for co-

ordinating their removal. This person will then have the responsibility to update the Asset Team so that the Asset Register is kept up-to-date.

16.0 Warranties

16.1 Non-Council properties

As part of all applications, a standard 12 month warranty is provided on all products and works. After this period no additional warranty is offered with the exception of the below:

- Stair Lifts – as part of the DFG, the applicant receives a 5 year service and repair warranty package.
- Ceiling Track Hoists – as part of the DFG, the applicant receives a standard 1 year warranty, following which they are provided with a further 4 year service package, with no breakdown cover.

After the stated warranty period has expired it is the applicant's responsibility to pay for maintenance/repair of the adaptations.

16.2 Council properties

A standard 12 month warranty is provided by all suppliers/contractors. Following which the repair, service and maintenance of all products is handled by RMBC Repairs. It is the responsibility of the Adaptations Co-Ordinator to ensure that once any manufacturers/contractor warranty has expired, the appropriate service within RMBC is informed to ensure scheduled maintenance and repair is maintained.

17.0 Allocations of Adapted Properties

Applicants requesting re-housing and require some form of adaptations

17.1 Where an applicant has applied for adaptations:

17.1.1 Applicants will need to have been assessed by an Occupational Therapist as requiring adaptations.

17.1.2 Where a customer wants to be re-housed rather than adapt their existing property, the Occupational Therapist should recommend requirements **and** solutions. This is contrary to the normal process highlighted within 5.2.

17.1.3 The Occupational Therapist must then contact the Assessment Team (Housing) to inform them of the outcome and requirements.

17.1.4 Where an applicant has not applied for adaptations they will need to be assessed by the Assessment Team (Housing).

- 17.2 Where the Housing Advice Officer deems that adaptations are required when moving to a new property, they should update the customer's application with the requirements and the correct Medical Priority Band 2.
- 17.3 If the customer is adequately housed and existing adaptations in the applicant's current property meet the customers need, then a Band 2 will not be awarded.
- 17.4 Allocations of adapted properties will be to those with an assessed need for those adaptations.
- 17.5 If no applicant is suitable for the adapted property, but their needs partly meet the adaptations then they will be allocated in line with the Allocations Policy.
- 17.6 If an applicant does not require the adaptations within a property, then the Adaptations Team should be contacted prior to an offer to an applicant. The Adaptations Manager may consider removal of adaptations if it is feasible and appropriate under special circumstances, however, it is expected that this would only be in limited cases. If a property that is allocated is let to an applicant and then contact is made with the Adaptation Team to request removal of an adaptation, such a request would be refused.
- 17.7 In the case of a split household where the disabled person is a child (16 yrs and under or 19 yrs and under if the child is in full time education), Medical Priority Band 2 cannot be given to both parents.

The parent with parental control will be given Medical Priority Band 2 due to a child's disability. When deciding on who has parental control, the following will be taken into account:

- Who the child resides with primarily
- Any Court Orders in place
- Who child benefit is paid to

The other parent will not be given Medical Priority if that priority is solely reliant on the child's circumstances. The applicant would remain within the group they are currently in.

If there are special circumstances that mean the applicant requires adaptations, but they are not eligible, then their case maybe considered at the Housing Assessment Panel. (See Allocations Policy for details)

- 17.8 All adapted properties are advertised in the Key Choices Letting Scheme, but the advert will inform the customer that preference will be given to applicants who have made a bid with an assessed need.
- 17.9 Where adaptations have been refused on a property for one of the reasons listed within Section 13, a report should be submitted to the Housing Assessment Panel. The panel have the authority to consider Band 1 status under exceptional circumstances.

17.10 Where a Major Adaptation valued over £8,000 has been identified as a potential solution and a further potential solution is for re-housing, a report should be submitted to the Housing Assessment Panel. The panel have the authority to consider Band 1 status under exceptional circumstances.

18.0 Health and Safety

18.1 The Adaptations team deliver the service at a local level, via home visits, which supports the Council's commitment to providing greater accessibility to services, meeting social needs by helping to ensure a better quality of life, improving fair access and choice, protecting, keeping safe vulnerable people and specifically addresses the diversity agenda, by tailoring services to the needs of hard to reach groups.

18.2 To ensure Health and Safety procedures are adhered to, the team work within the provisions of an ETAB procedure. A copy of this procedure is available to all Housing Options staff.

*The ETAB procedure contained personal staff information and is therefore not published or available to non-council members.

18.3 All accidents and incidents should be reported to the Adaptations Manager and the Health and Safety Team.

Any threats of violence or actual violence against staff will be reported to the police and legal action will be pursued against the perpetrator. Staff will work to the policy and guidelines on work related violence to employees in line with:

- The Health and Safety at Work Act
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Approved Code of Practice and guidance L 21

19.0 Safeguarding

19.1 All safeguarding issues will be reported to the Safeguarding Team's as per the Council's safeguarding policy. For concerns about Children and Young people contact Rotherham Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub-(MASH) telephone (01709) 336080 and Adult Safeguarding concerns to Assessment Direct telephone (01709) 822330

20.0 Complaints

20.1 All complaints are dealt with under the corporate complaints procedure.

20.2 Advice and guidance for staff dealing with complaints can be found on the intranet.

20.3 Advice for customers wishing to register a complaint can be gathered from:

https://www.rotherham.gov.uk/forms/form/310/en/complain_about_council_services

20.4 Complaints can be made in writing, via email or over the telephone.

21.0 Data Protection

21.1 The Council will comply with the Data Protection Act 1998 and Article 8 of the Human Rights Act and will show proper regard for the confidentiality of service users and employees personal information.

21.2 The Adaptations Team will work within the guidelines of the Council's Data Protection Policy

22.0 Equality and Diversity

22.1 The Council will comply with the Equality Act 2010 and related legislation as per below:

- Equal Pay Act 1970
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- Race Relations Act 1976
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Employment Equality (Religion and Belief) Regulations 2003
- Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006
- Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007

22.2 The Council will comply with all anti-discrimination legislation including:

- Human Rights Act 1998
- Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004
- Civil Partnership Act 2004
- Gender Recognition Act 2004
- Work and Families Act 2006

22.3 The Council operates an Equality and Diversity Policy which the Adaptations Team works within.

Aids and Adaptations

Appendices

December 2015

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A1.0 Types and Specifications of Adaptation

This policy aims to identify the most common adaptations required as part of a grant application, it does not cover all possible adaptations that may be relevant to the purpose of section 23 of the *Housing, Grants, Construction & Regeneration Act 1996* and thus is not limited to its content. Furthermore its intention is to provide guidance, individual needs and circumstances are to be taken into consideration when assessing qualifying criteria of adaptations.

A2.0 Types of Major Adaptation

A2.1 Extensions

Apart from Modular Extensions, extensions are the most costly type of major adaptation. Extensions generally include adding further rooms to an existing property, such as bathing/washing facilities or bedroom.

Consideration for extending a property to include washing and bathing facilities may occur when:

- The client meets the criteria for the facility (see criteria for W.C. and showers).

And

- The client is unable to negotiate stairs.

Or

- The client has extreme difficulty in negotiating stairs and the prognosis indicates that there will be deterioration of function in the future, and a stair-lift/vertical lift is not appropriate.

And

- It is not technically feasible to install, or client functionally unable to use a stair-lift or vertical lift.

And

- The existing facilities are not accessible and cannot be reasonably adapted to make them suitable for the disabled person.

Consideration for extending a property to include bedroom facilities may occur when:

- It is not appropriate to provide lift/stair-lift access to the existing bedroom (See criteria for lift provision).

And

- There is only one reception room (living room or dining room) on the ground floor, and there is more than one person in the household. Where there have previously been two separate rooms which have been converted into a through room, the expectation would be that the room would be restored to its previous condition (as part of the adaptation), thus providing two rooms again, one of which would be used as a bedroom for the person with disabilities.

Or

- When both of the above apply, but the remaining reception room cannot

reasonably be expected to be used as a dining/living room, because of the size of the household including the person with disabilities.

And

- Additional bedroom/ living space can be considered for a client with behavioural problems where safety is a predominant concern; for example, children sharing a bedroom when left unsupervised at night one child poses a significant safety risk to the other/others.

Note: In all cases where general alterations and extensions to living space maybe applicable, re-housing will be discussed with the customer.

Costs can range from £12,000 - £45,000.

A2.2 Conversions

Conversions include the alteration of a specified room or building to meet the customers need. Often this would mean converting a garage, loft or parlour room into a bedroom or bathroom or both. This can be a cost effective alternative to building an extension.

Consideration for converting a property to include washing and bathing facilities may occur when:

- The client meets the criteria for the facility (see criteria for W.C. and showers).

And

- The client is unable to negotiate stairs.

Or

- The client has extreme difficulty in negotiating stairs and the prognosis indicates that there will be deterioration of function in the future, and stair-lift/vertical lift is not appropriate.

And

- It is not technically feasible to install, or client functionally unable to use a stair-lift or vertical lift.

And

- The existing facilities are not accessible and cannot be reasonably adapted to make them suitable for the disabled person.

Consideration for converting a property to include bedroom facilities may occur when:

- It is not appropriate to provide lift/stair-lift access to the existing bedroom. (See criteria for lift provision)

And

- There is only one reception room (living room or dining room) on the ground floor, and there is more than one person in the household. Where there have previously been two separate rooms which have been converted into a through room, the expectation would be that the room would be restored to its previous condition (as part of the adaptation), thus providing two rooms again, one of which would be used as a bedroom for the person with disabilities.

Or

- The above applies, but the remaining reception room cannot reasonably be expected to be used as a dining/living room, because of the size of the household including the person with disabilities.

And

- Additional bedroom/ living space can be considered for a client with behavioural problems where safety is a predominant concern; for example, children sharing a bedroom when left unsupervised at night one child poses a significant safety risk to the other/others

Note: In all cases where general alterations and extensions to living space maybe applicable, re-housing will be discussed with the customer.

Costs can range from £11,000 - £25,000.

A2.3 Ramped Access

Ramped Access will be considered where:

- (Non-Self Propelling Wheelchair Users) the customer is unable to walk short distances and/or negotiate steps safely. If the customer is able to manage with the assistance of a carer a ramp will not usually be provided. However, if the customer would only need a carer to assist with the external access and the provision of a ramp would enable to customer to be independent, a ramp will be considered.
- (Self Propelling Wheelchair Users) The customer is a full-time wheelchair user and where it is feasible, provision will be made. However, frequency of use will be taken into account.
- (Powered vehicles purchased by customer) Where the customer is eligible for provision of a Health Authority wheelchair and fulfils criteria A2.3 (a) or (b) provision of a ramp will be considered.

Concrete ramping is supplied to Council stock as standard and modular temporary ramping to Private properties. There are however several exemptions from this rule:

- Private property residents do have the right to apply for concrete ramping if they desire.
- If deemed appropriate by the Occupational Therapist or Adaptations Technical Officer, modular temporary ramping can be installed in Council properties for one or both of the following reasons:
 - Where the property is on 2 floors and is presently suitably un-adapted for disabled use, the use of temporary ramping would allow the property to be easily returned to its original (un-adapted) state if the property were to become unoccupied in the future. If the property is ground floor, or has a level access shower installed this rule becomes void.
 - Where the Occupational Therapists deem it necessary as the occupant is terminally ill.

Particular care must be taken concerning structure and location of the ramp to ensure its safe use, not only by the person with disabilities, but also by other members of the public.

The British Standard Code of Practice for 'Design of Housing for the Convenience of Disabled People', BS8300 (2010) should be adhered to as a minimum standard where possible.

Ramped access would generally be a minimum of 1:12 and ideally 1:15.

Ground excavation concluded and paving slabs on end to be used as retainer unless otherwise specified. Hardcore compacted to necessary levels not exceeding 150mm. 20mm aggregate concrete not exceeding 150mm thick brought to a tamped finish with trowelled edges. Finished area to be suitably graded that no ponding of water is apparent.

Ramped access to have a minimum of 100mm up stands. Width of ramp must be a minimum of 1200mm unobstructed. A gradient of 1:12 is acceptable where individual flights are no longer than 5m. For flights greater than 10m a minimum 1200 x 1200 level landing must be provided.

An Aco drainage channel or similar approved to be fitted at head of ramp. The existing DPC must be protected by the provision of a vertical damp proof membrane. Ventilation to the sub floor spaces through the existing air grates must be maintained. Supply and fit galvanised mild steel tubular handrails. Tubular handrail to be 50mm in diameter. Handrail to be 900mm high from ramp with uprights at maximum centres of 2m. Uprights to be placed at every change of direction.

Ramped Access costs can range from £1,000 - £12,000

A2.4 Through Floor Lifts

A through floor lift will be considered when a customer meets the guidelines for a stairlift but is unable to use a stairlift safely or for whom a stairlift is contra-indicated.

The following considerations need to be taken into account:

- (a) Health and Safety/Building/Fire Regulations affecting the proposed installation.
- (b) Customers with pre-paid meters may need further advice from the contracted company as to whether a through floor lift is appropriate.
- (c) Where a client lives alone, or is alone for long periods, the installation of an alarm/telephone to summon help in an emergency should be considered.

Through floor lifts are applicable to assist customers reaching upper floors who cannot utilise stair lifts. Space is required on both floors to ensure this option can be done.

Lifts shall comply with all British and European standards such as BS 5776 including all current amendments applicable at the time of manufacture. Through Floor Lifts shall comply with BS 5900. All lifts must comply with the BSEN 8140 standards as and when they are published.

Lift will be a single floor rise, and in case of fire the lift must return to 1st floor, for indoor use only.

The lift must be constructed so that it does not cause excessive electromagnetic interference and are not unduly affected by electromagnetic interference, and carry C.E marking in accordance with the E.H.C Directive 89/336/E.E.C. and Amending Directive 92/31 E.E.C.

A lockable ON/OFF switch shall always be supplied and installed either on the machine or on the wall.

Any electrical work which may be required must be carried out in accordance with current legislation and an appropriate certificate to be produced upon completion.

In the case of single access properties, stair lifts must not be installed that could prevent access in the case of emergency.

All lifts must be individually serial numbered and full installation/maintenance records must be maintained.

Costs can range from £10,000 - £16,000

A2.5 Stair lifts

When recommending stair lifts, the following considerations need to be taken into account:

- Health and Safety/Building/Fire Regulations affecting the proposed installation, e.g. minimum stair widths.
- Customers with pre-paid meters may need further advice from the contracted company regarding the on-going power needed for charging the stairlift battery back up.
- Contra Indications such as:
 - Progressive conditions which will affect transfer to stair-lift.
 - Poor sitting/standing balance due to medical reason.
 - Fast deteriorating conditions.
 - Client is confused, or spatial orientation problems are present.
 - Severe epilepsy.
 - Children with complex needs
 - Anxiety factor unresolved by trial use.

Criteria/guidelines for recommendation of a stair lift are as follows:

- (a) It is severely painful or functionally very difficult for the client to climb the stairs.
- (b) It is medically contra-indicated for the client to climb the stairs, even with additional stair rails.
- (c) The prognosis is static/deteriorating (i.e. that rehabilitation or recovery following illness has been considered)
- (d) Stairlifts will not usually be recommended where the disabled person has access to a downstairs bathroom and toilet and where there is adequate space for a bed downstairs.
- (e) Where there have previously been two separate rooms which have been converted into a through room, the expectation would be that room would be restored to its previous condition (as part of the adaptation), thus providing two rooms again, one of which could be used as a bedroom for the person with disabilities' (if there is a bathroom and toilet downstairs already).
- (f) Where a person has a downstairs toilet (inside with heating) and is able to negotiate the stairs safely once in the morning and once at night, a stairlift will not normally be recommended'.
- (g) Stairlifts to first floor flats will not usually be recommended where the person is able to negotiate the steps once per day. A door entry system would be considered.

Standard specification must include:

- Manual swivel seat.
- Seatbelt to be fitted as standard.
- Padded upholstery in a neutral colour.
- Minimum safe working Load 120Kg.
- Up to 5000mm of track
- 12 months fully inclusive warranty.

Stair lifts must comply with the BSEN 8140 standards as and when they are published. The stair lift must be constructed so that it does not cause excessive electromagnetic interference and are not unduly affected by electromagnetic interference, and carry C.E marking in accordance with the E.H.C Directive 89/336/E.E.C. and Amending Directive 92/31 E.E.C.

A lockable ON/OFF switch shall always be supplied and installed either on the machine or on the wall. The electrical supply to the appliance shall be a unique dedicated clearly labelled supply and terminate adjacent to the appliance or control

unit in a switched fuse connection. When specified a 30 mA sec RCCD shall be installed to protect the 240 V parts of the installation.

Any electrical work which may be required must be carried out in accordance with current legislation and an appropriate certificate to be produced upon completion.

Varying costs apply dependent on if the staircase is straight. Curved stair lifts are available at a higher cost. Space at the top of the stairs is required for transfers on and off the lift.

Costs can range from £1,400 - £8,000.

A2.6 Ceiling Track Hoists

Ceiling track hoists are fitted to assist with the transfer of customers in and out of bed, in and out of bathing facilities and on and off toilets. Occupational Therapists individually assess customers for sling requirements.

Ceiling Track Hoists are usually electric and consist of a hoist suspended from a length of overhead tracking fitted in one of three ways:-

- Ceiling fixed.
- Wall fixed.
- Gantry fixed between A frames.

A hoist will be recommended when:

(a) A moving and handling assessment has determined that hoist transfers are necessary and other equipment has been considered and is unsuitable.

And

(b) There is insufficient room for a mobile hoist

Or

(c) Provision of a ceiling track hoist will reduce the number of carers or support the carer(s) by reducing the physical exertion of moving and handling.'

Customers with pre-paid meters may need further advice from the contracted company regarding the on-going power needed for charging the hoist when not in use.

The unit must be installed to include connection to a suitable electrical supply. Any electrical work which may be required must be carried out in accordance with current legislation and an appropriate certificate to be produced upon completion. Minimum safe working Load 130Kg.

All hoists must be individually serial numbered and full installation/maintenance records must be maintained.

Tracks can be straight and can offer turning circles. They can transfer through multiple rooms. Joists are required for this to occur.

Joist requirements are to be in line with those specified by current Ceiling Track Hoist tendered contractor.

Costs can range from £1,200 - £6,000

A2.7 Internal Alterations

Internal alterations can include door widening, wall removing/building and sometimes can fall into the minor adaptations category.

Costs can range from £1,000 - £10,000

A2.8 Modular Extensions

These are pre-built extensions that can be moved from one location to another. The initial costs are high, but they are re-usable and can be moved. The cost of moving them is also high and they are of a set format so will not always be relevant. There are currently 3 in the borough.

Costs can range from £25,000 - £100,000

A2.9 Hard standings

Hard standings include drop kerbs (although these on their own fall under Minor Adaptations – see A 3.12), are for off road parking for level access to properties for wheelchair use.

Hard standings will only be approved where:

- The customer's home has no off-street parking space. (However exceptions may be made by the OT on an individual needs basis when considering individual care package needs)

And

- Parking stress in the area must be so severe that a parking space in close proximity to the address cannot be found for a major portion of most days (i.e. occasional short-lived 'invasions' by patrons of places of public resort would not normally qualify).

And

- The **driver** is a Blue Badge holder who is only able to walk or propel a wheelchair for short distances outside the home. The driver should be suffering from 'substantial' and permanent ambulatory disability, considerable disability in walking more than a short distance without severe difficulty, pain or detriment to his/her condition.

Or

- The **passenger** is a Blue Badge holder and the driver is unable to park in the road to allow the disabled person out, or cannot push a

wheelchair from the nearest available parking area, which is an unreasonable distance away.

Passengers will not normally qualify as it is not unreasonable to expect that an able-bodied driver should 'double-park' if necessary to set down the disabled passenger and remove the vehicle afterwards. Although this may entail short-term obstructions of the highway, as it is not either 'unnecessary' or 'wilful' it is unlikely to be considered to constitute an offence.

Exceptions may be made where the passenger requires constant attendance or, where the driver is of advanced age or frailty and has to man-handle equipment, wheelchair etc. in addition to the disabled passenger.

Consideration is taken of the customer's medical condition and long term prognosis.

All the above are subject to planning regulations and permission.

Grounds will be excavated until a suitable sub grade is reached and debris will be removed from site. 50mm thick pre-cast paving slabs to be used as retainer unless otherwise specified. These will provide the framework into which the hard core and concrete will be placed.

When installed the paving flags will be vertical and plumb on sides, the top edge shall be level, the base shall be set into the ground to a depth of not less than 200mm, held in place with concrete. The top edge of the flag shall be cut with a masonry saw to give a straight clean edge 100 mm above the finished surface of the concrete and shall be consistent along the gradient of the ramp. The cut edge is to be smooth and flat with all sharp arises removed to form a chamfered edge. Paving flags shall comply with current legislation. Hardcore compacted to necessary levels not exceeding 200mm. 20mm aggregate concrete not exceeding 150mm brought to a tamped finish with trowelled edges.

A fair joint will be made at the junction of the ramp and existing hard surface. The platform shall be level with the internal finished floor level. The finished area will be suitably graded to ensure that no ponding of water is apparent.

The existing DPC must be protected by the provision of a vertical damp proof membrane. Sub ventilation to dwelling must be maintained where air bricks are obstructed: installation of 100mm PVC pipe duct from the existing air brick terminating at a new air brick installed within the platform/ramp will be required.

Costs can range from £1,000 - £3,500

A2.10 Level Access Shower

Level Access Showers do not mean that the room will be a wet room, it will just have a wet area and therefore customers must be made aware that water still may run out of the tray area and therefore will sit on any residing floor area.

A level access shower can be recommended when one or both of the following criteria is fulfilled:

- The disabled person fulfils the guidelines for an over-bath shower but is unable to lift their legs over the bath side even with assistance. The level of discomfort and pain must also be considered when assessing whether it is appropriate for the customer to be assisted. If a client would be dependent on a carer for assistance and a care package is being considered for this alone, a level access shower could be considered to promote independence.

Or

- Single incontinence and inability to use equipment independently.

An information sheet is to be sent to all customers detailing the above, with regard to what they are and are not entitled to as part of the DFG. Under no circumstance (unless authorised by the OT) will the adaptations team pay for, or indeed facilitate any works not mentioned above unless it has direct impact upon the installation of the Level Access Shower.

Preformed shower tray forming a wet area; thermostatically controlled shower; approximately 8 sq metres of tiling; shower rail and weighted curtain with between 10ml – 20ml gap from floor; grab rails as necessary; slip resistant floor covering for entire room; moisture resistant lights; extractor fan.

Pipe work to run the shortest possible route to unit and to be chrome face fixed. Any new outlets must have means of isolation fitted.

100mm axial extractor fan with a 15 litres per second extraction volume with a pre set factory fitting. Fan to have an isolator fitted outside the bathroom to comply with current legislation.

Tiles to be fixed with water proof adhesive and water proof grout. Tiling. Waterproof adhesive to BS 5980 and BS EN 1347 applied.. The tiles are to be evenly spaced and shall be both plumb in the vertical and level on the horizontal lines and provide a smooth and even surface when fixed. Fit plastic tile edging strips around window apertures and as vertical end stops where required.

Waterproof grout to joints, filling all voids. Joints abutting window frames, door casings, skirtings, shower trays and baths to be sealed using silicone sealant to BS

5889 for use in wet areas. Wipe down all surfaces to remove residue of grout. Leave installation clean, tidy and ready for use.

Replace existing light fitting with moisture resistant lights operated by a new pull cord. Where a pump is required for drainage purposes an Impey Gulpar pump should be fitted.

Supply and fit fully weighted shower curtain to hang flush with floor shower area in a safe and operational manner. Curtain to be anti-fungal. Rail, curtain runners and rings to be fixed with plugs and screws as per manufacturers instructions.

All pipe boxing required is to be formed from PVC boards and sealed with anti-fungal silicon sealant.

Floor area of bathroom to be covered with SLIP RESISTANT FLOORING. Seams on flooring to be welded and adhesives to be used as per manufacturer's instructions. Customers have choice of colour (subject to availability).

In instances where the floor area is too large for one piece of covering, the welded jointing strip **MUST** be away from the showering area.

Floor sheet to be fully sealed and secured. Silicone sealant to BS 5889 for use in wet area.

All installations to be in accordance with the regulations of current legislation. A minor works electrical certificate is to be issued upon completion of the works along with the invoice.

Costs can range from £1,800 - £4,000

A2.11 Shower over bath

Over bath showers will only be recommended where the client has one or more of the following problems:

- Double incontinence
- Unpredictable epilepsy or black outs
- Confirmed medical condition where bathing is contraindicated.
- Inability to use bathing equipment safely. A bath board and seat has been considered but is inappropriate due to the customer's degree of functional loss. If a client can achieve independence with the provision of an over bath shower, provision will be considered to avoid the necessity of a care package. The client may have to consider purchasing a bath board or swivel bather to enable them to access the over bath shower.

Thermostatically controlled shower; approximately 5 sq metres of tiling; shower rail and weighted curtain with a minimum 200ml hang within the bath; grab rails as necessary; moisture resistant lights; extractor fan.

Supply and fix controlled shower unit with lever control, extra long sliding bar and grab rails to be positioned as per OT's specification

A cord operated, double pole isolating switch or wall mounted switch is to be conveniently located outside the bath/shower room with minimum contact gap of 3mm both poles. The switch must be accessible and clearly identified with neon indicator light. A 30MA residual current device and 40 amp MCB unit is to be sited adjacent to existing consumer unit. Connector block and 2 No. 25mm² PVC double insulated and sheathed tails to meter.

Pipe work to run the shortest possible route to unit and to be chrome face fixed. Any new outlets must have means of isolation fitted. Grab rails to be PVC grab rails (with a ribbed finish) or similar approved. All cables recessed underneath plasterwork must be protected with PVC capping fixed with non-ferrous materials.

Tiles to be fixed with water proof adhesive and water proof grout. Tiling. Waterproof adhesive to BS 5980 and BS EN 1347 applied. The tiles are to be evenly spaced and shall be both plumb in the vertical and level on the horizontal lines and provide a smooth and even surface when fixed. Fit plastic tile edging strips around window apertures and as vertical end stops where required.

Waterproof grout to joints, filling all voids. Joints abutting window frames, door casings, skirtings and baths to be sealed using silicone sealant to BS 5889 for use in wet areas. Wipe down all surfaces to remove residue of grout. Leave installation clean, tidy and ready for use.

Replace existing light fitting with moisture resistant lights operated by a new pull cord.

Supply and fit fully weighted shower curtain to hang flush with floor shower area in a safe and operational manner. Curtain to be anti-fungal. Rail, curtain runners and rings to be fixed with plugs and screws as per manufacturer's instructions.

All pipe boxing required is to be formed from PVC boards and sealed with anti-fungal silicon sealant.

Supply and fit fully weighted shower curtain to hang within 200mm of bath. Curtain to be anti-fungal. Rail, curtain runners and rings to be fixed with plugs and screws as per manufacturer's instructions.

Allow a 25mm lip minimum on wall side of bath for the fitting of equipment if needed and silicon seal bath area with anti-fungal silicon sealant to prevent water penetration.

All pipe boxing required is to be formed from PVC boards and sealed with anti-fungal silicon sealant.

All installations to be in accordance with the regulations of current legislation. A minor works electrical certificate is to be issued upon completion of the works along with the invoice.

Costs can range from £1,000 - £2,000

A2.12 Toilets:

Additional (Standard) W.C.

E.g. provision of a W.C. on the ground floor. This will only be considered where chemical W.C. and commodes are inappropriate because there is only one ground floor room plus kitchen and the client lives with other family members.

Criteria

- There is a permanent medical condition affecting frequency/urgency of micturition and/or bowels.
- The client's functional ability to reach the existing W.C. is severely restricted due to the nature of their disability.
- Where access to existing amenities cannot be provided.
- A chemical W.C. and special commodes have been considered and are inappropriate.

Special W.C.

An automatic W.C. that provides flushing, warm washing and drying functions from one operation, i.e. it combines the functions of a W.C. and a bidet with an additional drying facility.

Criteria

- The client is unable to maintain proper hygiene after toileting due to degree of their functional loss.
- The provision would give the client an appreciable degree of independence in toileting.

Combined W.C./Shower Unit

Criteria

- The client meets the criteria for an additional W.C. and for a shower.
- No alternative is available.

Water

15mm cold water service only, water supply can be from high or low level storage or mains.

A special W.C. will be supplied with 15mm isovalve/flow control filter. No external hot water supply is required. Any new outlets must have means of isolation fitted.

Soil connection

Standard outlets suitable for "P" trap through the wall (180mm floor to centre) or "S" trap through the floor (150mm wall to centre).

Electrical

Any electrical work which may be required must be carried out in accordance with current legislation and an appropriate certificate to be produced upon completion. 220/240v single phase AC supply is required (loading 6 to 8 amp, maximum power 1500 watts). A fuse spur outlet should be located adjacent to the unit preferably on R.H.S. facing. This must not have a switch if the unit is in bath or shower area.

Over Flow

Has an internal overflow which discharges into the WC pan through the discharge outlet valve (flush valve). If external overflow is required then the rear of the cistern can be drilled to accommodate a 22mm rear entry overflow; where sited against external or panelled wall, the overflow can be taken straight through. If this is not possible, the wall may have to be chased to accommodate the overflow, or the unit may have to be fitted further toward and then panelled-in.

Costs can range from £2,000 - £4,000

A2.13 Central Heating

Provision will be considered in any one of the following circumstances:

- Where a person is unable to manage their existing heating system and there is no carer (family, friend or home carer) available to assist.
- Where a person requires additional heating because of specific medical condition which causes an inability to keep warm using the existing heating system.
- Where there is medical evidence that hospital admissions are clearly related to the form of heating in the client's home.
- Where a person has a condition which causes them to be a danger to themselves or others because of the existing heating, e.g. hyperactivity, severe sensory impairment, severe learning disability.

Consideration will be given to:

- Reasonable alternative ways of managing the existing system. The amount of support required and already provided during the day should be taken into account when deciding whether an alternative is reasonable. For example, where a client requires assistance to light and maintain the fire, a change of heating may be more appropriate than home care provision where care is not already being provided for other activities.
- Heating will only be provided in rooms used by the client for a substantial amount of time e.g. sitting room, bathroom, bedroom. Heating will not generally be recommended in hallways, etc.
- Unless the client requires a specific type of heating due to their disability, the actual form of heating need not be specified on the OT35b referral to the Adaptations Team in order to give them flexibility and therefore reduce costs.

The new heating systems will be designed as a fully pumped, sealed, two pipe system with a difference across the heating circuit of 20° C to maximise the efficiency of the condensing boilers.

Heating and hot water is to be provided via an 'A' rated, condensing combination room sealed boiler installed generally within either the existing cylinder cupboard or kitchen. The boilers selected should meet the following requirements:

- The boiler should be of 28kw output and should be capable of providing a minimum of 12 litres/minutes of hot water @ 35° C rise.
- The boilers will have a 7-day integral time clock to control the heating. Alternatively a remote time clock may be installed in a location agreed by the Contract Administrator.

Consideration on placement of the temperature controls must also be taken into account to ensure clients always have comfortable access to them, especially if the occupant lives alone and/or does not have carers visiting regularly

Radiator outputs and pipe work sizes will be adjusted for the 20°C temperature difference resulting in slightly larger radiators and smaller pipe work.

The systems will be designed with steel panel radiators each having a thermostatic radiator valve and a lock shield return valve.

Radiators will be located under windows wherever possible and with a typical lounge/living room, the heating load should be split between two radiators rather than a single large radiator to distribute the heat across the room.

Radiator valves shall be bottom/bottom connections.

Pressure differential valves are to be installed in a bypass as and where necessary, dependant on the selected boilers' requirements.

Exposed pipe work e.g. vertical pipe drops, or in houses with solid floor, should be contained in performed white melamine faced boxing. Alternatively the exposed pipe work should be boxed in with timber.

All hidden pipe work under ground floor floorboards, and in loft areas will be insulated with 25mm thick insulation. Pipe work behind kitchen units etc. are to be insulated with 22mm thick insulation.

The gas carcass will be totally renewed and the new supply will be sized to meet the new appliances' requirements.

Where gas fires are to be installed the chimney is to be swept by a NACS (National Association of Chimney Sweeps) registered operative and a NACS certificate presented as part of the hand over pack, or where an existing liner is installed the old liner should be removed. In both cases, a new continuous flue liner should be installed, with appropriate flue box, connectors and terminals.

All gas work is to conform to current Gas Safety Regulations and Legislation and must be carried out by a CORGI registered engineer. Appropriate certification must be supplied upon completion of works.

At the design stage each property will be visited and a thorough survey carried out to produce a scaled working drawing and schedule of main materials for each property. The drawing will contain: heat losses for each room, radiator sizes outputs and positions, Boiler position, positions of pipe drops, all pipe work sizes and routes, any trunking/boxing, all flue sizes and routes, note floor construction (Solid or Timber), location of room thermostat and remote time clock if fitted.

All electric fires to be fitted with hearth, backing and surround.

Removal of existing:

The following elements where practical, will be completely removed from the property, existing heating system cylinder; feed and expansion tanks; circulators. All making good is to be carried out to a standard equal or above that of the existing, with the exclusion of any decoration work i.e. painting and wall papering.

Commissioning and manuals:

The whole of the system will be commissioned and balanced in accordance with the best-accepted practices, as detailed in relevant Commissioning Codes.

The completed works is to be hot flushed to remove all deposits and flux. Following flushing and inhibitor is to be added to the heating system.

Upon completion the relevant test certificates shall be completed and a pack containing the Operation and Maintenance manual and guarantee for each property provided.

The client will also be provided with training on the use and operation of the new system and controls, which shall be set to the client's requirements.

The contractor shall provide the client with a laminated A4 double sided operation guide, written in plain English summarising the basic operation of the boiler, programmer, room thermostat, thermostatic radiator valves and the selected fire, complete with illustrations or pictures as necessary to provide an easy to follow guide to the heating systems operation.

Costs can range from £3,000 - £6,000

A2.14 Kitchens

Additional Space in Kitchens

Criteria

- The client is a wheelchair user.
- The person with disabilities is the predominant user of the kitchen, and is responsible for preparation and cooking of food for self or family.

Redesign/Reorganisation of Facilities of Existing Kitchen

Criteria

The extent of the adaptation will be dependent on whether the person with disabilities is the predominant kitchen user or not. Where light use only is envisaged, the provision might be no more than access and a lower/higher work surface. The adaptation will take into account the use of the kitchen by other members of the household.

Adaptations to kitchens may include lowered work surfaces and access to specific areas.

Kitchen appliances will not be fitted as part of an adaptation. Customers will need to make their own arrangements.

A Minimum 10 standard 13 amp sockets outlets – a mixture of double and single sockets above and below worktops to suit appliance positions, with isolators above worktops and one cooker point.

New 40 mm worktops. All plinths to be fitted with sides behind front section and all edges.

All unit backs to be fitted, only exception being where gas meter positions prevent this.

All worktops edges to be fitted with aluminium strips, bedded with silicone, lead edges to be filed to prevent sharp edges. The only exception being splayed edges where Formica is to be fitted.

Isolator valves to hot and cold water to be installed.

All sinks wastes to be renewed in PVCu.

Washing machine outlets to be combined with sink outlet.

All worktops to receive silicone seal to perimeter.

Gas and electrical cooker points are to be fitted with safety chain.

Concealed fully adjustable 180° hinges.

Drawers: metal sides, 15mm bottoms and back.

Side panel/plinth/shelves finish/colour: 15mm white melamine faced high density chipboard. Clip on 15mm plinth in matching colour fixed to legs.

Shelves on plastic covered steel clips.

Adjustable plastic feet on box on legs carcass 4 nr to each single unit, 5 nr to each double unit.

Worktop classification to BS 6222: Part 3 Type 2.

All units are pre-drilled and assembled using dowels and confirmat screws at corners and provided with plastic cover caps for confirmat screws.

All wall units 720mm high, 300 deep provided with adjustable fixings, unless specified by the OT.

All base units 875mm high to underside of worktop, unless specified by the OT.

Worktop finish/pattern/colour: 40mm thick with balancing laminate, lipping on exposed faces.

An inset stainless steel sink with single right or left hand drainer to suit the kitchen layout with chrome finish ¼ turn lever taps.

Three rows of 150mm x 150mm ceramic tiles above worktops and between worktops and wall units as appropriate. Tiling will be taken down to floor level behind the cooker space.

An Electrical Completion Certificate must be provided in compliance with the latest addition of the IEE Regulations and to BS 7671:2001.

Costs can range from £2,000 - £3,500.

A2.15 Paths Around the Property

Where a client has difficulty in walking, visual impairment or is at risk of stumbling.

Where the client uses walking equipment or a wheelchair, the path should be sufficiently wide and of sound condition to allow easy and safe access, for example, to the gate of the property and such outbuildings as are used regularly by the client.

A2.16 Access to Garden

This will be considered where it is not possible for the applicant to access a garden area. As per DFG guidance, "garden" means a garden belonging to, or usually enjoyed with, a dwelling occupied by a disabled occupant and includes:

- (i) a balcony adjoining the dwelling of a disabled occupant;
- (ii) a yard, outhouse or other appurtenance within the boundaries of the land in which the dwelling of a disabled occupant is situated and belonging to it or usually enjoyed with it;
- (iii) a yard, outhouse or other appurtenance within the boundaries of the land in which is situated the building in which the dwelling of a disabled occupant is situated and belonging to it or usually enjoyed with it.

A suitable garden area will consist of, but is not limited to, a safe area within the boundary of the property to which the applicant has safe access. This could be to the front, side, or rear of the dwelling. Applications for which will be considered on an individual basis.

A3.0 Types of Minor Adaptations

A3.1 *Fencing*

To provide a secure area to the rear of the property up to 6m in length and full width of the boundary.

Consideration will only occur when

- The customer's vulnerability is due to a medical condition and not due to developmental norms related to their age.
- And
- Should only be supplied where normal fencing is not adequate, i.e. not high enough or strong enough to protect a vulnerable person with a permanent and substantial disability.
- And
- The customer could not be safely contained in garden without fencing.

Costs can range from £200 - £3,000

A3.2 *Door re-hanging / changing (sliding)*

Re-hanging doors so they open on the opposite hand or direction, or to adapt to sliding doors to make suitable and usable for customers.

Costs can range from £50 - £300

A3.3 Door widening

Widening of doors for wheelchair use. Existing door is removed including casing. Opening enlarged to receive a 926mm internal door leaf where necessary. Adequate support provided to brickwork above opening and fit of suitable sized lintel with adequate bearing if required.

New flush door, casing, laths & architraves including all door furniture fitted. In case of a bathroom door; incorporation of a bathroom privacy set which allows emergency access.

Any electrical work which may be required must be carried out in accordance with current legislation and an appropriate certificate to be produced upon completion

Costs can range from £400 - £800

A3.4 Tubular steel handrails

Mild galvanised steel tubular handrail fitted. Rail to be 50mm in diameter. Handrail to be 900mm high from ramp level, with uprights at maximum centres of 2m. Uprights to be placed at every change of direction.

Uprights to be set in plain concrete C20P, 20mm aggregate at a depth of a minimum of 600mm. Ensure the handrail is held in place until the concrete has cured.

All joints to be welded with burrs, snags and uneven areas to be removed with a grinder to provide a smooth and even surface.

Costs can range from £80 - £2,000

A3.5 Easy going steps

Step size will be 600mm x 900mm however this can change on an individual need basis, all steps should be of equal tread and depth. Each step will be formed from pre-cast concrete flags. The sizes of treads & risers will need to be determined. The brick on edge will be used as a riser unless otherwise specified. Bedding to be in cement mortar. All debris to be removed and site left clean and tidy.

Costs can range from £60 - £1,000

A3.6 Lever taps

Either 75mm or 150mm Lever Taps.

Existing taps removed and pipe work adjusted as required.

New pair of 22mm (3/4" BSP) Peglar or Similar approved lever taps with 75mm / 150mm reach fitted. Lever taps to comply with current legislation.

Any new outlets must have means of isolation fitted.

Hot tap to be fitted on left and cold tap fitted to right.

Costs can range from £40 - £200

A3.7 Strip lights (internal/external)

Provision of additional strip lights for low light areas both internal and externally.

Costs can range from £80 - £1,000

A3.8 Door Systems

Door Opening Systems

An automated door system with key fob entry

Considerations will occur when:

- The client is unable to open or close the main external door or secure it.
- And
- Where a door opening system would enable the user to access the community independently.

Door Entry Systems

An automated door system with handsets and intercom system to enable entry for visitors.

Considerations will occur when:

- The client is bed-bound or has severely restricted mobility and is unable to reach the front door.
- Or
- The client is living above or below the ground floor and there is no lift access.

Consideration needs to be given to the locking system in the door and whether this is compatible with a door entry or door opening systems. Replacement of the door to a suitable alternative will be considered if necessary. Customers should be advised by the OT to check what impact this may have on their home insurance.

Costs can range from £300 - £1,000

A3.9 Additional electrical sockets

Provision of additional electrical sockets for disability equipment.

Costs can range from £40 - £1,000

A3.10 Boxing in stairs

Enclosure of open areas of stairs with solid structures.

Costs can range from £250 - £500.

A3.11 Composite Doors

The door will be pre-hung, solid core, featured door of external quality. Weatherboard to be fitted as standard.

Front doors are to be one of 4 styles and colours. The frame shall be 70mm PVCu White Profile with suitable size Aluminium Reinforcement fitted. All frames shall be fitted with a Part M low mobility threshold.

A multi-point locking system is to be used with a minimum of three locking points including the latch. Door furniture to be Gold anodised unless specified.

Front doors to have a door viewer appropriately positioned, security 'T' bar using correct fixing screws, brass numerals and a gold anodised letter plate (including internal flap). Euro cylinder lock shall be fitted with drill resistant hardened pins, with 3 keys provided.

The lock shall have a cylinder guard fitted. Gas vent, min 600mm, to be fitted on top rail of door leaf (If required)

The doors shall be installed strictly in accordance with manufacturer's instructions. Doors shall be sealed to external brickwork using approved low-modulus brown silicone mastic.

Costs can range from £400 - £600.

A3.12 Drop Kerbs

Consideration for drop kerbs will occur:

- Where a self-propelled wheelchair is in use, a lowered kerb at the opposite side of the road must be already available.
- Construction of a lowered kerb will not be considered if there is already one within a reasonable and negotiable distance from the customer's house.
- All the above are subject to planning regulations and permission.

Excavation of existing kerbs and replace with splayed kerbs and at least 3 dropped kerbs. Excavation of the footway. Reconstruction of the footway with 150mm thick sub-base, 60mm thick base course and 20mm thick wearing course.

A license must be obtained from Streetpride EDS prior to work commencing.

Costs can range from £300 - £500.

A3.13 Lighting

To enhance residual vision of client with visual impairment as confirmed by eligibility to be on Register of Partially Sighted People.

A3.14 Strengthened Glass

Where a client is a danger to self and others due to regular breaking of ordinary window/door glass.

A3.15 Ventilation

The provision of a manual/mechanical ventilation/extractor or alternative type of window. For example, where the client is unable to open the existing window in kitchen, own bedroom, living room, bathroom and windows cannot be reasonably adapted by the provision of winders, etc.

Minor adaptations can be combined and still fall within minor adaptations if the total cost remains under £1000.

A4.0 Types of Minor Fixings

A4.1 Grab Rails

Grab rails are moulded and fluted white PVC. The location will be specified by the OT. Fixings will be secured to the wall in horizontal/vertical/ diagonal position using appropriate fixings.

Internal grab rails are moulded and fluted white PVC

External grab rails are steel finished with white powder coating.

A4.2 Key Safes

External storage for keys with numbered key access. External size of key safe is H=107mm x W=57mm x D=50mm. Product and installation warranty is 24 months. Position of key safe to be fitted as directed upon order.

A4.3 Wooden Stair Rails

Wooden mopstick rail fitted traversing stairs where required. Additional rails can be provided to existing rails.

A4.4 Bed and Chair Raisers

Feet or brackets added to beds or chairs to enable access to the relevant object.

A5.0 Authorised Persons

A5.1 Staff defined as authorised persons concerning *Minor Fixings*:

Occupational Therapists

Social Services Officers

Technical Officers and Support Workers

Social Workers

Assessment Direct Officers

Sensory Impairment Staff – Rehabilitation Officers

A5.2 Staff defined as authorised persons concerning *Minor Adaptations*:

Occupational Therapists

Social Services Officers

Technical Officers (Social Care)

Social Workers

Assessment Direct Officers

Sensory Impairment Staff – Rehabilitation Officers

A5.3 Staff defined as authorised persons concerning *Major Adaptations*:

Community Occupational Therapists

Sensory Impairment Staff – Rehabilitation Officers

Housing Occupational Therapists

A6.0 MEANS TESTING FOR DISABLED FACILITIES GRANTS

To make sure that the DFG grant goes to the people who need it most, the amount of grant awarded is decided by conducting a Test of Resources (Means Test). This is carried out in accordance with regulations laid down by the government. The test of resources is used to assess the level of a client's contribution towards the cost of eligible works and is based on a formula calculating a notional level of need (the amount the government says you need to live on each week) compared to the relevant person's income and capital.

Who is subject to the test of resources?

The disabled occupant who requires the adaptation and, if any, the disabled occupant's partner. If the adaptations are for a child or young person under 19 who is in full time education (up to "A" level standard or equivalent) there is no means test for the parents. However if an applicant is in receipt of one of the following income-related benefits they will NOT have a contribution towards the grant:-

- Income Support
- Housing Benefit
- Pension Credit Guarantee Credit
- Employment and Support Allowance Income Related
- Income Based Job Seekers Allowance

If an applicant is not in receipt of one of the above benefits, below is a brief explanation of how a contribution is calculated:-

How a person's needs are calculated (the notional amount you need to live on each week)

The notional level of need is referred to as the "**applicable amount**", and this is made up of set personal allowances and premiums, depending on age, whether single or a couple, the number of dependent children under 19, the rate of Disability Living Allowance etc. This does not take into account regional variations in housing costs or mortgage payments.

Below are some examples of Personal Allowances

Single person aged – less than 25	£47.95
Single person aged - not less than 25	£60.50

Couple where at least one member is aged not less than 18 £94.95

Pensioner Premium for those who have not reached the qualifying age for state pension credit

Single person aged not less than 60	£63.55
Couple where at least one is aged not less than 60	£94.40

For those that have reached the qualifying age for state pension credit

Single person aged 60 – 64	£124.05
Single person aged 65 or over	£143.80
Couple aged 60 to 64	£189.35
Couple aged 65 or over	£215.50

Below are some examples of premiums

At least one child	£16.75
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Disability premiums for those not having reached the qualifying age for state pension credit

Single person	£25.85
Couple	£36.85

Everyone receives an additional premium called the Housing Allowance, currently this is £61.30.

Using the figures above a couple who are both 76 years old could have the following applicable amount:-

Housing Allowance	£61.30
Pensioner Premium	<u>£215.50</u>
	£276.80

Please note that this is not a complete list and is for general guidance only.

How a person’s income and capital are determined

The weekly income of the disabled person and their partner is taken into account. This includes net earnings from employment, pensions, benefits, rental income, maintenance etc. Disability Living Allowance and Attendance Allowance are not counted as income.

Capital over £6000 is treated as a weekly tariff income. £1 for each £250 or part of £250 in excess of £6000 is added to their overall income for the week e.g. if you have savings of £7500, of that amount £1500 will be used in the calculation and will result in £6 added to the weekly income - $£1500 \div £250 = £6$.

For those over 60 years of age the weekly tariff income is £1 for each £500 or part £500 in excess of £6000.

How to calculate a grant contribution

The “applicable amount” is subtracted from the total income. Where the income does not exceed the applicable amount the grant will be 100% of the cost of the works. Where the income exceeds the applicable amount, this figure is used to calculate a “notional” loan that the applicant could raise from the excess income, and this figure will be the client contribution. The notional loan is calculated, using a stepped scale

by applying different multiplying factors for each proportion of income over the applicable amount and depending on the client's tenure. A worked example using two adults aged 76 is shown below:

State Pensions per week	£240.00
Private pensions per week	£61.80
Savings weekly tariff income	£10.00
Total income	£311.80

A couple's applicable amount is	£276.80
Therefore the excess income would be	£35.00

Loan Generation Factors

Excess income	Owner-Occupiers	Tenants
£47.95 or less	£18.85	£11.04
The next £47.95	£37.69	£22.09
The next £95.90	£150.77	£88.34
All remaining income	£376.93	£220.86

If an applicant is a home owner and their income exceeds the applicable amount by £35.00:

$£35.00 \times £18.85 = \underline{£659.75}$, which would be the contribution towards the works.

If an applicant is a tenant and their income exceeds the applicable amount by £35.00:

$£35.00 \times £11.04 = \underline{£ 529.37}$ which would be the contribution towards the works.

The assessment could include further additional premiums or allowances and only when full evidence of income and savings is provided to the Council can an accurate assessment be carried out.