

1. Policy Statement

Papworth Trust is committed to meeting the needs of its tenants/leaseholders and offers a range of services to help all our tenants/leaseholders to maintain their independence by making alterations or adaptations to their homes where it is possible and viable to do so and where the tenants/leaseholders' quality of life would be improved because of the adaptation.

The Regulatory Framework states that Housing Associations are expected to work in partnership with local authorities; co-operate with their strategic housing function; their duties to meet identified local housing need and to facilitate the necessary provision. The primary objective is to enable more vulnerable tenants/leaseholders to have access to and use of their home enabling them to live in a safe environment, preserving their independence and dignity.

Papworth Trust takes full account of the Equality Act 2010 and other relevant legislation.

2. Definitions

For the purpose of this policy an Adaptation is defined as:

'A physical alteration to a property or property grounds to improve safety, independence and function of the disabled person within that environment.'

3. Methods of assistance – Leaseholders/Shared Ownership

Papworth Trust will seek to give permission for a minor or major adaptation to leasehold or shared ownership properties subject to the terms of the agreement in place with the leaseholder/shared owner, together with an assessment of the impact that any adaptation may have on the value of the property and future maintenance liabilities.

Papworth Trust will not unreasonably withhold permission.

4. Methods of assistance – Tenants

4.1 Papworth Trust may offer assistance to tenants by either completing a minor adaptation to their existing home, by facilitating a move to accommodation that is already adapted or is more suitable for adaptation, or by giving permission for a major or minor adaptation to take place.

Papworth Trust has a strong commitment to supporting tenants to remain in their homes, however when granting permission for alterations we will not only consider tenants

needs but also our overarching objective to ensure the best use of our stock.

4.2 Papworth Trust will make maximum use of external sources of funding, including Disabled Facilities Grants and will work in partnership with the local authority and other agencies to implement this policy.

4.3 Papworth Trust will support tenants by submitting Landlord applications where appropriate.

5. Minor Adaptations

5.1 Papworth Trust aims to provide a wide variety of minor adaptations to help meet the needs of disabled tenants. Typically, these relatively low-cost items are easy to install and have a large impact on the ability of tenants to carry out routine activities.

5.2 Minor adaptations may include, but are not limited to:

- Grab rails
- Repositioning electrical sockets
- Lever taps
- ½ steps
- Small portable ramps (usually wooden)
- Key Safes

5.3 Minor adaptations do not include equipment which should be sought via the community equipment team of the county authority. Equipment is something associated with the individual not the property e.g. a raised toilet seat, a changing table and can be taken with tenant

5.4 Tenants requiring minor adaptations to their homes funded by Papworth Trust, or another professional body must contact the Trust in writing with an occupational therapy or other suitable professional recommendation (i.e. an approved assessor) recommendation.

5.5 If the tenant requires a minor adaptation which they plan to self-fund they should apply via the Tenant Alteration Policy clearly stating that the requirement is a minor adaptation. An Occupational Therapy or professional body recommendation is not required in these circumstances.

5.6 Minor adaptations which are requested and have the appropriate accompanying documentation as stated in S5.4 will be fitted within 10 working days, subject to materials.

5.7 Permission will not be unreasonably refused.

5.8 Work will be carried out as soon as practicable, subject to budgetary provision.

If the budgetary provision within any financial year has been exhausted, then permission will normally be given for Social Care Services to install the recommended minor adaptation.

6. Major Adaptations

6.1 Major adaptations are material changes or larger specialist equipment required to help meet an individual's personal needs including, but not limited to:

- Installation of Wetrooms/Level Access Shower (LAS)
- Door widening
- Ramps
- Stairlifts
- Steplifts
- Hoists
- Through floor lifts
- Provision of a downstairs toilet

6.2 Tenants requiring major adaptations to their homes must contact Papworth Trust in writing with an occupational therapy recommendation.

6.3 Where permission is given, Papworth Trust will work in partnership with the local authority and any relevant Home Improvement Agency to ensure that applications are assessed and Adaptation works completed to Papworth Trust agreed standards in the shortest possible timescale.

6.4 There are occasions when proposed Adaptation works will be incompatible with other aspects of the property and the Papworth Trust reserves the right to refuse permission for work to be carried out where the long term viability of the property concerned may be affected or where the property is unsuitable for the adaptations required. Papworth Trust will not unreasonably withhold such consent.

6.5 Consideration will be given to include planned improvement works if it is within the 5 year programme and complements the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) works.

6.6 Where consent is given, Papworth Trust will aim to complete owners certificates and issue letters of consent within the following time periods upon receiving the adaptation request and accompanying data (see section 6.2 and 6.7)

Adaptation Type	Time in calendar days
Standard adaptations e.g. wet rooms, LAS, stair-lifts, hoists, door widening, specialist toilets, some ramps	21
Complex adaptations or those requiring significant changes e.g. downstairs toilet,	45

reconfigurations, step lift, door widening to load bearing walls, communal adaptations, some ramps	
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6.7 As part of the package to enable consent to be granted Papworth Trust requires the following information to be sent with the request:

- a. Occupational therapist recommendation report;
- b. Confirmation that funding will be via DFG and/or customer contribution;
- c. Confirmation from the tenant that future liability for maintenance post guarantee period will be accepted by them for all lifting equipment, specialist bathing equipment and specialist toilets;
- d. Confirmation that what is on the OT design brief is what will be completed – Papworth Trust will only grant permission for works it has been informed of by this report. If there are subsequent needs for alteration further permission must be sought prior to changes being effected;
- e. Confirmation of guarantees provided upon completion of the works.

6.8 Papworth Trust will not accept responsibility for pumped waste or any damage caused by failure of a pumped system. Papworth Trust strongly encourages the use of gravity waste systems but where this is impossible then negotiations with the tenant/contractor/3rd party Provider will take place to agree a suitable individual solution taking into consideration cost and future maintenance liability.

6.9 When lifting equipment, specialist bathing equipment and specialist toilets are fitted Papworth Trust may offer a service contract at cost to the tenant, payable monthly/quarterly in advance, for servicing and maintenance after the expiry of the guarantee period. If the tenant requires this they need to write and inform Papworth Trust no less than 3 months before the expiry of the guarantee period

6.10 On completion of any major adaptation Papworth Trust requires the following to be emailed by the 3rd party agent supporting the tenant with the works:

- a. Full technical specification used;
- b. Sign off sheet by qualified technical person;
- c. Copies of all certificates;
- d. Contractors liability insurance of not less than £5m
- e. Guarantee periods and documentation.

7. Funding

- 7.1 Papworth Trust commits an annual budget for minor adaptations to our properties, supporting customers and our partners.
- 7.2 Major adaptations will be paid for by the relevant local authority Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) budget or by Papworth Trust adaptation and assistance program dependent on funding being available.
- 7.3 Major Adaptations are subject to a means test by the Local Authority. Papworth Trust will not pay for any shortfall in the grant available and the cost of works including specialist fees.
- 7.4 DFG's are currently subject to a £30k limit. Papworth Trust will not pay for any shortfall in the grant available and the costs of the works including specialist fees where the adaptation is over the £30k limit.
- 7.5 Papworth Trust will make maximum use of external sources of funding and work in partnership with the local authority and other agencies to implement this policy.
- 7.6 Papworth Trust will not generally be responsible for the repairs and maintenance of major adaptations installed. These will be considered to be the property of the tenant and as such any 3rd party supporting the tenant to obtain such adaptations should explain to them the need to obtain insurance and service contracts to enable their repair and maintenance. It would be expected that (minimum) 5 year guarantees are obtained at the outset. (Refer to S6.7c)
- 7.7 The exception to clause 7.6 is where the major adaptation is installed in a supported housing or group home. In these circumstances the management of the repairs and maintenance and servicing of the major adaptation will be accepted subject to the tenant(s) agreeing in writing for the full cost of the said repairs, maintenance or servicing to be recovered from the service charges payable.

8. Grounds of refusal for major adaptations:

- 8.2 Papworth Trust will not normally give permission for an adaptation where the property is under occupied and the adaptation involves more than equipment provision i.e. that which materially affects the structure/fixtures of the property.
- 8.3 Papworth Trust will not give permission for an adaptation which is technically unsuitable for the property type.
- 8.4 Papworth Trust will not give permission for an adaptation which will make a significant change to a property and that has a short useful life (i.e. it is anticipated that it will be needed for less than 5 years). Papworth Trust may, in its discretion give permission for adaptations of this type if the tenant is terminally ill.

8.5 Papworth Trust will not give permission for an adaptation which will make a significant change to a property and which in the reasonable opinion of Papworth trust could make it difficult to let in future.

9. When a major adaptation has been refused and void properties

- 9.1 If it is not viable or possible to undertake a necessary adaptation, Papworth Trust will assist the tenant in understanding their options, ensuring that they are clear about what action they will need to take and whom they may be able to access support or assistance.
- 9.2 All adaptations carried out in our properties are recorded. Papworth Trust will look at void properties or those which may be coming up void in the future and work with the tenant to identify if that property is suitable.
- 9.3 This information will be used to inform the future re-letting of adapted properties, ensuring wherever possible that a suitable new tenant who can fully benefit from those adaptations is found, before we consider removing the adaptations, even if this results in a longer than usual void period.

10. Existing adaptations

- 10.1 Where the property has existing adaptations which Papworth Trust currently maintain by service contracts or otherwise (regardless of how they were originally installed); the Trust will continue to maintain these for the length of their life cycle.
- 10.2 Life cycles of adaptations are determined by condition reports from the servicing provider and industry average
- 10.3 When the life cycle of the equipment has expired Papworth Trust will notify the tenant in writing to explain that the equipment can no longer be economically maintained
- 10.4 Papworth Trust will advise the tenant to request an Occupational Therapy assessment should they believe that the equipment/adaptation is still required.
- 10.5 Papworth Trust may choose to provide Occupational Therapy Services where they are funding the adaptation due to the type of tenancy
- 10.6 When received this will be managed in line with Sections 6-9 of this Policy.
- 10.7 If the assessment demonstrates that the existing equipment does not meet the need of the tenant then Papworth Trust will consider Section 4.1 with the tenant.
- 10.8 In relation to replacement equipment/adaptations, any additional features or enhancements over and above the specification of the existing equipment/adaptation that will cause the cost of the said equipment/adaptation to be increased will be managed in line with this Policy;

10.9 Equipment/adaptations in communal areas will be treated in line with S5-7 of this policy.

11. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years or sooner if changes are required.

12. Further Information

Policies and Procedures
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tenant Alteration Policy
Forms
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• None
Guidance
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• None
External web links
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• None

13. Document control

Owner	Business Manager – Housing
Other input received from	Tenant Scrutiny Panel (2022)
Approver	Senior Business Manager – Property
Date	January 2025
Next Review date	January 2028

14. Version tracker

Version number	Date	Comments/Reason for issue
1.0	November 2018	New policy
1.1	November 2021	Revisions to timings and some wording, expectations
2.0	January 2022	Revisions to timings following TSP input
3.0	January 2025	Reviewed, addition of S4.4.

If you have any feedback or want to suggest corrections to this policy, please contact the policy owner.

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