

Castlehill Housing Association

Adaptation Policy

Updated June 2018



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1. Introduction

This Policy outlines the approach taken by Castlehill Housing Association when dealing with requests for adaptations to properties.

- 1.1. CHA aims to facilitate the efficient administration of carrying out adaptations for our tenants subject to the availability of funding.
- 1.2. The responsibility for administering adaptations lies with the Development Department.
- 1.3. Records for all ongoing adaptations shall be kept centrally within the office. The progress of these will be reviewed on a regular basis.
- 1.4. The Development Sub-Committee will be informed of the number of adaptations carried out on a quarterly basis and the funding status thereof. As required regulatory information is also reported to Scottish Government and the Scottish Housing Regulator and conforms with our requirements under The Tenants Charter.
- 1.5. Adaptations carried out will be entered in QL and recorded as a property element.
- 1.6. In accordance with CHA Data Protection policy the OT referral report will be kept for one financial year only. At the end of the year these reports will be archived in the appropriate tenants' personal file.
- 1.7. CHA is committed to complying with the Equality Act 2010. We aim to ensure that in all our policies and decision making there is no unfair discrimination on issues of; gender, marital status, age, ethnic origin, religious belief, sexual orientation, disability or any other relevant ground. We aim to make our services as accessible as possible and will endeavour to provide information in appropriate forms for those requiring it.
- 1.8. CHA will carry out adaptations for tenants occupying a property as their only and principal home.
- 1.9. This policy is in accordance with the relevant legislation:

Housing (Scotland) Act 2010

Equality Act 2010

Chronically Sick & Disabled Persons Act 1972

2. Definitions

- 2.1 **Occupational Therapist Referral:** the written report that CHA receives following the personal assessment of tenants requirements.
- 2.2 **Adaptations to Housing:** Adaptations are permanent or semi-permanent changes to a house and are classified as:
- 2.3 **Temporary Adaptations:** those that are not fixed and may be moved e.g. free-standing shower seat.
- 2.4 **Permanent Adaptations:** those that will remain in the property. They are funded by the Scottish Government and are classified as minor or major
- 2.5 **Minor:** defined as a change that does not affect the overall structure of the dwelling, e.g. hand rails, handles, grab rails.
- 2.6 **Major:** defined as permanent or structural change to the dwelling e.g. widening doors, kitchen adaptations, and level access showers.
Major Stage 2: large work usually to extend a property or build in significant changes usually at construction stage.
Major stage 3: work required within an existing property ranging from level access showers to replacing taps.
- 2.7 **Decanting:** when a tenant needs to be moved to another property for major building work.
- 2.8 **Snagging:** The inspection of work after installation. Any faults are reported back to contractor to make good.
- 2.9 **Mainstream housing:** Properties that are designated for and let to single people and families.

Abbreviations:

CHA: Castlehill Housing Association

OT: Occupational Therapist

TA: Technical Assistant (Castlehill Development Dep)

3. The Adaptation Process

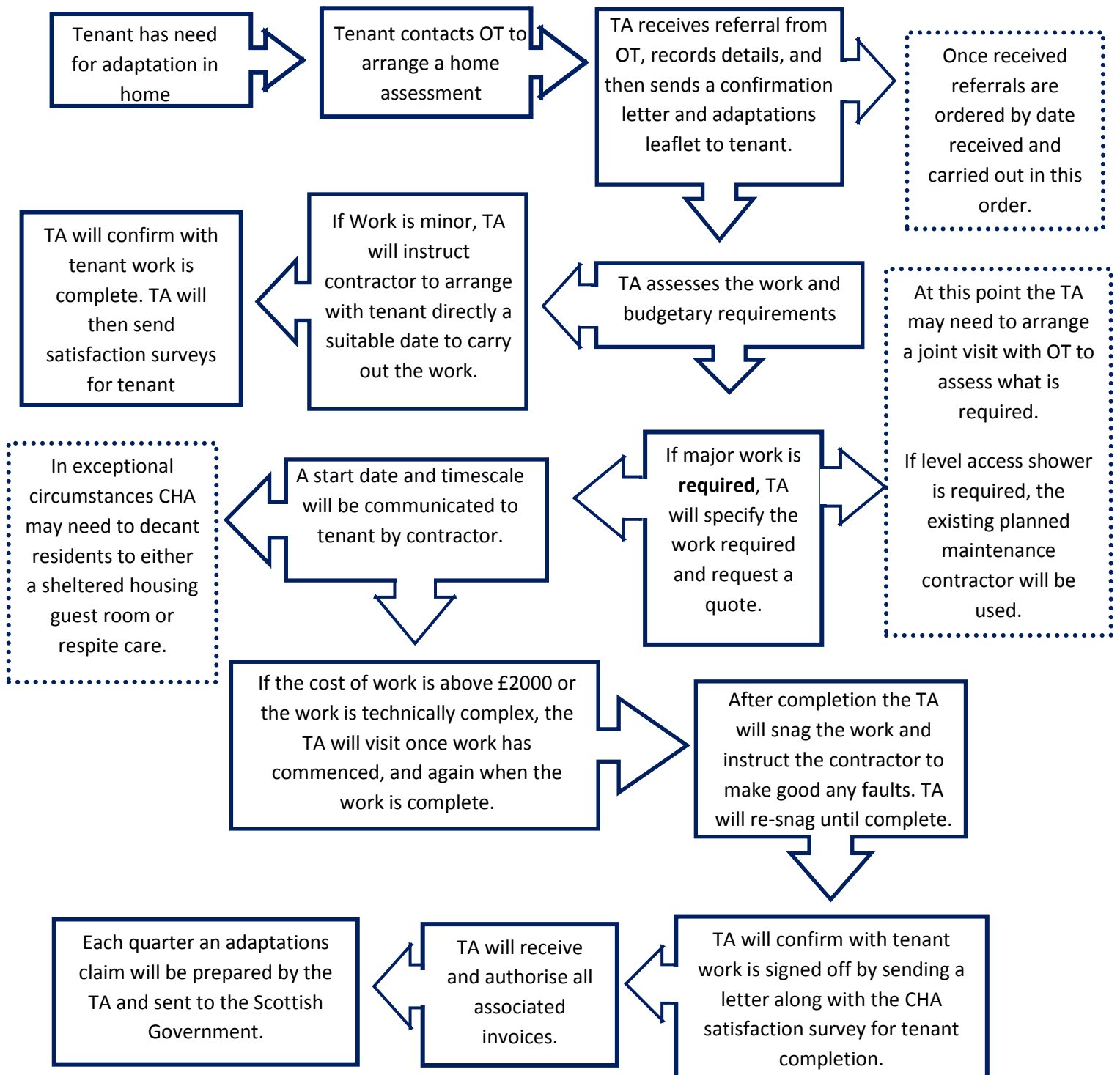
- 3.1 **Initial enquiry** can be made directly by the tenant, carer, relative, or by another agency.
- 3.2 **Self-Referral to the OT service:** Tenants should approach the OT Service direct, to request an assessment for adaptations (excluding hand rails and grab rails)
- 3.3 **Occupational Therapist Assessment:** An OT will meet with the tenant and assess their medical conditions and the impact on their mobility/use of their property. The OT will forward their report and recommendations for work needed to be carried out.
- 3.4 **Carrying out the work:** CHA will manage and instruct a contractor to carry out the work. Large scale adaptations and/or high cost works with a potential value of over £7,500 will be carried out in accordance with our procurement policy.
- 3.5 **Adaptations not technically feasible (or impracticable).** When the proposed adaptation is not technically feasible nor financially viable, approval for the refusal of the request will be sought from the relevant Director. CHA will liaise with the OT and the tenant to consider other options with a focus on providing alternative accommodation.
- When the best solution would be a move to an alternative accommodation, CHA will, in conjunction with the OT, consider carrying out urgent minor adaptations to the tenants current home.
- 3.6 **Inspection:** Castlehill will inspect all works over a cost of £250.00 and sign off.
- 3.7 **Feedback:** A questionnaire will be issued to each tenant asking for feedback about the service and the work. Replies will be used to improve the service.
- 3.8 **Adaptations funding:** Current funding is provided direct by the Scottish Government and allocated yearly. When the budget allocation for CHA is spent and OT referrals continue to be received, CHA will contact Scottish Government and try to secure additional funding. If no additional funding is secured all referrals will be held on a waiting list. The waiting list will be held by date order from receipt of the OT referral. If no funding is received CHA will consider carrying out minor adaptations e.g. handrails, within the limit of any existing CHA adaptations budget.

Where a waiting list is in operation tenants will be notified in writing and OT will be notified by email. The referrals on the waiting list will be dealt with as a priority when funding is allocated and this work will be completed strictly in date order. Due to the potential time delay CHA will contact the OT to confirm the tenants needs remain unchanged before proceeding with the waiting list referrals.

4. Adapted housing portfolio

- 4.1 **Voids:** CHA will ensure that all void inspections carried out by Maintenance Officers, will record and accurately reflect adaptations that have been carried out. All ground floor properties and flatted accommodation with lift access will be assessed by Housing Officers for suitability by an applicant who is disabled, or has restricted mobility.
- 4.2 **Planned Maintenance:** CHA planned maintenance programmes will consider tenants mobility needs when planning programmes.
- 4.3 **Sheltered properties:** bathroom upgrade programmes will, as standard, install level access showers.
- 4.4 **New build:** Housing Officers will offer new build property, which has been designed to wheelchair standard, to a household that needs wheelchair accommodation.
- 4.5 **New build (Stage 2 major adaptations):** At construction stage, if a property is identified as requiring adaptations, CHA will endeavour to futureproof the property for the current and future tenant. For example, reinforcing roof joists in case of a future requirement for a ceiling hoist.
- 4.6 **Mainstream properties:** When planning programmes, consideration will be given to replacing shower cubicles with level access showers in ground floor properties only. Additional features such as grab rails etc, may also be considered.
- 4.7 **Wheelchair Housing:** This consists of dwellings constructed specifically for people confined to a wheelchair. They are designed to give extra floor area, special bathroom, kitchen, and other features.
- 4.8 **Sharing Owners:** Castlehills adaptations funding is only applicable for Castlehill tenants. Sharing owners will need to self finance these works and/or apply for other appropriate funding. Sharing owners may be eligible for relevant Local Authority private sector funding
- 4.9 **Property let to other agencies:** Castlehills adaptations funding is only applicable for individual Castlehill tenants. When a property is let to another agency/landlord who in turn lets to its own residents/tenants adaptations cannot be funded by Castlehill. The agency/resident will need to self finance these works and apply for other appropriate funding. In exceptional circumstances Castlehill may consider contributing to the cost of the adaptation if the work would benefit the building in the future. This will not be the case if the adaptation is specialised to meet an individual resident's particular need.

5. Procedure



KEY:

CHA = Castlehill Housing Association

OT = Occupational Therapist

TA = Technical Assistant

6. Adaptation Policy Conditions

- 6.1 **Work required:** CHA will only carry out medical adaptation work stated in the OT referral. If a tenant disagrees with the OT specification, or wishes to make amendments CHA cannot approve these requests. CHA will refer the case back to the OT for further consideration.
- 6.2 **Tenant improvements:** Tenants can request permission to carry out works themselves at their own cost in accordance with the tenant improvement or tenant alteration policy. CHA is unable to carry out partial works or contribute to these costs.
- 6.3 **Fire safety:** When planning for any alterations CHA must take into consideration fire safety for the whole building. If we believe an adaptation will compromise fire safety we will request guidance from our fire consultant, and proceed following their recommendations.
- 6.4 **Auto Doors:** On receipt of OT referral we will endeavour to make at least one block entrance door, auto door accessible if it is not already. This can be either the front or back door. Accessibility will be discussed with the tenant and OT prior to installation. Auto Doors will be installed as per OT referral for tenants' personal front doors.
- 6.5 **Level Access Showers:** in sheltered and amenity properties level access showers will be fitted on any floor as per the OT request. In general needs properties, level access showers will only be installed in ground floor properties, (and where technically feasible). If a level access shower cannot be installed CHA will refer the case back to OT to consider alternative options e.g. a low threshold shower cubicle.
- 6.6 **Stair Lifts:** Will only be installed in communal staircases in sheltered or amenity blocks, upon receipt of OT referral. Due to fire safety regulations, stair lifts will not be considered for general needs properties.
- 6.7 **Ramps:** CHA will only consider non-permanent forms of ramp (i.e. metal or wooden) upon receipt of OT referral. Concrete ramps will only be considered as part of a stage 2 adaptation.
- 6.8 **Decanting:** Due to their medical conditions tenants in sheltered accommodation may wish to temporarily move out while their home is being adapted. If available the scheme guest room can be booked. If no guest room exists the next closest and available sheltered housing guest room facility will be offered. Tenants will be responsible for arranging their travel and any associated costs. No charge will be made to the tenant for guest room use.

If specialist respite care is required, the tenant/care manager will be responsible for arranging this.

- 6.9 **Loss of Facilities:** During bathroom adaptations CHA will endeavour in all cases to provide a functioning toilet at the end of each working day. Tenants will be required to make alternative bathing arrangements. Where alternative facilities are available in the scheme (e.g. guest room / communal bathing / toilet facilities) compensation will not be applicable. Where work involves loss of bathing facilities, compensation will be paid in accordance with CHA compensation policy.
- 6.10 **Respite care costs:** In cases where tenants are charged for respite care, CHA will pay only loss of facilities compensation in accordance with the CHA compensation policy.
- 6.11 **Colours:** When adapting a bathroom, CHA will fit white wet wall and grey non-slip flooring as standard. There is no option for the tenant to chose colours, or contribute towards costs of providing alternative materials/colours.
- 6.12 **Adding to existing fixtures:** If an adaptation requires the addition of fixtures, e.g. additional wet-wall areas or wall units, CHA will attempt to match the existing fixtures colours as best as possible. Unless there is a medical reason specified by the OT that all fixtures must match exactly, CHA cannot replace existing fixtures to match the new ones.
- 6.13 **Access Refused:** If CHA or the contractors are not able to gain reasonable access to carry out the adaptation, work will not go ahead or will be deferred. CHA will refer the case back to the OT to make alternative arrangements.
- 6.14 **Removal of Adaptations:** Tenants can request that freestanding equipment (temporary) can be removed if it is deemed no longer necessary.

For permanent adaptations, existing tenants will be advised at the time of installation, that CHA will not remove these for the remainder of their tenancy.

For permanent adaptations, new tenants when accepting a property will be required to accept the current permanent adaptations within that property. These will not be removed by Castlehill nor will permission be given to a tenant to remove these.

7. Allocations of existing adapted properties

Castlehill works in partnership to allocate their vacant properties via a Choice Based Lettings System. Choice Based Lettings is a system of allocation that allows applicants to bid for properties that they are interested in. This is currently delivered by the use of the *Homehunt* NES system.

When properties are identified as wheelchair adapted, or level access, this information is publicised in the Homehunt advertising. Any applicant can apply for the property however priority will always be considered for applicants who have a wheelchair or level access requirement. Where several applicants meet this criteria, housing need priority will then be considered.

Housing Officers will not normally allocate without completing a visit to the applicants current accommodation. This allows the opportunity for the particular adaptations and the applicant's compatibility with the property to be considered. Where the Housing Officer believes that the property would not be suitable due to the applicants needs or where it is possible funding will not be available, this would be discussed with them. Legislation does not allow Castlehill to bypass an applicant from an offer because the property is not suitable but the practical issues around the suitability will be raised. Applicants will be advised that if they accept the offer for the property funding cannot be guaranteed. Applicants will also be informed that if adaptations cannot be carried out they will not have any priority for a transfer within Castlehills' stock.

Housing Officers will provide the Adaptations leaflet for applicants at the home visit stage before an offer is made to ensure that they are aware of the limitations and timescales involved in the implementation of this policy.

Appendix 1

Targets & timescales for processing adaptations

Stage	Action	Target timescale
Referral received	CHA TA to acknowledge receipt of the referral, record the details, and send a confirmation letter and adaptations leaflet to tenant.	Within 5 working days
CHA TA will assess the work required as minor or major .		
Minor Adaptation	Action	Target Timescale
Instruction	TA will request that the contractor contacts the tenant directly to arrange and carry out the work.	Within 20 working days **
Signing Off	TA will notify OT of completion of works, and send satisfaction survey to tenant.	Notification within 5 working days of receiving completion notice.

Major Adaptation	Action	Target Timescale
Joint Visit	Where necessary a Joint Visit with the TA, contractor and OT will take place to specify and agree on requirements	Within 15 working days *
Instruction	Once work and quote agreed, TA will instruct contractor. Contractor will agree a suitable start date with the tenant.	Within 40 working days **
Work	Work will commence at agreed start date, and will be completed within a timescale which will tenant will be advised of.	
Snagging	TA will carry out snagging inspection.	Within 5 working days of completion of work. **
Signing Off	Once snagging is complete, TA will sign the job off as complete. TA will notify OT of completion of works, and send satisfaction survey to tenant.	Notification within 5 working days of signing off.

*Dependent on availability of OT

**Dependent on availability of tenant

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Appendix 2

Adaptation Letters

- Letter 1- acknowledgement that referral has been received & leaflet
- Letter 1a- confirmation of work going ahead and contractor
- Letter 2- confirmation of work on waiting list
- Post completion of work satisfaction questionnaire

Letter 1.



11 Waverley Place
Aberdeen
AB10 1XH
T: 01224 251137
www.castlehillha.co.uk
info@castlehillha.co.uk

Occupational Therapist referral received

We have received a letter from your Occupational Therapist requesting adaptation work is carried out in your home. We are currently progressing your referral and currently the average waiting time for work to be carried out is 2 months.

Once complete, Castlehill will not remove this adaptation for the remainder of your tenancy.

Please find enclosed our adaptations leaflet.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J. Dunbar". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Jodie Dunbar
Technical Assistant

Tel: 01224 974569
Email: Jodie.Dunbar@castlehillha.co.uk

Letter 1a.



11 Waverley Place
Aberdeen
AB10 1XH
T: 01224 251137
www.castlehillha.co.uk
info@castlehillha.co.uk

Dear ...

Following our visit on x/x/x regarding the adaptation to your home, we can confirm that the contractor carrying out the work will be...

They will be in touch with you as soon as possible to arrange a start date.

Once complete, Castlehill will not remove this adaptation for the remainder of your tenancy.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J. Dunbar". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial "J".

Jodie Dunbar
Technical Assistant

Tel: 01224 974569
Email: Jodie.Dunbar@castlehillha.co.uk

Dear

Castlehill Housing Association Adaptations Waiting List

We have received a request from your Occupational Therapist to carry out an adaptation to your home. Unfortunately your referral is now being held on our adaptations waiting list.

Every year Castlehill receives an allocation of funding from the Scottish Government to enable us to carry out adaptations to our properties for tenants. Due to a reduction in the funding and a high number of referrals, our total funding allocation for this year has now been spent.

Your request has been added to our waiting list which is held in date order and will be actioned as soon as funding becomes available. It is unlikely that more funding will become available before May 2018.

We will contact you again when funding becomes available.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'J. Dunbar'.

Jodie Dunbar

Technical Assistant

Post Completion Satisfaction Survey



11 Waverley Place
Aberdeen
AB10 1XH
T: 01224 251137
www.castlehillha.co.uk
info@castlehillha.co.uk

Dear x

Adaptation

Adaptation works were recently completed within your home. We would like to know your views on the work that has been completed.

Please could you take the time to complete and return the questionnaire using the enclosed Freepost envelope.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J. Dunbar". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Jodie Dunbar
Technical Assistant

Tel: 01224 974569

Email: Jodie.Dunbar@castlehillha.co.uk



Resident Satisfaction Survey

WO number: xxxxxx

Contractor: x

How satisfied were you with the following? (Tick boxes as appropriate)

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Don't Know
The convenience of the dates					
Workers turning up on time.					
Time taken to complete job.					
Conduct of contractor's workforce.					
Quality of work carried out.					
Clearance of mess/rubble.					
The helpfulness of Castlehill staff in dealing with your request.					
How well informed were you kept throughout the process, from application to completion of the work.					
How easy the application process was.					
Has the adaptation improved your quality of life.					

If you have any further comments or suggestions to make, please let us know in the space below.

Residents signature _____

Date _____