
Aids and Adaptations Policy

**February 2026 | This policy relates to Elmbridge Borough
Council Residential Properties**



Elmbridge
Borough Council

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Introduction

Elmbridge Borough Council is committed to enabling residents, particularly those with disabilities, to live independently and safely in their homes. This policy sets out how the council will provide aids and adaptations to help residents manage daily living, maintain dignity, and remain in their homes wherever possible.

We recognise that appropriate adaptations can significantly improve quality of life, reduce reliance on care services, and support health and wellbeing. The policy ensures that requests for aids and adaptations are assessed, prioritised, and delivered fairly, transparently, and in accordance with relevant legislation and best practice.

Scope

This policy applies to all residential tenancies owned by Elmbridge Borough Council, including:

- General needs housing; and
- Temporary accommodation provided for homelessness or emergency housing situations.

The Managing Agent is responsible for administering this policy on behalf of Elmbridge Borough Council. This is currently Pinnacle, www.pinnaclegroup.co.uk. The Managing Agents responsibilities includes receiving and assessing adaptation requests, commissioning works, and ensuring delivery in line with agreed procedures.

Policy Aims

The aims of this policy are to:

- Enable residents with disabilities to live independently and safely in their homes.
- Ensure adaptations are delivered efficiently, fairly, and represent value for money.

- Work in partnership with Occupational Therapists, Adult Social Care, and other relevant professionals to ensure appropriate and proportionate solutions.
 - Make best use of adapted housing stock to meet the needs of residents now and in the future.
 - Comply with relevant legislation, including the Equality Act 2010 and the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996.
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Definitions

- **Aids and Adaptations:** Changes that are made to your home to help you or a member of your household to live independently.
- **Minor Adaptations:** Non-structural alterations typically costing under £1,000, such as grab rails or lever taps, designed to help residents live more independently.
- **Major Adaptations:** Structural alterations or installations costing over £1,000, such as level-access showers or stairlifts, which require more extensive works.
- **Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG):** A means-tested grant provided by local authorities to fund major adaptations to enable disabled people to live independently.

Minor Adaptations

Minor adaptations are non-structural alterations intended to support residents in living independently and safely within their homes. These works are normally recommended by an Occupational Therapist (OT) and are funded by Elmbridge Borough Council, in its capacity as landlord, up to a maximum value of £1,000 per property.

Where an OT referral is not available, the managing agent may accept alternative professional evidence to support the request. This may include written recommendations from carers, hospital discharge teams, clinical practitioners, GPs, or social workers. Each case will be considered individually, taking into account the resident's specific needs and circumstances.

Minor adaptations will usually be carried out as part of the managing agents repairs service and completed within standard repair timescales. All works must be

appropriate, reasonable, and represent good value for money.

Examples of minor adaptations include, but are not limited to:

- Grab rails and handrails
- Key safes to assist carers or support staff
- Lever taps on washbasins, sinks or baths
- Additional handrails adjacent to steps or stairs
- Relocating or adding power sockets, including for mobility scooter charging
- Small or removable ramps to provide easier access
- Flashing or amplified doorbells to support residents with hearing impairments

Major Adaptations

Major adaptations are works costing more than £1,000 and typically involve structural alterations, improvements, or additions to the fabric of the building. These works are intended to make a property suitable for the long-term needs of the resident and will require a professional assessment, such as an Occupational Therapist's report.

Where a resident requires a major adaptation, the managing agent will refer the resident to Elmbridge Borough Council's Care and Repair team. The team will support residents in applying for a Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG).

Care and Repair Elmbridge will always recommend the most economical solution that meets the assessed medical need. As the DFG is public funding, the service has a duty to ensure that it is used in a reasonable, practicable and cost-effective manner.

If the tenant does not agree with the recommended solution, the referral will be returned to the managing agent and the Care and Repair referral will be closed.

When considering major adaptations, we will take into account:

- Whether the work is necessary and appropriate to meet the resident's needs.
- The practicality and reasonableness of the works, given the property's age, type and condition.
- The impact of the adaptation on other residents, particularly in communal buildings.

- Whether possession proceedings are underway.
- Whether a suitably adapted alternative property is available.

We may decline requests for major adaptations where the works are not feasible, cost-effective, or present health and safety risks. In such cases, the managing agent will work with the resident and their OT to explore alternative solutions, including consideration of rehousing.

Examples of major adaptations include:

- Level-access showers
- Large or permanent ramps
- Stairlifts
- Through-floor lifts
- Structural alterations to doors or walls
- Kitchens for wheelchair users
- Dropped kerbs and hardstandings

Adaptations in Temporary Accommodation

Due to the short-term nature of temporary accommodation, only minor and easily removable adaptations will be considered. Where the cost of the works exceeds £100, discretionary grants may be considered through Elmbridge Borough Council's Care & Repair team.

Adaptations in Communal Areas

In its role as landlord, the we will consider reasonable requests for adaptations to communal areas to improve accessibility. Requests must be supported by an Occupational Therapist's report and may be made by residents or their representatives, regardless of tenure.

Where proposed adaptations would have a significant impact on service charges, a formal consultation will be carried out with affected residents before works proceed.

We will not carry out communal adaptations where it does not have legal control of the building or where third-party consent cannot reasonably be obtained.

Equipment and Aids

Freestanding or medical equipment, such as portable hoists, hospital beds, toilet frames, shower chairs, or bathing equipment, is not provided through this policy. These items are normally supplied by the relevant Adult Social Care or Health Services department.

Residents requiring such equipment should contact their local Social Services department directly.

Maintenance and Records

The council in its role as landlord, will maintain any equipment installed under a DFG once the warranty has expired. We reserve the right to apply a service charge to cover the cost of this maintenance.

The Managing Agent will maintain a record of all homes where adaptations have been installed. This will support effective allocation of adapted properties to applicants who would benefit from them. Any major adaptations will require formal approval by the Housing Contracts & Compliance Manager or the Head of Housing.

All information collected in relation to this policy will be recorded in compliance with the relevant Data Protection Legislation.

Requests for Review

Where a resident disagrees with a decision made under this policy, they may request a review. Requests must be submitted in writing within 21 days of the decision and should set out the reasons for the request and include any relevant information not previously considered.

The review will be carried out by a senior officer not previously involved in the case. The review will consider whether this policy has been applied correctly and whether all relevant information was taken into account. It will not replace or override professional medical or Occupational Therapist assessments.

We will aim to notify the resident of the outcome of the review in writing within 28 days of receiving the request. A request for review is not part of the council's formal complaints procedure.

If the resident remains dissatisfied following the review, they may pursue the matter through the council's complaints procedure.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Elmbridge Borough Council is committed to ensuring that its services are fair, accessible, and non-discriminatory. All actions under this policy will comply with the Equality Act 2010, with special consideration to our duties under the Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010. We will make reasonable adjustments to ensure that residents with disabilities can access the aids and adaptations service.

Legislation

- Equality Act 2010
- Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996
- The Housing Renewal Grants Regulations 1996
- The Housing Renewal Grants (Services and Charges) Order 1996
- The Disabled Facilities Grants and Home Repair Assistance (Maximum Amounts) (Amendment No. 2) (England) Order 2001
- The Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002
- The Disabled Facilities Grants (Maximum Amounts and Additional Purposes) (England) Order 2008
- The Housing Renewal Grants (Prescribed Form and Particulars) (Revocation) (England) Regulations 2010
- Data Protection Act 2018

Monitoring and Review

This Policy will be reviewed every three years or sooner if required due to legislative changes or operational needs. Responsibility of for monitoring its implementation lies with our housing services team.