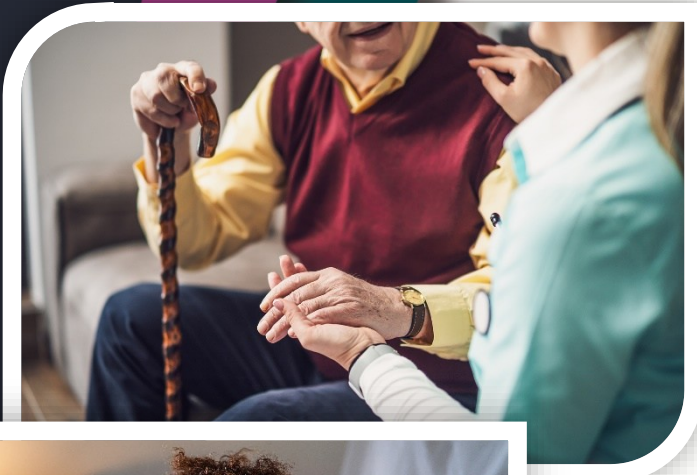




**Babergh &
Mid Suffolk**
District Councils



Joint Aids and Adaptations Policy

English	If you would like this document translated or require an accessible format such as large print or braille, please call 0300 123 4000, and select option 3.
Kurdish	ئەگەر دەتەوێت ئەم بەلگەنامەیە وەر بگێڕدر ئیت یان پێویستت بە شێوازیکی دەستگەشتن ھەیە وەک چاپی گەورە یان نووسینی نابینایان braille، تکایە پەیوەندی بکە بە 0300 123 4000، و بژاردەی 3 ھەڵبژێرە.
Polish	Jeśli chcesz, aby ten dokument został przetłumaczony lub potrzebujesz innego dostępnego formatu, takiego jak duży druk lub alfabet Braille'a, zadzwoń pod numer: 0300 123 4000 i wybierz wewnętrzny 3.
Portuguese	Caso pretenda esta informação traduzida, ou em formato acessível como impressão grande ou braille, por favor ligue para o número 0300 123 4000 e selecione a opção 3.
Pashto	که چیرې ددغه سند ژباړه غواړئ یا یې لویې چاپې یا بریل بڼې ته اړتیا ولرئ، مهرباني وکړئ 0300 123 4000 ته زنگ ووهئ او 3 اېشن یا غوراوی وټاکئ.
Romanian	Dacă doriți ca acest document să fie tradus sau dacă aveți nevoie de un format accesibil, cum ar fi caractere mari de tipar sau Braille, vă rugăm să apelați 0300 123 4000 și să selectați opțiunea 3.

1.0 Policy Overview

This policy outlines the principles and procedures for providing aids and adaptations to help council tenants with disabilities or long-term health conditions to live independently within their homes. It ensures that resources and funding are managed efficiently, and that requests for adaptations are handled in compliance with current legislation and best practices.

This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure compliance with evolving governmental legislation, guidance, and best practices.

1.1 Aim of the Policy

The primary aims of this policy are:

- To assist tenants with physical or mental impairments by providing necessary aids and adaptations to their homes.
- To enable disabled individuals to live independently and safely.
- To ensure timely and effective processing of requests for adaptations, subject to available funding.

- To maintain and manage the housing stock effectively, balancing the needs of tenants with the overall asset management strategy.

1.2 Equality and Diversity

Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils are committed to promoting equality and ensuring that residents with disabilities are treated fairly and without discrimination in line with the Equality Act 2010.

2.0 Policy Details

2.1 Eligibility Criteria

To qualify for adaptations, tenants must:

Be a council tenant of Babergh or Mid Suffolk District Councils.

Have an impairment that has a significant, long-term impact on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Adaptations will only be carried out for permanent members of the household. Adaptations will not be provided for lodgers or temporary visitors.

2.2 Assessment and Referrals

An Occupational Therapist (OT) assessment is required for major adaptations. The OT will assess the tenant's needs and make recommendations for necessary adjustments. For minor adaptations, tenants may self-refer without the need for an OT assessment in most cases.

2.3 Minor Adaptations

Minor adaptations are considered to be works costing under £1,000 and do not require complex installations. These adaptations are typically preventative and aim to prolong the independence of individuals. Examples include:

- Handrails and grab rails.
- Lever taps.
- External lighting for visual impairments.
- Flashing or amplified doorbells for hearing impairments.

2.4 Major Adaptations

Major adaptations require an OT referral and may include:

- Stair lifts or through-floor lifts.
- Level access showers or wet rooms.
- Kitchen modifications, including lower surfaces for wheelchair users.
- Ramp and pathway installations.
- Widening doorways and making other structural adjustments to improve accessibility.
- Extensions are not usually provided.
Exceptions may be considered only where the applicant has a life-limiting condition requiring 24-hour care and likely to involve health interventions. These cases must be signed off by the Director of Housing.
- Major adaptations involving structural work must be signed off by both the Head of Housing Solutions and the Head of Assets.
- Adaptations exceeding £30,000 may require alternative funding or rehousing options, especially when the property is not suitable for further modifications due to design constraints.

2.5 Decision-Making Criteria

When making decisions on whether to approve adaptations, the Council will consider:

- The feasibility and reasonableness of the proposed adaptation.
- The condition and structure of the property.
- Existing adaptations that may already be in place.
- The possibility of rehousing the tenant to a more suitable property.
- If an adaptation is deemed unreasonable or impractical due to property design, the Council will explore rehousing options.

2.6 Timescales and Prioritisation

The Council aims to complete approved adaptations within the following timeframes:

Urgent cases: 2 weeks.

Routine cases: 8 weeks.

Interim touchpoints:

- Acknowledgement within **3 working days** of referral received

- Decision communicated within **10 working days** of OT recommendation
- Progress updates every **4 weeks** while awaiting works

Urgency is determined by the OT assessment and the tenant's individual circumstances, particularly in cases involving hospital discharge.

Hospital Discharge Cases

2.7 Timescales and Prioritisation

Urgent Cases: The Council aims to complete approved adaptations within 2 weeks for urgent cases. Urgency is determined by the Occupational Therapist (OT) assessment and the tenant's individual circumstances. This includes cases involving hospital discharge, where timely adaptations are critical to ensure the tenant can return home safely and comfortably. The Council will prioritize these cases to facilitate a smooth transition from hospital to home, reducing the risk of readmission and supporting the tenant's recovery.

Temporary Accommodation

2.8 Alternative Housing

Temporary Accommodation: In situations where the required adaptations are extensive and cannot be completed while the tenant remains in the property, the Council will consider providing temporary accommodation. This ensures that tenants are not unduly inconvenienced or placed at risk during the adaptation works. The Council will work closely with the tenant to identify suitable temporary housing options and will aim to minimize the duration of the stay in temporary accommodation.

Housing Register and Adaptations

2.9 Policy Details

Housing Register: Tenants who are on the housing register should be aware that it is unlikely that adaptation works will be carried out until a permanent tenancy is secured. This policy ensures that resources are allocated efficiently and that adaptations are made to properties where tenants have a long-term commitment. Adaptations will only be carried out for permanent members of the household, ensuring that the modifications benefit

those who will reside in the property for the foreseeable future.

Mutual Exchange: Where tenants secure alternative accommodation through a mutual exchange and indicate that aids or adaptations will be required in their new home, the Council will assess each request on a case-by-case basis. Before approval, the following conditions will apply:

An Occupational Therapist (OT) assessment must confirm the need for adaptations in the new property.

Consideration will be given to whether adaptations have already been made in the tenant's current property and the extent of those works.

The feasibility and cost of proposed adaptations in the new property will be reviewed against the Council's funding limits and asset management strategy.

Where adaptations are extensive or impractical due to property design the mutual exchange may not go ahead, alternative options such as rehousing may be explored.

Terminal or Palliative Care

2.10 Timescales and Prioritisation

The Council recognizes the importance of providing a comfortable and accessible living environment for residents with life-limiting conditions, such as Motor Neurone Disease (**MND**), other terminal illnesses, or those receiving palliative care.

These cases will be treated as high priority, with the aim of completing essential adaptations as quickly as possible to support dignity and quality of life.

The Occupational Therapist (OT) assessment will take into account the tenant's health condition, including such conditions as MND, advanced cancer, or other progressive illnesses, and the urgency of their needs. Adaptations will be tailored to enhance comfort, accessibility, and independence wherever possible.

2.11 Funding and Costs

The Council will fund adaptations up to £30,000 per property. Where the costs exceed this amount, rehousing to a more suitable property will be considered. Tenants who are subject to Rent Arrears, Anti-Social Behaviour Orders, or have

submitted a Right to Buy application may be ineligible for adaptations.

2.12 Right to Buy

Properties that have received major adaptations which significantly alter the property will be exempt from the Right to Buy scheme, in accordance with the Housing Act 1985.

2.13 Alternative Housing

Rehousing will be considered if:

The property cannot be reasonably or practically adapted to meet the tenant's needs.

Major adaptations have already been carried out at the property.

Rehousing would provide a more appropriate living environment for the tenant, especially if an existing adapted property is available.

2.14 Notification of Decisions

Once a decision has been made, the tenant and the OT will be informed whether the adaptation is approved or denied. If approved, contractors will be

instructed, and the tenant will be notified of the proposed start date.

2.15 Appeals

If a tenant disagrees with the decision, they can appeal in writing within six weeks of the notification. The appeal will be reviewed by two managers not involved in the original decision. The tenant will receive a written outcome of the appeal within 20 working days.

3.0 Emergency Restrictions

In the case of national or local emergency restrictions (such as a pandemic), the Council may have to adjust the timelines or temporarily halt adaptations in line with government guidance.

4.0 Links to Other Policies

This Aids and Adaptations Policy aligns with and should be read in conjunction with other relevant council policies, including:

[The Housing Allocations Policy.](#)

[Housing Repairs and Maintenance Policy.](#)

[The Tenancy Agreement.](#)

5.0 Legislation

The following legislative acts underpin the provisions of this policy:

- [The Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970](#)
- [The Housing Grants Construction and Regeneration Act 1996](#)
- [Equality Act 2010](#)
- [The Care Act \(2014\)](#)
- [The Regulatory Reform Order 2002](#)
- [The Housing Act 1985](#)
- [The Housing Act 2004](#)
- [The Housing Health and Safety Rating System](#)
- Home Adaptations for Disabled People (2013)

Application Process

1. Initial Assessment: The tenant or their representative contacts Suffolk County Council on 0808 800 4005 for OT to carry out an assessment so they go through the front door and will help with customer service. To request an adaptation. An initial assessment is conducted by an Occupational Therapist (OT) to determine the need and scope of the required adaptation.

2. Recommendation and Approval: The OT provides a recommendation, and the application is reviewed for approval based on the assessment and financial limits.

3. Communications: Tenants will be made aware of the following:

- When a referral is received from the OT.
- When a decision is made on the referral.
- Whilst waiting for works to be started, updates and progress.
- Once the works are completed.

4. Quotation and Scheduling: Once approved, the council seeks quotations from contractors. Upon selection, the adaptation work is scheduled.

5. Implementation: The adaptation is carried out by approved contractors under the supervision of the council's housing adaptations team.

6. Completion and Review: Upon completion, the adaptation is inspected to ensure it meets the required standards and the tenant's needs. A follow-up review ensures the adaptation continues to meet the tenant's requirements.



Version	Notes	Date
1	First written	October 2024
2	Second version with minor changes throughout	August 2025
3	Final draft	November 2025
4	Reviewed Yearly	