

# Disabled Adaptations Policy

## Residential Council housing

Version	2 (February 2026)
Release date	2 <sup>nd</sup> February 2026
Policy owner	Head of Housing
Summary of changes	The policy has been updated to clearly set out tenants' rights, including timescales, to access adaptations and to clarify responsibilities between the Council and Kent County Council for minor and major adaptations. It also strengthens arrangements for managing major adaptations, including addressing historic backlogs, improving contractor oversight, and reinforcing performance monitoring to support timely delivery.
Approval date	2 <sup>nd</sup> February 2026
Approved by	MT delegated authority
Review date	2 <sup>nd</sup> February 2028

## Contents

1.	Executive Summary	1
2.	Introduction	1
3.	Policy aims	2
4.	Relevant Legislation	3
5.	Definition	4
6.	Adaptation Process Overview	5
7.	Policy detail	6
7.1	Funding of Minor Adaptations:	6
7.2	Funding of Major Adaptations:	6
7.3	Eligibility requirements for making an application – who can apply	7
7.4	Types of adaptations available	8
7.5	Types of adaptations not available not available	9
7.6	The application process	9
7.7	Alternative options where an adaptation is considered non-viable for the existing dwelling	11
7.8	Prioritisation for approved adaptations	13
7.9	Redevelopment provision	13
7.10	Adaptations to communal areas	13
7.11	Tenants installing own aids and adaptations	14
7.12	Adaptation that affect the rental value of the property	14
7.13	Maintenance and servicing	15
7.14	Existing adaptations in council properties	15
7.15	Financial assistance towards moving into suitable adapted home	16
7.16	Adapting vacant properties	16
7.17	Future occupation and successive requests for adaptations	17
7.18	Referrals relating to neuro diversity needs	18
7.19	Removal of aids and adaptations	18
8.	Appeals and complaints	19
9.	Communication and consultation	19
10.	Performance monitoring	20
11.	Equality and diversity	20
12.	Policy monitoring and review	21

## **1. Executive Summary**

Canterbury City Council (CCC) aims to provide increased alignment to the way that housing adaptations are managed through the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) regimes. The key features of this policy are:

- Greater focus on supporting tenants to consider how their housing needs may be met in the longer term.
- Financial assistance to support tenants with the costs of relocating where needed.
- Support in meeting tenants' overall well-being including support for carers, safety in the home, access to welfare benefits, social inclusion and referrals to sensory services and other healthcare services.
- Ensuring adapted properties are let to those in greatest need.
- Ensuring the available budget is used efficiently and that CCC are able to make best use of the social housing stock.

## **2. Introduction**

The purpose of this policy is to set out the approach of Canterbury City Council to the management of requests for aids and adaptations recommended by an Occupational Therapist within housing stock owned by CCC.

- The consideration of tenant's adaptations as assessed by a qualified Occupational Therapist registered with the Health & Care Professions Council (HCPC) in the UK
- The financial thresholds and categories for assessed adaptations
- Adaptations and options for tenants
- Indicative timescales within which work is expected to be carried out
- CCC communication with residents, Occupational Therapists (OTs), Social Services, professionals and other specialist agencies
- The management of waiting lists by CCC (e.g. where there is a high demand for adaptations that exceeds the annual budget)

This policy sets out the parameters within which the Kent County Council Occupational Therapist Team and CCC will cooperate.

The policy seeks to promote fairness and equality throughout the activities of CCC, regardless of where the applicant lives, their background or circumstances.

### **3. Policy aims**

The primary aim of the adaptation service is to enable CCC to provide housing which best meets the assessed needs of tenants with disabilities.

This policy supports the best use of financial resources and property assets. This may result in requests for adaptations being declined and the consideration of rehousing options where the assessed need is not capable of being achieved by keeping tenants in the home, they are currently living in. This could be due to the financial costs, affect upon the future use of the property asset, practicalities of adapting the property and the availability of alternative solutions to the tenant's assessed needs.

Adaptations may not be completed where the tenants' needs can reasonably be met through rehousing within a twelve month period from the date at which CCC is made aware of the tenants assessed needs.

The policy will also guide occupational therapists (OT) and other professionals to understand what CCC will and will not be able to assist with in terms of adaptations to a tenant's home.

CCC aims to operate a service that offers suitable, practical and cost-effective solutions that best meet tenants' assessed needs.

The key principles of this policy are to:

- provide a seamless service that puts tenants at the heart of the process
- offer a range of options for tenants that are both achievable and realistic
- find the best possible solution for tenants to meet their individual needs
- operate legally and according to best practice

- operate within the available budget and provide value for money
- minimise waiting lists and waiting times
- measure the impact of this policy in terms of real outcomes
- make best use of the housing stock (property assets)

Under this policy CCC will consider solutions that best meet the long-term needs of tenants and their families as a primary objective, ensuring their safety, well-being and quality of life.

CCC aims to ensure that no tenant waits longer than 12 months for an adaptation to be progressed.

#### **4. Relevant Legislation**

In determining this policy, regard has been given to the allocations policies and the relevant statutory provisions and requirements mentioned in –

- the Care Act 2014,
- the Equality Act 2010,
- the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970,
- the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996, as amended by the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002.

Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 imposes a duty on a public authority, where it must in the exercise of its functions, have due regard for the need to eliminate discrimination and promote equality.

Necessary and Appropriate, Reasonable and Practicable Works

Section 24 of the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 places a duty on housing authorities who are not themselves a social services authority to consult the relevant social services authority and to satisfy themselves that the works are reasonable and practicable having regard to the age and condition of the property.

Assessments are completed by Kent County Council Occupational Therapists (OT's) in line with their good practice guide and a referral is submitted to CCC detailing the nature of the works required. Each case will be individually assessed on its own merits and CCC decides what is

reasonable in the light of its need to make housing available to a wide range of people in need, over the long term.

It is generally not considered reasonable to carry out adaptations that require structural alteration to the property (beyond that of widening door openings and removal of non-load bearing internal walls), involve alterations to the common parts of blocks of flats that will impact the use of these areas by residents of the block, require alterations to services that are communal to any block of flats (with the exception of door entry systems), involve the installation of flush floor showers and wet rooms to flats above the ground floor of a block of flats (unless there is step free access to upper floors i.e. communal lift), limit the future use of family housing to households with disabilities and CCC will support such families to move to suitable accommodation.

Reasonableness also relates to cost, and where the particular construction type of a property makes it excessively costly to adapt, CCC may refuse the adaptation in favour of offering alternative housing that meets the applicants needs or which can be readily adapted at a lower cost.

These are some of the criteria that will be considered; however, each case will be decided on its merits.

## **5. Definition**

The Equality Act 2010 defines a disabled person as someone who has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

A long-term adverse effect refers to disabilities:

- That have lasted for at least twelve months
- The effects of which will last for at least twelve months
- Which are likely to last for the remainder of a person's life

Occupational Therapists (OT) and other professionals are required to confirm that all three criteria apply to each assessment submitted to CCC for consideration.

## 6. Adaptation Process Overview

The adaptation process is the responsibility of two organisations –

1. The first process is an assessment by Kent County Council Occupational therapists.
2. The second process requires KCC passing the recommendations to Canterbury City Council to categorise and implement.

Process:

For adaptation work to be carried out, tenants must request a referral to an OT approved by KCC Social Services -

For adult services (Over 18's) call 03000 416161

For children services (Under 18's) call 03000 411111

For minor adaptations (hand or grab rails) email

**social.services@kent.gov.uk**

The OT will assess the level of disability need, and a referral must be sent to CCC to be processed. This referral and any supporting information must be sent by a secure method of communication.

Where information is communicated electronically this must be password protected. In some cases, the OT will request a joint visit with CCC to look at the feasibility of a proposal they wish to recommend.

CCC will categorise assessments as follows:

- **Minor Adaptations** – works of £1,000 and under, are progressed in referral date order by the Private Sector Housing team. The tenant will receive a written decision within ten working days from receipt of the recommendations from KCC  
Examples include grabrails, lever taps and showers over baths
- **Major Adaptations** – works over £1,000 are categorised by the OT as either 'urgent' or 'standard'. These are reviewed monthly with 'urgent' taking higher priority  
Examples include flush floor showers, ramps and stairlifts

Urgent major works – tenants will receive a written decision within ten working days from the Private Sector Housing team, and the works will be carried out as soon as possible within six months. Stairlifts up to £5,000 that are a routine specification will also receive a written decision within ten working days from the Private Sector Housing team and aim to be completed within six months.

‘Standard’ (and therefore not urgent) major works – tenants will receive a written decision within sixty working days and will be put on a waiting list and carried out, these are intended to be completed within twelve months.

Performance of the contractor will be monitored through customer satisfaction surveys and post-inspections to ensure CCC meets its performance targets.

Adaptation budgets and waiting lists will be reviewed monthly with the KCC OT service and reported quarterly to CCC.

## **7. Policy detail**

### **7.1 Funding of Minor Adaptations:**

The council is required to use funding within the Housing Revenue Account only for all adaptations below the £1,000 threshold. It is not permitted to use the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFGs)

### **7.2 Funding of Major Adaptations:**

For major adaptations within council owned properties, the council is required to use funding within the Housing Revenue Account borrowing provision, rather than using Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs), which are available to customers in the private sector. The council will normally only fund major adaptations up to a maximum limit, which has been determined by matching the maximum DFG award. This is currently £30,000 (inclusive of Value Added Tax, where appropriate). In circumstances where the equipment and/or works are above the maximum limit of £30,000, the council will discuss the options on a case by case basis, including alternative options, such as;

- Re-housing, or
- Increasing the maximum limit, having obtained the appropriate approval.

An option appraisal will be invoked for adaptations over a threshold of £20,000.

The budget for major adaptations is fixed annually within the capital funds available in that year. To manage this budget, the council will prioritise applications in a way that best meets the greatest need, as demand often exceeds the funding available. All major adaptations are subject to budget availability.

Customers applying for major adaptations are not subject to means testing unlike customers in the private sector making an application for a DFG. However, this may be reviewed in the future, should budgetary pressures require the council to reflect a more equitable distribution of the funds by directing assistance to those in most financial need.

A customer may choose to make a contribution in relation to preferred choice, for example, the choice of tiles and increased coverage of a tiled area. Any costs not funded by the council must be in place prior to works commencing.

### **7.3 Eligibility requirements for making an application – who can apply**

The council will normally only consider a request for adaptations within a council-owned property if the person:

- Is the tenant, or the tenant's partner or a member of the tenant's immediate family; and
- Is permanently resident in the household. (This will be substantiated through a residency check); and
- Has an impairment which has a significant or serious long-term effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities in and around their home and / or access essential facilities within their home.

Adaptations for children of parents with shared access arrangements will only be completed at the property which is the principal and main home. This follows the requirements under the DFG legislation whereby

mandatory DFG's are only available for properties which are to be used as the only or main home of the person who is to benefit from the adaptations.

No age restrictions apply to making an application.

Requests for major adaptations will not normally be approved where a Right-to-Buy application has been received. Customers in these cases will be signposted to the assistance available through the council's DFG Programme once they have bought their home. If the Right-to-Buy application is withdrawn or cancelled, applications for major adaptations may be reconsidered under this policy.

If the applying customer has expressed the intention to move from the property, e.g. by way of transfer, mutual exchange or other method, we may decide not to approve major adaptations at their current property. However, each application will be considered on its individual merit.

#### **7.4 Types of adaptations available**

It is the intention to match the same provision with those applied to customers in the private sector, who are eligible for a DFG. Therefore, this policy reflects the provisions set out for DFGs within the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996. This states the purposes for which a DFG must or may be given, in order to facilitate:

- Access to and from the home.
- Making the dwelling or building safe for the disabled occupant and other persons residing with him/her.
- Access to a room used or usable as the principal family room.
- Access to or providing for the disabled occupant, a room for sleeping.
- Access to, or providing for the disabled occupant, a room(s) in which there is a lavatory, a shower and or bath, a wash hand basin, or facilitating the use of such facilities by the disabled occupant.
- The preparation and cooking of food by the disabled occupant.
- The use by the disabled occupant of a source of power, light or heat by altering the position of one or more means of access to or control of that source or by providing additional means of control.

- Access and movement by the disabled occupant around the dwelling in order to enable him/her to care for a person who is normally resident in the dwelling and is in need of such care.
- Facilitating access to and from a garden by a disabled occupant.

## **7.5 Types of adaptations not available not available**

The following are examples of adaptations that will not normally be funded, although cases will be appraised on individual merit.

- Adaptations for the storage and charging of mobility scooters.
- Vehicular access, hard standings and driveways.
- Certain pieces of non-specialist fixture, equipment and appliances will not be classed as aids and adaptations. In general, this applies where the fixture/equipment/appliance has the same use for another occupant who is not disabled. For example; ovens and hobs and other appliances forming part of an adapted kitchen, fixed window coverings.
- Safe play areas inside or outside.

## **7.6 The application process**

An OT will undertake an assessment of need to identify any necessary and appropriate adaptations that may meet the needs and prognosis of the disabled person, in line with meeting Care Act 2014 eligibility criteria.

From the completed OT assessment, the council must be satisfied that the tenant is eligible for this type of assistance in accordance with the criteria shown in paragraph 7.3. Where a customer is not eligible, they will be informed in writing and given the reasons why.

Having established that a customer is eligible for assistance, there are several factors to be considered when assessing whether it is reasonable and practicable to undertake major adaptations having regard to the type, age and condition of the dwelling. Some of the factors taken into consideration (although not an exhaustive list) are given below:

- The age and condition of the property.
- Existing adaptations at the property.

- Cost of adaptations necessary to make the property suitable.
- Length of time the adaptation will take and the void rent loss.
- Whether the property will meet the long-term needs of the disabled person.
- Property constraints in terms of its adaptability.
- Whether access to the property would be compromised, such as being in a first floor flat or in a property accessible only via a steep incline
- Architectural and structural characteristics of the dwelling, some of which may render certain types of adaptation inappropriate, for example properties with narrow doors, stairways and passages, steep flight of steps.
- Property type and demand.
- Availability of more suitable alternative accommodation.
- Availability of the disabled person's existing support network and carers.
- Current occupancy of a property, for example is it under-occupied.
- Any competing needs of different members of the family which cannot be met in that particular home.
- Whether adaptations affect the amenity of the area for other residents.
- Where works would require planning permission or building regulation approval which has not been, or would not be, granted.
- Where the city council is taking possession proceedings against the customer for example, for rent arrears or anti-social behaviour.
- Whether adaptations make the best use of the council's housing stock and whether the adaptation affects the future let ability of a property.
- Whether it is a ground floor in a block of flats.
- whether the adaptations would be the best use of the current housing stock or negatively affect the future let ability of the property, or prove to be prohibitively expensive.

The council may have to instruct a feasibility study to establish the practicality of the adaptation, particularly if the estimated cost of adapting a property is £30,000 or above.

An acknowledgement letter will be sent to the tenant advising them of this.

The full options appraisal process will consider whether the work should go ahead or whether an alternative solution can be found which will continue to meet the essential needs of the tenant.

An option appraisal process may also be invoked if other factors are in question.

Where the application is considered viable following an evaluation of the options appraisal, it is then prioritised to be dealt with. An acknowledgement letter will be sent to the customer advising them of this.

If an adaptation is considered non-viable, the customer will be advised of the decision in writing, detailing recommended alternative options, as per section 7.7

### **7.7 Alternative options where an adaptation is considered non-viable for the existing dwelling**

Other options will always be considered before extensive adaptations are carried out to a property. These options include;

- The possibility of better use of space within the existing footprint of the property, for example utilising a second reception room/dining room.
- A move to a more suitable property that would resolve the need for adaptations and present a better long term solution for the applicant.

For all requests for major adaptations, the council will discuss with the customer the option of a transfer to alternative accommodation that better meets the needs of the disabled person. This could include;

- Arranging a suitable alternative within the council's stock, for which a priority medical banding would be given; or
- The purchase of a suitable property to meet the needs of the person; or
- Housing with another social housing provider.

Examples of why this may be considered are where:

- A vacant property which is already suitably adapted to meet the essential needs of the customer can be identified.
- A vacant property which is more suitable to be adapted to meet the essential needs of the customer can be identified.
- An extension can be avoided by a move to a larger property.
- The current property is not suitable for a particular adaptation.
- Adaptations to a property may reduce its potential to be let in the future.

Where it is considered that a move to other suitable accommodation would be possible and/or the best solution, a priority banding will be given to the tenant to enable them to move more quickly.

If suitable accommodation is available the tenant would be expected to accept the alternative property, where reasonable and in consideration of the tenant's circumstances.

Once an offer has been accepted on an alternative property, the tenant will be expected to take up the tenancy and move into this property as soon as is practical. If a tenant refuses two offers of alternative accommodation which the council considers reasonably meets their needs, the council may refuse to undertake the requested adaptation to their current property. Under such circumstances, the council will discuss with the tenant the options available.

In cases where rehousing is being looked at as the approved/preferred option, then this must be possible within a reasonable timescale (based on an assessment of risk and availability of accommodation). If it is not possible to find suitable alternative accommodation within a reasonable time, adaptations to the existing property or another property will be considered.

Where the adaptation is considered by the council as not viable at the current property, having taken all factors into consideration, the council will offer and discuss the alternative options with the tenant. If the tenant refuses to take up any of those options, the council will refuse to undertake the requested adaptation. The tenant will be notified of this decision in writing.

## **7.8 Prioritisation for approved adaptations**

Every job is approved in order of date received, unless we are informed by the OT that a job is urgent in which case it will be approved and scheduled as soon as possible.

The council will also take into account the length of time a person has been waiting. The council will inform tenants who are awaiting an adaptation of the position and give an indication as to how long they are likely to have to wait. Where necessary, the council will also work with the tenant to explore alternative options such as rehousing or other sources of funding.

## **7.9 Redevelopment provision**

Where a tenant living in an adapted property is being moved because of redevelopment or refurbishment of their home, essential adaptations will be carried out in the new home being offered. This is most likely to apply to the tenants of previously converted housing, older properties and sheltered housing schemes which require refurbishment. It may involve providing showers to residents who have previously only had access to communal facilities.

## **7.10 Adaptations to communal areas**

Adaptations to common parts and communal areas, for example to a shared access path, will be reviewed on a case by case basis via an options appraisal. This will take account of the health, safety and needs of all affected occupants as well as the local area needs and the most appropriate funding agreed where necessary.

Permission will always be sought by the council where an adaptation encroaches on a boundary, property or land not owned by the tenant or the council. An example of this would be where ramping is required to shared access areas.

## **7.11 Tenants installing own aids and adaptations**

In some circumstances, tenants may wish to be supported to install their own aids and adaptations. This may be where, for example, an aid or adaptation is not available for council funding. Under these circumstances, the customer will be responsible for funding the cost of purchase and installation themselves. The council will need to give the customer permission in writing, through the Tenants Improvements Works application process, for most adaptations they wish to make to the property before the work is undertaken.

If a tenant installs their own adaptations, this will still be overseen by the council. Where they are of a technical nature, these will not normally be maintained by the council. Therefore, the tenant will be responsible for any servicing or repairs that are required.

At the end of a tenancy, the tenant will be required to remove their own installed adaptations and make good any damage to the property. Alternatively, if the council agrees to take responsibility for the alterations, the tenant will need to agree to sign over ownership free of charge.

The amount of rent charged will not be affected by privately funded adaptations to the property.

## **7.12 Adaptation that affect the rental value of the property**

A major adaptation may make significant changes to the size and proportions of the property. An example of this may be where an extension has increased the number of bedrooms / bathrooms or available living space. Other conversions may reduce the number of rooms and therefore also impact on the attributes of the property. In such cases, the council will re-evaluate the rental charges, in line with the rent setting procedures and the new rent will apply having given the appropriate notice period of at least 28 days, in accordance with the terms of the tenancy agreement.

### **7.13 Maintenance and servicing**

On re-let of any adapted property there will be routine inspection and maintenance undertaken of aids and adaptations in situ.

Certain aids and adaptations will be subject to agreed servicing and maintenance programmes. This generally applies to large pieces of equipment including stair lifts, through floor lifts, step lifts, wash/dry toilets, and hoists.

Tenants will be expected to allow reasonable access to enable servicing and maintenance of aids and adaptations. Should this not be permitted, tenants may be liable for the cost of any deterioration or fault which is attributed to the inability to perform necessary servicing and maintenance. Tenants may also be liable for charges in the case of inappropriate call outs or aborted pre-arranged visits.

Maintenance/repair of major adaptations to the structure of a property will be undertaken as responsive repairs after a reasonable time (usually 12 months).

### **7.14 Existing adaptations in council properties**

The council has a commitment to make best use of existing adaptations installed in its properties. The council will maintain its records of adaptations within its stock to facilitate the appropriate matching of properties against tenants' needs. The allocation of properties will be based on the criteria set out in the council's current Allocations Policy.

Direct/Discretionary Lets:

- If a property becomes vacant and has extensive or specific adaptations, the decision may be made to allocate the property as a direct/discretionary let.
- The council will hold a list of all the applicants who require extensive or specific adaptations and information about all stock which has been extensively adapted. When a property is identified as not being suitable for a normal let this may then be matched to the applicant most in need, based on priority and waiting time.

- The council reserves the right to withdraw adapted properties from the lettings list as appropriate.

Letting adapted properties:

- Adapted properties that become available will be offered to those with matching needs or similar needs. If this is not possible within a reasonable timescale, based on an individual property option appraisal, then properties may be offered to applicants without a need for the adaptations.
- If a person requiring adaptations applies to join the housing register, they may, after being assessed by an OT, be granted priority banding for any suitable adapted properties.
- If a customer no longer requiring adaptations would prefer to move from an adapted property to an un-adapted home, the council will consider this if it has someone else who needs that type of adapted home.
- Future tenants must accept the adapted property 'as is', unless the new tenant's assessed needs require additional special requirements.
- Where the adaptation is preventing the property from being re-let, i.e. in the situation of a long term void, after a certain length of time the council may consider removing the adaptation and for example, placing it into storage. Each case will be considered on a case by case basis with input and advice from relevant officers.

### **7.15 Financial assistance towards moving into suitable adapted home**

Where tenants take up the option to transfer to an alternative accommodation that better suits their needs, to either enable a major adaptation to be installed in a more suitable way providing better value money, or move to a property that already has that major adaptation that is required, then the council may offer financial assistance to cover relocation expenses as part of the adaptations package. This is only applicable to major adaptations

### **7.16 Adapting vacant properties**

If the council is considering offering a tenant a vacant un-adapted or partially adapted property requiring adaptations or further adaptations, council officers, including an OT and a surveyor will firstly have to assess

the suitability of the property to meet the tenants assessed essential needs.

Once the OT and a surveyor have made their assessment of a vacant property, the council reserves the right to withdraw an offer of accommodation if the property is not deemed suitable. The tenant will be advised regarding their housing options.

If major adaptations are required and the property is deemed suitable, some or all of the adaptation work will be carried out as a priority where possible and practical, to minimise void times.

The tenant will be expected to take up the tenancy as soon as is practical. If the tenant is able to live in the property whilst awaiting some or all of the adaptation work they will be expected to do so. This will be assessed by an OT. If minor adaptations are required the tenant will be expected to take up the tenancy prior to the adaptations being carried out.

Upon completion of works the tenant will be required to transfer from their current property and take up a tenancy in the newly adapted property. They will have no rights to remain in the original property. Failure to take up an adapted property offer once works have commenced, will be deemed a refusal of a reasonable offer and this may affect any future applications they make for aids and adaptations.

Those applicants that are not existing council tenants will be advised that failure to take up an adapted property offer once works have commenced, will be deemed a refusal of a reasonable offer and this will affect any future applications they make for re-housing or aids and adaptations, as detailed in the Allocations Policy.

### **7.17 Future occupation and successive requests for adaptations**

Once major or extensive adaptations have been completed at a property it is expected that the tenant requiring the adaptation will continue to live at the address, unless circumstances do not allow this (for example, no longer able to use the property due to a worsening medical condition and further adaptations are not possible).

If a tenant applied to be re-housed, unless their circumstances had changed, they would normally be adequately housed and would have no priority on the housing register.

If they then chose to move to an un-adapted/unsuitable property, any application for adaptations to that property may be refused.

Where significant work has taken place at a property and the tenant requiring the adaptation(s) dies or is unable to remain at the property and permanently resides elsewhere, the remaining family members may be asked to move to alternative accommodation to allow the adapted property to be let to a disabled person. Similarly, where the disabled person remains after death of a partner in a joint tenancy, the disabled person may be required to move to alternative adapted accommodation if, for example, the property is under-occupied.

#### **7.18 Referrals relating to neuro diversity needs**

It is appreciated that where a child has challenging behaviour as a result of their neuro diversity, it can cause difficulties and put additional strain on the family environment. Sometimes in these instances additional space or specialist facilities and equipment are needed to alleviate the strain on the family.

If a child is unable to share a bedroom with siblings due to a medical condition that affects their behaviour, but there is adequate additional space in the property, it is not reasonable or practical to provide additional space or equipment under this policy.

For other referrals relating to behaviour, CCC will work with the OT to consider the best solution and only carry out an adaptation where there is a genuine medical need that satisfies the requirements of this policy, and only when all alternative options have been exhausted

#### **7.19 Removal of aids and adaptations**

An aid or adaptation to a property that has been funded by the council is owned by the council and must not be removed by the tenant during or at the end of their tenancy. If a tenant removes an adaptation without the proper approval, then they will be recharged.

In circumstances where an aid or adaptation is no longer required, the council will consider removing it if it may be used in another home. Otherwise, it will be left in place.

If an aid or adaptation is no longer working and beyond reasonable repair then approval will be given for it to be removed following a reassessment of need.

The council will not normally remove structural adaptations to a property, for example ramping, widened doors, level access showers.

## **8. Appeals and complaints**

If a tenant is dissatisfied with any decision made about their application they have the right to make a complaint using the Council's formal complaint process. The stage one complaint will be investigated and responded to by the Private Sector Housing Service Manager from within the council. Details on how to make a complaint are available from the CCC's website.

If tenants remain dissatisfied with the outcome of the complaint, the case can be considered by the Housing Ombudsman.

## **9. Communication and consultation**

CCC recognises the importance of communicating with our tenants and will:

- Provide clear and comprehensive advice and information to tenants, with an aim for a single point of contact
- Contact tenants to confirm approval of recommended adaptations; when the work will be carried out, or that there is a waiting list
- They will be given an approximate waiting time for their adaptations
- Inform tenants and explain why recommended adaptations have been refused under the limitations of this policy
- Consult in person with tenants regarding major works and explain the scope of the works and how long it will take to complete.
- Where appropriate, provide tenants with colour choices (e.g. for major bathroom adaptations – paint, tiles, flooring etc. - within CCC specification)

- Work with healthcare professionals on individual cases to ensure the most timely and cost-effective options are considered

## **10. Performance monitoring**

CCC is committed to monitoring performance on providing adaptations by:

- Monitoring completed adaptations through the use of customer satisfaction surveys; to ensure we maintain performance and help inform future service improvements
- Publishing information in relation to CCC performance against the aims and standards set out in this policy
- Training CCC staff to recognise the need for adaptations and to enable them to give guidance to tenants who may require an OT referral
- Complying with the CCC Comments, Complaints and Compliments policy when a tenant wishes to complain or make a comment about any aspect of the adaptations process

## **11. Equality and diversity**

Through the management of this policy CCC aims to treat all tenants fairly, and with respect and professionalism regardless of their gender, race, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation and/or marital status.

To enable all tenants to have clear information and equal access to our services, CCC will publish this policy in a range of languages and formats and/or through a range of media, where appropriate, upon request.

Where there is a barrier to accessing information about the service, extra effort will be made by CCC staff and its representatives to ensure the tenant understands the process. This may involve asking a relative or third party for help, or employing translation or interpretation services if necessary.

CCC staff will be sensitive to people who have lived in properties for a long time, to ensure that any solution (whether an adaptation or a move) is in the tenant's best interest and supports their long-term needs, well-being and continuity of care.

## **12. Policy monitoring and review**

This policy and any associated procedures will be reviewed at least every three years. The review will ensure that a comprehensive service is being offered that meets tenants' requirements. The policy will also be reviewed in accordance with any future legislative changes as and when they occur, or if the policy is deemed to be unfit for purpose and/or no longer reflects tenants' changing needs.

Monitoring of performance and satisfaction with the adaptations service will be used to inform future policy review in this area. All reviews will consider whether:

- The current policy adheres to legislative and regulatory requirements and reflects good practice.
- The aims and objectives of the policy are being met.
- The current policy outcomes meet the needs and requirements of our customer base.
- Service users are aware and understand the policy and believe it to be fair and consistent.
- The service offers value for money.

Overall monitoring and review of this policy will be undertaken in consultation with staff, tenant groups, Canterbury City Council and other relevant partners and stakeholders.