



## **EQUIPMENT / LOAN POLICY**

***‘Supporting people to live as independently  
as possible within their own home by  
accessing the Equipment Loan Scheme’***



# Introduction

Due to increasing demands for Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG's) people can wait in some instances in excess of 6 months before they are provided with the adaptation they need.

In circumstances where people require adaptive equipment such as stair-lifts, platform lifts, through floor lifts and modular ramps this equipment can be provided on a loan basis (the equipment loan scheme) and in most cases recovered for re-use by Hartlepool Borough Council (HBC) once the equipment is no longer needed. This means people can receive the adaptive equipment much more quicker than if they had to go through the DFG process.

Provision in this way also means that HBC can enable more people to live independently in their own home by providing suitable adaptive equipment to meet their specific needs in a timely manner.

## Policy Aim

This policy aims to provide a framework for delivering help with home adaptive equipment in the most effective, efficient and equitable way and supports the outcomes within the local Housing Strategy 2019-2024.

## Financial Information

All funding for the Equipment Loan Scheme will be established based on the allocated available budget and in line with the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan.

## Eligibility

Where there is an application for assistance by a person with disabilities, an assessment of the need for the person (and their carer if applicable) will be made by the Council's Occupational Therapy Service before any decisions in accordance with the Policy are made about the provision of adaptive equipment. All assessments of need are made in accordance with the Care Act 2014.

The Equipment Loan Scheme is only applicable for eligible residents of Hartlepool.

## Work Eligible for the Equipment Loan Scheme

The works consist of sourcing, supplying and installation of stair-lifts, through floor lift, step lifts and modular / metal ramps, along with any other associated works to enable the installation to occur e.g. if a new front door is required to enable a ramp to be installed or radiators need to be moved to allow a stair-lift to be fitted.

## Assessment

Following an assessment of need of a client undertaken by a representative of the Occupational Therapy Service a referral will be sent to the Special Needs Housing Team requesting the works be carried out under the Equipment Loan Scheme.

Officers from the Special Needs Housing Team are responsible for the technical direction as to whether the requested works are *reasonable* and *practicable* having regard to the age and condition of any buildings where the adaptive equipment is to be installed.

## Application of the Process

All applications for the Equipment Loan Scheme will be processed by an Officer from the Special Needs Housing Team and will ensure the following information is received.

- All relevant information from the Occupational Therapy Service.
- An estimate from the contractor for the cost of carrying out the works.
- All relevant Land Registry Information (ensure the person who is applying for the loan owns the property) if applicable.
- Housing Association authorisation, if applicable.
- Landlord authorisation, if applicable.

On completion of the installation of the adaptive equipment, the Special Needs Housing Team will inspect the works prior to any payment of invoices and take action if any defects are identified.

## Agency Service

The Special Needs Housing Team offers an Agency Service to all people at no extra costs to the individual. The Special Needs Housing Team are funded in part from the allocated budget (DFG)

This covers a proportion of staffing and administration costs, plus miscellaneous costs incurred during the year (such as bespoke staff training / and necessary IT upgrades for example) and abortive costs (i.e. in the event of cancellation or in instances where a person dies)

The Special Needs Housing Team on approving an application for provision through the Equipment Loan Scheme will specify in writing to the person that the adaptive equipment will be recovered if no longer needed.

# Conditions

The conditions relating to the provision of Equipment Loan Scheme are as follows:

- The eligible works shall be carried out as quickly and reasonably practicable from the date of approval of the application.
- Consideration will need to be made in some instances where works may not have been reasonably foreseen at the point of the initial application and then cause potential delays in the provision.
- The eligible works shall be carried out by the contractor who was asked to estimate for the works.
- The eligible works shall be carried out in accordance with the specification.

The payment for works is conditional upon:-

- The eligible works being executed to the satisfaction of the Council.
- The Council being provided with an acceptable invoice, demand or receipt for payment for the works and any preliminary or ancillary services.
- The Council will issue payment direct to the contractor for works which have been carried out to the Council's satisfaction.
- The Council require the return of all equipment when it is deemed to be no longer required.

## Completion of Works

**Lifts** - Where a stair-lift, through floor lift or step lift has been installed under the Equipment Loan Scheme the Occupational Therapy Service, under contractual agreement with the relevant supplier will ensure the lifts are serviced biannually and maintained as necessary.

**Ramps** - Should any problems occur with modular ramping, people will be advised to contact the Special Needs Housing Team who will in turn ensure the contractor concerned rectifies any problems, as necessary.

# Policy Monitoring Review

A review of the policy will take place on a bi-annual basis and / or in line with legislative or regulatory changes.