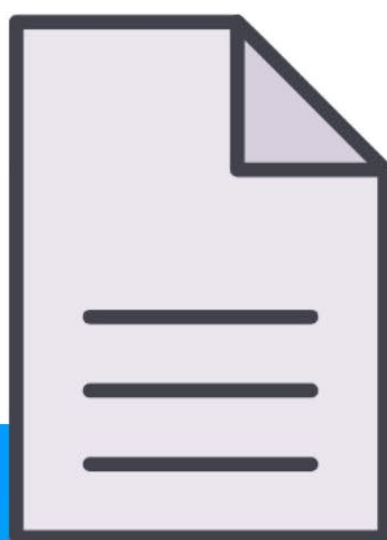


gentoo



Equipment and Adaptations

Issue control	
Policy:	Equipment and Adaptations
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Policy Author:	Head of Service
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Equality Assessment completed:	Yes
Data Protection Impact Assessment required:	Yes
This document is uncontrolled when printed	

Printed versions of policies may go out of date – the latest version will always be on the Policy Hub located on the Gentoo Intranet. If you are unable to access this, please contact the Governance Team.

For support and advice regarding the policy, please contact the Policy Owner. For queries on the policy register, please contact the Governance Team.

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Policy Introduction

- This policy sets out our approach to the provision of equipment and adaptations to support customers to live safely and independently within their homes.
- The policy ensures that all requests are managed in a consistent, transparent, and in a person-centred manner.
- Gentoo are committed to providing safe, accessible homes that promote independence, dignity and wellbeing.
- Providing equipment and adaptations supports:
 - Independent living
 - Improved health outcomes
 - Reduced risk of injury
 - Social inclusion and wellbeing
- Gentoo will:
 - Enable customers to live independently for as long as possible
 - Provide a fair and consistent approach to adaptations
 - Work collaboratively with health, social care and local authority partners
 - Ensure value for money and effective use of housing stock
- Where a property cannot reasonably be adapted, we will support the customer to move to more suitable accommodation.

Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging

- We are committed to the principles of equity, diversity, inclusion and belonging throughout the organisation and aim to:
 - Treat everyone equally, fairly, and with respect.
 - Provide fair and equitable outcomes for colleagues and customers.
 - Welcome and value difference and not tolerate discrimination, harassment or victimisation of any individual or groups.
 - Challenge the behaviour of those who do not uphold our values and go against our principles.
 - Oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes pay and benefits, terms and conditions of employment, dealing with grievances and discipline, dismissal, redundancy, leave for parents, requests for flexible working, and selection for employment, promotion, training, or other developmental opportunities.

- We are committed to the principle of diversity and inclusion for all colleagues and customers, regardless of sex, race, religion or belief, age, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, or disability.
- This policy and the associated procedures (if applicable) will ensure that customers and colleagues are treated as individuals with fairness and respect. An Equality Assessment has been completed on this policy.

Scope, Escalation and Monitoring

Scope

- The scope of this policy covers Gentoo Group.
- This policy applies to:
 - General needs rented properties
 - Supported housing
 - Sheltered housing
 - Leasehold/Shared Ownership
 - Rent to Buy properties
 - Market rented properties (domestic)
 - Temporary accommodation
 - Stock owned but not managed by the Group
 - Communal areas, including those relating to Leasehold/Shared Ownership properties

Escalation

- Where the Board or a Committee has concerns about significant issues in any area of this policy, they must escalate these concerns to the Executive Director of Customer, People and Engagement.
- Where a colleague has concerns about significant issues in any area of this policy, they must escalate these concerns through their line management structure, and ultimately to the Executive Team.
- Where a colleague continues to have concerns about significant issues in any area of this policy, they should refer to the whistleblowing section within the Group's Working Professionally Policy, which can be found on the Policy Hub on the Gentoo Intranet.

Monitoring

- We will monitor and learn from the feedback we receive about how we manage and respond to requests for Adaptations and Equipment to ensure a high standard of service.
- This policy will be reviewed every three years, unless business needs or legislative changes dictate that we review it before this time.
- This policy may be subject to an audit in line with the internal audit plan.
- This policy is a grade 2 and changes will need the approval of the Executive Team.

Core Purpose, Vision and Themes

- Our core purpose is to provide warm, safe and decent home for our customers of today and tomorrow.
- Our vision is to become the best provider of social homes in the country.
- Our values are what we stand for and what we want to be known for. They are what makes us, us.
 - We care about people.
 - We take accountability.
 - We shape the future.
 - We bring leadership.
 - We deliver.
- We live our values in everything we do from the boardroom to the front room, to deliver our priorities for our customers.
- We have identified six themes which will guide the delivery of our services and support the Group's vision and ambitions for the next 10 years.
 - The best provider of social homes in the country.
 - A housing provider that listens and sorts things out.
 - Helping our communities to thrive.
 - Achieving growth through partnerships and innovation.
 - A professional, caring, great place to work.
 - Embracing modern technology and data.

Regulation and Legislation

- The Director of Customer will ensure this policy has regard to all of the following legislation, regulation and best practice:
 - Equality Act 2010
 - Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970
 - Care Act 2014
 - Housing Grants Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 as amended by the Regulatory Reform Order 2002
 - 1996 Guidance for Housing Associations to fund minor adaptations
 - Regulatory Framework for Housing
 - Adult Social Care Reform White Paper 2021
 - National Disability Strategy 2021

Consumer Standards

- We are guided by the Consumer Standards, which describe ways to improve things for people living in Social Housing.
- The Safety and Quality Standard:
 - (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safety-and-quality-standard>)
- The Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard:
 - (<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/transparency-influence-and-accountability-including-tenant-satisfaction-measures>)
- The Neighbourhood and Community Standard:
 - (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/neighbourhood-and-community-standard>)
- The Tenancy Standard:
 - (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tenancy-standard>)
- The Regulator of Social Housing sets out the Neighbourhood and Community Standard which we must meet. Failure to properly discharge these responsibilities could lead to a serious detriment or other judgement from the Regulator if we breach the Standards in place at the time.

Roles and Responsibilities

- The key roles and responsibilities in Gentoo for this policy are set out below. If applicable, additional responsibilities for this policy are detailed in the relevant supporting procedures.

Role	Key responsibilities
Director of Customer	Is accountable for the effective implementation of this policy and ensuring colleagues involved in its delivery understand their roles and responsibilities
Head of Neighbourhoods/ Head of Service	Will assist with implementing this policy and ensuring all colleagues involved in the Equipment and Adaptation policy are trained in our procedures and adequately skilled to implement those.
Housing, Support and Specialised colleagues	Should have awareness of the policy, act accordingly and help customers in live safely and independently in their home.
Customer Voice Manager and colleagues	Will provide regular feedback relating to performance.

Definitions

- The following definitions are used throughout this policy.

Term	Definition
Equipment	Is portable or moveable equipment that does not require changes to the property such as shower chairs, walking frames, commode equipment.
Adaptations	Are fixed alterations or additions made to a property to improve accessibility and / or safety. Adaptations can involve minor or major work.

Term	Definition
Minor adaptations	Are typically low-cost adaptations, generally up to £1,000 and include: - Grab rails - Lever taps - Stair handrails - Lowering door thresh - Concrete steps - WC lever flush handles
Major adaptations	Are higher cost and more complex works, generally over £1,000 and Sunderland City Council has statutory responsibility for assessing eligible needs for major adaptations. These can include: - Level access showers and wet rooms - Stair lifts and through floor lifts - Bath hoists - Widened doorways - Permanent ramps - Lowering or rearranging kitchens - Extensions and structural alterations.

Policy Statement

- The aim of this policy is to provide a fair and consistent approach to adaptations and equipment. Gentoo will not unreasonably withhold permission for any adaptation work. Any decisions regarding adaptations will be made on a case-by-case basis balancing the needs of the customer, long-term sustainability of the home, the cost and funding available.
- Standard operating procedures and workflows will ensure that customers are treated as individuals with fairness and respect.
- Gentoo is committed to the development of good practice and effective procedures whilst ensuring value for money is achieved.
- Colleagues and customers will be clear in their understanding of how equipment and adaptations are defined.
- Gentoo will support customers throughout the process of minor and major adaptations being carried out. Requests for Equipment and Adaptations can be made by customers, family members or carers and health and social care professionals.

- Decisions regarding referral routes will be guided by the Equipment and Adaptations standard operating procedures and workflows, professional assessment of the customer's needs, the nature of the works required and the suitability of the property.
- Sunderland City Council has statutory responsibilities for assessing needs for major adaptations through its Adult Social Care and Occupational Therapy service. The Council also administers Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) funding.
- Where a customer's needs indicate a major adaptation may be required, Gentoo will refer the customer to Sunderland City Council for assessment.
- Where required, Gentoo will work with Occupational Therapists and other agencies to confirm the most appropriate solution to meet a customer's need.
- Any assessments will consider the customers' current and longer-term needs, risks to safety and wellbeing and the suitability of the property.
- In cases where specialist recommendations differ, a final decision will be made by a senior manager.
- Gentoo will ordinarily fund and deliver minor adaptations directly, whilst major adaptations will normally be delivered through the Council's assessment and DFG process or other external sources which could include customer contributions.
- Annual budgets will be allocated to support adaptation works and reviews to ensure effective resource management.
- Gentoo will maintain Adaptations installed to a regulated standard in rented properties to ensure they remain safe and effective. There may be a service charge applied for this work. Adaptations will be assessed at the end of the tenancy to determine whether they remain or are removed.
- Adaptations may be refused if the adaptation is not reasonable, the property is unsuitable for the adaptation, or the customer is looking to be rehoused.
- Where an Adaptation is refused alternative solutions will be explored including rehousing.
- Accessibility to our Equipment and Adaptation provision for customers will be easy, clear and well published.

Confidentiality

- We will treat all information received in a private and confidential manner.
- We will only disclose information to agencies and other third parties once we have the consent of the customer to do so.

- We may, however, have a legal obligation to pass information on, for example to Safeguarding, Police or other relevant agencies.
- This policy fully complies with the Group's Data Protection Policy.

Performance Monitoring, Reporting and Auditing

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

- To allow us to monitor and report on the delivery of this policy we will produce and review the following KPI's.

Key Performance Indicator	Owner (job role)
Completion of assessments for Adaptation requests	Head of Neighbourhood, Head of Service
Full adherence to Equipment and Adaptation procedures	Head of Neighbourhood, Head of Service
Tenant Satisfaction Measure scores	Director of Customer

- Key performance information to enable an overview of this policy performance will be provided on a timely basis to the Board. This information will be used to help shape our service delivery of Equipment and Adaptations.

Version Control

Version history			
Version	Amendment details	Date	Revised by
1.0	Approved	13/05/2019	Michelle Meldrum
2.0	Updated & reviewed	19/12/2022	Phil Meek
3.0	Approved by Executive Team	04/01/2023	Susie Thompson
3.1	Updated & reviewed	01/06/2026	Julie Walker
3.2	Updated formatting and circulated to the Executive Team for approval.	12/6/2026	Chloe Appleby
3.3	Amendments included following Exec Feedback	23/7/2026	Julie Walker
4.0	Policy approved by Executive Team.	07/08/2026	Chloe Appleby