

Powys County Council

Housing Services

Independent Living (Adaptations) Policy

April 2022

For Decision

Cyngor Sir Powys Gwasanaethau Tai

Powys County Council Housing Services

Cysylltwch â ni yn Gymraeg neu yn Saesneg. Ni fydd cysylltu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi. / Contact us in Welsh or in English. Contacting us in Welsh won't lead to a delay.

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Powys County Council Housing Services Independent Living (Adaptations) Policy

Contents

1	Policy background and coverage	2
2	Allocating homes to tenants	4
3	Adapting accommodation	6
4	Small adaptations	10
5	Medium and large adaptations	12
6	Funding	16
7	Alternative suitable accommodation	18
8	After adapting the home	20
9	Adaptations by tenants and freestanding equipment	22
10	Equalities	23
11	Reviewing decisions, complaints and compliments	24
12	Review of this policy	25

1 Policy background and coverage

- a. The Council's Housing Services aims to meet independent living needs of its tenants, current and prospective, so that they can carry out everyday tasks in their home and care can be provided safely.
- b. Independent living needs can be met through:
 - I. allocating suitable homes to prospective tenants
 - II. adapting homes for current tenants
 - III. assisting current tenants to move to more suitable alternative homes
 - IV. building or acquiring homes
- c. The Council aims to meet these needs in a resource effective way.
- d. 'Homes in Powys' is the Common Housing Register (CHR) and Common Allocation Scheme (CAS) covering access to all social housing in Powys. This includes homes provided by the Council' and housing associations. Housing Services and 'Homes in Powys' partners aim to let social housing in a way that addresses the needs of prospective tenants and households. This includes consideration of adaptations and accessibility of the accommodation.
- e. The Council carries out adaptations to its homes to cater for independent living needs people may have and to make sure carers can provide care safely. Adaptations can also prevent emergency or unplanned admissions to hospital and can facilitate earlier discharge from hospital. The adaptations provided must be necessary and appropriate, as well as reasonable and practicable.
- f. The Council will always consider whether or not a move to more suitable alternative accommodation may offer a better solution to address the longer-term needs of the household.
- g. The Council will make sure that it manages the adaptations process in accordance with this policy, legislation and all relevant Housing Services policy, process and standards.
- h. The Council will make sure that, where it has discretion, this is exercised in a reasonable, fair and equitable manner.
- i. This policy relates to homes owned and managed by Powys County Council through its Housing Revenue Account, the Council's landlord service.

1.1. Officer roles

The following roles can be involved during the adaptations process.

Trusted Assessor (TA)

Any member of staff that completed the “Trusted Assessor Technician Training (Minor Adaptations Without Delay)” training course.

Housing Standards Officer (HSO)

A dedicated role within Housing Services, working across different residential property tenures, to make sure that adaptations are reasonable and practicable, in consultation with Social Services. For Council homes, Housing Standards Officer manage the process of installation of medium and large adaptations.

Occupational Therapist (OT)

Occupational therapy is a science degree-based, health and social care profession, regulated by the Health and Care Professions Council. Occupational Therapists assess the needs and recommend to Housing Services what is necessary and appropriate to meet the needs.

Lifetime Homes Officer (LHO)

A dedicated role within Housing Services, responsible for co-ordinating the adaptations process and monitoring time scales.

Housing Options Officer (HOO)

A dedicated role within the Housing Service, responsible for providing housing options advice across tenures, allocating how to apply for and be offered Council and social housing and managing homelessness and ‘Homes in Powys’ applications.

Housing Quality Officer (HQO)

A dedicated role within the Housing Service, responsible for comprehensive technical and contract management services for planned maintenance and major works and technical support to repairs and maintenance services and ensuring void homes are of the required standard before they are let. In some cases, a Housing Quality Officer may manage the process of installation of medium and large adaptations.

2 Allocating homes

2.1 Objective

The Council makes sure adequate processes are in place to allocate Council and housing association homes in a way that meets the needs of prospective tenants.

2.2 Housing allocation and designating accommodation

- a. The Council keeps a register of Council accommodation designated as being especially suitable to people over the age of 60 and/or disabled people.
- b. When Council accommodation becomes vacant, a property assessment by the Housing Quality Officer takes place to confirm and update the property records, including accessibility and adaptations. The assessment includes the potential to make the accommodation more accessible or provide additional adaptations relatively easily.
- c. The Council has assessed its stock and designated accommodation especially suitable for allocation to people over the age of 60. The assessment takes into account the location, proximity to services and accessibility.
- d. A decision, to designate accommodation especially suitable for disabled people, will be made before the adaptation is carried out, or when accommodation becomes vacant. In some instances, the designation may be changed while the accommodation is still occupied. The criterion used is that the accommodation has features which are substantially different from those of ordinary accommodation.
- e. Expensive, large adaptations normally justify a designation. A decision if whether medium adaptations will justify a designation, will be made on a case-by-case basis by the Area Manager – Housing Quality, in consultation with the Housing Standards Officer.
- f. There are five levels of accessibility, each given an accessibility code to help the allocation of homes via ‘Homes in Powys’, to those who would benefit most from particular types of access:
 - I. completely wheelchair accessible (L1)
 - II. partially wheelchair accessible (L2)
 - III. completely level access (L3)
 - IV. up to five steps (L4)
 - V. five or more steps (GN)
- g. The Council maintains ‘Homes in Powys’, on behalf of its own landlord service and participating housing associations. Households that need or

would like to move are encouraged and supported to register with 'Homes in Powys', in line with the CAS.

- h. Applicants will be asked if they, or anyone in their household, require level access, aids or adaptations. If an applicant has specific needs, they will be advised to obtain an assessment from a social services Occupational Therapist (OT). People living in Powys can contact ASSIST (phone 0345 602 7050 or online www.powys.gov.uk/article/7708/ASSIST).
- i. The Council makes sure that designated accommodation is allocated to households that meet the qualifying criteria in accordance with the common allocations policy.
- j. It may still be necessary to adapt accommodation to meet the needs of a prospective tenant, before or after they move in.

2.3 Developing and acquiring

- a. The Council has a development programme to build affordable homes, covering both the homes in builds itself and those built by housing associations.
- b. If there is a specific identified need for accommodation designed to meet that need, the Council will consider including such needs in the programme.
- c. The Council and 'Homes in Powys' partners may consider buying existing accommodation to meet the specific needs of a household for which there are no other housing options.

3 Adapting accommodation

3.1 Objective

The Council aims to make its housing stock more accessible and inclusive for current and future tenants. This is done through responding to individual needs and through improving all accommodation and estate environments to meet the needs of all.

3.2 Welsh Housing Quality Standard

- a. The Council has achieved compliance with the Welsh Housing Quality Standard at the end of 2018. This means accommodation is of good quality and suitable for the needs of existing and future tenants.
- b. All accommodation should have the necessary physical adaptations to suit the professionally assessed needs of the tenants.
- c. If a new need is identified, the Council will consider adapting the current accommodation or to support a move to more suitable accommodation.

3.3 Adaptations to meet individual needs

- a. A housing adaptation can provide a number of benefits, but is primarily to help disabled and/or older people and to support their carers to:
 - remove barriers that can lead to people being disabled by their environment and not by their impairments (social model of disability)
 - remain or become more independent within their own home
 - facilitate an earlier hospital discharge
 - prevent any further falls
 - provide care safely
- b. Tenants are encouraged to approach the Council to discuss their needs for adaptations to their home.
- c. The Council will discuss needs with tenants, and any carer working on their behalf, throughout the process.
- d. Any recommended adaptation must be necessary and appropriate to meet the needs of the tenant, and the adaptation must be reasonable and practicable to carry out having regard to the age and condition of the building.

3.4 Eligible persons

- a. The Council will consider requests for adaptations from Council tenants for themselves, as well as for permanent members of their household that occupy the home as their only or principal home at the time of the request.

3.5 Adaptations in new build homes

- a. During the first twelve months of occupation the Council will not provide adaptations. This is to protect the integrity of the twelve months defects period and contractual warranties that apply to new build properties.
- b. Tenants are asked to sign an agreement to accept the property as it is currently finished and that no adaptations, alterations or decorating are to take place within the first twelve months.
- c. There may be significant changes in tenants' circumstances that may need to consider installing adaptations within the first twelve months. Before an adaptation is agreed, the Clerk of Works responsible for the scheme must be consulted to confirm any implications the works may have on warranties.

3.6 Requests for lodgers, sub-tenants and other non-permanent household members

- a. Adaptations for people other than the tenant and their permanent household, will only be considered in exceptional cases. These people have only limited rights to remain resident at that property. Any adaptations may be of limited or short-term benefit.
- b. It needs to be demonstrated that the lodger, sub-tenant or other person is a resident of the property for at least three years.
- c. It also needs to be demonstrated that there is significant hardship, for example not being able to access or egress the accommodation.
- d. Medium and large adaptations for lodgers, sub-tenants and other non-permanent household members, require approval of a Service Manager.

3.7 People living on Gypsy and Traveller sites

- a. Gypsies and Travellers who have stopped travelling due to old age, ill-health or being disabled and are living on a Council owned site, may require adaptations to meet their needs.
- b. Small adaptations to the amenity blocks will be provided in the same way as small adaptations to Council homes.
- c. A need for medium or large adaptations should be assessed by an Occupational Therapist (OT) from Social Services. The OT will recommend if and how the needs can be met.

3.8 Adaptations that are eligible

- a. The Council differentiates between three levels of adaptations:

For Decision

- small
 - medium
 - large
- b. Adaptations that may be considered to meet the need of the household are those that ensure that the home and the building are safe for the household. Assistance is given to:
- Facilitate access
 - Provide suitable facilities
 - Make a building safe for use
 - Make environmental improvements to enable the disabled person to safely live in their home
- c. The Council will use the same approach for tenants of the Council as it does with applicants for a Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG), as set out in the 'Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996' and subsequent regulations. DFGs are the equivalent for people living in privately owned homes of the aids and adaptations available to people living in Council-owned properties.
- d. The purposes for which mandatory disabled facilities grants may be given fall into a number of categories and are set out in legislation¹:
- I. Facilitating access by the disabled occupant to and from the dwelling or the building;
 - II. Making the dwelling or the building safe for the disabled occupant and other persons residing with him/her;
 - III. Facilitating access by the disabled occupant to a room used or usable as the principal family room;
 - IV. Facilitating access by the disabled occupant to, or providing for the disabled occupant, a room used or usable for sleeping;
 - V. Facilitating access by the disabled occupant to, or providing for the disabled occupant, a room in which there is a lavatory, or facilitating the use by the disabled occupant of such a facility;
 - VI. Facilitating access by the disabled occupant to, or providing for the disabled occupant, a room in which there is a bath or shower (or both), or facilitating the use by the disabled occupant of such a facility.
 - VII. Facilitating access by the disabled occupant to, or providing for the disabled occupant, a room in which there is a wash hand basin, or facilitating the use by the disabled occupant of such a facility;
 - VIII. Facilitating the preparation and cooking of food by the disabled occupant.
 - IX. Improving any heating system in the dwelling to meet the needs of the disabled occupant or, if there is no existing heating system there or any such system is unsuitable for use by the disabled occupant, providing a heating system suitable to meet his/her needs;

¹ section 23(1) of The Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 and section 3(2) of The Disabled Facilities Grants (Maximum Amounts and Additional Purposes) (Wales) Order 2008.

For Decision

- X. Facilitating 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;
 - XI. Facilitating 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 and in need of such care;
 - XII. Facilitating access to and from a garden by a disabled occupant;
 - XIII. Making a garden safe for a disabled occupant;
 - XIV. Such other purposes as may be specified by order of the Secretary of State.
-
- e. There may be a difference between what is desirable and what is actually needed. The Council will consider recommendations for adaptations that are needed.
 - f. Tenants need to report repair and maintenance issues of adaptations to the Council.
 - g. Medium and large adaptations, will not be undertaken where the person requiring adaptations is intending to move from the property, for example by being registered with 'Homes in Powys'. If there is no prospect of being able to move to a suitable home within the next six months, the Council will consider providing medium adaptations.

4 Small adaptations

4.1 Objective

The Council makes sure there is a transparent and efficient process in place to deal with requests for adaptations.

4.2 Small adaptations

- a. Small adaptations will be characterised by a rapid response with a short delivery time target. This is an approach which follows the 'Minor Adaptations without Delay' guidance, which has been produced by the College of Occupational Therapists.
- b. Small adaptations are adaptations with an expected value below £1,000 in any of the Council's homes.
- c. Examples of small adaptations are:
 - I. grab rails
 - II. lever taps
 - III. additional stair rails
 - IV. smoke alarms for people with a hearing impairment
 - V. replacing recessed or knob style handles to kitchen units' doors and drawers
 - VI. relocating sockets and/or switches
 - VII. additional sockets for appliances required for medical equipment needs
 - VIII. half steps to improve the accessibility of steep or high steps and thresholds
 - IX. door intercom
 - X. over bath showers

4.3 Request for small adaptations

- a. A tenant should contact the Powys ASSIST social service helpline number 0345 6027050 who will then issue formal referral to the Council's delivery partners at Care & Repair or escalate to the Occupational Therapy service for fuller assessment as appropriate.
- b. A home visit is often not necessary. If a visit is necessary, this should normally be done by a Trusted Assessor. A visit by an Occupational Therapist may be offered but should not delay provision of a small adaptation.
- c. Any member of Housing Services that is qualified as a Trusted Assessor and an Occupational Therapist can authorise small adaptations.
- d. Medium and large adaptations may be installed by any contractor meeting the Council's requirements.

4.4 Timescales

- a. The Council will ensure there is a process in place to ensure that small adaptations are usually installed within four weeks from date of the request from the tenant with the Council.

5 Medium and large adaptations

5.1 Objective

The Council ensures there is a transparent and efficient process in place to deal with requests for adaptations.

5.2 Medium adaptations

- a. Medium adaptations are adaptations with an expected value of between £1,000 and £10,000. Multiple medium adaptations may be classed as large adaptation. For example, where a level access bathroom, widening doorways and ramping to the front door are required in one adaptation.
- b. Examples of medium adaptations are:
 - I. replacing baths with level access showers
 - II. ramps
 - III. widening doors
 - IV. stair lifts
 - V. ceiling tracks

5.3 Large adaptations

- a. Large adaptations are adaptations with an expected value above £10,000.
- b. Examples of large adaptations are:
 - I. through floor lifts
 - II. extensions
 - III. complete redesign of bathrooms and kitchens

5.4 Standard medium adaptations in designated homes

- a. Standard medium adaptations are available to tenants living in homes designated for people over 60 or designated as adapted.

The following adaptations class as a standard adaptation:

- I. replacing baths with level access showers
 - II. ramps
 - III. widening doors
 - IV. door intercom
 - V. removing older storage, solid-fuel and oil heating systems
- b. A tenant should contact their Housing Options Officer to discuss a request for standard adaptations.
 - c. An Occupational Therapist may be asked to assess the tenant's needs if it is not clear the adaptation will address the needs of the tenant. In most cases no OT assessment will be necessary.

5.5 Medium and large adaptations in general needs homes

- a. A tenant should contact Powys ASSIST to request an assessment from an Occupational Therapist (OT).
- b. The assessment of need should be carried out by an OT. Agreeing recommendations should be a team approach between OT, Housing Options Officer (who may also refer to the Housing Quality Officer) and Housing Standards Officer, in consultation with the person requesting an adaptation.
- c. the assessment should take into account:
 - I. the needs of the tenant's household now and in the next five years, including:
 - the tenant's existing support network and carers
 - needs of all members of the tenant's household
 - II. housing management considerations, including:
 - availability of more suitable alternative accommodation
 - intention to move, like being registered on a housing register
 - possession proceeding or breaches of tenancy, including rent arrears
 - five-year future suitability of the accommodation, including overcrowding or under occupying
 - ASB by or against the tenant
 - history of frequent moving
 - history previous adaptations
 - designation of the accommodation as especially suitable for disabled people and access level
 - location and future demand for an adapted property
 - III. asset management considerations, including
 - existing and potential future adaptations
 - planned maintenance and improvement programmes
 - construction type
 - future servicing and maintenance
 - location, like conservation area
 - planning and building regulations
 - IV. finance management considerations, including
 - the cost effectiveness of the adaptation in the current home
- d. Any recommendations should be agreed between OT, Housing Standard Officer, and Housing Options Officer, who will also consult with the local Housing Quality Officer if necessary. If they cannot agree due to different professional opinions, a Housing Services Senior Manager will be asked to decide what the recommendation will be.
- e. Examples of reasons not to carry out adaptations are:
 - I. The accommodation will not meet the tenant's needs; for example, if a tenant lives in a flat above ground floor, where the tenant is not being able to use the stairs; or a single person living in a three-bed

house requiring a level access shower or level access ramp.
Decisions about suitability are the responsibility of the Area Manager – Housing Communities, after consultation with the Housing Options Officer, the Occupational Therapist and tenant.

- II. The person requiring adaptations is accepted on 'Homes in Powys' or planning to move
 - III. There are breaches of the tenancy agreement and the Council has started possession proceedings
 - IV. There are competing needs of different members of the tenant's family which cannot be met in the accommodation
 - V. Adaptations cannot be carried out safely or they affect the structural stability of the building
 - VI. There are concerns about the age and condition of the property or the property has been earmarked or is being considered for disposal or redevelopment
 - VII. The architectural and structural characteristics of the accommodation, or any planning, conservation or listed building restrictions, may render certain types of adaptation inappropriate
 - VIII. Access ramps that would adversely affect the amenity of the area for other residents.
 - IX. The Council has obtained a warrant for eviction due to a breach of tenancy conditions, for example due to rent arrears or anti-social behaviour.
 - X. Adaptation is not cost effective in the accommodation, for example structural alterations with minimal gain of space or a bath room that is too small to fit in a level access shower, without reconfiguring the lay out.
- f. Every situation is likely to be different and customised solutions may be necessary to provide the right solution at the right time.
 - g. If a recommendation made by the OT, in consultation with the Housing Options Officer and Housing Quality Officer, is to provide adaptations, the Housing Standards Officer will formally consider the recommendation on behalf of the Council's landlord service, before offering the adaptation to the tenant.
 - h. The tenant will be informed of the decision to carry out medium or large adaptations and will be asked to agree with the installation of the adaptations to address their needs. It is not always possible to provide all the details at this stage and further discussion about the details may be required at a later date.
 - i. If the needs of the tenant change or if an adaptation after all does not address the needs, the tenant should approach the Council to discuss this.
 - j. If the accommodation is to be designated as being especially suitable for disabled people, the tenant will be informed of this.

For Decision

- k. No works will be carried out before securing all necessary consents, if any. This can be for example consent from Building Control, Local Planning Authority, Highway Authority or Water Authority.
- l. Medium and large adaptations may be installed by any contractor meeting the Council's requirements.
- m. If the Council decides not to carry out adaptations, the Council will inform the tenant, including the reasons for the decision and if and how any assessed needs can be met in different ways.
- n. If the recommendation by the OT is to move to more suitable alternative accommodation, the Housing Options Officer will discuss this with the tenant and agree a plan of action.

5.6 Time scales

- a. The expected maximum time scale to deliver a medium adaptation is 6½ months and for large adaptations 17½ months.
- b. Requests are dealt with in date order.
- c. Requests that enable hospital discharge, palliative care, preventing imminent risk of serious harm or preventing homelessness may be prioritised by Housing Services. Decisions to prioritise are made in consultation with the tenant and officers and professionals that are involved.

6 Funding

6.1 Objective

The Council aims to deliver adaptations cost effectively.

6.2 Annual budget

- a. The Council will allocate a capital and revenue budget each year.
- b. Should demand for adaptations exceed the available budget, the Council will inform all tenants who are awaiting an adaptation, to explain the position and give an indication as to how long they are likely to have to wait.

6.3 Planned programmes

- a. Where possible, the Council will incorporate medium and large adaptations within existing planned maintenance and improvement programmes. The Council will take into account the expected maximum time scale to deliver a medium adaptation within 6½ months and a large adaptation within 17½ months.
- b. Where incorporation is not possible, the adaptation works will be ordered separately.

6.4 Authorisation of works and payments

- a. Small adaptations need to be authorised by:
 - any member of housing staff that is a trusted assessor.
- b. Standard adaptations in designated homes need to be authorised by
 - any member of housing staff that is a trusted assessor, or
 - a Housing Standards Officer, on behalf of the Council's landlord service, or
 - a Housing Environmental Health Officer, on behalf of the Council's landlord service.
- c. Medium adaptations up to £10,000 need to be authorised by:
 - a Housing Standards Officer, on behalf of the Council's landlord service, or
 - a Housing Environmental Health Officer, on behalf of the Council's landlord service.
- d. Large adaptations between £10,000 and £36,000 need to be authorised by:
 - a Housing Standards Officer, on behalf of the Council's landlord service, and a positive advice from

For Decision

- another Housing Standards Officer or
- Area Manager – Housing Communities, or
- Housing Environmental Health Officer, or
- Area Manager – Housing Quality

The Service Manager- Housing Quality needs to be informed of the authorisation.

Adaptations above £36,000 need to be recommended by a Housing Standards Officer and submitted to the Service Manager – Housing Quality to ensure authorisation at the necessary level.

6.5 No financial contribution from the tenant

Tenants are not required to contribute financially to authorised adaptations in Council accommodation. Social Services and Housing Services will agree funding for adaptations.

7 Alternative suitable accommodation

7.1 Objective

The Council will consider, if a move to more suitable alternative accommodation is a better option than adapting the current accommodation.

7.2 Recommendation to move

- a. A move to suitable alternative accommodation is likely to be recommended in the following circumstances:
 - I. The property does not lend itself to adaptation
 - II. The household is significantly under-occupying a large property; this is two or more bedrooms than required
 - III. The property, even with adaptations, will not be suitable for the tenant and household
 - IV. The cost of adaptations is above £5,000 and a move to adapted or more suitable accommodation is more cost effective
 - V. The tenant is requesting a move for their own reasons because the current property is expected not to be suitable within the next five years
 - VI. The time to carry out an adaptation is expected to take longer than moving to other suitable accommodation. Especially large adaptations may be subject to delays, because of prescribed procurement procedures and obtaining planning permission. Housing Options Officers are able to advise on the likelihood suitable accommodation becoming available and access to 'Homes in Powys'.
- b. A recommendation to move to suitable alternative accommodation will only be made where the Council knows that genuinely suitable accommodation is available. However, there will be instances where it is not appropriate or possible to adapt the current accommodation, but due to the local housing market there are no suitable accommodation available within a reasonable time scale. When deciding what is reasonable, the expected time scales are taking into account, as well as the impact on the tenant not being suitably housed.
- c. In identifying suitable alternative accommodation, the Council will take due regard of the tenant's preference in terms of location and type and size of accommodation. This is subject to the 'Homes in Powys' housing allocations policy. Tenants are often given high priority under the allocations policy.
- d. The Council will discuss with the tenant, the likely waiting time for alternative accommodation and agree jointly, in consultation with the Occupational Therapist, whether this waiting period is acceptable.

For Decision

- e. If the initial expected waiting time for a move is exceeded or if the tenant's circumstances change, the case will be reviewed. Periodic reviews take place for households registered in the top priority band.
- f. In seeking alternative accommodation, the Council will work with housing associations. This means Council tenants may be offered accommodation provided by a housing association.
- g. When a tenant moves as the result of a recommendation, the Council will work with the tenant to support them in the process of moving home. This can be in the form of advice, practical assistance, such as arranging removers, and, where appropriate, financial assistance.
- h. Any financial assistance would generally be confined to reimbursing any reasonable out of pocket expenses incurred in the move, with a maximum of £2,000. The tenant will be informed beforehand what can and cannot be covered and will need to provide invoices.
- i. A tenant cannot be forced to move against their wish. If a tenant refuses suitable alternative accommodation and chooses to stay in the unsuitable accommodation, this is their choice. However, if the Council has decided a move is the best outcome, the Council will not carry out adaptations, other than small adaptations.

8 After adapting the home

8.1 Objective

The Council aims to keep adaptations available for future use in the case the need for them ceases to exist.

8.2 Repairs, maintenance and replacement

- a. Adaptations are part of the home and are repaired and maintained by or on behalf of the council as necessary.
- b. If an adaptation need replacing or repairing according to the Council's Housing Quality division of Housing Services, and the estimated cost is above £1,000, a fast-track assessment by an Occupational Therapist will be carried out to determine if the adaptation still meets the needs of the tenant, or if a different adaptation is needed or if the adaptation can be completely removed.

8.3 Moving after adaptations

- a. After the Council carries out medium or large adaptations, it is normally expected that the tenant intends to remain in the adapted home for the next five years. The home should meet the needs of the tenant.
- b. If a tenant needs to move, the Council will reassess the tenant's changed need. Examples of changed need are:
 - I. a change in medical circumstances
 - II. a change in household size and composition
 - III. employment elsewhere
- c. If a tenant needs to move within Powys, the Council will try, in line with the 'Homes in Powys' housing allocation policy, to offer a home that meets their needs. Adaptations may be necessary.
- d. If the tenant wants to move, but there is no urgent reason, the Council may decide not to carry out medium or large adaptations to the new accommodation. If the current home meets the need of the tenant it is likely they will be placed in the lowest priority band under the common allocations policy. The tenant would have to wait until a suitable home becomes vacant.

8.4 Mutual exchange

The Council normally refuses a mutual exchange where the home is designed or adapted to suit a physically disabled person and the home would be occupied by someone that is not physically disabled.

8.5 Adaptation no longer required

- a. In cases where adaptations are no longer required, the adaptations are normally left in place.
- b. The removal of adaptations may be considered for items which may be used in other accommodation, for example a stair-lift or a modular ramp or on recommendation of an Occupational Therapist that there is a need to remove it, following the adaptation process.
- c. If the person for whom the medium or large adaptation was provided no longer lives in the property, the Council will consider if the accommodation may be needed for someone else that needs the adaptation. The Council will try to balance the personal circumstances of the remaining people with the need of the household on the common allocations register that needs the adaptation.
- d. Reasonable moving expenses will be paid, if the remaining people move to make the accommodation available for people that need the adaptation. If this is applicable, it will be confirmed before the move.

9 Adaptations by tenants and freestanding equipment

9.1 Objective

If tenants wish to carry out adaptations themselves, the Council will give permission where reasonable.

9.2 Alterations

- a. The Council will ensure there is a procedure in place dealing with requests for alterations to the home carried out by tenants.
- b. All tenants will need to obtain written permission from the Council, before carrying out adaptation works in the property.
- c. The Council will not unreasonably withhold permission.
- d. Permission or refusal will always be in writing and never given verbally.
- e. Any adaptations by tenants need to comply with building regulations and other legal requirements. The Council will attach other conditions to any permission.
- f. The Council will not normally maintain or service any adaptation made by the tenant. The tenant will be responsible for this unless the Council has agreed in writing to be responsible for repairs and maintenance.
- g. At the end of the tenancy the tenant may be required to remove any adaptations they have installed and make good any damage to the property. If this is the case the Council will include this as a condition to the permission. The Council can agree to take responsibility for the adaptations. Where the Council accepts responsibility, this will be confirmed in writing.

9.3 Equipment

- a. Equipment is provided through the Occupational Therapy Teams in Health and Social Services, not by Housing Services.
- b. Examples of equipment are:
 - I. mobile hoists and slings
 - II. toilet frames
 - III. bed levers
 - IV. shower chairs
- c. People can contact ASSIST or their Occupational Therapist for advice.

10 Equalities

10.1 Objective

The Council is committed to giving an equal service to all.

10.2 Procedures and practices

- a. The Council's staff and contractors will operate in such a way to ensure that their procedures and practices are sensitive to the needs of individual residents. They will ensure that they do not discriminate in any way.
- b. Enforcement and application of this policy will from time to time need to be tailored to meet the needs of individuals. All cases will be considered on merit and individually.

10.3 Information

- a. The Council will in all reasonable circumstances make information available in a variety of information formats, including for example:
 - I. Braille
 - II. large print
 - III. audio tape
- b. Where services are required to ensure that information is accessible to the tenant or member of their family, the Council will provide these services where reasonable. This includes the use of interpretation services for languages, including British Sign Language.
- c. To deliver services, it is necessary for the Council to collect, store and process personal data about applicants, tenants, residents, other individuals and businesses. This is done in line with data protection legislation. The Housing Privacy Notice is published on the Council's website and explains in detail how the Council collect, store and process data and how people can exercise their data protection rights.
- d. Personal data collected and processed to carry out this policy is mainly provided by the tenants as part of tenancy management and requests for adaptations. The information is used and may be shared to ensure the tenant is eligible for, to assess the need for and installation of adaptations.

11 Reviewing decisions, complaints and compliments

11.1 Objective

The Council is committed to improve service delivery and put right any mistakes.

11.2 Review

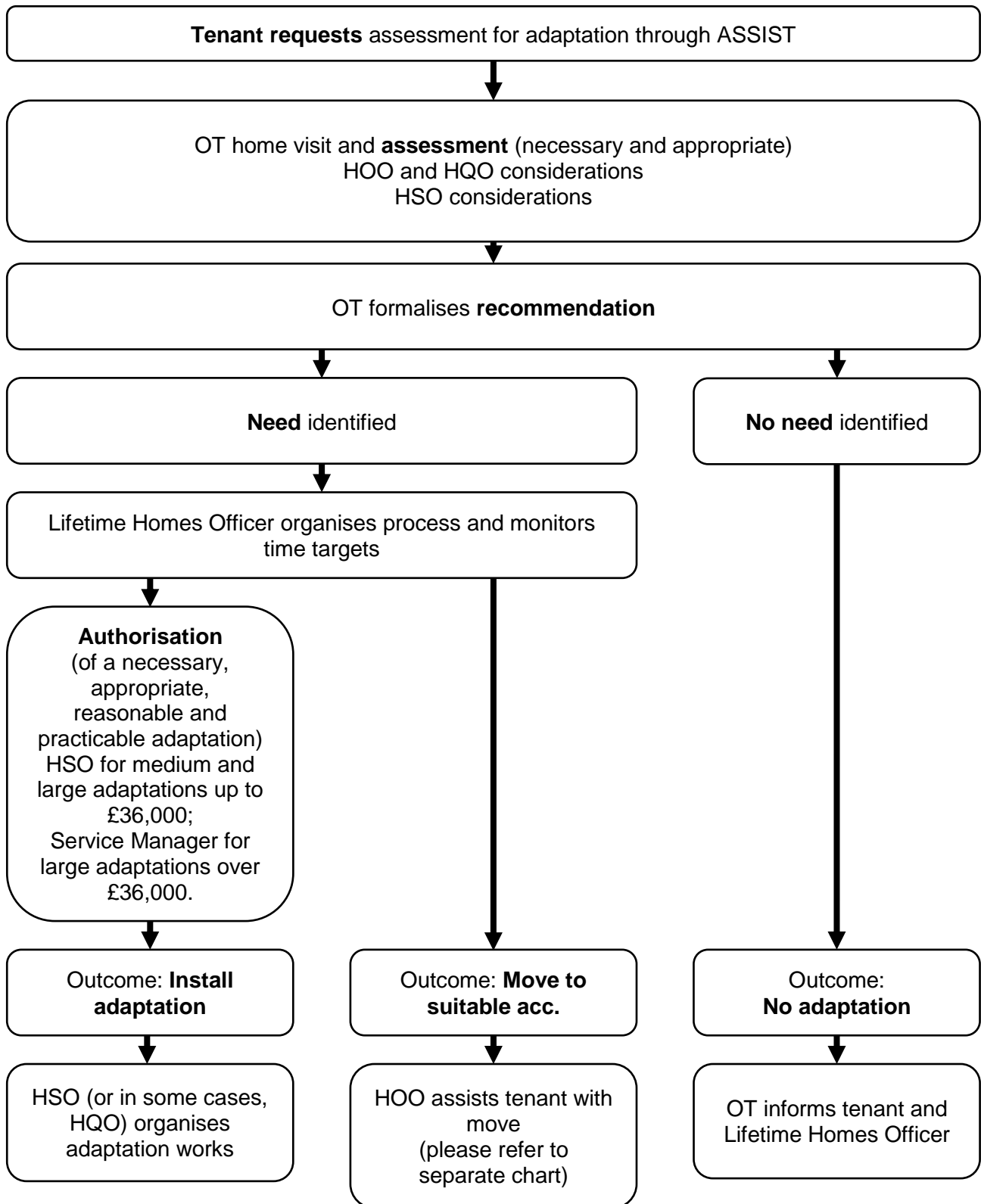
Anyone that is affected by a decision of the Council's Housing Services is entitled to ask for an independent review from a manager that was not involved in making the decision.

11.3 Complaints and compliments

- a. The Council welcomes all feedback from customers, because it helps to improve services.
- b. When the Council receives a complaint, the Corporate Complaints Procedure will be followed.
- c. The Council will aim to clarify any issues that are deemed unclear.
- d. Where possible, the Council will put right any mistakes it may have made.
- e. Where the Council gets something wrong, it will apologise and where appropriate try to put things right.
- f. The Council will aim to learn from good practice and mistakes and use the information gained to improve services.

12 Review of this policy

- a. The Council will review this policy every three years unless there are circumstances that require a review, for example a change in legislation or regulation.
- b. Where there has been a change in legislation which has an impact on the policy, the policy will be reviewed within three months of the legislation or regulation coming into effect.



ASSIST – Powys Adult Social Care Information Service 0345 602 7050 / powys.gov.uk/contact
 HOO – Housing Options Officer
 HQO – Housing Quality Officer
 HSO – Housing Standards Officer
 HSMT – Housing Senior Management Team
 OT – Occupational Therapist

Process to move to more suitable accommodation

