

The background of the page features an abstract graphic composed of several overlapping circles in two colors: a vibrant blue and a warm orange. The circles vary in size, with the largest orange circle serving as the central backdrop for the title. Other circles of both colors are scattered around it, some overlapping each other and the central circle, creating a dynamic and modern visual effect.

AIDS & ADAPTATIONS POLICY

Owner	Chief Customer Officer
Directorate	Customer
Authorising body	Customer Influence Committee
Resident involvement	Yes
EIA	Yes
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1. Introduction

- 1.1 At Eastlight Community Homes (hereafter ‘Eastlight’), we are committed to ensuring residents have the advice, support and guidance they need to live safely and independently in their homes and communities. This may include installing aids or making larger adaptations to their homes.
- 1.2 This Aids & Adaptations Policy sets out how we will support residents who request such support, either directly or in partnership with the relevant Local Authority (LA).

2. Scope

- 2.1 Aids and adaptations are available to all Eastlight residents, including their children and any other registered occupants living in an Eastlight home.
- 2.2 Information about our approach to aids and adaptations can be found via the Eastlight website. Alternatively, interested residents can contact us so that we can appropriately assess and meet their needs.
- 2.3 Leaseholders, shared owners and residents living in intermediate and market rented homes are excluded from this service. However, should they need advice and support, they are strongly encouraged to approach their LA directly.
- 2.4 Leaseholders must first seek Eastlight’s permission before making any adaptations that may affect the communal or exterior areas of their home. All requests will be considered through our Landlord’s Consent process to ensure the proposed works are suitable, viable and do not adversely affect the building’s structural integrity.
- 2.5 This policy should be read in conjunction with Eastlight’s Empty Homes & Allocations Policy, Leasehold Management Policy, Shared Ownership Policy and Service Charge Policy.

3. Statutory & Regulatory Requirements

- 3.1 This policy is designed to ensure Eastlight meets its obligations under the following statutory and regulatory requirements:
 - Housing Act 1985
 - The Chronically Sick & Disabled Persons Act 1970 (Sections 1 & 2)
 - Housing Grants Construction & Regeneration Act 1996 (Section 23)

- The Equality Act 2010
- Regulator of Social Housing's Consumer Standards 2024.

4. Think Customer

- 4.1** At Eastlight, we exist to provide the best possible homes and services for residents.
- 4.2** Our 'Think Customer' approach aims to guide and support colleagues whenever they make decisions that affect residents, directly or indirectly.
- 4.3** 'Think Customer' ensures our people fully consider how residents will experience and be impacted by the service we provide. Before acting, our people must think about:
 - The short and long-term effects of their actions
 - The residents' individual needs and preferences
 - Whether their communication is clear, respectful and appropriate
 - If they can draw on any past insights or experiences to help them when making tough decisions
 - Whether they, themselves, would be happy with the service being provided.
- 4.4** The 'Think Customer' model is designed to complement and work alongside all Eastlight policies and procedures, including this Aids & Adaptations Policy.

5. Our Approach

- 5.1** Any resident (subject to limitations cited in 2.3) may apply for aids and adaptations. An application may also be made on a resident's behalf by a representative, such as a relative, household member or support provider, where appropriate consent has been obtained.
- 5.2** Referrals for aids and adaptations requests must be received and approved by Eastlight before any work is requested, commissioned and completed in the home.
- 5.3 Minor Aids & Adaptations**
 - 5.3.1** Minor adaptations are those typically costing less than £2,000. They will generally be assessed, approved and delivered directly by Eastlight.
 - 5.3.2** Eastlight will accept referrals for minor aids and adaptations from a Community Agent, statutory service provider (e.g. a GP, social prescriber, social worker, mental health worker or Occupational Therapist (OT)), or from the relevant LA.
 - 5.3.3** Examples of minor aids and adaptations include, but are not limited to:

- Grab rails
- Handrails
- Additional stair rails
- Small ramps or threshold ramps
- Lever taps
- Minor step alterations
- Key safes
- Other low-cost works that improve safety, independence and accessibility.

5.4 Major Adaptations

5.4.1 New residents must disclose pre-existing medical or health conditions before the start of their tenancy to be eligible to raise a request for major adaptations to their home within the first 12 months of their tenancy.

5.4.2 Major adaptations are those typically costing more than £2,000 per adaptation. They are usually delivered through the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) scheme following an OT assessment arranged through the relevant LA.

5.4.3 Examples of major adaptations include, but are not limited to:

- Level access showers or wet rooms
- Through-floor lifts
- Stairlifts
- Permanent wheelchair ramps
- Widened doorways
- Property extensions
- Major bathroom adaptations, including specialist toilets
- Kitchen adaptations
- Structural alterations to improve accessibility.

5.5 Eastlight will only consider requests for major adaptations that meet eligibility criteria (see Section 6) and that are supported by an OT assessment.

5.6 If the eligibility criteria are not met, we will support residents in finding alternative solutions, where possible. These may include assistive technology, signposting to support agencies, or finding a more suitable home for residents to live in.

5.7 Requests for major adaptations will be referred for funding through available grant schemes, such as the DFG administered by the relevant LA. Where funding gaps exist, Eastlight will work with the LA and other partners to explore all viable options to support residents' safety, independence and accessibility needs.

5.8 Where a major adaptation changes the number of bedrooms within a home, the rent charged for that property may be affected. It may also impact Council Tax, Housing

Benefit, Universal Credit, and any under-occupancy charge that applies.

- 5.9** Where specialist equipment is required as part of the major adaption, residents will be referred through the DFG or other LA-approved equipment service, as appropriate.
- 5.10** Eastlight will perform annual servicing and maintenance of any stairlifts, step-lifts and through-floor lifts installed by Eastlight contractors. Responsibility for any other maintenance, repairs or servicing of items provided by a third party (i.e., through the DFG or other equipment service) remains with the relevant provider and is not the responsibility of Eastlight.
- 5.11** When specialist equipment becomes ‘beyond economical repair’, Eastlight will refer the resident to the relevant LA to explore a replacement through the DFG.
- 5.12** Residents who wish to complete their own adaptations, including work through the DFG, must first apply and secure Eastlight’s consent through the Landlord’s Consent process. Residents can contact us to apply for Landlord’s Consent or complete the online form available on the ‘Making Changes’ page of our website.

6. Eligibility Criteria

- 6.1** Each case or request for aids and adaptations will be reviewed on an individual basis, with consideration given to medical exemptions, access to support services and the works required within the home.
- 6.2** If a home is under-occupied and a resident applies for an adaptation, we will support the resident to move into a more appropriate home as the preferred option.
- 6.3** Any adaptations that are inappropriate or impractical for the home (for example, due to structural integrity), will not be agreed. Eastlight will support the resident in moving to a more appropriate home that better meets their needs instead.
- 6.4** Any resident who has been with Eastlight for less than 12 months and has not already disclosed pre-existing conditions before the start of their tenancy will not be eligible for major adaptations to their home within the first 12 months of their tenancy – unless there are exceptional circumstances. In this case, an agreement should be reached between Eastlight and the relevant LA prior to the works being assessed.
- 6.5** Any resident with pending enforcement action, existing debt or property damage will not be considered eligible for adaptations until the situation has been resolved – unless there are exceptional circumstances. In this case, an agreement should be reached between Eastlight and the relevant LA prior to the works being assessed.
- 6.6** Any resident who uses a Mutual Exchange to move out of an adapted home that meets their needs into an un-adapted home must ensure the property is suitable for

occupation (as per Ground 7, Housing Act 1985). They will be unable to make any major adaptations following the move within the first 12 months. This may be excused if, at the time, the move into the un-adapted property was reasonable and the most suitable outcome for the resident. If this was the case, then the resident would be eligible to apply for the DFG in their new home, and Eastlight may then accept minor adaptations on a case-by-case basis and upon request.

- 6.7** Eastlight will not process any new requests for aids and adaptations where a current application for Right to Buy, Right to Acquire or subsequent scheme is active.
- 6.8** Where a resident chooses to leave their home within the first five years of having major adaptations completed, the cost of the work will be recharged to the resident. This will not apply when a resident dies or has to move for disability/care reasons.
- 6.9** Exceptional circumstances, as determined by an OT, will be considered by Eastlight's Appeals Panel, which is made up of senior managers.
- 6.10** Where eligibility criteria are not met, Eastlight will provide support as detailed in 5.6.

7. Equality Impact Assessment

- 7.1** An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) for this policy was conducted. As a result, actions have been put in place to mitigate any negative impacts.

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