YMCA

Effective from:
1 June 2026

APPLICATION OF THIS DOCUMENT

This document outlines YMCA St. Paul's Group's (the Charity) approach to minor and major adaptations to our residents' homes.

Adaptations provide our residents with a safe and accessible home. The policy applies to residents living in homes that are owned and managed by the Charity, excluding Temporary Housing.

The policy does not apply to residents living in homes that are not owned by us. This policy must be read in conjunction with individual occupancy agreements and licences.

This document applies to all legal entities within the Group and operates alongside other policy documents such as the Referral, Assessment & Allocations policy and the Support Pathway Policy

1. Definitions

1.1 **Adaptation:** The purpose of an adaptation is to modify the home environment to restore or enable independent living, privacy, confidence and dignity for individuals (and their children where applicable). The focus is on identifying and implementing an individual solution to enable someone living in a disabling home environment to use that home more effectively, rather than on the physical adaptation itself.

1.2 **Mobile or non-fixed aids:** Items or systems that can support an individual with maintaining as much independency as possible. These can include bed hoists, bath boards, walking frames, bed, sofas or chair raisers and are usually subject to the outcome of an assessment.

1.3 **Minor adaptation:** A piece of work that would not normally exceed £1,000 in total. These include, but are not limited to, grab rails, handrails and stair handrails, flashing doorbells and smoke alarm alerts (for hearing and visually impaired residents), window opening equipment, provision of suitable taps, door handles, sockets, internal door threshold ramps or door entry systems. Some minor adaptations can be carried out without a referral from an occupational therapist (OT). If there are several adaptations in one property which combined exceed £1,000, they would still qualify as minor adaptations.

1.4 **Major adaptation:** a substantial alteration often requiring structural changes resulting in a permanent change to a property. This work could potentially be in excess of £1,000 and require project management resources. Changes can include, but are not limited to, level or ramped access to bedroom or bathroom, fixed ramps and other external facilities, widening of doors and windows, lifts and hoists, stair lifts, specially equipped kitchen, bathrooms or showers.

1.5 **Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG):** Government funding available to disabled residents to pay for, or towards, adaptations to their home. Funding decisions are delegated to local authorities and can be applied for by anyone.

2. Application

2.1 Reasonable adjustments

Housing applicants have a right to request adaptations to be made to a property ahead of them moving in before they accept the property. If the requests are reasonable, we will adapt the property. If we find the request unreasonable and the resident does not agree to the property as is, we may withdraw the offer of a property.

We have clear procedures in place to assess whether a request is reasonable.

Examples of reasonable changes are:

- Remove or replace, furnishings, materials or equipment (so long as it would not become a permanent fixture when installed)
- Replace or provide signs or notices
- Replace taps or door handles
- Change the colour of any surface, such as a wall or a door

Reasonable adjustments only pertain to auxiliary aids and services as defined by the Equality Act 2010. That means we are not obliged to make structural changes to the property, although the resident can request an adaptation as outlined below.

Exclusions

We may refuse an adaptation request if:

- the request is for improvements unrelated to Disability or health needs
- the adaptation is structurally unfeasible
- the cost of the adaptation is disproportionate in relation to the long-term suitability of the property
- the property is due for major works or redevelopment.
- The resident refuses to engage in the assessment process or fails to provide supporting evidence

2.2 Requests for an adaptation

We assess each request for an adaptation to determine whether a minor or major adaptation is required. We may ask for additional information, such as medical records, or occupational therapist reports to support any requests. The requested adaptation must support essential daily living tasks, safety, mobility, or independence.
There must be clinical evidence of need, normally via an occupational therapist assessment for major or complex minor adaptations. The property must be structurally suitable for the proposed works.

Support with applying for an adaptation

We assist our residents in applying for housing adaptations depending on the cost of the adaptation. The first step for a resident is to refer themselves to social services so that an occupational therapist can assess their needs and size of the adaptation. Once the adaptation needs are assessed, we will assist in either funding or securing the funding through the Disabled Facilities Grant.

In line with our Safeguarding Policy, in urgent cases, where a resident may be at serious risk in their home without an adaptation and where the local authority is unable to assist with an immediate assessment, we will consider a private occupational therapist to carry out the assessment. Throughout the assessment process we work closely with residents, advocates, occupational therapist team and other technical staff teams involved in the process to ensure each party is kept up to date with the process.

2.3 **Minor adaptations**

We always provide minor adaptations where the assessment confirms there is a need. Usually, the assessment will be carried out by an occupational therapist. For this, residents will need to refer themselves to social services. Once the assessment is obtained, we will arrange for the minor adaptation to be carried out, if it is assessed to cost £1,000 or less.

Minor adaptation without delay

If the resident's needs are simple to assess, we consider a qualified contractor as being a sufficient person to assess what adaptation is needed and they can make the adaptation without an assessment from an occupational therapist.

2.4 **Major adaptations**

As with the minor adaptations, an assessment from an occupational therapist needs to happen before the start of works on an adaptation. Applications for a major adaptation are made to the local authority, as these are funded through the Disabled Facilities Grant. Where we are able to, we will complete the application on the resident's behalf. In some cases, the resident will need to submit the application. Where there is a shortfall in funding, we will supplement the Disabled Facilities Grant to ensure the adaptation is made.

3. Works

Where we are responsible for carrying out the works, we use approved contractors who specialise in carrying out adaptation work. We may require a tender process for major adaptation work in accordance with our procurement policy. Major adaptations require a cooperation between us and the specific involved borough and therefore, timeframes for installing them differ. We monitor all equipment under warranty, to make sure we can

promptly seek repairs or replace the adaptations if required. Repairs to equipment installed by our contractor will be prioritised.

Maintenance responsibilities after installation
We are responsible for:

- The repair and maintenance of any fixed adaptations we have installed, in line with the manufacturer's guidance and statutory requirements.
- Servicing of specialist equipment where these were installed by us or funded through a Disabled Facilities Grant and handed over to us for ongoing maintenance.
- Managing warranties and ensuring contractors carry out repairs or replacements within warranty periods.
- Removing adaptations when they are unsafe, no longer functional, or obsolete

Residents responsibilities
Residents are responsible for:

- Ensuring adaptations are used correctly, in accordance with manufacturer instructions and any guidance provided.
- Reporting faults, defects or issues as soon as they occur.
- Allowing reasonable access for servicing, maintenance or inspection appointments.
- Keeping adaptations clean and in good working order through regular household care.
- Covering the cost of repairs made necessary by misuse, neglect, or deliberate damage

4. Communal areas

We provide adaptations in communal areas of all tenures, where a need has been identified and recommended by an occupational therapist following an assessment

5. Reviewing and Reporting

5.1 We will monitor at least annually:

- The number of adaptation requests received
- The number of adaptations carried out

5.2 This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure that it remains fit for purpose and has been consistently applied.