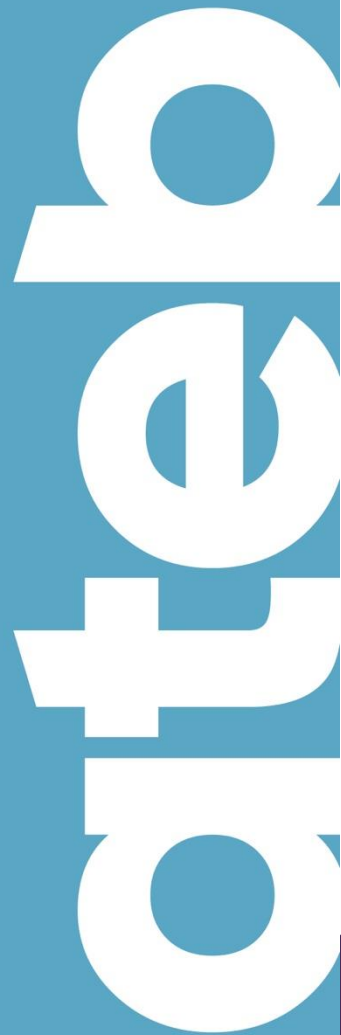


# SA/04 - Aids & Adaptations Policy

Creating  
better  
Living Solutions



**“Our policies embed our culture, expectations. They have been agreed by our Board(s) as best practice documents for the Group’s decision making.”**

### **Policy Statement**

ateb is committed to providing an excellent service to all its contract holders. We understand that over time contract holders’ physical health may alter and adaptations to a property may be required to enable customers to remain in their own homes.

ateb will consider all requests for aids and adaptations in this respect equitably and expediently in order that customers can remain as independent and comfortable as reasonably possible in their own home.

<b>Approval Date</b>	<b>Lead Contact</b>	<b>Review Date</b>
25 <sup>th</sup> May 2023	Head of Property	May 2026

## Policy Contents

1. Policy Statement
  2. Principles
  3. Responsibilities
  4. Control
  5. Links to other documents
- 

### 2. Principles

This policy details:

- Who can request adaptations.
- The adaptations we provide.
- The adaptations we'll give permission for installing.
- How adaptations are maintained and recycled.

Adaptations are only one way to help a contract holder remain independent in their home. We will also consider other options, including finding contract holders more suitable accommodation.

Finding the best solution can take time so we will encourage customers to contact us as soon as possible if they are having difficulties.

#### Who can request an adaptation?

- Any ateb contract holder can apply for an adaptation if they or a member of their household have a long-term illness, disability or impairment limiting their daily activities.
- We do not provide aids and adaptations for leaseholders, shared owners, or occupants in temporary accommodation. These occupants can install adaptations or apply to the local authority for funding.
- This policy does not cover mobility vehicles and their storage. A contract holder can purchase their own mobility vehicle and install storage but must obtain permission from ateb before carrying out any works.

## Requesting an adaptation?

The list below provides an example of aids and adaptations and their expected cost NB: costs can vary depending on the adaptation and property.

Minor Adaptations (under £1,000, including VAT, funded by ateb).

- Grab rails, handrails, and stair handrails.
- Provision of suitable taps, door handles, sockets e.g., lever taps.
- Alterations to thresholds, paths, and gateways to give easier access.
- Flashing doorbells for hearing impaired customers.
- Fire safety equipment e.g., flashing, and vibrating alert systems for hearing and visually impaired customers.
- Window opening equipment.
- Internal door threshold ramps.
- Door entry systems

**Major Adaptations** (over £1,000, including VAT, funded by Welsh Government through Physical Adaptation Grants).

- Fixed ramps and handrails.
- Specially equipped kitchen, bathrooms, or showers e.g., level access shower.
- Through floor lifts and ceiling track hoists.
- Widening of doors and windows.
- Stairlifts.
- Wash and dry toilets.

We do not provide portable equipment such as walking aids, wheelchairs.

- ateb contract holders can apply for an adaptation themselves or via a third party, such as an Occupational Therapist. If a contract holder wants to replace an existing adaptation, they should apply for this as a new adaptation.
- If a contract holder wants to install their own adaptation, they must get permission first as it is an alteration to their home.
- We will always discuss what a contract holder needs with them. Where possible we will complete minor works, such as grab rails, without further assessment. If required, we will ask that a contract holder gets advice from an Occupational Therapist to make sure the adaptation meets their current and long-term needs.

## Minor Adaptations

- If the works will cost less than £1,000 per property (including VAT where applicable), we will pay for and aim to install requests for adaptations within 28 days of receiving

a request, where we have funding available. Each year we set aside funding for minor adaptations.

- If a contract holder makes multiple requests for minor adaptations, we will review the case in liaison with an Occupational Therapist to make sure an adaptation is the best solution. If multiple adaptations take a request over £1,000, the Executive Director for Customer must approve the request.

### Major Adaptations

- If the adaptation will cost more than £1,000 per property (including VAT where applicable), we will carry out the works using the Welsh Government Physical Adaptation Grant (PAG).

We will not normally fund aids and adaptations in communal areas. We may make reasonable adjustments to the accessibility of the building, for example installing a ramp to a communal entrance.

If we make alterations to communal areas, we will make all occupants aware of the costs and add the cost to the service charge paid by all occupants in the block including ground floor flats.

### Granting or refusing permission

- We will adapt properties where it is practical to do so. We will not unreasonably refuse a request.
- Examples of where we may refuse a request include, but are not limited to may include:
  - The property is due for disposal, modification, or major refurbishment within the next 12 months.
  - The adaptation requested is not structurally practical e.g., based on the age, structure or size of the building or room.
  - The home is under or over occupied.
  - We are taking legal action for breach of occupancy contract.
  - The lease does not allow us to carry out adaptations on a property we do not own. The request is for a level access shower above ground floor level, which could cause long term maintenance issues.
- If we refuse a request, we will let the contract holder know and explore other options with them that would enable them to live independently in their own home, this may include, but is not limited to:
  - ateb working with statutory and third sector partners to identify alternative solutions to adapting the property.

- Work with the contract holder to address any occupancy management issues i.e., breach of occupancy contract, to avoid any unnecessary delay in granting permission.
  - ateb working closely with the Occupational Therapist team to identify alternative aids and adaptations that would support independent living.
  - As a last resort ateb working with other housing partners to identify alternative housing that would be more suitable to meet the contract holders short- and longer-term needs.
- If a contract holder is not happy with our decision, then they may ask for a review under our Customer Feedback policy.

### **Maintaining Aids and Adaptations**

- Before any aids or adaptations are installed by ateb we will make sure that the contract holder is aware of their responsibilities and potential costs that will be recovered through service charges for maintenance, inspections, and servicing.
- Where a contract holder installs aids and adaptations themselves, they will be responsible for servicing and maintenance.
- ateb will be responsible for the maintenance of aids and adaptations we install.
- If we are responsible and an adaptation breaks or becomes faulty, we will prioritise repairs in line with our Repairs policy. Where access is restricted to toilet, bathing or cooking facilities it will be treated as an emergency repair.
- Where we install through floor lifts or ceiling track hoists, in line with the principles of the Lifting Operations Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER), we will carry out six-monthly insurance inspections (in addition to maintenance inspections). Usually, contract holders will be responsible for paying for these via service charges.
- Where we install stair lifts, in line with the principles of the Lifting Operations Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER), we will carry out annual insurance inspections (in addition to maintenance inspections). Usually, contract holders will be responsible for paying for these via service charges.

### **Making best use of aids and adaptations**

- The Voids Surveyor will carry out an assessment of all homes prior to relet. This will enable the Lettings Team to advertise and allocate adapted homes to a suitable person. If there is not a suitable person, we will recycle adaptations where practical to do so.
- We will support disabled housing registers held by local authorities in our areas of operation, to promote the best use of our adapted homes.
- We may refuse a request for contract holders to “swap” homes via a transfer of Occupational Contract (mutual exchange) if the home is adapted for a support need the incoming occupant does not have.

### 3. Responsibilities

The following responsibilities will apply to the following leadership groups and role profiles:

#### Group

This is an ateb Policy which applies to ateb. ateb is responsible for ensuring appropriate training, support and guidance is given on its application and use.

#### Board of Management

To ensure all requests for aids and adaptations are handled in accordance with this policy, within a fair, transparent, non-discriminatory framework based on need. The Board satisfies this responsibility by delegating duties to the Chief Executive who is responsible for ensuring that adequate resources are made available to enable the objectives of this policy to be met.

#### Executive Director for Customer

- Ensure responsibilities for aids and adaptations are effectively delegated.

#### Head of Property

- Ensure the Aids and Adaptations policy is in place, monitored and reviewed.
- Responsible for the implementation of the policy and to ensure sufficient resources are available.
- Ensure responsibilities for aids and adaptations is effectively delegated and an overall structure established with clear processes and procedures.

#### Key Operational Role Responsibilities

In addition to the responsibilities listed above the following key roles have specific responsibilities for the operational delivery of the policy across the group:

#### Maintenance and Voids Manager

- Monitoring of performance, equality, and customer satisfaction data.
- Supporting and providing guidance on requests for Aids and Adaptations.
- Ensuring Contract Holders are aware of how Aids and Adaptations can be requested.

#### Housing Solutions Team

- Referring Contract Holders for an Occupational Therapist assessment where a need has been identified and cannot be met without professional advice and support or is likely to exceed £1,000 in value.
- Supporting and assisting Contract Holders with rehousing where aids and adaptations to their existing home will not meet their needs.

### Customer Service Advisors

- Deal with customers enquiries at the first point of contact.
- Co-ordinate and arrange requests for minor aids and adaptations that are likely to cost less than £1,000 and do not require an Occupational Therapist assessment through West Wales Care and Repair a subsidiary of ateb.

## 4. Control

The Head of Property is the lead contact for this policy and for ensuring it remains operationally effective. The Head of Property will review this policy and these reviews should take place as and when required and at least every 3 years. Changes to legislation/regulatory requirements will mean a review may need to take place before the date listed and lead contacts need to take responsibility for this.

This policy is a dynamic document and will be amended as required following service reviews or changes to the operating environment.

Board approval will be obtained before any amendments are published and employees will receive refresher training as applicable.

## 5. Links to other documents

### External

- Welsh Government Criteria and Guidance – Physical Adaptation Grant

### Internal

- Process Map – Aids and Adaptations
- Process Map – West Wales Care and Repair Physical Adaptations
- Service Charge Procedure
- [PN21 - Customer Feedback Policy](#)
- [PN25 - Reactive Repairs](#)
- [PN06 - Lifting Equipment Safety Policy](#)



## Additional help

Contact our customer team  
quoting the policy reference:

Tel: **0800 854 568**

Email: **hello@atebgroup.co.uk**

Facebook **@theatebgroup**

Face to Face: **Get in touch and we can arrange a location.**

## Version History

Ver.	Date	Changes
1	25/05/23	Policy approved by Board
2		
3		