



Equipment & Adaptations Policy 2021

Document Control

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1. Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to outline how Berneslai Homes will manage the Equipment & Adaptations requests of tenants in their homes.

By doing this we will achieve consistency and equality in the service provided to disabled people across Barnsley. It will allow staff to carry out clear and consistent assessments of need and will ensure adaptations are provided to people in accordance with their assessed need.

Ensuring we have a robust, fair and consistent approach that is clear and understandable to all by going through a well-documented and evidenced based process in line with current Adaptation Guidelines and Legislation is the key.

Our collective aim working in partnership with the NHS (South West Yorkshire Partnership Trust) and the Disabled Facilities Grants Team is:

“To help people towards independence, health and wellbeing by assessing their abilities and the difficulties they have with daily living tasks and to assist them in planning and agreeing actions to improve the situation”

This policy centres around the delivery of Adaptations, however adaptations are only one of the many options available and as such all alternatives will be considered when devising a solution to meet individual needs.

2. Legislative Framework

The statutory duties of the Local Authority in connection with adaptations are mainly laid down in the following legislation:

- The Care Act 2014
- Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970 (Children)
- NHS and Community Care Act 1990
- Equality Act 2010
- The Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996
- The Housing Act 1996
- Housing Renewal Grants (Services and Charges) Order 1996

However, Berneslai Homes must decide whether the applicant's needs can be best met through:

- Issue of equipment
- Adaptations

Or

- Re-housing to suitably adapted accommodation

Berneslai Homes can discharge its duties under the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970 (Children) or the Care Act 2014 (Adults) by any of these means.

3. Adaptation Requests & Referrals – (To NHS SWYPT)

A request for an adaptation may originate with the disabled person themselves or their carer/s or may arise as part of treatment or care during involvement with other social, health or housing services.

The request (**Referral**) is made to the Equipment, Adaptation and Sensory Impairment Service within the NHS (South West Yorkshire Partnership Trust) who are responsible for assessing the person's need.

Referrals from service users or their relative/representative can be made by a variety of ways:

- Telephone
- Letter
- Email
- SMS text – (For British Sign Language Users)
- Berneslai Homes Website
- BMBC web site

Referrals from staff of other services must be written formally. When a referral is received by the service the content is considered and if accepted, the referral is prioritised according to perceived risk to the individual or carer. Referrals may not be accepted if they are not appropriate, see below.

Inappropriate referrals

If a request is received that is considered inappropriate, the person making the referral will be informed of the reasons behind the decision. Every effort will be made to redirect the person to an appropriate agency that may be able to help. Examples are:

- A person who does not have a permanent or long-term disability, e.g. recovering from a surgical operation
- Where it is reasonable to expect the individual or their landlord to provide a facility considered a standard requirement, e.g. installation of the first stair rail
- Difficulties that arise as a result of wear and tear or poor maintenance, such as uneven steps and paths or overgrowth of shrubs causing a trip hazard on the path

Referral Priority

The circumstances of each referral that is eligible for **assessment** by the equipment and adaptation team are considered by the Senior Occupational Therapists and given a “priority”. The aim is for the assessment to meet the targets below:

Urgent Priority – within 5 working days: serious injury to the service user or their carer is unavoidable without immediate assessment and action. Urgent assessment is necessary to prevent the breakdown of care arrangements, e.g. assessment of moving and handling needs; enable discharge from hospital; enable safe access/use of toilet, assessment of void properties on behalf of Berneslai Homes.

Standard Priority – as soon as possible: (the aim is within 21 working days but is subject to demand) eligible for assessment but no indication of specific risk or inability to access facilities necessary to perform essential tasks.

4. Assessment – (By NHS SWYPT)

Assessments take place in the person’s own home. The process involves not only questions and answers and discussion but also observation of the performance of daily living tasks. This is so that the Occupational Therapist or the Equipment and Adaptations Officer can complete a full functional assessment. The assessment will consider:

- Joint movement and limitations
- Pain and discomfort
- Strength and stamina
- Medical history and prognosis
- Long term mobility needs
- Social needs
- Needs of other household members and carers
- Frequency of use
- Psychological needs
- Availability, ability, health and needs of carers
- The home environment and structure
- Safety of user and other household members
- Aspirations of the disabled person
- Need for additional care arrangements

This is necessary to understand the impact the difficulties have on the person’s life and determine the level of risk to the person or their carer. An assessment may involve several visits to the person’s home, in less complex situations an assessment may be completed in one visit.

5. Assessment Outcomes – (From NHS SWYPT)

The outcome of the assessment is discussed with the service user and significant others, and the appropriate action agreed, this could be the recommendation of:

- A suitable care package
- Equipment
- Minor Adaptations and/or Major Adaptations.

Care Package

A care package is a combination of services (*via Adult Social Care*) put together to meet a person's assessed needs as part of a care plan following an assessment or a review. It defines what a person needs in the way of care or services to help them live their life in a dignified and comfortable manner.

Equipment

Equipment to support community care and promote the independence and dignity of service users is supplied by the Community Equipment Service based at Unit 33, Grange Lane, Stairfoot, Barnsley.

Examples of equipment are:

- Raised toilet seats
- Bath lifts
- Shower stools/chairs
- Commode

Minor & Major Adaptations

All Minor & Major Adaptations are delivered by Berneslai Homes for their tenants.

6. Minor Adaptations

Minor Adaptations

Minor adaptations include alteration to a property that involves secure or permanent attachment to, or alteration of, the fabric of the property usually up to the value of £1,000.

These may come as the outcome of assessment, from a member of Berneslai Homes Staff or directly as a tenant request.

Within Berneslai Homes, tenants are currently able to order some minor works up to a maximum of £250 in value 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. This can be done by contacting our repairs hotline:

- 01226 787878
- repairs@berneslaihomes.co.uk

Any work requests above £250 must be referred through to the Property Services Team for prior inspection & approval. Relevant officers will decide jointly with the Equipment, Adaptation and Sensory Impairment Service as to whether there is a need for a formal assessment.

Examples of minor adaptations are:

- Grab rails – “D” shaped preformed metal or plastic rails screwed to walls
- Drop-down rails
- Handrail – wooden rails usually needed on stairways
- Metal rail to external steps
- Step alterations – maximum number 3 steps
- Handrails to footpaths – subject to inspection from the Property Services Team.
- Sensory lighting
- Alterations to position of light switches/sockets

7. Major Adaptations

Major Adaptations

Major adaptations are usually a significant and permanent alteration to the property. As a guideline this covers adaptations over £1,000.

Examples of frequently requested major adaptations are:

- Stair lift
- Level access shower
- Ramp

The recommendation for adaptations agreed by the Equipment and Adaptations Service as being necessary and appropriate are discussed with Berneslai Homes via a ***weekly Housing Panel Meeting (officer attended panel which looks at Berneslai Homes managed properties)***.

The panel will consider whether it is suitable, feasible and reasonable to alter the property to install/construct the required adaptation before agreeing to fund it and placing an order with a contractor to complete the work. Properties will be assessed according to the following criteria:

- **Suitability** – Jointly agreed by Equipment and Adaptations and Berneslai Homes as necessary and appropriate to meet service user long term needs.
- **Feasibility** – Determined by Berneslai Homes to comply with current Building Regulations and where applicable any planning legislation.

****This will consist of visiting the property, taking necessary photographs, drawings and measurements required to assist in the approval process****

- **Reasonable and Practicable** based on several factors:
 - 1) Budget/cost
 - 2) Availability of suitable alternative accommodation
 - 3) Long term needs of the individual
 - 4) Care arrangements
 - 5) Family support
 - 6) Main and principle home
 - 7) Adaptations for the disabled person only and not carer, e.g. separate bedroom for formal care.

8. Major Adaptations Approval Routes

Once the panel have made their decision on a Major Adaptation, there is a formalised route for approval of funds in line with delegated approval limits set within the organisation.

Within the Property Services Team, any Major Adaptation can be approved as below:

Maintenance Manager >£10k

Head of Repairs Maintenance & Building Safety >£25k

For any Major Adaptations over the value of £25k, including all extension to property requests, the Maintenance Manager must submit a Business Case Report to SMT on the standard template for consideration and approval, and must include the following:

- Tenancy Household Members
- Tenancy Start Date
- Details of the Property
- Existing Adaptations
- Adaptation Request
- Nature of Disability
- Panel Recommendation against options available
- Health & Safety Issues / Concerns
- Photographs
- Detailed Drawings
- Measurements
- Full Feasibility Study
- Timescales & Impact (e.g. Decant)
- Any other Professional Supporting Information (Medical Professional etc)
- Report from a full on-site Assessment / Observations (not virtual)
- Re-Housing Availability
- Correspondence with BMBC regarding Acquisition / New Build Options
- Full Breakdown of Costs (Appendix A)

9. Major Adaptations Outcomes & Decisions

Berneslai Homes Senior Management Team will meet once per month and collectively review all SMT reports as part of the structured agenda of the meeting.

Collectively, they will decide whether to approve or reject the proposal with a clear outcome outlined.

The outcome will be sent in writing to the tenant within 5 working days by the Maintenance Manager.

10. Ordering of Works & Timescales

Minor Adaptations are all ordered via contract partners Construction Services or Wates depending on Geographical location across the borough in line with the PRIP contract and are have a 7-day completion target.

Majors Adaptations are agreed weekly on a Tuesday at the panel meeting. Orders are raised and allocated on a Friday to contract partners Construction Services or Wates depending on Geographical location across the borough in line with the PRIP contract and are have a 30-day completion target.

For **larger Major Adaptation projects** such as property extensions, a work instruction is raised and allocated to the Project Delivery Team within Asset Management. There are no set timeframes allocated. The Project Delivery Team provide Senior Management with regular updates on progress and will liaise with the tenants providing regular updates to them too.

11. Funding Adaptations & DFG Explained

Funding adaptations to local authority dwellings

The Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) framework and mandatory aspect of the grant applies across all tenures, but the DFG budget cannot be used for funding adaptations to local authority dwellings.

Adaptations for Berneslai Homes Tenants must be paid from the Housing Revenue Account which sits with Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council.

The cost of multiple and expensive adaptations should be considered carefully to ensure budgets are used to achieve maximum benefit and ensure value for money is achieved.

12. Re-Housing

Berneslai Homes works in partnership with other housing providers to make the most effective use of properties within the Borough.

Re-housing could be considered more appropriate than carrying out major adaptations in a person's current property in the following circumstances:

- Current home has design features that do not make adaptation a feasible option and it is therefore considered not 'reasonable and practicable'.
- Current home requires extensive adaptations that are not reasonable or practicable

- Appropriate accommodation can be provided within the Barnsley Metropolitan Borough that would remove the need for extensive adaptations (this will be taken into consideration by Berneslai Homes)
- Major adaptations would not meet the long-term assessed needs of the person and their carer / family

Consideration will be given to the individual's needs, including those of their carer, family and local support network.

Within Berneslai Homes, appropriate support for vulnerable tenants will be provided in cases where re-housing is the preferred option.

When re-housing is recommended, tenants will be automatically assigned a named advisor who will work with them to complete an application form, award the relevant priority banding under the terms of the lettings policy and find suitable accommodation.

We will follow the lettings policy to identify suitable vacancies that become empty.

Please see a link to the lettings policy below:

<https://www.berneslaihomes.co.uk/find-a-council-house-in-barnsley/our-lettings-policy/>

The Lettings Team will carry out a review every 3 months looking at the waiting list and availability of properties.

The panel will re-visit and review the decision made to re-house every 12 months if a suitable property has not been found, or at quarterly intervals if the tenant is classed as high risk in their current accommodation.

There will be a rolling review of cases at each panel meeting.

13. The Right to Reviews, Appeals & Complaints

There is no automatic right of appeal or review associated with decisions made under the terms of this policy. This does not remove a tenant's right to make independent legal challenge if they feel legislation has been breached or complain if they feel we have not followed the terms of this policy in making the decision.

If a complaint is upheld, then the application must be reconsidered by panel and a fresh decision given. This reassessment may not result in a changed decision but ensures that the policy has been applied fully.

If a complaint is not upheld, the tenant has the right to refer their concerns to the Housing Ombudsman

However, there are certain circumstances where it would be deemed appropriate to review the decision by way of a panel reassessment and this includes:

- where it is evident and proven there has been a significant change in circumstances since the decision was made, or

- additional information that needs to be considered.

Any tenant wanting the decision to be reviewed must ask submitted within 6 weeks of the original decision being made. After this time a new application must be made. We will only assess a re-submission of an application for the same adaptation and applicant if a significant change in circumstances can be proven.

Please see our complaints procedure guide for further details via the link below:

<https://www.berneslaihomes.co.uk/contact-berneslai-homes/make-a-compliment-complaint-or-suggestion/>

14. Types of Major Adaptations & Eligibility Criteria – Current Guidance

ADAPTATIONS

Under the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act, 1996 Major adaptations are considered for the following purposes:

- To facilitate access to and from the dwelling
- To make a dwelling safe for a disabled person
- To provide access to the main family room
- Access to and safe use of:
 - a room for sleeping
 - the bath or a shower
 - toilet
- The preparation and cooking of food where the disabled person is the main provider of meals
- A heating system that meets the individual needs arising from disability and complies with current regulations
- Facilitate the use of power and lights
- To facilitate access and movement around the dwelling to enable the disabled person to care for a dependent normally resident in the dwelling.

Ref: 1. Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act, 1996

2. Circular 17/96 Private Sector Renewal: Strategic Approach.

The service will also consider adaptations to:

- Facilitate ease of access to visitors when the disabled person is unable to allow access themselves through the usual means
- Ceiling track hoists to facilitate safe moving and handling practice

Access to Property

Only one access will be adapted; this will consider the entrance most appropriate to need and the most cost-effective solution. In exceptional circumstances a second entrance will be considered subject to medical need.

Our preference is to install ramps where ever possible, these are low maintenance and are permanent, providing lasting level access to a property.

External step lifts are expensive to install, must be serviced, repaired and have a limited life. In tenanted accommodation the liability for maintenance is ongoing and it is likely that it would have to be removed at a change in tenancy.

In the Housing setting we are often able to offer other accommodation as an alternative to adaptation. This can often help tenants long term needs. For example, a move from a house to a bungalow.

Berneslai Homes will consider the installation of step lifts only when other solutions like ramps or alternative accommodation is not feasible.

Where lifts have been installed in a Berneslai Homes tenanted property, they will be serviced and maintained by the Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council and this will be organised by Berneslai Homes.

Metal hand rails

- next to steps in a pathway
- at steep incline of path or drive
- two or more steps at the entrance to the property
- as part of the installation of a ramp

NOTE

- Rails along paths or driveways will only be provided if there is a steep incline (greater than 1:12), camber on the path or significant drop to one or more sides of the existing path (200mm).

- A service user who has difficulty on a level path should be advised to use a mobility aid, e.g. walking stick or walking frame.

Path or step alterations

- the existing steps prevent access/egress to the property
- to allow passage of a wheelchair or a person using a mobility aid such as a walking frame, e.g. widening of path.

NOTE

If the existing path or steps are badly constructed, damaged or in need of repair, the service user will be advised to contact the appropriate agency to obtain reconstruction or repair and not adaptation.

Ramps

Eligibility:

- The person is a permanent wheelchair user and is eligible for provision of a wheelchair by the NHS
- The person is mobile within the property but unable to safely manage steps with a handrail
- The ability and safety of the helper will be taken into consideration.
- The person is eligible for a powered NHS outdoor chair, but has instead chosen to use a privately purchased powered scooter to meet their outdoor mobility needs

NOTE

- If the service user relies on a wheelchair for outside use but is able to safely negotiate steps and walk 50M or more they will not be eligible for a ramp.

- The ramp will be a permanent construction. Currently within Berneslai Homes, this only applies to ground floor flats and bungalows.

Berneslai Homes may choose to install metal ramps to properties that are two (or more) storey's high in exceptional circumstances if there are no alternative options.

- Semi permanent ramps may be provided in some circumstances, e.g. the service user is terminally ill or, their mobility could significantly improve or, the property is not suitable for long term use or re-let as suitable for a disabled person.

- Berneslai Homes may provide a ramp at the communal entrance if this is the most feasible entrance to adapt, subject to Part M compliance? The needs of other residents and visitors to the building will be taken into consideration

- All ramps will adhere to current Building Regulations.

• Within Berneslai Homes, no ramps will take up more than 50% of the garden area and where possible should be in a straight line to the preferred main entrance door taking into consideration any internal access arrangements. The only exception to this is where it may be necessary to include for one 90 degree turn in order to achieve this.

- Ramps will not normally be provided to facilitate access to the property for the storage of privately purchased mobility scooters. In these circumstances external storage will be recommended.

- Storage facilities for privately purchased mobility scooters will not be provided.

- The number of steps and elevation of a property in relation to the public footpath or highway may make provision of a ramp not feasible at some properties.

Hard standing, driveway and dropped kerbs

A hard standing is a level car parking area with access from the road i.e. it should include a dropped kerb. These will not be recommended to prevent vandalism or alleviate lack of general parking spaces.

Dropped kerbs without a hard standing are the responsibility of the BMBC Highways section. If there are insufficient lowered kerbs in the vicinity of the property to facilitate wheelchair egress the highways department will be informed.

In circumstances where the applicant is requesting a dropped kerb to facilitate access to an existing drive/hard standing area they must apply to the Highways Section and pay for the work themselves.

All hard standings must comply with the Building Regulations and the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) guidance in respect of falls from heights.

Eligibility:

- The service user is unable to get from the house to the vehicle at the roadside and/or get into or out of the vehicle parked at the roadside either assisted or unassisted without danger or detriment to health.
- The service user is the passenger and the driver are unable to double park briefly to allow the disabled passenger to get in or out of the vehicle. Reasons for this may be; the passenger requires constant attendance, or the driver has to handle a wheelchair or other equipment in addition to assisting the disabled passenger
- For those children that have been diagnosed with severe challenging behaviour and have undergone or currently undergoing a behavioural management programme. Provision will only be considered if behavioural management strategies have been fully exhausted and the child poses a danger to themselves or others. **This is not a substitute for supervision.**

Door alterations

Door widening will only be considered if the internal circulation space is greater than the door widening required and allows access to essential rooms.

Eligibility:

- For a permanent wheelchair user where the doorways need to be widened to allow wheelchair access.
- The service user has severely restricted mobility and alteration will provide better access and safety
- An additional doorway is essential, and the only feasible option is to create level or ramp access to the property.

NOTE

- Kick plates and wall protection will only be provided where space remains limited and wheelchair manoeuvres are difficult. This can be approved as a minor adaptation.

- The minimum number of doorways required to give access and egress to essential facilities will only be considered.

Door Entry / Intercom Systems

Eligibility:

- A person lives alone and is unable to get to the door to have control over who enters the property
- A person lives with a family member who is out at work during the day and no other family member is available to assist.

Door entry systems will be selected from the list below

Specification One: Intercom Only Enables the person to speak to the caller, the person then opens/closes the door independently.
Specification Two: Intercom and automatic door release. Enables the person to speak to the caller and unlock the door via a wall mounted control.
Specification Three: Intercom and automatic door release. Enables the person to speak to the caller and unlock the door via a handset/mobile fob
Specification Four: 'Automatic Entry' Intercom and automatic door release and door opening. Enables the person to speak to the caller and unlock the door and open the door via a wall mounted control
Specification Five: 'Automatic Entry' Intercom and automatic door release and door opening. Enables the person to speak to the caller and unlock the door and open the door via a handset/mobile fob.
Specification Six: Digital door entry with/without video. Enables the person to see the caller, the caller then allows themselves in by using the pin number.

NOTE

Key safes are available through Stay Put to enable access for formal carers

Lifts

Stair lift

A stair lift should not be recommended where a person has access to a suitable bathroom and toilet downstairs and where there is adequate and appropriate space to sleep, considering the accommodation needs of the family and anyone else caring for the person. For example, if a downstairs bedroom could be created by converting an existing reception room or dividing a large reception room.

Eligibility:

- The person's mobility is so severely restricted that it is difficult for him/ her to negotiate stairs in safety and without undue distress or risk to the carer
- Using stairs would be detrimental to the service user's health and a stair lift is medically indicated as necessary
- The person's prognosis is not going to improve
- The person is not due for any surgery or rehabilitation which will change their ability to manage stairs
- Berneslai Homes will consider installing a stair lift (subject to feasibility) where the service user has been diagnosed with a terminal illness and it is felt that the stair lift would provide some means of assistance as part of any compassionate 'end of life' care.

NOTE

- A stair lift will not usually be recommended where there are medically diagnosed problems with sitting balance and co-ordination, or when the person must be assisted to transfer from chair to chair.

- Further medical information is required in considering the suitability of a stair lift for people with epilepsy or vertigo

- A stair lift is not ordinarily a suitable option for someone with a rapidly deteriorating neurological condition, e.g. motor neurone disease, multiple sclerosis, or dementia since this may affect their future ability to use the controls or get on and off independently and safely. This will be subject to individual risk assessment.

- In some circumstances the stairway design may make installation of a stair lift not feasible.

- The service user's weight will influence if it is feasible to install a stair lift, taking account of the stair configuration.

-Where there are young children under the age of 5 years permanently living at the property, a risk assessment will be undertaken by the OT to establish if installation is appropriate and safe.

Vertical or Through Floor Lift

Eligibility:

- The service user is unable to transfer to a stair lift, or their condition is likely to deteriorate to the point where they are unable to use a stair lift.
- The structure of the staircase is not appropriate for the safe installation of a stair lift
- Ground floor living with access to essential facilities cannot be reasonably achieved by change of use of a second reception room to a bedroom
- Where there are young children under the age of 5 years permanently living at the property, a risk assessment will be undertaken by the OT to establish if installation is appropriate and safe.

NOTE

- Installation of a vertical lift must enable access to essential facilities on either floor.
- The construction, design and layout of the property may determine that many properties are not suitable for this type of adaptation.

Step Lift

Fitted in circumstances where it is inappropriate to ramp due to the gradient or lack of space. (see note below)

Eligibility:

- Person is a wheelchair user or is at risk whilst negotiating steps and/or carer is at risk in assisting person to negotiate steps.

NOTE

- Berneslai Homes will consider the installation of step lifts only when other solutions like ramps or alternative accommodation is not feasible.
- Equipment may pose a risk to children under 5 years old, other household members with sensory impairment, challenging behaviour, cognitive impairment.

Ceiling Track Hoist

Eligibility:

- A mobile hoist has been considered and evaluated and found to be inadequate for the user and/or carer(s) to perform transfers.
- The service user requires hoisting and the use of a mobile hoist is not feasible due to limited space or carer's needs.
- A ceiling track hoist will enhance the service user's independence when transferring, e.g. self-hoisting

NOTE

- The position(s) and number of track(s) and associated structural alterations must be determined and explained to the user

Additional Ground Floor Facilities

Eligibility:

- The service user is unable to use a lift (stair lift or through floor lift) safely, or it is not structurally feasible to provide a lift.
- Existing facilities cannot be reasonably adapted to make them suitable for the service user.
- Re-housing has been considered but rejected and justified as inappropriate.
- It is technically feasible to provide the additional facilities on the ground or first floor
- The user's condition will deteriorate making ground floor facilities the most appropriate long-term option.

NOTE

- In circumstances where the existing accommodation does not meet long term mobility needs, and it is not reasonable and practicable to adapt within the body of the property, rehousing will be recommended by Berneslai Homes.

Ground floor W.C

- Commode or urine bottle have been considered and there are substantial reasons why these are not appropriate.
- There is a room downstairs available for use as a WC.
- It is technically feasible to provide a ground floor WC.
- There is a medical diagnosis of 'urgency or frequency of need', confirmed by a consultant, that makes reaching the first floor WC, with or without a lift (stair lift or vertical lift), unreasonable.

First Floor W.C

- Commode or urine bottle has been considered and there are substantial reasons why these are not appropriate
- There is a room on the first floor available and suitable for use as a WC.
- There is a medical diagnosis of 'urgency or frequency of need' confirmed by a consultant, that makes reaching the WC on the ground floor, with or without a lift (stair lift or vertical lift), unreasonable.

Wash/dry toilet

A toilet that can both clean and dry the service user eliminating the need to self-clean.

Eligibility:

- The person is unable to manage their personal hygiene due to reduced range of movement/strength in their upper limbs

NOTE

- Consider if toilet will be used with or without use of over toilet chair – this may affect toilet height

- Consider type of control unit required, e.g. standard back bar operation, or touch sensitive switch.

- Consider type of douche, e.g. single/twin spray

• In some circumstances the installation of a suitable wash / dry toilet may not be feasible to install due to pipe layout or for people with reduced life expectancy or first floor installations where the property is unlikely to be suitable as a future let for other disabled tenants. When installing a suitable wash / dry toilet, specification to be agreed with OT and Berneslai Homes beforehand.

Bathing, Shower and Washing Facilities

Level access shower

Eligibility:

- The service user has been assessed as no longer being able to access their bath safely, either independently or with reasonable assistance, even with bathing equipment.
- The service user is not able to maintain adequate body hygiene either independently or with reasonable assistance.
- Medical diagnosis indicates that the service user is likely to become a permanent wheelchair user.

NOTE

- All showers recommended will meet stringent health and safety specifications with water temperature not exceeding 43 degrees centigrade.

• When installing a shower unit that is suitable for someone who is visually impaired, specification to be agreed with the OT and Berneslai Homes beforehand.

Shower over bath

Eligibility:

- The service user is not able to maintain adequate body hygiene either independently or with reasonable assistance.

- The service user is able to transfer safely into or over the bath and their condition is unlikely to significantly deteriorate.
- It is necessary for the service user to shower rather than bathe due to management practicalities or their condition is unpredictable e.g. medically confirmed double incontinence.
- In some circumstances this may be an appropriate adaptation for people with epilepsy subject to confirmation from a specialist epilepsy practitioner.

NOTE

- A shower over the bath is not a reasonable long-term solution for people with conditions with potential for deterioration of mobility in the future e.g. muscular-skeletal conditions or progressive neurological conditions.

- Consideration for flicker-free lights and doors that open onto corridors or landings for ease of access will be made for service users with epilepsy.

Specialist baths

Specialised baths or a bath to replace a shower will only be provided where it is established that using a shower is detrimental and there is evidence of this from a medical consultant.

Kitchen Adaptations

Eligibility:

- The service user is wheelchair dependent for getting about the house and has a primary responsibility for the preparation of food for self/others in the household.
- The service user lives alone or is alone for most of the day, has severe functional loss and is unable to use existing facilities.
- The kitchen is totally inaccessible, and it is structurally feasible to adapt.

NOTE

- A level electric hob only (**no gas**) will be supplied - usually ceramic or halogen (but NOT induction) and oven housing unit. It is the responsibility of the house holder to purchase an oven (side hung door recommended) to be fitted at a suitable height.

- Within Berneslai Homes, all hobs will be gifted to the tenant and it will be the tenants' responsibility for any future maintenance and / or replacement costs. Tenants will be expected to sign an acceptance / disclaimer form prior to work commencing.

- The sink bowl will be insulated to prevent burns

Heating conversion / alteration

Eligibility:

- The service user has severely limited indoor mobility and there is no other household member able to operate/manage the existing system, e.g. solid fuel appliance.
- The service user has a specific medical condition which severely affects his/her body temperature, or which would be exacerbated by uneven room temperatures.
- The service user has severe loss of sensation because of their medical condition.
- The service user has a condition causing him/her to be a danger to him/her self or others when using the existing heating system.
- The service user needs to use a ground floor room as a bedroom and the gas appliance is not compliant with gas regulations.
- Zoned/thermostatically controlled heating is essential for the service user's condition. In these circumstances an Air Source Pump installation will not be suitable.
- The necessary change to the existing heating system is not available through any other housing improvement scheme, e.g. Barnsley standard.

NOTE

- Within Berneslai Homes, it is normal practice to change Solid Fuel appliances upon request by tenants irrespective of medical need. However, there may still be a need to carry out a medical assessment to ensure that any proposed replacement heating system meets the needs of the service user.

- The 1996 Local Government and Housing Act (Disabled Facilities Grants) state that disabled people should have assistance to obtain "adequate heating" which does not necessarily mean a full central heating system.

- Heating cannot be provided on the basis that there are inadequate or no existing facilities available.

- Heating cannot be provided to change existing facilities to a system which is cheaper to run.

- The gas/electricity supplier should be consulted where the person has difficulty operating the controls of a unit or system, as they can often arrange for changes to controls as part of their general service to customers with disabilities.

Miscellaneous Adaptations

Fencing

Eligibility:

- The service user cannot be safely contained within the property boundary with existing boundary structures
- Provision is subject to a risk assessment and multi-disciplinary decision
- The service user, usually a child, is vulnerable due to behavioural problems that are symptoms of a diagnosed medical condition.
- Provision is normally considered as part of a behavioural support programme to address the challenging behaviour in the long term.

NOTE

- Medical consultant confirmation is required as evidence of condition and need.

Toughened Glass

Eligibility:

- There is serious risk of harm to the service user or other household members.
- The service user has severe learning disability and / or dementia and has unpredictable behaviour or is hyperactive

NOTE

- Medical consultant confirmation is required as evidence of condition and need.
- When toughened glass is installed an alternative means of escape should be identified or a method made available to the service user to break the glass in cases of emergency.

Safe Spaces

A safe space is a safer area or room. It is not a substitute for supervision. They can be purchased 'off the shelf' or 'made to measure' and can be considered for the purpose of a safe environment for sleeping or as a safe environment allowing a disabled child with severe challenging behaviour a place to 'calm down' when in a heightened state of emotion.

Eligibility:

- Provision is subject to a risk assessment and multi-disciplinary decision
- Provision is normally considered as part of a behavioural support programme to address the challenging behaviour in the long term
- Will not be considered where provision will inhibit the independence of the child e.g. by preventing a child independently accessing a toilet

Sound Reduction

Sound reduction of a wall adjoining another property will be considered if a child with severe challenging behaviour is causing /or is likely to cause a breakdown in community relationships.

At the time of assessment, the service user should be informed that the adaptation works will provide a reduction in noise transference only.

Eligibility:

- Provision subject to a risk assessment and multi-disciplinary decision
- Provision is either a part of a behavioural management strategy to enable the child to remain at home or when the child with severe challenging behaviour has undergone a behavioural management programme but continues to frequently disturb the neighbourhood with making exceptionally loud noises or is disturbed by noises from others.

Factors to consider:

1. How the child would be heard if requiring attention;
2. Use of monitoring system;
3. Re-housing;
4. Carpeting the wall or installation of Styrofoam boarding
5. Would the provision of sound reduction influence the child's safety and wellbeing in terms of being heard by a carer for instance in the case of a fire within the property and the need for emergency evacuation.

CCTV Monitoring

Is the use of video cameras to monitor real time activity.

Eligibility:

- Provision subject to a risk assessment and multi-disciplinary decision
- Provision is either part of a behavioural management strategy to enable the child to remain at home or when the child with severe challenging behaviour has undergone a behavioural management programme but continues to require monitoring to minimise risk to themselves and reassure parents

Lighting

Eligibility:

- To enhance the residual vision of a person with a visual impairment confirmed by their eligibility to be registered as sight impaired.

Non-audible Smoke Detector

Eligibility:

- The person should be registered or registerable as Deaf and be unable to hear an audible smoke detector readily available commercially

Non-audible Door Bell

Eligibility:

- The person should be registered or registerable as Deaf and be unable to make use of a loud doorbell readily available commercially

Electrical Sockets and Switches

Eligibility:

- To enable use of essential additional appliances/apparatus that are required for a medical need.
- There is no alternative such as use of an extension socket or alternative light source
- Additional sockets are required as part of the installation of technical equipment for sensory impairment or environmental control devices.

Ventilation/Window Opening Devices

Eligibility:

- The disabled person lives alone and/or is alone for significant parts of the day
- The disabled person is unable to reach/open existing windows in the principal rooms due to functional loss.

NOTE

- Within Berneslai Homes, an alternative style of window with lower sash openers may be ordered for service users who meet the criteria.

Powered Door Openers

An automatic door opener that allows a person (who is an independent wheelchair user) to independently access and egress rooms.

Eligibility:

Permanent and long term need where the service user will achieve a significant level of independence e.g. ability to access and egress the property independently.

Points to consider:

1. Type of automatic door opener required;
2. Space - consideration for door swing;
3. Door restrictors to doors that open outwards

Respite Care (Applicable when this is as of a direct result of any building works associated with Major Adaptations)

Eligibility:

- There is serious risk of harm to service user or other household members while the work is carried out. This will need to be determined following a full consultation with the relevant contractor who would need to provide a Risk Assessment and Project Plan that sets out quite clearly as to what the risks to the service users and other household members are and how they propose to mitigate any risks. Planning of works should be carried out in such a way that high risk elements of work are appropriately accounted for in order that the need for respite care is kept down to an absolute minimum thus less disturbance to the service user and their families.
- The service user has severe learning disability and / or dementia and has unpredictable behaviour or is hyperactive
- Lack of essential services while work is undertaken.
- There are no family members that the service user can reside with for the duration of the works.

NOTE

- This will only be agreed when all other options have been considered.
- Respite will only be agreed after prior authorisation from an appropriate manager within the Property Services Directorate.
- When respite is agreed locality, facilities and suitability will need to be agreed with service user and other family members.
Please note this may cause a delay to adaptations work as facility identified will require 'setting up' as vendor.
- When only part of the service users request is agreed, or future adaptations are not feasible due to regulations etc. A paragraph identifying this will be added to the letter sent out by 'Equipment Adaptation and Sensory Impairment Service'
- The cost of any respite care will be limited to Standard Local Authorities rates applicable at the time. Where there are supplement costs, Berneslai Homes will within reason reimburse some / possibly all of these costs on the basis that 3 quotes have been obtained prior to the service user being moved and that the quotes are for a similar level of service required. Berneslai Homes will normally accept the cheapest quote provided that the relevant establishment and service provided is appropriate to meet the service user's needs.

Extensions

IMPORTANT INFORMATION – Within Berneslai Homes, where a request for an extension has been received then re-housing to a more suitable property must be fully considered as the first main option.

Eligibility

- The service user has severely restricted mobility and the adaptation will provide better access and safety.
- The service user is unable to use a lift (stair lift or through floor lift) safely, or the property is not structurally feasible to provide a lift.
- Existing facilities cannot be reasonably adapted to make them suitable for the service user.
- Re-housing has been considered, but rejected and justified as being wholly inappropriate (this may be as a result of a very large family with a disabled child or adult living as part of the larger family)
- It is technically feasible to provide the additional facilities within the proposed extension in accordance with current Building Regulations and associated Planning legislation.
- The user's condition will deteriorate making ground floor level-access facilities the most appropriate long-term option.

NOTE: The following is applicable to the provision of extensions within Berneslai Homes managed properties:

- All extensions will need to be authorised by the Senior Management Team.
- All extensions are to be single storey level-access only and shall be fully wheelchair accessible in accordance with current Building Regulations. Consideration shall also be given to the provision of ramped access to all main entrance doors.
- Extensions should only be considered where level access to the extension can be achieved.
- Conservatories and pods will no longer to be considered as an appropriate option.
- The extension design and size should meet all future needs of the service user and future service users.
- The extension and ramp should not exceed an area of 50% or more of the garden area.

Factors applicable:

- The design should not impact on the amount of natural light that is made available to other rooms.
- The extension should not be greater than 50% of the original floor area of the existing property.
- Extensions should be constructed out of suitable materials that match the existing property and comply with all current planning and building contract legislation.
- Service users and their families should be advised that the timescale for carrying out this type of work could take a substantial amount of time to complete. This timescale will also be subject to Local Planning Regulations and individual site conditions that may become apparent as part of any feasibility studies or design proposals.