

## Equality and Safety Impact Assessment

The **Public Sector Equality Duty** (Section 149 of the Equality Act) requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between different people carrying out their activities.

The Equality Duty supports good decision making – it encourages public bodies to be more efficient and effective by understanding how different people will be affected by their activities, so that their policies and services are appropriate and accessible to all and meet different people's needs. The Council's Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) includes an assessment of the community safety impact assessment to comply with Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act and will enable the Council to better understand the potential impact of proposals and consider mitigating action.

Name or Brief Description of Proposal	Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Homes Adaptation Policy
<b>Brief Service Profile (including number of customers)</b>	
<p>Southampton City Council owns over 17,000 properties and each year will make adaptations to Council owed housing stock to enable our tenants to be able to live safely in their homes.</p> <p>The Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 introduced new rules that social housing landlords must comply with regarding the safety of homes. The revised Consumer Standards set a requirement that Registered Providers must assist tenants seeking housing adaptations to access appropriate services; they must clearly communicate how they will do this and co-operate with tenants and relevant organisations to achieve this (Safety and Quality Standard). The Policy has also been reviewed and restructured in line with the Council's current Policy structure. This has involved incorporating additional sections.</p>	
<b>Summary of Impact and Issues</b>	
<p>The HRA Homes Adaptation Policy for Council Tenants sets out the criteria by which the Council will assess requests for adaptation work, in order to meet the needs of its tenants and their families to live independently in their homes.</p> <p>This policy has been developed to replace the Council's existing Disabled Adaptations Policy for Council Tenants. The revised draft policy aims to be inclusive of a wider group of tenants so that more tenants can access the adaptations service. This includes tenants who are elderly or frail, or tenants and immediate family members that are neurodivergent.</p>	

The existing policy was reviewed to ensure it remains up to date and compliant with relevant legislation and regulation. Following the introduction of new consumer standards set by the Regulator of Social Housing in April, the policy will also be compliant with the new Safety and Quality Standard which contains specific expectations for all registered providers of housing to adhere to.

The draft policy incorporates the following main changes:

Including clearer guidance on how SCC reach a decision on when and how a disabled adaptation is to be carried out

It seeks to provide clear guidelines for the assessment, approval and implementations of housing adaptations and have consideration for alternative options to ensure all options are considered.

The formulation of a Homes Adaptation Panel which will consider all adaptations over the value of £7500.

The document specifies the criteria for residents to qualify for home adaptations

A right to review a decision

#### **Potential Positive Impacts**

- The policy will provide clearer guidance for the process to apply for an adaptation.
- It provides guidance for the assessment process and about how decisions are made.

<b>Responsible Service Manager</b>	Maria Byrne, Head of Housing Needs & Support
<b>Date</b>	23/06/2025
<b>Approved by Senior Manager</b>	Jamie Brenchley, Director of Housing
<b>Date</b>	23/06/2025

#### **Potential Impact**

<b>Impact Assessment</b>	<b>Details of Impact</b>	<b>Possible Solutions &amp; Mitigating Actions</b>
<b>Age</b>	The overall aim of the Policy is to have a positive impact on residents who apply for a disabled adaptation. Older people might be more likely to have mobility issues, therefore this group are more likely to have a need for an adaptation to their home. This Policy is likely to have a positive impact	Processing disabled adaptations as quickly as possible and effectively communicating with tenants regarding waiting times and delays.

Impact Assessment	Details of Impact	Possible Solutions & Mitigating Actions
	<p>whereby it sets out the circumstances which the Council will undertake an adaptation. The wide powers enable local authorities to offer other forms assistance such as repairs, or assistance to move, if an applicant's home is unsuitable for adaptation however, removing Processing disabled adaptations as quickly as possible and effectively communicating with tenants regarding waiting times and delays. restrictions to adaptations due to rehousing requirement is likely to have a positive impact to older people who might have lived in their home for many years and have an emotional attachment to the property. In addition to this, there might be practical reasons for the individual(s) to stay in the property, such as their GP surgery, individual(s) might also have a strong support network where they are. Waiting times and any delays could have a negative impact on tenants and/or household members because it could limit their ability to live independently whilst the individual(s) is waiting for the adaptation and cause emotional distress.</p>	
<b>Disability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The overall aim of the Policy is to have a positive impact on residents who apply for a disabled adaptation. The Policy applies to disabled people as defined within DFG</li> </ul>	Processing disabled adaptations as quickly as possible and effectively communicating with tenants regarding waiting times and delays.

Impact Assessment	Details of Impact	Possible Solutions & Mitigating Actions
	<p>guidance, the Care Act 2014, and the Children Act 1989, therefore Processing disabled adaptations as quickly as possible and effectively communicating with tenants regarding waiting times and delays. will have a direct impact upon this characteristic. This Policy is likely to have a positive impact whereby it sets out the circumstances which the Council will undertake an adaptation. The wide powers enable local authorities to offer other forms assistance such as repairs, or assistance to move, if an applicant's home is unsuitable for adaptation however, removing restrictions to adaptations due to rehousing requirement is likely to have a positive impact to older people who might have lived in their home for many years and have an emotional attachment to the property. In addition to this, there might be practical reasons for the individual(s) to stay in the property, such as their GP surgery, individual(s) might also have a strong support network where they are. Waiting times and any delays could have a negative impact on tenants and/or household members</p>	

Impact Assessment	Details of Impact	Possible Solutions & Mitigating Actions
	because it could limit their ability to live independently whilst the individual(s) are waiting for the adaptation and cause emotional distress.	
<b>Gender Reassignment</b>	The overall aim of the Policy is to have a positive impact on residents who apply for a disabled adaptation.	No mitigations are required currently.
<b>Care Experienced</b>	None identified	N/A
<b>Marriage and Civil Partnership</b>	None identified	N/A
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b>	None identified	N/A
<b>Race</b>	There must be a need to live together in order for people to be included in applications. This may impact people who live in extended families which is common in some communities.	Where an applicant wants to include extended family members in an application but there is no 'need' to live together as defined by the policy, the council will offer advice on housing arrangements and other housing options which will allow families to remain living together in the home or close by. This could include considering whether to offer an applicant a property with fewer bedrooms if it were to result in an overall improvement to the housing situation- as identified in paragraph 90 of the policy- or considering on a case-by-case basis whether to make an exception to policy- e.g. where there has been a long-established extended family living arrangement within the household.
<b>Religion or Belief</b>	None identified	N/A
<b>Sex</b>	None identified	N/A

Impact Assessment	Details of Impact	Possible Solutions & Mitigating Actions
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	None identified	N/A
<b>Community Safety</b>	None identified	N/A
<b>Poverty</b>	None identified	N/A
<b>Health &amp; Wellbeing</b>	<p>The Council has annual budget of 2.7 m in 2025/26 for adaptation works to Council owned stock.</p> <p>The policy sets out to clarify eligibility, articulate how cases will be prioritised, and ultimately ensure that HRA funding for adaptations is delivering the best outcomes.</p> <p>The policy will aim to improve the health and wellbeing of Southampton City Council Tenants .</p>	<p>This more focused and targeted approach will address the significant current backlog of cases, reducing waiting times and ensuring that the budget delivers the best outcomes for customers and makes best use of the Council's housing stock.</p> <p>The budget for 2025/6 will remain unchanged as the backlog is addressed. It is anticipated that efficiencies will be saved across the Council as a whole (Adults and Children's social care) as over time those cases that deliver the most significant outcomes will be dealt with more quickly. It is also anticipated that the implementation of this policy will ultimately lead to an increase in the release of family size accommodation.</p>
<b>Other Significant Impacts</b>	None identified	N/A