

Aids and Adaptations

Frequently asked
questions



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Introduction to aids and adaptations

There are lots of reasons a person might need aids and adaptations for their home. If something happens to someone in your household, like an accident or illness or a worsening of a condition you've been living with for a while, there are ways we can work with you and your local authority to get the changes made to help you live happily and comfortably in your home.

We've put together some useful information in this guide, but if you need help, please do contact us using the details at the end of this document. If you live in one on our Retirement Living schemes, you could also approach your Wellbeing Connector.

What are aids?

An aid is usually a physical piece of equipment that can be provided to adapt your home to help you in your day to day activities.

This can include items such as:

- Hospital beds
- Toilet frames
- Shower chairs
- Bathing equipment

These are not things that Stonewater is able to provide for you but can be easily accessed through other sources such as your local authority or GP/healthcare support team.

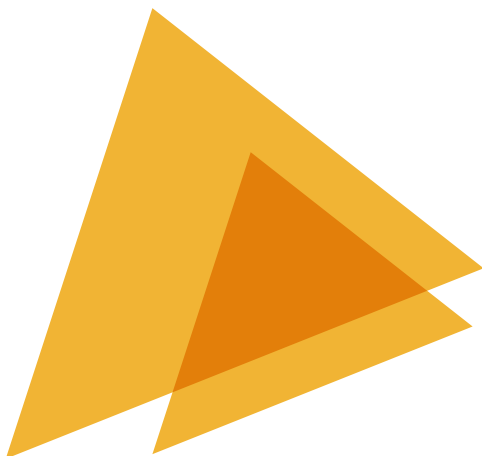
How do I get aids to support me around the house?

If you need equipment such as a wheelchair or other mobility aid, you can apply to your local authority.

You may also be able to make a referral to the local social care team, often through your GP or directly so you can get support in applying for equipment.

You can find more information about how the process works in your local area at the following website:

[gov.uk/apply-home-equipment-for-disabled](https://www.gov.uk/apply-home-equipment-for-disabled)



What are adaptations?

An adaptation is something that can be changed or added to your property or its fixtures and fittings which will assist you to live independently. These can be split into two areas - a 'minor' adaptation and a 'major' adaptation.

For some adaptations you may need an occupational therapist to identify and support your request. If you aren't sure if you need an occupational therapist, give us a call and we can let you know.

What is a minor adaptation?

A minor adaptation is generally something that costs £1,000 or less to install or complete. These could include:

- Handrails
- Grab rails
- Lever taps
- Door handles
- Signs or notices
- Plinths for toilets
- Silent bells/doorbells
- Door/wall protectors
- Visual smoke alarms

If your adaptation falls into this category, we'll pay for it and arrange for the work to be done.

An occupational therapist can identify the best place for these minor adaptations to be installed so they are the most suitable for you.

These are just the most common examples, there might be other things that an occupational therapist recommends that we can help you with too.

Minor adaptations - how it works

You contact us with your request



If your request is something we can organise straight away, such as a key safe, lever tap, flashing or vibrating doorbells or smoke alarms, then we'll pass on your request to a contractor and they will arrange an appointment with you to have the work done.

If your request is for something we need some more information on, we'll contact you to ask a few questions before we ask our contractors to book an appointment with you.



Our contractor completes the works

Can Stonewater get me a raised toilet seat or wheelchair?

Stonewater can support in providing adaptations that form part of the building. If you need something that isn't part of the building that makes up your home, such as a mobility aid, your GP, social worker or occupational therapist will be able to give you help and advice on where you can get help with your request.

What is a major adaptation?

Major adaptations could be anything from widening your door frames for a wheelchair, installing a ramp, adapting heating or lighting controls or changing your bathroom so it's easier for you to use.

These generally cost more than £1,000 and are not usually funded by Stonewater and may be accessed via a Disabled Facilities Grant.

Whilst Stonewater does not fund these types of works we can help you with the technical side of the process, such as agreeing plans, specifications and getting permissions. We'll also support your local council to complete the work as quickly as possible once the grant is approved.

Do I have to pay for it?

Yes, though your local council has a special fund to help with this and you can apply for a Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) with them.

To be eligible you or someone living in your property must be disabled. Either you or the person you're applying for must:

- Own the property or be a tenant (at Stonewater, we are willing to accept requests from household members residing at our properties)
- Intend to live in the property during the grant period (which is currently 5 years)

The grant will be means-tested – so you may have to pay towards the cost, depending on your financial situation. Disabled children under 18 can get a grant without their parents' income being taken into account.

You can find out the most up to date information including how the means testing applies on Disabled Facilities Grant by visiting the Gov.UK website: www.gov.uk/disabled-facilities-grants

Note: You might not get any grants if you start work on your property before the authority approves your application. Contact your local authority (www.gov.uk/find-your-local-council) for more information on how the process works in your local area.

If you can't get a DFG, get in contact with us and we'll try to connect you to a local charity who can help.



How will my DFG be paid?

If you are successful in obtaining a Disabled Facilities Grant from the council you'll be paid either:

- In instalments - as the work progresses
- In full - when the work is finished

The council may pay the contractor directly or give you a cheque to pass on to them. They'll agree this with you when they approve your application.

How do I know if Stonewater will approve my proposed adaptation before applying for a Disabled Facilities Grant?

You can contact us on 01202 319 119 and give us details of your request, explaining why you need it, what difference it is going to make and if you're getting support from an occupational therapist.

As every home is different, we'll do a technical investigation to make sure the suggested changes will be possible in your home.

We will also look at your request to make sure that adapting your existing home is the best way to support you, or whether it would be better to help you find a new home more suitable for your new in the long term. If we have suggestions of a potential better solution, they will give you a call to discuss this and agree a plan to help you going forward.

If we are happy with your plans, we can give you permission in principle, and once we get a formal request from your Occupational Therapist with technical drawings we can move on to formal approval.

Major adaptations - how it works

You contact us with your request

Our surveyor will look at it and speak to you if they have any questions.

Once our surveyor is happy, our customer experience team will review your request to make sure we have everything we need from you.



If the request has come from you, we grant permission in principle and ask for some information from your occupational therapist to make sure we're meeting your needs.

If the request has come from your occupational therapist, we'll get in touch with them directly to get everything organised.



If there are any changes to your service charges due to your adaptation, our service charge team may contact you to discuss these.

While the work is carried out, we will be in direct contact with your occupational therapist with any updates.

Once the work is completed, our surveyor will visit to check everything is OK and your occupational therapist will provide any certification that is required.

What is an occupational therapist?

Occupational therapists are medical professionals who work with people of all ages, they can look at all aspects of daily life at home, school or work. They look at the activities you find difficult and see if there is another way you can do them. This could be by adding in aids to assist you or making changes in the form of adaptations to your home.

How do I get an occupational therapist?

If you need support moving around your home and you think aids and adaptations could help, please contact your GP who can discuss your needs and refer you to an occupational therapist if required.

An occupational therapist will usually contact you to arrange a telephone call, or arrange a visit to your home, to discuss the difficulties you are experiencing and what changes may be made to support your needs.

I think I need to move out of my home

We understand that in some circumstances, aids and adaptations cannot make a property suitable for someone's needs. In these instances we will provide advice on other options for you, such as moving properties and can support you in various options including mutual exchange and joining the housing register to source a more suitable home.

Local Authority moves. In order to find somewhere new to live that suits your needs, you'll need to contact your local authority who'll be able to help. All social housing properties, including Stonewater properties, will be advertised through their housing list.

When you register you will be given a banding and it allows you to bid or be nominated for properties that meet your needs.

Banding basically means that applicants are grouped together into a number of bands, which reflect differing levels of housing needs and priority. You will need to ensure that you

make clear in your application for rehousing what you require from your new home e.g level access, a wet room, ground floor entrance etc.

Mutual exchange

You can also consider a mutual exchange. A mutual exchange will help you to swap properties with a Stonewater customer or another social housing provider's customer.

To find out if you're eligible, check the 'right to exchange' information on your tenancy agreement or get in contact with our team.

You may not be eligible for a mutual exchange if you are on a starter tenancy or if you have arrears on your account but we can give you advice if this is the case. You can find more information on our website: www.stonewater.org/for-residents/moving-or-swapping-home/

Management transfers

In certain exceptional circumstances where a customer has an urgent need for a move, we may be able to explore a management transfer within Stonewater's own stock.

Ahead of an application for a management transfer we will explore all options with you to check there's no other way to meet your housing need.

Contact us

If you need help with anything you've read in this guide, please contact us.

By email:
customers@stonewater.org

By phone:
01202 319 119
Monday to Friday 8am - 8pm
Saturday 9am - 1pm

If you live in one of our Retirement Living schemes, you could also approach your Wellbeing Manager.

Find us at www.stonewater.org

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