

# Aids & Adaptations Policy

---

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 A2Dominion is committed to providing adaptations, helping our customers to stay as independent as possible in their homes. We will take all reasonable measures to provide a fair service and we will work with external agencies to make the best use of our adapted properties.
- 1.2 This policy sets out what assistance we will provide for those tenants who have a disability, long term illness or impairment which limits their daily activities. This also includes children who are permanent members of a household.
- 1.3 It applies to all Assured and Secure tenants in “general needs” or “sheltered” homes. It is not applicable to tenants in temporary accommodation, leaseholders or shared owners. These residents can install their own adaptations but must obtain our permission before they do so. They can also apply to the local authority for adaptations.

## 2. Policy aims and objectives

- 2.1 A2Dominion acknowledges the importance of enabling people with disabilities to have more choice and control over where they want to live, to enjoy independent living and be part of an inclusive community. These issues are highlighted in the government’s Lifetime Homes – Lifetime Neighbourhoods Strategy (2011); Independent Living Strategy (2008); Equality Act 2010.
- 2.2 This is a discretionary service and A2Dominion has no legal requirement to provide equipment or adaptations, however, we recognise that we do have a ‘Duty to make Reasonable Adjustments’ for a person to whom the premises are let, (referred to in this document as the tenant, the customer, you).
- 2.3 Local authorities have a statutory duty to provide Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs). A2Dominion will work closely with them and will allocate a budget annually to assist them in carrying out their statutory duties.
- 2.4 We aim to keep tenants in their own homes wherever possible. However, we also have a responsibility to make best use of our homes, including those already

**For a copy of this policy in an alternative format, such as large print or a translation, please contact our Customer Contact Centre by calling 0800 432 0077 or via our website ([www.a2dominion.co.uk/contact](http://www.a2dominion.co.uk/contact))**

adapted. Therefore, we will offer alternatives to adaptation where it is more appropriate for our customers. At all times we will work to minimise delays.

- 2.5 A2Dominion will make a distinction between 'minor' adaptations (work costing less than £2,000) and 'major' adaptations (work costing over £2,000).

### 3. Definitions

- 3.1 **Aids and Adaptations** are changes to your home to help you or a member of your household to live independently.
- 3.2 There are two types of adaptation, **minor** adaptations such as grab rails and lever taps and **major** adaptations such as a wet room or stairlift. See [Appendix one](#) for more information.
- 3.3 **Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG)** is a grant that may be available from your council if you're disabled and need to make changes to your home.
- 3.4 **Home Improvement Agencies** are local organisations dedicated to helping older people, people with disabilities, and vulnerable people to live safely and independently in their own homes.

### 4. Implementation

- 4.1 A2Dominion will fund **minor adaptations**, defined as costing up to £2,000 (including VAT) per property, per financial year, whether arising from an Occupational Therapist recommendation or other professional sources including those internal to A2Dominion. Minor adaptations are defined as non-structural alterations or additions to the home. We will discuss your needs with you and if required, for some requests, we may ask you to get advice from an Occupational Therapist to ensure the requested work meets your individual needs in the most effective way.

*[Appendix one](#) gives a list of the type of minor adaptations we provide.*

- 4.2 For adaptations costing over £2,000 (including VAT). A2Dominion will refer you to your local authority or local Home Improvement Agency (HIA). We will give advice to residents when applying for a DFG and we will work with occupational therapists to find suitable alternatives if an adaptation is not possible.
- 4.3 A2Dominion will maintain any equipment installed under a DFG upon the expiry of a warranty, providing relevant permission is obtained prior to installation. We do, however, reserve the right to implement a service charge to cover the cost of maintenance. Reinstatement by the tenant will not be required at the end of the tenancy. The exception to this will be where a tenant has funded the installation themselves. Self-funded adaptations will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

*[Appendix two](#) gives a list of the type of equipment we will maintain.*

- 4.4 Where works are between £2,000 (including VAT) and £12,000 (including VAT) A2Dominion will also fund the initial £1,000 of DFG eligible works and then a further 20% of eligible works, up to maximum work cost of £12,000. It is envisaged that any works will be undertaken through the local Home Improvement Agency.
- 4.5 A2Dominion has a process of agreeing funding and process protocols with local authorities, using a standard format to minimise delay and to ensure that the most appropriate solutions are found for tenants. A Home Improvement Agency may be engaged in some areas, or for certain types of work.
- 4.6 A2Dominion will work closely with other statutory and voluntary organisations including, but not limited to, Primary Care Trusts (PCTs), social services, local authorities and Age Concern in the delivery of its Adaptations Policy and on joint prevention strategies and initiatives.
- 4.7 Where the demand for adaptations exceeds the resources available, A2Dominion will work with the statutory and voluntary agencies, including but not limited to, social services, local authorities and others as appropriate to prioritise applicants on a case-by-case basis and to agree alternative solutions for individuals and households.
- 4.8 A2Dominion has a dedicated Adaptations team which will:
- Assess what type of assistance tenants require.
  - Provide minor adaptations up to a value of £2,000 (inclusive of VAT).
  - Offer tenants advice when applying to the local authority for Disabled Facilities Grant funding for all adaptations costing over £2,000.
  - Refer to other services if appropriate, for example, handyperson services.
  - Make a referral to the Lettings team for re-housing if this is the most appropriate solution, or if requested by the tenant.
- 4.9 We will respond to all reasonable requests for adaptation, however there are some circumstances where we may withhold consent. These circumstances may include (but are not limited to):
- Where there is no support for the adaptation, e.g from an occupational therapist or social worker
  - Requests for level-access shower rooms in flats above ground floor where there is no communal lift.
  - Requests for walk-in baths due to high maintenance costs and risk of flooding.
- 4.10 A2Dominion will only contribute towards DFGs where permission has been obtained in writing beforehand.

- 4.11 Adaptations will only be provided for permanent household members. When considering the need for an extension to a home, only permanent members (including carers) of the household will be considered.
- 4.12 If a major adaptation has already been undertaken, A2Dominion may not consider the request to transfer to another un-adapted property.
- 4.13 A2Dominion will not contribute towards the cost of an adaptation costing more than £2,000 where a tenant does not agree to apply to the Local Authority for a Disabled Facilities Grant.
- 4.14 In advance of any significant adaptation works (including planned and cyclical) A2Dominion will undertake appropriate home visits and inspections to ensure we consider any special needs or requirements of the resident or their family.
- 4.15 Requests for A2Dominion to fund (or part-fund) a tenant's contribution, where their income or savings mean that Disabled Facilities Grant will not meet the full cost of the adaptation, will be reviewed by A2Dominion on a case-by-case basis.
- 4.16 Where the cost of an adaptation exceeds £30,000 there will be no commitment from A2Dominion to fund the work, unless an agreement on funding has been reached with the local authority and social services. In which case, A2Dominion may fund 50% of the additional works to a maximum works total value of £45,000. This will be assessed and agreed on a case-by-case basis.
- 4.17 Where a property has been substantially adapted and your needs or your circumstances change, A2Dominion may consider other housing options, for example assisting you to remain in the property or be transferred to another home.
- 4.18 A2Dominion may, where appropriate, recycle existing adaptations to reduce waiting times for residents awaiting adaptation works.
- 4.19 When delivering adaptations A2Dominion will do so within agreed timescales. We will also take the opportunity to identify any additional support needs that may be required and take the appropriate steps to ensure they are met, either within our own resources or by means of a referral to an alternative agency.
- 4.20 A2Dominion will hold a register of all adapted properties including, details of tenants' disabilities, along with links to the asset management database, for future planning and reference.
- 4.21 Requests for adaptations or alterations to facilitate the use of a mobility scooter will be considered in accordance with the Mobility Scooters Policy (available on request).

- 4.22 The A2Dominion adaptation service will be widely publicised to residents and available on our website.
- 4.23 A2Dominion will also work with its residents in developing future policy on adaptations and setting standards (including consultation on this policy). We will also undertake post installation satisfaction surveys at six months to assess the usefulness of the adaptations and to ensure the needs of the individual haven't changed.
- 4.24 Each request will be looked at on a case-by-case basis, taking into account new developments and warranties, the location of an adaptation and if it will change the number of bedrooms the property has.

## **5. Service standards**

- 5.1 A2Dominion has agreed with residents and key stakeholders the following set of service standards:
- To respond to initial enquiries (at first point of contact) within 10 working days.
  - Where onward referral is needed to agency this will be done within 10 working days.
  - A2Dominion will aim to complete minor adaptation works at a time convenient to the resident.
  - We aim to answer permission requests for disabled facilities grants within 20 working days, although this is partly dependent on the local authority response times.
- 5.2 Regional management teams will monitor performance and report to regional boards, the Customer Services Committee and the Customer Insights team on performance demand and waiting times for adaptations.

## **6. Monitoring and review arrangements**

- 6.1 We will monitor the effectiveness and implementation of this policy to ensure that customers are treated fairly.
- 6.2 This policy will be reviewed every three years, unless legislation or sector developments require otherwise, ensuring that it continues to meet its objectives and take account of good practice developments.

## **7. Consultation**

- 7.1 This policy has been developed in consultation with colleagues across operational teams and informed by industry good practice. We have also consulted with customers and our Customer Services Committee.

## 8. Equality, diversity & inclusion statement

- 8.1 A2Dominion Group, staff, partners, stakeholders and contractors are committed to providing services, which are relevant and appropriate to the needs of people. We will treat others fairly and without discrimination.
- 8.2 We will ensure that all our services relating to this policy are accessible and available for all customers as set out in the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

## 9. Data protection statement

- 9.1 The protection of personal data is of great importance to A2Dominion Group and more than just a legal obligation.
- 9.2 A2Dominion Group and its affiliated organisations are registered as data controllers with the ICO. The registration numbers are as follows:
- A2Dominion Housing Group Limited: Z4843307
  - A2Dominion Homes Limited: Z9799978
  - A2Dominion South Limited: Z7835340
  - A2Dominion Housing Options Limited: Z5412073
  - A2Dominion Residential Limited: Z3391351
  - A2Dominion Developments Limited: ZA103931
  - Pyramid Plus London LLP: Z3594227
  - Pyramid Plus South LLP: Z3594230
- 9.3 Our data protection policy and procedures are governed by the Data Protection Act 2018. We collect and process personal information in order to provide housing services and meet our contractual and legal obligations. All persons authorised to receive personal data are obliged to handle personal data in accordance with applicable laws and regulations at all times.
- 9.4 For information on how we collect, store, process and use customers' personal data, please visit our website on [a2dominiongroup.co.uk/privacy-and-cookie-policy](https://a2dominiongroup.co.uk/privacy-and-cookie-policy).
- 9.5 For employee related privacy statement, please contact our HR team at [hrenquiries@a2dominion.co.uk](mailto:hrenquiries@a2dominion.co.uk).
- 9.6 You can also contact the Data Protection Officer / Data Compliance team at [governance@a2dominion.co.uk](mailto:governance@a2dominion.co.uk)

## 10. Associated Documents

- Mobility Scooter Policy
- RCOT adaptations without delay 2019

## Appendix one:

Example of adaptations and their expected costs.

NB, costs can vary depending on adaptation, property & location.

### Minor adaptations (under £2,000 including VAT)

- Grab rails, handrails and stair rails
- Taps, door handles, sockets to accommodate medical equipment
- Alterations to thresholds, paths and gateways to give easier access
- Window opening equipment
- Modular ramps to aid access
- Half steps

### Major adaptations (over £2,000 including VAT) – DFG approved by local authority

- Wheelchair ramps
- Dropped kerbs and hardstandings
- Kitchens for wheelchair users
- Level access showers
- Stairlifts
- Widening of doors
- Wash & dry toilets
- Through floor lifts and ceiling track hoists

## Appendix two:

Example of equipment A2Dominion will maintain on expiry of warranty

- Through floor lifts
- Stairlifts
- Ceiling track hoists
- Specialist baths
- Wash and dry toilets