

Reasonable Adjustments Policy

Version Control						
Version	Date drafted	Date approved	Approved by	Date reviewed	Next review date	Owner
Final	06/01/2021	25/01/2021	Board		25/01/2024	Operations Director
2024 review				26/02/2024	26/02/2027	Managing Director

1. Introduction

- 1.1. As a provider of specialist supported housing, Westmoreland Supported Housing Ltd (WSHL) is committed to ensuring that disabled customers are not disadvantaged when accessing our services. To this end we will make reasonable adjustments where necessary. This is to minimise barriers that customers or their representatives might face so that those with disabilities have the same access to our services, as far as is possible, as those who do not.
- 1.2. This policy does not seek to explain how we will approach every situation, it is intended as a general statement of our policy and:
- Confirms our commitment to improving accessibility for everybody that we deal with
 - Sets out some of the basic principles of our commitment to provide reasonable adjustments for disabled people
 - Sets out the factors that we will take into account in dealing with requests for reasonable adjustments

2. Legal and regulatory responsibility

- 2.1. The Equality Act 2010 (The Act) provides a legislative framework to protect the rights of individuals and to advance equality of opportunity for all. Although not specifically listed as a public body under the Act, as an employer, and as a provider of services to the public, WHSL commits to comply with the provisions for public bodies under the Act.



2.2. Under the Act the legal duty to make reasonable adjustments arises in three circumstances:

- Where there is a provision, criterion or practice which puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage in relation to a relevant matter in comparison with persons who are not disabled
- Where a physical feature puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with persons who are not disabled
- Where a disabled person would, but for the provision of an auxiliary aid, be put at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with persons who are not disabled. Substantial disadvantage is defined in the Equality Act 2010 s.212(1) as 'more than minor or trivial'

2.3. As part of the Ombudsman's Complaints Handling Code, organisations are required to have a reasonable adjustments policy to be compliant. This is part of the annual self-assessment that is carried out and published.

3. Reasonable adjustments

3.1. To make an adjustment in our context, means to make a change to work practices to avoid or correct the disadvantage to a person with a disability.

3.2. Examples of this include:

- Allowing more time than we would usually for someone to provide information that we needed or
- Providing specialist equipment or additional support such as a sign language interpreter or providing easy read documents.

3.3. There is not a prescribed list of reasonable adjustments; the adjustment will depend on the individual's needs. We will discuss the requirements with the person concerned and seek to reach agreement on what may be reasonable in the circumstances. We will not make assumptions about whether a disabled person requires any reasonable adjustments or about what those adjustments should be.

3.4. Some examples of the adjustments that staff can make include:

- provision of auxiliary aids where appropriate
- provision of information in appropriate alternative formats (eg large print, Braille, coloured paper etc)
- extension of time limits (where it is lawful to do so)
- use of email or telephone in preference to hard copy letters
- use of plain English or Easy Read service
- communication through a representative or intermediary
- rest or comfort breaks in meetings

3.5. The Equality Act does not define what is 'reasonable' but guidance from the Equality and Human Rights Commission Suggest that the most relevant factors are:

- The effectiveness of the adjustment(s) in preventing or reducing the disadvantage for the disabled person
- The practicality of us making the adjustments
- The availability of our resources including external assistance and finance
- Any disruption to the Service that making the adjustment may cause

3.6. We will let people know that we can provide reasonable adjustments for example in the following ways:

- By including a paragraph in written communications where appropriate
- By asking whether a reasonable adjustment might be required over the telephone
- By offering tenancy agreements in an easy read format as standard
- By publishing our policy on our website
- By working with key representatives groups and others to raise awareness of this policy

3.7. We are committed to provide a high standard of service, dealing with everyone in a way that is fair and free from discrimination. If someone is dissatisfied with the arrangements we have made for providing reasonable adjustments, we will respond in accordance with our complaints policy. If necessary when reviewing our decision we may seek advice from specific expert disability groups or seek legal advice.

4. Policy review

4.1. This policy will be reviewed every 3 years.