

Document Name	Reasonable Adjustment Policy For Customers
Effective Date	1 February 2022
Date for Review	To be reviewed every two years or in response to changes in relevant legislation and/or other Newark and Sherwood District Council policies, procedures and agreements.
Version Number	<i>Approved</i>
Approved by	Senior Leadership Team Homes & Communities Committee Policy & Finance Committee
Responsible Business Manager	Business Manager Customer Services and Business Manager Housing & Estates

Customer Reasonable Adjustment Policy

1.0 Overview

- 1.1 The Council is committed to providing excellent customer service.
- 1.2 One of the Council's values is to be "Caring and Compassionate". To achieve this the Council strives to be sensitive to the different needs and circumstances of others.

2.0 Scope of the Policy

- 2.1 This policy outlines what a reasonable adjustment is and how the Council will action these requests when received to ensure we are compliant with Equality and Diversity legislation and regulations.
- 2.2 This policy is designed to:
- confirm the Council's commitment to improving accessibility for everybody that it deals with;
 - set out some of the basic principles of our legal duty to provide reasonable adjustments for people; and
 - set out the factors that we will take into account in dealing with requests for reasonable adjustments.

3.0 What is a Reasonable Adjustment?

- 3.1 A reasonable adjustment involves making a change to the way that we usually do things to ensure that we are fair to all of our residents. This may involve departing from our usual practice in the way we do things if we find that the current position places a person at a substantial disadvantage. For example we may:
- allow more time for someone to respond or provide information; or
 - make sure our buildings do not present obstacles for disabled people, for instance by providing lifts or ground floor meeting rooms; or offer a suitable alternative locations
 - provide specialist equipment or additional support
- 3.2 Where appropriate we will discuss the requirements with the individual concerned and seek to reach agreement on what may be reasonable in the circumstances.
- 3.3 Under the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.
- 3.4 Under the Act, the Council have a duty to make reasonable adjustments in the following three circumstances:

- where a provision, criterion or practice puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage 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

Where any of the above circumstances apply the Council must take such steps as are reasonable to either avoid the disadvantage or to provide the auxiliary aid.

3.5 We will let residents know that we can provide reasonable adjustments, for example:

- by including a note on our published documents indicating that we can provide the document in an alternative format on request;
- by publishing this policy on our website; and
- by working with key representative groups and others to raise awareness of this policy.

3.6 The Equality Act does not define what is "reasonable" but guidance from the Equality and Human Rights Commission suggests that the most relevant factors are:

- Whether the adjustment will help the individual to overcome the disadvantage they have
- The adjustment should be designed to fully address the disadvantage it is meant to overcome, for example providing a meeting room which is accessible by wheelchair may not properly overcome the barriers faced by the wheelchair user if there are no disabled toilet facilities also available.
- Whether it is practical to provide the adjustment
- What the resource implications of making the adjustment are; how much it will cost and whether this is proportionate to the adjustment being requested

4.0 Requesting a Reasonable Adjustment

4.1 If you want to make a request for a reasonable adjustment in order to access our services please contact the Council by telephone, email or visit one of our offices.

4.2 Whilst we will consider each request on individual circumstances, there are some common adjustments which we can offer as a matter of course.

4.3 The adjustments will always be agreed with the individual.

4.4 Some examples of the simple reasonable adjustments we can make are:

- Offer additional support to residents with temporary or enhanced needs. These can include those with visual or speech impairment and varying degrees of memory problems.
- Provide support in different formats, face to face, digitally and scheme visits.
- Provide information in a format that is convenient.
- Provide a variety of communication channel options.
- Signpost to additional support services.
- Identify and carry out adaptations (i.e. make physical changes)
- Provide support with accessing disabled aids and equipment
- Support with financial matters, including Welfare Benefits

4.5 In most cases we will be able to agree and deliver the required reasonable adjustments with a minimum of delay. In some cases, we may need to consider in more detail how best to overcome the difficulties a disabled person may be experiencing. For example, where the adjustment requested may be difficult to provide or where it may interfere with our statutory or regulatory obligations.

4.6 In some circumstances the Council will be unable to make the adjustment as it is not 'reasonable', for example where the cost of the adjustment is not practical. In such circumstances the Council will inform the resident as to why this is the case and discuss with the resident alternative options.

5.0 Monitoring and Evaluation

5.1 The Council will record and monitor the reasonable adjustments that have been requested and made. This will allow us to review the services we provide and help us identify whether there are any wider steps that we can take to improve our services.

5.2 This information will be published on our on our website.

6.0 Review

6.1 The Policy is to be reviewed every two years or in response to changes in relevant legislation and or other Newark and Sherwood District Council policies, procedures and agreements.