



Mansfield  
District Council

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# Reasonable Adjustment Policy

## March 2024

### Current Document Status

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Approving Body	Head of Housing
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Date	
Author	Performance and Insight Manager
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### Version History

Date	Version	Author / Editor	Comment
04/03/2024	V1	Performance and Insight Manager	Draft policy sent to Operational Managers for comments

### Equality Impact Assessment Record

Date	Type of assessment completed	Completed by
15/3/2024	Initial	Performance and Insight Manager

## **1 Policy Statement**

- 1.1 Mansfield District Council (MDC) are committed to making sure our services can be easily accessed by all customers including those with disabilities and/or additional needs.
- 1.2 This policy has been written in accordance with the Housing Ombudsman Service's Complaints Handling Code, our commitments under the Equality Act 2010 and the Regulator of Social Housing's revised consumer standard Transparency, Influence and accountability specific outcome;  
  
"Registered providers must take action to deliver fair access to, and equitable outcomes of, housing and landlord services for all tenants".
- 1.2 This policy does not aim to explain how we will approach every circumstance where a customer requires a reasonable adjustment to access a service. It is a general statement of our commitment to ensure customers with disabilities are not at a disadvantage when accessing our services.
- 1.3 The policy defines what a 'reasonable adjustment' is, in what type of circumstances they will be carried out and how a request for a reasonable adjustment can be made.
- 1.4 Many of the adjustments we offer could also be made available to our customers without disabilities.

## **2 Scope**

- 2.1 The policy covers all activities delivered by MDC's Housing Department and applies to both existing customers and prospective new customers who are at a 'substantial disadvantage' compared to those without a disability when accessing services.

## **3. The Equality Act 2010**

- 3.1 Under the Equality Act 2010 (The Act) a person is considered as having a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long term' negative effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.
- 3.2 The Act provides a legislative framework to protect the rights of individuals and to advance equality of opportunity for all.
- 3.3 Under the Act, we have a legal duty to make adjustments in the following three circumstances:
  - Where there is a provision, criterion or practice which puts a person with a disability at a substantial disadvantage in relation to a relevant matter in comparison with persons who are not disabled;
  - Where a physical feature puts a person with a disability at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with persons who are not disabled; and or

- Where a person with a disability would, but for the provision of an auxiliary aid, be put at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with persons who are not disabled.

#### **4. What is a reasonable adjustment?**

- 4.1 A reasonable adjustment may be a physical alteration to one of our premises, for example, fitting a lift, wide doors or a ramp.
- 4.2 It may also be a change to one of our policies, procedures or services, for example, a comfort or rest break in a meeting or an extension of time limits (where lawful to do so).
- 4.3 MDC will adjust how we communicate with our customers in order to meet their specific needs. For example, providing information in alternative formats or a sign language interpreter at workshops and events.
- 4.4 In all circumstances, the reasonable adjustment is being made to ensure all of our services can be equally accessed by customers with disabilities, as well as those who do not.

#### **5. How to request a reasonable adjustment**

- 5.1 A reasonable adjustment can be requested from us in the following ways:
- In writing, explaining what the adjustment is and why it is needed. This can be done by letter or email;
  - By telephoning Mansfield District Council's Customer Services;
  - By referral from a local authority or other relevant agency;
  - By a family member when we have been given permission for them to do so; and or
  - A member of staff may suggest for one to be made, when they are aware it will support the customer's needs.
- 5.2 In most cases MDC will be able to agree and deliver the required reasonable adjustment with a minimum of delay. However, in some cases it may be necessary for MDC to consider in more detail how best to overcome the difficulty a customer with disabilities is experiencing and/or seek advice from expert disability organisations that can assist with signposting and other forms of support.

#### **6. How do we define 'reasonable'?**

- 6.1 The Equality and Human Rights Commission suggests the following considerations when MDC decides whether an adjustment is 'reasonable' or not:
- How effective the adjustment(s) will be in assisting a customer with a disability and in preventing or reducing the possibility of them being at a disadvantage;
  - The practicality of the Group making the adjustment(s);

- The cost of the adjustment(s) and whether this is possible within Group resources; and
- Any disruption to the service that making the adjustment(s) may cause.

6.2 In the circumstance where MDC are unable to make a reasonable adjustment due to cost or resources, MDC will work together with the customer to find the most appropriate alternative solution for them.

## **7. Keeping record of a customer's needs**

7.1 At the beginning of a customer's tenancy, they will be asked whether they have any support needs and/or any communication preferences. These will be recorded onto our internal systems (QL) and will be used in order to meet the customer's specific needs throughout the duration of their tenancy.

7.2 MDC will proactively check that we have the appropriate support flags and communication preferences recorded on our systems, where information is missing or requires updating.

7.3 Any reasonable adjustments made will be recorded on MDC's reasonable adjustment register.

## **8. Reasonable adjustments to our complaints process**

8.1 MDC will make reasonable adjustments to our complaints service where necessary, ensuring customers with a disability are not at a disadvantage when accessing the service.

8.2 Examples of the reasonable adjustments MDC will make are:

- Using the customer's communication preference throughout the duration of the complaint;
- We will not request a complaint to be made in writing where this presents a barrier or disadvantage to the customer due to their disability or additional needs;
- Extension of any time limits (where it is lawful to do so); and
- Provide information in alternative formats eg. Braille, large print or on coloured paper.

## **9. Equality Impact Assessments**

9.1 MDC complete an equality impact assessment each time we develop or review a policy, procedure or service. The assessment is to help MDC make sure its decision making is fair and does not present any barriers or disadvantage to customers from any protected group (including disability) under the Equality Act 2010.

## **10. Responsibility and Decision Making**

- 10.1 The information below illustrates the structure for responsibility and decision making in relation to this policy:

### **Head of Housing**

Overall responsibility for adoption of the policy

### **Performance and Insight Manager**

Responsible for ensuring consultation is carried out with involved customers.

### **Operational Managers**

All managers are responsible for reading, understanding and monitoring the delivery of the policy.

### **All staff**

All staff are responsible for reading, understanding and delivering services in line with this policy.

## **11. Monitoring and reporting**

- 11.1 MDC will report our performance on the number of requests for reasonable adjustments made and number granted to enable effective monitoring of the service to the Housing Executive Group, Departmental Managers Team (DMT) Performance Clinic and in MDC's Annual Report to Tenants

## **12. Review**

- 12.1 This Policy will be reviewed every three years or in line with changes in legislation, whichever is the sooner, updates or recommendations for changes will be presented to the Head of Housing for approval.

## **13. Complaints**

- 13.1 If a customer is dissatisfied with the arrangements or decisions MDC have made regarding a reasonable adjustment, MDC will respond in accordance with our Complaints Policy. If necessary when reviewing our decision, MDC will seek advice from specific expert disability groups

- 13.2 Whilst MDC strongly encourage customers to submit their complaint online at [www.mansfield.gov.uk/council-councillors-democracy/complaints-1](http://www.mansfield.gov.uk/council-councillors-democracy/complaints-1) so that issues can be handled by the relevant service area quickly. Customers can also make a complaint:

- In writing
- By telephone – 01632 463463
- By email – [mdc@mansfield.gov.uk](mailto:mdc@mansfield.gov.uk)
- In person
- Through a representative or advocate (see section 4 of the policy)

#### **14. Related Policies**

- Aids and Adaptations Policy
- Vulnerable Persons Policy
- Corporate Complaints Policy