



Service Adjustment policy

1.0 Purpose and scope

The purpose of this policy is to set our high-level position around tailoring our services to meet individual needs and respond to identifiable risks.

We are aware of the impact that housing can have on health. That is evident in many of the service requests we receive. We understand that our role as a landlord to provide good quality homes that allow our residents to live well requires a dynamic approach.

The aim of this policy is to:

- Outline how we consider 'service adjustments' - additional needs not covered by legislation, in line with best practice
- Set out how we recognise and uphold the legal housing rights of our residents, specifically how we respond to requests for a 'reasonable adjustment'
- Demonstrate transparency around the support residents can expect from us

We strive to develop a culture where staff can confidently and sensitively respond to the diverse needs of residents. This policy does not set out all the different ways in which we might tailor a service we deliver. Instead, it highlights our over-arching commitment to maintaining fairness and inclusivity in delivering services to our residents, ensuring transparency and accountability. Examples of how housing management services can be tailored are set out in relevant policies and internal guidance.

This policy applies to all households living in properties that we own or manage.

This document should be read in conjunction with our [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy](#).

2.0 Defining service adjustment

Service adjustment: a catch-all term covering both discretionary agreements and more 'formal' reasonable adjustments to adjust our service to meet the needs of a resident either on an ad hoc or routine basis.

A service adjustment need arises when a housing issue disproportionately impacts a customer due to their personal circumstance or characteristic (either protected or un-protected). As a result, we tailor our services to ensure a resident is not disadvantaged, by providing additional support or a quicker response.

Examples of **housing issues** include housing costs, property conditions, including lack of heating or hot water, safety. Examples of a **personal circumstance** include experience of homelessness, experience of domestic abuse or violence, alcohol/drug dependency, grief/bereavement, financial security, digital access or a short-term health issue or condition.

Reasonable adjustment: formal agreement with a resident protected by the Equality Act 2010 to change the way we deliver a service to remove barriers in accessing our services as a housing provider, enabling them to access the same benefits, terms or conditions as other residents.

Protected characteristics are listed under the Equality Act 2010. They include age, gender reassignment, being married or in a civil partnership, being pregnant or on maternity leave, disability, race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

Examples of **unprotected characteristics** include carer status, socioeconomic class, education, height, weight. We recognise that not every individual who is protected by the Equality Act has additional needs related to housing. Personal or health factors may have no bearing on a resident's ability to sustain their tenancy or request a service. At the same time, adjustment needs can fluctuate they can have a long-lasting impact, deteriorate over time or may only temporarily arise when an external factor renders a person vulnerable.

Identifying service adjustment needs (Recognise)

While the definition of a service adjustment need used here is situation-based, we proactively seek to prevent or mitigate any increased risk to residents with additional needs.

Through all interactions and touchpoints during a customer's residency, including at the beginning of their residency, we ask them whether there is any information about them or anyone in their household that they believe it is important that we should be aware of. This allows us to mitigate any increased risk that a housing issue may have to the person's wellbeing should it arise. Where possible, it also allows us to tailor services around these needs through practical actions or considerations (for example, knocking loudly, wearing face coverings, speaking slowly and with patience or engaging with a nominated alternative contact).

We have incorporated other proactive measures to prevent risks, such as conducting regular wellbeing checks in supported housing schemes.

Staff are also alert to any additional needs and will advocate for a quicker or adapted service where they suspect a person may benefit from this.

In specific circumstances, we will request evidence of any additional needs, usually in the context of lettings, where a transfer is required on medical grounds. Where we provide support for tenancy sustainment, for example support with a housing benefit application, we may also ask the resident to provide us with relevant information.

We recognise the important role that advocates can play in supporting residents with adjustments needs to ensure they are receiving a good service. With the resident's explicit consent, we will correspond with a family member or third party on their behalf.

We will not share any personal data with advocates or third parties if consent is not freely given, except where there are specific safeguarding concerns, as outlined in our [safeguarding policy](#).

3.0 Addressing individual needs (Respond)

Consideration of residents' needs or circumstances underpins all the services we deliver. We are clear that a person who is struggling with a housing issue can always contact us for support.

We anticipate diverse needs by completing a diversity and inclusion assessment for each housing management policy. This assessment considers the actual or potential impact a service might have on different groups and uses insight from complaints and best practice reports to highlight common issues and propose solutions. We use the outcome of these assessments to shape communication, procedures and guidance so that both staff and customers are clear about the support available before having to request it.

Specific examples of how we adapt services are provided in housing-management specific policies. As a set of general principles, we consider the following factors when determining how to tailor services:

- The impact a housing issue is having on an existing need or circumstance: to what extent a housing issue is a contributory factor to or exacerbating a residents' health condition or circumstance
- How a housing issue might be the sole cause of a service adjustment request, particularly where physical or mental health has been impacted
- How the risk to safety a housing issue might pose might increase due to a person's circumstances

We do not complete detailed support assessments with our residents; where the needs of a person are severe and complex, we work with social services and external agencies to determine what level of support might be required.

We are clear and realistic about the way in which a service can be optimised to meet the needs of a resident offering practical and tailored support options, while remaining responsive to individual requests assessed on a case-by-case basis, with consideration given to the residents' health needs, household circumstances, and any relevant housing situations.

We make every attempt to anticipate how a particular housing issue may disproportionately impact a household due to their individual circumstances. For example, where we know that a resident is over 65, we will respond to their reports of a heating or hot water failure quicker without them have to make a request for a service adjustment.

If a resident would like to nominate a person to act on their behalf in their relationship with Notting Hill Genesis, also concerning repairs, they can do so by following the process outlined here: [Authority of representation](#).

4.0 Reasonable adjustments

In addition to informing us about any additional needs, residents can make a formal request for a reasonable adjustment to their local officer.

A reasonable adjustment is a physical change to premises or a change to how we deliver a service to ensure a person with a disability is not disadvantaged due to their housing situation. A reasonable adjustment can be a one-off request or a change to how we regularly deliver a service. An adjustment can be short-term or long-term.

In considering whether a request is reasonable, consideration is given to the following:

1. Effectiveness: the adjustment should fully address the resident's need.
2. Practicality: we must be able to practically make the adjustment
3. Resources: how much staff time and how much the adjustment will cost

We have clear [procedures](#) in place that staff must follow when assessing whether a request is reasonable. Residents will receive a formal response to their request.

5.0 Record keeping and monitoring (Record)

Service adjustments

Where a resident provides us with information on the basis of it being used to inform how we deliver our services, this is recorded on their individual account and reviewed ahead of all interactions. Sensitive data, such as specific health conditions, is never shared with contractors. Instead, we provide contractors with instructions on how to tailor the service, for example, by giving the resident time to answer the door.

Residents' profile

Key information that affects all services, including language preference or communication needs, is recorded on a residents' profile, which is visible to any member of NHG staff who is interacting with the resident.

Diversity data

We are careful and concise in our record keeping, making sure that diversity data is not stored on a resident's file. As this data is used for research purposes only, it is anonymised. This includes information about disability and age, which we will also ask about in the context of service delivery. Diversity data is captured at the start of a tenancy and may be reviewed at certain points throughout the tenancy.

Monitoring

Throughout their tenancy, we regularly ask residents if there is any information that they wish to share with us, while also using our professional curiosity to proactively identify potential requirements. (See section 3).

We also rely on residents to keep us informed about any changes to the household's circumstances. We dynamically review our records once we are alert to a change in circumstances.

6.0 Heat networks

Heat networks are regulated by Ofgem, and, as a result, residents with specific support needs who are supplied through a heat network benefit from additional protections when making a heating and/or hot water service request. These protections apply regardless of whether energy charges are paid directly to the heat supplier or through us.

Residents whose energy is supplied through a heat network may request reasonable service adjustments in accordance with this policy. This includes, but is not limited to, receiving energy bills and other communications in alternative formats.

As per this policy, heat network residents requiring service adjustments will be added to our Priority Services Register (PSR) to identify residents where additional support may be required. We will promote the PSR in heat network communications to ensure residents know how to join and what services are available.

Examples of support that may be available include assistance with meter readings where required and establishing password or identification schemes to provide reassurance that any person visiting the resident's home is authorised.

During heat network outages or significant service interruptions, we will use the PSR to identify residents who require additional support such as priority communication, temporary heating or prioritised response times.

7.0 Complaints

Complaints about discrimination or failure to recognise health needs or personal circumstances are responded to in line with our [complaints policy](#), as well as our code of conduct. If appropriate, the disciplinary policy will also be followed and working within the requirements of data protection, the complainant will be given a comprehensive response as to the outcome of the complaint.

8.0 Reference

The following legislation and regulatory standards are relevant to this policy:

- Under the Equality Act 2010, NHG has a duty to “advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it”
- The Social Housing Regulator's Transparency, Accountability and Information Standard requires landlords to consider the diverse needs of their residents.
- The Housing Ombudsman Complaints Handling Code 2024 states that landlords must consider whether a resident is vulnerable or at risk when responding to complaints.
- Article 8 of the Human Rights Act an individual has a right to privacy, or the right to ‘physical or psychological integrity’.

The following procedures are relevant to this policy:

- [Service adjustment procedure](#)
- [Reasonable adjustment procedure](#)

- [Communication and Translation procedure](#)

Document control

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Approval date	20 August 2026
Effective date	20 August 2026
Approved by	Chief Customer Officer

Version Control

Date	Amendment	Version
13/06/2024	New policy published.	1.0
21/10/2024	Statement added around authority of representation.	1.1
09/09/2025	Terminology throughout policy changed from 'vulnerability' to 'service adjustments'	1.2
20/08/2026	Definition of service adjustment amended; section on heat network customers added	1.3