



**berneslai**  
homes

## Reasonable Adjustments Policy

## Document Control

<b>Title</b>	Reasonable Adjustments Policy
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<b>Subject</b>	Reasonable Adjustments across our services
<b>Information Asset Owner</b>	Sarah Barnes, Head of Customer Services
<b>Approved by</b>	Executive Management Team
<b>Approved date</b>	June 2024
<b>Review date</b>	June 2027
<b>Review responsibility</b>	Jill Holt Organisational Development Manager
<b>Applicable to</b>	Tenants, Residents, Housing Applicants, and any other customers of Berneslai Homes
<b>DPIA Completion Date</b>	NA
<b>EIA Completion Date</b>	TBC
<b>Regulatory Framework</b>	Transparency, Influence and Accountability Consumer Standard
<b>Legislative Duties</b>	The Equality Act 2010

## Revision History

Date	Version	Author	Comments
06.06.24	0.1	Jill Holt Organisational Development Manager	Draft Policy
20.06.2024	0.2	Jill Holt Organisational Development Manager	2 <sup>nd</sup> draft
24.06.2024	1.0	Jill Holt Organisational Development Manager	Approved by Dave Fullen on behalf of EMT

## Consultation and Distribution

Type	Details
<b>Consultation</b>	Tenants- 17.06.06
<b>Distribution</b>	Staff and customers

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## 1. Introduction

Berneslai Homes is an arms-length management organisation (ALMO) responsible for managing around 18,000 homes on behalf of Barnsley Council.

We support tenants and work together to create thriving communities.

We're responsible for:

- Managing the waiting list and letting vacant homes
- Collecting rent and service charges
- Repairs, maintenance, and improvements in homes and on estates
- Leaseholder Management
- Supporting tenants to manage their tenancies
- Supporting tenants with money issues, jobs, training, and skills, and much more
- Keeping our estates clean and tidy and dealing with anti-social behaviour (ASB)
- Engaging with and listening to customers and communities
- Working with Barnsley Council to build and acquire new homes

As a local authority social housing provider, we have an obligation to deliver services that meet the requirements of the Regulator of Social Housing's Consumer Standards.

Everyone who works for Berneslai Homes embraces our '3 Cs' values and applies them to their role:

Customer first - you'll be at the heart of all we do.

Can do attitude - we'll make change happen, fix problems, and adapt to achieve.

Curious - we'll look beyond face value to get things right.

## 2. Policy Aim

Everyone who works for Berneslai Homes embraces our 3 Cs values, we have the customer at the heart of everything we do, and we embrace diversity and inclusion.

This means that we recognise that where necessary, we will make reasonable adjustments if it is required for people to access and use to our services.

This document gives more details on our approach to reasonable adjustments.

## 3. The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 (the Act) provides a legislative framework to protect the rights of individuals and to advance equality of opportunity for all. Berneslai Homes commits to comply with the provisions for public bodies under the Act.

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'.

## 4. What is a reasonable adjustment?

A 'reasonable adjustment' is a legal term defined by the Equality Act 2010: 'To make an adjustment to make a physical change to premises or to change work practices to avoid or correct the disadvantage to a person with a disability'.

In practice a reasonable adjustment involves making a change to the way that we usually do things to ensure that we take account of individual needs.

## 5. When Will We Make a Reasonable Adjustment?

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:

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

In practice many reasonable adjustments involve little or no cost or additional resourcing requirements and are easy to implement.

In changing policies, criteria or practices we are not required to change the basic nature of the service we offer but where there are lessons to be learnt about how we strengthen our approach to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, we will commit to embedding these where practically possible.

In the circumstances where we are unable to make a reasonable adjustment, we will work together with the customer to find the most appropriate alternative solution for them.

## 6. Types of Reasonable Adjustments Offered

There is no defined list of reasonable adjustments as the adjustment required will depend on the needs of the individual. We will discuss the requirements with the person concerned and will seek to reach an agreement on what may be reasonable in the circumstances. We will not make assumptions about whether a person requires any reasonable adjustments, or about what they should be, and will instead have sensitive and confidential discussions when required.

Below provides a summary of the types of adjustments that may be reasonable. This list is not exhaustive, and staff are empowered to use their discretion to find an appropriate solution.

- Provision of information in appropriate alternative formats (eg large print, Braille, coloured paper, Easy Read etc)
- Extension of time limits (where it is lawful and practical to do so)
- Using the customers preferred type of communication (eg email or letter)
- Communication through a representative or intermediary
- Rest or comfort breaks in meetings.
- Carrying out small repairs that would ordinarily be a resident's responsibility but may be challenging for an individual to complete, due to their circumstances. This could include replacing batteries in a smoke alarm, for example.

## 7. Requesting a Reasonable Adjustment

Customers can request a reasonable adjustment at any time when contacting us. It is both encouraged and recommended that we should be made aware of the request as soon as possible so that we may deal with it in the most effective way. It is not necessary to put the request in writing but there may be times where we ask for further information or supporting evidence to action a request.

Staff will, where appropriate, proactively discuss and ask whether any reasonable adjustments are required. This may be over the phone, through letter or e-mail or during an in-person visit.

We will treat all conversations with sensitivity, confidentiality and on a case-by-case basis. We will listen to a customer's needs and make every effort to meet requests for adjustments when it's reasonable to do so. Where we are unable to meet a request, we will explain why.

We will record any reasonable adjustment on our tenancy records.

## 8. Vulnerable Tenants

If a customer is found to have vulnerabilities, requests and considerations for reasonable adjustments will also take the Vulnerability Policy into consideration.

## 9. Financial Considerations

In deciding whether it is reasonable to approve a reasonable adjustment, staff will consider the value for money impact (such as resources or effective use of budgets) as a criterion to decide whether it's appropriate to approve the adjustment.

Adjustments that are costly and have limited impact on the customer and the situation that requires support, are unlikely to be approved. In the circumstances where we are unable to make a reasonable adjustment, we will work together with the customer to find the most appropriate alternative solution for them.

## 10. Monitoring

The effectiveness of this policy will be reviewed through feedback from the individuals via any surveys completed, complaints and from colleagues delivering services. Feedback from these sources, as well as our resident panel, will be used to shape and steer the next review of the policy.

We include reasonable adjustments in our customer profile reports.



## 11. Reviews and Complaints

### Reviews

A review may be request of any decision within 21 days of being informed of the decision. Contact us through the usual channels to discuss any decisions we make about reasonable adjustments to our services so we can review our decision. The review will be undertaken by who is senior to the person who made the original decision and who has not previously been involved in the case. We will complete the review within 6 weeks of the review being requested and this includes informing the applicant of the outcome of the review.

### Complaints

Where an indivial or their representative believes we have failed to follow the terms of this policy they can make a complaint. Complaints will be handled through the Complaints Policy.

A complaint can be made in any of the following ways:

- By emailing us at [customerservices@berneslaihomes.co.uk](mailto:customerservices@berneslaihomes.co.uk)
- By visiting our website and completing an online form
- By telephone on 01226 787878.
- In writing to Customer Services, Berneslai Homes, PO BOX 627, Barnsley, S70 9FZ.
- In person to Berneslai Homes staff.
- By a third party or representative (e.g. family, friends, Local Authority Councillor, MP, Board Member, Mayor's office). (We deal with normal day to day enquiries from councillors through a separate procedure but we clarify with the resident and/or councillor whether the contact is an enquiry or a complaint).
- Via social media (to maintain the resident's privacy we will ask for details to be sent in private messages).

## 12. Regulatory Framework

This policy meets our regulatory duties under the Transparency, Influence and Accountability Consumer Standard.

The Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard requires landlords to be open with tenants and treat them with fairness and respect so they can access services, raise concerns when necessary, influence decision making and hold their landlord to account.

This standard means that Berneslai Homes do the following:

- Ensure that communication with and information for tenants is clear, accessible, relevant, timely and appropriate to the diverse needs of tenants.
- Ensure that landlord services are accessible, and that the accessibility is publicised to tenants. This includes supporting tenants and prospective tenants to use online landlord services if required.
- Allow tenants and prospective tenants to be supported by a representative or advocate in interactions about landlord services.

This policy also fulfils our duty under The Equality Act 2010 to protect the rights of individuals, to advance equality of opportunity for all and make reasonable adjustments 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
- a physical feature puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with persons who are not disabled
- 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.

## 13. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

We will ensure equal and fair access to our services; we will do this by taking into consideration the individual needs of our tenants, their family or other persons living with them. We will ensure that individual needs are considered and make reasonable adjustments where necessary.

We will treat people fairly and with dignity and respect.

All staff are trained in Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion to embed understanding about where we may need to adapt normal policies, procedures, and ways of working to accommodate resident's individual needs. This is mandatory training which is monitored by our Organisational Development Team

Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy meets our duties under the Equality Act 2010 (the Act) is about the following:

Equality - Of access to opportunities.

Diversity – Recognise and celebrate differences.

Inclusion – Belonging and acceptance, feeling valued for who you are.

## 14. Related Documents

The following documents are to be used in conjunction with this policy:

- Customer Excellence Strategy
- [Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy 2022-25](#)