

Home Assist

Aids and adaptations

Enabling independent living

Helping make everyday life easier for you in your home

karbonhomes.co.uk/homeassist

Adapting your Home

At Karbon Homes, we give you the strong foundations you need to crack on with life.

As part of this, we provide and help customers access a wide range of living aids to assist you with everyday tasks, such as climbing the stairs or having a bath.

In this leaflet we'll explain what an adaptation is, the different types that are available and give you everything you need to know to make an application.

The purpose of an adaptation

An adaptation to your home helps restore or enable independent living, privacy, confidence and dignity for individuals and their families.

What is an adaptation?

Aids and adaptations are special fixtures and fittings which are designed to:

- **Improve access to your home**
- **Improve your mobility in and around your home**
- **Help you with your day-to-day living**

This could involve fitting a handrail to help climb the stairs, installing a stair lift or replacing a bath with a walk-in shower.

What are minor adaptations?

Minor adaptations are small changes to your home that help you with your everyday life.

Minor adaptations include grab rails, banister rails and lever taps and fitting of key safes.

A housing officer or one of our contractors may arrange an appointment with you to assess the adaptation you need. In most cases we will be able to quickly approve and begin the work.

We aim to supply and fit certain minor adaptations within five working days of the adaptation being approved and the funding secured. This may take longer depending on the type of adaptation or the need for an assessment by an occupational therapist. Regardless, we will keep you informed throughout the process.

What are major adaptations?

Major adaptations are larger changes to your home that help you live independently. These could include wheelchair ramps, level access showers and stair lifts.

If you think you need a major adaptation you will be referred to your local authority for an occupational therapist (OT) assessment.

Depending upon your income, you may qualify for a Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) from your local authority. Your OT will help you apply for this.

Who can use the service?

Anyone who is registered disabled or has a medical or age related need. The service is available for customers of all ages, including children and young people.

Once your assessment has been processed, we will work with you and your OT to identify the best options for you.

Examples of minor adaptations

There are a variety of minor adaptations that we can install for our residents. We will treat every request on an individual basis to find a solution that suits you.

Grab Rails

- Available for both internal and external use
- Available in various colours and sizes
- Available to fit in emergency timescale
- Can be ordered without an OT assessment

Floor to floor handrails

- Available in various sizes as made to measure
- Available in various colours
- Can be ordered without an OT assessment

Door Entry System

- An OT assessment is required

Wall to Floor Rails

- Available for both internal and external use
- Available in various sizes
- Available in various colours
- Can be ordered without an OT assessment

Key Safe

- A four digit number needs to be supplied before fitting
- The code should avoid including the same number twice
- Can be ordered without an OT assessment
- Available to fit in emergency timescale

Drop Down Bar/Rail

- Available in various colours
- Can be ordered without an OT assessment

Examples of Major Adaptations

- **Through-floor lift** ▲
- **Stair lift** ▲
- **Level access shower**
- **Adapted kitchens**
- **Ramped access** ▶

What is an Occupational Therapist?

Occupational therapists (OT) are qualified healthcare professionals who are experts in assessing your physical needs. They specialise in helping people manage their daily life, helping them to live independently. An OT can make adaptation suggestions to help make your life easier in your home.

OTs work for your local authority, so who you see depends on where you live. If you would like to see an OT, you can contact your local authority, email us at **adaptations@karbonhomes.co.uk** or call Karbon Homes on **0808 164 0111** – ask to speak to our adaptations team – and we can help put you in touch.

What will the Occupational Therapist do at my assessment?

The OT will arrange a visit with you at home to carry out an assessment. They will discuss all the possible solutions to your problem. In some instances, certain equipment can be more appropriate to your needs than making an adaptation to your home.

If adaptations are the best solution, your OT will discuss in detail how these can be arranged. Your adaptation request may be referred to us or you may need to apply for a Disabled Facilities Grant from your local authority. Whatever you need to do, Karbon Homes and your OT will be there to help.

In extreme cases where your home is ill-suited to your needs, your OT may suggest that the best solution is to move. We'll look at every possible option available to best meet your long-term needs.

What is a Disabled Facilities Grant?

You may be entitled to a Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) from the county council to pay for your adaptation.

Whether you are eligible for a DFG depends on your needs. A grant will only be approved if your needs have been confirmed by an OT and they believe that adaptations to your home are necessary, appropriate, reasonable and practicable.

This will be means-tested so you may have to pay towards the cost, depending on your financial situation. If you can't get a DFG, there are some charities that may be able to help you and your OT should be able to put you in contact with them.

Means testing will apply to DFG unless the application is for a disabled child or young person under the age of 19.

This DFG information is only a summary. Your OT will be able to answer any questions and provide more in-depth information.

Disabled Facilities Grant – Landlords Permission

As part of the DFG application process, we need to grant permission for the adaptation works to commence within our property, your home.

The process involves the Local Authority Home Improvement Team contacting us directly to provide information about your proposed adaptations and the necessary forms to be completed.

Permission is usually granted within five working days for adaptation types that can be easily removed e.g., Stair lifts, modular ramps, ceiling track hoists and wash and dry toilets.

Permission is also automatically granted within five working days for bathroom adaptations such as an over bath shower or wet room install within Karbon bungalows.

Before we can grant permission for more permanent adaptations within our general needs properties we will need to look into the following:

- Do we have alternative housing available close by to your current home which would better meet your needs
- The effect the adaptation works will have on the ability to re-let the accommodation in the future

What happens if I'm refused an adaptation?

On the occasion(s) where we must refuse your application, you have the right to appeal against our decision. However, we'll always explain how and why we reached the decision and agree an alternative solution with you (for example, we might be able to move you to a more suitable home). If you still want to appeal, we'll review your application and get back to you within 10 working days.

Frequently asked questions

What is an aids equipment loan service?

Some care trusts provide equipment to help with health and social needs through their Community Equipment Service.

The service provides equipment to allow people to live as independently as possible in their own home. The equipment provided is loaned and should be returned when it is no longer required. There is no charge for the service.

Examples of loan equipment could include walking, kitchen, bathing and toileting aids

The service only provides equipment when a health or social care professional has confirmed it is needed. Many different people can order equipment on your behalf, including care managers, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, specialist social workers, district nurses and health visitors. For more information about loan equipment services, please contact your local authority.

We'll occasionally pilot schemes that provide small aids where funding is available.

Can Karbon Homes help with my mobility scooter?

Unfortunately, we are usually unable to provide adaptations that assist mobility scooters such as ramps, paths or sheds.

Storing and charging mobility scooters is usually our residents' responsibility, but for health and safety reasons we recommend storing them outside of the house, preferably in a shed with a power supply.

What about leaseholders?

If you live in one of our leasehold or shared ownership properties, applications for adaptations follow the same procedure as our rented properties. Leaseholders will however be asked to pay for the adaptation, in line with the terms of the lease.

Other Options and Important Information

Moving Home

In some cases, the adaptation you require may prove unsuitable for the type of property you live in. The size, construction, or location of your property could make the installation of aids and adaptations difficult. If a lot of adaptations are required for your property, you could be better served by moving into a different home.

We will look at every possible option available to you so we can help meet your long-term needs. This may, for example, involve moving to a more suitable property.

Planned Works

If your property is subject to improvements via our Planned Works Programme, we can potentially provide an adaptation once we've received an OT's referral.

Your planned works customer liaison officer will be able to discuss this with you before your planned works commence.

Adaptation Works

Any work undertaken is always subject to our written authorisation. Please do not modify your home or arrange DFG funding without our written permission.

Where necessary, all appropriate planning permission and building regulations must be obtained and a copy must be sent to Karbon Homes.

Adaptation Recycling

If you have a fitted stair lift or ramp that you no longer require, please call our customer service number on **0808 164 0111**. We may be able to remove and recycle these adaptations.

Claiming VAT back on adaptations

When we fund adaptations in our properties, our suppliers are able to - where an adaptation meets a certain criteria - claim 5% or zero rated VAT. In order to comply with the HMRC regulations, we may request that you sign a declaration form confirming that you are chronically sick or living with a disability.

If you're disabled, you'll generally have to pay VAT on the things you buy. However, VAT relief is available on a limited range of goods and services for disabled people. For further information please contact HMRC direct or check out their information on the HMRC website.

How can I find out more about the service?

For more information please email us at **adaptations@karbonhomes.co.uk** or contact us on **0808 164 0111** and ask to speak to the Adaptations Team.

We'll be able to give you any information you need to make the right decision for you.

Want to make a referral?

We can also help with referrals from family and healthcare professionals.

Just visit **www.karbonhomes.co.uk/homeassist** and complete our referral form.