

Adaptations

An overview of the current adaptations provision within Barking and Dagenham

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Appendix A

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Summary

- The following slides provide an overview of the current status of the adaptation provision within Barking and Dagenham. This will include council resident and private ownership adaptations.
- The report aims to explain:
 - A data overview of the current situation relating to adaptations
 - The process in which assessments are made and how decisions are reached with regards to adaptations
 - The client journey within the system
 - An overview of how funding is allocated and spent
 - The current issues within the system to providing clients their assessed adaptation requirement
 - How Covid-19 and other factors have impacted deliverables
 - The projects underway within Housing and Regeneration which support those requiring an adaptation of change of residence
 - How we are making the most of our existing housing stock

Assessments for adaptation

- Adaptations to a resident's home must be preceded by an assessment by an Occupational Therapist (OT).
- Depending on a client's circumstances, OT's will strive to meet a client's needs through the least impactful or resource intensive methods first. For example, a bath raiser instead of a level access shower
 - Through this clinical reasoning, the OT service avoid unnecessary spend to the Council.
- There is increased demand for assessments for adaptations which has led to the service having to outsource a number of assessments to external OT providers.
 - 2020/21 – 177 cases were outsourced at an average cost of £147 per assessment (£26,000)
 - 2021/22 (to date) – 150 cases outsourced to an alternative provider who charges £160 per assessment (£25,000).
 - Many agencies are declining work as they are unable to recruit OT's to complete assessments.
- Due to the increased demand, wait times for assessments have risen slightly to 12-16 weeks. Compared to our neighbouring boroughs, this is a short wait time.
- The OT service must prioritise its work, and adaptations are a 'Priority 2'.
 - Priority 1 includes: Moving and Handling (double handed care), Severe behavioural cases, Hospital discharges, significant toileting needs, Safeguarding.
 - Priority 2 includes: Adaptations, change in circumstance for existing clients, moving and handling (single handed care), key safes.
- The priority list is essential to ensure that those most at risk remain safe.

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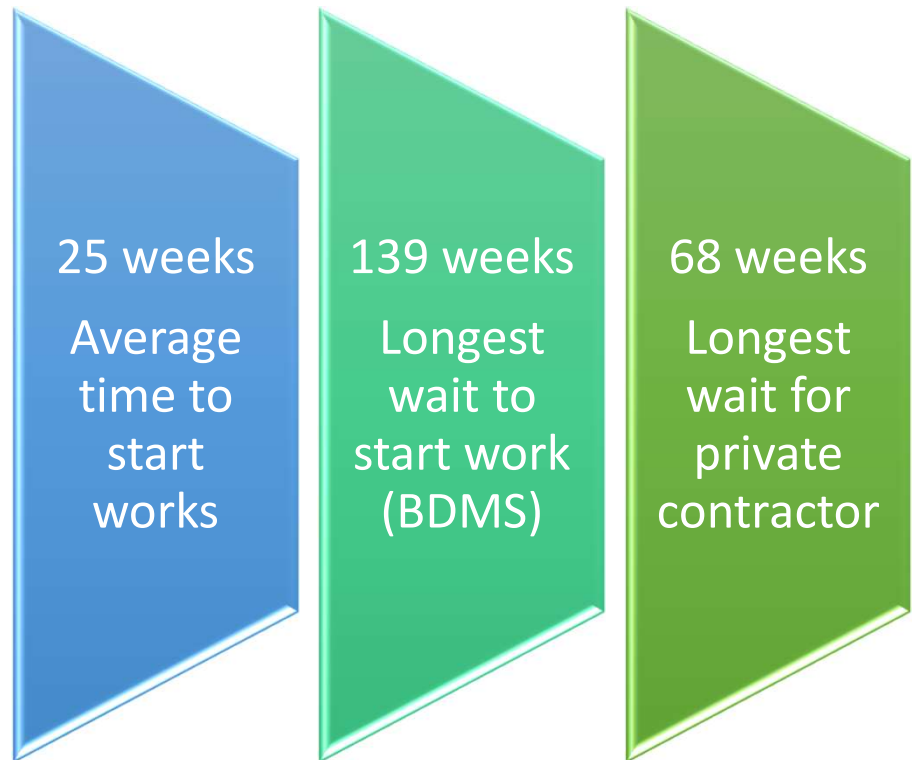
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Assessment Process

- Older residents and those with a disability can receive a social care assessment. Within this assessment, if it is felt the client could gain an increased level of independence by altering something within their home, or providing equipment, a referral for an Occupational Therapy assessment is made.
- The Occupational Therapist (OT) assesses the client's ability to carry out activities of daily living and makes recommendations; one of which may be an adaptation to their property.
- The OT will make recommendations for the adaptations which will be sent to the Equipment and Adaptations (E&A) Service.

Data overview: Council Tenants

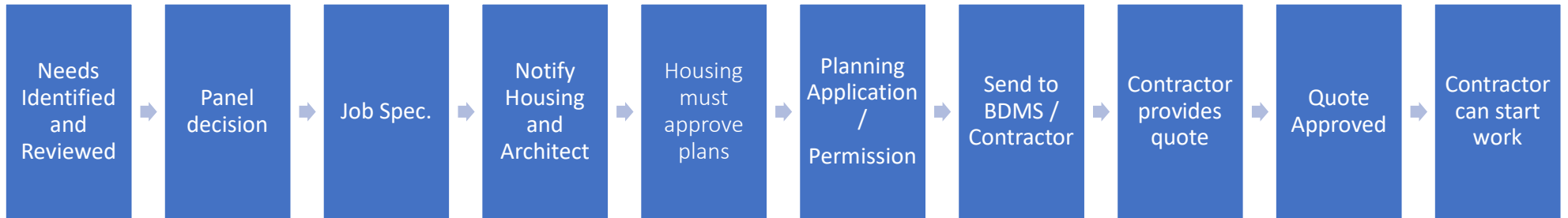
- There are a total of 265 clients with either a completed adaptation since April 2020 or in the adaptation process. Of these:
 - 109 work has not started (41%)
 - 156 work has started (59%)
 - Of those started 113 have completed (72%)
 - 43 (28%) have not completed
- The average age of the client group is 61.



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Adaptations – Process overview



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Application Process Overview

- Submitted OT assessments are reviewed by the Major Adaptations Panel, which consists of the OT, the E&A Manager and the Head of Service for Social Care.
- Whether the client is a council or private tenant must be determined to understand if the work is completed via the council budget or Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG).
- Clients require a means assessment against the recommended adaptation.
- Where client contributions exceed the cost of the recommended adaptation, the client is deemed to have sufficient funds to pay for the work privately, and the case is closed to the service.
- Successful DFG applications are processed via the Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) where independent contractors can bid for the jobs, or the client appoints their own contractor.
- Council tenant applications are given to BDMS to complete, as the named provider for the Council
- Clients are able to 'top up' on the cost of the OT recommendation if they wish to make additional changes. These changes must be approved by an OT.

Application – additional requirements

- Detailed specifications for the adaptation based on the OT's recommendations must be created
- Housing and the Council's architects are involved in the progression of planning application and approval
- There are multiple stages and delays can occur at any of these points
- The E&A Team manage all applications throughout the process

Funding and Expenditure

- All council adaptations are given to BDMS to complete the works. This is an average annual budget of £1M (with £900K roll over from last year)
- Average anticipated annual spend for DFG is £1.2M each year on adaptations (currently a roll over included due to Covid-19)
- Any Council underspend is rolled forward to the next financial year.

How we can improve

Covid-19

- My Place (BDMS) stopped all non-urgent work between March – September 2020. This led to a delay in adaptations during the pandemic
- Private works were also impacted, but jobs could be moved to different contractors to complete
- Clients chose to delay works due to isolating

DFG issues (Causing underspend)

- Client contributions exceeding cost of adaptation means
- Recommended adaptation exceeds grants threshold (£30k), and SU/housing association unable to fund additional spend
- Private Landlords not giving permission to complete work on their properties

Other issues

- Staffing issues – community OT's are difficult to recruit nationally and the OT service has been under capacity for several months
- Clients cancelling application process
- Client declining financial assessment

Contractual issues

- Until April 2021, all council adaptations had to be given to BDMS, there are currently 92 adaptations given to BDMS before Apr 21 which are yet to complete
- From April 2021, council adaptations have been placed on the DPS to support BDMS to complete outstanding adaptations.

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What we are doing to improve

Covid-19

- BDMS have requested no further work be given to them until they are able to reduce/remove their backlog of work.
- All adaptations are being processed via the DPS and given to contractors with capacity to complete works efficiently.
- Systematically working through the backlog of cases to ensure works start as soon as possible

DFG issues (Causing underspend)

- We explain at the outset that adaptations are means tested and explain fully to residents what this means
- We work with private landlords to explain the works in detail to encourage their participation in the process.

Other issues

- We continue to advertise for OT's, we have recruited a Consultant OT who will help manage the staff and the workflow.
- We are exploring short and long-term methods to increase capacity, ensuring we have the correct skill mix within the OT service
- Work with clients to understand the assessment process and the potential requirement to partially or fully fund their adaptation (depending on their financial situation)

Contractual issues

- The use of the DPS system for the bidding and allocation of work has helped shift some to the backlog of adaptations.

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How can we ensure that we are making the best use of our housing stock?

- **187 wheelchair accessible homes** are being built by Be First as part of their current programme, which will ultimately be managed by Reside. We are working closely with Reside and Care and Support to plan the allocation of these units and complete any enabling adaptations required for specific households, and have adjusted the approach of pre-allocating adapted new build homes much earlier in the process.
- **Comprehensive review is taking place of those on the Housing Register** who have an adapted housing need, to ensure that we have up to date information on their exact needs to allow us to make the best use of our stock. We are ensuring we work in a relational way with households, understanding their wider circumstances and preferences to help identify the best housing options.
- **The first projects to extend existing HRA homes** are underway – which will extend three homes to two 5 beds and one 4 bed. The intention is to make this a core part of the Housing Revenue Account investment programme.
- **50 new bungalows** to be completed in the next four years – we have identified an initial set of priority sites that will provide around 30 bungalows, and are reviewing further sites to provide at least another 20.
- **New homes for people with Autistic Spectrum Disorder** were approved by Cabinet in November 2020 for Brocklebank, which we think will be the first of their kind in the country. The architects are now progressing the designs, and we will involve service users and their families in the more detailed design process.

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New Build programme & specialist homes

Adapted homes – new build

There are **242 wheelchair accessible adaptable homes** forecasted in the remaining Be First programme to 2024, which will be managed by Reside. This represents around 10% of the new build homes. The tenure mix of adaptable units in the pipeline to 2024 is shown in the table on the right. Please note these are the major housing schemes – other smaller and more specialist schemes will also come forward.

The adaptable units are a mix of tenures. This is weighted towards affordable rent and London affordable rent (LAR) levels. Affordable rent means between **65% - 80% of market rent**, and **LAR is 50%** of market rent (similar to standard Social Housing).

LAR lettings are managed through Community Solutions, designed for households on our waiting list. Affordable rented units are also recommended to any households on the waiting list who are able to afford this rent level.

A similar number will be delivered as part of future Be First programmes beyond 2024, so through Be First we now have a steady supply of Reside wheelchair accessible units.

Be First schemes due to complete in 2021/22			
Scheme	Completion target	No. of wheelchair accessible units	Total no of units
Sebastian Court	Oct 21	10	95
Melish & Sugden	Sep 22	2	19
200 Becontree	Oct 21	2	19
Sacred Heart	Oct 21	3	29
Gascoigne East 2 Block C	Jan 22	5	52
Crown House	April 2022	17	169

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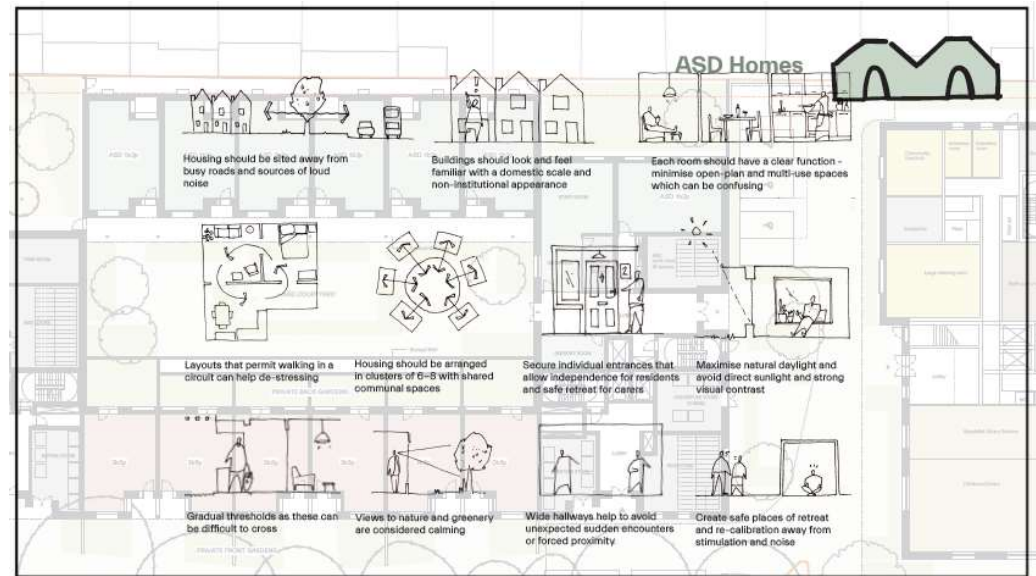
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New Build - Brocklebank

In November 2020, Cabinet approved the redevelopment of Brocklebank Lodge. This will include 16 homes for people with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD). We think this will be the first development of its kind in the country.

As well as providing purpose-built new homes that are designed to meet the needs of people with ASD, the development will enable significant savings once the new homes are built (around £1.1m), which are reflected in the Disabilities Improvement Programme.

The architects are taking the needs of people with ASD into account in the initial design of Brocklebank Lodge. We will involve service users and their families in the more detailed design process.



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New Build - Bungalows

- We are bringing forward a number of small sites (mostly former or current garage sites) for development to meet specific housing needs. Be First will shortly begin a programme of demolishing garages that are no longer in use.
- Bungalows will help to meet the housing needs of older residents who need adaptations. The bungalows will be designed to be wheelchair accessible, and the design process will take into account other adaptation needs.
- As well as being a good option to meet the housing needs of older people, new bungalows will help with efforts to enable tenants to downsize, freeing up larger homes for families.



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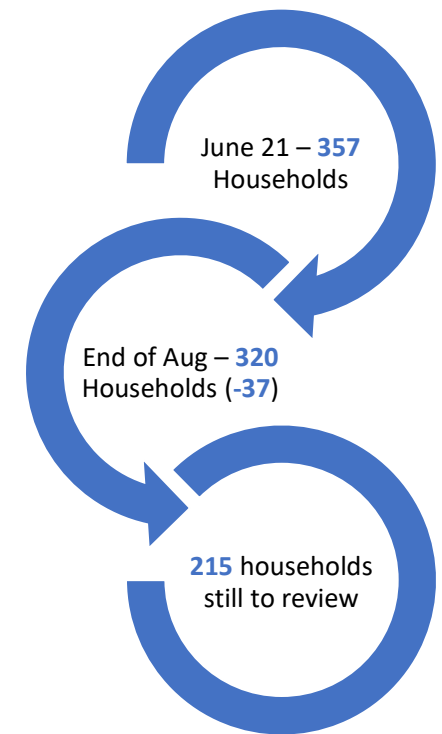
How we use our existing housing stock

A new approach to lettings – Review of the Housing Register

We are also ensuring that we make the best use of our adapted homes. Community Solutions with input from Care & Support are carrying out a comprehensive review of households on our Housing Register who have an adapted housing need, to ensure that we have up to date information about their requirements.

There are 320 households currently registered, 55 applications are for older people's adapted housing. The review has already reduced the number registered and is on-going.

These households have also been cross checked with those known to Care & Support. 42 households on the register have been identified as known to Social Care and are deemed a priority in terms of accommodation.



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How we use our existing housing stock

A new approach to lettings - Partially adapted property pilot

- We have also been looking at a different way of **letting adapted properties** – during the review of the adapted Housing Register we have been seeking to identify homes that might not meet all of a household's needs but would significantly improve their life and reduce hardship compared to their current accommodation. Types of properties included:
 - Partially adapted Social Housing with the agreement if they wish to remain on the register
 - Improved offer within the Private Rented Sector for those currently living in this tenure type
 - Temporary Accommodation Stock
- A pilot to test this concept ran between January-June 2021, and during this time a further 19 households successfully moved. The learning from the pilot has been taken away and this approach has formed part of the review of the remaining cases on the housing register.

A new approach to lettings - Partially adapted property pilot

Adapted offers (pre-pilot) between July – Dec 2020 were as follows:

Tenure Type	Total Offers Made	Accepted	Declined
Social Housing Fully Adapted	108	56	52

A breakdown of all adapted offers during pilot (January-June 2021) were:

Tenure Type	Total Offers Made	Accepted	Declined
Social Housing Fully Adapted	110	74	36
Social Housing Partially Adapted	26	19	7
Alternative Privately Rented	2	0	2
Temporary Accommodation	6	4	2

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Trailing a new approach to lettings - case studies

Case 1

Family living in a mobile home on the Eastbrookend travellers site. Mother and 3 children (2 of the children also had additional needs). Registered for a 4 bedroom wheelchair adapted property. Offered a temporary accommodation Modula housing unit as an interim offer until a permanent Council property can be located. This was accepted and the care package in place for the family has now been lowered.

Case 2

Council tenants living in a house. One child is a wheelchair user so in need of an alternative 3 bed wheelchair adapted property. Parents are carrying the child up the stairs and school have also raised concerns. Offer was made of a temporary 3 bed wheelchair adapted property & a separate offer of a partially adapted property with a stairlift to assist with getting him up the stairs. Both offers made with the right to stay on the register for the long term permanent offer, but offer was refused.

The review of the Housing Register and learning from this pilot will give us a clearer picture of needs in the Borough in relation to adapted stock; however, this has also showed that whilst we undoubtedly need to increase the level of certain types of adapted stock, there are challenges caused by the number of offers made that are refused (47 between January – June 2021). A joint approach from Housing and Social Care about the expectations and availability of stock is being utilised to manage the approach to this, to improve outcomes.

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