



Bridgewater Housing Association Policy	
Policy name	Designated Disabled Parking Policy
Policy category	Housing Services (HS)
Policy number	HS04
Date adopted	April 2017
Last review	N/A
This review	August 2024
Next review	April 2027
Equalities impact assessment required	No
Links to other documents	HS05 Estate Management Policy HS16 Customer Engagement Strategy
Consultation	Yes

This policy is available to the public on the Association's website. Copies are also available on request and free of charge from the Association. This policy can also be provided in large print, braille, audio or other non-written format and in a variety of languages, on request.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Association owns and maintains 256 communal car parks, with the number of spaces ranging from 2 to 30. These parking areas are located across all of our estates. Our new build developments at Rashielee South, Clayson House and Rashielee North all have parking provision for disabled persons, however our sheltered and general needs properties in the main do not.
- 1.2 Although car parking spaces are widely available throughout Bargarran, North Barr and Park Mains, demand is outstretching supply as more and more households own more than one car. As parking spaces become progressively scarce, this has a particularly negative impact on disabled persons.

2. PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

- 2.1 The purpose of this policy is to set out the Association's approach to dealing with requests to designate a space for disabled parking, and to provide a context within which the Association can approve a request for a designated space for disabled parking. Whilst there is no statutory obligation on the Association to agree to such requests, the Association nevertheless wishes to be able, within reason and to comply with its equality obligations, to make it easier for disabled drivers to access their homes, regardless of whether they are tenants of the Association or Factored Owners or. Therefore this policy will apply to tenants and owners.
- 2.2 The policy extends to disabled persons within the household, such as spouses, partners and children. The disabled person does not need to own a car or be able to drive one.
- 2.3 Generally no more than 25% of available spaces in each parking area will be designated specifically for disabled parking. It is at the sole discretion of the Housing Services Manager to determine whether exceptional circumstances exist to exceed this limit.

3.0 LEGAL & REGULATORY CONTEXT

- 3.1 This Policy is based on good practice and complies with many of the principles outlined in the Scottish Social Housing Charter:

Charter Outcome 1: Equalities - Social landlords perform all aspects of their housing services so that: every tenant and other customer has their individual needs recognised, is treated fairly and with respect, and receives fair access to housing and housing services.

Charter Outcome 2: Communication - Social landlords manage their businesses so that: tenants and other customers find it easy to communicate with their landlord and get the information they need about their landlord, how and why it makes decisions and the services it provides.

Charter Outcome 3: Participation - Social landlords manage their businesses so that: tenants and other customers find it easy to participate in and influence their landlord's decisions at a level they feel comfortable with.

4. ELIGIBILITY

- 4.1 The Association requires to establish a consistent set of criteria which will provide staff with guidance in relation to approving or refusing requests for designated disabled parking.
- 4.2 It is acknowledged that the disabled person may be the driver or a passenger in the vehicle, however the person making the application must be able to satisfy the criteria below.
- 4.3 The provision of spaces specifically designated for disabled parking will only be considered where:
- applicants are the driver of the vehicle and live in a property either owned or factored by the Association;
 - applicants have been unable to park close to their homes and have had to park and walk/walk the disabled person home;
 - there has not been a safe “dropping off” point for the disabled passenger who may be at risk if left unattended;
 - applicants do not have a private driveway;
 - applicants do not have access to a garage;
 - applicants (or a disabled person in the household) have a valid Blue Badge. (The Blue Badge Scheme is a service for people with severe mobility problems and allows badge holders to park close to where they need to go. Renfrewshire Council issue Blue Badges to people living in Renfrewshire who qualify for the scheme.);
 - applicants have valid insurance;
 - applicants hold an appropriate driving licence and are the driver of a personally owned or leased car;
 - applicants have limited scope for the provision of off street parking facilities in the immediate environment to their permanent address.
- 4.4 The Association can only allocate parking spaces within areas which the Association owns and which have not been adopted by the local authority for the purposes of maintenance. Applications for parking on roads which have been adopted must be referred to Renfrewshire Council.

5. APPLICATION PROCESS

- 5.1 Applicants will be invited to complete an application form (Appendix 1) prior to a decision being reached and should supply a copy of their blue badge and proof of valid motor insurance and driving license.
- 5.2 A site visit will be carried out to determine the location for the disabled parking space, if approved.
- 5.3 Where a designated parking space is approved, a “disabled” symbol will be painted on the surface by the Association’s contractor. This will be repainted periodically as a result of reasonable wear and tear. The disabled bay will not be tied to one house, and will be available to anyone displaying a blue badge.

- 5.4 Neighbour Notifications will be issued to local residents for all successful applications. This will confirm that the Association will designate a space for disabled parking and neighbours will be notified within 14 days of a decision being taken. The purpose of the notification is not to invite objections or comments on the parking space – it is solely for information purposes.
- 5.5 The use of designated spaces in unadopted areas is not, however, enforceable by law and relies solely on the good will of neighbours to respect the individual's disability. Applicants and adjacent owners will be notified of this.

6. STAFF DELEGATION

- 6.1 The Housing Officers will have delegated authority to process and approve applications. Where a decision has been taken to refuse a designated space for disabled parking. The applicant will be provided with reasons. Appeals against decisions to refuse a designated space for disabled parking will be referred to the Housing Services Manager. The Housing Services Manager is the final decision maker in relation to designated parking spaces and has delegated authority to make appropriate decisions.

7. CHANGE OF CIRCUMSTANCES

- 7.1 The designated parking space may only be used for its intended purpose, therefore should a change of circumstances occur, for example, the disabled person no longer resides in the household or misuse occurs, the Association may revert the space to its original usage.
- 7.2 End of tenancy and re-let procedures/change or property ownership will establish whether the space can revert to communal use.
- 7.3 In the event that a designated space is no longer required and the eligibility criteria has been met by another resident in the vicinity, the Association will permit its continued use as a space for disabled parking to meet the needs of the new applicant.

8. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

- 8.1 The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 and the Equalities Act 2010 place an overarching duty on Registered Social Landlords to exercise the functions conferred on them by the Act in a manner which encourages equality of opportunity and observes equal opportunity requirements laid down in other legislation and regulations.
- 8.2 The Association's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy covers a range of issues such as access to housing, disability and age, and has the overarching aim of mainstreaming equality in all that we do.

9. COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

- 9.1 Any customer who feels aggrieved by their treatment under this Policy, or feels that the service provided has fallen short, can raise a formal complaint as part of the Association's Complaints Handling Procedure, which is available on the Association's website or at our office. There is also a right to complain to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman. The Complaints Handling Procedure details the way in which complaints can be made and the timescales for responding.

10. POLICY REVIEW

- 10.1 This policy will be reviewed every *three* years or as required to assess its effectiveness and to consider any changes required in the light of experience, new guidance, good practice, and legislation. Minor changes are allowed without recourse to the Board to improve the policy as a result of upheld complaints, where appropriate.