



This capital funding is available to support the delivery of adapted and accessible homes through the first, second and third rounds of the Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF). The funding will be available to local authorities (LAs) to top-up existing grants for individual properties to deliver fully accessible properties and major adaptations to homes for households in transitional accommodation under the Afghan Resettlement Programme (ARP) with complex medical or mobility needs. The top-up funding will be combined with a family-led approach, ensuring that each home is tailored to meet the needs of a specific household currently in transitional accommodation.

Eligibility

Local authorities: LAs participating in the first, second and third rounds of the Local Authority Housing Fund who still have resettlement properties left to deliver or occupy can apply for this funding to top-up individual LAHF grants to deliver major adaptations to those properties.

Before adaptations are made, LAs will be matched to a specific household so that properties can be adapted to the needs of that household, who will be required to accept it as their one allocation in advance.

Households: The criteria for eligible households is set out below: • The household is currently in transitional accommodation under the ARP.

- One or more members of the household have been assessed by an Occupational Therapist (or similarly qualified person) as needing major or extensive adaptations, or a fully accessible property, to meet medical or mobility needs.
- The adaptations required fall outside the scope of the Exceptional Costs Fund, Disabled Facilities Grant or Integration Tariff, e.g. because the total cost is likely to exceed £30,000, the adaptations required are not covered by these funds and/or the adaptations need to be made urgently or prior to the household moving into the property.

Matching process

Working in collaboration with Strategic Migration Partnerships (SMPs) and LAs, the Home Office matches available LAHF homes to Afghan resettlement households in transitional accommodation. The Home Office LA Engagement Team will regularly share a list of potential households with SMPs. SMPs and LAs should use this list to identify suitable properties for households on the list.

If you are participating in the first, second or third rounds of LAHF, still have resettlement properties left to deliver or occupy, and would be able to adapt a LAHF property to meet the needs of a particular household, please contact your resettlement colleagues and SMP in the first instance who will have a list of eligible households. They may currently be within or beyond your own local authority area.

You may be able to get additional information on the requirements of a specific household from the Home Office (if held) or the LA where the household is currently in transitional accommodation. Some households may already have Occupational Therapy reports which make recommendations for the adaptations they require. If a household does not already have an Occupational Therapy report, the LA where the household is in transitional accommodation will be responsible for arranging an assessment as soon as possible.

If you identify a household in transitional accommodation requiring extensive or major adaptations that you would like to be considered for adding to this list, please inform the Home Office Liaison Officer in the relevant transitional accommodation who will submit this to the Home Office Matching Team via the household's triage form. Please also make your SMP aware.

Once you have identified both a household and a LAHF property suitable for that household, please submit a property offer form (POF) to your SMP or to HO (lapledgesandpropertyoffers@homeoffice.gov.uk) copied to your SMP in the usual way. You must make clear that it is a LAHF top-up property and indicate the intended household. The Home Office Matching Team will then offer that household the property as their one allocation (subject to adaptations being made). The household must provide written confirmation to the Home Office that they accept the property as their one allocation ahead of any adaptation works commencing.

Application process for funding

Once a household has been matched to a property and accepted their one allocation, the LA delivering that LAHF property can apply to MHCLG for the top-up funding.

We will shortly provide confirmation of the method for submitting applications.

MHCLG will aim to provide a response within 10 working days. If approved, the LA will be required to sign a Memorandum of Understanding, and funding will be provided in a single upfront payment ahead of the adaptations being made. Payments will be made to LAs in line with MHCLG's monthly payment dates.

Funding is available until the end of this financial year. It is not essential for all funds to be spent by LAs in this financial year, although given the urgent needs we expect that will often be the case. At the end of the financial year, LAs should submit a Statement of Grant Usage covering all of the funding they have received through the fund. MHCLG reserves the right to request the return of any unspent funding.

MHCLG also reserves the right to refuse any application.

Evidence requirements

The application process will require the LA providing the LAHF property to submit:

- evidence of the adaptations required, including an assessment by an occupational therapist or similarly qualified person
- property details, including room composition
- itemised quote setting out the cost per required adaptation and total amount requested

Q&A

How will this work in Wales/Scotland/Northern Ireland?

The guidance included in this document applies to *properties* in England only, although *households* in transitional accommodation in devolved nations are eligible. MHCLG is in conversations with the Devolved Governments about how similar outcomes may be supported in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

What types of adaptations are needed?

The adaptations required are likely to be wide ranging and specific requirements will be dependent on the bespoke needs of the household. Many households require wheelchair-accessible properties including level access washing facilities and door widening; some require more complex adaptations including hoisting equipment or property extensions/room conversions to provide extra space for adaptations, for example a downstairs wet room or accessible/adapted bedroom.

What types of adaptations will be funded?

This funding is for major and extensive adaptations. We would expect this to include a combination of different adaptations that could not be funded through the Exceptional Costs Fund or the Disabled Facilities Grant, e.g. because the total cost is likely to exceed £30,000, the adaptations required are not eligible and/or the adaptations need to be made quickly or prior to the household moving into the property.

Examples of types of adaptations that would be funded include, but are not limited to:

- Hoisting equipment
- Level access shower facilities
- Stairlifts
- Ramps
- Changing the height of kitchen work surfaces
- Adapting the home for wheelchair use such as widening doorways

- Ground floor bathroom/bedroom facilities
- Property extensions/room conversions to provide extra space for adaptations, for example a downstairs wet room or accessible/adapted bedroom.

Are there any adaptations that would not be funded?

All applications will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Any costs that seem excessive may require additional evidence.

Adaptations required for properties will not be funded through the LAHF top-up fund if they could be funded through existing HM Government (HMG) funding streams, including:

- The Exceptional Costs Fund
- The Disabled Facilities Grant
- The ARP Integration Tariff

Exceptions to this may apply for example if:

- The total cost of required adaptations exceeds £30,000
- The adaptations fall outside the scope of the above funding streams
- The adaptations must be completed urgently or prior to the household moving into the property

LAs should not apply to both the LAHF top-ups fund and the Exceptional Costs Fund for the same property.

Is there a minimum or maximum amount of expenditure?

The funding for each application will be considered on a case by case basis, and applications will require evidence of the costs and requirements for each specific adaptation. Any costs that seem excessive may require additional evidence.

If total expected expenditure is less than £30,000, this should be sought through the Exceptional Costs Fund instead, subject to the exceptions set out in the question above.

Will these properties be eligible for void costs?

Local authorities are already able to use the Year One Tariff to pay for a period of void rent costs. To reflect this, 56 days' void rent costs are already built into the ARP Integration Tariff. In exceptional circumstances if the required adaptations to the property are estimated to take longer than this, the LA may include up to an additional 56 days' void rent costs in their funding application for the LAHF top-ups fund. This will require evidence of estimated rent foregone and the relevant time period. This funding can only be requested upfront as part of the original application. Requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

How does this funding relate to the Exceptional Costs Fund and Disabled Facilities Grant?

The LAHF adaptations top-ups fund is an entirely separate fund to the Exceptional Costs Fund and Disabled Facilities Grant. It does not replace either of these funds, but is an alternative funding route aimed at supporting households currently in transitional accommodation whose combined requirements exceed the funding available through these means or would not be met through these funds. If an LA receives funding through the LAHF adaptations top-up fund, applications for the Exceptional Costs Fund or Disabled Facilities Grant should not be submitted for the same property.

What sizes of property are needed?

Properties are needed of all sizes. The Home Office Matching Team will share regular information with SMPs on latest requirements.

How can we ensure that households are not matched to more than one property/local authority?

The Home Office Matching Team keeps a central record of matches, ensuring each household is matched to only one property. To support this, if any potential matches are identified locally by a local authority or SMP, each proposed match should be shared with the Home Office at the earliest opportunity. Details should be provided on how the household meets the eligibility criteria, including an Occupational Therapy report. Please submit this information to the Home Office Matching Team and maintain regular communication with them (ARPMatchingTeam@homeoffice.gov.uk).

Do properties have to be in a particular Local Authority area?

Properties are needed in all areas. Location preference isn't taken into consideration when matching the cohort to settled accommodation. Therefore, we ask that LAs focus on the immediate housing needs of the households and procure suitable properties in line with needs. There may be a small number of households that have location specific requirements due to ongoing medical treatment.

What if a property being adapted for a household is not available ahead of their deadline to leave transitional accommodation?

Wherever possible, local authorities should aim for properties to be ready by the end of the household's 9-month stay in transitional accommodation. Given these are complex households with a significant housing need, we encourage local authorities to proceed with making arrangements for a property suitable for long-term occupation to be adapted, even if there may be a gap before it is ready.

Who is responsible for conducting occupational therapy assessments?

The local authority where the household is in transitional accommodation is responsible for providing an occupational therapy assessment to the local authority offering to adapt a LAHF property. Assessments should be carried out by an Occupational Therapist or similarly qualified person.

How will personal data be managed?

Information and evidence submitted to MHCLG should not include personal details such as individual's names or case reference numbers that would make them identifiable. Such information should be redacted from the application and supporting evidence.

How will the risk be managed of the household rejecting the property once it's been adapted?

Households will be required to accept the property as their one allocation prior to the adaptations commencing. It should be made clear to the household by the local authorities and the Home Office that this property will be their one allocation, and if they reject it at any point, they will receive a notice to quit transitional accommodation and would face homelessness.

The LA claiming the funding and delivering the property has a responsibility to maintain regular contact with the household and keep them engaged throughout the process, including providing regular updates on progress with the property and plans for the household's integration into the local community, schools, etc.

What if the household is matched to the property but it subsequently becomes not available?

We would only expect properties to be withdrawn in exceptional circumstances, e.g. where procurement falls through or adaptations cannot be made. If possible, the LA should seek to procure or identify an alternative property that meets the household's requirements. If this is not possible, the household matched to the property would have their one allocation withdrawn and would be re-added to the list of potential families shared by the Home Office Engagement Team for matching to another property.

What if a household does reject this property once it's been adapted for them?

Given that this funding is to adapt properties to meet the needs of a specific household, the LA claiming the funding and delivering the property has a responsibility to maintain regular contact with the household and keep them engaged throughout the process, including

providing regular updates on progress with the property and plans for the household's integration into the local community, schools, etc.

In the unlikely scenario that the household does reject the property, they would receive a notice to quit transitional accommodation and would face homelessness. The property would go back into the Home Office matching pool where suitability will be assessed for another household requiring similar adaptations. If any further adaptations were required to meet the needs of the new household, MHCLG would consider whether further funding could be made available.

Can properties that have already been offered to the Home Office for matching be considered for adaptations?

Yes, if you have offered a property to the Home Office but it is yet to be matched to a household, and it would be suitable for major or extensive adaptations, you may wish to consider putting it forward for adaptations through this fund. Please contact the Home Office Matching Team to discuss this option: ARPMatchingTeam@homeoffice.gov.uk

Do all adaptations need to be complete before a household moves into the property?

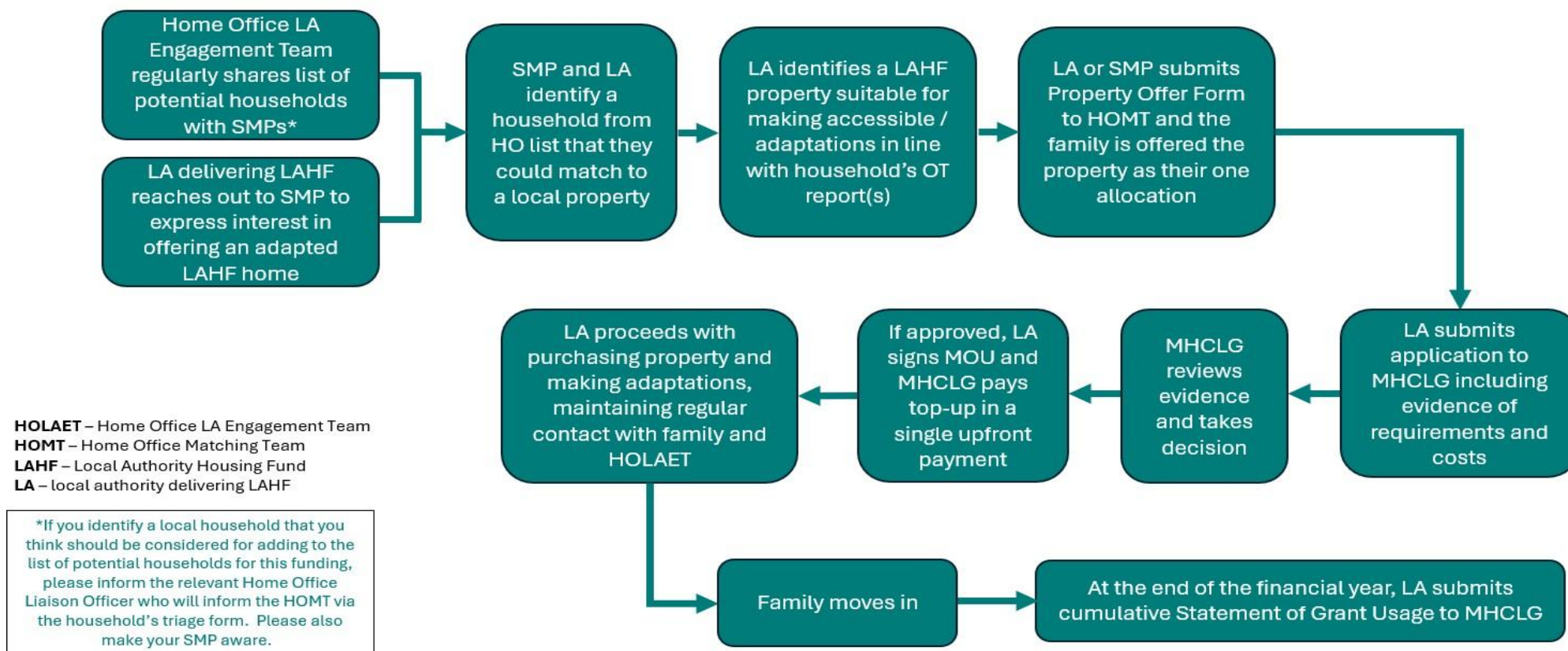
Ideally, given the complex needs and extensive adaptations required for these households, adaptations should be completed prior to the household moving in. However, if the property is deemed to be suitable for the household to live in prior to the completion of all works, the household may be moved in pending final adaptations, subject to approval of the household's current medical professional.

Where should I direct any queries?

Please send any queries to LAHFResettlementTopUps@communities.gov.uk.

Annex B: Process Map

LAHF top-ups process



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