

Terms of Reference for the Joint Housing Adaptations Steering Group (JHASG)

Purpose:

To ensure that regardless of tenure the best possible housing adaptations service is delivered for the people of Northern Ireland. The JHASG will provide a strategic interagency overview of this service, agree and prioritise areas for joint action and provide a support framework for cross sector working.

Background

In 2000, the Northern Ireland Housing Executive and the then Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety commenced a fundamental review of the Housing Adaptations Service in Northern Ireland. It was recognised by both organisations that interagency collaboration was essential to meet the emerging challenges of this complex area of service provision.

The JHASG was formed to support the Joint Fundamental Review of Housing Adaptations Services in February 2000. The group remained in place following the publication of the preliminary report in 2001 to oversee the implementation of 29 recommendations. In March 2004, it was decided that this group should be retained as it was clear that the requirement for strategic interagency collaboration would continue.

The JHASG provides a stakeholder forum to progress the current work of the Department for Communities / Department of Health Inter-Departmental Review of Housing Adaptations Services which commenced in 2010. The Final Review Report includes an Action Plan which contains 21 recommendations.

JHSAG Terms of Reference

- (i) To monitor the delivery of the Action Plan;
- (ii) To monitor and manage overall risk in relation to the implementation of the Action Plan;
- (iii) To agree further actions as deemed necessary on the basis of reports/ research received; and
- (iv) To agree terms of reference for and appoint any additional sub groups that may be deemed necessary.

The Group can review its membership at any time and may consider inviting other stakeholder organisations to become members of the Group on either a temporary or permanent basis.

Core members

- Department for Communities
- Department of Health
- Northern Ireland Housing Executive (Cross – divisional representation)
- Occupational Therapy Managers Forum (HSC Trusts)
- Service User Representation / Disability Action
- NI Federation of Housing Associations
- Health and Social Care Board
- Public Health Agency

Protocol for meetings

The meetings will take place three times per year in January, May and September and will be alternately chaired by the DoH and DfC.

Cross-sector administrative support will be provided by the NIHE Adaptations Policy Unit. This involves the preparation of papers, scheduling meetings, preparation and circulation of minutes. Periodically other stakeholders may assist with aspects of these tasks as outlined in the Final Report and Action Plan.

Key areas for cross-sector collaboration

1. Service user involvement
2. Identification of need and data exchange
3. legislation and policy impact assessments/development
4. Research strategy
5. Strategic planning and co-ordination of resources
6. Service reviews, redesign and implementation
7. Performance monitoring
8. Quality improvement/governance
9. Technology - improvement/design and product standards
10. Coordinated training initiatives
11. Interagency communications and related IT development
12. Public information on housing adaptations services