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Forest of Dean District Council

Disabled Facilities Grant

Policy

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1. Introduction

Forest of Dean District Council, in its role as a local housing authority, is under a statutory duty by virtue of the provisions of the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 (the Act) to provide Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) for disabled people of all ages in all housing tenures, depending on eligibility where appropriate legislative conditions are met.

This policy explains how people with disabilities in the Forest of Dean can receive financial assistance to improve and adapt their homes to meet their needs, by removing disabling barriers from the home environment thus enabling people to thrive which reduces the impact on the NHS, Adult Social Care and improves people's employment prospects.

This document outlines conditions and criteria for who can receive this financial assistance.

2. Legislation

[Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996](#) - The Council's legal obligations, powers and duties for financial assistance are contained within.

[Regulatory Reform \(Housing Assistance\) \(England and Wales\) Order 2002](#) – Added discretion and flexibility, giving options to assist beyond mandatory requirements. This policy follows the rules in the Regulatory Reform Order, setting out clearly what discretionary assistance is available, with the relevant eligibility criteria.

[Care Act 2014](#) states that local authorities must provide services and facilities that help people to live independently. The core purpose of adult care and support is to assist individuals in achieving their personal goals. The wellbeing principle is central to this act, emphasising the importance of promoting wellbeing and independent living. This policy aligns with the principles enshrined in the Care Act to prevent reduce and delay the development of care needs.

[Armed services Act 2006](#) - Under section 343 (as amended by section 8 of the Armed forces Act 2021), the Council must consider the Armed Forces Covenant when allocating DFGs and may offer special consideration for veterans in certain situations.

[Housing Act 2004](#) – this introduced the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) to establish minimum standards for housing. It obligated landlords to act if Category I hazards are found in a dwelling. The Department of Local Government and Communities further established the standard for decent homes in 2006 specifying minimum standards for the repair, quality, facilities and thermal comfort of homes.

Please see Appendix A of this document for more detail on the relevant legislation.

A full summary of the relevant regulations, guidance and legislation affecting the DFG can be found at: [Disabled Facilities Grant - Regulations and Orders \(foundations.uk.com\)](http://foundations.uk.com)



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3. Funding Sources

The main source of funding to support the DFG is from the Annual Capital grant from Central Government through the Better Care Fund.

Our first obligation and priority are to deliver Mandatory DFG's. Additionally, we will offer a range of discretionary grants to help disabled individuals live independently and safely in their homes. However, we would not promote this discretionary assistance at the expense of the statutory mandatory function.

If demand exceeds the funding available, the Council will use the clinical priorities form to immediately manage demand to provide grants to those most in need first -see appendix D. If pressure arising from demand is sustained the DFG Forum will consider which discretionary assistance to withdraw to enable our mandatory duties to continue to be met. The DFG Forum, with Gloucestershire Housing Partnership oversight, may also consider the adoption of a loans scheme in such circumstances to facilitate the completion of more complex works.

4. Summary of Assistance Types

This summary of financial assistance provides a list of each type of funding schemes available. The Mandatory DFG is set out below with full details. For elements of Discretionary DFG more details see Appendix B - Types of Assistance.

Excluding the Mandatory DFG, all other assistance provided through this policy is discretionary and therefore subject to the Council having sufficient funds.

The general terms and conditions of this policy are also applicable to the different types of discretionary assistance. For discretionary funding assistance, the Councils reserve the right to make minor amendments to the eligibility criteria, level of grant or assistance using delegated decision approval.

5. Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG)

The mandatory grant (Max £30,000) supports the provision of adaptations to promote independent living within the home, subject to the provisions of the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996.

This grant is set out within legislation requiring the statutory means test.

If an applicant is in receipt of a passport benefit: Universal Credit; Income Support; Income-based Employment and Support Allowance (not contribution based ESA); Income based Job Seekers Allowance (not contribution based JSA); Guarantee Pension Credit (not Savings Pension Credit alone); Working Tax Credit and/or Child Tax Credit (where the annual

income for the purposes of the tax credits assessment was below £15,050); Housing Benefit, they will automatically be assessed as having a NIL contribution toward any grant award.

Applications for disabled children are passported for a full grant.

Where the applicant is an owner occupier, and the grant value is over £5,000 a local land charge up to £10,000 may apply for 10 years. Consideration may be given to waiving this land charge, upon sale of the property, where the resident is experiencing significant hardship. See Appendix A for more details.

6. Discretionary Assistance

The following are discretionary forms of assistance enabled through the Better Care Fund allocation, subject to the primary requirements of Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant being met. No stand-alone applications for these forms of assistance will be considered:

- Client contribution support - To increase the affordability of applications by offering up to a £10,000 waiver of disabled persons assessed contribution.
- Extended warranties on equipment – This recognises the burden of servicing and maintaining specialist equipment (such as stairlifts) and provides support with funding five-year extended warranties on equipment provided through the DFG.
- Dementia friendly - This assistance will provide aids and adaptations in the home designed to enable people with a diagnosis of dementia to be enabled by their surroundings and retain their independence for longer.
- Discretionary top-up grant - enables top-up funding to a Disabled Facilities Grant scheme that exceeds the Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant maximum where the additional costing is considered justifiable.
- Hoarding support grant – to support the general provision of mandatory DFG.
- Professional fees- Eligible ancillary charges are included in grant approvals to professional fees for technical surveys and application support. This assistance may support hospital discharges where safety is a concern.
- Rapidly progressing or highly debilitating conditions – To assist persons with a relevant diagnosis e.g. Motor Neurone Disease (MND), with specialised living aids to enable independent and safe living.



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- Relocation grant – A grant may be available to help applicant to move if adaptations to their current home through DFG are determined not to be feasible or reasonable.
- Adaptations support grant - This grant is designed to support or facilitate the completion of DFG works, examples include general repairs, creating safe access or completing electrical upgrades as would be necessary to enable works to go ahead.

7. Making Payments

The assistance will only be paid under the following conditions:

The assisted works must be completed within 12 months of approval unless the delay was caused by the Council or an extension due to exceptional circumstances is agreed. Requests for extensions will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

The assisted works must be carried out in accordance with the specifications outlined in the formal approval and conditions or with prior agreement from the Council.

The Council and the applicant are satisfied with the completed works.

The Council must receive an invoice, demand, or receipt for payment in an 'acceptable' format. The invoice should be addressed to the applicant c/o the Council and include sufficient detail for the Council to identify the works carried out, the charges, and any agreed-upon variations. Applicants or family members should not produce the invoice.

The payment of assistance to the contractor can be made via the applicant or, if requested in the original application, the council can pay directly to the applicant's agent and contractor.

The assistance may be paid in one lump sum upon satisfactory completion of the works or in staged payments as the work progresses. Interim payments will only be made if the Council is satisfied that the value of work completed exceeds the claimed value to date. The frequency and number of interim payments must be determined before works commence and not exceed 90% of the total for any one contractor. The councils aim to pay all invoices deemed to be 'acceptable' within 30 days of receipt.

The contract for works funded by Disabled Facilities Grants, along with associated assistance, will be between the applicant and the contractor, as specified in the legislation. While the Council's Standing Orders regarding procurement do not directly apply since the Council is not entering into a contract, the Council will still follow the same principles when obtaining quotes on behalf of supported applicants to ensure appropriate services are provided.



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The provision of assistance other than mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants is subject to the availability of funding. All applications will be evaluated based on the identified needs and circumstances of the applicant or household.

Associated costs incurred during the application process, such as architects' fees or Land Registry charges, will be included in the value of any awarded funding and will not be paid separately, except for exceptional circumstances where works cannot proceed, and such costs may be eligible for discretionary assistance.

The provision of mandatory grants and discretionary financial assistance will be subject to internal and external auditing to ensure proper procedures are in place and followed, and that public funds are appropriately utilised.

8. Restrictions

There are certain cases where we may not be able to offer to assist or where the funding may be reduced or reclaimed. These situations are outlined below:

1. Assistance cannot be provided when there is a dispute over property ownership.
2. If the property owner(s) have a legal obligation to carry out the necessary works and it is reasonable for them to do so.
3. Assistance is not typically provided for temporary residences (i.e. occupancy periods less than the 5-year intention to stay).
4. We cannot give assistance for works that were started before formal approval of the application. However, in exceptional circumstances, we may exempt an application from this condition, such as when a defect poses serious risks to health and safety.
5. We do not provide grant assistance for works covered by insurance. If an applicant can make an insurance claim, the assistance amount will be reduced by the insurance company's liability. We will require the applicant to pursue relevant insurance claims and repay the assistance provided if applicable.
6. We will only offer to assist if the property's age, condition, and structural layout make it feasible to achieve the required scope of works.
7. The Council will assess the prices provided by contractors to ensure value for money, comparing them with similar jobs priced within the last year.
8. If the Council find that the price quoted by contractors is too high, we may advise the client that the total eligible assistance will be a lower amount.



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9. If the client chooses a different or enhanced scheme or items of works, the Council will only provide financial assistance for the primary requirements identified by the Occupational Therapy Service and the Council. The applicant will be responsible for costs above the agreed amount.

10. We may refuse an application lacking required information or documentation.

11. Deviating from the approved scheme of works without prior agreement may lead to the approval being rescinded or further payments of assistance being refused.

12. If the applicant ceases to be the owner of the property before the works are completed, they must repay the total amount of assistance received.

13. A grant condition imposing a liability to repay assistance may be registered as a Local Land Charge, payable upon the property's sale.

14. Works must be completed within 12 months of approval, with a possible extension of up to 6 months if agreed by the Council.

15. For common parts of a dwelling, assistance will only cover the applicant's reasonable share of the liability.

16. In exceptional cases, the Council may defer payment of a Disabled Facilities Grant for up to 12 months.

17. Assistance may be provided for caravans and houseboats used as main residences, subject to eligibility requirements. Holiday residences, caravans on holiday sites, second homes, and sheds or outbuildings do not qualify for assistance.

18. If there are unique situations where individuals genuinely need urgent support but are precluded from accessing assistance due to specific aspects, the Council may consider an offer of assistance in exceptional circumstances, especially if it helps meet strategic objectives. Such decisions will be made by the relevant officer.

9. Other Requirements

When granting approval for assistance, the Council may impose additional conditions. Some examples of these conditions are:

1. The applicant may be required to contribute towards the cost of the works.

2. The Council may request the right to nominate tenants for available rental housing.

3. The applicant must commit to maintaining the property in good repair after the assisted works are completed.



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4. If specialised equipment is provided as part of the assistance, the Council or its appointed agent may reclaim the equipment when it is no longer needed.

10. Decisions, Notifications and Changes

Once the Council reviews the application, they will inform the applicant in writing if it has been approved or refused. The notification will be sent as soon as practically possible, but within six months of receiving a complete and valid application.

If the application is approved, the notification will specify the eligible works, the amount of assistance provided, and the builder/contractor assigned to carry out the works.

In some cases, for a Disabled Facilities Grant, the Council may defer payment for up to 12 months due to financial or operational reasons. This will be clearly stated in the approval notice.

In certain situations where unforeseen circumstances cause the cost of the works to increase or decrease unexpectedly, the Council may review the financial assistance given. If deemed appropriate, they will issue consequent variations orders showing amendments to the approval certificate. The total funding is confirmed separately on completion.

Approvals of discretionary funding will follow an internal decision process as set out in Appendix B – Types of Assistance.

11. Appeals

If you've applied for assistance and your application was not considered within 6 months or refused, you have the right to request a review of the decision. To do this, you must submit a written request to the Council within 28 days of receiving the decision letter. We will then conduct a review and inform you of the outcome in writing.

If you remain dissatisfied with the review decision, you have two options:

1. You can go through the Council's Corporate Complaints procedure to address your concerns.
2. Alternatively, you can approach the Local Government Ombudsman for further assistance.

Exceptions to the policy may be considered only in cases of exceptional circumstances where you cannot reasonably fund or carry out the necessary work.

If you have complaints related to the service delivery rather than the policy itself, you should direct those to the Council. We will investigate your complaint following the [complaints procedure for Forest of Dean District Council](#).



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If the complaint is about any additional works or alterations carried out without prior approval from the Council, neither these increased costs nor the complaint will be considered and the responsibility for funding such changes will remain with the applicant.

12. Service Standards

There is a statutory requirement for Councils to determine valid and fully made applications for mandatory disabled facilities grant within six months.

This does not account for pre-application activities such as the screening process and the 'application support' and administration including occupational therapy assessment, means testing, producing specifications, tendering contractors, etc. The 6-month period commences when the valid application paperwork is complete, and the contractors' quotes have been received.

In accordance with government guidance, the Council aim to reduce timescales for the delivery stages of home adaptations funded by a disabled facilities grant. The timescales for moving through these stages will depend upon the urgency and complexity of the adaptations required as well as factors relating to the applicant. More urgent cases will be prioritised for action, with larger and more complex schemes taking longer to complete.



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Appendix A – Legislation

With reference to the guidance Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) delivery: Guidance for local authorities in England - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) and the legislation for the DFG, the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 (the 1996 Act), this section provides the context and information for how the Council will determine disabled facilities grant applications. The four main elements of a decision are:

- The disabled occupant and the applicant
- The eligible works
- Amount of grant
- Grant conditions

Once a formal application has been ‘properly’ submitted, the Council is under a duty to consider it within 6 months.

The Disabled Occupant

A “disabled occupant” is a “disabled person” who needs adaptations to a dwelling, houseboat or caravan where they intend to live as their only or main residence for the next 5 years.

A Disabled Person

To be eligible for a DFG a person is disabled if:

- their sight, hearing or speech is substantially impaired,
- they have a mental disorder or impairment of any kind, or
- they have a substantial physical disability by illness, injury, or impairment.

And that impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

A substantial effect on day-to-day activities means one that’s ‘more than minor or trivial’. The effect on their normal day-to-day activities might be substantial if the disabled person has more than one impairment. The effects might only be ‘minor or trivial’ if they have very little effect on their daily life like if the only effect on them is that they have to stop for a few minutes rest after walking for a mile at a normal pace.

A long-term effect means something that has affected them or is likely to affect them for at least a year. The impairment will also still be considered to be long-term if it’s likely to affect



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the disabled person for the rest of their life even if that's going to be less than a year. A person is taken to be disabled if: they are an adult who is or could be registered under section 77 of the Care Act 2014, or they are a child or young person registered under paragraph 2 of Schedule 2 to the Children Act 1989 who is a disabled child as defined by section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

Where they intend to live

A DFG is available to fund facilities for a disabled person in:

- dwellings,
- qualifying houseboats and caravans, and
- in the common parts of buildings containing one or more flats where they live.

A "dwelling" is defined as a building (or part of a building, e.g. a flat) occupied as separate premises. This includes dwellings where someone lives as part of their employment, like a farm cottage or a flat over a shop. Where more than one disabled person lives at the same address, the Council can consider multiple applications based on individual needs.

Children living in dual residency arrangements

Where a disabled child has parents who are separated and the child lives for part of the time with each parent, a mandatory DFG is only available at the address, which is the main residence of the disabled child, usually the home of the parent in receipt of child benefit. However, it will often be in the best interests of the child to provide adaptations at both locations. Under these circumstances it is assumed that the one party will apply for a mandatory DFG at the main residence within the relevant district.

The relevant Council will use its discretionary powers in considering applications to adapt the other home of a disabled child, if it is situated within its boundary to ensure that they can maintain normal living arrangements. Considering the details of any court order and specifically the allocation of time spent with each parent in determining eligibility for assistance.

In determining the works that might be considered as eligible for assistance the relevant Council will consider the suitability of the main residence for adaptation, the complexity and scope of the adaptations required, and any observations or referral made by the Occupational Therapist.

Please see the section on discretionary DFGs in Appendix B (B2.4) for details on land charges that may apply.



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Situations outside of these prescribed circumstances would be considered on their own merits following the receipt of written representations from the grant applicant.

The relevant Council maintains the discretion to only consider discretionary awards whilst they have sufficient funds to sustain mandatory DFG approvals.

The relevant Council reserves the right not to approve any discretionary assistance.

Children in foster care

Foster carers are eligible to apply for a DFG on behalf of a foster child, but provision may depend on the type and length of placement, and the relevant Council will consider shorter periods of intention to occupy.

Who can make a DFG application?

Only certain people can make a valid application - in many cases this will not be the disabled person themselves.

The Applicant

A valid application can be made by:

- someone who has an owner's interest in the property (either an owner-occupier or a landlord)
- a tenant of a dwelling; or
- the occupant of a caravan or qualifying houseboat.

The applicant cannot be:

- Public bodies such as a Local Authority or Clinical Commissioning Group
- A "person from abroad" – those without status to reside.
- Anyone under 18 years of age.

An **owner's application** must be accompanied by a certificate which confirms that they:

- already have or propose to acquire an owner's interest (the grant cannot be approved until they take ownership). (For common parts applications, The Housing Renewal Grants (Owner's Interest) Directions 1996 sets out that a certificate for each flat of the building is required), and
- intend that the disabled person will live in the dwelling as their only or main residence for the grant condition period (5 years).



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- Where more than one owner, any of the owners can make a solo application.
- Leaseholders are owners if they have 5 or more years remaining.
- A freehold landlord may also make an application.

A **tenant's application** must be accompanied by a certificate which confirms that they:

- are making a tenant's application; and
- intend that the disabled person will live in the dwelling as their only or main residence for the grant condition period (5 years) or for such shorter period as their health and other relevant circumstances permit.

All tenant applications should also be accompanied by an owner's certificate signed by the landlord unless the Council thinks it is unreasonable to do so in the circumstances. The landlord must still give permission for the works.

If the landlord's consent is unreasonably withheld, or unreasonable conditions have been attached it must be taken that consent has been given. The Council will review this on a case by-case basis, considering factors such as related rent increases or payment to remove adaptations and a requirement to reinstate.

These provisions do not apply to a protected tenancy under section 1 of the Rent Act 1977 or a statutory tenancy under section 2 of that Act or a secure tenancy under the Housing Act 1985.

An **occupant's application** must be accompanied by a certificate which confirms that they:

- are making an occupant's application; and
- intend that the disabled person will live in the dwelling as their only or main residence for the grant condition period (5 years).

Unless the Council think it is unreasonable to do so in the circumstances, all occupant's applications should also be accompanied by a consent certificate signed by owners of the houseboat and mooring or the caravan and caravan park.

Each certificate confirms the intention of the applicant at the time of the application and so long as that was genuinely their intention, no repayment of grant is required if circumstances change, and the disabled person can no longer occupy it as intended.

The grant condition period starts when the works are completed to the satisfaction of the Council ("the certified date" (section 44)).

What is a completed application

An application is deemed to be valid once completed. A complete application consists of:

- Completed and signed Application form by the property owner or tenant, including the financial information for means testing of the disabled person.
- Occupation certificate for either an owner occupier, tenant, landlord or occupant of houseboat or caravan.
- Proof of ownership e.g., proof of title or utility bill.
- Financial evidence of the disabled person for each of the incomes entered on to the form e.g., bank statements, pensions, benefits.
- Two or three quotes for the works (based upon an assessment of relevant works - Applicants may be supported to obtain these after completing the forms).
- Planning permission and Building Control Application, build over agreements (water), where applicable.
- Other permissions such as landlord consent to works.

Once the relevant council is satisfied that they have received a complete application, they will validate the application.

Properties held in trust

These should be treated in the same way as applications by owner-occupiers, tenants or occupiers. A trustee or beneficiary applying for a grant must be able to fulfil all the normal grant conditions.

Persons from abroad

The applicant cannot be a 'person from abroad' within the meaning of regulation 10 of the Housing Benefit Regulations 2006 or as the case may be regulation 10 of the Housing Benefit (Persons who have attained the qualifying age for state pension credit) Regulations 2006 (see regulation 3 of the Housing Renewal Grants Regulations 1996 (S.I. 1996/2890)).

The Council is also not allowed to pay a grant where a disabled person who could have applied for a grant is a "person from abroad", even though the applicant is not a "person from abroad".



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The Armed Forces Community

For injured or disabled service personnel who live in Service Accommodation and continue to work in the Armed Forces, any adaptations for them or their dependents will be funded by the Ministry of Defence.

If the Council receive applications from serving Armed Forces personnel who live in their own accommodation, on behalf of themselves or family members. Applications might also be received from veterans of the Armed Forces. In these cases, the statutory Armed Forces Covenant Duty is likely to apply.

Mental Capacity

If the Council thinks an applicant lacks capacity to make a particular decision or take a particular action for themselves at the time the decision or action needs to be taken, they should follow the guidance laid out in the Code of Practice to the Mental Capacity Act 2005.

The Eligible and Relevant Works

To determine which adaptations are “eligible works” for grant assistance, there must be ‘A’ - a purpose for the works and ‘B’ – the relevant works pass the test of ‘necessary and appropriate’ and ‘reasonable and practicable’.

A - The Purposes

The Act sets out the “purposes” (section 23) for which a grant must be approved. The first stage is to assess whether the disabled person needs adaptations to meet these “purposes”. The purposes for which a grant can be approved are:

1. Making it easier for the disabled person to access and leave the dwelling, houseboat, or park home.
2. Ensuring the dwelling, houseboat, or park home is safe for the disabled person and others living with them.
3. Improving access to a room used as the main family area.
4. Improving access to a room used for sleeping.
5. Improving access to a room with a lavatory or facilitating the use of such a facility for the disabled person.
6. Improving access to a room with a bath or shower or facilitating the use of such a facility for the disabled person.



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7. Improving access to a room with a wash hand basin or facilitating the use of such a facility for the disabled person.
8. Making it easier for the disabled person to prepare and cook food.
9. Upgrading the heating system to meet the needs of the disabled person or providing a suitable heating system if none exists or the existing one is not suitable.
10. Making it easier for the disabled person to access and control sources of power, light, or heat.
11. Enhancing access and mobility around the dwelling, houseboat, or park home to enable the disabled person to care for another resident in need of assistance.
12. Improving access to and from a garden for the disabled person or making the garden accessible and safe for them.

These purposes cover a wide range of potential adaptations to cover most circumstances and to meet the adaptation needs of disabled people whose needs are less obvious, such as those with a sight or hearing impairment or a learning disability.

B - The Relevant Works

If one or more purposes have been identified, the Council will consider the “relevant works” to meet those purposes. For example:

- A ramp could be the relevant work to meet the purpose of improving access to the home
- A stairlift could be the relevant work to meet the purpose of accessing a room used for sleeping.

For each of the “relevant works” the Council consider whether they are needed and if a grant should be awarded by deciding if they are “necessary & appropriate” and “reasonable & practicable”.

Necessary and Appropriate

Relevant works are necessary and appropriate to meet the needs of the disabled person (section 24(3)(a)). The Council must make this decision, in consultation with the social services authority.

DFGs are designed to give disabled people a degree of independence in the home and should aim to meet current and anticipated future needs. If the disabled person has care needs, the impact of adaptations on the level of this care should be considered including whether tasks will be reduced or eased. The disabled person should gain a degree of



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independence, or if dependent upon the care of others, the adaptation should significantly ease the burden of the carer.

In all cases the assessment of whether relevant works are necessary and appropriate must be made against each applicable purpose individually. So, for example, if it is not possible to appropriately provide access to a room suitable for sleeping, that should not in itself prevent a grant being awarded to gain access to the home.

Where the disabled person has a limited life expectancy then it may be appropriate to consider funding adaptations that can be more easily removed when they are no longer required if that is considered the right approach in the circumstances.

There will be occasions when the need to address one or more purpose is significantly more urgent than others. The Council will consider the benefits of proceeding with assessing the urgent works and phased approvals if there would be undue delay in assessing for all.

For some cases the disabled person and the applicant may elect for a higher cost option. The Council will need to ensure that the works meet the required purposes and are necessary and appropriate, but the estimated expense would still be based on the lower cost option.

Reasonable and Practicable

Where the relevant works have been judged to be necessary and appropriate, the Council will consider if it is reasonable and practicable to carry out the works having “regard to the age and condition” of the property.

If it is not to be a good use of resources to award a DFG to adapt an old, run-down building, the Council may consider that the relevant works are not reasonable and practicable. In these cases, the applicant will be given information and advice on their housing options.

Other issues, such as whether the property is otherwise suitable for the disabled person are not relevant considerations.

The Council must also be mindful of achieving the best value for money. Where there are potential alternative options for the relevant works that could meet the required purposes, or the disabled person or applicant elect for a higher cost option, the Council would usually base the approval on the lower-cost option. All options must meet the required purposes and be necessary and appropriate.

For example, where the purpose is to provide access to a room suitable for sleeping, then a stairlift or utilising an existing ground floor room are likely to be preferred over building a new bedroom.

Amount of Grant

The Council will consider the following when determining the amount of grant:

- The reasonable cost of carrying out the eligible works along with the cost of associated services and charges – this is the “estimated expense”; and
- The amount of grant the council can award, considers the estimated expense, any assessed client contributions and the maximum amount of grant approved (including both mandatory and discretionary, where applicable).

Grant applications require at least two quotations from different contractors for the costs of the relevant works. Larger schemes of work over £30,000 will require a minimum of three quotes. The Council will exercise discretion in some circumstances, allowing a single quotation for specialist equipment.

The contract for carrying out the works will be between the applicant and the contractor which means that public procurement rules do not apply.

Other Services and Charges

The Act allows the cost of certain services and charges to be included with the grant application. These are set out in The Housing Renewal Grants (Services and Charges) Order 1996 and include costs associated with preparing the application and the carrying out of works:

1. confirming that the applicant has an owner’s interest.
2. technical and structural surveys.
3. the design and preparation of plans and drawings.
4. the preparation of specifications and schedules of relevant works.
5. assistance in completing forms.
6. advice on financing the costs of the relevant works which are not met by grant.
7. making applications for building regulations approval (including any application fee and the preparation of related documents).



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8. making applications for planning permission (including any application fee and the preparation of related documents).
9. making applications for listed building consent (including any application fee and the preparation of related documents).
10. making applications for conservation area consent (including any application fee and the preparation of related documents).
11. obtaining tenders/quotes.
12. providing advice on building contracts.
13. considering tenders.
14. supervising the relevant works; disconnecting and reconnecting electricity, gas, water, or drainage utilities where this is necessitated by the relevant works; and paying contractors.
15. The services and charges of a private occupational therapist in relation to the relevant works can also be included.

A discretionary grant will cover the cost of a maintenance agreement for a period of five years (where available) from the certified installation date for certain equipment such as stair lifts, through-floor lifts, wash/dry toilets, step-lifts, and similar items that were installed with the assistance of a Disabled Facilities Grant.

In cases where a maintenance agreement of 5 years is not available from the manufacturer, a discretionary grant will fund the maximum warranty period that is available. If a reconditioned stair lift is being installed, any remaining warranty will be extended to the full 5 years if possible. The aim is to ensure that essential equipment remains in good working condition and well maintained for an extended period after installation.

The Means Test

An application for a Disabled Facilities Grant will be subject to a means test in accordance with the regulations made under the 1996 Act, including any local amendments within this policy. The maximum Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant award at the time of policy publication is £30,000 minus any assessed contribution required by a 'means test' (test of financial resources).

If the mandatory grant limit is changed by statute, then the maximum available Disabled Facilities Grant awarded by the Council will reflect this.



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If an applicant receives multiple grant awards over time, their assessed contribution to the first grant will be considered if it falls within the original contribution period (10 years for owner occupiers and 5 years for tenants).

NOTE: where an applicant is in receipt of a recognised, qualifying, means-tested benefit they will not be further means-tested, and they will have no calculated contribution to make. Where works are for the benefit of a child or young person up until their 19th birthday or younger at the date of application – they too will be exempt from a means test.

Grant Conditions

The following conditions may apply to an award of a Disabled Facilities Grant:

Future occupation of the dwelling

It is a condition that for 5 years from the date of completion of the works, the dwelling is occupied in accordance with the intention stated in the certificate submitted as part of the application.

Local Land Charge

The Council will register a local land charge on a dwelling. The charge will only be placed on owner's applications where the amount of grant exceeds £5,000. The maximum charge is £10,000. This charge may be recovered, if it is sold or otherwise disposed of within ten years of the certified date.

Where the applicant is a foster carer and the application is associated with a long-term placement, a charge will not usually be placed.

If a dwelling is sold or disposed of within ten years, the Council will consider whether or not it is reasonable to demand repayment or part repayment of the charge considering:

- the financial hardship it would cause,
- whether the sale is due to an employment-related relocation,
- whether the sale is connected with the physical or mental health or well-being of the grant recipient or of a disabled occupant of the premises; and
- whether the sale will enable the recipient of the grant to provide care to another disabled person.

If a grant is initially awarded for an amount of less than £5,000, an applicant will be consulted before the grant is revised if it would result in a charge being placed.



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Deferred payment

In exceptional circumstances, we reserve the right to defer payment of a grant for up to 12 months after the date of approval.

Recovery of equipment

The Council may include a condition that specialist equipment, such as a stairlift, may be recovered where it is no longer required. Where it is clear that the equipment will not be reused because of age or condition the Council may decide to waive this right to recovery.

Use of contractors

Contractors shall have a Safeguarding Policy in place with detailed procedures, covering the protection / safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults, for: Safer Recruitment; Training, including induction; Supervision and Safeguarding Procedures; Management of Allegations and Whistle Blowing. Contractors shall ensure that all staff have read and understood the policies that are in place.

The works must be performed by the agreed contractor(s) whose quotation was submitted as part of the application. If a different contractor is to carry out the works, the Council's consent must be obtained beforehand, and a new estimate from the new contractor must be submitted.

However, any additional costs resulting from the change in contractor must be covered separately by the applicant.

The Council will not accept an invoice, demand, or receipt if it is issued by the applicant or a family member. If the applicant or a family member carries out the work, only the cost of materials used will be eligible for financial assistance.

Completion of the works

Payment of the grant is conditional on the eligible works being completed within 12 months from the date of approval of the grant. The Council may extend this period if there is a valid reason, and such requests must be made in writing before the 12-month period ends. The payment of the grant depends on the works being done to the Council's satisfaction and upon receiving a satisfactory invoice, demand, or receipt for the works and any related services or changes.

The Council will usually make payments directly to the contractor on behalf of the applicant, not to the applicant themselves. If there is any disagreement about a payment made to the contractor, it's unlikely a payment will be made until the dispute is resolved. However, the



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Council may make payment directly to the applicant if they have provided the necessary information before grant approval.

Appendix B – Types of Assistance

Mandatory and Discretionary Disabled Facilities Grant Details

B.1 Mandatory

B.1.1 Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants	
Purpose	To support the provision of adaptations to promote independent living within the home, subject of meeting the purposes set out in the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996.
Eligible Applicant	The owner, tenant, or occupier of a dwelling where a disabled person is living and/or intends to live for the next 5 years.
Eligible Works	Works considered necessary to meet the needs set out in an Occupational Therapists referral. Aids and adaptations must meet the purposes set out in appendix A.
Amount of funding	£30,000 or as per the current statutory limit. This may be supplemented with elements of discretionary funding in Appendix B.2
Means Test	<p>Works are subject to the statutory means test as set out in legislation.</p> <p>If the applicant is in receipt of a passport benefit, such as universal credit, housing benefit, income support, guaranteed pension credit, etc.) they will automatically be assessed as having a NIL contribution toward any grant award.</p> <p>The means test does not apply to disabled children and young people.</p>
Land Charge	Where the applicant is an owner-occupier and the grant value is over £5,000, a local land charge up to £10,000 may apply for 10 years.

Conditions	Statutory conditions apply.
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B.2 Discretionary Disabled Facilities Grants

This section covers the details of the discretionary assistance included within this policy.

B2.1 Client Contribution Support	
Purpose	This is a discretionary grant to support applicants who are assessed as having a means tested contribution that is unaffordable. It is also available in cases where the disabled person has rapidly progressive disorder resulting in a life expectancy of under 2 years.
Eligible Applicant	Those eligible for Mandatory DFG. All Tenures.
Eligible Works	Available towards the cost of DFG eligible works only, that would have been covered by the assessed contribution. Funding will be reviewed on an individual case basis.
Amount of funding	Up to £10,000 (For assessed contributions £0-£10,000)
Means Test	No additional DFG means test
Land Charge	Where the applicant is an owner-occupier and the grant value is over £5,000, a local land charge up to £10,000 will apply for 10 years.

Conditions	In addition to standard grant conditions: - Contributions will be reduced in full and funded by this grant up to £10,000 and will be treated as discretionary funding. Applicants will be expected to fund any assessed contribution above £10,000. Therefore, if the assessed contribution is over £10,000 then they will have to fund their full contribution prior to receiving any grant assistance.
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B2.2 Extended warranties	
Purpose	To support those on lower incomes with the new costs arising from servicing and maintenance on specialist equipment provided through the DFG.
Eligible Applicant	Those in receipt of a mandatory DFG.
Eligible Works	Up to a 5-year warranty on equipment such as stairlifts, through floor lifts, step lifts and wash dry toilets funded at the point of purchase of this equipment through the DFG. This warranty will commence for a period of 4 years from the end of the usual 12-month warranty or after any extended warranty already offered by the supplier as standard.
Amount of funding	N/A
Means Test	Mandatory DFG means test
Land Charge	No land charge
Conditions	No additional conditions.

B2.3 Dementia Friendly Grant	
Purpose	Works to make the home 'dementia' friendly or to meet sensory needs and to help the individual to live safely, manage their own surroundings, and retain/develop their independence.
Eligible Applicant	Applicants can be any tenure of home with a clinical diagnosis of dementia and referred by an Occupational Therapist (Hospital OT or an OT from the Integrated community team).
Eligible Works	To give personal choice to a person about how and where to meet their future care needs and focusing on being able to remain living safely, independently, and well at home for as long as possible. A referral confirming the works which are necessary and appropriate to support them to retain their independence. Examples of work may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contrasting colour flooring, contrasting colour facilities, walls or doors • Replacement glass kitchen cupboard fronts • Lighting and door signage
Amount of funding	£2,500
Means Test	Mandatory DFG means test
Land Charge	No land charge
Conditions	In addition to standard grant conditions: - Funding will be reviewed on an individual case basis. Applications must be accompanied by an intention that the property remain their only or main residence for 5 years.

B2.4 Discretionary Top-Up Grant	
Purpose	This is a discretionary grant to top up a DFG to carry out works that are above the current mandatory limit of £30,000, where the additional costs are considered justifiable. It recognises that the £30,000 limit is insufficient to meet complex needs – especially for extensions.
Eligible Applicant	Those eligible for a mandatory DFG - All tenures.
Eligible Works	Available towards the cost of DFG eligible works, taking into consideration discretionary powers to contribute funding towards adaptations under the Care Act and the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act. Grant is not available for equipment that isn't normally provided via the DFG.
Amount of funding	Up to an additional £40,000 (added to the mandatory grant amount) can be approved by the appropriate officer subject to the relevant local council's financial procedure (Agreed at DFG Forum on 22/12/20). Amounts above this discretionary amount will be considered on case-by-case basis and will be considered through the collective expertise of the DFG Forum to provide critical appraisal – due consideration will be given to the level of funding available.
Means Test	No additional means test will be applied for any grant over £30K – the statutory means test will apply for adults up to the £30k limit (not applicable for children's cases)
Land Charge	Where the applicant is an owner-occupier and the grant value is over £5,000, a local land charge up to £10,000 may apply for 10 years on the amount of the grant up to £30,000. Additionally, a further local land charge will also apply for 10 years for the full value of the grant from £30,001 up to £70,000.

	<p>The full value of the assistance awarded for grants in excess of £70,000 will be placed as a land charge on the property for a period of 15 years, repayable at the sale of the property.</p> <p>These land charges will be applied as a total sum arising from the above grant conditions.</p>
Conditions	<p>In addition to standard grant conditions: -</p> <p>Funding will be reviewed on an individual case basis. Applications must be accompanied by an intention that the property remain their only or main residence for 5 years.</p> <p>One application in any 5-year period.</p>

B2.5 Hoarding Support Grant	
Purpose	This is a discretionary grant to top up a mandatory DFG to carry out works that are required to enable eligible works under a mandatory DFG to be safely installed and used by disabled person.
Eligible Applicant	Those eligible for a mandatory DFG, will require a home assessment by an appropriate council officer. The assessment needs to score a 'clutter rating' of 5 or more.
Eligible Works	These are works that do not meet a need but are necessary for the mandatory/eligible works to be completed.
Amount of funding	Up to £5,000

Means Test	Mandatory means test only - No additional DFG means test
Land Charge	No land charge.
Conditions	No additional conditions.

B2.8 Professional Fees	
Purpose	<p>To pay professional fees and other ancillary charges which are eligible under a mandatory DFG application that was unable to proceed through no fault of the applicant.</p> <p>This also provides a more equitable access to DFGs for those on the Housing Needs Register seeking a suitable home that better meets their needs. This discretionary funding of fees allows for feasibility inspection and abortive fees prior to approval to determine if adaptation is possible.</p> <p>The relevant council will consider funding professional fees (e.g. a structural engineer) rapidly to cases involving hospital discharge where there is a concern for the safety of the disabled person and their carer in respect of the condition or structure of the property (e.g. a wooden floor technical survey where a plus size patient needs specialist equipment).</p>
Eligible Applicant	Those eligible for a mandatory DFG. All tenures.
Eligible Works	Eligible ancillary charges and professional fees are included in grant approvals for technical surveys and application support. The Professional Fees Grant allows for feasibility inspection and abortive fees prior to approval to determine if adaptation is possible.

Amount of funding	A maximum of £7,500 plus VAT (cap based upon up to 15% of mandatory grants limit). For further information (as a guide only) please see the abortive fees table in the Gloucestershire Agents protocol.
Means Test	N/A
Land Charge	N/A
Conditions	Fees will not be eligible for payment under this grant unless the application cannot proceed due to circumstances beyond the control of either the applicant or the Council's DFG Service.

B2.9 Rapidly Progressing and Highly Debilitating Conditions	
Purpose	To assist persons with for example MND with specialised living aids to enable independent and safe living.
Eligible Applicant	Disabled persons with an Occupational Therapy referral stating a condition considered to be rapidly progressing and highly debilitating conditions such as Motor Neurone Disease (MND).
Eligible Works	As per mandatory DFG.
Amount of funding	Up to £15,000.
Means Test	No Means Test (see conditions for explanation)
Land Charge	Where the applicant is an owner-occupier and the grant value is over £5,000, a local land charge up to £10,000 may apply for 10 years.

<p>Conditions</p>	<p>In addition to standard grant conditions: -</p> <p>This element of discretionary funding recognises it is often the case people with MND want to continue to work during the early stages of the disease, where they may be assessed as having an excessive contribution which would lead to a NIL grant, compared to when they can no longer work, and an un-adapted home can make day to day activities very difficult to manage. This funding is only available to residents whose medical condition will significantly impact their financial circumstances and is most likely to benefit those still in work or with partners who work.</p> <p>Applications will only be accepted after the OT has consulted with their clinical lead for approval. For palliative conditions, where the appropriateness of the proposed work has been thoughtfully considered, can also be included, but may be subject to a revised grant limit.</p> <p>On receipt of a referral for a disabled person with a rapidly progressing and highly debilitating condition, their grant enquiry will be prioritised. If the disabled person is assessed as having a high contribution, which exceeds the eligible costs of a mandatory DFG, they will be offered discretionary funding for works up to £15,000. The grant applicant/disabled person will be required to privately fund the cost of any work exceeding the £15,000 limit. This includes any unforeseen/additional work identified after approval.</p>
	<p>Any professional fees will need to be included within the £15,000.</p> <p>A limit of £15,000 is expected to cover the cost of adaptations that can be delivered in the appropriate timeframe. Longer term adaptations, while beneficial, could not be completed in a short period of time.</p> <p>This grant is a “one-off” grant, but does not, prevent the disabled person making an application for mandatory grant assistance in the future.</p>

B2.10 Relocation Grant	
Purpose	A grant to help applicants with relocation costs of moving home, if adaptations to their current home through DFG, are deemed to not be necessary, appropriate, reasonable or practicable to adapt.
Eligible Applicant	Those eligible for Mandatory DFG. Any applications for this assistance will be supported by the Council working with an Occupational Therapist who have determined that options regarding adaptations at the current dwelling are either unachievable or can be delivered more cost effectively in a new dwelling.
Eligible Works	Eligible relocation expenses that could be considered on each case are: Estate agent fees; Solicitor costs; Survey costs; Stamp duty; Removal expenses; relevant professional fees and up to 2 months' rent for one property to cover void payments for new landlord.
Amount of funding	A discretionary top up can be considered above the Mandatory Grant Limit for applications if the move is within Gloucestershire. If outside of Gloucestershire this will be limited to £5,000 for relocation costs if the applicant is moving to a more suitable dwelling that's supported by the new local authority. The applicant will be expected to contact the local authority of the new home for further adaptations.
Means Test	No additional means test to the Mandatory DFG.

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<p>Land Charge</p>	<p>No land charge on this discretionary grant however a land charge may apply to a future mandatory DFG on the proposed property in accordance with the usual policy of placing these on cases over £5,000 up to a maximum of £10,000 for 10 years.</p>
<p>Conditions</p>	<p>In addition to standard grant conditions: -</p> <p>A grant is available to help the applicant to move if adaptations to their current home through DFG are determined not to be necessary, appropriate, reasonable and practicable and they are considering relocation to a property they intend to purchase or rent.</p> <p>Applicants must be 18 or over on the date the application is made and in the case of a disabled child, the parent(s) would make the application.</p> <p>Any application must be supported by a recommendation from the Occupation Therapist or Trusted Assessor.</p> <p>The Council and occupational therapist service must be satisfied that the proposed property either meets the needs of the disabled person or are satisfied that it can be adapted at a reasonable cost.</p> <p>Consideration may be given to a move outside of Gloucestershire, but this would require the agreement of the relevant local authority to consider any necessary adaptations before a relocation grant can be considered.</p> <p>Grants cannot be paid retrospectively. Assistance will not be given toward the purchase price of a new property.</p> <p>The Council will require at least two quotations from independent contractors that realistically reflect the cost of the eligible works/services provided.</p>

	If the move is aborted through the fault of the applicant, then costs will not be paid, and any costs already paid will be reclaimed from the applicant.
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B2.11 Adaptations support grant	
Purpose	To support or facilitate the completion of DFG works. A grant for necessary works that have been identified during the mandatory DFG adaptation and presents the disabled person with an additional and significant risk to health that impacts their medical condition.
Eligible Applicant	This assistance is for owner occupiers. The applicant must have lived in the property for 5 years prior to application and have made an application for a mandatory DFG.
Eligible Works	Examples of eligible works may include heating repairs or replacement; general repairs; safe access and roof, window and door repairs. For example – electrical upgrade works required for an electric shower to be installed, which may ordinarily be classed as a repair but without which the identified adaptation cannot be completed.
Amount of funding	£10,000



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Means Test	Statutory DFG means test will apply.
Land Charge	Where the applicant is an owner-occupier and the grant value is over £5,000, a local land charge up to £10,000 will apply for 10 years.
Conditions	In addition to standard grant conditions, only 1 application, in any 10-year period.



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Appendix C – How to Apply

How to access this service

Information on how to apply for a disabled facilities grant can be found on the Gloucestershire website: [Disabled Facilities Grants \(DFG\) | Gloucestershire County Council](#)

Step 1

Contact Adult helpdesk below to set up a visit and assessment by an Occupational Therapist. Grant assistance can only be considered once the relevant council has received a referral from an Occupational Therapist so the first step to making a grant application is to phone the relevant helpdesk below and set up an Occupational Therapist assessment to see if they think adaptations would be necessary to meet the disabled person's needs.

Adult Social Care Phone: 01452 426 868

Email: socialcare.enq@gloucestershire.gov.uk

Website: www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/adults-and-older-people

Children and families for disabled children (up to 19 years)

Phone: 01452 426 565

Email: childrenshelpdesk@gloucestershire.gov.uk

Website: www.ghc.nhs.uk/our-teams-and-services/children-and-young-people/physical-health/childrens-occupationaltherapy

Step 2

The Occupational Therapist will send the relevant Council a referral if they think adaptations are required to meet the medical needs of the disabled person.

Step 3

The Council's Grant Officer will contact the applicant to start the application process. However, if you require further information about DFGs and how to apply please contact: housingadaptations@fdean.gov.uk



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APPENDIX D - Clinical Prioritisation Form

Referral for assessment for Disabled Facility Grant		
Referred by: (Name, address, telephone)		For the attention of
Date referred to Occupational Therapy		
Assessment end date (date decided to refer for DFG)		
Complexity matrix identified by OT at initial referral:		<input type="checkbox"/> Targeted <input type="checkbox"/> Specialist
Adaptation Complexity		<input type="checkbox"/> Urgent and simple
		<input type="checkbox"/> Non urgent and simple
		<input type="checkbox"/> Urgent and complex
		<input type="checkbox"/> Non urgent and complex.
Joint Visit Required:		<input type="checkbox"/> YES
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO
NHS no:		Type of Tenure *:
Name of SU:		<input type="checkbox"/> Owner Occupier
DOB:		<input type="checkbox"/> Rented
Ethnicity:		<input type="checkbox"/> Council
Address:		<input type="checkbox"/> Private
Telephone:		<input type="checkbox"/> Housing Association
Email:		



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Whom to contact if different from above	Name of Housing Association:
<p>Pass-porting Benefits: <i>Adult applications only</i></p> <p>Income Support</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Income Based Job Seekers Allowance</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Income-based Employment and Support Allowance</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Guarantee Pension Credit</p> <p>Working Tax Credit or Child Tax Credit (with income less than £15,050)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Housing Benefit</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Universal Credit</p>	
<p>The above named is a disabled person within the meaning of the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996. I have assessed the above-named person's circumstances, and I am of the opinion that the following works are necessary and appropriate to meet the needs of the disabled person.</p>	
	Facilitating access by the disabled person who lives in the property to and from their dwelling.
	Making the dwelling safe for the disabled occupant and other people living with them
	Ensuring the disabled person has access to a room used or usable as the principal family room.
	Facilitating access by disabled occupant to, or providing a room used or usable for sleeping.
	Providing or improving access to the toilet, wash hand basin and bath (and/or shower).
	Adaptations to the kitchen to enable the disabled person to cook and prepare food independently.
	Improving or providing a heating system in the property which is suitable for the disabled person's needs.
	Adaptations to the heating, lighting or power controls to make it easier to use.
	To improve access and movement around the home to enable the disabled occupant to care for another person who normally lives with them.
	To allow access to garden



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<p>Occupational Therapist’s recommendations for relevant works that are necessary and appropriate to meet the assessed needs of the disabled occupant.</p> <p><i>Subject to agreement of District Council that work is reasonable and practical having regard to the age and condition of the property.</i></p> <p><i>(for example; wheelchair access to... level access to.... Access to suitable bathing facilities)</i></p>	
<p>Medical condition or disability relevant to the adaptation <i>(basic information which effects on function and support needed due to this)?</i></p>	
<p>Social Circumstances <i>:(including who assists the patient/ young person/child, housing situation and any communication difficulties and any risks)</i></p>	
<p>Specifications attached:</p>	<p>For stairlifts, Shower /drier toilet and ceiling track hoists</p>
	<p>Quotes attached:</p>
	<p>Quotes to follow:</p>