

Adult Services and Wellbeing
Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council

Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) Policy

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Policy Version Control

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Introduction

The Council recognises the growing challenges presented by an ageing population and the increasing number of children with a severe disability living longer and the demand this places on all services. Making changes to homes so they are more accessible and useable enables disabled children and adults to lead more independent lives. Adaptations and equipment can restore dignity, improve independence and safety and make life easier for both disabled people themselves and for their carers (family carers or care provider service staff). In addition, they can be crucial in avoiding the need for home care & support services, a move into care, reducing hospital admissions, or in enabling someone to leave hospital. The Council recognises the Social Model of Disability and, through the use of the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) and associated discretionary schemes aims to enable people to remain independent in their own home, or to relocate to a more suitable property, by removing or reducing barriers to independent living in the home.

This policy sets out the local housing interventions in place to assist people with adaptations in their homes using Disabled Facilities Grant funding, where they meet the eligibility criteria described later in this document. The key priorities are to meet the assessed eligible needs of older people, disabled people or families with disabled children, to emphasise prevention strategies, and assisting with hospital discharge.

In line with the independent [DFG Review 2018 Summary.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#) and [Disabled Facilities Grant \(DFG\) delivery: guidance for local authorities in England](#) Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council (CMBC) have adopted the recommended guiding principles for the assessment and installation of adaptations: -

- Need to retain (or restore) dignity
- Need to have values recognised
- Need for relief from pain, discomfort and danger
- Need to minimise barriers to independence
- Need for some element of choice
- Need for good communication as part of giving choice
- Need for light and warmth
- Needs of children; to provide for development and change; need for space
- Needs of other family members and of the family as a whole

This policy sets out how Calderdale MBC exercises its [statutory] duties with regard to home adaptations under the [Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#), its associated, pertinent welfare duties prescribed in The [Care Act 2014](#) and how it uses its powers under the [The Regulatory Reform \(Housing Assistance\) \(England and Wales\) Order 2002 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#) to offer a range of housing interventions to promote independent living and well-being.

Importantly, it aims to provide greater flexibility in how the DFG is used, whilst demonstrating transparent and consistent justification processes to help deliver wider strategic objectives in partnership with health, social care, and housing providers, together with projects to keep people warm, safe and well at home and to reduce bureaucracy in the grant's administration.

Legislative Framework

The Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) is a statutory and mandatory grant provision (i.e. you are entitled to one if you satisfy the conditions for it) established under Part 1 Chapter 1 of the [Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/68/section/1). The Act stipulates the purposes under which the DFG can or must be provided and outlines who is eligible for grant assistance and how the grant must be administered.

In addition to the 1996 Act, [The Regulatory Reform \(Housing Assistance\) \(England and Wales\) Order 2002 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2002/1200/made) (RRO) allows local authorities wide discretion to assist with housing in their locality. In 2008, the government extended the scope of the RRO to include the use of DFG money. This enables authorities to use DFG funding for the wider purposes set out in the RRO which can include a wide range of measures to help people live independently including assistive living technologies to support independence as well as other forms of assistance such as repairs or assistance to move. The ways this discretion will be exercised is outlined in the Discretionary Assistance Schemes section of this policy.

In addition, in relation to the needs of children, the provisions of the [Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1970/31/section/1) continue to apply.

The charges that can be made for the provision of Disabled Facilities Grants are laid out in the [The Housing Renewal Grants \(Services and Charges\) Order 1996 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1996/1200/made)

Under Section 343 of the [Armed Forces Act 2006 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/42/section/343), the Council must consider the Armed Forces Covenant when allocating disabled facilities grants and may offer special consideration for veterans in certain situations.

The [The Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996: Disabled Facilities Grant \(conditions relating to approval or payment of grant\) general consent 2008 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/145841/DFG_conditions_2008.pdf) gives housing authorities the discretion to impose a local land charge on a dwelling, if it is sold or otherwise disposed of within ten years of the certified date. The charge can only be placed on owner's applications where the amount of grant exceeds £5,000. The maximum charge is £10,000.

Local housing authorities in England have strategic responsibilities to consider housing conditions in their area including the need for new housing under section 8 of the [Housing Act 1985](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1985/68/section/8). As they assess housing needs and develop housing strategies, section 3 of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970 means they must consider the special needs of chronically sick and disabled persons.

Under [The Housing Act 2004](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/30/section/1), Local Authorities have a duty to keep housing conditions under review, including having regard to particular hazards that might be dangerous or prejudicial to health for certain vulnerable groups.

DFG funding is ringfenced within the local Better Care Fund (BCF) allocation in recognition of the importance of an integrated approach to housing, health and social care. As such, DFG spending must be in accordance with the local Better Care Fund Plan which is developed in line with [2023 to 2025 Better Care Fund Policy Framework](https://www.bettercarefund.gov.uk/)

As with all public authorities' duties, due regard is required to certain equality considerations when exercising our functions in line with [Public Sector Equality Duty: guidance for public authorities - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/public-sector-equality-duty-guidance-for-public-authorities) and [Equality Act 2010 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15)

Providing adaptations to properties involves extensive construction works, and as such the [Building Regulations 2010](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukreg/2010/154) and its associated [Approved Documents - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/approved-documents) often apply to the works we carry out. [The Construction \(Design and Management\) Regulations 2015 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukreg/2015/125) apply to all construction works and depending on the nature of the works carried out the [Planning Act 2008 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/15), [Party Wall etc. Act 1996](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/10), [Planning \(Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas\) Act 1990 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/15) and [The Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukreg/2012/161) may also apply.

With the provision of lifting equipment, [The Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukreg/1998/154) and [The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukreg/1998/154) may apply to adaptations provided.

While the main legislation governing Disabled Facilities Grant works is the 1996 Act, The [Care Act 2014 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/19) is also relevant to the provision of DFG works. The bringing together of health, social care and housing is intrinsic to the Care Act 2014 and the responsibilities to promote individual wellbeing and preventing needs for care and support are a core purpose for the provision of disabled adaptations. However, it is important to remember that criteria for the provision of DFG works is that the work is *necessary and appropriate* and *reasonable and practicable*, and eligibility criteria from the Care Act 2014 should not be applied.

Strategic Alignment

The provision of disabled adaptations in Calderdale and the development of this policy aligns with key corporate strategies:

Calderdale Council's Vision 2034 states that: -

In 2034 Calderdale will be an enterprising place, full of opportunity, where we can all live a larger life.

We will always be kind and welcoming. Everyone will have reason to be full of hope and this will enable us to thrive and get us through testing times.

We will be celebrated for our distinctive heritage, nature and creativity that everyone can enjoy.

[Calderdale's Corporate Plan 2024-2026](#) sets out how Vision 2034 will be achieved and the key priorities of the Council, which are Reducing Inequalities, Climate Action and Strong, Thriving Towns and Places and A Sustainable and Effective Council. In particular, the provision of disabled adaptations aims to help reduce inequalities through the removal or reduction of physical barriers within the home and facilitating access to the wider community, while the tenure neutral nature of Disabled Facilities Grants ensures they are available to everyone who is eligible. Through our commitment to recycle lifting equipment wherever

possible, along with our commitment to replace all of our work vehicles with electric vans, we are also working towards the Council's commitment to Climate Action.

The use of the DFG to provide adaptations for children helps to fulfil Calderdale Council's commitment that 'All children and young people are healthy and stay safe at home, in school and in the community.' As part of Calderdale Council's 'Ageing Well' strategy, the DFG helps to allow people to keep living in their homes for as long as they want to.

Calderdale Council's [Calderdale Housing Strategy 2021](#) feeds into Vision 2034, and as a Housing related grant, the DFG forms a part of this strategy. As part of the strategy's commitment to provide 114 new homes for elderly/disabled persons per year to 2032/33 the Accessible Homes Agency will continue to link with our Housing colleagues to provide information on local demand for adapted/adaptable properties, to be involved in the design of these properties to ensure they are future proofed to allow necessary adaptations and also the flexible use of the DFG to help fund these adaptations where eligible tenants are identified.

Other Calderdale Council strategies that are relevant to the provision of disabled adaptations for adults and children include [Calderdale Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2027](#), [Ageing Well Plan for 2023 to 2027 \(calderdale.gov.uk\)](#)

The DFG is a ringfenced grant administered via the Better Care Fund. Calderdale Council must produce a Better Care Fund Plan in line with the [2023 to 2025 Better Care Fund policy framework](#). Calderdale Council's [Better Care Fund Plan 2023 \(calderdale.gov.uk\)](#) sets down how the DFG will be used to bring health, housing and social care together to support people living in their own home. The plan describes how the Local Authority's must, further to the Care and Support (Preventing Needs for Care and Support) Regulations 2014 regulations under the Care Act 2014 provide minor adaptations costing £1000 or less free of charge and through it's Handyperson Service will help to support timely discharge from hospital; how disabled adaptations will continue to be provided to people's homes via the DFG and how the DFG can be used to provide bespoke adaptations to people living in Extra Care schemes. The DFG is instrumental in the Better Care Fund vision of supporting people to live healthy, independent, and dignified lives and in particular to enable people to stay well, safe and independent at home for longer.

The relevant legislation and guidance are:

[Care and support statutory guidance - GOV.UK](#) paragraphs 2.60 and 8.14

[The Care and Support \(Preventing Needs for Care and Support\) Regulations 2014 - Regulation 2](#)

[The Care and Support \(Preventing Needs for Care and Support\) Regulations 2014 - Regulation 4](#)

[The Care and Support \(Charging and Assessment of Resources\) Regulations 2014 - Regulation 3](#)

Equality Impact Assessment

The Equality Impact Assessment is included in the supporting documents.

Measuring the Outcomes of Adaptations

The aim of home adaptations is to maintain or restore the use of the home so that a person can regain or retain their independence and carry on living in the community.

CMBC aims to measure outcomes effectively and demonstrate the transformation that can occur in peoples' lives when they feel in control of their home environment.

Outcomes will be measured in the following ways:-

- Major Adaptations will be reviewed by an Occupational Therapist approximately 3 months after completion of the works, to give the user time to adjust to the adaptations. This review will focus on whether the adaptations meet the assessed needs of the user and if the adaptations have resulted in a reduction of care needs. The reviews will be either over the telephone, or in person if necessary.
- A customer satisfaction questionnaire will be completed at the same time, with any urgent issues fed back to the Technical Officer and the date stored
- Records will be kept of complaints and compliments and this information used to improve the service, providing a picture of what we do well and where we need to improve.
- The information gathered annually for the Government's DELTA report will be used to measure Calderdale's performance against Stages 2, 3 and 4 of the best practice target timescales laid out in [Disabled Facilities Grant \(DFG\) delivery: guidance for local authorities in England](#) section 4.16

Mandatory Provision of Disabled Facilities Grants

Disabled Facilities Grant Purposes

Under **The Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996**, the following works attract mandatory grant assistance in principle:

To facilitate access & use of, by a disabled occupant: -

- a) to and from the dwelling;
- b) to a room used as the principal family room;
- c) to a room used or usable for sleeping;
- d) to a room in which there is a lavatory;
- e) to a room in which there is a bath or shower (or both);
- f) to a room in which there is a wash-hand basin;

In addition: -

- g) making the dwelling safe for a disabled occupant and others living there;
- h) facilitating preparation and cooking of food by a disabled occupant;
- i) improving the heating system to meet the needs of a disabled occupant, or providing a heating system suitable to meet their needs;
- j) facilitating use by a disabled occupant of power, light or heat, or providing additional means of control;
- k) facilitating access and movement by a disabled occupant around a dwelling to enable him/her to care for a person who normally resides in the dwelling and needs such care;
- l) facilitating safe access to and from a garden for a disabled occupant.

These are referred to as 'the purposes'

Eligibility

As per the **Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996**, to be eligible for a mandatory DFG,

- The disabled person to whom the works relate 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.
- Their impairment must be substantial and long term.
- The applicant must have, or proposes to acquire, an owner's interest in every parcel of land on which the relevant works are to be carried out (the application can be made when there is an intention to acquire an owners interest but the grant cannot be approved until they take ownership) and must provide an owners certificate stating this, or
- The applicant is a tenant and must provide a tenants certificate stating this.
- For a tenant's application, an owners certificate must also be provided by the landlord
- A leaseholder is classed as an owner if more than 5 years remain on the term if the lease. If the term is less than 5 years or the lease is part of a shared ownership arrangement, then they should be treated as a tenant.

- Tenants must have permission from their landlord to carry out the works
- A landlord may also make an application as the owner of the dwelling. This has two significant implications:
 - the means test does not apply
 - nomination rights can be secured under grant conditions to ensure that the property is relet to another disabled person if there is a change of tenancy within the grant condition period (5 years)
- The property must be their only or main residence
- The property must be in a reasonable state of repair
- They must intend to live in the property during the grant period (which is currently 5 years) and this must be evidenced in either the owner's or tenant's certificate
- Be over 18 years of age at the date of the application (Applications on behalf of children or young people aged 17 years and under must be made by an appropriate adult)
- Where adaptations are required on common parts of a building, they must have the power or duty to carry out the works and where appropriate have the owner's consent in writing to carrying out the works.
- Not be ineligible, by virtue of the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996, regulations made under the Act or any other enactment

In order to approve an application, the Council must identify which of the 'purposes' the disabled applicant needs to meet and then identify if there are any 'relevant works' that will meet this purpose, they must then be satisfied that the works are both 'necessary and appropriate' for the needs of the disabled person and 'reasonable and practicable' in relation to the age and condition of the property. If the relevant works meet all 3 of these stages, they become the 'eligible works'.

- In considering if the works are 'necessary and appropriate' to meet the disability needs, the Accessible Homes Agency must consult with the Social Services department; as such, an assessment by a suitably qualified & competent professional (usually an Occupational Therapist) is required. An incremental approach will be taken when assessing the applicant's needs, with the suitability of equipment and minor adaptations considered before determining that a DFG is a necessary and appropriate solution. A copy of the Disabled Adaptations Criteria and DFG Priority Criteria will be provided where a private Occupational Therapy referral is provided to ensure the works are necessary and appropriate, meet the Council's criteria for providing adaptations and are assigned an appropriate priority as per the criteria outlined in this policy. Private OT referrals may be referred to a Social Care OT to review if the referral doesn't appear to meet the criteria.

- On receipt of a referral recommending & justifying those adaptations being submitted to the council's Accessible Homes Agency (AHA), the AHA then determine if the work is 'reasonable and practicable' in relation to the age and condition of the property as well as being 'necessary and appropriate'. Properties might not be considered suitable for adaptation if the property is in a poor or dangerous condition, if previous building works have not been in line with and approved by Planning or Building Regulations, if the property is overcrowded or if the property size, type, construction, location or layout are such that it is not reasonable or practicable to adapt. This will be ascertained by a Technical Officer.

The application will be assessed using the DFG Approval Tool (see supporting documents) and the decision as to whether or not the grant is approved will be recorded and communicated to the applicant.

Test of Resources

Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants are means tested for adults unless they are in receipt of certain means tested benefits, as per [The Housing Renewal Grants Regulations 1996 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk). On receipt of the referral CMBC will write to the applicant requesting either confirmation of eligible benefits or that the disabled person and their spouse/partner complete a preliminary test of resources if applicable. The preliminary means test is carried out at the beginning of the process to allow applicants to make an informed choice as to whether they wish to apply for a Disabled Facilities Grant. Landlord applications are not means tested.

Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants are not means tested for children under 18 years of age or a Young Person up to their 20th birthday who is in full time (at least 12 hours per week of teaching), ordinary (standard education as provided by school or similar establishment), non-advanced (to GCE A level or equivalent) education.

Where the cost of the proposed adaptations exceeds the mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant limit of £30,000 or the maximum available grant after the means test contribution has been deducted, this cost will need to be met by the applicant. Discretionary top-up funding may be available, subject to available budget and will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Discretionary assistance sits outside of Mandatory DFG test of resources legislation, as per [Disabled Facilities Grant \(DFG\) delivery: guidance for local authorities in England](#) section 3.34 . If an application is made for discretionary top-up funding on an owner-occupied property, the property owner will be subject to a test of resources if the proposed adaptations will significantly increase the value of the property. This will generally relate to the provision of an extension, loft conversion or garage conversion but may also apply in other cases, for example significant reconfiguration of a property or significant garden or landscaping works. Subject to availability, the Council may be able to offer a Home Appreciation Loan to homeowners to cover this cost; if this product is available, the applicant can request further information from the Accessible Homes Agency. Where the disabled person is unable to access private, discretionary or loan funding, the Council may have a duty to assist, as laid out in [Disabled Facilities Grant \(DFG\) delivery: guidance for local authorities in England](#) section 2.26 and 2.48.

Grant Limit

At present, the minimum available mandatory DFG funding is £1,000 and the maximum £30,000 as set out in the [The Disabled Facilities Grants \(Maximum Amounts and Additional Purposes\) \(England\) Order 2008 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#). The maximum available grant includes VAT where applicable; some disabled adaptations works are zero rated for VAT as per the [Reliefs from VAT for disabled and older people \(VAT Notice 701/7\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#), the responsibility for and decision to charge VAT lies with the contractor.

Any funding for works that meet mandatory DFG criteria that is additional to the £30,000 limit (or grant limit after the deduction of any assessed contribution) will be considered Discretionary funding. Any funding for works that fall outside of the mandatory remit of The Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 will be considered Discretionary funding. Any funding for works where the Test of Resources is waived will be considered

Discretionary funding. Any works that fall under the £1000 minimum DFG limit will be considered Minor Works and are not covered within this policy.

All Discretionary funding is subject to the availability of funding.

The Accessible Homes Agency does not currently apply a fee directly to individual grants for administering the Grant, there are though occasions when the services of other professionals are required including structural engineers, land searches, architectural consultants and planning advisors and the fees for these services can be charged to the Grant.

There is no direct charge to the applicant for assessments undertaken by health and social care staff. Should a person use their own appointed assessor, the cost of this work can be reclaimed through the Grant if a suitable assessment is provided.

Payment of Grant

As per **The Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996**, the Council cannot approve a grant for works that have already begun unless they are satisfied there is a good reason for this. The council may exclude the cost of works completed prior to grant approval from the available grant figure. Grant cannot be paid for works that have been completed prior to grant approval.

As per The Act, the grant may be paid—

- (a) in whole after the completion of the eligible works, or
- (b) in part by instalments as the works progress and the balance after completion of the works.

As such, the grant cannot be used to pay deposits or 'up front' payments prior to works commencing, the grant can only pay for completed works.

Payment is usually to the contractor carrying out the works, on receipt of a valid invoice and all necessary certification (eg. Electrical certificates, Building Control completion etc.). In some instances, payment can be made to the applicant with prior agreement to reimburse for items they have purchased or contractors they have paid as part of the eligible works. Proof of such payment is required prior to reimbursement.

As per The Act, grant cannot be used to pay an invoice from an applicant or a member of their family.

Where an owner occupier has given a signed undertaking to occupy a property as his/her principal residence after completion of the assisted works for a period of time, and if they cease to do so during that time, they may be required to repay on demand to the council the total amount of Assistance paid out.

Where a landlord or owner has given a signed undertaking that the property will be available for letting/residing for a period specified after completion of the assisted works, and if the landlord or owner ceases to make the relevant property available for letting/residing during

the specified period then the landlord or owner may be required to repay on demand to the council the total amount of assistance paid out.

The Council may if it deems necessary, in circumstances where resources become limited and/ or demand increases significantly, place referrals for potential applicants for assistance on a waiting list in order of the date of initial contact with Social Services in relation to the Disabled Facilities Grant purpose, prior to being invited to make their application for grant assistance. In such circumstances the potential applicant will be issued a letter explaining their being placed on a waiting list and will then receive further updates on a cyclical basis no later than every six months. The Council will however give priority to referrals that are deemed to be of an urgent nature as determined by the Occupational Therapy Referral.

Local Land Charges

Under **The Disabled Facilities Grant (Condition relating to approval or payment of grant) General Consent 2008**, the Council has the discretion to impose a local land charge on a dwelling if it is sold or otherwise disposed of within ten years of the certified date to recoup the cost of adaptations. The charge can only be placed on owner's applications where the amount of grant exceeds £5,000. The maximum charge is £10,000 on works funded under the mandatory DFG of £30,000.

The council will exercise this right for owner applications where an adaptation will significantly increase the value of a property, this will generally relate to the provision of an extension, loft conversion or garage conversion but may also apply in other cases, for example significant reconfiguration of a property or significant garden or landscaping works. A formal process will be developed to facilitate this.

Where a land charge is to be applied, this will be discussed with the applicant (and property owner if this is not the same person) prior to completing the DFG application.

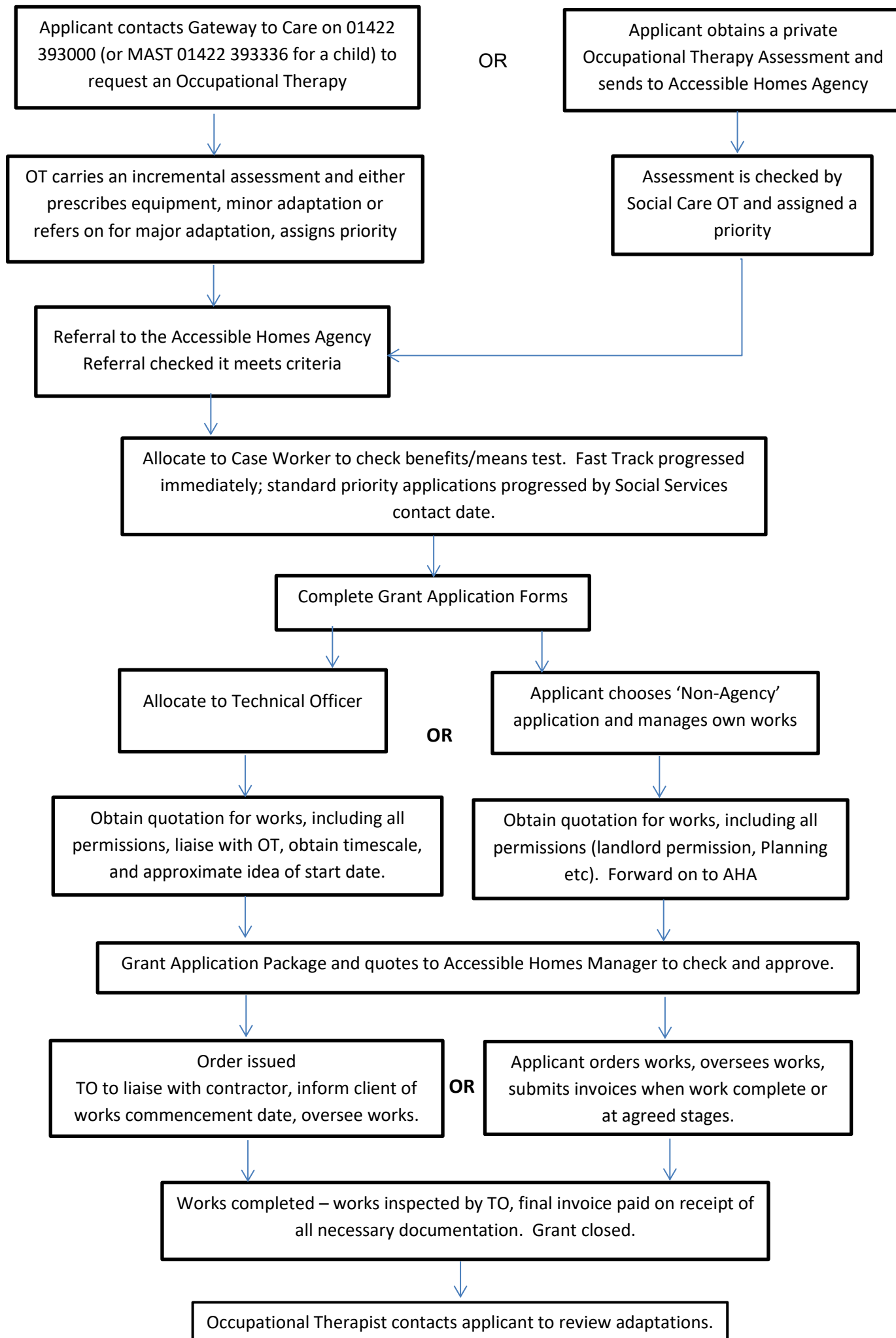
If a dwelling is sold or disposed of within ten years, the Council must consider whether or not it is reasonable to demand repayment or part repayment of the charge taking into account:

- 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;
- whether the sale will enable the recipient of the grant to provide care to a disabled person

There may be situations where it is not appropriate to apply a land charge, for example where the property is in negative equity and the Council may waive the right to apply a land charge.

There is no maximum charge on works funded under discretionary schemes, so any costs above the mandatory DFG limit of £30,000 may be subject to the land charge on top of the allowed £10,000 or the Council may offer a Home Appreciation Loan, both are subject to the availability of funds.

Accessible Homes Agency Major Works Application Process



Discretionary Assistance Schemes under the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) Order, [England & Wales] 2002

Under the **Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) Order, [England & Wales] 2002** Councils can exercise their powers to provide assistance outside of the mandatory DFG framework. This can include works that don't come under the remit of mandatory DFG and also streamlining access to statutory DFGs by speeding up the application process and/or removing the requirement for a Test of Resources. Discretionary schemes may be provided either under schemes created to target certain situations or may be determined on a case-by-case basis via the Adult Services and Wellbeing Directorate Leadership Team.

Discretionary Assistance Schemes are available where funds and resources permit and must not negatively affect the Council's ability to provide Mandatory DFGs. Where funds or resources are limited, Discretionary Assistance Schemes may be paused or removed, a formal process will facilitate this. Discretionary Assistance Schemes may use their own application forms separate to the mandatory DFG application form.

The eligibility criteria and application process for discretionary schemes will be the same as for Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant applications unless specifically stated otherwise or in exceptional circumstances agreed by the Adaptations Panel.

Scheme Details

Internal Lifting Equipment Provision and Replacement

Internal lifting equipment e.g. stair lifts, through floor lifts and ceiling track hoists are now readily recyclable (either for re-use or parts) and therefore provides substantial cost savings to the Disabled Facilities Grant Funding as well as having a positive environmental impact. Lifting equipment reduces falls, strain and injury to carers and reduces care costs which provides cost savings to both the Council and NHS.

The maximum grant is £30,000 and is not means tested.

Should a person be assessed as having eligible needs for which adaptations additional to lifting equipment are recommended, then the provision of these items will be removed from any calculation required for the means testing of a DFG.

Wash/Dry WC Provision and Replacement

Wash/Dry WCs are recyclable (either for re-use or parts) and can provide cost savings to the Disabled Facilities Grant Funding as well as having a positive environmental impact. Provision of wash/dry WCs increase independence and dignity and can reduce the need for carers, which can reduce care costs which provides cost savings to both the Council and NHS.

The maximum grant is £30,000 and is not means tested. This grant is limited to the provision of one wash/dry WC within a property.

Should a person be assessed as having eligible needs for which adaptations additional to a wash/dry WC are recommended, then the provision of these items will be removed from any calculation required for the means testing of a DFG.

Mechanical Door Openers to Dwelling Main Entrance Door

Where a person is physically unable to independently exit their property due to being unable to open and close the door, the provision of a mechanical door opener can greatly increase independence and reduce the need for care.

The maximum grant is £30,000 and is not means tested. This grant is limited to the main entrance door of the dwelling only, it does not apply to internal doors or communal doors.

Should a person be assessed as having eligible needs for which adaptations additional to a door opener are recommended, then the provision of these items will be removed from any calculation required for the means testing of a DFG.

Lifting Equipment and Wash/Dry WC Removal

To facilitate the recycling of lifting equipment, we will remove equipment previously installed via DFG to either re-use or strip for parts. We will make good to the fabric of floor and ceiling where through floor lifts are removed and replace Wash/dry WCs with standard white WCs. We will not make good to disturbed décor or floor coverings.

Discretionary Funding in Excess of the DFG Maximum Amount

Increasingly, the cost of recommended adaptation works exceed the limit of the £30,000 grant.

These requests may be eligible for additional funding through a discretionary grant. Discretionary grants of up to £10,000 are at the discretion of the Accessible Homes Agency Manager. Requests for additional Discretionary funding in-excess of £10,000 are to be submitted to the Directorate Leadership Team meeting for consideration, which is held monthly.

All grant requests for Discretionary Funding are to be submitted in writing to the panel and formal decisions recorded. All notifications to be issued within a month of the date of the panel.

These grants will be means tested in line with the main grant and in the case of works that add substantial value to a property, for example extension, loft conversions and major landscaping works the property owner may be means tested.

Appeals can be submitted by the DFG applicant to the Director of Adult Services and Wellbeing should the request for Discretionary Funding be declined. If the person or their representative is not satisfied with the outcome of the appeal, they will be provided with contact details of the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

Discretionary Funding Where the Applicant is Unable to Pay the Means Test

Occasionally, where an applicant has been assessed as having a Means Test contribution to pay, the applicant is unable to pay this amount.

These requests may be eligible for funding through a discretionary grant if the applicant can demonstrate that they genuinely are unable (as opposed to unwilling) to pay the assessed contribution. Discretionary grants of up to £10,000 are at the discretion of the Accessible Homes Agency Manager. Requests for additional Discretionary funding in-excess of £10,000 are to be submitted to the Directorate Leadership Team meeting for consideration, which is held monthly.

All grant requests for Discretionary Funding are to be submitted in writing to the panel and formal decisions recorded. All notifications to be issued within a month of the date of the panel. Decisions are made on a case-by-case basis. These grants will be means tested in line with the main grant.

Appeals can be submitted by the DFG applicant to the Director of Adult Services and Wellbeing should the request for Discretionary Funding be declined. If the person or their representative is not satisfied with the outcome of the appeal, they will be provided with contact details of the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

Hospital Discharge Grants - to support any older or disabled person who has assessed eligible needs, being discharged from hospital, this includes any older person or disabled person being discharged from intermediate care.

The Hospital Discharge Grant provides adaptations essential to assist people to return to their own homes. These works will mainly include access ramps, door widening, stairlifts, through floor lifts and ceiling track hoists and other adaptations that have been assessed to be both 'necessary & appropriate' and 'reasonable and practicable' to provide within a suitable timeframe to facilitate discharge home, &/or to enhance the sustainability of a discharge where interim temporary solutions such as being based downstairs or use of a mobile hoist are not feasible / possible.

Eligibility for the Hospital Discharge Grant requires an assessment by a suitably qualified & competent professional - usually an Occupational Therapist - from which it is identified that the adaptations are 'necessary and appropriate' to meet assessed needs and are essential to facilitate discharge. The resulting Major Adaptations Report to the council's Accessible Homes Agency is required to provide the reasoning, option appraisal and a recommendation for adaptations.

The maximum Grant is £30,000 and is not means tested.

This grant will not be used to fund adaptations that have been requested that will not prevent discharge.

Adaptations Where the Referral Was Made Prior to a Child Turning 18

Where an Occupational Therapy Referral is received 6 months or more prior to the child's 18th birthday, that application will be treated as child's application and will not be means tested at the time of approving the grant.

Relocation Grants - to support people who would be eligible for a DFG where it is more practical or cost effective for them to move rather than remain in their current property.

On occasion, the outcome recommendation of an assessment may be relocation rather than adaptation of the current property. In such circumstances, the assessor will submit a formal Relocations recommendation to the Accessible Homes Agency. This may also be requested directly by the applicant.

On occasion a property is uneconomical or unfeasible to adapt to meet a person's assessed need. This may be due to its layout, construction, ownership or planning issues.

In either of these instances a Relocation Grant may be available to support people eligible for a DFG with a move to an alternative more suitable property or if the proposed property could be more easily and economically adapted if the cost of moving is a barrier to their relocation.

This grant is held by the Council and used to fund items including:

- Removal Costs
- Reasonable provision of carpets and curtains.
- The carrying out of some simple preparation works such as fitting curtain tracks, building furniture and cleaning.
- Deposit/bond on rented properties where other sources of funding are not accessible.

Normal DFG eligibility conditions apply to the Relocation Grant. The Grant will be held by the Council and submitted invoices paid direct or costs reimbursed.

The Relocation Grant for any individual is only accessible every five years unless exceptional circumstances occur.

A relocation Grant may also be offered to assist a tenant in an adapted/adaptable property who does not need the facilities to move out to allow a disabled applicant to move into the property.

This Grant has a maximum amount of £5,000 and is not means tested. The grant is only available to applicants moving from a property within Calderdale to a more suitable property within Calderdale which results in either the removal or reduction of DFG costs, it will not be available where a person moves to a property that requires adaptations more extensive than the property they currently live in, or if their current property is adequately adapted and they are relocating through personal choice.

Essential Adaptations to support End of Life Care (End of Life Care Adaptations Grant) - to support any person being cared for at home at the end of their life.

The End-of-Life Care Adaptations Grant provides funding for adaptations to assist people to be cared for at home towards the end of their life. These works can include, for example

access ramps, door widening, stairlifts, through floor lifts, ceiling track hoists, and other adaptations that are considered essential to support end of life care at home.

“End of Life” is defined as someone who’s life expectancy is less than 12 months. A person may not necessarily meet this definition if they are receiving Palliative Care and have a life expectancy of longer than 12 months, have a degenerative neurological condition (expected to live for 12 months+), are undergoing treatment for cancer, or receiving outpatient hospice care.

Eligibility for the End-of-Life Care Adaptations Grant requires an assessment by a suitably qualified & competent professional - usually an Occupational Therapist - from which it is identified that the adaptations are ‘necessary and appropriate’ to meet assessed needs. The referrer may seek medical evidence as to the person’s prognosis. The resulting Major Adaptations Report to the council’s Accessible Homes Agency is required to provide the reasoning, option appraisal and a recommendation for adaptations.

The Accessible Homes Agency (AHA) will thereafter be responsible for determining whether or not the recommended adaptations are deemed ‘reasonable and practicable’. Wherever the recommended works are regarded by AHA as not being reasonable and practicable, this will be discussed further with the referrer.

The End-of-Life Care Adaptations Grant is not subject to a Means Test and the works will be prioritised as Fast Track. The maximum Grant is £30,000.

The grant will not be used to fund adaptations that are not essential to meet the applicant’s needs and the assessor must take into account the level of disruption the adaptations are likely to create and determine if this would be detrimental to the applicant. Major bathroom adaptation would not usually be considered essential and alternative bathing solutions should be considered instead.

Essential Adaptations to support Rapidly Deteriorating Conditions (Rapidly Deteriorating Conditions Adaptations Grant) - to support any person living with a rapidly deteriorating condition.

The Rapidly Deteriorating Conditions Adaptations Grant provides for funding of adaptations to assist people to be cared for at home as their condition worsens rapidly towards the terminal phase. These works can include, for example, access ramps, door widening, stairlifts, through floor lifts, ceiling track hoists, and other adaptations that are considered essential to support end of life care at home.

“Rapidly Deteriorating” is defined as someone who has a medical condition that has entered or is soon anticipated to enter a terminal phase. Someone may not necessarily meet this definition if they have a degenerative neurological condition that is slowly progressing, are undergoing treatment for cancer, or receiving outpatient hospice care.

Eligibility for the Rapidly Deteriorating Conditions Adaptations Grant requires an assessment by a suitably qualified & competent professional - usually an Occupational Therapist - from which it is identified that the adaptations are ‘necessary and appropriate’ to meet assessed needs. The referrer may seek medical evidence as to the person’s prognosis. The resulting

Major Adaptations Report to the council's Accessible Homes Agency is required to provide the reasoning, option appraisal and a recommendation for adaptations.

The Accessible Homes Agency (AHA) will thereafter be responsible for determining whether or not the recommended adaptations are deemed 'reasonable and practicable'. Wherever the recommended works are regarded by AHA as not being reasonable and practicable, this will be discussed further with the referrer.

The Rapidly Deteriorating Conditions Adaptations Grant is not subject to a Means Test and the works will be prioritised as Fast Track. The maximum Grant is £30,000.

The grant will not be used to fund adaptations that are not essential to meet the applicant's needs and the assessor must take into account the level of disruption the adaptations are likely to create and determine if this would be detrimental to the applicant.

The grant cannot be used to fund anything that should be funded through Continued Healthcare Funding.

Military Compensation

Where Military Compensation has been awarded, this will not be taken into account as income for the purpose of the DFG Means Test in line with the Royal British Legion's 'Credit Their Service Campaign'.

Offsetting costs of works

It is recognised that people may from time to time wish to provide adaptations for themselves or family members in an alternative appropriate way.

Funding offered through the above Grants where appropriate may be used in this way. Any request to offset the cost towards an alternative scheme will be considered by the Accessible Homes Agency, provided it meets the assessed eligible needs of the disabled person and on the understanding that any higher costs shall be funded by the person or other family members. The works must meet the recommendations in the Major Adaptations referral and funds will not be normally paid until the works are complete. Interim payments may be considered where the total cost of the works exceeds £10,000 on receipt of an appropriate invoice and with evidence that the work invoiced has been completed satisfactorily. The Council will retain at least the final 10% of payment until all works are complete, all necessary certification has been received, and the adaptations is occupied by the intended user.

Normal DFG eligibility conditions apply to Offset Cost Grants and these grants are subject to the same Means Test as a mandatory DFG. If the recommended adaptation in the OT report is technically feasible and would have been non-means tested e.g. Lifting equipment, the offset cost alternative will be means tested if not for an exempt item. For example, if the recommendation was for a through floor lift and bathroom conversion and a Technical Officer deems this technically feasible, the bathroom works would attract the usual means test criteria but the lifting equipment would be exempt, however if the applicant's preferred scheme is an extension to the property, the usual cost of providing a through floor lift and bathroom would be the eligible grant funding but the usual DFG means test criteria will be applied to the whole of the works and a local land charge may be applied.

At least two estimates for the work are required and a full breakdown of costs on the estimates will be required before works can be approved and invoices will need to be fully itemised before payment is approved.

Where the cost of a preferred scheme is more than the maximum available DFG funding, or if the works require significantly more technical input, for example extensions and loft conversions, the works must be procured via the 'non-agency' route whereby the applicant obtains their own plans, permissions and quotes and manages the project themselves.

Top-up equity loans may be available to fund costs above the maximum DFG funding; the applicant can discuss this option with the Accessible Homes Agency.

Offset Cost grants will be progressed in order of priority and Social Services contact date in line with all other grants.

Adaptation of New Build Social Housing and Refurbishment Schemes

Where a new build social housing scheme, in conjunction with Calderdale Council's Housing Strategy Team, earmarks certain plots as accessible properties with nomination rights for the Accessible Homes Team, discretionary funding can be used to fund any adaptations over and above the standard Building Regulations M4(3) requirement unit cost of that plot, even if a specific tenant has not yet been nominated for the plot. The Accessible Homes Agency must be involved in the design of these adaptations and satisfied they will meet the needs of their client base. This grant is not means tested.

Where a Social Landlord is carrying out refurbishment works and a tenant has an assessed need for a disabled adaptation, discretionary funding can be used to fund any cost over and above the standard unit cost to make the refurbishment meet their assessed need. An Occupational Therapy referral is required in these cases.

Service and Repair of Lifting Equipment and Major Assistive Technology

All lifting equipment and major assistive technology is purchased with an extended service and repair warranty through the DFG, with the exception of End of Life care where warranties are 12 or 24 months, however, older equipment and equipment outside of its warranty is maintained until no longer viable through either our service and repair contract in the case of lifting equipment or repair by the manufacturer for equipment such as door openers and wash/dry WCs. This prolongs the life of the equipment and reduces or delays the need for successive DFG applications, providing substantial cost savings to the Disabled Facilities Grant Funding. Salvaged parts from removed equipment are used where appropriate which has a positive environmental impact and links with the Council's commitment to reduce and recycle where possible.

When the item is no longer viable to repair (either technically or financially), it is replaced, if still required, at no cost to the client through a new non-means tested lift replacement grant and stripped for parts where appropriate

Minor Works Plus Scheme

The Handyperson Service carries out the Council's statutory duty to provide small adaptations under £1000 outside of the scope of this policy and the Disabled Facilities Grant. Works costing over £1000 come under the remit of Disabled Facilities Grant works and as such follow the same criteria including grant application and means test. Works costing between £1000 and £3000 are often falls prevention works such as external rails, small ramps and shallow steps, children's safety adaptations such as safety locks and window protection or hoists which reduce the need for care. Any works not prioritised as Fast Track can wait a long time, increasing the risk of falls. Even when prioritised as fast Track, the grant sign-up process can be lengthy, and a means test contribution may result in works being cancelled by the applicant. The Minor Works Plus scheme treats small adaptations between £1000 and £3000 as Minor Adaptations which allows for these works to be carried out quickly with reduced bureaucracy.

Adaptations in a second property where a child's parents have shared custody

DFG is only eligible at main residence (usually where child benefit is paid) – discretionary powers may be used to provide adaptations at second property where this is deemed necessary and appropriate. CMBC will consider each request on a case-by-case basis.

'Top Slicing' the DFG allocation to pay eligible Agency Fees

Under the Housing Renewal Grants (Services and Charges) Order 1996

2. - (1) The services and charges specified for the purposes of section 2(3)(b) of the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 (meaning of preliminary or ancillary services and charges) are those for which the applicant is liable in respect of—

- (a) confirmation, if sought by the local authority, that the applicant has an owner's interest,
- (b) technical and structural surveys,
- (c) design and preparation of plans and drawings,
- (d) preparation of schedules of relevant works,
- (e) assistance in completing forms,
- (f) advice on financing the costs of the relevant works which are not met by grant;
- (g) applications for building regulations approval (including application fee and preparation of related documents),
- (h) applications for planning permission (including application fee and preparation of related documents),
- (i) applications for listed building consent (including application fee and preparation of related documents),

- (j) applications for conservation area consent (including application fee and preparation of related documents),
- (k) obtaining of estimates,
- (l) advice on contracts,
- (m) consideration of tenders,
- (n) supervision of the relevant works,
- (o) disconnection and reconnection of electricity, gas, water or drainage utilities where this is necessitated by the relevant works, and
- (p) payment of contractors.

In the majority of grant applications, the above services are provided by the Council's Technical Officers and Caseworkers. Were a percentage fee to be attached to each individual DFG, the amount of available funding for the applicant would be reduced by the amount of the fee. Instead, the Council will 'top slice' the DFG allocation to cover the cost of providing these services, allowing individual DFG applications to receive the full eligible grant allocation.

Abortive Fees Grant

Where works have been carried out and the works do not result in a completed DFG, for example investigative works, Planning Applications, Architect fees, Structural Engineer fees, trial holes or when the applicant dies while the work is in progress, this grant can cover the costs incurred.

One off projects to target specific issues

There may be occasions where 'one off' projects may be the best way to address specific issues. Where this is the case, a Business Case will be submitted for approval to the Directorate Leadership Team and, if approved, the schemes will come under the remit of discretionary schemes under the RRO. Examples of such projects could include bulk tendering projects to clear a backlog of cases or projects to target specific issues or demographics.

Further discretionary schemes may be added, or schemes removed or paused by way of Directorate Leadership Team approval which will be appended to this document.

Monitoring and Review of this Policy

This policy will be monitored and reviewed in line with other relevant Council policies, at least every two years, and where significant legislative or other changes occur the Council will consider whether relevant provisions should be incorporated into or removed from this policy.

Comments, Compliments and Complaints

If you are unhappy with the outcome of a decision then you can ask the person who assessed you to look at the decision again. If you are still unhappy you can speak to a team manager and if you are still unhappy after that you can access the complaints process.

Information on complaints, compliments and comments can be found on the Council's Internet page: [Complaints and compliments | Calderdale Council](#)

Hard copies of the Comments, Compliments and Complaints Leaflet are available, including versions in large print, or in another language. For further information regarding the process contact the Complaints and Compliments team by e-mail complaintsandcompliments@calderdale.gov.uk