

Disabled Facilities Grant - Frequently Asked Questions

What is a Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG)?

The Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) is a means tested grant intended to help people living with disabilities and long term health conditions to live safely and independently at home for longer. The grant can be applied for by owner occupiers, private tenants and tenants of a social landlord. The adaptations must be assessed and recommended by an Occupational Therapist.

The Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) was introduced in 1989. The DFG is part of the Better Care Fund; a pooled budget seeking to integrate health, social care and housing services.

What adaptations is the DFG used to fund?

The DFG is most commonly used towards funding for stair lifts and level access showers. It can also fund ramped access to someone's home, ceiling track hoists and through floor lifts but this is not an exhaustive list.

How much grant am I entitled to?

For applications for **children and young persons** the maximum limit of mandatory disabled facilities grant funding is **£30,000**. For adults in receipt of certain **means tested benefits** there is also a mandatory limit of **£30,000**.

Local authorities such as Winchester City Council have the power to award discretionary funding without means testing applicants as long as this is part of their DFG policy. Therefore Winchester City Council have opted to award applications from **adults who are not in receipt of certain means tested benefits** a discretionary grant of up to **£15,000**.

A grant award consists of the total cost of works and any fees, including the council's service fee charge (see service fee agreement for details)

Additional discretionary funding may be available for funding towards costs that exceed the mandatory and discretionary funding limits. This is further detailed in the current policy.

Do I have to repay the grant awarded to me?

Although local authorities do have powers to reclaim grant monies if the client is an owner occupier and chooses to sell their home most clients will not repay the grant they are awarded. The General Terms and Conditions form provides more detail on this subject.

Who is responsible for the adaptations after completion?

Once the warranty period expires (this varies depending on type of work) on the completed works they become your property if you are an owner occupier or your landlord's property if you are a tenant. This means all future repairs or removal costs are the responsibility of the property owner and/or the landlord. Landlords may have their own policies on this matter which they should clarify with tenants.

Choosing a Contractor

There are two methods for this – your own choice of contractor, or a contractor that has signed up to the council's list of contractors. If you are happy for the Council to find a contractor on your behalf, and once we are fully satisfied you are eligible for a grant, one of these companies will be provided with your details and the schedule of work recommended by your Occupational Therapist (OT) and asked to take on the work. They will contact you directly as soon as they can to organise to visit you and they will arrange a mutually convenient date for work to begin. More about this arrangement is detailed in the Service Fee Agreement Form.

You are welcome to use your own contractor, subject to conditions and as long as they can provide an itemised quotation to demonstrate they will adapt according to the OT's specification. We may also compare this quotation with our own schedule of works to ensure the grant awarded is fair value. They will also need to provide a valid invoice in order for us to pay the grant to them. If you or a family member do the work grant money can only be paid to cover materials.

It is important to note that as the work is being carried out on your home the contract for works will be between you and the contractor. This means the council is not responsible should you have and dispute with a contractor during or after the works are complete.

Will I have a say in what adaptations I have and how they will look?

If you have any wishes or concerns in relation to the adaptations these can be taken into consideration, certain aspects of the works are not negotiable but some aspects will be. The grant is able to cover the costs for the required works but will not cover anything except essential decoration. For example standard white tiles in a shower room and neutral paint in work affected areas only.

You are welcome to negotiate with your contractor to upgrade certain aspects of the work, as long as the specification will still be met and that you pay the difference in price yourself. **The grant is there to adapt your existing home rather than provide a refurbishment service and the works will be approached as such.**

It is important to consider if you can afford the cost of any extra works you request from the contractor over and above the grant funding that has been awarded to you. For example, if you choose to have tiles that are more complicated than standard white tiling you will be responsible for the cost of the tiles, any required extra materials and labour to fit them.

What happens once the works are complete?

Once the works have been completed the invoice will be sent to us directly from the contractor. Before paying this we will contact you to ensure the works are satisfactory, we may visit or call you to complete this.