

DFG Client Service Agreement Form

Why does the council offer a grant support service?

The Council recognises that the process of making a grant application and completing grant works can be complex. Therefore the council provides a support service in order to help clients make adaptations to their home. In particular the council can offer a registered list of contractors who can complete various common adaptations such as level access showers, stair lifts etc. The contract for any works, procured via the support service or not, is between the client and the contractor and not with the council under any circumstances. A scope of this service is provided below.

In common with other professional services the Council charges a fee for the grant support service. The funding for Disabled Facilities Grants is administered directly from central government to Local Authorities and therefore the council is required to charge a service fee in order to pay for the administration of the grant to clients. The fee is payable to the council from the grant that a client has approved for each client at a percentage of 12% + VAT of the costs of works. For example:

Cost of Adaptation = £1000.00

12% Service Fee = £120.00

VAT on Service Fee = £24.00

Total Service Fee = £144.00

Total Grant Approved (Service Fee and Cost of Adaptation) = £1144.00

This Agreement is to authorise the Council to provide additional service and support in administering and processing the application for assistance and in the project management of works completed under the grant or loan awarded.

Without your agreement the Council is under no obligation to provide this service and support. Similarly you are under no obligation to request this service and support, in part or in full, but this may limit the service provided by the Council to its statutory requirement to assess the application, carry out the financial means test, approve quotes provided by the applicants chosen contractors against the recommendations of the OT, and complete a final inspection of the works to approve payment of the grant.

PLEASE TURN OVER

SCOPE OF SERVICES AND SUPPORT

- 1) Assistance in the completion of application forms including any financial declaration required for means testing purposes.
- 2) Obtaining permissions from landlords or co-owners or other parties with a financial interest in the property.
- 3) Liaising with relevant Occupational Therapists or other health and care professionals involved with the applicant's care (over and above and consultation required in accordance with the relevant legislation) for the purposes of agreeing the necessary provision of adaptations.
- 4) Preparation of a specification and/or schedule of works.
- 5) Liaison with Winchester City Council Planning and Building Control departments where applicable.
- 6) Obtaining and assessing estimates or quotes from contractors. (NB the applicant may nominate contractors to be invited to bid for works but any award made will be in accordance with the Council's assessment of all bids received).
- 7) Letting contracts for works.
- 8) Instructing contractors on site and negotiating any variations to approved works (subject to the applicant's agreement) and associated costs.
- 9) Inspecting the works in progress and on completion.
- 10) Paying contractors' interim and final invoices, subject to the applicant's satisfaction with the works. (NB If the Council are satisfied with the works and the applicant is dissatisfied and is in dispute with the contractor, the Council may pay any outstanding award to the applicant pending the resolution of the dispute by the applicant and the contractor(the parties to the contract for works)).
- 11) Such other assistance as may be requested subject to the agreement of the Council's Corporate Head of Housing.

The Council's fee will be 12% plus VAT of the approved cost of the eligible works.

The fee is also eligible for grant aid and will be included in the total award approved. For mandatory grants the maximum permitted grant is £30,000.

This applies to all grants apart from when a grant approaches or exceeds £25k. At this point a service fee of £2,030 plus VAT at 20% will be applied equating to a total service fee charge of £2,436.00.

Where the cost of eligible works and the Council's minimum fee combined exceed £30,000 the Council will limit its fee to £2,436 regardless of any additional assistance offered through discretionary funding.

The applicant authorises the Council to collect the fee by deduction from the overall grant approved.

If the application is not successful then no fee is payable.

The Council may terminate this agreement at any time by notifying you in writing of the reasons for the decision, and where this happens no fee will be payable.

You may terminate this agreement at any time by the notifying the Council

If you end this agreement the Council will be entitled to charge the full fee due under the agreement but may reduce the fee to reflect the level of services provided.

This Agreement is made under **Section 169 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the Housing Renewal Grants (Services and Charges) Order 1996** and is between the Council and the applicant.

This Agreement also allows the Council to make such enquiries as are necessary to confirm the ownership of any property for which grant assistance is applied for, and to confirm the receipt of benefits identified on the application form (whether for the applicant or their partner where their financial status is relevant to the application) by application to the appropriate agency.

INFORMATION THAT MAY BE REQUESTED

- i) Proof of ownership, where applicable from the Land Registry or from the applicant's solicitors or bank where no registration exists.
- ii) Proof of Housing Benefit or Council Tax Reduction receipt from Winchester City Council's (or any other local authority's), Revenues and Benefits department where applicable.
- iii) Proof of benefit receipt from the Department of Works and Pensions or other Government agency where applicable.

Declaration:

I wish the Council to provide the additional services and support detailed above.

I authorise the Council to make such enquiries as it deems necessary to confirm property ownership and to confirm receipt of benefits as detailed in my application form.

SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT(S):

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DATE:

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GRANT GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The conditions set out below are specific to Disabled Facilities Grants and Loans. Only the works agreed by the Council will be covered by the grant and/or loan. If a grant or loan is approved there will be a 12 month time limit to complete the works.

If you are an owner occupier then a local land charge may be placed on your property on completion of a grant. If the property is sold, assigned or transferred the grant may have to be repaid.

The council will have regard to **The Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996: Disabled Facilities Grants (Conditions relating to approval or payment of Grant) General Consent 2008 and The Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002** when deciding whether or not to demand repayment.

For Mandatory Grants, the charge only applies where the grant is more than £5,000. Where the grant is more than £5000, only the amount over the first £5,000 is added as a charge. There is a charge limit of £10,000 and the charge will only apply for 10 years.

For Discretionary Grants, the charge can be for the full amount of the grant and repayable on sale, assignment or transfer of the property without time limit. The Council may vary the conditions applied to the charge on a case by case basis according to the applicant's circumstances and you will be advised of these conditions when any offer of discretionary grant is made.

Cases that exceed the mandatory limit where the client is the owner occupier then a local land charge will be placed on your property on completion of a loan. If the property is sold, assigned or transferred then the loan may have to be repaid.

The works must be completed by the contractor stated on the approval document.

If you have a contribution to pay you must ensure you have the money available to cover your share of the costs before the work begins on site.

Unforeseen and additional costs will only be paid under the grant and/or loan where extra works are necessary to complete the adaptation and must be agreed by the council before they are undertaken.

Any increase in the grant and/or loan may have an impact on the charge placed against the property and under no circumstances can a mandatory grant of more than £30,000 be authorised, but works above this amount may be funded by discretionary grant and/or loan provision.

AUTHORISATION

I accept the general terms and conditions.

SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT(S):

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DATE:

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