

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?

The mandatory limit for DFGs is £30,000, however this does not mean that you automatically are entitled to this amount of funding. The amount of funding awarded will be determined by the needs identified by your occupational therapist and what the council considers are reasonable and appropriate costs. The council will award an amount of funding based on what they believe is the most cost-effective way of meeting your needs that were identified by your occupational therapist. The amount of grant funding awarded will also be determined by whether you have a contribution to pay towards the cost of the work or not.

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 several discretionary grants available which can be found in our DFG 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 work they become your property and if you are an owner occupier you are responsible for the repair and maintenance of the adaptations. If you are a tenant your landlord becomes responsible. 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

Winchester City Council has an approved list of contractors to complete adaptations. The schedule of works, which is based on your Occupational Therapist, will be sent to two contractors who will be invited to quote for the works. They will contact you and arrange to visit your property to provide an estimate. The work will be awarded to the contractor who provides the most cost-effective estimate. If for any reason you would like the contractor who provided the more expensive quote to carry out the work, you will need to pay the difference in cost. You can choose to have a contractor of your choice tender for the works, but they will need to be vetted by the council, and an estimate from another contractor will be required.

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 only able to cover the costs of the required work to meet your needs.

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