

INDEPENDENT LIVING

DISABLED FACILITIES GRANTS (DFG)

ASSISTANCE POLICY 2025



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The purpose of the Policy is to:

- i) Assist Officers of the Council, Partner Agencies, and Citizens of Plymouth in the interpretation and implementation of the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002 (The Order) so far as it relates to the adaptation of the homes of disabled people.
- ii) Ensure fair, equitable and consistent treatment for all disabled people who require the Council's assistance in adapting their home.

1.2 This Policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 (The Act).

Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002 (The Order)

1.3 The Council accepts that there may be circumstances that warrant exceptions to this Assistance Policy. The Community Connections Service Director is authorised to assess individual cases and where appropriate, and reasonable to do so, decide that an exception be made to the normal Assistance Policy.

1.4 In addition the Council has determined that under certain circumstances it shall use its discretion under the legislation to provide additional discretionary grant assistance (see section 3.0 Types of Assistance). This grant assistance is intended to allow additional flexibility within the DFG process however can only be provided should adequate levels of funding allow.

1.5 From 1st April 2015 there was a significant change in the way that national government funding for provision of home adaptations grants (DFG) is paid to local authorities. Instead of national government making a direct payment to each local housing authority to help them to meet the cost of providing Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG), this allocation is now paid through Better Care Funds (BCF). This arrangement presents an opportunity to consider how to integrate provision of help with home adaptations across housing, health and social care systems to achieve better health and wellbeing outcomes for those with Care & Support needs (See Appendix A).

2.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 **The Role of the Council as 'Housing Authority':**

2.1.1 The legal responsibility for the provision of DFGs sits with Plymouth City Council (The Council) as the 'Housing Authority'. All applications for DFGs must meet the relevant requirements as set out within the legislation. This means that works being requested must be deemed as being 'necessary and appropriate' and 'reasonable and practicable' and eligible works (eligible works are noted in section 23 of the Housing, Grants, Construction & Regeneration Act 1996).

- 2.1.2 By law the Council must consider applications for DFGs and make determinations on those applications within 6 months of receipt. The Council considers that an application for a DFG has been submitted at the point of a satisfactorily completed application form, Occupation/Owners Certificate, Landlord Certificate and any relevant permission in principle. Where a grant is to be means tested, evidence of financial income and savings will be required to consider the application as valid. Note: Where assistance is required to complete the Application Forms, please call 01752 668000, or E-mail: ccspoke@plymouth.gov.uk to discuss this further.
- 2.1.3 The Council have combined the referral and initial application form into one form completed by the 'Social Services' provider. This form is now known as the Independent Living Assistance Application Form. Further information may be required if the application requires a means test.
- 2.1.4 Whilst applications for DFG must be determined within 6 months of receipt, the application must be completed in full to be considered a valid application. The Council will advise if there is missing information. Once an application for a DFG is approved (determined) the Council must ensure that the DFG is completed within 12 months. By combining the referral and application form it is hoped the process will be shorter for applicants.
- 2.1.5 As part of the consideration of an application the Council has a duty to determine whether works being requested are necessary and appropriate and are eligible for DFG funding (eligible works are noted in section 23 of the Housing, Grants, Construction & Regeneration Act 1996). To inform this decision, during the application process the Council has a duty to consult with the 'Social Services Authority'. The Council reserves the right to discharge this duty to Occupational Therapists identified via the Adaptations, Repairs, Maintenance and Improvement (ARMI) Dynamic Purchasing System. This may include a 'Social Services' delivery partner.
- 2.1.6 In addition as part of the consideration of an application the Council has a duty to determine whether works being requested are reasonable and practicable. Factors considered in deciding if the works are reasonable and practicable include the size of the property, the number of occupants, its location and any environmental or physical constraints. This will be determined through information obtained during the application process and observations made during any site visit by the Council or any other party involved in the adaptation works.
- 2.1.7 Where the Council is likely to refuse an application for a DFG, the Council will, where applicable, contact the applicant to give them the opportunity to provide additional information which may affect such a decision, prior to a formal refusal being made.
- 2.1.8 Where the Council has no option but to refuse an application for grant, the Council will advise the applicant of the reasons for such refusal in writing.
- 2.1.9 An applicant will have the right to a review of such a decision and if required, should request a review in writing to the Community Connections Service Director within 28 days of the date of the refusal letter.

- 2.1.10 Where works are approved and undertaken, they must be carried out to the satisfaction of the grant applicant and the Council. The grant applicant will be asked to sign a completion certificate to indicate their satisfaction. However, the Council will have the overriding decision as to whether the works have been carried out to a satisfactory standard and will make direct payments to contractors, other than where a prior agreement has been made with the applicant.

2.2 The Role of the Occupational Therapist:

- 2.2.1 The Council in their role as the Social Services Authority has a duty to respond to consultation requests from the Housing Authority to help determine whether a request for a DFG is necessary and appropriate.
- 2.2.2 The Council commissions a Social Care Delivery Partner to undertake the Social Services role for Adults. Hence, in determining what is necessary and appropriate the Council discharges this duty to Livewell South West, as commissioned by Plymouth City Council. In the case of Children's applications, Occupational Therapy is provided by Children's Social Care, within Plymouth City Council.
- 2.2.3 Following the assessment of a disabled person by an Occupational Therapist, recommendations where adaptations are considered necessary and appropriate, will be received by the Council as a referral (see Appendix B), This will detail the clinical needs of the applicant and the purpose for the grant in accordance with section 23(1) of the Act (see Appendix C).
- 2.2.4 The Occupational Therapist will provide a specification of the requirements using the standard specification and highlighting any variation to the standard specification of works (see Appendix B). They will also provide an estimation of cost and have evidenced a discussion with the applicant in regard to moving to more appropriate accommodation (where applicable) and the applicant covering the cost of works above the grant maximum.
- 2.2.5 The 'Social Services Authority' has a responsibility to provide community care equipment and minor adaptations, which a person has been assessed to need and for which he or she is eligible, free of charge provided the costs (including fittings) is less than £1,000.
- 2.2.6 A minor adaptation (e.g. grab rails, fixed shower seats and ramps) for both adults and children are normally defined by a value of up to £1,000. These works, regardless of cost, if they require traditional building methods (i.e. would be considered 'Construction' work under Construction Design and Management Regulations 2015), may be procured using the Dynamic Purchasing System. This is to ensure best value and regulatory compliance. The application process may differ depending on the nature of the works.

2.3 Role of the Independence Community Interest Company:

- 2.3.1 The Council operates a Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) to support DFG applicants and those in need of minor building works to meet their home

environmental needs in engaging with reputable and compliant contractors. The system offers consumer protection and insurance backed warranty for the work completed via the system. Independence CIC manage the DPS on behalf of Plymouth City Council.

- 2.3.2 Independence CIC will ensure the compliance of each contractor who is entered into the DPS. This will include all necessary certification, qualifications and insurances. They will provide on-going monitoring of compliance, and address non-compliance as it arises.
- 2.3.3 Contractors entered into the DPS are required to be TrustMark registered. Independence CIC run a TrustMark Operating Scheme and as such where a contractor is registered via Independence CIC, they will complete sample inspections of work completed via the DPS as part of the contractor's membership to the TrustMark scheme.
- 2.3.4 Where non-compliance is discovered or alerted to, Independence CIC will support in resolving disputes, either directly through TrustMark or via an Alternative Dispute Resolution provider.

2.4 Role of the Applicant:

- 2.4.1 The applicant and/or applicants' carer is expected to provide all information relevant to the application as requested and sign the declaration at the end of the application form.
- 2.4.2 As detailed above the Council operate a Dynamic Purchasing System, that the applicant will need to indicate their desire to utilise, within the Application form. However, should the applicant wish to use an alternative contractor of their own choosing, they will be provided with a grant approval figure based upon indicative adaptation costings (See Appendix B) and given the option to self-fund any additional costs. PCC will contact the applicant to assist in all matters relating to the administration of the grant, including submitting a comparable quote for the works from their chosen contractor. The applicant must take full control and be solely responsible for ensuring all works are completed to the satisfaction of the Council prior to the release of any grant funding. The applicant will be responsible for all parts of the works including selecting, instructing, liaising with, and managing the contractor and works, for ensuring the works are suitable for the need and that any relevant permissions/certifications are obtained. Furthermore, the applicant must resolve any issues arising with their chosen contractor themselves.
- 2.4.3 The applicant is expected to keep appointments made with parties involved in the DFG process and ensure they read and understand all correspondence. Where the applicant wishes to undertake work not included within the grant approval, they are expected to self-fund works outside of the grant funded eligible works.
- 2.4.4 Where an applicant has a means tested contribution to make, this must be made directly to the contractor before commencement of the works. No grant funding will be released until the confirmation that the contribution has been paid is received by the Council.

2.5 Role of the Landlord:

- 2.5.1 Where the grant applicant is a tenant, they must ensure their landlord is aware that they intend on applying for assistance to adapt the property.
- 2.5.2 The Council will seek permission in principle to adapt the property from the landlord. Following a design being confirmed as eligible for funding the Council will seek full permission for the works to proceed from the landlord. If the landlord does not give permission to adapt the property to meet the tenant's needs, no application can be accepted, and the tenant will be unable to apply for assistance.
- 2.5.3 Full permission will be sought from the landlord upon receipt of full details of works. The landlord is asked to respond within 5 working days.
- 2.5.4 Where it is considered, by the tenant that their landlord has unreasonably refused permission in principle they must follow the necessary complaints procedure with their landlord or housing association.
- 2.5.5 Means testing, servicing and maintenance of equipment in the case of a tenant:

2.5.5.1 Housing Association Tenants

If the application is made by the tenant, then it is their resources that will be tested. If the application is made by the landlord, then the local authority has discretion on the level of grant offered. The powers in section 31 (3) of the Act provides for a general power to enable a local authority to use its discretion in deciding the level of any grant offered in respect of a landlord's application. Section 31 (3) of the Act also requires authorities to have regard to the extent to which the landlord can charge a higher rent for premises following the completion of works.

2.5.5.2 Private Renting

Most tenancies in the private sector are assured short hold tenancies, which normally run for a fixed term, generally 6 – 12 months. Assured short hold tenancies provide little security for tenants and create uncertainty about how long they will be able to stay in the property.

It is a requirement of the application for DFG that a certificate to state the intention of the applicant to remain living in the property for 5 years. However, for a DFG application the certificate is only about intention and does not require a formal tenancy which will last for five years. Unless it is very unlikely that the tenancy could last 5 years, then this should not be a barrier to a successful DFG application.

The Council has discretion not to require a tenant's certificate where it is "unreasonable in the circumstances to require such a certificate". Para 22(3) of the Act.

The tenant must note that they are responsible for the maintenance and servicing of the equipment after installation.

3.0 TYPES OF ASSISTANCE

3.1 Disabled Facilities Grant (Mandatory Assistance)

- 3.1.1 DFGs are largely subject to the requirements of legislation and are mandatory. Approval is required where an applicant meets specific disability and financial criteria.
- 3.1.2 The assessment of need must detail what is necessary and appropriate to meet the assessed need of the DFG applicant, the eligible works that meet the purpose(s) of the grant (see Appendix C) and provide recommendations for adaptations.
- 3.1.3 These recommendations will form the 'client brief'.
- 3.1.4 The grant will be means tested (except where the works are for a child) and subject to prioritisation. Prioritisation will be as ascertained by the Occupational Therapist.
- 3.1.5 DFG Applicants in receipt of a means tested benefit will not need to be means tested for the grant and will therefore be 'passported' through the application process.
- 3.1.6 The statutory grant maximum is £30,000 (less any means tested contribution, if applicable).

3.2 Discretionary Assistance Allocation (DAA) – 'Top Up' Grant

- 3.2.1 Applications will be available for the provision of a 'top-up' to the Disabled Facilities Grant (Mandatory Assistance) where costs exceed the maximum amount of £30,000. Decisions will be made by the Discretionary Funding Panel (DFP).
- 3.2.2 The 'Top Up' Grant will be subject to means testing regardless of the age of the applicant (already completed for Adult cases as part of the mandatory DFG). For Children's cases, the parent(s) / guardian(s) will subject to a financial assessment to determine their ability to fund additional costs on top of mandatory grant assistance before discretionary assistance will be considered.
Note: Where no assessed contribution is payable, the maximum discretionary assistance of £30,000 will be considered. Where an assessed contribution is payable, this will be taken as a deduction from the maximum discretionary assistance. E.g. if assessed contribution = £5,000, then maximum discretionary

assistance for the 'Top Up' Grant will be £25,000 (this being the maximum £30,000 minus the £5,000 assessed contribution).

- 3.2.3 'Top Up' Grant will be a maximum of £30,000.
- 3.2.4 A local Land charge will be placed upon the property. Should the property be sold within the term of the 'Top Up' Grant, repayment of the 'Top Up' plus interest will be made to the council.
- 3.2.5 The term of the 'Top Up' Grant will be 15 years.
- 3.2.6 The grant will incur interest 'rolled up' for the term of the 'Top Up' Grant and will be charged at 0.5% per annum.
- 3.2.7 DAA applicants with no means tested contribution must have savings of less than £23,250 to be eligible (this amount is the Upper Capital Limit used to determine entitlement to help with the cost of social care from your local Council).

3.3 Discretionary Assistance Allocation (DAA) – 'Moving on Grant' Moving to more suitable accommodation

- 3.3.1 Where required adaptations involve substantial structural alterations or extensions and, in any event, where the cost of the adaptation work exceeds £30,000 (plus 'Top Up' if eligible), then moving to more suitable accommodation shall be considered to address the needs of the household.
- 3.3.2 In addition where it is not possible to provide adaptations to meet the need of the applicant, moving to more suitable accommodation shall be considered.
- 3.3.3 In order to help facilitate a move to appropriate alternative accommodation the Council shall provide grant assistance to cover the 'moving costs' associated with such a move.
- 3.3.4 Eligible 'moving costs' include estate agent fees, solicitor costs, survey costs, stamp duty, removal expenses and the connection or disconnection of appliances.
- 3.3.5 Grant maximum will be £15,000.
- 3.3.6 The application will be moved through to completion and not be subject to any prioritisation process or means test.
- 3.3.7 Grant assistance will be awarded for applicants moving within Plymouth City Council's boundaries only.
- 3.3.8 In order to be eligible for this assistance Community Connections, and 'Social Services' must be involved in the property identification process and to ensure the existing accommodation cannot be adapted to meet the assessed need. Where an applicant chooses to move to an unsuitable property or does not involve both Community Connections and 'Social Services' in the property identification process, they will not be eligible for this assistance.

3.4 Discretionary Assistance Allocation (DAA) - 'Fast Track' Adaptations

- 3.4.1 Applications will be 'Clinically Fast Tracked' if they are for terminally ill applicants with a prognosis of less than 12 months or with a rapidly progressive condition, e.g. MND.
Note: The client will be required to have a completed SRI form or meet the requirement for this or other reasonable medical evidence (please discuss this with your Occupational Therapist).
- 3.4.2 The application will be moved through to completion and not be subject to any prioritisation process or means test.
- 3.4.3 Grants will be a maximum of £10,000. Costs above this maximum may be considered in exceptional circumstances.

3.5 Discretionary Assistance Allocation (DAA) - 'Hospital Discharge' Adaptations

- 3.5.1 Works to allow the applicant to be discharged from hospital or Care facility, or; an individual is at risk of admission to an inpatient setting due to an unmet housing need.
- 3.5.2 The application will be moved through to completion and not be subject to any prioritisation process or means test.
- 3.5.3 Grants will be a maximum of £10,000. Costs above this maximum may be considered in exceptional circumstances.

3.6 Discretionary Assistance Allocation (DAA) - 'Replacement Hoist or Stairlift'

- 3.6.1 Cases will only be considered where evidence is provided by the applicant that the lift is beyond its lifetime and/or cannot be repaired. The applicant will be expected to provide evidence of good maintenance practice of the hoist/stair lift since its original installation.
- 3.6.2 All applications for a replacement Hoist or Stairlift will require a new Occupational Therapists assessment to ensure that needs have not changed during the lifespan of the existing stairlift.
- 3.6.3 The application will be moved through to completion and not be subject to any prioritisation process or means test.
- 3.6.4 Grants will be a maximum of £10,000. Costs above this maximum may be considered in exceptional circumstances.

3.7 Discretionary Assistance Allocation (DAA) - 'Cleaning or clearance of a home to enable safe discharge from hospital'

- 3.7.1 Clearance of a home to allow the applicant to be discharged from hospital or Care facility, or; cleaning or clearance of a home where an individual is at risk of admission to an inpatient setting.
- 3.7.2 The application will be moved through to completion and not be subject to any prioritisation process or means test.
- 3.7.3 Grants will be a maximum of £5,000. Costs above this maximum may be considered in exceptional circumstances.

3.8 Discretionary Assistance Allocation (DAA) - 'Works for people with dementia'

- 3.8.1 Works for applicants with dementia, including colour and contrast decorating, carbon monoxide/cold/heat alarms, lighting, safety flooring, digital technology
- 3.8.2 The application will be moved through to completion and not be subject to any prioritisation process or means test.
- 3.8.3 Grants will be a maximum of £5,000. Costs above this maximum may be considered in exceptional circumstances.

3.9 'Nil Grant' Applications

- 3.9.1 Following the mandatory means test for Disabled Facilities Grants, should an applicant's contribution exceed the cost of the works deemed necessary, and the applicant wishes to fund the works themselves then the applicant will be offered a 'Nil Grant' Application.
- 3.9.2 'Nil Grant' Applications will be supported via the Dynamic Purchasing System.
- 3.9.3 A fee of 1% of the cost of the works will be paid to Independence Community Interest Company for use of the Dynamic Purchasing System.
- 3.9.4 A fee of 2.5% of the cost of the works will be paid to Plymouth City Council to cover administration costs.

3.10 Discretionary Assistance Availability

- 3.10.1 The availability of all discretionary grant assistance is subject to the Councils annual budget setting procedure and the availability of sufficient levels of funding.
- 3.10.2 All such payments are at the Council's discretion and will be removed once available funds are exhausted.

3.10.3 Mandatory Assistance will take priority over Discretionary Assistance.

3.10.4 If demand for Mandatory Assistance was at a level where there were insufficient funds to offer Discretionary Assistance the applicant will be offered a choice of proceeding with the works via a Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant (and thus its requirements) or waiting until funding becomes available.

3.10.5 The council would not therefore be in breach of its Statutory Duty to approve a Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant to an eligible applicant.

4.0 PRIORITISATION PROCESS

- 4.1 Applicants will be allocated an initial prioritisation from point of triage, by the Occupational Therapist. Mostly, this will be at initial contact to the Council. This triage prioritisation will assist in managing demand for Occupational Therapy Assessment in relation to adaptations.
- 4.2 Furthermore, during periods of high demand, the Council reserves the right to use a needs-based prioritisation scheme to ensure priority is given to those applicants for DFGs who are in greatest need. This prioritisation will be determined by the assessing Occupational Therapist, upon completion of clinical assessment and consideration of risk. The prioritisation will be a 'fast track', 'red', 'amber', 'green' system, where 'fast track' is the highest priority and thus the risk of injury to the applicant if adaptations are not provided is higher. This prioritisation will be used to determine when works can commence.
- 4.2 The Occupational Therapist will discuss their assessed priority with the applicant during the assessment.
- 4.3 The applicant will receive notification of their priority within their needs assessment. Based on this priority the applicant will be advised of likely timescale for dealing with recommended adaptations following this being received by Community Connections.
- 4.4 As detailed above the level of priority is determined following a needs-based assessment. If an applicant's health deteriorates from the initial assessment there will be the opportunity for their case to be reprioritised, subject to advice and information from the assessing Occupational Therapist.
- 4.5 If an applicant is dissatisfied with the priority they have been awarded, they may appeal against the decision made, in writing, outlining the reasons why they feel the case has been incorrectly assessed, by contacting Adult Social Care.

5.0 REFERRAL PROCESS

- 5.1 Requests for assessment regarding the home environment for children or adults will initially be made via Social Care (for Adults this is Livewell South West).
- 5.2 A clinical assessment of functional need within the home environment will be conducted by an Occupational Therapist or Assistant (please refer to Social Care guidelines for

timescales) to identify what is necessary and appropriate to meet the assessed need within the home environment.

- 5.2 As part of their engagement, the Occupational Therapist will discuss different options regarding the applicants housing needs. Should other Social Care needs be identified they will make the appropriate referral. For example, if the applicant's needs can be met through equipment provision, it may be that adaptations to your property are not deemed necessary or appropriate and will therefore not be eligible for DFG.
- 5.3 Upon receipt of the Application form from the Occupational Therapist, as agreed with the applicant, Community Connections will confirm receipt of the form from Social Care and provide a copy of the recommendations to the applicant.
- 5.4 The Application form will then be processed, and any mean testing will be undertaken. Should further information be required, Community Connections will make this request of the applicant.
- 5.5 Community Connections will establish eligibility (including means testing, where applicable), and notify the applicant of any assessed contribution they have to make towards the cost of the works. For the application to progress, the applicant will have sign to agree to pay their contribution before the works commence.
- 5.6 The priority detailed by Social Care will determine when the case will be submitted to the appropriate 'Lot' within the Dynamic Purchasing System. If the applicant wishes to use their own contractor to undertake the work, they should discuss this with their allocated DFG Officer.
- 5.7 Once costings for the required adaptation have been provided by suppliers, the Council will consider if the works are 'reasonable and practicable'.
- 5.8 The Council will then notify the applicant in writing of the grant determination. This may either be rejection of the application if not considered eligible or formal approval of the grant.
- 5.9 Within the formal approval of grant letter the applicant will be notified of expected completion timescales (in accordance with their priority, where applicable).
- 5.10 The awarded provider will arrange to complete the works with the applicant.
- 5.11 Works must be completed within 12 months of the date of valid application.
- 5.12 The works must be completed in a safe and compliant manner.
- 5.13 Where the provider is selected by the grant applicant, the grant applicant must take on the role of 'Domestic client' under the Construction Design and Management Regulations 2015. Where the provider is selected by the Council via the Dynamic Purchasing System, the Council will take on the role of the 'Domestic Client'. This is regardless of tenure.
- 5.14 Where statutory permissions are required; these must be obtained prior to work commencement.

- 5.15 Grant payment will not be released until all certification and compliance notification is received by the Council. This will include, electrical and gas safety certificates, building control certificates, and any other compliancy requirements related to the specific works.

6.0 MEANS TESTED CONTRIBUTIONS

- 6.1 As part of the Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant application process, a standard test of resources is undertaken to determine whether the applicant needs to make a financial contribution toward the cost of works undertaken.
- 6.2 The Council will use its discretion under the Regulatory Reform Order 2002 to provide 'non-means tested' DFG, as detailed in section 3.0.
- 6.3 Applications for mandatory grant assistance to meet the needs of a child (valid application must be before 19th birthday), are 'non-means tested'. Please refer to section 3.0 for discretionary assistance.

7.0 REPAYMENT AND RECOVERY OF SPECIALISED EQUIPMENT

7.1 Repayment of Grant

- 7.1.1 The Council will reclaim funding for DFG works that exceed £5,000 up to a maximum of £10,000 where the homeowner sells the home within 10 years of the grant completion¹.
- 7.1.2 A charge will be registered as a local land charge on the title deeds of the property.
- 7.1.3 This money is recouped via the land charge.
- 7.1.4 The local housing authority may demand the repayment by the recipient of such part of the grant that exceeds £5,000 (but may not demand an amount in excess of £10,000) if:
- (a) the recipient disposes (whether by sale, assignment, transfer or otherwise) of the premises in respect of which the grant was given within 10 years of the certified date; and
 - (b) the local housing authority, having considered:
 - (i) the extent to which the recipient of the grant would suffer financial hardship were they required to repay all or any of the grant;
 - (ii) whether the disposal of the premises is to enable the recipient of the grant to take up employment, or to change the location of their employment;
 - (iii) whether the disposal is made for reasons connected with the physical or mental health or well-being of the recipient of the grant or of a disabled occupant of the premises; and
 - (iv) whether the disposal is made to enable the recipient of the grant to live with, or near, any person who is disabled or infirm and in need of care,

¹ The Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996: Disabled Facilities Grant (Conditions relating to approval or payment of Grant) General Consent 2008

which the recipient of the grant is intending to provide, or who is intending to provide care of which the recipient of the grant is in need by reason of disability or infirmity,

and it is satisfied that it is reasonable in all the circumstances to require the repayment.

- 7.1.5 In addition, any recipient of a DFG that has adaptations carried out and subsequently moves property within the City and is seeking further grant assistance to install similar adaptations to those previously funded, then the cost of the original adaptation will have to be repaid by the applicant before new adaptations can commence.
- 7.1.6 Each case will be considered on its own merits and evidence to justify the move will be required to avoid repayment of grant. The applicant will have to provide evidence and justification in writing to Community Connections.
- 7.1.7 Where charges are levied, then in each case the Council must be satisfied that it is reasonable to require the repayment and will consider this in line with the legislation.

7.2 Recovery of Specialist Equipment

- 7.2.1 Where an application for Disabled Facilities Grant has been approved under section 23(1) of the Act and the eligible works consist of or include the installation in the property of specialised equipment for the disabled occupant(s), the applicant shall notify the Council if and as soon as the equipment is no longer needed².
- 7.2.2 For the purposes of this condition;
 - 7.2.2.1 the Council shall, on approving the application, specify in writing the equipment to which this condition is to apply and the period (being a reasonable condition period for the equipment in question) during which it is to apply, and shall serve on the applicant a copy of such written specification; and
 - 7.2.2.2 the Council, or Social Services on their behalf, shall be entitled, upon reasonable prior notice given to the applicant, inspect the equipment and, to remove it.
- 7.2.3 The Council agrees, within a reasonable time following inspection (by the provider) of the equipment:
 - (a) to notify the applicant whether the equipment is to be removed; and
 - (b) if the equipment is to be removed, arrange for it to be removed and to make good any damage caused to the property by its removal.
- 7.2.4 Subject to the Council (or Provider) giving prior notice in accordance with the above the applicant is expected to give the Council (or Provider) reasonable access to the property for the purposes of inspection and removal of the equipment.

² The Housing Renewals Grants (Additional Conditions) (England) General Consent 1996

- 7.2.5 In the event of a breach of any of the conditions set out above, the Council may demand repayment from the applicant of a sum equal to the amount of the grant paid and the same shall become repayable to the Council in accordance with Section 52 of the Act.³

8.0 APPLICANT NO LONGER ENTITLED TO GRANT

- 8.1 Where a grant applicant ceases to be entitled to a grant before completion of the works, the Act states that the Council cannot pay any grant or any further instalments after that date. If the grant applicant makes an owner's application, he ceases to be entitled to a grant when he ceases to have a qualifying owner's interest or ceases to have the intention specified in the owner's certificate which accompanied the grant application.
- 8.2 If the grant applicant makes a tenant's application, he ceases to be entitled to a grant when he ceases to be a qualifying tenant of the dwelling or if the landlord ceases to have the intention specified in the owner's certificate submitted with the application.
- 8.3 The Council has the right under the legislation to demand any instalment that has already been paid to be repaid forthwith together with interest from the date on which it was paid until repayment. The Council will consider each case on its own merits in deciding whether to recover any such payments.

9.0 CHANGES IN CIRCUMSTANCES

- 9.1 In some cases there is a change of circumstances after the grant has been formally approved that may affect the payment of grant. These circumstances detailed in the Act are:
- 9.1.1 where the medical need changes and the approved grant eligible works are no longer considered necessary or appropriate to meet the needs of the disabled person,
 - 9.1.2 the disabled occupant ceases to occupy the dwelling,
 - 9.1.3 the disabled occupant dies.
- 9.2 In such circumstances, the Act states that the Council can take appropriate action and may:
- 9.2.1 refuse to make any payment, or further payment of grant.
 - 9.2.2 agree that the works or a portion of the works will be completed and the grant or an appropriate proportion of it paid.
 - 9.2.3 request that the application should be re-determined given the new circumstances.

³ This includes reference to compound interest (currently at 8%)

- 9.3 The Council has the right under the Act to demand any instalment that has already been paid to be repaid to the Council together with interest from the date on which it was paid until repayment. Each case will be considered on its own merits in deciding whether to recover any such payments.

10.0 CASES IN WHICH GRANT MAY BE RECALCULATED, WITHHELD, OR REPAID

- 10.1 The Council can refuse to pay grant or any further instalment of grant which remains to be repaid or make a reduction in the amount of grant if:
- 10.1.1 The Council ascertains that the amount of grant was approved based on inaccurate or incomplete information and exceeds that to which the grant applicant was entitled.
 - 10.1.2 The Council ascertain that without their knowledge the eligible works were started before the application was approved.
 - 10.2.3 The works are not completed within 12 months (due to applicant action or inaction).
 - 10.2.4 The cost of works is less than the estimated expense upon which the grant was calculated.
 - 10.2.5 The work has been carried out by a contractor who was not one of the contractors who originally quoted for the work.
- 10.2 Where any of the above situations arise, the Council can demand repayment by the applicant in whole or part, of the grant or any instalment of the grant paid together with interest from the date of payment until repayment³. Each case will be considered on its own merits in deciding whether to recover any such payments.

11.0 CONDITIONS AS TO REPAYMENT IN CASE OF COMPENSATION

- 11.1 Where the Council approve an application for a grant, they impose a condition requiring the applicant to take reasonable steps to pursue any relevant claim to which this section applies and to repay the grant, so far as appropriate, out of the proceeds of such a claim.
- 11.2 The claims to which this section applies are:
- 11.2.1 an insurance claim, or a legal claim against another person, in respect of damage to the premises to which the grant relates, or
 - 11.2.2 a legal claim for damages in which the cost of the works to premises to which the grant relates is part of the claim;
- and a claim is a relevant claim to the extent that works to make good the damage mentioned in paragraph (11.2.1), or the cost of which is claimed as mentioned in paragraph (11.2.2), are works to which the grant relates.
- 11.3 In the event of a breach of a condition under this section, the applicant shall on demand pay to Plymouth City Council the amount of the grant so far as relating to any such works, together with compound interest as from such date as may be prescribed by or

determined calculated at such reasonable rate as the authority may determine and with yearly rests⁴.

12.0 DEFERRING GRANT PAYMENT

- 12.1 The Council has the discretion to defer any payment of an approved grant for a period of up to twelve months from the date of grant approval.
- 12.2 Any such decision must be set out within the grant approval notice.

13.0 GRANT CONDITIONS

- 13.1 Throughout this policy reference is made to grant conditions, these are detailed below:
 - 13.1.1 The grant conditions run for a period of time following the completion of the works, this is known as the grant condition period. The conditions run from the certified date, which is the date that the Council certifies the grant funded work as completed to its satisfaction.
 - 13.1.2 This period is 5 years.
 - 13.1.3 A local land charge will be registered for a period of 10 years in the case of owner occupiers.

14.0 DISPUTES ABOUT THE ASSISTANCE PROVIDED

- 14.1 Nothing in this document is to be interpreted as committing the Council to the approval, or payment, of assistance towards works to the property.
- 14.2 Nothing in this policy is to require the consideration of an application for financial assistance where:
 - 14.2.1 There is an excessive risk to the health and safety of Council staff, agents, or other persons or
 - 14.2.2 There are any indications that there is a fraudulent element to the application or
 - 14.2.3 There are outstanding monies owed to the Council (other than by way of an agreed mortgage where the repayment schedule has been maintained) or
 - 14.2.4 The applicant fails to co-operate with the Council (or other persons) in their reasonable requirements to enable this application to be considered (or to be considered in the context of delivering the assistance programme to other applicants) or

⁴ Currently 8% compound interest, which may be charged from the date of payment

14.2.5 There are other difficulties whereby the approval of an application for financial assistance is unlikely to result in the relocation to an appropriate property.

14.3 Decisions regarding these matters are to be referred to the Community Connections Service Director.

14.4 If you are not satisfied with the decision made regarding works that are eligible for grant funding or any other aspect of the service, you can make a complaint via:

<https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/feedbackandcomplaints/makegeneralcomplaintcomplimentorgiveusyourfeedback>

15.0 FRAUD

15.1 If the Council discovers that the details of the application are incorrect, misleading, or that the quotations have been subject to collusion, or that any other attempt has been made to defraud the Council, then the approval may be cancelled, any payments made may become repayable (together with interest) and, in appropriate cases, the matter will be investigated and may be subject to prosecution.

16.0 CONSULTATION

Agreed with the Plymouth City Council Portfolio Holder for Housing & Co-operative Development, pre-policy consultation has been conducted from Friday 07 February to Friday 14 March 2025. The below partners, organisations, internal departments and user groups have all been contacted.

Livewell

Plymouth Community Homes

PCC Departments:

- Adult Social Care
- Children's Young People & Families
- Commissioning
- Community Connections
- Community Learning Disability Team
- Across PCC via PCC Staffroom

Aster Group

Hastoe Housing Association

Plymouth Charity Trust

Stonewater

South Devon Rural

Clarion Housing Association

Salvation Army

Sanctuary Housing

Guinness Partnership

Westward Housing Group Limited

Willowtree Housing Partnership (formerly South Western Housing Society and Tamar Housing Society)

Bournemouth Churches Housing Association (BCHA)

Livewest Housing Association

Sovereign Housing Association

Highbury Trust

Improving Lives Plymouth (DIAC)

Plymouth Area Disability Action Network:

Plymouth Dementia Action Alliance (PDAA)

Motor Neurone Disease Association

SSAFA

Age UK

Plymouth Octopus Project

Royal British Legion

Elder Tree Befriending Service

Family hubs (via Community Empowerment, Libraries PCC Commissioning)

End users identified by key stakeholders

Children's Young People and Families

Community Learning Disability Team

Adult Social Care

Commissioning

Dementia Friendly City Co-ordinator

The main considerations resulting from these consultations are:

- Increased scope of discretionary funding.
- Offer of low-cost loan service for DFG applicants – Subject to future policy revision. Note: Funds are required to introduce this, and further discussion is required at this time.
- A list of competent contractors to deliver adaptation works for applicants who are privately funding their adaptations.
- Continuation of the 'Nil Grant' offer as a low-cost service where applicants can pay for their own adaptation works. Note: This offer is only available to applicants with a higher contribution than the cost of their works following a financial means test, see section 3.9.
- Continued use of alternative methods of delivery, including modular extensions (in place of traditional construction), modular ramps (in place of concrete ramps) and wall panelling (in place of wall tiles).
- Renewed scrutiny around requests for hardstandings and consideration of alternatives to meet the assessed need(s).

- Selection of DFG contractors being influenced by the contractor's commitment to Net Zero.

In response to these considerations, we have:

- Increased the discretionary assistance for 'Top Up Grant', see section 3.2.
- Revised the discretionary assistance offer, please see sections 3.2 to 3.9 inclusive.
- Introduced modular construction, modular ramps and wall panelling as acceptable alternatives to traditional construction, concrete ramps and wall tiling respectively.

17.0 APPLYING FAIRNESS

- 17.1 The Council's policy is to treat all those that apply for assistance fairly and on an equitable basis founded on case by case needs assessment, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, marital status, race, nationality (including citizenship)⁵, disabilities or religious or political affiliation.
- 17.2 The Council regularly monitors its applications for assistance to ensure that policies and procedures comply with current equal opportunities legislation.
- 17.3 An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out and is available to the public via the Plymouth City Council website.
- 17.4 Plymouth's agreement with the Fairness Commission states that Plymouth City Council should commit to fairness in what it does, how it does it, and who gets what:

In this instance the following principles apply:

- 17.4.1 The city should give priority to those in greatest need when it allocates resources.
- 17.4.2 Things that make the biggest difference to people's lives should get priority when deciding where resources go.
- 17.4.3 Preventing inequalities is more effective than trying to eliminate them.
- 17.4.4 Services should be provided 'with' people, not 'for' them.

18.0 ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND DATA PROTECTION

The information collected on the questionnaire, application form and supporting evidence from Plymouth City Council will be used to process applications for assistance. The information may be passed on to the Department of Work and Pensions and Inland Revenue as permitted by law.

The Council may also check the information provided by the applicant or information provided by a third party, with other information held by the Council.

The Council may also obtain information from certain third parties or give information to them to check the accuracy of the information, to prevent or detect crime, or to protect public funds in

⁵ (subject to Appendix B – General Conditions of Assistance, item 12 – Persons from abroad)

other ways, as permitted by law. These third parties include Government Departments and other Local Authorities.

Personal information will not be disclosed about applicants to anyone outside Plymouth City Council nor will we use information about you for other purposes unless the law permits this. Where requested by the applicant in writing, we will share the full DFG referral, e.g. with Housing Associations, to support a request for their consent to proceed with adaptation works.

Information may be used for statistical purposes. Such information will be displayed so that it cannot be attributed to any person.

We will never share or use your information for marketing purposes.

We will only keep your information for 6 years. It will be stored and processed in line with the principles of the Data Protection Act 2018. You have certain rights under the Data Protection Act and the EU General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), which include the right to access, rectification and erasure. To enforce these rights or enquire about any other aspects of data protection, please contact:

Data Protection Officer, Plymouth City Council, Ballard House, West Hoe Road, Plymouth PL1 3BJ.
Email: dataprotectionofficer@plymouth.gov.uk

Plymouth City Council is registered as a data controller with the Information Commissioner's Office (registration number: Z7262171).

The Council's full Privacy notice can be found at:
<https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/aboutwebsite/privacypolicy>

19.0 REVIEW AND REVISION OF THIS POLICY

This policy will be reviewed and revised as and when required.

This Policy, when approved, will be advertised, as required, in accordance with the provisions of Article 4 of the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England & Wales) Order 2002.

20.0 APPENDICES

Appendix A – Housing and Health

In order to meet a range of performance outcomes and to manage local needs, a budget for provision of DFG will usually require contributions from housing, social care and health. The allocation from national to local government is intended to contribute towards meeting local need, but is not expected to meet all local needs, hence contributions will be required and/or demand will need to be managed.

Home adaptations contribute to meeting a range of Public Health, NHS and Social Care Outcomes⁶.

The vast majority of disabled people (all ages) live in general (not specialist) housing, and so home adaptations play a key role in enabling safe, healthy and independent living at home. Whilst efforts are being made to increase the development of specialist new build homes, this will not satisfy the demand for adapted homes, and these will invariably require adaptations themselves.

Home adaptations can reduce health and social care costs, help to reduce risk of injury e.g. from falls, enable faster hospital discharge, delay onset of admission to residential care and reduce care costs e.g. for people with dementia.

The quality and suitability of the home environment is particularly important for disabled people, older people, those living with a chronic disease e.g. dementia or the consequences of a serious injury, and those who experience functional and cognitive difficulties.

The Council's 'Plan for Homes 4' is our latest housing strategy, the plan contains 10 initiatives to support five key themes, one of these being specialist and supported housing

This can be found using the following link:

The Plan for Homes | [PLYMOUTH.GOV.UK](https://plymouth.gov.uk)

Health and care leaders have come together to develop a Long Term Plan⁷ to make the NHS fit for the future, and to get the most value for patients out of every pound of taxpayers' investment.

This plan has been drawn up by those who know the NHS best, including frontline health and care staff, patient groups and other experts. The plan represents the opinions and interests of 3.5 million people.

⁶ Care & Repair England (2015): Integration Briefing 1, Disabled Facilities Grant Funding via Better Care Funds – An Opportunity to Improve Outcomes.

⁷ NSH: January 2019, Long Term Plan

Some of the ways the plan sets out improve care for patients over the next ten years relate to the home environment, and the types of assistance set out in the policy:

- helping more people to live independently at home for longer
- developing more rapid community response teams to prevent unnecessary hospital spells and speed up discharges home.
- making further progress on care for people with dementia
- giving more people more say about the care they receive and where they receive it, particularly towards the end of their lives.

The main legislative framework governing DFGs is provided by the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 (the Act). Since 1990, local housing authorities have been under a statutory duty to provide grant aid to disabled people for a range of adaptations to their homes. This grant aid is means tested for adults (not for children) and eligibility is defined in the Act.

Recognition of the Armed Forces - Under section 343AA of the Armed Forces Act 2006 (inserted by section 8 of the Armed Forces Act 2021), local authorities are required to have due regard to the three principles of the Armed Forces Covenant when exercising certain housing functions, including allocating disabled facilities grants. Under this provision, special provisions for veterans may be justified in some circumstances.

The Housing Act 2004, 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.

Social care authorities have had legal obligations concerning provision of help with home adaptations for disabled people that pre-dates the housing law.

With the introduction of the Care Act 2014, there remain social care duties in relation to the delivery of home adaptations. These include, for example, adult social care statutory requirements under the Care Act to assess needs and to arrange for appropriate assistance to be provided and statutory entitlements to community equipment and minor adaptations (e.g. handrails to the access to a property or lever taps to a kitchen sink or washbasin).

The nine point legal definition of wellbeing in the Care Act includes 'suitability of living accommodation' (Care Act 2014 (section 1(2))). Four outcomes listed in the eligibility regulations under the Act can be affected by home adaptations:

- Maintaining personal hygiene
- Managing toilet needs
- Maintaining a habitable home environment
- Being able to make use of the home safely

Note that disabled children also have entitlements to DFG as defined by the Act and there is consequently a further legal interface with legislation concerning social care and children, not detailed here, but in the Children Act 1989.

The Government's Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002 (RRO) provided opportunities for Local Authorities to make significant changes to the way they tackle housing issues. The adoption and publication of a Policy for housing assistance is a requirement of the RRO before any assistance can be offered. Under the RRO, a Council has the discretion to decide whether it provides grants, loans, advice etc. for the purpose of repairing, improving, extending, converting or adapting housing accommodation.

The Council can decide the extent to which it offers assistance and what conditions are applied to these services. The exception to this is the mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG), the terms and conditions of which remain substantially as set out in the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996. However, the Government has issued three consents which enable the Council to apply conditions to DFGs in addition to those specified in the 1996 Act, namely:

- The Housing Renewal Main Grants (Recovery of Compensation) General Consent 1996 (This relates to the repayment of grant where the beneficiaries have received compensation relevant to the works carried out)
- The Housing Renewals Grants (Additional Conditions) (England) General Consent 1996 (This relates to the recovery of grant aided equipment where it is no longer required by the disabled person)
- The Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996: Disabled Facilities Grant (Conditions relating to approval for payment of Grant) General Consent 2008 (This relates to the repayment of a portion of the grant monies should the property be sold or ownership transferred)

All three of these consents have been incorporated into this policy. Further details are provided in the policy.

DFG's are mandatory grants and are available to disabled people when works to adapt their home are deemed necessary and appropriate to meet their needs and when it is reasonable and practicable to undertake such adaptations having regard to the age and condition of the dwelling or building.

In order for the Council to determine whether adaptations are necessary and appropriate, the Council is required to liaise and consult with the Social Services Authority regarding the adaptation needs of disabled people (as stated in Section 24 of the Housing, Grants, Construction, Regeneration Act 1996). Generally, the Council will accept those recommendations provided by the Occupational Therapist (OT) however in order to best use resources there may be a need to better identify and fully explore alternative solutions in some instances, for example relocation by means of a Discretionary Relocation Grant.

One of the key areas of connection between housing law and social care law with regard to provision of DFG is the decision about what adaptations a DFG grant should pay for.

Housing authorities themselves must decide what action to take regarding the award of a DFG on the basis of the advice from the social care authority about what works are 'necessary and

appropriate', alongside their own judgement as to whether the recommended/requested adaptation is 'reasonable and practicable'.

It is important to note that social care eligibility criteria (e.g. only providing help for those assessed to have eligible care and support needs under the Care Act 2014) do not apply to housing legislation, including the Act and DFG regulations, and DFGs should not be limited on this basis.

There are, however, occasions whereby it is not reasonable and practicable to adapt a property, based on its age, condition and/or layout. In cases where it is not possible to adapt a property to an appropriate standard or where the cost of the works is considered excessive the Council may determine that works are not reasonable and practicable and may require other options to be considered, e.g. Discretionary Relocation Grant or alternative housing solution.

The Council is sensitive to the aspirations of all applicants; however, these will not automatically form part of the considerations surrounding the determination of the most appropriate scope of works which would be eligible for grant funding. However, should the applicant wish to enhance the eligible works, consideration will be given to self-funded enhancement, as long as the needs are met (e.g. additional/coloured tiling as part of a Bathroom Adaptation).

Mandatory DFG's are subject to a means test (except in the case of children) giving due regard to the financial position of the applicant. This will determine the amount (if any contribution) they may be required to make towards the cost of the works and hence the amount of Grant available to them. Applicants in receipt of certain benefits are also exempt, and considered 'passporting', details of which will be given upon application.

It is important to note that the means testing process is clearly defined by the Regulations and the Council does not have any discretion in applying it.

The current maximum Grant limit is £30,000 and all applications must be approved within 6 months of the full and complete application being submitted to the Council.

The grant can be recovered following the relevant disposal of the property within 10 years of payment provided that the Council is satisfied that it is reasonable to do so. Grants below £5,000 are excluded and the maximum amount that the Council can recover is £10,000.

- This Assistance Policy re-asserts the need to apply Section 52 of the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996, which sets out the principles of seeking repayment of grant under specific circumstances. This power has the advantage that on repayment, the monies can be re-used to assist other applicants in need of home adaptations.

Appendix B - Application Form

INDEPENDENT LIVING ASSISTANCE

Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act, 1996

Regulatory Reform Order (2002)

Application Form

APPLICANT:					
Full Name *:				Address *:	
Date of Birth *:				Postcode *:	
Male *	<input type="checkbox"/>	Female *	<input type="checkbox"/>	E-mail Address *:	
Eclipse ID *:				Date of First Contact with ASC *: <i>Date of first contact specifically related to works in this application.</i>	
<p>Please confirm your preferred means of communication here: (E-mail / Telephone / Letter – please delete as applicable)</p> <p>Please note we will communicate with you via email unless specified above.</p> <p>Communication information: Please add a note here if there is anything that needs to be shared with us and Contractors when contacting the client (e.g. client has a hearing impairment / mobility impairment and might take an extended time to answer the phone / door / when visiting / please knock on the door to the rear of the property etc.)</p> <p>As the Client, if your telephone number changes, please E-mail communityconnections@plymouth.gov.uk or phone 01752 398500 with your name and address and new phone number so we can update our records. This will help to avoid any delay as your case progresses.</p>					
Telephone Number *:				NI Number *:	
Does anyone hold Power of Attorney for you? If so, please include their name, address & telephone number *:		Yes or No – Please provide details			
Is there someone else with whom you are happy for us to communicate? If so, please include their name, address, telephone number & relationship to you:		Y or No – Please provide details			
ACCOMMODATION *:					
Are you a:	Owner Occupier - If leasehold only, please specify the freeholder below:			<input type="checkbox"/>	Tenant: <input type="checkbox"/>
	Living with parents / family member:			<input type="checkbox"/>	Shared Ownership: <input type="checkbox"/>
Who else lives in the house with you?	Name		Relationship		
	Contact Number		Date of Birth		
	Name		Relationship		
	Contact Number		Date of Birth		
	Name		Relationship		
	Contact Number		Date of Birth		

Housing Association / Private Landlord / Freeholder (if applicable):	Name		Company	
	Contact Number		Email Address	

INCOME (THIS SECTION MUST BE COMPLETED FOR APPLICATION TO BE ACCEPTED) *:

Do you or your partner receive any of the following (you will need to provide proof of benefits upon request):
YES or NO

		Documents seen by Livewell
Guaranteed Pension Credit	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Housing Benefit	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Universal Credit	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Income Support	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Employment Support Allowance (income based)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jobseeker's Allowance (income based)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Working/Child Tax Credit (with a household income less than £15,050)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

FURTHER INFORMATION *:

Do you receive paid care?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Does a family member care for you?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you previously applied for a DFG?						Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
If yes, please give details (including description of works and approx. date):									
Will you or a member of your family carry out the works?						Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you already begun the works?						Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you already finished the works?						Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST ASSESSMENT *:

Therapist's Name:		Telephone Number:	
E-mail Address:			
OT Manager's Name: (Checked by)		Date:	
Community Connections: (Checked by) (Not to be completed by Livewell SW)		Date:	
Should Community Connections contact the OT prior to contacting the client?			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

Is the customer registered on Devon Home Choice:	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Band	
Feasibility Visit Has a Feasibility Visit been carried out for this case? If Yes, please provide details: <i>(Please note that Feasibility Visits can be carried out virtually / Google Street View can be used to look at front access)</i>						
Comments regarding paid care The provision of an adaptation could have a direct impact on the necessity for continued care. If this applies in this case, please provide details: (N.B. This may impact on the points system and may highlight if there is some other action that could be taken).						
Amount of paid care (£) per week	before adaptation			after adaptation		
Adaptation Requirements - Reasoning and Recommendations <i>(Please give detailed information regarding the ability of the person and potential for deterioration (physical, sensory, cognitive, learning disability for example) and how this affects their function (i.e. abilities and needs)). You should consider – E.g. Client, environment, task, family dynamics e.g. where TFL required. Please remember to include any relevant points which were discussed with the Client, e.g. Stairlift discussed but agreed not necessary and appropriate at this time or declined by the Client, option of moving has this been considered/discounted and why)</i>						
Access (REQUIRED)*: Comment on access to/from property and applicant's ability to manage access currently and in the future: <i>(Please consider if adaptations are required to access in the future. Consideration should be given where works are required within communal hallways/footpaths/entrance doors as this might not be eligible for grant funding and could have a detrimental effect on other occupants sharing these facilities)</i>						
Suitability of property Long Term (REQUIRED)*: Comment on suitability of property to meet persons long term needs (if recommended adaptations go ahead): <i>(Please note any future works that might be required for this Client stating reasons why they are not necessary and appropriate at this time)</i>						
What is necessary and appropriate to meet the need? * <i>(List the N&A (necessary and appropriate) in clear terms of what is required, not a wish list, sufficient and clear descriptions and reasoning are required the recommendations should meet the persons needs for the next 5 years at least). Please see Appendix 4 for current eligibility. Please also consider if the Client is not able to remain in the property while the works are completed – Please discuss this with your Localities/DFG Lead before submitting your referral).</i>						
May we share the information given in this form with others involved in your grant? <i>(this could include bodies outside of Plymouth City Council)</i>				Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Would you like PCC to select a contractor on your behalf? (See Appendix 2).				Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
The works to be undertaken are covered under the Construction Design and Management Regulations 2015, are you happy for PCC to act as the client in regard to these regulations (See Appendix 3).						

RAG Rating *					
Red	<input type="checkbox"/>	Amber	<input type="checkbox"/>	Green	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fast Track					<input type="checkbox"/>
PRIORITY REASONING (REQUIRED) *: Please provide professional reasoning for RAG RATING including any interim solution which will meet need in short term (NB: Any FAST TRACK rating will need to be sent to Localities/DFG Lead for authorisation in the first instance).					

REQUIREMENT DETAILS *									
Does the person have support from carers with the tasks relevant to this application?				Yes		<input type="checkbox"/>	No		<input type="checkbox"/>
Full Time Wheelchair User	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Part Time Wheelchair User	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is the person likely to be using a wheelchair in the next 5 years?						Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
If yes, please select all that apply			Indoor	<input type="checkbox"/>	Outdoor	<input type="checkbox"/>	Shower		<input type="checkbox"/>
If yes, please supply the external size and the weight of the wheelchair:									
Customer weight (please note stone & lbs OR kg)				Customer height (please note if feet and inches OR metres)					
PROPERTY INFORMATION *									
Parking Restrictions? If so, what? (E.g. pay and display, residents parking etc.)		Unable to park directly outside the property.				Is the property a New build?		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Type of Property		Bungalow		<input type="checkbox"/>	House	<input type="checkbox"/>	Flat		<input type="checkbox"/>
Type(s) of Adaptation *: If any of the requirements are not possible the installer/contractor is to discuss with the OT. Please delete adaptation rows that are not required.									
CHECKLIST FOR TYPES OF ADAPTATION: - Bathroom Adaptation – level access shower - Heating – removal of the radiator and vertical radiator to be installed - Other (please specify details)									
IMPORTANT: Please provide specific detail that you feel will benefit the contractor with their installation, (i.e. stronger on left or right for rail/control positions, breathing difficulties regards dust producing works, increased need to use toilet) but do not type the clients name in the sections below:									
Bathroom Adaptation				Specifics to be completed					
Thermostatically controlled push button (or other easy to use control) electric or mixer shower unit; longer length riser rail and standard length shower hose, unit to be positioned 1200mm above floor level.				Is shower to be used by individual or used by carer assisting (to aid with positioning controls) – carer assisted					
Level Access Floor Former Shower									
Step in shower tray, please note maximum tray height client could manage									
Shower Tray size (Min), consider future seating options				Size in millimetres 800 x 1000mm minimum					
Shower enclosure				Please state preference:					

Grab rails – fixed or drop down,	
Freestanding shower seat being supplied by OT	
Wall mounted shower seat, with back rest, arms and support legs.	
New WC	
Wash and dry toilet	
New Wash hand basin	
Changes to access door	
Room layout – possibly knocking WC and bathroom into one room, enlarge bathroom by moving internal wall or forming bathroom/WC in new area of property.	
Internal Door Adjustments? If other than bathrooms or kitchens or external access	Specifics to be completed
Door alterations, widening, convert to sliding, open opposite direction, remove internal timber thresholds	
External Access	Specifics to be completed
Garden	

Adaptation Estimated Cost

You are not expected to obtain quotations. Please simply use the indicative cost to populate the Estimate Cost box. This is to give the grant administrator an idea of the estimated total cost, and how close to the grant maximum the works are likely to be.

Adaptation Type	Indicative Cost	Estimated Cost
Bathroom Adaptation	£6,000	
Bathroom Adaptation – 2 rooms knocked into 1	£8,000	
Wash dry toilet seat (Bio bidet or AKW)	£1,100	
Wash dry toilet (i.e. Geberit)	£4,500	
Stair Lift – Straight, internal	£2,500	
Stair Lift – Straight, external (on existing steps, as long as not communal)	£4,800	

Stair Lift – Straight, external (new steps to be formed)	£14,800	
Stair Lift – Curved, internal	£6,500	
Stair Lift – Curved, external (on external steps as long as not communal)	£10,000	
Through Floor Lift, no extra building work	£15,000	
Through Floor Lift, with building works	£18,000	
Ceiling Track Hoist – Straight	£2,500	
Ceiling Track Hoist – Straight bariatric	£5,000	
Ceiling Track Hoist – H Track	£3,750	
Ceiling Track Hoist – H Track bariatric	£6,500	
Door Widening, internal door	£600 (per door)	Note how many doors
Door Widening, external door	£1,700	
Automatic Door Opening System on existing door mainly in blocks of flats	£4,000	
Automatic Door Opening System with new door mainly external doors	£5,300	
Automatic Window Opening System	£650 per window opening	Note how many windows
Kitchen	£14,000	
External Ramp – concrete (basic, door landing ramp, landing)	£7,000	
External Ramp – concrete (complex, multiple landings & ramps)	£14,000	
External Ramp - modular (basic)	£6,000	
External Lift Access	£25,000	
Sub Total		
Other Works (estimate cost)		
Estimated Grand Total		
Works over £30000?	Yes	No
If yes, customer can fund works over £30000?	Yes	No
Have you discussed moving to alternative accommodation?	Yes	No
If yes, what was the outcome		
If no, please put the customer works in priority order, or suggest where funding over £30000 is to come from?		

DECLARATION PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

- I declare that the information I have given is correct and complete, to the best of my knowledge and belief.
- I authorise the Council making enquiries to check the information I have given. This may mean contacting other Government agencies, my employer, or my accountant if I am self-employed.
- I understand that if I give false information or knowingly leave out information I may be prosecuted.
- I authorise the Occupational Therapy Service to provide Community Connections with any information on my disability/condition considered necessary to enable the determination of this grant application.
- I understand that submission of this form does not constitute a valid application until all relevant information has been received.
- I understand that I give permission in principle to the recommendations as discussed with the Occupational Therapist completing this form (the recommendations are subject to change and agreement with all parties).
- I understand that my landlord will have to give consent (delete if owner occupier)

Applicant Name		Signed		Date	
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Please send completed form to:

communityconnections@plymouth.gov.uk



Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act, 1996

Part I: Chapter I Owner's Certificate

To Plymouth City Council:			
In connection with my application dated			
For a Disabled Facilities Grant in respect of Property address			
		Post Code	
I HEREBY CERTIFY that I [have] or [propose to acquire] a qualifying owner's interest in the dwelling intended for the application.			
I INTEND that the disabled occupant will live in the dwelling or flat as their only or main residence throughout the grant condition period (5 years for grants of £5,000 or less, 10 years for grants over £5,000) or for such shorter period as [my] [their] health or other relevant circumstances permit.			
Signed by all owners		Date	
Where the applicants have an owner's interest in the property specified in the application (i.e. the house or the dwelling within the building) are to be owned in accordance with the Occupation Certificate. Where there is a relevant disposal of part or all of the property within 10 years of the date of completion the Council may demand repayment of that portion of the grant which exceeds £5000 subject to a maximum repayment of £10,000. Full details of this condition are set out in Annex 4 of the Housing Assistance Policy 2011.			

**Housing Grants, Construction and
Regeneration Act, 1996**

Part I: Chapter I
Tenant’s Certificate

To Plymouth City Council:			
In connection with my application dated			
For a Disabled Facilities Grant in respect of Property address			
		Post Code	
I HEREBY CERTIFY that my application is a tenant’s application for a disabled facilities grant.			
I INTEND that the disabled occupant will live in the dwelling or flat as their only or main residence throughout the grant condition period or for such shorter period as [my] [their] health or other relevant circumstances permit.			
Signed by all tenants		Date	

Stair Lift Controls

Standard Joy Stick – Long



Ergonomic Joy Stick



Standard Joy Stick – Short



Arm Control – Paddle



Rocker Switch



Arm Control – Toggle



External Ramp:

- Gradient of the ramp will be 1:15.
- Maximum length of ramp will be 5m before landing is required.
- Minimum Clear width of 1200mm.
- Top and Bottom Landings of 1200mm x 1200mm.
- Landing provided at each change in direction (1200mm x 1200mm).
- Ramp and landings will have 100mm upstands.
- Bi-lateral metal railings will be installed where the drop is more than 600mm on both exposed sides.
- Rails will be 900mm high.
- Ramp and Landing Surface will be slip resistant.

This standard specification will be adhered to unless otherwise indicated and justified by the Occupational Therapist. Contractors will undertake full measured survey of the site and advise if ramp specification is not feasible.

For 1:15 Ramp	
Height of Steps (Rise)	Length of Slope (going)
100mm	1500mm
200mm	3000mm
300mm	4500mm
400mm	6000mm
500mm	7500mm

Selecting a Contractor on the grant applicant's behalf.

Plymouth City Council run a Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) for all adaptation procurement (major adaptations), which means all contractors/providers are registered and compliant in regard to the work they undertake for our customers. All contractors/providers are TrustMark registered (see <https://www.trustmark.org.uk/> for more detail), and will provide the customer with an insurance backed warranty (2 years, extendable up to 5 years if grant applicant wishes to pay for this extension) for the work they undertake via the DPS. The customer will receive a leaflet about the service upon acknowledgement of this form.

Having PCC procure the work on the customers behalf means that other relevant legislation, e.g. Construction Design and Management Regulations 2015 is covered, and processes followed.

The works identified to meet the customers' needs will be placed on the relevant 'Lot', e.g. Lot 2 for Bathroom Adaptation with Design, and providers will be asked a series of questions relevant to the works, customer etc. and asked to submit a 'percentage adjustment bid' to our standard Schedule of Works. This information will determine the selected contractor/provider, who will be awarded the work following formal grant approval.

The contractor/provider will ask the customer to sign a contract. The contract for the works is between the customer and the contractor/provider NOT PCC.

If the customer has concerns or there are problems with the works, if the contractor/provider has been selected by PCC on the customers behalf, In.CIC and PCC will provide support to resolve the matter.

Should the customer choose to not utilise the DPS, they will be responsible for providing 3 quotations for the works, which must match your recommendations. The contractors they select must hold the relevant insurance. Please contact your allocated DFG officer to discuss this further.

If a family member undertakes the work, the cost of materials **only** will be covered. Where the customer selects their own contractors/provider or a family member undertakes the works, they must take full responsibility for the project and any subsequent issues. PCC will take no responsibility for these works.

In.CIC, or Independence Community Interest Company have been employed by PCC to produce and manage the Dynamic Purchasing System. They also offer a TrustMark registration scheme for adaptation specialists, and support PCC in ensuring compliance and quality of contractors/providers.

Construction Design and Management Regulations 2015.

The construction design and management regulations 2015 places a duty on domestic clients' who has construction work carried out on their home (construction work means any work that employs construction techniques, materials or equipment). CDM 2015 applies to adaptations.

PCC feel it unreasonable to expect the grant applicant to take this duty on and hence in most circumstances PCC will take the 'client role'. The only exception to this is when the grant applicant wishes to retain this duty, when the grant applicant does not want PCC to select the contractor or when an architect is employed.

The regulations places duties on all parties to give full consideration to the health and safety of those involved in the project and for future maintenance.

PCC will ensure the appropriate contractor/provider is selected (via the DPS), that they consider health and safety during the works (the construction phase plan), and provide required information for use and maintenance of the equipment (the Health & Safety file).

The works are not notifiable; however, the co-ordination role is important and a legal duty.

The grant applicant must agree to PCC undertaking this role by completion of the box within the form, or they must undertake this role themselves. PCC will check there is a construction phase plan and health and safety file before releasing grant payment.

Appendix C - Eligible works:

The adaptation works eligible for assistance will be those listed under section 23 (1) of the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996, as follows:

Facilitating access to the home and garden

Where there is a need to remove or help overcome any obstacles which are preventing the disabled person from moving freely in and out of the property, including common parts, in and around the garden and any yard, outhouse or “other appurtenance” (e.g. a balcony or the land adjacent to the mooring of a qualifying houseboat).

Access might also include works outside the normal curtilage of the dwelling, such as a dropped kerb pavement crossing.

Eligible works to facilitate access to the home and garden may include, but are not limited to:

- Ramped access to the main entrance door for wheelchair use; widened or shallower steps to main entrance door or a step lift;
- Widened entrance door for wheelchair use;
- Path to entrance door;
- Alterations to secondary entrance door/patio window to provide access to rear garden/yard where access cannot reasonably be gained via the adapted main entrance and drive/side path;
- Installation of Platform Lift or Step Lift equipment.

In deciding the extent of providing access to the garden, the following will be taken into account.

- Grant assistance will not be given where there is already access to the garden but grant assistance may be given to improve an existing access to make it safe for the disabled occupant. It does not include extending an existing access e.g. creating a side access so a person can also go around the side of a house, nor to repair an existing surface.
- Grant assistance may be provided to allow access to an area of the garden but may not provide access to all areas of the garden.
- Generally, the most modest solution for providing access to both the house and the garden will be considered and this can mean that one access may be sufficient to access both the house and the garden.
- Where homes have communal gardens, e.g., blocks of flats served by a single access, grants will not normally be provided for an individual access to the garden unless it can be demonstrated that because of the disabled persons condition the travel distance to the garden would be excessive and unreasonable.

Making the premises safer

Eligible works to make the premises safer for the disabled person and other people living with them might include situations where:

- someone with challenging behaviours is hurting themselves, other people they live with or damaging the property;
- someone with impaired vision cannot safely navigate into and around their home or carry out everyday tasks and activities;
- someone with impaired hearing can't hear a standard smoke alarm; or

Access to the principal family room or bedroom

Where the disabled person is unable to access a room suitable for use as a living room or gain access to a room usable for sleeping. Or where the disabled occupant shares a bedroom with another person, they cannot access a room of sufficient size so that the normal sleeping arrangements can be maintained.

Eligible works for access to the principal family room or bedroom may include, but are not limited to:

- Widened doorway for wheelchair access;
- Provision and installation of stair lift/through-floor lift equipment and structural alterations required to allow installation, if the principal family room or bedroom is on an upper floor;
- Widened doorway in entrance hall to access principal family room or bedroom for wheelchair use;

Access to a toilet

Works eligible for assistance may include, but are not limited to:

- Provision of a toilet where one does not exist.
- Provision and installation of stair lift/through-floor lift equipment and structural alterations required to allow the installation, where access is required to a toilet above ground floor level;
- Strengthened ceiling and/or preparation works for ceiling track hoist, where hoist is to be provided by Plymouth City Council;
- Repositioning toilet to facilitate access by wheelchair user;
- Raised/lowered toilet pan;
- Provision of grab rails to assist with access to the toilet;
- Provision of ground floor toilet where upper floor cannot reasonably be accessed;
- Widened doorway for wheelchair access;

Access to a bath or shower

Where the disabled person cannot access a room with a bath and/or a shower or cannot use the existing bath and/or shower. In cases where the disabled person needs access to a bath and a shower, they would need to demonstrate a medical need for both.

Works which may be eligible for assistance include, but are not limited to:

- Provision and installation of stair lift/through-floor lift equipment and structural alterations required to allow the installation, where access is required to an existing bathroom above ground floor level;
- Provision of bath or shower for the first time;
- Provision of shower (thermostatically controlled) over a bath, including necessary curtain, tiles and grab rails;
- Replacement of bath with shower facility;
- Replacement of shower with a bath;
- Provision of bath and shower where there are 2 or more disabled occupants with differing needs;
- Relocation of bath/shower to facilitate use by wheelchair user;
- Strengthened ceiling and/or preparation works for ceiling track hoist, where hoist is to be provided by Plymouth City Council;
- Widened doorway for wheelchair access;
- Provision of fixed seat/grab rails;
- Safety flooring to create shower facility.

Access to a wash hand basin

A wash-hand basin will normally be provided in the same room as the WC.

Where the disabled person cannot access a room with a wash hand basin or cannot use the existing wash hand basin.

Works to provide access to a wash hand basin may include, but are not limited to:

- Relocation of wash hand basin to facilitate use by wheelchair user;
- Replacement of wash hand basin with more suitable type e.g. replace vanity unit with wall fixed wash hand basin;
- Replacement of taps with lever taps in association with above.

Facilitating the preparation of cooking of food

The extent of adaptation work in a kitchen should be related to the extent of cooking and food preparation normally undertaken by the disabled person.

Where the disabled person cannot access or does not have suitable facilities to prepare and cook food for themselves and others living with them.

Eligible works to facilitate the preparation of cooking of food may include, but are not limited to:

- Rearrangement of kitchen fittings/appliances to facilitate their use;
- Enlargement of the kitchen if it is too small to allow its safe use;
- Adapted work-top/storage units;
- Adapted doorway, e.g. for wheelchair user;
- Widened doorway, e.g. for wheelchair user;
- Raised height surfaces for appliances

Control of power, light and heat

Eligible works for the control of power, light and heat may include, but are not limited to:

- Relocating power points to make them accessible;
- Adaptation of heating/lighting controls to make them accessible;
- Replacement of solid fuel fire with other heating appliance in living/sleeping rooms normally used by a disabled occupant;
- Improvement of inadequate heating in living/sleeping rooms normally used by disabled occupant (People with limited mobility who remain in one room for long periods usually need a warmer home than able-bodied people);
- Provision of central heating.

Caring for others - Where the disabled person cannot move around the home to care for another person who normally lives there, whether they are related to the disabled person or not. This may include a spouse, partner or family member, another disabled person or a child. Importantly the dependent being cared for need not be disabled

Eligible works may include, but are not limited to:

- Provision and installation of stair lift/through-floor lift equipment and structural alterations required to allow the installation, where the disabled person lives on the ground floor but needs access to bedrooms;
- Widened doorways to bedrooms of those being cared for by disabled, wheelchair user;

Common parts

An application can be made to fund adaptations to the common parts of buildings containing one or more flats. This can include the structure and exterior of the building, routine parts of the building such as the front door and paths, as well as common interior areas of the building including emergency/fire exits, stairwells and passageways.

Under Section 36 of the Equality Act 2010 in England and Wales, landlords are required to make reasonable adjustments to the common parts of leasehold and commonhold homes, including hallways, entrances and stairs.

Appendix D - Discretionary Assistance Allocation (DAA) (Summary):

Discretionary Assistance	ILA Policy clause	Maximum amount	Owner Occupier	Tenant (incl. living with family)	Means tested
Discretionary Assistance Allocation (DAA) top-up of mandatory DFG	3.2	£30,000	Yes	Yes	Yes (for children's cases)
Moving on Grant	3.3	£15,000	Yes	Yes	No
Fast Track adaptations	3.4	£10,000	Yes	Yes	No
Works to allow the applicant to be discharged from hospital or Care facility, or; an individual is at risk of admission to an inpatient setting due to an unmet housing need	3.5	£10,000	Yes	Yes	No
Replacement stair lift or hoist	3.6	£10,000	Yes	Yes	No
Cleaning or clearance of a home to enable safe discharge from hospital	3.7	£5,000	Yes	Yes	No
Works for people with dementia, including colour and contrast decorating, carbon monoxide/cold/heat alarms, lighting, safety flooring, digital technology	3.8	£5,000	Yes	Yes	No
'Nil Grant' Application	3.9	N/A	Yes	Yes	No

Appendix E – Interim revisions to policy (date to be confirmed):

Lendology

- To consider a means of loaning money to clients where necessary, Lendology is a Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) registered Social Enterprise Community Interest lender, that works in partnership with local councils. With funding provided by their Council Partners, Lendology lends funds to homeowners for a range of home repairs, improvements, adaptations, energy efficiency and renewable energy measures. The interest rate charged on the loans is agreed and set by the Council.
- The way the scheme works is that everyone living in Plymouth would receive the same interest rate, regardless of the loan amount, loan term or personal circumstances and the interest rate is fixed for the term of the loan. Lendology is currently used by Exeter City Council and others in the South West including Cornwall, Mid Devon, South Hams, Teignbridge & Torridge & West Devon. These schemes have been in operation since 2008, and the current interest rate for homeowners is set at 4% for these authorities.
- For homeowners, Lendology registers a Title Restriction at the Land Registry against the client's property. This means that if the homeowner looks to sell, re-mortgage or transfer ownership of the property, Lendology will be notified. This ensures that Lendology can ensure exceptional loan repayment rates. Most existing customers understand that Lendology are lending councils funds and its as such a fantastic rate they are happy to have the title restriction added. Should the person sell the property Lendology would expect to be repaid.
- Having supported existing Devon Partners for over 15 years with Disabled Facilities Grant top-up loans Lendology are confident that they would be able to provide an excellent service to Plymouth Council and its residents.