



Disabled Facilities Grants

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Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) are a mechanism to provide financial assistance for adaptations to dwellings occupied by disabled people to give them easier access to and around the dwelling and to enable them to use the facilities.



- Statutory duty since 1990
- Housing Grants Construction and Regeneration Act 1996
- Duty of district and borough councils
- Duty to consult with Social Services



Eligibility

- Disabled person who lives in the dwelling as their only or main residence
- Owner occupier or tenant
- Can be adult or child
- Referral has to be made by the Social Services authority (Nottinghamshire County Council Occupational Therapist)



Mandatory Grant

- Access to dwelling
- Movement around dwelling
- Access to bathing, washing, toilet and kitchen facilities, and living room
- Adapting heating and lighting controls
- Improving heating system
- Providing access to the garden



- Average grant (East Midlands) approx. £7,500
- Works include stairlifts, tracking hoists, level access showers, wet rooms, external ramps, door widening, bathroom or bedroom extensions, etc



Discretionary Grant

General power under Article 3 of the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2012 enables housing authorities to give discretionary assistance in any form (for example, grant, loan, equity release) for adaptations.

However, must have a published policy.



Conditions

- Maximum of £30,000 per grant
- Subject to financial test of resources
- No means test for children
- District council must say if works are “necessary and appropriate” and if it is “reasonable and practicable to carry out works having regard to age and condition of dwelling”.
- District council must approve or refuse an application within six months
- 12 months in which to carry out the works from approval



Funding

- Annual capital grant from central government
- Amount based on complex needs formula
- Used to be 60/40 central / local split
- Districts had to make up shortfall
- Steady increase in funding from central government over the past 18 years with a projected increase of 7% next year



Better Care Fund

DFG allocations now form part of the BCF and are paid to the County Council each year.

However, County Council must pay the full amount to each district by the end of June, unless schemes are agreed.



Better Care Fund (2)

- With BCF and increasing allocations, there is a requirement for district councils to plan strategically with social services and health authority colleagues to obtain the maximum benefit from the capital funding in terms of improving health outcomes across all sectors.
- Statutory duty to provide DFGs remains.



Examples of BCF-DFG funded schemes

- Warm Homes on Prescription (WHOP)
- Handyperson Adaptation Service (HPAS)
- Top up schemes
- Assistive technology



Benefit of DFGs

Research undertaken by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation has shown that “spending on adaptations appears to be a highly effective use of public resources”.

Research by the London School of Economics has shown a cost benefit of 1:2 for DFG spend: health and social care gains.



Challenges for the future

- Joined up thinking between health, social care and housing.
- Jointly agreed plans to make the best use of the funds
- Joint use of budgets
- Common policies
- Integration with Sustainability and Transformation Partnership





