

Disabled Facilities Grants in Leicestershire

A Guide For Home Owners and Private Tenants



Leicestershire
County Council



Melton
Borough
Council



Hinckley and Wigston
Borough Council



Hinckley & Bosworth
Borough Council

A Borough to be proud of



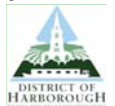
Charnwood
Leading in Leicestershire



Blaby
District Council



North West
LEICESTERSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL



DISTRICT OF
HARBOROUGH
MURAL SOUTH LEICESTERSHIRE

Introduction

Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG's) were introduced in 1989 and are provided in Leicestershire by the local Councils. They provide financial help for disabled people who need an adaptation to their home. This includes people who own their own home, tenants, and people living in houseboats and caravans.

Examples of works the grant might cover:

- a stairlift
- ramped access into a home
- replacing a bath with a level access shower

Leicestershire County Council's Social Care Services (called Social Care from now on) have responsibility for assessing people's needs and arranging community care services. If Social Care assesses a disabled person as needing major adaptations to their home in order to allow them to live as independently as possible, they will make recommendations for a DFG to the relevant Council.

This booklet gives you guidance on:-

- What work can be carried out under a DFG
- Who you need to contact if you wish to apply for a DFG
- Who pays for the DFG
- How long it may take
- What the stages of the DFG process are
- The conditions of the grant

There is a checklist on page 11 which can be used to record progress on the adaptation.

Also included in this booklet are details of the grant process on page 7 and our service standards on page 8.

1. What work can be done under a DFG?

If you, or someone in your household is disabled then the grant is mandatory for adaptations that Social Care class as essential to give you better freedom of movement into and around your home and to access essential facilities within it. Where necessary it can also provide the essential facilities themselves.

In some circumstances other work may be carried out but this would be the decision of the Council concerned.

The Council will only offer mandatory grants if the scheme proposed is reasonable and practical; schemes that are not, will be turned down by the Council. The types of work are listed below:

- to make it easier to get into and out of the dwelling by, for example, widening doors and installing ramps;
- ensuring the safety of the disabled person and other occupants by, for example, providing a specially adapted room in which it would be safe to leave a disabled person unattended or improved lighting to ensure better visibility;
- to make access easier to the living room;
- by providing or improving access to the bedroom, kitchen, toilet, wash basin and bathing facilities; for example, by installing a stairlift or installing a level access shower;

- to improve or provide a heating system in your home which is suitable to the needs of the disabled person;
- to adapt heating or lighting controls to make them easier to use;
- to improve access and movement around the home;
- to enable the disabled person to care for another person who lives in the property, such as a spouse, child or another person for whom the disabled person cares; and
- to improve access to and from the garden of your home where feasible.

Some local Councils offer discretionary grants for work which is not listed above or to provide financial assistance to help you move to a more suitable property if it is not feasible or practical to adapt your existing home. You are advised to contact your local Council directly for further information on the availability of discretionary grants.

2. Who do you need to contact to apply for a grant?

There are seven local Councils in Leicestershire who provide Disabled Facilities Grants, these are:

- Blaby District Council
- Charnwood Borough Council
- Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council
- Harborough District Council
- Melton Borough Council

- North West Leicestershire District Council
- Oadby and Wigston Borough Council

In the first instance you should contact Leicestershire County Council, before you apply for a grant on:

Leicester (0116) 305 0004

They employ Occupational Therapists who are qualified to give you advice on how best to overcome your difficulties. They will need to visit you in your home and may, if necessary, ask to speak to your doctor, hospital and so on, depending on your circumstances.

A DFG must be applied for by an owner or private tenant of the property. This person (the grant applicant) may or may not be the disabled occupant for whom the work is intended.

Some Councils use Home Improvement Agencies to administer some or all DFG cases on their behalf.

3. Who Pays?

a) What will I have to pay?

Mandatory DFG's are means tested. This means that the grant applicant may be required to pay an amount towards the costs of adapting their home. If the disabled person is eligible for and receiving certain means tested benefits then they will not be required to pay towards the work. If the disabled person is a child, there is no means test and no contribution to pay.

To work out what you would be expected to pay, the Council carries out a means test that is set by law. They compare your weekly income with standard weekly living costs. Any capital and assets you have are considered as investments that could generate weekly income. However your first £6,000 of savings are ignored.

Any income that you have over the Government's standard living costs (for someone in your circumstances) is considered as money available to pay off a ten year loan. Your contribution is, therefore, an amount equivalent to a loan which you could afford to pay off over a ten year period.

Your contribution can vary from a few pounds to the whole cost of the adaptation. If the test reveals your contribution is higher than the cost of the adaptations needed you may still wish to apply for a 'nil' grant (even though you won't get any money) because your costs will be taken into account should you need more alterations to your property within the next 10 years. Also by going through the 'nil grant' route you get the expertise and support of your Occupational Therapist and the Grant Officer.

As the means test is set by law your Council is not able to vary, change or ignore the result.

b) What will my Council pay?

The grant is the difference between what the grant applicant is assessed as being able to afford, and the reasonable cost of the adaptation. There is, however, a maximum limit of £30,000 for mandatory grants. Any grant payable over this amount is at the discretion of the individual Council.

c) What if I can't afford my contribution?

If you are unable to raise your contribution you should contact your Occupational Therapist for advice.

4. How long will it take?

The Leicestershire authorities have a target of completing 70% of major adaptations within 12 months and all stairlifts within 6 months. As a County we are looking to reduce the time taken to process grant applications. Your local Council will be able to provide individual average times and performance for your area and you are advised to contact your local Council directly for more information.

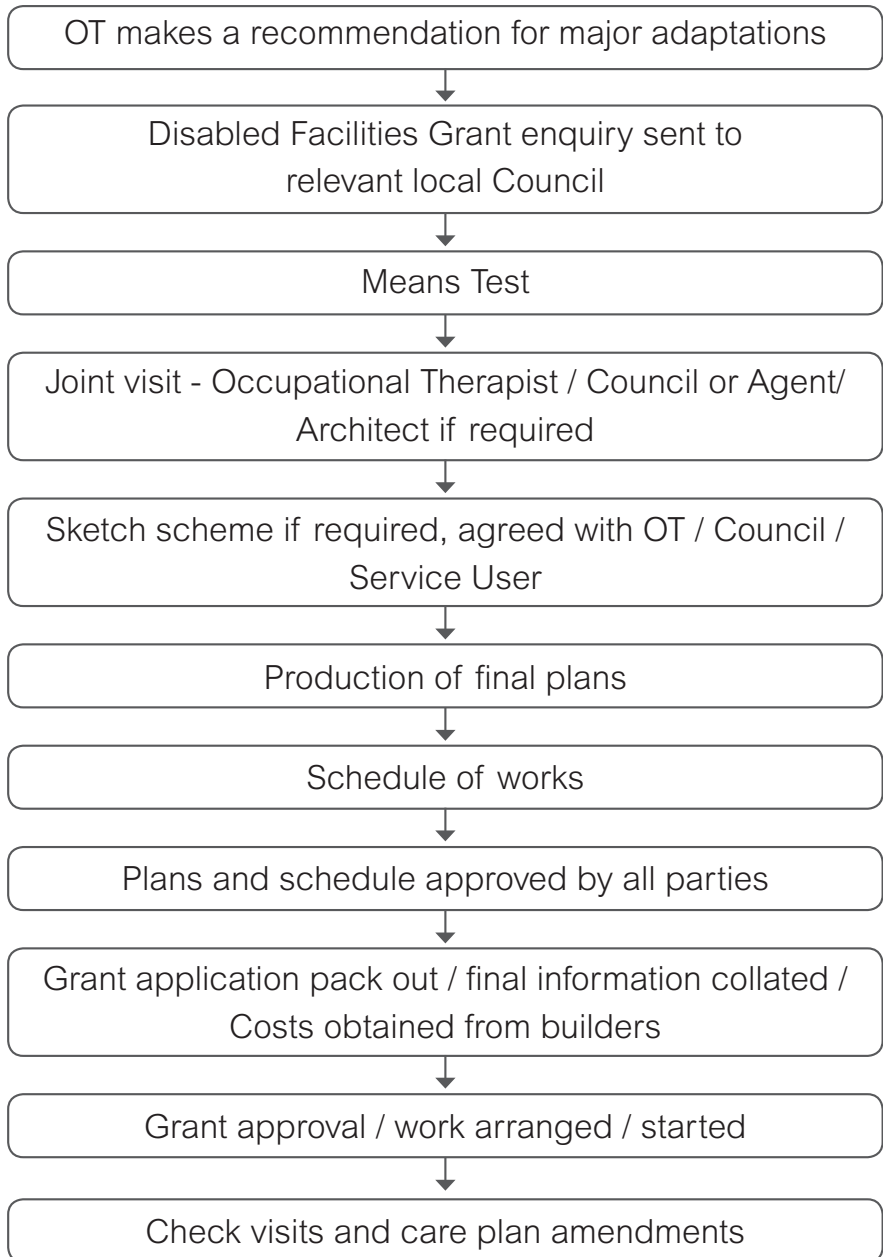
5. The stages of the Disabled Facilities Grant process

The procedures detailed in this leaflet have been agreed between Social Care and the local Councils.

The procedure of applying for a grant varies depending on whether you will be applying for a grant for major building works or for the installation of equipment such as stairlifts and through floor lifts.

On page 7 there is a flowchart to show the stages of a usual 'major' adaptation for example a level access shower.

Disabled Facilities Grant Process – Major adaptations (eg. Bathrooms)



Customer Service Standards

Topic	When you:	We will:	In the following timescale
Housing Adaptations (Major)	Have been assessed by Social Care that you need a major adaptation and they have carried out a referral to us	Assist you with a grant application through to completion of the works	70% of cases within 12 months of the Social Care referral
Housing Adaptations (Stair Lifts)	Have been assessed by Social Care that you need a stair lift and they have carried out a referral to us	Assist you with a grant application through to completion of the works.	70% of cases within 6 months of the Social Care referral

6. Conditions of the grant

You will be given the grant conditions at the time you receive your grant approval documentation, you should read these carefully.

Please note:

- You will already have signed a certificate (at application stage) stating that it is your intention to remain in the property for the next five years. If it becomes apparent that this is not your intention the Council may recover any grant monies paid.

- Some Councils will require repayment of a DFG over £5,000 if the property is sold (or other similar circumstances). You will be advised whether this will apply to you.
- If it appears that after the grant is approved you are not entitled to it, the Council may withhold or reclaim grant monies.

7. General

You may be asked to arrange for drawings of your home. You can choose whoever you want for this but you must take responsibility for the cost of the plans. Although architects fees can be included and paid out of the DFG, if you do not proceed with the grant works (for any reason) you are expected to pay these fees. These fees can only be paid if and when the grant is approved and the works proceed.

Once your grant is approved you should contact your builder to arrange for the works to start. **The builder must not start the works until you have received your approval document.** You have 12 months from approval to complete the work.

If your local Council uses a Home Improvement Agency to administer the grant, these works will be arranged for you on your behalf. However please be aware that if for any reason you do not proceed with your grant application, you will be required to pay for any costs such as architect fees incurred by the Agency.

Please note that, other than specialist equipment for example lifts, you are responsible for any repairs in connection with your grant work (if you have specialist equipment repairs are only covered if you have agreed to 'sign the equipment over' to the County Council).

Record of contacts:

	Name	Contact details:
Your Occupational Therapist is:		
Your Grant Officer is:		
Your Builder is:		
Other (eg. Architect)		

Notes:

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Progress on your adaptation:

Stage	Date
Your first enquiry	
Your Social Care assessment	
First visit by Grant Officer	
First visit by an Architect	
Sketch plan first seen	
Plan agreed and signed by yourself	
Application pack received	
Builders visit to price for the works	
Application submitted to the Council	
Grant approved by the Council	
Start date	
Completion date	
Grant Officer final visit	
Social Care final visit	

This information can be made available on request, in other languages and formats (Large Print, Braille or on Audio tape) by contacting:



Leicestershire County Council

Adaptations Team

Leicester **(0116) 305 9229**

આ માહિતી બીજા ભાષાઓમાં અને રૂપમાં (મોટા અક્ષરોમાં, અંધવિધિમાં અથવા ઓડિઓ ટેઇપ) ઉપર નીચે મુજબ સંપર્ક કરી વિનંતી કરવાથી મળી શકે છે:

લેસ્ટરશાયર કાઉન્ટી કાઉન્સિલ

એડેપ્ટેશન્સ ટીમ

0116 305 9229

ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਰੂਪਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ (ਵੱਡੇ ਛਾਪੇ, ਬ੍ਰੇਲ ਜਾਂ ਆਡਿਓ ਟੇਪ ਤੇ) ਅੱਗੇ ਲਿਖੇ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰਕੇ ਬੇਨਤੀ ਕਰਨ ਤੇ ਉਪਲੱਬਧ ਕੀਤੀ ਜਾ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੈ:

ਲੈਸਟਰਸ਼ਾਇਰ ਕਾਉਂਟੀ ਕੌਂਸਲ

ਐਡੈਪਟੇਸ਼ਨ ਟੀਮ

0116 305 9229

MAY 2011