

Disabled Facilities Grants



If you or someone in your home are disabled you may qualify for a Disabled Facilities Grant from the Council to pay towards the cost of essential adaptations.



West Berkshire
COUNCIL

What is a Disabled Facilities Grant?

A Disabled Facilities Grant is a form of financial help, of up to £30,000, available from the Council. It can be used towards adaptations to give disabled people better freedom of movement into and around their homes, and to give access to essential facilities within the home. The grant is available to private tenants, owner occupiers and registered provider tenants.

The types of adaptations that can be provided include:

- Level Access Showers
- Stair Lifts
- Kitchen Adaptations
- Access Ramps
- Through Floor Lifts
- Provision of Specialist Equipment

An Occupational Therapist will carry out an assessment of your current housing situation and your medical needs. They will recommend the types of adaptations required. The Occupational Therapist will need to be satisfied that any works recommended are 'necessary and appropriate' to meet your needs.

If you would like to arrange for an initial needs based assessment you can do so by contacting the relevant Locality Team on **01635 503050**.

Financial Assessment

Disabled Facilities Grants are subject to a financial assessment – a 'means-test' to determine if you will need to contribute towards the cost of the works. You may be entitled to full grant funding if you are in receipt of certain means-tested benefits. The Home Improvement Agency are able to undertake a preliminary test of resources to give you an indication of the level of contribution you will be expected to make.

Disabled Facilities Grants for children or qualifying young people are not subject to a means-test and will therefore be passported to full grant funding up to the maximum limit of £30,000.

Grant Conditions

There are certain conditions that apply to a Disabled Facilities Grant. The main condition is that you must intend to occupy the property for a minimum of

5 years. If you are registered with the Housing Allocations Team seeking a move, you only have a short term tenancy or your house is for sale on the open market, you will not be considered to satisfy this condition.

Grants cannot be awarded for works that have already been started or completed.

For owner occupiers, if the relevant person receives a Disabled Facilities Grant for more than £5,000 the Council will place a local land charge on the adapted property and if the property is sold or otherwise disposed of within a ten year period the Council may seek to recover the grant funding that exceeds £5,000 up to a maximum charge of £10,000.

For example:

- If the total grant is under **£5,000** - no local land charge will be placed on the adapted property.
- If the total grant is for **£8,000** – a local land charge of **£3,000** will be placed on the adapted property.
- If the total grants is in excess of **£15,000** a local land charge of **£10,000** will be placed on the adapted property.

How long will it take to get the Disabled Facilities Grant?

When your Occupational Therapist has prepared the recommendations the Home Improvement Agency will consider if the recommended work is 'reasonable and practicable'.



The Application process can be complex depending on the recommended works and for that reason, whilst you can prepare your own Grant Application we recommend that you seek support. Whether you are a tenant of a Registered Provider, an Owner Occupier or Private Tenant the Home Improvement Agency Team can support you with all aspects of completing your Grant Application. This can include seeking planning permission, preparing technical drawings, tendering for quotes, sourcing a contractor and overseeing the works until practical completion.

When your fully completed application is received the Home Improvement Agency Team will aim to approve your application within six weeks, however this is subject to available funding. If your application approval is likely to be delayed in consequence of limited funding, we will inform you of this and in any case a decision will be made on your application within six months.

All works approved with the Grant Application must be complete within twelve months of the grant being approved.

The contractors providing your adaptations will be paid directly by the Home Improvement Agency Team, when the works have been certified. If you are required to make a financial contribution, you will be required to pay this money to the Council before work can commence.

For further information regarding Disabled Facilities Grants you can contact the Home Improvement Agency Officer on 01635 519680 or email: HomeImprovementAgency@westberks.gov.uk.

We are committed to being accessible to everyone. If you require this document in an alternative format or translation, please call the Home Improvement Agency on 01635 519629.