



# **Housing Assistance Policy**

## **2022-2025**

Date adopted: xxx 2023

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Purpose

- 1.1.1 This policy is required under Article 4 of the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002. The Order provides councils with the discretion to develop schemes to provide financial assistance to deal with a range of housing issues.
- 1.1.2 This policy is set out in two parts. Part One of the Policy identifies the areas on which the Devon Councils will focus Better Care Funding (BCF) in order to improve housing conditions across the districts. The funding will be targeted to those areas that contribute to the delivery of the Better Care Fund and Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) priorities.
- 1.1.3 Part Two of the Policy provides details of assistance specific to the Councils local priorities outside the scope of the Better Care Fund. These schemes will be delivered using the Councils own funding subject to availability.
- 1.1.4 The policy covers a period of three-financial years from 22/23 to 24/25
- 1.1.5 This policy provides the Devon Councils with the flexibility and discretion to provide appropriate assistance to meet the aims and priorities set out in section 3 below.
- 1.1.6 This policy has been agreed by the following Councils:
- Devon County Council
  - East Devon District Council
  - Exeter City Council
  - Mid Devon District Council
  - North Devon District Council
  - South Hams District Council
  - Teignbridge District Council
  - Torridge District Council
  - West Devon District Council

## 1.2 Review

- 1.2.1 The Devon Wide policy has been reviewed twice, the latest being in 2019. Having worked with the policy for the last four years a more detailed review has been undertaken in consultation with stakeholders to identify any gaps or enhancements required to the policy. This policy incorporates the agreed

changes suggested by stakeholders and will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure it continues to meet local needs.

## 1.3 Funding

- 1.3.1 The assistance contained within this policy subject to the availability of funding. Where funding is limited, priority for spend will be given to the provision of the Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant programme across the County.

# 2 Context

## 2.1 Housing and Health

- 2.1.1 Housing is a key determinant of health, and by promoting good quality housing this policy can contribute to reducing health inequalities for the residents of Devon.
- 2.1.2 In 2008, flexibilities were introduced enabling councils to use government funding that has been allocated for disabled facilities grants more intelligently to deliver adaptations for disabled people outside of the mandatory grant regime.
- 2.1.3 Research has shown that there is a direct impact on the health and well-being of residents resulting from the homes in which they live; therefore, poor housing can contribute to poor health.
- 2.1.4 Each year hazards in the home result in unnecessary injuries, episodes of ill-health, and harm to mental health; in many cases the occupiers do not link the poor condition of their homes with a potential negative impact on their health. The poorest housing stock can be found in the private sector, and in some cases residents who own their own home are not able to maintain them resulting in the development of hazards.
- 2.1.5 This policy aims to address the link between housing conditions and health through the provision of adaptations that allow disabled people to remain safely and independently in their home; along with works to reduce serious hazards in the home that have the potential to cause accidents and ill health.
- 2.1.6 The Policy also aims to provide discretionary funding to help prevent homelessness and promote sustainable renting in the private sector.

## 2.2 Better Care Fund (BCF) and Metrics

- 2.2.1 In 2015 the government introduced the Better Care Fund (BCF) in an attempt to bring health and social care together in an integrated way. The fund is a combination of government funding from the Department of Health and the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and includes the grant allocation for disabled facilities grants (DFG).

- 2.2.2 Each year, in June, the government publishes the Better Care Fund Policy Framework, which lists the conditions that the better care fund must be used to address and these have remained largely unchanged.
- The conditions are:
- 2.2.3 **Condition 1:** *a jointly agreed plan between local health and social care commissioners, signed off by the HWB* – The local authority and Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) must agree a plan for their local authority area that includes agreement on use of mandatory BCF funding streams. The plan must be signed off by the Health & Wellbeing Board (HWB).
- 2.2.4 BCF plans should set out a joined-up approach to integrated, person-centred services across local health, care, housing and wider public services. They should include arrangements for joint commissioning, and an agreed approach for embedding the current discharge policy in relation to how BCF funding will support this.
- 2.2.5 **Condition 2:** *NHS contribution to adult social care to be maintained in line with the uplift to CCG minimum contribution* - The funding must be used to contribute to the maintenance of adult social care services in each local authority.
- 2.2.6 The minimum expectation of spending for each HWB area is derived by applying the percentage increase in the CCG contribution to the BCF for the area to the 2020 to 2021 minimum social care maintenance figure for the HWB.
- 2.2.7 **Condition 3:** *invest in NHS commissioned out of hospital services* - BCF narrative plans should set out the approach to delivering this aim locally, and how health and local authority partners will work together to deliver it.
- 2.2.8 **Condition 4:** *a plan for improving outcomes for people being discharged from hospital* - This national condition requires areas to agree a joint plan to deliver health and social care services that support improvement in outcomes for people being discharged from hospital, including the implementation of the hospital discharge policy.
- 2.2.9 Having regard to the national conditions, areas have flexibility in how the fund is spent across health, care and housing schemes or services. Ambitions need to be agreed on how this spending will improve performance against the BCF metrics detailed below.
- 2.2.10 The metrics are as follows:
- [Discharge Indicator Set](#) - reducing length of stay in hospital, measured through the percentage of hospital inpatients who have been in hospital for longer than 14 and 21 days; and improving the proportion of people discharged home using data on discharge to their usual place of residence
  - Avoidable admissions to hospital
  - Admissions to residential and care homes
  - Effectiveness of re-ablement

- 2.2.11 Plans under national condition 4 (discharge) should describe how HWB partners will work with providers to improve outcomes for a range of discharge measures, covering both reductions in the time someone remains in hospital, effective decision making and integrated community services to maximise a person’s independence once they leave hospital.
- 2.2.12 This policy forms part of the suite of options to achieve these conditions. Devon County Council and the District Councils have identified an opportunity to provide additional grant and loan products to meet these conditions and deliver against the Health and Wellbeing Board priorities.

## 3 Priorities

### 3.1 Devon BCF Priorities

- 3.1.1 In Devon, the Better Care Fund priorities aim to achieve the following outcomes:
  - Reduced admissions to residential and nursing care homes
  - Reduce delayed transfers of care
  - Reduce avoidable emergency admissions
  - Increase dementia diagnosis rates

### 3.2 Health and Wellbeing Board Priorities

- 3.2.1 In addition to the above, the ‘Healthy and Happy Communities’ Devon Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2020–25 also contains a series of priorities that this policy can contribute to.
- 3.2.2 The priorities are detailed below and those that this policy has a direct impact on are highlighted in bold.

1. Create opportunities for all-inclusive economic growth, education and social mobility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Narrow gaps in educational attainment and adult skills</li> <li>b. Reduce levels of child poverty</li> <li>c. Support economic growth in more disadvantaged areas</li> <li><b>d. Increase social mobility</b></li> </ul>	2. Healthy, safe, strong and sustainable communities creating conditions for good health and wellbeing where we live, work and learn <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <b>Improve housing conditions</b>, reduce homelessness, and increase supply of appropriate, high-quality housing</li> <li>b. Create conditions for good health, physical activity and social interaction</li> <li>c. Support healthy workplaces and schools</li> <li>d. Help keep communities and individuals safe</li> </ul>
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<p>3. Focus on mental health building good emotional health and wellbeing, happiness and resilience</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Reduce loneliness in all age groups</li> <li>b. Identify people at risk and intervene to improve poor mental health as soon as possible</li> <li>c. Proactively address the mental health consequences of trauma and adverse childhood experiences</li> <li>d. Promote a positive approach to mental health and wellbeing</li> </ol>	<p>4. Maintain good health for all, supporting people to stay as healthy as possible for as long as possible</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Prevent ill health by enabling people to live healthier lives</li> <li>b. Detect disease in the early stages to reduce impact on health</li> <li><b>c. Support those with long-term conditions to maintain a good quality of life</b></li> <li><b>d. Support carers to improve and maintain their own health &amp; wellbeing</b></li> </ol>
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### 3.3 Local District Priorities

3.3.1 Each Devon local authority has its own agreed priorities detailed within its Corporate/Strategic Plans that are specific to their areas. There are however some goals that are common across the county. These include:

- Providing quality housing
- Housing that is safe and meets the communities needs
- Promoting health and wellbeing

### 3.4 Objectives of this Policy

3.4.1 This policy aims to utilise the BCF funding to provide financial assistance to residents that helps realise the combined priorities detailed above.

3.4.2 In order to achieve this, the policy will focus on the following objectives:

- **Objective 1** - Assist disabled residents to remain in their own homes through supporting the provision of adaptations (so far as this is necessary, appropriate and reasonably practicable). To prevent admissions to care, to assist with delayed transfers where possible and to ensure a safe home that supports health and wellbeing.
- **Objective 2** – Safeguard the health and well-being of vulnerable residents by removing unnecessary hazards to health and safety in the home to reduce avoidable emergency admissions
- **Objective 3** – Provide adaptations that are suitable for the future by ensuring the scheme of works is dementia aware.
- **Objective 4** – Assist vulnerable people to afford to heat their homes through appropriate energy efficiency and heating measures.

- **Objective 5** – Assist vulnerable people impacted by hoarding and the cleanliness of their home environment.
- **Objective 6** – Assist people to move to more appropriate accommodation that meets their needs.
- **Objective 7** – Reduce and prevent homelessness and rough sleeping.

# PART ONE – Better Care Fund Assistance

## 4 Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants

### 4.1 Background

4.1.1 The delivery of the disabled facilities grant programme is mandatory and a statutory function of the local housing authority. The delivery of this function is governed by the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996.

### 4.2 Eligibility

4.2.1 Any disabled resident seeking financial assistance with the cost of adaptations to their home must be assessed by an Occupational Therapist (OT) working on behalf of, in consultation with, or otherwise approved by Devon County Council.

4.2.2 For the purposes of the Disabled Facilities Grant a person is considered disabled if they meet any of the following criteria:

- their sight, hearing or speech is substantially impaired,
- they have a mental disorder or impairment of any kind, or
- they are physically substantially disabled by illness, injury, impairment present since birth, or otherwise.

4.2.3 A person under the age of eighteen shall be considered disabled if:

- they are on a register of disabled children maintained under paragraph 2 of Schedule 2 to the Children Act 1989, or
- they are in the opinion of the social services authority a disabled child as defined for the purposes of Part III of the Children Act 1989 (local authority support for children and their families).

4.2.4 All owners, tenants, licensees or occupiers who meet the above criteria are eligible to apply for a Disabled Facilities Grant to provide adaptations for a disabled person residing at the property.

### 4.3 Conditions

4.3.1 All grants other than those for children are subject to a test of financial resources, which is prescribed by The Housing Renewal Grants Regulations 1996.

4.3.2 At the time of writing, the grant maximum in England is £30,000. This is set by Government and is subject to occasional review. If the grant maximum is

reviewed, this policy will adopt the new grant maximum for England, as stated here: <https://www.gov.uk/disabled-facilities-grants/what-youll-get>, or other official UK Government source.

- 4.3.3 The disabled person must intend to occupy the property as their only or main residence for a period of five years after the works are complete (or such shorter period as the person's health or other relevant circumstances permit).
- 4.3.4 In order to make an application the applicant must supply the following:
- A completed and signed application form
  - Evidence of financial situation
  - Evidence of ownership of the property or the right to reside at the property
  - Permission for the works to be carried out (if applicable)
  - For more complex works; a detailed schedule of works and plans that must be agreed by the council and OT as appropriate.
  - Any planning or building regulation approvals
  - Tenders for the works unless using an agreed procurement framework.
- 4.3.5 The applicant must have permission from the owner of the property for the work to be carried out. The council will require an owner's certificate if the property is rented.
- 4.3.6 Only the works agreed by the council will be covered by the grant.
- 4.3.7 If the grant is approved there are 12 months to complete the works from the date of approval.
- 4.3.8 The works must be completed by the contractor stated on the approval document.
- 4.3.9 No grant works should proceed until the grant application has been approved and all relevant Planning, Building Regulation or landlord approvals have been obtained.
- 4.3.10 If the applicant has a financial contribution towards the cost of adaptations they must ensure they have funds in place to cover their share of the costs before the work begins on site.
- 4.3.11 Subject to conditions, a loan from Lendology Community Interest Company may be available to cover an assessed financial contribution to a grant.
- 4.3.12 Unforeseen and additional costs will only be paid for where they are necessary in order to complete the adaptation and must be agreed by the council before they are undertaken.
- 4.3.13 In some cases a local charge may be applied (refer to 4.3.18) when the grant is complete. Any increase in the grant amount awarded may have an impact on the level of charge placed against the property.

- 4.3.14 Applicants who are successful in their application for assistance will be required to maintain the adaptation. The Council is not responsible for any maintenance or repair once the grant is complete.
- 4.3.15 The contract for the works is the responsibility of the applicant.
- 4.3.16 In all but the most exceptional cases, the council will seek to pay any approved grant funds directly to contractors on satisfactory completion of works.
- 4.3.17 No grant will be paid until a satisfactory invoice has been received and the works have been carried out to the satisfaction of the Council.
- 4.3.18 Only works falling within the mandatory elements, as specified in Appendix A, will be covered by the grant.
- 4.3.19 For owner occupiers, where the grant is in excess of £5,000 a local land charge will be placed on the property for the amount over £5,000 up to a maximum of £10,000. This charge will remain on the property for a period of 10 years from the date the grant is certified as complete.
- 4.3.20 Repayment of the charge is only applicable if the property is sold, assigned or transferred within the 10 year condition period.
- 4.3.21 If the property is to be transferred, assigned or sold within that period then the council must have regard to the following before repayment is requested:
- the extent to which the recipient of the grant would suffer financial hardship were they to be required to repay all or any of the grant;
  - 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;
  - whether the disposal is made for reasons connected with the physical or mental health or wellbeing of the recipient of the grant or of a disabled occupant of the premises; and
  - 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, 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.
- 4.3.22 Where the cost of the work exceeds the mandatory grant limit the applicant may be eligible to apply for an Accessible Homes Grant, subject to available funds.

## **5 Stair Lift Grant**

### **5.1 Background**

- 5.1.1 The Stair Lift Grant is subject to available funding.

- 5.1.2 This grant provides internal and external straight track or curved track stair lifts, step lifts and through-floor lifts without a means test for the applicant.
- 5.1.3 This grant also covers relevant preparatory and other works necessary for installation of the lift.
- 5.1.4 This grant includes provision of rented stair lifts for end of life care, or any other reason, as specified by the Occupational Therapist.

## 5.2 Eligibility

- 5.2.1 To be eligible for this grant the following must be in place:
- Any disabled resident seeking financial assistance with the cost of adaptations to their home must be assessed by an Occupational Therapist (OT) working on behalf of, in consultation with, or otherwise approved by Devon County Council.
  - Where additional works are required to install the stair lift or other relevant lift, these will be covered as part of this grant.
  - Where an applicant/disabled person requires multiple adaptations, the stair lift (or other eligible lift) will be provided through this grant and other adaptations will be provided through the DFG or accessible homes grant where the applicant is eligible.
  - All owners, tenants, licensees or occupiers who meet the above criteria are eligible to apply for this grant to provide adaptations for a disabled person residing at the property.

## 5.3 Conditions

- 5.3.1 The applicant must have permission from the owner of the property for the work to be carried out. The council will require an owner's certificate if the property is rented.
- 5.3.2 The applicant intends to live in the property as their only or main residence for the period of 5 years or for a shorter period as health or other relevant circumstances permit.
- 5.3.3 The final approved sum will be based on competitive contracting through the council's procurement system, or other process.
- 5.3.4 Only the works agreed by the council will be covered by the grant.
- 5.3.5 The works must be completed by the contractor stated on the approval document, unless otherwise agreed with the council.
- 5.3.6 No grant works should proceed until the grant application has been approved and all relevant Planning, Building Regulation or landlord approvals have been obtained.

- 5.3.7 Unforeseen and additional costs will only be paid for where they are necessary to complete the adaptation and must be agreed by the council before they are undertaken.
- 5.3.8 Applicants who are successful in their application for assistance will be required to maintain the equipment and any associated works. This includes adhering to the terms of any guarantee or warranty and ensuring the equipment is regularly serviced at the applicants cost.
- 5.3.9 The contract for the works is the responsibility of the applicant.
- 5.3.10 In all but the most exceptional cases, the council will seek to pay any approved grant funds directly to contractors on satisfactory completion of works.
- 5.3.11 No grant will be paid until a satisfactory invoice has been received and the works have been carried out to the satisfaction of the applicant and Council.
- 5.3.12 Lifts (stair lifts, step lifts and through floor lifts) and other equipment funded through the grant process will belong to the applicant. Servicing, upkeep and disposal is the responsibility of the applicant. The Council only usually remove lifts or other equipment if they are able to be economically refurbished and reused, or in the case of a moving grant, equipment may be removed to be re-used in the 'new' property if considered an effective use of resources.
- 5.3.13 No local land charge will be placed against the property for this grant.
- 5.3.14 The council reserves the right to reclaim this grant from a social housing provider or private landlord in the following circumstances:
- a. if the tenant for whom the grant was originally approved is unreasonably required to leave the property within the grant condition period (5 years), or
  - b. if the property is not let to a household that will benefit from the adaptation upon any re-let within the grant condition period (5 years).

## **6 Bathroom Adaptation Grant**

### **6.1 Background**

- 6.1.1 The Bathroom Adaptation Grant is subject to available funding.
- 6.1.2 This grant provides level access showers, automatic wash-dry WCs and other bathroom adaptations and/or equipment without a means test for the applicant.
- 6.1.3 This grant also covers relevant preparatory and other works necessary for safe installation but does not cover substantial works such as extensions.

### **6.2 Eligibility**

- 6.2.1 To be eligible for this grant the following must be in place:
- Any disabled resident seeking financial assistance with the cost of adaptations to their home must be assessed by an Occupational Therapist (OT) working on behalf of, in consultation with, or otherwise approved by Devon County Council.
  - Where additional works are required to provide accessible washing/hygiene facilities these will be covered as part of this grant.
  - Where an applicant/disabled person requires multiple adaptations, the bathroom adaptations (or other eligible works) will be provided through this grant and other adaptations will be provided through the DFG or accessible homes grant where the applicant is eligible.
  - All owners, tenants, licensees or occupiers who meet the above criteria are eligible to apply for this grant to provide adaptations for a disabled person residing at the property.
- 6.2.2 This grant is not available to fund the building of an extension, or other major building alteration to provide a bathroom. Substantive building work would be funded by DFG, or other means, depending on eligibility. In such cases, this grant can be used to fit out the bathroom.

## 6.3 Conditions

- 6.3.1 The applicant must have permission from the owner of the property for the work to be carried out. The council will require an owner's certificate if the property is rented.
- 6.3.2 The applicant intends to live in the property as their only or main residence for the period of 5 years or for a shorter period as health or other relevant circumstances permit.
- 6.3.3 The final approved sum will be based on competitive contracting through the council's procurement system, or other process.
- 6.3.4 Only the works agreed by the council will be covered by the grant.
- 6.3.5 The works must be completed by the contractor stated on the approval document, unless otherwise agreed with the council.
- 6.3.6 No grant works should proceed until the grant application has been processed and all relevant planning, Building Regulation or landlord approval has been obtained.
- 6.3.7 Unforeseen and additional costs will only be paid for where they are necessary to complete the adaptation and must be agreed by the council before they are undertaken.
- 6.3.8 Applicants who are successful in their application for assistance will be required to maintain the equipment and any associated works and have it regularly serviced at their cost.



- 6.3.9 The contract for the works is the responsibility of the applicant.
- 6.3.10 In all but the most exceptional cases, the council will seek to pay any approved grant funds directly to contractors on satisfactory completion of works.
- 6.3.11 No grant will be paid until a satisfactory invoice has been received and the works have been carried out to the satisfaction of the applicant and Council.
- 6.3.12 No local land charge will be placed against the property for this grant.
- 6.3.13 The council reserves the right to reclaim this grant from a social housing provider or private landlord in the following circumstances:
- a. if the tenant for whom the grant was originally approved is unreasonably required to leave the property within the grant condition period (5 years), or
  - b. if the property is not let to a household that will benefit from the adaptation upon any re-let within the grant condition period (5 years).

## **7 Accessible Homes Grant - General**

### **7.1 Background**

- 7.1.1 The Accessible Homes Grant is subject to available funding.
- 7.1.2 Grant funding may be available in the following circumstances:
- Where a mandatory grant has been approved but the cost of the work exceeds the mandatory grant maximum.
  - Where there are works that may not be covered by the Disabled Facility Grant in relation to adapting the home and making it safe.
  - To pay fees associated with feasibility surveys etc. to determine if an eligible adaptation can proceed.

### **7.2 Eligibility**

- 7.2.1 To be eligible for this grant the applicant must either:
- be eligible to apply for a mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant, or
  - require other works or equipment deemed as reasonable and practicable by the council to adapt the home or make it safe for the disabled occupant, or their carer(s).
  - All owners, tenants, licensees or occupiers who meet the above criteria are eligible to apply for this grant to provide adaptations for a disabled person residing at the property.

7.2.2 Applications for a disabled adult are subject to the DFG means test, it is likely that this will have been completed as part of the formal Disabled Facility Grant application and therefore will not need to be repeated

7.2.3 There will be no means test of parents and/or guardians of a disabled child in line with the requirements of the mandatory DFG.

### 7.3 Conditions

7.3.1 Where the applicant has a combination of Accessible Homes Grants (including Contribution grants and Moving grants) to deliver the agreed adaptations the maximum amount that can be applied for is £40,000. Any costs required that are over a combined total of £40,000 will not attract any further Accessible Homes Grant funding and alternative sources such as a loan will need to be considered. This does not preclude further applications for an AHG if additional adaptations are required in the future.

7.3.2 Evidence supplied by the Disabled Facility Grant application will be used to support the application for the Accessible Home Grant.

7.3.3 For owner applications a local land charge will be placed on the property for the full value of the awarded Accessible Homes Grant. The full charge(s) will be repayable if the property is sold, assigned or transferred within 10 years of the grant being completed. This is in addition to any land charge placed on the property under other sections of this policy.

7.3.4 As this is a discretionary grant, the Accessible Homes Grant will be recovered in all circumstances of the property being sold, assigned or transferred unless there are exceptional circumstances. These circumstances will be considered on a case by case basis.

7.3.5 Only the works agreed by the council will be covered by the grant

7.3.6 Eligible works must be completed within 12 months of the grant being approved.

7.3.7 The works must be completed by the contractor stated on the approval document, unless otherwise agreed with the council.

7.3.8 No grant works should proceed until the grant application has been processed and all relevant planning, Building Regulation or landlord approval has been obtained.

7.3.9 Unforeseen and additional costs will only be paid for where they are necessary to complete the adaptation and must be agreed by the council before they are undertaken.

7.3.10 Any increase in the grant may have an impact on the charge placed against the property.

7.3.11 Applicants who are successful in their application for assistance will be responsible for maintaining the adaptation.

7.3.12 The contract for the works is the responsibility of the applicant.

- 7.3.13 The grant will normally be paid direct to contractors in all but the most exceptional cases.
- 7.3.14 The council will only offer grant funding for those works that are considered appropriate, reasonable and practicable to meet the needs of the disabled person.
- 7.3.15 No grant will be paid until a satisfactory invoice has been received and the works have been carried out to the satisfaction of the council.
- 7.3.16 In addition to the above, this grant is subject to the conditions of the primary DFG grant to which it is contributing.

## 8 Accessible Homes Grant – Contribution

### 8.1 Background

- 8.1.1 The Accessible Homes Contribution Grant is available where the DFG means test identifies that a contribution is required.
- 8.1.2 The Accessible Homes Contribution Grant is subject to available funding.

### 8.2 Eligibility

- 8.2.1 To be eligible for this grant the applicant/disabled person must meet the following:
- eligible to apply for a mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant, or
  - eligible for the 'Accessible Homes Grant – General'
- 8.2.2 An applicant/disabled person will only be eligible for grant funding to cover an identified contribution following an assessment of their available savings to cover the contribution.
- 8.2.3 As a rule of thumb where the contribution represents a third or more of the person savings then a grant may be available. However, this will be applied on a sliding scale to allow those with some savings to benefit from a partial grant to cover some of the contribution. For example:
- a) An applicant has a means tested contribution of £1500.00. If the applicant has savings of £4500 or less, they will be able to access additional grant to cover the contribution; subject to grant limits and finance availability.*
  - b) An applicant has a means tested contribution of £1500.00. If the applicant has savings of £6000, they will be able to access £1000 of additional grant to cover the contribution; but they would be expected to pay £500.*

## 8.3 Conditions

- 8.3.1 The grant maximum for combined Accessible Homes Grants (including general and moving grants) is £40,000. Anything over £40,000 will not attract any further Accessible Homes Grant funding.
- 8.3.2 Evidence supplied by the Disabled Facility Grant application will be used to support the application for the Accessible Home Contribution Grant.
- 8.3.3 For owner applications a local land charge will be placed on the property for the full value of the awarded Accessible Homes Contribution Grant. The full charge(s) will be repayable if the property is sold, assigned or transferred within 10 years of the grant being completed. This is in addition to any land charge placed on the property under other sections of this policy.
- 8.3.4 As this is a discretionary grant, the Accessible Homes Contribution Grant will be recovered in all circumstances of the property being sold, assigned or transferred unless there are exceptional circumstances. These circumstances will be considered on a case by case basis.
- 8.3.5 In addition to the above, this grant is subject to the conditions of the primary DFG grant to which it is contributing.

## 9 Accessible Home Grants: Moving Application

### 9.1 Background

- 9.1.1 This grant may be available to assist a disabled person to move to more suitable accommodation subject to available funding.

### 9.2 Eligibility

- 9.2.2 An applicant will be eligible for this grant:
- Where the Occupational Therapist and/or the Council consider re-housing to be more appropriate than adapting the existing accommodation.
  - Where the landlord has refused permission for any adaptation works to be carried out and therefore it is no longer feasible for the occupier to remain in the property safely.
  - Where it is possible to carry out works at the existing property but a move is preferred, the total cost incurred in the eligible 'moving' expenses plus any estimated eligible adaptation costs at the 'new' property should not be greater than the cost of adapting the applicant's current home.
  - Where the 'new' property, in the opinion of the Council, provides a long term, sustainable home for the person for whose benefit the works are required.

- Adaptations at the 'new' property will be subject to the Statement of Need and a new DFG application. Adaptations may exceed the mandatory DFG grant and any top-up assistance available, so any likely contribution by the applicant/disabled person should be considered prior to moving.
- If the 'new' property is within a neighbouring authority covered by this policy then the receiving authority will need to ensure the new property is suitable. This should also be agreed with the Occupational Therapist. The applicant must ensure that the relevant council's officers and Occupational Therapist have been consulted and any subsequent DFG application is made to the receiving authority.
- To qualify for this grant the applicant must have been resident in the existing property for at least 2 years prior to making an application to move.

9.2.2 In determining the 'reasonable expenses' regard shall be given to the following criteria:

- The cost of the eligible works at the applicant's existing property are not deemed reasonable, or;
- The eligible works at the applicant's existing home are not technically feasible, or;
- The adaptation of the applicant's existing property does not provide a sustainable, long term solution for their housing needs, or;
- The landlord of the property refuses to give permission for the necessary works to be carried out.

### 9.3 Eligible Expenses – owner occupier

9.3.1 Expenses that can attract grant under this section may include the cost of:

- Any arrangement fee charged by a lender to cover the formation of a mortgage.
- Conveyancing fees.
- Land Registry Fee
- Local Authority Searches
- Stamp Duty
- Valuation, Homebuyers or Full Structural Survey
- Professional or other removal costs
- Estate Agent Commission.

9.3.2 The maximum grant payable for eligible expenses under this heading for an owner occupier is £10,000.

## 9.4 Eligible expenses – tenant

9.4.1 For a tenant the expenses that can attract grant under this section may include the cost of:

- Letting agent fees
- Rent deposit
- Professional or other removal fees

9.4.2 The maximum grant payable for eligible expenses under this heading for a tenant is £5,000.

## 9.5 Conditions

9.5.1 The grant maximum for combined Accessible Homes Grants (including General and Contribution grants) is £40,000. Anything over £40,000 will not attract any further Accessible Homes Grant funding.

9.5.2 Grant assistance is only payable to an owner occupier upon the successful completion of the purchase of the 'new' property and the disabled person then occupying that property as their only and main residence.

9.5.3 When moving to rented accommodation the applicant must obtain permission from the landlord for any adaptations to be carried out before the grant will be paid.

9.5.4 The applicant must intend to live in the new property as their only or main residence for a period of 5 years (or such shorter period as the person's health or other relevant circumstances permit).

# 10 Healthy Homes Grants

## 10.1 Background

10.1.1 The Healthy Homes grant is a flexible grant to provide repairs and other works to the home to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the occupier(s); subject to available funding.

10.1.2 This includes assisting an occupier with infestations and accumulations (hoarding) where the condition of the dwelling will lead to a delayed transfer of care (hospital discharge) or potential avoidable hospital admission.

10.1.3 It also includes repairs to existing disabled adaptations and some heating and energy efficiency works as determined necessary by the council

## 10.2 Eligibility

10.2.1 To qualify for this grant the applicant must meet at least one of the following:

- a) have been declined by Lendology CIC for a Home Improvement Loan
- b) be in receipt of one of the following benefits:

- Housing Benefit
- Disability Living Allowance
- Personal Independent Payment with the daily living component
- Attendance Allowance
- Pension Credit
- Income Support
- Council tax benefit (not the single person discount)
- Universal Credit

*(Universal Credit replaces the following means tested benefits: Housing Benefit, Income Related Employment Support Allowance, Income Based Job Seekers Allowance, Child Tax Credit, Working Tax Credit and Income Support)*

- c) otherwise be in financial hardship following an assessment by:

- Lendology CIC
- The council's Housing Options, Benefits or other relevant team
- Citizens Advice Bureau, or
- Other third party commissioned by the council to work in a community support role.

10.2.2 A grant can be awarded in addition to a loan from Lendology CIC if the amount of loan available is not enough to cover the cost of addressing the eligible works.

10.2.3 Healthy Homes Grant can be used to fund repairs to disabled adaptations where the equipment or other works are out of warranty or guarantee.

10.2.4 This grant can be used to fund temporary measures or items that can be removed, to allow the occupier to return home as part of end of life care, or otherwise to expedite hospital discharge. Eligible works may be funded by DFG or Accessible Homes in the first instance, depending on the most expedient route.

10.2.5 This grant can also be used for home repairs that are likely to have a significant impact on the health and safety of the person residing in the property (category 1 hazard under the Housing Act 2004). Where the person residing is a tenant then only those works that are not the responsibility of the landlord may be covered.

- 10.2.6 It can also be used to prevent unnecessary hospital admissions, or to expedite hospital discharge, as a result of a hoarding disorder. In practice this can include the following:
- a) Help with cleansing a property to expedite hospital discharge, to enable someone to receive care, or to enable other eligible works under this policy to take place.
  - b) Practical support with hoarding behaviour to alleviate impacts on the health of the occupier, as assessed by an officer of the council, or other social care professional.
  - c) Clearance of the dwelling to ensure the safety of the occupier following an assessment by an officer of the council

### 10.3 Conditions

- 10.3.1 Households are able to apply for a 'Healthy Homes Grant' on multiple occasions. The maximum grant available is £10,000 in any two year rolling period.
- 10.3.2 For owner applications a local land charge will be placed on the property for the full value of each Healthy Homes Grant that is awarded unless the grant is for one of the reasons stated in 10.3.4 below. The full charge(s) will be repayable if the property is sold, assigned or transferred within 5 years of the grant being completed. This is in addition to any land charge placed on the property under other sections of this policy.
- 10.3.3 As this is a discretionary grant, the Healthy Homes Grant will be recovered in all circumstances of the property being sold, assigned or transferred unless there are exceptional circumstances. These circumstances will be considered on a case by case basis.
- 10.3.4 A local land charge will not be placed against the property if the purpose of the grant is to:
- a. Repair disabled adaptations already subject to a charge. This will apply to the cost of those repairs only, if the grant is being used for multiple reasons;
  - b. Provide equipment or works to help with end of life care;
  - c. Help with hoarding or the cleansing of a property.
- 10.3.5 For tenants the grant will only be available where the landlord is not responsible for the works required. As such, the grant will be limited to providing assistance with infestations and accumulations (hoarding) where the condition of the dwelling will lead to a delayed transfer of care (hospital discharge) or potential avoidable hospital admission, or where the landlord is not responsible for the works.
- 10.3.6 An applicant should apply for a loan for any substantial work beyond removing the immediate health and safety risk.



# 11 Home Improvement Loans

## 11.1 Background

11.1.1 Lendology CIC (Community Interest Company) is a not-for-profit company contracted by the council to deliver loans to residents in the district.

11.1.2 Lendology CIC administer loans within the requirements of this policy. Home Improvement Loans are flexible and can be used for the following purposes (with specific reference to the Better Care Fund):

- Home repairs and improvements;
- Adaptation works where grant is not available;
- To cover an applicant contribution to a grant;
- To cover the cost of the work over the Disabled Facilities Grant and/or Accessible Homes Grant maximum.

11.1.3 In addition, loans may be available for the following purposes **subject to available funding outside of the Better Care Fund:**

- To bring empty homes back into use
- For renewable energy enhancements and energy efficiency improvements
- For landlords to carry out repairs or improvements to rented accommodation.

## 11.2 Eligibility

11.2.1 This will vary and is based on the individual circumstances of each applicant. Case managers from Lendology CIC will carry out an assessment and provide independent advice on ethical and responsible lending and the most appropriate product to suit the needs of the applicant.

## 11.3 Conditions

11.3.1 Conditions may vary depending on the loan product selected and the individual circumstances of each applicant.

11.3.2 Typical 4.2% APR, loans are subject to status. Lendology may insist on loans being protected at the Land Registry by a Title Restriction. Missing payments could affect your credit rating and ability to obtain credit in the future.

## 12 Warm Up Grants

### 12.1 Background

- 12.1.1 The Warm Up grant is a flexible grant to provide top-up funding for energy efficiency measures considered by an officer of the council as essential to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the occupier(s) of a property; subject to available funding.
- 12.1.2 These grants, up to a maximum £3,000 per property, provide top up funding where energy providers and installers are part funding energy efficiency measures under their Energy Company Obligation (ECO) or other energy efficiency funding.
- 12.1.3 Warm Up funding can also be used in conjunction with Healthy Homes Grants (based on eligibility for Healthy Homes), where the hazard(s) being rectified requires upgrading of the heating/hot water provision or improved insulation.
- 12.1.4 Eligible works include:
- Insulation measures (e.g. loft, cavity wall, solid wall, flat roof & room in roof)
  - Heating and hot water repairs or upgrade

### 12.2 Eligibility

- 12.2.1 Applicants must have been identified through an assessment by an officer of the council under the Healthy Homes Grant criteria or - subject to the Council adopting this process - through the council's Energy Company Obligation Flexible Eligibility Statement of Intent (SOI).
- 12.2.2 Applicants can only apply for this grant if they meet the health criteria of the SOI in their respective council areas or the Healthy Homes Grant criteria.
- 12.2.3 To qualify for the top-up a survey must be carried out by the energy provider, an officer of the council, a local installer, or their agent and qualifying works identified.
- 12.2.4 All owners, tenants, licensees or occupiers who meet the criteria are eligible to apply for this grant.
- 12.2.4 For owner occupiers a maximum of up to £3,000 is available.
- 12.2.5 If more than £3,000 is needed then the applicant should apply for a Lendology CIC loan, subject to availability and eligibility

### 12.3 Conditions

- 12.3.1 The maximum grant available is £3,000.

- 12.3.2 The grant can be applied for by the owner of the property where the person occupying the property meets the healthy homes grant criteria or SOI health criteria.
- 12.3.3 Once a 'Warm up grant' has been awarded for works to a property, no further 'Warm up grant' will be available for the same property for a period of 5 years from the date the grant is certified as complete.
- 12.3.4 A local land charge will be placed on the property for the full value of the Warm Up grant and will be repayable if the property is sold, assigned or transferred within 5 years of the grant being completed. This is in addition to any land charge placed on the property under other sections of this policy.
- 12.3.5 As this is a discretionary grant, the Warm Up Grant will be recovered in all circumstances of the property being sold, assigned or transferred unless there are exceptional circumstances. These circumstances will be considered on a case by case basis.
- 12.3.6 In all but the most exceptional cases, the council will seek to pay any approved grant funds directly to contractors on satisfactory completion of works.
- 12.3.7 No grant will be paid until a satisfactory invoice has been received and the works have been carried out to the satisfaction of the applicant and Council.

## **PART TWO – Local Initiatives**

### **13 Other types of assistance**

#### **13.1 Introduction**

- 13.1.1 In addition to the Better Care Fund the Council has other sources of funding that can be used to provide financial assistance.
- 13.1.2 This section of the policy sets out the types of assistance that are available to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping and can help people to remain in their homes.
- 13.1.3 All of the grants mentioned in this section are subject to funding being available.

### **14 Home Start Grant**

#### **14.1 Background**

- 14.1.1 The Home start grant is a one off grant to help those that are moving out of an unsustainable housing situation into the private rented sector. The grant can only be applied for once and if further similar assistance is required the applicant should apply for the Home Start Loan
- 14.1.2 This grant can be used to cover the following elements:
- The deposit for the applicants first suitable private rented home
  - Rent in advance as required
  - Top up to initial rent shortfall while benefits or wages are being organised

#### **14.2 Eligibility Criteria**

- 14.2.1 To qualify for this grant the applicant must meet the following criteria:
- Be owed a housing duty under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017;
  - Be over the age of 18,
  - Be a 16/17 year old supported by Devon County Council into a young person's housing project;
  - Be entering into a first tenancy in the UK, at a property within the Mid Devon area.

### 14.3 Grant Limit

- 14.3.1 The maximum amount of grant available is £2,500
- 14.3.2 The amount of grant award is dependent on the circumstances of each case.
- 14.3.3 A financial assessment of the income and expenditure of the household, along with the affordability of the proposed rent and other expenses will be undertaken to determine the suitability of the accommodation.
- 14.3.4 Basic furniture and household items to set up the new home may be available via a referral to an external company or charity.
- 14.3.5 The grant is only available once per household/tenancy.

### 14.4 Conditions relevant to the application

- 14.4.1 The person applying for the grant must be named on the tenancy agreement.
- 14.4.2 For the application to be considered, all sections of the application must be completed and the declaration signed by the applicant. All supporting evidence must be provided with the application.
- 14.4.3 Once the application has been received the Council will assess whether a grant is available.
- 14.4.4 The Council, or an organisation acting on their behalf, will carry out a check of the property and other necessary documents and certificates to determine if the property is suitable for the purposes of the grant.

### 14.5 Conditions relating to Payments

- 14.5.1 The council will pay grant monies relating to deposit and rent directly to the landlord/agent via a BACs, or by other means in respect of agreed individual circumstances.
- 14.5.2 A claim form and any other finance declarations or information required by the council must be submitted and validated before any agreed payments are made.
- 15.5.3 Failing to comply with the grant conditions may result in a claim for payment not being validated - for example failing to engage with the council.

### 14.6 Conditions following approval

- 14.6.1 By signing the application the tenant is agreeing to maintain rent payments going forward and to adhere to the terms of the tenancy agreement.
- 14.6.2 The landlord must place the deposit into a government listed Tenancy Deposit Protection Scheme (DPS).
- 14.6.3 Failing to comply with the conditions may result in the grant being reclaimed.

- 14.6.4 Circumstances where the grant may be reclaimed from the tenant:
- Failing to pay rent and allowing arrears to build up without good reason – the local housing authority will determine whether there is good reason when assessing if repayment is required
  - Failing to adhere to the terms of the tenancy agreement – for example causing anti-social behavior or acting in a way that means the landlord has to serve a relevant notice to regain possession of their property.

## 15 Home Start Loan

### 15.1 Background

15.1.1 The Home Start Loan is to support households owed a housing duty under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and do not qualify for the Home Start Grant.

15.1.2 This loan can be used to cover the following elements:

- The deposit for the applicants private rented home
- Rent in advance as required
- Top up to initial rent shortfall while benefits or wages are being organised

15.1.3 As this is a loan the applicant will be required to make monthly repayments as determined by the loan provider.

15.1.4 This loan will be administered by our local loan provider Lendology CIC.

### 15.2 Eligibility Criteria

15.2.1 To qualify for this loan the applicant must meet the following criteria:

- Be over the age of 18
- Be entering into a tenancy agreement in the private sector or with a registered housing provider (not the Council)
- Be moving to a property in the Mid Devon area.

### 15.3 Loan Limit and repayment

15.3.1 The maximum amount of loan available is £2,500 with a maximum loan term of 5 years, but this is dependent on the individual circumstances of the applicant and their ability to repay the loan. Affordability of the loan will be determined by Lendology CIC.

15.3.2 As part of the loan application the council will carry out an assessment of the affordability of the rent to try and prevent potential rent arrears.

- 15.3.3 Basic furniture and household items to set up the new home may be available via a referral to an external company or charity.
- 15.3.4 The loan is repayable on a monthly basis. The interest rate on the loan is 4% (4.2% APR) the term for repayment will be agreed with Lendology following the affordability assessment.
- 15.3.5 It may be possible to apply for further loans but the amount available will be determined by the repayment history, the outstanding balance to re-pay any existing loans and the amount being requested.
- 15.3.6 A further loan will not be available if the applicant is being evicted for:
- Failing to pay rent and allowing arrears to build up without good reason – the local housing authority will determine whether there is good reason
  - Failing to adhere to the terms of the tenancy agreement – for example causing anti-social behaviour or acting in a way that means the landlord has to serve a relevant notice to regain possession of their property.
- 15.3.7 In exceptional circumstances the Housing Options Manager may allow a further loan, these circumstances will be considered on a case by case basis.

## 15.4 Conditions relevant to the application

- 15.4.1 The person applying for the loan must be named on the tenancy agreement.
- 15.4.2 For the application to be considered, all sections of the application must be completed and the declaration signed by the applicant. All supporting evidence must be provided with the application.
- 15.4.3 Once the application has been received Lendology will assess whether a loan is available.
- 15.4.4 The Council, or an organisation acting on their behalf, will carry out a check of the property and other necessary documents and certificates to determine if the property is suitable.

## 15.5 Conditions relating to Payments

- 15.5.1 Lendology will pay loan monies relating to deposit and rent directly to the landlord/agent via a BACs, or by other means in respect of agreed individual circumstances.
- 15.5.2 A claim form and any other finance declarations or information required by Lendology CIC must be submitted and validated before any agreed payments are made.

## 15.6 Conditions following approval

- 15.6.1 By signing the application the tenant is agreeing to maintain rent payments going forward and to adhere to the terms of the tenancy agreement.

- 15.6.2 Failing to keep up with loan repayments may result in recovery action being taken
- 15.6.3 The landlord must place the deposit into a government listed Tenancy Deposit Protection Scheme (DPS).

## 16 Rent Arrears Grant

### 16.1 Background

- 16.1.1 The purpose of the Rent Arrears Grant is to support households in the private rented sector who find themselves in rent arrears.
- 16.1.2 The aim is to help those households on low incomes avoid eviction from their homes by using the grant to pay the rent arrears and prevent homelessness.
- 16.1.3 If a private tenant has accrued rent arrears as a result of circumstances beyond their control then they may be eligible to apply for this grant.
- 16.1.4 This grant is subject to available funding.

### 16.2 Eligibility Criteria

- 16.2.1 To qualify for this grant the household must meet the following criteria:
- Be owed a housing duty under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017;
  - Accrued rent arrears due to circumstances beyond their control but otherwise have been a responsible tenant;
  - Be a resident in the Mid Devon District area;
  - Be a private tenant with an assured short hold tenancy with a private landlord/agent;
  - Be over the age of 18;
  - Be a 16/17 year old in a young person's housing project and supported by Devon County Council;
  - The landlord is considering ending the tenancy because of the rent arrears.

### 16.3 Grant Limit

- 16.3.1 The amount of grant awarded is dependent on the circumstances of each case.
- 16.3.2 A financial assessment of the income and expenditure of the household will be undertaken to determine if the rent is affordable once the arrears have been cleared.
- 16.3.3 The maximum grant available per household/tenancy is up to £2,500. However the Council may review this in respect of individual circumstances.



16.3.4 Only one claim may be made per household/tenancy unless there are exceptional circumstances that mean a second application is required. The decision on whether a second grant can be offered will be determined by the Housing Options Manager.

## 16.4 Conditions relevant to the application

16.4.1 The application form must be completed by one of the tenants named on the tenancy agreement.

16.4.2 For the application to be considered, all sections of the application must be completed and the declaration signed by the applicant. All supporting evidence must be provided with the application.

16.4.3 Once the application has been received the Council will contact the landlord/agent for the property. The landlord must complete and sign the landlord certificate before the grant can be approved.

16.4.4 The landlord must provide the required supporting evidence with the certificate for the application to be considered.

16.4.5 By signing the certificate the landlord agrees to extend the tenancy by a minimum of 6 months subject to the tenant continuing to adhere to the terms of the tenancy agreement.

## 16.5 Conditions relating to Payments

16.5.1 The local housing authority will pay the grant direct to the landlord/agent via a BACs payment once the application has been approved.

## 16.6 Conditions following approval

16.6.1 By signing the application the tenant is agreeing to maintain rent payments going forward and to adhere to the terms of the tenancy agreement.

16.6.2 By signing the certificate and the subsequent payment of the grant to the landlord means they are agreeing to extend the tenancy agreement by a minimum of 6 months, subject to the tenant adhering to the terms of the tenancy agreement and continuing to pay their rent.

16.6.3 Failing to comply with the conditions may result in the grant being reclaimed from either party.

16.6.4 Circumstances where the grant may be reclaimed from the tenant:

- Failing to pay rent and allowing further arrears to build up without good reason – the local housing authority will determine whether there is good reason when assessing if repayment is required

- Failing to adhere to the terms of the tenancy agreement – for example causing anti-social behavior or acting in a way that means the landlord has to serve notice under section 8.

16.6.5 Circumstances where the grant may be reclaimed from the landlord:

- Landlord does not extend the tenancy by a minimum of 6 months
- Landlord serves a section 21 notice within 6 months of the grant being paid.

16.6.6 The landlord must contact the council as soon as rent arrears become apparent.

16.6.7 The landlord must allow the council the opportunity to resolve the issue of rent arrears with the tenant before instigating possession proceedings for rent arrears.

16.6.8 The landlord must have placed the deposit into a government listed Tenancy Deposit Protection Scheme (DPS).

## 17 Landlord Incentive Grant

### 17.1 Background

17.1.1 The Landlord Incentive Grant is to encourage landlords in the private rented sector to accept tenants that do not have a reference, may have been homeless or rough sleeping, or evicted from another rented property.

### 17.2 Eligibility

17.2.1 A landlord will be able to apply for the incentive grant when they accept a tenant nominated by the housing options team.

17.2.2 The landlord must enter into a 12 month tenancy to be eligible for the grant.

17.2.3 The landlord must place the deposit into a government listed Tenancy Deposit Protection Scheme (DPS).

### 17.3 Grant limit

17.3.1 The incentive grant will be based on the monthly rental of the property. A landlord will receive the equivalent of two months' rent if they enter into a 12 month tenancy.

17.3.2 The tenant may also qualify for one of the other forms of assistance in this policy ensuring the landlord will receive a deposit and rent in advance.

### 17.4 Conditions

- 17.4.1 The landlord must offer a 12 month tenancy to the eligible tenant.
- 17.4.2 The landlord must place the deposit into a government listed Tenancy Deposit Scheme (DPS).
- 17.4.3 The landlord must contact the council before instigating possession proceedings to allow the council the opportunity to resolve any tenancy matters with the tenants.
- 17.4.4 If the issues cannot be resolved the council will notify the landlord and advise whether or not possession can proceed.

## **18 Miscellaneous**

### **18.1 Exceptions to this policy**

- 18.1.1 The council accept that applications may be received for adaptations, works or circumstances not covered in the detail of this policy or may fall outside the eligibility criteria listed. In all cases, these will need to be formally determined.
- 18.1.2 Any such application will be referred for assessment by the Operations Manager for Public Health and Housing Options.
- 18.1.3 Matters resulting in a significant budget implication will be escalated to the Corporate Manager for Public Health, Regulation and Housing.
- 18.1.4 Exceptions decisions will be reviewed periodically to determine if a policy change is required and will be presented at the next policy review.
- 18.1.5 Exceptions applications will be determined with reference to the council's priorities as laid out in relevant council policies and legislation.

### **18.2 Appeals and complaints**

- 18.2.1 Where the applicant has a complaint about the manner in which the council is applying this policy, then they should follow the Council's formal complaints process.
- 18.2.2 Where the complaint is in respect of works, the complaint should be made to the contractor in the first instance, if this does not resolve the problem then the council should be contacted for advice.

## 19 Appendix A: Eligible works

### 19.1 Disabled Facilities Grant and Accessible Homes Grant

- 19.1.1 An assessment by an agreed Occupational Therapist must be carried out. The Occupational Therapist will then recommend the type of adaptation required.
- 19.1.2 Minor works are assessed by the Occupational Therapist and may be dealt with outside of the grant process.
- 19.1.3 In order to decide on an eligible scheme there is a two stage process:
- a. The Occupational Therapist assesses what is 'necessary and appropriate' to meet the needs of the disabled occupant.
  - b. The Public Health and Housing Options service assess what measures are reasonable and practicable to meet the identified needs in practice.
- 19.1.4 During both of the stages of this process the Occupational Therapist and Public Health and Housing Options service will work closely with the applicant to ensure, as far as possible, that their input is taken into account.

### 19.2 Purposes for which a grant must or may be given

- 19.2.1 The following are the purposes for which a mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant is available, as contained in legislation.
- 19.2.2 Each adaptation criteria is provided with an example. The examples are intended to give a brief idea of the type of work available. In each case, the eligible works will be decided through the process laid out in 19.1, above.
- 19.2.3 Facilitating access by the disabled occupant to and from the dwelling, or the building in which the dwelling or, as the case may be, flat is situated;
- *For example, ramping and/or handrails to the main external door.*
- 19.2.4 Making the dwelling safe for the disabled occupant and other persons residing with them;
- *For example, upgrading of the electrical installation, where the current installation is considered unsafe for the disabled occupant.*
- 19.2.5 Facilitating access by the disabled occupant to a room used or usable as the principal family room;
- *For example, alterations to facilitate wheelchair access to a living room.*
- 19.2.6 Facilitating access by the disabled occupant to, or providing for the disabled occupant, a room used or usable for sleeping;
- *For example, alterations to facilitate wheelchair access to a bedroom.*

- 19.2.7 Facilitating access by the disabled occupant to, or providing for the disabled occupant, a room in which there is a lavatory, or facilitating the use by the disabled occupant of such a facility;
- *For example, installation of a stairlift to facilitate access to a first floor WC.*
- 19.2.8 Facilitating access by the disabled occupant to, or providing for the disabled occupant, a room in which there is a bath or shower (or both), or facilitating the use by the disabled occupant of such a facility;
- *For example, installation of a level-access shower.*
- 19.2.9 Facilitating access by the disabled occupant to, or providing for the disabled occupant, a room in which there is a wash hand basin, or facilitating the use by the disabled occupant of such a facility;
- *For example, provision of an accessible wash hand basin, including any alterations necessary to facilitate access.*
- 19.2.10 Facilitating the preparation and cooking of food by the disabled occupant;
- *For example, installing low-level food preparation areas.*
- 19.2.11 Improving any heating system in the dwelling to meet the needs of the disabled occupant or, if there is no existing heating system there or any such system is unsuitable for use by the disabled occupant, providing a heating system suitable to meet his needs;
- *For example, upgrading/replacing of boilers/radiators where the property has been extended as part of a wider adaptation.*
- 19.2.12 Facilitating the use by the disabled occupant of a source of power, light or heat by altering the position of one or more means of access to or control of that source or by providing additional means of control;
- *For example, alterations to the height and/or position of light switches and power points to make them accessible to the disabled person.*
- 19.2.13 Facilitating access and movement by the disabled occupant around the dwelling in order to enable them to care for a person who is normally resident there and is in need of such care;
- *For example, widening of doorways.*
- 19.2.14 Facilitating access to and from a garden by a disabled occupant; or making access to a garden safe for a disabled occupant;
- *For example, providing access to an area of the garden suitable for the disabled occupant.*