

## **DISABLED FACILITY GRANT INFORMATION SHEET**

### **Overview**

A Disabled Facility Grant from the council can assist in making the home of a person with a disability more suitable to live in and help them manage more independently in their home. Examples of changes are:

- widen doors and install ramps
- improve access to rooms and facilities – for example stairlifts or a downstairs bathroom
- provide a heating system suitable for your needs
- adapt heating or lighting controls to make them easier to use

Anyone who is registered or eligible to be registered as a disabled person can apply, but the grant is subject to a means test.

A Disabled Facilities Grant will not affect any benefits you get.

### **What you will get**

How much you get depends on your:

- household income
- household savings over £6,000

In England the maximum grant that is available is £30,000.

Depending on your income, you may need to pay towards the cost of the work to the property.

Disabled children under 18 can get a grant without their parents' income being taken into account. Call the Social Care Occupational Therapist at the Paediatric Therapy Team on 01793 464246 for more information.

You might not get any grant if you start work on your property before the council approves your application.

### **Eligibility**

You or someone living in your property must be disabled. Either you or the person you are applying for must:

- own the property or be a tenant (including a Housing Association in certain cases)
- intend to live in the property during the grant period (which is currently 5 years)

You can also apply for a grant if you are a landlord and have a disabled tenant. The council needs to be happy that the work is:

- necessary and appropriate to meet the disabled person's needs
- reasonable and can be done - depending on the age and condition of the property

You might not get any grant if you start work on your property before the council approves your application.

### **Making an enquiry for a Disabled Facility Grant**

To make an initial enquiry for a Disabled Facility Grant, there is a form available at [https://www.swindon.gov.uk/forms/form/272/en/grant\\_preliminary\\_enquiry\\_form](https://www.swindon.gov.uk/forms/form/272/en/grant_preliminary_enquiry_form), which should be completed and submitted.

### **Being assessed for the grant**

An occupational therapist will carry out a needs based assessment and will ask you for further information, including financial details, by phone. Each case will be prioritised according to need.

### **Applying for a grant to cover the cost**

Where the occupational therapist assesses a need for adaptation work or other alterations in your home, you may be able to apply to the council for a grant to meet all or part of this cost.

These grants are means tested to ensure that financial aid goes to those found to have most need. The means test will take into account the income and savings of the disabled person together with their spouse or partner.

Those in receipt of certain means tested benefits are "passported" to a full grant and will not have to make a contribution towards the cost of work.

These "passporting" benefits are:

- Universal Credit
- Income Support
- Income-based Employment and Support Allowance (not contribution-based ESA)
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (not contribution-based JSA)
- Guarantee Pension Credit (not Savings Pension Credit alone)
- Working Tax Credit and/or Child Tax Credit (where your annual income for the purposes of the tax credits assessment was below £15,050)

- Housing Benefit

Those who have incomes above this level will need to be means tested by a Grant Officer to determine their contribution towards the cost of works.

### **How to apply for the grant**

Your occupational therapist will be able to assist you by referring you to the Grants Team if they think you may be eligible from the information you provide to them.

### **What happens next**

You will be visited by a Grant Officer who will carry out a formal means test and undertake a survey of your home to see how the occupational therapist's recommendations may be met. He or she will be able to advise whether you are likely to qualify for grant assistance towards the cost of any work, and on the process and likely timescales.

The Grant Officer will then process the formal application.

It is important to understand that the grant simply finances all or part of the works that may be needed. You, as the applicant, will need to find contractors, work with them to get quotations, and then to have the works completed to the required standard.

However, Swindon Council can offer advice and often assist in finding reputable contractors and in explaining what works are required.

### **Restrictions**

Disabled Facilities Grants are not available for works which have not been recommended by the occupational therapist as meeting your needs, or for work which has already been started. Do not start works unless and until you have received a formal grant approval document.

### **How you will be paid**

You will be paid either:

- in instalments - as the work progresses
- in full - when the work is finished

The council may pay the contractor directly or give you a cheque to pass on to them. They will agree this with you when they approve your application.

### **When you will be paid**

You will be paid either:

- when the council is happy with the finished work
- when you give the council the invoice, demand or receipt for payment from the contractor
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Normally, if you (or a relative) does the work the council will only accept invoices for materials or services you have bought.

### **Appeals**

You can appeal to your council if you are unhappy with their decision. If you appeal and you are still not happy, you can complain to the Local Government Ombudsman.