

## Part 1 Document

## **Appendix C – Adult Social Care Responsibilities and Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG)**

- 1.1 Section 47 of the National Health Service and Community Care Act 1990 requires Social Services to assess a client's need and, using the Fair Access to Care tool, make a judgment about the level of risk and whether a person is eligible for social care support.
- 1.2 Adult Social Care is responsible for meeting eligible needs. If the need requires a major adaptation then, in conjunction with colleagues in Housing, a short term solution must be immediately offered. This should be the most appropriate and cost effective solution in order to meet the need. Providing the needs are met then Adult Social Care will initially have fulfilled its duty under Community Care legislation.
- 1.3 When a person who has a life threatening condition requests a major adaptation this will be managed in a timely and appropriate way. Medical information and professional judgment will be taken into account to determine how needs may most appropriately be met.
- 1.4 In meeting the ongoing or longer term eligible needs, Adult Social Care may recommend that an application is made for a Disabled Facilities Grant. By making this recommendation and providing that the needs could be fully met by this provision Adult Social Care will have discharged its duty, under Community Care legislation.
- 1.5 The provisions governing mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) under the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 as amended by the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002 (the RRO) are described in greater detail in Appendix A and Appendix B (attached).
- 1.6 From 18 July 2003 the RRO makes two principal changes to the DFG legislative provisions in the 1996 Act:
  - It extends mandatory DFG eligibility to those occupying park homes and houseboats; and
  - It removes the power to give discretionary DFG
- 1.7 A Disabled Facilities Grant is a grant to help towards the cost of adapting a home to enable the client to continue to live there. A grant is paid when the Council considers that changes are necessary and appropriate to meet assessed needs and is happy that the work is both reasonable and practical to carry out.

- 1.8 The Grant may be claimed by the owner of the property when the applicant certifies that he or she intend to occupy the property of their only or main residence throughout the grant period which lasts for five years. The grant condition period begins on the date the works have been completed to the satisfaction of the Council. This date is known as 'the certified date'.
- 1.9 An occupational therapist will undertake an assessment in order to recommend the type of adaptations needed. However, he or she could recommend that assessed needs may be met more cost effectively and less intrusively than by the provision of a major adaptation.
- 1.10 A Disabled Facilities Grant can be used for essential adaptations to give the client better freedom of movement into and around their home and/or to provide essential facilities within it. Acceptable types of work include:
- Widening doors and installing ramps
  - Providing or improving access to rooms and facilities – e.g. by installing a stair lift or providing a downstairs bathroom
  - Improving or providing a heating system which is suitable for the client's needs
  - Adapting heating or lighting controls to make them easier to use
  - Improving access to and movement around the home to enable a person to care for another person who lives in the property
- 1.11 The amount paid is based on a means test of the applicant's average weekly income in relation to their outgoings (their 'assessed needs'). The Test of Resources takes into account savings above a certain limit, although certain benefits including Disability Living Allowance and/or Income Support are generally ignored.
- 1.12 If the applicant has a partner then their combined income will be assessed jointly. Capital is included in the means test. Currently the first £6,000 of savings is disregarded.
- 1.13 Depending on the outcome of the financial assessment the amount of financial assistance offered can vary from 0% to 100%.
- 1.14 The current maximum amount of grant is £25,000 per application (due to increase to £ 30,000 from April 2008), less any assessed contribution from the applicant.

- 1.15 Only in exceptional cases of hardship, where a person cannot meet their assessed contribution, will Adult Social Care provide advice as to how this contribution may be met. Such advice could include directing a person to an appropriate Charity, financial management support e.g. Money Advice, offering a Relocation Grant or finding an alternative method of resolving the longer term need.
- 1.16 Carers needs will also be considered in accordance with 'The Carers (Recognition and Services) Act 1995, which extends the right of assessment to carers, where the cared for person is eligible to receive an assessment or re-assessment under section 47 of the 1990 Act.
- 1.17 In addition the Council as a whole will seek to comply with all the laws designed to protect the rights of people e.g. Race Relations and the Sex Disability Discrimination Acts and comply with the equality framework.
- 1.18 If a client is unhappy with the way that their application has been dealt with, they will have recourse to the Departmental Complaints Procedure. Clients should be made aware of this facility.
- 1.19 This Major Adaptations process is managed by the Major Adaptations Team, a cross departmental, interdisciplinary team , which is composed of Urban Care Technical Officers, Occupational Therapists, and Case Workers.'