

INDEPENDENT LIVING

ASSISTANCE POLICY 2019



PLYMOUTH
CITY COUNCIL

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I.0 INTRODUCTION

I.1 The purpose of the Policy is to:

- i) Assist Officers of the Council, Partner Agencies, and Citizens of Plymouth in the interpretation and implementation of the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002 (The Order) so far as it relates to the adaptation of the homes of disabled people.
- ii) Ensure fair, equitable and consistent treatment for all disabled people who require the Council's assistance in adapting their home.

I.2 This Policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 (The Act).

Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002 (The Order)

I.3 The Council accepts that there may be circumstances that warrant exceptions to this Assistance Policy. The Community Connections Service Director is authorised to assess individual cases and where appropriate, and reasonable to do so, decide that an exception be made to the normal Assistance Policy.

I.4 In addition the Council has determined that under certain circumstances it shall use its discretion under the legislation to provide additional discretionary grant assistance (see section 3.0 Types of Assistance). This grant assistance is intended to allow additional flexibility within the DFG process however can only be provided should adequate levels of funding allow.

I.5 From 1st April 2015 there was a significant change in the way that national government funding for provision of home adaptations grants (DFG) is paid to local authorities. Instead of national government making a direct payment to each local housing authority to help them to meet the cost of providing Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG), this allocation is now paid through Better Care Funds (BCF). This arrangement presents an opportunity to consider how to integrate provision of help with home adaptations across housing, health and social care systems to achieve better health and wellbeing outcomes for those with Care & Support needs (See Appendix A).

2.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 The Role of the Council as 'Housing Authority':

- 2.1.1 The legal responsibility for the provision of DFGs sits with Plymouth City Council (The Council) as the 'Housing Authority'. All applications for DFGs must meet the relevant requirements as set out within the legislation. This means that works being

requested must be deemed as being 'necessary and appropriate' and 'reasonable and practicable'.

- 2.1.2 By law the Council must consider applications for DFGs and make determinations on those applications within 6 months of receipt. The Council considers that an application for a DFG has been submitted at the point of a satisfactorily completed application form, Occupation/Owners Certificate, landlord certificates and any relevant permission in principle. Where a grant is to be means tested, evidence of financial income and savings will be required to consider the application as valid.
- 2.1.3 The Council have combined the referral and initial application form into one form completed by the 'Social Services' provider. This form is now known as the Independent Living Assistance Application Form. Further information may be required if the application requires a means test.
- 2.1.3 Whilst applications for DFG must be determined within 6 months of receipt, the application must be completed in full to be considered a valid application. The Council will advise if there is missing information. Once an application for a DFG is approved (determined) the Council must ensure that the DFG is completed within 12 months. By combining the referral and application form it is hoped the process will be shorter for applicants.
- 2.1.4 As part of the consideration of an application the Council has a duty to determine whether works being requested are necessary and appropriate. To inform this decision, during the application process the Council has a duty to consult with the 'Social Services Authority'. The Council reserves the right to discharge this duty to Occupational Therapists identified via the Adaptations, Repairs, Maintenance and Improvement (ARMI) Dynamic Purchasing System. This may include 'Social Services' delivery partner.
- 2.1.5 In addition as part of the consideration of an application the Council has a duty to determine whether works being requested are reasonable and practicable. Factors considered in deciding if the works are reasonable and practicable include the size of the property, the number of occupants, its location and any environmental or physical constraints. This will be determined through information obtained during the application process and observations made during any site visit by the Council or any other party involved in the adaptation works.
- 2.1.6 Where the Council is likely to refuse an application for a DFG, the Council will, where applicable, contact the applicant to give them the opportunity to provide additional information which may affect such a decision, prior to a formal refusal being made.
- 2.1.7 Where the Council has no option but to refuse an application for grant, the Council will advise the applicant of the reasons for such refusal.
- 2.1.8 An applicant will have the right to a review of such a decision and if so desires should request a review in writing to the Community Connections Service Director within 28 days of the date of the refusal letter.

- 2.1.9 Where works are approved and undertaken they must be carried out to the satisfaction of the grant applicant and the Council. The grant applicant will be asked to sign a completion certificate to indicate their satisfaction. However, the Council will have the overriding decision as to whether the works have been carried out to a satisfactory standard and will make direct payments to contractors, other than where a prior agreement has been made with the applicant.

2.2 The Role of the Occupational Therapist:

- 2.2.1 The Council in their role as the Social Services Authority has a duty to respond to consultation requests from the Housing Authority to help determine whether a request for a DFG is necessary and appropriate.
- 2.2.2 The Council commissions a Social Care Delivery Partner to undertake the Social Services role for Adults. Hence, in determining what is necessary and appropriate the Council discharges this duty to Livewell South West, as commissioned by Plymouth City Council. In the case of Children's applications, Occupational Therapy is provided by Children's Social Care.
- 2.2.3 Following the assessment of a disabled person by an Occupational Therapist, recommendations, where adaptations are considered necessary will be received by the Council, detailing the clinical need of the applicant and the purpose for the grant in accordance with section 23(1) of the Act (see Appendix B).
- 2.2.4 The Occupational Therapist will provide a specification of the requirements using the standard specification and highlighting any variation to the standard specification of works (see Appendix B). They will also provide an estimation of cost and have evidenced a discussion with the applicant in regard to moving to more appropriate accommodation (where applicable) and the applicant covering the cost of works above the grant maximum.
- 2.2.5 The 'Social Services Authority' has a responsibility to provide community care equipment and minor adaptations, which a person has been assessed to need and for which he or she is eligible, free of charge provided the costs (including fittings) is less than £1000.
- 2.2.6 A minor adaptation (e.g. grab rails, fixed shower seats and ramps) for both adults and children are normally defined by a value of up to £1000. These works, regardless of cost, if they require traditional building methods (i.e. would be considered 'Construction' work under Construction Design and Management Regulations 2015), may be procured using the Dynamic Purchasing System. This is to ensure best value and regulatory compliance. The application process may differ depending on the nature of the works.

2.3 Role of the Independence Community Interest Company:

- 2.3.1 The Council operates a Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) to support DFG applicants and those in need of minor building works to meet their home environmental needs in engaging with reputable and compliant contractors. The

system offers consumer protection and insurance backed warranty for the work completed via the system. Independence CIC manage the DPS on behalf of Plymouth City Council.

- 2.3.2 Independence CIC will ensure the compliance of each contractor who is entered into the DPS. This will include all necessary certification, qualifications and insurances. They will provide on-going monitoring of compliance, and address non-compliance as it arises.
- 2.3.3 Contractors entered into the DPS are required to be TrustMark registered. Independence CIC run a TrustMark Operating Scheme and as such where a contractor is registered via Independence CIC, they will complete sample inspections of work completed via the DPS as part of the contractor's membership to the TrustMark scheme.
- 2.3.4 Where non-compliance is discovered or alerted to, Independence CIC will support in resolving disputes, either directly through TrustMark or via Alternative Dispute Resolution provider.

2.4 Role of the Applicant:

- 2.4.1 The applicant and/or applicants carer is expected to provide all information relevant to the application as requested, and sign the declaration at the end of the application form.
- 2.4.2 As detailed above the Council operate a Dynamic Purchasing System, that the applicant will need to indicate their desire to utilise, within the Application form. However, should the applicant wish to use an alternative contractor they will be provided with a grant approval figure based upon indicative adaptation costings (See Appendix B) and given the option to self-fund any additional costs. The applicant must provide 3 comparable quotations based upon the OT recommendations. The applicant must take full control and be solely responsible for ensuring all works are completed to the satisfaction of the Council prior to the release of any grant funding. The applicant must resolve any issues arising with their chosen contractor themselves. (see: <https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Suppliers%20Guide%20%28Under%2025k%29.pdf>).
- 2.4.3 The applicant is expected to keep appointments made with parties involved in the DFG process and ensure they read and understand all correspondence. Where the applicant wishes to undertake work not included within the grant approval, they are expected to self-fund works outside of the grant funded eligible works.
- 2.4.4 Where an applicant has a means tested contribution to make, this must be made directly to the contractor on completion of the works. No grant funding will be released until the confirmation that the contribution has been paid is received by the Council.

2.5 Role of the Landlord:

- 2.5.1 Where the grant applicant is a tenant, they must ensure their landlord is aware that they intend on applying for assistance to adapt the property.
- 2.5.2 The Occupational Therapist may assist the tenant in the first instance to seek permission in principle to adapt the property. If the landlord does not give permission in principle to adapt the property to meet the tenant's needs, no application can be accepted and the tenant will be unable to apply for assistance. Permission must not be withheld unreasonably.
- 2.5.3 Full permission will be sought from the landlord upon receipt of full details of works. The landlord is asked to respond within 5 working days.
- 2.5.4 Where it is considered, by the tenant that their landlord has unreasonably refused permission in principle they must follow the necessary complaints procedure with their landlord or housing association.
- 2.5.5 Means testing, servicing and maintenance of equipment in the case of a tenant:

2.5.5.1 Housing Association Tenants

If the application is made by the tenant then it is their resources that will be tested. If the application is made by the housing association then the local authority has discretion on the level of grant offered. The powers in section 31 (3) of the Act provides for a general power to enable a local authority to use its discretion in deciding the level of any grant offered in respect of a landlord's application. Section 31 (3) of the Act requires authorities to have regard to the extent to which the landlord is able to charge a higher rent for premises following the completion of works.

“Carrying out adaptations”, a good practice guide for registered social landlords (1998) (section 4.3) says that housing associations “should not expect to recover the costs of carrying out an adaptation, nor of subsequently maintaining such adaptations, by a charge to the tenant concerned via service charges. In addition to being regarded as bad practice, such a charge would be illegal within the terms of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995”.

2.5.5.2 Private Renting

Most tenancies in the private sector are assured short hold tenancies, which normally run for a fixed term, generally 6 – 12 months. Assured short hold tenancies provide little security for tenants and create uncertainty about how long they will be able to stay in the property.

It is a requirement of the application for DFG that a certificate to state the intention of the applicant to remain living in the property for 5 years. However, for a DFG application the certificate is only about intention, and does not require a formal tenancy which will last for five years. Unless

there's reason to believe that it's very unlikely that the tenancy could last 5 years then this should not be a barrier to a successful DFG application.

The Council has discretion not to require a tenant's certificate where it is "unreasonable in the circumstances to require such a certificate". Para 22(3) of the Act.

The tenant must note that they are responsible for the maintenance and servicing of the equipment and installation.

3.0 TYPES OF ASSISTANCE

3.1 Disabled Facilities Grant (Mandatory Assistance)

- 3.1.1 DFGs are largely subject to the requirements of legislation, and are mandatory. Approval is required where a customer meets specific disability and financial criteria.
- 3.1.2 The assessment of need must detail what is necessary and appropriate to meet the assessed need of the DFG applicant, and provide recommendations for adaptations.
- 3.1.3 These recommendations will form the 'client brief'.
- 3.1.4 The grant will be means tested and subject to prioritisation.
- 3.1.5 DFG Applicants in receipt of a means tested benefit will not need to be means tested for the grant and will therefore be 'passported' through the application process.
- 3.1.6 The grant maximum is £30,000 (except for when the adaptation is for someone 18 years old or under).

3.2 Disabled Facilities Grant (Discretionary Assistance) - Emergency Adaptations

- 3.2.1 Cases are deemed as an emergency where the required adaptation:
 - a) Allows the applicant to be discharged from hospital or Care facility, or;
 - b) An individual is at risk of admission to an inpatient setting due to an unmet housing need;
 - c) The applicant is terminally ill or has a life limiting fast progressive condition (as evidenced by Social Care).

- 3.2.2 Cases will only be deemed as an emergency following a health and social care assessment from 'Social Services'.
- 3.2.3 The assessment must contain sufficient justification to evidence the need for emergency action.
- 3.2.4 The application will be moved through to completion and not be subject to any prioritisation process or means test.
- 3.2.5 Grants will be a maximum of £7,000.
- 3.2.6 Installations costing more than the grant maximum will be means tested.

3.3 Disabled Facilities Grant (Discretionary Assistance) - 'Fast Track' Adaptations

- 3.3.1 Applications will be 'Fast Tracked' if they are for the installation of:
 - a) Stair lift
 - b) Hoist
- 3.3.2 Cases where there is a need for a replacement stair lift or hoist will only be considered where evidence is provided by the applicant that the lift is beyond its lifetime and/or cannot be repaired.
- 3.3.3 The applicant will be expected to provide evidence of good maintenance practice of the stair lift since its original installation.
- 3.3.4 The application will be moved through to completion and not be subject to any prioritisation process or means test.
- 3.3.5 Grants will be a maximum of £7,000.
- 3.3.6 Installations costing more than the grant maximum will be means tested.

3.4 Disabled Facilities Grant (Discretionary Assistance) – Dementia Adaptations

- 3.4.1 Applications will be available for changes to the home environment that help people with dementia and cognitive impairment to live safely in their own homes for longer.
- 3.4.2 Works might include (but not limited to):
 - Colour and contrast decorating
 - Carbon monoxide/ cold / heat alarms
 - Lighting
 - Safety flooring
 - Digital technology

3.4.3 The application will be moved through to completion and not be subject to any prioritisation process or means test.

3.4.5 Grants will be a maximum of £3,000.

3.3.6 Works costing more than the grant maximum will be means tested.

3.5 Disabled Facilities Grant (Discretionary Assistance) – ‘Top Up’ Grant

3.5.1 Applications will be available for the provision of a ‘top-up’ to the Disabled Facilities Grant (Mandatory Assistance) where costs exceed the maximum amount of £30,000.

3.5.2 The ‘Top Up’ Grant will be subject to means testing regardless of the age of applicant.

3.5.3 ‘Top Up’ Grant will be a maximum of £20,000.

3.5.4 A local Land charge will be placed upon the property. Should the property be sold with the term of the ‘Top Up’ Grant, repayment of the ‘Top Up’ plus interest will be made to the council.

3.5.5 The term of the ‘Top Up’ Grant will be 15 years.

3.5.6 The grant will incur interest ‘rolled up’ for the term of the ‘Top Up’ Grant and will be charged at 0.5% per annum.

3.6 Disabled Facilities Grant (Discretionary Assistance) - Moving to more suitable accommodation

3.6.1 Where required adaptations involve substantial structural alterations or extensions and in any event where the cost of the adaptation work exceeds £30,000 (plus ‘Top Up’ if eligible), then moving to more suitable accommodation shall be considered to address the needs of the household.

3.6.2 In addition where it is not possible to provide adaptations to meet the need of the applicant, moving to more suitable accommodation shall be considered.

3.6.3 In order to help facilitate a move to appropriate alternative accommodation the Council shall provide grant assistance to cover the ‘moving costs’ associated with such a move.

3.6.4 Eligible ‘moving costs’ include estate agent fees, solicitor costs, survey costs, stamp duty, removal expenses and the connection or disconnection of appliances.

3.6.5 Grant maximum will be £15,000.

3.6.6 Grant assistance will be awarded for applicants moving within Plymouth City Council’s boundaries only.

- 3.6.7 In order to be eligible for this assistance Community Connections, and 'Social Services' must be involved in the property identification process and to ensure the existing accommodation cannot be adapted to meet the assessed need.

3.7 'Nil Grant' Applications

- 3.7.1 Following the mandatory means test for Disabled Facilities Grants, should a customer's contribution exceed the cost of the works deemed necessary and the customer wishes to fund the works themselves then the customer will be offered a 'Nil Grant' Application.
- 3.7.2 'Nil Grant' Applications will be supported via the Dynamic Purchasing System.
- 3.7.3 A fee of 1% of the cost of the works will be paid to Independence Community Interest Company for use of the Dynamic Purchasing System.
- 3.7.4 A fee of 1% of the cost of the works will be paid to Plymouth City Council to cover administration costs.

3.8 Discretionary Assistance Availability

- 3.8.1 The availability of all discretionary grant assistance is subject to the Councils annual budget setting procedure and the availability of sufficient levels of funding.
- 3.8.2 All such payments are at the Councils discretion and will be removed once available funds are exhausted.
- 3.8.3 Mandatory Assistance will take priority over Discretionary Assistance.
- 3.8.4 If demand for Mandatory Assistance was at a level where there was insufficient funds to offer Discretionary Assistance the customer will be offered a choice of proceeding with the works via a Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant (and thus its requirements) or waiting until funding becomes available.
- 3.8.5 The council would not therefore be in breach of its Statutory Duty to approve a Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant to an eligible applicant.

4.0 PRIORITISATION PROCESS

- 4.1 Applicants will be allocated an initial prioritisation from point of triage, by the Occupational Therapist. Mostly this will be at initial contact to the Council. This triage prioritisation will assist the Council in managing demand for Occupational Therapy Assessment in relation to adaptations.
- 4.2 Furthermore, during periods of high demand, the Council reserves the right to use a needs based prioritisation scheme to ensure priority is given to those applicants for DFGs who in are greatest need. This prioritisation will be determined by the assessing Occupational Therapist, upon completion of clinical assessment and consideration of risk. The prioritisation will be a 'red', 'amber', 'green' system, where 'red' is the highest priority and

thus the risk of injury to the applicant if adaptations are not provided is higher. This prioritisation will be used to determine when works can commence.

- 4.2 The Occupational Therapist will discuss their assessed priority with the applicant during the assessment.
- 4.3 The applicant will receive notification of their priority within their needs assessment. This notification will also advise the applicant of likely timescale for dealing with recommended adaptations.
- 4.4 As detailed above the level of priority is determined following a needs based assessment. If an applicant's health deteriorates from the initial assessment there will be the opportunity for their case to be reprioritised, subject to advice and information from the assessing Occupational Therapist.
- 4.5 If an applicant is dissatisfied with the priority they have been awarded, they may appeal against the decision made, in writing, outlining the reasons why they feel the case has been incorrectly assessed to the Community Connections Service Director.

5.0 REFERRAL PROCESS

- 5.1 Requests for assessment in regard to the home environment for children or adults will initially be made via Social Care (for Adults this is Livewell South West).
- 5.2 A clinical assessment of functional need within the home environment will be conducted by an Occupational Therapist or Assistant (please refer to Social Care guidelines for timescales) to identify what is necessary and appropriate to meet the assessed need within that home environment.
- 5.2 As part of their engagement, the Occupational Therapist will discuss different options regarding the applicants housing needs. Should other Social Care needs be identified they will make the appropriate referral.
- 5.3 Upon receipt of the Application form from the Occupational Therapist, as agreed with the applicant, Community Connections will confirm receipt of the form from Social Care, and provide a copy of the recommendations to the applicant.
- 5.4 The Application form will then be processed and any means testing will be undertaken. Should further information be required, Community Connections will make this request of the applicant.
- 5.5 Community Connections will establish eligibility (including means testing, where applicable), and notify the applicant of any assessed contribution they have to make towards the cost of the works. The applicant will have to agree to pay their contribution before their application can be progressed.
- 5.6 The priority detailed by Social Care will determine when the case will be submitted to the appropriate 'Lot' within the Dynamic Purchasing System. If the applicant wishes to use their own contractor to undertake the work, they will need to supply 3 quotations from appropriate providers, via the Plymouth City Council online system. (see:

<https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Suppliers%20Guide%20%28Under%2025k%29.pdf>).

- 5.7 Once costings for the required adaptation have been provided by suppliers, the Council will consider if the works are 'reasonable and practicable'.
- 5.8 The Council will then notify the applicant in writing of the grant determination. This may either be rejection of the application if not considered eligible or formal approval of the grant.
- 5.9 Within the formal approval of grant letter the applicant will be notified of expected completion timescales (in accordance with their priority, where applicable).
- 5.10 The awarded provider will arrange to complete the works with the applicant.
- 5.11 Works must be completed within 12 months of the date of valid application.
- 5.12 The works must be completed in a safe and compliant manner.
- 5.13 Where the provider is selected by the grant applicant, they must take on the role of 'Domestic client' under the Construction Design and Management Regulations 2015. Where the provider is selected by the Council via the Dynamic Purchasing System, the Council will take on the role of the 'Domestic Client'. This is regardless of tenure.
- 5.14 Where statutory permissions are required, these must be obtained prior to work commencement.
- 5.15 Grant payment will not be released until all certification and compliance notification is received by the Council. This will include, electrical and gas safety certificates, building control certificates and any other compliancy requirements.

6.0 MEANS TESTED CONTRIBUTIONS

- 6.1 As part of the Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant application process a standard test of resources is undertaken to determine whether the applicant needs to make a financial contribution toward the cost of works undertaken.
- 6.2 The Council will use its discretion under the Regulatory Reform Order 2002 to provide 'non-means tested' DFG, as detailed in section 3.0.
- 6.3 Applications for adaptations to meet the needs of a child (valid application must be before 19th birthday), are 'non-means tested'.

7.0 REPAYMENT AND RECOVERY OF SPECIALISED EQUIPMENT

7.1 Repayment of Grant

7.1.1 The Council will reclaim funding for DFG works that exceed £5,000 up to a maximum of £10,000 where home owner sell the home within 10 years of the grant completion¹.

7.1.2 A charge will be registered as a local land charge on the title deeds of the property.

7.1.3 This money is recouped via the land charge.

7.1.4 The local housing authority may demand the repayment by the recipient of such part of the grant that exceeds £5000 (but may not demand an amount in excess of £10,000) if:

- (a) the recipient disposes (whether by sale, assignment, transfer or otherwise) of the premises in respect of which the grant was given within 10 years of the certified date; and
- (b) the local housing authority, having considered:
 - (i) the extent to which the recipient of the grant would suffer financial hardship were he to be required to repay all or any of the grant;
 - (ii) whether the disposal of the premises is to enable the recipient of the grant to take up employment, or to change the location of his employment;
 - (iii) whether the disposal is made for reasons connected with the physical or mental health or well-being of the recipient of the grant or of a disabled occupant of the premises; and
 - (iv) 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,

is satisfied that it is reasonable in all the circumstances to require the repayment.

7.1.5 In addition any recipient of a DFG that has adaptations carried out and subsequently moves property within the City and is seeking further grant aid to install similar adaptations to those previously funded, then the cost of the original adaptation will have to be repaid by the applicant before new adaptation can commence.

7.1.6 Each case will be considered on its own merits and evidence to justify the move will be required to avoid repayment of grant. The applicant will have to provide evidence and justification in writing to Community Connections.

¹ The Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996: Disabled Facilities Grant (Conditions relating to approval or payment of Grant) General Consent 2008

7.1.7 Where charges are levied, then in each case the Council must be satisfied that it is reasonable to require the repayment and will consider this in line with the legislation.

7.2 Recovery of Specialist Equipment

7.2.1 Where an application for Disabled Facilities Grant has been approved under section 23(1) of the Act and the eligible works consist of or include the installation in the property of specialised equipment for the disabled occupant(s), the customer shall notify the council if and as soon as the equipment is no longer needed².

7.2.2 For the purposes of this condition;

7.2.2.1 the council shall, on approving the application, specify in writing the equipment to which this condition is to apply and the period (being a reasonable condition period for the equipment in question) during which it is to apply, and shall serve on the customer a copy of such written specification; and

7.2.2.2 the council, or Social Services on their behalf, shall be entitled, upon reasonable prior notice given to the customer inspect the equipment and, to remove it.

7.2.3 The council agrees, within a reasonable time following inspection (by the provider) of the equipment:

- (a) to notify the customer whether the equipment is to be removed; and
- (b) if the equipment is to be removed, arrange for it to be removed and to make good any damage caused to the property by its removal.

7.2.4 Subject to the Council (or Provider) giving prior notice in accordance with the above the customer is expected to give the Council (or Provider) reasonable access to the property for the purposes of inspection and removal of the equipment.

7.2.5 In the event of a breach of any of the conditions set out above, the Council may demand repayment from the customer of a sum equal to the amount of the grant paid and the same shall become repayable to the Council in accordance with Section 52 of the Act.³

8.0 APPLICANT NO LONGER ENTITLED TO GRANT

8.1 Where a grant applicant ceases to be entitled to a grant before completion of the works the Act states that the Council cannot pay any grant or any further instalments after that date. If the grant applicant makes an owner's application he ceases to be entitled to a grant when he ceases to have a qualifying owner's interest or ceases to have the intention specified in the owner's certificate which accompanied the grant application.

² The Housing Renewals Grants (Additional Conditions)(England) General Consent 1996

³ This includes reference to compound interest (currently at 8%)

- 8.2 If the grant applicant makes a tenant's application he ceases to be entitled to a grant when he ceases to be a qualifying tenant of the dwelling or if the landlord ceases to have the intention specified in the owner's certificate submitted with the application.
- 8.3 The Council has the right under the legislation to demand any instalment that has already been paid to be repaid forthwith together with interest from the date on which it was paid until repayment. The Council will consider each case on its own merits in deciding whether to recover any such payments.

9.0 CHANGES IN CIRCUMSTANCES

- 9.1 In some cases there is a change of circumstances after the grant has been formally approved that may affect the payment of grant. These circumstances detailed in the Act are:
- 9.1.1 where the medical need changes and the approved grant eligible works are no longer considered necessary or appropriate to meet the needs of the disabled person,
 - 9.1.2 the disabled occupant ceases to occupy the dwelling,
 - 9.1.3 the disabled occupant dies.
- 9.2 In such circumstances, the Act states that the Council can take appropriate action and may:
- 9.2.1 refuse to make any payment, or further payment of grant.
 - 9.2.2 agree that the works or a portion of the works will be completed and the grant or an appropriate proportion of it paid.
 - 9.2.3 request that the application should be re-determined given the new circumstances.
- 9.3 The Council has the right under the Act to demand any instalment that has already been paid to be repaid to the Council together with interest from the date on which it was paid until repayment. Each case will be considered on its own merits in deciding whether to recover any such payments.

10.0 CASES IN WHICH GRANT MAY BE RECALCULATED, WITHHELD OR REPAYED

- 10.1 The Council can refuse to pay grant or any further instalment of grant which remains to be repaid or make a reduction in the amount of grant if:
- 10.1.1 The Council ascertains that the amount of grant was approved on the basis of inaccurate or incomplete information and exceeds that which the grant applicant was entitled.
 - 10.1.2 The Council ascertain that without their knowledge the eligible works were started before the application was approved.

- 10.2.3 The works are not completed within 12 months (due to applicant actions).
- 10.2.4 The cost of works is less than the estimated expense upon which the grant was calculated.
- 10.2.5 The work has been carried out by a contractor who was not one of the contractors who originally quoted for the work.

10.2 Where any of the above situations arise, the Council can demand repayment by the applicant in whole or part, of the grant or any instalment of the grant paid together with interest from the date of payment until repayment³. Each case will be considered on its own merits in deciding whether to recover any such payments.

11.0 CONDITIONS AS TO REPAYMENT IN CASE OF COMPENSATION

11.1 Where the Council approve an application for a grant they impose a condition requiring the customer to take reasonable steps to pursue any relevant claim to which this section applies and to repay the grant, so far as appropriate, out of the proceeds of such a claim.

11.2 The claims to which this section applies are:

11.2.1 an insurance claim, or a legal claim against another person, in respect of damage to the premises to which the grant relates, or

11.2.2 a legal claim for damages in which the cost of the works to premises to which the grant relates is part of the claim;

and a claim is a relevant claim to the extent that works to make good the damage mentioned in paragraph (a), or the cost of which is claimed as mentioned in paragraph (b), are works to which the grant relates.

11.3 In the event of a breach of a condition under this section, the customer shall on demand pay to Plymouth City Council the amount of the grant so far as relating to any such works, together with compound interest as from such date as may be prescribed by or determined calculated at such reasonable rate as the authority may determine and with yearly rests⁴.

12.0 DEFERRING GRANT PAYMENT

12.1 The Council has the discretion to defer any payment of an approved grant for a period of up to twelve months from the date of grant approval.

12.2 Any such decision must be set out within the grant approval notice.

13.0 GRANT CONDITIONS

13.1 Throughout this policy reference is made to grant conditions, these are detailed below:

⁴ Currently 8% compound interest, which may be charged from the date of payment

13.1.1 The grant conditions run for a period of time following the completion of the works, this is known as the grant condition period. The conditions run from the certified date, which is the date that the council certifies the grant funded work as completed to its satisfaction.

13.1.2 This period is 5 years

13.1.3 A local land charge will be registered for a period of 10 years in the case of owner occupiers.

14.0 DISPUTES ABOUT THE ASSISTANCE PROVIDED

14.1 Nothing in this document is to be interpreted as committing the Council to the approval, or payment, of assistance towards works to the property.

14.2 Nothing in this policy is to require the consideration of an application for financial assistance where:

14.2.1 There is an excessive risk to the health and safety of Council staff, agents, or other persons or

14.2.2 There are any indications that there is a fraudulent element to the application or

14.2.3 There are outstanding monies owed to the Council (other than by way of an agreed mortgage where the repayment schedule has been maintained) or

14.2.4 The customers fail to co-operate with the Council (or other persons) in their reasonable requirements to enable this application to be considered (or to be considered in the context of delivering the assistance programme to other customers) or

14.2.5 There are other difficulties whereby the approval of an application for financial assistance is unlikely to result in the relocation to an appropriate property.

14.3 Decisions regarding these matters are to be referred to the Community Connections Service Director.

14.4 If you are not satisfied with the decision made regarding works that are eligible for grant funding or any other aspect of the service, you can make a complaint via:

<https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/feedbackandcomplaints/makegeneralcomplaintcomplimentorgiveusyourfeedback>

15.0 FRAUD

15.1 If the Council discovers that the details of the application are incorrect, misleading, or that the quotations have been subject to collusion, or that any other attempt has been made to defraud the Council, then the approval may be cancelled, any payments made may become

repayable (together with interest) and, in appropriate cases, the matter will be investigated and may be subject to prosecution.

16.0 CONSULTATION

Agreed with the Plymouth City Council Portfolio Holder for Housing & Co-operative Development, pre-policy consultation has been conducted during August 2019. The below partners, organisations, internal departments and user groups have all been contacted.

Livewell

Plymouth Community Homes

Livewest Housing Association

Sovereign Housing Association

Highbury Trust

Improving Lives Plymouth (DIAC)

Plymouth Area Disability Action Network:

Plymouth Dementia Action Alliance (PDAA)

Motor Neurone Disease Association

SSAFA

Age UK

End users identified by key stakeholders

Children's Young People and Families

Community Learning Disability Team

Adult Social Care

Commissioning

Dementia Friendly City Co-ordinator

The main considerations raised as a result of these consultations are:

- Necessity of requiring three separate quotes from Contractors when the Client chooses to select their own Contractor.
- The process for a Client choosing to use their own Contractor could be more informative in the interest of this being a viable option to carry out the works.

In response to these considerations, we have:

- Clarified that the reason for obtaining 3 quotes is that past experience has shown that 2 quotes does not always give a reasonable indication of cost due to the possibility of one being high and the other being low. With 3 quotes, more often than not, 2 will be close and hence the other can often be disregarded or require clarification where notably lower than the other 2 quotes.
- Committed to providing further supporting information for clients to enable them to feel confident about the option to select their own Contractor. This information will

be included in the introductory letter that is sent to Clients following the receipt of a referral from a clinical professional.

17.0 APPLYING FAIRNESS

- 17.1 The Council's policy is to treat all those that apply for assistance fairly and on an equitable basis founded on case by case needs assessment, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, marital status, race, nationality (including citizenship)⁵, disabilities or religious or political affiliation.
- 17.2 The Council regularly monitors its applications for assistance to ensure that policies and procedures comply with current equal opportunities legislation.
- 17.3 An Equal Impact Assessment has been carried out and is available to the public via the Plymouth City Council website.
- 17.4 Plymouth's agreement with the Fairness Commission states that Plymouth City Council should commit to fairness in what it does, how it does it and who gets what:

In this instance the following principles apply:

- 17.4.1 The city should give priority to those in greatest need when it allocates resources.
- 17.4.2 Things that make the biggest difference to people's lives should get priority when deciding where resources go.
- 17.4.3 Preventing inequalities is more effective than trying to eliminate them.
- 17.4.4 Services should be provided 'with' people, not 'for' them.

18.0 ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND DATA PROTECTION

The information collected on the questionnaire, application form and supporting evidence from Plymouth City Council will be used to process applications for assistance. The information may be passed on to the Department of Work and Pensions and Inland Revenue as permitted by law.

The Council may also check the information provided by the customer or information provided by a third party, with other information held by the Council.

The Council may also obtain information from certain third parties, or give information to them to check the accuracy of the information, to prevent or detect crime, or to protect public funds in other ways, as permitted by law. These third parties include Government Departments and other Local Authorities.

Personal information will not be disclosed about customers to anyone outside Plymouth City Council nor will we use information about you for other purposes unless the law permits this.

⁵ (subject to Appendix B – General Conditions of Assistance, item 12 – Persons from abroad)

Information may be used for statistical purpose. Such information will be displayed so that it cannot be attributed to any person.

We will never share or use your information for marketing purposes.

We will only keep your information for 6 years. It will be stored and processed in line with the principles of the Data Protection Act 2018. You have certain rights under the Data Protection Act and the EU General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), which include the right to access, rectification and erasure. To enforce these rights or enquire about any other aspects of data protection, please contact:

Data Protection Officer, Plymouth City Council, Ballard House, West Hoe Road, Plymouth PL1 3BJ.
Email: dataprotectionofficer@plymouth.gov.uk

Plymouth City Council is registered as a data controller with the Information Commissioner's Office (registration number: Z7262171).

The Council's full Privacy notice can be found at:
<https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/aboutwebsite/privacypolicy>

19.0 REVIEW AND REVISION OF THIS POLICY

This policy will be reviewed and revised as and when required.

This Policy, when approved, will be advertised, as required, in accordance with the provisions of Article 4 of the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England & Wales) Order 2002.

20.0 APPENDICES

Appendix A – Housing and Health

In order to meet a range of performance outcomes and to manage local needs, a budget for provision of DFG will usually require contributions from housing, social care and health. The allocation from national to local government is intended to contribute towards meeting local need, but is not expected to meet all local needs, hence contributions will be required and/or demand will need to be managed.

Home adaptations contribute to meeting a range of Public Health, NHS and Social Care Outcomes⁶.

The vast majority of disabled people (all ages) live in general (not specialist) housing and so home adaptations play a key role in enabling safe, healthy and independent living at home. Whilst efforts are being made to increase the development of specialist new build homes, this will not satisfy the demand for adapted homes and these will invariably require adaptations themselves.

Home adaptations can reduce health and social care costs, help to reduce risk of injury e.g. from falls, enable faster hospital discharge, delay onset of admission to residential care and reduce care costs e.g. for people with dementia.

The quality and suitability of the home environment is particularly important for disabled people, older people, those living with a chronic disease e.g. dementia or the consequences of a serious injury, and those who experience functional and cognitive difficulties.

Health and care leaders have come together to develop a Long Term Plan⁷ to make the NHS fit for the future, and to get the most value for patients out of every pound of taxpayers' investment.

This plan has been drawn up by those who know the NHS best, including frontline health and care staff, patient groups and other experts. The plan represents the opinions and interests of 3.5 million people.

Some of the ways the plan sets out improve care for patients over the next ten years relate to the home environment, and the types of assistance set out in the policy:

- helping more people to live independently at home for longer
- developing more rapid community response teams to prevent unnecessary hospital spells, and speed up discharges home.

⁶ Care & Repair England (2015): Integration Briefing 1, Disabled Facilities Grant Funding via Better Care Funds – An Opportunity to Improve Outcomes.

⁷ NSH: January 2019, Long Term Plan

- making further progress on care for people with dementia
- giving more people more say about the care they receive and where they receive it, particularly towards the end of their lives.

The main legislative framework governing DFGs is provided by the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 (the Act). Since 1990, local housing authorities have been under a statutory duty to provide grant aid to disabled people for a range of adaptations to their homes. This grant aid is means tested for adults (not for children) and eligibility is defined in the Act.

Social care authorities have had legal obligations concerning provision of help with home adaptations for disabled people that pre-dates the housing law.

With the introduction of the Care Act 2014, there remain social care duties in relation to the delivery of home adaptations. These include, for example, adult social care statutory requirements under the Care Act to assess needs and to arrange for appropriate assistance to be provided and statutory entitlements to community equipment and minor adaptations (e.g. handrails to the access to a property or lever taps to a kitchen sink or washbasin).

The nine point legal definition of wellbeing in the Care Act includes 'suitability of living accommodation' (Care Act 2014 (section 1(2))). Four outcomes listed in the eligibility regulations under the Act can be affected by home adaptations:

- Maintaining personal hygiene
- Managing toilet needs
- Maintaining a habitable home environment
- Being able to make use of the home safely

Note that disabled children also have entitlements to DFG as defined by the Act and there is consequently a further legal interface with legislation concerning social care and children, not detailed here, but in the Children Act 1989.

The Government's Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002 (RRO) provided opportunities for Local Authorities to make significant changes to the way they tackle housing issues. The adoption and publication of a Policy for housing assistance is a requirement of the RRO before any assistance can be offered. Under the RRO, a Council has the discretion to decide whether it provides grants, loans, advice etc. for the purpose of repairing, improving, extending, converting or adapting housing accommodation.

The Council can decide the extent to which it offers assistance and what conditions are applied to these services. The exception to this is the mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG), the terms and conditions of which remain substantially as set out in the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996. However, the Government has issued three consents which enable the Council to apply conditions to DFGs in addition to those specified in the 1996 Act, namely:

- The Housing Renewal Main Grants (Recovery of Compensation) General Consent 1996 (This relates to the repayment of grant where the beneficiaries have received compensation relevant to the works carried out)
- The Housing Renewals Grants (Additional Conditions)(England) General Consent 1996 (This relates to the recovery of grant aided equipment where it is no longer required by the disabled person)
- The Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996: Disabled Facilities Grant (Conditions relating to approval for payment of Grant) General Consent 2008 (This relates to the repayment of a portion of the grant monies should the property be sold or ownership transferred)

All three of these consents have been incorporated into this policy. Further details are provided in the policy.

DFG's are mandatory grants and are available to disabled people when works to adapt their home are deemed necessary and appropriate to meet their needs and when it is reasonable and practicable to undertake such adaptations having regard to the age and condition of the dwelling or building.

In order for the Council to determine whether adaptations are necessary and appropriate, the Council is required to liaise and consult with the Social Services Authority regarding the adaptation needs of disabled people (as stated in Section 24 of the Housing, Grants, Construction, Regeneration Act 1996). Generally the Council will accept those recommendations provided by the Occupational Therapist (OT) however in order to best use resources there may be a need to better identify and fully explore alternative solutions in some instances, for example relocation by means of a Discretionary Relocation Grant.

One of the key areas of connection between housing law and social care law with regard to provision of DFG is the decision about what adaptations a DFG grant should pay for.

Housing authorities themselves must decide what action to take regarding the award of a DFG on the basis of the advice from the social care authority about what works are 'necessary and appropriate', alongside their own judgement as to whether the recommended/requested adaptation is 'reasonable and practicable'.

It is important to note that social care eligibility criteria (e.g. only providing help for those assessed to have needs which meet the 'substantial' criteria) do not apply to housing legislation, including the Act and DFG regulations, and DFGs should not be limited on this basis.

There are, however, occasions whereby it is not reasonable and practicable to adapt a property. In cases where it is not possible to adapt a property to an appropriate standard or where the cost of the works is considered excessive the Council may determine that works are not reasonable and practicable and may require other options to be considered, e.g. Discretionary Relocation Grant or alternative housing solution.

The Council is sensitive to the aspirations of all customers; however, these will not automatically form part of the considerations surrounding the determination of the most appropriate scope of works which would be eligible for grant funding. However, should the customer wish to enhance the eligible works, consideration will be given to self-funded enhancement, as long as the needs are met (e.g. additional/coloured tiling as part of a Bathroom Adaptation).

DFG's are subject to a means test (except in the case of children) giving due regard to the financial position of the customer. This will determine the amount (if any contribution) they may be required to make towards the cost of the works and hence the amount of Grant available to them. Customers in receipt of certain benefits are also exempted, and considered 'passporting', details of which will be given upon application.

It is important to note that the means testing process is clearly defined by the Regulations and the Council does not have any discretion in applying it.

The current maximum Grant limit is £30,000 and all applications must be approved within 6 months of the full and complete application being submitted to the Council.

The grant can be recovered following the relevant disposal of the property within 10 years of payment provided that the Council is satisfied that it is reasonable to do so. Grants below £5,000 are excluded and the maximum amount that the Council can recover is £10,000.

- This Assistance Policy re-asserts the need to apply Section 52 of the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996, which sets out the principles of seeking repayment of grant under specific circumstances. This power has the advantage that on repayment, the monies can be re-used to assist other customers in need of home adaptations.

Appendix B - Application Form

INDEPENDENT LIVING ASSISTANCE

Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act, 1996

Regulatory Reform Order (2002)

Application Form

APPLICANT:					
Full Name:				Address:	
Date of Birth:				Postcode:	
Male	<input type="checkbox"/>	Female	<input type="checkbox"/>	Email Address:	
Care First ID			Date of First Contact with ASC		
Please note we will communicate with you via email for all communication					
Telephone Number:			NI Number		
Does anyone hold Power of Attorney for you? If so who and their address:					
ACCOMMODATION:					
Are you a:		Owner Occupier: <input type="checkbox"/>		Tenant: <input type="checkbox"/>	
Who else lives in the house with you?	Name		Relationship		
	Contact Number		Date of Birth		
	Name		Relationship		
	Contact Number		Date of Birth		
	Name		Relationship		
	Contact Number		Date of Birth		
Landlord:	Name		Company		
	Contact Number		Email Address		
INCOME (THIS SECTION MUST BE COMPLETED FOR APPLICATION TO BE ACCEPTED):					
Do you or your partner receive any of the following (you will need to provide proof of benefits upon request):					
					Documents seen by Livewell
Guaranteed Pension Credit			<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Housing Benefit			<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Universal Credit			<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Income Support			<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Employment Support Allowance (income based)			<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>

Jobseeker's Allowance (income based)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Working/Child Tax Credit (with a household income less than £15,050)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

FURTHER INFORMATION									
Do you receive paid care?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Does a family member care for you?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
					Have you previously applied for a DFG?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Please give details:									
Will you or a member of your family carry out the works?						Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you already begun the works?						Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you already finished the works?						Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST ASSESSMENT:										
Therapist's Name:			Telephone Number:							
Email Address										
Should Community Connections contact the OT to discuss known risks?							Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Customer registered on Devon Home Choice				Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Band		
Comments regarding paid care										
The provision of an adaptation could have a direct impact on the necessity for continued care. If this applies in this case please provide details:										
(N.B. This may impact on the points system and may highlight if there is some other action that could be taken).										
Amount of paid care (£) per week			before adaptation			after adaptation				
Adaptation Requirements - Reasoning and Recommendations <i>(Please give information regarding the ability of the person and potential for deterioration)</i>										
What is necessary and appropriate to meet the need?										
It is necessary for . It would therefore be appropriate to provide , for the reasons above.										
May we share the information given in this form with others involved in your grant?						Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Would you like PCC to select a contractor on your behalf? (see guidance).						Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	
The works to be undertaken are covered under the Construction Design and Management Regulations 2015, are you happy for PCC to act as the client in regard to these regulations (see guidance).										

RAG Rating					
Red	<input type="checkbox"/>	Amber	<input type="checkbox"/>	Green	<input type="checkbox"/>
				Fast track	<input type="checkbox"/>

REQUIREMENT DETAILS										
Does the person have support from carers with the tasks relevant to this application?				Yes		<input type="checkbox"/>	No		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Full Time Wheelchair User	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Part Time Wheelchair User	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is the person likely to be using a wheelchair in the next 5 years?						Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	
If yes, please select all that apply			Indoor	<input type="checkbox"/>	Outdoor	<input type="checkbox"/>	Shower	<input type="checkbox"/>		
If yes please supply the external size of the wheelchair and the weight of the wheelchair:										
Customer weight			Customer height							
PROPERTY INFORMATION										
Parking Restrictions? If so what?						New build?		<input type="checkbox"/>		
Type of Property		Bungalow		<input type="checkbox"/>	House		<input type="checkbox"/>	Flat		<input type="checkbox"/>
Type of Adaptation (Standard specification unless otherwise stated by Occupational Therapist): If any of the requirements are not possible the installer/contractor is to discuss with the OT. Delete Adaptation rows that are not required.										
Bathroom Adaptation - Standard				Agree (OT)		Other requirements				
Thermostatically controlled push button (or other easy to use control) electric or mixer shower unit; longer length riser rail and standard length shower hose, unit to be positioned 1200mm above floor level.										
Level Access Floor Former Shower										
Half height shower screens, including shower curtain. Screen configuration selected by customer.										
2 no. white 450mm grab rails positioned in accordance with customer instruction.										
Wall mounted shower seat, with back rest, arms and support legs (not padded).										
Slip resistant flooring, colour selected by customer.										
WC as existing										
Wash hand basin as existing										
Door width as existing										
Room layout as existing						(OT to provide sketch plan if changes are required):				
Stair Lift - requirements				Yes	No	Other requirements				
Straight flight										
Curved flight						Please give details:				
Manual Swivel Chair						Top/Bottom/Both (delete as appropriate)				

Auto Swivel Chair			Top/Bottom/Both (delete as appropriate)
Linked seat and footrest			
Type of hand control	n/a	n/a	Short Joy Stick/Long Joy Stick/Rocker Switch/Ergonomic Joy Stick/Arm Control Paddle/Arm Control Toggle
Handing of hand control	n/a	n/a	Left/Right (delete as appropriate)
Remote Control			
Obstructions to consider			Detail obstruction:
Safety	n/a	n/a	Seat belt/3 point harness (delete as appropriate)
Through the Floor Lift - requirements	Yes	No	Other requirements
Wheelchair user?			Standing/Seated (delete as appropriate)
Size of Lift Car			
Remote Controlled			Location of controls:
Self-Controlled?			Positioning of controls:
Door Opening Automatically?			If no, door will be manual opening.
Does the carer need to access the lift?			
Lift location (where does the lift need to go from and to?):			
Turning circle outside of lift to be 1500mm (unless otherwise stated).			
Ceiling Track Hoist - requirements	Yes	No	Other requirements
Straight Track			
H-Track (X-Y)			
Manual Traverse			
Powered Traverse			
Which rooms is it servicing?			
Door Adjustments? - requirements	Requirements		
Door Widening			
Which Doors?			
Width?			
Sliding Door? Please give details.			
Automatic Door Opening System			
Which Doors?			
Control?	Key Fob, Wall Switch, Intercom, Key Pad		
Remove Threshold			
Which Doors?			
Completely Level Threshold?	Contractor to ensure adequate drainage.		
Kitchen Adaptation - requirements	Requirements		

OT expected to meet with accessible Kitchen supplier to ascertain full requirements and submit application with full details.			
External Ramp - Standard	Agree (OT)	Other requirements	
Ramp gradient 1:15			
1200mm minimum clear width of ramp			
100mm minimum upstands			
Bilateral metal galvanised rails (where drop is over 600mm)			
1200mm x 1200mm minimum clear landing areas within ramp			
1200mm x 1200mm minimum clear landing area outside of entrance door			
Level threshold entrance door			
Ramp is to comply with Building Regulations			
External Lift Access - requirements	Yes	No	Other requirements
Platform Lift			Lift car size?
Incline Lift			Lift car size?
External Stair Lift (Joy Stick Control only)			Manual Swivel
Carer assistance required in the lift			
Where is the lift travelling from and to			
If the user is not a wheelchair user, how will they be seated?			
What type of controls are required and where should they be positioned?			

Adaptation Estimated Cost		
You are not expected to obtain quotations. Please simply use the indicative cost to populate the Estimate Cost box. This is to give the grant administrator an idea of the estimated total cost, and how close to the grant maximum the works are likely to be.		
Adaptation Type	Indicative Cost	Estimated Cost
Bathroom Adaptation	£5500	
Stair Lift – Straight	£2000	
Stair Lift – Curved	£4500	
Through Floor Lift	£9000	
Ceiling Track Hoist – Straight	£1500	
Ceiling Track Hoist – H Track	£3000	
Door Widening x 1	£500	
Automatic Door Opening System	£3500	
Kitchen	£6000	
External Ramp	£5000	
External Lift Access	£20000	

Sub Total			
Other Works (estimate cost)			
Estimated Grand Total			
Works over £30000?			
	Yes		No
If yes, customer can fund works over £30000?			
	Yes		No
Have you discussed moving to alternative accommodation?			
	Yes		No
If yes, what was the outcome			
If no, please put the customer works in priority order, or suggest where funding over £30000 is come from?			

DECLARATION PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

- I declare that the information I have given is correct and complete, to the best of my knowledge and belief.
- I authorise the Council making enquiries to check the information I have given. This may mean contacting other Government agencies, my employer, or my accountant if I am self-employed.
- I understand that if I give false information, or knowingly leave out information I may be prosecuted.
- I authorise the Occupational Therapy Service to provide Community Connections with any information on my disability/condition considered necessary to enable the determination of this grant application.
- I understand that submission of this form does not constitute a valid application until all relevant information has been received.
- I understand that I give permission in principle to the recommendations as discussed with the Occupational Therapist completing this form (the recommendations are subject to change and agreement with all parties).
- I understand that my landlord will have to give consent (delete if owner occupier)

Applicant Name		Signed		Date	
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Please send completed form to:

communityconnections@plymouth.gov.uk



**Housing Grants, Construction and
Regeneration Act, 1996**

Part I: Chapter I
Owner's Certificate

To Plymouth City Council:			
In connection with my application dated			
For a Disabled Facilities Grant in respect of Property address			
		Post Code	
I HEREBY CERTIFY that I [have] or [propose to acquire] a qualifying owner's interest in the dwelling intended for the application.			
I INTEND that the disabled occupant will live in the dwelling or flat as their only or main residence throughout the grant condition period (5 years for grants of £5,000 or less, 10 years for grants over £5,000) or for such shorter period as [my] [their] health or other relevant circumstances permit.			
Signed by all owners		Date	
Where the applicants have an owner's interest in the property specified in the application (i.e. the house or the dwelling within the building) are to be owned in accordance with the Occupation Certificate. Where there is a relevant disposal of part or all of the property within 10 years of the date of completion the Council may demand repayment of that portion of the grant which exceeds £5000 subject to a maximum repayment of £10,000. Full details of this condition are set out in Appendix A of the Independent Living Assistance Policy 2019.			

**Housing Grants, Construction and
Regeneration Act, 1996**



Part 1: Chapter 1
Tenant's Certificate

To Plymouth City Council:			
In connection with my application dated			
For a Disabled Facilities Grant in respect of Property address			
		Post Code	
I HEREBY CERTIFY that my application is a tenant's application for a disabled facilities grant.			
I INTEND that the disabled occupant will live in the dwelling or flat as their only or main residence throughout the grant condition period or for such shorter period as [my] [their] health or other relevant circumstances permit.			
Signed by all tenants		Date	

STANDARD SPECIFICATIONS:

Bathroom Adaptation:

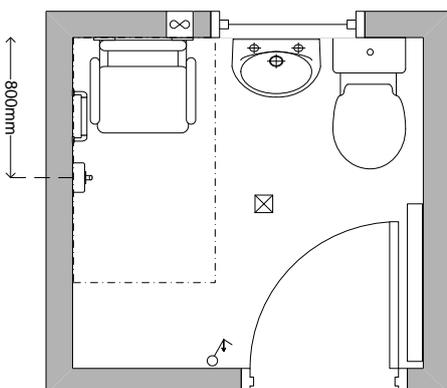
- To include (unless otherwise stated by the Occupational Therapist):
- Replace bath with level access shower, standard shower former size of 800mm x 1400mm.
- Half Height Carer Screens (contractor will agree configuration with customer).
- Shower curtain for shower area (length to be approx. 300mm just below top edge of the screens).
- Shower area (plus 1 tile width or 150mm beyond edge of shower area) to be tiled/wall boarded.
- Thermostatically controlled easy use shower unit, base of unit to be 1200mm above floor level, and 800mm from corner of shower area to centre of unit.
- Shower will include longer hose and riser rail.
- 2 no. 400mm white fluted plastic grab rails (positioned as per customer instruction).



-
- Wall mounted shower seat with seat, back and arms (including support legs), standard width of seat is 460mm.
- Slip-resistant flooring, with 100mm upstands to the whole perimeter of the room.
- Extractor fan linked to light control with 15 minute overrun.
- Vapour proof light (1 no.).
- WC as existing.
- Wash Hand Basin as existing.
- Door as existing.

Where not already installed the above standard specification will be allowed for unless otherwise indicated and justified by the Occupational Therapist.

An example of the standard specification is below (for shower positioning and size only):



Stair Lift Controls

Standard Joy Stick – Long



Ergonomic Joy Stick



Standard Joy Stick – Short



Arm Control – Paddle



Rocker Switch



Arm Control – Toggle



2. External Ramp:

- Gradient of the ramp will be 1:15.
- Maximum length of ramp will be 5m before landing is required.
- Minimum Clear width of 1200mm.
- Top and Bottom Landings of 1200mm x 1200mm.
- Landing provided at each change in direction (1200mm x 1200mm).
- Ramp and landings will have 100mm upstands.
- Bi-lateral metal railings will be installed where the drop is more than 600mm on both exposed sides.
- Rails will be 900mm high.
- Ramp and Landing Surface will be slip resistant.

This standard specification will be adhered to unless otherwise indicated and justified by the Occupational Therapist. Contractors will undertake full measured survey of the site and advise if ramp specification is not feasible.

For 1:15 Ramp	
Height of Steps (Rise)	Length of Slope (going)
100mm	1500mm
200mm	3000mm
300mm	4500mm
400mm	6000mm
500mm	7500mm

Selecting a Contractor on the grant applicant's behalf.

Plymouth City Council run a Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) for all adaptation procurement (major adaptations), which means all contractors/providers are registered and compliant in regard to the work they undertake for our customers. All contractors/providers are TrustMark registered (see <https://www.trustmark.org.uk/> for more detail), and will provide the customer with an insurance backed warranty (2 years, extendable up to 5 years if grant applicant wishes to pay for this extension) for the work they undertake via the DPS. The customer will receive a leaflet about the service upon acknowledgement of this form.

Having PCC procure the work on the customers behalf means that other relevant legislation, e.g. Construction Design and Management Regulations 2015 is covered, and processes followed.

The works you have identified is needed to meet the customers' needs will be placed on the relevant 'lot', e.g. Lot 2 for Bathroom Adaptation with Design, and providers will be asked a series of questions relevant to the works, customer etc. and asked to submit a '% adjustment bid' to our standard Schedule of Works. This information will determine the selected contractor/provider, who will be awarded the work following formal grant approval.

The contractor/provider will ask the customer to sign a contract. The contract for the works is between the customer and the contractor/provider NOT PCC.

If the customer has concerns or there are problems with the works, if the contractor/provider has been selected by PCC on the customers behalf, In.CIC and PCC will provide support to resolve the matter.

Should the customer choose to not utilise the DPS, they will be responsible for providing 3 quotations for the works, which must match your recommendations. The contractors they select must hold the relevant insurance, and provide their quotations via PCC online system, please see link <https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Suppliers%20Guide%20%28Under%2025k%29.pdf>

If a family member undertakes the work, the cost of materials **only** will be covered. Where the customer selects their own contractors/provider or a family member undertakes the works, they must take full responsibility for the project and any subsequent issues. PCC will take no responsibility for these works.

In.CIC, or Independence Community Interest Company have been employed by PCC to produce and manage the Dynamic Purchasing System. They also offer a TrustMark registration scheme for adaptation specialists, and support PCC in ensuring compliance and quality of contractors/providers.

Construction Design and Management Regulations 2015.

The construction design and management regulations 2015 places a duty on domestic clients' who has construction work carried out on their home (construction work means any work that employs construction techniques, materials or equipment). CDM 2015 applies to adaptations.

PCC feel it unreasonable to expect the grant applicant to take this duty on and hence in most circumstances PCC will take the 'client role'. The only exception to this is when the grant applicant wishes to retain this duty, when the grant applicant does not want PCC to select the contractor or when an architect is employed.

The regulations places duties on all parties to give full consideration to the health and safety of those involved in the project and for future maintenance.

PCC will ensure the appropriate contractor/provider is selected (via the DPS), that they consider health and safety during the works (the construction phase plan), and provide required information for use and maintenance of the equipment (the Health & Safety file).

The works are not notifiable, however, the co-ordination role is important and a legal duty.

The grant applicant must agree to PCC undertaking this role by completion of the box within the form, or they must undertake this role themselves. PCC will check there is a construction phase plan and health and safety file before releasing grant payment.

Appendix C - Works Eligible for Assistance:

The adaptation works eligible for assistance will be those listed under section 23 (1) of the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996, as follows:

Access to the Dwelling

Works eligible for assistance may include:

- Ramped access to main entrance door for wheelchair use; widened or shallower steps to main entrance door or a step lift;
- Widened entrance door for wheelchair use;
- Resurfaced or re-graded path to entrance door;
- Alterations to secondary entrance door/patio window to provide access to rear garden/yard where access cannot easily be gained via the adapted main entrance and drive/side path;
- Structural alterations required to allow installation of stair lift through floor lift or step lift equipment.

Making the Dwelling Safe

Works eligible for assistance may include:

- Works to provide means of escape from fire (usually to flats);
- Provision of guards or cladding etc; to prevent persons with behavioural problems harming themselves;
- Specialised glazing or shades to windows to protect occupants with a medical condition which make them sensitive to sunlight;
- Repairing defective stairs or floors etc which are hazardous
- Additional lighting on stairs and steps;
- Repositioning of sockets and switches;
- Provision of door and window opening systems to allow independent access.

Access to Principal Family Room

Works eligible for assistance may include:

- Widened doorway for wheelchair access;
- Provision and installation of stair lift/through-floor lift equipment and structural alterations required to allow installation, if the principal living room is on an upper floor;
- Widened doorway in entrance hall to access principal family room for wheelchair use;

Access to Sleeping Room

Works eligible for assistance may include:

- Provision and installation of stair lift/through-floor lift equipment and structural alterations required to allow the installation, where access is required to a bedroom or room suitable for sleeping which is above ground floor level;
- Conversion of a ground floor room into a bedroom; Widened doorway for wheelchair access to sleeping room;
- Construction of bedroom extension;
- Strengthened ceiling and/or preparation works for ceiling track hoist, where hoist is to be provided by Plymouth City Council.

Access to WC

Works eligible for assistance may include:

- Provision of a WC where one does not exist.
- Provision and installation of stair lift/through-floor lift equipment and structural alterations required to allow the installation, where access is required to a WC above ground floor level;
- Strengthened ceiling and/or preparation works for ceiling track hoist, where hoist is to be provided by Plymouth City Council;
- Repositioning WC to facilitate access by wheelchair user;
- Raised/lowered WC pan;
- Provision of grab rails;
- Provision of ground floor WC where upper floor cannot be accessed;
- Widened doorway for wheelchair access;
- Extension for a WC.

Access to Bathing Facilities

Works which may be eligible for assistance include:

- Provision and installation of stair lift/through-floor lift equipment and structural alterations required to allow the installation, where access is required to an existing bathroom above ground floor level;
- Provision of bath or shower for the first time;
- Provision of shower (thermostatically controlled) over a bath, including necessary curtain, tiles and grab rail;
- Replacement of bath with shower facility;
- Replacement of shower with a bath;
- Provision of bath and shower where there are 2 or more disabled occupants with differing needs;
- Provision of bathroom extension;
- Relocation of bath/shower to facilitate use by wheelchair user;

- Strengthened ceiling and/or preparation works for ceiling track hoist, where hoist is to be provided by Plymouth City Council;
- Widened doorway for wheelchair access;
- Provision of fixed seat/grab rails;
- Non-slip/sloping floor to create shower facility.

Access to Wash Basin

A wash-hand basin will normally be provided in the same room as the WC.

Works to provide access may include:

- Relocation of wash-hand basin to facilitate use by wheelchair user;
- Replacement of wash-hand basin with more suitable type e.g. replace vanity unit with wall fixed wash-hand basin;
- Replacement of taps with lever taps in association with above.

Access to Kitchen Facilities

The extent of adaptation work in a kitchen should be related to the extent of cooking and food preparation normally undertaken by the disabled person.

Works which may be eligible for assistance include:

- Rearrangement of kitchen fittings/appliances to facilitate their use;
- Enlargement of the kitchen if it is too small to allow its safe use by wheelchair user;
- Adapted work-top/storage unit for wheelchair user;
- Adapted doorway for wheelchair user;
- Widened doorway for wheelchair user;
- Raised height appliances (DFG will not cover the cost of appliance).

Access to Power, Light and Heat

Works which may be eligible for assistance include:

- Relocating power points to make them accessible;
- Adaptation of heating/lighting controls to make them accessible;
- Replacement of solid fuel fire with other heating appliance in living/sleeping rooms normally used by a disabled occupant;
- Improvement of inadequate heating in living/sleeping rooms normally used by disabled occupant;
- Provision of central heating.

Access to Permit Care of Other Persons

Where the disabled occupant cares for other persons e.g. spouse, young children or elderly relatives who are normally resident in the dwelling, works may be provided to other rooms in the dwelling to allow the disabled person access to care for those persons, including:

- Provision and installation of stair lift/through-floor lift equipment and structural alterations required to allow the installation, where the disabled person lives on the ground floor but needs access to bedrooms;
- Widened doorways to bedrooms of those being cared for by disabled, wheelchair user;

Access to the Garden

In deciding the extent of providing access to the rear garden, the following will be taken into account.

- Grant assistance will not be given where there is already access to the garden but grant assistance may be given to improve an existing access to make it safe for the disabled occupant to use. It does not include extending an existing access e.g. creating a side access so a person can also go around the side of a house.
- Generally, the most modest solution for providing access to both the house and the garden will be considered and this can mean that one access may be sufficient to access both the house and the garden.
- Where homes have communal gardens, e.g., blocks of flats served by a single access, grants will not normally be provided for an individual access to the garden unless it can be demonstrated that because of the disabled persons condition the travel distance to the garden would be excessive and unreasonable.

Other

Works may include:

- Soundproofing to improve the quality of life for carers
- Safety rooms for children
- Highly specialised bathing equipment to aid carers
- Funding to aid works to commence, i.e. client contribution to respite care (all other sources of funding should be exhausted before approaching the Housing Authority).