Contents

1.0 Introduction 3
2.0 Legal Framework 4
3.0 National Context 4
4.0 Implementation 8
5.0 Background 8
6.0 Strategic Context 8
7.0 Corporate Priorities 10
8.0 Assistance Priorities 10
9.0 Types of Assistance 11
10.0 Prioritisation of Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant 12
11.0 Disabled Facilities Grant Process 13
12.0 Discretionary Relocation Grant Process 28
13.0 Aids and Adaptations Technical Services/Home Maintenance Technical Services Process 30
14.0 Recovery of Specialised Equipment 31
15.0 Applicant no longer entitlement to grant 32
16.0 Changes in circumstances 32
17.0 Cases in which grant may be recalculated, withheld or repaid 33
18.0 Conditions as to repayment in case of compensation 33
19.0 Deferring Grant Payment 34
20.0 Grant Conditions 34
21.0 Disputes 34
22.0 Fraud 35
23.0 Consultation 35
24.0 Applying Fairness 36
25.0 Complaints and Comments 36
26.0 Access to information and Data Protection 37
27.0 Review and Revision of this policy 37

Appendices

A Types of assistance available 39
B Priority Weighting System 45
C Terms of Engagement 49
D Sell2Plymouth 50
1.0 Introduction

The setting in which a person lives, and its suitability to their specific needs, has a major impact on the extent to which their needs can be met, or prevented, over time. Housing is therefore a crucial component of care and support, as well as a key health-related service.

Suitable living accommodation includes all places where people live; for example a house, flat, other general dwelling, an adult placement or other specialist housing.

Suitable living accommodation is a place which is safe, healthy and suitable for the needs of a person, so as to contribute to promoting physical and emotional health and wellbeing. For example, a healthy home would be dry, warm and insulated and a safe home would meet particular needs, e.g. of an older or disabled person.

Housing plays a critical role in enabling people to live independently and in helping carers to support others more effectively. Poor or inappropriate housing can put the health and wellbeing of people at risk, whereas a suitable home can reduce the needs for care and support and contribute to preventing or delaying the development of such needs.

Housing services can be used to help promote an individual’s wellbeing, by providing a safe and secure place in which people in need of care and support and carers can lead a full and active life. Local authorities must take into account suitability of living accommodation as part of their duty to promote an individual’s wellbeing.

Housing is an integral part of the health and care system and a local authority’s responsibility for care and support. This could be in relation to a local authority’s (and its partners in health, housing, welfare and employment services) duty to prevent, reduce or delay the need for care and support for all local people, through the statutory requirement for local authorities to collaborate, co-operate and integrate with other public authorities (e.g. health and housing) or through the duty to assess an adult or carer’s needs for care and support or in providing advice and information.

In many cases, the best way to promote someone’s wellbeing will be through preventative measures that allow people to live as independently as possible for as long as possible.

A local authority must provide or arrange for the provision of services that contribute towards preventing, reducing or delaying the needs for care and support. The provision of suitable living accommodation can be a way to prevent needs for care and support, or to delay deterioration over time. Getting housing right and helping people to choose the right housing options for them can help to prevent falls, prevent hospital admissions and readmissions, reduce the need for care and support, improve wellbeing, and help maintain independence at home.

A person’s home plays a significant part in prevention, for example, from the limitations of the physical home environment (i.e. movement around the building or use of its facilities), accessibility, having adequate heating and the links between living in cold and damp homes and poor health and wellbeing.

Providing suitable accommodation via home adaptations, are an example of provision which enables wellbeing and independence and prevents need. Prevention, as defined in the Care Act 2014, can be described in terms of three general approaches – primary, secondary and tertiary,
with home adaptations, prevention of falls, warm and safe homes being examples of secondary prevention.

One of the methods by which adequate housing can be achieved is via the national Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) programme which provides the framework for local authorities to provide mandatory grants for housing adaptations for disabled people, enabling them to live independently and safely in their own homes.

Plymouth City Council (The Council) know that in the future its limited resources are likely to mean it cannot provide immediate help to all those requiring assistance, rather it will be required to plan and programme its resources. This is due to increasing numbers of people seeking DFG’s, the increase in complexity of need, and as the cost of providing adaptations grows.

This policy has been created in order to explain how the Council will use its resources to assist those in need and how decisions will be made about the help it can provide, the circumstances in which people may need to wait for assistance and how the Council will seek to make the best use of the limited resources available working with partners to deliver independent living services.

The Independent Living Assistance Policy (Assistance Policy) outlines the conditions and circumstances under which the Council is able to assist householders of all tenures in the application of Disabled Facilities Grants, privately funded adaptations and privately funded home improvements.

2.0 Legal Framework

Local authorities have broad powers to support different types of accommodation in order to meet people’s needs for care and support. The Care Act is clear that suitable accommodation can be one way of meeting care and support needs. However, the Act is also clear on the limits of responsibilities and relationship between care and support and housing legislation, to ensure that there is no overlap or confusion. Section 23 of the Care Act clarifies the existing boundary in law between care and support and general housing.

Where housing legislation requires housing services to be provided, then a local authority must provide those services under that housing legislation. Where housing forms part of a person’s need for care and support and is not required to be provided under housing legislation, then a local authority may provide those types of support as part of the care and support package under the Care Act.

3.0 National Context

From 1st April 2015 there was a significant change in the way that national government funding for provision of home adaptations grants for disabled people (Disabled Facilities Grants) 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.

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 Outcomes.

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.

The NHS 5 Year Forward View noted that a key condition for transformation across local health economies is a strong primary and out-of-hospital care system, with well-developed planning about how to provide care in people’s own homes, with a focus on prevention, promoting independence and support to stay well.

Home adaptations for disabled people meet this condition as they can:

- Enable independence at home
- Speed up hospital discharge/reduce re-admission
- Prevent escalation of need e.g. accidents and falls
- Support maintenance of physical and mental well-being
- Reduce the cost required elsewhere in the Health and Social Care system resulting from the above

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

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

2 NSH: 2014, Five Year Forward View
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 (Clause 1(2))). Four out of 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 Social Services 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.

4.0 Implementation

This Assistance Policy will become operational on 21st March 2016. The Policy will not affect grant approvals made prior to that date. This policy will be announced by both placing an advertisement in the Plymouth Evening Herald, by publishing it on the Council’s website and using social media.

5.0 Background

The 2011 Assistance Policy was derived from the Private Sector Housing Strategy 2012-2017. The new Assistance Policy reflects the removal of Private Sector Housing Renewals Grant following the 2010 Comprehensive Spending Review and the Better Care Fund arrangements.

Some of the forms of assistance set out in the 2011 policy are no longer tenable within the current budgets available. New policies have to be implemented now in order to utilise the limited funding to best effect. This is despite the fact that the 2012-2017 Housing Strategy aims to assist a wider group of citizens.

6.0 Strategic Context

Plymouth City Council and NHS Northern Eastern and Western Devon Clinical Commissioning Group (NEW Devon CCG) formed an integrated commissioning function on 1 April 2015, bringing together over £630 million of Plymouth City Council and NEW Devon CCG funding.

This is fulfilling the vision of the Health and Wellbeing Board of integrated health and wellbeing.

The aims of the integrated commissioning system are:

- To improve health and wellbeing outcomes for the local population
- To reduce inequalities in health and wellbeing of the local population
- To improve people’s experience of care
- To improve the sustainability of our health and wellbeing system
These aims will be realised through commissioning in line with four integrated commissioning strategies. The strategies apply to health and wellbeing services commissioned for Plymouth and the health services commissioned for South Hams and West Devon.

Disabled Facilities Grants are embedded within the Community Based Care Commissioning Strategy as a Key Outcome Performance Indicator for people with long-term support needs, and the strategy aims (aim 3) to support people to manage their own health and care needs within suitable housing.

In addition to this The Wellbeing strategy includes services that support wellbeing that will be aiming to build an individual’s capacity to meet the challenges they face in their lives, and also contribute to a wider approach of addressing the determinants of health and wellbeing by reducing unacceptable challenges that people face, e.g. poor quality housing and homelessness.

Improving housing decency levels is a key ambition of the Wellbeing Strategy as poor quality housing has a cross cutting impact on society; for example, it impacts negatively on health (physical, mental and emotional), contributes to child poverty, reduces educational attainment; increases fuel poverty and reduces attendance at work. There is a clear link between the areas of worst housing condition, deprivation and greatest health inequality. As a consequence this has contributed to a life expectancy gap of 12.2 years between neighbourhoods in Plymouth (see Thrive Plymouth).

Within the Enhanced and Specialised Care Commissioning Strategy adaptations to housing to improve accessibility is given as an example of Secondary Prevention (Reduce – early intervention), which are more targeted interventions that are aimed at individuals with an increased risk of developing needs. These preventative services may help slow down or reduce any further deterioration and avoid other needs from developing.

The Council has a statutory duty to approve mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG’s) for major adaptations to provide suitable home environment to allow elderly and disabled people to remain living in their own homes. This work helps people to live independently in their own homes, thereby helping to contain the potential increase in costs to Social Care Services.

The legislation governing DFGs is the 1996 Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act. DFGs are mandatory and are available from local authorities in England and Wales, subject to a means test. The grants are to provide adaptations to the home environment to promote independence and keep people living in their own homes.

Disabled Facilities Grant funding has been allocated in 2015-16 as part of the Department of Health’s £3.8 billion Better Care Fund. The grant is for the provision of adaptations to disabled people’s homes to help them to live independently in their own homes for longer. The Better Care Fund is made up of local pooled funds, local partnerships between Care Commissioning Groups and local Authorities under section 75 of the NHS Act 2002. Future funding for DFG will come from the Better Care Fund, as approved through the Integrated Health and Wellbeing Board.
7.0 Corporate Priorities

The Assistance Policy directly supports the City’s Vision and The Corporate Plan 2013/14 to 2016/17 by:

- Directly contributing to ‘Caring Plymouth’ by:
  1. Promoting independence and reducing health and social inequality, helping people to take control of their lives and to be treated with dignity and respect.
  2. DFG funded adaptations enable people to remain in their own homes, thereby helping to contain the potential for increases in costs to health and care services and minimising risks to disabled people, their family and carers.
  3. Wellbeing is a guiding principle throughout the Care Act 2014 which sets out the framework for the future provision of adult social care.
  4. Suitability of living accommodation is one of the matters local authorities must take into account as part of its duty to promote wellbeing.
  5. The provision of major adaptations is a preventative measure which can promote someone’s wellbeing allowing them to live as independently as possible and for as long as possible.
  6. Assisting to prioritise prevention, by providing safe and suitable home environments and thus reducing falls and fear of falling.
  7. Assisting home owners to take control of their lives and to make more informed decisions about their care by providing specialist assistance and advice in regard to adapting the home environment and home maintenance.

- Directly contributing to ‘Growing Plymouth’ by:
  1. Providing specialist assistance and advice in regard to home maintenance and improvements with a focus upon decent homes.

- Directly contributing to ‘Pioneering Plymouth’ by:
  1. Designing and delivering housing, health and social care services using a more joined-up and personalised approach and that are more flexible and efficient.

8.0 Assistance Priorities

Support independent living

- Ensuring that householders can live independently in their home for as long as possible is a key government objective and echoed in the NHS Five Year Forward Plan. This is achieved by the mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant and the Discretionary Relocation Grant.

- Ensuring that householders have access to specialist information and advice in regard to independent living aids and adaptations, to be empowered to make informed decisions
about their housing options, this is provided via the private services offered (see appendix A).

**Support maintenance of decent homes**

- Ensuring that householders have access to specialist information and advice in regard to home conditions maintenance and remedial measures.
- Protection of vulnerable home owners when engaging with contractors and installers.

**9.0 Types of Assistance (see appendix A)**

**9.1 Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG)**

DFGs are largely subject to the requirements of legislation, and are mandatory. Approval is required where a customer meets specific disability and financial criteria.

The Government has issued three consents which enable the Council to improve the use of its resources. These have all been incorporated into this policy as they improve the financial efficiency of the DFG scheme. These consents refer to the repayment of portions of the grant where a customer moves, the recycling of specialist equipment where this is no longer needed and the reclaiming of compensation where a successful claim is made.

**9.2 Discretionary Relocation Grant**

This grant has been introduced to help disabled customers whose homes are not suitable for adaptation to meet their needs. The works may be impossible or simply impracticable. Their cost may be excessive. Even if the works were carried out, the property may still be unsuitable to meet the occupants needs.

The Relocation Grant offers the alternative of finding another home which is suitable with minimal adaptation; the assistance helps fund the financial shortfall arising from the purchase of the new property.

**9.3 ‘Nil Grant’ Applications**

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, and technical support in accordance with this policy.

**9.4 Aids and Adaptations Technical Services/Home Maintenance Technical Services**

For customers that wish to fund their own adaptations and/or home maintenance works any customers will be eligible to request assistance in completing essential works. The Council can provide technical services: surveying and producing schedules of works
and plans; obtaining quotations; advising on essential maintenance and providing oversight of works in progress (not project management). A fee will be required for this work. See appendix A.

10.0 Prioritisation of Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant (see Appendix B)

A prioritisation assessment is undertaken as part of the referral for DFG, produced by the Occupation Therapist within their assessment of the needs of the customer. The assessment provides an indication of the urgency for the changes required to the home environment.

It is appreciated that everyone is different and has individual needs and that one case is no less important than another. However, it is also recognised that some people may require an adaptation more urgently than another, as determined by their medical condition and other circumstances, therefore a prioritisation system is used to ensure those most in need receive adaptations soonest.

The individual circumstances of each case are often complex and as such it is imperative to ensure consistent application of the prioritisation system so that it is equitable and transparent. The system is closely monitored and managed for consistency and fairness.

Appendix B illustrates the scoring system utilised and the weighting applied to the type of adaptations and risk factor.

The prioritisation system results in three categories; high, medium and low. The priority will allow programming of works to the most vulnerable in the timeliest manner. The priority system does not affect the mandatory nature of the DFG and applications will still be processed in accordance with the statutory timescales.

A fast track arrangement is in place for exceptional cases where the need is evidently more urgent than can be justified by the scoring system. The Housing Solutions Panel is utilised as the mechanism for agreeing fast track cases presented by occupational therapists and grants officers.

This provides a fair and transparent decision making process.

10.1 Accessible Housing Solutions Panel

The Accessible Housing Solutions Panel (the Panel) has been brought together to find solutions to the most complex housing problems for disabled and elderly people across Plymouth.

The role of the Accessible Housing Solutions Panel is to provide strategic direction and leadership to ensure suitable priority is allocated to customers of Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs); correct banding is allocated to those applying for Devon Home Choice (DHC); and complex cases are identified and potentially matched to specialist housing.

The Accessible Housing Solutions Panel sets out to achieve the most appropriate housing outcome for the most complex or critical disabled and elderly people within Plymouth, and the most appropriate use of Plymouth City Council resource in achieving this solution. The Panel may also identify potential areas of savings to the authority.
The Accessible Housing Solutions Panel will comprise of Renewals Manager, Housing Services, Plymouth City Council (Chair); Advanced Practitioner Occupational Therapy, Livewell Plymouth (Vice Chair); Housing Options Officer – Special Needs Housing, Plymouth City Council (Vice Chair); Team Manager – Occupational Therapy, CHiDs, Education, Learning and Families, Plymouth City Council; Regeneration & Development Contract Surveyor (Adaptations), Plymouth Community Homes.

The Accessible Housing Solutions Panel may generally review the circumstances relating to the customer and their housing situation. The Panel is accountable for:

• decisions made in regard to the re-prioritisation of DFG cases,
• amendments to Banding in complex cases in regard to DHC,
• direct matching suitable candidates for specialist housing,
• addressing Housing Association specific adaptation cases,
• developing prioritisation approach for DFG.

The membership of the Panel will commit to:

• attending all scheduled Accessible Housing Solutions Panel meetings,
• attendance at all meetings and if necessary nominate a proxy,
• providing all agenda items in advance of the meeting,
• seeking and providing all appropriate evidence for the decision making process,
• make timely decisions and take action so as to not hold up the process,
• notifying affected customers in writing, within 5 working days.

Members of the Panel will expect:

• that each member will be provided with complete, accurate and meaningful information 2 working days in advance of the scheduled meeting. Information to be provided directly to the chair, via email,
• to be given reasonable time to make key decisions,
• open and honest discussions, without resort to any misleading assertions, decisions can only be made on the facts given,
• ongoing review to ensure the effectiveness of the Panel.

11.0 Disabled Facilities Grant Process

11.1 Referral Process

Customers are referred for DFGs following an assessment carried out by an Occupational Therapist (Social Services, Health Services, and Private Occupational Therapist) or self-referral from the disabled person. A referral form and prioritisation score from the Occupational Therapist forms the basis for referral. Customers are supported by the Council throughout the application and building processes. In the case of a self-referral, Livewell Plymouth will be asked to provide a full functional assessment to confirm the home environment needs of the individual and what is necessary and appropriate.
11.2 Application Process

Upon receipt of a completed referral the customer will be invited to complete an application form for a DFG. The form must be completed fully by the customer or customer’s agent/advocate providing all requested financial evidence and proof of benefits.

Once fully processed the customer will be notified, in writing, of any contribution they have to make towards the cost of the eligible works. At this point the application is considered ‘valid’ and the grant determination must be given within 6 months of this date.

11.3 Means Tested Contribution

Applicants for DFG’s will be required to complete the financial section within the applications form (unless in receipt of means tested benefits and evidence can be provided) to determine whether any contribution is to be paid towards the cost of works. Evidence of income and all benefits must be provided. The Council will undertake the means tests in line with the prevailing statutory provisions in force at the point of application. At present parents of disabled children and young persons are not subject to the means test.

If required, a Test of Resources can be undertaken prior to the submission of a referral from an OT to provide the applicant with an early indication of their likely contribution if they are not in receipt of means tested benefits and are concerned they will not be eligible for grant funding.

Means tested benefits currently include: housing benefit, income based Employment Support Allowance; guaranteed credit (pension credit) and will automatically be assessed as having a NIL contribution toward any grant award and will receive full grant.

The grant applicant will be required to sign an agreement to pay their contribution on completion of the works. Should the customer be unable to afford their contribution, they may wish to seek charitable funding via https://www.turn2us.org.uk/.

If an applicant has an assessed contribution toward the cost of the grant eligible works, the payment of this contribution must be made direct to the contractor on completion of the works. The remaining grant balance cannot be paid until the contribution has been received by the contractor.

In circumstances where an applicant has a degenerative condition and where it is likely additional adaptations may be required over time, it should be noted that there is no restriction on further grant applications at a later date. Any contribution paid by an applicant toward an initial application will be deducted from any future assessed contribution if the second application is made within a prescribed period (10 years for owner occupiers and 5 years for tenants).
11.4 Eligibility

The applicant or someone living with the applicant must be disabled (see below). Either the disabled person or the person applying on the disabled person’s behalf must:

- own the property or be a tenant or living with family,
- intend to live in the property during the grant period (which is currently 5 years for works up to £5000 and 10 years for works over £5000).

A landlord may apply for a grant on their tenant’s behalf if they 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 practicable (i.e. can be done) - depending on the age, condition and suitability of the property.

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

**Definition of disabled person**

For the purposes of the legislation relating to DFGs, a person is defined as being disabled if:

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

A person aged 18 or over is taken to be disabled if:

- they are registered as a result of any arrangements made under section 29(1) of the National Assistance Act 1948, or
- they are a person for whose welfare arrangements have been made under that section or might be made under it.

A person aged under 18 is taken to be disabled if:

- they are registered in a register of disabled children maintained under the Children Act 1989, or
- in the opinion of social services they are a disabled child as defined for the purposes of Part III of the Children Act 1989.

- Adaptations to Rented Property

It is not lawful for persons in any tenure to be obstructed in making an application for assistance through a DFG. Section 19(1)(b) and (5), of the Act state; “tenant” means someone who has a tenancy and is expressly stated to include:

- a secure tenant, introductory tenant or statutory tenant,
• a protected occupier under the Rent (Agriculture) Act 1976 or a person in occupation under an assured agricultural occupancy within the meaning of Part I of the Housing Act 1988,
• an employee (whether full-time or part-time) who occupies the dwelling or flat concerned for the better performance of his duties,
• a person having a licence to occupy the dwelling or flat concerned which satisfies such conditions as may be specified by order of the Secretary of State,
• other expressions relating to tenancies, in the context of an application, shall be construed accordingly.

The Council will request that the landlord provides a 5 year tenancy agreement to the tenant and sign an agreement to allow the tenant to remain in the property as their main residence for the grant condition period of 5 years for grant up to £5000 and 10 years for grant over £5,000. The landlord will also be consulted in regard to the works required and their permission will be required in order to provide formal grant approval.

The Council will also require the tenant to sign an agreement to remain living in the property as their main residence for the grant condition period of 5 years for grant up to £5,000 and 10 years for grant over £5,000.

• Customer renting from a family member (but not living with them):

In this instance the customer is most likely occupying under a licence agreement, and as such is a qualifying tenant under the Act. The precise terms and conditions of the occupation will need to be established and considered.

• Customer renting from and living with family:

In this case the tenant may be occupying under a license agreement and thus eligible under the Act. Plymouth City Council may require the owner of the property to make the application for the benefit of the disabled family member.

11.4a Applicant’s Certificates

The Authority cannot consider an application for a mandatory DFG unless it is satisfied that;
• the applicant has or proposes to acquire, an owner’s interest in every parcel of land on which the relevant works are to be carried out, or
• the applicant is a tenant of the dwelling where the relevant works are to be carried out.

Certificate required in case of owner’s application

• An owner’s application for a DFG must be accompanied by an owner’s certificate which will certify that the applicant has or proposes to acquire an
owner’s interest and that they intend that the disabled occupant will live in
the dwelling as their only or main residence throughout the grant condition
period following completion of the works.

Certificates required in case of tenant’s applications

- A tenant’s application for a DFG must be accompanied by a tenant’s
certificate which will certify that the application is a tenant’s application and
that the applicant intends that the disabled occupant (whether that is the
applicant or someone in the applicant’s household) will live in the dwelling
as their only or main residence throughout the grant condition period
following completion of the works.

- A tenant’s application should be accompanied by an owner’s certificate from
the person who at the time of the application is the landlord under the
tenancy. The Authority can waive this where it is not reasonable in the
circumstances to request a certificate.

- Private tenants must obtain their landlords written permission for the
required works before a DFG can be formally approved. Where a landlord
withholds this permission for the works to be undertaken a grant cannot be
approved. Any DFG approved works will not include any reinstatement.

Occupiers and Consent Certificates (houseboats and park homes)

- Occupiers of houseboats and park homes must provide an ‘occupiers
certificate’ certifying the intention of the disabled occupier to occupy the
qualifying houseboat or park home as his only or main residence throughout
the grant condition period. Any such certificate must also be accompanied
by a ‘consent certificate’ from each person who owns the mooring or land
on which the houseboat or park home is stationed or who owns the
houseboat or park home.

11.5 Approval Process

Assistance is approved by Plymouth City Council Housing Renewals, as set out in the
report Delegated Authorities for Officers with Statutory Duties 2015 (and its
successors).

The Authority is required to approve or refuse the grant within 6 months of a valid
grant application being made. A valid application is deemed to be made when the
following documentation is submitted:

- A completed application form
- The appropriate certification (see 11.4a) together with proof of ownership
  or tenancy
  - Including Landlord Permission (Private Rented and Registered Social
    Landlord)
• The appropriate evidence of financial resources in order that the Council can undertake the Means Test

Officers from the Authority will work with prospective grant applicants to ensure the appropriate documentation is in place to make a valid application.

The Authority will not normally approve an application for grant where the relevant work has already begun. It can approve however if it is satisfied that there were good reasons for beginning the works before the application was approved. Any grant offer may be reduced to reflect the works undertaken prior to approval.

The Authority will not approve an application for a DFG if the relevant works have been completed.

The grant limit is £30,000 and the Council have no discretion to go above this level and therefore when making recommendations regard must be given to how the applicant will be able to finance the additional costs. This amount is reduced by any contribution assessed as payable by the grant applicant. Funding above the £30,000 limit must be borne by the applicant.

Works eligible for DFG assistance will be determined by Housing Renewals in consultation with the information provided by the referring/consulting Occupational Therapist to determine what home environment would be necessary and appropriate to meet the Applicant's needs. The Housing Technical Officer will be required to ascertain what works are considered reasonable and practicable (having regard to the age and condition of the dwelling or building) given the OT’s clinical assessment.

In order for the Council to determine what adaptations, or other solution is necessary and appropriate, the Council has a duty to liaise and consult with Social Services. In most cases the Council will accept the recommendations of the Occupational Therapist (OT), however, in some cases and to best use resources, alternative solutions may need to be explored.

11.5a Purposes for which grant can be used.

The purposes for which grant can be provided are described in the following categories of adaptation and are detailed in Section 23 of the Act as being works which can be considered for grant assistance:

a. Facilitating access and movement by the disabled occupant to and from and around the dwelling, qualifying houseboat or qualifying park home, or the building in which the dwelling or, as the case may be, flat is situated.

Such works may include;

• Ramping and associated works to the main external door. This could be an alternative access door if the Council consider this more reasonable and
practicable. Only one access point will normally be allowed for each dwelling. Should external access to a garden be required this may be considered as the main entry to the property, should this not be possible a secondary access will be considered.

- Permanent ramps will not normally be fitted to mobile homes and the Council may consider the installation of semi-temporary or modular ramps wherever appropriate.

- The Council will not provide assistance for the removal of permanent installations once installed, unless the Council are able to recycle the equipment for another user.

- Provision of hard standings (usually 3.6m x 4.8m maximum) will be considered where the disabled person is in a wheelchair or has difficulty walking to the house. This will only be considered where existing on-street parking is deemed unsatisfactory and a marked disabled parking bay is not possible or where it affords a more economical solution than providing additional paths/ramping from the roadside. Please note: being a holder of a blue badge is not the eligibility criteria for this item.

- External stair lifts will only be considered if reasonably practicable and they are not prone to excessive exposure or vandalism.

- Automatic door opening to main entrance doors will only be allowed for persons who have severe mobility problems or otherwise unable to open the door (or door cannot be opened by a carer). Door entry systems will primarily be operated from fixed positions and wireless systems will only be considered where fixed systems will not meet the need. The system considered most reasonable by the Council will be selected as eligible for grant funding.

b. Making the dwelling, qualifying houseboat or qualifying park home, or the building, safe for the disabled occupant and other persons residing with them;

Such works may include;

- Widening doors will only be grant aided where these rooms are in essential use by the disabled person and the width of the existing doors is inadequate.

- Other adaptations that are necessary to facilitate access to any of the relevant rooms by the disabled person will be considered.

- Provision of specialist safety enclosures or protection where disabled children with violent behavioural problems may harm themselves, may be considered if medical evidence is provided.
• Provision of enhanced fire alarm systems for those with hearing difficulties.

• The provision of fixed overhead hoists, tracking and fixed electrical wiring for permanent hoist installations when evidenced by a medical need. Please note: Social Services will be responsible for the supply of all slings etc. and the maintenance of all hoisting equipment, via the Community Equipment Services contract (subject to change).

c. Facilitating access by the disabled occupant to a room used or usable as the principal family room;

d. Facilitating access by the disabled occupant to, or providing for the disabled occupant, a room used or usable for sleeping;

e. Facilitating access by the disabled occupant to, or providing for the disabled occupant, a room in which there is a lavatory, bath or shower (or both) wash hand basin, or facilitating the use by the disabled occupant of such a facility;

Such works may include;

• Adaptation of the facilities in the bathroom and toilet can include the provision of level or low access showers (tray or floor former), lever taps, raised height WC pans, specialist WC seats etc. In exceptional circumstances, the Council may propose alternative technologies as opposed to specialist WC seats.

• Existing sanitary ware will be reused if considered appropriate. The provision of tiling will be limited to the shower area or 300mm beyond the end of each shower wall or to a suitable abutment/change of direction, where necessary as determined by the council). Full shower enclosures will not be eligible for grant funding, however, half height shower screens will be provided where a medical need is evidenced and/or they are required for practical reasons.

• Free standing seats will normally be provided by Adult Social Care and Children's Integrated Disability Service. Fixed shower seats will only be supplied where a medical need is evidenced and/or they are required for practical reasons. The adaptation or provision of more than one bathroom to a house e.g. additional ground floor WC, will only be considered if evidenced by functional need and confirmation that appropriate alternate equipment cannot be utilised.

• Additional heating will only be considered for the bathroom/shower room in addition to a radiator as long as it does not contravene current regulations for wet areas, and medical need is evidenced and/or they are required for practical reasons.
f. Facilitating the preparation and cooking of food by the disabled occupant;

Such works may include;

- Where someone other than the disabled person does and will continue to do the cooking and preparation of meals, normally it will not be necessary to carry out full adaptations. However, it may be possible to carry out low level adaptations to allow the disabled person to prepare light meals or hot drinks, typically this may include a low-level worktop with power points for a kettle/microwave.

- Full adaptation will only be considered where the disabled person is the only or main user of the kitchen.

- Adaptations can include;
  
  - Alteration to the height or position of the kitchen sink, and the type of taps fitted to it. Powered, adjustable-height sinks will not generally be allowed, as the provision of a second sink is a more economical solution. A cooker point and oven-housing unit ensuring its height and position is in a safe location and the provision of worktops to either side where spacing allows. Work surfaces located beside the sink and on each side of the cooker having a total length of approximately 1.5m, all at a suitable height for the disabled person where spacing allows. Food storage in an accessible position, usually space for a refrigerator with power supply.
  
  - Wheelchair access, if necessary, including wider doors, rearrangement of facilities and alterations to the kitchen door, light switches and power points, but only if it is necessary.
  
  - Extensions or enlargement to kitchens can only be agreed where they are absolutely necessary in order to provide turning space for a wheelchair and if suitable space cannot be achieved by rearrangement of the existing facilities, and there is no other suitable alternative.
  
  - The provision of cupboard and storage units on an “essential” basis. Mechanical ventilation for kitchen schemes is to be in accordance with the current Building Regulations.
  
  - Over hob extraction or odour control systems will not be provided.
  
  - Kitchen appliances such as hobs and ovens will not be funded but their installation cost will be considered.
  
  - No other ‘white goods’ will be funded by way of the DFG.
g. Improving any heating system in the dwelling, qualifying houseboat or qualifying park home to meet the needs of the disabled occupant or, if there is no existing heating system or any such system is unsuitable for use by the disabled occupant, providing a heating system suitable to meet his needs;

Such works may include;

- Supplementary heating to the rooms that are in everyday use by the disabled person where a medical need can be demonstrated. This does not include repair to existing systems. Changes to the type of heating system will only be allowed if evidenced by medical need.

- Possible upgrading/replacing of boilers where the property has been extended as part of the adaptation.

h. Facilitating the use by the disabled occupant of a source of power, light or heat by altering the position of one or more means of access to or control of that source or by providing additional means of control;

Such works may include;

- Alterations to the height and/or position of light switches and power points to make them accessible to the disabled person (only in rooms accessible to the disabled person).

i. Access to the Garden

- This will only be considered if specifically recommended by an Occupational Therapist. In deciding the extent of any access to the garden, the following will be taken into account. Grant assistance will not be given where there is already access to the garden but grant 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 person’s condition the travel distance to the garden would be excessive and unreasonable.

- The grant will simply be for providing immediate access to the garden and does not include landscaping gardens to make them more suitable for the disabled person to access.
j. **Additional Items**

- Where an adaptation cannot be carried out due to disrepair issues, those repairs, within reason, may be carried out via Disabled Facilities Grant e.g. works such as replacement of rotted flooring or strengthening of the floor as part of a level access shower installation and electrical repairs to enable works to be carried out safely. Replacing defective drainage and a full rewire would not be eligible. Works that would otherwise be expected to be carried out by the landlord will not be eligible for DFG funding. Required works will be determined by the Council.

- Additional bathrooms or bedrooms may be allowed where they are specifically for the disabled person and it can be demonstrated that adaptation of other rooms or space or access to those rooms in the property is unsuitable.

- Extensions will only be allowed following a detailed and thorough option appraisal process, carried out by the Council, including moving to alternative accommodation.

- In the case of access, effective adaptation can only proceed where it can be reasonably and practicably carried out without having a detrimental impact on neighbouring properties.

- Requests are sometimes received to provide separate bedrooms where disabled children with behavioural difficulties share a room with other siblings and disturb their sleep. This will only be considered under mandatory grant where it can be demonstrated that;
  - The child is prone to violent outbursts and there is a real risk of physical harm to the child or to the other siblings.
  - That all other options relating to the use of existing rooms within the property have been considered and that no alternative arrangements can be identified.
  - The parents are owner occupiers and not tenants. If tenants, they will expected to find suitable alternative accommodation.

k. **Works considered non-mandatory**

- Where works other than those described as mandatory are required they will only be considered if funded by the customer or other funding stream.

**11.5b Replacement of Equipment**

Where an existing piece of equipment, previously installed via Disabled Facilities Grant breaks down, an accredited service engineer’s report is needed before it can be
considered for replacement. This must be obtained by the customer. The equipment must be outside of its expected ‘lifespan’ (as below), and the referral must be accompanied by a full engineer’s report detailing the lift is no longer salvageable.

- Internal Stair Lifts 10 years
- Through Floor Lifts 15 years
- External Stair Lift 10 years
- External Access Lifts 10 years

All new stair lifts either straight or curved will be procured via the Access Equipment Framework Agreement with the provision of a 1 year warranty. After this time the customer is responsible for all servicing and maintenance.

Warranties and other service contracts other than the standard manufacturer’s warranties will not be provided.

11.5c Works Out of Scope

The Care Act and provision of community equipment and minor adaptations Regulations 2 & 4 of the Care and Support (Preventing Needs for Care and Support) Regulations 2014 and Regulation 3 of the Care and Support (Charging and Assessment of Resources) Regulations 2014 specify that any community care equipment and minor adaptations for the purpose of assisting with nursing at home or aiding daily living should be provided free of charge, and, for the purposes of these Regulations, an adaptation is minor if the cost of making the adaptation is £1,000 or less.

For adaptations the £1,000 cost limit applies to the purchase and fitting of the adaptation. Social Services authorities retain the discretion to charge for adaptations costing over £1,000 where those adaptations are made by the authority under its powers to provide care services.

11.5d Variations to a DFG (DFG Trade Off)

Where the customer wishes to undertake works which exceed those deemed necessary, appropriate, reasonable and practicable under the scope of the DFG then the Council may only provide the DFG for the value of the works it determines meet those criteria and no more, minus any relevant contributions and/or fees and charges. However, if the customer wishes to enhance the eligible works they may ask the approved contractor to undertake work privately and fund these extra works themselves as long as the eligible works are not compromised, as determined by Plymouth City Council.

A DFG will only be approved where the proposed works clearly meet the need of the customer as determined by Social Services. Variations to the DFG eligible works must be approved by Plymouth City Council Housing Renewals and Occupational Therapist (in some circumstances). Any funding required above and beyond that of the DFG eligible works must be met by the customer and made direct to the contractor undertaking the works.
The payment of the DFG will only be made upon certification by the Council that the works are complete and are of a satisfactory standard.

The Council will require copies of all relevant statutory documentation prior to approving payment such as a copy of the Planning Consent and Building Regulations Completion Certificate, Party Wall Notices, electrical and gas certificates, asbestos removal notice etc. where deemed applicable.

11.5e Ineligible Work

The Council will not approve assistance for works that should be the subject of either an insurance claim under a policy valid at the time of the occurrence of the insurable incident nor that which forms part of a relevant claim for compensation. The existence of such a relevant pending or current claim, of which the Council was unaware at the time assistance was granted, will result in a breach of conditions and any payment made may be required to be repaid.

Assistance is also not normally available for:

- Cosmetic repairs e.g. redecoration, minor plasterwork etc.
- Repair or replacement of domestic appliances, e.g. cookers, gas fires, light fittings etc.
- Repairs to garden buildings and structures, detached garages, outbuildings and sheds, etc.
- Deliberate damage by the owner or occupier
- Works already completed
- Do it yourself works
  - The Council will consider providing grant funding to those eligible for materials only, if the work is carried out by a qualified family member.

11.6 Selection of Contractor to undertake the Works.

Plymouth City Council Housing Renewals operate Framework Agreements for the supply of Stair Lifts, Hoists, Through the Floor Lifts and Bathroom Adaptations, and as such, eligible costs of such works are dictated by the agreements. Suppliers/contractors will be selected from the Frameworks unless the customer expresses a desire to select their own supplier/contractor.

If selecting their own supplier/contractor the customer must take full responsibility for the installation and the progress of works. The supplier/contractor must be able to register on Sell2Plymouth (Appendix D) in order to qualify to receive grant payment direct from Plymouth City Council on satisfactory completion of the works. Both the customer and Plymouth City Council Housing Renewals must be satisfied with the completed works. The customer is responsible for paying any costs over and above those deemed eligible by the Council in the formal grant determination.
Plymouth City Council Housing Renewals may select a supplier/contractor on the customer’s behalf from the Trading Standards Buy with Confidence list only, or other approved contractor list.

No works must commence prior to formal grant determination.

11.6a Carrying out the Work

All the works must be carried out by the contractors either selected on the customer’s behalf or detailed with the formal grant approval letter.

The timescales for commencement of work referred to in the formal grant assistance approval letter are a guide and the Council will use their best endeavours to comply with this.

All works must be completed, whether or not financially aided, to a standard acceptable to the Council and in accordance with the schedule of works. Where works have not been completed, final payment cannot be made.

The Housing Technical Officer must have access to inspect all works as he/she may require (as far as reasonably possible) (a) to ensure that public funds have not been improperly spent and (b) to gather statistical information. This relates to all works whether assisted or otherwise.

Where the contractor, in carrying out the works, identifies the existence of other defects (or unforeseen factors that affect the works) at the property, he/she is to notify the customer and Housing Technical Officer of their presence, and await instruction. The customer must not instruct the contractor to complete any work without agreement from the housing Technical officer if work is grant funded.

All works are to be carried out in accordance with the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, Building Regulations, Planning and Listed Building requirements, highways consents and all other legislation appropriate to the nature of the work.

11.7 Payment of the Grant

The Act requires the Council to pay the grant on condition that the work has been carried out to its satisfaction. Payments will be made direct to the contractor from the Council, where the grant applicant has been advised of such prior to grant approval.

The Council will inspect the works once completed and if in their opinion the work has been done satisfactorily will pay the contractor direct to the value of the grant. Any other payments that the grant applicant is responsible for must be made by the applicant direct to the contractor.

If there is a dispute between the grant applicant and the contractor and the Council is satisfied that the work has been completed to a satisfactory standard, payment of any outstanding grant money may be made to the applicant and it will be the responsibility of the applicant to pay the contractor.
If the Council is not satisfied with the standard of work it will retain the grant money until such time as any works issues have been resolved at which point it will pay the contractor, or if the applicant is still not satisfied, it will pay the applicant.

Grant payment must be made within 12 months of valid application.

11.7a Guarantees and Certificates

Suppliers/contractors provided by Plymouth City Council Framework Agreements or selected from the Buy with Confidence Scheme (or other approved list) will provide the customer with a 12 month guarantee on the works completed (unless otherwise indicated). After this time it is the responsibility of the customer to service and maintain the installed adaptations. Plymouth City Council Housing Renewals shall assist the customer in rectifying problems within the first 12 months of completing the adaptations works only.

All relevant certificates will be supplied to the customer either direct from the supplier/contractor or upon release of final payment of the grant.

No grant payment will be made until all relevant certificates of compliance have been seen by the Council.

11.8 Repayment of Disabled Facilities Grant

The Council may seek to recover DFG in the following circumstances:

- where the Council has approved an application for a grant under Part 1 of the Act;
  - where the grant is for a sum exceeding £5,000,
  - and where the grant applicant has a qualifying owner’s interest in the premises on which the relevant works are to be carried out.

The Council may demand the repayment by the recipient of a grant that exceeds £5,000 (but may not demand an amount in excess of £10,000) when:

(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 Council have considered:
   (i) the extent to which the recipient of the grant would suffer financial hardship were he/she 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;

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

The Council must be satisfied that it is reasonable in all the circumstances above to require the repayment.

The conditions above will be recorded as local land charges and are binding on any person who is for the time being an owner of the dwelling or building.

It is the grant recipient’s responsibility to approach the Council to make an application to not repay the DFG.

12.0 Discretionary Relocation Grant Process

Where the Council deem it not reasonable or practicable to undertake adaptations to a property the Council may consider the option of relocation as an alternative method of meeting the customer’s needs. DFG Relocation Grants provided under the Council’s policy are subject to a means test as per the means test stipulated under the Regulations and will therefore determine the Customer’s ability to make a contribution or to pay the full cost of the proposed move and all additional works required. The same application process for DFG applies to the Relocation Grant. The overall Relocation Grant maximum will be limited to either the current DFG Grant maxima or the reasonable costs of carrying out the adaptations to the existing property, whichever is the lesser and subject to any contribution. Any Grant awarded in respect to relocation will be to meet the reasonable costs associated with moving together with the costs of any lesser adaptation that may be appropriate to meet the customer’s needs in the new property as identified by Social Services.

Reasonable costs of moving include the following:

- Legal fees
- Estate agents fees
- Stamp duty
- Land registration fees
- Survey fees
- Electrical and drainage inspection fees
- Removal costs (lowest of at least two quotes)

The above relate only to those reasonable costs incurred as a result of a relocation involving the sale and purchase of a property. The Council will consider all relocation cases on their own merits and will give consideration to the most cost effective options/solutions. The Council will not normally consider providing funding to meet any cost difference between the new and existing property price.
The Council will only consider assistance in respect to relocation to a property deemed to be more appropriate to meet the customer’s needs by the Council. The Council will not provide assistance relating to relocation outside the Council boundary.

12.1 Approval of Assistance

Approval of assistance will be based upon the difference in value between the customers’ current home and the proposed property, together with legal fees, valuation fees, estate agent’s fees and stamp duty, subject to the grant maximum. The customer will need to provide evidence as to their financial need for help to move.

The approval will be specific to the purchase of the property to which it relates.

12.2 Payment of Assistance

The timescales for the completion of the purchase (as referred to in the formal approval letter) must be adhered to. If the purchase is not completed within the stated period, the approval will be cancelled.

- Payment will be made to the customer’s solicitor on exchange of contracts and prior to the completion of the purchase.

- Payment is conditional on the grant moneys being utilised for the purchase and associated costs as set out in the approval notice.

- The customer’s solicitor will provide the Council with a statement of account on completion of purchase.

12.3 Customers becoming ineligible for grant funding

Where, prior to the completion of the sale, the grant applicant becomes ineligible for assistance any approval may be cancelled.

12.4 Legal Charge

The grant will be registered as a Legal Charge from the date of completion of purchase to the end of the condition period, in this instance the period is 15 years.

12.5 Ownership and Occupancy Conditions

The following conditions last for the period of conditions as set out in the Occupation Certificate of the application form, commencing with the date of completion of purchase. This period is 15 years.

- The house or the dwelling within the building are to be owned in accordance with the Occupation Certificate given in the application form. Where there is a relevant disposal of part or all of the property within 15 years of the date of completion of purchase the Council may demand repayment of the grant in full.
• The disabled customer is to reside in the dwelling in accordance with the Occupation Certificate. Where the customer leaves the dwelling within 15 years of the date of completion of purchase the Council may demand repayment of the grant in full.

• This following paragraph applies where the incident that gave rise to the disability leads to a successful claim for compensation.
  • The applicants are to notify the Council of this payment. The Council will require repayment of the sum paid under the Discretionary Relocation Grant. The Council will require you to provide any information it may reasonably require in connection with such a claim. Full details of this condition are set out in Section 17.0.

12.6 Breach of Conditions

Following a breach of conditions (as above) the responsibility for repayment of the assistance given, together with any interest, rests with the applicant.

Where interest is demanded following a breach of any condition, the rate to be used is 8% compounded annually. This will be calculated from the date of demand for payment until all moneys have been repaid.

12.7 Repayment of grant for other reasons

The customers may repay the grant before the end of the period of conditions. The sum repayable will be calculated as in 27 above, and on payment all conditions cease to have effect.

13.0 Aids and Adaptations Technical Services/Home Maintenance Technical Services Process

For customers that wish to fund their own adaptations and/or home maintenance works any customers will be eligible to request assistance in completing essential works. The Council can provide technical services: surveying and producing schedules of works and plans; obtaining quotations; advising on essential maintenance and providing oversight of works in progress (not project management). A fee will be required for this work see appendix A. The customer will be asked to agree to and sign a terms of engagement before the officer commences work (see appendix C).

13.1 What services can Housing Renewals offer?

• Providing a list of reliable local builders and contractors, via Buy with Confidence (or other approved contractor list).
• Providing a list of reliable specialist contractors to provide adaptations such as stair lifts.
• Visiting the customer at home to give advice about any home adaptations that may provide dignity and independence in the home.
• Visiting the customer at home to give advice about any problems they may have with the condition of their home.
• Helping the customer to have work carried out to their home. For example, drawing up plans, getting quotes and liaising with others involved in the work, such as Occupational Therapists and contractors.
• Assisting with housing options, and directing to appropriate services.
• Helping the customer obtain other local support services, for example Plymouth Energy Community.
• Signposting to financial help, for example, benefit checks, debt advice or money to help you repair or adapt your home.
• Helping to make the customer’s home more energy-efficient, though other Local Government schemes.

13.2 How much does it cost?

• The first visit to the customer is free.
• We charge a fee of 10% (plus vat) of the total cost of the completed works* or an upfront fee of £100 (stair lifts only).

*The customer will be asked to pay a non-refundable deposit of £100 upon the second visit, which will be deducted from the final fee invoice.

It is the customer’s decision whether they want Housing Renewals to help, and any costs will be discussed and agreed at the initial visit.

14.0 Recovery of Specialised Equipment

Where an application for Disabled Facilities Grant has been approved under section 23(1) 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 authority if and as soon as the equipment is no longer needed

For the purposes of this condition;

• the authority 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

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

The authority agrees, within a reasonable time following inspection of the equipment,

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

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

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.5

15.0 Applicant no longer entitled to grant

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.

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.

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.

16.0 Changes in circumstances

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:

- 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,
- the disabled occupant ceases to occupy the dwelling,
- the disabled occupant dies.

In such circumstances, the Act states that the Council can take appropriate action and may:

- refuse to make any payment, or further payment of grant.

5 This includes reference to compound interest (currently at 8%)
• agree that the works or a portion of the works will be completed and the grant or an appropriate proportion of it paid.
• request that the application should be re-determined given the new circumstances.

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.

17.0 Cases in which grant may be recalculated, withheld or repaid

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:

• 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.
• The Council ascertain that without their knowledge the eligible works were started before the application was approved.
• The works are not completed within 12 months.
• The cost of works is less than the estimated expense upon which the grant was calculated.
• The work has been carried out by a contractor who was not one of the contractors who originally quoted for the work.

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 repayment. Each case will be considered on its own merits in deciding whether to recover any such payments.

18.0 Conditions as to repayment in case of compensation

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.

The claims to which this section applies are:

(a) an insurance claim, or a legal claim against another person, in respect of damage to the premises to which the grant relates, or
(b) 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.
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 rests\(^6\).

**19.0 Deferring Grant Payment**

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

**20.0 Grant Conditions**

Throughout this policy reference is made to grant conditions, these are detailed within this section.

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.

For tenants this period is 5 years and for owners the period is 10 years.

**21.0 Disputes about the assistance provided**

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

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

- There is an excessive risk to the health and safety of Council staff, agents, or other persons or
- There are any indications that there is a fraudulent element to the application or
- There are outstanding monies owed to the Council (other than by way of an agreed mortgage where the repayment schedule has been maintained) or
- 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
- There are other difficulties whereby the approval of an application for financial assistance is unlikely to result in the relocation to an appropriate property.

Decisions regarding these matters are to be referred to the Accessible Housing Solutions Panel.

---

\(^6\) Currently 8% compound interest, which may be charged from the date of payment
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 Have your Say.

You can make a complaint by visiting:  
http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/homepage/newsandviews/haveyoursay/complaint.htm

Completed forms should be sent to Customer Services, Plymouth City Council, Plymouth PL1 2AA and we will contact you within three working days.

A supervisor, or team leader, will usually look at first time complaints and investigate the cause and formulate solutions.

A full response will be sent to you within 20 working days explaining our solution or recommendation. Sometimes more complex complaints may take longer but we will keep you informed of progress.

Some types of complaint have to be dealt with under a different legal process. In this case we will pass your complaint on to the correct person and let you know.

If you feel your complaint has not been dealt with properly you can complain to the Local Government Ombudsman.

The Ombudsman is an independent organisation which investigates complaints about councils.

22.0 Fraud

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 may be referred to the police for prosecution.

23.0 Consultation

Pre-policy consultation has been carried out with the Welfare Rights Forum encompassing: Citizens Advice Bureau; Age UK; FoodBank; Royal Navy & Marine Welfare.

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

- How this Policy was going to be promoted and if guidance (referral process) was going to be available to partner agencies.
- Concern was raised over the points allocated to ‘Heating’ provision and questions were asked around other products/grants to help the elderly obtain suitable heating system and energy efficiency measures.
In response to these concerns, we have:

- Considered producing operating guidance to sit alongside this Policy to assist agencies guide their customers.
- Provided advice in regard to energy efficiency measures available through Plymouth Energy Community.

24.0 Applying Fairness

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), disabilities or religious or political affiliation. The Council regularly monitors its applications for assistance to ensure that policies and procedures comply with current equal opportunities legislation.

An Equal Impact Assessment has been carried out and is available to the public via the Social Inclusion Unit.

Applying Fairness

Plymouths 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:

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

25.0 Complaints and Comments about this policy

Comments, complaints or suggestions about the Policy or any aspect of our work are welcomed. The Council’s standard comments, complaints and appeals procedure will be followed. If you would like a copy of this, please contact us on Tel 01752 307075 or go to the website www.plymouth.gov.uk.

If a complaint is about a Freedom of Information request, you can complain to the Information Commissioner, www.ico.org.uk.

______________________________

7 (subject to Appendix B – General Conditions of Assistance, item 12 – Persons from abroad)
26.0 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.

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

Plymouth City Council is the data controller for the purposes of the Data Protection Act 1998.

27.0 Review and Revision of this policy

This policy will be reviewed and revised when required.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appendices</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Types of assistance available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Priority Weighting System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Terms of Engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Sell2Plymouth</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix A – Types of assistance available

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Disabled Facilities Grant</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Discretionary Relocation Grant</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Aids and Adaptations Technical Services</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Home Maintenance Technical Services</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assistance Policy</strong></td>
<td>I Disabled Facilities Grant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose</strong></td>
<td>To provide adaptations to promote independent living and help keep people in their own homes.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Eligibility (all criteria must be satisfied)</strong></td>
<td>The application must be supported by an Occupational Therapist's statement confirming that the works are necessary and appropriate.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The works must refer to those items specified in the Housing Grants Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 (the 1996 Act) Section 23(1) as amended.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The works must be reasonable and practicable as determined by the Council.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Eligible Works</strong></td>
<td>Works to relate to the 1996 Act Section 23(1) as set out in the statement of need.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Financial Arrangements</strong></td>
<td>Subject to a Means test that is used to calculate the customer's contribution towards the cost to the work. There is a limit of £30,000 for the works (this includes any contribution which has to be paid by the customer).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Application</strong></td>
<td>Referral route may be via Livewell Plymouth, Children’s Services, Private Occupational Therapist, or any other Occupational Therapy Practitioner. Self-referral will be accepted, however, the Council will require consultation with an Occupational Therapist.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In the case of tenants, the landlord (including Housing Association) may apply on the tenant’s behalf.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Approvals</strong></td>
<td>Plymouth City Council will issue a formal approval</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Payment</strong></td>
<td>Payment is made on (a) customer approval of works and (b) Council approval of contractors’ invoices and (c) Council satisfaction of the completion of works. Payment is made to the contractor(s).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Main Conditions</strong></td>
<td>The Council will specify that specialist items of equipment may be removed from the property when these are no longer required by the disabled person.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Where the property is sold, the Council may demand repayment of that portion of the grant that exceeds £5,000 subject to a maximum repayment of £10,000. This amount is registered as a local land charge.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Council may demand repayment of (part of) the grant where the works relate to a claim for compensation and this claim is successful.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conditions of grant apply for 5 or 10 years (depending upon the value of works completed). These are secured by a local land charge.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|                      | Where the tenant no longer occupies the property, the Council may demand repayment from the landlord of that portion of the grant that exceeds £5,000.
subject to a maximum repayment of £10,000. This amount is registered as a local land charge.

**General Note**

Most of the requirements of Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants are controlled by the provisions of the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assistance Policy</th>
<th>2 Discretionary Relocation Grant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose</strong></td>
<td>To assist disabled people and families with disabled children to move to a home that better suits their needs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eligibility (all criteria must be satisfied)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A discretionary relocation grant is available where the home of a disabled person, or family with a disabled child cannot be adapted either because the expense is prohibitive or the required changes are not feasible, as determined by the Council.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The customers propose to move to a home, within the area of Plymouth City Council, which:
- is in a habitable condition and
- relocation is a more cost effective option (in terms of public funding) to meet the assessed need.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eligible Expenditure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The grant is not available for funding any gap in value between selling one property and purchasing a more suitable one. It can be used to cover fees and legal expenses.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Financial Arrangements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The grant is for a maximum of £ 30,000.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Application</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>An application will need to consist of:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confirmation of sale price</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confirmation of purchase price</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Details of mortgage redemption cost (if any)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Details of new mortgage (if any)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Details of costs of fees etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All details to be confirmed by solicitor acting for sale/purchase</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approvals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plymouth City Council will issue a formal determination of grant.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Payment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Funds will be paid to a solicitor on exchange of contract so that they are available for completion.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main Conditions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The grant will be secured as a Legal Charge on the property for 15 years.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Specific conditions may be incorporated requiring the completion of works to make the property suitable for occupation by the disabled customer. These works will:
- be identified by an Occupational Therapist’s statement confirming that the works are necessary and appropriate **and**
- refer to those items specified in the Housing Grants Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 (the 1996 Act) Section 23(1) as amended.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assistance Policy</th>
<th>3 Aids and Adaptations Technical Services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>To assist vulnerable, elderly and disabled people, their families and carers who are able to fund their own works to design and procure adaptations to their homes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eligibility (all criteria must be satisfied)</td>
<td>All citizens of Plymouth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Arrangements</td>
<td>To be decided by the customer. Plymouth City Council will assist in sourcing charitable funding where appropriate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terms of Engagement</td>
<td>Please see appendix C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fee</td>
<td>Plymouth City Council will charge a fee of 10% (plus VAT) of the completed works. A non-refundable deposit of £100 will be required upon the second visit to the customer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placing of Orders</td>
<td>Plymouth City Council may place an order with an approved contractor (or those of the customer’s choice) on instruction from the customer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payment</td>
<td>Customers will provide payment direct to the contractor and to Plymouth City Council for their fee upon completion of works as set out in the terms of engagement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistance Policy</td>
<td>4 Home Maintenance Technical Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>To assist vulnerable, elderly and disabled people, their families and carers who are able to fund their own works to design and procure home maintenance and improvement works to their homes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eligibility (all criteria must be satisfied)</td>
<td>All citizens of Plymouth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Arrangements</td>
<td>To be decided by the customer. Plymouth City Council will assist in sourcing charitable funding where appropriate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terms of Engagement</td>
<td>Please see appendix C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payment</td>
<td>Customers will provide payment direct to the contractor and to Plymouth City Council for their fee upon completion of works as set out in the terms of engagement.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## APPENDIX B – PRIORITY WEIGHTING SYSTEM

### PRIORITY WEIGHTING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category 1 - Reason for recommending adaptation</th>
<th>POINTS</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Note: score all that are relevant to the referral)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To facilitate access to the toilet</td>
<td>+20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To facilitate the use or access to bathing/showering</td>
<td>+15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To facilitate access into/out of the property</td>
<td>+10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To facilitate the use of the kitchen/enable food preparation</td>
<td>+10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To make a dwelling safe (i.e. access light switches, heating controls etc.)</td>
<td>+10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To facilitate access to a room used or usable as the principle family room</td>
<td>+10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To facilitate access to or the provision of a room used or usable for sleeping</td>
<td>+10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To improve or provide a heating system to meet the disabled occupants need.</td>
<td>+10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To facilitate access to the garden</td>
<td>+5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Category 2 – Function

(Note: apply score where relevant)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Customer/child is a permanent wheelchair user</td>
<td>+15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer/child is mainly a wheelchair user but can stand for short periods</td>
<td>+10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer/child is ambulant indoors but needs wheelchair outdoors</td>
<td>+8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer/child is ambulant but uses frame/sticks or support system</td>
<td>+6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer/child is ambulant but unsteady or blind or deaf</td>
<td>+4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer/child is has a hidden disability which impedes how they function in their current home environment (e.g. Brain Injury)</td>
<td>+15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL**

### Category 3 - Risk Category

(Note: apply only one score)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Customer is a single disabled parent with a disabled child</td>
<td>+20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both customer and their partner have a disability thereby restricting their ability to provide care for each other.</td>
<td>+20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer lives alone</td>
<td>+15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer/child has a carer but there is a risk to the continuation of the caring arrangement whilst waiting for the adaptation</td>
<td>+10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer is a disabled parent with able bodied child aged under 16</td>
<td>+5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL**
### Category 4 – Child/Young or ex-service Person’s application

Child in need of adaptations is under 18 or is ex-service personnel  
**TOTAL** +10

### Category 5 – Removal or Reduction of other services

If a social care package is to be removed or reduced as a direct result of adaptations or customer cannot return home from hospital additional points may be counted. Cost saving must be evidenced and confirmation provided on completion of works to MAT.  
**TOTAL** +20

### Category 6 – Existing Adaptations

There are existing adaptations/equipment which partially meet needs for the short term  
**TOTAL** -10

---

**FINAL TOTAL SCORE**

### ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

#### Fast Track Request

Occasionally, in exceptional circumstances, it may be necessary to progress a DFG immediately such as due to significant health and safety issues or a terminal illness OR if replacement of existing equipment (e.g. stair lift) is required. Equipment must be outside of industry expected life span and all efforts must have been made by the equipment owner to have the equipment maintained (evidence of such must be provided).

All Fast Track Requests will be subject to the Housing Solutions Panel decision (see Housing Solutions Panel Terms of Reference).
The panel will consist of:

Housing Renewals Manager (Plymouth City Council)

OT Team Leader (Children’s Services) (Plymouth City Council)

OT Advance Practitioner (Livewell Plymouth)

Special Need Housing Options Manager (Plymouth City Council)

Any other relevant party.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OT signature:</th>
<th>Signed:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supervisor (if applicable):</th>
<th>Signed:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cases will be prioritised on the following basis:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>81 and above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>41 - 80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Up to 40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

THE PRIORITISATIONS SCORING ABOVE IS SUBJECT TO ADJUSTMENT AND REVIEW ON A REGULAR BASIS AND WILL REFLECT THE DEMAND EXPERIENCED.
Appendix C

AUTHORISATION FORM
TO PLYMOUTH CITY COUNCIL
FOR ASSISTANCE WITH ADAPTATIONS

I instruct the Housing Renewals Team to act on my behalf in the above matter. This may include preparing drawings, specifications and schedules of works; obtaining quotations from contractors; obtaining any consents that may be required from relevant bodies for the works to be carried out.

On receipt of any costings for required works the Housing Renewals Team will liaise with the client to advise on the best value approach to the work. Once work has been agreed, and start dates arrived at, the Team will carry out a pre start meeting at the property along with interim site inspections and a final sign off to ensure that works have been completed to a standard acceptable by myself and the Housing Renewals Team. When the builder is instructed, please be aware that YOU and NOT Plymouth City Council are entering into a contract. The contractor will provide a guarantee of 12 months for the works they have carried out, some of the individual items will have their own extended warranties that are provided by the manufacturer.

Upon acceptable completion of the works I agree to pay the relevant contractors invoice.

I understand that the information pertinent to my case will be held securely on a database within Plymouth City Council. I agree that my contact details can be given out to relevant contractors in order for appointments to be made with myself.

I understand that there is a fee payable by myself to the Major Adaptations Team and that this fee will be a sum equivalent to 10% (plus VAT) of the total costs relating to ALL work carried out on my property by the selected contractors during the adaptation process. I accept that there will be an agreed non-refundable deposit of £100 for services provided by the Housing Renewals Team, and that this deposit will be deducted from my final fee.

SIGNATURE _____________________________________________  DATE __________

NAME _______________________________________________________________

ADDRESS _______________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________

POSTCODE ____________________________________________________________
Appendix D

http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/doingbusinesswiththecouncil
Relevant Legislation

- The Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996
- The Housing Renewal Main Grants (Recovery of Compensation) General Consent 1996
- The Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996: Disabled Facilities Grant (Conditions relating to approval for payment of Grant) General Consent 2008
- Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002
- Care Act 2014
- Consumer Act 2015