Adapting your home

A step by step guide for adults and children with disabilities.
## Contents

**Introduction** 3

**The Disabled Facilities Grant** 4

**Step one** 5
  - Assessment of your needs 5

**Step two** 6
  - The DFG application process 6
  - The financial test 7
  - Other grant application forms 7
  - Obtaining quotes 8

**Step three** 10
  - Grant approval 10

**Step four** 11
  - Work in progress 11

**Step Five** 12
  - Payment for work 12
  - Future maintenance of the adaptation(s) 13

**Useful contacts** 14
  - Compliments, comments and complaints 14

**Further information** 15
  - Disabled Facilities Grants 15
  - Getting in touch 15
Introduction

If you are disabled, or someone living with you is disabled, a Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) may help pay for your home to be adapted.

This leaflet gives you some general information about the grant process and describes the main steps involved when you apply for a DFG in Stockport. It also provides you with space to record the progress of your grant application.

Grants for a range of work are mandatory. This means that the Council must offer you a grant if you qualify for it. However, because the grants are means-tested, you should not assume that you will automatically be offered one.

If you are a tenant of Stockport Homes your adaptation will be funded in another way and you should refer to the leaflet “Equipment and Adaptations Service” which explains the process used.
The Disabled Facilities Grant

You may be happy to apply for a DFG and arrange the adaptations yourself. However if you are unfamiliar with building contracts and the management of building work you can ask Stockport’s Home Improvement Agency, the Staying Put Scheme (SPS) for help. SPS officers take responsibility for the work and appoint the contractor. There is a charge for this service but the grant will pay this.

The SPS will:

• help you complete the grant application forms.
• help you to find money to pay for the adaptations if the grant will not meet the full cost.
• advise you about other services you could benefit from.
• help you to maximise your income.
• obtain quotes for the necessary work from reputable contractors.
• make a building surveyor available to offer advice about how to resolve any technical problems to ensure that your adaptation is safe and fit for purpose.
• arrange for a building surveyor to supervise complex work (E.g. an extension) from start to finish to ensure it is completed properly and to a high standard.

If you prefer, you may use your own professional adviser but you must declare this on the grant application form, especially if they will want to charge for their services.

Whether you decide to use the SPS or not your right to apply for a grant is not affected.
Step one

Assessment of your needs

Your Occupational Therapist (OT) or Equipment and Adaptations Officer (EAO) has conducted an assessment of your needs and determined that your home should be adapted.

Your OT/EAO will have told you how urgent your case is considered to be. Stockport Council uses a priority points system to determine this. Priority will be given to people at highest risk.

Your case has now been passed to Stockport Homes from where the DFG is administered on behalf of Stockport Council. You will be told by Stockport Homes if there will be any delay in progressing your application for a DFG.
Step two

The DFG application process

The grant process can be complex and timescales often depend on how quickly you can provide the information required. However on average it takes about two months to process a grant application for a small adaptation.

For larger adaptations which require planning permission, for example extensions, the application process can sometimes take up to six months.

The Grant Application process is the first half of the process. Once the grant has been approved, arrangements can then be made for the work to be carried out. Please refer to Step Four- Work in Progress for other timescales.

Please note: if you carry out any work before the grant offer is made you will be responsible for the cost of that work and you may not be offered any grant at all.
The financial test

The DFG is a contributory grant. This means that depending on your financial situation, you may be asked to contribute towards the cost of the adaptation(s) you need. You will be asked to complete a ‘Test of Resources Form’ which requires you to give full details of your income and savings and those of your partner, if relevant. You will be offered help to complete this form and will be told as soon as possible if you will need to pay anything.

Parents or guardians applying for a DFG on behalf of a disabled child under the age of 19 do not need to go through the financial test.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test of resources form completed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Notified of contribution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agreed to pay contribution</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you are asked to make a contribution you can’t afford to pay, and you have chosen to use the SPS, officers will be able to discuss various options with you such as taking out a loan, or approaching charities.

Other grant application forms

Apart from the ‘Test of Resources Form’ there are other grant application papers which officers from Stockport Homes will help you complete.
**Obtaining quotes**

This is part of the grant application process. Generally quotes must be obtained using a detailed list of the work required. This is known as a schedule of work and it will be prepared by a Stockport Homes Building Surveyor (the “Grant Inspector”). If specialist equipment is needed (E.g. a lift or hoist) a quote from the manufacturer may be accepted.

In the more complex cases such as building an extension, formal plans will be required, usually supported with planning permission. In these circumstances, we strongly advise that you employ either your own professional agent or the SPS.

Date of inspection by the Grant Inspector:

If you choose to use the SPS the contractor(s) will be chosen for you. However if you decide to arrange work yourself or have your own agent you will choose the contractor.

Stockport Homes operates a List of ‘Registered Contractors’ and will provide you with a copy of this list if you choose to arrange work yourself. All contractors on this list have been through a vetting process. You may choose to employ a contractor from this list but you are not obliged to do so. However please be aware that in more complex cases contractors will probably ask for stage payments. Registered Contractors may submit interim accounts for payment. If you choose to employ a contractor who is not a Registered Contractor your grant will only be released to you when the work is completely finished. This means that you may need to think about how any stage payments will be financed.

Dates quotes returned to Stockport Homes:
Step three

Grant approval

Once all the grant application papers are provided they will be passed to the Grant Officer who will check them. If everything is in order a grant will be offered for the reasonable costs of providing the adaptation(s) needed, less any contribution that you are required to make (See Step Two). If the Grant Officer thinks the contractor’s quote is too high they will only offer a grant for a proportion of the quote.

The law says you must be given a decision on your grant application within six months of making a completed grant application. However a decision is usually given much faster – usually within four weeks of receiving a completed grant application. A “completed grant application” is one in which all application papers have been completed fully and all supporting documents including contractors’ quotes have been provided.

Date of grant approval:

The grant offer is valid for 12 months so work must be completed within this timescale. If you don’t think you can meet this timescale you should contact the Grant Officer immediately.
## Step four

### Work in progress

If you are using the SPS they will agree with you and the contractor when work will start. How long it takes depends how busy the contractor is but for a straightforward adaptation such as a stairlift or level access shower, work should be finished one to two months after a grant approval has been issued. For more complex work such as an extension it could be four to six months.

If you have chosen to arrange the adaptation yourself the timescales will be determined by you and you contractor. Please tell Stockport Homes when work is due to start as the Grant Inspector will need to check the work.

Always tell the Grant Inspector immediately if you are unhappy with the standard of work.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contractor one is:</th>
<th>Date work starts:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contractor two is:</td>
<td>Date work starts:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contractor three is:</td>
<td>Date work starts:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant Inspector notified:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Step Five

Payment for work

If you have used the SPS, when work is finished payment will be made on your behalf and you will be sent an invoice for any contribution that you agreed to pay towards the cost.

If you have not used the SPS you must sign the contractor’s invoice to say that you are happy with the work and then send it to the Grant Inspector. The grant will then be paid. If there is a shortfall of money payable to the contractor you must pay it.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Work finished:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Invoice sent to Grant Inspector:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payment made:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Future maintenance of the adaptation(s)

When any guarantee for the work has expired you will be responsible for the upkeep of the adaptation. For a lift or hoist adaptation, your OT/EAO will be able to give you advice on setting up servicing and maintenance arrangements. This is to ensure that the adaptation stays in good working order and is safe to use.

Useful names and numbers

Name of OT/EAO:  
Phone number:

Name of Grant inspector:  
Phone number:

Name of Customer Liaison Officer:  
Phone number:
Useful contacts

Adult Social Care: 0161 217 6029

Children Services: 0161 219 6028

Stockport Homes Adaptations and Older Persons Support Team: 0161 474 4291 or 0161 474 2617

Compliments, comments and complaints

Your comments are important to us as they help us to improve the service we offer. We hope that you are satisfied with the service you receive and feel able to tell us. If you are unhappy with any aspect of the process we also need to know. In the first instance it is best to speak to the staff directly involved and explain to them the difficulty. They will then try to address your concerns. If you do not feel comfortable contacting staff directly, or you are unhappy with the response they have provided, you can contact the Customer Feedback Officer on

Customer Feedback Officer: 0161 474 2600
feedback@stockporthomes.org
Further information

Disabled Facilities Grants

Information outlining the law relating to DFG’s is published by the Government. Visit the DCLG website at www.communities.gov.uk

Getting in touch

If you would like to find out more you, or someone on your behalf, can contact us by:

Telephone: 0161 474 4291 or 0161 474 2617
Email: AOPSTeam@stockporthomes.org
Write to us: Adaptations and Older Persons Support Team
Stockport Homes Group
Cornerstone
2 Edward Street, Stockport SK1 3NQ

Why not visit our website?
www.stockporthomes.org/hra

Contact Stockport Council for information on the DFG
www.stockport.gov.uk/services/housing/homeowner/grantshomerepairsadaptations

Contact Stockport Homes for information on the Staying Put Scheme
www.stockporthomes.org/advice-and-support/support-in-the-home/staying-put-scheme/
You can get free copies of newsletters and other documents from Stockport Homes on audio tape, CD or in large print.

For more information please contact the Social Inclusion Team on 0161 474 2860 or email inclusion@stockporthomes.org