

DISABLED FACILITIES GRANT POLICY DOCUMENT

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Contents

	PAGE
Policy Introduction	4
Part 1 Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants	5
1.0 Introduction	5
2.0 Amount of Mandatory DFG	6
Part 2 Discretionary Disabled Facilities Grants	7
3.0 Introduction	7
4.0 Top-Up Grant to Mandatory schemes	7
5.0 Dual residency of a disabled child	8
6.0 Relocation Grant	9
Part 3 General Requirements & Grant Conditions	10
7.0 Applications for grant	10
7.1 Definition of disabled person	10
7.2 Applicant's criteria	11

8.0	Cost of Work	12
9.0	Means tested contributions/Successive Grants	12
10.0	Grant Approval	13
11.0	Payment of Grant	14
11.1	Completion of work	14
11.2	Entitlement to grant ceases	14
11.3	Changes in circumstances	15
11.4	Cases where grant recalculated	15
11.5	Repayment in case of compensation	16
11.6	General Provisions	16
11.7	Deferring Grant Payment	17
12.0	Grant Conditions Following Completion	17
12.1	Repayment in case of disposal of premises	17
13.0	Installation of Equipment and Maintenance	18
14.0	Contractual Relationships	18
15.0	Complaints	19
16.0	Policy Amendments	19

POLICY INTRODUCTION

This document sets out the way in which Newark and Sherwood District Council will provide both mandatory and discretionary Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) for private sector residential adaptations.

This document contains information on eligibility for grant assistance, conditions relating to applications, approval and payment of grant and other relevant conditions and requirements.

PART 1 MANDATORY DISABLED FACILITIES GRANTS

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Newark and Sherwood District Council, in its role as a local housing authority, is under a statutory duty by virtue of the provisions of the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 (the Act) to provide Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) for private sector residential adaptations where the appropriate legislative conditions are met.

1.2 The purposes for which a DFG may be given are set out in the Act and can be summarised as follows:

- Facilitating Access – grant may be given for works to remove or overcome any obstacles which prevent the disabled person from moving freely into and around the dwelling, access to the garden and enjoying use of the dwelling and facilities or amenities within it.
- Making a Dwelling or Building Safe – grant may be given for certain adaptations to the dwelling or building to make it safe for the disabled person and other persons residing with them. This may include the provision of lighting where safety is an issue or for adaptations designed to minimise the risk of danger where a disabled person has behavioural problems.
- Access to a room usable for sleeping – grant may be given for the provision of a room usable for sleeping where adaptation of an existing room in a dwelling (upstairs or downstairs) or the access to that room is unsuitable. Where the disabled person shares a bedroom with a spouse or partner a grant may be given to provide a room of sufficient size so that normal sleeping arrangements can be maintained.
- Access to a bathroom – grant may be given for the provision of, or access to, a WC, washing, bathing and/or showering facilities.
- Facilitating preparation and cooking of food – grant may be given to re-arrange or enlarge a kitchen to improve the manoeuvrability for a wheelchair and to provide specially modified or designed storage units, work top area etc. Where most of the cooking and preparation of meals is done by another household member, it would not normally be appropriate to carry out full adaptations to the kitchen. However, it might be appropriate to carry out certain adaptations that enable the disabled person to perform minor functions in the kitchen, such as preparing light meals or hot drinks.
- Heating, lighting and power – a grant may be given to provide or improve the existing heating system in the dwelling to meet the disabled person's needs. A grant will not be given to adapt or install heating in rooms which are not normally used by the disabled person. The installation of central heating will only be considered where the well-being and mobility of the disabled person would otherwise be adversely affected. Provision is also made under this section for the adaptation of heating, lighting and power to make them suitable for use by the disabled person.

- Dependant Residents – grant may be given for works to enable a disabled occupant better access around the dwelling in order to care for another disabled person who normally resides there whether or not they are related to the disabled person. Such works could include adaptations to a part of the dwelling to which the disabled person would not normally need access but which is used by the person to whom they are providing care and therefore it is reasonable for such works to be carried out.
- Common parts- grant may be given for works to facilitate access to a dwelling through common parts of a building.

1.3 In order to approve DFGs, officers of the Authority will work primarily with the Occupational Therapy (OT) Service at Nottinghamshire County Council. The Authority cannot refuse to accept a referral from an independent OT, usually employed directly by the prospective grant applicant, but retains its duty to consult with the County Council. In such cases all relevant information will be forwarded to the Nottinghamshire County Council Occupational Therapy service and no decision on grant eligibility will be made until their assessment and recommendations have been made.

1.4 The OT service will make referrals to Newark and Sherwood District Council recommending work to be carried out which is necessary and appropriate to meet the needs of their client. The Authority will approve grants if, amongst other things, it is satisfied that the work is reasonable and practicable to carry out.

1.5 Although the provision of mandatory DFG's is covered by the Act and the Authority must comply with the legislation, this document sets out the policy that will be applied by the Authority in the provision of DFGs with regard to matters not covered by the legislation.

2.0 Amount of Mandatory DFG

2.1 The maximum amount of mandatory grant that the Authority can pay for any single grant application is set by Order and is currently £30,000. This amount is reduced by any contribution assessed as payable by the grant applicant (see section 9.0 on the Test of Resources).

PART 2 DISCRETIONARY DISABLED FACILITIES GRANTS

3.0 Introduction

3.1 In addition to providing mandatory DFG's, the Authority has the power to offer discretionary financial assistance by virtue of the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England & Wales) Order 2002. Using these powers, the Authority has agreed to offer discretionary DFG's for private sector residential adaptations in certain specific circumstances.

4.0 Top-Up to Mandatory Schemes

4.1 Although the maximum amount of grant available for a mandatory DFG is currently £30,000 the Authority has agreed through this policy to potentially provide an additional maximum amount of up to £10,000 as a discretionary top-up where circumstances are such that the cost of work exceeds £30,000 (either as a result of unforeseen works or the extent of the original work that is recommended to the Council). This type of assistance will only be offered as a top up for schemes that fall within the mandatory grant headings as previously described.

4.2 When determining any application for discretionary assistance the Authority will consider any agreed Nottinghamshire County Council funding plus the ability of the applicant to self-fund the identified additional costs. Subject to this assessment discretionary award will potentially make up the difference between the maximum grant and the cost of eligible works (up to a maximum £10,000). Any discretionary top-up will be repayable on the eventual sale of the subject property and will be recorded as a Land Registry charge.

4.3 If an application for additional discretionary grant is received in a dual residency situation (see Section 5.0 for details), on the basis that both parents/guardians are resident within the Newark and Sherwood district, the Authority will only provide a total maximum discretionary assistance of £30,000 for the subject disabled child. If the full discretionary grant is required at the second home then no Top Up would be made available to the mandatory scheme.

4.4 Any discretionary top-up will only be considered having regard to the amount of resources the Authority has at the time. If it does not have sufficient resources left to deal with other referrals that have been passed to the Authority by the Occupational Therapy Service at the time, the Authority reserves the right not to approve any discretionary top-up.

5.0 Dual residency of a disabled child

- 5.1 In cases where families separate and a court order provides that residency of the subject disabled child is split between the mother and father (or other designated guardian) the Authority may consider the award of discretionary DFG to one property. The proposed adaptations will only be considered for discretionary assistance if they fall within those headings normally applied to mandatory schemes (see section 1.2).
- 5.2 Mandatory DFG can only be provided to the 'sole or main residence' of the disabled applicant and in circumstances covered by this section it would be assumed that one party would apply for mandatory grant on the basis that the child occupies the subject property as their sole or main residence. The main residence will be determined by which party receives child benefit. This property may or may not be within the Newark and Sherwood district although the Authority would only be liable for mandatory grant to any property within our boundaries.
- 5.3 The Authority will consider the details of any court order and specifically the allocation of time spent with each parent in determining eligibility for assistance. No specific percentage split is proposed by this policy as each case will be reviewed on its own merits. Factors to be considered include the specific details of any order, likely time to be spent at each property, whether the child will stay overnight at the subject property and for what period etc.
- 5.4 In determining the works that might be considered as eligible for assistance the Authority will consider the suitability of the subject property for adaptation, the complexity and scope of the adaptations required and any observations or referral made by the Occupational Therapy service. The scope of any works will not necessarily mirror that to be undertaken at the sole or main residence.
- 5.5 Any assistance provided under this heading will be up to a maximum award of £30,000, but will not be subject to any form of means testing. Any award will be repayable to the Authority if the subject property is sold within 10 years of the certified date (the date the eligible works are complete). The award amount will be recorded as a Land Registry charge. Any decision by the authority to recover Discretionary Grant payments will be based on the same criteria applied to mandatory grant recovery. The factors that would be considered in such circumstances are set out in Section 12.2.1 of this document. Situations outside of these prescribed circumstances would be considered on their own merits following the receipt of written representations from the grant applicant.
- 5.6 Any discretionary award will only be considered having regard to the amount of resources the Authority has at the time. If the Authority does not have sufficient resources left to deal with other mandatory referrals that have been passed to them by the Occupational Therapy Service at the time, the Council reserves the right not to approve any discretionary assistance.

6.0 Relocation Grant

- 6.1 A relocation grant may be available to an applicant who owns or privately rents their property if adaptations to their current home through DFG are determined not to be feasible or reasonable and they are considering relocation to a property they intend to purchase.
- 6.2 Applicants must be 18 or over on the date of application is made and, in the case of a disabled child, the parent(s) would make the application. Any application must be supported by a recommendation from the Nottinghamshire County Council's OT service.
- 6.3 The Authority and the OT must be satisfied that the proposed property already meets the needs of the disabled person without further adaptation or are satisfied that it can be adapted at a reasonable cost.
- 6.4 Applicants must be relocating within the Newark and Sherwood district. Consideration may be given to a move within Nottinghamshire but this would require the approval of the relevant district/borough council, whether or not adaptations are required and the scale of any adaptations before a relocation grant can be considered.
- 6.5 A grant of up to £5000 may be made available towards specific relocation expenses, which includes estate agent fees, legal costs, removal costs and up to a 75% contribution toward cooker and/or fridge if built-in appliances are being left behind and none are, or have been fitted in the new property.
- 6.6 The cost of the relocation grant together with the cost of any adaptations required to the new property must demonstrate value for money, whether the move is within Newark and Sherwood or to another district/borough council in Nottinghamshire. For moves within Newark and Sherwood up to £10,000 may be available towards the cost of any adaptations. Any scheme likely to cost in excess of this figure will be considered on its own merits by the Authority.
- 6.7 Applications must be submitted prior to the relocation, grants cannot be paid retrospectively. Assistance will not be given toward the purchase price of the new property.
- 6.8 The Authority will normally require two quotations from independent contractors that realistically reflect the cost of the works/service provided. In some circumstances, one estimate may be accepted if the Authority is satisfied that the cost is reasonable.
- 6.9 All applicants will be required to complete the move within 12 months from the date of approval of their application. Any payments made will be made either directly to the service/work provider or to the grant applicant. Valid invoices or receipt must be provided prior to payment.
- 6.10 If on sale of the applicant's existing property, a net equity of more than £10,000 is released, the Relocation Grant will only fund the physical removal costs.

(Net equity refers to any equity released when the purchase price of the new property is less than the existing property's selling price).

- 6.11 If the move is aborted through the fault of the applicant then costs will not be paid and any costs already paid will be reclaimed from the applicant. If the reason for the move failing is through no fault of the applicant then the Authority will not cover the costs.
- 6.12 The new property must be the disabled person's main residence and no applicant will be awarded a Relocation Grant on more than one occasion.
- 6.13 The Relocation Grant scheme will be subject to the same Test of Resources as the mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant scheme unless the relocation is for a disabled child in which case no test will be applied.
- 6.14 Any Relocation Grant will be recorded as a land registry charge and will mirror those repayment conditions attached to mandatory DFG's that breach a £5000 threshold (see section 12.1).

PART 3 GENERAL REQUIREMENTS & GRANT CONDITIONS

The following general requirements and conditions will apply to both mandatory DFGs and discretionary DFGs.

7.0 APPLICATIONS FOR GRANT

7.1 Definition of disabled person

- 7.1.1 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.
- 7.1.2 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.

7.1.3 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 the social services authority (Nottinghamshire County Council) they are a disabled child as defined for the purposes of Part III of the Children Act 1989.

7.2 Applicant's criteria

7.2.1 The Authority cannot consider an application for a mandatory or discretionary 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

7.2.2 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 a period of five years following completion of the works.

Certificates required in case of tenant's applications

7.2.3 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 a period of five years following completion of the works.

7.2.4 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.

7.2.5 Private tenants must obtain their landlords written permission for the subject works before a DFG can be approved. Where a landlord withholds this permission for the works to be undertaken a grant cannot be approved. Any DFG approved would not normally include any element of reinstatement.

Occupiers and Consent Certificates (houseboats and park homes)

- 7.2.6 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 (5 years from the certified date). 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.

8.0 COST OF WORK

- 8.1 The Authority uses public money to fund the provision of both mandatory and discretionary DFGs and as such it must take into account value for money.

- 8.2 When officers schedule the work to be carried out, they will ensure it meets the needs of the applicant but at the same time they will only prepare a basic specification. If grant applicants wish to have a higher or more complex specification that costs more, they will have to pay the difference themselves.

- 8.3 The applicant will be required to obtain two quotes for the cost of work (although the Authority will do this for applicants if they request us to do so- see section 11.0 below). The grant will usually be approved on the basis of the cheapest quote unless there are extenuating circumstances. Where the applicant wants to use a contractor that will cost more than the quote that is deemed acceptable by the Authority, the applicant will have to pay the difference direct to the contractor. The Authority will notify the contractor that the client will have to make a contribution and advise them of the value of the contribution.

- 8.4 If a grant applicant has a preferred scheme of works that meets their assessed need to the same degree as the scheme proposed by Authority i.e. the provision of a ground floor extension in lieu of a vertical through floor lift installation, the Authority will part fund the preferred scheme to the same degree as the grant eligible works. Any extra over costs associated with the clients preferred scheme, including unforeseen works, architects fees etc., must be met by the grant applicant. Evidence that sufficient funds are in place must be made available prior to works starting. The Occupational Therapy Service will be consulted to ensure that the applicants preferred scheme meets their assessed need in full.

9.0 MEANS TESTED CONTRIBUTIONS/SUCCESSIVE APPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Applicants for DFG's will be required to complete a test of resources form (means test) to determine whether any contribution is to be paid towards the cost of works. The Authority will undertake such 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 a test of resources.

In the majority of cases a Preliminary Test of Resources will be undertaken prior to the provision of an OT referral to provide the prospective applicant with an early indication of their likely contribution. Such preliminary tests will not be applied in urgent cases or where the OT is aware that the client is in receipt of a passport benefit. The recipient of a passport benefit (a number of means tested main street benefits including housing benefit, income support, guaranteed pension credit etc.) will automatically be assessed as having a NIL contribution toward any grant award and will receive full grant.

- 9.2 If an applicant has an assessed contribution toward any application any payment of this contribution is made to the scheme contractor on completion of the works. If the level of contribution is high the Authority may require evidence that the applicants have the resources in place to fund their contribution and that they may wish to seek independent financial advice on how they might raise the necessary funds.
- 9.3 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).
- 9.4 This provision means that it may be in the interest of applicants to proceed with a grant application even if their assessed contribution is higher than the likely cost of works, leading to the award of a 'nil grant' approval. In such circumstances the applicant must proceed to complete the subject works to a satisfactory standard. If a second application is submitted within the prescribed period the cost of the previously completed works will be deducted from any assessed contribution the applicant might have.

10.0 GRANT APPROVAL

- 10.1 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 7.2 above) together with proof of ownership or tenancy
- The appropriate evidence of financial resources in order that the Council can undertake the Test of Resources
- The appropriate number of quotes

The Authority is required to consult with and obtain confirmation from the OT Service that the works which are the subject of the application are necessary and appropriate to meet the needs of the disabled occupant.

- 10.2 Officers from the Authority will work with prospective grant applicants to ensure the appropriate documentation is in place to make a valid application.
- 10.3 The Authority will not usually 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.
- 10.4 The Authority will not approve an application for a DFG if the relevant works have been completed.

11.0 PAYMENT OF GRANT

11.1 Completion of work

- 11.1.1 The legislation requires the Authority to pay the grant on condition that the work has been carried out to its satisfaction. It also states that it is able to pay the contractor direct where it has advised the grant applicant prior to the grant being approved that this would be the method of payment.
- 11.1.2 The Authority has resolved through this policy that other than in exceptional circumstances it will always pay the contractor direct and the grant applicant will be notified of this prior to the grant being approved.
- 11.1.3 The Authority 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.
- 11.1.4 If there is a dispute between the grant applicant and the contractor and the Authority is satisfied that the work has been completed to a satisfactory standard, payment of any outstanding grant money will be made to the applicant and it will be the responsibility of the applicant to pay the contractor. If the Authority 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.

11.2 Entitlement to a grant ceases

- 11.2.1 Where a grant applicant ceases to be entitled to a grant before completion of the works the legislation states that the Authority cannot pay any grant or any further instalments (as the case may be) 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.

- 11.2.2 The Authority 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 Authority will consider each case on its own merits in deciding whether to recover any such payments.

11.3 Changes in circumstances

- 11.3.1 In some cases there is a change in circumstances after the grant has been approved that affects the payment of grant. These circumstances (which are prescribed in the legislation) are;

- where the works cease to be necessary or appropriate to meet the needs of the disabled occupant;
- the disabled occupant ceases to occupy the dwelling; or
- the disabled occupant dies.

- 11.3.2 In such circumstances, the legislation states that the Authority can take such action as appears to be appropriate and may decide:

- that no grant shall be paid or as the case may be, no further instalments shall be paid;
- that the works or some of them should be completed and the grant or an appropriate proportion of it paid; or
- that the application should be redetermined in the light of the new circumstances.

- 11.3.3 The Authority has the right under the legislation to demand any instalment that has already been paid to be repaid to the Authority forthwith 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.

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

- 11.4.1 The Authority is entitled to refuse to pay grant or any further instalment of grant which remains to be repaid or make a reduction in the amount of grant in the following circumstances:

- The Authority 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 Authority 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.

11.4.2 Where any of the above situations arise, the Authority 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.

11.5 Repayment in case of compensation

11.5.1 It is a condition of the grant that the applicant takes reasonable steps to pursue any relevant claim and to repay the grant so far as appropriate out of the proceeds of such a claim. A claim is:

- (i) an insurance claim or legal claim against another person in respect of damages to the premises to which the grant relates, or
- (ii) a legal claim for damages in which the cost of the works to premises to which the grant relates is a part of the claim, and a claim is a relevant claim to the extent that the works to make good the damage or the cost of which is claimed are works to which the grant relates.

11.5.2 In the event of a breach of this condition the applicant shall on demand pay to the Authority the amount of grant so far as relating to any such works together with compound interest from such date as may be determined, calculated at such reasonable rates as the Authority may determine.

11.5.3 The Authority may determine not to make such a demand or to demand a lesser amount. The assumption is that the amount will be demanded in full however on representations from the applicant, the Authority will consider each case on its own merits.

11.6 General Provisions

11.6.1 Where work has commenced but grant entitlement has ceased and where the Authority has decided that the works or some of them should be completed and the grant or an appropriate proportion of it paid the Authority will arrange to make good the work so that the property is safe, secure and water-tight.

11.6.2 This may not include carrying out such work as finishing internal surfaces and plumbing any new facilities (unless these are the only facilities in the property) for example. Any work over and above making the property safe, secure and water-tight would have to be paid for by the applicant or some other appropriate person.

11.7 Deferring Grant Payment

- 11.7.1 The Authority 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.

12.0 GRANT CONDITIONS FOLLOWING COMPLETION

- 12.1 There are certain grant conditions that run for a period of time following the completion of the grant (the grant condition period). These conditions will run from the certified date i.e. the date at which the Authority has certified that the works have been carried out to its satisfaction. The application of such conditions will only apply if the grant applicant has an owner's interest in the subject property and will remain in place for 10 years from the certified date.

12.2 Repayment in cases of disposal of the premises

- 12.2.1 The Authority has resolved that it will demand repayment by the applicant of such part of the grant that exceeds £5,000 (but will not demand an amount in excess of £10,000 if –
- (i) the grant 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
 - (ii) the Authority having considered –
 - (a) the extent to which the grant recipient would suffer financial hardship were they to be required to repay all or any of the grant;
 - (b) whether the disposal of the premises is to enable the grant recipient to take up employment or to change the location of their employment;
 - (c) whether the disposal is made for reasons connected with the physical or mental health or well being of the grant recipient or of a disabled occupant of the premises; and
 - (d) whether the disposal is made to enable the grant recipient to live with, or near, any person who is disabled or infirm and in need of care which the grant recipient is intending to provide or who is intending to provide care of which the grant recipient is in need by reason of disability or infirmity;
- is satisfied that it is reasonable in all the circumstances to require the repayment.

12.2.3 If a grant recipient is of the opinion that any of the exemptions may be appropriate then they will be required to submit written representations to the Authority setting out their case in full. The decision on whether to waive either all or a proportion of the grant recovery will be made by the Environmental Health Business Manager.

12.2.4 This condition is a local land charge and is binding on any person who is for the time being an owner of the dwelling or building.

13.0 INSTALLATION OF EQUIPMENT AND MAINTENANCE

13.1 Equipment which can be installed and removed fairly easily with little or no structural modification will not be funded by either a mandatory or discretionary DFG. The cost of supplying such equipment will fall to Nottinghamshire County Council.

13.2 Typically the type of equipment that will be covered by a mandatory DFG includes (this is not an exhaustive list):

- Stair lifts
- Ceiling track hoists (excluding slings)
- Through floor lifts
- Rise and fall showering tables that are electrically powered
- Rise and fall baths that are electrically powered
- Wash and dry toilets

13.3 Where the provision of equipment is funded by a mandatory DFG it is usually the responsibility of the applicant to take out the necessary insurances and maintenance agreements to ensure the equipment is properly maintained. However, the Authority will include within the grant the cost of a supplier's standard maintenance/service agreement to give cover for up to 5 years for stair lifts and through floor lifts only.

13.4 If a grant application is made for replacement of defective/obsolete equipment it will not be approved if it can be shown that the equipment can be repaired at a reasonable cost in comparison to renewal. In such cases the costs of the repairs will fall to the householder.

14.0 CONTRACTUAL RELATIONSHIPS

14.1 Following the referral from the Occupational Therapy Service at Nottinghamshire County Council, officers from Newark and Sherwood District Council will schedule the works that are required. The scheduled works will form the basis upon which contractors quote. As referred to above at paragraph 8.3 the grant applicant will need to obtain two quotes however officers will source such quotes on behalf of the applicant if requested.

The Authority reserves the right to charge a fee for this and associated services i.e. scheme design, producing plans and specification, release of interim payments, assistance with the completion of application forms etc.

- 14.2 Whilst work is being undertaken officers will wherever possible visit the property to ensure that the work is being undertaken as per specification and when the work is completed, the officer will carry out a final inspection to ensure it has been completed satisfactorily (see paragraph 11.1.1 above).
- 14.3 Grant applicants must be aware however that the Authority is in no way responsible for the work of the contractor and that there are no contractual obligations between the contractor and Newark and Sherwood District Council.

The purpose of the final inspection is simply to protect the public purse. All contractual relationships with respect to the carrying out of the work are between the grant applicant and the contractor.

- 14.4 If there is a dispute between the grant applicant and the contractor, the Authority will not be able to get involved unless by some act or default the Authority has caused the issue which has led to the dispute.

15.0 COMPLAINTS

- 15.1 Where Applicants are dissatisfied with the service they have received (including where a grant has been refused), they should contact the Environmental Health Business Manager at the main Council address. If the matter is not resolved to Applicants' satisfaction they can make a formal complaint via the Authority's adopted Customer Comments procedure.
- 15.2 If after receiving the Authority's response the complainant is still dissatisfied, they can write to the Local Government Ombudsman.

16.0 POLICY AMENDMENTS

- 16.1 The Environmental Health Business Manager has delegated authority to make minor policy amendments which do not affect the broad thrust of policy direction. Other changes must be approved by the appropriate Council Committee for Housing Strategy and Regeneration.