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www.aberdeencity.gov.uk

Private Sector Housing Unit

Disability Adaptation Grant

Occupational Therapy Service
Helping you to help yourself

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THIS BOOKLET HAS BEEN COMPILED TO ASSIST PEOPLE WHO HAVE A SUBSTANTIAL AND PERMANENT DISABILITY WHO WISH TO APPLY FOR A SCHEME OF ASSISTANCE GRANT ON THE GROUNDS OF THEIR DISABILITY.

WHO CAN APPLY?

Anyone who has a substantial and permanent physical or mental disability.

The following are typical examples of applicants. Anyone who:

- meets the criteria for provision as agreed/ assessed by an Occupational Therapist
- owns his/her own home or who privately rents and it is his/her main home. Tenants will require the owners written consent for the proposed works
- lives with other family members
- is a parent or person with parental responsibility of a child under the age of 16 years who meets the above criteria
- has previously had a successful grant for adaptations but whose need has substantially changed i.e. a child who is now an adult
- lives with a close relative on a permanent basis and it is their main home e.g. an elderly parent living with an adult son or daughter
- lives in shared ownership property

HOW DO I APPLY ?

Contact your local Community Occupational Therapy Service who will make arrangements for an Occupational Therapist to visit you at home. The Occupational Therapist will assess your needs and advise if you meet the criteria for grant funding.

The Occupational Therapist will remain in contact with you to assist with the grants process.

Duty Occupational Therapy - Telephone number: (01224) 558333, Fax: (01224) 558360 or E-Mail: OTDuty@aberdeencity.gov.uk

WHAT IS AN OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST?

A person who is trained to understand the implications of your medical need and physical disabilities. Community Occupational Therapists are employed by Aberdeen City Council to help people with disabilities to remain in their own homes as independently as possible. This may be in the form of specialist advice, assessment, equipment and when required recommendations on alterations to your home.

Through an assessment of individual needs at your home, they will discuss and observe any problems that you may have in carrying out your

daily tasks after which they will offer suggestions and practical help on how particular problems can be overcome and will help you decide the best solution to your problems.

If you feel you need your home adapted to give you more independence the community occupational therapist is your first point of contact to access the grants available.

WHAT CAN I GET A GRANT FOR?

On completion of an assessment that determines that the applicant meets the criteria for grant assistance to carry out adaptation work to their home, Aberdeen City Council will consider the use of both Mandatory and Discretionary Grants available at the time of request.

- Grants are not awarded retrospectively therefore you must not start the work before talking with your occupational therapist. Works may only commence after grant has been approved and any other consents obtained such as Planning Approval or Building Warrant.
- Work which is not considered permanent or installed for long term use will not normally qualify for grant assistance.
- Ongoing servicing of adaptations is not eligible for grant assistance

THE PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING UNIT

The Private Sector Housing Unit is currently part of Housing & Environment within Aberdeen City Council and is responsible for delivering the Scheme of Assistance for Private Sector Housing.

Under the Scheme of Assistance grants towards the costs of adaptations to a house to meet the needs of a disabled person are classed as Adaptation Grants.

Part of the Unit's function is to see whether an individual qualifies for grant assistance based upon an occupational therapist's recommendation and to arrange payment on satisfactory completion of the works. This process may involve inspections of the property before, during and after works are completed.

You may be required to carry out extra works to the property as a condition of any grant awarded. These Conditional Works will be deemed necessary to ensure the useful future life of the property but will not qualify for grant assistance. Recording Dues (currently £30) will be deducted from any grant awarded.

The majority of the works may be eligible for VAT exemption. To ensure you get exemption from VAT (where appropriate), make sure you sign the VAT exemption certificate available from your agent or contractor.

THE GRANT

Local authorities have a mandatory duty under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 to provide a minimum 80% grant funding for adaptations to provide a disabled occupant with the Standard Amenities suitable for their purpose and/or adaptations to the structure to suit their particular needs. Grant funding of 100% will be provided for those applicants who are on the list of Scottish Government prescribed passport benefits currently:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Guarantee element of Pension Credit
- Employment Support Allowance (income related)

If you are considering any additional works outwith the grant application, you are advised to obtain written quotations from the builder/contractor and provide written agreement to them if you decide to proceed.

Further information can be obtained from the Private Sector Housing Unit on (01224) 522134.

ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE

If you do not qualify for the 100% benefit related grant and you are having difficulty funding the difference in costs, please contact the Private Sector Grants Unit to obtain a referral form for "Cash In Your Pocket Partnership" who may be able to assist you with this matter through benefits advice and charitable funding.

The Cash in Your Pocket Partnership works with organisations that encourage take up of benefits and services that can improve health and wellbeing.

DO I NEED AN AGENT?

In most cases, yes. However, you will be advised if this is not necessary.

Your community occupational therapist can provide you with a list of Agents who have expressed an interest in designing adaptations for people with a physical disability and who other applicants have used in support of their recent applications.

You may already know a firm or agent who has worked for a friend or for you in the past and wish to use them.

Your occupational therapist cannot tell you which Agent to choose. You are responsible for choosing your own. You should contact more than one firm to help you decide which will be best for you.

It is important to get a written agreement on the extent of the Agents involvement on your behalf, i.e. will they act as your agent throughout the work? Also, ask them to detail their fees.

Your Agent may charge for an initial consultation to investigate the feasibility of proposed works. If the adaptation does not go ahead, you may have to pay a charge for this consultation. However, the agent's fees will be eligible for grant if the work is completed.

- Your Agent is responsible for carrying out a survey of your home, preparation of plans and work specification and contract compliance.
- They will advise as to whether a Quantity Surveyor/Structural Engineer will be required.
- They will apply for Planning Consent and/or Building Warrant where applicable and will seek tender prices from suitable contractors.
- They should co-ordinate between you, the occupational therapist, contractors, The Private Sector Housing Unit etc.
- They must make adequate site visits to ensure work is being done as per specification.
- They will agree final accounts.

Any issue regarding contractual matters should in the first instance be made to the Agent.

THE GRANT APPLICATION

The following documents are the minimum required to enable the submission of a Grant Application:-

- An Application Form for Grant
- A copy of the Recorded Title Deeds for the property.

Depending on when the property was purchased this will consist of either:

- 1 A copy of the recorded disposition in the owners favour bearing the Registers of Scotland stamp.
 - 2 A copy of the Land certificate.
 - 3 A copy of the unrecorded disposition in the owners favour plus a copy of the receipted Form 4 from the Registers of Scotland.
- Two detailed Competitively Priced (like for like) Estimates which specify the work to be carried out.
 - One set of Working Drawings if needed.
 - The Occupational Therapist will submit a report to the Private Sector Housing Unit to support your application.

An inspection of your property may be required and a written offer of a grant will be made as soon as all administrative procedures have been undertaken.

You or your Agent must not instruct the contractor to start work until you have been issued with formal notice of approval of grant.

THE ADAPTATION

A checklist is included in this booklet on page 14

Please put a tick or a date on the checklist as the steps are completed. This will help you to know what stage in the adaptation procedure you are at and whether you, your agent, the Private Sector Housing Unit or your occupational therapist is responsible for the next step.

Your occupational therapist will remain in contact with you during the grant process to assist you if required.

PAYMENT OF GRANTS

Interim Payments

An interim payment may be considered during larger adaptation works. If you are approached by your contractor, direct him to your agent who will progress matters for you. A site inspection will have to be carried out by the Private Sector Housing Unit before payment can be made and an interim invoice from the contractor will also be required.

Final Payments

Once all the work has been completed to your satisfaction, the final accounts should be submitted to the Private Sector Housing Unit. Once received, a Final Inspection will be carried out, the Final Approved Cost worked out and payment made to you, or to a third party if you have signed a mandate making the grant payable to them.

More information about a mandate can be obtained from your community occupational therapist.

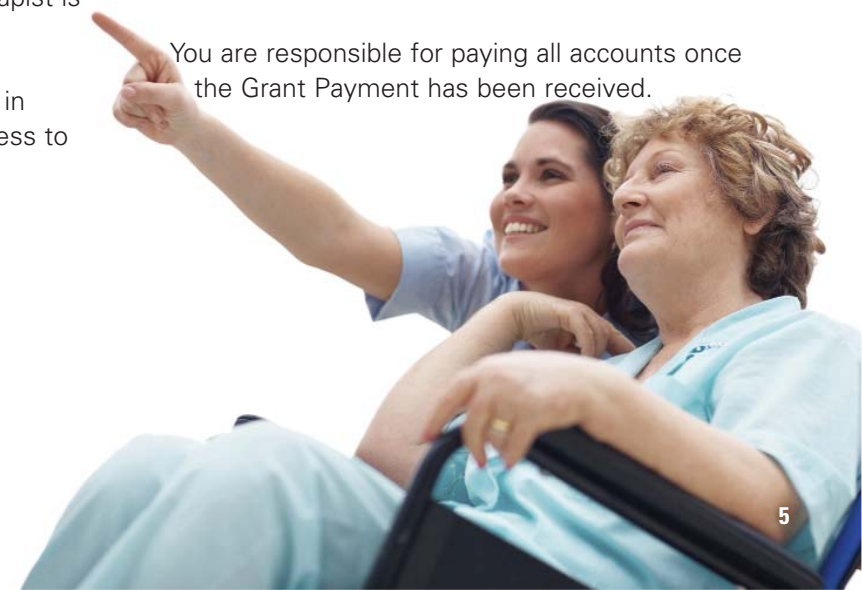
Final Accounts must comprise of the following:

- Invoices or accounts for all grant earning work.
- Invoices for Agent, Quantity Surveyor and/or Engineer's fees etc.

A Final Inspection will be carried out by a member of staff from the Private Sector Housing Unit. You or your agent will be advised of any problems identified during the inspection.

Once all work has been completed to the satisfaction of the Private Sector Housing Unit and relevant Authorities/Utilities (if applicable) have also passed the work, the Final Approved Cost will be calculated and payment made.

You are responsible for paying all accounts once the Grant Payment has been received.



THE STEPS TO A SUCCESSFUL ADAPTATION AND GRANT APPLICATION

CHECKLIST	ACTION BY WHOM	DATE ACTIONED
1 Contact the Duty Occupational Therapist on Tel: (01224) 558333 and ask for an assessment.	You	
2 The Community Occupational Therapist (OT) will arrange to visit you by appointment.	OT	
3 During the visit the OT will assess your need for an adaptation and discuss possible solutions. They will go over the grant procedure, the financial implications and how to employ an agent (if required).	You/OT	
4 The OT must discuss your needs with and gain approval for support of the grant application from their Senior OT.	OT/SOT	
5 Obtain permission in writing from your landlord at this stage (if appropriate).	You	
6 An initial visit is arranged with your chosen agent, the OT and you. You may wish to have a friend or relative to come and support you. During this visit, the OT will advise the agent what is required.	OT/You/Agent	
7 After this meeting and agreement with all parties on the adaptation, the agent will produce sketch drawings (if needed).	Agent	
8 A further visit will be required to discuss these sketches – if approved, you must instruct the architect/technical agent to make full plans. At this stage, you discuss any extra work to be included but will not be grant aided (late alterations will delay your application).	OT/You/Agent	
9 The OT and / or agent will ask for your signature on a form, which confirms that, if for any reason the grant does not proceed, you will pay the architects fees.	OT	
10 Before your architect/technical agent submits the final drawings to you for your final approval he/she may have discussions with various council services e.g. Planning, for their comment and provisional approval.	Agent	
11 The OT will contact the Private Sector Housing Unit Tel: (01224) 522134 and advise them to send you a grants pack which will include grant application forms and guidance notes on how to complete the forms.	OT	
12 The architect/technical agent will (as required) apply for planning and/or building warrant. He/she may also contact contractors (minimum of two) for tender prices at this stage. You may have your own contractors that you may wish to invite tenders from.	Agentt	
13 You should receive written confirmation from your architect/ technical agent advising you that the main stages of the grant process are on going as the process continues.	Agent	

CHECKLIST	ACTION BY WHOM	DATE ACTIONED
14 Once planning permission and/or building warrant and tender prices have been received the architect/technical agent will submit all tenders, drawings etc to the Private Sector Housing Unit.	Agent	
15 The architect/ technical agent or the Private Sector Housing Unit will contact the OT, who will submit a report confirming the need for the adaptation on the grounds of your disability.	Agent/ PSHU/OT	
16 At this stage you should submit the grant application forms together with all the supporting documentation required. A copy of your Title Deeds must also be submitted. You may request a home visit from staff in the Private Sector Housing Unit to assist you if required.	You	
17 At this point the Private Sector Housing Unit will acknowledge receipt of your application and may carry out an inspection of your property.	PSHU	
18 If further information is required following inspection of the application, the Private Sector Housing Unit will contact your architect/technical agent/OT or you, prior to grant approval.	PSHU	
19 You must wait for Formal Notice that your grant has been approved before any work can start.	PSHU	
20 On receiving formal notice of approval, inform your architect/ technical agent and OT.	You	
21 The OT will ask you to sign a letter seeking formal agreement on the financial responsibility for the adaptation/grant payments.	OT/You	
22 OT/architect/technical contacts Legal Section, Corporate Governance with the required Mandate form where necessary.	OT	
23 You or your architect/technical agent on your behalf can now appoint the contractor. It is recommended that this be done in writing.	Agent/ Contractor/You	
24 The contractor can now be contacted to arrange a start date and if required arrangement made for a joint site visit. Any additional works should be discussed again at this stage.	Agent/ Contractor/You	
25 Discuss with contractor, the VAT exemption certificate, He should provide one for you to complete, which he will keep with his final accounts for tax purposes. Obtain quotes for any additional works throughout the adaptation works to remain aware of the cost implications.	You/ Contractor	
26 The architect will check the progress of the work as it proceeds. Any last minute alterations to the general plans should be notified to the OT and the Private Sector Housing Unit. This may cause delays.	Agent	
27 If there are any problems throughout the process your OT or the Private Sector Housing Unit may be able to offer advice/ assistance.	You	

CONTACT DETAILS/NOTES

Occupational Therapist:

Private Sector Housing unit:

Architect/Technical Agent:

Contractor:
