



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

This booklet is intended only to give general guidance on how the grant system currently operates and no part of it is intended to have contractual effect.

It does not contain a full statement of the law and if you are in doubt on any matter you should seek independent advice from your own solicitor or other adviser.

Scheme of Assistance Grant

Disabled Adaptation Grants are administered by the Private Sector Housing Unit and supported by Occupational Therapists from Bon Accord Care in partnership with Aberdeen City Council.

This booklet has been compiled to assist people who have a substantial and permanent disability and who wish to apply for a Scheme of Assistance grant to adapt their home.

Helping you to help yourself

Those Involved:

- You (The client)
- The Private Sector Housing Unit
- Occupational Therapists
- Private firms of Architects and other suitably qualified persons
- Contractors

What is a disability adaptation grant?

Disability Adaptation Grants are available to help disabled people adapt their home, helping them to live as independently and safely as possible. Aberdeen City Council will consider the use of both Mandatory and Discretionary Grants available at the

time of the request. To qualify for a grant the works must be deemed **necessary** and **appropriate** as well as being **reasonable** and **practical** for the applicant to be successful.

Who can apply?

To apply for a grant the applicant must:

- Have a substantial and permanent disability which affects their ability to live within their home. Disability is defined in legislation as: a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities (Equality Act 2010)
- be a home owner or part owner through a shared ownership scheme; or
- a tenant who privately rents their home. Tenants will require the owner's written consent for the proposed works; or
- Live with family members in a privately owned/rented property on a permanent basis e.g. an elderly parent living with an adult son or daughter; or
- have parental responsibility for a child under the age of 16 years who has a disability living in private owned/rented property
- have been assessed by an Occupational Therapist as meeting the criteria for provision of an adaptation.

What can I get a grant for?

Grant assistance is available to complete adaptations which meet the specific needs of the disabled person i.e.

- widening doors and providing ramps to give wheelchair access into your property;
- improving access to upstairs facilities i.e. bedrooms and bathrooms by installing a stair lift or vertical lift;
- making kitchen work areas more accessible for someone with a mobility impairment;
- provision of accessible washing facilities i.e. removal of a bath and installation of a level wheelchair accessible shower.

Grants are not awarded retrospectively therefore you **must not** start any adaptation works until the grant has been approved and any other consents such as planning approval or a building warrant have been obtained.

Grant assistance is **not** available to extend a property for additional living space, decorating costs, or for the ongoing servicing and maintenance of adaptation works.

Work which is not considered permanent or installed for long term use will not normally qualify for grant assistance.

How do I apply?

Contact the Occupational Therapy Service at Bon Accord Care who will take your details and arrange 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 assist you throughout the grants process.

Duty Occupational Therapy Service

Tel. number: 01224 570440, or E-Mail: OTDuty@bonaccordcare.org

What is an occupational therapist?

An Occupational Therapist (OT) is a registered professional who is trained to understand how your disability affects you and to assess your needs.

Our OTs are employed by Bon Accord Care in partnership with Aberdeen City Council. They help people with disabilities to remain in their own homes as independently as possible. This may be in the form of specialist advice, assessment, and equipment provision or by recommending alterations/adaptation to your home.

Through an assessment of your individual needs at home, the Occupational Therapist will discuss and observe any problems that you may have in carrying out daily tasks. 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 Occupational Therapist is your first point of contact to access the grants available.

The Private Sector Housing Unit

Aberdeen City Council's Private Sector Housing Unit is currently part of Communities, Housing & Infrastructure within Aberdeen City Council and is responsible for the administration of Scheme of Assistance Grants for Private Sector Housing. This includes properties previously owned by Aberdeen City Council and Housing Associations.

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

Part of the Unit's function is to determine 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 and would normally qualify for grant assistance.

Recording Dues (£60 as of June 2016) will be deducted from any grant awarded.

The majority of the works will be eligible for VAT exemption. Please ensure you sign the VAT exemption certificate available from the Architect 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 that provide disabled occupants with standard amenities suitable for 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)
- Universal Credit

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 Housing Unit to obtain a referral form for the Cash In Your Pocket Partnership who may be able to assist you with this matter through

If you are considering any additional works out with 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 522299.

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 architect / technical agent?

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

Your Occupational Therapist can advise you of firms of Architects 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.

However you may already know of a firm or agent and wish to use them.

Your Occupational Therapist cannot tell you which **Architect/Technical Agent** to choose. You are responsible for choosing your own.

You can 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 **Architects/Technical Agents** involvement on your behalf, i.e. will they act as your agent throughout the work? Also, ask them to detail their fees.

Your **Architect/Technical 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 Architect's fees will only be eligible for grant assistance if the work is completed.

Your **Architect/Technical Agent** is responsible for doing the survey, preparation of drawings, plans and work specification and contract appliance. Their role will also involve;

- Advising whether a **Quantity Surveyor/Structural Engineer is required.**
- Applying for **planning consent and/or building warrant**, where applicable, and will contact contractors for tender prices.
- Acting as a co-ordinator between you, the Occupational Therapist, contractors, Private Sector Housing Unit etc. during the planning, execution and completion of work.
- Making adequate site visits to ensure work is being done as per specification.
- Agreeing final accounts.

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

The grant application

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

- (a) An Application Form for Scheme of Assistance Grant
- (b) Two detailed **competitively priced (like for like) estimates** which also specify the work to be carried out.
- (c) One set of **working drawings/plans** (if required).
- (d) An Occupational Therapist report to the Private Sector Housing Unit in support of your application.
- (e) 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.

If you wish a third party to deal with the grant payment on your behalf you can complete a grant payment mandate form and submit this with/during your application. More information about a mandate can be obtained from the Private Sector Housing Unit or your Occupational Therapist.

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 **Architect/Technical 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 10.

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 Architect/Technical 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

Interim payments may be considered during larger adaptation works. If you are approached by your contractor, direct him/her 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 a satisfactory standard, 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.

Final Accounts must comprise of the following:

- (a) Invoices or accounts for all grant earning work.
- (b) Invoices for Architects, Quantity Surveyors and/or Engineers fees etc.

A final inspection will be carried out by a member of staff from the Private Sector Housing Unit. You or your Architect/Technical 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 the authorities/utilities (if applicable) have also passed the work, the final approved cost will be calculated and grant 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

YOUR CHECKLIST		Action by whom	Date actioned
1	Contact the Duty Occupational Therapist on Tel: 01224 570440 and ask for an assessment of need.	You	
2	The 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. He/she will go over the grant procedure, the financial implications and how to employ an Architect/ Technical Agent (if required) and give you a grants information booklet.	You/OT	
4	The OT must discuss your needs with and gain approval for support of the grant application from his/her 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 Architect/Technical 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 Architect/Technical Agent of the works eligible for grant funding.	OT/You/ Architect/ T. Agent	
7	The Architect/Technical Agent will produce sketch drawings/plans (if needed).	Architect/ T. 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 can discuss any extra work you wish included but will not be grant aided (late alterations will delay your application).	OT/You/ Architect/ T. Agent	
9	The OT will ask you to read and sign an advisory letter which confirms that, if for any reason the grant does not proceed, you will pay the Architects fees.	OT	

YOUR CHECKLIST		Action by whom	Date actioned
10	Your Architect/Technical Agent will prepare final drawings for your approval.	Architect/	
11	The OT will contact the Private Sector Housing Unit on 01224 522299 and advise them to send you a grant application form and guidance notes on how to complete the form.	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. Your Architect/ Technical Agent will ask if you wish the grant to be mandated to a third party.	Architect/ T. Agent	
13	You should receive written confirmation from your Architect/Technical Agent advising you that the main stages of the grant process are ongoing as the process continues.	Architect/ T. Agent	
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.	Architect/ T. Agent	
15	The Architect/ Technical Agent or the Private Sector Housing Unit will contact the OT, who will submit a report supporting your application.	Architect/ T. Agent/ PSHU/OT	
16	At this stage you should submit the grant application forms together with all the supporting documentation and a copy of your Title Deeds. You may request a home visit from staff in the Private Sector Housing Unit to assist you if required.	You	
17	The Private Sector Housing Unit will acknowledge receipt of your application and may carry out an inspection of your property.	PSHU	

YOUR CHECKLIST		Action by whom	Date actioned
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	Ensure you have funding in place to pay the balance of costs if an 80% grant is awarded. All grant recipients also pay a £60 recording fee which is deducted from the final grant payment.	You	
22	Architect/Technical Agent/you should contact the Private Sector Housing Unit/OT if a grant payment Mandate form is required.	Architect/ T. Agent/You	
23	You or your Architect/Technical Agent can now appoint the contractor. It is recommended that this be done in writing.	Architect/ T. Agent/ Contractor/ You	
24	The contractor can arrange a start date and if required arrange a joint site visit. Any additional works should be discussed again at this stage.	Architect/ T. 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 you request and be 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.	Architect/ T. Agent	

YOUR CHECKLIST		Action by whom	Date actioned
27	If there are any problems throughout the process contact your Architect/Technical Agent in the first instance. If the issue is still not resolved your OT or the Private Sector Housing Unit may be able to offer advice/ assistance.	You	
28	On completion of the adaptation your Architect/ Technical Agent should carry out a site visit to inspect the works.	Architect/ T. Agent	
29	The final accounts should be sent to the Private Sector Housing Unit with copies to the Architect/ Technical Agent and if required your OT.	Architect/ T. Agent/ Contractor/ You	
30	The Private Sector Housing Unit will arrange an inspection of the adaptation to allow grant payment to be made.	Grants Unit	
31	A Completion Certificate is issued for you (if applicable) by Building Control which should then be kept with your Title Deeds.	Building Control/ Architect	
32	The Private Sector Housing Unit will arrange for the grant payment for the correct amount to be paid to you or your nominated person (if mandate form completed).	PSHU	
33	You now settle accounts with the Architect/ Technical Agent and the contractor, plus any additional costs as agreed with the contractor.	You	
34	Please advise the OT that the works are complete, inspection passed and cheque paid.	You	

Grant Application Complete

