



ABERDEEN  
CITY COUNCIL

SCHEME  
OF  
ASSISTANCE

Amended 1<sup>st</sup> August 2012



# Scheme of Assistance

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 (s.72)

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## VISION

Aberdeen's Community Plan includes the key aim to improve the quality of housing and environment for individuals and the community.

## STRATEGY

The Local Housing Strategy aims to achieve this vision by making the best use of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006, along with other legislation such as the Tenements (Scotland) Act 2004, (Tenements Act) to assist in meeting our aim of ensuring an ongoing effective supply of quality housing in the city that meets future needs and expectations.

This strategy also takes account of the Scottish Government's policy vision to maximise independence of disabled people and to drive down the extent of unsuitable housing.

The Scottish Government's policy vision includes the following: -

- That there will be a cultural change in attitudes to housing quality in the private housing sector.
- Private owners will become more aware of repair and maintenance responsibilities and more proactive in carrying them out.
- Private owners will invest more to ensure their homes have a sustainable future.

The Scheme of Assistance, (SoA) arose from the findings of the Housing Improvement Task Force, (HITF) which was set up by the Scottish Government in 2000, to undertake a comprehensive review of housing policy as it relates to the condition of private sector housing in Scotland. The findings were reported in 2003 and led to the introduction of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006. The philosophy behind this SoA is to assist homeowners in taking responsibility for their own properties and to make the most effective use of the public funding that is directed to assisting homeowners.

Aberdeen City Council's SoA therefore seeks to offer a broad range of assistance that most closely suits the particular needs of homeowners, private landlords and their tenants. The council accepts that offering only grant assistance is not the most productive method of ensuring prolonged interest from homeowners in proactive property maintenance. Rather, it can be agreed that it creates a dependency on financial assistance thus fostering the opposite effect to that which is desired.

Tenants of local authorities and Housing Associations are benefiting from new quality standards which were introduced by the Scottish Government in 2004 and are referred to as the Scottish Housing Quality Standard, (SHQS).

The standard is based on the consultation document "Modernising Scotland's Social Housing", issued in March 2003, and contains the following broad quality criteria:

- compliant with the tolerable standard;
- free from serious disrepair;
- energy efficient;
- provided with modern facilities and services;
- healthy, safe and secure.

While local authorities and registered social landlords are expected to ensure that their stock meets the standard by 2015, it is for individual owners to decide whether to make improvements to meet the standard.

Aberdeen City Council is committed to working with home owners to optimise the expected change in attitude toward repair and maintenance. This, along with the delivery of the SHQS in the social sector, should see the quality of housing improved across all tenures.

## **ACCESS TO ASSISTANCE**

The underlying objective for the SoA is to provide applicants with appropriate levels of information that assists them to make informed choices and allows them to control their own outcomes. Homeowners will therefore be able to decide on how much assistance, if any, that they wish to utilise.

Access to assistance will in the first instance be: -

- to the Private Sector Housing Unit, (PSHU) by self referral, or by third party, (where consent has been given), by: -
  - telephone,
  - email or web contact, or
  - written correspondence, or
  - (where appropriate), by calling at the PSHU office or any Council offices for onward referral/transfer to the PSHU.

(see appendix 5 for further details)

Assistance may also be provided by: -

- onsite visits by PSHU staff, or
- workshops, seminars, meetings aimed at owners and occupiers, or
- frequently Asked Questions, (FAQs), with answers posted on the website, or
- publications.

On contact with the PSHU, an initial assessment will determine what assistance may be offered and how best to deliver it. The format for any assistance will be dependant on the needs of the specific applicant and may involve referral to a more appropriate service/agency.

### **1.0 Assistance with repairs and maintenance of houses**

Aberdeen City Council's grant assistance over the past 20 years has focused primarily around the traditional granite tenement stock. This has resulted in a grant spend of approximately £35m. However, the Local House Condition Survey 2005 showed that there has been no significant improvement in the level of disrepair across the whole of the housing stock and that the pre 1919 stock, which captures the traditional granite tenements, still shows a higher than average repair cost per unit.

In order to address this issue, we need to begin the process of tackling disrepair at a far earlier stage than is currently done, by engaging with owners at a much earlier stage.

The main emphasis for the SoA is to enable homeowners to maintain their own properties. This will be done primarily by providing them with the type of information that they need to do this. In the case of tenement properties, other legislation already exist that allows homeowners to carry out essential communal repairs to their building. Armed with this information many owners will be more able to cajole their co-owners into action. In short, the intention is to remove the reliance on the local authority taking action on their behalf.

The enforcement powers available to the Council such as Maintenance Orders and Work Notice's are intended for use where the power of persuasion, either by joint owners, or by the council, has failed to have the desired effect. Council officers will therefore work jointly with owners to achieve a satisfactory outcome before resorting to enforcement power.

Where the local authority has taken enforcement action against the owner/s of a property, the willing owner/s will be offered assistance to carry out the works as if they had instigated the contract themselves. However, where the owner/s fails to seek assistance prior to the council instructing the works on behalf of any owner/s who fails to co-operate with an order, then no offer of financial assistance will be provided.

## **TYPES OF ASSISTANCE**

### **1.1 Advice & Practical Assistance**

- 1.1.1. Offer free advice to any homeowner living in Aberdeen City on how to carry out repair and maintenance works to their home, (via telephone, web site, leaflets or events).
- 1.1.2. Carry out site visits to assist owners identify what works require to be carried out and to assist in prioritising works.
- 1.1.3. Offer owners advice on how to obtain quotations from contractors.
- 1.1.4. Offer owners advice on choosing a suitable contractor for the type of work that they need carrying out.
- 1.1.5. Refer on to external organisations that can offer specific advice, for example:-
  - o SCARF - for energy advice
  - o Citizens Advice Bureau, or
  - o Benefits Advice, or
  - o Care & Repair – (assistance for retired and/or disabled homeowners).
- 1.1.6. Offer advice, (and assist), homeowners on how to engage with their neighbours to carry out communal works.

### **1.2 Enforcement Powers**

The 2006 Act provides powers for local authorities to carry out works where an owner/s fails to engage, either, in the case of tenements, with other joint owners, or with the

Council, on a voluntary basis. The Council may then choose to take action that forces that owner to carry out the works requested. This enforcement may take the form of either a Maintenance Order or a Work Notice.

### 1.2.1 Maintenance orders

A maintenance order, (see definitions), can be issued where the local authority feels that the house is not being maintained to a reasonable standard and require the owner/s to take action to remedy this matter. The Maintenance Order will: -

- i. assist owners to focus on the need for repair and maintenance to their home, or
- ii. assist owners through enforcement where an owner can not be traced or contacted, or
- iii. assist owners through enforcement where a person cannot afford/gain access to suitable funding sources.

### 1.2.2 Work notice

A work notice may be issued where the council are satisfied that the property meets the criteria set out in the Act, (see definitions) and have failed to gain the co-operation of all or some of the owners. Serving of the Notice will allow the council to either; execute all of the works identified within the notice, or, to make a contribution on behalf of any joint owner who fails to co-operate with other joint owners.

The Council will then reclaim all expenses incurred in carrying out this work by means of a Repayment Charge which is secured against the title deeds of the property. A repayment charge will incur interest payments over the duration of the debt and all administration costs will also be recharged.

## 1.3 Declaration of Housing Renewal Areas (HRA)

Where it is established that an area has a significant number of houses which are sub-standard or that the appearance or state of repair of any houses are adversely affecting the amenity of that area, Aberdeen City Council may consider declaring a HRA with the purpose of improving that area.

Where a house is defined in a HRA action plan as a house which the local authority considers to be in a state of serious disrepair and ought to be demolished, the local authority may require the owner of the house to demolish it by the serving of a demolition notice.

When considering whether an area is to be declared a HRA, Aberdeen City Council will consult with the owners and representative groups within that area in order to: -

- advise on how an HRA operates and what it will mean for that particular area,
- agree on the boundary of the area to be included;
- agree on an appropriate action plan that will ensure that any agreed works can be carried out, and;
- advise on what assistance if any can be provided.

## 1.5 Financial Assistance

Grant funding has been the main thrust for effecting repairs and improvements within the private housing sector for approximately 50 years. Introduction of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 changes this by offering local authorities new ways to engage with homeowners to encourage them to take responsibility for their own property and break any dependence on the grants system.

On that basis, Aberdeen City Council expects all home owners to finance the repairs and improvements to their own home through their own financial arrangements. Only once this option has been fully explored and proof provided that this is not an option, will Aberdeen City Council consider giving access to publicly funded sources. Special provisions apply for works to adapt a home for the purpose of making it suitable for the habitation of a disabled occupant, (see 2.0).

Financial Assistance that may be offered: -.

- 1.5.1 Offer financial assistance in the form of grants to engage the services of building professionals to assist in the promotion of proactive property maintenance, for instance, may be used in conjunction with a maintenance order.
- 1.5.2 Refer on to “Cash in your pocket” for a benefit check all clients who appear to require assistance in maximising their income.
- 1.5.3 Assist all clients on prescribed income replacement benefits, to access secured loans through the benefit services.

**The qualifying criteria for financial assistance packages for all non-disabled adaptations will be based on the financial circumstances of the person, or persons, whose name appears on the title deeds.**

**Financial assistance will not be provided for landlords irrespective of where the repairing responsibility lies.**

## **ADAPTATION OF HOMES FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**

Local authorities have a mandatory duty under the 2006 Act to provide a minimum 80% grant funding for adaptations to provide a disabled occupant with the Standard Amenities suitable for their purpose. This statutory duty extends to tenants within the private rented market. The aim is to assist homeowners or private tenants to remain independent and living within their own homes and within the community in which they are familiar and supported. This grant is referred to as a **Mandatory** grant and is only restricted by the type and amount of work required to meet the needs of the occupant being assessed.

While striving to assist owners in maintaining their independence, Aberdeen City Council is mindful of the Scottish Government’s belief that owners have a personal responsibility for their own housing. We have therefore attempted to reflect this within our package of assistance while, endeavouring at the same time to ease the additional financial burden that disability can bring. We have also addressed the issue of assistance, where it is required, for those living with disability through mental ill health as well as physical disability. For this reason the package of assistance will be tailored to suit the individual

needs of each applicant and a range of additional discretionary grants, budget permitting, may be offered.

Mandatory assistance is required with regards to reinstatement of a property that has been adapted for the needs of a disabled occupant. Aberdeen City Council acknowledges that there are insufficient adapted homes within the city to meet the needs of disabled homeowners. With that in mind, the council will not be encouraging adapted properties to be reinstated and will therefore only grant aid such works in exceptional circumstances. In the private rented market, the first option will be to try and match suitable tenants to adapted properties, but, in order to encourage landlords to assist any tenant with a disability, this council will offer grant assistance to reinstate a property at the end of the tenancy if that is the only practical solution.

## 2.0 Assessment of Circumstances

- 2.0.1 Aberdeen City Council view adaptations for the needs of disabled persons as only one element of an overall support package. In order to fulfil this view, all applications for assistance to provide adaptations to private sector housing will be based on an assessment carried out by a member of staff from the Community Occupational Therapy Service.
- 2.0.2 Where appropriate, the Community Occupational Therapy staff will transfer their responsibility to carry out an assessment to another appropriate professional body and/or seek a reference from an appropriate professional.
- 2.0.3 The assessment criteria are set out in appendix 2.
- 2.0.4 Timeframe to carry out assessment is set out in appendix 2.
- 2.0.5 Scope of works for which grant is applicable is set out in appendix 2.

## 2.1 Requesting an Assessment

To request an assessment for assistance to adapt your home you can contact the Aberdeen City Council's Community Occupational Therapy service, or, you can ask your GP, District Nurse, Health Visitor etc. to contact the service on your behalf via: -

- **Duty Occupational Therapist**  
Integrated Duty Point  
Links Resource Centre  
City Hospital  
Park Road  
Aberdeen, AB24 5AU  
Telephone: 01224 558333  
Duty Clerical Telephone: 01224 558334  
Fax: 01224 558360  
E-Mail: [OTDuty@aberdeencity.gov.uk](mailto:OTDuty@aberdeencity.gov.uk)

### **Opening Times:**

Monday – Thursday 9.00am – 12.30pm 1.30pm – 4.30pm  
Friday 9.00am – 12.30pm 1.30pm – 3.30pm

The information received by the service will be recorded and prioritised in line with Council protocols, (see appendix 2). You will be advised as to the approximate waiting time for an assessment. Should your circumstances change in the interim period, you should report this to the Occupational Therapy Service so that your case can be re-evaluated.

## 2.2 Appeals Process

On completion of your assessment you will be advised by the occupational therapist of what assistance can or cannot be provided. In the event that you are dissatisfied with the offer of assistance made to you by the community occupational therapist that has carried out your assessment, you can ask for a second opinion.

In this event, a senior occupational therapist will arrange with you to carry out a second assessment. In the event that the outcome is no different to the first, your case will be considered by a meeting of the senior occupational therapists.

Should you still be dissatisfied with this result, you can request the Occupational Therapist to provide you with a complaints form, or complain via the Council web page [http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/PPS/sl\\_pps/men\\_SW\\_Comments.asp](http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/PPS/sl_pps/men_SW_Comments.asp)

## 2.3 Type of Assistance

The assessment aims to identify needs, decide what level of priority applies and agree how best to meet that need.

The package available through the SoA relates to the home of the individual and may be in the form of;

- advice on alternative accommodation,
- equipment,
- adaptations to the existing home,
- referral on to other appropriate agencies.

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 use of the following grants: -

### **Mandatory Grants**

The following grant is to provide adaptation works that provide the assessed occupant with standard amenities (see appendix 2), or adaptations to the structure, which suit their particular needs: -

- 2.3.1 Provide 80% grant funding to provide, or, carry out adaptation of the standard amenities, at an existing property, to suit the needs of a disabled occupant. Grant funding of 100% will be provided for those applicants who are on the list of Scottish Government prescribed passport benefits. (*Income Support, Pension Credit (guarantee element), Income Based Job Seekers Allowance, Employment Support Allowance (income related)*). (see appendix 2 for qualification of works under mandatory grants).

Where a property is extended solely to create space for a standard amenity such as a bathroom, the cost will be covered by mandatory grant. Where an extension is used to provide standard amenities and living accommodation, only the element containing the standard amenities will receive mandatory grant.

## Discretionary Grants/Loans/Assistance

The following grants will be limited by availability of funding: -

- 2.3.2 Provide 80%, or, 100% if passported, grant funding to carry out adaptations within the home, (see appendix 2 for qualifying works).
- 2.3.3 Refer on to Home Appreciation Loan Scheme (part of the NLU) for assistance with extensions that provide living accommodation, such as bedrooms, required to suit the needs of a disabled occupant, as defined as being necessary by Aberdeen City Council's Community Occupational Therapy assessment criteria, (see appendix 1).
- 2.3.4 Refer on to the Lending Advisory Service, (part of the NLU), for financial assessment and assistance to find suitable lending arrangements for additional funding requirements over and above the grant limit.
- 2.3.5 Provide practical assistance to find additional funding from suitable charitable sources for works beyond the grant aided works.
- 2.3.6 Assist private landlords by matching potential tenants with specific needs to their adapted property in order to maximise the benefit of the adapted property through the Disabled Persons Housing Service, (DPHS)
- 2.3.7 Where a tenant match can not be located, ACC may provide grant assistance of 80% of the cost of works, to the landlord of a private rented property in order to reinstate the property to the position prior to the adaptations, where that tenant has previously received grant assistance to carry out that adaptation under the SoA.
- 2.3.8 Where the above option is deemed appropriate, Aberdeen City Council will require proof of previous condition prior to execution of adaptation works.
- 2.3.9 Aberdeen City Council will offer advice on scope of works required to reinstate a property that has been adapted for the needs of a disabled occupant, relevant statutory approvals required, and on selection of a suitable contractor to execute the works. No financial assistance will be offered.
- 2.3.10 Aberdeen City Council may consider assisting with funding of agents fee's where the works are aborted, due to unforeseen circumstances, such as deterioration in conditions leading to admission to long term hospitalisation.

Applicants will be given assistance to plan how they wish to progress with any adaptation work. This may be by assisting to directly appoint an Agent or by referring on to the Care & Repair service for further support and assistance. Discretionary grants may be provided for tenants in private rented accommodation on the basis that the tenancy is a secured tenancy with an unlimited period of tenure and provided that the landlord has no liability under the lease to undertake the required adaptations.

Adaptations are provided to meet your needs and therefore the discretionary grants will not normally be repeated within a 5 year period, unless due to a change in level of disability.

## 2.4 Direct Payments

On completion of an assessment that determines that the client would qualify for grant assistance to carry out adaptation works to their home, a direct payment equivalent to the assessed amount required to carry out that adaptation, **may** be provided to the claimant to be offset against the cost of either, carrying out

an alternative adaptation option, (such as an extension), or alternatively, to be used for the purpose of securing a more suitable property for their needs.

## 2.5 Extensions & Conversions

Where it is deemed impractical to provide adequate facilities within the current home to suit the needs of the disabled occupant, then Aberdeen City Council will offer advice and assistance to source funding, suitable to the needs of the applicant. This may take the form of referring on to the National Lending Advisory Service in the first instance and/or the National Lending Unit for a Home Appreciation Loan, when available.

## 2.6 Assisted House Purchase

2.6.1 Where an assessment has determined that an adaptation to the property is impractical or unlikely to resolve the clients needs, that is, that an adaptation suitable for the clients needs can not physically be carried out to the current home, then the applicant will be referred to Grampian Housing Association to be considered for assistance to purchase a new home through “Low cost Initiative for First Time buyers”, (LIFT), (see appendix 4).

2.6.2 This new property will be eligible for assistance to adapt it to the needs of the applicant.

## **ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE FOR ELDERLY & DISABLED HOMEOWNERS**

Aberdeen City Council currently funds a Care & Repair service for assisting homeowners who are 60+ and/or disabled. This scheme offers assistance in the form of: -

- **Small Repairs Service;**  
Help with carrying out small essential repairs around the home, (see appendix 3).
- **Advice and Assistance with major repair works;**  
Assistance to identify necessary repairs, maintenance and alteration work and to prioritise necessary action, assistance to prepare schedule of works and obtain quotations from appropriate contractors, oversee works on site and ensure works carried out correctly.
- **Affordable Warmth;**  
This service is available to all households in fuel poverty in the private sector to help with repairs to, and installation of energy efficient heating systems and provides assistance with works to reduce energy consumption. Access to Affordable Warmth loan scheme.
- **Assistance to raise funding shortfall;**  
Assistance to obtain appropriate benefits, discuss funding options available and to raise charitable funding where appropriate.

## **ENERGY EFFICIENCY ASSISTANCE**

Aberdeen City Council offer assistance to the citizens of Aberdeen through numerous packages that it develops in partnership with external contractors and agencies operating within the energy sector. Due to the nature of the market place the packages on offer can vary from time to time. For this reason it is requested that all applicants contact the council; either through the Private Sector Housing Unit, or, refer to our website, [www.aberdeencity.gov.uk](http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk) for the most up to date situation.

## **PRIVATE WATER SUPPLIES**

There are a small number of properties within the Aberdeen City area which have their own private water supply.

Aberdeen City Council enforces the Private Water Supply (Scotland) Regulations 2006 and Private Water Supplies (Grants) (Scotland) Regulations 2006 in relation to these properties, and maintain and update the Private Water Supply Register as required by the regulations

We undertake the sampling and risk assessment of drinking water supplies in response to the statutory requirements and to complaints and enquiries from homeowners. We investigate the sample results and other concerns regarding water quality in regard to public health risk and provide appropriate advice and guidance to owners, solicitors, consultants and to the general public.

We administer the Private Water Supply Grants Scheme utilising Scottish Government funding to supply sterilisation equipment and carry out other works as necessary in order to improve the quality of water from private supplies.

These grants are allocated yearly, but are not for connecting to a mains water supply but must be for either: -

- upgrading existing supply,
- protection works to the well,
- risk assessment carried out by ACC,
- UV filtration systems.

## Definitions

<p><i>Advice</i></p>	<p>This will normally be done by telephone or face to face where the client visits a council office.</p> <p>May include: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• technical issues,</li> <li>• accessing Trusted Trader Scheme,</li> <li>• information from other services on behalf of client,</li> <li>• how to access other services within the Council and external agencies funded by ACC to deliver specific assistance,</li> </ul>
<p><i>Practical Assistance</i></p>	<p>May include: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• on site inspection of property by a council officer,</li> <li>• assistance to facilitate meetings with all owners,</li> <li>• assistance to obtain services of an agent or contractors specific to type of work to be undertaken,</li> <li>• assistance to prepare maintenance plans.</li> </ul>
<p><i>Disability</i></p>	<p>Meaning of “disability” and “disabled person” Disability Discrimination Act 1995</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The (DDA) defines a disabled person as someone who has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.</li> </ul> <p>For the purposes of the DDA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• substantial means neither minor nor trivial</li> <li>• long term means that the effect of the impairment has lasted or is likely to last for at least 12 months (there are special rules covering recurring or fluctuating conditions)</li> <li>• normal day-to-day activities include everyday things like eating, washing, walking and going shopping</li> <li>• a normal day-to-day activity must affect one of the 'capacities' listed in the Act which include mobility, manual dexterity, speech, hearing, seeing and memory</li> </ul> <p>Some conditions, such as a tendency to set fires and hay fever, are specifically excluded.</p>
<p><i>Approved cost of works</i></p>	<p>This is the amount that Aberdeen City Council determines to be the maximum level of funding that they deem to be appropriate for eligible works for which assistance will be provided.</p>
<p><i>Maintenance Orders</i></p>	<p>A maintenance order allows a local authority to require the owner/s of a property to prepare a maintenance plan that defines; what works they will carry out to their property, when it will be carried out, how much it will cost and how it will be paid for. This plan will be presented</p>

	<p>to the local authority for approval and/or amendment.</p> <p>The maintenance plan can remain in place for up to 5 years, (which will be the case in most instances), and is recorded against the title deeds. This alerts any prospective purchaser to the fact that they will be committed to meeting the conditions of that plan for its duration.</p> <p>Where the owner/s fail to prepare a maintenance plan the local authority can prepare a plan in their stead and require the owners to implement it. The maintenance order can also stipulate that the owners appoint a manager to oversee implementation of the plan. Where an owner or owners fail to implement the plan Aberdeen City Council can implement the plan on their behalf and recover all relevant costs. These costs will include; the cost of carrying out any works, costs of any agent appointed to oversee the project on behalf of the owners and any costs incurred by the local authority in implementing the Order.</p>
<i>Work Notice</i>	<p>A work notice allows a local authority to “Bring any house which the local authority considers to be sub-standard into, or keeping it in, a reasonable state of repair.”<sup>1</sup></p> <p>The work notice also brings enforcement powers whereby the local authority can instruct the works to be carried out when the owner, or owners, fail to comply with the conditions detailed in the work notice.</p>
<i>Sub-standard</i>	<p>A house is classed as being sub standard if it is: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• below the tolerable standard, or</li> <li>• being in a state of serious disrepair, or</li> <li>• being in need of repair and, if nothing is done to repair it, is likely to deteriorate rapidly into a state of serious disrepair, or</li> <li>• damaging any other property.</li> </ul>
<i>Scottish Housing Quality Standard</i>	<p>This is the minimum standard to which the Scottish Government expects all social housing in Scotland to be built. It is therefore the measure to which all housing in Scotland should aspire.</p>
<i>Stairlifts</i>	<p>A stairlift is a mechanised piece of equipment fitted to an existing stair for the purposes of transporting a user between floors.</p>
<i>Tolerable Standard</i>	<p>The tolerable standard for housing is a 13 point standard: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Is structurally stable</li> <li>(b) Is substantially free from rising or penetrating damp</li> <li>(c) Has satisfactory provision for natural and artificial lighting, for ventilation and for heating</li> <li>(d) Has an adequate piped supply of wholesome water within the house</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> Housing (Scotland) Act 2006, c5, s30, (1) (b).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(e) Has a sink provided with a satisfactory supply of both hot and cold water within the house.</li><li>(f) Has a watercloset or waterless closet available for the exclusive use of the occupants of the house suitably located within the house;</li><li>(g) Has an effective system for the drainage and disposal of foul and surface water</li><li>(h) Has satisfactory facilities for the cooking of food within the house;</li><li>(i) Has satisfactory access to all external doors and outbuildings</li><li>(j) Has a fixed bath or shower and a wash-hand basin, each provided with a satisfactory supply of both hot and cold water and suitably located within the house.</li><li>(k) Has a water closet or waterless closet (amends (f) above)</li><li>(l) Has satisfactory thermal insulation</li><li>(m) In the case of a house having a supply of electricity, complies with the relevant requirements in relation to the electrical installation for the purposes of that supply.</li></ul>
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## **Appendix 2: - Disability Assessment Framework**

### Qualifying criteria for equipment and adaptations: -

- 1 The person for whom the equipment/adaptation is being considered must be a disabled person, as defined in legislation (Disability Discrimination Act 1996).

Circumstances may occasionally occur where provision of equipment/adaptation is necessary to overcome temporary disability.

- 2 The assessor concludes that the equipment/adaptation is necessary i.e. where appropriate; the first choice is for the disabled person to receive rehabilitation or training in alternative techniques to carry out a daily living activity, rather than rely on equipment/adaptations.
- 3 The purpose of providing the equipment/adaptation is to increase or maintain the functional independence of a person with substantial or long term disabilities. The form of provision will be dependent on the service user's needs in relation to the disability and the technical feasibility of the site.
- 4 Account will be taken of preferences expressed by a service user, and the assessor should seek agreement about the type of provision with the service user, carer, other members of the household and, if appropriate, other agencies e.g. the GP or District Nurse.
- 5 Equipment and adaptations are provided in the most cost-effective way. Where an individual wishes a more expensive solution they, or a third party, would be expected to fund the difference.
- 6 Equipment and adaptations fall within the scope of Direct Payments. Eligible individuals may therefore choose to receive a cash payment towards the purchase of equipment/adaptations, in lieu of their provision. (For further details please refer to later section, 'Relevant Legislation', <http://www.dpscotland.org.uk/>, or contact the ACC Direct Payments Co-ordinator, 01224 522005, [SDSTeam@aberdeencity.gov.uk](mailto:SDSTeam@aberdeencity.gov.uk) )
- 7 The needs of a carer will also be considered when providing equipment/planning the adaptation.
- 8 Written instructions/manufacturers instructions for equipment will be left with the service user, including advice on what to do if something goes wrong. All equipment issued will be demonstrated to the person.
- 9 Equal opportunities: ethnic and cultural aspects of the household will be considered. As part of the assessment, the usual practices of the family will be established. It may be necessary to consult with appropriate cultural groups, (e.g. Grampian Racial Equality Council, Aberdeen City Council Ethnic Minority Forum).

### Method of assessment

Anyone can contact the Community Occupational Therapy service to request advice, information or assessment (Tel - 01224 558333). If the need for an assessment for an

adaptation has been identified, an Occupational Therapist will arrange to visit you and undertake an assessment of need in accordance with Aberdeen City Council's criteria for the provision of equipment and adaptations. Due to demand on the service your request will be given a priority rating and may be placed on a waiting list.

Works for which grant assistance can be provided are as follows: -

Mandatory Grants: -

- Provision, or adaptation of standard amenities such as;
  - WC,
  - WHB (wash hand basin),
  - level access shower,
  - height adjustable bath/showering table,
  - Clos-O-Mat installations,
  - Combined shower/toilet installations,
  - Towards the cost of providing a bathroom external to the main structure of the home, e.g. within a new extension but not including any living accommodation,
  - Adaptations to kitchen sink (not units), to make accessible for use from a wheelchair.
- Alteration to widen door openings, or convert to sliding doors, within the home for the purpose of providing wheelchair access, *(this will not be subject to grant assistance for reinstatement works to landlords)*.
- Provision/construction of external ramps and handrails to entrance of home *(this will not be subject to grant assistance for reinstatement works to landlords)*.

Discretionary Grants: -

- Provision of internal stairlift to access amenities such as bathroom, bedroom or kitchen not on the same floor as the main living accommodation.
- Adaptation of kitchen units to make them suitable for access from a wheelchair.
- Provision of through floor lifts.
- Provision of overbath showers.
- Secure enclosures to gardens.
- Provision of ceiling track hoists.
- Installation/adaptation of door opening and/or phone entry systems.
- Raising or lowering of power points and switches.
- Provision of permanent external step lifts to provide access to one of the entrances to the home, and/or including alterations to widen existing paths and steps, *(this will not necessarily be the front door)*.

Timeframe for carrying out initial occupational therapy assessment: -

PRIORITY 1 – emergency: allocated immediately

(The service user or the person caring for them is placed in a situation of unacceptable risk immediate measures are required).

PRIORITY 2 – high priority: allocated within 2 weeks

(Serious risk factors to the service user or the person caring for them in relation to daily living tasks).

PRIORITY 3 – medium priority: allocated within 4 weeks

(Moderate risk factors to the service user or the person caring for them in relation to daily living tasks).

PRIORITY 4 – low priority: allocated within 3 months

(No significant risk factors to the service user or the person caring for them in relation to daily living tasks).

### **Appendix 3: - Small Repairs Service**

This service currently operates via the Aberdeen Care & Repair project and offers older homeowners or, homeowners with a disability the opportunity to have small essential repairs carried out for a minimal charge. The condition is that these works are capable of being completed within 2 hours. Any jobs that require more time are charged at normal rates.

### **Appendix 4: - Low cost Initiative for First Time buyers, (LIFT)**

Open Market Shared Equity is part of the range of assistance from the Scottish Government under LIFT.

It aims to help people on low incomes who aspire to own their home but who cannot afford to pay the full price for a house.

The Scottish Government provides grants to registered social landlords, (housing associations), to help them fund part of the price of a property that is for sale on the open market. You will pay for the majority share in the property – normally between 60 and 80 per cent of the price – and the registered social landlord will use the grant to pay for the rest.

The scheme was introduced in 2005 but has been extended to provide assistance for individuals or households who have 'particular needs', such as an evidenced need to move due to a disability,

People who meet the qualifying criteria can access Homestake using the following exceptions: -

- Do not have to be 1st time buyers,
- They can purchase a stake in a property as low as 51%, rather than the usual 60%-80%,
- The normal restriction of buying a stake in a property which only has two bed spaces larger than their current need may be relaxed,
- If on income support, mortgage interest can be met for mortgages up to £100,000
- Qualifying income levels for mortgage can be relaxed,
- The requirement to obtain several mortgage quotations can be relaxed where the applicant is experiencing difficulty in obtaining more than one.

## **Appendix 5: - Contact Details**

### **Private Sector Housing Unit**

For advice and assistance on all on housing repairs, maintenance, and adaptations: -

Telephone: - (01224) 522299      Email: - [privatehousing@aberdeencity.gov.uk](mailto:privatehousing@aberdeencity.gov.uk)

Private Sector Housing Unit  
Housing & Environment  
Business Hub 1, Lower Ground Floor West  
Marischal College  
Broad Street  
Aberdeen  
AB10 1AB

### **Community Occupational Therapy Duty Team**

For advice and assistance on disability aids and adaptations.

- **Duty Occupational Therapist**  
Integrated Duty Point  
Links Resource Centre  
City Hospital  
Park Road  
Aberdeen, AB24 5AU
- Telephone: 01224 558333  
Duty Clerical Telephone: 01224 558334  
Fax: 01224 558360  
E-Mail: [OTDuty@aberdeencity.gov.uk](mailto:OTDuty@aberdeencity.gov.uk)

### **Scottish Public Services Ombudsman**

The SPSO is the final stage for complaints about organisations providing public services in Scotland. They deal with complaints about councils, the National Health Service, housing associations, the Scottish Government and its agencies and departments, colleges and universities and most Scottish public bodies. You should only utilise this service once you have exhausted the Council's own complaints procedure. [www.spsso.org.uk](http://www.spsso.org.uk)

Tel 0800 377 7330  
Text 0790 049 4372  
Fax 0800 377 7331  
[Email ask@spsso.org.uk](mailto:ask@spsso.org.uk)

### **Community organisations.**

For a list of voluntary organisations, charities and community groups within Aberdeen City that may be able to offer additional advice and or assistance, visit Aberdeen City Council web page: - [http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/xcc\\_CommunityDirectory.asp](http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/xcc_CommunityDirectory.asp)

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Open Market Shared Equity Pilot

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