



# **Private Sector Housing Assistance Policy**

**2017-2018**

## **CONSULTATION DRAFT: SUMMARY DOCUMENT**

Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration  
Act 1996

The Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance)  
(England and Wales) Order 2002

## **INTRODUCTION**

This summary outlines Chorley Council's policy regarding the information, advice and support to assist home owners and tenants requiring adaptations and other help relating to their home.

## **DISABLED FACILITIES GRANTS (DFGs)**

The Council has a legal duty to provide specialist adaptations to meet the care and mobility needs of people with disabilities to enable them to live independently with privacy and dignity.

The Occupational Therapy service in Lancashire County Council's Adult Social Care Services Department assesses customers' needs.

Chorley Council is responsible for statutory housing functions, whilst Lancashire County Council is responsible for social care.

**The Council recommends that from April 2017 the maximum grant of £30,000 can be increased by up to a further £10,000 in order to allow all the recommended adaptation work to be carried out.**

**The Council also recommends that from April 2017 a 10% fee is applied to each adaptation application. Chorley is unusual in Lancashire in not applying a fee. The funds generated could be reinvested in services or placed in general balances.**

## Eligible Works for Disabled Facilities Grant

- To assist entry to and exit from the property.
- To aid access into and around the living areas, bedroom, kitchen and bathroom.
- To improve or provide heating and/or light controls.
- To make the home safe for the disabled occupant and other people residing with him/her.
- Access to and from the garden by a disabled occupant.
- Where the existing footprint or layout of the dwelling, including outbuildings and garages, can be adapted or converted to accommodate the facilities required, the Council will not consider any extension to the property.
- Where an extension is necessary, the Council will consider the most cost effective method of meeting the applicant's requirements.
- Where the applicant has a preference for works that are over and above those necessary to meet the disabled person's needs (such as an extension rather than the provision of stair lift and level access shower) the Council will only fund the cost of the original recommended works, with the remainder being funded by the applicant.

## Better Care Fund

From 2015/16 the grant paid from Central Government to Local Authorities to help pay for DFGs has been part of the Department of Health's 'Better Care Fund'.

The Better Care Fund is a 'single pooled budget for health & social care services to work more closely together in local areas based on a plan agreed between the NHS & local authorities'.

The Council intends to use the funding that it receives via the Better Care Fund (BCF) to help to address the stated BCF priorities, namely:

- Reducing delayed transfers of care
- Minimising avoidable hospital admissions
- Facilitating early discharge from hospital

## CHORLEY ADAPTATION GRANT (CAG)

The Regulatory Reform Order 2002 ("the RRO") introduced discretionary powers for Councils to develop different forms of assistance to meet local needs.

The Council intends to use the RRO to enable us to operate more flexibly and responsively from April 2017.

**From April 2017, and subject to available funding, the Council intends to remove the financial assessment for the following types of adaptation requests submitted by the Occupational Therapy service:**

- Level Access Shower
- Stairlifts
- Through Floor Lifts
- Ceiling Track Hoists
- Wash-dry toilets (procured via LCC)

To qualify for the non-means tested route to obtaining an adaptation, the required adaptation work would consist of one item only from the above list.

## **INTEGRATED HOME IMPROVEMENT SERVICE (IHIS)**

The IHIS service is a LCC initiative which supports the broad aims of improving or maintaining health and quality of life, and maintaining residents' independence.

It is anticipated that there will be a corresponding reduction in customers experiencing falls, hospital and residential care admissions and overall demand for health and social care services.

## **Handyperson service**

The service includes a number of interventions (this is not an exhaustive list):

- Supplying and fitting grab rails and hand rails
- Changing light bulbs
- Fitting draught excluders
- Carrying out small repairs to paths and steps
- Removing clutter in hallway and on stairs
- Putting up and taking down curtains

- Relocating and/or fixing trailing flexes
- Tracking down or taping loose or fraying carpets

## **Eligibility for free Handyperson services**

Eligibility criteria is as follows:

Customers in the private sector aged 18 and above must **either** have:

- a disability that is, or could be, registered and/or have a diagnosed long term health condition/s that directly affects their mobility or independence to stay safe at home.

**Or**

- an imminent and/or major risk that will lead to the person having an unscheduled admission to hospital or residential care without intervention.

**Or**

- The service is needed to facilitate a discharge from hospital where it would not be deemed safe for them to return without intervention

## **Minor Adaptation service**

This service provides housing-related support to disabled individuals.

Minor Adaptations customers are not subject to a financial assessment.

Customers are assessed by an OT for items costing less than £1,000 (typically banister rails, external metal rails and adjustments to steps).

If customers need such adaptations, LCC refer the cases to the Council and we arrange to do the works.

## **CONSULTATION QUESTIONS**

- 1. Do you agree with the recommendation to introduce a non-means tested grant – the Chorley Adaptation Grant – from April 2017 ?**
- 2. Do you agree with the recommendation to allow an additional sum of up to £10,000 above the DFG maximum of £30,000 to ensure that all the recommended works can be carried out ?**
- 3. Do you agree with the recommendation to apply a 10% fee on each adaptation case from April 2017 ?**

**NB The customer would not pay this amount themselves – it would instead be added to their grant amount. The funds generated could be reinvested in services or placed in general balances**

Please submit your consultation responses by Monday 6<sup>th</sup> March by the following methods:

**By Email:**

[housing.repairs@chorley.gov.uk](mailto:housing.repairs@chorley.gov.uk)

**In writing:**

Chorley Home Improvement Agency, Health and Wellbeing Service, Civic Offices, Union Street, Chorley PR7 1AL