

Improving access to the Disabled Facilities Grant

Nottingham City Council's DFG policy proposals

Background and proposed changes.



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Disabled Facilities Grants

Disabled Facilities Grants help cover the cost of essential home adaptations for older people and disabled people of all ages, helping them to remain well, avoid unnecessary hospital stays and continue living in their own homes for as long as possible.

Eligibility criteria

- Occupational Therapist assessment which confirms that the proposed works are necessary and appropriate
- A technical assessment which confirms that the proposed works are reasonable and appropriate.
- [Eligible works](#)
- [Financial means test](#)

Examples of Eligible Works

- stair-lifts
- level access showers and wet rooms
- wash and dry toilets
- ramps
- wider doors
- extensions to existing dwellings
- garden access
- heating systems
- Insulation
- telecare and assistive technology



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Policy context

Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) are funded by central government. The funding is provided to local authorities as a ring-fenced capital grant, which means it can only be used to pay for eligible adaptations for people whose circumstances meet the grant's eligibility criteria.

Local authorities are responsible for administering DFG funding and abide by [Government guidance](#). Local authorities' duties include assessing applications, approving eligible works, and ensuring the grant is used in line with national legislation and guidance.

The Disabled Facilities Grant operates within a national framework set by government, which includes a maximum grant amount of £30,000 and a financial means test. Much of this framework has not been updated for many years and no longer reflects today's construction costs or the cost-of-living pressures faced by residents when financial contributions are calculated.

Local authorities have discretionary powers that allow them to provide additional support where there is a clear local need. Nottingham City Council is proposing to use these powers to make the DFG more flexible and better suited to supporting residents across the city.



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Enabling a local approach: Nottingham City Council's DFG policy proposals

Increase the maximum grant from £30,000 to £50,000

The £30,000 limit has not changed since 2008 and no longer reflects current building costs.

Waive the first £10,000 of the means tested assessed contribution

The national means-test formula does not reflect current cost-of-living pressures. Many low-income households are being asked to pay contributions they cannot afford. The Council will continue to use the national formula but waive the first £10,000.

Increase the Relocation Grant cap to £50,000

Moving to a more suitable home can sometimes be the most practical and cost-effective option. Increasing the cap better reflects current property prices.

Joint residency (disabled children) grant

Where a disabled child lives between two separated parents, a statutory DFG can only be awarded for the main home. The Council proposes to offer a discretionary grant of up to £30,000 to help adapt the second home where this is in the child's best interests.

Motor neurone disease (MND) grant

To ensure timely support, adaptations costing up to £20,000 for residents with MND will not be means-tested.



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The council already uses some discretion in how it applies DFG policy and proposes to continue operating the following.

Repayment threshold

If a property is sold within 10 years, the council may recover some of the grant. Under the national framework repayment conditions apply to grants over £5,000. The council has increased this threshold to £10,000. In addition the maximum amount repayable will be capped at £10,000. For example, if a person received a £25,000 grant and sells the property within 10 years, they would be required to repay £10,000. If the grant was £12,000, the amount repayable would be £2,000.

Decent Homes for Disabled People Grant

In some cases, essential repair works must be completed before any DFG-funded adaptations can proceed. For example, if a property's electrical installation is found to be unsafe, a full or partial rewire may be required before adaptations can be safely installed. A grant of up to £10,000 may be available to applicants who have an active DFG application.

To note:

- Conditions apply to all discretionary grants and are set out in the policy.
- These discretionary grants will be subject to an assessment and the availability of Council resources at the time of application.



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Enabling a local approach: Comparison to the national policy framework

Area of policy	National policy	Proposed local policy
Grant maximum	£30,000	£50,000
Means Testing	National formula	Waive the first £10K of assessed contribution
Grant conditions if property is sold with 10 years (maximum grant)	Repayment on amounts over £5K, capped at £10K	Repayment on amounts over £10K, capped at £10K
Relocation Grant	No national policy	Up to £50K towards price of alternative property
Children living in joint residency arrangements	No national policy	Grant available up to £30K for second property
Applicants with a Motor Neurone Disease diagnosis	No national policy	No means test or repayment conditions for works up to £20K
Decent Homes for Disabled People Grant	No national policy	£10K grant available alongside an active DFG application, fully repayable

These discretionary grants will be subject to an OT assessment and the availability of Council resources at the time of application.



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Grant conditions: repayment and mean testing requirements

Grant type	Repayment condition	Repayment term	Means test
Mandatory DFG £30K plus discretionary £20K top up	Apply repayment on amounts over £10K, capped at £10K	If property is sold within 10 years	Adults – required Children – not required
Exceptional funding (£50K+)	Amount over £50K fully repayable	On property sale or transfer	Adults – required Children – required
Relocation Grant – moving costs	Maximum loan is below the repayment threshold	n/a	Adults – required Children – not required
Relocation Grant – purchase price	Grant amount fully repayable	On property sale or transfer	Adults – required Children – required
Children living in joint residency arrangements	Apply repayment on amounts over £10K, capped at £10K	If property is sold within 10 years	Adults – n/a Children – required
Applicants with a MND diagnosis (£20K)	No repayment conditions	n/a	Adults – not required Children – n/a
Decent Homes for Disabled People Grant	Grant amount fully repayable	On property sale or transfer	Adults – required Children – required

These discretionary grants will be subject to an OT assessment and the availability of Council resources at the time of application.



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Have your say

Please visit our online consultation page [Improving access to Disabled Facilities Grant - Nottingham City Council](#) where you can view the draft policy.

Please complete the survey to share your views. [Take the survey](#)

All feedback received will be carefully considered and will help shape the final policy and how Disabled Facilities Grants are delivered in Nottingham.

If you have any further questions regarding the consultation, please contact us at Adaptations.Housing@nottinghamcity.gov.uk



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