

Spelthorne Borough Council

Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) Policy

July 2017



## **Introduction**

Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG's) are a statutory function which are administered by Spelthorne Borough Council in order to provide aids and adaptations to enable a disabled person to live independently in their own home.

## **Aims and Priorities**

Spelthorne Borough Council's Corporate Plan 2016-2019 has 4 priorities:

- Housing
- Economic Development
- Clean and Safe Environment
- Financial Sustainability

Within the Housing Priority, the plans include:

- to make the best use of existing housing within the Borough (owner occupied and rented) making sure that it is safe and suitable to meet the needs of our residents, including people with disabilities and our older residents
- to help vulnerable people in need to make best use of their homes for as long as possible through a range of adaptations and other assistance (e.g. meals on wheels and our community alarm network)

## **What does a DFG provide?**

Grants may be provided to cover the cost of any changes that need to be made to an individual's home in order for them to remain in their own home. This could be to:

- Widen doors and install ramps
- Improve access to rooms and facilities – e.g. stairlifts or a downstairs bathroom
- Provide a heating system suitable for needs
- Adapt heating or lighting controls to make them easier to use

## **Who can apply?**

Grants are for disabled people and can be applied for by:

- The disabled person
- A person living with a disabled person,
- The landlord of a property

The person who the grant is for must:

- own the property or be a tenant
- intend to live in the property during the grant period (which is currently 10 years)

The council needs to be satisfied that the work is:



- necessary and appropriate to meet the disabled person's needs
- reasonable and can be done - depending on the age and condition of the property

### **How much is a Grant?**

The maximum Mandatory Grant in England is currently £30,000 which may be topped up through a discretionary grant of an additional £15,000. The additional £15,000 is subject to individual circumstances and overall review of the budget.

Applications are means tested so how much is provided depends on income or any savings. The individual may have to contribute towards the cost or pay the whole cost.

There is no means test for those who receive a means-test benefit, for example Pension Credit, Housing Benefit, or Income Support.

### **Land Charges**

If you are having a larger adaptation (over £15,000), a land charge will be placed against the property. The charge is placed for 10 years, and the amount placed depends on the cost of the works. Should you sell your property within 10 years of the adaptation, the amount will be repayable, subject to Group Head (Community Wellbeing) discretion.

DFG's are publicly funded and there is a high demand for them. By placing a charge for the larger adaptations, this means that the money can be used to help other disabled residents.

### **How to apply?**

There are several ways to apply for a grant:

- The Council use a Home Improvement Agency that supports people through the process. They will manage the projects from start to finish. Initial advice is free and there is no obligation to proceed. If an application is submitted, there is a standard fee charged for their service which is usually paid for out of the grant. Anyone wishing to apply for a grant (including home owners or private rented) can use this service.
- Speak to your Occupational Therapist (OT) who can advise on the application process.
- Speak to the Independent Living Team at Spelthorne Borough Council

Contacts:

Home Improvement Agency  
A2Dominion  
Spelthorne House  
Thames Street  
Staines upon Thames  
KT18 4TA

Independent Living Team  
Spelthorne Borough Council  
Council Offices  
Knowle Green  
Staines upon Thames  
TW18 1XB

Tel: 020 8825 1219

Tel: 01784 448607/ 446471



## How long will the process take?

Local Authorities have up to 6 months to approve a fully completed application form. Works aim to be completed within 12 months from receipt of the fully completed application. In many cases these times periods are significantly shorter.

## DFG Legislation

The Legislation for DFG's is within the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996. The Regulatory Reform Order 2002 gives Local Authorities power to introduce policies around aids and adaptations

In 2008, the government made changes to allow greater flexibility around how the money can be used in order to keep people in their own homes.

In 2017/18, the overall budget for grants was increased to £431m (from £220m) the previous year. As a result, this allows Local Authorities to look at additional ways the money can be spent to help people live independently in their own homes.

The table at the end of this policy summarises Spelthorne Borough Council's conditions for various types and costs of adaptations.

## Complaints Procedure

Spelthorne complaints policy can be found at:

<https://www.spelthorne.gov.uk/complaints>

or contacting Spelthorne's Customer Service department

- email [customer.services@spelthorne.gov.uk](mailto:customer.services@spelthorne.gov.uk)
- phone us on 01784 451499
- write to us at:

Customer Service Centre  
Spelthorne Borough Council  
Knowle Green  
Staines-upon-Thames  
Surrey TW18 1XB

A2D complaints contact details below:

Sean Frizell HIA & A&A Manager  
Spelthorne House  
Thames Street  
Staines-upon-Thames  
Surrey TW18 4TA

[Sean.frizell@a2dominion.co.uk](mailto:Sean.frizell@a2dominion.co.uk)

Tel: 020 8825 1850



Scheme	Amount available	Scope	Who is eligible	Conditions
Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant	Up to £30,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stair lifts</li> <li>• Hoists</li> <li>• Ramps</li> <li>• Level access shower/wet room</li> <li>• Door widening</li> <li>• Extensions</li> <li>• Conversions</li> <li>• Any other larger adaptations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A disabled person who owns the property</li> <li>• A disabled tenant in a rented property (social housing or privately rented)</li> <li>• Parent or guardian of a disabled child</li> <li>• Disabled person living in someone else's home</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fully completed application</li> <li>• Means tested</li> <li>• No land charges applied to basic adaptations (e.g. stairlift, level access shower under £15,000)</li> </ul>
Discretionary Top up Disabled Facilities Grant	Up to £15,000 on top on mandatory £30,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extensions</li> <li>• Conversions</li> <li>• Any other larger adaptations</li> </ul>	As above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fully completed application</li> <li>• Spelthorne Borough Council panel will meet to consider application</li> <li>• Means tested</li> <li>• Land charges applied</li> </ul>
Discretionary Budget	Manager's discretion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Warranties</li> <li>• Flexibility outside mandatory grants</li> </ul>	As above	