

Spelthorne Borough Council

Disabled Facility Grants (DFG) and Better Care Funding

for disabled resident aids and adaptations Proposed Policy 2022

Introduction to Disabled Facilities Grants.

Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG's) are a statutory function which are administrated by Spelthorne Borough Council.

DFG's are available to help fund the cost of aids and adaptations to enable a disabled person to live independently in their own home and support the provision of decent, healthy, and safe housing within the borough under the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 and the flexibility of the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002

A DFG is only available to people who are disabled within the meaning of the National Assistance Act 1948. This means that a DFG will not be granted to a person who is solely elderly or retired.

The Council closely with Surrey County Council's Social Services Department, who will assess the needs of the client and confirm that the works are "necessary and appropriate".

This policy ensures that resources are targeted at those who would not otherwise be able to adapt, repair or improve their home. By providing adaptations to those who have a medical need and by developing a preventative approach the Council can reduce hospitalisation and improve adults' health and wellbeing. In turn this relieves some of the pressure on Social Services and NHS partners

DFG's are a means tested scheme, which will consider a disabled persons income, savings and capital owned by them and their spouse or partner. Depending on the outcome of the test, they may be required to contribute towards the cost of the works. A means test will not be conducted if they are applying on behalf of a child.

The maximum DFG available in England is £30,000. If the total cost of the works, plus any fees or VAT exceed this amount, the applicant may be required to pay the additional costs.

There is no means test for

- those who receive a non-means test benefit, for example Guaranteed Pension Credit, Housing Benefit, or Income Support.
 - a standard stairlift
 - a level access shower (where there is need to modify an existing bathroom)
 - a disabled child under 19 years (if in education or receiving child benefits)
 - Motor neurone disease (MND), palliative or end of life diagnosis
- Spelthorne Borough Council offer a fast-tracked process with no means testing for works up to £5000 and ignore the earnings of the person with the

diagnosis where; larger scale works are assessed as being necessary and appropriate.

The person who the grant is for must:

- own the property or be a tenant
- the property must be the disabled person's main residence
- must be a UK citizen
- have lived, or be intending to live, in the property in question for at least five years, or for such a shorter period as their health and other relevant circumstances permit

The Council needs to be satisfied that the work:

- is necessary and appropriate to meet the disabled person's needs
- is reasonable and practical
- considers things such as the effect on other residents, limited access, conservation considerations, and the structural characteristics of the property
- is of good quality and meets other safety standards (applies where grants approved and adaptations or other works are undertaken)

Land Charges

If the DFG is for a homeowner and the adaptation is over £5,000, a land charge will be placed against the property (up to £10,000). The amount placed depends on the cost of the works and will decrease yearly over the next 10 years.

Should the property be sold within 10 years of the adaptation, the amount will be repayable.

In the event that the homeowner seeks to 'top up' their DFG, the total amount of the 'top up' will be placed on the property as a land charge. This charge will not benefit from any yearly decrease or expiration. Therefore, should the property be sold by the beneficiary of the grant, or their beneficiaries at any future date then the land charge will be repayable in full and the reasonable costs associated with recovery.

Aids and Adaptations Grant.

A Minor Aids and Adaptations Grant is available to Homeowners costing less than £2000 for a wide variety of other aids or adaptations. these include:

- works to make a home suitable for a disabled occupant's accommodation, welfare, or employment.
- providing small-scale adaptations to either fulfil needs not covered by mandatory DFG's
- avoiding the procedural complexities of mandatory DFGs, to deliver a much quicker remedy for urgent adaptations
- repairs to a previous DFG

Getting grant approval before starting work

If the work is started before a grant application is formally approved in writing the application will be disqualified.

What works are eligible?

Mandatory grants can be awarded for the following works:

- facilitating a disabled person's access to the dwelling for example, widening doors and installing ramps
- by providing or improving access to the bedroom, kitchen, toilet, wash basin and bath (and/or shower) facilities; for example, by installing a stair lift or providing a level access shower room
- facilitating the preparation of food by the disabled person.
- improving/providing a heating system to meet the disabled person's needs
- facilitating access and movement around the home to enable the disabled person to be cared for by someone dependent upon him or her needs.
- making the dwelling safe for the disabled person and others residing with him or her.
- facilitating access to and from a garden or making a garden safe.

Who can apply?

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

- the disabled person
- a person living with a disabled person,
- parent or guardian of a disabled child,
- the landlord of a property

How long will the process take?

- Spelthorne Borough Council have up to 6 months to approve a fully completed application form.
- Spelthorne Borough Council aim to complete the works within 12 months from receipt of the fully completed application in many cases these times periods are significantly shorter.

How to apply?

- speak to an Occupational Therapist (OT) who can advise on the application process.

Spelthorne Locality Team,
Ashford Centre,
Stanwell Road,
Surrey

TW15 3DU

Telephone: 01932 795 292

Email: Spelthorne.otduty@surreycc.gov.uk

- apply directly to the Independent Living Team at Spelthorne Borough Council.

Spelthorne Borough Council,
Knowle Green,
Staines-upon-Thames,
Surrey
TW18 1XB

Telephone: 01784 448 607

Email: dfg@spelthorne.gov.uk

Complaint procedure

Spelthorne Borough Council aim to provide a high-quality and value-for-money services to all our residents.

If Spelthorne Borough Council do get something wrong, the Council try to put it right quickly and learn from mistakes, to help improve services in the future.

Feedback from residents is an important part of helping the Council to do this.

The Council will deal with all complaints fairly, consistently, and professionally.

Ways that you can contact The Council.

- email Customer Services
- phone us on 01784 451499
- write to us at:

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

Scheme	Amount Available	Eligible Works	Who is Eligible	Conditions / Notes
<p>Disabled Facility Grant (DFG)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandatory • Main priority of the DFG Team 	<p>Up to £30,000</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access • Ramps • Concrete hardstanding • Stairlifts • Through lifts • Level access showers • Hoists • Door widening • Conversions • Extensions • Any larger adaptations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A disabled person who owns the property • A disabled tenant in a rented property • Parent or Guardian of a disabled child • A disabled person living in someone else's home 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occupational Therapist (OT) assessment • Work is necessary, appropriate, reasonable, and practical. • Fully completed application • Means tested (except in the case of an applicant with MND, palliative or end of life diagnosis as confirmed by a medical professional)
<p>Aids and Adaptations Grant</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-Means tested • Homeowner / Private tenant • One Grant per property 	<p>Up to £2,000</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small scale adaptations • Half steps • Ramps • Rails • Repairs to previous DFG • Warranties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A disabled person who owns the property • A disabled tenant in a privately rented property • Parent or Guardian of a disabled child • A disabled person living in someone else's home 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work is necessary, appropriate, reasonable, and practical. • Occupational Therapist (OT) assessment not necessary • This brings Spelthorne Borough Council in line with other Councils
<p>Top UP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spelthorne Borough Council Panel 	<p>Up to £15,000 over the £30,000 DFG limit</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexibility outside mandatory grant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A disabled person who owns the property • A disabled tenant in a privately rented property • Parent or Guardian of a disabled child • A disabled person living in someone else's home 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occupational Therapist (OT) assessment • Work is necessary, appropriate, reasonable, and practical. • Fully completed application • Means tested

<p>Land charge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homeowner 	<p>Up to £15,000</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributions • Top Ups • Nil Grants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A disabled person who owns the property • Parent or Guardian of a disabled child 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work is necessary, appropriate, reasonable, and practical. • In circumstances where occupants desire a higher specification to standard work • To Top Up if over the mandatory limit of £30,000 • Where if following a means test the applicant would have to contribute to the work
<p>Community Equipment Store (CES)</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ceiling Track Hoists • Ramps • Handrails 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A disabled person who owns the property • A disabled tenant in a privately rented property • Parent or Guardian of a disabled child • A disabled person living in someone else's home 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occupational Therapist (OT) assessment
<p>Handy Person Service (Home Link)</p>	<p>Charged may apply</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dementia Service • Urgent Hospital Discharge / Palliative / Safety and Security • Minor Health and Safety work • General DIY • Skilled Electrical • Skilled Plumbing • Key Safes • Handrails 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elderly 60 Years + • Disabled in receipt of DLA or PIP • Vulnerable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occupational Therapist (OT) assessment • Self-referral • Owner Occupier • Privet / Rented

Spelthorne Borough Council Panel,
DFG Officer,
Strategic Lead Independent Living,
Head of Service Independent Living,
Deputy Chief Executive.

Note – Changes to previous Policy are in Blue