



Renfrewshire
Council

Help With Adaptations To Your Home

**A guide for disabled people in
private housing in Renfrewshire**

revised August 2013

Introduction

This leaflet is for people living in owner-occupied and privately rented housing in Renfrewshire. It tells you about the help available from us to adapt a home for a disabled person. (If your home is rented from the Council or a housing association you should ask your landlord about the help available.)

A revised system of assistance was introduced in April 2009. Councils are required by law to provide assistance in certain circumstances, but in other situations can decide what to offer. This guide takes you through the process of getting your home adapted to help you continue living there.

Getting your needs assessed

If you have a need that we think is a priority for assistance, we will help you to adapt your home as necessary.

Firstly you will need an assessment of your circumstances by one of our Occupational Therapists to see what sort of difficulties you are having in your home and what might be the best way of helping you. To arrange this, please contact Social Work through the Adult Service Request Team (ASeRT):

- Phone: 0141 207 7878
- Fax : 0141 886 3460
- Text / SMS: 07958 010325
- E-mail: adultservicerequest.sw@renfrewshire.gsx.gov.uk

Where necessary, the assessment will also look at the needs of other family members living with you, including anyone who helps care for you.

We will have to decide whether your need is a priority – in other words, how urgently you need help.

The Occupational Therapist will then discuss options with you. These may include rehabilitation, referral to other health specialists, provision of daily living equipment, or an adaptation to your home.

Sometimes the assessment may decide that instead of adapting your home, another option – such as moving to a different property – is the best way of meeting your need. If this is the case, we will work with you to explore your options.

If you are unhappy with the outcome of the assessment, you can ask for your case to be re-considered. If you are still unhappy after the appeal, you may want to contact the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman on 0800 377 7330, SPSO Freepost EH641, Edinburgh EH3 0BR or ask@spsa.org.uk

When an adaptation is the best way to meet your need, you can apply for financial help.

What adaptations can I get help with?

You can get help with a range of adaptations - that is, permanent changes to your home that involve building work such as:

- replacing the bath with a walk-in shower
- constructing a galvanised ramp to help you get in and out of your home

If we have assessed you as having a priority need for adaptations like these, the cost of work will probably be eligible for a grant.

How much grant will I get?

If you are eligible for a grant, it will cover 80% of the cost of the work you have been assessed as needing.

However, the grant will cover 100% of the cost of the work if you receive one of these welfare benefits:

- Income Support
- Income-Based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Pension Credit (guarantee element)
- Income-Related Employment and Support Allowance.

If you have been offered a grant at 80%, but you cannot raise the other 20% of the costs that you need to go ahead with the work, we will give you the opportunity to apply for additional grant assistance, on a means-tested basis, which could take the percentage up as high as 100%. We can also arrange for a Benefits Check for you to ensure that you are receiving all the help that you are entitled to.

You may be entitled to exemption from VAT for all or part of your adaptation work – your contractor or our staff should be able to advise you about this.

Where you want to carry out work over and above what you have been assessed as needing – for example if you are replacing the bath with a shower but you would like to re-tile the rest of your bathroom – you will need to pay for this yourself as grant will not cover these extra costs. Such additional work should not change the suitability of the adaptation to meet your needs and will not affect the grant you receive to adapt your home.

How do I apply for a grant?

Your Occupational Therapist will visit you again with an officer from Care and Repair Renfrewshire, who will advise on the technical aspects of adapting your house. You will be given assistance to complete a grant application form and guidance on how to proceed. If the adaptation is for a child aged under 16, the responsible parent should apply for the grant. If the work is going to be technically complex, we will ensure that you get the necessary help, through Care and Repair Renfrewshire.

With your agreement Care & Repair or your Occupational Therapist will get quotations from at least two contractors, to give us an estimate of the cost of the necessary work. The contractors must be proper businesses that have experience in this type of work.

We must be satisfied that the cost of the work is reasonable. We may therefore ask you to get other estimates if we believe that those estimates you have obtained are not competitive. Your grant will be based on the lowest estimate that you submit. Your Occupational Therapist will need to be satisfied that the proposed works will meet your needs.

Once we have the application form and estimates and completed all the necessary checks, we will send you a formal letter of approval which will show the approved cost of the works and the percentage of grant which is being offered. **You must wait until your grant is approved in writing before asking your contractor to start the work, as we will not be able to approve a grant on work which has already been carried out.** Please inform your Occupational Therapist or Care & Repair Renfrewshire when the work is starting.

For some larger works, you may also need a Building Warrant and/or Planning Permission – you may be eligible for exemption from the fees for these and grant assistance may be available for associated consultancy fees. **You will need to have all the necessary consents, as well as your grant approval, before you ask your contractor to start the works.**

Once the adaptation work is finished, you should ask for a final invoice from your contractor. You should then contact Care and Repair Renfrewshire or your Occupational Therapist and arrange for them to inspect the completed work to ensure that it has been carried out satisfactorily and that it meets your needs. If the work needed a Building Warrant, the contractor will also need to get a completion certificate. If the work included any electrical work, the contractor should also give you an electrical completion test certificate.

When we are satisfied with the work, we will pay the grant, either straight to you or to the contractor or another person if you prefer. We will keep a fee of £60 from the grant payment to cover the cost of registering the grant with Registers of Scotland, where the title deeds of all houses in Scotland are recorded.

Additional living space

If it is identified that extra living space is needed in your home and/or additional bathroom and toilet facilities, mandatory grant is only available for assistance with the installation of essential facilities.(i.e. bathroom and toilet facilities)

Where you are unable to finance the proposed additional living space required for your home we will work with you to consider all alternative options which might include looking for more suitable alternative housing. The Council may offer you financial assistance with the costs of moving home. We may also be able to refer you to voluntary organisations such as Ownership Options who could help you buy a suitable property.

The LIFT Open Market Shared Equity scheme may also be a good option if you cannot afford the full cost of purchasing a larger or more suitable house. (Applicants who are eligible can purchase a house for sale on the open market through this scheme, with an equity share of up to half the value of the house being taken by a Housing Association).

A house in the social rented sector may be suitable for your needs or may be readily adaptable, and the Council and Housing Associations may be able to offer housing to owner-occupiers where this would be the most cost-effective way of meeting their needs.

The Council will only consider offering additional financial support under exceptional circumstances (e.g. when there is more than one disabled person in the household also assessed as requiring major adaptations) However, this support would only be available where budgets allow and after all other alternative options have been explored by you.

Help for private tenants

If you rent your home privately, you will need to get the agreement of your landlord for you to carry out the adaptation that you need. However, the landlord cannot refuse to give consent without a good reason.

You should apply for assistance from us in the same way as a home owner. If you later move out of the rented house, and your landlord requires you to remove the adaptation you made, we will provide help to do this.

Other assistance

As a Council, we must ensure (under the NHS & Community Care Act 1990), that where a disabled person's need is assessed as being a priority, that need is met within a reasonable time period. So, if you cannot cover the full cost of meeting your need, even with a maximum grant, you should contact us to see if we can find any way to help you.

If you are not satisfied with the way in which we have dealt with your case, you have the right to complain. If you are still not satisfied with the answer that we give you, you can contact the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman on 0800 377 7330, SPSO Freepost EH641, Edinburgh EH3 0BR or ask@spsos.org.uk

This leaflet is not intended to be a detailed guide to the law on help with adaptations. It provides only a general overview of what is set out in the legislation. For more information about getting help with adaptations, or if you are having any other problems with your home, please contact us at:

Renfrewshire Council
Development and Housing Services (Owner Services Section)
9 Clark Street, Paisley, PA1 1RX
Telephone : 0141 618 5895/5711
E-mail: ownerservices.hps@renfrewshire.gov.uk

Care & Repair Renfrewshire provides advice and practical assistance with repairs and adaptations to the homes of older and disabled people. Contact them at:

Care & Repair Renfrewshire
1st floor, Bridgewater Shopping Centre, Erskine, PA8 7AA
Telephone: 0141 812 4111
Email: enquiries.carerepair@bridgewaterha.org.uk

The two organisations listed below can offer specialist advice to disabled people on adaptations and other housing options, and will be able to tell you about any other local or national advice agencies which may be able to help you further.

Advice Service Capability Scotland
Telephone: 0131 313 5510
Textphone: 0131 346 2529
ascs@capability-scotland.org.uk

Ownership Options
Phone: 01312471400
Email:
info@oois.org.uk

Update is Scotland's national disability information service. Their Helpline number is 0131 669 1600.

If you would like information in another language or format please ask us -  0141 618 6150

如欲索取以另一語文印製或另一格式製作的資料，請與我們聯絡。

اگر آپ کو معلومات کسی دیگر زبان یا دیگر شکل میں درکار ہوں تو برائے مہربانی ہم سے پوچھئے۔

ਜੇ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੀਦੀ, ਤਾਂ ਇਹ ਸਾਥੋਂ ਮੰਗ ਲਓ।

Jeżeli chcieliby Państwo uzyskać informacje w innym języku lub w innym formacie, prosimy dać nam znać.