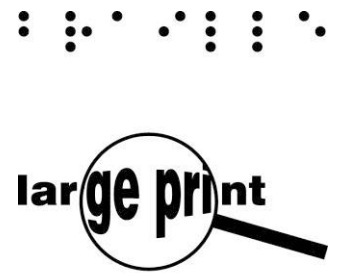


DARTFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

Disabled Facilities Grants Policy

March 2016

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. The legislative provisions governing disabled facilities grants (DFGs) are contained in the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 (as amended) (HGCRA 1996).
- 1.2. A DFG is a mandatory grant limited to £30,000 towards the cost of providing adaptations and facilities which include access into and around the property and the main rooms used by the disabled person, safety of the disabled person and adapting the heating and lighting controls for a disabled person in a dwelling, qualifying houseboats and caravans or in the common parts of a building containing one or more flats.
- 1.3. A DFG will not be granted to a person who is merely elderly or retired.
- 1.4. Applicants should not assume that they will automatically qualify for a DFG, as they are means tested. This may result in a 'nil grant' or applicants having to pay a contribution towards the required works themselves.
- 1.5. In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, the Council ensures that its DFG service is equally accessible to all.
- 1.6. The responsibility for administering DFGs lies with the local housing authority. There is a duty to consult with social services authorities on whether the proposed works are necessary and appropriate to meet the needs of the disabled person who is seeking a DFG (under Part 1, Section 24(3) of the HGCRA 1996). However, it is the local housing authority which must decide what action should be taken on that advice. It is also the local housing authority which must decide whether the application is approved, having regard to whether the proposed works are necessary and appropriate to meet the needs of the disabled person and whether it is reasonable and practicable to carry them out.
- 1.7. In deciding whether works are necessary and appropriate, the local housing authority must have regard to whether the works would enable the disabled person to remain living in their existing home as independently as possible and whether the works would meet as far as possible, the assessed medical and physical needs of the person.
- 1.8. The Council is a local housing authority and is committed to improving the quality of life for its residents and to provide a high level service to households requiring assistance to remain in their own homes. The Council takes account of and this Policy reflects the good practice guidance 'Delivering Housing Adaptations for Disabled People 2013 issued by the Home Adaptations Consortium and the guidance issued by the Department of Communities and Local Government.
- 1.9. This Policy deals specifically with the provision of DFGs and is tenure neutral i.e. anyone may apply for a DFG (see section 2.2.of this Policy). However, please note the advice in sections 3.18 to 3.20 of this Policy.
- 1.10. The Council has a separate policy for the provision of disabled adaptations within its housing stock see - <http://www.dartford.gov.uk/by-category/housing2/housing/council-housing/improvements-and-repairs>

2. DFGs for tenants of housing associations and council tenants

- 2.1. Although the responsibility for administering DFGs lies with the Council, housing associations also have a duty to their tenants to provide a home which is accessible. The Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) states *“registered providers shall co-operate with relevant organisations to provide an adaptations service that meets tenants’ needs”*¹. Tenants of Housing Associations are therefore recommended to approach their landlord for assistance in the first instance for minor works.
- 2.2. Council tenants and housing association tenants are eligible to apply for DFGs and will be assessed for needs on the same basis as private owners and tenants. Before it offers a DFG to a qualifying housing association applicant, the Council will contact the relevant housing association directly regarding the applicants’ proposed adaptation works.
- 2.3. Applicants who are resident in shared ownership or discounted sale properties are classed as ‘private’ owner occupiers for the purpose of DFG adaptations and should therefore approach the Council for assistance.

3. DFG Process

Eligibility

- 3.1. The DFG must be for the benefit of someone who is registered as a disabled person, or who would qualify to be registered. Unless excluded from entitlement to grant aid², any disabled person over the age of eighteen or the parents or guardians on behalf of applicants under the age of eighteen, may apply for a DFG. A landlord may also apply on behalf of a tenant.
- 3.2. A DFG is only available to pay for alterations to a disabled person’s main residence. Owner-occupiers, tenants or licensees and some occupiers of houseboats and caravans who are able to satisfy the HGCRA 1996 criteria are eligible for a DFG.
- 3.3. The maximum amount of a mandatory DFG is £30,000. The amount payable may be subject to a means test of the disabled occupant, their spouse and civil partner/co-habiting partner. Other members of the household are not means tested.
- 3.4. Applications on behalf of a disabled person under the age of 19 are not means tested e.g. where the application is for a disabled child or qualifying ‘young person’³ there is no means test. Therefore, a person aged 16 but not yet 20 years old and in full-time, non-advanced education (i.e. more than 12 hours a week at school or college) or approved unwaged training can be a qualifying ‘young person’ subject to the definition contained in the 2009 Regulations.

Application/Referral

- 3.5. An applicant may apply directly to the Council’s Private Sector Housing (PSH) team for a DFG. Alternatively, applicants may refer to the Council via Kent Social Services, an Independent Agent (IA) or Occupational Therapist (OT).

¹ The Regulatory Framework for Social Housing in England from April 2012)

² The Housing Renewal Grants (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2009)

³ The Housing Renewal Grants (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2009)

- 3.6. An applicant who applies directly to the Council will be asked to either contact social services for an OT assessment or seek their own assessment, via an independent OT or IA. The OT/IA will assess the applicants' needs and identify any adaptations and/or facilities that might be required.
- 3.7. Prior to the preliminary visit (see section 3.13 of this Policy), a preliminary means test will be undertaken by the Council to enable it to determine the applicants' DFG eligibility and the applicants' likely contribution (if any), towards the cost of any adaptations and/or facilities' works.
- 3.8. Where the applicant is required to contribute towards the costs (see section 3.18 of this Policy), applicants must ensure that they have the funds available to cover the costs before work begins on site. Evidence of this must be provided to the Council at the application stage.
- 3.9. The Council's Private Sector Housing team may be able to advise and assist applicants by signposting to other services that may help with any additional costs that may be required.
- 3.10. Applicants will be asked to sign a consent form to allow data sharing.
- 3.11. The Council will obtain ownership evidence or right to reside at the property.
- 3.12. Where applicable, permission for the adaptations and/or facilities' works to be carried out must be obtained in advance e.g. from a housing association, landlord or joint owner. Applicants should not start any work on adapting their home until they have final approval from the Council for the DFG. Applicants cannot get a DFG for work that has already been completed.
- 3.13. An Officer from the PSH team will normally visit the applicant on receipt of the IA/OT's full recommendations. A preliminary visit may be undertaken by the Council prior to this stage, to inspect the property to ensure that the adaptation and/or facilities' works are reasonable and practicable. The Officer will also check that the proposed works are the most cost effective method of achieving an appropriate solution to the applicants' needs (sections 3.15 and 3.16 of this Policy refers).

Eligible Works

- 3.14. Eligible Works are detailed in Appendix 2.
- 3.15. Before granting a DFG, the Council must satisfy itself that the works are respectively, **necessary and appropriate** to meet the needs of the disabled person and are **reasonable and practicable** to implement, depending on the age and condition of the property. In doing so, the Council will consult with the social services authority under the HGCRA 1996 on whether the works are necessary and appropriate.
- 3.16. In reaching a decision, the Council will consider whether the proposed adaptations or improvements:
 - are needed to provide for a care plan to be implemented which will enable the disabled occupant to remain living in their existing home as independently as possible; and
 - would meet, as far as possible, the assessed needs of the disabled occupant taking into account both their medical and physical needs; and
 - distinguish between desirable, possible & legitimate aspirations of the disabled occupant, what is actually needed & for which DFG support is fully justified.

The Council will also have specific regard to the age and condition of the property, the effect on other residents, the practicalities of carrying out work on properties with limited access, conservation considerations, and the structural characteristics of the property.

- 3.17. Although the HGCRA 1996 imposes a duty on the Council to consult social services authorities in coming to a view on whether the proposed works are 'necessary and appropriate', it is for the Council to decide whether those works are 'reasonable and practicable.'

Discretionary top up and grants/loans

- 3.18. Whilst the Council does not have to provide discretionary 'top up' assistance, it will consider an application for such assistance. Applicants should however note that the Council does not currently give a discretionary 'top up' grant for works which, although meeting the purposes for a mandatory DFG, cost more than the maximum mandatory amount of £30,000 or exercise its discretionary assistance powers for adaptations in other ways (see below). The applicant will be required to meet any additional costs above the £30,000 limit. If, for example, the agreed adaptations would cost £40,000, then the first £30,000 would be mandatory and met by the Council by way of DFG. The 'top up' for the extra £10,000 would be met by the applicant.
- 3.19. Depending on funding constraints and current legislation, the Council has the discretion to provide a discretionary DFG for adaptations falling outside the mandatory DFG process, but only to residents in the private sector⁴. Discretionary DFG is not available to council tenants as legislation does not allow the Council to use its capital allocation for grants towards improving its own stock.
- 3.20. Applicants should note that the Council does not currently provide discretionary DFG for adaptations falling outside the mandatory DFG process.

Land charges

- 3.21. If the applicant is an owner-occupier and has work funded through a DFG, the Council will register a local land charge against their property, where the grant payment exceeds £5,000 (see Appendix 3). This allows the recovery of funds in the event of a property subsequently being sold or otherwise disposed of.
- 3.22. If the property is disposed of within 10 years of the date of completion of the works, then the Council may demand the repayment of such part of the DFG that exceeds £5,000 (but may not demand an amount in excess of £10,000).

Home Improvement Agencies

- 3.23. The Council currently works closely with the Home Improvement Agency (HIA) (currently Family Mosaic). Applicants may nominate the HIA to act as their agent during the DFG application process or employ an IA to assist them if they wish.

Grant Application

- 3.24. The application process can be complicated and it is recommended that applicants use an IA or an OT to help them. The applicant must supply the following to support their application:
- A fully completed application form
 - Evidence of financial circumstances
 - A detailed schedule of works and plans that must be agreed by the Council and the IA/OT in advance
 - Particulars of fees and charges
 - Any planning or building regulation approvals
 - Two or more quotations for the adaptation works

⁴ Section 435 Housing Act 1985 (as amended)

- Evidence of funds available to the applicant where the applicant is required to meet costs over the mandatory DFG award of £30,000.

Fees and Grant Levels

3.25. The maximum mandatory award for a DFG is £30,000 and includes the actual costs of carrying out works of improvement or repair and other admissible expenses and charges necessarily incurred, such as:

- architects and surveyors fees;
- charges for planning permission or building regulation approval;
- fees for the professional services of an OT engaged by the applicant to advise on what works are required (this does not include the costs of an OT acting on behalf of the social services authority);
- charges made by IAs for advising on or assisting with an applicants' DFG application.

3.26. The Council will determine which fees are eligible for DFG in the same way as it assesses the eligible works. In doing so, the Council will consider the reasonableness of the fees and whether they are properly incurred. As with the works themselves, the payment of a DFG in respect of any fees and charges is dependent on the provision of a satisfactory receipt or invoice.

Grant Conditions

3.27. The following conditions apply to a DFG:

- If the DFG is approved, only works agreed by the Council will be covered by the DFG;
- Approved works must be completed within 12 months of the DFG approval;
- Approved works must be completed by the contractor named on the approval document;
- If the applicant is an owner/occupier, a local land charge may be placed on their property where the grant is more than £5,000. (see Appendix 3 for more details on grant repayment);
- If the property is sold, assigned or transferred within 10 years of the grant being awarded, then the grant may be required to be repaid (see section 3.21 of this Policy);
- Unless otherwise stated in this Policy, unforeseen and additional admissible costs (see section 3.25 of this Policy) will only be included in the DFG providing they have been agreed in advance by the Council and subject in all cases, to the mandatory DFG award limit of £30,000.

Alternative schemes

3.28. To give more choice and flexibility, an applicant may request a variation to the works recommended by the IA/OT. In an alternative scheme scenario, the applicant applies to carry out more works than that recommended by the IA/OT e.g. a ground floor extension or conversion of a garage.

3.29. The Council will consider the applicants' alternative scheme in accordance with sections 3.15 and 3.16 of this Policy.

3.30. The Council may pay an amount equal to the cost of the works originally recommended by the OT/IA. Additional costs for the alternative works will need to be paid by the applicant (see Appendix 4 for more details).

Approval or Refusal

- 3.31. Once a valid DFG application has been received, the Council has 6 months to approve or refuse the application (this is a legal obligation). An application can only be considered valid if all the relevant paper work and evidence has been submitted, verified and approved by the Council.
- 3.32. The DFG is then either approved or refused by an authorised manager. If the DFG is refused, the applicant will receive a formal refusal letter stating the reasons why the DFG has been refused. If the DFG is approved, a formal approval letter will be sent out detailing the terms of the grant and the conditions that need to be met. Once approved, the applicant has 12 months from the date of approval to complete the works.

Work on Site

- 3.33. A DFG is an agreement made between the applicant and the Council. It is not a contract between the Council and the building contractor or agent, so the Council will not be responsible for supervising the work or making sure it is done to the proper standard. The applicant, or IA, will be responsible for making sure the work is properly carried out.
- 3.34. The applicant will be paid either:
 - by instalments – as the work progresses;
 - in full – when the work is finished.It is normal practice for the Council to pay the DFG direct to the contractor or IA with the agreement of the applicant.
- 3.35. Applicants must make sure that they receive from the contractor any instruction manuals for equipment that they have installed and also warranties for any specialist equipment, such as a stair lift, through floor lift, ceiling track hoist or wash/dry toilet. Once the works are completed, applicants will need to arrange and pay for any future repairs or maintenance of their adaptation and equipment (when the warranty periods have expired), as these costs cannot be paid for by a DFG.

4. Monitoring and Review

- 4.1. The Council's Housing Service is responsible for ensuring that this Policy is adhered to and is effective. The Head of Housing monitors the DFG budget.
- 4.2. This Policy will be reviewed regularly to take account of any changes in legislation, statutory guidance, local priorities, capital funding or for any other reasons.

5. Complaints

Any complaints about this Policy and/or its implementation should be addressed through the Council's Corporate Complaints Procedure. See <http://www.dartford.gov.uk/by-category/council-and-democracy2/complaints/the-three-stages-of-our-complaints-procedure> for further information on how to complain

Appendix 1

Guidance and code of Practice for Agents and Advisors acting on behalf of applicants wishing to access Disabled Facilities Grants

It is the advisors/agents role to act on behalf of their client in designing adaptations or scheme of work, obtaining consents and securing services of suitable builders, leading eventually to the satisfactory completion of works. Works must satisfy the grant conditions or adaptation objective of both the client and the Occupational Therapist and meet the quality standards of an ordinary reasonable person.

It is recommended that applicants seek agents who can demonstrate that they have sufficient knowledge and experience (see below). Inexperienced/unqualified advisors/agents often necessitate considerable extra input from the local authority, which is of little benefit either to the applicant or to the local authority.

As a guide only, applicants may wish to consider the following when choosing an agent:

- Do they have experience of designing for the disabled?
- Can they provide references?
- Can they provide evidence of appropriate insurances?
- Can they provide evidence of professional registration?

Contractors should be vetted by the advisor/agent to ensure they have adequate public liability and employee liability insurance and have a health & safety policy and any other legislative policies. Details should be vetted of sub-contractors' tax certificate or certificate CIS, and any details on NICEIC, GASSAFE, FENSA etc. and VAT registration number if applicable.

The vetting and checking of all such certificates and policies should be carried out periodically, not exceeding annually.

Appendix 2

Under the Housing, Grants and Construction Act 1996 (as amended) and following consultation between Kent local authorities who administer Disabled Facility Grants, it has been agreed that the following works can generally attract mandatory DFG funding (but only where the local authority considers them to be “necessary and appropriate” for the needs of the disabled person and it is “reasonable and practicable” to carry out the work).

Facilitating access

1. Facilitating access by the disabled occupant

- to and from the dwelling
- to a room used or usable as the principle family room
- to a room used for or usable for sleeping
- to a room in which there is a lavatory
- to a room in which there is a bath or shower
- to a room with a wash hand basin

Such works may include:

- Ramping and/or handrails to the main external door. This could instead be a rear door in the case of a rear access. Only one access point will be allowed for each dwelling. External stairlifts will be considered if reasonably practicable and they are not prone to vandalism. Handrails under £1000 are to be the responsibility of Social Services unless they are in conjunction with a ramp.
- Widening a main entrance door and the doorways to the bedroom, bathroom and living room. Automatic door opening to main entrance doors will only be allowed for persons who are otherwise unable to open the door. Door entry systems will be considered where the person has severe mobility problems.
- Alterations to facilitate wheelchair access to the bedroom, bathroom and living room. Access to other rooms may be considered where the disabled person is a carer.
- Other adaptations that are necessary to facilitate access to any of the relevant rooms by the disabled person, for example, stairlifts or vertical lifts in some cases. Where a stairlift breaks down and it is 5-10 years old, a manufacturer’s report is needed before it can be replaced. If it is over 10 years, a report may not be required. It is considered good practice to include a 5-year extended warranty/service contract with all new lifts.
- Provision of hard standings (3.6m x 4.8m max) and associated crossover for vehicle access where the disabled person is in a wheelchair or has difficulty walking to the house. This will only be given where existing on-street parking is considered unsatisfactory and a marked disabled parking bay is not possible or where it affords a more economical solution than providing additional paths/ramping from the roadside. It is cheaper, for example, to put a marked disabled parking bay outside a house compared to providing a hard standing. (Please note: Being a holder of a blue badge is not the eligibility criteria for this item).

Washing facilities

2. Facilitating the use of washing facilities by the disabled occupant

- Adaptation of the facilities in the bathroom and toilet, including the provision of flush floor showers, lever taps, specialist WCs, Closo-mat or Gerbit etc. The adaptation or provision of more than one bathroom to a house e.g. additional ground floor wc, will only be considered if evidenced by functional need.
- An electric fan heater should be provided to the bathroom/shower room in addition to a radiator as long as it does not contravene IEE regulations for wet areas.

Kitchen Facilities

3. Facilitating the preparation and cooking of food

- Where someone other than the disabled person does and will continue to do the cooking and preparation of meals, normally it will not be necessary to carry out full adaptations. However, it may be possible to carry out minor adaptations to allow the disabled person to prepare light meals or hot drinks, typically this may include a low-level worktop with power points for a kettle/microwave.
- Full adaptations can be considered where the disabled person is the only or main user of the kitchen.

The following adaptations can be considered:

- Kitchen sink, including alteration to its height or position or the type of taps fitted to it. Powered, adjustable-height sinks will not generally be allowed, as the provision of a second sink is a more economical solution.
- Cooker point and oven-housing unit ensuring its height and position is in a safe location and the provision of worktops on either side.
- Work surfaces located beside the sink and on each side of the cooker having a total length of approximately 1.5m, all at a suitable height for the disabled person.
- Food storage in an accessible position, usually space for a refrigerator with power supply.
- Wheelchair access, if necessary, including wider doors, rearrangement of facilities etc.
- Alterations to the kitchen door, light switches and power points, but only if it is necessary.
- Extensions or enlargement to kitchens can only be agreed where they are absolutely necessary in order to provide turning space for a wheelchair and if suitable space cannot be achieved by rearrangement of the existing facilities.
- The provision of cupboard and storage units on an "essential" basis. (2x1m base units and baskets or equivalent).
- Mechanical ventilation where Building Regulation approval is required.

Other works that will be considered

- Alterations to the height and/or position of light switches and power points to make them accessible to the disabled person.
- Heating the rooms that are in everyday use by the disabled person where a medical need can be demonstrated.
- This does not include repair to existing systems. Changes to the type of heating system will only be allowed if evidenced by medical need.
- Possible upgrading/replacing of boilers where the property has been extended as part of the adaptation.
- Provision of laminate glass or specialist lighting or guards to fires and around radiators where disabled children with violent behavioural problems may harm themselves.
- Provision of enhanced fire alarm systems for those with hearing difficulties.
- Carrying out structural alterations where necessary to provide fixings for disabled equipment provided by Social Services e.g. fixing for tracking /overhead hoists.
- Where an adaptation is required to a listed building and additional works are required to comply with requirements.
- Where an adaptation cannot be carried out due to disrepair issues, those repairs, within reason, may be carried out. This includes such works as replacement of rotted flooring or strengthening of the floor as part of a flush floor shower installation, electrical repairs to enable works to be carried out safely, and dealing with low water pressure. Replacing defective drainage and a full rewire would not normally be eligible.
- Additional bathrooms or bedrooms may be allowed where they are specifically for the disabled person and it can be demonstrated that adaptation of other rooms or space or access to those rooms in the property is unsuitable. Extensions will only be allowed after a detailed options cost/benefit analysis.
- In cases of small terraced properties with narrow passageways or very difficult access, effective adaptation can only proceed where it can be reasonably and practicably carried out without being detrimental to neighbouring properties.
- Requests are sometimes received to provide separate bedrooms where disabled children with behavioural difficulties share a room with other siblings and disturb their sleep. This will only be considered under mandatory grant where it can be demonstrated the child is prone to violent outbursts and there is risk of physical harm to the child or to the other siblings.

Access to the garden

This has only recently been introduced and will only be considered if recommended by an Occupational Therapist and In deciding the extent of providing access to the rear garden, the following will be taken into account.

- Grant assistance will not be given where there is already access to the garden but grant may be given to improve an existing access to make it safe for the disabled occupant to use. It does not include extending an existing access e.g. creating a side access so a person can also go around the side of a house. Generally, the most modest solution for providing access to both the house and the garden will be considered and this can mean that one access may be sufficient to access both the house and the garden. Where homes have communal gardens, e.g. blocks of flats served by a single access, grants will not normally be provided for an individual access to the garden unless it can be demonstrated that because of the disabled persons' condition the travel distance to the garden would be excessive and unreasonable.

- The grant will simply be for providing immediate access to the garden and does not include landscaping gardens to make them more suitable for the disabled person to access. However, to assist a disabled person to live independently, an allowance of 4 m² of pathway,(which may include a turning circle for a wheelchair user), will be considered to assist access to any specific areas enjoyed by the disabled person.
- See also the list of non-mandatory items in the next section relating to gardens etc.

General guidance of works considered non-mandatory

Applicants should note that the Council does not currently provide discretionary DFG for adaptations falling outside the mandatory DFG. Examples of such adaptations include;

- Generally, more extensive adaptations than those described previously.
- The provision of cupboards, storage units, breakfast bars, generally above and beyond the standard that applies for mandatory grants.
- Cookers, hobs, refrigerators, dishwashers, washing machines & waste disposal.
- Replacement of rooms or parts of rooms which have been "lost" by carrying out adaptations (by way of explanation, where a ground floor living room or dining room is converted into a bedroom with en-suite shower room for a disabled person, the construction of a "replacement" living room or dining room for use by the rest of the family could not be grant aided on a mandatory basis.)
- Fitments in rooms, for example built-in cupboards, wardrobes, storage units etc.
- Extensions to living rooms.
- Provision of secondary access from dwelling house, formation of patios, garden paths etc. walkways from garages and sheds. 2nd access – would need very exceptional circumstances to allow this.
- Storage areas and charging points for wheelchair/ scooters.
- Service contracts for lifts and other equipment.
- Provision of treatment rooms
- Pager systems linked to doorbells or telephones for the profoundly deaf.
- Floor coverings (except thermo-plastic tiles or similar permanent floor finish to bathroom area).
- Wall tiling (except splash backs and immediate shower areas).
- Provision of disabled aids and equipment that can be fitted with no or little structural alterations. These are likely to be able to be removed fairly easily and re-used if the disabled person should decide to move in the future.
- Non-fixed aids, e.g. bath hoists can be funded by KCC as equipment but some authorities allow it as discretionary.
- Sliding doors/two way doors – not needed – can turn door round or flexicare 2 way hinges in special cases if likely to fall.
- Hard standings (as a Planning Condition)
- Air conditioning.
- CCTV
- Creating a safe play area and/or fences.
- Storage areas for example scooters, wheelchairs, children's equipment.
- Portable/non-fixed items.
- Drop kerbs, hard standings and ramps for non- wheelchair users/non-drivers.
- Minor adaptations up to the value of £1,000 which are obtainable from Social Services, Occupational Therapy Bureau
- Formation of Patios

- Walkways to and from garages or scooter storage areas
- Formation of bin store areas
- Provision of clothes drying facilities
- General provision of external lighting

Appendix 3

The conditions relating to the repayment of Disabled Facilities' Grants are contained within "The Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996:Disabled Facilities Grant (Conditions relating to approval or payment of Grant) General Consent 2008"

When considering repayment of any DFG awarded, the Council's Housing Options & Private Sector Housing Manager will have regard to paragraph 3(2) of this general consent which states:

'The local housing authority may demand the repayment by the recipient of such part of the grant that exceeds £5000 (but may not demand an amount in excess of £10,000) if:

- a) the recipient disposes (whether by sale, assignment, transfer or otherwise) of the premises in respect of which the grant was given within 10 years of the certified date; and
- b) the local housing authority, has considered:
 - I. the extent to which the recipient of the grant would suffer financial hardship were he to be required to repay all or any of the grant;
 - II. whether the disposal of the premises is to enable the recipient of the grant to take up employment, or to change the location of his employment;
 - III. whether the disposal is made for reasons connected with the physical or mental health or well-being of the recipient of the grant or of a disabled occupant of the premises; and
 - IV. whether the disposal is made to enable the recipient of the grant to live with, or near any person who is disabled or infirm and in need of care, which the recipient of the grant is intending to provide, or who is intending to provide care of which the
 - V. recipient of the grant is in need by reason of disability or infirmity,
 - VI. that it is satisfied that it is reasonable in all the circumstances to require the repayment.'

Appendix 4

DFG - Alternative Schemes

The Council may pay an amount equal to the cost of the works originally recommended by the OT. The additional costs for the alternative works will need to be paid by the applicant.

Requirements to be met in order for the Council to agree use of alternative schemes:

1. The proposed alternative scheme should meet the applicants' needs as outlined in the original OT/IA recommendations and be certified by the Kent County Council Occupational Therapist as achieving this aim and be possible in the property.
2. The Council must be satisfied that the applicant has sufficient financial resources to complete the scheme including a contingency sum of 10% for unforeseen works.
3. The applicant must provide a minimum of 2 estimates for the OT/IA recommended works from a competent contractor. The Council reserves the right to seek an alternative estimate if those supplied seem excessive or inadequate.
4. An experienced/qualified agent designs/controls the works and certifies satisfactory completion. NB. The applicant is responsible for additional costs of designing the alternative scheme and for approvals under planning and building control legislation.
5. The Council will only pay an amount equal to the cost of the works originally recommended by the OT/IA.
6. The approved DFG will not be paid until satisfactory completion has been certified by the IA and the Council.
7. The works must be completed within 12 months of the DFG approval otherwise the DFG will be void.
8. No variation of the approved DFG will be made for additional unforeseen costs, however, where the need for work ceases (see 9 below), the approved grant is likely to be reduced.
9. The DFG will not be paid in full, if during the course of the works, the need for them ceases.