

INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS



ADAPTATIONS AND YOUR HOME

This guide is to help provide you with information on the help available if you find that your home is unsuitable due to you being elderly or having a disability which, means that you can't get around your home or use the facilities. If this is the case, there may be help available to get adaptations carried out at the property you live in.

There are some grants available to pay for these adaptations, depending on your circumstances. The information in this guide has been provided by Shelter Scotland's website which also contains further details that explore some of the options noted in this leaflet in greater detail. If you wish to obtain more detailed information, then please go to: -

https://scotland.shelter.org.uk/get_advice/advice_topics/repairs_and_bad_conditions/adapting_your_home

We hope that you find the information in this guide useful and it helps you to consider the options available.

If you are a Council or Housing Association Tenant



If you currently rent your home from a Council or a Housing Association and your home is no longer meeting your needs or the needs of someone living in your home as part of your household then you should contact your landlord to discuss the options available.

There are many adaptations that do not involve making any major changes to the property itself for example, getting a ramp or a raised seat for the toilet. These are known as 'auxiliary aids' and it is likely that your landlord will provide them for you, or some equipment can be provided by the contacting the Councils Social Services Department.

If you require a larger adaptation such as removing a bath and replacing this with a level access shower then your landlord will require a Community Care Assessment which, is normally carried out by an Occupational Therapist from your Council's Social Work Department. They will look at how you cope with day-to-day living and will recommend help or equipment that might make life easier for you. If the recommendation is to carry out an adaptation to your property this assessment will be sent to your landlord.

Housing Associations do get additional funding each year from the Scottish Government to pay for adaptations to their properties. This funding is called Stage 3 funding. Your landlord only gets a certain amount of Stage 3 funding each year, so you may have to wait for the adaptations to be done. Ask your landlord for more information about this.

If you find it easier and more convenient to carry out the adaptations yourself then you can write to your landlord and ask for permission. In making the decision on whether to allow you to proceed with any adaptation your landlord will have to consider various things such as: -

- your safety and the safety of anyone who lives with you or near you
- any costs your landlord may incur as a result of the adaptations
- whether the work is likely to reduce the value of the property or make it less suitable for letting or sale in the future
- whether the adaptations will have an effect on the size of the accommodation
- how well the adaptation you request will meet your needs
- the effect on your well-being if the adaptation isn't carried out
- how disruptive the work will be for your neighbours
- whether the work will comply with planning permission and building standards requirements
- whether it will be possible or necessary to put the property back to the way it was before the work was done

Your landlord will not withhold their consent unreasonably however, if they do say no then you can appeal against this decision. Information on this process can be obtained from your landlord.

[If you are a Private Rented Tenant](#)



If you rent your home from a private landlord, you will need to ask their permission to make any adaptations. However, your landlord cannot refuse consent unreasonably as this can be seen as discrimination. The Equality Act 2010 grants rights to disabled people for landlords to make necessary changes to their homes. This is called the duty to make reasonable adjustments.

There are some adaptations that may not involve making changes to the property itself, for example, getting a ramp or a raised seat for your toilet. These are known as 'auxiliary aids', and it's likely that your landlord will need to provide them for you, or equipment can be provided by contact your Council, Social Services Department.

Other adaptations, such as a stairlift or handrails, will involve making changes to the property itself. In this case you will need to get your landlord's permission to carry out the adaptations. Firstly, you should write to your landlord explaining what work you need to do and why. You may also find it helpful to get advice from an Occupational Therapist or Health Worker as they will suggest adaptations that help you get the most out of your home. However, you don't need to get social work involved if you don't want to - your landlord must still consider your request. When considering your application, your landlord can take into account:

- what your disability is
- whether the work proposed is really necessary to make your home suitable for a disabled person (for example, is it necessary to build a toilet on the ground floor? Could a stairlift be installed more easily instead?)
- your safety and the safety of anyone who lives with you or near you
- the costs the landlord may incur, as a result of the adaptations
- whether the work is likely to reduce the value of the property or make it less suitable for letting or sale in the future
- whether the property could be put back to its original condition when you move out
- the nature of your disability and how it affects you
- how well the adaptation you request will meet your needs
- the effect on your well-being if the adaptation isn't carried out
- your ability to pay for the work
- what kind of tenancy you have
- the length of time you're likely to live in the property
- how much work is involved
- how disruptive the work will be for your neighbours
- whether the work will comply with planning permission and building standards requirements
- whether it will be possible or necessary to put the property back to the way it was before the work was done
- the Code of Practice issued by the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC)

The first two instances don't apply if you wish to carry out work under the energy assistance package.

There is also a range of assistance available from the Council to private tenants or homeowners if they require adaptations. This is through a scheme called Private Housing Assistance Scheme. There are 3 main types of assistance available: -

- Advice & Information – how to maintain your home, adaptation advice and how to raise funds to carry out works
- Practical Assistance – this could be to help with complicated issues such as common ownership or inspections
- Financial Assistance – there are grants available to Private Tenants and Homeowners who meet the criteria for eligible adaptations

Please contact your local Council for more information on the Private Housing Assistance Scheme.

Having taken all the things above into account, your landlord cannot refuse consent unreasonably however, some of the reasons they can refuse are: -

- giving permission would breach any legal obligation in the title deeds of the property

- you can't get planning permission or a building warrant for the work (see below)
- their mortgage lender won't give them permission to alter the property
- the adaptations would make the property unsafe
- the adaptations would affect common areas and other owners in the building object

If the landlord does agree to the work, they may also impose reasonable conditions for example: -

- insist that you obtain the necessary planning permission and building warrants
- if the repairs affect common areas, ask you to get consent from the other owners
- set certain standards of the work, taking into account the age and condition of the house and the likely cost of complying with these standards
- insist that you stick to a plan or specification that they've approved and give them an opportunity to inspect the work
- state that you're responsible for the maintenance of the adaptation
- ask you to put the property back the way it was before, when you move out

Once your landlord has made their decision, they will write to you and they must also advise you on how you can appeal any decision. If they refuse permission for you to adapt your home, you may be able to persuade them to change their mind but you may wish to seek advice from an adviser at a disability rights agency or Shelter Advice Centre may be able to negotiate on with your landlord on your behalf.

If you own your home



If you own your home, you may still need to get consent to carry out adaptations. You can firstly ask your Council's Occupational Therapy or Social Work Department to carry out a care assessment to recommend any changes that could be made to help you live independently more easily. However, it may take time to get an appointment.

If you are arranging for the adaptations to be carried out yourself, you will find more useful information on Shelter Scotland's website page called 'Keeping you home in good repair' it gives you advice on finding a contractor. If the adaptations are extensive (for example, if you're putting in a new bathroom or wet room) it's a good idea to get advice from an architect first. Larger problems may involve several different contractors (for example, you may need a plumber, a builder and a joiner to put in a new bathroom), and an architect will be able to co-ordinate the work for you.

If the adaptations are substantial, you may need to get planning permission and or a building warrant from the Council.

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- Financial Assistance – there are grants available to Private Tenants and Homeowners who meet the criteria for eligible adaptations

Please contact your local Council for more information on the Private Housing Assistance Scheme.

If you need to move out your home whilst any major work is being carried out the Housing (Scotland) Act 2014 introduced a new ground which, enables social rented landlords to grant a Short Secure Tenancy to homeowners where they have a short term, temporary housing need and require time to sort out their permanent housing arrangements including adapting their property due to medical needs. If you are in this situation you should contact your local Council or Housing Associations for further information.

We hope you have found this guide useful however, if it is still not possible to adapt your current home to meet your needs and you wish to move then you should contact the Council and Housing Associations in your area to find out more on how to apply for a move on medical grounds.

Ochil View Housing Association operate a digital choice-based lettings system called These Homes. We would encourage you to complete an application online which, includes a section on moving due to medical grounds. If you already have a registration with These Homes, then you can access your registration and update the section on medical priority. If you require further information on how to apply for medical priority then please contact Donna Philips, Housing Services Assistant (Housing Options) at housing@ochilviewha.co.uk or by phoning 01259 722899.

Useful Contacts

Clackmannanshire

Adult Care Services, Kilncraigs, Greenside Street, Alloa, FK10 1EB



01259 452498/450000



adultcare@clacks.gov.uk

Fife

Social Work Services, New City House, 1 Edgar Street, Dunfermline KY12 7EP



03451 55 15 03

Fife Community Equipment Store (FCES) Fife Council Bankhead Central, Bankhead Park, Glenrothes, Fife KY7 6GH



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