



Item	Details
Reference:	NWLDC Financial Assistance Policy
Status:	Draft
Originator:	Clare Proudfoot
Owner:	Environmental Protection Team Manager
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### Key policy details

This financial assistance policy details the various grants available from North West Leicestershire District Council for Home Owners, Private tenants (including other social landlords) and Landlords to improve their homes.

### Approvals

Item	Date of Approval	Version No.
Consulted with Section 151 Officer	17 April 2025	1.1
Reviewed by Legal Services		1.1
Reviewed by Community Scrutiny		
Approved by Cabinet		

### Policy Location

This policy can be found at to be updated with weblink once approved at Cabinet

### Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

Completed by	Completion date
Minna Scott	10 June 2025

### Revision history

Version Control	Revision Date	Summary of Changes

## Policy Review Plans

This policy is subject to a scheduled review once every five years or earlier if there is a change in legislation or local policy that requires it.

## Distribution

Title	Date of Issue	Version No.
Community Scrutiny		
Cabinet		
Webpage		

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. This financial assistance policy details the various grants available from North West Leicestershire District Council for Home Owners, Private tenants (including other social landlords) and Landlords to improve their homes.
- 1.2. This policy supports the [Council's priorities](#) for 2023 – 2028 as set out in the Council Delivery Plan, helping to contribute towards the communities and housing key aim of private rental tenants across the district being able to live safely in their own homes.

## **2. Statutory Context**

- 2.1. [The Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996](#) places a statutory duty on local authorities to provide Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs).
- 2.2. DFGs are to enable disabled people to be able to live independently within their own home.
- 2.3. [The Regulatory Reform \(Housing Assistance\) \(England and Wales\) Order 2002](#) provides district councils with the ability to create discretionary grants and loans to improve living conditions in homes so long as the council approves and publishes a policy.
- 2.4. North West Leicestershire District Council receives an allocation from central government each year to fund DFGs and other discretionary loans and grants offered by the Council.
- 2.5. Since 2015 as part of a wider partnership with health and social care the allocation has been pooled into the Better Care Fund so that all services can consider how the allocation can best benefit residents of North West Leicestershire District Council.
- 2.6. With the exception of DFGs, the grants and loans detailed in this policy are subject to sufficient funds being available. They may be withdrawn or postponed at any time.
- 2.7. However, the Council will ensure that sufficient funds are available prior to approving any grant. Once a grant is approved the council will not withdraw or postpone funding.

## **3. Lightbulb**

- 3.1. The Lightbulb Service helps support the residents of Leicestershire to remain safe and well in their own homes. Lightbulb brings together a range of support such as aids and adaptations, energy advice, home safety, home improvements and support with the transition from hospital to home.
- 3.2. North West Leicestershire District Council works in partnership with the [Lightbulb Service](#) who deliver DFGs and a range of other health and wellbeing grants on our behalf.

- 3.3. The Lightbulb Service brings together a number of professionals, including Surveyors and Housing Support Co-Ordinators to support residents to support applicants through the process of applying for one of their grants including DFGs.
- 3.4. For anyone wanting to apply for a DFG or for more information on the assistances and service delivered by Lightbulb, you can find their contact details [here](#).

#### **4. Adaptations in Council houses**

- 4.1. This policy covers works for people who own their own homes, people who privately rent, tenants of other social landlords and private landlords.
- 4.2. Full details of how to access adaptations for tenants of North West Leicestershire Council can be found [here](#).

## 5. Summary of Assistances

Assistance	Purpose	Maximum Funding	Eligibility criteria	Delivered by	Available to:				
					Owner Occupiers	Private Renters	Social Renters	Private Landlords	Empty Homes
Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG)	To enable disabled people to remain living independently in their own home	Up to £30,000	Means Tested	Lightbulb	✓	✓	✓		
Other Lightbulb discretionary offers	Varied – See <a href="#">Lightbulb's</a> website for full details	N/A	Varied	Lightbulb	✓	✓	✓		
Adapted Property Home Improvement Grant	To increase quality of homes and the number of available properties to privately rent for people with disabilities on North West Leicestershire's housing register	Up to £90,000	Available to private landlords	North West Leicestershire District Council				✓	✓

## **6. Cases falling outside of the Policy**

- 6.1. Applications for assistance that fall outside of this policy will be considered by the Environmental Protection Team Manager.
- 6.2. Where applications that fall outside of this policy have been refused, applicants can appeal to the Head of Community Services.

## **7. Accessing assistances delivered by North West Leicestershire District Council**

- 7.1. Enquiries for grants can be made by contacting us on 01530 454545 or via the Council's web-based enquiry form. Referrals can also be received via the Safe Spaces and Respiratory Illness project teams.
- 7.2. North West Leicestershire will guide applicants, explain to potential applicants the grant process, provide application forms and carry out a home visit.
- 7.3. North West Leicestershire will determine what works will be eligible under the grant being applied for and provide an outline specification to the applicant.
- 7.4. To make a valid application, applicants will need to provide three quotes with their completed application form. The quotes will need to be detailed enough to clearly demonstrate to the council that the specification has been achieved. The least expensive quote will be used to determine how much grant will be awarded by the council.
- 7.5. The Council will make a grant determination within four weeks of valid applications and let applicants know the outcome of the determination. The Council will then, if required, undertake the necessary arrangements to place a land charge on the property.
- 7.6. Once the charge is registered, or if no charge is required, a formal grant approval will be sent to the applicant. Applicants are then able to instruct their contractor to undertake the work. Applicants are free to use any contractor of their choosing, but the Council will only pay the amount of grant awarded.
- 7.7. Where there are unforeseen works identified, that could not have been reasonably known of before works were started, applicants will need to inform the Council and provide a cost for the works. The Council may carry out a site inspection or request photo proof of the unforeseen works.

The Council will inform the applicant in writing of their agreement to vary the grant amount. Additional works undertaken without authorisation from the council will be at the applicant's risk and the council may not pay for additional works retrospectively.

- 7.8. Applicants may apply for interim payments when more than £30,000 of work has been completed.

When interim payment is requested, the Council may undertake a site inspection or request photo proof of the works completed to date.

- 7.9. Once the works are completed the Council will carry out an inspection of the completed works. Applicants will need to provide the Council with copies of relevant certificates for the works undertaken. For example, electrical installation certificates, gas safe certificates, FENSA certificate and building control sign off (when required).
- 7.10. Payments, whether interim or final, will be paid in all instances directly to the contractor and the applicant will need to provide a valid invoice for payment to be released.
- 7.11. Where the Council has refused to approve a grant or payment appeals can be made in the first instance to the Environment Protection Team Manager.
- 7.12. Where appeals are declined, applicants can make a final appeal to the Head of Community Services.
- 7.13. North West Leicestershire District Council may provide support in accessing the grants detailed in this policy. This will be offered on a case-by-case basis where the council believe help and support is required due to a vulnerability of the applicant, and without support, it is unlikely a valid application could be submitted or a grant completed.
- 7.14. Support from the council could be help with (but not limited to):
- Filling in application forms
  - Obtaining quotes
  - Gaining permissions
  - Instructing contractors
  - Obtaining certificates

## **8. Adapted Property Home Improvement Grant**

- 8.1. The Adapted Property Home Improvement Grant is a grant of up to £90,000 for Private Landlords to improve and adapt their properties to rent them out to people with disabilities on North West Leicestershire's housing register.

### **Grant Details**

- 8.2. The grant will fund improvements to the property to bring it up to the Decent Homes Standard. This includes:
- Remedying all Category 1 hazards in the property
  - Ensuring it is in a reasonable state of repair. i.e. repairing or replacing building components that are either need replacing or major repairs carrying out.
  - Ensuring it has reasonable modern facilities. For example, replacing old and outdated kitchens and bathrooms.

- Ensuring provides a reasonable degree of thermal comfort, which could include new heating systems, additional radiators or extra insulations which could include solid wall insulation.
- 8.3. Full details of the Decent Homes Standard can be found [here](#).
- 8.4. In addition to bringing the property up to the Decent Homes Standard, the grant must be used to adapt the property to make it suitable for disabled people.
- 8.5. The adaptations must include:
- Level access into the home and garden.
  - Widened doorways to the principal family room, the principal bedroom, the kitchen and bathroom.
  - If there is no ground floor bedroom, a stairlift must be installed.
- 8.6. All works carried out under the Adapted Property Home Improvement Grant will be designed and specified by North West Leicestershire District Council.

### **Eligibility Criteria**

- 8.7. Any private landlord whose property is currently void. There is no minimum length of time that the property must be empty.

### **Conditions of the grant**

- 8.8. Applicants who apply for the grant will need to give nomination rights to North West Leicestershire District Council for five years from the completion of the grant. This is known as the grant condition period.
- 8.9. They will also set their rent at the local housing allowance rate for the grant condition period.
- 8.10. A legal land charge will be placed on the property for the grant condition period. Any cost associated with placing this land charge will be added to the grant.
- 8.11. There are no repayment conditions for the grant, except for the following circumstances:
- The property is sold during the grant condition period.
  - A no fault eviction notice is served during the grant condition period.
  - An unlawful eviction is carried out during the grant condition period.
  - Landlord permission for a tenant's disabled facilities grants application is refused during the grant condition period.
- 8.12. The Council may not demand repayment or defer payment in exceptional circumstances, for example the death of the applicant. All applications to defer or waive repayment must be made to the Environment Protection Team Manager.

- 8.13. Where requests to defer or waive repayment are declined, applicants can appeal to the Head of Community Services.