

DISABLED FACILITIES GRANTS IN ENGLAND – A RESEARCH REPORT FOR  
DISTRICT COUNCILS NETWORK & THE SOCIETY OF DISTRICT COUNCIL  
TREASURERS - APRIL 2013

Headlines only:

- Over 50% of District Councils in England participated in the research.
- Disabled Facilities grant is an important mechanism for supporting people with disabilities to live independently. This can frequently contribute to the avoidance of hospital admissions and residential care.
- Delivery of DGF is a statutory function delegated to local housing authorities in England with partial funding from Central Government.
- Research identifies poor management in that resources are not deployed as effectively as they could be; people are left waiting too long, sometimes up to 2 years and the financial pressure placed on District Councils with low reserves cannot be sustained.
- Many District Councils are operating a waiting list that is not responding well for people.

Recommendations:

1. Formation of partnerships between District Councils and County Councils to be rolled out nationally and agree clear local Adaptations Policy
2. DGF services to be delivered in an integrated way from assessment through to delivery of aids equipment which includes an independent client advocacy role – alternatively, responsibilities would be transferred to one organisation to manage the entire process
3. Each local partnership should be required to agree a joint Adaptations Strategy which complies with national guidance
4. The system should shift towards supporting people to make their own choices with greater advice available to applicants including other housing options to meet their needs
5. In future, most adaptations for home owners should be funded through the equity in their homes with a grant safety net for those with no equity
6. DFG should not be paid for adaptations in social housing. Registered providers should be expected to make best use of housing stock, taking advantage of tenure reforms to do so
7. CCG should be expected to provide revenue support for housing related prevention services which can delay or avoid admission to hospital or same services, especially handyman Services