



From mountain to sea

Private Sector Housing Care and Repair Service

Aberdeenshire Council provides the Care and Repair Service through our Private Sector Housing Team. The service offers information, advice and practical help with repairs, maintenance and adaptations to Aberdeenshire owner occupiers and private tenants who are over 60 and/or have a disability. The service is aimed at supporting people to continue to live independently at home.



Aberdeenshire Council

Care and Repair

Aberdeenshire Care and Repair provides a free service offering information, advice and help with repairs, maintenance and adaptations to Aberdeenshire owner occupiers and private landlords' tenants who are over 60 and/or have a disability.

Information, advice and practical help:

We can help by providing:

- Advice and information on practical ways to improve your home
- A home visit to help you identify or prioritise the work needed
- Help you to arrange quotes for works identified
- Help you to arrange professional assistance from Architects etc
- Help you with contacting services such as Building Standards or Trading Standards to deal with sub-standard work
- Refer you to partner agencies for issues such as Fuel Poverty
- Signpost you to partner agencies for financial health checks
- Signpost you to organisations who may help you with fundraising for the cost of essential repairs.



Help provided is aimed at enabling and supporting clients to continue living independently at home. The service is a facilitation service only with all responsibilities/contracts for works remaining between homeowner and contractors as with any other domestic works you would complete to your property.

Small Repairs

Small Repair Grants are provided to cover the cost of small internal and external repairs. The work is carried out by local tradespeople of your choice. The grants are provided to help keep properties wind and water tight, reduce the risk of accidents and should support independent living at home.

Type of jobs covered by the grant include, roof repairs with signs of water ingress, repairs to central heating and hot water, security of doors and

windows, repairing a broken standard amenity (toilet, bath/shower, sink), electrical repairs to sockets, lights, security lighting.

To qualify for the service you must be either over 60; have a disability; be supported by services from Health and Social Care. The owner could also be an unpaid carer caring for someone who qualifies who is living within their home. The homeowner must stay in the property which should be in council tax band A - D. The applicant must also be on a qualifying benefit such as Income Support/Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance; Guarantee credit part of Pension Credit; Employment and Support Allowance (in the support group); Universal Credit - Limited Capability for Work and Work Related Activity.

Funding will be provided for jobs estimated at around £250 but will not cover work on outbuildings such as garages and conservatories.

Charitable Fundraising

If you are on a low income with limited savings, Aberdeenshire Council Care and Repair may be able to signpost you to charities and organisations for help with funding essential repairs to your property. We can also help you to obtain quotes to give you a better understanding of the costs involved.

Major Adaptation Grants

Aberdeenshire Council always tries to help people who have a disability to live independently in their home. Assistance is available if you need to have your home adapted to make it more accessible by contacting Aberdeenshire Council's Occupational Therapy Team. They will ask you about the difficulties you are having and, if necessary, arrange to carry out an assessment of your needs.

The Occupational Therapist can arrange for the instalment of special equipment to use in your home (for example, hand rails or grab rails) or you may be considered for a structural adaptation such as a shower to replace a bath. If you need a structural adaptation, you may be eligible for financial assistance from Aberdeenshire Council but this can only be assessed via a referral from your Occupational Therapist.

If you want to speak to an Occupational Therapist please call their contact centre number on 0345 608 1206 and ask for an assessment of need.

What type of work qualifies for a Disabled Adaptation Grant?

Examples of work covered by grant are:

- Provision of standard amenities such as a toilet, wash hand basin or level access shower.
- Ramps.
- Curved stair lifts.
- Through floor lifts.
- Widening doors to allow wheelchair access.
- Lowering kitchen units to allow access for wheelchair users.
- An extension to provide a standard amenity where the current amenity is assessed as being unsuitable.
- Internal and external alterations to allow access to a property for wheelchair users.



Timeframes

The timeframe for major adaptations can be substantial and can be affected by various issues. This can be reduced through early discussions with the Occupational Therapy Service and the Care and Repair Service and remaining open to discussion of options to meet your assessed need. It is important that your expectations around this are realistic as adaptations can also depend on how easy it is to adapt your property with some properties being classed as 'Hard to Adapt'.

Client/Homeowner Responsibilities

We provide a facilitation service only with all responsibilities/contracts for works remaining between you and your contractor as with any other works you do to your property. We can provide as much or as little help as is required in facilitating the process depending on how much of the process you wish to take on yourself. We do not project manage works but we do have to ensure that we obtain best value for the grant funding which means we do have a minimum process to follow in order to identify, approve and authorise the grant funding package.

What financial assistance is available?

Every applicant who is entitled to a grant will receive a minimum 80% grant towards the cost of an adaptation. If you are in receipt of certain benefits, you will be automatically be entitled to a 100% grant. For those applicants who are not eligible for a 100% grant they may be awarded a grant between 81 and 99% subject to a means test.

Where an applicant is happy to accept the mandatory 80% grant they will not have to provide details of their financial circumstances.

Disabled Adaptation Grant process - what will happen?

An Aberdeenshire Council Private Sector Housing Officer (PSHO) will visit with your Occupational Therapist (OT) to discuss options and help with your application paperwork.

- We will agree jointly with yourself and your OT the works required, final layout and an approved 'Particulars of Works' for your adaptation

- There are sometimes more than one option that can be supported by your OT with grant based on the most cost effective option, however you are free at your own cost to choose the more expensive or to upgrade works beyond what grant will cover
- Your PSHO will help you to identify contractors where required and can help request quotes on your behalf
- You will be advised of the 'Approved Expense' and will receive an 'Offer of Grant' laying out how this and your grant award has been calculated. If happy you will then be asked to sign this and return.
- On completion of works, the PSHO will visit to ensure the works have been completed as per agreed 'Particulars of Works', meeting your needs.
- The PSHO will then arrange to release the grant on receipt of invoices from your contractor and will advise you of any payments you need to make for the adapted works.
- If you need any equipment, this will be arranged by the Occupational Therapist.

Building Standards and Permissions

As with all other domestic works, homeowners have a responsibility to ensure their works comply with Buildings Standards and that all warrant and planning permissions are in place prior to starting any works. It is common for larger adaptations to require building warrant and also planning permission on occasion but this can also apply to smaller structural works such as door widening or adding an external ramp. We will work with you to help you identify where these are required and also help you to identify Architectural Services that can draft plans and obtain these permissions on your behalf. These fees require to be paid by yourself at the start of the process but grant funding is available to reimburse reasonable costs associated with the adaptation works on completion.



Title Deeds and Owner Authorisation

We will require legal authority from all owners of the property before we can provide funding for an adaptation therefore it is important for clients to have any ownership issues resolved as these can delay approval of grant funding. Copies of legal documents will be required including title deeds showing owners and any death certificates for owners who are still on the deeds. To reduce delays in this area you should check to see if you have this information available and if not you can request these items yourself from the below links.

Title Deed Extracts (Title Sheet) -
<https://www.ros.gov.uk/services/search-property-information>

Registrar Certificates - <https://www.mygov.scot/birth-death-marriage-certificate>

Cost of Registering Grant Funding

All grants paid will have to be registered on your deeds with the General Register of Sasines under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006. The Council will complete this but there is a mandatory cost of £70 for this, which must be paid by the grant recipient to the Council on completion of the works.

'Hard To Adapt' properties and housing options

Occasionally it may not be possible to adapt your current home to meet your needs. This can happen for reasons such as:

- There is not enough space to make the necessary changes
- The way your house is built makes it very difficult or impossible to change

In these situations we may recommend you consider other housing options. Housing options can be discussed with the Houseability Service which is an external, independent organisation. They can offer advice and support in moving to a different property.

For more information on this service contact Aberdeenshire Council Care and Repair on **01467 534753**.

What happens if I am not happy with the Occupational Therapy Assessment?

If you do not agree with the outcome of your Occupational Therapy Assessment, you can ask for this to be reconsidered by contacting the Occupational Therapy Team Manager who will review and consider your assessment and the recommendations made.

They may also arrange a further assessment by an Occupational Therapy Senior Practitioner.

What happens if I am not happy with my grant award?

If you do not agree with the decision of your grant award you can ask for it to be reconsidered by contacting the Team Leader (Private Sector Housing). If agreement cannot be reached at this stage, you can ask for your case to be reviewed by the Housing Manager (Strategy).

Right to appeal

You also have the right to appeal to the Housing Adaptation Grants Appeals Sub Committee who will review the decisions made by the Occupational Therapy Service and the Private Sector Housing Team regarding your adaptation grant assessment. The Committee is made up of Elected Members of the Council.

You must submit the request within 28 days of the decision being made by the council, in writing to the Director of Infrastructure Services.

Other non-Care and Repair Services

Minor Adaptations

If you are starting to struggle with moving around your home you can ask for some minor changes to help you keep your independence without a formal Occupational Therapy assessment. If the adaptations are small, inexpensive and easily completed you can request them via self-assessment by accessing the Council's website at <https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/community-care/living-independently/occupational-therapy/ot-equipment-and-adaptations/>

You can also request a booklet and self-assessment form by calling **0345 608 1206**.

Contact us

For more information about Aberdeenshire Council Care and Repair call **01467 534753** or email careandrepair@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

A full statement of the assistance the council will provide is available from Aberdeenshire Council. This can be found at <http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/housing/private-housing/homeowners-advice-and-support/> or by contacting Private Sector Housing on **01467 534753** or email private.housing@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

