

Private Sector Housing Assistance Policy 2019 - 2022

Team: Strategic Housing
Date: December 2019

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Version Control

Version	Description of version	Effective Date
1	Housing Assistance Policy 2019/22	1 st December 2019
2	Housing Assistance Policy 2019/22	1 st July 2020

Approvals

Approved by	Date

Associated Documentation

Description of Documentation	
Private Sector Housing Renewal Policy 2016	Redundant

1. Introduction

- 1.1 South Derbyshire District Council (the Council) recognises the importance that good quality, accessible, safe, and warm housing has in contributing to people's quality of life.
- 1.2 The primary responsibility for maintaining and repairing private sector homes rests with the owner, however the Council is committed to improving the quality of housing within the District and has statutory responsibilities to assist certain people where they cannot reasonably do this for themselves.
- 1.3 Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) and discretionary housing grants can make a significant contribution in meeting the needs of older, vulnerable and disabled people by providing assistance to facilitate adaptations or essential repairs in the home to promote health and wellbeing and maximise the opportunities for continued independence.
- 1.4 This Policy updates the Council's Private Sector Renewal Policy, which was last updated in November 2019. It is steered by objectives contained within the Council's Corporate Plan, the emerging Housing and Health Strategy and Derbyshire County Council's (the County Council) Better Care Fund (BCF) Narrative Plan.

2. Policy Statement

- 2.1 This Policy sets out how the Council will exercise its statutory obligations for the provision of mandatory DFGs under the provisions of the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 and use the discretion afforded under Article 3 of the Regulatory Reform Order (Housing Assistance) (England & Wales) Order 2002 (the RRO) to provide flexible assistance to help improve the living conditions of people living within the District.
- 2.2 In accordance with the RRO, this policy has been adopted by the Council and details the:
 - Scope of adaptations available under the DFG.
 - Other types of assistance the Council may make available based on an assessment of local need.
 - Eligibility conditions for the assistance.
 - Amount of assistance available.
 - Conditions that will apply to the provision of the assistance.
 - Circumstances when repayment is required.

3. Policy Aims

- 3.1 The focus of this Policy is one of early intervention and proactive prevention; to avoid crisis, to enable people to live healthily and well at home and remain living as independently as possible.
- 3.2 The assistance contained within the Policy aims to meet the identified priorities set out in the Council's Corporate Plan, the emerging Housing and Health Strategy, and County Council's BCF Plan by:
 - Increasing the number of people who are able to live independently and safely at home.

- Contributing to the principal aims of the BCF to reduce delayed transfers of care, minimise avoidable hospital admissions and facilitate early discharge from hospital where possible (reducing bed-based care).
- Improving the health, wellbeing, and quality of life of people living within the District.
- Removing or reducing housing related defects that are detrimental to a person's health.
- Reducing the number of households living in fuel poverty by improving the energy efficiency of the District's private sector housing stock.
- Increasing the number of empty properties brought back into use, particularly where this accommodation can be used to relieve homelessness.
- Supporting the coordination and integration of services to deliver person centred outcomes.

4. Legal and Policy Framework

4.1 Home Adaptations

- 4.1.1 The provision of a DFG is regulated by the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996. The Act places a statutory duty on the Council to provide assistance to qualifying disabled people to undertake a range of adaptations to their homes that are considered "necessary and appropriate" to meet their needs and are "reasonable and practical" having a regard to the age and condition of the property, any work must also be determined as "eligible" as defined by the Act and subsequent regulations. The grant is subject to a "test of resources" in accordance with the legislation, except in the case of children aged under 19, and gives the Council powers to require the grant funding to be repaid upon disposal of the property in certain circumstances.
- 4.1.2 The Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002 gives the Council greater freedoms to provide financial assistance for adaptations, essential home repairs or improvements to improve housing conditions to benefit an individual's health, wellbeing, or quality of life. Article 3 of the Act introduces a wide range of discretionary powers to allow the Council to develop different forms of assistance to meet local needs, based on the local housing conditions and the resources available to the local authority.
- 4.1.3 In 2015/16, the Government made changes to the funding mechanism for DFGs by including the allocation for DFGs as part of the Better Care Fund (BCF). The fundamental principle of the BCF pooled budget is to enable health, social care, and housing services to work more closely together to assist people to manage their health and wellbeing and to live independently in their communities for as long as possible. The statutory duty for the Council to deliver the DFG remains, and within Derbyshire the full DFG allocation is passported through to the Council each year to enable the delivery of DFGs and other local housing related priorities.

4.2 Housing Assistance

- 4.2.1 The Governments view is that the primary responsibility for maintaining privately owned properties rests with the homeowner, however in certain circumstances it may become necessary for the Council to assist in carrying out essential repairs or improvements in the form of advice, financial assistance or enforcement action.
- 4.2.2 The Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA) 1995 outlines that Local Authorities are uniquely placed to assess the needs of their areas and sets out the specific role the Council has to play in improving the

energy efficiency of residential accommodation. Since 2013 the Act requires the Council to produce biennial reports setting out the measures it is taking to improve energy efficiency within the residential accommodation of the District.

- 4.2.3 The Housing Act 2004 places a statutory duty on the Council to enforce housing standards in its locality and introduced the Housing, Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) risk assessment for residential properties. The HHSRS assess 29 potential hazards within a home and classifies these as either Category 1 or 2 hazards, with Category 1 hazards placing the occupants at risk of immediate harm. This requires the Council to take appropriate action and enforce housing standards when these are not met. The Act also set out the requirement for the Council to keep the housing conditions under review and develop strategies and approaches to address areas of concern.
- 4.2.4 The Energy Act 2011 places an obligation on energy companies to help the poorest and most vulnerable households with saving energy. The Energy Company Obligation (ECO) is a government energy efficiency scheme to help reduce carbon emissions and tackle fuel poverty. Under the scheme, the larger energy suppliers have to set targets to:
- Promote measures to reduce carbon emissions, such as roof and wall insulation and connections to heating systems; and
 - Promote measures which improve the ability of low income and vulnerable households to reduce the amount of money required to heat their homes, such as the replacement or repair of a boiler.
- 4.2.5 The Housing and Planning Act 2016 includes a package of measures to tackle rogue landlords within the private rented sector. Since April 2018, landlords of domestic properties may not grant a new tenancy or renew an existing tenancy for a property rated with an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) of F or G unless an exemption applies. The landlord must improve the rating to minimum of E or register an exemption before letting. The Council has committed to monitoring this and will take enforcement action where necessary to ensure the District's private rented stock meets the minimum standards.
- 4.2.6 From April 2020, the minimum level of energy efficiency applies to all domestic private rented properties covered by the Regulations, even if there has been no change in tenancy. If an exemption applies, landlords must register this on the Private Rented Sector Exemptions Register. Full details of exemptions are set out in the updated Domestic Landlord Guidance.

5. Local Strategic Framework

- 5.2 The Council's Corporate Plan outlines the Council's vision of the District being a great place to live, visit and invest, and outlines the values it holds to ensure the services it delivers reflect the local needs of residents. The Strategy includes a number of priorities which will support the aims of this Policy:
- Enabling independent and affordable living.
 - Supporting and safeguarding our most vulnerable residents by keeping them healthy and happy in their homes.
 - Promoting health and wellbeing.
 - Improving the condition of residential housing within the District.
 - Working towards achieving carbon neutrality by 2030.

5.3 The Council's emerging Housing and Health Strategy 2020 - 2022 will identify housing and health related issues within the District. The Strategy will prioritise these issues and propose ways in which the Council, within their role as enabler, will tackle them. The emerging priorities currently identified that relate to the delivery of this policy are:

- Improving health outcomes through housing interventions.
- Meeting the needs of our ageing population.
- Tackling disrepair in the private sector.
- Joining up services to prevent crisis.

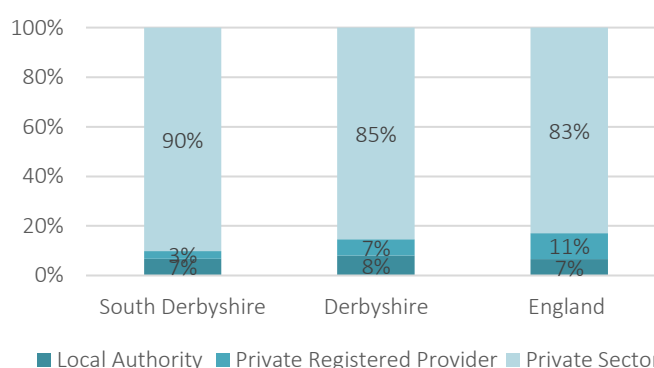
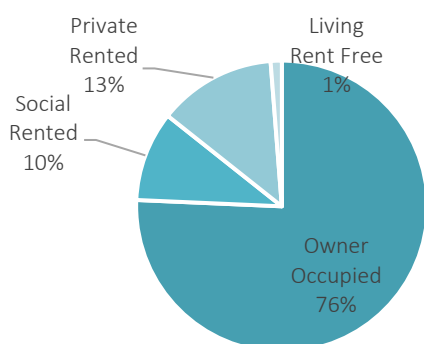
5.4 The County Council's BCF Narrative Plan outlines the way in which the Derbyshire BCF will operate to ensure that the health and social care system can deliver services to meet the needs of the local population. The priorities of this plan that support the delivery aims of this policy are:

- Prevention and early intervention to prevent crisis.
- Reducing delayed transfers of care (bed-blocking) or facilitate early discharge from hospital.
- Minimising avoidable admissions to hospital or residential care.
- Enabling people to remain living safely and independently at home.
- Maximising the health and wellbeing of the population.
- Ensuring seamless service provision is delivered across organisations by partnership working.

6. Local Context

6.1. South Derbyshire is a largely rural District at the heart of the National Forest. It is one of the fastest growing areas in England with a current population of over 105,000. This is set to grow by nearly 15% between 2019 and 2028 to increase this total to over 120,000 people.

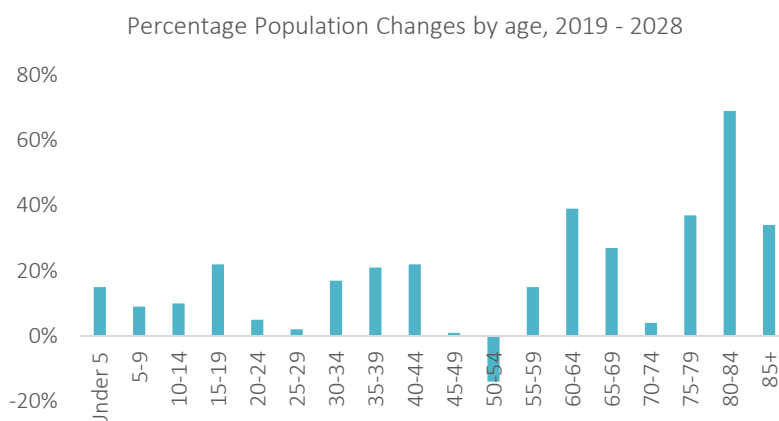
6.2 The majority of people within the District live in the private sector (90%); with 76% owning their own home, either outright or with a mortgage and 13% living within the private rented sector. Only 10% of households live in socially rented housing.



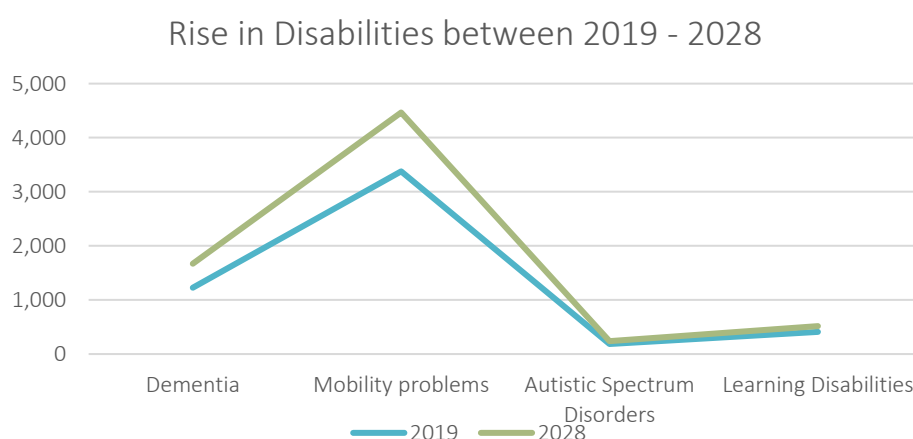
The tenure figures should be used as an estimate of the tenure split rather than absolute figures.

6.3 The District will see an increase in the population of people aged 65 and over, in particular there will be significant growth in the 80+ age group which will place increasing pressures on health, social care and acute services.

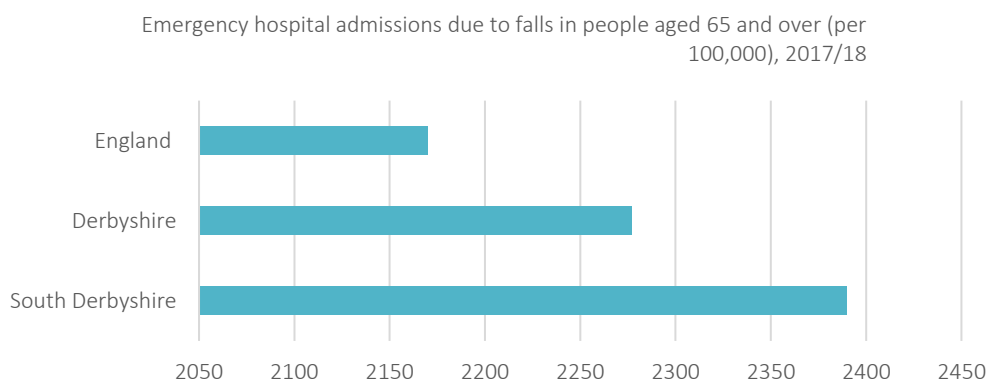
The table below shows the percentage changes in age groups between 2019 and 2028.



- 6.4 The number of people living within the District with long term health conditions or a disability is set to increase by 32% between 2019 and 2028, in particular the number of people living with Dementia is set to rise by 36% and those living with a physical disability is set to rise by 32% over the same timeframe. The chart below shows the growth in some long-term health problems/disabilities:



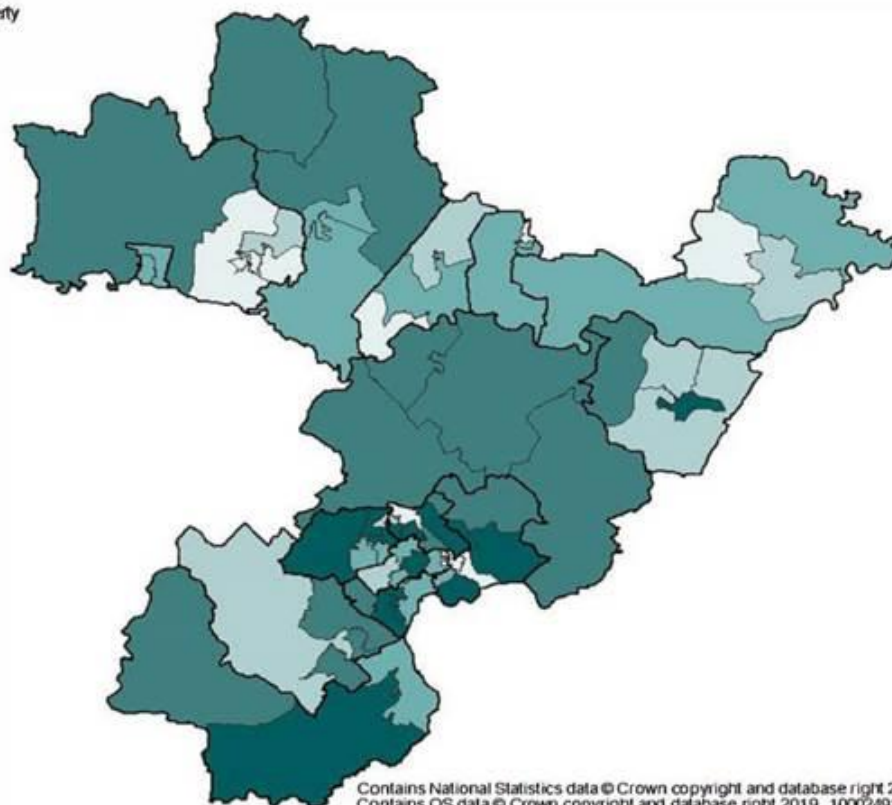
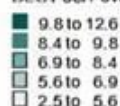
- 6.5 It is also anticipated that the number of frail older people will increase; frailty increases the risk of adverse health outcomes including falls, reduced mobility and disability, reduced independence, and hospitalisation. Older people are more vulnerable to accidents in the home, with those aged 65+ having the highest risk of falling. South Derbyshire has a greater rate of hospital admissions for falls in the home than in Derbyshire or England:



- 6.6 A household is considered to be in fuel poverty if they need to spend more than 10% of their income to maintain a satisfactory heating regime. South Derbyshire has a lower proportion of households living in fuel poverty than the national average; with 7.9% of households considered to be living in fuel poverty compared to the national average of 10.9%.
- 6.7 The heat map below shows the areas of the District considered to be in the highest levels of fuel poverty. These are areas the Council will proactively target with its preventative work to ensure the financial resources reach those most in need.

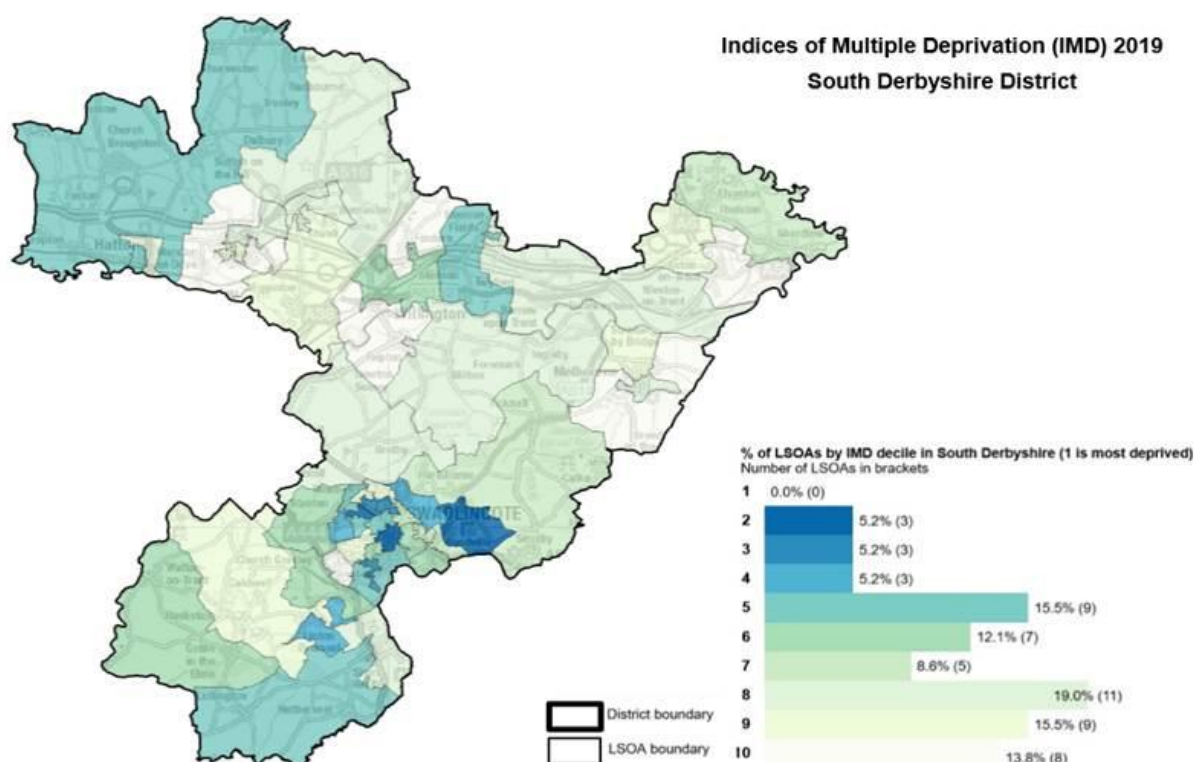
**South Derbyshire District Council
Fuel Poverty 2019**

Proportion in Fuel Poverty
DEC Fuel Poverty 2019



Contains National Statistics data © Crown copyright and database right 2019
Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2019. 100024913.

- 6.8 The rising cost of living including food, fuel and housing costs mean that some communities experience higher than average levels of deprivation and poverty. The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) is the most commonly used measure of deprivation, with the lower numbers showing the areas of highest levels of deprivation.
- 6.9 The map overleaf shows that there are no areas within South Derbyshire that fall within the most 10% deprived areas across England, however there are stark contrasts between areas of deprivation, mainly around the urban core and towards the south and north-west of the District, and areas of greater affluence throughout the District.



7. Funding

- 7.1 The Council has seen an increase in DFG funding since 2014/15 as a result of the allocation being paid via the County Council's BCF funding. The take up of mandatory DFGs within the District has not kept pace with the amount of funding received and therefore the Council has taken the opportunity to revise this policy to offer discretionary assistance and pilot new schemes to meet identified local need.
- 7.2 Mandatory DFGs will always need to have priority on the use of DFG monies, all other assistance which may be provided under this policy is at the sole discretion of the Council and will be subject to the availability of financial resources. At times of high demand, waiting lists for discretionary schemes may be instigated or schemes may be amended, suspended, or removed entirely to ensure the Council can meet its statutory responsibilities.
- 7.3 In addition to the DFG funding, the Council will exploit all possible opportunities for internal and external funding and work with other providers to improve housing conditions and the health and wellbeing of our residents.
- 7.4 Where assistance has been given on the condition of a land charge being applied to the property, all monies received from the disposal of the property will be returned into the DFG budget and be ringfenced for future mandatory and discretionary schemes delivered under this policy.

8. Adaptations

8.1 Disabled Facilities Grant

This grant will provide disabled people adaptations to their homes to promote independent living.

Purpose	This is a mandatory grant available to provide essential adaptations to the homes of disabled people to facilitate independent living, ensuring they have adequate access to and around their homes and to essential facilities within it, subject to the provisions contained within the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996. This summary document should be read in conjunction with the full Act.
Maximum Grant Amount	£30,000 however the grant will only cover the cost of works deemed to be eligible.
Applicant Eligibility	A person must be considered as disabled under the Act. The grant is available to adapt the home to meet the needs of any disabled person living within the property to enable them to continue to live there however the application should be in the name of the homeowner or tenant of a private landlord or registered provider (applications from Council tenants are covered under separate funding arrangements). The grant is subject to a test of resources (see financial assessment).
Eligible Works	The works must be deemed as necessary and appropriate to meet the needs of the disabled person, and reasonable and practicable having regard to the age and condition of the property to: • Make the home safe. • Facilitate access to and from the home. • Facilitate access to or provide a bedroom. • Facilitate access to the principal family room. • Provide a room containing a bath or shower or facilitate the use of such a facility. • Provide of a room containing a toilet and wash hand basin or facilitate the use of such a facility. • Facilitate the preparation and cooking of food (only if used by the disabled person). • Provide or improve a heating system. • Facilitate the use of power, light, or heat by altering the same or provide additional means of control. • Facilitate access and movement around the home to enable a disabled person provide care for another person. • Facilitate access to a garden. The Council will support the use of preferred schemes where it can be evidenced, to the satisfaction of the Council that the preferred work is necessary and appropriate and will still meet the disabled person's needs. Funding for preferred schemes will only be awarded up to the maximum amount of the assessed eligible work. For example, if the Council recommends a stairlift to facilitate access to a bedroom, however the applicant would prefer a ground floor bedroom, the Council will only provide a grant for the cost of the stairlift (the original eligible works) and it will be for the applicant to fund the additional costs.

	Remedial works identified that support the provision of eligible work that require action will be considered as part of the grant costs. e.g. upgrade or replacement electrics to facilitate the safe installation of a stairlift.
Financial Assessment	Funding will only be provided towards works deemed eligible. Eligible work under £6,000 or for a child (under 16, or under 19 if in receipt of child benefit) will not be subject to a test of resources. Works for £6,000 or over will be subject to a formal test of resources or a means test in accordance with the Act to determine an applicant's contribution.
Application	Applications should be made using the relevant forms and supported by an assessment by Derbyshire County Council's Adult Social Care or a private Occupational Therapist Assessment. The Council are responsible for assessing that the person is a qualifying disabled person and the work is necessary, appropriate, reasonable, and practicable. The assessment for what work is necessary and appropriate will be undertaken in conjunction with Derbyshire County Council's Adult Social Care Department. The grant is subject to a test of resources; proof of qualifying means tested benefits, or the results of this test will be considered as part of the application process. Certification will be required to prove ownership or landlord's consent, along with a signed disclaimer stating the applicant's intention to remain in the property for the next five years.
Payment	Any associated fees such as technical surveys, obtaining proof of title etc are taken from a top sliced portion of the budget which is used for design fees. Payment will be made directly to the contractor(s) upon satisfactory completion of eligible works as inspected by the Council. In certain circumstances stage payments may be made towards the cost of large works. If the applicant has a contribution to pay, they must ensure they have the money to cover their share of the costs before work commences. Unforeseen and additional costs will only be paid for where they are necessary to complete the adaptation and must be agreed by the Council before they are undertaken. Any increase in grant amount may have an impact on the charge placed against the property.
Conditions	The disabled person must intend to occupy the property as their only or main residence for a period of five years after the works are complete (or such shorter period as the person's health or other relevant circumstances permit). Work must not commence until formal approval of the grant has been issued to the applicant and works must be completed within 12 months from the date of this formal approval. The Council is not responsible for the ongoing maintenance or repairs of the work, and it is the applicant's responsibility to ensure they adhere to the recommended servicing of any equipment e.g. stairlifts, through floor lifts, closomats etc. Where the applicant is an owner occupier and the grant amount is above £5,000, the Council will recover the costs of the grant up to £10,000 if the property is disposed of within 10 years from the date of the completion of works. This will be placed as a legal charge against property; however, the

	Council may waive this requirement in exceptional circumstances in accordance with the grant rules. The first £5,000 will be disregarded. A maximum charge of £10,000 will be applied in accordance with the example below:	
	Grant	Repayment Required
	£5,000	£0
	£10,000	£5,000
	£20,000	£10,000
	£30,000	£10,000
Strategic Aims	• Increase the number of people living independently and safely at home. • Reduce the number of serious hazards in people's homes. • Improve the health, wellbeing, and quality of life of people living within the District.	

8.2 Discretionary Top Ups for DFG

In exceptional circumstances, the Council will consider applications to top-up the funding of a mandatory DFG application where this exceeds the maximum grant limit of £30,000. The maximum funding available for this is £10,000.

Purpose	To provide discretionary financial assistance to a disabled person who qualifies for a mandatory DFG where the cost of the eligible works exceeds the mandatory grant maximum of £30,000.
Maximum Grant Amount	£10,000
Applicant Eligibility	The applicant must have been assessed as eligible for a mandatory DFG; and The applicant or household must be in receipt of an income related benefit. For clarity, this includes one or more of the following: • Income Support • Guaranteed Pension Credit • Income based Employment and Support Allowance • Income based Job Seekers Allowance • Working Tax Credit • Universal Credit • Housing or Council Tax Support (not including single person or disabled person discount). Discretion will be given to applicants considered to be in exceptional financial hardship which will be determined on a case by case basis by the Head of Housing. Applications made towards the cost of an applicant's assessed contribution will not be considered unless exceptional circumstances exist. These will be determined on a case by case basis by the Head of Housing.
Eligible Works	Works funded by this grant must be eligible works which have been deemed necessary and appropriate to meet the disabled persons need, as defined by the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996.
Financial Assessment	There will be no additional means test required for the top-up, however the applicant or the household will need to be in receipt of a qualifying means tested benefit or considered to be in financial hardship as outlined above.

Application	A formal application for this assistance will not be required in addition to the DFG application.
Payment	Payment will be made directly to the contractor(s) upon satisfactory completion of eligible works as inspected by the Council. In certain circumstances stage payments may be made towards the cost of large works.
Conditions	The conditions for this grant will be the same as outlined within the DFG (Mandatory Works), except for: Where the applicant is an owner occupier the Council will recover the full costs of the top-up grant if the property is disposed of within 10 years from the date of the completion of works. For clarity, the charge added will be in addition to any mandatory grant applied. This will be placed as a legal charge against property; however, the Council may waive this requirement in exceptional circumstances in accordance with the grant rules.
Strategic Aims	• Increase the number of people living independently and safely at home. • Reduce the number of serious hazards in people's homes. • Improve the health, wellbeing, and quality of life of people living within the District.

8.3 Relocation Grants

In certain circumstances, it may not be possible to suitably adapt the home of a disabled person or the cost of doing so becomes prohibitive. In order to effectively meet the person's needs, the Council will consider applications for a relocation grant to assist the household with the cost of moving to a more appropriate home.

Purpose	This fund will offer discretionary assistance to pay for the associated costs of moving home where it is not reasonable or practical under the mandatory DFG assistance to suitably adapt the home of the disabled person, or the cost of doing exceeds the maximum grant limit of £30,000 or moving home would provide a better long-term solution.
Maximum Grant Amount	£30,000
Applicant Eligibility	The applicant will have been assessed as eligible for a mandatory DFG and there is no possibility of adapting their current home or moving would provide a better long-term solution; and The cost of the relocation grant will be lower or equivalent to the original grant, including the estimated cost of any adaptations required in the new home and less than the maximum grant limit of £30,000.
Eligible Works	• Legal and estate agent fees • Survey fees • Stamp duty • Removal costs • Eligible works deemed necessary and appropriate to adapt the new home
Financial Assessment	The DFG is subject to a formal means test, a further means test for this grant will not be required.
Application	A formal application for this assistance will not be required in addition to the DFG application.

Payment	Payment will be made directly to the applicant's solicitor upon exchange of contracts for all legal and estate agent fees. Payment will be made directly to the contractor(s) upon satisfactory completion of eligible works as inspected by the Council.										
Conditions	Where the applicant is an owner occupier and the grant amount is above £5,000 the Council will recover the costs of the grant up to £10,000 if the property is disposed of within 10 years from the date of the completion of works or exchange of contracts. This will be placed as a legal charge against property; however, the Council may waive this requirement in exceptional circumstances in accordance with the grant rules. The first £5,000 will be disregarded. A maximum charge of £10,000 will be applied in accordance with the example below: <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Grant</th><th>Repayment Required</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>£5,000</td><td>£0</td></tr> <tr> <td>£10,000</td><td>£5,000</td></tr> <tr> <td>£20,000</td><td>£10,000</td></tr> <tr> <td>£30,000</td><td>£10,000</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Grant	Repayment Required	£5,000	£0	£10,000	£5,000	£20,000	£10,000	£30,000	£10,000
Grant	Repayment Required										
£5,000	£0										
£10,000	£5,000										
£20,000	£10,000										
£30,000	£10,000										
Strategic Aims	• Increase the number of people living independently and safely at home. • Reduce the number of serious hazards in people's homes. • Improve the health, wellbeing, and quality of life of people living within the District.										

8.4 Additional Officer Posts

- 8.4.1 To support the effective and efficient delivery of Mandatory DFGs, the Council will invest in the provision of a dedicated Occupational Therapist and Technical Officer. This will enable qualifying disabled people to receive eligible works to adapt their homes more quickly and support the policy aims of reducing hazards within the home, enabling people to live independently and safely, and improving the health, wellbeing and quality of life in addition to preventing avoidable bed-based care.

9. Home Repair Assistance

9.1. Healthy Homes Programme

Purpose	Discretionary assistance available to help vulnerable residents who are affected by poor housing to stay warm and well at home by providing heating repairs or upgrades and insulation.
Applicant Eligibility	The applicant must be an owner occupier or living in private rented accommodation that they are struggling to afford to keep warm and classed as vulnerable due to age, or existing health conditions such as: • cardiovascular, respiratory, mental health, physical disability, addictions, terminal illness, suppressed immune system. life changing or life limiting conditions). These applications must be supported by a recommendation from an OT, social worker, GP, or other healthcare professional.
Eligible Works	Works will be assessed on an individual basis, however, could include: • Loft or cavity wall insulation • Improving home energy efficiency

	• Repairing or replacing heating systems • A new gas connection to the property • Clearance, cleaning, and hoarding • Minor electrical works
Financial Assessment	Applicants will be assessed based on their household income with a decision being made to the income threshold based on household composition or be in receipt of one or more income related benefits at the point of approval. • Income Support • Guaranteed Pension Credit • Income based Employment and Support Allowance • Income based Job Seekers Allowance • Working Tax Credit • Universal Credit • Housing or Council Tax Support (not including single person or disabled person discount).
Application	Referrals can be made directly to the scheme by contacting 01629 536919 or 01629 536091.
Strategic Aims	• Reduce the number of serious hazards in people's homes. • Improve the energy efficiency of the Districts private sector housing. • Reduce the number of households living in fuel poverty. • Contribute to the number of people living independently at home. • Improve the health, wellbeing, and quality of life of people living within the District.

9.2. Healthy Homes Assistance Fund

The purpose of this assistance is to remove significant hazards in people's homes or to provide security and/or energy efficiency measures to reduce fuel poverty in cases not covered by the Healthy Homes Programme. Assistance will be available in the form of a grant, up to a maximum of £10,000 per property.

Purpose	Discretionary assistance intended to ensure vulnerable or disabled households can live in homes that are safe and free from serious defects or hazards, are warm and secure.
Maximum Grant Amount	£10,000 (extendable to £25,000 with the written consent of the Head of Environmental Services)
Applicant Eligibility	The applicant must be an owner occupier or at the Council's discretion living in private rented accommodation. The property must be the applicant's sole and only residence and: • Contain a household member who is 60 years of age or over; or • Contain a child under 5 or a pregnant woman; or • Contain a household member who is in receipt of a disability related benefit; for clarity this includes any rate or component of Personal Independence Payments, Disability Living Allowance or Attendance Allowance; or • Contain a household member with a diagnosed health condition which is made worse by their living conditions. (The following conditions will be considered as part of the assessment - cardiovascular, respiratory, mental health, physical disability,

	addictions, terminal illness, suppressed immune system. life changing or life limiting conditions). These applications must be supported by a recommendation from an OT, GP, or other healthcare professional. • Other exceptional criteria will be determined on a case by case basis by the Head of Environmental Services.
Eligible Works	Works eligible for assistance will be at the discretion of the Council and in general relate to the removal or help to remedy defects or deficiencies within the home that impact on health, for example: • Essential repairs determined by the HHSRS to address Category 1 or serious Category 2 hazards in order to make the property safe, warm, weatherproof, or healthy. • Installation or replacement central heating systems or improve the energy performance of the home. • Work to prevent falls around the home. • Additional security measures. All works must be deemed as reasonable and practicable having regard to the age and condition of the property.
Financial Assessment	Applicants must be in receipt of one or more income related benefits at the point of approval. • Income Support • Guaranteed Pension Credit • Income based Employment and Support Allowance • Income based Job Seekers Allowance • Working Tax Credit • Universal Credit • Housing or Council Tax Support (not including single person or disabled person discount). • Other exceptional criteria will be determined on a case by case basis by the Head of Environmental Services.
Application	Referrals will be received through multiple channels. The applicant will be required to complete an application form following an inspection from the Council to ensure works meet the requirements of the assistance. Proof of qualifying eligibility criteria will be required in order to process the application.
Payment	Works will be inspected by the Council on completion. If deemed satisfactory, payment will be made directly to the contractor(s) on behalf of the applicant. In certain circumstances, stage payments may be made towards the cost of large works. Unforeseen works may be included within the assistance if work has already commenced, up to a maximum of £1000. This is subject to the pre-approval from the Head of Environmental Services. Reasonable associated fees e.g. technical surveys, proof of ownership etc will be included within the assistance.
Conditions	The Council will not pay for works already underway or completed. Written consent from the owner must be obtained before works can commence. Works must be completed within three months from the date of approval unless an extension has been granted by the Head of Environmental Services.

	The Council will not accept more than two applications for assistance within a five-year period. A local land charge will be placed against the property for the full cost of work (including associated fees). Unless there is clear evidence that this condition will have an adverse effect on the vulnerable or disabled person who the funding is intended to benefit. The Head of Environmental Services must give written approval where a local land charge is not to be placed on a property. Repayment of the grant will be made in full on the sale, transfer, or assignment of the property. In the exceptional circumstances where the Council will assist works to a property that is rented, a condition will be applied to the assistance that the landlord will only charge rent set at the local housing allowance rate for the type of property for a three year period, and will accept nominations from the Council should the property become vacant during the same timeframe. An applicant can repay the grant in full or in stages at any time throughout the duration of the assistance. All returned monies will be recycled back into the scheme to ensure it is sustainable in the long term.
Strategic Aims	• Reduce the number of serious hazards in people's homes. • Improve the energy efficiency of the Districts private sector housing. • Reduce the number of households living in fuel poverty. • Contribute to the number of people living independently at home. • Improve the health, wellbeing, and quality of life of people living within the District.

9.3. Empty Homes Grant

The purpose of this assistance is to support empty homeowners who wish to bring their empty homes back into use for either their own occupation or to contribute to the private rented stock. The grant will provide a maximum amount of £9,000 and can be used to cover the cost of required renovation works with conditions applied that the property must be let to families on the housing register for a period of 5 years following completion of the work.

Purpose	Discretionary assistance intended to bring long term empty properties back into occupation in order to optimise the occupancy of the districts housing stock, to support the supply of affordable housing and to minimise the anti-social behaviour and blight associated with empty properties.
Maximum Grant Amount	£9,000 per residential unit
Applicant Eligibility	The applicant must be the owner of the property which is the subject of the grant application. The property must: • Have been empty for at least 1 year; • Fail to meet the Decent Homes Standard; • Other exceptional criteria will be determined on a case by case basis by the Head of Environmental Services.
Eligible Works	Works eligible for assistance will be at the discretion of the Council and in general relate to works necessary to enable the property to meet the Decent Homes Standard.

	All works must be deemed as reasonable and practicable having regard to the age and condition of the property.
Financial Assessment	No financial assessment criteria apply.
Application	The applicant will be required to complete an application form and provide proof of ownership following an inspection and relevant enquiries from the Council to ensure the property meets the requirements of the assistance.
Payment	Works will be inspected by the Council on completion. If deemed satisfactory, payment will be made directly to the contractor(s) on behalf of the applicant. In certain circumstances, stage payments may be made towards the cost of large works. Unforeseen works may be included within the assistance if work has already commenced, up to a maximum of £1000. This is subject to the pre-approval from the Head of Environmental Services. Reasonable associated fees e.g. technical surveys, proof of ownership etc will be included within the assistance.
Conditions	The Council will not pay for works already underway or completed. Works must be completed within 12 months from the date of approval unless an extension has been granted by the Head of Environmental Services. If, on completion of the grant the property is to be rented, the landlord must let at an affordable rent level (the local housing allowance rate) to households on the Councils housing waiting list for a minimum 5-year period.
Strategic Aims	• Increasing the number of empty properties brought back into use, • Reduce the number of serious hazards in people's homes. • Improve the health, wellbeing, and quality of life of people living within the District. • Improve the energy efficiency and reduce fuel poverty.

9.4. Public Health Officer - Healthy Homes

To support the early identification of hazards and essential repairs, the Council will invest in a dedicated Officer to identify and proactively react to issues of disrepair that are having a serious detrimental impact on a person's health, wellbeing and quality of life. This will support the policy aims of increasing the number of people able to live independently and safely at home and reduce the number of serious hazards within the home.

10. Hospital Discharge

10.1. Hospital Discharge Assistance

To support the aim of reducing the need for bed-based care, this fund will give prompt assistance to people who are fit to be discharged from hospital however there is a housing related reason that is preventing discharge back to their home.

Purpose	This discretionary assistance is for people in hospital or a health or social care funded placement whose discharge is delayed due to the conditions of their home; or the assistance will prevent emergency admission into hospital, or a health or social care funded placement.
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Maximum Grant Amount	£2,500
Applicant Eligibility	The applicant must be an owner occupier or at the Council's discretion living within the private rented sector or a tenant of a registered provider. Applicants must be in hospital or a health or social care funded placement or is likely to need emergency admission due to the housing or living conditions. In all cases an applicant must be deemed capable of living independently by the relevant healthcare professional making the referral. The property subject to the application must normally be the applicant's permanent residence.
Eligible Works	Works will be determined on a case by case basis which will facilitate the purpose of this fund. Eligible works can include those listed below however this is not exhaustive and any works that reduce the need for bed-based care will be considered. • Urgent adaptations that allow access in or around the person's home • Urgent repairs to remove serious hazards • Heating repairs or improvements • Property clearance and one off deep cleans of hoarded goods. Work excludes packages of care funded by social care or health.
Financial Assessment	This assistance is not subject to a means test or any qualifying criteria.
Application	A referral is required by a relevant health or social care professional supporting the application. In all cases applications for assistance will be administered as soon as reasonably practicable.
Payment	Payment will be made directly to the contractor(s) upon satisfactory completion of eligible works as inspected by the Council. Works will be provided at no cost to the individual.
Conditions	Written consent from the owner(s) of the property will need to be obtained prior to works commencing unless the works are for cleaning or clearing the property. If the cost of the works exceeds the maximum financial assistance available, the Council will liaise with the relevant professional to determine the priority works. The Council will not pay for works carried out without prior approval.
Strategic Aims	• Increase the number of people living independently and safely at home. • Reduce the number of serious hazards in people's homes. • Assist with hospital discharge and delayed transfers of care, including reducing the use of bed-based care. • Improve the health, wellbeing, and quality of life of people living within the District. • Improve the energy efficiency and reduce fuel poverty.

10.2. Home from Home Scheme

The Home from Home scheme will adapt existing Council homes to high standards; turning them into respite facilities to support a reduction in the need for bed-based care where there is a housing

related issue delaying discharge or triggering admission. This scheme will principally support the aim of meeting the BCF priorities by reducing the need for bed-based care, but also allow people to live independently and safely at home and improve the health, wellbeing, and quality of life.

10.3. Early Intervention Officer – Housing and Health

The creation of this Officer post will support the overall aims and priorities of this Policy. They will be responsible for providing customers with a holistic assessment of their needs in relation to their housing issues, and proactively work with them to resolve these issues to enable them to live as independently as possible. They will be the primary point of contact for hospital discharge to prevent the use of bed-based care and be responsible for coordinating the Home from Home Scheme, the Hospital Discharge Grant and the Dementia Friendly Homes Grant, as well as monitoring the services contained within this policy are delivering against their strategic aims.

11. Dementia Friendly Homes

This grant will support people with a diagnosis of dementia or memory loss to live as independently as possible in their existing home.

Assistance and Outcomes	To provide aids, adaptations, or assistive technology to enable people with memory loss or a diagnosis of dementia to live as independently as possible within their home and reduce feelings of confusion.
Maximum Grant Amount	£1,500
Eligibility	The applicant must be an owner occupier, live within the private rented sector or a tenant of a registered provider. The applicant or a member of their household must have a diagnosis of dementia or is suffering from a recognised memory loss affecting day to day living, is able to continue to live independently at home.
Financial Assessment	This assistance is not subject to a means test or any qualifying criteria.
Eligible Works	The provision of aids or adaptations. These must be related to the memory loss or dementia and support with the promotion of independence or the self-confidence of the applicant, for example: • Assistive technology such as dementia clocks, medication dispensers, memo minders etc. • Automatic lighting, exit sensors • Easy to use telephones • Activity monitors • Installation of keysafes, coloured grab rails, thermostatic taps • Provision and installation of equipment to reduce the risk of fire. (this list is not exhaustive and will be based on an assessment of individual need)
Application Process	A referral is required by a relevant health or social care professional supporting the application. An assessment will be undertaken by a trained officer of the Council.
Payment and Fees	The Council will appoint a contractor or work with a third party to undertake eligible works. Payment will be made directly to the contractor on satisfactory completion of works. Works and equipment will be provided at no cost to the individual.

Conditions	Ongoing monitoring costs and maintenance of equipment will not be provided.
Strategic Aims	• Increase the number of people living independently and safely at home. • Assist with hospital discharge and delayed transfers of care, including reducing the use of bed-based care (where appropriate). • Improve the health, wellbeing, and quality of life of people living within the District.

12. Domestic Abuse and Victims of Crime

12.1. Safer Homes – South Derbyshire

This grant will enable victims of crime and older people to live safely in their homes. The safer homes grant is provided through the Community Voluntary Service (CVS) and paid for by the Council's Community Safety Partnership.

Purpose	Assistance to improve the security of homes of older people (60+), victims of crime and vulnerable people who live within the District.
Eligible Works	The assistance involves a full security assessment of the home. Items installed will be on provided as a result of this assessment but could include the installation of: • Additional door or window locks • Security lighting • Door viewers and door chains • Window Alarms • Referrals for Fireproof letter boxes
Financial Assessment	The security measures will be provided at no cost to the individual.
Strategic Aims	• Increase the number of people living independently at home. • Improve the health, wellbeing, and quality of life of people living within the District.

12.2. Domestic Abuse Services

This service will enable the Council to provide victims of abuse specialist support to assist with their immediate needs and support them in their long-term recovery. It will support the policy aims of increasing the number of people who are able to live independently and safely, improving the health, wellbeing and quality of life of people living within the District and support partnership working to achieve better person-centred outcomes.

13. Early Intervention Officer – Mental Health

To support people living within the private sector or registered provider properties who suffer with mental ill health, the Council will invest in the provision of a dedicated Support Worker to prevent homelessness and avoid the need for costly hospital admissions. This service will support the policy aims of increasing the number of people able to live independently and safely at home, contribute to

reducing the need for bed-based care, improve the health, wellbeing and quality of life of the individual and support the coordination of services to deliver person centred outcomes.

14. Supporting Independence

14.1 Stay Active and Independent for Longer (SAIL)

This project will help older people who are at risk of isolation to engage in a variety of physical activities provided by the Council throughout the District. This scheme will support the strategic aims of the policy by increasing the number of people who are able to live independently and safely at home, improve the health, wellbeing and quality of life of people living within the District and support the coordination of services to deliver person centred outcomes.

14.2 Capital and Revenue Funding Opportunities

The Council will support the delivery of one-off pilot projects or seed funding to launch services within the District that support the aims of this policy. The Council intends to advertise these opportunities to internal and external providers and will score applications based on how they will support the delivery of this policy and its strategic priorities.

15. Measuring Performance

- 15.1 The schemes contained within this policy will be subject to a consistent monitoring and evaluation procedure to ascertain that value for money is being achieved by the individual schemes along with measuring the social return on investment the scheme makes.

16. Data Protection

- 16.1 All data will be held securely in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations (EU) 2016 (GDPR).
- 16.2 In order to progress an application it may be necessary to share the information an applicant provides with relevant other Council departments and externally with Adult Social Care and other relevant health care professionals. Applicants will be informed of this data sharing at the time of applying in the form of a privacy notice.
- 16.3 The Council is under a duty to protect public funds and may use the information provided for the prevention and detection of fraud.

17. Complaints

- 16.1 Appeals against refusals of any applications for discretionary assistance should be submitted as a Stage 1 complaint to the Strategic Director of Service Delivery. Details of the process are available on the Council's website: [Comments, compliments and complaints | South Derbyshire District Council](#) or alternatively you can make your complaint in writing to:

Strategic Director – Service Delivery
South Derbyshire District Council

Civic Offices
Civic Way
Swadlincote
Derbyshire
DE11 0AH

18. Review

- 17.1 This Policy will be reviewed every three years to ensure it is still reflective of locally assessed needs; unless there are substantial changes in the legislation governing the policy or the availability of funding to support the policy aims.
- 17.2 The policy grants discretion to extend or amend the eligibility criteria, the level of grant or assistance available and the scope of works where the situation is exceptional, and would, in the opinion of the Strategic Director of Service Delivery, help the Council to meet its strategic housing aims.

19. Useful Contacts

Derbyshire County Council	Telephone: 01629 533190 Email: contactcentre@derbyshire.gov.uk
South Derbyshire District Council	Telephone: 01283 221000 Email: customer.services@southderbyshire.gov.uk
Derbyshire Healthy Homes programme	Telephone: 01629 536919 Email: healthyhome@derbyshire.gov.uk
South Derbyshire Community Voluntary Service (CVS)	Telephone: 01283 219761 Email: projectsupport@sdcv.org.uk