

Redditch Borough Council
Overview & Scrutiny Committee
19 February 2024

Overview - Disabled Facilities Grants

Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) are mandatory grants to support the provision of adaptations to promote independent living within the home, subject to the provisions of the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996.

The Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) provides each local authority in England with a DFG allocation which is contained within the Better Care Fund paid to the County Council and passported to the Local Housing Authority

Under the Regulatory Reform Order – Local Authorities have some flexibility on how it uses its allocation. The use of this flexibility must form part of the Council's Housing Assistance Policy.

A DFG is the only mandatory housing grant available. If an applicant makes a valid application, the Council has a duty to approve the grant. The lack of budget is not a valid reason to refuse or withhold a grant approval. There is no minimum grant amount and a maximum mandatory grant of £30,000. This figure was set by the Disabled Facilities Grants (Maximum Amounts and Additional Purposes) (England) Order 2008. The DFG is a 'means tested' grant and contributions may be required to progress the application.

The council uses its powers to place a local land charge against the property where the Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant exceeds £5000. The charge may be up to a maximum of £10,000 and repayment of the sum on charge is required where the adapted property is sold, transferred or otherwise disposed of within a 10-year period from completion of the work.

The grant is awarded to the person, not the household, so multiple grants for the same household are possible. Minor adaptations costing £1000 or less, equipment, and reablement (for at least six weeks) must be free of charge and is provided by social care through the County Council (Care & Support Regulations 2014).

DFGs are tenure blind so are available for owner occupiers, private tenants, housing association tenants and Council housing tenants. Local Housing Authorities with a Housing Revenue Account (HRA) such as Redditch are required to self-fund home adaptations for council tenants through this account and not use the DFG funding provided by the government. Due this stipulation Council tenants are not required to submit a DFG application and are dealt with through the Housing Department. A

provision was made for expenditure in the HRA as a 'Disabled Facilities Allowance' in the 2012-13 self-financing settlement.

it is considered good practice to offer a Home Improvement Agency (HIA) service to support a disabled person and their family through the complicated process of carrying out major building works. In Worcestershire a partnership of the 6 Local Housing Authorities and Worcestershire County Council commissioned a HIA referred as the Worcestershire Promoting Independent Living Service and this is provided by Millbrook Health Care under a contract until March 2025. There is also a fee of 14.9% paid to the home improvement agency through the DFG funding for each completed scheme. The services in Redditch managed through this agency and funded through the Council's DFG allocation are listed below:

- Mandatory DFG
- Discretionary DFG top up
- Dementia Dwelling grant
- Hospital Discharge grant
- Home repair assistance
- Housing options
- In house OT (x1) and trusted assessor trained staff
- Energy efficiency measures
- Self-Funder disabled adaptations

DFG – Process

There are 4 key elements to a robust DFG decision:

- The disabled occupant - Robust decision-making begins with a comprehensive assessment of the applicant's needs. This involves gathering relevant information about the applicant's disability, their living situation, and the specific adaptations required to improve their quality of life and independence at home
- The applicant - DFG decisions must be based on clear criteria for financial eligibility. This involves assessing the applicant's financial circumstances to determine their ability to contribute towards the cost of the adaptations.
- The eligible works - Before approving a DFG application, it is essential to assess the technical feasibility of the proposed adaptations. This involves evaluating factors such as the structural integrity of the property, building

regulations compliance, and the availability of suitable contractors to carry out the work.

- Amount of grant – Does the scheme require additional funding above the maximum grant available.

There are 5 key stages of delivering a home adaptation. Applicants can undertake the process of submitting a DFG application without the use of the HIA.

- **Stage 0:** first contact with services – This is mainly through health, Adult Social Care, the Council or direct to the HIA
- **Stage 1:** An assessment and identification of the relevant works for the disabled occupant is undertaken by the OT service (Herefordshire & Worcestershire Health & care HNS Trust) or applicants can employ a suitably qualified OT to undertake an assessment.
- **Stage 2:** The HIA will identify the relevant works and assess if the works are necessary and appropriate in conjunction with the OT. The HIA undertakes casework and any technical requirements and obtain quotes, undertake the means test and if proceeding complete the DFG application and submit the formal grant application to the Council for approval.

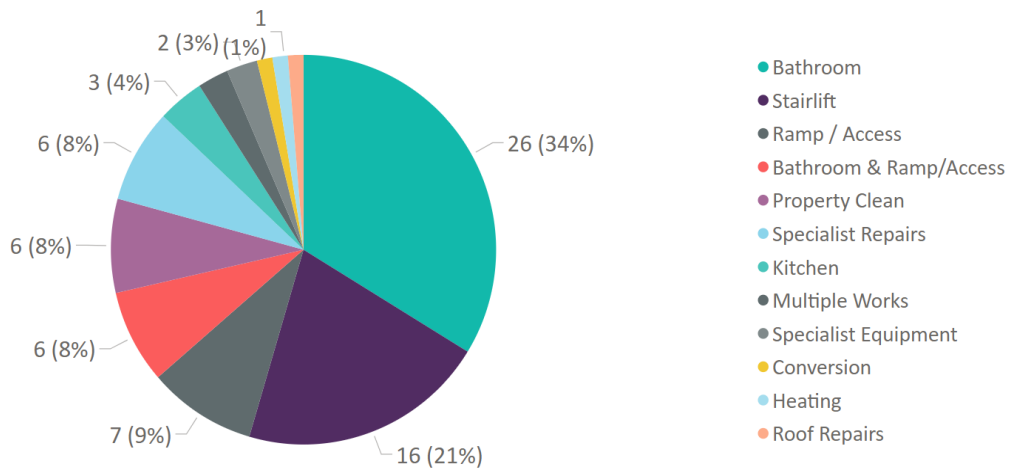


- **Stage 3:** The Council assess if they are reasonable and practicable and approves or rejects the application. The Council has a maximum of 6 months to approve the application.
- **Stage 4:** When approved Millbrook will instruct the works and project manage the adaptations.

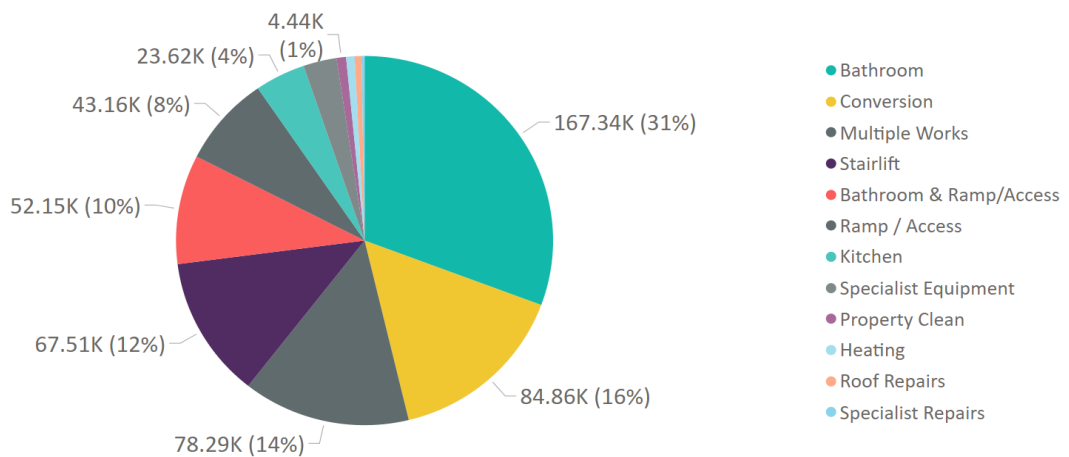
DFG's in Redditch

The following information has been provided by Millbrook Health Care as part of the current re-tendering work being undertaken.

DFG completions by Job Type
Redditch
2022-2023



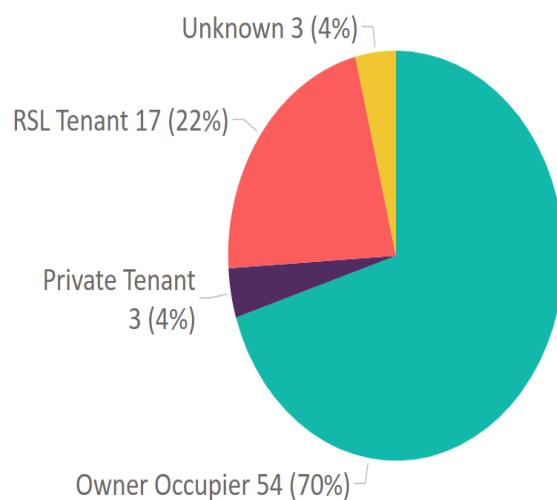
DFG Expenditure in £s by job/adaptation type
Redditch
2022-2023



Number, median delivery times, total value, and average value of DFG completions by adaptation type in Redditch 2022-23

Adaptation Type	Cases	Median delivery time in working days	Total Payment	Average Payment
Bathroom	26	146	£167,341.42	£6,436.21
Stairlift	16	81	£67,511.93	£4,219.50
Ramp / Access	7	186	£43,159.56	£6,165.65
Bathroom & Ramp/Access	6	198	£52,151.41	£8,691.90
Property Clean	6	N/A	£4,439.72	£739.95
Specialist Repairs	6	N/A	£1,381.05	£230.18
Kitchen	3	165	£23,622.25	£7,874.08
Multiple Works	2	447	£78,292.85	£39,146.43
Specialist Equipment	2	199	£15,587.85	£7,793.93
Conversion	1	465	£84,864.36	£84,864.36
Heating	1	126	£3,948.08	£3,948.08
Roof Repairs	1	N/A	£3,221.12	£3,221.12
Total	77	169	£545,521.60	£7,084.70

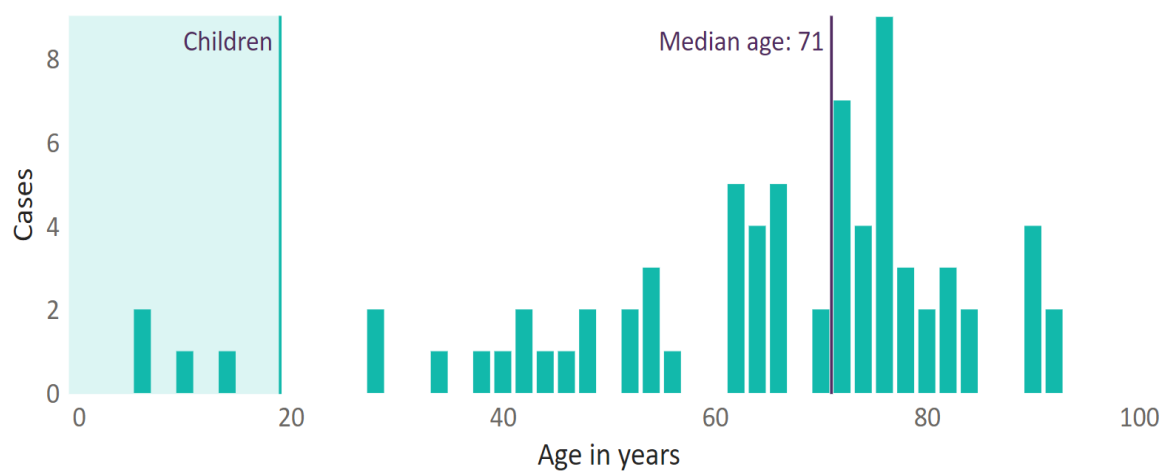
DFG recipients by tenure
Redditch
2022-2023



Distribution of the tenure DFG recipients in Redditch 2022-23

Tenure	Cases	Median delivery time in working days	Total payment	Average payment
Owner Occupier	54	141	£418,779.89	£7,755.18
RSL Tenant	17	151	£102,876.33	£6,051.55
Private Tenant	3	127	£20,092.74	£6,697.58
Unknown	3	7	£3,772.64	£1,257.55
Total	77	169	£545,521.60	£7,084.70

Histogram of the age of DFG recipients
Redditch
2022-2023



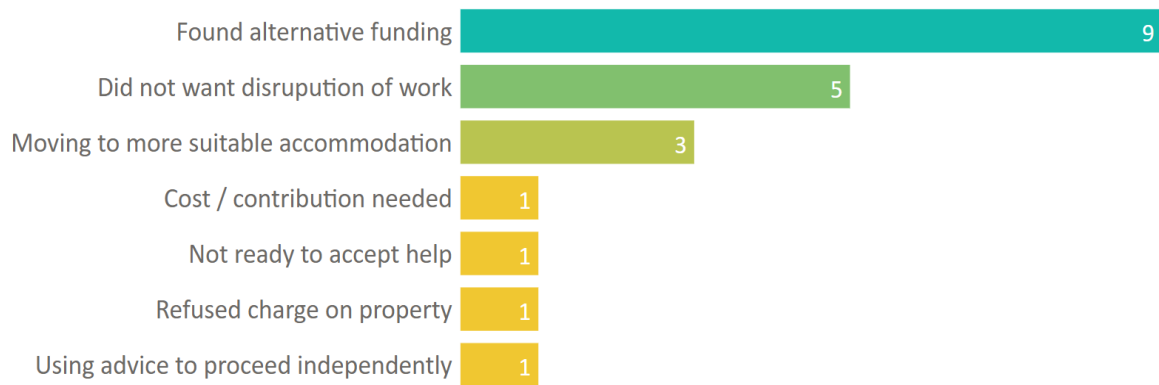
Age of DFG recipients 22/23

Age	Cases	Median delivery time in working days	Total Payment	Average Payment
Adult	73	167	£438,972.89	£6,013.33
Child	4	276	£106,548.71	£26,637.18
Total	77	169	£545,521.60	£7,084.70

Reasons clients did not want to proceed with a DFG

Redditch

2022-2023



Cases