

Grants & Loans

Private Housing Renewals Policy 2012



Hospital Discharge Grant

The Hospital Discharge Grant is available to pay for essential repairs and adaptations to your home which are needed before you can be discharged from hospital.

This factsheet explains who is eligible for this grant how to apply.

Am I eligible for a Hospital Discharge Grant

You qualify for this grant:

- You **MUST** live in Reading Borough (you pay your Council Tax to Reading Borough Council) **AND**
- You **MUST** either own and have lived in your home for at least three years or live in private rented accommodation **AND**
- You **MUST** be in receipt of at least one of the following principle means tested benefits (*Income Support, Housing Benefit, Disabled Persons Tax Credit, Income based Job Seekers Allowance, Working Families Tax Credit (income limit £16,190), Child Tax Credit (income limit £16,190), Working Tax Credit (income limit £16,190), Guaranteed Pension Credit, Income Based Employment Support Allowance and any other benefits deemed as means tested in the future*)

AND

- You **MUST** be referred by an Occupational Therapist

What can the Hospital Discharge Grant be used for?

You can only use this grant to pay for small adaptations or which are needed to make your home safer for you when you leave hospital. This could include things like installing handrails, providing an over bath shower, installing or repairing a stairlift.

The grant can also cover any essential costs including Home Improvement Agency Fees.

How much will I get?

How much you get depends on the cost of the work - the maximum grant available is £3,000

How do I apply for this Grant?

Your Occupational Therapist (OT)* will assess your situation and your home to identify the work required and they will refer you to our independent Home Improvement Agency, who will:

- check you meet the qualifying criteria for this Grant
- Help you get quotes for this work from at least two contractors
- Help you complete a Grant application form and check you have the supporting documents to prove your eligibility
- Submit your application to the Council for approval

* To arrange an OT assessment please contact Reading Adult Social Care Services on 0118 937 3747.

The approval process

Once we have received your application we will assess your application and double check your eligibility - we will write to let you know if your application is successful within 21 days.

Do not start any work until you have received written confirmation from the Council.

There is limit to the funding available for this grant - this money will be allocated on a first come first served basis.

Getting the work done

Once you have received confirmation that your grant has been approved our Home Improvement Agency will arrange for the work to be carried out.

Paying for the Work

The Council will pay the grant direct to your contractors once

- the work has been completed to a satisfactory standard **AND**
- we have received an acceptable invoice (*on official headed paper, with full details and costs of the work carried out*) **AND**
- we have received any certificates or warranties required for the work carried out **AND**
- you have signed a consent form confirming you are satisfied with the quality of the work*

* if you tell us there is a problem we will inspect the work - if we believe it is of a sufficiently good standard we will make payment without your consent.

Unforeseen work

The Home Improvement Agency will contact the Council if any unforeseen works arise once your grant has been approved and the work has started.

The Council may increase the amount grant awarded to pay for these additional works up to the maximum grant payable.

The Council will not pay for additional works carried out without permission.

If the cost of the work exceeds the grant.

You are responsible for the cost of any unforeseen work which exceeds the maximum grant.

Conditions for this Grant

The following conditions apply:

- If you breach any of the conditions of the grant you will be asked to repay the grant in full.
- You will not be eligible for further grant funding from the Council within three years of receiving this grant.

Appealing our Decision

If we refuse your Grant application we will explain why.

If you think we haven't have assessed your situation fairly you can ask us to look at your application again. However, you should be aware that:

- although we can review your application against our current policy for this Grant, we can't change the rules
- we have limited funds available for this grant - once the funds have run out we cannot award any further grants during that financial year (April - March).

Complaints

Complaints about the Council

If you are unhappy with:

- the way you have been treated by a member of the Private Sector Renewal Team or
- we have not done something we said we would

... please let us know as soon as possible.

You can complain directly to the staff working with you or, if you prefer you can contact the Council's Complaints Manager.

Complaints about the HIA

If your complaint is about services and support provided by the Home Improvement Agency you should address your complaint directly to them.

They should give you a copy of their complaints process when they first visit you at home.

Useful Contacts

Home Improvement Agency

Aster Living Berkshire West

Tel: 01635 588 811
Email: bwcr@ridgewaycommunity.org.uk

Council Services

Private Sector Renewal Team

Tel: 0118 937 2562
Email: psra.team@reading.gov.uk

Complaints

Tel: 0118 937 3737
Email: complaints@reading.gov.uk

This information can be made available in alternative formats (such as audio or Braille) and languages on request. Please contact the Private Sector Renewal Team on 0118 937 2562