



Guidance for Aids and Adaptations

****Our tenants who reside in the North Lincolnshire area and who are in need of any major disability adaptation work are advised to contact North Lincolnshire Council on (01724) 297000 in order to make a referral to their Occupational Therapy Team who will be able to carry out an assessment of their needs****

This guidance explains what you need to do if someone in your home wants to request an aid or adaptation. We all hope to live as independently as we can, for as long as we can, and there are ways we can help you do this with some simple adaptations to your home. Whether it is due to older age, an illness or a disability, there are things which will make life easier for you, such as a ramp at your front door or grab rails in the bathroom.

Who can apply?

All tenants and permanent members of their household who have any long-term condition, are struggling with everyday activities and are being made disabled by their environment. The adaptation should increase safety, independence and social inclusion. There is no minimum length of tenancy. All requests for adaptations will be assessed and considered on an individual basis.

There are two types of adaptations, minor or major. Whether you need a minor adaptation or major adaptation to your home, the first step is always the same. You will need to be referred to an Occupational Therapist (OT) so they can carry out an assessment of your needs.

Minor adaptations

These are items which are not fitted to your home and can easily be moved or changed, such as grab rails:

- Aids and adaptations costing £1,000 or less will be funded by the association's own annual aids and adaptations budget. A means test does not apply to minor aids and adaptations.
- Most minor aids and adaptation works are carried out by our own Repairs Team but, on occasion, we may employ specialist contractors to undertake work on our behalf.

Major adaptations

These are more long term fittings which require some structural changes:

- Providing ramps, widening doors, shallow steps.
- Improving controls for heating and lighting.
- Adapting or providing suitable washing, bathing or toilet facilities.
- Ensuring the disabled person can move around and access parts of the home so they can look after someone else.
- Installing a stair lift or a 'through the floor' lift or ceiling track hoists.

- Adaptations to the kitchen, such as lowering counters.
- Adaptations to the bathroom, e.g. toilet or bath or level access shower.

*The above is not an exhaustive list

Major adaptations are those that cost more than £1000 and are usually funded through a Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) which is means tested. The local authority (North Lincolnshire Council) administers the DFG using established criteria.

A Disabled Facilities Grant (in England) is a grant from your local council to pay for changes to your home so you can continue to live there. The amount paid through the grant will depend on your income and outgoings.

The DFG can be a lengthy process and timescales for completion vary. As part of the process, **you will need to contact** North Lincolnshire Council for an assessment by an Occupational Therapist (OT). If you require a major adaptation to your home, a home assessment will need to be undertaken by an OT to determine whether or not an adaptation is required to assess your needs and agree solutions.

The OT will then contact Ongo Homes to discuss the adaptation requested and whether we would grant an 'owners consent in principle' for this work to be carried out on the property before liaising with the Home Assistance Team (part of North Lincolnshire Council).

Suitability of properties:

If it is recommended that a major adaptation is needed, there might be different options available to you. If your property is unsuitable for the recommended adaptations, Ongo Homes will discuss with you what alternatives are available. This may include considering a transfer to a more suitable property.

It might be that Ongo Homes already have a fully adapted home perfect for your needs and so you might consider moving into an alternative home. We will help you throughout the process to make it as easy and stress-free as possible.

The means test:

Should the council agree that you need adaptations to your home they will produce a report outlining exactly what you need. This is really important as it helps to determine what work needs to be done. The costs are usually covered but if there is a need for you to contribute, the council will discuss this with you before any work is carried out. If the means test identifies tenant's requirement to fund/contribute (full or partial) Ongo Homes may in some cases, pay part or full payment up to a maximum of £2,000 of the tenant's contribution to avoid them not being able to have the work done at all.

The means test will be carried out by the Home Assistance Team (HAT) which is a part of North Lincolnshire Council. Therefore, Ongo Homes has no influence as to the outcome or determination of this test and during this stage any queries relating to the means test should be directed to the HAT.

The means test determines how much, if anything, you will have to pay towards the cost of the work. If you are a disabled adult, you must provide financial and benefits information for you and

your partner. There is no means testing for families of disabled children under 18. Depending on the assessment, the amount of financial assistance offered can vary up to 100% of the cost.

The Home Assistance Team must give a decision and tell you what your financial contribution, if any, will be. If you qualify for this DFG they will arrange and manage contractors to undertake the work and will liaise with Ongo Homes where required.

Further information can be found at: <https://www.northlincs.gov.uk/site/documents/housing/home-assistance-policy-2023-2026/#1704358881816-cd2d74a5-d7e3>

Self-funded requests:

If you have decided to self-fund and arrange for your own contractors to undertake any home adaptation work (and not go down the means tested DFG route via the local authority) it would still be necessary for you to arrange an OT assessment by contacting North Lincolnshire Council.

If you are going to buy your own equipment, it is still necessary to have an assessment by an Occupational Therapist. They will provide guidance on what equipment is most suitable and advise you on what is available. Please see table below the 'how to apply section' for information we would require to process your self-funded adaptation request.

Some major adaptation work may need to be covered by part M of building regulations. You will need to put in place an appropriate application with local building control to sign the appropriate major adaptation work off, should the contractor you use not be approved to sign building regulations work off themselves. The application and cost to do this will be your responsibility and at your expense.

Retrospective Permission:

If at any time it becomes clear that an adaptation had been installed without permission, then the tenant will be contacted and retrospective permission will be granted provided that the necessary paperwork is completed and returned confirming that all of the necessary conditions have been met.

As stated above, if any work undertaken needs to be part M compliant, then you will need to arrange building control sign off and provide this certificate which confirms the completed adaptation is compliant with part M of building regulations.

We may ask you to remove, put back or make good any adaptation work you have completed but for which we have not approved and/or which does not meet our standards.

How to apply:

1) DFG route

If you are requesting major adaptation work via a DFG, then all you need to do is contact North Lincolnshire Council on (01724) 297000 in order to make a referral for an OT to carry out an assessment. Should you qualify for this DFG, no further input is required from yourself as the Home Assistance Team (of NLC) will arrange and carry out this work.

Self-fund route

If following an OT assessment, the outcome is that you do not qualify for a DFG and will need to self-fund to progress your adaptation request (or you have decided from the start to self-fund), then an alteration permission form must be completed. This is available by contacting our Customer Service Team. You will need to provide full details of the adaptation you would like to carry out.

- 2) We only give permission for adaptations if we are prompted by an OT assessment. Regardless of how a customer wants to fund an adaptation (themselves, from a charity or grant assistance from the local authority).

- 3) The installation of any adaptation must be carried out by a competent person and confirmation of your chosen contractor details must be provided. A permission form must be completed with information from the chosen contractor as shown:

We may request a risk assessment and a method statement from your chosen contractor for certain adaptations but will contact you if this is the case

- Please provide a quote on letter headed paper with details of the contractor. Quote must include a plan/layout of the current area (where work is to be carried out) and the new proposed layout showing dimensions of adaptation to be installed.
- Quote from the contractor must also include a full description of the proposed work, materials to be used and how the works will be carried out.
- The contractor must have Public and Employers Liability Insurance. Please include insurance details/documents for your contractor.
- Details of any warranty period on the work once completed should you encounter any problems once adaptation has been installed/fitted.

- 4) Any pictures taken via phone can be emailed if necessary to Enquiries@ongo.co.uk. Please use your first line of address as reference e.g. 'Permission request for 20 Ongo Road'

Guidance for application to undertake adaptation work

If a stairlift is to be fitted:

- With your application we will need the referral from Occupational Therapy. All stairlifts require an Occupational Therapy assessment, even if you are paying for it yourself. We would always recommend that a full assessment is carried out for all stairlift users, which includes taking of the necessary measurements of your weight, height and other specific measurements to ensure that the stairlift is suitable for your needs and is safe for you to use.
- We do not give permission for second hand stairlifts to be installed – applies to purchased and rented.
- The standard of workmanship must be to the satisfaction of Ongo Homes Limited and carried out by a suitably qualified stairlift engineer who must provide the required minor works certification. Most stairlifts are powered by a battery charger plugged into the nearest socket. In this case no minor works electrical certificate would be needed or provided by installer. Any certification will need to be sent to Ongo Homes.
- Tenant to confirm the date of stairlift installation and also confirm the make, model and serial number of the stairlift.
- Ongo Homes will service the stair lift every 6 months from the date of installation to satisfy our own compliance requirements.
- Ongo Homes will undertake a LOLER inspection (lifting operations and lifting equipment regulations 1998) every 6 months on this stairlift.
- At the end of any warranty period provided by your installer, Ongo Homes will be responsible for the repair and maintenance of this stairlift.

If a shower cubicle/wetroom is to be fitted:

- The shower must not exceed the limitations of the existing electrical installation and consumer unit.
- The work must be carried out by qualified electrician to BS 7671 who must provide the required minor works certification. This will need to be sent to Ongo Homes Ltd once the work is complete.
- All aspects of the work that were submitted must be carried out by fully qualified trades persons and the relevant building regulations sign off paperwork must be provided.

If a ramp is to be fitted:

- With your application we will need the referral from Occupational Therapy. All ramps require an Occupational Therapy assessment, even if you are paying for it yourself.
- The ramp will need to be part M compliant along with the building regulations approval. You can locate any supporting documentation from the Building Control Team at North Lincolnshire Council.
- We do not allow ramps to be constructed from concrete and only allow modular ramps which gives the ability to remove when no longer required.
- You will need to remove the ramp, rails and reinstate the steps and the doorway. Additionally, you will need to replace any other items that have been altered for the ramp to be installed at the property following the end of your tenancy. Failure to do this will mean a recharge for removal and renewal of materials/ costs that Ongo Homes Ltd may incur.
- The work does not affect the structural integrity of the property.
- There must be no damage to the external cladding/brickwork to your property, if damage occurs then this must be repaired at your cost.

For all types of adaptations the following also apply:

- The tradesperson will contact Ongo Homes direct for any relevant asbestos information relating to the installation.
- Work must be carried out in a manner to ensure minimum disruption to your neighbours and in line with relevant Health and Safety guidelines.
- ☒No costs in connection with the work to be incurred by Ongo Homes.
- The work must be completed within 3 months of the initial request. Failure to do so will mean you having to apply again for permission.
- All debris resulting from the alteration must be disposed of in an appropriate manner.
- Permission is limited to the works specified in the initial request.

Frequently asked Questions:

I have had an OT assessment carried out by the team working on behalf of North Lincolnshire Council (NLC) and I qualify for a DFG for my major adaptation. Do I need to contact Ongo and let you know?

No. There is no need to contact Ongo Homes or complete any alteration forms. The OT Team will contact Ongo Homes on your behalf and arrange for consent to undertake required work. The Home Assistance Team based at NLC will then arrange for a contractor to undertake this work. It is important to note that Ongo Homes do not carry out any major adaptation work. Should you wish for an update on the work, please contact the Homes Assistance Team direct.

What is the process I need to follow if I decide to self-fund an adaptation?

Whether you would want to replace a bath with a shower enclosure or a wetroom, or if you would like a stairlift, a ramp or any other type of adaptation you should still contact an OT in order for them to carry out an Occupational Therapy assessment. We only give permission for aids and adaptations if we are prompted by an OT assessment. An Occupational Therapist can advise you of the most appropriate equipment and adaptations to suit your needs. The OT service will work directly with you to determine any adaptations you will require.

You will then be required to complete an alteration form and provide any supporting documentation requested on page 4. Please note, If you have decided to undertake certain major adaptations (eg wetroom, ramp etc), you will be required to provide a building regulations certificate once the work has been completed and signed off.

I would like an adaptation not for myself but for a family member who resides in the property. Would I still require an assessment from the OT for this request?

As you are requesting an adaptation based on your health needs or any other member of your household, we will need to process this request as part of our Aids and Adaptation process which means we will need information from an Occupational Therapist (OT).

Same reasoning would apply if anything was installed/constructed without our permission for any member of your household with health needs. We would still require evidence from an OT assessment recommending that this adaptation is appropriate and would be suitable for the individual concerned.

I am a tenant in a Ongo property outside the North Lincolnshire area. Will I be able to contact the Occupational Therapy Service at North Lincolnshire Council?

No. You will first need to establish whether the Occupational Therapist provision operate either via your local authority or the NHS trust in your area. Dependant on who is responsible for this provision, you will be able to make contact with them directly in order to refer yourself for an OT assessment.