

Introduction

Sometimes your circumstances can change and you might find it harder to do the routine things you used to be able to do at home, for example getting into or out of your home, or moving around indoors. However, often, with some simple adaptations, you can continue to do these things and retain your independence. This information sheet describes some of the ways we can help to support you to adapt your home.

Are you eligible for help?

To find out please phone **Somerset Direct** on **0300 123 2224**.

Depending on your circumstances the person you talk to may be able to give you advice straight away or they may ask an Occupational Therapist to phone you back.

They will discuss with you what choices are available and agree the best course of action for you. This may be giving you information or advice, or arranging to visit you to assess what you need. Everyone's situation is different and we carefully consider each request for support, we use eligibility criteria that have been agreed with all District Councils in Somerset.

What help can we give?

Minor Adaptations: These include ramps, rails, and other small works that may be recommended following your assessment. If you are eligible, minor adaptations can be arranged for you **free of charge**.

Major Adaptations: These could include a stair lift, widening doorways, and adapting bathrooms. The work may be funded through

a Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) administered by your District Council, following a recommendation from a Social Care Occupational Therapist (OT).

Applicants for a DFG can be home owners, private or council tenants, or people who live in park homes and houseboats. The council will need to check that your proposed scheme is necessary, and appropriate to meet the needs identified by Social Care Occupational Therapists. It must also be reasonable and practical depending on the age and layout of your property. The amount of the grant you receive will be decided by a means test. It will depend on your income and capital and you may be asked to contribute towards the cost of the work.

It is important that you **do not start any work** before you have received grant approval from your District Council - you will not normally be entitled to any help for work already undertaken.

For more information contact your District Council and ask for an application form and/or copy of the leaflet 'Disabled Facilities Grant' which is also available by following this website link.

www.communities.gov.uk/documents/housing/pdf/138592.pdf

Phone numbers for the District Councils

Mendip	01749 648999
Sedgemoor	0845 408 2540
South Somerset	01935 462462
Taunton Deane	01823 356356
West Somerset	01643 703704

Home Improvement Agencies

Aster Living Care and Repair is the preferred provider of Home Improvement Agency services for Somerset. They are funded by Somerset County Council, the District Councils and NHS Somerset to help you arrange a major adaptation if you need it. They can provide technical services, such as drawing plans, obtaining quotations for work. They work with Social Care Services and the District Councils to

make sure the work progresses smoothly. They keep lists of reliable contractors, who can provide a quality service and make sure that everything is as it should be when the work is finished. They can help you to complete the works privately if you are not eligible for funding under the DFG means test.

Aster Living Care and Repair Somerset Blackdown House Blackbrook Park Taunton Somerset TA1 2PG	Aster living Care and Repair Somerset Flourish House 2 Cathedral Avenue Wells Somerset BA5 1FD
Phone: 0333 400 8299	Phone: 0333 400 8299
Fax : 01823 444251	Fax: 01749 832121
Email somersetadminteam@asterliving.co.uk	

All their advice and information is free. But they may have to charge for any technical work. They will also help you find ways to pay for the work, including local authority grants, loans and charitable funding.

They also provide a subsidised handyman services called **Handihelp** which can help you with small repairs, maintenance and minor adaptations (not funded through social care services). A charge is made for this service and they will provide a quotation if you ask them.

Handihelp	
Phone	0333 400 8299
Email	Handihelp@asterliving.co.uk
Fax	01823 444251

Or you can get more information from **Somerset Direct** on **0300 123 2224**.

Note: If you are registered disabled with Social Care Services, you will be exempt from paying VAT on certain types of works done to adapt your home* or equipment purchased specifically to meet your disability needs.

*You should be given a form to claim VAT relief when you buy your equipment or adaptation. Please see the HM Customs and Excise leaflet called '**VAT reliefs for disabled**', or visit their website: <http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/vat/sectors/consumers/index.htm>

Your opportunity to feedback

We welcome your comments about the services you receive. If you would like to tell us what you think, please either:

- Contact us by going to our website, www.somerset.gov.uk, or
- Speak to your social care worker
 - Phone Somerset Direct on 0300 123 2224, or
 - Contact the Adults and Health Customer Experience Officer
Floor B2 East
County Hall
Taunton
TA1 4DY
Email: customerexperience@somerset.gov.uk

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