



# ACCESSIBLE HOMES

A guide for private sector  
landlords and agents



## Future-Proofing your Tenant Base: Letting to Older and Disabled Renters



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## **ACCESSIBLE HOMES: A GUIDE FOR YOU AND YOUR TENANTS**

This guide describes services available for delivering accessible homes in the Private Rented Sector in Wales.

Making changes to a property may seem like a complex and costly process but in reality, many adaptations are small, simple and easily installed. Moreover, there are a number of avenues of support open to private sector landlords.

This support is important, because under the Equality Act 2010, landlords and agents have a duty to provide reasonable adjustments to tenants who are disabled, to allow them to live safely and independently in the property.

This guide will show you:

- Where you and your tenant can access financial support to carry out larger housing adaptations as well as smaller adjustments.
- Where you and your tenant can find advocacy and informational services to support in your journey towards an accessible home.
- Where you and your tenant can access support for mental health, neurodiversity and learning needs, as well as physical needs.
- Signposting and contact details of various support organisations working across Wales to promote accessible and safe houses for older and disabled tenants.





## FINANCIAL SUPPORT

On this page you will find financial support options for carrying out adaptations to a property.

### Local Authorities: Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs)

The Disabled Facilities Grant scheme is intended to fund adaptations to people's homes, to help them live independently. Local Authorities have a statutory responsibility to provide a DFG if a person meets the eligibility criteria.

Disabled Facilities Grants are intended to cover some or all of the actual cost of adaptations. There is no set amount that applies to everyone; grants are awarded on a case-by-case basis.

Mandatory Grants are (generally) a minimum of £1000, and a maximum of £36,000.

### Eligibility for a DFG

To be awarded a grant, a tenant (or their child) must:

- Have a disability, a long-term health condition, or age-related additional needs.
- Intend to live in the property during the 'grant period': this is usually 5 years, but can be shorter in certain circumstances, such as if the applicant has a terminal illness.

#### Important

Pay attention to the grant terms and conditions, which vary according to the Local Authority. To avoid unexpected costs or land charges on your property, check on applying what happens if:

- The tenant leaves within the grant period (usually 5 years)
- The tenant dies or leaves the property and the property is not re-let to another disabled tenant
- The grant award is over a certain amount and the landlord sells the property within a certain number of years

Also remember that non-essential works, such as décor-matching or whole-room refits are not covered by the DFG.

Your Local Authority website is a good place to start to find out how to begin a DFG application or to ask a question about grant conditions

For example:

**DISABLED  
FACILITIES GRANT |  
NEWPORT CITY  
COUNCIL**





## FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Further information about financial support options for carrying out adaptations to a property.

### Minor adaptations in your home

Your tenant may also require smaller adaptations that fall below the threshold of a Disabled Facilities Grant (i.e. under £1000). These include adjustments such as hand rails, lighting support and shower seats.

Most Local Authorities have a separate scheme for works that cost less than £1000.

For example:

Newport County Council Safety at Home and Enable Scheme

Sometimes advocacy groups may directly provide grants to disabled people who require aids and adaptations in their home. These are often organisations that focus on helping a particular group of disabled people, such as younger people or those from Black and minority ethnic backgrounds.

For example:

Independence at home - grants to those in financial need

### Care & Repair services in Wales



If your tenant is over the age of 60 and requires minor adaptations to help keep them safe and independent at home, your local Care & Repair agency may be able to help. They can install small adaptations under the Rapid Response Adaptation programme.

Find your local Care & Repair  
Agency here

### *What is considered 'reasonable' when it comes to adjustments?*

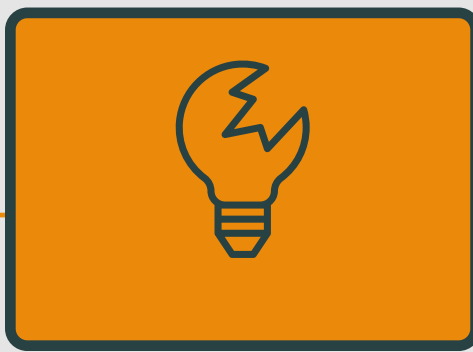
The Equality Act 2010 requires landlords to make 'reasonable' adjustments for disabled tenants, to enable them to live independently and safely.

What is 'reasonable' will depend on the situation, and the property.

Landlords are not required to make changes to a property that would be unaffordable or impractical. They are not required to make structural changes to a property, or to alter any shared / communal spaces.

If possible, the tenant should agree with the landlord or agent on what is considered reasonable for their situation.

This page on Citizen's Advice has further information.



## OTHER TYPES OF ASSISTANCE

As well as financial support for adaptations and reasonable adjustments, there are other types of assistance to guide you and your tenants through the process of making homes suitable for a range of different needs.

### Advocacy Groups

Organisations which support people with a particular condition or type of condition and advocate for greater awareness and understanding.

Some groups may be associated with a particular type of disability. Examples include RNIB (sight loss), RNID (hearing loss), Mind (mental health), and Alzheimer's Society (dementia).

Many have informative websites and /or a telephone helpline for advice and information. A small number of them directly provide grants for adaptations, but there are many more who can advise you on where to look for grant funding and give support with applying.

Here is an example from the RNIB website about adapting a home for a person with sight loss.

### Healthcare workers

Healthcare workers will often be the ones responsible for making referrals for adaptations to support independent living. They are the experts in their profession and can provide information and advice on the technical side of housing accessibility.

Occupational Therapists, Rehabilitation Officers and Physiotherapists are some key professionals who can offer information about equipment or practical support that might be most effective in helping a person overcome barriers associated with their disability.

Ask your tenant(s) if they are engaged with any of these professionals.

Here is an example about how Occupational Therapists can support you to make changes to your home



Age Cymru is the national charity for older people in Wales. Along with five local partners it provides a wide range of support services to those over the age of 50 regardless of housing tenure. This includes information and advice, independent advocacy, physical activity programmes, support for those experiencing loneliness, support for unpaid carers, and other services which vary in local areas.

Contact Age Cymru to find out about support available in your area. Call 0300 303 44 98 (charged at a local rate) between 9am–4pm Monday to Friday or email [advice@agecymru.org.uk](mailto:advice@agecymru.org.uk) or visit [www.agecymru.org.uk](http://www.agecymru.org.uk).



## MENTAL HEALTH AND NEURODIVERSITY

On this page, you will find additional services which offer support for tenants who are disabled due to a mental health need, neurodiversity, or learning disability.

In addition to physical impairments, there are other reasons why a tenant may be disabled. These include mental health, neurodiversity (e.g. Autism) and cognitive / learning impairments.

Helping a tenant with such needs can be particularly challenging for landlords.

A report from Community Housing Cymru highlighted that:

'45% of landlords feel there is 'never' enough support and information for landlords to support tenants with mental health problems.'

### Key services which can help

Tai Pawb

Mental Health e-guide.

This guide has a comprehensive list of services for mental health support in Wales.

[Download the guide here](#)

Scope

A charity which offers a range of advice and support for disabled people across the UK.

[Find out more here](#)

Mirus

Provides services for disabled adults to help them live independently and participate fully in life and society.

[Find out more here](#)

Rent Smart Wales

Wales-wide Local Authority Directory.

A resource listing services across Wales to support landlords and tenants throughout the tenancy.

[rentsmart.gov.wales](https://rentsmart.gov.wales)

### Top tips for landlords



Create a non-judgmental environment where tenants feel safe disclosing concerns.

Use clear, compassionate language when discussing rent, property issues, or welfare.



Adapt your communication style to suit your tenants needs. A tenant experiencing mental health challenges may prefer to be contacted via telephone as opposed to a house visit.



If something serious happens that's outside your control, like a safeguarding concern, make sure you know who to report it to and how —this could include the local council or social services.



## GENERAL SERVICES AND SIGNPOSTING

Please click on any of the icons and images below for further support and signposting to assist you in making suitable changes to support older and disabled tenants.

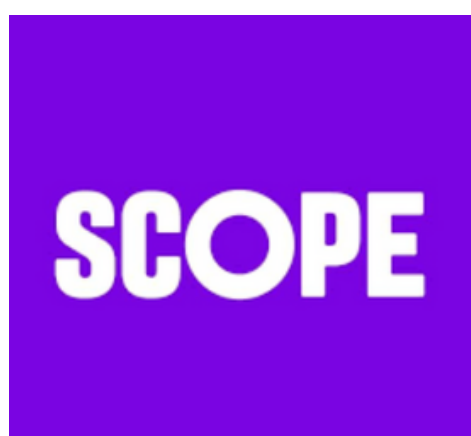
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