



10C

## Disabled Facilities Grants and home accessibility


### Information for people with or affected by motor neurone disease or Kennedy's disease

If your mobility is affected by motor neurone disease (MND) or Kennedy's disease, you may need to make changes to your home. Equipment or building works can make your home more suitable for your needs and help you to continue to live there. These changes are known as adaptations.

A Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) from your local authority, or the Northern Ireland housing executive (NIHE), may help you pay for these adaptations. This information sheet includes the following sections:

- 1: **What is a Disabled Facilities Grant?**
- 2: **What can I use the grant for?**
- 3: **How do I apply?**
- 4: **What other options do I have?**
- 5: **How do I find out more?**

It is important to note that a DFG can take a long time to be approved, some local authorities act quicker than others. Ask for an assessment as soon as you start to need support. Other options include funding the work yourself, seeking funding from charities or moving to a more accessible home.

 This symbol is used to highlight **our other publications**. To find out how to access these, see *Further information* at the end of this sheet.

 This symbol is used to highlight **quotes** from other people with or affected by MND.

**This information sheet has been evidenced, user tested and reviewed by experts.**

This information applies to England, Wales and Northern Ireland. We will highlight any differences between nations in this information sheet, however, there may be regional differences within each nation. If you live in Scotland, contact MND Scotland for information (see *Useful organisations* later in this sheet for contact details).

Contact your local authority in England, local Care and Repair agency in Wales, or the Northern Ireland housing executive for information on how DFGs work where you live.

## 1: What is a Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG)?

A DFG is funding from a local authority that supports people with disabilities to pay for adaptations to their home. In Northern Ireland, the grants are provided through the Northern Ireland housing executive (NIHE) and equipment is provided by the health and social care trusts. The grant can help you to continue living in your home for as long as possible.

Search by postcode for your local council at: [www.gov.uk/find-local-council](http://www.gov.uk/find-local-council) and in Northern Ireland search for health and social care trusts at: **[www.nidirect.gov.uk](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk)**

A DFG is means-tested, so your savings and assets (known as capital) and household income will be taken into account. In Wales you do not need a means test for small or medium DFG's. These are usually adaptations which don't require extensive building work such as grab rails and bath seats. See later heading, *What is a means test?* in section 3: *How do I apply?* If you are awarded a grant, it will not affect any benefits you receive.

**You will not get a grant if you start work on your property before the application is approved.**

Adaptations can range from small alterations to major home extensions. They can also include installing equipment to help you live more independently and make things easier for your carers. Adaptations can vary depending on the way your condition affects you and the level of support you need.

The type of accommodation you live in could reduce your choice of adaptations. For example, if you live in a flat you may not be able to have things like an accessible bathroom pod attached to the side of the building. Some buildings may not have structurally strong enough ceilings for hoists. You may need to think about moving to a different home to meet your changing needs.

If you are thinking about making changes to your home, get advice from qualified professionals first.

For example:

- an occupational therapist (OT) to assess your physical needs and your home
- a qualified surveyor or architect to plan and oversee the work (if you decide to apply for a DFG, you may be able include the cost of their fees in your application, check with your local authority first.)
- a trusted builder
- a local home improvement agency, which can provide advice and practical help on improvements and adaptations. See section 4: *What other options do I have?* for more information.

To arrange an OT assessment, contact your local authority, or in Northern Ireland, your local health and social care trust. If the waiting list is long you may wish to pay for a private OT to assess your needs. You may find an OT from local health care services assesses your general needs around the home. Often, an OT from social services makes decisions about adaptation needs. In England and Wales this may be charged to the DFG, if you qualify. Check with your local authority before arranging anything.

## Am I eligible?

Your local authority or the Northern Ireland housing executive, should be able to show you their policy for housing and adaptations. This will explain what is available in your area and any rules or conditions that apply. You can apply for a DFG if you or anyone living in your property is disabled and you are:

- the owner of the property and live there (an owner occupier)
- a private tenant
- a local authority or housing association tenant
- a landlord with a disabled tenant
- planning to live in the property for the next 5 years, or for as long as the disabled person's health permits.

If you are a housing association tenant in Wales, your landlord needs to apply for a *Physical Adaptations Grant* instead of a DFG. For more information, search for *Physical Adaptations Grant* at: **[www.gov.wales](http://www.gov.wales)**. In Northern Ireland, housing association tenants will need to apply for funding through the Northern Ireland housing executive, speak to your landlord if you want to apply for funding.

## How much grant is available?

When this information sheet was last revised, the maximum amounts available for DFG's were:

- £30000 in England
- £25000 in Northern Ireland
- £36000 in Wales

If the cost of the proposed work is more expensive, the local authority or Northern Ireland housing executive may be able to cover part or all of the extra cost in some cases. See section 4: *What other options do I have?* They will normally need two written estimates of the cost of the works before deciding whether or not to agree to your application.

## 2: What can I use the grant for?

Any changes to your home which help you continue living there may be considered. If agreed, minor adaptations costing less than £1000 can be funded by a DFG, but in some areas certain items may be funded by your local authority or health and social care trust instead. If you live in Northern Ireland some of the below adaptations are not available through a DFG but are provided through a health and social care trust. Ask your healthcare team for more information.

Adaptations may include:

- a stair lift
- widening doors and installing ramps to give access to the property
- a wash and dry toilet
- a walk-in shower or wet room
- a through floor lift
- a hoist system
- providing a heating system suitable for your needs
- minor adaptations which include items such as stair rails, grab rails and adapting heating or lighting controls to make them easier to use
- major structural adaptations such as an extension or downstairs bathroom.

Most types of installed equipment can be included in a DFG, but the work can take months to be approved and completed. With MND, this could mean the equipment is no longer suitable by the time it is installed. Try to think about your future needs, changes and equipment as early as you can.

If a grant is agreed, it will cover the costs for adaptations or equipment assessed as being essential, but no more. Your personal preferences will be considered, but not at extra expense.

## **What adaptations do I need?**

An occupational therapist (OT) will assess your needs and advise which improvements may help. Don't rush into buying equipment without professional advice, as mistakes can be costly and frustrating.

Some items that are commonly used by people with MND include:

**Stair lift:** for access upstairs when the stairs themselves become difficult to climb. They are fitted to your existing staircase and can be curved or straight. If you are a wheelchair user, you may need two wheelchairs to continue using the stair lift, one at the bottom of the stairs and one at the top. If you use a walking aid you may also find keeping one on each floor easier. As your MND progresses, you may no longer be able to transfer in and out of the chair or it may become unsafe to try to. This means a stair lift may only be useful for a short amount of time without additional help from hoists. Your local authority or the Northern Ireland Housing Executive may be able to provide a list of local suppliers you can buy or rent a stair lift from, but always take advice from your occupational therapist first.

**Through floor lift:** will allow you to use one wheelchair for both floors of your home. There is no need to transfer in and out of your wheelchair when using the lift, so it can be used as your MND progresses. A stair lift is sometimes used as a temporary measure until the through floor lift is installed. Not all homes are suitable for lift installations, as they need a certain amount of space and they can be expensive.

**Wash and dry toilet:** can help you maintain your personal hygiene after using the toilet. The system washes and blow-dries your intimate areas while you are still seated on the toilet. Some types will replace your existing toilet, but others can fit over it. The controls are connected to the plumbing and electrical supply. The toilet may only be useful for a short time as transferring on and off can become difficult. Its use can be extended by adding other disability aids, such as frames and rails.

**Portable hoist:** as MND progresses, you may no longer be able to lift and move your body. A portable hoist makes transferring much easier, as there is less lifting and moving done by carers. This item is unlikely to require a DFG application and may be available through your occupational therapist or health and social care trust if you live in Northern Ireland.

**Ceiling track hoist:** works in a similar way to the portable hoist, but uses a track in the ceiling. It is more expensive but could allow easier movement between areas with less manual handling. If you are applying for a DFG, a ceiling track hoist system can be part of the application. Your OT can advise if a ceiling tracking system would be suitable for your needs.

**Minor adaptations:** following an assessment of need, smaller items, such as grab rails and bath seats, can be supplied by your OT without the need for a DFG. In most cases, these are not expensive and can be fitted easily – and may be supplied for free by the OT. Small adaptations can also be included in a DFG as part of a larger adaptation. For example, if you have a room converted into a bathroom, you may include items such as grab rails in the application.

**Major structural adaptations:** you can make a DFG application where changes would involve extensive building work and could be quite expensive.

Some examples are:

- a downstairs bedroom or bathroom conversion or extension
- changing a bathroom to a wet room area
- fitting door ramps
- widening existing doors for wheelchair access
- installing new lighting or heating controls.

**Access to gardens:** DFG funding is unlikely to apply to work on landscaping, but if you have a garden, you may want to consider ways to make it more accessible, if that's important to your quality of life. Your OT can advise.

**Heating your home:** a DFG can be used to improve your existing heating system, install a new heating system suitable for your needs, or alter your existing heating controls. Work can be done to minimise draughts from doors and windows with draught excluders, or by installing secondary glazing. Fitting letterbox brush seals and reflective radiator panels can also help.

If you have concerns about the costs associated with heating your home contact your energy supplier to find out if you are on the best deal they can offer. Sometimes it's worth shopping around for a better deal once your tariff ends. You may qualify for schemes that can help with heating costs. Search for terms like *warm home*, *cold weather payment* and *winter fuel payment* on **www.GOV.UK** to find out if you are eligible.



For more information on benefits, see:  
Information sheet 10A – *Benefits and entitlements*

## **What do I need to think about?**

The following questions may help you find out more at an assessment, tailored to your individual needs.

### **Space, widening doorways and access**

- Will there be enough space for turning circles in regularly used rooms, either for a walking aid or a wheelchair?
- Will there be enough space in my hallway to use a wheelchair or walking aid, even with the radiator or storage heater taken into account?
- Will the floor coverings need to be changed if I use a mobility aid, so they don't create resistance?
- Would sliding doors give better access and take up less space than doors that have to swing open?
- How wide does a doorway need to be to allow space for your hands and elbows if using a walking frame or self-propelled wheelchair?
- Will a stairlift or a through floor lift work best for access in my home?
- Will I need a wheelchair and hoist on each floor if I use a stairlift?
- Are there any walls that can be removed to create space and accessibility?

### **Bathroom adaptations and installations**

- How will I get to the bathroom?
- Can a shower chair be used to get to the bathroom and into the shower, and fit over the toilet too?
- Can I have grab rails installed?
- Could an upstairs bathroom be converted into a wet room, or is it best to invest in one downstairs?
- Will I need a ceiling track hoist or portable hoist for use in the bathroom?
- Can I have a level access shower installed?
- How do I get other bathroom equipment such as a specialist toilet that can wash and dry me, or a powered bath chair?

## **Your home environment:**

- Will I need internal ramps for small steps and uneven floors levels in my home?
- If I had lower kitchen worktops, where would the white goods go if they don't fit under the counter anymore?
- Can level mixer taps be installed in the kitchen and bathrooms?
- How could environmental controls help me remain more independent and will a DFG help with installation costs?
- If using environmental controls for lighting or heating, is there any emergency support in the event of a power cut?
- Will I need to employ an architect to design any changes to my home?

## **The entrances and exits of your home:**

- Will external ramps be needed to get in and out?
- Will garden pathways need to be made safer for home access?
- Will any alterations to entrances and exits affect the weather proofing of my home?
- Will ramps affect the way existing doors open and shut?
- Will any changes need new security features? For example, easier access to a door handle, locks, or alarm system?
- Will environmental controls allow for an automatic door to open from a distance?
- Do any new doors need to be approved for fire safety regulations?
- Can I request entrance and exit adaptations to a communal building, if living in a flat?

## **How long will it take to do adaptations?**

Applying for a DFG and taking on larger home renovations can be a long process involving several stages such as:

- contacting your local authority and requesting an assessment for a DFG
- getting an assessment and recommendations from an OT
- asking your landlord what you can and can't do to the property if you are renting
- arranging a surveyor to check the integrity of the building, if your grant is approved for a larger adaptation
- hiring an architect to help design a suitable, accessible home
- applying for planning permission from the local authority
- finding good builders and getting quotes, sometimes you can only employ builders from a certain council approved list
- starting building work.



If your preferences add to the cost, you will need to pay the difference. For example, if you prefer more expensive decoration, you will need to pay for this. In Northern Ireland, this is known as 'enhanced works', which are not included in DFGs.

### 3: How do I apply?

You need to be assessed by an OT, who can apply for a DFG on your behalf following the assessment.

To arrange for an OT assessment, contact:

- your local authority in England and Wales
- your local health and social care trust in Northern Ireland.

The application will be based on the OT's recommendations and will be forwarded to the local authority in England or Wales, or the Northern Ireland housing executive.

Some OTs may be unfamiliar with MND. Our MND Connect helpline can provide information on the disease and we also have a booklet for professionals called, *Occupational therapy for motor neurone disease*, which may help with the assessment (see *Further information* at the end of this sheet for contact details). If you are in touch with an MND Association visitor (AV) or other support volunteer, it may be helpful for the OT to contact them too.

The assessment should reflect that your needs will change as your MND progresses.

The local authority or Northern Ireland housing executive will usually check that any works are necessary and will be suitable to meet your needs. They must write to you with a decision within six months of the date of a submitted application.

They can refuse your application if they feel the work is not practical or your needs can be met with minor adaptations. If your application is agreed, they must set out the terms in writing.

You may need to apply separately for any planning permission or building regulations approval. If a home improvement agency or Care and Repair is supporting you through the DFG process, they may be able to help you apply (see earlier heading *What are home improvement agencies?*). Contact your local authority, or the Northern Ireland housing executive, for how this works in your area.

If you are awarded a DFG, you will be assigned a grants officer who will help to make sure the work is up to standard. In Northern Ireland, the grants officer will support you through the entire DFG process. In Wales, you may be assigned a technical officer by your local Care and Repair agency, who will map, cost and manage the works.

In England, you will normally have to use a contractor from the local authority's approved list of builders, who might be more expensive than some other builders (see later heading *What if I pay for the adaptations myself?*). Home improvement agencies can also help, where available.

In Wales, your local Care and Repair agency will either complete the works or use a list of approved contractors that they will employ to undertake works if they can't complete them.

In Northern Ireland, if the works cost over £5000, you will need to choose a contractor from a Warranty Scheme approved by the Northern Ireland housing executive.

## **What are home improvement agencies?**

Home improvement agencies are also known as Care and Repair in England and Wales, or Radius Housing or Gable in Northern Ireland. If you get a DFG, a home improvement agency may complete the work. They are not-for-profit organisations managed locally by housing associations, councils or charities.

They may help with adaptations, repairs and improvements to your home and guide you through the DFG process.

Most home improvement agencies can also provide a range of helpful services such as:

- household maintenance
- gardening
- decorating
- safety and security measures
- energy savings.

To find your nearest home improvement agency, contact your local authority's housing department, the Northern Ireland housing executive, or Foundations – the national body for home improvement agencies. In England, you can also use the search tool at: **[www.findmyhia.org.uk](http://www.findmyhia.org.uk)** See also later heading *Useful organisations* in section 5: *How do I find out more?*

## **Do I need to tell my landlord?**

You will need your landlord's permission for any adaptations to be carried out, so talk to them before you make your application. If you are a council tenant or housing association tenant, your landlord may be able to arrange the work for you without the need for a DFG. Check what is possible with your landlord and your local authority, or the Northern Ireland housing executive, before you make your application.

If you are a housing association tenant in Wales, your landlord will need to apply for a *Physical Adaptations Grant* instead of a DFG. For more information, search for *Physical Adaptations Grant* at: **[www.gov.wales](http://www.gov.wales)**

If you are a housing association or Northern Ireland housing executive tenant, your adaptation will be provided by them, following an assessment and recommendation by an occupational therapist.

## **Can I get a backdated grant?**

You must apply for a grant before you start any work. You will not be able to receive a grant for works already completed.

## **If I have already had a DFG, can I apply again?**

You can only apply for one DFG at a time, but you can include different adaptations in the same application. For example, you may need to convert a room downstairs, widen doorways for access, install a hoist and improve heating systems at the same time.

You can apply for another grant if your needs change. As the grant can take a long time to be agreed, think carefully about your future needs when you make your first application.

Your OT and local authority or the Northern Ireland housing executive should also consider the progressive nature of MND when looking at any adaptations you may need. If they are unfamiliar with MND, they can contact our helpline MND Connect for information on the disease (see *Further information* at the end of this sheet for more details).

## **What is a means test?**

When being assessed for funded adaptations or installations, a means test is the financial part of the assessment. This works out how much you may need to pay toward the cost.

The assessment will take into account:

- your age
- how many children or dependants you have
- your wages
- your benefits
- any pensions and investments
- savings over £6000.

If you have a partner, their income will also be assessed. You may need to provide evidence of your savings and assets (known as capital), and your income.

The amount you have to pay may be reduced due to your age or how many children or dependants you have. These amounts are set by the government and will not take into account your individual expenses.

Based on the means test, the grant may range from zero to the full amount you have requested. If you are offered less than the full amount, you will be responsible for paying the rest of the cost.

You may not have to pay the extra cost if you receive:

- income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Income Support
- Housing Benefit
- Guarantee Pension Credit
- Tax Credit with a low income
- Universal Credit.

Ask for a means test as early as possible in the process to find out if you qualify. In Northern Ireland, the assessment is completed at the start of the process.

In Wales you do not need a means assessment anymore for small or medium DFG's. These are usually adaptations that don't require extensive building work. Ask your occupational therapist for more information.

If you are working, your income will be taken into account. Depending on how much this is, you may not be eligible for a DFG. However, it is still worth being assessed and advised by an OT so that you know what equipment is right for you.

## **How will it affect my benefits?**

Being awarded a DFG will not affect your benefits. Some benefits such as Personal Independence Payment, Disability Living Allowance or Attendance Allowance may not be counted in your financial assessment.

## **When will I get the money?**

The grant is usually paid when the local authority or Northern Ireland housing executive is satisfied with the work and have received an invoice. An invoice will not be accepted for work carried out by you or a member of your family. Normally, if you or a relative does the work, only invoices for materials or services you've bought will be accepted.

In some areas of England, the local authority may pay by instalments as the work progresses. In Wales and Northern Ireland, the final payment will be paid when the OT agrees that the completed work satisfies their recommendation.

## **What if I decide to move house after DFG work has been done?**

If you or your family move within 10 years in England or Wales, or 5 years in Northern Ireland, you may be expected to pay back some or all of the DFG. It is important to ask what the rules are in your area during the application process for a DFG.

Your personal circumstances should be taken into account. You may not be asked to repay the grant if you sell the property for health-related reasons, but you should be aware it is possible.

## **Is there any way of fast tracking a grant application?**

Most areas have a lengthy waiting list for DFGs. Each local authority has some freedom in how they process the applications, so there may be a possibility of fast tracking for conditions such as MND, which can change quickly. It is worth asking the grants officer in your area about fast tracking your application.

There is no guarantee it will be agreed. Even where fast tracking is possible, you may still have to wait depending on the number of applications entering the system.

Wales operates a Rapid Response Adaptations Programme for minor adaptations to assist people to return home after a stay in hospital. This works with a limited budget to enable works such as small ramps, levelling of pathways, rails and grab rails. The programme is handled by Care and Repair Cymru. See Useful organisations in section 5: *How do I find out more?* for contact details.

## **Who will supply the items needed?**

If you are awarded a DFG, the equipment will be provided by the preferred suppliers of your local authority or the Northern Ireland housing executive. This will also be true of smaller items that do not have to go through the DFG process that are agreed by the OT.

## **Who will maintain and repair the equipment?**

If you are awarded a DFG for large equipment such as a stair lift or hoist, you become the owner of the equipment. This means you will be responsible for maintenance and repairs, or removal once it is no longer needed.

It may be worth asking suppliers for a longer warranty on any work or equipment. Extended warranties may cost more, but if something does go wrong, repairs can be very expensive.

You can usually get a better deal if you arrange the extended warranty before any adaptations have been made. If you try to extend a warranty at a later stage, it is likely to cost more.

You may be able to rent equipment, so you have some cover if repairs are needed. Always ask if renting equipment what the contract covers.

## **Can I make a complaint?**

If you do not get a decision within six months about your application for a DFG, or you are unhappy with the application process, write to your local authority or the Northern Ireland housing Executive.

Alternatively you can contact the:

- Local Government Ombudsman in England
- Public Services Ombudsman for Wales
- Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman.

These people investigate complaints about councils and other public bodies. See *Useful organisations* at the end of this sheet for contact details.

## **4: What other options do I have?**

### **What if I need help to pay any outstanding costs?**

If you are not eligible for a DFG, or it does not cover the full cost of the adaptations, your local authority, or the Northern Ireland housing executive, may have ways to help you to pay for any outstanding costs. In England and Wales they may be able offer a low cost loan or a form of equity release (see later heading *What are equity release schemes?*) to enable adaptations to your property. If you choose to take out a loan, the repayments will take into account your income and expenses and should be set at an affordable level.

Contact our helpline team, MND Connect, if you are worried that housing which meets your needs is going to be a problem for you in the future. See *Further information* in section 5: *How do I find out more?* at the end of this sheet for contact details.

## **What if I pay for the adaptations myself?**

If you decide to fund the adaptations yourself, it's still important to get an assessment by an OT to avoid costly mistakes. This will ensure that any adaptations will be suitable for your needs before you arrange any work or equipment.

It might be cheaper and quicker to pay for the entire adaptation yourself if you know a reliable builder who you are happy to employ, rather than get a DFG and pay a contribution. Local authorities and the Northern Ireland housing executive are tied into contracts with certain suppliers which can slow the whole process and reduce competitive pricing. Ask about this when making initial enquiries as each local authority works differently and some are now moving away from using a set list of contractors.

However, your OT, local authority or the Northern Ireland housing executive may be able to advise how to search for accredited suppliers. It is essential to use reputable companies to do any form of adaptation or installation.

You could hire equipment from specialist providers. Hiring equipment such as stairlifts or ramps means when the piece of equipment is not used anymore the supplier will come and remove it. This can make less work for you. Hiring equipment also means any repairs needed should be paid for by the supplier.

You could look into buying second-hand equipment on social media. Often good quality equipment is available at a much-reduced price. Research the product thoroughly and consider getting it serviced before using it.

If you decide to pay for the work yourself, a home improvement agency can help you with the process. See heading *What are home improvement agencies?* in section 1 for more information.

## **Could I move into other accommodation?**

If you own your property and it is unsuitable for the adaptations you need, you may need to consider selling it and buying a more suitable home. Another option is to put your name onto the local authority and housing association waiting lists as soon as you can.

If you live in a local authority or housing association property, you will need to tell them about your situation and ask to make an application for more suitable accommodation.

You will need to provide evidence of your needs when applying for an adapted property, such as a supporting letter from your OT.

However, it is important to note that there is a shortage of suitable adapted properties in most areas of the UK, both within the private rented sector and local authority housing.

## What are equity release schemes?

There are many schemes where you can release some of the value of your home to generate income or a cash lump sum. These may be arranged through a mortgage that is repayable on death (lifetime mortgage).

Alternatively, you can sell part or all of your property, but continue to live in it during your lifetime. This can be helpful to access funds quickly, but the amount you receive may be less than the property is worth on the open market. Whether you qualify and how much cash you receive will depend on your age and the property's value.

This type of scheme may be available through your local authority or home improvement agency. You can also access similar schemes through mortgage brokers or other financial institutions. In all cases, we advise you to seek independent legal and financial advice before making any decisions. See *Useful organisations* at the end of this sheet for organisations who provide free, impartial advice on money matters.

## How can the MND Association help me?

If you are having difficulty getting the equipment you need through your local adult social care services, our helpline MND Connect may be able to help by contacting them on your behalf. See *Further information* at the end of this sheet for contact details.

If statutory services still cannot help, the MND Association may be able to provide some financial help. For more information, see: [www.mndassociation.org/financialsupport](http://www.mndassociation.org/financialsupport) or contact our helpline team, MND Connect.

A request for an MND Support (Care) Grant from the MND Association must be made by a health and social care professional who has assessed your needs.

## Which benefits can help with housing costs?

Housing Benefit supports people on a low income to pay their rent. In Northern Ireland, Housing Benefit also supports people on a low income to pay their Rates.

Housing Benefit for rent is being replaced by Universal Credit, which includes a housing cost element.

You may be eligible if you:

- receive certain means-tested benefits
- work part time or full time on a low income.



You cannot get Housing Benefit or Universal Credit to help pay your mortgage or home loan. If you own and live in your property (are an owner occupier) you may be able to get a loan to help with your mortgage interest payments if you are receiving certain means-tested benefits. This is called a Support for Mortgage Interest (SMI) loan.

You may also be able to get a reduction on your Council Tax bill if your income and savings are below a certain level. A similar entitlement in Northern Ireland is called Rate Relief.

You may qualify under the Disabled Band Reduction Scheme in England or Wales, which is not means-tested. In Northern Ireland, you may be entitled to Disabled Person's Allowance instead.

You must be able to show that you have:

- installed an extra bathroom, kitchen or other room that you need due to being disabled
- made adaptations to make the property more suitable if you are using a wheelchair.

The property must be the main home of at least one disabled person. It doesn't have to be the person responsible for paying the Council Tax (or Rates charge in Northern Ireland).



For more information on benefits, see:  
Information sheet 10A – *Benefits and entitlements*

## 5. How do I find out more?

### Useful organisations

We do not necessarily endorse any of the following organisations, but have included them to help you begin your search for further information. The contact details are correct at time of print, but may change between revisions. If you need help to find an organisation, contact MND Connect (see Further information sheet for details).

#### Adult social care services

Adult social care services can be contacted through your local authority, or health and social care trust in Northern Ireland. You can find your local council online at:

Website: [www.gov.uk/find-your-local-council](http://www.gov.uk/find-your-local-council)

Or for Northern Ireland, search for *health and social care trusts* at:

Website: [www.nidirect.gov.uk](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk)

### British Red Cross

A charity that helps people in crisis, offering a range of disability aids.

Address: 44 Moorfields, London EC2Y 9AL

Telephone: 0344 871 11 11

Email: [contactus@redcross.org.uk](mailto:contactus@redcross.org.uk)

Website: [www.redcross.org.uk](http://www.redcross.org.uk)

### Care & Repair Cymru (Wales)

A charity helping older and disabled people to stay in their own homes.

Address: 1st Floor, Mariners house, Unit A, Trident Court, East Moors road,  
Cardiff, CF24 5TD

Telephone: 029 201 07580

0300 111 3333 (to contact your local Care & Repair agency)

Email: through the website contact page

Website: [www.careandrepair.org.uk](http://www.careandrepair.org.uk)

### Care & Repair England

A charity helping older and disabled people to stay in their own homes.

Address: Unit 9, The Renewal Trust Business Centre, 3 Hawksworth Street,  
Nottingham NG3 2EG

Telephone: 0115 950 6500

Email: [info@careandrepair-england.org.uk](mailto:info@careandrepair-england.org.uk)

Website: [www.careandrepair-england.org.uk](http://www.careandrepair-england.org.uk)

### Citizens Advice

Free, confidential advice to help resolve legal, money and other problems. Search for local branches on the website.

Telephone: 0800 144 8848 (England, or contact your local Citizens Advice Bureau)  
0344 477 2020 (Wales)

Website: [www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk) (England)

[www.citizensadvice.org.uk/wales](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/wales) (Wales)

[www.citizensadvice.org.uk/nireland](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/nireland) (Northern Ireland)

### Disability Law Service

Legal advice and information.

Address: The Foundry, 17 Oval Way London SE11 5RR

Telephone: 020 7791 9800

Email: [advice@dls.org.uk](mailto:advice@dls.org.uk)

Website: [www.dls.org.uk](http://www.dls.org.uk)

### Disabled Living Foundation

A national charity providing advice and information on daily living aids.

Address: Unit 1, 34 Chatfield Road, Wandsworth, London SW11 3SE

Telephone: 0300 999 0004

Email: [info@dlf.org.uk](mailto:info@dlf.org.uk)

Website: <https://livingmadeeasy.org.uk>

### **Elderly Accommodation Counsel (EAC)**

Advice on accommodation, support and care for older people. Website has information on all aspects of care, support and housing for older people.

Address: 3rd Floor, 89 Albert Embankment, London SE1 7TP

Email: through the website contact page

Website: **[www.housingcare.org](http://www.housingcare.org)**

### **Find my HIA**

Search tool to find your local home improvement agency in England.

Telephone: 0300 124 0315

Website: **[www.findmyhia.org.uk](http://www.findmyhia.org.uk)**

### **Foundations**

A national body for home improvement agencies.

Address: The Old Co-Op Building, 11 Railway Street, Glossop,  
Derbyshire SK13 7AG

Telephone: 0300 124 0315

Email: [info@foundations.uk.com](mailto:info@foundations.uk.com)

Website: **[www.foundations.uk.com](http://www.foundations.uk.com)**  
**[www.adaptmyhome.org.uk](http://www.adaptmyhome.org.uk)**

### **GOV.UK**

Online government information about benefits and support in England and Wales.

Website: **[www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)**

### **Local Authority Welfare Rights Officers**

Advice and help with social care and benefits. Contact your local authority for information.

Website: **[www.gov.uk/find-your-local-council](http://www.gov.uk/find-your-local-council)**

### **Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman**

Investigates complaints about councils and other relevant public bodies in England.

Telephone: 0300 061 0614

Website: **[www.lgo.org.uk](http://www.lgo.org.uk)**

### **MND Scotland**

Care, information and research funding for people affected by MND in Scotland.

Address: Unit 8, 76 Firhill Road, Glasgow, G20 7BA

Telephone: 0141 332 3903

Email: [info@mndscotland.org.uk](mailto:info@mndscotland.org.uk)

Website: **[www.mndscotland.org.uk](http://www.mndscotland.org.uk)**

### Money Helper

Free and impartial money advice.

Address: Holborn Centre, 120 Holborn, London EC1N 2TD

Telephone: 0800 138 7777 (English language)

0800 138 0555 (Welsh language)

Email: [enquiries@moneyadvice.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@moneyadvice.org.uk)

Website: [www.moneyhelper.org.uk](http://www.moneyhelper.org.uk)

### NI Direct

Providing government online information for Northern Ireland, with specific reference to benefits and government support schemes.

Website: [www.nidirect.gov.uk](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk)

### Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE)

Northern Ireland's housing authority, offering a range of services to people living in socially rented, privately rented and owner-occupied accommodation.

Telephone: 03448 920 900

Website: [www.nihe.gov.uk](http://www.nihe.gov.uk)

### Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman

Investigates complaints about public services in Northern Ireland.

Address: Progressive House, 33 Wellington Place, Belfast BT1 6HN

Telephone: 0800 343 424

Email: [nipso@nipso.org.uk](mailto:nipso@nipso.org.uk)

Website: [www.nipso.org.uk](http://www.nipso.org.uk)

### Public Services Ombudsman for Wales

Investigates complaints about public services and independent care providers in Wales (for England and Northern Ireland, see Local Government Ombudsman).

Address: 1 Ffordd yr Hen Gae, Pencoed CF35 5LJ

Telephone: 0300 790 0203

Email: [ask@ombudsman.wales.org.uk](mailto:ask@ombudsman.wales.org.uk)

Website: [www.ombudsman-wales.org.uk](http://www.ombudsman-wales.org.uk)

### Radius Housing

Provides housing, care and support to people in Northern Ireland. Their 'Staying Put' scheme helps disabled people stay at home by providing home improvement adaptations (like Care & Repair Cymru and England).

Address: 38-52 Lisburn Road, Belfast BT9 6AA

Telephone: 0330 123 0888

Email: [info@radiushousing.org](mailto:info@radiushousing.org)

Website: [www.radiushousing.org](http://www.radiushousing.org)

### Research Institute for Disabled Consumers (RIDC)

Independent consumer research charity, providing free consumer information and user reviews for older and disabled people.

Address: Ground Floor, Unit 10, Blenheim Court, 62 Brewery Road,  
London N7 9NY

Telephone: 020 7427 2460

Email: [mail@ridc.org.uk](mailto:mail@ridc.org.uk)

Website: [www.ridc.org.uk](http://www.ridc.org.uk)

### Shelter

A charity working to relieve homelessness and bad housing, through advice, information and advocacy to people in housing need.

Address: Shelter (England) 88 Old Street, London EC1V 9HU

Telephone: 0808 800 4444

Website: [www.shelter.org.uk](http://www.shelter.org.uk)

### Shelter (Wales)

Telephone: 0800 495 495

Website: [www.sheltercymru.org.uk](http://www.sheltercymru.org.uk)

### Shelter (Northern Ireland)

Telephone: 028 9024 7752

Website: [www.shelterni.org](http://www.shelterni.org)

### TrustMark

Government endorsed 'find a tradesperson' scheme.

Address: The Square, Basing View, Basingstoke, RG21 4EB

Telephone: 0333 555 1234

Email: through the website contact page

Website: [www.trustmark.org.uk](http://www.trustmark.org.uk)

### Turn2Us

Help with accessing available funding through benefits, grants and other types of financial support.

Address: 200 Shepherds bush Road, Hammersmith W6 7NL

Email: through the website contact page

Website: [www.turn2us.org.uk](http://www.turn2us.org.uk)

### Welsh Government

The devolved government for Wales.

Address: Cathays Park, Cardiff CF10 3NQ

Telephone: 0300 0604400

Email: [customerhelp@gov.wales](mailto:customerhelp@gov.wales)

Website: [www.gov.wales](http://www.gov.wales)

## **Acknowledgements**

With thanks to the following for their invaluable assistance with this information sheet:

Our User review group for kindly sharing their experiences.

Heather Dungey, Senior Governance Officer, Care and Repair Cymru.

Shane Elliott, Housing and Health Liaison Officer, Department of Health, Northern Ireland.

Sophie Fournel and the team at Centre for Independent Living, Kent.

Jane Leicester, MND Service Improvement Practitioner, Greater Manchester MND Care Centre.

Shaun Robinson, Operational Support Team Manager, Foundations.

Gemma Spedding, Occupational Therapist, Salford Royal NHS Trust.

Gary Vaux, Head of Money Advice Unit, Hertfordshire County Council.

## **References**

References used to support this document are available on request from:

Email: [infofeedback@mndassociation.org](mailto:infofeedback@mndassociation.org)

Or write to: Information feedback, MND Association, Francis Crick House, 6 Summerhouse Rd, Moulton Park, Northampton NN3 6BJ

## **Further information**

We have related information sheets you may find helpful:

1A – *NICE guideline on motor neurone disease*

10A – *Benefits and entitlements*

10B – *Direct payments and personalisation*

10D – *NHS Continuing Healthcare*

10E – *Work and MND*

10F – *Your rights to social care*

10G – *Support for families with children*

11C – *Equipment and wheelchairs*

11E – *Environmental controls*

You can also refer to our tools and guides:

*What you should expect from your care* – our pocket-sized booklet to help open conversations about your care with professionals. Features the main points from the NICE guideline on MND.

*Living with motor neurone disease* – our guide to MND and how to manage its impact, including guidance about your finances.

*Personal care with MND* - to help prolong independence with daily routines.

*Caring and MND: support for you* – comprehensive information for family carers, who are supporting someone living with MND.

*Caring and MND: quick guide* – the summary version of our information for carers.

*Occupational therapy for motor neurone disease* - a guide for professionals.

You can download most of our publications from our website at:

**[www.mndassociation.org/publications](http://www.mndassociation.org/publications)** or order in print from the MND Connect team, who can provide additional information and support:

### **MND Connect**

Telephone: 0808 802 6262

Email: [mndconnect@mndassociation.org](mailto:mndconnect@mndassociation.org)

### **MND Association website and online forum**

Website: **[www.mndassociation.org](http://www.mndassociation.org)**

Online forum: **<https://forum.mndassociation.org>** or through the website.

## **We welcome your views**

We'd love to know what you think we're doing well and where we can improve our information for people with or affected by MND, or Kennedy's disease. Your anonymous comments may also be used to help raise awareness and influence within our resources, campaigns and applications for funding.

To feedback on any of our information sheets, access our online form at:

**[www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/infosheets\\_1-25](http://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/infosheets_1-25)**

You can request a paper version of the form or provide direct feedback by email:

**[infofeedback@mndassociation.org](mailto:infofeedback@mndassociation.org)**

Or write to:

Information feedback, MND Association, Francis Crick House, 6 Summerhouse Rd,  
Moulton Park, Northampton NN3 6BJ

Last revised November 2021  
Next review November 2024  
Version: 1

Registered Charity No. 294354  
Company Limited by Guarantee No. 2007023  
© MND Association 2011

