

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST RESOURCE

Disabled Facilities Grant Application Guide

A practical walkthrough for OTs supporting clients through the DFG process — from initial referral to lift installation.



1 What is a Disabled Facilities Grant?

A Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) is a means-tested local council grant in England, Wales and Northern Ireland that helps fund essential adaptations to a disabled person's home — including through-floor lifts, platform lifts and home elevators.

Maximum grant amount: Up to £30,000 in England (figures vary in Wales and Northern Ireland). The amount awarded depends on a means test for adult applicants — grants for children under 18 are usually not means-tested.

2 Who is eligible?

The applicant (or a member of their household) must be disabled, as defined under the Equality Act 2010, and the work must be considered "necessary and appropriate" to meet their needs, as well as "reasonable and practicable" given the property.

ELIGIBILITY FACTOR	REQUIREMENT
Residency	Applicant must live in the property as their only or main home
Tenure	Owner-occupier, private tenant, or council/housing association tenant
Intention to remain	Applicant must intend to live in the property throughout the grant condition period (typically 5 years)
Necessity	An OT assessment confirming the adaptation is necessary for the applicant's needs

3 The application process

Here is the typical journey from first contact to a completed installation. Timescales vary by local authority — some councils are quicker than others.

1 OT assessment & referral

The OT visits the client's home, assesses mobility needs and access requirements, and recommends the appropriate adaptation (e.g. a through-floor lift). This assessment underpins the whole application.

2 Application submitted to the local council

The client (or their representative) submits a formal DFG application to their local housing authority, supported by the OT's recommendation.

3 Means test (if applicable)

For adult applicants, the council carries out a financial assessment (means test) to determine how much of the cost, if any, the client must contribute. Grants for children are typically exempt.

4 Site survey & quotation

Request a free, no-obligation site survey from Pollock Lifts. We assess the property and provide a formal quotation, which is submitted as part of the grant application.

5 Grant approval

Once approved, the council confirms funding (in full or in part, depending on the means test outcome) and work can be scheduled.

6 Installation

Pollock Lifts installs the lift, typically within one to three days, with minimal disruption to the household.

4 Why consider Pollock Lifts

When specifying a lift for a DFG-funded adaptation, the manufacturer matters — for compliance, longevity, and how smoothly the installation goes for your client.

40+ years of experience

Designing and manufacturing lifts in the UK and Ireland since 1983

In-car diagnostics

Built-in diagnostic display supports faster servicing and troubleshooting

UK & Ireland manufactured

Independently owned British business with a 115,000 sq ft manufacturing facility

Personalised approach

"You first, solution second" — adaptations tailored to the client's home and needs

BS9500:2012 compliant

Products meet recognised UK safety standards for home lifts

Full aftercare

Local installation teams and 24/7 call-out support after the lift is fitted

Why this matters for your recommendation: A DFG-funded adaptation needs to hold up for years under the grant condition period. Choosing an established, compliant manufacturer reduces the risk of complications for your client — and for the application itself.

5 Documents typically required

Requirements vary slightly by local authority, but applicants are commonly asked to provide the following.

Proof of identity

Passport, driving licence, or similar

Proof of income & savings

For the means test (adult applicants)

Proof of residency

Tenancy agreement or property deeds

Landlord's consent

Required for tenants before work begins

OT assessment report

Confirming the recommended adaptation

Contractor quotation

Formal quote from Pollock Lifts

6 Tips for a smoother application

Apply early. DFG processing times vary widely by council — some take a few months, others considerably longer. Starting the application as soon as the need is identified avoids delays.

Be thorough in the OT report. A detailed, specific assessment reduces the likelihood of the council requesting further information, which can slow the process.

Loop Pollock Lifts in early. We can provide a site survey and quotation ahead of formal approval, so the application isn't held up waiting on paperwork from us.

We're here to help with the technical side

Request a free site survey or ask us anything about specifying the right lift for a DFG application.

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