

People and Communities Policy Committee

Agenda

Members of the People and Communities Committee:

Cllr D Bills (Chairman)
Cllr S Blundell
Cllr M Dewsbury
Cllr J Easter
Cllr T Holden

Cllr J Hornby (Vice Chairman)
Cllr N Legg
Cllr S Nuri Nixon
Cllr J Wilby

Date & Time:

Thursday 7 October 2021
10:00 am

Place:

Colman Room, South Norfolk House, Cygnet Court, Long Stratton, Norwich, NR15 2XE

Contact:

Leah Arthurton tel (01508) 533610
Email: democracy@s-norfolk.gov.uk
Website: www.south-norfolk.gov.uk

PUBLIC ATTENDANCE:

If a member of the public would like to observe the meeting, or speak on an agenda item, please email your request to democracy@s-norfolk.gov.uk, no later than 5.00pm on Monday 4 October 2021. Please note that due to the current rules on social distancing, places will be limited. Please see further guidance on attending meetings at page 2 of this agenda

Large print version can be made available

If you have any special requirements in order to attend this meeting, please let us know in advance.

Public Speaking and Attendance at Meetings

All public wishing to attend to observe, or speak at a meeting, are required to register a request by the date / time stipulated on the relevant agenda. Requests should be sent to: democracy@s-norfolk.gov.uk

Public speaking can take place:

- Through a written representation (which will be read out at the meeting)
- In person at the Council offices

Please note that the Council cannot guarantee the number of places available for public attendance, but we will endeavour to meet all requests.

All those attending the meeting in person are invited to sign in on the QR code for the building and promptly arrive at, and leave the venue. Hand sanitiser are provided, and you are invited to observe social distancing. Further guidance on what to do on arrival will follow once your request to attend or speak has been accepted.

AGENDA

1. To report apologies for absence and to identify substitute members;
2. Any items of business which the Chairman decides should be considered as a matter of urgency pursuant to section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act, 1972. Urgent business may only be taken if, “by reason of special circumstances” (which will be recorded in the minutes), the Chairman of the meeting is of the opinion that the item should be considered as a matter of urgency
3. To receive Declarations of Interest from Members
(Please see guidance form and flow chart attached – page 4)
4. Minutes of the meeting of the People and Communities Policy Committee held
22 June 2021
(attached – page 6)
5. South Norfolk Council Mobile Homes Fees Policy;
(attached – page 42)
6. Independent Living Assistance Policy;
(attached – page 58)
7. Work Programme;
(attached – page 106)

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AT MEETINGS

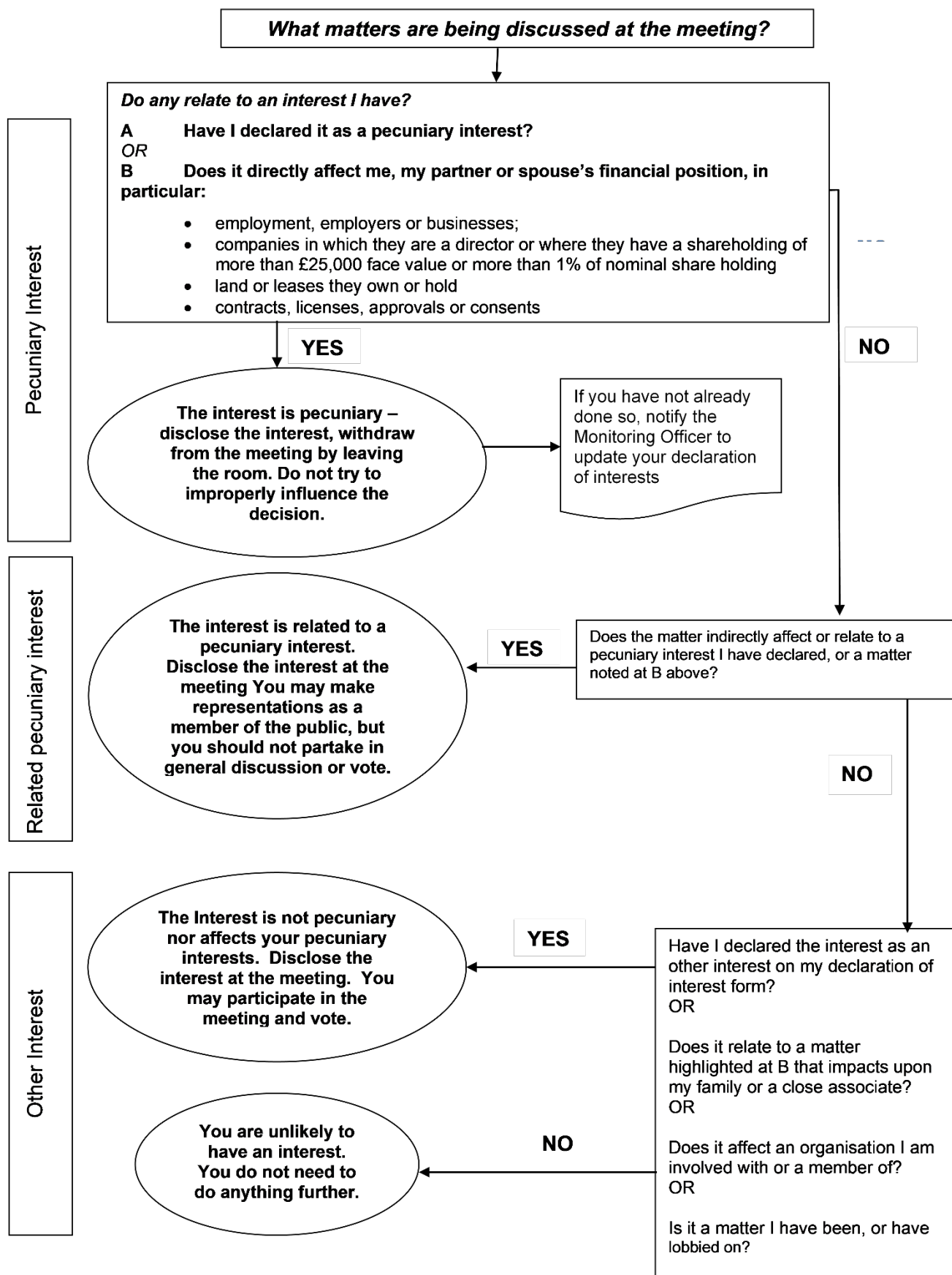
When declaring an interest at a meeting Members are asked to indicate whether their interest in the matter is pecuniary, or if the matter relates to, or affects a pecuniary interest they have, or if it is another type of interest. Members are required to identify the nature of the interest and the agenda item to which it relates. In the case of other interests, the member may speak and vote. If it is a pecuniary interest, the member must withdraw from the meeting when it is discussed. If it affects or relates to a pecuniary interest the member has, they have the right to make representations to the meeting as a member of the public but must then withdraw from the meeting. Members are also requested when appropriate to make any declarations under the Code of Practice on Planning and Judicial matters.

<p>Have you declared the interest in the register of interests as a pecuniary interest? If Yes, you will need to withdraw from the room when it is discussed.</p>
<p>Does the interest directly:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. affect yours, or your spouse / partner's financial position? 2. relate to the determining of any approval, consent, licence, permission or registration in relation to you or your spouse / partner? 3. Relate to a contract you, or your spouse / partner have with the Council 4. Affect land you or your spouse / partner own 5. Affect a company that you or your partner own, or have a shareholding in <p>If the answer is "yes" to any of the above, it is likely to be pecuniary.</p> <p>Please refer to the guidance given on declaring pecuniary interests in the register of interest forms. If you have a pecuniary interest, you will need to inform the meeting and then withdraw from the room when it is discussed. If it has not been previously declared, you will also need to notify the Monitoring Officer within 28 days.</p>
<p>Does the interest indirectly affect or relate any pecuniary interest you have already declared, or an interest you have identified at 1-5 above?</p> <p>If yes, you need to inform the meeting. When it is discussed, you will have the right to make representations to the meeting as a member of the public, but you should not partake in general discussion or vote.</p>
<p>Is the interest not related to any of the above? If so, it is likely to be an other interest. You will need to declare the interest, but may participate in discussion and voting on the item.</p>
<p>Have you made any statements or undertaken any actions that would indicate that you have a closed mind on a matter under discussion? If so, you may be predetermined on the issue; you will need to inform the meeting, and when it is discussed, you will have the right to make representations to the meeting as a member of the public, but must then withdraw from the meeting.</p>

FOR GUIDANCE REFER TO THE FLOWCHART OVERLEAF.

PLEASE REFER ANY QUERIES TO THE MONITORING OFFICER IN THE FIRST INSTANCE

DECLARING INTERESTS FLOWCHART – QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF



Agenda Item: 4

PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES POLICY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the People and Communities Policy Committee of South Norfolk District Council held on Tuesday 22 June at 9.30am.

Committee Members Present:	Councillors: D Bills (Chairman), J Easter, T Holden, J Hornby and S Nuri-Nixon
Apologies for Absence:	Councillors: S Blundell, M Dewsbury, N Legg and J Wilby
Cabinet Member Present:	Councillor: Cllr A Thomas (for part of the meeting)
Officers in Attendance:	The Assistant Director Individuals and Families (M Pursehouse) and the Help Hub and Communities Senior Manager (K Gallagher).

24 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed Cllr A Thomas, the new portfolio holder for Better Lives, to the meeting.

Cllr Thomas explained that she was very pleased to have recently taken on the Better Lives portfolio, and she looked forward to working more closely with the Committee in future.

25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

With regard to minute 28, Skills and Training Project, Cllr D Bills declared an interest as a member of Norfolk County Council's Adult Learning Committee.

26 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the People and Communities Policy Committee held on 11 February 2021 were confirmed as a correct record.

27 PREVENTION ADVICE AND SUPPORT

The Help Hub and Communities Senior Manager introduced the item, which provided an update to members regarding prevention, advice and support offered from the Help Hub. The Committee received a presentation (appended to these minutes) which sought to advise members on the reasons behind the Council's need to offer support alongside future aspirations for prevention services. It also examined the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and the One Team approach, on the service.

During discussion, members queried whether the savings and costs of the service could be calculated. Officers explained that this was a complicated process, however, officers were working towards producing these figures in the coming months. The Help Hub and Communities Senior Manager explained that the Hub provided huge savings for the NHS and Social Care, and that the Council might need to consider recouping more of its costs in future.

In response to a query, officers explained that community engagement was an important and ongoing role within the team. There was an exceptional network of community groups with the sole purpose of helping others, and these had come to the forefront during the pandemic. However, officers were aware that there were many other groups, such as football clubs or church groups, that could be better equipped in understanding the work of the Hub and could assist in promoting its service and help to build capacity within the local community.

Members noted that 63% of people receiving support through the Hub were not aware of the service before they were referred to it, and discussion followed regarding the best ways to promote the service. Officers explained that in addition to word of mouth, promotion took place through leaflet distribution, face book advertisements and promotions at events such as the South Norfolk On Show. Members suggested that easy access points, for example in libraries, should be implemented, in addition to face-to-face drop-in sessions in various locations. The Committee noted that work was continuing to improve the Hub's branding and members agreed that there was a need to detach it from other Council services, as it was felt that this would create more trust and be less confusing for some residents.

The Assistant Director Individuals and Families added that as part of the Council's Accommodation Review, he had been tasked with looking at how one office to serve both South Norfolk and Broadland Councils, could still meet the needs of local residents, and he referred to a number of opportunities, such as the use of town and parish council meeting rooms and an increase in virtual interaction with residents. In response to queries, officers agreed that face to face meetings were the only appropriate method of communication in some cases, and acknowledged that not everyone had access to online services.

One member raised the importance of interaction with schools and how engagement with children and teachers would also increase the awareness of parents. Officers confirmed that the Hub had previously worked closely with schools and that Children's Services made up a huge element of the Hub's work. Members stressed the importance of early years support.

One member referred to the recent closure of the Citizens Advice office in Wymondham, and queried whether the Hub was able to provide independent advice with regard to council tax debts. Officers explained that residents had been using the Council's debt and welfare advice service for years, alongside other agencies, such as Citizens Advice. They had no concerns regarding conflict, explaining that all officers across all the agencies worked to the same standard when providing advice.

One member queried the age profile of users across the service and officers explained that further work regarding demographics was required. Members noted that 65% of referrals came through GP Surgeries.

The Committee thanked officers for an interesting and informative presentation, and indicated their support for future areas of focus, including accessibility for all, promoting self-serve to those who were able, and prevention. Members looked forward to receiving more information on savings, costs, and more detailed demographics.

28 SKILLS AND TRAINING PROJECT

Members considered the report of the Evaluation and Data Analyst, and the Economic Growth Administrator, which examined the impact of Covid-19 on the local economy, in particular skills and training, and set out proposals to tailor support to specific cohorts of residents and start-up businesses.

The Assistant Director Individuals and Families delivered a brief presentation, outlining the background and proposals of the report. Members noted the aim to focus skills and training on those who needed it most, and that these had been identified as the following cohorts:

School Leavers
Higher Education Leavers
Recently Unemployed (including underemployed)
Individuals wishing to start own business

The Assistant Director drew attention to the proposed actions to target each cohort and he stressed the need to ensure that the Council worked in partnership with other agencies to avoid duplication and ensure an effective and comprehensive response for customers.

In response to queries, the Assistant Director explained that although the market was saturated with training providers/recruitment agencies, businesses were still finding it difficult to recruit. He explained that the Council

had a role to play in facilitating and influencing, and providing the support needed to those individuals who faced barriers when searching for work.

The Committee expressed its support for the proposed approach, and members discussed the impact of being out of work both on individuals and families as a whole. One member referred to the “revolving door” and the need to break the cycle and help develop skills and competencies that would ensure long-term benefits for both individuals and families.

With reference to paragraph 3.1.1 of the report and the statement regarding low aspirations, particularly amongst manual workers, the Assistant Director explained that this was an area where many workers, with no plans or aspirations ended up, as qualifications were not always required. He did however agree that this area of work could provide a good and rewarding career path for some. Members agreed that there was a need to provide better careers advice at an earlier stage and also additional support such as accounting skills training, to assist the self-employed. Members noted that the reason most businesses failed during the first 1-3 years, was issues with cashflow.

Turning to apprenticeships, the Assistant Director stressed the need for both South Norfolk and Broadland Councils to utilise the Apprenticeship Levy Funding, with a target of 19 apprentices in place by March 2022, across the One Team. Members expressed their support for a central apprenticeship fund, funded through recurring underspends of existing budgets. They also supported the recruitment of higher entry level apprentices in areas of growth and where there was a shortage of qualified officers, such as in Environmental Health and Planning. In response to queries, the Assistant Director explained that there would always be a risk of apprentices moving on after their two-year placement, however, the Council was working hard with other local authorities to promote the area as an attractive place to live and work.

It was

RESOLVED

To

1. Note the impacts on skills, training and the wider economy in South Norfolk and Broadland and to note the intended approach to tailor support to specific cohorts of residents and start-up businesses
2. Support the potential establishment of a central apprenticeship fund, funded through the recurring underspend of existing budgets.

(The meeting concluded at 11.26 am)

Chairman

Two Councils - One Team

Appendix 1 (minute 27 refers)

The Help Hub: Prevention, Support and Advice

Now, Next and the Future



Two Councils - One Team

Report Journey

- People and Communities Panel – 22nd June
- Wellbeing Panel - 22nd June
- Construct report – July/August
- CMLT – early September
- Cabinet (SNC) – September onwards
- Cabinet (BDC) – September onwards

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What are we going to cover?

- What are the drivers for having the Help Hub?
 - What does The Help Hub look like from the outside?
 - What does it look like for One Team?
 - Who do we support?
 - How do we support?
-
- Where have we been?
 - What are we doing?
 - What are we going to do?

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What are the drivers?

‘Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing, not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.’

World Health Organisation

‘Integrated care is about giving people the support they need, joined up across local councils, the NHS, and other partners. It removes traditional divisions between hospitals and family doctors, between physical and mental health, and between NHS and council services.’

NHS England

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What are the drivers?

THE VISION

Working together to create the best place and environment for everyone, now and for future generations



OUR PRIORITIES. OUR PEOPLE, OUR APPROACH



Supporting individuals and empowering communities



Protecting and improving the natural and built environment, whilst maximising quality of life



Growing the economy



Moving with the times, working smartly and collaboratively

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What are the drivers?

Cost savings:

Using the New Economy Manchester Cost Benefit Analysis:

- A homeless prevention case costs min £747
- A homeless application costs £2,909
- A complex eviction costs £7,770

The Help Hub received 432 housing based Request For Support last year (excluding Domestic Abuse) 155 were referred through for housing advice, but 277 were supported through Help Hub services of one type or another.

Therefore, we resolved 277 cases outside of the statutory housing system.

277 x £747 is the minimum saving of **£206,919**

If just one quarter of these (69 people) would have gone on to make a homeless application having not had support then this is further saving of **£201,448**

If 10% of those had been complex evictions that's a further **£53,613**

Very hypothetical but that's a total figure of **£461,980** fiscal saving from the hub's housing cases.

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What are the drivers?

Cost savings:

Whilst the Help Hub is about improving outcomes for individuals and families, by utilising the New Economy Manchester Cost Saving Calculator, we can demonstrate some of the areas where there is potential fiscal benefit to dealing with issues at an early stage.

Health 731 GP referrals to Social Prescribing £95,761 potential fiscal benefit	Children and Families 529 children directly supported by Early Help Family Focus £29.3 mil potential fiscal benefit	Domestic Abuse 120 cases with DA as a presenting need £357,323 potential fiscal benefit
Independent Adults 184 people supported through Disabled Facilities Grant £5.3 mil potential fiscal benefit	Employment 276 cases with unemployment or benefits as presenting need £2.9 mil potential fiscal benefit	Crime 328 fewer incidents of ASB in 2017/18 £231,896 potential fiscal benefit

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What are the drivers?

Improved quality of life:

Chloe is a single mother of two, aged 24. She is suffering from anxiety and depression that does not seem to be responding to medication. She states that her life is full of problems that she cannot resolve. She is worried she may lose her home.



The Help Hub team was able to:

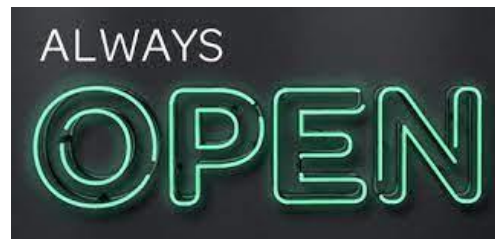
- ✓ Identify that Chloe is a victim of domestic abuse (physical and financial) from a non-resident ex-partner. She was then referred to the Haven Project for support.
- ✓ Arrange, through the Council's Benefits Team, to clear her rent arrears, arising from financial exploitation by the ex-partner.
- ✓ Arrange through the Council's Housing Team for her to be rehoused in a location unknown to the ex-partner.
- ✓ Link her with a local peer support group to increase her confidence and chance for socialisation in her new location.

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What is the Help Hub?



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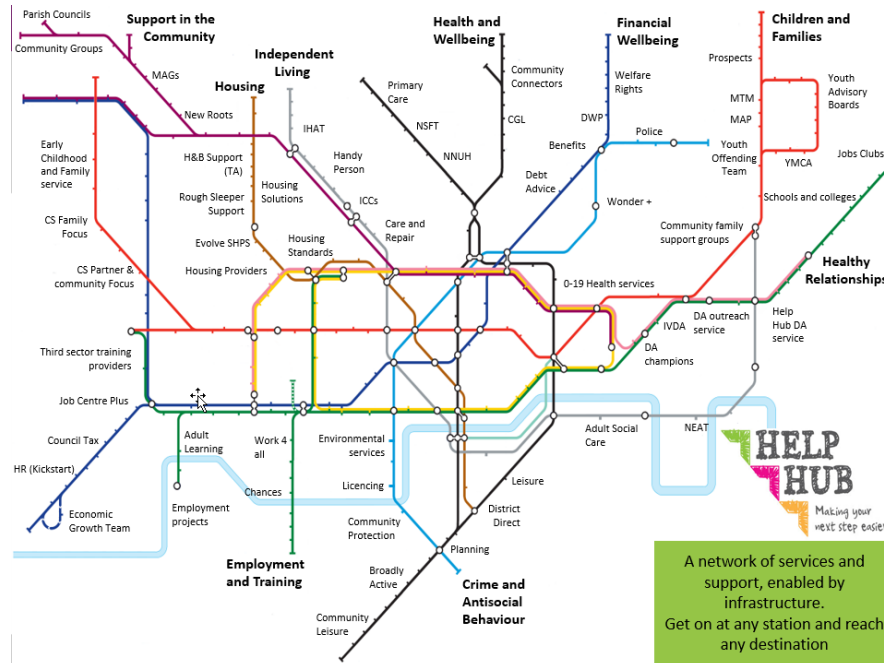
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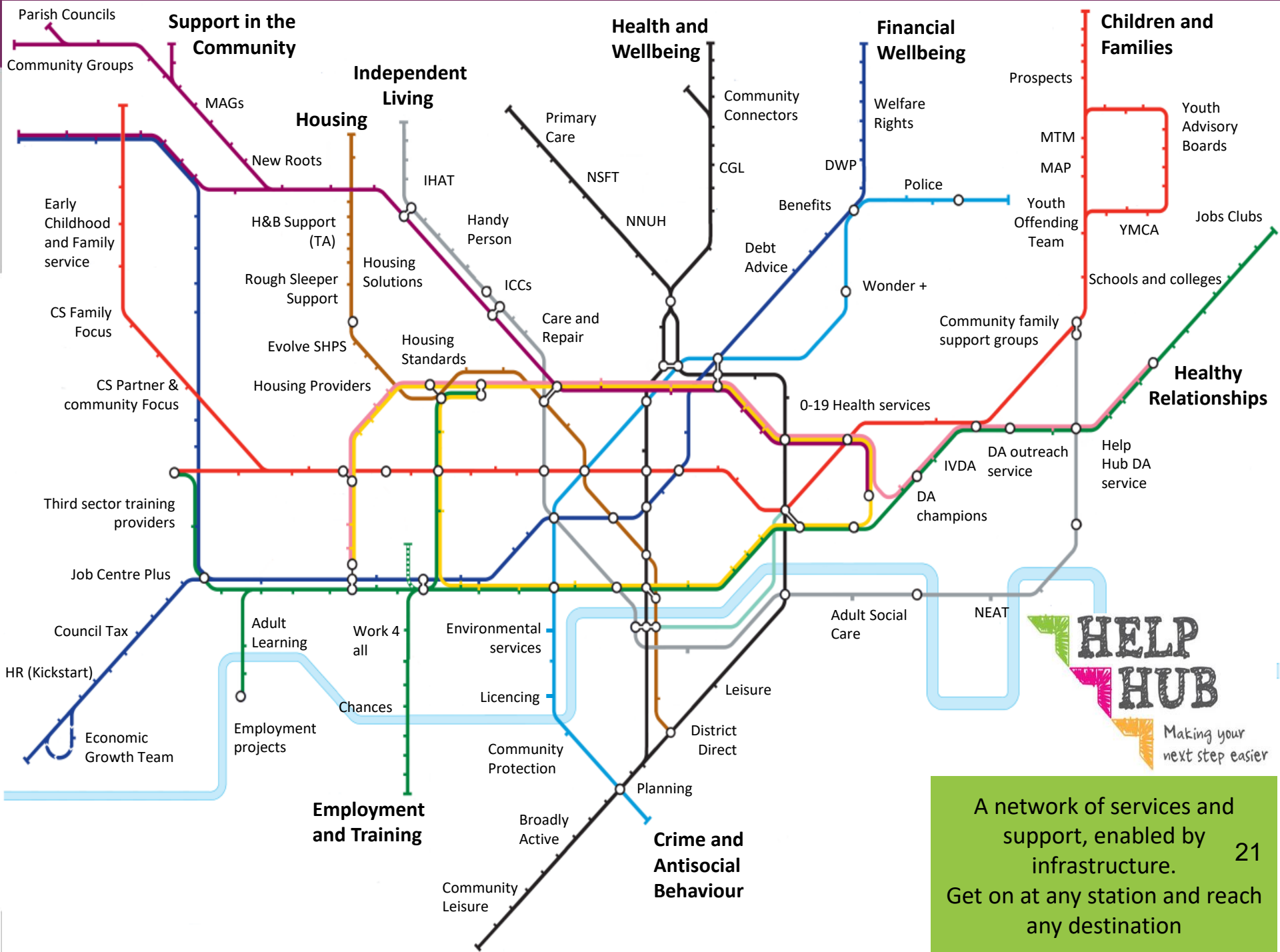
In Short...

The Help Hub is a network of community groups, organisations and services that is underpinned by an infrastructure which allows for easy navigation between them to meet the needs of the individual

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What makes the network?





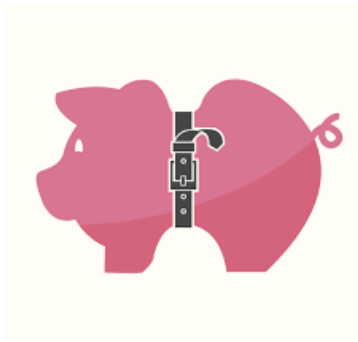
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The importance of community



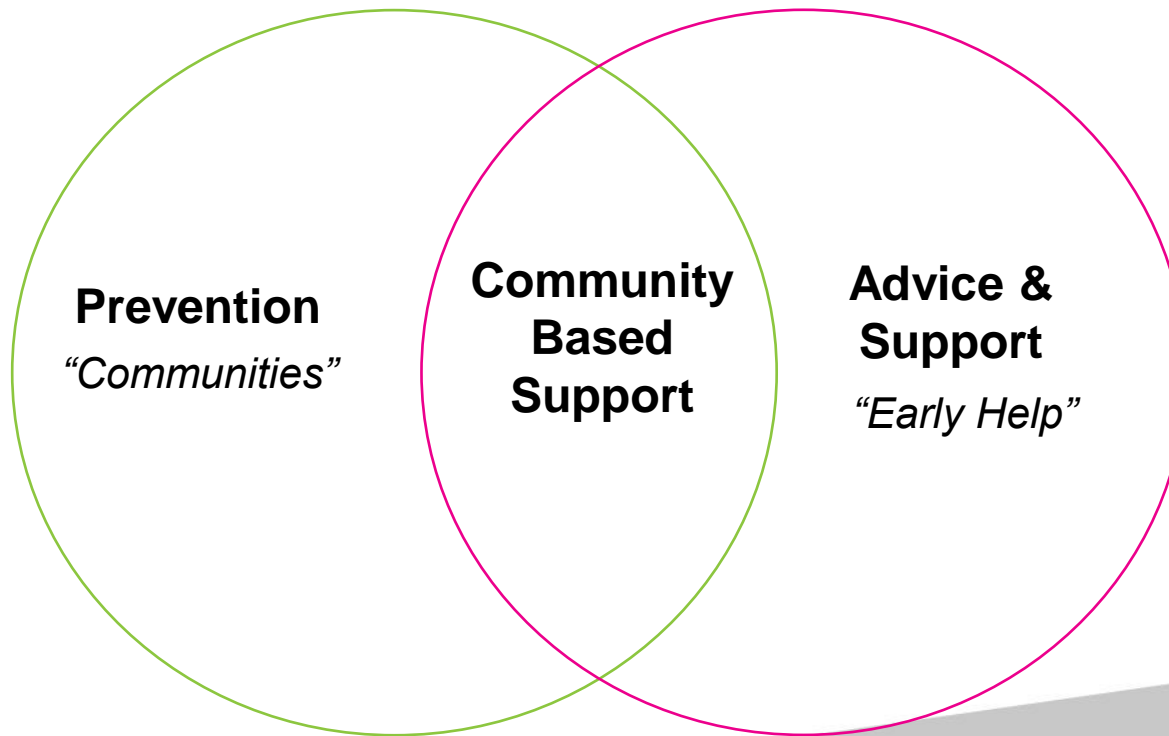
SNAB Community Links

Private group · 55 members



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What is the Help Hub for One Team?



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Prevention – Communities

What we do

- Building capacity within the community to help each other
- Creating opportunities for residents to improve physical, social and mental wellbeing
- Protecting community spaces
- Providing access to funding

Why we do it

- People who support each other are less likely to need access to formalised services – this is better for them, and the public purse

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Advice and Support – Early Help

What we do

- Triage and assessment – identifying peoples full needs and linking into the most appropriate resource to resolve their needs
- Immediate hardship support: providing access to food and fuel, alongside;
- debt advice, welfare rights and money management support
- Jobs and training: providing help, advice and guidance for accessing employment, training and learning
- Handyman service to older/vulnerable residents: helping with handrails, key safes, smoke alarms, and other works to prevent slips, trips and falls
- Practical support and specialist housing advice to enable discharge from hospital
- Provision, through commissioning, of specialist support i.e. Mental Health, Domestic Abuse

Why we do it:

- To enhance the health and life chances of residents
- To safeguard our most vulnerable residents
- To enhance the economic wellbeing of individuals, families and communities.

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Community Based Support – taking services to the community

What we do

- Community Connectors – in South Norfolk the team spend half their week in GP surgeries delivering social prescribing sessions. Other referrals come from partner agencies, self-referrals and community groups. In Broadland, the role is exactly the same in terms of meeting need although without the link to NHS Primary Care. Connectors provide assisted, engaged and supported help.
- District Direct – ensuring vulnerable patients have a safe environment to return to upon discharge from hospital

Why we do it

- To take the Help Hub out to the community; getting access to those who need support at all levels to prevent escalation

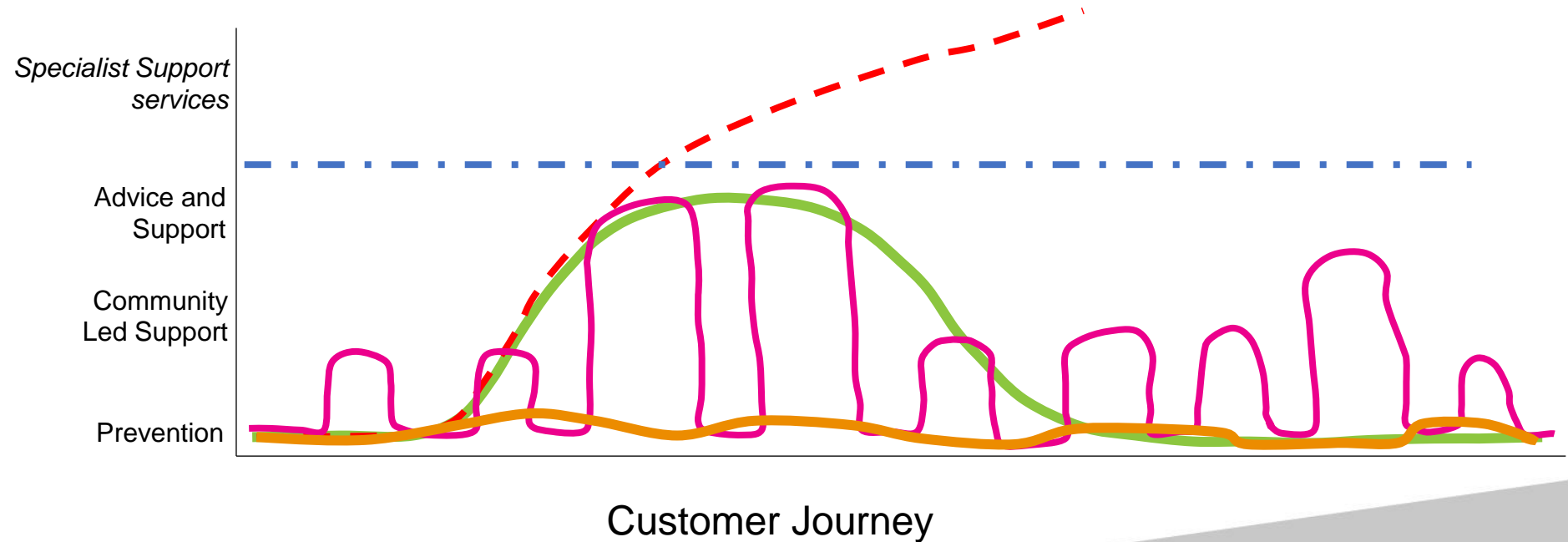
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What do we know about people accessing support



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The spectrum of support



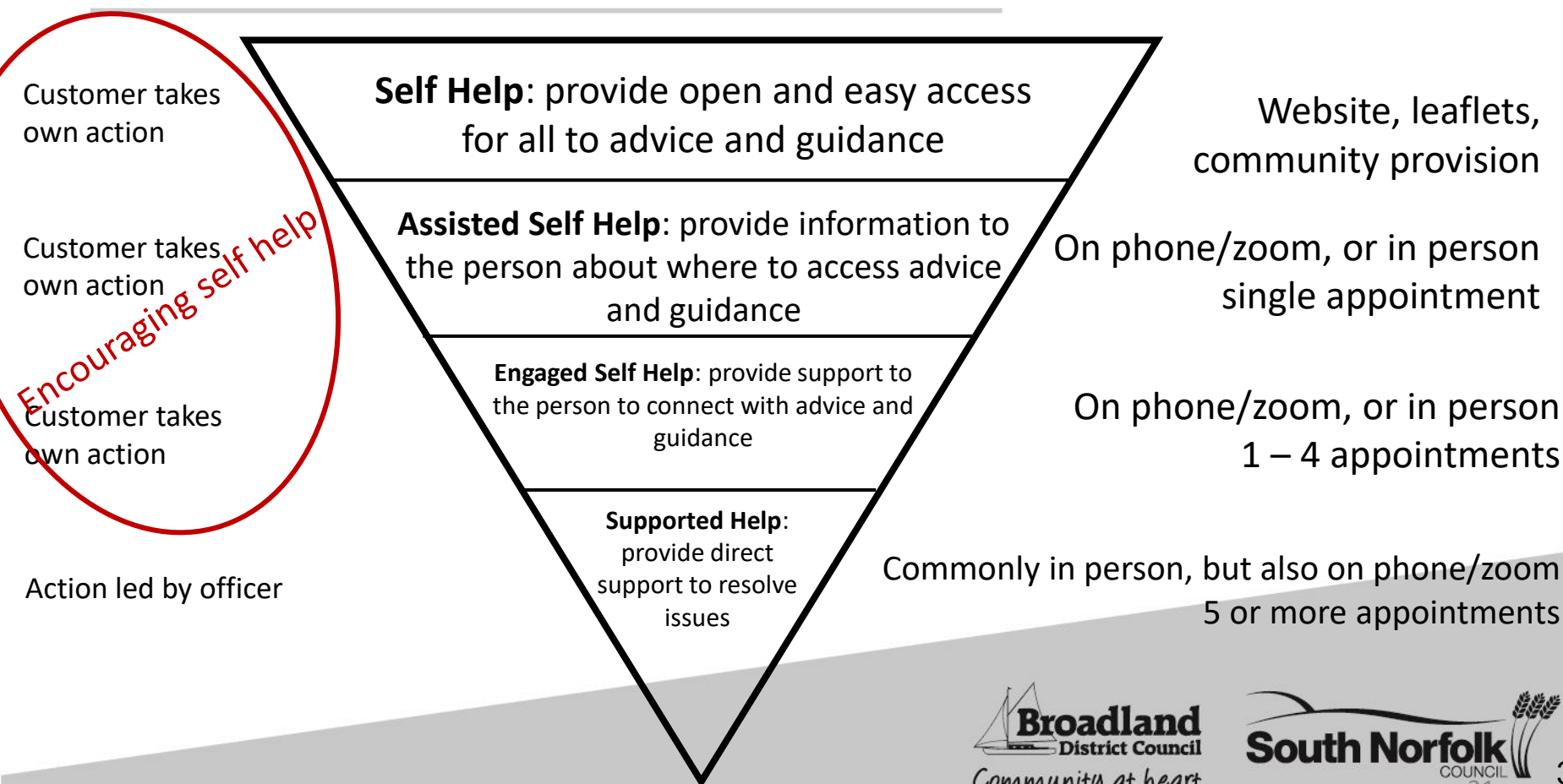
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Prevention: aka, doing ourselves out of a job



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How do we do this? A sliding scale of support



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Before we move on – any questions?

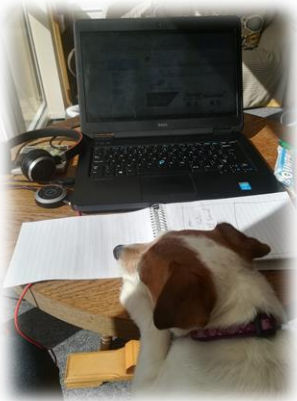


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Where are we now?

In the last 18 months the service has experienced the move to a single paid service, and the very significant impact of the pandemic.

The Help Hub has developed its ways of working and structure to deal with these events whilst maintaining a high level of service and support for residents.



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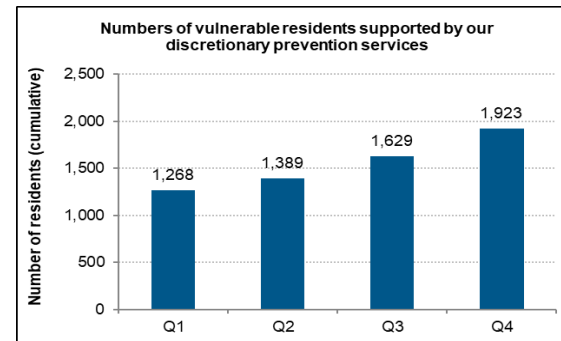
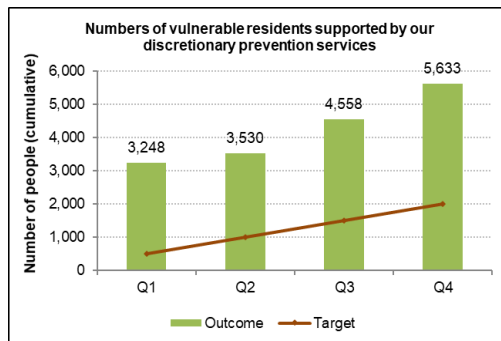
Where are we now?

Help Hub Requests for support

2019-20: 2549

2020 -21: 2544*

*Lower RFS in first part of the year due to covid



- 20,000 Covid related calls taken
- 5,000 calls made to shielding residents
- 4,000 contact tracing visits made
- 4,000 food parcels delivered
- 2,750 prescriptions collected
- 3,150 shopping trips done

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Where are we now?

- We have brought together what was previously two services: Early Help and Communities
- Building on the strengths of each, we have brought together two Help Hubs under a single back office function
- All staff across the wider team have learned how to answer calls to the Help Hub lines and formed an overflow hunt group. They learned new skills, about more services and a greater understanding of the wider team's roles - we are now more resilient as a service
- We have become more flexible to deal with unexpected circumstances
- We have made both Help Hubs customer facing and the opening hours have been extended from 8:15am to 10pm

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Where are we now?

- We have retained and built on the Help Hub brand to ensure residents know where to go for help and support
- We have ensured that the network of support is offered as consistency as possible across both councils, and we continue to build on this
- We have worked with Public Health partners to deliver community testing
- We have delivered Test and Trace since Jan 2021
- We carried out surge testing in Diss
- We set up food distribution centres



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Where are we now?

- Covid-19 enabled the building of better and improved links with community organisations that are there to support and help people
- The legacy of the pandemic will be this network of community organisations who will act as eyes and ears in our communities to identify people who need support, and provide it where possible.
- This is a two-way street, they can direct people to the Hub who need support, whilst the hub can also refer and connect people to them whose needs can be met through a community based offer.



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Where are we now?

- We have adapted the way we work to deliver services virtually:
 - Marriott's Way and EAMA 10km
 - Community at Heart Awards
 - Community Awards
 - Collaboration meetings
 - Broadly Active



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What's next?

The Help Hub of the future is not just about supporting people when they have needs, but also creating and providing offers that prevent the need arising.

In the next 6 months we will focus on the following areas:

- We need to make the Help Hub even more accessible to all, including those who might be digitally excluded and those for whom English is not their first language.
- Promote and enhance the ability for people to self-serve who can through provision of a digital advice, information and self-help offers.
- Realign the “prevention” (communities) element of the Help Hub to ensure we are ready to offer an equitable service across the two districts

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What's next?

- Development of additional services to deal with the impact of the pandemic in the following areas:
 - mental wellbeing,
 - physical health and mobility,
 - domestic abuse,
 - financial resilience
 - Identifying and connecting with those who are currently disengaged.
- Developing our Community Connector (Social Prescribing) offer in Broadland – we currently have temporary connectors already in place via the COMF, and will be working with the Local Primary Care Networks (PCNs) in order to create a similar framework to that which exists in South Norfolk*

*note: PCNs have specific funding provided directly to them to invest in Social Prescribing as part of the NHS Plan

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Next Steps

- Member workshops for further discussion
- Engagement with partners to plan for the recovery phase of the pandemic, and develop a new way of working which reflects life post pandemic
- Scoping and data collection exercise to determine focus areas

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Thank you – any questions?



Agenda Item: 5
People and Communities Policy Committee
7 October 2021

South Norfolk Council Mobile Homes Fees Policy

Report Author(s): Kevin Philcox
Housing Standards Senior Manager
01603 430578
kevin.philcox@broadland.gov.uk

Portfolio: Better Lives

Ward(s) Affected: ALL

Purpose of the Report:

The Mobile Homes Act 2013, introduced duties and powers for local authorities. New regulations, The Mobile Homes (Requirement for Manager of Site to be Fit and Proper Person) (England) Regulations 2020 provide additional duties and powers for the local authorities. Relative guidance details an approach for local authorities to recover costs. This report provides a background and procedure for the council to implement the regulations and recover costs.

Recommendations:

Committee to recommend to Cabinet:

- a. The inclusion of the enforcement of new regulations as part of the Housing Standards responsibility.
- b. Approval of the fee's structure detailed in the Mobile Homes Fees Policy.
- c. Delegate authority to the Senior Housing Standards Manager to approve Fit and Proper Person applications.

1. Summary

- 1.1 The Mobile Homes Act 2013, introduced duties and powers for local authorities. Section 1 of the Act provides an opportunity for councils to charge fees for some services. Guidance from the Department for Communities and Local Government, (DCLG), ('The Mobile Homes Act 2013, A Guide for Local Authorities on Setting Site Licensing Fees'), details the parameters by which local authorities can charge.
- 1.2 New regulations, (The Mobile Homes (Requirement for Manager of Site to be Fit and Proper Person) (England) Regulations 2020), introduce an offence for a protected site to operate unless the Council is satisfied that the occupier or the appointed site manager is a fit and proper person to manage the site. The regulations require a comprehensive application procedure. The new regulations provide an opportunity for local authorities to recover costs of this procedure using a fee structure as detailed in the MHCLG document 'Mobile Homes: a guide for local authorities on setting fees for the fit and proper person test'.
- 1.3 Before setting any fee with either of the legislative procedures, there is a requirement that the council must prepare and publish a fees policy.

2 Background

2.1 The Mobile Homes Act 2013

- 2.2 The Mobile Homes Act 2013 infers actions for local authorities regarding relevant protected, (residential), sites in addition to current licensing functions. Protected sites are those where residents have certain rights regarding occupancy and rents as detailed in the 1983 Mobile Homes Act. It does not apply to private family residential site and does not apply to any holiday site. Under the Act local authorities may charge for their services in the delivery of its licensing procedure. However, no fee can be charged unless it is included in an approved fees policy.
- 2.3 The DCLG produced 'The Mobile Homes Act 2013, A Guide for Local Authorities on Setting Site Licensing Fees' which details that any fees policy should set out fees payable for:
 - (a) applications for the grant of a site licence.
 - (b) applications for the transfer of a site licence.
 - (c) applications for alteration to the conditions of an existing licence.
 - (d) annual fee payable for an existing licence.
- 2.4 Any fee policy requires an assessment of current workload required to deliver the mobile home site licensing service.

2.5 Mobile Homes (Requirement for Manager of Site to be Fit and Proper Person) (England) Regulations 2020

- 2.6 These new regulations require that a person managing a residential caravan site must be a fit and proper person to do so. The regulations commence in two parts with certain powers and obligations initiated on the 1st July 2021 with the completion and legal duties commencing on the 1st October 2021.
- 2.7 The Regulations only affects relevant protected sites as for the procedures in the Mobile Homes Act 2013.
- 2.8 The site operator will need to apply to the Council to be included in a new register of fit and proper persons. If the site operator has appointed a site manager to manage the site, they could apply for that person (rather than themselves) to be assessed as fit and proper.
- 2.9 The fit and proper test includes a determination of whether the relevant person can secure the proper management of the site, including compliance with the site licence and the long-term maintenance of the site.
- 2.10 The council will also need to consider other legal requirements in the determination of whether a person is fit and proper, including prescribed committed offences, rights to work, membership of any redress scheme and rejected applications from other authorities. The Council can approve the application with conditions. Explanations of use of conditions are detailed in the Guidance.
- 2.11 If a site operator or their appointed site manager fails to meet the fit and proper test, the site operator will have a limited grace period in which to submit another application for an alternative site manager to be assessed for inclusion on the register.
- 2.12 A successful application will be included in the register for five years. The fit and proper person's name and business contact details, as well as the name and address of the site, and whether a condition has been attached, will all be included on the register. Where an application is rejected, the name and address of the site will be included on the register but not the person's name or business contact details.
- 2.13 The Council is required to make the register available to the public and online.
- 2.14 Where the Council makes a decision to include the relevant person on the register:
- for less than the standard five years, or
 - subject to conditions, or
 - not to include the relevant person on the register,

The Council must issue a preliminary decision notice to the site owner detailing the reasoning behind the decision.

- 2.15 A site owner who receives a preliminary decision notice with conditions details above, they will have 28 days to make representations to the Council. The Council must consider and take any representations it receives into account before making a final decision.
- 2.16 The regulations detail an appeal procedure against a council decision to set conditions to an application, refuse an application or revoke an existing application. They also include defences to operate sites for limited periods in breach of the fit and proper requirement.
- 2.17 The regulations provide a power for the council to set and charge an application fee, as well as an annual fee, via a condition on someone's inclusion in the register. Detailed guidance regarding fees is detailed in the MHCLG document 'Mobile Homes: a guide for local authorities on setting fees for the fit and proper person test'.
- 2.18 On conviction for breach of the requirement to provide a fit and proper person, the site operator would be liable for an unlimited fine and the Council can consider an application for the site licence to be revoked.
- 2.19 The council is obliged to create and publish a fee policy for any fee charged and ensure that the fee is reasonable and transparent.

3. Current position/findings

- 3.1 The Council currently has four sites that are used for business purposes, where homes are freely brought and sold by the residents. These are detailed in Appendix 1.
- 3.2 The Council inspects these sites periodically to ensure compliance with site licence conditions.
- 3.3 Where new sites require a licence, the licence including attached conditions is produced. The conditions ensure safety and satisfactory amenity and facility standards on site.
- 3.4 The Mobile Home Act 2013, provides an opportunity to charge for the licencing procedures. The DCLG guidance details how the fees may be produced by the Council and provides limitations on what actions can be charged for.
- 3.5 The fit and proper assessment is a new piece of legislation, again with the opportunity to initiate a charge for the application and assessment. The council has contacted all affected sites, providing information on the new legislation requirements and the necessary application form.

4. Proposed action

- 4.1 To initiate a new work program to ensure compliance with the Mobile Home Act 2013 and new regulations. The procedure will include an enhanced risk-based inspection procedure for protected sites and will also include the inspection of other sites.

- 4.2 Using procedures detailed in The Mobile Homes Act 2013, introduce a fee structure, as detailed in the attached policy, Appendix 2. The policy will include applications for licence and an annual fee. The fee structure will be based on a risk rating that takes into account the size of a site, the level of compliance with licence conditions and confidence in management. This means that a site which is historically more problematic than another site and therefore requires more officer involvement and more monitoring, would pay a higher licence fee than a well-managed site that requires very little local authority involvement.
- 4.3 To implement a fee structure as part of the application and registration process as detailed in The Mobile Homes (Requirement for Manager of Site to be Fit and Proper Person) (England) Regulations 2020. The fee structure is also incorporated into the fee policy. The annual fee available through these regulations is not considered necessary as an annual fee is incorporated in the policy through the Mobile Homes Act 2013 procedure.
- 4.4 To delegate the decision process for determination of a Fit and Proper Person Application to the Housing Standards Senior Manager. Where representation by the site owner to a preliminary decision notice is received within the 28 period, the representation will be heard by the Assistant Director for Individuals and Families who will make a final decision.

5. Other options

- 5.1 To reject the proposed charge for licencing actions involved in the application and registration process for the fit and proper person assessment. The service will then be provided with no fee for the businesses concerned.

6. Issues and risks

- 6.1 **Resource Implications** – The procedure can be met within the existing Housing Standards team.
- 6.2 **Legal Implications** – The proposals are in accordance with statutory procedures.
- 6.3 **Equality Implications** – The proposals do not specifically affect individuals within a protected characteristic group.
- 6.4 **Environmental Impact** – There will not be any environmental impact from the legislation.
- 6.5 **Crime and Disorder** – The objective of the legislation is to improve management of protected sites. The robust approach of the Council in its delivery of the regulations should provide a positive impact on crime and disorder.

- 6.6 **Risks** – Although residential rent increases are controlled through previous legislation, the Act does allow the licensee to increase the pitch rents to residents to cover the cost of the annual fee. Although this will be limited to a single annual increase, effectively this fee may be directly passed on to the site residents. The guidance details a procedure for applications, transfers and variations. It also provides models for setting the annual fee.

7. Conclusion

- 7.1 The 2013 Act and new regulations reflect a continuing progression of legislation to control the residential rental sector. They provide further powers for local authorities regarding the management of certain residential mobile home sites and an opportunity to recover the costs of the requirement.

8. Recommendations

- 8.1 Committee to recommend to Cabinet:
- a. The inclusion of the enforcement of new regulations as part of the Housing Standards responsibility.
 - b. Approval of the fee's structure detailed in the Mobile Homes Fees Policy.
 - c. Delegate authority to the Senior Housing Standards Manager to approve Fit and Proper Person applications.

Background papers

List any background papers here

Appendix One-List of Protected Sites

Appendix One – List of Protected Sites:

1. Downsland Park, Woodrow Lane, Great Moulton, Norfolk.
2. Waveney Park, Stuston Road, Diss, Norfolk, IP22 4JB.
3. Sandy Lane Park, Mill Lane, Thorpe next to Haddiscoe, Norfolk, NR146PX.
4. Tower Hill Caravan Site, Tower Hill Park, Costessey, Norfolk

Appendix Two – South Norfolk Mobile Homes Fees and Charges Policy

Mobile Homes Fees and Charges Policy

Mobile Home Act 2013

**The Mobile Homes (Requirement for Manager of Site to be Fit and
Proper Person) (England) Regulations 2020**

South Norfolk District Council

Housing Standards

Contents

Introduction

- 1. Purpose**
- 2. Scope of Policy**
- 3. Achieve Cost Recovery**
- 4. Reviewing Charges**

Fees and Charges Policy

Introduction

The Mobile Homes Act 2013 introduced new Duties and Powers for Local Authorities. Section 1 of the Act provides an opportunity for Councils to charge fees for some of these services.

New regulations, The Mobile Homes (Requirement for Manager of Site to be Fit and Proper Person) (England) Regulations 2020, provide certain duties and powers for the Authority. These include the requirement of assessment of Fit and Proper persons to manage relevant protected Mobile Homes Sites and a power to charge for this additional service.

Guidance from the DCLG 'The Mobile Homes Act 2013 - A Guide for Local Authorities on Setting Site Licensing Fees' and from BEIS 'A guide to local authorities on setting fees for the fit and proper person test' details the parameters on which local authorities can charge.

Before setting any fee rates, there is a requirement that the Council must prepare and publish a fees policy. This Policy provides the frame work that the Council will use to implement the charging procedure.

1 Purpose

- 1.1 The policy establishes the principles for the charging for services provided by Housing Standards in accordance with procedures detailed in the Mobile Home Act 2013 (The Act) and The Mobile Homes (Requirement for Manager of Site to be Fit and Proper Person) (England) Regulations 2020. It aims to provide an accountable pricing structure for specific services to site owners.
- 1.2 The policy details the mechanisms that the Council will use when setting fees and charges for mobile home parks.

2 Scope of Policy

- 2.1 The Policy can only be used on protected sites as is detailed in the Act. Within this parameter, only sites that are used for business purposes will be eligible for the fee.
- 2.2 The Council must comply with all legal requirements for setting fees or charges and generating income from this procedure to ensure the Council is not exposed to the risk of legal challenge. Therefore the fees procedures detailed in this policy are coherent with the relative guidance. For Licence fees 'The Mobile Home Act 2013 - A Guide for Local Authorities' on setting site licensing fees' is applied. With regard to fees for the Fit and Proper Person Test the Council will adhere to the BEIS document "A guide to local authorities on setting fees for the fit and proper person test"

- 2.3 The fee structure is designed to have a fair and equitable reflection of costs relative to the level of resource required and details the fees for the following services:-
- Considering applications for the issue or transfer of a site licence;
 - Considering applications for altering conditions in a site licence and
 - Administration and monitoring of site licences.
 - Considering applications for fit and proper person test.
- 2.4 Where multiple sites exist within the same curtilage with a single licensee, the sites will be combined for the purpose of setting annual fee costs.
- 2.5 The licence fees will start in the financial year 2022/23 and will require payment at the beginning of that year. Licensees will then be charged annually. The Fit and Proper Person application fee will be initiated as from October 2021.

3 Achieve Cost Recovery

- 3.1 The structure of the Fees Policy is set to meet the cost of providing the service and is restricted to those coverable services detailed in the guidance. It is designed to have a fair and equitable reflection of costs relative to the level of resource required.
- 3.2 The costs are based on the officer time and associated management costs required to deliver the service and uses midrange points on the Councils pay scale to define officer and management costs. These costs will be adjusted each year in line with the Councils pay structure. The time taken for each service delivery is evaluated with respect to the size of the site and corresponding work load.
- 3.3 Appendix 1 details the services costed against time for the provision of new Licence applications. Table one below provides a total cost. These costs do not include travel which will be evaluated for the individual sites and added.

Table One Site Licence Costs

Number of Homes	Total Cost
0-3	£229.50
4-10	£253.80
11-50	£296.25
51+	£348.80

- 3.4 Appendix 2 details the services costed against time for the provision of a transfer of a licence. This is largely a desk top exercise as no site visit is required. The Cost is therefore constant across the types and size of sites and at current rates is set at £84.40.

- 3.5 Appendix 3 details the services costed against time for a variation of a licence. Again this is a singular cost as most variations are simplistic and relate to single issues such as the additional units and has been costed at £202.20. These costs do not include travel which will be evaluated for the individual sites and added.
- 3.6 Appendix 4 details the service cost against time for the annual fee procedure. These are based on an annual inspection process. However, as this is a risk based approach, Appendix 5 details how the annual cost is divided by the period of inspection which is linked to the risk rating. These costs do not include travel which will be evaluated for the individual sites and added.
- 3.7 Appendix 6 details the services costed against time for the Fit and Proper Person application procedure. This is largely a desktop exercise in considering each application and therefore is a singular cost set at £270.24. These costs do not include travel which will be evaluated for the individual sites and added if required.

4. Reviewing Charges

- 4.1 This fee policy is based on minimal charges for the mobile home function. The risk based approach ensures that sites will not be over charged for the services. There will be a presumption that charges will be increased annually in line with the council's pay review and corresponding midpoint pay scale.
- 4.2 It may be that costs through variant circumstances are increased in a single year for a particular site. In this case the guidance allows for the increase in the following year to compensate. Therefore the charges will be reviewed annually to ensure the fee is relevant to the cost of providing the service for the individual sites.

Appendix 1 - Initial Application and Licence

Task	Officer	Rate	1-3	Cost	4-10	Cost	11-50	Cost	51+	Cost
Initial enquiry	CEO	45.04	10	£ 7.51	15	£ 11.26	15	£ 11.26	15	£ 11.26
letter/telephone calls to make appointments and send out forms	CEO	45.04	35	£ 26.27	40	£ 30.03	50	£ 37.53	60	£ 45.04
updating hard files/computer system	CEO	45.04	25	£ 18.77	25	£ 18.77	25	£ 18.77	25	£ 18.77
processing licensing fee	CEO	45.04	25	£ 18.77	25	£ 18.77	25	£ 18.77	25	£ 18.77
Land reg check & fee	CEO	45.04	10	£ 7.51	15	£ 11.26	17	£ 12.76	20	£ 15.01
review necessary documents	CEO	45.04	25	£ 18.77	25	£ 18.77	25	£ 18.77	25	£ 18.77
site inspection at planning stage or immediately after	CEO	45.04	25	£ 18.77	25	£ 18.77	48	£ 35.77	60	£ 44.78
download photographs	CEO	45.04	10	£ 7.51	10	£ 7.51	15	£ 11.26	15	£ 11.26
preparing report on contraventions	CEO	45.04	10	£ 7.51	10	£ 7.51	15	£ 11.26	20	£ 15.01
preparing draft and final licences	CEO	45.04	20	£ 15.01	23	£ 17.34	25	£ 18.77	40	£ 30.03
review with manager	CEO	45.04	16	£ 11.81	20	£ 15.01	20	£ 15.01	20	£ 15.01
updating public register	CEO	45.04	10	£ 7.51	10	£ 7.51	15	£ 11.26	10	£ 7.51
second visit following issue of new licence.	CEO	45.04	15	£ 11.26	20	£ 15.01	25	£ 18.77	45	£ 33.78
carry out risk assessment	CEO	45.04	10	£ 7.51	15	£ 11.26	15	£ 11.26	25	£ 18.77
reviews of decisions or defending an appeal	CEO	45.04	60	£ 45.04	60	£ 45.04	60	£ 45.04	60	£ 45.04
				£229.50		£253.80		£296.25		£348.80

Appendix 2 - Licence Transfer (Desktop Procedure)

Task	Officer	Time	Rate	Cost
Initial enquiry to transfer	CEO	5	45.04	3.75
Post application form	CEO	10	45.04	7.51
Application received - check correct forms, fee etc. received	CEO	30	45.04	22.52
Review application details	CEO	20	45.04	15.01
Determine app & issue licence	CEO	32	45.04	24.34
			45.04	
Update Flare	CEO	15	45.04	11.26
				£84.40

Appendix 3 - Amending Conditions.

Task	Officer	Time	Rate	Cost
Initial enquiry to amend	CEO	5	£45.04	£3.75
post application form	CEO	15	£45.04	£11.26
application received	CEO	30	£45.04	£22.52
Review application details	CEO	30	£45.04	£22.52
site inspection Inc. traveling time	CEO	45	£45.04	£33.78
Determine app, third party consultation	CEO	45	£45.04	£33.78
consult with manager and draft licence	CEO	54	£45.04	£40.81
consult with site owner and issue licence	CEO	30	£45.04	£22.52
Update Flare and public register	CEO	15	£45.04	£11.26
				£202.20

Appendix 4 – Service Costs.

Task	Officer	Rate	A <3 Time	Cost	B(3-10)	Cost	C(11-50)	Cost	D(51-100)	Cost	E(100+)	Cost
Letter writing/telephone call to make appointment	CEO	£45.04	15	£ 11.26	15	£ 11.26	15	£ 11.26	15	£ 11.26	15	£ 11.26
handling enquiries and complaints	CEO	£45.04	30	£ 22.52	40	£ 30.03	55	£ 41.20	70	£ 52.55	84	£ 63.17
updating hard files and Flare	CEO	£45.04	28	£ 21.09	31	£ 23.23	32	£ 24.02	25	£ 18.77	30	£ 22.52
Processing the licence fee	CEO	£45.04	15	£11.26	30	£ 22.52	30	£ 22.52	30	£ 22.52	30	£ 22.52
reviewing necessary documents and certificates	CEO	£45.04	15	£11.26	30	£ 22.52	30	£ 22.52	45	£ 33.78	45	£ 33.78
downloading photographs	CEO	£45.04	10	£7.51	10	£ 7.51	10	£ 7.51	15	£ 11.26	15	£ 11.26
preparing report on contraventions	CEO	£45.04	27	£ 20.34	35	£26.27	60	£ 45.04	90	£ 67.56	100	£ 75.07
review with manager	CEO	£45.04	15	£11.26	10	£ 7.66	15	£ 11.26	15	£ 11.26	15	£ 11.26
carry out risk assessment	CEO	£45.04	15	£11.26	15	£ 11.26	25	£ 18.77	29	£ 1.42	30	£ 22.52
Pre-Programmed Full Site Inspection	CEO	£45.04	30	£22.52	35	£ 26.27	45	£ 33.78	70	£ 52.55	100	£ 75.07
Follow Up inspection to check compliance.	CEO	£45.04	20	£15.01	25	£18.77	40	£ 30.03	45	£ 33.78	45	£ 33.78
				£165.30		£207.30		£267.90		£336.70		£382.20

Appendix 5 - Risk Applied Service Costs.

risk rate	severe	high	medium	low
inspection interval	1	2	3	5
<3	£165.30	£82.90	£55.10	£33.35
small (3-10)	£207.30	£103.65	£68.75	£41.45
medium (11-50)	£267.90	£133.95	£88.95	
Large (51-100)	£336.70	£168.85		
Extra Large (101+)	£382.20	£191.10		

Appendix 6 - Fit and Proper Person Application.

Detail	Minutes
Initial enquiries;	15
letter writing/ telephone calls etc. to make appointments and requesting any documents or other information from the site owner or from any third party in connection with the application process;	30
sending out forms;	10
updating files/ computer systems and websites;	20
processing the application fee;	20
land registry searches;	15
time for reviewing necessary documents certificates;	30
preparing preliminary and final decision notices;	60
review by manager or lawyers of applications, representations made by applicants or responses from third parties;	60
updating the public register;	10
carrying out any risk assessment process considered necessary;	30
reviews of decisions or in defending appeals.	60
Total	360

Total cost at Officer rate of 45.04 = £270.24

Independent Living Assistance Policy

Report Author(s): Louise Simmonds
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Portfolio: Better Lives

Ward(s) Affected: All Wards

Purpose of the Report:

This report sets out how the Integrated Housing Adaptations Team, (IHAT), proposes to assist vulnerable residents of all ages throughout the district of South Norfolk. Enhancing our existing grant assistance, with the introduction of innovative and preventative approaches, will further integrate our housing, health, and social care work, and provide a refreshed approach to using Disabled Facilities Grant, (DFG), funding more effectively.

Residents will be enabled to remain living independent and resilient, whilst preventing, delaying, or reducing more costly demand on acute services. Broadening the range of options to assist our residents will reduce the continued cycle of permanent adaptations.

Recommendations:

The committee to recommend to Cabinet:

1. The proposed 'Independent Living Assistance Policy'.
2. A revised Care and Repair fees procedure.
3. Options for a revised Land Charges procedure.

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report proposes to enhance the service of the Integrated Housing Adaptations Team, (IHAT). The proposed 'Independent Living Assistance Policy', (see Appendix 3), builds on grants already in place, both mandatory, (the DFG), and discretionary, (Gaining Independence Grant and Forget Me Not Grant), introducing new grant assistance and interventions to provide

support for vulnerable residents. It aims to prevent accidents, ill health and minimise care costs, hospital admissions and a deterioration in independence and quality of life.

- 1.2 This proposal is the first phase into exploring further transformation from an 'adaptations'-based service to a 'maintaining independence' service, focussing on policy. The team will continue to explore collaborative working with Adult Social Care, the NHS, and other partners to re-think the way we support independence and helping people remain active and independent for longer. New procedures will utilise resources differently, promote efficient use of adapted properties and reduce the cycle of adaption. Work is underway on practice and process, which will be reported on separately, as required. This policy will lay the foundations for improved practice and process.

2. Background

- 2.1 Activity within this report and the proposed 'Independent Living Assistance Policy' is underpinned by legislation relating to the council's statutory housing duties under the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996. Local housing authorities have a statutory duty to provide grant aid to elderly, disabled and vulnerable residents, where a need has been identified, for a range of adaptations to their home.
- 2.2 The Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance England and Wales) Order 2002, (RRO), enabled councils to provide, through a policy decision, a wide variety of further discretionary assistance to residents beyond the above-mentioned statutory duty. The RRO can be used to create simplified assistance schemes, avoiding the complex DFG process, and reducing demand on valuable Occupational Therapist resource.
- 2.3 Since 2015 the DFG allocation from Central Government to district authorities has been integrated into the Better Care Fund, (BCF), in recognition of the crucial role of home adaptations to help enable people of all ages to live safely and independently at home for longer. The Better Care Fund Policy Framework requires the ring fenced DFG element of the BCF to be passed to Housing Authorities in full, unless otherwise agreed. Joint plans are developed with Norfolk County Council and the Norfolk & Waveney Clinical Commissioning Group to focus on the four national priorities of the BCF - delayed transfers of care/hospital discharge, non-elective admissions, (general and acute), admissions to residential and care homes and effectiveness of re-ablement.
- 2.4 The current locality plan for South Norfolk Council 2021-22 can be found in Appendix 1.
- 2.5 In a letter to Local Authority Chief Executives, dated 4th May 2021, (see Appendix 2), the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, (MHCLG), announced a budget of £573 million from the Department of Health and Social Care for the Disabled Facility Grant in 2021-22. The letter praised excellent work undertaken by local authorities delivering "*much needed*

adaptations during these difficult and testing times". Importantly, the MHCLG letter confirmed DFG capital funding may also be used for wider social care projects. The letter signposted the Regulatory Reform Order (2002) and encouraged the uptake of locally published RRO policies.

- 2.6 The proposed 'Independent Living Assistance Policy' will result in a revised Locality plan for South Norfolk integrated into BCF arrangements. The proposed discretionary grant and assistance schemes have been informally discussed with colleagues at Norfolk County Council who complimented the range and clarity of proposed assistance and encouraged its implementation and use as an example of good practice. As such, any new policy approved by Cabinet will update the Council's Locality Plan with immediate effect.
- 2.7 The grant assistance and support packages suggested in this report and policy incorporate the five County wide IHAT objectives - to reduce waiting times, improve the customer journey, improve the management of adaptations, reduce operating costs, and improve consistent delivery.

3 Current position/findings

- 3.1 The team face increasing demand from residents of all ages, with mental health, serious illness, and care issues, as well as older and frail residents, who are seeking more innovative solutions than are currently available.
- 3.2 The South Norfolk Care and Repair service is a chargeable service to help residents with grant applications, check entitlements for benefits and oversee grant eligible adaptation work. The fee for this service is 15% of the total cost of adaptation work. The fee is in line with the sector and is typically included within and paid for via grant funding. For Saffron properties, the care and repair fee is currently capped at 10%, which is the only housing provider in South Norfolk who benefits from these cap. The fee is used to supplement our service with discretionary items and to provide a comprehensive service and reduce waiting times in the face of shortfalls in Occupational Therapist capacity.
- 3.3 Legislation provides the Council an opportunity to place a land charge of up to £10,000 for grant values between £5,000 and £15,000, that is valid for 10 years on owner occupiers. The land charge procedure is a widely used across the Country and is considered standard practice for larger grants. The aim of the charge is to place an emphasis on the individual and family on the cost of adaptation, reducing unnecessary relocation following an adaption. Currently land charges are only added to a property where there has been capital value is added to the property, e.g. an extension.

4. Proposed action

- 4.1 To implement the 'Independent Living Assistance Policy', which includes the existing Independent Living assistance, with refinements, in addition to the introduction of new assistance packages. (see Appendix 1 and 2 of the policy document).

- 4.2 To set the fee at 15% for all care and repair service involvement regardless of property tenure and to provide for consistency to all Housing Associations. This will ensure consistency across all our housing providers both, social and private and help deter the cycle of adaptations currently in South Norfolk, without putting a financial barrier in place. South Norfolk Council already benefit from considerable income from the DFG fee (around 85%), and therefore increasing Saffron fee will add a negligible increase to our income stream. However, any additional income will enable the team to continue to protect the services it provides and fund additional discretionary assistance beyond that.
- 4.3 To introduce a land charge procedure of up to £10,000 for all DFG's and Gaining Independence Grant's in the case of owner occupiers, where the grant exceeds £5,000. This would be in conformance with The Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996: Disabled Facilities Grant (Conditions relating to approval or payment of Grant) General Consent 2008. This creates the benefit of incentivising residents to think about the cost of adaptation, reducing the cycle of adaptations, and recouping additional funds if the property is sold early, thus providing a small addition income.

5 Other options

- 5.1 The council could decide not to introduce the new 'Independent Living Assistance Policy' and remain with the existing DFG, Gaining Independence Grant and Forget Me Not Grant. The range of adaptation work able to be completed using a Gaining Independence Grant would be restricted by the existing £8,000 limit.

6 Issues and risks

6.1 Resource Implications

- 6.1.1 The capital spend on this policy will be limited to the finance provided by the MHCLG through the Better Care Fund. The proposed additional services will be financed using the increase in annual allocation South Norfolk Council has received over the previous financial year. In 2020-21 South Norfolk Council IHAT received a DFG budget of £912,547 and in 2021-22 received £1,035,425. The increase in budget totalling £122,878, is intended to be allocated to grants and assistance detailed in the new policy. Any extension of expenditure beyond the £122,878 will require approval from the Assistant Director for People and Places in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Better Lives.
- 6.1.2 For future delivery, expenditure levels beyond mandatory DFG's will be agreed with the Assistant Director for People and Places and Portfolio Holder. All grants and assistance beyond the DFG will be subject to availability of funds in the relevant financial year. Careful monthly monitoring of grant expenditure will enable the IHAT to react accordingly to ensure best use of available finances.

6.1.3 There is a possibility that the annual DFG allocation may not be fully spent on traditional DFG adaptation work, particularly with uncertainties regarding continuing COVID-19 restrictions, contractor availability and building material supplies. Future consent from Norfolk County Council to carry forward funding may not be possible, and outstanding money may need to be returned. In such a scenario the opportunity to assist residents in other ways via the proposed new grant and assistance schemes provides greater opportunity to ensure the most effective use of the full budget.

6.1.4 Revenue will be met within existing resource and will be topped up by an increase in revenue from the 15% care and repair service fees and land charges applied. Delivery will be drawn from existing referral routes.

6.2 Legal Implications

6.2.1 In the case of owner occupiers, where the grant exceeds £5,000, a local land charge may be placed on the property limited to a maximum of £10,000 which will be required if the property is sold or otherwise disposed of within 10 years of completion of adaptation works. This is accepted and legal practice in relation to mandatory DFG's. The land charge procedure will be applied to the Gaining Impendence Grant discretionary assistance in the same manner as that applied to mandatory DFG's.

6.2.2 In accordance with the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002, all new discretionary grant and assistance schemes must be via an approved and published policy report.

6.3 Equality Implications – An Equalities Assessment is attached at Appendix 4.

6.4 Environmental Impact – None.

6.5 Crime and Disorder – will proposals impact upon crime and disorder? – No.

6.6 Risks – As detailed in item number 6 above.

7 Conclusion

7.1 The Council's current policy offer lacks the depth to meet the evolving needs of our residents. The proposed Independent Living Assistance Policy follows Government encouragement to introduce a RRO procedure to greater assist our residents in new and efficient ways. The options detailed in the policy are vital to the success of the Strategic and Delivery Plans. The policy will help to ensure the quality, suitability and sustainability of housing providing a home for residents to thrive.

8 Recommendations

The committee to recommend to Cabinet:

8.1 The proposed 'Independent Living Assistance Policy'.

8.2 A revised Care and Repair fees procedure.

8.3 Options for a revised Land Charges procedure.

Appendix 1 South Norfolk Council Locality Plan

Appendix 2 Letter from Housing with Care and Support Division

Appendix 3 South Norfolk Council Independent Living Assistance Policy

Appendix 4: Equalities and Communities Impact Assessment

Background papers – None

Appendix 1: South Norfolk Council Locality Plan

1 Introduction

This document shows the aims and proposals, for the use of the BCF Disabled Facilities Capital Grant allocation, for each of the 7 district councils providing the Disabled Facility Grants in Norfolk. The housing and home improvement teams providing this service contribute significantly to the health and wellbeing of communities and prevent, reduce, or delay the need for major interventions from health or social care. The increase in the BCF allocation for DFG over the last few years has meant that the teams across Norfolk have helped more people to remain living safely and independently at home. The interventions made also contribute to the better care fund metrics such as:

1. Non-elective admissions
2. Admissions to residential care homes
3. Effectiveness of re-ablement
4. Delayed transfer of care/discharge to assess

2 Document Overview

This document details the planned activity by all 7 districts in Norfolk for the year 2021-2022.

The document consists of 3 sections the first section shows an overview of the planned activity for each district. The next section contains a table for each district showing the grants available and a brief description of what the grant covers and whether it contributes to Living Well (prevention), Maintaining Independence (early intervention) or Re-ablement at Home. Finally, there is a summary table showing what grants are available in each district.

3 Overview of Planned Activity.

This section gives an overview of planned activity for each district

South Norfolk Council BCF/DFG Allocation £1,035,425

Planned activity for 2021/22

1. This is being reviewed currently and further assistance may be added later in this financial year. The assistance currently being provided is shown below:
 - a. DFGs of up to £30,000 for appropriate and necessary adaptations which are reasonable and practicable.
2. Reduce the time it takes to deliver adaptations. Adaptations provided through DFG's have been proven to delay admission to residential care for an average of 4 years and to reduce the amount of formal and informal domiciliary care required. The sooner such adaptations are provided the better in terms of this preventative effect. We aim to reduce the end to end times for Disabled Facilities Grant aided adaptations to 140 days. Prior to COVID progress had been made and applicants were generally seen quicker. We aim to get back to assessing quickly and will continue to analyse the process and identify time efficiencies that can be implemented.
 - a. The District Direct Hospital Discharge Grant (max £3000) is intended to assist our residents who are able to return home from hospital but are prevented from doing so because there are factors at their home (that can be speedily remedied), that prevent them from doing so.
 - b. Handyperson Scheme providing Handrails*, Smoke alarms*, Key safes*, Small Accessibility and Safety works (e.g. prevention of slips and falls), Basic Home Improvements (e.g. minor furniture repairs).
*The service may be free or subsidised for those who meet the qualifying criteria.
 - c. **Social Prescribing** – Working through South Norfolk's GP practices, Community Connectors help people address underlying issues early through linking into services within the community rather than continuing to use clinical or medical services4
Grants Available

4 Grants Available

The following tables show the grants available and a brief description of what the grant covers. The columns that the grant covers shows whether it contributes to Living Well (prevention), Maintaining Independence (early intervention) or Reablement at Home.

South Norfolk Council – Activity and Interventions

Living Well (prevention)	Maintaining Independence (early intervention)	Re-ablement at home
Disabled Facilities Grants Grant funded (up to £30,000) home adaptations recommended by an Occupational Therapist.		
Handyperson scheme •Handrails* •Smoke alarms* •Key safes* •Small Accessibility and Safety works (e.g. prevention of slips and falls) •Basic Home Improvements (e.g. minor furniture repairs). *The service may be free or subsidised for those who meet the qualifying criteria.	District Direct Hospital Discharge Grant (max £3000) This grant is intended to assist our residents who are able to return home from hospital but are prevented from doing so because there are factors at their home (that can be speedily remedied), that prevent them from doing so.	
Warm Homes Fund Delivery of the warm home fund funding to South Norfolk residents	I'm Going Home Grant I'm Going Home grant offers onward support for a short period of time. The patient is supported by a range of services working closely to ensure the patient reaches a point where they can remain at home without the further need for care and support or with a care and support package. The package can also be used for palliative purposes. This can include key safe, temporary stairlift hire, temporary ramps, short-term community alarm and further offers of support in the community.	
Dementia Grant Grant provided by contributing to and accessing the county wide Forget me Not grant procedure		
Social Prescribing Working through South Norfolk's GP practices, Community Connectors help people address underlying issues early through linking into services within the community rather than continuing to use clinical or medical services		

Below is a summary table showing discretionary grants/services available from the information in the previous sections.

	Breckland	Broadland	Great Yarmouth	North Norfolk	Norwich	South Norfolk	West Norfolk
Discretionary DFG Grant	yes	no	no	no	no	yes	yes
Fast Track Hospital Discharge Pathway	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
prevention/Low Level Adaptations Grant	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes
DFG contribution Top-up Grant/loan	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	no	yes
DFG over £30K Top-up grant/loan	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	no	yes
Heating upgrade grant	yes	yes	yes#	no	yes	yes	yes
Means tested Architect Grant	no	yes	no	no	yes*	no	no
Hospital Discharge Grant	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes
Hospital Discharge/admission prevention Pack	no	no	yes	no	no	yes	yes
Social Prescribing/Advice service	yes	no	yes	no	yes	yes	yes
Relocation Grant	yes	yes**	yes##	yes**	yes	yes**	yes
Handyman Service	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes
Dementia Grant	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Enabling Carers Adaptation Grant	no	no	no	no	yes	no	no
HIA Service	no	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes
District Direct Service	no	no	yes	no	no	yes	yes
Discretionary Emergency Repair Grant/Loan	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	no	yes

*Norwich home improvement team provides a full in-house architectural service FOC included in the agency service

** The Norfolk and Waveney Equity Share scheme is available for all districts to use as and when funds allow.

Great Yarmouth provides a top up to Warm Homes Fund

Through the Norfolk and Waveney Equity Scheme administered by Great Yarmouth Borough Council

Appendix 2 Letter from Housing with Care and Support Division

Cathy Page
Deputy Director,
Housing with Care
and Support
Division
Fry Building 2
Marsham Street
London SW1P 4DF

04 May 2021

To Local Authority Chief Executives in:

1. Unitary Authorities
2. Metropolitan Borough Councils
3. County Councils
4. London Boroughs (including the City of London)

CC: District Councils

CC: Foundations, National Body for Home Improvement Agencies

£573 million for the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) in 2021-22

Dear Local Authority Chief Executives,

Following the Chancellor's announcement of £573 million for the DFG at Spending Review 2020, I am pleased to inform you that 2021-22 allocations have been confirmed to us by the Department of Health and Social Care. I would also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the continued excellent work by local authorities to deliver these much-needed adaptations during these difficult and testing times.

Confirmation of this £573 million for the DFG in 2021-22 represents a 61% increase in funding for home adaptations since 2015, and Government remains committed to helping older and disabled people to live as independently as possible in their own homes. As in previous years, we intend to make these payments to local authorities in England in May, and details of each local authority's allocation can be found in **Annex B**. This also specifies the amounts which Tier 1 authorities must pay to each district council in their areas, unless otherwise agreed.

As you know, the DFG is capital funding for the provision of home adaptations to help older and disabled people to live as independently and safely as possible in their homes. Where agreed locally (and in two-tier areas with the express agreement of district councils), a portion of the grant may also be used for wider social care capital projects. A grant determination letter outlining the conditions of grant usage will be issued to local authorities to coincide with the payments being made.

In two-tier areas the main DFG funding will be paid to the Tier 1 authorities (county councils), while the statutory duty to provide adaptations to the homes of those eligible people who qualify, continues to sit with Tier 2 local housing authorities (district councils). I can confirm that, building on the approach taken in previous years, each area should allocate DFG funding primarily for the provision of home adaptations, and in two-tier areas, unless specific agreement is given by any district council, Tier 1 authorities must pass down the DFG funding to their district councils in full, and in a timely manner, to enable the districts to continue to meet their statutory duty. Since 2015 the DFG has been part of the Better Care Fund (BCF) in recognition of the crucial role home adaptations can play in supporting the integration of housing, health and social care to help enable people of all ages to live safely and independently at home for longer. Each BCF plan should consider the contribution that can be made by the DFG. Further details will be set out in the BCF Policy Framework for 2021-22, which will be published shortly.

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government would also like to draw your attention to Foundations, who are funded by this department. Foundations is the National Body for Home Improvement Agencies and it is working closely with local authorities to help them deal with the challenge of delivering adaptations in the current climate, and they are on hand to help where needed. More information can be found at: <https://wwwFOUNDATIONS.uk.com/>.

Finally, I would like to signpost the Regulatory Reform Order (2002) to local authorities to encourage uptake of locally published RROs. At present, over 93% of authorities have a locally published RRO policy, but we would like to see this rise to 100% uptake. The RRO gives local housing authorities power to assist individuals with renewals, repairs, and adaptations in their homes through grants or loans, subject to the adoption and publication of a policy for provision of assistance under the RRO. For example, it can provide authorities with power to fund essential repairs to reduce injury and accidents in the home, to ensure homes are adequately heated, and to expand the scope of adaptations available under the DFG legislation. Local authorities can also use the RRO to create assistance schemes which help people meet their needs without going through the full DFG process. Schemes such as these can, for example, provide 'fast track' mechanisms for low level adaptations, which do not require a full social care assessment or means test. If your authority is interested in adopting and publishing a local RRO policy, please contact Foundations for help and assistance.

If you have any general questions about your authority's DFG funding in 2021-22 please send them to Disabled.facilitiesgrants@communities.gov.uk.

Regards,



**Deputy Director
Housing with Care and Support**

Annex A

THE DISABLED FACILITIES CAPITAL GRANT (DFG) DETERMINATION 2021-22 [31/5515]

The Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Rough Sleeping and Housing) ("the Minister") in exercise of the powers conferred by section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003 hereby makes the following determination:

Citation

1. This Determination may be cited as the Disabled Facilities Capital Grant Determination (2021-22) **[31/5515]**.

Purpose of the grant

2. The purpose of this grant is to provide support to local authorities in England towards capital expenditure lawfully incurred or to be incurred by them.

Determination

3. The Minister determines as the Tier 1 authorities, unitary authorities and London Boroughs to which grant is to be paid and the amount of grant to be paid, the authorities and the amounts set out in **Annex B** to this determination.

Grant conditions

4. Pursuant to section 31(4) of the Local Government Act 2003, the Minister of State determines that the grant will be paid subject to the conditions set out below.

Treasury consent

5. Before making this determination in relation to local authorities in England, the Minister obtained the consent of the Treasury.

Signed by authority of the **Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Rough Sleeping and Housing)**



Cathy Page
Deputy Director
Housing with Care and Support
2021

04 May

GRANT CONDITIONS

1. Grant paid to a local authority under this determination may be used only for the purposes of meeting capital expenditure and as provided for in paragraphs 2 to 5 below.

2. Grant paid under this determination must be spent in accordance with a Better Care Fund (BCF) spending plan jointly agreed between the relevant local authority or local authorities and the relevant Clinical Commissioning Groups. This plan must be developed in keeping with the 2021-22 BCF Policy Framework and BCF Planning Guidance (which provides specific guidance on the DFG) which will be published shortly.

3. In two-tier authority areas each Tier 1 authority must pay the amounts specified in **Annex B** below as allocated to the named Tier 2 authorities in their area to those authorities in full **no later than 30 June 2021**, subject to paragraph 4.

4. A Tier 1 authority may retain part or all of an amount specified in **Annex B** below as allocated to a Tier 2 authority in their area if the relevant Tier 2 authority has expressly agreed, in accordance with National Condition 1, that the money is to be used for other social care capital projects.

5. Any money paid under this grant determination must only be used for the specific purpose of funding adaptations for disabled people who qualify for a Disabled Facilities Grant made under the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 or under the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) Order 2002 (or any other social care capital projects where otherwise agreed as above).

6. The Chief Executive or Chief Internal Auditor of each of the recipient payment authorities (London Boroughs, Unitary Authorities and Tier 1 Authorities) are required to sign and return to Disabled.facilitiesgrants@communities.gov.uk at the Housing with Care Support Division of the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government a declaration, **to be received no later than 31st October 2022**, in the following terms:

“To the best of our knowledge and belief, and having carried out appropriate investigations and checks, in our opinion, in all significant respects, the conditions attached to the **Disabled Facilities Capital Grant Determination (2021-22) No [31/5515]** have been complied with”.

7. If an authority fails to comply with any of the conditions and requirements of paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6 the Minister of State may-

a) reduce, suspend, or withhold grant; or

b) by notification in writing to the authority, require the repayment of the whole or any part of the grant.

8. Any sum notified by the Minister of State under paragraph 7(b) shall immediately become repayable to the Minister.

Annex B: DISABLED FACILITIES GRANT ALLOCATIONS 2021-22

Norfolk	£9,157,782
Breckland	£1,329,644
Broadland	£1,013,705
Great Yarmouth	£1,348,045
King's Lynn and West Norfolk	£1,782,807
North Norfolk	£1,354,615
Norwich	£1,293,541
South Norfolk	£1,035,425

Appendix 3 South Norfolk Council Independent Living Policy



Independent Living Assistance Policy

Contents

- 1 Introduction**
 - 1.1 Policy Statement**
 - 1.2 Policy Principles**
 - 1.2.1 Strategic Priority**
 - 1.2.2 Disabled Facilities Grant**
 - 1.2.3 The Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance England and Wales) Order 2002.**
 - 1.2.4 Better Care Fund Locality Plan**
 - 1.2.5 Policy Aims**
- 2 Adaptations, Residential Support and The Integrated Approach**
 - 2.1 Integrated Housing Adaptation Team**
 - 2.2 Home Improvement Agency, (HIA), Officers**
 - 2.3 Current Procedure**
 - 2.3.1 Gaining Independence Grants**
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 - 2.3.3 Care and Repair Fee**
- 3 New Procedures**
 - 3.1 Delivery Development**
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 - 3.2.1 Local Land Charge**
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 - 4.1 Financial Management**
 - 4.2 Income Generation**
- 5 Service Delivery and Development**
- 6 Monitoring Key Outcomes**

6.1 Objectives

6.2 management and review of service

7 Customer Feedback

Appendix 1 Grant and Assistance

Appendix 2 Summary of Grant provision

1 Introduction

1.1 Policy Statement

The Independent Living Assistance Policy considers the health and wellbeing of residents and combines traditional procedures with new innovative assistance, support, and action for residents of the council. The Policy includes, both mandatory and discretionary processes. The policy will help to ensure the quality and suitability of housing and ensure accommodation meets resident's needs, allowing vulnerable residents to retain or regain their independence, sustain their health and wellbeing, and provide a base from which to thrive.

The Disabled Facilities Grant, (DFG), is a time-tested approach that has demonstrated considerable success in promoting independent living for eligible applicants. This policy enhances the services of the Integrated Housing Adaptations Team, (IHAT), that already deliver a successful DFG program. It introduces increased opportunities to help vulnerable residents, focussing on early intervention, prevention, and enablement through a range of facilities, equipment, services, and financial assistance alongside traditional home adaptations. The approach builds the efficiency and consistency in service delivery and provides new focussed ways of helping residents to remain safely in their home longer, beyond the scope of the DFG in an ambitious preventative program. It aims to prevent accidents, ill health and minimise care costs, hospital admissions and a deterioration in independence and quality of life.

Importantly, the policy follows Government intentions and clear encouragement to introduce an imaginative policy to greater assist our residents in new and efficient ways.

1.2 Policy Principles

1.2.1 Strategic Priority

The councils Strategic Plan, Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the Delivery Plan highlight the importance of housing and housing services in supporting older and or vulnerable people to maintain their independence. South Norfolk has a high percentage of residents aged over 65, (34,409 – 24.1%), compared to the national average, (18.5%), and this is expected to rise to 50,890, (28.7%), by the year 2043*. The percentage of the population over the age of 85 is also higher than the national average and is projected to grow by an average of 5.4% in South Norfolk and Broadland by 2043. This will result in an increase in age related conditions and disabilities and increases demand on a range of services and on the housing stock of the district. It requires housing services and provision to adapt to manage this demand.

**Data obtained from NorfolkInsight.org.uk, Norfolk County Council 2020*

There are direct links between poor housing and poor health particularly in older people, residents with disabilities or chronic illness and households with young children. South Norfolk Councils strategic plan is to create an aligned

team to work together to create the best place for everyone, now and for future generations. The delivery plan is to assist persons to maintain independence and live safe and well in their own home longer through early intervention, prevention and re-ablement and to avoid or defer more costly health / care costs.

1.2.2 Disabled Facilities Grants, (DFG's)

Local housing authorities have a statutory duty to provide means tested grant aid to disabled residents to promote independent living where a need has been identified, for a range of adaptations to their home. This known as a Disabled Facilities Grant, (DFG). Adaptations provided through DFG's have demonstrated delays to admission to residential care by an average of 4 years, a reduction in falls within the home and a reduction in the amount of formal and informal domiciliary care required. The activity is underpinned by legislation and as such is included in the Council's statutory housing duties using procedures detailed in the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996.

1.2.3 The Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance England and Wales) Order 2002.

The Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance England and Wales) Order 2002, was made under the Regulatory Reform Act 2001 and came into force on 18 July 2002. The Order provides local housing authorities with the opportunity to assist individuals with renewals, repairs, and adaptations in their homes through grants or loans, subject to the adoption and publication of a relevant policy. For example, it can provide authorities with power to fund essential repairs to reduce injury and accidents in the home, to ensure homes are adequately heated, and to expand the scope of adaptations available under the DFG legislation. Local authorities can also use the RRO to create simplified assistance schemes, avoiding the complex DFG process. Schemes such as these can, for example, provide 'fast track' mechanisms for low level adaptations, which do not require a full social care assessment or financial means test. This power to introduce additional discretionary schemes of assistance is not restricted, aside from the fact that authorities must have regard to guidance which sets out overarching principles such as the need to be fair and to:

- a) Give priority to the most vulnerable households.
- b) Ensure that applicants for loans are properly advised; and
- c) Take realistic account of people's ability to contribute, including to equity release loans.

At present, over 93% of authorities have a locally published RRO policy, but the MHCLG would like to see this rise to 100% uptake.

1.2.4 Better Care Fund Locality Plan

Since 2015 the DFG allocation from Central Government to district authorities has

been integrated into the Better Care Fund, (BCF), in recognition of the crucial role home adaptations can play in supporting the integration of housing, health, and social care to help enable people of all ages to live safely and independently at home for longer. For two tier authority areas, the Integration and Better Care Fund Policy Framework requires the ring fenced DFG element of the BCF to be passed to Housing Authorities in full, unless otherwise agreed. Joint plans are developed with Norfolk County Council and the Clinical Commissioning Groups to focus on the four national priorities of the BCF which are:

- Delayed transfers of care/hospital discharge
- Non-elective admissions (general and acute)
- Admissions to residential and care homes
- Effectiveness of re-ablement.

Any additional grant beyond the DFG procedure, financed through the Housing Authorities allocation of funds from the Better Care Fund (BCF) is required to be spent in accordance with the BCF spending plan jointly agreed between Norfolk County Council and the Norfolk & Waveney Clinical Commissioning Group. Therefore a 'locality plan' must be developed in keeping with the Integration and BCF Policy Framework 2021/22 and most recent Planning Guidance, National Condition 1, ('Plans to be Jointly Agreed'), of which provides specific guidance on DFGs.

1.2.5 Policy Aims

This policy will enhance the current Councils current BCF Locality Plan with a range of packages that will be available to South Norfolk Council residents to supplement the procedure. The assistance aims to provide appropriate practical, cost-effective, and preventative advice and support to residents most at risk of losing their independence. New housing grant assistance and interventions are introduced, focussing on:

- Maintaining independence, (early intervention).
- Living well, (prevention), and
- Re-ablement at home.

The policy considers the health and wellbeing of residents and brings together all forms of grant, support, and action available to the Council, both mandatory and discretionary. As well as a reactive tool to resident's needs, the policy introduces innovative and preventative approaches and assistance to maximise the opportunity for people to remain safely in their home longer and to prevent or minimise care costs, hospital admissions and a deterioration in independence and quality of life.

Assistance and support detailed in this policy will incorporate the following five county wide IHAT objectives:

1. Reduce waiting times.

2. Improve the customer journey.
3. Improve the management of construction /adaptations.
4. Reduce operating costs and
5. Improve consistent delivery.

To ensure that the assistance given is targeted effectively, councils have the power to carry out tests of financial resources and to charge for any labour or materials they provide, should they wish to do so. They have the power to set the conditions under which any financial assistance should be repaid and the period over which those conditions should apply. Where they chose to give a loan or to attach conditions to a grant or loan, councils have the power to waive any requirement to repay it or to reduce the amount they require to be repaid.

Using these powers, the Council has introduced a range of new grant assistance scheme. A summary of existing and proposed new grants and assistance is detailed in Appendices 1 and 2.

2 Adaptations, Residential Support, and the Integrated Approach

2.1 Integrated Housing Adaptation Team

For a DFG to proceed an assessment of need is required. The assessment details eligible works for financial assistance to adapt the property. The legislation details that District Authorities liaise with Social Services and as a result, accepted practice is for Occupational Therapists to provide or supervise these assessments.

To achieve fluidity, Adult Social Care staff, (Occupational Therapists and Assistant Practitioners), from Norfolk County Council, are co-located within the Housing Standards team. Working alongside South Norfolk Council officers Occupational Therapists and Assistant Practitioners form the Integrated Housing Adaption Team, (IHAT). The process ensures that residents' eligible needs are met, and the most appropriate adaptations are made to their home.

2.2 Home Improvement Agency, (HIA), Officers

HIA officers are employed by the Council and based within the Housing Standards Team. HIA officers offer a Care and Repair service aimed at older or vulnerable people to enable them to remain living independently in their own home.

The Care and Repair service offers bespoke advice and support, linking clients to independent advice and financial help to deal with repairs, improvement, and adaptation needs. The officers help residents with grant applications, check entitlements for benefits and oversee grant eligible adaptation work. Care and Repair Officers and Technical Officers work with contractors to oversee adaptation work through to successful completion. Officers go above and beyond grant delivery to provide a holistic approach to ensure residents are safe and happy to live independently in their home for longer and often link with

local support services to enable residents wherever necessary. The process also lessens the risk of property deterioration and the risk of vulnerable persons being the victim of fraudulent surveys and rogue traders.

2.3 Current Procedure

2.3.1 Gaining Independence Grants

The DFG has been supplemented by a fast track grant using a discretionary procedure previously approved by the Council. This fast track service uses simplified methodology and eligibility to provide efficient grants for eligible residents. The Housing Standards team currently offers this assistance to elderly and vulnerable residents in need in the form of a 'Gaining Independence Grant'.

2.3.2 Forget Me Not Grants

Forget me not grants are available to South Norfolk residents via a Norfolk wide approach for small non means tested assisted for residents with dementia. They are designed for low level interventions and are capped at £500.

2.3.3 Care and Repair Fee

The South Norfolk Care and Repair service is a chargeable service to help residents with grant applications, check entitlements for benefits and oversee grant eligible adaptation work. No upfront costs are required as the charge is incorporated into the grant procedure. At present the fee is 15% or 10% dependant on the tenure of the property.

3 New Procedures

3.1 Delivery Development

To address the emerging preventative program, further promoting independence and to enhance the Councils contribution to Better Care Fund priorities the Council has introduced a range of assistance that are integrated into the Councils Better Care fund locality plan. The assistance will fast track procedures and address health priorities.

The Council will provide financial assistance where appropriate through a system of grants and incentives. The aims of this are:

- To remove people from hazards that present an immediate risk to their health.
- To adapt homes to make them suitable for people with disabilities.
- To enable people to maintain their independence.
- To improve the quality of the housing stock.

The new financial assistance available include:

- A revision of the Gaining Independence Grant.
- Assistive Technology Grant.
- Low Level Adaptation Grant.
- Maintenance Grant.
- Re-location Grant.
- Void Adapted Property Procedure.
- Fuel Poverty Grant.
- DFG Contribution Grant.
- Top-Up Grant.
- Get You Home Grant.
- Serious Illness Grant.
- Mental Health Grant.
- Carer Support Facility Grant.
- Architect Grant.
- Maintenance Grant.

The measures available in detail, including eligibility, is detailed in Appendix 1

Much of the new grant assistance was trialled when the Housing Standards team received additional funding from the MHCLG in January 2021. A temporary 'Vulnerable Assistance Project' introduced new grant schemes under a single project title for approval. The wide range of schemes was introduced to help the maximum number of residents as possible. A refined and simplified application procedure was used to make assistance as efficient as possible. These schemes proved to be successful and assisted many vulnerable residents in difficult situations.

The DFG and Forget Me Not Grant will remain as currently used.

In addition to the above, the council will continue to work in collaboration with partners to bid for external funding opportunities that will benefit our residents as and when they become available. For example, the Council has used the provisions of the Energy Company Obligation (ECO) Flexible Eligibility scheme to increase the number of residents who can benefit from energy efficiency improvements to their home through the ECO scheme.

3.2 Additional Measures

3.2.1 Land Charges

The Statutory Instrument, The Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996: Disabled Facilities Grant (Conditions relating to approval or payment of Grant) General Consent 2008, provides a power for a land charge of up to £10,000 for grant values between £5,000 and £15,000. Previously at South Norfolk Council its use has been limited. Land Charges will now be used on all

owner occupier properties using procedures detailed in the above statutory instrument. This is accepted legal practice in relation to mandatory DFG's.

In addition where a Gaining Independence Grant exceeds £5,000 a local land charge will be placed on the property limited to a maximum of £10,000 which will become due if the property is sold or otherwise disposed of within 10 years of completion of adaptation works. As such the land charge procedure will be applied to these discretionary Gaining Independence Grants in the same manner as that applied to mandatory DFG's.

3.2.2 Care and Repair Fee

The Care and Repair fee will now be set at 15% to all care and repair service involvement regardless of property tenure. This procedure will provide a consistency to all Housing Associations and other Landlords.

4 Resource

4.1 Financial Management

All new financial assistance detailed in Appendix 1 will be subject to availability of funds in the relevant financial year. Mandatory DFG's will remain the priority and all funding will be within existing resource. Delivery will be drawn from existing referral routes. The scope of the policy reflects this with a wide range of assistance to help as many residents as possible within these parameters.

The Council will allocate capital and revenue funding to support this policy and regularly review its budgets considering:

- The response to the Council's policy.
- Changing demand for different kinds of assistance.
- The need to change the priorities of initiatives and policies.

A monitoring procedure will be initiated by the Housing Standards Senior Manager in consultation with the Assistant Director and Portfolio Holder.

The budget and workflow will be closely monitored monthly to ensure sensible expenditure throughout the financial year.

There is a potential to overspend on new, additional grant assistance packages and to reduce the amount of funding available for traditional adaptation work, which remains a statutory duty to provide according to an identified need. However, the new assistance packages provide preventative ways of assisting residents as an alternative to always seeking the traditional and potentially more expensive adaptation work. This is an opportunity to assist residents in new, quick, and efficient ways within the limits of the annual budget.

The proposed additional services will be financed using the increase in annual DFG budget South Norfolk Council has received over the previous financial year. In 2020-21 South Norfolk Council IHAT received a DFG budget of

£912,547 and in 2021-21 received £1,035,425. The increase in budget totalling £122,878, is intended to be allocated to grants and assistance detailed in the new policy. Any extension beyond this sum will require approval from the Assistant Director for People and Place in consultation with the Portfolio Holder.

For delivery in future years expenditure beyond mandatory DFG's will be agreed with the Assistance Director for People and Place and Portfolio Holder. All grants and assistance beyond the DFG will be subject to availability of funds in the relevant financial year. Careful monthly monitoring of grant expenditure will enable the IHAT to react accordingly to ensure best use of available finances.

There is a possibility that the annual DFG allocation may not be fully spent on traditional DFG adaptation work, in such a scenario the opportunity to assist residents in other ways via the proposed new grant and assistance schemes provides greater opportunity to ensure the most effective use of the full budget. If it appears that the DFG budget is unlikely to be spent an increased amount can be allocated to new grant and assistance schemes in agreement with the Assistant Director and Portfolio Holder.

The budget and workflow will need to be closely monitored to ensure sensible expenditure throughout the financial year. Expenditure will be monitored monthly to react accordingly using the greater range of grant and assistance options available.

4.2 Income

As detailed in 3.2.1 the Council will use the powers detail in The Statutory Instrument, The Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996: Disabled Facilities Grant (Conditions relating to approval or payment of Grant) General Consent 2008. The Council will increase return via a local land charge to supplement the capital budget.

As detailed 3.2.2 in the Council will charge fees, where appropriate, for its Care and Repair services. The universal fee of 15% based on the cost of the works arranged on behalf of the client for the users of the Care & Repair Service will increase income. The Council will consider introducing charges to offset the cost of other services such as obtaining home maintenance advice services and home surveys etc. as the services become available.

5 Service Delivery and Development:

The Council will encourage property owners, landlords and residents to properly maintain their homes and where appropriate to do so, enable homes to be made suitable for those that need to regain or maintain their independence.

Services designed to stop a further decline in independence or that promote independent living skills must be balanced against the immediate needs of

residents and resolving existing housing problems, particularly those experienced by the most vulnerable.

Providing help to improve people's living conditions will be achieved through a combination of:

- Provision of a range of advice, guidance, and support services.
- Provision of means-tested financial assistance.
- The use of regulation or enforcement powers.
- Responding to opportunities to attract additional funding and resources to the area.

South Norfolk Council will continue to work in collaboration with partners to achieve the service objectives. The Council will work with Health and Social Care partner services to establish common assessment and referral pathways to ensure an effective multi-disciplinary approach.

6 Monitoring Key Outcomes:

6.1 Objectives

The Council undertakes to address the key objectives identified in the Strategic and Delivery plans. It has identified the measures that can be used to monitor its progress on each of these objectives. These measures sit within the following success indicators:

- The number of vulnerable people assisted to remain in their own homes following intervention.
- The number of properties adapted to meet the needs of disabled occupants.
- The number of homes where energy efficiency has been improved.

General measures of successful outcomes for our residents include improved social mobility outcomes achieved for our residents, an increase in the number of residents supported to be independent for longer, the prevention of falls and other accidents in the home, a reduction in care costs and a reduction in need for residential care.

6.2 Management and review of service

To ensure the services achieve the required outcomes and partners effectively contribute to the delivery of shared outcomes, activity in this policy will be underpinned by a set of shared governance arrangements.

South Norfolk Locality Better Care Fund activity and outcome performance will be presented to the People and Communities Directorate monthly at Dashboard meetings. It will be available at Corporate Management meetings, whenever required.

County IHAT Managers meetings monitor and evaluate performance and outcomes of the service at each of the seven local authorities throughout

Norfolk, comparing performance and sharing good practice. The group is currently reviewing local authority performance at each stage throughout the DFG process. The council will work with and align procedures and best practice accordingly. Monthly performance data is submitted to the County IHAT coordinator to continuously to monitor progress.

7 Customer Feedback:

- 7.1 The Council encourages feedback from users of our services and has an online feedback form on our website that can be accessed at.

<https://www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/zz-compliments-complaints-snc>

Clients are requested to sign completion certification upon satisfactory completion of work / assistance and before a grant is paid. Further customer feedback mechanisms will be introduced as the service is further reviewed.

Appendix 1 – Grants & assistance

1. DISABLED FACILITIES GRANT, (DFG):	
Purpose of assistance	Mandatory service for district tier authorities. To provide adaptations, equipment, and services to enable a person with a disability to live safely and independently in their own home.
Maximum Grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £30,000. The grant will be the difference between the applicants assessed contribution and the eligible costs up to a maximum grant of £30,000.
Eligible Persons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any disabled person, as described by the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996, s.100. Applicants can be property owners or tenants; some landlords may apply on behalf of tenants
Eligible Properties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A permanent and legal residence in South Norfolk Council district, including dwellings, mobile homes or caravans and houseboats.
Eligible Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum cost of works £750. Works that are essential for access, mobility around the home, personal care, bedroom, kitchen, safety, and services, as described in the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 s.23 Works must be necessary and appropriate to meet the needs of the disabled person; and Work must be reasonable and practicable to carry out having regard to the age and condition of the dwelling or building. Fees for costs and professional services in connection with the scheme. Cost of a five-year stair lift warranty. The Grant will be costed using a 2-quote procedure to ensure efficiency of delivery and best value. Alternatively, an agreed unit rate, (agreed price scheme), will be used for common adaptations.
Relevant Works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council will only consider funding an extension to a dwelling if the assessed need cannot be met by the provision of equipment and/or alterations to the property. The Council will only consider funding the provision of equipment and/or alterations to a dwelling if the assessed need cannot be met by re-organising the existing living space available in the property. The grant will only be available for the cost of works necessary for the adaptation and not to the wider fabric of the property. Grant will only be available towards the cost of works to meet the assessed needs of the disabled person.

Common parts or group repair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The reasonable sum or proportion relating to the applicant's liability.
Applicant Contribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applicants will be assessed for their ability to contribute to the scheme, the test of resources will be that as applied to the Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant rules as set out under the Housing Renewal Grant Regulations 1998 (as amended). Where the applicant has been determined as having a contribution to make to the works, that contribution will be deposited with the Council before the works commence.
Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The client needs assessment will be focussed on the immediate and foreseeable needs of the person to live as independently in their home as their condition will allow. Norfolk County Council will, based on assessments of the client in their home undertaken by suitably qualified assessors, be responsible for determining clients' needs. The Council shall only entertain applications accompanied by the relevant certificates of owner or tenant occupation. The Council shall only entertain applications accompanied by proof of ownership and/or owner's permission. In the case of owner occupiers, where the grant exceeds £5,000 a local land charge will be placed on the property limited to a maximum of £10,000 which will become due if the property is sold or otherwise disposed of within 10 years of completion of the works.

2. GAINING INDEPENDENCE GRANT (GIG):	
Purpose of assistance	<p>To provide adaptations to enable a person with a disability to live safely and independently in their own home.</p> <p>This is a streamlined disabled adaptation grant for where the works are of a smaller nature and the applicant is in receipt of specified benefits. It is intended as a fast track alternative to a DFG, not a replacement.</p>
Maximum Grant	£12,000
Eligible Persons	<p>Any disabled person, as described by the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 s.100, applicants can be property owners or tenants, some landlords may apply on behalf of tenants</p> <p>The person must be in receipt of one or more of the following passport benefits.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Income Support Pension Credit Guarantee Job Seekers Allowance (Income related) Employment Support Allowance (Income related) Housing Benefit

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council Tax Support (not including single person reduction) • Universal credit
Eligible Properties	A permanent and legal residence in South Norfolk Council district, including dwellings, mobile homes or caravans and houseboats.
Eligible Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum cost of works £750.00 • Works that are essential for access, personal care, bedroom, kitchen, safety, and services, as described in the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 s.23 • Works must be necessary and appropriate to meet the needs of the disabled person; and • Works must be reasonable and practicable to carry out having regard to the age and condition of the dwelling or building. • Cost of a five-year stair lift warranty • Fees for costs and professional services in connection with the scheme • The eligible costs will be determined by use of a contractor selected through a procurement process.
Relevant Works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council will only consider funding an extension to a dwelling if the assessed need cannot be met by the provision of equipment and/or alterations to the property. • The Council will only consider funding the provision of equipment and/or alterations to a dwelling if the assessed need cannot be met by re-organising the existing living space available in the property. • The grant will only be available for the cost of works necessary for the adaptation and not to the wider fabric of the property. • Grant will only be available towards the cost of works to meet the assessed needs of the eligible person.
Common parts or group repair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The reasonable sum or proportion relating to the applicant's liability
Applicant Contribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant will be responsible for the payment any non-eligible works undertaken at their request at the time the eligible works are undertaken.
Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The client needs assessment will be focus on the immediate and foreseeable needs of the person to live as independently in their home as their condition will allow. • Norfolk County Council will, based on assessments of the client in their home undertaken by suitably qualified assessors, be responsible for determining clients' needs. • The Council shall only entertain applications accompanied by the relevant certificates of owner or tenant occupation.

	<p>The Council shall only entertain applications accompanied by proof of ownership and/or owner's permission.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the case of owner occupiers, where the grant exceeds £5,000 a local land charge will be placed on the property limited to a maximum of £10,000 which will become due if the property is sold or otherwise disposed of within 10 years of completion of the works.
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3. FORGET ME NOT GRANT - funded by Norfolk County Council

Purpose of assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To assist people living with Dementia and those caring for them in the maintenance of a safe, decent, and warm home. • To prevent admission to, and aid discharge from hospital or residential care.
Maximum Grant	£500
Minimum cost of works	£0
Eligible Persons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diagnosis of Dementia or likely diagnosis of dementia • Not means tested.
Referral route	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GP • Primary care Workers • Community Care • Admiral Nursing Service • Self or family referral • Other
Eligible Properties	A permanent and legal residence in South Norfolk Council district.
Eligible Works	<p>Works will include small-scale works following an assessment of the property such as.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional lightning in the home • Decorating in such a way to provide contrast to the walls and skirting boards • Adding signage to rooms and cupboard doors • Removing and installing glass fronted cupboard doors • Fitting memory cues, photos frames to the wall, clocks, and notice boards • Essential repairs to remedy category one hazard • Essential minor improvements and adaptations • Home Safety and Security • Energy Efficiency measures where alternative home energy assistance is unavailable • Works to prevent unreasonable delay to the release of a patient from primary care

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works to prevent a relevant person being admitted to primary care
Delivery mechanism	<p>The Dementia Friendly Home is coordinated through the Care & Repair Home Improvement Agency.</p> <p>One quote only needed for work / equipment due to low level grant.</p>
Conditions	<p>Must have lived in the relevant property for 12 months at the time of the initial enquiry and intend to remain in occupation for 5 years</p> <p>The grant will not be used to effect repairs/works that are the responsibility of a private or social landlord.</p> <p>The grant will not be used to effect repairs/works/adaptations that can be funded through other means such as a Disabled Facilities Grant or GIG.</p>

4. LOW LEVEL GRANT:

Purpose of assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide small scale, non-complex and low-cost work, equipment, or maintenance repairs to enable an elderly, disabled or vulnerable person to live safely and independently in their own home. • Works intended to be undertaken by a suitably qualified handyperson or contracted partner. • This is a low level, (£0 - £750), streamlined disabled adaptation grant for where the works are of a smaller nature and the applicant is in receipt of specified benefits. It is intended as an alternative to a DFG or GIG, not a replacement, and the aim is that adaptation needs are completed within 50 working days of being identified. • Discretionary means tested grant. • Improve the health, wellbeing, and quality of life for vulnerable South Norfolk residents. • Referral route – Self referral, family members, Early Help Partners, GP, Hospital discharge team
Maximum Grant Minimum Grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £750 • £0
Eligible Persons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The cost of the service to residents will be in line with the handyperson fees set at that time or agreed contractor price. • Persons will be eligible for the discounted service if they are <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In receipt of a specified means tested benefit and ○ physically unable to carry out the works themselves (assessment of circumstances and long-term health conditions)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The person must be in receipt of the following benefits which will be checked on the councils benefit system at the time of request for works <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pension Credit Guarantee ○ Housing Benefit ○ Universal credit • Ability to undertake the works will be assessed by interview at the time of the request for works
Eligible Properties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A permanent and legal residence in South Norfolk council district, including dwellings, mobile homes or caravans and houseboats.
Eligible Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £750 maximum grant.
Relevant Works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key safes, hand / grab rails, minor repair, maintenance or adaptation work, smoke alarms, CO detector, clearance, or cleaning to enable adaptation work to commence, accessibility and Safety works. • Basic home improvements, (works which help independence). • The service will not undertake works that are the responsibility of a landlord.
Applicant Contribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Means tested grant. Applicants will be assessed for their ability to contribute to the scheme, the test of resources will be that as applied to the Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant rules as set out under the Housing Renewal Grant Regulations 1998 (as amended). • Where the applicant has been determined as having a contribution to make to the works, that contribution will be deposited with the Council before the works commence.
Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work will be focussed on the immediate needs of the person to live safely and independently in their home. • The Council shall only entertain applications accompanied by the relevant certificates of owner or tenant occupation. • The Council shall only entertain applications accompanied by proof of ownership and/or owner's permission.

5. ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY GRANT, (ATG):

Purpose of assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discretionary assistance beyond that currently provided by the County Council. • To provide equipment, technology, and services to enhance quality of life, prevent accidents in the home and enable a person with a disability to live safely and independently in their own home.
Maximum Grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £2,000. (Minimum grant: £0). Non means tested.

Eligible Persons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any disabled person, as described by the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996, s.100. Applicants can be property owners or tenants; some landlords may apply on behalf of tenants
Eligible Properties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A permanent and legal residence in South Norfolk Council district, including dwellings, mobile homes or caravans and houseboats.
Eligible Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technology, equipment, or services that are essential for access and mobility around the home, personal care, and safety, as described in the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 s.23 Assistive technology not already available via the Norfolk County Council Assistive Technology Team. Works must be necessary and appropriate to meet the needs of the disabled person; and Fees for costs and professional services in connection with the scheme. The eligible costs will be determined by competitive tendering in accordance with the councils standing orders or use of a contractor selected through a procurement process.
Relevant Works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alternative assistive technology, equipment, and services not already available via the Norfolk County Council Assistive Technology team. Innovative project working with in association with the University of East Anglia to trial new preventative technologies in homes. Grant will only be available towards the cost of technologies, equipment, and services to meet the assessed needs of the disabled person.
Applicant Contribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non means-tested grant.
Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The client needs assessment will be focussed on the immediate and foreseeable needs of the person to live as independently in their home as their condition will allow. Norfolk County Council will, based on assessments of the client in their home undertaken by suitably qualified assessors, be responsible for determining clients' needs. The Council shall only entertain applications accompanied by the relevant certificates of owner or tenant occupation. The Council shall only entertain applications accompanied by proof of ownership and/or owner's permission.

6. FUEL POVERTY GRANT:

Purpose of assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discretionary grant available for renovation / repair of structure and heating systems that will assist warmth and health in a home. To improve the health and wellbeing of residents by assisting households in fuel poverty and/or at
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	<p>risk from cold to access Energy Company Obligation (ECO) flexible funding to improve the energy efficiency of their homes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A preventative tool to enhance healthy living for vulnerable residents, • This additional grant will link in with the Warm Homes Fund offer and provide a holistic approach to address housing issues of disrepair and thermal resilience as well as poor heating. • Referral route – self-referrals, partners, ECO providers.
Maximum Grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £8,000. • For tenanted residents, the grant will only be related to items beyond that which could be achieved through enforcement procedures, (that tend to be a minimum standard).
Eligible Persons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicants can be property owners or tenants; some landlords may apply on behalf of tenants. • Financial eligibility will require correlation with the Councils Eco Flex statement of intent and /or a means test benefit. This will need to be combined with a health or care requirement. For care, the minimum eligibility would be those in receipt of attendance allowance. For the health condition element, those individuals receiving a health-related benefit. In addition, confirmation by a medical practitioner would be accepted. • Qualifying low-income benefits – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Housing benefit ○ Council tax reduction/support (but not where single occupancy discount is the only reduction) ○ Child tax credit - no income cap ○ Working tax credit – no income cap ○ Universal credit – no income cap • Person deemed vulnerable to cold – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Over 65 (living at the property) (birth certificate, passport, driving licence) ○ Pregnant woman (Mat B1 letter) ○ Child under 5 (birth certificate) ○ Health condition exacerbated by cold proved by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ letter from GP ▪ letter from hospital ▪ eligible for free flu jab for health reasons ▪ referral from a medical professional • Flexible funding eligibility will be determined by the Council who will refer eligible households to the appropriate ECO provider for survey and assessment. A referral will not guarantee the installation of measures.

Eligible Properties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A permanent and legal residence in South Norfolk Council district, including dwellings, mobile homes or caravans and houseboats. • A high-cost home - F or G rating on Energy Performance Certificate for the property (if available) or a score of 80 above property energy use assessment.
Eligible Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No minimum cost of works. • Fees for costs and professional services in connection with the scheme. • The eligible costs will be determined by competitive tendering in accordance with the councils standing orders or use of a contractor selected through a procurement process.
Relevant Works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works that are essential for repair or replacement of structure and heating systems to assist warmth and health in a home. E.g. replacement windows in living rooms and bedrooms and works to address structural dampness or the repair of poor-quality external doors. Or, if required a first-time heating system. • Works will be determined by the ECO provider considering the funding available and the energy saving that can be achieved. • Work must be reasonable and practicable to carry out having regard to the age and condition of the dwelling or building.
Common parts or group repair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The reasonable sum or proportion relating to the applicant's liability.
Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council shall only entertain applications accompanied by the relevant certificates of owner or tenant occupation. • The landlord's permission will be required before any measures will be installed in a privately rented property • The Council shall only entertain applications accompanied by proof of ownership and/or owner's permission.

7. DFG CONTRIBUTION GRANT:

Purpose of assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discretionary grant to remove the personal contribution as a result of the DFG mandatory means test by up to £5,000. For example, a £10,000 contribution would be reduced to £5,000. • The Contribution Grant will not be available to an applicant with £16,000 or over, available in a current or savings account. • The grant should reduce the number of applicants who cancel their applications due to their contribution being too high.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any contribution above £5,000 will be required to be paid by the applicant.
Maximum Grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £5,000. The grant will be the applicants assessed contribution up to a maximum grant of £8,000.
Eligible Persons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any disabled person, as described by the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996, s.100. Applicants can be property owners or tenants; some landlords may apply on behalf of tenants. Only available to applicants with under £16,000 in current account or savings account.
Eligible Properties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Same as for DFG.
Eligible Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Same as for DFG. Contribution grant linked to Approved DFG works.
Relevant Works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Same as for DFG
Applicant Contribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applicants contribution will be determined by the test of resources as applied to the Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant rules as set out under the Housing Renewal Grant Regulations 1998 (as amended). Where eligible the clients calculated contribution towards DFG work will be paid using the Contribution Grant, up to maximum of £5,000.
Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Same as for DFG.

8. DFG TOP UP GRANT:

Purpose of assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discretionary grant to provide a speedy resolution to applications where works are expected to exceed the DFG cap of £30,000. To provide a top up grant up to £10,000 that will be placed as a conditional 10-year charge on the land register property details. If the resident was to move or sell the property during this period, the grant would require repayment to the council. For Housing Association properties and rental properties, the top up grant will not generally be available, however should exceptional circumstances require, the grant can be provided without condition with the approval of the portfolio holder.
Maximum Grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £10,000.
Eligible Persons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any disabled person, as described by the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996, s.100. Applicants can be property owners or tenants; some landlords may apply on behalf of tenants

Eligible Properties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same as for DFG.
Eligible Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same as for DFG.
Relevant Works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same as for DFG.
Applicant Contribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same as for DFG.
Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same as for DFG.

9. GET YOU HOME GRANT:

Purpose of assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discretionary non means tested grant to pay for essential maintenance / repair works and / or essential capital purchases at residents' properties identified through the District Direct Service and other hospital referral routes.
Maximum Grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £5,000.
Eligible Persons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any person in hospital or discharged from hospital into a residential home or other care facility awaiting consent to return home.
Eligible Properties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A permanent and legal residence in South Norfolk Council district, including dwellings, mobile homes or caravans and houseboats.
Eligible Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £5,000 maximum grant.
Relevant Works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any repair or maintenance work to the structure of a property or equipment required to provide a safe and warm home for the resident to return to from hospital or care facility. Examples include installation of a level threshold door, safe access ramps, hand and grab rails, key safes, repairs to heating systems, etc.
Applicant Contribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non means tested grant.
Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same as for DFG.

10. SERIOUS ILLNESS GRANT:

Purpose of assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discretionary non means tested grant to provide adaptations, initiate repairs or improve thermal capacity of homes for all residents diagnosed with a terminal condition, as detailed by a medical practitioner. • This grant provides quick and straight forward financial assistance to seriously ill residents in need of adaptations and / or equipment to make their final stages in life at home as safe and comfortable as possible.
Maximum Grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £5,000.

Eligible Persons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any person diagnosed with a serious, (terminal), illness such as Motor Neurones Disease or a stage 4 cancer. Serious / terminal illness to be confirmed by a medical professional.
Eligible Properties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A permanent and legal residence in South Norfolk Council district, including dwellings, mobile homes or caravans and houseboats.
Eligible Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £5,000 maximum grant.
Relevant Works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any repair or maintenance work to the structure of a property or equipment required to provide a safe and warm home for the resident to return to from hospital or care facility. Examples include installation of a level threshold door, safe access ramps, hand and grab rails, key safes, repairs to heating systems, etc.
Applicant Contribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non means tested grant.
Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work / equipment will be focussed on the immediate needs of the person to live as safe and independently in their home as their condition will allow. The Council shall only entertain applications accompanied by the relevant certificates of owner or tenant occupation. The Council shall only entertain applications accompanied by proof of ownership and/or owner's permission.

11. MENTAL HEALTH GRANT:

Purpose of assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discretionary non means tested grant to help a resident who has diagnosed mental health problems and has lost control over the maintenance and structural repair of their property or its contents. Usually such persons are already assigned an Adult Social Care worker and their home presents a serious risk of injury or harm to the resident. Intervention and assistance are required to make their home safe. Provide for clearance and cleaning of a property to enable contractors to work safely during grant assisted adaptations.
Maximum Grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £5,000.
Eligible Persons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any person referred to the Housing Standards team by an Adult Social Care worker typically where there is concern over the mental capacity of the resident or where a resident is found to be living in a property at risk due to serious disrepair.
Eligible Properties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A permanent and legal residence in South Norfolk Council district, including dwellings, mobile homes or caravans and houseboats.
Eligible Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £5,000 maximum grant.

Relevant Works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any repair or maintenance work to the structure of a property to remove serious category 1 hazards, (as defined in the Housing, Health and Safety Rating System) or to clear and clean a property to enable grant assisted adaptation work to be undertaken. Examples include structural repairs to the roof or windows to make a property watertight, repairs to stairs to prevent falls, repairs to electrical installations and repairs to heating systems to provide heating and hot water.
Applicant Contribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non means tested grant.
Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work will be focussed on the immediate needs of the person to live safely and independently in their home. The Council shall only entertain applications accompanied by the relevant certificates of owner or tenant occupation. The Council shall only entertain applications accompanied by proof of ownership and/or owner's permission.

12. CARER SUPPORT FACILITY GRANT:

Purpose of assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discretionary means tested grant to enable and assist live in carers or family members who provide the essential Care and Support for disabled residents.
Maximum Grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £5,000.
Eligible Persons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A live-in carer or family member providing care / support for a disabled resident. Means tested grant. Disabled person or carer is in receipt of a passport benefit, including carers Allowance.
Eligible Properties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A permanent and legal residence in South Norfolk Council district, including dwellings, mobile homes or caravans and houseboats.
Eligible Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £5,000 maximum grant.
Relevant Works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any adaptation or equipment to provide respite and comfort for carers, including equipment to improve the health, (physical and mental) and wellbeing of the carer.
Applicant Contribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Means tested grant. Applicants will be assessed for their ability to contribute to the scheme, the test of resources will be that as applied to the Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant rules as set out under the Housing Renewal Grant Regulations 1998 (as amended). Where the applicant has been determined as having a contribution to make to the works, that contribution will be deposited with the Council before the works commence.
Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work will be focussed on the immediate needs of the person to live safely and independently in their home. The Council shall only entertain applications accompanied by the relevant certificates of owner or tenant occupation.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council shall only entertain applications accompanied by proof of ownership and/or owner's permission.
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13. ARCHITECT GRANT:

Purpose of assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discretionary means tested grant to provide for specialist technical drawings / plans required for complex DFG adaptation works. Grant total is based on a technical estimate of 10% of total adaptation costs, for adaptations that require detailed drawings / plans beyond the schedule process initiated by the council's Technical Officers.
Maximum Grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £4,500.
Eligible Persons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Same as for DFG.
Eligible Properties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A permanent and legal residence in South Norfolk Council district, including dwellings, mobile homes or caravans and houseboats.
Eligible Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £4,500 maximum grant.
Relevant Works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Architect / technician fees associated with the submission of plans to Planning and Building Control for DFG adaptation work.
Applicant Contribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Means tested grant. Applicants will be assessed for their ability to contribute to the scheme, the test of resources will be that as applied to the Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant rules as set out under the Housing Renewal Grant Regulations 1998 (as amended). Where the applicant has been determined as having a contribution to make to the works, that contribution will be deposited with the Council before the works commence.
Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work will be focussed on the immediate needs of the person to live safely and independently in their home. The Council shall only entertain applications accompanied by the relevant certificates of owner or tenant occupation. The Council shall only entertain applications accompanied by proof of ownership and/or owner's permission.

14. MAINTENANCE GRANT:

Purpose of assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discretionary non means tested grant to provide for repair costs of specialist equipment previously installed via grant assistance and where the initial warranty period has expired, e.g. maintenance and repair of stair lifts and wash / dry toilets, (Closomat, Geberit, etc.). As part of a DFG or GIG, a 5-year warranty is included in the grant for the installation of a stairlift or other specialist equipment. When the warranty period has expired, a maintenance grant would cover the cost of any repair work
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	necessary to ensure the continued safe operation of the equipment for the resident. If repair work exceeds the maximum grant limit, then consideration should be made to replacement of the equipment using a DFG or GIG.
Maximum Grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £2,000.
Eligible Persons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Same as for DFG.
Eligible Properties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A permanent and legal residence I South Norfolk Council district, including dwellings, mobile homes or caravans and houseboats.
Eligible Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £2,000 maximum grant.
Relevant Works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Repair / maintenance costs involved to ensure continued safe operation of specialist equipment, e.g. stairlift or wash/dry toilet.
Applicant Contribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None means tested grant.
Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work will be focussed on the immediate needs of the person to live safely and independently in their home. The Council shall only entertain applications accompanied by the relevant certificates of owner or tenant occupation. The Council shall only entertain applications accompanied by proof of ownership and/or owner's permission.

15. RE-LOCATION GRANT:

Purpose of assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discretionary service for district tier authorities. Procedure to help fund relocation costs in cases where adaptations cannot be made to the current property or moving is a more suitable and cost-effective solution. Financial assistance to encourage residents to look at accommodation options which are more suited to needs thereby avoiding adaptations on unsuitable properties and potentially freeing up properties more suited to others. Provides financial assistance towards relocation where properties cannot be adapted due to planning, conservation, or structural restrictions.
Maximum Grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £5,000.
Eligible Persons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any disabled person, as described by the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996, s.100. Applicants can be property owners or tenants; some landlords may apply on behalf of tenants. Means tested grant.
Eligible Properties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A property identified by the Housing Solutions team as not being suitable for adaption or the necessary adaption is not possible due to planning or conservation restrictions
Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Same as for DFG.

16. VOID ADAPTED PROPERTY PROCEDURE:

Purpose of assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discretionary service for district tier authorities.• Procedure to provide funding to enable properties on the Housing Solutions team stock list, which have already been adapted and become vacant, to be held / reserved for a person with needs identified to match the adapted property.• The Void Property Procedure would pay the rent on the property for up to a maximum of six weeks to enable the Housing Solutions team to match the property to a suitable person on the housing waiting list.• This avoids properties which have had adaptations being allocated to persons without an identified need and would prevent another property needing to have expensive adaptation work undertaken.
Maximum Grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Up to a maximum of six weeks rental payments.
Eligible Properties	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A property identified by the Housing Solutions team at South Norfolk Council or a Housing Association property?
Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The rent on an adapted property, which becomes vacant, will be paid by the grant up to a maximum of six weeks and only when matched to a resident with identified need.

Appendix 2:



Summary of Independent Living Assistance:

Grant	Maximum Grant Payable	Means Tested Yes / No	Potential Uses	Eligibility Criteria
Disabled Facilities Grant, (DFG).	£30,000	Yes	Home adaptations, equipment and/or alterations. Only available for cost of works necessary to meet the assessed needs of the disabled person.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Minimum cost of works £750. -Works essential for access, mobility around the home, personal care, bedroom, kitchen, safety, and services, as described in the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 s.23. -Works must be necessary and appropriate to meet the needs of the disabled person; and -Work must be reasonable and practicable.
Gaining Independence Grant, (GIG).	£12,000	Yes	As above but simplified & streamlined process. Not suitable for complex adaptations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -As above -Person must be in receipt of one or more passport benefits, (including council tax support – not single person reduction alone)
Forget Me Not Grant.	£500	No	To assist people living with Dementia and those caring for them in the maintenance of a safe, decent, and warm home. To prevent admission to, and aid discharge from hospital or residential care.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Diagnosis of Dementia or likely diagnosis of dementia. - Must have lived in property for 12 months and intend to remain in occupation for 5 years. The grant will not be used to effect repairs/works that are the responsibility of a private or social landlord.

Low level Grant	£750	Yes	-Small scale, non-complex and low-cost work, equipment, or maintenance repairs to enable an elderly, disabled or vulnerable person to live safely and independently. -Work intended to be undertaken by handyperson or approved contractor.	Persons will be eligible for the discounted service if they are in receipt of a specified means tested benefit and physically unable to carry out the works themselves (assessment of circumstances and long-term health conditions)
Assistive Technology Grant	£2,000	No	To provide equipment, technology, and services to enhance quality of life, prevent accidents in the home and enable a person with a disability to live safely and independently in their own home.	-Technology, equipment, or services that are essential for access and mobility around the home, personal care, and safety, as described in the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 s.23 -Works must be necessary and appropriate to meet the needs of the disabled person
Re-location Grant	£5,000	Yes	Financial assistance to help fund relocation costs in cases where adaptations cannot be made or moving is a more suitable and cost-effective solution. Could be used to fund removal fees, carpets, or furniture / fittings to help a move to a more a more suitable property.	Any disabled person, as described by the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996, s.100. Applicants can be property owners or tenants; some landlords may apply on behalf of tenants. A property identified as not being suitable for adaption or adaption is not possible due to planning or conservation restrictions.

Void Adapted Property Procedure	Up to six weeks rent payments	No	Procedure to provide funding to enable properties on the Housing Solutions team stock list, already adapted and vacant, to be reserved for a person with needs identified to match the adapted property.	-An adapted property identified by the Housing Solutions team at South Norfolk Council and an identified applicant with needs matched to the property.
Fuel Poverty Grant	£5,000	Yes	-Renovation / repair of structure or heating systems to improve warmth & health in a home. E.g. replacement windows in bedrooms / living rooms, repair of structural dampness, replacement of poor-quality external doors or first-time heating system.	-Correlation with councils' Eco Flex Statement of intent and/or: in receipt of a means tested benefit plus receive a health-related benefit or certification by medical practitioner. -Owner occupiers or tenants. -Tenants-assistance limited to that beyond enforcement proceedings against landlord to achieve greater than minimum standards.
DFG Contribution Grant	£5,000	Yes	-To remove applicant DFG /GIG contribution as a result of means test	-Any contribution over £5,000 must be paid by applicant. -Applicant ineligible if savings are more than £16,000.
Top Up Grant	£10,000	No	-To provide a fast resolution to applications where work is likely to exceed max DFG cap of £30,000	-Conditional 10-year Land Charge on property. Grant repayable to council if resident moves or sells property within this period. -Not available to Housing Association or rented properties unless exceptional

				circumstances and in agreement with Portfolio holder
Get You Home Grant	£5,000	No	-Essential maintenance work - Essential capital purchases	-District Direct or other hospital referral.
Serious Illness Grant	£5,000	No	- Adaptations, repairs or improve thermal capacity of homes.	-Terminal illness confirmed by medical practitioner
Mental Health Grant	£5,000	No	-House or garden clearance to enable essential repairs. -Adaptations or repairs to remove hazards or improve thermal capacity	-Vulnerable resident likely to have adult social care involvement, mental health concerns, unable to identify need for or arrange own remedial work.
Carer Support Facility Grant	£5,000	Yes	-Adaptations or equipment to enable and assist family members who provide care and support for disabled residents.	-Disabled applicant or carer on passport benefit, including carers allowance.
Architect Grant	£4,500	Yes	-Technical drawings/plans by architect / technician for structural adaptation work.	-DFG / GIG application which requires detailed drawings/plans beyond Tech Officer Schedule of Works.
Maintenance Grant	£2,000	No	-To provide repair costs of specialist equipment previously installed via grant assistance and where the initial warranty period has expired, e.g. maintenance and repair of stair lifts and wash / dry toilets.	Same as for DFG / GIG. Previous DFG / GIG applicant with expired warranty.

Appendix 4: Equalities and Communities Impact Assessment



Name of Officer completing assessment:	Louise Simmonds
Date of Assessment:	18/07/2020

What is the proposed Policy?

To put together a range of additional interventions using the council's improved Better Care Fund allocation for the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG).

1. Which protected characteristics does this Policy impact: (please tick all that apply)

Age	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sex	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pregnancy/Maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sexual Orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Gender Reassignment	<input type="checkbox"/>
Race	<input type="checkbox"/>	Civil Partnership/Marriage	<input type="checkbox"/>	Religion or Belief	<input type="checkbox"/>
Health	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Rurality	<input type="checkbox"/>	Low Income	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
				None of the above	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. What do you believe are the potential equalities impacts of this policy?

Please include:

- Any other groups impacted not detailed above
- Partnership organisations worked with in the development of this policy
- Evidence gathered to inform your decision
- Where you have consulted, Who and How this has informed the decision/policy

Note: Impacts could be positive and/or negative and impact groups differently

The intended effects of the proposed interventions are positive in that they will enable individuals experiencing long term health issues or disabilities to live at home for longer and in better health. In addition, the need for more formal health and/or social care interventions will be reduced or delayed.

Two of the proposals relate to the easing of the DFG process where blockages could occur either through the contribution of the applicant or because the cost of the works needed extends beyond the current cap of £30K meaning that interventions can be in place and have an effect sooner.

The introduction of the 'Get You Home Grant' will link to the District Direct service and enable a quicker discharge from hospital as this formalises a clear pathway for those interventions to ensure that the patient is returning to a suitable and safe home. It is also intended that application of the grant could reduce the incidence of re-admission to hospital.

The 'Mental Health Grant' will provide assistance for those not able to make the necessary decision to ensure their homes are safe.

Refining the heating system project will assist more people experiencing fuel poverty. Fuel Poverty can impact markedly on health, including mental health. Research suggests that cold housing increases the level of minor illnesses such as colds and flu and exacerbates existing conditions such as arthritis and rheumatism and more than 1 in 4 adolescents living in cold housing are at risk of multiple mental health problems compared to 1 in 20 adolescents who have always lived in warm housing.

Age:

All suggested interventions are age neutral, in that they would be targeted at need rather than a certain age group. Although it is acknowledged that older people are the largest cohort age group who would be accessing these services and would see the most positive impacts, this would not remove access for other age groups.

Carers:

One of the proposed interventions is aimed specifically to improve the health and wellbeing of carers - the 'Carers Support Grant'. Implementation of the intervention positively impacts carers by providing an adaptation, equipment, support, or service to improve health and wellbeing. The improvements that can be made to the physical home environment can reduce the physical impact of caring duties and improve the health and mental health of the people they are caring for and themselves.

3. How is it proposed that any identified impacts are mitigated?

Please include:

- Steps taken to mitigate, for example, other services that may be available
- If you are unable to resolve the issues highlighted during this assessment, please explain why
- How impacts will be monitored and addressed?
- Could the decision/policy be implemented in a different way?
- What is the impact if the decision/policy is not implemented?

Other protected characteristics:

Disability, Age, Health and Low Income have been identified as the characteristics these interventions would mainly impact. In addition, it should be noted that the other protected characteristics would not impact on access to the interventions. However, monitoring of this would be included as part of the 12-month review process.

In conclusion, the decision could be made not to implement these interventions and while this does mean that, in effect, business as usual would continue, an opportunity to improve outcomes for people with the protected characteristics of Age and Disability and our own additional characteristics of Health and Low Income would be missed.

Signed by evaluator: Kevin Philcox

Signed by responsible head of department:

Agenda item 7 People and Communities Policy Committee Work Programme

Date	Subject of Report	Responsible Officer	Notes
7 Oct	Mobile Homes – Charging Policy	Kevin Philcox	
	Independent Living Assistance Policy	Mike Pursehouse	
2 Dec	Best in Class Housing Model Progress	Richard Dunsire	
3 Feb 2021	Health and Wellbeing Strategy	Mike Pursehouse	
	Future Adult Care Integration	Mike Pursehouse	
21 Apr			