**SODC Housing Grants**

South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse district councils have made it easier for people with disabilities or who are vulnerable to receive housing assistance grants and loans to help make their homes safer and more comfortable.

While the councils have always provided a grants and loans service for vulnerable people to help their homes better suit their needs, the new Housing Assistance Grants and Loans policy introduced by the councils this month has extended what’s on offer.

The maximum grant available has increased from £30,000 to £50,000 and a grant is also now available for people living with dementia. In addition, the system is to be streamlined with new technology aiming to improve the service and reduce the waiting times for work to be carried out.

The new policy aims to:

* support more disabled residents to live independently by improving access and movement around their homes
* reduce hospital admissions and enable early hospital discharges
* reduce the need for residential care by allowing people with disabilities to live independently in their own homes
* reduce fuel poverty and the effects of living in cold homes
* support tailored home adaptations for those who need them including those suffering with dementia

To apply for a Disabled Facilities Grant, the first step is to contact an Occupational Therapist to see if someone is eligible. For more information on applying for grants and loans please see our  website pages ([South](http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/services-and-advice/housing/managing-your-home/grants-adapt-your-home-disability)) and ([Vale](http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/housing/managing-your-home/support-live-independently/disabled-facilities-grant))

Councillor David Rouane, South Oxfordshire District Council Cabinet Member for Housing and Environment, said: “The adaptations which these grants will enable are becoming increasingly important as the population ages. Changes to people’s homes can restore dignity and independence, improve safety and make life easier both for vulnerable people themselves and for their carers.”

Councillor Jenny Hannaby, Vale of White Horse District Council Cabinet Member for Housing and Environment, said: “The new policy can help towards home improvements, even small ones, which may mean people avoid the misery of a health crisis and the subsequent increased dependency on families, carers and services. This policy should make life easier, safer and more comfortable and more independent for our most vulnerable residents.”

Communications

South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils

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