

Response from : **Older People's Commissioner for Wales: additional written evidence 1**

Aids and Adaptations

List of good practice provided by Welsh local authorities – December 2012

Joint Working

- Co-location of OTs with grant officers has reduced waiting list from two years in 2010 to two months
- Council has employed on a trial basis an adaptations coordinator to bridge OT and adaptations teams.
- Invested in additional OT support to speed up the assessment process
- Managed by an integrated disabled person's service including surveyors, OTs.
- Close links with RSLs who delivery PAGs
- Workshop bringing together officers from social services and housing
- Monthly meetings between Housing and OT
- Joint working between housing and OTs (colocation)
- Reorganisation of OT into a single service team
- Officer seconded to Housing Renewal Team
- Good joint working with OTs
- Close partnership with C&R (co-located with the council).

Use of resources

- Acknowledged timescales need to be reduced and have invested officer time and financial resources. This has reduced delivery time from 809 to 399 over three years.
- Cabinet considering proposals for additional resources

- Funding to Care and Repair
- Provision of sufficient capital to adaptations even in financially challenging times – no applicant has to wait for grant assistance as a result of lack of funds
- Recycling of equipment
- Living Independently Home Repair Grant tackles other works of repair e.g. roofs or electrics at same time as DFG.
- Strong financial support, consistent capital allocation

Customer experience

- Recently started monitoring feedback from clients, for example 82% of people who received a DFG felt it helped them stay independent.
- Telephone based enquiry service and home visit options for applicants
- In house agency service to hand hold applicants through the process.
- Early draft means test to give potential applicants a very early indication of any financial contribution
- Root and Branch review in 2007 to identify process efficiencies, streamline customer journey. Reduced from 500+ days to 175 days
- Customer satisfaction levels high (95%)
- Home visits

‘Process’ issues

- Changes to Housing Renewal Policy specifically aimed at reducing delivery times over the next 12 months.
- Partnership with LSVT with a panel to consider applications for adaptations, including moving to a new property.
- Tighten up on targets for each step of DFG process
- Joint pre-referral visit by housing surveyor and OT to ensure any recommendations are reasonable and practical
- Fast track procedure for urgent cases
- Prioritisation system to deal with most urgent cases first
- Using surveyors as assessors to reduce OT waiting times
- More accurate recording

- Fast track stair like service for palliative care
- Refining application process
- E-referral process from OT to grants team
- Dedicated team with specialist OTs
- Fast track for priority cases

Alternatives to DFG

- Minor works commissioned separately
- Prioritising hospital discharge for minor adaptations
- Partnership with Care and Repair to deliver minor adaptations and the RRAP programme (average time 4 days)
- Safety at Home Scheme: partnership between OT and C&R (delivered 454 minor adaptations last year, average time 6 days)
- Discretionary relocation grant via Pathways to Adapted Housing Register
- Minor adaptations Grant for less than £2k (average 59 days)
- Financial incentive to move
- 11 days to deliver minor adaptations
- Loans and grants for other repairs and improvements

Contractors / building work

- Recently re-tendered for building contractors
- Framework contract with local contractors – with agreed timescales and schedule of rates
- Approved contractor agreements.
- One experienced local architect
- Joint feasibility visits OT and grants
- Expert local contractors
- Schedule of rates (removed tendering)
- In house grant agency
- Registered Builders Scheme – advice on sourcing a builder