



St. Helens  
Council

# Equipment and Adaptations Service



St. Helens Council

## Contact Centre

Wesley House  
Corporation Street  
St. Helens  
WA10 1HF

**Tel:** 01744 676789

**Minicom:** 01744 671671

**Fax:** 01744 676895

**Email:** [contactcentre@sthelens.gov.uk](mailto:contactcentre@sthelens.gov.uk)

→ [www.sthelens.gov.uk](http://www.sthelens.gov.uk)



Please contact us to request translation of Council information into Braille, audio tape or a foreign language.

## Introduction

**St.Helens Council wants people with a disability to live as independently as possible. Our friendly, accessible Equipment and Adaptations Service can help you improve your quality of life.**

Our Occupational Therapists, specially trained Occupational Therapy Assistants and Technical staff can:

- Assess what you need and give you expert advice;
- Provide access to a range of specialist equipment to help you with your activities of daily living;
- Assist you with an application for a Disabled Facilities Grant for the installation of permanent adaptations such as stairlifts, showers, ramps, hoists and handrails;
- Help you find a more suitable home if your current home can't be adapted.

All disabled people are entitled to an **assessment** to determine what equipment or adaptations they need.

This booklet describes what we can offer and the conditions you must meet to use our service.

## How to apply

### The first step

If you have a disability, or you are the parent or carer of a child with a disability, and you live within the Borough of St.Helens, you can contact the Customer Service Officer on the following number to make a referral:

01744 676600

The Customer Service Officer will ask you for your personal details, some information about who helps you, and what your request is about.

These details will be passed on to the Council's Occupational Therapy Service. An Assessment Officer will then contact you within 2 working days of receipt of your request.

## Assessment

We will carry out an initial assessment with you over the telephone, or, if you prefer, we will post an assessment form to you for you to complete at home.

We may do this if we have difficulty contacting you.

The information from this assessment will help us decide whether we will be able to assist you with any services and how best these can be offered.

There are several ways in which we can provide help.

After the initial assessment, it may be very clear that your needs can be met by either a piece of equipment or a minor adaptation which will not involve a visit to your home by any of the Occupational Therapy staff.

An example could be a commode, reacher or an additional stair rail.

If it seems as though simple aids could meet your needs you will be offered an assessment via the Council's Mobile Assessment Service. Our staff will visit you at home and make an assessment of your needs. Following the assessment, where your needs can be met by the provision of simple items of equipment this will be issued to you.

Complex items of equipment or electrically operated equipment will be provided on a long-term loan arrangement through the community equipment stores for as long as you need it.

If you are having difficulty with many aspects of your daily life, and it appears you could be helped either with the provision of equipment and/or an adaptation you will be put forward for an assessment by an Occupational Therapist or an Occupational Therapy Assistant.

There will most probably be a waiting list for this assessment. People who are felt to be at high risk will be assessed first. The Occupational Therapist or Occupational Therapy Assistant will either write to you or telephone you to make an appointment to visit you at home.

When we visit you we will talk to you about what you need and assess what can be done to help you.

You will be fully involved during the assessment process. We will give you clear information and will arrange for an interpreter if this is necessary. The assessment will be tailored to what you and, if appropriate, your carer need.

We generally don't look at a solution such as major adaptations or rehousing until we have explored other options first, so we start looking at equipment to help you live independently, i.e. toileting, bathing, getting in and out of bed, feeding, dressing.

We can assist with the provision of equipment or adaptations, or both, to help you live independently. 'Equipment' covers things that don't need permanently fixing in your home. 'Adaptations' are permanent changes to your home – ranging from minor fittings to major installations and property extensions.

For example, if you need help getting in and out of the bath, we would first check whether equipment like a bath board and seat would be all that you need. If not, we could try a portable battery operated bath lift. Or, we could use a shower board along with an adaptation like a shower installed over the bath.

Only when we have explored all the options will we look at major adaptations like a level access shower.

The solutions we recommend will be based on individual needs. We will take various things into account, e.g. the nature of your condition, difficulties you are having, the needs of your family and carers and the suitability of your home.

## Conditions

If you are unhappy with any of the decisions that have been made as a result of your assessment, you should contact the Service Manager of the Occupational Therapy Service in the first instance, either in writing or by telephone on 01744 671652.

In the event that a complaint cannot be resolved informally, you have the right to register a formal complaint. Complaints can be put in writing to

The Complaints Officer  
Adult Social Care and Health  
Performance Management  
The Gamble Building  
Victoria Square  
St. Helens  
WA10 1DY

Or information can be found on the Council Website.

Equipment is provided to help you live independently and/or safely within your home. We do not provide equipment to meet nursing or mobility needs, e.g. pressure relieving equipment, walking aids, wheelchairs (in these cases, you should discuss this with your Doctor or District Nurse Services).

We also do not provide equipment if:

- It's for educational, employment or recreational use; or
- You are visiting the area and want a short term loan; or
- You are going on holiday and want a short term loan; or
- It is a small item and you could reasonably be expected to buy it yourself, i.e. an item under £20.

## Providing equipment

### Simple items of equipment

Following assessment, where simple pieces of equipment have been recommended, you will be given a prescription which will list all the equipment to which you are entitled.

Either you, your carer or representative can take this prescription to an accredited retailer of your choice. A list is available of all the accredited retailers in the locality. The retailer will take your prescription and give you your equipment. This will be a brand new piece of equipment which is yours to keep.

You can choose to upgrade your equipment to a similar model with more features, but you will have to pay any difference in price.

In certain circumstances, the Occupational Therapist or OT Assistant may prescribe a delivery service. You will need to contact your chosen retailer to arrange for the equipment to be delivered. If you have not been prescribed a delivery service, but would prefer to have the equipment delivered, you can ask the retailer to do this for you; however, you may have to pay for this service.

The retailer will show you how to fit the equipment and written instructions will also be provided. You will have to sign the prescription to confirm that you have been given the equipment. The prescription has to be redeemed within 1 month of you getting it.

You own the equipment and you are responsible for looking after it.

### Complex items of equipment

More complex equipment (electrically operated/specialist) will be provided on a long-term loan through the Community Equipment Store. The item will be ordered for you by the OT staff and delivered to your home.

The OT or OT Assistant may want to visit you again on delivery to check the suitability of the item. The equipment will be serviced and maintained by the Stores where necessary.

## Children's equipment

We can provide equipment if your child has a disability and needs more specialised equipment than a non-disabled child of a similar age. We do not provide readily available equipment that non-disabled children would need, such as a fireguard or high chair.

### Buying your own equipment

We can advise you about where to buy equipment locally if you know what you need and prefer not to make an application for assessment through the Council.

Online help is available with carrying out your own self assessment of needs by visiting [www.asksara.org.uk](http://www.asksara.org.uk)

Help may be available to pay for equipment by a Direct Payment or Personal Budget. You should contact your Social Worker for further information.

We cannot pay for equipment you have bought for yourself in the past.

## Adaptations to your home

**Minor adaptations costing under £500, such as grab rails and stair rails, are provided by the Handy Person Service.**

Any adaptations costing over £500, where there has been an assessed need, is classed as a Major Adaptation and is funded on a **Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG)** which is means tested.

DFGs for provision of adaptations for children are exempt from means test and will receive 100% grant funding.

You will be asked to complete a Provisional Test of Resources form and return it to the Council. Any contribution you may have to make towards the cost of the adaptation will be calculated on the information supplied on the form.

If it turns out that you will need to contribute the full cost of the adaptation, you can still get help from the Occupational Therapist and Technical Officer in terms of advice as to what adaptations will meet your needs.

## Moving to another home

### Rehousing

If your present home is unsuitable for the adaptations that you need, you can apply to be rehoused to a property that is either purpose built or already adapted.

To do this, you will need to register with 'Under One Roof'. More details of how to do this can be found on the Under One Roof website, [www.under-one-roof.org.uk](http://www.under-one-roof.org.uk) or by telephoning 01744 636363.

We will offer advice on your housing needs and will normally write a report which will help to ensure you are placed in the most appropriate banding.

You will be able to bid on properties when they are advertised. However, we would need to view the property before an offer was made to you to determine its suitability.

If it is identified that adaptations are required at the property, because of timescales involved, you will be asked to move in before adaptation work commences.

## Major adaptations and the conditions you must meet

### Access to your home

#### Ramp

We will normally provide access to either the front or the back door of your property, preferably the primary access. Access to your back garden will be provided if you are unable to access it from the front of your property.

You are eligible to apply if:

- You use a wheelchair all the time; or
- You can't go up steps or half steps yourself or need a lot of assistance from carers; or
- You are a carer who lives at the property and are unable to manoeuvre a wheelchair in and out; or
- You meet the assessed criteria for an Electrically Powered Indoor/Outdoor Wheelchair (EPIOC) provided by Wheelchair Services; or
- You meet the assessed EPIOC criteria but have chosen to use an electric powered scooter.

\* We would not provide ramp access or storage facilities for privately purchased scooters not meeting the EPIOC criteria.

#### Driveway, hardstanding and dropped kerb

You are eligible to apply if:

- You are a driver and are unable to walk or self propel a wheelchair to a vehicle parked in front of your home; or
- Parking stress is such that you are unable to park in close proximity to your home and you are unable to walk or self propel a wheelchair to your property; or
- You are a passenger and the driver is unable to park in the road to allow you out of the vehicle or cannot push your wheelchair from the nearest available parking space.

## Paths and rails

You are eligible to apply for a path to be widened if:

- You need this for access for a wheelchair or mobility aid;
- You have poor mobility and your paths are in a good state of repair so that they may be levelled to improve access to your home.

You are eligible to apply for external rails to be installed if:

- Your mobility is severely restricted and external rails will assist negotiating steps to the property.

However, please note the following:

- Levelling of a path will not be undertaken where the need arises from the path falling into disrepair;
- There is no provision for the storage of powered wheelchairs or scooters or a power supply for charging batteries.

## Lifts and hoists

### Stairlift

You are eligible to apply if:

- You can't use the stairs safely on your own, or it is painful, exhausting and dangerous to do so; and
  - Your only bathroom and toilet is upstairs; or
  - Your bathroom and toilet are downstairs but there is no room for you to sleep on the ground floor. We will only put in a stairlift if your staircase is suitable for this type of lift and you can get on and off it safely.
- \* If you have dizzy spells or a medical condition which is likely to cause you problems with your balance (either now or in the future), it is likely that we will recommend a through floor lift instead.

### Through floor lift

We could install a through floor lift if it is not possible to install a stairlift. You are eligible to apply if you meet the conditions for a stair lift (see above), but also if:

- You need help getting on and off a stairlift; or
- You have a progressive condition which is likely to make it difficult to use a stair lift in the future; or
- You have multiple impairments, and you use a wheelchair all the time.

### Track hoist

You are eligible to apply if:

- There is not enough space for a mobile hoist; and
- It would be the only way to move independently and safely; and
- Your carer can't move you, or risk injury to themselves if they do.

## Bathroom

We take a gradual approach to bathroom adaptations. We will see if equipment like a bath board and seat would be suitable before we undertake major work.

We will also look at the effect of adaptations on other people who live with you.

We will assess for the bathroom adaptations you need, and we will talk to you and your carer about a range of other things, e.g. grab rails, the type of shower tray/flooring, the layout of the room, the height of the controls, screen doors (if applicable) etc.

### Shower over the bath

You are eligible to apply if:

- You can use a shower board to transfer into the bath but are unable to lower/raise yourself onto a bath seat; and
- A bath hoist is not a suitable alternative; or
- You are at risk if you sit in a bath of water (because of uncontrolled epilepsy or a medical condition, for instance); or
- You need a shower because of chronic incontinence.

### **Level access shower or wet room**

You are eligible to apply if:

- You are unable to transfer over into the bath using a shower board or bath hoist.

### **Toilet**

You are eligible to apply for an additional toilet, either upstairs or downstairs, if:

- You are unable to reach the existing toilet because of your disability; and
- You have a permanent severe medical condition affecting frequency and urgency of bowel movements.

### **Wash/dry toilet**

You are eligible to apply if:

- You cannot maintain personal hygiene after using the toilet.

### **Kitchen**

You are eligible to apply for additional space in your kitchen, or alterations to the height and lay out of kitchen units, if:

- You are dependent on a wheelchair indoors and live alone; or
- You are dependent on a wheelchair indoors and primarily responsible for food preparation and cooking for the family.

### **Extra heating/change of heating**

#### **Change of heating**

You are eligible to apply if:

- It can be established from you doctor that the current heating system poses significant risk of permanent damage to health; or
- You are unable to physically manage the heating system due to your physical condition; and there is no one else living in the household to do this for you.

### **Additional heating**

You are eligible to apply if:

- It can be established from your doctor that there would be significant risk to your health if this were not provided.

### **Adaptations for children**

#### **Fencing**

You are eligible to apply if:

- The existing boundaries are not good enough; and
- The child is vulnerable and needs constant supervision; and
- Their vulnerability is due to their disability, not age.

#### **Safe play area**

You are eligible to apply it:

- The child would otherwise be in danger; and
- The child is vulnerable and needs constant supervision; and
- The vulnerability is due to their disability, not age.

#### **Strengthened glass (windows)**

You are eligible to apply if:

- There is a danger the child will break glass regularly; or
- There is a serious risk of breaking glass.

#### **Safety gate**

You are eligible to apply if:

- A commercially available gate cannot protect the child.

## Useful addresses & telephone numbers

### St.Helens Council

#### New referrals for adults and children

Customer Services Officers  
Wesley House  
Corporation Street  
St.Helens  
WA10 1HF  
Tel: 01744 676600

#### Occupational Therapy queries

Occupational Therapy Services  
Town Hall  
Victoria Square  
St.Helens  
WA10 1HP  
Tel: 01744 676522

### Accredited retailers

#### Independent Living Store

St.Mary's Arcade  
Church Square Shopping Centre  
St.Helens  
WA10 1AR  
Tel/Fax: 01744 607379

#### Shopmobility

Chalon Way multi-storey car park  
Chalon Way West  
St.Helens  
WA10 1BF  
Tel/fax: 01744 613388

#### Aline Mobility

58 Claughton Street  
St.Helens  
WA10 1SN  
Tel: 01744 602602

#### Aides to Living

99 Warrington Road  
Prescot  
L34 5ST  
Tel: 0151 426 1239

#### Donlons Pharmacy

155 Station Road  
Haydock  
St.Helens  
WA11 0JN  
Tel: 01744 25036

#### Taylor's Pharmacy

210 West End Road  
Haydock  
St.Helens  
WA11 0AN  
Tel: 01744 453364

#### Disability Living Aids

2 Cross Lane  
Earlestown  
Newton-le-Willows  
WA12 9QE  
Tel: 01925 270083

#### Aline Mobility Super Centre

Unit E1  
Witt Road  
Alexandra Street  
Widnes  
WA8 7RU  
Tel: 0151 423 3738

#### Aids4mobility

Unit 3 Diamond Business Park  
Sandwash Close  
Rainford  
St.Helens  
WA11 8LU  
Jason: 07813026032  
Phil: 07968078983