



Scheme of Assistance

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1. Introduction

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 was introduced to improve the quality and condition of private sector homes. Section 72 of Part 2 of the Act introduced the requirement for Local Authorities to develop a Scheme of Assistance (SoA) for providing assistance to homeowners and private sector tenants when carrying out works on their homes. This was based on the principle that homeowners should take full responsibility for maintaining their home but that assistance should be made available if necessary.

Angus Council remains strongly committed to achieving a high standard of housing in the private sector and will provide an extensive range of advice, information, practical assistance, and in some cases financial support in order to improve private sector housing stock in Angus. Particular importance is attached to enabling people to stay in their own homes and live independently by increasing the number of houses that are suitable for older people and people with disabilities.

The SoA is designed to promote greater responsibility among homeowners for the repair and maintenance of their homes and sets out a range of ways the Council can help homeowners achieve this. It will also help homeowners and private sector tenants with disabilities remain in their homes through provision of information, advice and assistance to carry out adaptations.

1.1 Vision

The aims of the SoA are to:

- Encourage homeowners to recognise that they have the primary responsibility for maintaining their homes;
- Provide a fair and sustainable approach to providing assistance to help homeowners and private sector tenants to improve, repair and adapt their homes;
- More effectively address disrepair in private sector housing;
- Maximise the impact of public resources by leveraging in homeowners' contributions and assist a far greater number of homeowners than was possible under the Councils previous grants focused approach;
- Help older, vulnerable people and people with disabilities living in their own homes or the private rented sector to live independently in their home for as long as they choose to do so.

To achieve these aims the Council will deliver, fairly and efficiently, information and advice, and practical and financial assistance in partnership with homeowners, private landlords, private sector tenants and other services and stakeholders.

2. Context of the Scheme of Assistance

2.1 National and Local Policy

The Scottish Government set out a national outcome approach within which there are five strategic objectives that underpin its core purpose - "to focus government and public services on creating a more successful country with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish, through increasing sustainable economic growth". These objectives are:

- *Wealthier and fairer*: Enable businesses and people to increase their wealth and more people to share fairly in that wealth
- *Healthier*: Help people to sustain and improve their health, especially in disadvantaged communities, ensuring better, local and faster access to healthcare

- *Safer and stronger*: Helping communities to flourish, becoming stronger, safer places to live, offering improved opportunities and a better quality of life
- *Smarter*: Expanding opportunities to succeed from nurture through to lifelong learning ensuring higher and more widely shared achievements
- *Greener*: Improving Scotland's natural and built environment and the sustainable use and enjoyment of it

In a local context, our vision is that 'Angus is a great place to live, work and visit' and local priorities and outcomes have been identified to ensure we achieve that vision, including a number of housing-related outcomes:

- A reduced carbon footprint
- An enhanced, protected and enjoyed natural and built environment
- The best start in life for children
- Safe, secure, vibrant and sustainable communities
- Improved physical, mental and emotional health and well being

In the housing context, the SoA contributes to these national objectives and local outcomes largely through enabling people to identify appropriate measures to live independently in suitable housing that meets their needs. The Council will also empower households to find funding solutions to meet their needs through a range of advice and assistance. This will include access to public grants and private sector funding, such as the release of equity from their property in order to make repairs and improvements, without relying on grant aid from the Local Authority.

The aim is to effectively target and maximise the Council's resources to help those who are most in need make their homes safer. The Council's strategic role is to ensure housing investment across all tenures contributes to meeting housing supply targets by meeting identifiable housing need, and thereby delivering the Strategic National Objectives and increasing the sustainability of the entire housing stock.

The Scottish Governments [Housing to 2040](#) sets out the vision for housing in Scotland to 2040 and a route map to get there. Aiming to deliver the ambition that everyone has a safe, good quality and affordable home that meets their needs in a place they want to be, one of the national strategies core principles is to 'improve the quality of all homes'. Developing this approach will comprise of two strands, within which a number of actions and supporting policies have been identified:

A New Housing Standard

- Introduce new legislation for a new tenure neutral Housing Standard in 2024/25
- Take action to support proactive approaches to repair & maintenance to help owners avoid high-cost interventions later
- Develop a Help to Improve approach – supporting homeowners and landlords pay for improvement work
- Introduce an enforcement framework to support the new Standard to help achieve and support compliance
- Work with the UK government to deliver a New Homes Ombudsman

Independent living

- Streamline and accelerate the adaptations system
- Address the practical barriers faced by older and disabled home movers who wish to move to a home that better meets their needs

- Better integrate the work of housing and health and social care services, helping deliver a person-centred approach
- A new focus on increasing the supply of accessible and adapted homes and improving choice
- Deliver tenure neutral wheelchair housing targets, delivering homes in accessible locations
- Review Housing for Varying Needs, the design guide used for new build properties – to help meet the needs of older people, disabled people, wheelchair users and people with other specific needs
- Introduce new building standards to underpin a Scottish Accessible Homes Standard which all new homes must achieve.

As Scotland's first ever long-term national housing strategy, the aim is to ensure that people are supported to live in homes they want to live in which are affordable and meet their needs.

2.2 Legislative Framework

The [Housing \(Scotland\) Act 2006](#), and the SoA are the result of a review carried out by the Housing Improvement Task Force (HITF) in 2001 of housing policy pertaining to private sector housing in Scotland. The review concluded that the system of Improvement and Repairs Grants only helped a minority of homeowners and the system needed to be significantly modified in order to provide higher quality assistance to those in the private sector.

In 2008, the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 (Scheme of Assistance) Regulations 2008 were approved by the Scottish Parliament; they set out the introduction of powers and duties which came into effect on 01 April 2009. The current system delivered through the SoA removes the requirement for Local Authorities to provide grants to homeowners and private landlords where a Statutory Notice has been served, and introduces the requirement to provide assistance, which may not be financial, where a Work Notice (section 3.8) has been served. Mandatory grants remain in place to fund provision of standard amenities and some structural alterations to meet the needs of disabled occupants (80% of costs for disabled adaptations for standard amenities and most structural amenities, increasing to 100% for people in receipt of specific welfare benefits). All grants for other works are now discretionary.

Section 37 of the Equality Act 2010 gives Scottish Ministers the right to make regulations that will allow disabled people to make relevant adjustments to the common parts of residential properties. The [Relevant Adjustments to Common Parts \(Disabled Persons\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2020](#) outlines changes to the permissions required for adaptations to common parts (section 4.2). Previously, a disabled person would require the consent of all owners prior to making relevant adjustments to common parts. This has now been amended so that adjustments can be made with the consent of a majority of owners.

With the introduction of these changes the Scottish Government envisages that:

- Private owners will become more aware of their responsibilities in terms of repair and maintenance, and be more proactive in carrying them out
- Private owners will invest more in their properties to ensure they have a sustainable future
- There will be a cultural change in attitudes to housing quality in the private sector and a move away from reliance on grant funding
- Disabled people will be helped to live more independently in their own homes

2.3 Local Housing Strategy

The Angus' **Local Housing Strategy (LHS) 2017-22** is a council wide strategy that sets out how Angus Council and its partners will ensure that Angus has good quality housing of the right tenure, type and size in the right location to meet the housing need and demand of current and future residents.

There are three strategic aims:

1. Increase the supply of good quality, affordable housing across all tenures
2. People can access a range of housing options and related services to meet their needs
3. Improve stock condition across all tenures, ensuring we tackle fuel poverty and energy efficiency and contribute toward climate change targets

The LHS highlights that around 80% of homes in Angus are privately owned, equating to 44,195 dwellings. Of these around 34,719 are owner-occupied, 7365 are private rented, and 2111 are vacant. The large number of people involved in private sector housing in Angus, either as tenants or owners, highlights the need to provide a comprehensive and coherent SoA which will help people maintain their homes to a high standard. This should be achieved with the help of easily accessible, transparent information and advice, and where appropriate, financial assistance.

Angus Council accepts that offering only grant assistance is not the most productive method of creating a sustainable private sector with a culture of responsible homeownership; rather it tends to foster dependency on Local Authority assistance. The Council is therefore seeking to offer a broader range of assistance, which will suit the particular needs of homeowners, private landlords and their tenants.

Tenants of local authorities and Housing Associations are already benefiting from the **Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS)**, introduced by the Scottish Government in 2004. This is the set of physical standards to which all Scottish housing should aspire, however only social sector properties are legally required to meet the standard. Angus Council is committed to working with homeowners in order to reach the required standard and, along with the improvements from the SHQS, enhance the quality of housing across all tenures in Angus. However it is for individual homeowners and private landlords to decide whether to make improvements to the property to meet SHQS and it is their responsibility to undertake the works.

The energy efficiency of housing stock plays an important role in housing quality and the quality of the lives for the householders. All social sector stock is currently compelled to achieve **Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESH)**, complimenting the physical quality standards implemented through SHQS. New minimum energy efficiency standards have also been established for the **private rented sector** (PRS) properties. Due to the Covid Pandemic improved standards will be phased-in from April 2025 and all PRS properties will be obliged to meet a minimum energy efficiency from April 2028. Similarly, there are new proposed standards for all **owner-occupied properties** and come 2030 action may be mandated to ensure all properties meet the minimum standard by 2040.

The LHS aims to make the best use of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006, along with other legislation to assist in meeting our needs of ensuring an ongoing effective supply of quality housing in Angus that meets future needs and expectations. The LHS also takes account of the Scottish Governments policy vision to maximise independence of disabled people and to drive down the extent of unsuitable housing.

2.4 Below Tolerable Standard Strategy

The Angus' **Below Tolerable Standard (BTS) Strategy 2019-24** ensures we meet the requirements of Section 10 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006. The Act states that local authorities must set out a strategy to address housing that is below tolerable standard. We have a duty to improve, close or demolish houses which do not meet the tolerable standard.

We measure the basic level of repair against 12 criteria:

- is structurally stable;
- is substantially free from rising or penetrating damp;
- has satisfactory provision for natural and artificial lighting, for ventilation and for heating;
- has satisfactory thermal insulation;
- has an adequate piped supply of wholesome water available within the house;
- has a sink provided with a satisfactory supply of both hot and cold water within the house;
- has a water closet or waterless closet available for the exclusive use of the occupants of the house and suitably located within the house;
- has a fixed bath or shower and a wash-hand basin, each provided with a satisfactory supply of both hot and cold water and suitably located within the house;
- has an effective system for the drainage and disposal of foul and surface water;
- in the case of a house having a supply of electricity, complies with the relevant requirements in relation to the electrical installations for the purposes of that supply;
- "the electrical installation" is the electrical wiring and associated components and fittings, but excludes equipment and appliances;
- "the relevant requirements" are that the electrical installation is adequate and safe to use
- has satisfactory facilities for the cooking of food within the house; and
- has satisfactory access to all external doors and outbuildings.

Failure against any of these renders a property below tolerable standard. A below tolerable standard property is not acceptable as living accommodation.

The BTS Strategy covers:

- the extent of BTS housing
- how we will raise awareness of, identify and address BTS housing
- how we will monitor the evidence to inform and update the Strategy

The BTS Strategy will help improve the condition of housing across all tenures and helps:

- reduce the number of houses that are below the Tolerable Standard
- prevent more houses from falling below the Tolerable Standard. It will do this by encouraging homeowners to repair, maintain and improve their homes

The BTS Strategy will also serve beyond addressing physical improvements to the built environment and heritage. Housing that is below the Tolerable Standard constitutes the poorest level of housing, raising concerns about the impact on the health, mental and physical wellbeing of the occupants and the impact on the local community. Therefore by helping reduce the number of BTS properties, there are wider benefits to communities and strategic outcomes across services.

If you are aware of a property that you believe to be below the tolerable standard and if after the owner/landlord has been notified of the problem:

- it is not attended to satisfactorily
- or if there is disagreement about whether there is a problem

Please contact the Council's Environmental Health Team via our [ACCESSLine on 03452 777 778](#)

2.5 Housing, Health & Social Care Integration

Since 2016 Angus Council, NHS Tayside, the third and independent sectors have been working together in a new Angus Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP). The Angus HSCP has been established under the provisions of the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014. The [Angus HSCP Strategic Plan](#) sets out how partners will achieve the vision to 'to place individuals and communities at the centre of our service planning and delivery in order to deliver person-centred outcomes'.

The [Housing Contribution Statement \(HCS\)](#) provides an overarching strategic statement of how the housing sector will support the work of the Integration Joint Board (IJB) to achieve the vision and outcomes for health and social care. The HCS can be seen as the 'bridge' between the LHS and the HSCP Strategic Plan and demonstrates how we will work together to support people to remain at home, prevent unnecessary admissions to hospital and ensure people who have to go to hospital are discharged in a timely manner with the right support in place.

Functions relating to equipment and adaptations are part of a range of local authority functions that are delegated to the Angus HSCP. This means that services related to equipment and adaptations, including the funding to support these, are now included within the new integration arrangements. It was identified through the HCS, that there was a need to develop an approach to adaptations which takes cognisance of the principals of a tenure-neutral approach to adaptations. A Working Group was established to support the review of adaptations services across Angus, including the development of the Housing Adaptations Joint Working Policy (section 4.1).

2.6 Equal Opportunities and Service Standards

The purpose of the SoA is to provide homeowners and private sector tenants with appropriate additional information to assist them in making informed choices about maintaining and repairing their homes. By providing a wide range of accessible, comprehensive information we will empower homeowners to decide how much assistance, if any, they wish to utilise.

The Council are committed to providing a fair and equal service, making access to information as easy as possible for everyone. To this end we always strive to:

- Deal honestly, fairly and politely
- Be trustworthy and reliable
- Provide accurate information
- Respect the right to confidentiality
- Take into account those whose first language is not English
- Be efficient and effective

Literature produced by the Council can be made available in Braille, large print, audio and in the main languages spoken within the community. Translation and interpretation services can be provided where required. The Council will make every effort to raise awareness of the SoA, ensuring the information and assistance is widely available to everyone in the community.

2.7 Delivering the Scheme of Assistance

The SoA has strong partnership links to a number of Council and external services, each where necessary playing a key role in the delivery of the service.



The Council sets the budget for private sector housing assistance, funded through the Council's General Services Fund.

Year	Number of Disabled Adaptations	Spend
2017/18	81	£332,168
2018/19	77	£311,307
2019/20	85	£321,759
*2020/21	28	£158,127

Clearly the Covid Pandemic had significant impact on the number of adaptations that could be completed during 2020/21. The 2021/22 budget allocation stands at £350,000 and, as with future years, will continue to be monitored and subject to variation, depending on the amount of grants presented for approval and payment.

3. The Scheme of Assistance (Part One): House Condition and Repairs

This section details the services that Angus Council offers to homeowners, private landlords and private tenants to help repair, maintain and improve their properties.

3.1 Information and Advice

Information and advice represent fundamental tools in reaching homeowners and private landlords. They are highly cost effective and will be used to influence a change of homeowner and private landlord attitudes towards maintaining the condition of private sector housing. In order to reduce instances of serious repairs being required, it is important to begin the process of tackling disrepair and engaging with homeowners at an earlier stage.

The main emphasis of the SoA is on promoting a culture of responsible homeownership. To achieve this homeowners may only need information resources, and these will be provided in the form of a [suite of guidance and information sheets](#) accessible on the Council website. These are available to homeowners, landlords and private tenants, outlining a range of topics including:

- Repairs and maintenance for owners
- Empty homes
- Asbestos in private properties
- Improving energy efficiency and saving energy in the home
- Minimum standards in the private rented sector
- Landlord and tenant disputes
- Communal repairs (including templates and checklists)

In addition to the information sheets, further guidance and information is available from relevant Council departments covering issues such as:

- Obtaining planning permission
- Obtaining a Building Warrant
- Dealing with a property in a conservation area
- Below Tolerable Standard housing
- Lead piping work
- Private Water Supplies (including Grants to improve supply)

For further information please contact our [ACCESSLine on 03452 777 778](#)

There are also a number of partner agencies to help owners establish what works need to be carried out, how to prioritise those works, and provide assistance in terms of achieving this. It may be necessary to refer people to specialist independent organisations and/or other statutory organisations who can help with more specific details and requirements, these may include:

- [Occupational Therapists](#) (Angus Council/NHS) – for aids and adaptations
- [Caledonia Care & Repair](#) (Caledonia Housing Association) – information/advice for older people and people with disabilities to enable them to improve, repair or adapt their (private rented or owner-occupied) homes
- [HES](#) (Home Energy Scotland) and [SCARF](#) (Save Cash And Reduce Fuel) - for energy efficiency and fuel poverty advice and assistance
- [Angus Citizens Advice Bureau](#)
- [Welfare Rights](#)

- Angus Council Environmental & Consumer Protection
- [Housing and Property Chamber](#) – for dispute matters relating to private sector tenancies, including rent, tenancy agreements, and property condition

The Council will work alongside these service providers to agree a way in which referrals can best be made and received. The Council cannot give legal or financial advice directly but can direct people to where this type of advice can be found.

3.2 Practical Assistance

It may be the case that some people require more than assistance in the form of information and advice. Where owners and private tenants are over 65, have a disability or long-term health condition or have otherwise been identified as vulnerable or at risk and require assistance to identify or organise repairs, the Council will provide practical assistance. This may include helping applicants to fill out grant application forms or arranging for contractors to make home visits and provide quotations for work. Some of these services may be provided by the Council's partner agencies.

Information on which agency will provide the service will be provided when access to the service is requested. You can visit our website [Help to live at home](#) or call our [ACCESSLine on 03452 777 778](#) and tell us about your circumstances and what assistance you may need.

3.3 Angus Trusted Traders Scheme

Angus Council recognise that homeowners can require help in finding a contractor that is reliable, cost effective and trustworthy. To enhance the choice for consumers and offer a better service to members, Angus is now part of the well-established and nationally branded Trusted Trader Scheme, which will replace the Angus Reputable Traders Scheme (ARTS) from April 2020. Backed by the Council and supported by Police Scotland, the Trusted Trader Scheme is used by many local authorities across Scotland.

The scheme ensures that all members:

- will be fully vetted by trading standards
- must conform to an agreed Code of Practice, ensuring fair business practices
- will be given a higher profile and exposure across the Angus area
- may use the Trusted Trader logo and branding on materials and vehicles

And consumers can be reassured that:

- all members have been vetted by Angus trading standards
- members must adhere to a monitored and managed complaints process
- feedback is 100% genuine and checked

To search for a Trusted Trader or find out more about the scheme and becoming a member, please visit the [Angus Trusted Trader website](#).

3.4 Financial Assistance

Prior to the changes introduced by the SoA, grant funding has been the main driver for repairs and improvements in private sector housing. The Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 offers local authorities a new way to engage with homeowners and encourage them to take responsibility for their own

property, removing grant dependence. In line with this, Angus Council expects homeowners to finance repairs and improvements from their own resources such as personal savings, equity release and affordable commercial lending (loans).

For hardship cases who are unable to access and utilise their own resources, the Council will endeavour to assist those in need, signposting to partner agencies and providing a wide range of advice and information as to how financial assistance could be sought.

There may be on occasion the potential to access publicly funded resources such as grant funding. However, we must stress that these resources are extremely limited and are determined by the availability of funding at a given time.

For further information please contact our [ACCESSLine on 03452 777 778](#).

3.5 Energy Efficiency and Fuel Poverty

Improving the energy efficiency of your home can help to improve its overall condition, ensuring it is warmer and safer. It can also help create a more comfortable living environment for the occupants, lowering fuel bills and providing better physical and mental wellbeing through improved comfort and peace of mind.

[Home Energy Scotland \(HES\)](#) offers a number of pathways, from advice and information to loan and grant funding, to help improve your home. Vulnerable people may qualify for grant funding and receive energy efficiency measures free of charge. You can contact HES on [0808 808 2282](#) for free, impartial, expert advice, or request a call back.

[Save Cash and Reduce Fuel \(SCARF\)](#) also offer a range of energy related services to help you live warmer and reduce your fuel bills. They have an expert team of advisors on hand to ensure you get accurate up to date advice. You can contact SCARF on [01224 213005](#) or email them at info@scarf.org.uk

3.6 Empty Homes

The condition of some empty homes continues to cause problems for owners and the surrounding communities. These properties are often neglected for a long time, leading to disrepair that can quickly spiral out of control and leave the owner with expensive repair costs.

The Council has a range of [information available to empty home owners](#), from information and advice on repairs, selling or renting the property, or accessing our [Empty Homes Loan / Grant Fund](#) to bring it back into use.

For further information please contact our [ACCESSLine on 03452 777 778](#)

3.7 Private Water Supply

Angus Council enforces the Private Water Supply (Scotland) Regulations 2006 and Private Water Supplies (Grants) (Scotland) Regulations 2006 in relation to properties with private water supply and maintains and updates the Private Water Supply Register as required by the regulations.

Environmental Health undertakes the sampling and risk assessment of drinking water supplies in response to the statutory requirements and to complaints and enquiries from homeowners, private

landlords and private sector tenants. Environmental Health investigate the sample results and other concerns regarding water quality in regard to public health risk and provide appropriate advice and guidance to homeowners, private sector tenants, private landlords, solicitors, consultants and to the general public.

Environmental Health administer the Private Water Supply Grants Scheme utilising Scottish Government funding to supply sterilisation equipment and carry out other works as necessary in order to improve the quality of water from private water supplies.

If a private water supply suffers from poor water quality, you may be eligible for a grant to improve it if:

- your home or business is in Scotland and served by a private water supply
- the private water supply is the main or sole source of water to these premises
- your private water supply is in need of improvement to bring it up to modern standards

We have compiled a [Private Water Supplies Grant Pack](#) which provides further information on the process.

If you share your supply with a number of neighbouring premises, you may wish to make a joint application.

3.8 Enforcement Powers

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 provides powers for local authorities to carry out works where a homeowner or landlord fails to engage with either a joint owner or the Council on a voluntary basis. The Council may then choose to take action which forces the homeowner or landlord to carry out the necessary works. There are a range of powers available to the Council, aimed mainly at encouraging home-owners to rectify the issue themselves. They include:

- Work Notices which are available to be used with regard to houses in serious disrepair and / or failing to meet the Tolerable Standard. The Council can serve statutory notices under Housing, Planning, Building or Environmental Health laws, requiring the owners or landlords to take action to remedy the problem. These powers will only be used if there is no other acceptable alternative. Specific circumstances will be taken into account in reaching a decision to take enforcement action.
- Working with private landlords and tenants to ensure they meet their obligations under the Repairing Standard. We may assist the tenant to mediate with their landlord to help remedy repairs, or signpost them to the First Tier Tribunal to help facilitate a solution or serve a statutory notice on the landlord, such as a Repairing Standard Enforcement Order (RSEO) which will certify to the Councils Landlord Registration service that the property is not fit for occupation.
- Maintenance Orders can be issued where the Council believes that a property is not being maintained to a reasonable standard and will require the owners to take action to remedy the matter. The Maintenance Order will:
 - Assist owners to focus on the need for repair and maintenance of their home, or
 - Assist owners through enforcement where an owner cannot be traced or contacted, or
 - Assist owners through enforcement where an owner cannot afford/gain access to suitable funding sources
- The Council can also serve Dangerous and Defective Building Notices if a property needs repair work carried out to prevent significant deterioration or to remove a danger to people in or

around it. Resource permitting, the Council may enforce necessary work and recharge costs as a last resort if owners do not comply with statutory notices within a reasonable period.

The principle aim of the SoA is to provide assistance to homeowners when carrying out works on their homes, encouraging them to take responsibility for repairs and maintenance, thereby negating the need to take enforcement action.

3.9 Housing Renewal Areas (HRA)

A local authority may designate any locality within its area as a Housing Renewal Area (HRA) if it considers that:

- a significant number of houses in the locality are sub-standard, or
- the appearance or state of repair of any of the houses in the locality is adversely affecting the amenity of that locality

When considering whether an area is to be declared an HRA, Angus Council will consult with owners and representative groups in that area in order to advise on how an HRA operates, what it will mean for that particular area, agree the HRA boundary, agree an action plan, and advise on what assistance can be offered.

A designation order would then be drafted, submitted to Ministers and approved before any action was taken. The emphasis of the HRA process is on community involvement, and the local authority will have a duty to re-house any residents displaced by any HRA action plan.

4. The Scheme of Assistance (Part Two): Adaptations and Amenities for People with Disabilities

This section details the services that Angus Council offers to people with disabilities who may require adaptations or amenities to help maintain their home and live independently.

The Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968 and the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970 places a duty on Local Authorities to assess people who appear to be in need of Community Care Services and where the assessment calls for the provision of services including adaptations then Angus Council must make arrangements to meet that need.

The 2006 Act includes a general duty to provide assistance to make a house suitable for a disabled person where the house is, or will be, that person's only or main residence. The 2006 Act widens the scope of mandatory grant to include most structural adaptations as well as for installing additional standard amenities which are needed because a disabled homeowner or private sector tenant cannot use the existing ones.

4.1 Adaptation of Homes for People with Disabilities

A need for adaptations can be identified by the person themselves (self-referral); a hospital; or through current social work or other agency involvement. Where a homeowner or private sector tenant has been identified as in need of adaptations, OT staff will arrange to visit and undertake an assessment of need. The assessment will take into account the ongoing needs of the disabled person and their carer, family or other people living in the property. An adaptation referral will be:

- defined as either Minor, Moderate, Major, or Complex
(*Appendix A, Adaptation Type and Approval Process*)

- allocated a priority in relation to the person's need (*Appendix B, Timescales for Allocated Priority*).

Appendix C outlines the **Adaptation Recommendation Process**.

A key element to the adaptation approval process is the importance of joint working between relevant services such as OT and Housing staff. This ensures that all options to meet a person's needs are explored from the earliest opportunity, including the suitability of the property to meet their medium to long term needs and the opportunities for rehousing.

The **Angus Housing Adaptations Joint Working Policy** sets out how we will provide an efficient adaptations service, meet the housing needs of people with medical and support needs, help people to live independently in their own home and support the provision of social care services. The provision of an effective and responsive adaptations service improves the quality of people's lives and is based on the principal of 'minimum intervention, maximum independence'.

OT staff will offer tailored advice and assistance designed to help the person live more independently in their own home. This may consist of providing equipment, and/or teaching the person new ways of carrying out activities they may be finding difficult. If a person is assessed as requiring a permanent adaptation for their home to meet their needs, the applicant will be eligible for mandatory grant assistance for the minimum work required to meet need. Examples of adaptations within the terms of the Policy may be, but are not limited to:

- Partial kitchen adaptation
- Level access shower
- Alteration/widening of doors
- Ramped access (Permanent and Removable Solutions)
- Equipment
- Structural work to facilitate equipment eg for ceiling track hoist, through floor lift

The Council have a mandatory duty under the 2006 Act to provide minimum 80% grant funding for work required to provide a disabled occupant with the necessary adaptations. The aim of this is to assist homeowners and private tenants to remain in their homes and live independently in the community they are familiar with and supported in.

Applicants will be eligible for 100% grant if they, their spouse, civil partner, partner or dependent are in receipt of one of the following income replacement benefits:

- Income support
- Income-based jobseekers allowance
- Pension credit (guarantee element)
- Income Related Employment and Support Allowance
- Universal Credit

Applicants who receive the 80% grant but do not qualify for 100% grant will not be eligible for any further financial assistance from the Council but they will have full access to the range of information, advice and other kinds of non-financial assistance provided.

In circumstances where a property is amended with work beyond the amenities covered by the mandatory grant, those additional works and the associated costs will be the responsibility of the homeowner. For example, where an additional bathroom is identified as a requirement and covered

by grant funding, the owner may also wish to provide further living accommodation (such as a bedroom), but they will have to cover the costs of the extra space themselves. The Council will be able to offer advice and information on carrying out the non-grant funded element.

4.2 Care and Repair Service

The Angus Care and Repair Service assists disabled homeowners and private sector tenants to arrange major adaptations and provide other services which enable older and disabled people to repair, maintain or adapt their home and promote independence.

The key aims of the service is to:

- Support disabled homeowners and private sector tenants to enable necessary adaptations to be made to their property and assist them to access available grant funding
- Provide general information and advice on repairs and maintenance to owners and private tenants, and provide practical assistance to eligible service users

Care and Repair support service users to arrange major and complex adaptations in their home following a referral from OT. Taking an enabling role, Care and Repair ensure that service users, their carers and their families are able to exercise appropriate control over the process, preventing service dependency whilst encouraging independent living.

For further information please contact Angus Care & Repair - anguscr@caledoniaha.co.uk.

4.3 Adaptations to Common Parts

A Common Part is generally recognised as any part or common facilities within or used in connection with a building, such as an entrance way, access passage or stairwell. Where such areas are used by a disabled person (with either physical or mental disability) to access their home, that person has the right to make relevant adjustments to the common parts with the consent of a majority of the owners of the common parts. A majority means a simple majority of one. Tenants in privately rented accommodation can still apply for a grant but they must obtain the consent of a majority of owners of the common parts, but the owners cannot unreasonably withhold consent.

4.4 Reinstatement of Adapted Property

Assistance may be required in the case of reinstating a property which has been adapted for the needs of a disabled or elderly occupant to its original condition by removing adaptations. There is however a substantial shortage of homes within Angus adapted to meet the needs of disabled homeowners therefore Angus Council will only grant aid such works in exceptional circumstances.

The removal of an adaptation, which meets current Building Standards, will not be funded or encouraged and where a property has recently been purchased, no financial assistance will be given for removal of adaptations. That said, Angus Council do not wish to discourage private landlords from assisting any tenant with a disability, and so grant assistance will be offered to reinstate a property at the end of a tenancy if that is the only practical solution; and if the costs incurred are above a minimum value of £2,000.

4.5 Requesting an Assessment

Anybody can contact the [Community Occupational Therapy service](#) to request advice, information or an assessment. To request an assessment for assistance to adapt your home you can contact Angus Council's Community Occupational Therapy service by calling [ACCESSLine on 03452 777 778](#) and asking for the First Contact service, or emailing FirstContactOT@angus.gov.uk.

You can also ask your GP, District Nurse, Health Visitor etc to contact the service on your behalf.

Referrals are prioritised and you may have to wait before we carry out an assessment, however you will be advised as to the approximate waiting time for an assessment. If your circumstances change, or if you want to check that we hold the correct information about you, get in touch with First Contact OT using the contact details above. A member of the team will contact you and if required will visit your home to discuss what aids and adaptations you might need.

You can get further information to help you live independently at home with the [Independent Living Angus online assessment tool](#). This online tool asks simple questions about you, your capabilities and your home. It then provides ideas on how tasks can be made easier as well as giving details on equipment solutions that are suitable.

Most of the services are aimed at adults, but some of the information may apply to younger people as well. Independent Living Angus offers:

- supported self-assessment for particular problem areas such as falls, difficulty with bathing or using the toilet
- suggestions for safe and suitable solutions to help you manage your daily living tasks
- options about the [purchase or loan of equipment](#)
- flexibility in completing your assessment - you can look at as much or as little information as you want at your own pace.

You can also visit our [help to live at home](#) pages for details of other services we provide.

4.6 Rehousing

Where the scope of work is not considered feasible or requires numerous major or complex adaptations, rehousing options will be explored. When exploring rehousing options, an options appraisal will be led by Housing and take into account the client's circumstances and needs. It will consider any suitable adapted or adaptable local authority stock; any suitable adapted or adaptable RSL stock; any suitable private rented properties and suitable home ownership options. Where rehousing is recommended by Occupational Therapy and Housing and due to the complex nature of the housing requirements there are no solutions available in the current housing stock or private market, the case will be referred to the Joint Complex Case Panel. The Council does not have a statutory duty to rehouse people with a medical need, and while every endeavour will be made to find a satisfactory solution within a reasonable timescale each case will be different and timescales will vary.

You can find out which housing options are available to you by using the online [Housing Options Wizard](#). There are lots of different housing options in Angus. The online tool can help you find out about the different housing options available to you and provide a range of personalised housing advice.

If you need additional advice or support we can also offer you an appointment to discuss your housing options with one of our trained Housing Officers. Our housing options service is free for anyone over 16 years old to help them find, keep and maintain their home. The service can give advice on a wide range of subjects including:

- planning to move home and finding accommodation
- help to prevent you becoming homeless
- homelessness
- an assessment of your housing needs
- getting support
- finding education, training and employment
- affordability and benefits

To contact the service call [ACCESSLine on 03452 777 778](tel:03452777778).

4.7 Appeals Process

On completion of an assessment by the Occupational Therapist, the applicant will be advised of what assistance can or cannot be provided. If the applicant is dissatisfied with the offer of assistance made by the Occupational Therapist, they can request a review. The Joint Complex Housing Panel has been established to provide a decision-making forum in relation to complex adaptation and rehousing decisions, as well as other decisions where despite comprehensive joint working it has not been possible to come to an agreed recommendation. The Panel will review the following cases:

- Complex adaptations recommended following a joint assessment by the case Occupational Therapist and Housing Officer;
- Rehousing recommended following a joint assessment by the case Occupational Therapist and Housing Officer where no suitable accommodation can be identified;
- No recommendation can be reached following a joint assessment by the case Occupational Therapist and Housing Officer and;
- Client does not agree with the recommendation reached following a joint assessment by the case Occupational Therapist and Housing Officer.

In situations where the applicant is still dissatisfied with the decision making, the case will be referred to the Head of Community Health & Care Services, and Service Leader for Housing.

5. Other Solutions and Assistance

5.1 Assisted House Purchase

If it has been determined that an adaptation to a property is impractical or unlikely to meet your needs, you can request assistance to purchase a new home through a number of [Scottish Government's home purchase schemes](#). These are known as shared equity schemes and they include:

- Open Market Shared Equity – help with buying any home available for sale on the open market that falls within a given price range, sharing the cost with the Scottish Government
- The New Supply Shared Equity Scheme – help to buy a new build home from a housing association or local council, sharing the cost with the Scottish Government
- Shared Equity for Older People – if you're aged 60 or over and want to buy a new home but can't afford the total cost

Housing Options Scotland is an organisation which can provide disabled people with specialist advice about purchasing a property suitable for their needs. They are a charity providing information, advice and other support to disabled people (which includes people with learning disabilities), carers and professionals to improve access to housing in the owner-occupied sector. They may be able to assist disabled occupants by:

- Providing information and advice on home ownership and its feasibility
- Helping to find independent financial advice
- Helping to access specialist technical advice
- Advice on using DSS benefits to finance an owner-occupied property
- Linking property seekers to adapted or purpose-built property for sale

More information about Housing Options Scotland can be found by [calling 0131 247 1400](tel:01312471400), or email info@housingoptionsscotland.org.uk

Any new property purchased with the assistance of these organisations would be eligible for assistance from the Council to adapt it to the needs of the applicant, however we recommend that you seek the advice of the housing and OT services at pre-purchase stage to advise on the suitability and eligibility for grant assistance.

5.2 Sight or Hearing Loss

If you have sight or hearing loss and require an assessment, we have an agreement with North East Sensory Services (NESS) to provide advice and information as well as an assessment of your needs. Contact NESS on [0345 271 2345](tel:03452712345) or [01224 625622](tel:01224625622) or SMS on [07593 102004](tel:07593102004).

5.3 Other Mobility Assistance

We do not provide any walking aids or wheelchairs. Wheelchairs are available from the Red Cross on short-term loan. Contact [01307 475072](tel:01307475072) or [01382 200084](tel:01382200084).

Walking Aids can be provided by contacting Physiotherapy Tayside NHS:

- Arbroath - [01241 822591](tel:01241822591)
- Carnoustie and Monifieth – [01241 802372](tel:01241802372)
- Forfar (including Kirriemuir) – [01307 475087](tel:01307475087)
- Brechin and Montrose - [01356 665162](tel:01356665162)

If you experience difficulty with your mobility you may be entitled to a [blue badge](#). Visit our [help to live at home pages](#) for more information about the support available to help you live at home.

5.4 Fire Detection Assistance for Homeowners

From February 2022 every home in Scotland must have interlinked fire alarms, meaning that if one goes off, they all go off. The new law also outlines the requirement for a heat alarm in the kitchen and a carbon monoxide detector if you have a carbon-fueled appliance (boiler, gas fire/heater or flue).

If you are a tenant, your landlord is responsible.

Older and disabled homeowners on low incomes can now get help with costs (subject to available funding). Please contact Angus Care & Repair - anguscr@caledoniaha.co.uk.

Alternatively, if you do not meet these criteria then you may be able to get some further advice and assistance from the [Scottish Fire Service](#).

6. Monitoring and Evaluation

It is important for Angus Council to have in place robust and reliable monitoring, reporting and review arrangements to ensure that the Scheme of Assistance meets the aims set out in section 1.1.

Where possible, all service requests and applications for assistance are recorded on the current in-house database recording systems which allow a wide range of reports to be extracted, including:

- Type of adaptation / assistance required
- Who is seeking assistance / advice
- Tenure and location
- Cost

To assist us in developing a complete overview of progress in delivering the SoA, we will also obtain information relating to common problems with private sector housing stock. We will raise awareness, identify and address private sector stock in poor condition, and help prevent properties from falling below standard. These will be monitored through data collection as part of our BTS Strategy 2019-24. The types of assistance and costs of delivering the SoA service will continue to be reported annually to the Scottish Government.

APPENDIX A: Adaptation Types and Approval Process

Adaptation Type	Description	Examples	Criteria	Specification	Recommendation / Approval Process
Minor	<p>Work that involves minor changes to the house or retrofitting</p> <p>Does not involve any significant or structural changes.</p> <p>Low value</p>	<p>Grab rails</p> <p>Bannister</p> <p>Specialist door handles</p> <p>Specialist taps/ wc handles</p> <p>Re-siting radiator</p>	<p>Needs not complex and can be resolved with a standard adaptation</p> <p>Any house type</p>	<p>Standard specification</p> <p>No site survey</p>	<p>Assessment</p> <p>No formal approval required</p> <p>Authorisation levels for staff making recommendations</p>
Moderate	<p>Work that involves permanent changes to the house.</p> <p>Do not involve any significant or structural changes.</p>	<p>Re-hanging doors</p> <p>Installing sliding door</p> <p>Over bath shower</p> <p>Widening of footpath</p> <p>Widening or creation of steps (4 or less)</p> <p>Blacksmith handrails</p>	<p>Needs not complex and can be resolved with a standard adaptation</p> <p>Adaptation meets assessed medium to long term needs</p> <p>Property suitable for adaptation and will meet medium to long term needs</p>	<p>Standard specification</p> <p>Site survey required</p> <p>May require drawings</p> <p>May require Building Warrant or Planning Consent</p>	<p>Assessment</p> <p>Authorised OT Service</p>
Major	<p>Structural work or work that involves other significant and/ or permanent changes to the house.</p>	<p>Curved stair lifts/ permanent ramps</p> <p>Wet floor shower in existing bathroom (may require layout to be rearranged)</p> <p>Additional wc or shower</p> <p>Structural work to facilitate equipment eg</p>	<p>Complex needs but can be resolved with a standard adaptation</p> <p>Adaptation meets assessed medium to long term needs</p> <p>Property feasible to adapt and will meet medium to long term needs</p>	<p>Specialist specification required to meet individual need or specialist assessment required to determine specification</p> <p>Site survey and technical assessment required</p> <p>Architect/ Structural Engineer/ Building Consultant involvement</p>	<p>Recommended via OT assessment and HO appraisal</p> <p>Authorised by: OT Service Senior Housing Officer Technical Manager/ Building Standards</p>

		for ceiling track hoist, through floor lift Widening doorways	All housing options have been considered	Requires drawings Likely to require Building Warrant or Planning Consent	
Complex	Structural work or work that involves other permanent changes to the house and either: i) Involves work to extend the footprint or convert garage/ attic, or ii) Involves multiple adaptations, or iii) Involves work to a property which is not suitable for adaptation or will not meet long term needs iv) Involves complex social, personal or financial circumstances v) Joint recommendation not reached (moderate or major)	Extension to living space including extension of footprint and conversion or garage/attic etc. Through floor lift requiring shaft (internal or external) Alteration to house layout Multiple major adaptations In-situ solution not feasible - conversion/ new build/ acquisition required	Complex needs requiring multiple adaptations and/ or very specialist adaptation or accommodation All housing options have been considered Emergency or urgent need	Specialist specification required to meet individual need or specialist assessment required to determine specification Site survey and technical assessment required Architect/ Structural Engineer/ Building Consultant involvement Requires drawings Likely to require Building Warrant or Planning Consent	Recommended via OT assessment and HO assessment Referred to Panel by OT Team Leader/ CHT Manager Approved by Panel

Appendix B: Timescales for Allocated Priority

All Occupational Therapy referrals will be screened and allocated according to our priority framework. The timescales are:

Priority Banding		Timescale
Priority 1		1-7 days
Priority 2		28 days
Priority 3		56 days

The service is striving to reduce the timescales to:

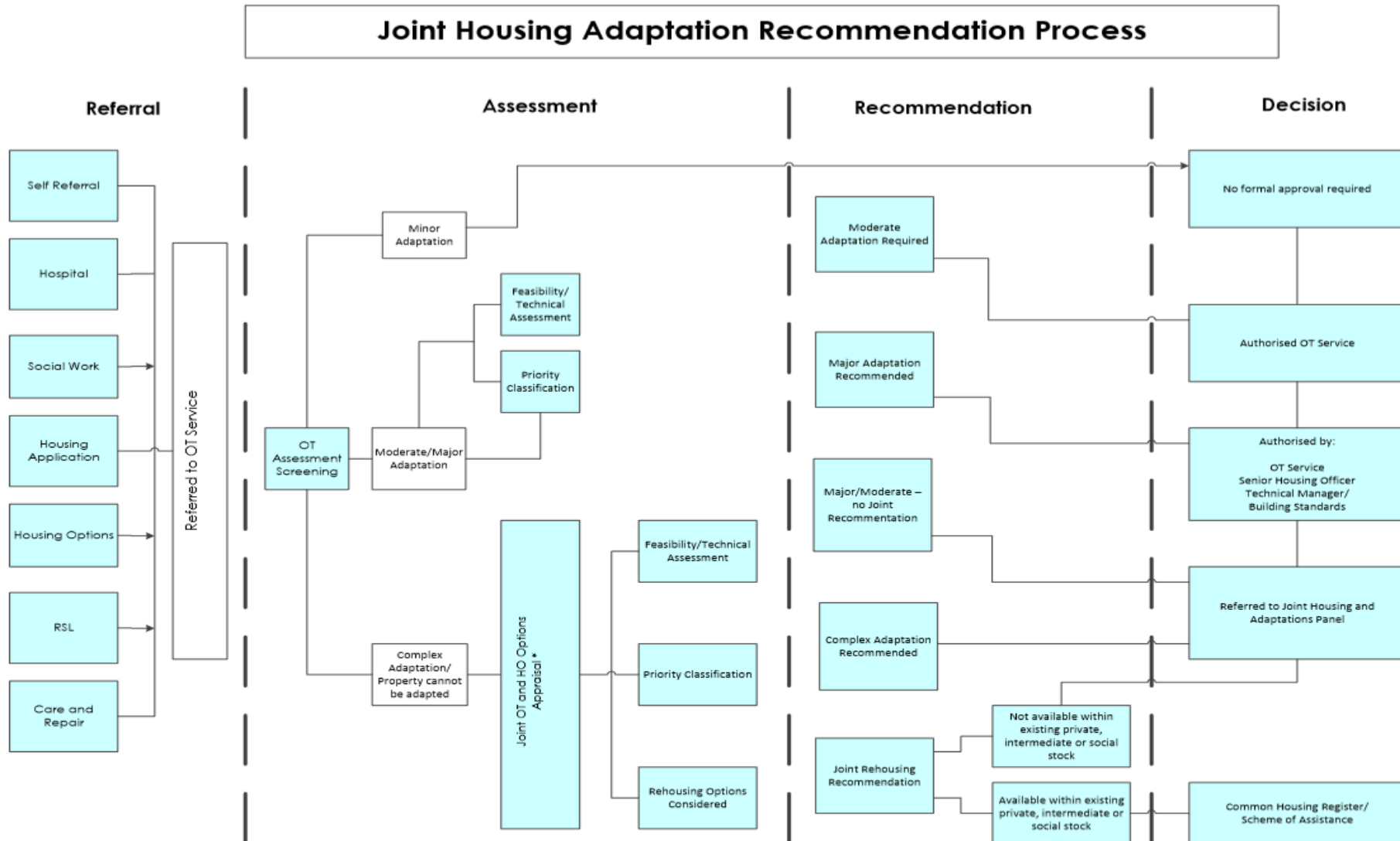
Priority 2 – 14 working days

Priority 3 – 28 working days

Where the Occupational Therapy assessment shows that the current accommodation cannot be adapted or requires numerous major adaptations or complex adaptations, the following timescales will apply:

Joint appointment to discuss housing options		14 working days (2 working days for delayed discharge)
Housing Options Appraisal completed and joint recommendation		14 working days following appointment (add an additional 40 working days for any feasibility studies requested)
Feasibility study		40 working days
Referral to Joint Complex Case Panel		2 working days
Considered at Joint Complex Case Panel		6 weeks

The Joint Complex Case Panel will monitor delivery timescales.



Useful Contacts & other Sources of Advice

Angus Council		
First Contact / Occupational Therapy	01241 465274	FirstContactOT@angus.gov.uk
Building Standards	01307 491836	PLNGrants@angus.gov.uk
Affordable Housing Team	01307 474725	AffordableHousingTeam@angus.gov.uk
Common Housing Register	01307 474772	housingchr@angus.gov.uk
Community Housing Team (<i>Forfar & Kirriemuir</i>)	03452 777 778	ForfarCHT@angus.gov.uk
Community Housing Team (<i>Montrose & Brechin</i>)	03452 777 778	BrechinMontroseCHT@angus.gov.uk
Community Housing Team (<i>Arbroath, Carnoustie & Monifieth</i>)	03452 777 778	HouArbroathCHT@angus.gov.uk
Registered Social Landlords (RSLs)		
Trust Housing Association Ltd	0131 444 1200	info@trustha.org.uk
Sanctuary Scotland Housing Association Ltd	0800 131 3348	ContactUs@sanctuary-housing.co.uk
Blackwood Housing Association Ltd	0131 317 7227	info@blackwoodgroup.org.uk
Angus Housing Association Ltd	0345 177 2244	contactus@angusha.org.uk
Caledonia Housing Association Ltd	0800 678 1228	info@caledoniaha.co.uk
Hillcrest Housing Association Ltd	0300 123 2640	customerservice@hillcrestha.org.uk
Abertay Housing Association	01382 903545	queries@abertayha.co.uk
Ark Housing Association	0131 447 9027	admin@arkha.org.uk
Bield Housing Association	01382 228911	info@beild.co.uk
Cairn Housing Association	0800 990 3405	enquiries@cairha.com

Housing Options and Related Services

Independent Living Angus, online based self-assessment system – www.independentlivingangus.org.uk - internet based service that allows you to access independent advice and information on local and national groups, safety advice and equipment items that may make everyday tasks easier or safer. You can also find out how you are ageing as well as undertake supported self-assessment in areas where you are having difficulty – i.e. self-care, falls, access in/out of your home.
Ownership Options - www.ownershipoptions.org.uk (Ownership Options helps disabled people to resolve their housing issues, by working on finding tailored solutions for individuals. They work across housing sectors, including private and social renting, however, their focus is on home ownership).
Care Information Scotland – 08456 001 001 / www.careinfoscotland.scot (Care Information Scotland is a helpline and website that has been set up to provide comprehensive information on community care for older people in Scotland).
The Council for Mortgage Lenders website provides information about mortgages and buying a home.
Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) offer a free home fire safety visit to check your rooms for potential hazards and provide information about smoke, heat and carbon monoxide alarms. Visit them online or call 0800 0731 999 , or text FIRE to 80800