

# East Lothian Council's Scheme of Assistance – *A Summary Guide*



**East Lothian**  
Council

# East Lothian Council's Scheme of Assistance

## INTRODUCTION

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 focuses on improving the condition of private sector housing in Scotland. Part 2 of the Act requires local authorities to have a Scheme of Assistance in place to assist homeowners, private landlords and private tenants to repair, maintain, improve and adapt their properties.

The Scheme of Assistance promotes increased responsibility among homeowners for the repair and maintenance of their homes.

This leaflet outlines the help and assistance East Lothian Council and key partners can provide to homeowners, private landlords and private tenants.



## Meeting the needs of disabled people

East Lothian Council has a duty to assist disabled people to make sure their home is suitable for their needs. If you are a disabled homeowner or private tenant, we can help you to adapt your home.

Before work can begin, an assessment of your needs must be carried out by an East Lothian Council Occupational Therapist. This ensures that the most suitable adaptation is carried out to address your current and future needs. The first point of contact for Occupational Therapy is through the Council's Access Service.

The Access Service can be contacted on **0845 603 1576 Monday to Thursday 9am-5pm and Friday 9am-4pm.**

Once it has been agreed that an adaptation is the best way to meet your needs, a referral will be made to Care and Repair East Lothian who can offer practical assistance. Assistance from Care and Repair is optional but can include organising architectural services and tendering for work, assistance to apply for a grant and/or charitable funding, help with paperwork and liaising with contractors. The level of support offered will vary depending on individual needs.

## Funding adaptations

East Lothian Council is required to provide grant funding towards the cost of adaptations that have been recommended by an East Lothian Council Occupational Therapist. Grants of either 80% or 100% of the total cost of work are available.

A grant of 100% of the eligible costs will be available if you or a member of your household (spouse, civil partner or dependant), is in receipt of one of these qualifying benefits:

- Income Support
- Income Based Job Seekers Allowance
- Guaranteed Pension Credit
- Income Based Employment and Support Allowance

A grant of 80% of the eligible costs will be available in other circumstances.

The applicant will be required to pay the balance between the grant award and cost of the work.

In some cases, Care and Repair East Lothian may be able to help people access other sources of funding such as benevolent funds or charitable trusts.



## Adapting privately rented properties

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 introduced the Right to Adapt for private tenants. If you are a private tenant, your landlord cannot unreasonably refuse permission for an adaptation that you need.

Before an adaptation can be carried out, you must first seek consent from your landlord to carry out the work. The landlord must make a decision within one month of receiving the application and cannot unreasonably withhold consent.

If you leave the property after an adaptation has been carried out, it is for the landlord to decide if it should remain. Most adaptations are very unobtrusive and can in fact improve the property by making it more attractive for future tenants. While landlords are encouraged to retain adaptations, the Council will provide assistance to reinstate the property if required.

For further information on adapting a privately rented property, contact the Private Sector Housing Team.



## Complaints, comments and compliments

East Lothian Council operates a feedback policy, which can be used if:

- You can see a way for us to improve a service
- We have done something well
- You have received a poor service

An information leaflet on the feedback policy is available from any Council office or can be downloaded from the Council and Government section of the website [www.eastlothian.gov.uk](http://www.eastlothian.gov.uk).

If an owner or private tenant is unhappy with the service they have received and would like to make a complaint, they should contact the Private Sector Housing Team in the first instance. They will try to resolve the matter as quickly as possible.

If the complaint remains unresolved then it can progress to step two of the feedback procedure (formal investigation), followed by step three (review by the Chief Executive).



Versions of this leaflet are available on request on audiotape, in Braille, large print or your own language.  
☎ Phone 01620 827199

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