

CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES: THINKING ABOUT THE FUTURE IN YOUR HOME

You can expect to be working with your occupational therapist (OT) for the next few years as your child develops and their long term needs become clearer. At this stage you may not know how your child will develop and whether any special considerations may need to be given in relation to their housing needs. Together with the help and advice of your child's OT, who is experienced in such matters, you may wish to start thinking about the options for your home in the future.

This leaflet is designed to help you start thinking about ideas now, so that you can start planning for your long term future in your home.

It may be that your current home is not going to be suitable for your child's long term needs even with adaptation. This (something you need to think about) may need to be considered before the situation becomes critical. Your child's OT will be able to discuss this with you in relation to your child's future predicted needs.

Things to think about

- Is it possible that your child will be in a wheel chair?
- Is your house large enough for them to manoeuvre about in a wheelchair?
- Is your bathroom large enough to accommodate a wheelchair?
- Is the hall way wide enough for a wheelchair?
- Will your child be able to get upstairs?
- Will they be able to use a stair lift?
- What is the access like to your home? Is it steep?
- Can a wheelchair manoeuvre upstairs?
- Can a wheelchair access the kitchen?
- Is there room to extend?
- Has the property been adapted or extended in the past? (this may affect the type & extent of any future works that can be carried out to the property)
- Is planning likely to be a problem?

Not all houses are suitable for adaptation. The scope for adaptation is also limited by the size of the mandatory grant. The current maximum available is £30,000 and is usually adequate to fund most adaptations. However, if extending your home is the only way to meet your child's assessed needs then additional funding may be required.

Your occupational therapist will be happy to discuss with you the options that might be possible in your home, both now and in the future. They can also advise you on what you need to look for if you decide to move house.

If you rent your property, your occupational therapist may be able to help you with your application for re-housing and registering with Choice Based Lettings. They would advise on your child's present & future predicted functional needs and how this relates to the type of property that would be suitable for your family, and could write a supportive report. This would be helpful in any bid you make for a property through the Choice Based Letting scheme. If the Housing Department is aware of your families long term needs for adapted properties they can try and influence the Housing Associations' new build program to accommodate this.