Information NOW
Information for people in Newcastle upon Tyne

Home adaptations, equipment and aids

You can make changes to your home or get equipment to help you with day-to-day tasks and activities such as getting:

- In and out of your bath
- Around indoors or outdoors
- Dressed
- On and off chairs
- In and out of bed
- Making a hot drink or a meal
- Going up and down the stairs
- Using a telephone
- Watching television or listening

Types of equipment

There are a range of things that you can buy to help you with:

- **Personal care** such as grab rails
- **Bathroom and hygiene** such as raised toilet seats, commodes and bath boards
- **Bed equipment** such as a bed raiser
- **Moving around the home** such as walking sticks, zimmer frames or hand rails
- **Chair adaptations**
- **Preparing food** such as lever taps and adapted kitchen utensils
- **Your safety and peace of mind,** for example, following if you had an injury or fall ill at home. This could include installing **alarms and telecare equipment,** including vibrating alert alarms, personal loop systems for deaf/deafblind/hard of hearing people

Types of adaptation

- **Minor adaptations are small changes that can be made to your home.** Such as, installing hand or grab rails around your home
- **Major adaptations are larger changes that can be made to your home.** These changes may require structural changes to your property. A professional may need to carry out these changes such as: installing a downstairs shower room, widening doorways, installing a ramp to your front door, or lowering the work tops in your kitchen



Age UK England have a helpful factsheet on **adapting your home.**

Get advice to find the right equipment

It is important to get the right advice first, to avoid making an expensive mistake. There are a number of services that can offer advice or assessments to help make sure you choose the right equipment for your needs.

Local help and advice

Disability North give independent living support and advice. You can visit them to see aids and equipment such as stair lifts, an accessible kitchen, bathroom and shower. They also have walkers, bed risers, shoes and wheelchairs. They can help you to choose and buy equipment to suit your needs. They have a list of second hand equipment that's available to buy.

Adult Social CarePoint at Newcastle City Council can give you information and advice. Call them for a chat to find out about local support. They will work with you to understand your situation. To find out what's working well and where they can help. They can put you in touch with local services. If you need one, they can arrange a **Needs Assessment** to find out if the council can help you further. Some people are eligible for financial help from the Council. This could include equipment or adaptations to your home that could make your life easier. If you can't get financial help, they can still tell you about services that could make your life easier.

Your doctor or GP surgery can refer you to NHS Disabled Services Centre for a wheelchair assessment.

Care & Repair Newcastle at Newcastle City Council is a home improvement agency. They help people to adapt their homes who are unable to do so themselves. They support disabled people, older people and vulnerable people to live independently and safely at home for longer. To use this service you will need to meet their eligibility criteria. This may also be means tested. If you are eligible for support they can help you to apply for a Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) and loan equipment. Contact them for more information.

Minor Adaptations and Repairs Service (MARS) provide adaptations for disabled people in Newcastle. To help you live independently and safely at home. They provide adaptations that are easily installed and don't require structural changes to your property. For example, internal and external grab rails.

Peacocks Medical Group have a shop in Newcastle City Centre where you can see and buy equipment.

NHS Disabled Services Centre at the Freeman Hospital, is the centre for:

- amputee rehabilitation and prosthetic limbs
- wheelchair and special seating: this includes wheelchair repairs
- artificial eye services

To use the NHS Disabled Services Centre you need to be referred by your hospital surgical team, after an amputation. Your doctor, GP and other healthcare professionals can refer you to this service too. You will then be given an appointment to attend the clinic for and assessment and support.

Online information and advice

Disabled Living Foundation provides advice about equipment for older and disabled people. Their website **Living Made Easy** can help you find equipment that can help you manage at home. You answer a few questions to get a personalised report. This can help you choose and buy equipment without having to wait for an assessment.

Scope provide information and support to disabled people, families and carers. They have a free disability telephone helpline. They can answer questions and talk you through a wide range of topics connected with disability, such as: equipment and assistive technology, benefits and social care.

RiDC conducts consumer research on products for older and disabled people. They have launched **Rate It** which enables you to read reviews of products by customers. They have produced a helpful guide to **bath accessories to help you get in and out of the bath.**

Equipment catalogues are available online from shops such as Boots or Argos. Some charities also have catalogues of products such as Age UK England.

Buying second hand equipment

Disability North have a list of second hand equipment for sale.

Disability Equipment Service is the largest source of second-hand equipment for sale in the UK.

Fitting your own equipment

Adult Social CarePoint at Newcastle City Council can give you advice about adapting your home. They can arrange for you to have a **needs assessment** to find out if you can help from the Council. They will give you tailored information and advice to help you find the right equipment or aids.

Disability North can give advice on different types of equipment and adaptations, where to purchase it and how to arrange for the work to be done.

If you want to fit your own equipment, you can arrange for a reliable tradesperson or handyperson to carry out the work. Find more information on our article **Getting repairs and decorating done** .

Maintain and repair your equipment

Adult Social CarePoint at Newcastle City Council can give you a list of companies who can help with maintaining your equipment.

Maintain your stairlift

These organisations can help if your stairlift (or other types of equipment) need repairing or maintaining. They will explain the cost of call out and repair:

- **Direct Services, Durham County Council**
- **Dolphin Stairlifts**
- **Easy Lift**
- **Stannah Stairlifts**

Hire equipment

It may be more cheaper to hire equipment such as wheelchairs, bathroom aids or walking frames if you only need it for a short time. You can hire equipment from

- **DLD Wheelchair Rental**
- **British Red Cross**

Borrow equipment

Newcastle City Loan Equipment Service (NCLES) provides equipment to help with your daily living and nursing needs at home. This is a free service. You borrow equipment for as long as you need it. When it's no longer needed they will collect the equipment, clean it and reuse it. They

install, maintain and repair a wide range of equipment. The equipment available to borrow includes:

- Toilet seats, frames and commodes
- Walking sticks, walking frames and standing equipment
- Pressure relief products
- Lifting and handling products
- Specialist beds and seating
- Bath and shower boards, seats and rails

To borrow equipment you need to have an assessment. Speak to:

- **Your Doctor or GP surgery**
- **Adult Social Care at Newcastle City Council**
- Your hospital ward or department, if you're currently receiving hospital treatment

You can return your equipment to NCLES when you no longer need it.

Help to pay for equipment and adaptations

Adult Social CarePoint at Newcastle City Council can give you information and advice, to help you find the right equipment or adapt your home. They can arrange for you to have a **needs assessment** to find out if you can help from the Council. They can then arrange for you to have a financial assessment to find out if you are eligible for help towards the costs of your support. If you are eligible for support from the Council they will work with you to find what you need. If you need equipment or changes made to your home, Adult Social Care can arrange for this with you.

Check you're receiving all the benefits you're entitled to.

Care & Repair Newcastle at Newcastle City Council is a home improvement agency. They help people to adapt their homes who are unable to do so themselves. They support disabled people, older people and vulnerable people to live independently and safely at home for longer. To use this service you will need to meet their eligibility criteria. This may also be means tested. If you are eligible for support they can help you to apply for a Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) and loan equipment. Contact them for more information.

Read more on InformationNOW on how to pay for adaptations to your home.

Home owners or private renters

Adult Social CarePoint at Newcastle City Council can give you information and advice, to help you find the right equipment or adapt your home. They can arrange for you to have a **needs assessment** to find out if you can help from the Council. Even if you are not eligible for help from Adult Social Care they can give you information and advice to help you find the right equipment or aids.

Living Made Easy can help you find equipment that can help you manage at home.

Care & Repair Newcastle at Newcastle City Council is a home improvement agency. They help people to adapt their homes who are unable to do so themselves. They support disabled people, older people and vulnerable people to live independently and safely at home for longer. To use this service you will need to meet their eligibility criteria. This may also be means tested. If you are eligible for support they can help you to apply for a Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) and loan equipment. Contact them for more information.

Care & Repair England have a workbook which helps you to think about your **Housing, Care and Related Finance in Later Life**.

Social Housing or Council Tenants

Speak to your housing provider to find out what help they can give you.

If you live in a council house, you can ask **Newcastle City Council** to make the necessary adaptations to your home free of charge.

Charities that help with equipment and aids

Citizens Advice Newcastle has information on charities that can offer financial help to former employees from a particular trade who are struggling to pay for the items they need.

Independence at Home provide small grants for people who have a physical disability, learning disability or long term illness and are in financial need. They provide small grants that include:

- Home Adaptations
- Mobility and Travel Equipment
- Special Disability Equipment
- Communications Equipment

You can't apply directly to this scheme. A professional health, social care or advice service worker can help you to apply for a grant.

Motor Neuron Disease Association (MNDA) offer a range of grants, some of which can be used for equipment and aids that are not provided by NHS or local authorities. Health and Social Care professionals can apply for a support care grant for someone diagnosed with MND. Anyone living with MND can apply for a quality of life grant

REMAP designs and provides free aids for disabled people.

Royal British Legion support veterans to get funding and grants to adapt your home and receive new equipment.

SSAFA Forces Help or **ABF The Soldiers' Charity** may be able to help pay for equipment and adaptations if you are a veteran.

The Chronicle Sunshine Fund is a local North East charity that provides specialist and adapted equipment to children and young people aged 0-19 living with disabilities, additional needs, chronic and terminal illness. They fund equipment that cannot be provided by NHS or local

authorities.

Turn2us is a charity where you find charitable funds and grants to apply for, when you need money for essential things in life. For example, furniture, household items, white goods, electrical items, studying, bringing up children, experiencing life changing circumstances and more. On their website they provide a benefits calculator, grant finder, and a Personal Independence Payment (PIP) Helper tool.

Wheelchairs and mobility scooters

Manual wheelchairs, mobility scooters and powered wheelchairs make it possible for you to get out and about and participate in the activities you enjoy. There are different vehicles available to choose from.

Read more on InformationNOW about **wheelchairs and mobility scooters.**

Children's equipment

Special equipment, adaptations and aids are needed to support children as they grow.

Turn2us is a charity where you find charitable funds and grants to apply for, when you need money for essential things in life. For example, equipment and aids, furniture, household items, electrical items, studying, bringing up children, experiencing life changing circumstances and more. They have a telephone helpline, benefits calculator and online information.

Whizz Kids supply mobility equipment across the UK and support young wheelchair users through skills training, clubs and employability.

Children Today provide specialised equipment for children and young people with disabilities throughout the UK. The aim is to ensure that every disabled child and young person fulfils their potential and leads an active childhood. Equipment can include wheelchairs, walking frames, tricycles and other mobility aids along with multi-sensory equipment.

Living Made Easy can help you find equipment for children with disabilities to help them manage at home

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Tax relief on equipment

If you're disabled or have a long-term illness, you won't be charged Value-added Tax (VAT) on products designed or adapted for your own personal or domestic use such as:

- Mobility Scooters
- Stairlifts
- Wheelchairs

To get the product VAT free your disability has to qualify. For VAT purposes, you're disabled or have a long-term illness if:

- You have a physical or mental impairment that affects your ability to carry out everyday activities, eg blindness
- You have a condition that's treated as chronic sickness, like diabetes
- You're terminally ill

See **gov.uk** for more information.

Telecare, telehealth and personal alarms

Telecare, telehealth and personal alarms can help you to live well at home. Giving you and the people who care for you confidence and peace of mind that you are safe. Also known as personal alarm systems, home care monitoring, careline systems, community alarms or pendant alarms.

There is lots of equipment that can help you:

- Remember to take medication or switch off appliances
- Lock doors
- Get help if you have a fall or a flood

Digital switchover for telecare, telehealth and personal alarms

The UK's telephone network is changing. It is being upgraded and improved by 2025. Telephone providers are moving customers from old analogue landlines to a new digital landline service. Services that use the old landline system such as, home phones and healthcare devices will be switched over to the new digital system.

People who use telecare devices that are connected to a phone line, such as a fall monitor, lifeline, or personal alarm. When you speak to your telephone provider tell them about the telecare service that you use. They can give you more advice about how the switch could affect you.

Ostara provides telecare in Newcastle. For new customers, they now only new install digital base units. For existing customers, they will contact you to swap your old analogue equipment and replace it with new digital equipment. The new digital units have a 72-hour battery back-up and a 4G roaming sim. This means your phone can still be used if there is a power cut or problems with the landline, so you can get help in an emergency. This process is being managed by Newcastle City Council. It is planned that by March 2025 the telecare service will be fully digital. This is well in advance of the switch off date.

The Housing Plus schemes (Sheltered and Assisted Living) are being upgraded to ensure they can operate when the landline networks are switched off.

If you have other devices connected to your telephone landline, such as alarm systems, you might need to upgrade your device to make sure it is compatible. You can contact the equipment supplier or device manufacturer to find out if it will still work when you switch to the new digital phone line.

Read more about moving landline phones to digital technology: what you need to know from Ofcom

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Check you're claiming the right benefits

There are various disability-related benefits that may be available to you including:

- **Disability Living Allowance**
- **Personal Independence Payment**
- **Attendance Allowance**
- **Carer's Allowance**

See **gov.uk** for more information.

Last updated: September 23, 2026

Useful Organisations

Shine On (formerly Caring Hands)

Email: contact@shineoncharity.org.uk

Website: https://www.shineoncharity.org.uk/

Telephone: 0191 261 5234

Address: Shine On, NE6 5QN

Citizens Advice Newcastle (CAN)

Email: citycab@newcastlecab.org.uk

Website: http://citizensadvice-newcastle.org.uk

Telephone: 0808 223 1133

Address: 4th Floor, City Library, NE1 8AX

Disability North

Email: reception@disabilitynorth.org.uk

Website: www.disabilitynorth.org.uk

Telephone: 0191 2840480

Address: The Dene Centre, NE3 1PH

RIDC (Research Institute for Disabled Consumers)

Email: mail@ridc.org.uk

Website: www.ridc.org.uk

Telephone: 0207 427 2460

Address: Unit 10 Blenheim Court, N7 9NY

Adult Social CarePoint at Newcastle City Council

Email: ASCP@newcastle.gov.uk

Website: http://www.newcastle.gov.uk/AdultSocialCare

Telephone: 0191 278 7878

Address: Adult Social CarePoint Newcastle City Council, NE4 9LU

Disabled Living Foundation (DLF)

Email: info@dlf.org.uk

Website: http://www.livingmadeeasy.org.uk/

Telephone: 0207 289 6111

Address: Shaw Trust, B69 2DG

SSAFA – The Armed Forces Charity

Email: tyneandwear.branch@ssafa.org.uk

Website: https://www.ssafa.org.uk/tyne-wear

Telephone: 0191 222 0803

Address: Fenham Barracks, NE2 4NP

Disability Equipment Service

Email: team@disabilityequipmentservice.co.uk

Website: https://disabilityequipmentservice.co.uk/

BLISS=Ability

Email: enquiries@blissability.co.uk

Website: www.blissability.co.uk

Telephone: 0191 427 1666

Address: 34-36 New Green Street, NE33 5DL

REMAP

Email: data@remap.org.uk

Website: http://www.remap.org.uk/

DLD Wheelchair Rental

Email: info@dldwheelchairrental.co.uk

Website: www.dldwheelchairrental.co.uk

Telephone: 0191 261 0007

Address: 9 - 18 Byker Bridge, NE1 2NS

Newcastle City Loan Equipment Service (NCLES)

Website: https://www.newcastle-hospitals.nhs.uk/services/loan-equipment-service/

Telephone: 0191 282 3484

Address: Geoffrey Rhodes Centre, NE6 2UZ

ABF The Soldiers' Charity

Email: supportercare@soldierscharity.org

Website: http://www.soldierscharity.org/

Telephone: 020 7901 8900

Address: Mountbarrow House , SW1W 9RB

Stannah Lifts

Email: gatesheadadmin@stannah.co.uk

Website: www.stannah.co.uk

Telephone: 0191 4600010

Address: Wellington Rd, NE11 9JL

Easy Lift Stairlifts

Email: info@easylift.org.uk

Website: www.easylift.org.uk

Telephone: 01207 503600

Address: Unit G3A , DH8 5SP

Direct Services, Durham County Council

Email: propertyhelpdesk@durham.gov.uk

Telephone: 03000 267890

Address: St. John's Road, DH7 8XQ

Care and Repair Newcastle at Newcastle City Council

Email: careandrepairnewcastle@newcastle.gov.uk

Website: www.careandrepairnewcastle.co.uk

Telephone: 0191 211 5836

Address: Care and Repair Newcastle, NE1 8QN

Peacocks Medical Group

Email: karen.sagar@peacocks.net

Website: https://www.peacocks.net/

Telephone: 0191 232 7894

Address: 1 St. Thomas Street, NE1 4LE

Age UK England

Email: contact@ageuk.org.uk

Website: www.ageuk.org.uk

Telephone: 0800 678 1602

Address: Age UK, EC3N 2LB

Living Made Easy

Website: https://livingmadeeasy.org.uk/

Address: Living Made Easy – Shaw Trust, B69 2D6

British Red Cross

Email: contactus@redcross.org.uk

Website: www.redcross.org.uk

Telephone: 0191 273 7961

Address: British Red Cross, NE4 8SR

NHS Disablement Services Centre

Telephone: 0191 223 1184

Address: Wheelchair Services Disablement Services Centre , NE7 7AF

Minor Adaptations and Repairs Service (MARS) at Newcastle City Council

Email: mars@newcastle.gov.uk

Telephone: 0191 277 1219

Address: Care & Repair Newcastle, NE1 8QN

Access Solutions

Email: enquiries@accesssolutions.org.uk

Website: www.accesssolutions.org.uk

Telephone: 01207 291703

Address: Woodland Court, DH9 7BF

Flexible Support Options (Brilan)

Email: info@flexiblesupportoptions.co.uk

Website: http://www.flexiblesupportoptions.co.uk

Telephone: 0191 261 7306

Address: c/o Balmoral Court, NE6 2DB

Turn2us

Website: www.turn2us.org.uk

Address: Unit 9, CF15 7QQ

Chronicle Sunshine Fund

Telephone: 0191 201 6289

Address: NCJ Media, NE1 7JB

Scope

Email: helpline@scope.org.uk

Website: https://www.scope.org.uk/

Address: Here East Press Centre, E15 2GW

Independence at Home

Email: iah@independenceathome.org.uk

Website: https://independenceathome.org.uk/

Ross Care

Website: https://rosscare.co.uk/

Telephone: 0191 415 5151

Address: Ross Care, NE38 0AE

Ostara

Email: ostara@newcastle.gov.uk

Website: https://ostara.newcastle.gov.uk/ostara-help-touch-button

Telephone: 0191 278 7878

Address: Ostara, NE7 7LX

Related Articles

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