

Disability Related Expense (DRE)

2026/27

Disability Related Expense - DRE:

What is Disability Related Expense (DRE)?

This is an allowance that is made in your financial assessment for additional expense due to disability or medical condition if you receive Attendance Allowance or Disability Living Allowance/Personal Independence Payment (care/daily living component).

What is Wokingham Borough Council Standard Disability Related Expense (DRE)?

We apply a standard disability related expense of £40.00 per week.

What if I believe my Disability Related Expense (DRE) is more than £40.00 per week?

We will ask for any evidence you have about your Disability Related Expenditure. This is proof of cost, such bills/invoices/receipts, contracts, bank statements and/or receipts. It is also proof that the cost is related to disability, such as a letter from a health professional or a care-plan that states a need is not met by the council.

What next?

We may require more evidence for things you have listed as Disability Related Expenditure, or disagree in some cases. For instance, if you choose to buy items/services when there is a cheaper alternative that meets the needs, or if it is something provided by the NHS for free. The cost of the listed items must be paid by you and not covered by a grant or donation.

Disability Related Expense (DRE) exclusions:

A DRE allowance will not be made for the following expenditure:

- If the service user is in residential care;
- General items or services require for daily living, which would be used by the general population;
- An item or service met by a payment from a Grant (e.g. Disability Facilities Grant) or where another funding source has been provided;
- The difference between the actual cost and the lower cost alternative where we consider it was reasonable for a lower cost alternative;
- Structural or landscaping work (e.g. tree surgery, path laying or re-laying) in gardens or to buildings unless;
 - Disabled Facilities Grant contributions apply in respect of the works carried out;
 - Works required to assist with the prevention of falls, such as the installation of hand rails, repairs to footpaths; or

- The modifications to garden or building are essential to enable use of a scooter or wheelchair that you need to use, or to provide secure storage for a scooter and the facility is used as such. In this case, the amount will be calculated as if the modifications were equipment with a suitable life span applied.

Where a particular item of expenditure combines more than one item or service but elements of which are to meet your specific need due to disability or medical condition, we will consider only those parts of the expense that are meeting specific need for disability or medical condition. For example, if you had to buy specific footwear or clothing due to your disability.

Sharing costs

If you share a household with other adults, and the additional disability related expense item relates to a service that supports the household as a whole (for example - payments to a cleaner), the amount of the expense item that is allowed for in your financial assessment will be on the basis that the costs are shared evenly by the number of adults in the household - unless we have information to show that a different way of sharing costs should be considered.

Verification of expenses

For most items, you will be expected to keep receipts as proof of purchase, or bills for services such as utility (e.g. water meter, gas, electricity).

If you are unable to give receipts for items of DRE you wish to claim as an allowance in your financial assessment, we will give you additional time to gather receipts if needed.

Special equipment items and maintenance

This guide includes allowances for special equipment items (such as wheelchair, stair lift, powered bed) if you have incurred an expense to make the purchase. Special equipment items will be allowed where they meet your specific need due to a disability or condition. The amount allowed in the financial assessment will be based on the life span of the equipment and either the purchase price you paid or a lower cost alternative if that was reasonable to meet your identified needs. Where special equipment items require maintenance, and you pay for this maintenance yourself, we will make an allowance for these maintenance costs in your assessment.

General tips

It can be difficult to think about Disability Related Expenditure. Your life is simply what you experience every day, and you are probably not use to considering what costs you incur each month that arise from your disability and which do not. You may not know which costs relate to your disability in day-to-day life.

Think about your day-to-day life and what items and services you use. Try to think about what is different between what you have to spend compared to a relative, friend or neighbour who does not have your disability or long-term health condition.

Think about a week, month and year in your life. You may use some items and services more at some times than others. It may help to look through your records you have about your disability and invoices/bills/receipts to see what you spend in a week/month/year and which costs arise from your disability or ongoing medical condition.

DISABILITY RELATED EXPENDITURE	EXAMPLE/TIPS
Washing Powder or laundry	If you need to use a special detergent or a laundrette. If you have to do more laundry, for example, because of incontinence or risk infection.
Clothing and footwear	Special clothing and shoes to fit your disability. If you have to buy clothing more often because of your disability. Costs of getting clothes adapted (e.g. having buttons replace with Velcro). Small equipment such as button hooks (if not provided by Occupational Therapy).
Bedding	Special bedding used, such as incontinence sheets and anti-allergenic sheets.

Heating costs, electricity and water	If you need your home to be heated more due to your condition. If you spend more time at home because of disability and use more power. If you use more water due to extra laundry. It could be hard to calculate some of this because you will need to work out what is “extra” compared to someone who doesn’t have your disability or impairment.
Purchase, maintenance and repair of disability related equipment	Items such as wheelchairs, beds, mattresses; hoist, lifts and stair lifts, and also home adaptations like grab-rails and ramps, if you have bought or hired these yourself (or you had to make a contribution to top up a Disabled Facilities Grant). Any costs repairing or maintaining them, or insuring them (e.g. wheelchair services, new batteries). IT such as adapted computer and communication aids, or specialist software or peripherals. Special gadgets you need in the kitchen or around the house such as food preparation machines, bed side tables, bath boards, sliding sheets, special cutlery (if not provided by Occupational Therapy).
Additional costs of specialist dietary items required (as confirmed by Adult Care or NHS doctor/Specialist) due to disability or medical condition	Actual cost paid for specific dietary items purchased due to disability or medical condition.
Chiropody	If NHS chiropodist is not available and is based on 6 weekly visits.

Some other items that may be considered:

- Holiday/respite: additional costs that arise due to your disability when you go on holiday, such as needing a carer or rental of specialist equipment when away.

- Home delivery costs (e.g. supermarket shopping deliver charges) if you can't go shopping yourself or a services isn't offered via your Social Care worker
- Extra costs of day-to-day life: disposable gloves for Pas and carers not provided by the NHS, things you need to buy yourself such as urinals, anything else that you need to pay extra for that you can't do yourself because of your disability
- Assistance dog costs: food, vet bills
- Social activities: if you have costs that relate to social activities to help with mental health issues, such as clubs and befriending services, or if you need to pay extra to take someone with you because of your disability (and it isn't covered by your social care package)
- Cost of privately arranged care, day and night care not arranged by the council (it isn't offered or part of your social care package) - any care support you receive that you pay for

Everyone's costs will be different and a list of examples cannot contain everything. IF you have Disability Related Expenditure that is not listed, you should still include it. If you are unsure whether the cost counts as DRE or not, put it on the financial assessment form anyway.

Examples of what cost could be:

If the heating costs are more than the standard rate:

Figures for 2026/2027	Standard	N East/ E Midlands	N West/ W Midlands
Single person - Flat/ Terrace	£2026.47	£2196.68	£2453.74
Couple - Flat/Terrace	£2673.61	£2895.21	£3233.86
Single person - Semi Detached	£2152.38	£2333.18	£2606.24
Couples - Semi Detached	£2841.48	£3072.58	£3432.44
Single - Detached	£2618.63	£2836.73	£3173.58
Couples - Detached	£3451.93	£3740.17	£4178.84

ALTERNATIVE HEATING ALLOWANCE

Ofgem published annual estimates of average energy usage by house size, which can then be extrapolated to find the average energy bills by house size.

The estimate is calculated by multiplying the kWh use by the current average unit rates and adding in the current average standing - Rates Effective 1st January 2026.

- Electricity 27.69p per kWh
- Electricity 54.75 per day (£199.84 per annum) standing charge
- Gas 5.93p per kWh
- Gas 35.09p per day (£128.08 per annum) standing charge

	Number of Bedrooms	Electricity usage (kWh)	Gas usage (kWh)	Estimated average annual dual fuel energy bill
Low	1 - 2	1,800	7,500	£1271.09
Medium	3 - 4	2,700	11,500	£1757.50
High	5+	4,100	17,000	£2471.31


Costs below are for 2026/27:

ITEM	AMOUNT	EVIDENCE
Community Alarm System	Actual cost, if reasonable	Bills from or payments to provider
Privately arranged care Private domestic support	Actual cost where this is not provided as part of the care plan, but the amount is reasonable and necessary for their care and support	Evidence of employment arrangement and/or legally correct payments to an employee under UK employment and tax law. Where agency arranged evidence of billing and payment.
Specialist washing powder or laundry	£5.02 per week	The assessment or care and support plan may identify a need. If not evidence from other sources and consideration of the nature and impact of any health problem or disability may provide a guide. Identify more than 4 loads per week
Special clothing or footwear/additional wear and tear to clothing and footwear Additional cost for bedding	Reasonable amount for extra cost caused by disability	The assessment or care and support plan may identify a need. If not evidence from other sources, which may include medical evidence, and consideration of the nature and the impact of any health problem or disability may provide a guide. Evidence of purchase and payment.

Internet access	Reasonable amount for additional cost due to disability	Evidence that costs are higher due to disability. Evidence of purchase and payment.
Transport costs necessitated by illness or disability	Reasonable amounts over and above the mobility component of PIP or DLA. Where support with costs are available from other sources but have not been used this can be taken into account in considering reasonableness. For example transport to hospital appointments or council provided transport to a day centre.	Evidence of payment and purchase
Special dietary needs	Reasonable amount where demonstrated above average dietary costs	The assessment or care and support plan may identify a need. If not evidence from other sources, which may include medical evidence, and consideration of the nature and the impact of any health problem or disability may provide a guide. Details of special purchases, including evidence of payment
Gardening	Based on individual costs of garden maintenance	As privately arranged care
Wheelchair	£5.24 per week manual £12.71 per week powered	Evidence of purchase. No allowance if equipment provided free of charge
Powered bed	Actual cost divided by 500 (10 yr life) up to a maximum of £5.78 per week	Evidence of purchase if available

Turning bed	Actual cost divided by 500 up to a maximum of £10.12 per week	Evidence of purchase if available
Powered reclining chair	Actual cost divided by 500 up to a maximum of £4.59 per week	Evidence of purchase if available
Stair-lift	Actual cost divided by 500 up to a maximum of £8.17 per week	Evidence of purchase without DFG input
Hoist	Actual cost divided by 500 up to a maximum of £4.02 per week	Evidence of purchase without DFG input

Notes



This publication is produced by Wokingham Borough Council.
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