



GWENT HOUSING SUPPORT GRANT

ALLOWABLE ACTIVITIES



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Introduction

Housing Support Grant Practice Guidance (2020).

The Allowable Activities detailed within this document should be read within the context of the Housing Support Grant Practice Guidance (2020) document. The guidance states that Housing-Related Support (H-RS) is provided to vulnerable people to help them develop and maintain the skills and confidence required to live as independently as possible. Housing and preventing homelessness/ people living in inappropriate institutional settings should be at the core of H-RS services. All allowable activities should be contained within a support plan, which addresses a person's housing and homelessness issues.

While this document relates to activities funded within the Housing Support Grant, local variances may be evident. Each service should be assessed on a case by case basis.

Chapter 2 of the guidance (Eligibility) also includes the following:

- HSG can be offered to anyone eligible, regardless of their tenure.
- The principles of the Housing Support Grant are:
 - The earliest preventions are most effective and most cost effective and should always be the interventions of first choice.
 - Tackling and preventing homelessness is a whole public services matter- rather than simply a 'housing matter'.
 - All services should place the individual at the centre, working to their strengths and supporting them to achieve their aspirations.
 - Services should be commissioned and delivered in a psychologically informed way, taking into account the impact of trauma on people who require support, to achieve a sustainable impact. This includes the five components of psychologically informed approaches: the psychological framework; relationships; staff support and training; evidence generating practice and physical environment.
 - Policy, service delivery and practice should be informed and shaped in a co-productive manner with service providers and those with lived experience.
 - Services should be developed using the best available evidence.
 - The duties in Part 2 of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 should be the last line of defence, not the first, and all services should work to the spirit not simply the letter of the law.
 - We expect all services to treat people with respect and as experts in their own lives, to work with empathy, listening and building trusting relationships and to be accountable to service users, the public and service commissioners.
 - Housing support must be delivered in a way which enables the effective delivery of complementary public services by ensuring their impact is not undermined by unstable housing circumstances. For example, the impact of mental health services can be undermined by a chaotic lifestyle- stabilising an individual's housing circumstance can improve the impact of that clinical response. HSG will achieve this by adopting collaborative approaches to working with other functions and agencies.
 - To provide services that build the capacity and ability of individuals or households to maintain a home.
 - To provide services that prevent homelessness or the need for an individual to live in an inappropriate institutional setting.
 - Providing or enabling access to suitable housing for individuals or households.
 - To provide services that mitigate the impact of homelessness on individuals or households.
 - Brokering access to other services for people in housing need.
 - Raising awareness and understanding with other professionals and with the wider public, including in schools and colleges.
 - Action to enforce legislation intended to secure and maintain access to good quality homes, which was previously funded through the Rent Smart Wales (RSW) grant. For example, legislation that places duties on landlords to be registered and regarding the management of tenancies.
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- People eligible for HSG funded services must be over 16.

- Pre-Tenancy work with individuals under 16 is permitted where purpose is to build the capacity to take on an occupation contract or right to occupy a home after their 16th birthday.
- Where there is a need for family support, such as family mediation, and the main purpose of which is to allow the individual under 16 to remain within the family home, HSG can be used to cover these services.
- Provision of HSG services will be based on **identified or assessed needs**; this assessment must be flexible and person centred.”
- HSG will be enabling, and develop a person’s independence, i.e. **‘doing with’** as distinct from **‘doing for’**. The focus of the service will be to encourage and support the individual to exercise personal choice and self-determination.
- Services must be part of a support package that must be based on a written **support plan**, agreed with the service user and including a **risk assessment** and **risk management** measures.
- Services must be outcomes focussed, and support plans should focus on what outcomes are to be achieved by the individuals supported. Services should adhere to the core principles contained within the **Housing Support Grant Framework 2023**.



Housing Support
Grant Outcomes Fra

Why do we need to define Allowable Activities for Housing-Related Support?

Although the above guidance does not contain a list of allowable activities, the Housing Support Grant Teams in Gwent have developed (and updated) this document not to restrict innovation but to assist agencies and individuals to manage expectation and understand the purpose, scope and boundaries of HSG.

An alphabetical list of HSG **allowable activities** follows on the next page.

A list of HSG **excluded activities** can be found at the end of this document.

Please contact your local Housing Support Grant Team for more information.

Allowable Activities

1	ACCOMMODATION (<i>FINDING ALTERNATIVE.....</i>)
	<p>This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assisting the individual to explore options for alternative housing • Helping the individuals to plan for liaising with the landlord i.e. drawing up a list of possible questions, helping to negotiate terms of occupation contracts • Form filling can be undertaken in conjunction with the service user but not in isolation • The funding of bond schemes. <p>This does not include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transporting service users to view a property, where the primary function is merely the provision of a transport service • Furniture removal • Decorating, cleaning or handyperson services
2	ACCOMMODATION (<i>SETTING UP AND SERVICES TO SUSTAIN TENANCY.....</i>)
	<p>This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support worker may go through the tenancy agreement with the individual, explaining and defining it's provisions, plan with the individual how they will go about contacting utilities companies and make payments (liaising on behalf of individuals where physical disability, learning difficulty or emotional issues prevent the individual from doing so independently) • Exploring options for payment methods – (individuals should be encouraged to consider these options for themselves wherever possible) • Helping the individual to compile a list of questions to ask utilities companies or an action plan of tasks to be undertaken, list of useful telephone numbers, demonstrating and modelling telephone conversations with agencies and companies • Helping the individual to compile a list of items required for the home, e.g. crockery, cutlery, fridge, decorating items etc • Accompanying individuals to advise and help them to purchase essential items for the property e.g. from DIY stores, electrical appliances • Assistance to organise removals and utilities • Landlord mediation • The supply of target hardening equipment • Translation, interpretation or BSL services where support services work with Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Groups, refugees and people with sight or hearing impairments. • Providing provisions such as food/toiletries in temporary accommodation settings to help individuals to become settled. • Assisting the individual to apply for discretionary or one off payments. <p>This does not include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moving an individual into a property i.e. moving furniture, decorating, handyman services, plumbing in washing machines, cookers etc • Purchasing items, furniture or white goods on behalf of individuals
3	ACCOMMODATION (<i>MAINTAINING.....</i>)
	<p>This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with the individual to identify issues any concerns that jeopardise the individual's tenancy e.g. strategies to reduce noise pollution and anti-social behaviours • Working with the individual. to help them understand the terms of their occupancy agreement • The support worker can assist the individual to explore the options available to them when addressing repair and maintenance issues

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cleaning/clearance services where provided as a timebound intervention alongside emotional support within the provision of specialist hoarding services with the primary aim of supporting the individual to develop their own skills in this area. <p>This does not include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acting on behalf of the landlord to issue Breach of Tenancy Notices or Notice Seeking Possession • Carrying out improvement, repair or maintenance • Domestic tasks such as shopping, cooking cleaning, gardening etc.
4	ADAPTATIONS TO IMPROVE ACCESSIBILITY IN THE HOME
	<p>This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helping the individual to access grants and information or refer themselves to appropriate agencies who may assist with adaptations and improvement to property <p>This does not include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support worker directly making alterations to property
5	ALARM SERVICES
	<p>This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alarm monitoring only <p>This does not include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installation, repair, maintenance, capital cost or provision of unit
6	CHILDREN
	<p>This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offering information, support and signposting on issues relating to child welfare such as parenting skills, mediation, liaising with schools, health workers and other statutory or voluntary agencies • Support to a person under 16 years of age where the parent/carer is service user, and behaviours may impact on sustainment of tenancy • Relevant costs associated with the provision of effective support, such as childcare or travel expenses, to enable individuals to attend courses or other similar activity to address their support needs. <p>This does not include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing a baby/child sitting service directly provided by the support worker • Formal behavioural therapy to children • Play work • Support to a person under 16 years of age where the parent/carer is not already receiving support, except to access family mediation services where the main purpose is to allow the individual under 16 to remain within the family home. • The support worker cannot be part of the decision making process.
7	COMMUNITY RESOURCES
	<p>This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing information (and making enquiries with or on behalf of the individual) about the availability and access arrangement for community resources. • Community resources could include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ statutory services such as Social Services, Health, Housing and Probation ○ Education, training and employment agencies ○ professional service such legal advice

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ voluntary and local community groups/service • If the individual requires support with attending the above the support worker is permitted to transport the service user to introductory visits only (subject to the support providers policies and procedures). • Accessing digital inclusion programmes.
8	DROP-IN
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing advice and HSG guidance on an ad hoc basis where there is no support plan in place e.g. support workers staffing a housing-related support 'drop-in' session
9	EMOTIONAL SUPPORT
	<p>This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The support worker may provide emotional support which promotes resilience and wellbeing for service users in receipt of a housing support service, to allow the individuals to share their feelings and concerns about something that is happening in their lives which is impacting on their ability to maintain their accommodation <p>This does not include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialist or formal counselling • Befriending services • Support that is clinical in nature and where a statutory body has the responsibility to provide that service.
10	FINANCES AND INCOME
	<p>This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budgeting and organising finances, including applications for appropriate benefits to maximising income (eg accessing Energy Efficiency/ fuel poverty programmes such as USwitch, accessing Water Assist, Discretionary Assistance Fund and Discretionary Housing Payments) • Assisting with developing strategies to reduce any debts and to address financial issues within set regulations stipulated by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA). It is the responsibility of the provider providing budgeting and debt counselling support to check with the FCA if they are required to be registered with the FCA. • The support worker may make enquiries and liaise with agencies (with or on behalf of the individual) in relation to the above • Supporting the individual to identify appropriate ways to pay rent e.g. set up direct debit payments • Drawing up a payment plan with the individual as part of the individual's overall financial support • Liaising with the landlord on behalf of the individual to negotiate re-payment of arrears <p>This does not include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acting as budget holder • Taking responsibility for any financial transactions • Transporting service users to bank • Financial involvement in regards of payment for provision of care services • Taking responsibility for individual's finances where individuals have been deemed not to have capacity to do so • Support workers should not handle an individual's money, credit or debit cards, should not have knowledge of PIN numbers and should not pay for items using individual's money.
11	HEALTH CARE
	<p>This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arranging access to emergency health services on behalf of an individual eg dental or GP appointment • Sign posting and advising the individual on agencies that may be able to assist with drug and alcohol treatment and testing orders • Liaison with relevant agencies • Arranging prescription collection services

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sign posting and advising the individual on agencies that may be able to assist with rehabilitation and specialist counselling and screening programmes. <p>This does not include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prompting, holding and administering medication • Apply/change dressings • Advice on medication • Direct medical intervention • Drawing up an action plan with a individual to assist in following their drug and alcohol treatment and testing order • Ensuring service users comply with testing orders
12	INDEPENDENT LIVING SKILLS
	<p>This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The support worker may undertake a motivating, modelling and prompting role in teaching individuals life skills, this can include demonstrating the use of equipment, drawing up household management plans with the individual (e.g. a timetable of household activities to be undertaken each week/month), and exploring options with the individual and encouraging them to plan, prepare and organise themselves e.g. food preparation, shopping or cooking • This should be a planned time-limited approach with the aim of the individual undertaking the tasks as independently as possible in time. The number of sessions required will depend on the needs of the individual • The support worker is permitted to demonstrate or model how to safely lock doors and windows, turn off equipment etc and to draw up a safety plan for the individual so they will eventually be able to do these tasks independently • Advice regarding controlling access to the dwelling <p>This does not include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domiciliary and personal care • Support workers undertaking any tasks themselves or on-going supervision of individuals. • On-going transport to take the individual shopping • Shopping on behalf of the individual including when individual is present but not actively involved in process • Answering the door on behalf of individuals • Checking ID on behalf of individuals • Asking visitors to sign in and out • Taking care of visitors (e.g. making tea and coffee etc) • Policing individual's behaviour or the building
13	REHABILITATION AFTER ILLNESS/ACQUIRED DISABILITY
	<p>This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support to apply for appropriate aids, adaptations and grants to improve access to property <p>This does not include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manual handling-related activities
14	SAFEGUARDING – ADULTS
	<p>This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The support worker may present factual information to safeguarding conferences (in person or in writing) • The support worker may contribute to and carry out a safeguarding action plan • The support worker should have knowledge of their organisation's policy and procedures in relation to safeguarding, and submit a duty to report form to their local safeguarding team where they suspect abuse is or may be occurring. <p>This does not include:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocacy, chaperoning or transportation for the individual. • The support worker cannot be part of the decision-making process.
15	SAFEGUARDING – CHILDREN
	<p>This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The support worker may present factual information to safeguarding conferences (following the initial meeting, invitations to attend additional safeguarding meetings should be agreed by the support manager and be dependent on the individual case and/or agenda). • The support worker may contribute to and carry out a safeguarding action plan for individuals 14+ supported by the family mediation services. <p>This does not include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocacy, chaperoning or transportation for the individual • The support worker cannot be part of the decision making process.
16	SERVICE USER INVOLVEMENT
	<p>This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The support worker may support the individual to participate in engagement involvement activities both internal and external to the support provider <p>This does not include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The support worker acting as facilitator for User involvement events or meetings • HSG money cannot be used to pay for the organisational costs of events and meetings such as room hire, refreshments
17	SOCIAL SKILLS
	<p>This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The support worker may discuss appropriate social interaction with the individual where their current behaviour may adversely affect their tenancy or ability to maintain their own home or find/sustain employment • The support worker may help the individual to access courses and training • If the individual requires support with attending the above the support worker is permitted to transport the individual to introductory visits only (subject to the support providers policies and procedures)
18	TRANSPORT / MOBILITY
	<p>This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training and advice on appropriate use of public transport as part of a support plan e.g. how to buy train tickets, access timetables etc • Training and advice on getting directions and transport to a new activity/venue • If the individual requires support with attending the above the support worker is permitted to transport the individual to introductory visits only (subject to the support providers policies and procedures) • Other exceptional instances will be determined on a case by case basis <p>This does not include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Longer-term transportation and accompaniment • The provision of a transport service that is a repetitive and/or promotes dependency • Support worker pushing a wheelchair user • Physical support to individuals to enable them to get in/out of vehicles or facilitate the use of mobility aids • Long term/permanent assistance or accompaniment with the use of public transport where it is unlikely that the individual will perform the task independently • Use of vehicle for removals

19	WORKSHOPS
	<p>This Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of workshop that are HSG focussed and time limited, and are identified on the support plan of the individual

Excluded Activities

These include:

- 1) Advice or advocacy not related to tenancy or maintaining the home
- 2) Acting as an appropriate adult
- 3) Befriending services / peer support
- 4) Cooking meals for service users in their own home
- 5) Directly provided creche facilities
- 6) Decorating services
- 7) Delivery of meals to service users in their own home
- 8) Domiciliary and cleaning services
- 9) Feeding, serving individuals or laying/clearing of table
- 10) Gardening / garden clearance services unless individual is receiving support under a hoarding service
- 11) Housing management tasks which would normally be funded by rents or service charge
- 12) Medication, supervising, prompting or monitoring of
- 13) On-going transport provision
- 14) Personal care services (examples): Activities that involve direct touching of the individual e.g. personal washing, taking medication, eating, toileting, dressing and other personally intrusive tasks
- 15) Advice, guidance or prompting for personal washing, taking medication, eating, toileting, dressing, and other personally intrusive tasks
- 16) Activities undertaken because the individual is physically unable to complete the activity themselves e.g. pushing a wheelchair, carrying/moving household items, locking doors
- 17) Rent collection
- 18) Respite services
- 19) Services where there is a statutory duty (where Social Services are required to fund under community care legislation)
- 20) Supervision of court orders
- 21) Supervision of offenders