

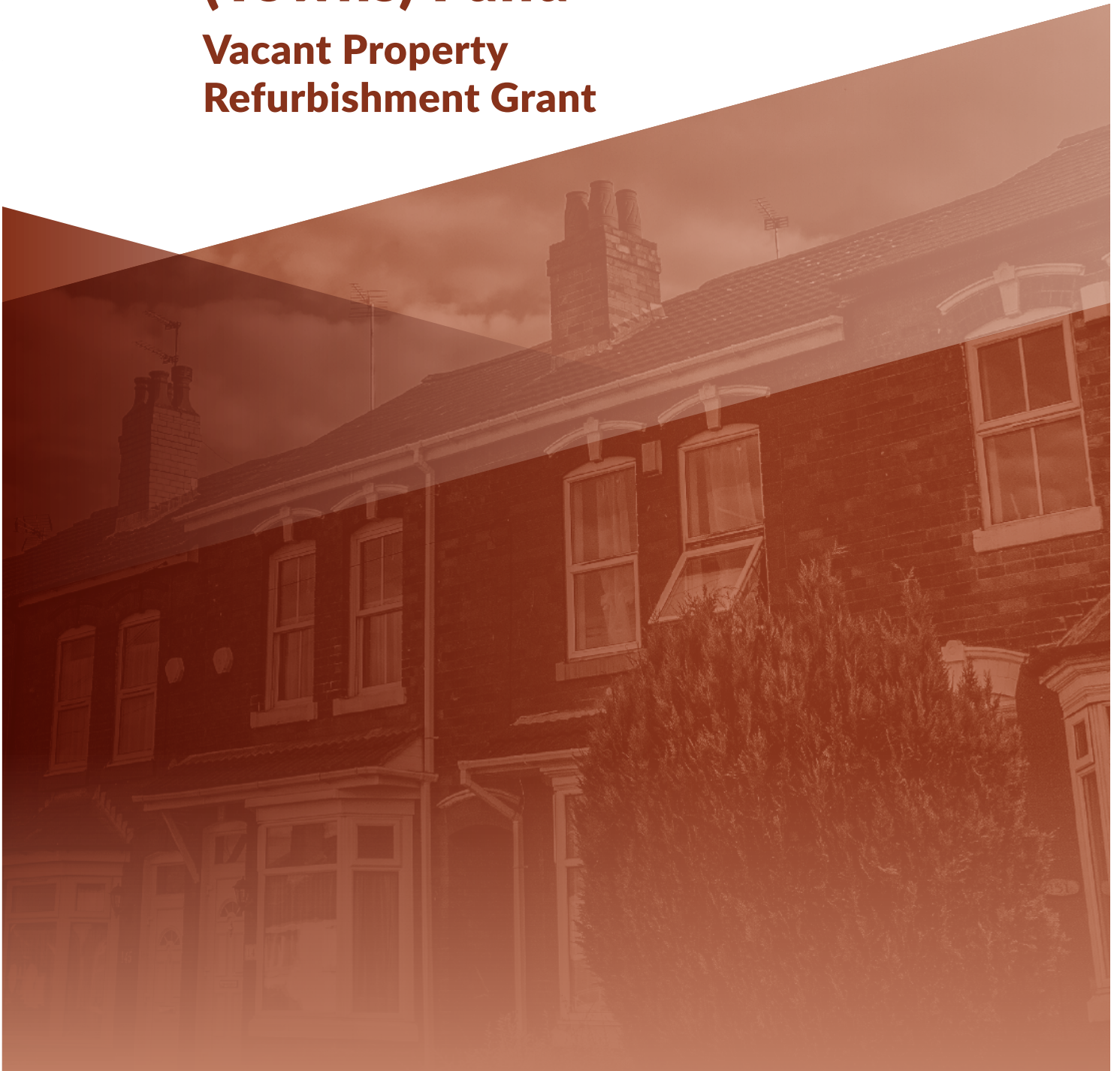


An Roinn Tithíochta,
Rialtais Áitiúil agus Oidhreachta
Department of Housing,
Local Government and Heritage

Application Form

Croí Cónaithe (Towns) Fund

Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant



About this form

This form can be used to apply for the Croí Cónaithe (Towns) Fund Grant for the refurbishment of a vacant property.

It is important to read this form carefully **before** you fill it in. Why? Because it will save you time and help us to process your application faster. You can fill in the form yourself or get help from someone you know and trust to fill out this form for you. However, you will have to sign and declare all information is correct and true on page 9.



a) What is this form for?

There is one grant available for eligible applicants to support the refurbishment of a vacant property:

1. Croí Cónaithe (Towns) Fund Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant



b) Conditions for the grant

The applicant will need to:

- ✓ meet the eligibility criteria set out in page 4;
- ✓ live in the home as their principal private residence when completed;
- ✓ have their tax affairs in order, with tax clearance from Revenue;
- ✓ ensure that the Local Property Tax to be in order where applicable;
- ✓ agree to the clawback conditions set out in page 5;
- ✓ **have the grant application approved before the work commences**

Please note that only one grant can be applied for under this scheme.



c) Checklist for documents to send with this form

To make it easier for you to see all the documents you need to send with this form, there is a **checklist** on page 9. It is important that you read this checklist before filling out your application form – **and** make sure you send all the documents along with your completed application form.



d) Where to send your completed form

You have to apply to your local authority using this form for the Croí Cónaithe (Towns) Fund Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant. If you have any questions, you should contact the Vacant Homes Officer in your local authority and they can help.



Croí Cónaithe (Towns) Fund Vacant Property Refurbishment

Who is this grant for?

A grant of up to a maximum of **€30,000** will be available for the refurbishment of a vacant property for occupation of the homeowner, including the conversion of a property which has not been used as residential heretofore (subject to appropriate planning exemptions or permission being in place), as a principal private residence. This will be subject to upper limits for the types of work specified below having regard to a reasonable cost assessment by the local authority. The grant is inclusive of VAT cost of the works.

Where the refurbishment costs are expected to exceed the standard grant of up to €30,000, a maximum top-up grant amount of up to €20,000 will be available where the property is confirmed by the applicant to be derelict (i.e. structurally unsound and dangerous) or if the property is already on the Derelict Sites Register bringing the total grant available for a derelict property up to a maximum of **€50,000**.

In the case of a top-up grant in respect of a derelict property where the property is not on the Derelict Sites Register, an independent report prepared by an appropriately qualified professional (e.g. quantity surveyor, engineer etc.) is required to be submitted along with the application confirming that the property is derelict (i.e. structurally unsound and dangerous).

Those applying for the grant will be required to indicate on the application form to confirm if they are applying for the vacant property refurbishment grant alone or the vacant property refurbishment grant including the derelict property top-up grant.

Properties considered for inclusion must be:

- ✓ vacant for two years or more; and
- ✓ built before 1993.

For the purposes of this scheme, a property is deemed to be vacant if it has been vacant and unoccupied for a period of two years or more. Confirmation of vacancy can be validated and verified by the use of, for example, utility bills which can help determine vacancy periods (e.g. pattern of usage or disconnection) or such other proofs as are available to the satisfaction of the local authority.

An SEAI Better Energy Home Scheme Grant may be available in combination with this grant. Works covered by SEAI Better Energy Homes Scheme will therefore not be covered. The local authority must satisfy themselves that proposed works are not claimed for under any other grant.

Proof of both vacancy and ownership will be required to support the grant payment. In terms of ownership, it is a matter for the applicant to confirm ownership with the local authority.

A local authority may give approval in principle to a grant application where the applicant is able to provide evidence of active negotiations to purchase a property i.e. confirmation of engagement from the estate agency or owner of the property and where the owner provides such evidence as to vacancy as is required under the scheme on behalf of the applicant. Such approval in principle shall not be confirmed as approval in full until ownership has transferred to the applicant and no drawdown may take place until such ownership has been confirmed to the satisfaction of the local authority. Confirmation of vacancy must be validated and verified by the local authority prior to grant approval.

Evidence of ownership for the grant payment, which the relevant local authority may consider, is outlined in the table below. The works must be approved in advance, following inspection by the local authority of the subject property.

Ownership Requirements for grant payment	Examples of Proof that may be submitted
The owner must be an individual who owns the dwelling (whether jointly or not) and the local authority must satisfy itself as to the ownership prior of the grant.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ a title deed¹ or similar legal instrument proving ownership of the property; ▶ evidence of current paid buildings insurance policy/schedule; ▶ evidence of payment of Local Property Tax (LPT); ▶ mortgage statement dated within the last 12 months
<p>NOTE: 1. A title deed can be obtained from the Property Registration Authority Ireland (https://www.prai.ie)</p>	

The relevant owner must intend in good faith to reside in the dwelling as his or her principal private residence on completion of the qualifying works to the dwelling. A declaration the individual intends to reside in the dwelling as his or her principal private residence on completion of the qualifying works to the dwelling must be provided to the local authority and clawback conditions will apply where the applicant ceases to reside in the dwelling as a principal private residence.

The grant will be paid based on vouched expenditure following a final inspection by the local authority.

Types of work covered

The following categories of works will be eligible for grant assistance, subject to a reasonable cost assessment by the local authority and to any limits for specific works as may be set out in guidance from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage:

- substructure works, including works to foundations, rising walls, floor slabs, damp-proofing and underpinning
- structural works to superstructure, including walls, party walls, chimneys, suspended timber floors, structural timbers
- works to internal walls, stairs, and landings, and internal wall completions including doors, windows, and applied finishes
- external walls completions including doors, windows, sills, and applied finishes
- roof completions, including flashings, fascias, soffits, gutters, downpipes
- building services including plumbing, heating, ventilation, electrical services, telecommunications,
- painting and decoration required because of works carried out
- extension within the ambit of exempt development under planning regulations, as part of a wider refurbishment
- necessary external works and site development works carried out within the curtilage of the site
- professional services associated with works

Eligibility

The Fund is focused on home ownership. There is a significant level of activation required of the participants through the refurbishment of a vacant property. A range of individuals or households will be eligible to avail of the scheme, with the prioritisation of applications for consideration using the framework below and in line with overall funding available. The priorities will be implemented on a sliding scale.

Framework of Priorities

1

Applicants who are first time buyers (i.e. not have purchased or built a home for themselves) or who qualify under the 'Fresh Start' principle. The Fresh Start principle includes previous homeowners who have experienced divorce or separation, or insolvency or bankruptcy, and who no longer have a legal interest in the previous home.

2

Applicants (other than 1 above) who have particular needs – specifically, disabled people or older people who are moving from their current home which they are selling or have sold and want to live in a town or village setting.

3

Applicants (other than 1 and 2 above) who are moving from their current home which they are selling or have sold and want to live in a town or village setting.

The scheme is exclusively available to individuals or households for which the property will be their principal private residence as homeowners. It is not available to undertakings and/or developers etc.

Applicants may only avail of the grant once and local authorities must ensure adequate tracking and checking of property addresses in this regard.

Purchasers benefitting from this scheme may also be eligible for a local authority Home loan, or, retrofit grants under the Better Energy Homes Scheme. In the case of retrofit grants, the local authority will not make the Vacant Property Refurbishment grant available for the same work. Local authorities must ensure that the works have not been grant aided via any other scheme and applicants are required to provide any information as may be requested by a local authority regarding any other grant aiding of works applied for by the applicant.

Eligible Towns and Villages

There are over 500 towns and villages in Ireland with a population of over 400 people. It is intended that the Croí Cónaithe Fund will apply in all such towns, and also to some smaller villages, which may not be defined villages for the purposes of the Central Statistics Office (CSO) Census mapping but with sufficient provision of services and amenities.

While initially the Fund will not apply to towns within the city and suburb boundaries of Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Galway and Waterford, as defined by the CSO Census mapping, the potential for inclusion of such towns within cities and suburbs will be further considered during the initial phase of the programme.

Towns outside of the city and suburb boundary in the CSO Census are defined as a separate 'town' and will therefore be eligible, e.g. Balbriggan.

Given the available resources, local authorities should prioritise consideration of applications in town/village locations based on the following criteria:

- ▶ the overall levels of vacancy and dereliction within the town or village;
- ▶ alignment with policies of the relevant development plan including areas/objectives identified for regeneration;
- ▶ the role that the Fund might play as part of wider town regeneration particularly in the light of emerging Town Centre First Plans and integration with other committed regeneration funding through the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund, the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund and the Towns and Villages Renewal Scheme.

Clawback

The applicant(s) should live in the qualifying residential property for a period of at least five years from the date of payment of the grant. If at any time the property is sold within ten years, the applicant(s) must reimburse the State an element of the full value of the grant, as follows:

Up to 5 years	Over 5 years and less than or equal to 10 years	Over 10 years
100% of the monetary amount of the grant	75% of the monetary amount of the grant	No Clawback



Application Form

Please answer all of the following questions using **BLOCK CAPITALS**.

Details of who the grant is for

Name

Address

Eircode

Date of birth

Email address

Contact phone number

Eligibility Requirements

Please tick one box below which best describes your circumstances.

1. Applicants who are first-time buyers (i.e. not have purchased or built a home for themselves) or who qualify under the 'Fresh Start' principle. The Fresh Start principle includes previous homeowners who have experienced divorce or separation, or insolvency or bankruptcy, and who no longer have a legal interest in the previous home.
2. Applicants (other than 1 above) who have particular needs – specifically, disabled people or older people who are moving from their current home which they are selling or have sold and want to live in a town or village setting.
3. Applicants (other than 1 and 2 above) who are moving from their current home which they are selling or have sold and want to live in a town or village setting.

Please provide additional details here along with any relevant supporting documentation

Details of the Vacant Property

Address of the property where the work will be carried out

Eircode

How long has the property been vacant?

Will the person who the grant is for be living here as their principle private residence when the work is completed?

This is a condition of the grant. YES NO

Have you provided confirmation that you are the property owner, or evidence of active negotiations to purchase the property? YES NO

Please tick the box that describes the home.

Detached
 Semi-detached
 Terraced
 An apartment

Is the property compliant with Local Property Tax? (to be completed if you are the owner of the property) YES NO

Please tick one of the following boxes to indicate what grant you are applying for:

- 1) Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant
- 2) Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant including the derelict property top-up grant.

You will need to send your local authority proof that Local Property Tax is up to date on the property where the work will be done. This can be a letter from Revenue or a printout of the online record, which will show:

- that this tax is paid; **or**
- deferral of payment (Local Property Tax will be paid later); **or**
- exemption from Local Property Tax.

You may wish to consider getting professional advice before you complete the next section.

List the details of the work you want to get done in your property (See types of work covered on page 3)

How much do you think the work will cost including VAT?

€

Applicants should provide a quotation(s) in respect of the works proposed.

Can you pay for any extra cost that is **not covered by** the grant? YES NO

Home owners should be aware of their responsibilities under Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations 2013. See www.hsa.ie

If you are approved for a grant and have not already installed them, you will need:

- at least two smoke/heat alarms – self-contained and with a 10-year-battery
- a carbon monoxide detector if you use fossil fuel heating like gas or coal. The carbon monoxide detector must meet the standard – EN 50291 (marked on box).

How many alarms are already installed in the home where the work will be done?

Smoke/heat alarms

Carbon monoxide detectors

Data Protection

By law, applicants must provide certain personal data in this form, so we can do our work. We treat all information and personal data provided as confidential. We do this in line with the General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection legislation.

To process this application, please note that we may share your personal data (information) with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

You can read the details of our Data Protection Policy and Privacy Statements on your local authority website. The policy explains how and why we will use personal data, and how we provide information about your rights as a data subject. The policy is also available in paper format if you request it from your local authority office.

Declaration

I declare that the information and details I have given on this application are true and correct.

Signature of applicant(s)

Date:

Checklist for what to include with this form

Your application will be delayed if details and documents are missing. This checklist will help you to send in all the documents needed to deal with your application.

All applications will need the following:

This form. Fully completed.

Proof that the property is vacant.

A quotation(s) in respect of the works proposed.

Proof of ownership or evidence of active negotiations to purchase the property if seeking approval in principle.

Evidence confirming the property is structurally unsound and dangerous if applying for the top-up derelict property grant.

Any other relevant documentation to support your application



What happens next?

What happens when I send in my application?

Your local authority will:

1. check it to make sure it is complete.
2. arrange for a technician from your local authority to visit the property to make sure it is possible to do the work and assess the projected costs of the planned works.
3. write to you to let you know if your application has been successful and tell you how much of a grant has been approved or that you have received approval in principle. Proof of ownership will be required before a grant is paid.
4. ask you to submit information from the contractor(s) doing the work such as their tax reference number to check their tax clearance details.
5. ask for the bank account details where the grant will be paid when the works are completed.
6. ask for an invoice for the completed work and arrange for a technician from your local authority to visit the property and confirm that the work is completed.

Further information your local authority may need

Your local authority may ask you to send in some extra documents such as the following:

- evidence of planning permission or a certificate of exemption under the Planning Acts.

For grants over €10,000

If the approved grant is over €10,000, **you will need** to get tax clearance from Revenue. You can apply for tax clearance using Revenue's online service at www.revenue.ie. If you do not have access to the internet, you can call Revenue on 1890 306 706, and they will post you an application form.

You must send your completed application form for tax clearance to Customer Services, Collector General's Division, Sarsfield House, Francis Street, Limerick, V94 R972.

If you do not get the grant, you can appeal the decision

Sometimes an application to your local authority for a grant will not be successful. If your application is not successful, you can write to your local authority to appeal the decision. You must write **within three weeks of the date of the original decision**, and clearly explain why you are appealing. A local authority official who was not involved with the original assessment will then assess this appeal and contact you with the result. This could take up to six weeks.

Thank you for filling out this form.

If you have any questions, please contact the Vacant Homes Officer in your local authority.



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