



Discretionary Grants



The Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002

Stratford-on-Avon District Council

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Discretionary Grant - Conditions

The Council, subject to conditions, may upon satisfactory application give assistance in the form of a grant for essential repairs or essential improvements to a dwelling that is required further to the identification of Category 1 Hazards at the dwelling, in accordance with the Housing Act 2004, Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS), as determined by an Officer of the Council.

1. Qualification criteria

1.1 Applications for assistance shall be accepted from qualifying persons who;

- Are aged 18 or over; and
- Live within the District of Stratford-on-Avon in living accommodation as their main residence; and
- Have resided in the property for at least 12 months, other than exceptional circumstances and agreed by the Housing and Communities Manager; and
- Have an owner's interest in the dwelling (not a tenant of either a Social or Private landlord); and
- Have works to be completed that are not covered by existing insurances, warranties, indemnities or any other policy or scheme that would otherwise cover the cost of the works; and
- Have an intention to remain resident in the living accommodation for a minimum of 5 years; and
- Have savings of less than £10,000

- Savings taper

Where savings are greater than £5,000 and less than £10,000, a taper will apply. The amount of grant awarded will reduce by £1 for every £1 of savings over £5,000 the applicant has. For example, where an applicant has savings of £6,500 and the work to be carried out will cost £3,000, the maximum amount of the grant will be £1,500; and

- Are in receipt of one of the qualifying means tested benefits as follows;
 - Income Support; or
 - Housing Benefit; or
 - Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme; or
 - Guarantee Pension Credit; or
 - Income Based Employment and Support Allowance; or
 - Income Based Job Seekers Allowance; or
 - Work Tax Credit and/or Child Tax Credit where total earned income does not exceed £15,000); or
 - Universal Credit.

2. Assistance criteria

2.1 Assistance shall be given for;

- Essential repairs and essential improvement works; and

- *Definition of essential*

"Essential" is deemed as a Category 1 Hazard as identified by an Officer of the Council under the Housing Act 2004 Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS).

- *Housing Health and Safety Rating System(HHSRS)*

The Housing Act 2004 introduced the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS). This system identifies and assesses the severity of hazards that are present in a dwelling (its structure and associated outbuildings and garden, yard and/or other amenity space, and means of access), so that the hazard can be removed completely, or so that the risk caused by the hazard can be minimised.

- Following the identification and assessment of any hazard within a dwelling, an Officer of this Council will give the hazard a particular score. Where the risk caused by the hazard is particularly high, the Officer is likely to award a high score and this is known as a Category 1 Hazard. Any other Hazard is known as a Category 2 Hazard.
- 2.2 Assistance shall not be given in respect of works;
- for which a grant under other sections of this policy has been approved or is pending approval;
 - that has already started or completed before the date of the formal approval;
 - where applicant has a statutory duty to carry out the necessary works and it is reasonable in the circumstances for them to do so.
- 2.3 The total amount of assistance provided will be at the discretion of the Council, but will be;
- A maximum for any applicant, or dwelling, of £5,000 within any five year period, subject to the home remaining in the same ownership; and
- 2.4 In the case of common parts or group repair, subject to the above, the applicant shall prove a repairing responsibility.
- 2.5 Grants will be considered at the discretion of the Council where no alternative grant is available.

3. Detail of the work

- 3.1 Generally the Council will provide contractors to carry out the work unless the applicant specifically wishes to use their own. Where this is the case:-
- Applications shall be accompanied by fixed quotations from at least 2 competent contractors, detailing costs and scope of works clearly;
 - The grant will be based on the lowest quotation submitted. If the applicant uses a contractor who has submitted a higher quotation the applicant will be liable for the difference in the costs between the lower and the higher quotations;
 - The applicant will ensure that all work shall be undertaken;
 - In accordance with Planning and Building Regulations;
 - In accordance with current Health and Safety at Work Regulations;
 - In accordance with manufacturers recommendations and best practice; and
 - To the satisfaction of the Council within 6 months from the date of approval of the grant
 - Payment of the grant shall be made on receipt of satisfactory contractor's invoice following satisfactory completion of the eligible works.
- 3.2 The applicant and not the Council, will pay any monies due to any person relating to the eligible works which are not discharged by payment of the grant and the Council may, at its absolute discretion, withhold payment of the grant, or any part of it, until such monies have been paid by the applicant.

4. Applicant Contribution

- 4.1
- For grants up to the value of £2,500, the applicant will pay a flat fee of £250 towards the cost of the work.
 - For grants awarded between the value of £2,501 and £5,000 a restriction will be recorded against the applicant's property so that the grant will be repayable at change of ownership of the property, such as sale of the property.

5. Miscellaneous

- 5.1 Where the award of a grant requires input from other agencies the award of a grant may take up to 12 months.
- 5.2 No grant shall be approved where proofs of qualification criteria have not been provided.
- 5.3 Grants will be paid to the approved contractor.