



Housing Grants and Loans Financial Assistance Policy

December 2021



Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| 1. INTRODUCTION | 3 |
| 2. PURPOSE OF THE POLICY | 5 |
| 3. POLICY OBJECTIVES | 6 |
| 4. KEY ISSUES | 7 |
| 5. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE AND CONDITIONS ATTACHED | 8 |
| 6. HOME IMPROVEMENT AGENCIES | 15 |
| 7. GRANTS/LOANS CONSIDERED IN SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES | 16 |
| 8. GRANT/LOAN ELIGIBLE WORK IN CEREDIGION | 16 |
| 9. FUNDING | 17 |
| 10. FEES & CHARGES | 17 |
| 11. COMPLAINTS..... | 18 |
| 12. TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS & PREVIOUS POLICY | 18 |
| 13. FURTHER POLICY DEVELOPMENTS | 19 |
| APPENDIX A – ENABLE – Support for Independent Living | 20 |
| DISABLED FACILITIES GRANTS AND SAFE, WARM AND SECURE | 20 |
| MANDATORY DISABLED FACILITIES GRANT (LARGE) | 20 |
| DISCRETIONARY DISABLED ADAPTATIONS ASSISTANCE | 22 |
| DISCRETIONARY DISABLED FACILITIES GRANT (MEDIUM) | 23 |
| DISCRETIONARY DISABLED FACILITIES GRANT (SMALL)..... | 24 |
| RELOCATION GRANT (DFG) | 25 |
| APPENDIX B - DISCRETIONARY MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR ASSISTANCE GRANTS AND LOANS | 27 |
| EMERGENCY REPAIR ASSISTANCE | 27 |
| HOME IMPROVEMENT LOANS | 29 |
| LIFETIME LOANS | 33 |
| HOUSES INTO HOMES (EMPTY PROPERTIES) LOAN | 34 |
| HEALTH AND HOUSING ANCILLARY ASSISTANCE | 37 |
| APPENDIX C – LOCAL AUTHORITY LOANS | 38 |

1 INTRODUCTION

In July 2002 the Government made significant changes to housing grant legislation, introducing the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England & Wales) Order 2002. This order allows local authorities to formulate their own flexible financial assistance policies to target their funding to address specific local needs and strategic priorities.

Disabled Facilities Grants now remain the only national mandatory grant, with all other types of assistance being at each Council's discretion.

With the introduction of the Regulatory Reform Order, before a Local Authority can provide any assistance under the order, an Authority must have adopted a policy for the provision of assistance, and give public notice of the policy¹. In addition, they must ensure that a full copy of the policy is available at all reasonable times and available by post on payment of a reasonable charge. Any assistance must then be provided in accordance with the policy. Consequently, it is incumbent upon Local Authorities to ensure that their financial assistance policy is updated to reflect the terms of this scheme and any other assistance they offer.

The purpose for which assistance may be provided is set out in Article 3 of the order. That is for the purpose of improving living conditions in their area and Authorities may provide direct or indirect assistance to a person for the purpose of enabling him:

- to acquire living accommodation (whether within or outside their area) - only where the Authority has acquired or proposes to acquire (compulsory or otherwise his existing living accommodation) or are satisfied that the acquisition of other living accommodation would provide for that person a benefit similar to that which would be provided by the carrying out of work to his existing accommodation;
- to adopt or improve living accommodation (whether by alteration, conversion or enlargement);
- to repair living accommodation;
- to demolish buildings comprising or including living accommodation;
- where buildings comprising, or including, living accommodation have been demolished to construct buildings that comprise, or include, replacement living accommodation.

'Living accommodation' is defined in Part 2 of the Order as a building or part of a building, a caravan, a boat or similar structure, occupied or available for residential purposes.

The Order further states² that the 'assistance' may be provided in any form and may be unconditional or subject to conditions, including conditions as to the repayment of the

¹ Article 4 Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002

² Article 3 Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002

assistance or of its value (in whole or in part), or the making of a contribution towards the assisted work.

With the introduction of the **Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**, there is an increased focus on the local authority to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of its residents. Through enabling the provision and improvement of housing, the local authority is therefore contributing towards a number of the seven wellbeing goals, including a prosperous Wales, a resilient Wales, a healthier Wales, a more equal Wales, and a Wales of cohesive communities.

A key new legislation that impacts on those who need assistance is the **Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act** that came into force on 6 April 2016. The Act provides the legal framework for improving the well-being of people who need care and support, and carers who need support, and for transforming social services in Wales. The fundamental principles of the Act are:

Voice and control – putting the individual and their needs, at the centre of their care, and giving them a voice in, and control over reaching the outcomes that help them achieve wellbeing.

Prevention and early intervention – increasing preventative services within the community to minimise the escalation of critical need.

Well-being – supporting people to achieve their own well-being and measuring the success of care and support.

Co-production – encouraging individuals to become more involved in the design and delivery of services.

In addition, the Local Government Act 2000 created a discretionary power referred to as ‘the well-being power’ which enables Local Authorities to do anything that they consider is likely to promote or improve the economic, social or environmental well-being of their area and / or persons in it, provided that they are not restricted from doing so by other legislation³.

However, Section 2 does not enable a Local Authority to do anything which they are unable to do by virtue of any prohibition, restriction or limitation on their powers which is contained in any enactment (whenever passed or made)⁴.

Therefore, Local Housing Authorities must have regard to Section 24, Local Government Act 1988⁵, (subject to Section 25) which provides the Local Housing Authority with the power to provide any person with financial assistance for the purposes of, or in connection with, the acquisition, construction, conversion, rehabilitation, improvement, maintenance or

³ Section 2, Local Government Act 2000

⁴ Section 3, Local Government Act 2000

⁵ Section 24, Local Government Act 1988

management (whether by that person or by another) of any property, which is or is intended to be privately let as housing accommodation.

Private let as housing accommodation is defined 'at any time when it is occupied as housing accommodation in pursuance of a lease or licence of any description or under a statutory tenancy and the immediate landlord is a person other than a Local Authority'.

Section 25, Local Government Act 1988, states that consent from the Secretary of State or Minister is required for the provision of financial assistance, unless⁶ the assistance or benefit is provided in exercise of any power conferred by Article 3 of the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance)(England and Wales) Order 2002.⁷.

Consequently, the broad nature of the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance)(England and Wales) Order 2002 and the general 'well being' powers contained in the Local Government Act 2000, means that Local Authorities will be able to provide financial assistance through the provision of discretionary grants and loan schemes to the full range of applicants and can attach such conditions or terms that they consider appropriate in the circumstances.

2 PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to identify priorities for housing capital investment, and to demonstrate how this investment will assist in contributing to the vision contained in the Council's Housing Strategy, Public Services Board Wellbeing Plan and the council's Corporate Strategy as well as any regional plans at both Mid Wales and/or West Wales level e.g. Growing Mid Wales (for regeneration) and/or West Wales Regional Planning Board (for Health and Social Care).

This Policy should be read in conjunction with these strategic plans and any other related documents.

Therefore this Policy provides information to the residents of Ceredigion on the financial assistance and advice service that may be available from the Council to ensure that housing is provided that is safe to live in, is energy efficient, and helps maintain residents' health and wellbeing. This policy is available to housing developers, private sector homeowners and tenants (subject to certain criteria) throughout the county.

This Policy will describe in detail:

- The full range of assistance that may be made available
- Who is eligible for this assistance
- The level of assistance being offered
- Legal conditions attached
- How they should make an application

⁶ Section 25 (1)(f) Local Government Act 1988

⁷ National Assembly of Wales Circular 20/02, Renewal Guidance

Assistance will be targeted at those households who by virtue of their age, disability or financial disadvantage or focused to targeted areas as defined by the Council as being in most need.

The intention with this policy therefore, is to outline the mandatory and discretionary grants and loans available from the local authority including the eligibility criteria, terms and conditions that the local authority places on those wishing to access this funding.

This Policy will replace those policies already in place for existing grants and loans the local authority currently offers, and will become operational from the 1st March 2022.

3 POLICY OBJECTIVES

This policy aligns with the strategic aims of the local Housing strategy which provides a firm foundation for dealing with the challenges facing housing and housing related services in Ceredigion. This Strategy recognises that good quality, affordable, and sustainable housing has the potential to make a positive and lasting impact on the health, economic vibrancy and community sustainability of Ceredigion. The strategy also sets out the current situation in terms of need, supply, access and affordability, as well as looking at housing standards, and Ceredigion's future requirements. Furthermore, this financial assistance policy enables the delivery of activities that contribute to the council's Corporate Strategy priorities specifically related to Enabling Individual and Family Resilience by 'promoting the wellbeing of individuals and families within safe, affordable and accessible homes.'

Therefore the key objectives of the Council's Financial Assistance Policy for Housing Grants and Loans are:

- To improve the condition and safety of housing in the County with the primary aim of improving the health and wellbeing of residents.
- To increase the provision of housing through improvement or conversion of existing buildings to residential use.
- To promote independent living by adapting properties within the County, enabling people with disabilities to remain in their own homes.
- To enable warmer and safer homes that a greater number of elderly and vulnerable residents of the County are able to remain in.
- To assist in reducing the number of households in fuel poverty by improving energy efficiency of home, whilst working on behalf of residents to attract external funding from a variety of sources (Welsh Government, Energy Suppliers etc) to minimize the cost of energy efficiency measures for homeowners .
- To make the best use of resources available to deliver housing improvements to those in most need.

4. KEY ISSUES

Culture Change – Due to diminishing capital funding available from Welsh Government in recent years, the availability of funding for housing grants has significantly reduced and ended in most circumstances. Therefore in order to maximise the available funding so as to ensure the continued improvement of housing stock within the county, there is a recognition that a more sustainable and effective use of scarce resources is needed. This policy therefore confirms the need to change the culture of grant aid by encouraging homeowners to maintain and repair their own homes, first and foremost, by their own means, using assistance from home improvement loans where available, and in particular circumstances for the vulnerable and/or elderly through the availability of grant aid.

Introduction of ENABLE – Support for Independent Living – From April 2016, Welsh Government launched ENABLE which brings together the current arrangements for delivering adaptations by building on the existing range of individual programmes and funding streams. It is designed to deliver the same simplified adaptations and a standardised service to individuals irrespective of their tenure. It does this by approaching the concept of delivering home adaptations to the user/client as falling into three broad categories or types – small, medium and large. Irrespective of tenure or how the adaptations are funded, the basic way in which the user will experience the delivery of their needed adaptations will follow one of these categories. Works defined within each category of adaptations include: There are three broad categories of assistance:

- “Small” e.g. grab rails and stair rails, lever taps. There will be no means test applied for this grant
- “Medium” e.g. adaptations such as walk-in showers, stair lifts and ramps. There will be no means test applied for this grant
- “Large” e.g. adaptations which require major structural changes to a property and/or extensions to it. There will be a means test applied to this grant

This policy amendment therefore incorporates these new categories of adaptations.

Loan Fund - WG support and encourage these innovative approaches including grant/loan mixes, loans and equity release. The provision of home improvement loans will provide valuable income, which can be reused by the Authority on repayment of the loan. Welsh Government supports this approach and has made available a number of loan products – Town Centre Loans, Houses into Homes, and Home Improvement Loans. These Schemes are seen as a way of providing additional finance to individuals and businesses for home improvements and conversions, which will contribute to the overall programme of improving the quality of homes and increasing housing supply. These funds are seen as a new way of providing finance to local authorities, instead of providing traditional grant funding. Local Authorities can borrow the funding from Welsh Government via ‘financial transaction’ funding that must be repaid to WG in an agreed period of time.

Safety Net - It is recognised that some form of direct financial assistance will be required where clearly vulnerable homeowners cannot help themselves by their own financial means. Direct financial assistance will be applicable for disabled facilities, and in order to deal with

emergency repair issues including works in default where the local authority has needed to step in to carry out works on behalf of the occupant/property owner.

Through Age Wellbeing Model - development of prevention and early intervention services – with the development and formalisation of integrated services for social care and health services, there is increasing focus being placed on ensuring that people are able to remain in their homes where possible. With this in mind, the suitability of these properties for householders in terms of adaptability and condition becomes increasingly important. This is being further reinforced by the duties contained within the Social Services and Wellbeing Act 2015.

The Council is currently pursuing large scale change to a new Through Age and Wellbeing Model. The vision of the model is 'To ensure every child, young person and adult in Ceredigion will be able to reach their full potential. To ensure fair access for all to excellent universal and targeted services that supports the health and wellbeing of all citizens. To develop skills and resilience that will last a lifetime and enable individuals to cope well with the challenges and pressures that they may face.' This further reinforces the focus on improving independence and access to services.

Empty Properties - There is a significant percentage of empty properties within the County. Empty properties are a wasted resource. A key proposal of the Council's Housing Strategy is to work closely with a partner to purchase, renovate and/or rent former empty properties.

Area based regeneration and/or energy efficiency schemes - It is clear that there are areas within the county that require a more strategic approach with regard to improving housing. Periodically, funding is made available such as Arbed Warm Homes that is aimed at improving the energy efficiency of the housing stock or in recognition of housing's key impact on area regeneration. The local authority endeavours to proactively apply for such funding in order to ensure that funding continues to be drawn into the area for housing and / or regeneration capital improvement.

5 FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE AND CONDITIONS ATTACHED

The Council has a duty to consider all applications for Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) which are administered under the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 (as amended) and specific details of the grant are contained within that Act of Parliament and associated guidance. The council also provides four other grants for disabled facilities – a Disabled Facilities Assistance, a Relocation Grant, Disabled Facilities Grant (Medium works) and Disabled Facilities Grant (Small works). All applications for assistance will be subject to an assessment of need by members of the Council's Porth Cynnal and Porth Gofal. This policy provides criteria to ensure grants are awarded fairly and consistently.

The local authority is committed to ensuring recognition of the needs of ex-service personnel. This Policy for Disabled Facilities Grants will ensure that priority will be provided to those applications received from ex-service personnel where their disability is as a result of service in the Armed Forces.

Furthermore, to realise the objectives of this policy and thereby the wider strategic aims of the local authority's Corporate Objectives and Public Service Boards Wellbeing Plan and associated documents, the Council provide the following grant and loan assistance (those that are labelled 'discretionary' are subject to budget availability).

ENABLE – Large Adaptations (mandatory funding)

- Disabled Facilities Grant (Large)

ENABLE – Medium and Small Adaptations (discretionary funding)

- Disabled Adaptations Assistance
- Disabled Adaptations Grant (Medium)
- Disabled Adaptations Grant (Small)
- Relocation Grant

Emergency Home Repair (discretionary)

- Emergency Repair Assistance
- Lifetime Loan
- Health and Housing Ancillary Assistance

Housing Improvement Loans (discretionary)

- Home Improvement Loan (Safe Warm Secure)
- Houses into Homes Loan (Empty Property Loan Scheme)

The availability of all Grant or Loan assistance will be subject to the Council's annual budget setting procedure. All non-mandatory grants/loans are offered at the Council's discretion and the framework for these grants/loans is subject to this Policy.

Details of each grant/loan are attached in the Appendices.

Some grants and/or loans are awarded on condition that the applicant will repay the grant/loan amount in full to the Council if the property is sold or not occupied as intended within an agreed time period. Full details of the grant/loan conditions are issued direct to applicants, in writing, at the time that a grant/loan is approved.

The grant/loan condition period starts on the date that work is completed to the satisfaction of the Council. Dependent on the type of grant or loan product, charges are lodged with the Land Registry prior to the approval of a grant/loan or as a Local Land Charge when work has been completed (dependent on type and value of grant/loan).

A Local Land charge is registered against the property in respect of Grants and Loans less than £5,000 when work has been completed. This land charge will secure the funds provided by the local authority, and will bind the applicant and any successors in title. This charge will be registered in the local land charges register and thereafter registered with the Land

Registry. Any grant/loan paid over £5,000 will be registered directly as a Legal Charge with the Land Registry.

In certain circumstances waiver of grant/loan conditions can be considered. Decisions on any waiver of repayment are made by the Team Manager for housing grants and loans with agreement from the appropriate Corporate Lead Officer and Cabinet Member in conjunction with Financial Services; with discretion to take these decisions to a relevant Grants/Loan Panel when appropriate.

Disabled Facilities Grant conditions imposed under this Policy remain as defined in the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 and any associated Regulations made under this Act as well as detailed within this Policy. Whilst this Policy gives a guide to the conditions, detailed guidance and a statement of law is available with reference to this legislation.

For certain types of discretionary grants and loans, conditions are placed on grant/loan either through a local land charge or a full Legal Charge with the Land Registry, depending on the value of the loan/grant. The powers that enable the local authority to secure these charges are defined within the Regulatory Reform Order 2002, and will be outlined to grant/loan applicants within the Grant/Loan Offer letter/agreement. The offer of the grant/loan will be subject to the applicant agreeing that a local land charge or legal charge is secured on the property and any successors in title if repayment has not been made prior to this time.

| 5.1 Table of the Grant/Loan Conditions Grant Type | Condition Period | Grant/Loan Conditions |
|---|------------------|--|
| ENABLE ADAPTATIONS | | |
| Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant (Large) | 10 years | <p>Maximum Grant = £36,000</p> <p>Applicant must remain living at the property as his/her only residence for the duration of the grant condition.</p> <p>The services of the in-house home improvement service must be used for all mandatory DFGs.</p> <p>Adaptation assistance must be supported by an Occupational Therapist assessment and recommendation.</p> |

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| Disabled Adaptations Assistance (Discretionary) | On sale/transfer/disposal of the property | <p>Maximum financial assistance £15,000 (with discretion to increase by decision of the Cororate Lead Officer in consultation with the Cabinet Member). NB this is not grant aid, but financial assistance provided for the duration of the recipient's occupancy of the property.</p> <p>Financial assistance repayable on sale/transfer of the property. Land Registry Charge will apply. The services of the in-house home improvement service must be used although exemptions may be considered.</p> <p>Adaptation assistance must be supported by an Occupational Therapist assessment and recommendation.</p> |
| Discretionary Disabled Facilities Grant (Medium) | No condition | <p>Maximum Grant = £36,000</p> <p>The services of the in-house home improvement service must be used for all discretionary DFGs.</p> <p>Adaptation assistance must be supported by an Occupational Therapist, Occupational Therapist Assistant or Trusted Assessors assessment and recommendation.</p> |
| Discretionary Disabled Facilities Grant (Small) | No condition | <p>Maximum Grant = £5,000</p> <p>The applicant must live in the dwelling as their only or main residence.</p> <p>Adaptation assistance must be supported by an Occupational Therapist, Occupational Therapist Assistant or Trusted Assessors assessment and recommendation.</p> |

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| Relocation Grant | 10 years | <p>Maximum Grant = £10,000</p> <p>There is a presumption against the allocation of a Disabled Facilities Grant where the property is unsuitable in the long term to the applicant's needs.</p> <p>To assist the disabled person to move to a more suitable property where it is more cost effective than adapting the current home consideration will be given to meeting legal and removal costs in addition to adaptation costs.</p> |
| Emergency Repair Assistance (Discretionary) | | |
| Emergency Assistance | Repair On sale/transfer/disposal of the property | <p>Maximum financial assistance = £5,000. NB this is not grant aid, but financial assistance provided for the duration of the recipient's occupancy of the property.</p> <p>The applicant must live in the dwelling as their only or main residence and have an owner's interest in the dwelling, or be a tenant of the dwelling alone or jointly with others and have a 'duty or power' to carry out the works in question (e.g. in the case of tenants, the landlord usually has the duty or 'repairing obligation' and not the tenant), or occupy the dwelling under a right of exclusive occupation granted for life.</p> <p>In respect of a mobile home the occupier must also satisfy a 3 year residential qualifying period.</p> |
| Lifetime Loan | On sale/transfer/disposal of the property | <p>Maximum loan = £15,000</p> <p>For loans up to £5,000 a local land charge will be secured on the property that will bind the applicant and any successors in title. This charge will be registered in the local land charges register and thereafter registered with the Land Registry.</p> |

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| | | For loans over £5,000 a Land Registry Legal Charge will be lodged. |
| Health and Housing Ancillary Assistance | On sale/transfer/disposal of the property | <p>No maximum but availability is funding dependent.</p> <p>For loans up to £5,000 a local land charge will be secured on the property that will bind the applicant and any successors in title. This charge will be registered in the local land charges register and thereafter registered with the Land Registry.</p> <p>For loans over £5,000 a Land Registry Legal Charge will be lodged.</p> |
| Grants no longer available although grant conditions are still in force: | | |
| <p>Special Initiative Grants (Aberystwyth Renewal Area only)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Energy efficiency b. Conversion – single household use c. Conversion – self contained flats | 10 years | The grant amount will be placed as a Local Land Charge on the property for a term of 10 years. |
| LOANS | | |
| Houses into Homes (Empty Property Loan Scheme) | For the duration of the loan | <p>Maximum loan = £25,000 per unit of accommodation</p> <p>Loans will be secured as first or second charge against the Land Registry Title.</p> <p>Maximum loan for where rents are based on the Local Housing Allowance Rate = £35,000 per unit of accommodation.</p> |

| | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|---|
| Home Improvement Loan | For the duration of the loan | <p>Maximum loan = £35,000 per unit of accommodation</p> <p>For loans up to £5,000 a local land charge will be secured on the property that will bind the applicant and any successors in title. This charge will be registered in the local land charges register and thereafter registered with the Land Registry.</p> <p>For loans over £5,000 a Land Registry Legal Charge will be lodged.</p> |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|---|

5.2 Waiver of the Grant/Loan Conditions

In certain circumstances, the Council can exercise its discretion and can waive repayment of a grant/loan. Each case is considered on its own merits and it is the responsibility of the grant/loan applicant to prove that there are legitimate reasons why the conditions cannot be adhered to. A decision will be made by the Corporate Manager responsible for adaptations grants and loans in conjunction with the appropriate Corporate Lead Officer and Cabinet Member in conjunction with Financial Services upon receipt of a written request accompanied by the required supporting documents.

Copies of the grant/loan conditions can be obtained from the Housing Service under Porth Gofal and are specific to the type of grant/loan received.

Specific considerations made by the Council prior to enforcing repayment of large disabled facilities grant include that we are satisfied that it is reasonable to require the repayment and will consider the following in line with Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996/Disabled Facilities Grant (Conditions relating to approval or payment of Grant) General Consent 2008): -

- the extent to which the recipient of the grant would suffer financial hardship were the recipient to be required to repay all or any of the grant;
- whether the disposal of the premises is to enable the recipient of the grant to take up employment, or to change the location of the recipient's employment;
- whether the disposal is made for reasons connected with the physical or mental health or physical or mental well-being of the recipient of the grant or of a disabled occupant of the premises; and
- whether the disposal is made to enable the recipient of the grant to live with, or near, any person who is disabled or infirm and in need of care, which the recipient of the grant is intending to provide, or where the person to whom the recipient of the grant has moved to live with him or her intends to provide care of which the recipient of the grant is in need by reason of disability or infirmity.

- Furthermore, for discretionary DFGs consideration will be given on application by the applicant/member of the family if the conditions of the grant were enforced which would lead to unnecessary financial hardship; the disposal is made for reasons connected with the physical or mental health or physical or mental well-being of the recipient of the grant or of a disabled occupant of the premises/member of the family.

6 HOME IMPROVEMENT AGENCIES

It can often be difficult to locate a reliable building contractor, obtain estimates and commission plans. The Council therefore encourages grant/loan applicants to engage the Housing Service Supervisory Service, or Wales and West Care and Repair to help them through the grant process. Both the Council and Care and Repair can appoint contractors and oversee any grant aided work for clients to make the grant process as easy as possible.

Alternatively, suitably qualified architects or building surveyors can provide this service privately for grant applicants. Supervisory service fees (up to a maximum level) can be considered a grant eligible expense and included in the overall grant award amount.

6.1 Ceredigion Home Improvement Supervisory Service

To ensure services are accessible and enable effective take up of grants for all households including vulnerable and/or elderly households the Council offers a full in-house Supervisory service.

The majority of grant applications made to the Council are from elderly or vulnerable households and opting for the Council's Supervisory Service removes the worry and stress which might be experienced in applying for a grant and in supervising the work of a builder as work progresses.

In recent years, a high number of grant applicants have engaged the services of the Supervisory Service to act on their behalf. Staff will arrange proof of ownership, drawing of plans, making of statutory Planning and Building Regulation applications and carrying out all the formalities of appointing (on the residents behalf) a suitable building contractor. Building work is carried out to an agreed timescale and is supervised by our qualified surveyors until it is completed to a satisfactory standard.

6.2 West Wales Care and Repair

The Council works closely with West Wales Care & Repair, which exists to assist older and disabled people to repair and improve their homes. Care and Repair specialises in helping residents over 65 years of age to access a variety of services. They also administer the Rapid Response Adaptations Programme, a Home Safety scheme, the Handyperson Scheme and they offer help and advice about benefits, home maintenance and potential benevolent funding.

Care & Repair also submit grant enquiries for their clients and can in some circumstances offer a service to appoint and oversee contractors who can carry out privately funded work.

The Council is pleased to be working in partnership with the Care and Repair Agency which provides valuable referral, information and advocacy services, integral to the aims of this policy. For further details please contact Care & Repair on 01970 639920.

7. GRANTS/LOANS CONSIDERED IN SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

The Council recognises that there will be occasions when its general policy will not provide a framework for special or unique circumstances which arise. In such circumstances, it may be necessary to consider providing assistance outside the scope of the policy. Examples of when special circumstances may occur include improvement and repair of adjoining properties, adaptations, conversions, extensions, energy efficiency housing improvement schemes and rebuilding of retaining walls. Financial assistance awarded in special circumstances will be on officer recommendation only and must be agreed in advance in accordance with delegated powers granted to the Corporate Lead Officer Porth Gofal (as referenced within the Constitution) in consultation with the relevant Cabinet portfolio member.

8. GRANT/LOAN ELIGIBLE WORK IN CEREDIGION

All grant/loan eligible work is determined by the Council's Housing Adaptations and Improvement, Housing Standards and Energy Efficiency Officers, who will produce a specification of eligible works in each individual case. The cost of work will be determined by using a standard schedule of rates, and comparing this with the receipt of builder estimates for this work. This will form the basis of the grant/ loan award. The exception to this is for Disabled Facilities Grants, where eligible works is recommended by an Occupational Therapist, Occupational herapist Assistant or Trusted Assessors in accordance with the needs of the applicant. In the delivery of Disabled Facilities Grants, the Council has undertaken a procurement process whereby all DFG are delivered by a dedicated corporate Minor Works Framework contract which is reviewed every two years. This will enable the Council to employ a dedicated contractor with the expertise and sensitivity required in carrying out the DFG's, which in turn ensures prompt delivery of a high standard of customer service. Where applicable, client contribution towards the cost of works will be calculated and notified in the approval process. The contributions will be collected in advance of the contract start, and held by the Council, to ensure swift payment upon completion of works.

In most cases only eligible work can be considered for grant/loan aid, and Council officers will be able to give applicants advice specific to their individual grant application dependent on property condition.

The homeowner can commission non grant/loan aided work at the same time, but would have to fund these costs themselves. The Council will not be responsible for any works carried out alongside, but not paid for by a grant or loan.

All work must be carried out to the specifications set out by the local authority and to the required standard in accordance with Building Control standards.

Energy efficiency works may be offered with other types of grant/loan assistance if appropriate, and works identified may attract grant/loan aid either from the Council , or via external funding sources which the Council may be able to identify and claim any funding available on the residents behalf. Advice will be given in each individual case.

Grant aid is **not** available toward the cost of furniture removal and storage, temporary alternative accommodation costs or redecoration such as wallpapering and painting or for replacement of decorative coving, dado rails, ceiling roses etc. following completion of essential repairs. The only exception to this is the Relocation Grant which can cover the cost of furniture, removal and storage.

Applicants need to consider any of these extra costs that they will be liable for before accepting the offer of grant and proceeding with the grant aided work.

9. FUNDING

Discretionary funding will be closely monitored and only available subject to available budget. Where the Occupational Therapist/Occupational Therapist Assistant has provided a recommendation, they will stipulate whether this is 'routine' or 'priority'. Schemes will be prioritised on this basis.

10. FEES & CHARGES

When making an application for grant assistance, applicants will incur fees and charges.

Fees and charges can include any fees the Council deem appropriate and include:

- planning and building control fees
- the preparation of plans
- structural surveys
- legal services

Fees for services will only be eligible for grant assistance if those services are essential to enable the formal grant approval to be completed.

When considering an application for assistance for discretionary grants, all appropriate and eligible expenses will be considered. In the case of the discretionary grants, maximum limits refer to the cost of works and appropriate fees will be awarded in addition to the total cost of works. In the case of the mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant, fees must be included in the maximum grant amount. The cost of work and all fees cannot exceed the grant maximum allowed for a mandatory grant.

Applicants must note that any fees, charges or expenses they incur as part of the grant application process will not be reimbursed unless appropriate invoices are provided and the grant application progresses through to completion of the works.

The Council also have discretion to only grant aid fees deemed reasonable, and may not cover the full cost if unreasonable or excessive fees are charged.

An applicant will be liable for any costs incurred if a grant application does not progress to completion.

With the introduction of Safe, Warm or Secure Home Improvement Loans, as part of these national schemes, the council is able to charge an administration fee for setting up and administering the loan (the value of this administration fee will be included in the council's fees and charges document published on the council's website for Home Improvement & Houses into Homes loans).

In order to encourage owner-occupiers to take up the Home Improvement loan product, it is intended that this fee will be paid by the local authority as a Loan Application Grant. This incentive will be dependent on availability of local authority funds for this purpose, and may be withdrawn at any time. In circumstances where landlords are also keen to work with the local authority in increasing the availability of affordable rental properties, an incentive is also available whereby fees for landlords will be waived if the property is offered for rent at the Local Housing Allowance rate for the duration of the loan period, and the landlord rents the property to tenants from the Council's Affordable Housing Register or otherwise a tenant who would be eligible to be on this Register. The landlord will be required to enter into a 'Nomination Rights' agreement.

Further information on fees, charges, further qualification requirements and conditions and a Loans Procedure are included with the respective details included in Appendices A-C below.

11. COMPLAINTS

The Council aims to meet the needs of all its customers. However, there may be times when a person may feel that he is not satisfied with the service he or she has received or the manner or decision taken with regard to their application. In such circumstances, complaints may be made through our formal complaints procedure either through social services or the Corporate Complaints Policy for further investigation and response. The intention is to proactively deal with complaints and seek early resolution where service users are dissatisfied with the outcome of our decision/action. As such, all complaints will receive a formal reply, in writing.

12. TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS & PREVIOUS POLICY

Full grant applications which have been formally approved or submitted to the Council to be determined prior to 1st March 2022 will be subject to the Policy in operation at the time that the grant was approved (Housing Grants and Loans Financial Assistance Policy April 2018 with amendments in subsequent years to reflect changes in policy).

Grant/loan enquiries that have been surveyed, a schedule of eligible works issued and a formal full grant application* invited prior to 15th February 2022 will be subject to the eligibility criteria of the previous policy. Enquiries in this category for all grants (other than Disabled Facilities Grants) that do not submit all the required documentation to constitute a full application by the 1st March 2022 will be cancelled and will have to re-apply under the terms and conditions of this Policy.

Enquiry forms for all discretionary Grants that are accepted by the Council prior to 15th February 2022, but where no schedule has been issued will be subject to the eligibility criteria, terms and conditions of this Policy.

* A 'full grant application' is considered to be all the documentation required to allow the Council to formally determine (approve or refuse) the application. This documentation can include (where applicable) the application form , evidence of all income and savings, proof of ownership , future occupation certificate, contractors estimate, drawings etc together with any other specific information requested relating to the specific enquiry.

13. FURTHER POLICY DEVELOPMENTS

It is the intention of the Council to regularly review this policy to ensure that maximum benefits are delivered from the financial assistance made available by ensuring 'added gain' from the capital housing programme and loans funds made available from Welsh Government. This includes seeking all external investment opportunities, working with partners and providing financial assistance that achieves the maximum outcomes in the most cost effective manner.

Regular reviews will take into account changes in national and local strategic housing priorities, the uptake of grants and budgetary constraints.

Grants will also be evaluated to include Integrated Impact Assessments to identify the 'added gain' from the contribution to wider strategic objectives of the Council.

The Council is committed to continuous improvement within the existing/foreseeable financial constraints that are being imposed on the Local Authority.

**APPENDIX A – ENABLE – Support for Independent Living
DISABLED FACILITIES GRANTS AND SAFE, WARM AND SECURE**

| MANDATORY DISABLED FACILITIES GRANT (DFG - Large) | |
|--|--|
| Purpose/key outcomes | <p>DFGs are available for large works to adapt a property to suit the particular needs of a disabled person who resides at the property. Assistance is given to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate access • Provide suitable facilities • Make a building safe for use • Make environmental improvements to enable the disabled person to safely live in their home. <p>Large works include (but is not limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extension to the original property • External lifts • Works where there is structural works to the property including requirement for Building Regulations and Planning |
| Eligibility criteria (applicant) | <p>To be offered grant aid:</p> <p>Owner Occupiers: must be a freeholder or leaseholder with at least 10 years of the lease remaining and the dwelling must be your only or main residence.</p> <p>Tenants: any tenant may apply for a disabled adaptation (subject to landlord consent).</p> <p>Landlords: where a tenant makes an application for a DFG, the landlords must be, or will be, a freeholder or leaseholder with at least 10 years of the lease remaining and the dwelling(s) is/are to be let on a permanent residential basis and not as a holiday home.</p> <p>A disabled person may make an application for a grant even if they fall outside the definitions above: each individual circumstance will be considered for grant assistance subject to an assessment of need from an occupational therapist and on application for grant assistance.</p> <p>Financial Resources</p> <p>Owner Occupiers and Private Tenants - The Statutory Test of Financial Resources as retained for Disabled Facilities Grants (HRGR 1996) applies. The amount of grant allocated will be the difference between the amount the applicant is assessed as being able to afford and the total cost of the eligible works.</p> |

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| | <p>The total of the incomes of all the persons who are relevant to the application will be taken into account.</p> <p>Grants for children are not subject to a test of parents' financial resources.</p> <p>It is the disabled adult person residing at a property who is subject to the means test where they share that residence with an owner-occupier (who may/may not be related).</p> <p>The age of the applicant will not be taken into account.</p> |
| Eligibility criteria (works) | <p>Works of adaptation required to enable the occupier to remain within their home. Assistance is given to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate access • Provide suitable facilities • Make a building safe for use • Make environmental improvements to enable the disabled person to safely live in their home. <p>Eligible works will be determined subject to an assessment of need by the Council's Occupational Therapist.</p> |
| Conditions | <p>For all DFGs the local authority will place a local land charge on the property in accordance with the <i>Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996: General Consent 2008</i> that will remain in place for 10 years following the completion of the grant works.</p> <p>▪ Relevant Disposal</p> <p>When applying for a grant or loan the applicants will be required to sign a Certificate of Intended Occupation stating that throughout the grant condition period of 10 years, the applicant or a member of the family intends to occupy the dwelling as his/her only or main residence</p> <p><u>Or</u></p> <p>If the applicant is a landlord, that he/she intends to let the dwelling as a residence to someone unconnected with him/her and is in agreement with the works.</p> <p>There is a presumption that grant aid will be recovered in full by the local authority where this condition is breached. This is subject to, delegated authority vested in the Corporate Lead Officer, to</p> |

| | |
|----------------|---|
| | <p>potentially waive repayment within the condition period in certain justifiable cases.</p> <p>Scheduled works included in the grant approval must be completed within 12 months of the approval date.</p> <p>Additional Grant Conditions - Authority is delegated to the Corporate Lead Officer to determine whether whole or part of a grant repayment is justified in specific instances of non-compliance based normally on a percentage reclaim relative to the time remaining of the grant condition period. The Corporate Lead Officer also has further authority to determine whether a fraud investigation is warranted. In cases of suspected fraud or deception - It is the policy of the authority to actively pursue, identify and investigate suspected instances of fraud and deception.</p> <p>The Council advises that this grant is only available through the services of the Council's Adaptations In-house supervisory service.</p> |
| Maximum | The maximum grant assistance available is £36,000. |

| DISCRETIONARY DISABLED ADAPTATIONS ASSISTANCE | |
|---|---|
| <p>Purpose/key outcomes</p> <p>Please note:</p> <p>This funding is not grant aid, but financial assistance provided for the duration of the recipient's occupancy of the property and becomes repayable on sale/transfer of the property.</p> | <p>To provide top-up funding for works of adaptation that have resulted in the maximum limit of the DFG being exceeded. This can also be used instead of a mandatory DFG for those not qualifying for mandatory DFG due to failing the means test (or not being able to afford their contribution), but ineligible for HILs.</p> <p>This funding is available only in exceptional circumstances and by decision of the Corporate Lead Officer in consultation with the Cabinet Member in cases where a report and officer recommendation is for discretionary top up funding exceeding £15,000 where works are deemed essential to provide the necessary adaptations above the mandatory DFG limit. For top funding of less than £15,000, delegated powers is provided to the Corporate Manager Housing Services to consider each case.</p> |
| Eligibility criteria (applicant) | As for mandatory DFGs but also may include those failing means test but not able to service home improvement loan repayments |
| Eligibility criteria (works) | As for mandatory DFGs, and on recommendation of the council's Occupational Therapist and Corporate Manager Housing. |
| Conditions | For all discretionary grants a Land Registry Legal Charge will be lodged to become repayable on sale or transfer of the property, for whatever reason, at whatever point in time. |

| | |
|----------------|---|
| | The Council advises that this grant is only available through the services of the Council's Adaptations In-house supervisory service. |
| Maximum | £15,000 (with the discretion to increase this in exceptional circumstances by the Corporate Lead Officer in consultation with the Cabinet Member) |

| DISCRETIONARY DISABLED FACILITIES GRANT (DFG - Medium) | |
|---|---|
| Purpose/key outcomes | <p>Discretionary DFGs are available for medium works to adapt a property to suit the particular needs of a disabled person who resides at the property. Assistance is given to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate access • Provide suitable facilities • Make a building safe for use • Make environmental improvements to enable the disabled person to safely live in their home. <p>Medium works include (but is not limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level access showers • Stairlifts • Ramps (moderate ramps where Building Control and Planning is not required) |
| Eligibility (applicant) criteria | <p>To be offered grant aid:</p> <p>Owner Occupiers: must be a freeholder or leaseholder with at least 10 years of the lease remaining and the dwelling must be your only or main residence.</p> <p>Tenants: any tenant may apply for a disabled adaptation (subject to landlord consent).</p> <p>Landlords: where a tenant makes an application for a DFG, the landlords must be, or will be, a freeholder or leaseholder with at least 10 years of the lease remaining and the dwelling(s) is/are to be let on a permanent residential basis and not as a holiday home.</p> <p>A disabled person may make an application for a grant even if they fall outside the definitions above: each individual circumstance will be considered for grant assistance subject to an assessment of need from an Occupational Therapist, Occupational Therapist Assistant or Trusted Assessor and on application for grant assistance.</p> |

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| | Financial Resources Owner Occupiers and Private Tenants – This will not be subject to a Test of Financial Resources. |
| Eligibility criteria (works) | Works of adaptation required to enable the occupier to remain within their home. Assistance is given to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate access • Provide suitable facilities • Make a building safe for use • Make environmental improvements to enable the disabled person to safely live in their home. Eligible works will be determined subject to an assessment of need by the Council's Occupational Therapist, Occupational Therapist Assistance or Trusted Assessor. |
| Conditions | The Council advises that this grant is only available through the services of the Council's Adaptations In-house supervisory service. There will be no repayment conditions on this grant. |
| Maximum | The maximum grant assistance available is £36,000. |

| Discretionary Disabled Facilities Grant (Small) - SAFE, WARM AND SECURE ADAPTATION GRANT | |
|---|--|
| Purpose/key outcomes | Safe Warm and Secure /Minor Adaptations: The Council aims to facilitate quick easy access through the grant system for the provision of minor and/or emergency adaptations. Small works include (but is not limited to): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grab rails • Handrails • Paths • Level access door thresholds • Steps • Lever taps • Repairs to existing adaptations. |
| Eligibility criteria (applicant) | Safe Warm and Secure Grants are non means tested up to £5,000 (plus VAT and fees) for all clients. The Council cannot pay for the same adaptations/work twice. |

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| | The Council cannot pay for extending a service contract beyond the initial period, or for carrying out a replacement of equipment where servicing and maintenance has not been kept up to date. |
| Eligibility criteria (works) | <p>Safe Warm and Secure Assistance – Minor Adaptations could help provide the following:</p> <p>Minor adaptations such as grab rails, steps and ramps, lever taps, repairs to existing adaptations.</p> <p>Any other works of assistance at the discretion of the Council.</p> <p>Grant is available on the recommendation of Occupational Therapists, Occupational Therapist Assistants, Community Care Workers or trusted assessors.</p> |
| Conditions | <p>The Council advises that this grant is only available through the services of the Council's In-House supervisory service or on application by the applicant, consideration will be given to waive this condition.</p> <p>There will be no repayment conditions on this grant.</p> |
| Maximum | Up to £5,000 plus fees plus VAT |

| RELOCATION GRANT (DFG) | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Purpose/key outcomes | <p>There is a presumption against the allocation of a Disabled Facilities Grant where the property is unsuitable in the long term to the applicant's needs.</p> <p>The Authority will also offer assistance towards the relocation of a disabled person in appropriate circumstances i.e. where a property's adaptation costs are not reasonable or practicable, or else where adaptation of the existing property may not adequately meet the needs of the disabled person or their family/carer.</p> <p>Therefore, sometimes an Occupational Therapist may identify a homeowner whose needs cannot be met within their existing home. Adaptations at certain properties may not be practicable and this decision will be made in conjunction with the disabled adaptations service. In these circumstances, a client may be eligible for financial assistance to move from their current home to a more suitable property, which is either adapted to meet their needs or, where adaptations are practicable.</p> |

| | |
|---|--|
| Eligibility criteria (applicant) | <p>For owner occupiers a Relocation Grant will be offered alongside a DFG which will be subject to the same eligibility criteria, means test and post completion conditions as apply to the discretionary/mandatory Disabled Facilities grant.</p> <p>In determining the level of assistance consideration will be given to the feasibility and cost of adapting both the current and proposed property, and the market value of each of the properties.</p> <p>The disabled person and their spouse would be subject to a test of their financial resources to determine their financial contribution.</p> <p>In cases where the disabled person is a child, the parents or guardian who will have an owner's interest in the relocation property will be subject to the test of resources calculation.</p> |
| Eligibility criteria (works) | <p>The grant offered will not exceed the cost of adapting the current property.</p> <p>For private sector tenants assistance with removal expenses will be considered in cases of hardship.</p> <p>The grant can only be used to cover the costs related to moving house, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • estate agent's fees • solicitor's fees • removal costs • essential utility connection costs • deposit for a privately rented property <p>In some cases, we may also consider helping with the cost of carpets and curtains and replacement of certain appliances. However, this will depend on the individual circumstances of each case.</p> <p>An assessment of the new property will be carried out by the Occupational Therapist in order to determine if the disabled person's daily living needs could be met at that property. In liaison with a Housing Adaptations and Improvement Officer, a determination of the cost of any adaptations necessary at the new property will be made.</p> |
| Conditions | <p>A charge will be lodged at the Land Registry on the new property as soon as possible after purchase of the property.</p> <p>In the event of a disposal of the property, within 10 years of the payment of the grant award, the grant will be repayable in its entirety.</p> |
| Maximum | <p>The maximum grant assistance available is £10,000.</p> |

APPENDIX B - DISCRETIONARY MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR ASSISTANCE GRANTS AND LOANS

Poor housing conditions are a major factor in older and/or vulnerable people suffering poor health and becoming dependent on community care.

However, with limited capital resources as a local authority, and an increasing elderly population, it is not possible to assist every older or vulnerable person.

Some older persons will have the ability and/or means to pay for maintenance of their own homes. With this in mind, grant and / or loan assistance will be targeted at those in greatest need. The Emergency Repair Assistance can assist elderly and /or vulnerable people with no other financial means to do so, to carry out essential repairs to their home. Furthermore, more recently funding has been made available to local authorities through the Home Improvement Loan and Houses into Homes Loan Schemes as a way of providing additional finance to individuals and businesses for home improvements, which will contribute to the overall programme of improving the quality of homes and increasing housing supply.

Furthermore, with the introduction of the WG Vibrant Viable Places regeneration programme, Town Centre Loans have been made available in order to target the number of vacant, underutilised and redundant sites and premises in town centres and to support the diversification of town centres by encouraging more sustainable uses for empty sites and premises. A specific housing element is included in this scheme to support the conversion of properties into living accommodation.

| EMERGENCY REPAIR ASSISTANCE | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Purpose/key outcomes | <p>Emergency Repair Assistance: The Council aims to provide financial emergency repair assistance to help with urgent works of repair, for the vulnerable and/or elderly.</p> <p>Please note: This funding is not grant aid, but financial assistance provided for the duration of the recipient's occupancy of the property and becomes repayable on sale/transfer of the property.</p> |

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>Eligibility criteria (applicant)</p> | <p>For people over 65 years</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Owner occupiers over 65 years with savings of less than £15,000, - Tenants over 65 years with life interest or have a long lease in a property with savings of less than £15,000, OR - Owner occupier or tenants who are in receipt of a means tested benefit (or equivalent) - Clients needing palliative care and/or to enable early release from hospital. <p>People over 18 and under 65 years of age - will also be eligible to apply if they meet the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Owner occupier, OR - Tenant who has a long lease, AND - be in receipt of a means tested benefit including: Income Support, income based Job-Seeker's Allowance, Income based employment and support allowance, Guaranteed Pension Credit, Housing Benefit, Council Tax benefit, Child Tax Credit or Working Tax Credit for which his/her income has been calculated to be less than the sum determined annually by DWP for means-tested purposes (currently £15,860 for 2011/12) or Universal Credit. OR - Applicants whose primary place of residence is at the property, but not in receipt of the income-related benefits above, will be subject to the <i>Reduction in Grant Regulation</i> 'means test'. Applicants whose contribution is calculated as less than £1,000 (one thousand pounds) will be eligible and will contribute the calculated amount towards the cost of the works. <p>The applicant must live in the dwelling as their only or main residence and have an owner's interest in the dwelling, or be a tenant of the dwelling alone or jointly with others and have a 'duty or power' to carry out the works in question (e.g. in the case of tenants, the landlord usually has the duty or 'repairing obligation' and not the tenant), or occupy the dwelling under a right of exclusive occupation granted for life.</p> <p>In respect of a mobile home the occupier must also satisfy a 3 year residential qualifying period.</p> <p>A check will be carried out as to whether any relevant grants have been paid previously to ensure that not more than £5,000 plus fees plus VAT is given in any three year period for each type of grant (Emergency Adaptation and Emergency Repair) (subject to exceptions below). The Council cannot pay for the same work twice.</p> |
|--|---|

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Eligibility criteria (works) | <p>Repair works for serious, unexpected, and potentially dangerous situations requiring immediate action to a dwelling such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - securing the basic fabric of the property from the entry of wind or rain - protecting the occupants from immediate exposure to danger - repairs to windows and doors - defective drainage - dangerous wiring <p>Any other works of assistance at the discretion of the Council.</p> |
| Conditions | <p>This financial assistance becomes repayable on sale or transfer of the property.</p> <p>A local land charge will be placed that will bind the applicant and any successors in title. This charge will be registered in the local land charges register and thereafter registered with the Land Registry.</p> <p>The Council advises that this financial assistance is only available through the services of the Council's Home Improvement Supervisory service or on application by the applicant, consideration will be given to waive this condition.</p> |
| Maximum | Up to £5,000 plus fees plus VAT in a 3 year period. |

HOME IMPROVEMENT LOANS

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Purpose/key outcomes | <p>These Home Improvement Loans are made available to support the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Substandard Housing (Cat 1 / Cat 2 Hazards / Welsh Housing Quality Standard); • Repair, Fire Safety or Security; • Empty Homes (Renovation / Conversion); |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy Efficiency (ECO top up); • Group Repair Schemes / Envelope Schemes; • Private Rented Sector (Access Schemes); • Aids and adaptations for older or disabled people or DFG top up. <p>This is not an exhaustive list and if the works contribute to making the property warm safe or secure, then it will fall within the terms of the scheme.</p> |

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>Eligibility criteria (applicant)</p> | <p>Owners of substandard houses and includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner occupiers • Landlords • Developers • Charities / Third Sector <p>Priority must be given to homeowners and landlords. Priority must be given to landlords that offer affordable / social housing / nomination rights over market rent.</p> <p>The applicant must be able to afford the monthly loan repayments and will be subject to a financial assessment.</p> <p>Applicants must not:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have adverse credit history which may include: • County Court Judgements (CCJ) • Individual Voluntary Arrangements (IVAs) • Debt Relief Order (DRO) • Bankrupt (within last 6 years) • Company Insolvency / Liquidation <p>Owe any outstanding debt to the Local Authority at the time of making an application</p> <p>Applicants must not:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have adverse credit history which may include: • County Court Judgements (CCJ) • Individual Voluntary Arrangements (IVAs) • Debt Relief Order (DRO) • Bankrupt (within last 6 years) • Company Insolvency / Liquidation <p>Owe any outstanding debt to the Local Authority at the time of making an application</p> |
| <p>Eligibility criteria (works)</p> | <p>Any loan requiring works must contribute to making the property Warm, Safe or Secure. There is no requirement that the property must meet all of these criteria. The loan could be targeted at one key element.</p> <p>The loan scheme could be used to support the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Substandard Housing (Cat 1 / Cat 2 Hazards / Welsh Housing Quality Standard); • Repair, Fire Safety or Security; • Empty Homes (Renovation / Conversion); • Energy Efficiency (ECO top up); • Group Repair Schemes / Envelope Schemes; • Private Rented Sector (Access Schemes); • Aids and adaptations for older or disabled people or DFG top up. |

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Eligibility criteria (works) | <p>This is not an exhaustive list and if the works contribute to making the property warm safe or secure, then it will fall within the terms of the scheme.</p> <p>There must be no Category 1 hazards (as defined by Housing Health and Safety Rating System HHSRS) after completion of works if the loan is a Landlord Loan, ie. The property is a rented property.</p> <p>Officers from the local authority will visit each property to determine eligible work and discuss the loan application process with the applicant.</p> |
| Maximum Loan Periods | <p>Owner Occupiers - maximum loan period up to 10 years; Landlords / Developers / Charities - maximum loan period up to 5 years.</p> <p>Loan period will be agreed on application, and will depend on the value of the loan and applicant's financial ability to repay.</p> |
| Repayment terms | <p>Loan repayment will be by monthly direct debit payments unless otherwise agreed during the application process.</p> <p>For owner-occupier loans the repayment period will be set to ensure a minimum repayment of £50/month with a repayment period agreed during the application process (up to a maximum of 10 years).</p> |
| Conditions | <p>Any loan offered, taking into account any existing mortgage cannot exceed 80% of the current property value. It is possible in certain cases for another property to be used as security for the loan.</p> <p>For loans up to £5000 a local land charge will be secured on the property that will bind the applicant and any successors in title. This charge will be registered in the local land charges register and thereafter registered with the Land Registry.</p> <p>This local land charge will also apply to those owner occupiers who receive the Loan Application Fee Grant and this charge will bind the applicant and any successors in title until such time as the loan is repaid.</p> <p>For loans over £5000 a Land Registry Legal Charge will be lodged that will bind the applicant and any successors in title.</p> <p>The property must remain fully insured against loss or damage, to full reinstatement value.</p> |
| Maximum | <p><u>Owner Occupiers</u> Min £1,000 up to a Max £35,000 per unit</p> |

| | |
|---|--|
| | <p><u>Landlords</u> Min £1,000 up to a Max £25,000 per unit – market rent Min £1,000 up to a Max £35,000 per unit – rents are based on the Local Housing Allowance Rate.</p> |
| Loan Application Fee Grant for owner-occupiers | <p>This can include the use of the supervisory service to oversee the works. Provided there is no default on the loan, or breach of grant conditions, the grant will not be repayable. The local authority has discretion to only approve the Loan Application Fee Grant in certain circumstances on consideration by the Corporate Manager and Corporate Lead Officer.</p> |
| Loan Fee Charges/cost | <p>A one-off administration fee will apply that may be paid over the term of the loan or paid up front.</p> <p>All fees are subject to change annually in line with the Council's Fees and Charges Policy. Fees correct at time of Policy approval, January 2022.</p> <p>Owner Occupiers Loan up to £5000 – fee of £650 Loan £5001 to £35,000 – fee of £1000</p> <p>In the event of Loan Application Fee Grant not being available a maximum of £500 will be charged to the applicant.</p> <p>Landlords Loan up to £10,000 – fee of £1035 Loan £10,001 - £35,000 – fee of £1555 Loan over £35,000 – fee of £2278</p> <p>These fees for landlords will be waived if the property is offered for rent at the Local Housing Allowance rate for the duration of the loan period, and the landlord rents the property to tenants from the Council's Affordable Housing Register or otherwise a tenant who would be eligible to be on this Register by entering into a Nomination Rights Agreement.</p> <p>Supervisory Service The Local Authority can provide a supervisory service for building works to ensure consistency in standards of workmanship and timely delivery of works. This will include measuring up the property to produce a scheme of work, including drawings where necessary, obtain quotes for the work, including for specialist equipment, and sort out any issues as they arise. The applicant may choose this service if they so wish at a charge of 10%.</p> |

| | |
|--|---|
| | Alternatively the applicant is at liberty to secure their own contractors for the works. In this circumstance, the local authority will not be liable for the quality of the workmanship or follow up on defects following completion of the works. |
|--|---|

| LIFETIME LOANS | |
|---|---|
| Purpose/key outcomes | There may be occasion when a property is in such a condition (Cat 1 hazards) that it is not reasonable for the Council to allow the occupier to remain without works being undertaken. The Council has discretion to offer a Lifetime Loan for Category 1 hazards within the property. |
| Eligibility criteria (applicant) | Owner occupiers who cannot meet the affordability check for Home Improvement Loans but who do not qualify for Emergency Repair Assistance or have already been awarded the ERA maximum. Where eligible benevolent funding must be sought |
| Eligibility criteria (works) | Repair works for serious, unexpected, and potentially dangerous situations requiring immediate action to a dwelling such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - securing the basic fabric of the property from the entry of wind or rain - protecting the occupants from immediate exposure to danger - repairs to windows and doors - defective drainage - dangerous wiring <p>Works will be Category 1 (HHSRS) hazards only.</p> <p>Any other works of assistance at the discretion of the Council. Officers from the local authority will visit each property to determine eligible work and discuss the loan application process with the applicant.</p> |
| Repayment terms | This financial assistance becomes repayable on sale or transfer of the property or if the applicant ceases to reside at the property. A local land charge or full legal charge will be placed that will bind the applicant and any successors in title. This charge will be registered in the local land charges register and thereafter registered with the Land Registry. The Council advises that this financial assistance is only available through the services of the Council's In-house supervisory service |

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| | <p>or on application by the applicant, consideration will be given to waive this condition.</p> <p>The loans are interest free until the time that they become repayable.</p> <p>Where any sum is required to be paid, but is not repaid in accordance with the loan conditions, a breach of conditions will have occurred. In such instances Ceredigion County Council may demand immediate repayment of the loan and interest will be charged at 5% above the Bank of England base rate.</p> |
| Conditions | <p>The Council may consider the availability of equity in the property when determining the amount of loan to award.</p> <p>For loans up to £5,000 a local land charge will be secured on the property that will bind the applicant and any successors in title. This charge will be registered in the local land charges register and thereafter registered with the Land Registry.</p> <p>For loans over £5,000 a Land Registry Legal Charge will be lodged that will bind the applicant and any successors in title. This charge will be registered in the local land charges register and thereafter registered with the Land Registry.</p> |
| Maximum | £15,000 inclusive of VAT (with the discretion to increase this in exceptional circumstances by consideration of the Grants Panel) |
| Loan Fee Charges/cost | No administration fee will be charged for this Loan. |

| HOUSES INTO HOMES (EMPTY PROPERTIES) LOAN | |
|--|--|
| Purpose/key outcomes | <p>Houses to Homes is a Welsh Government initiative designed to bring empty homes (min 6 months empty) back into use for sale or rent.</p> <p>Finance may be used for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • loans to return a property to use to sell - these loans would have a maximum 2 year repayment period • loans to return a property to use for rent - these loans would have a maximum 5 year repayment period |
| Eligibility criteria (applicant) | <p>Loans can be offered to individuals (expected 3 months pay slips), charities (3 years accounts), companies/ businesses (3 years accounts).</p> <p>Loans are not available for people wanting to renovate the property and live in it as their principal home (see Home Improvement Loans).</p> |

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Eligibility criteria (works) | <p>Works required for the renovation and improvement of single properties or the conversion of empty properties into a number of units, so that they are suitable for use as residential accommodation.</p> <p>Funding will be available up front before works start, providing owners with working capital.</p> |
| Repayment Terms | <p>This will depend on what is the intention with the property on completion of the works.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If renovating a single property, which is to be sold, the loan must be repaid when the property is sold or up to two years from the date of the loan approval, whichever is the sooner. • If converting a property into a number of units, which are to be sold on completion of the works, it is expected that the loan must be repaid on sale of the first unit, or two years, whichever is the sooner. However we will endeavour to arrange a mutually agreeable repayment schedule. • If the property/units are to be made available for letting the loan must be repaid within 3 years from the date of the loan approval. • All loans can be repaid earlier if the applicant wishes to do so. <p>The loans are interest free, providing there is no default on the loan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where any sum is required to be paid, but is not repaid in accordance with the loan conditions, a breach of conditions will have occurred. In such instances Ceredigion County Council may demand immediate repayment of the loan and interest will be charged at 5% above the Bank of England base rate. |
| Conditions | <p>Loans will be secured as first or second charge against the Land Registry Title.</p> <p>Loans can only be made available for properties that have been empty for at least six months or more.</p> <p>Any loan offered, taking into account any existing mortgage cannot exceed the following Loan to Value rates. Up to £25,000 loan - 80% LTV £25,001 - £100,000 loan – 75% LTV and £100,001 - £250,000 loan – 70% LTV.</p> <p>The Council may give consideration in certain cases for another property to be used as security for the loan.</p> <p>Applicant must carry out the conversion/repair works within an agreed time period.</p> |

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The property/units must be marketed for sale or for let within a reasonable period of time after completing the works (12 weeks). If the property/units are available for rent and are not occupied within this time period, then the loan may become repayable. The loan must be repaid either on or before the date as specified in your Loan Facility Agreement. <p>The property must remain fully insured against loss or damage, to full reinstatement value.</p> |
| Maximum | <p><u>Market rent properties</u> Min £1,000 up to a Max £25,000 per unit.</p> <p><u>Local Housing Allowance rent properties</u> Min £1,000 up to a Max £35,000 per unit. Landlord will need to enter into a Nomination Rights agreement or the PRS Lease scheme.</p> |
| Loan Fee Charges | <p>All fees are subject to change annually in line with the Council's Fees and Charges Policy. Fees correct at time of Policy approval, January 2022.</p> <p>Loan up to £10,000 – fee of £1035</p> <p>Loan £10,001 - £35,000 – fee of £1555</p> <p>Loan over £35,000 – fee of £2278</p> <p>These fees for landlords will be waived if the property is offered for rent at the Local Housing Allowance rate for the duration of the loan period, and the landlord rents the property to tenants from the Council's Affordable Housing Register or otherwise a tenant who would be eligible to be on this Register by entering a Nomination Rights Agreement.</p> <p>Supervisory Service</p> <p>The Local Authority can provide a supervisory service for building works to ensure consistency in standards of workmanship and timely delivery of works. This will include measuring up the property to produce a scheme of work, including drawings where necessary, obtain quotes for the work, including for specialist equipment, and sort out any issues as they arise. The applicant may choose this service if they so wish at a charge of 10%.</p> <p>Alternatively the applicant is at liberty to secure their own contractors for the works. In this circumstance, the local authority</p> |

| | |
|--|--|
| | <p>will not be liable for the quality of the workmanship or follow up on defects following completion of the works.</p> <p>Building/planning fees and RICS evaluation fees (if required) are not included and should be paid by the applicant.</p> |
|--|--|

| HEALTH AND HOUSING ANCILLARY ASSISTANCE | |
|---|--|
| Purpose/key outcomes | <p>Discretionary assistance to enable independent living where other grant and loan products do not cover costs due to limitations in criteria.</p> <p>Financial assistance is dependent on availability of appropriate funding avenues such as Integrated Care Funding.</p> <p>Examples of qualifying items include;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - clearance of property in hoarding cases - temporary accommodation to facilitate works - connection of services - other public health matters <p>This funding is offered at the discretion of the Team Manager only.</p> <p>Please note: This funding is not grant aid, but financial assistance provided for the duration of the recipient's occupancy of the property and becomes repayable on sale/transfer of the property.</p> |
| Eligibility criteria (applicant) | Vulnerable clients who cannot access other funding sources. |
| Eligibility criteria (works) | <p>Works which are necessary for the health/ safety of the occupant or other persons in proximity to the deficiency identified but cannot be fulfilled by other grant and loan products.</p> <p>Officers from the local authority will visit each property to determine eligible work and discuss each case with Team Manager.</p> |
| Conditions | Local Land Charges or Land Registry Legal Charge will be lodged to become repayable on sale or transfer of the property, for whatever reason, at whatever point in time. |
| Maximum | Subject to available funding. |

Local Authority Loans



Powers to award loans

The Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England & Wales) Order 2002 allows Local Authorities to formulate funding policies to address specific local needs and strategic priorities in improving living conditions. A policy must be in place/ adopted before any assistance can be issued.

Assistance may be provided in any form and may be unconditional or subject to conditions, including conditions as to the repayment of the assistance or of its value (in whole or in part), or the making of a contribution towards the assisted work. (As set out in local policy).

In addition the Local Government Act 2000 created a discretionary power referred to as 'the well-being power' which enables Local Authorities to do anything that they consider is likely to promote or improve the economic, social or environmental well-being of their area and / or persons in it, provided that they are not restricted from doing so by other legislation.

Consequently, the broad nature of the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance)(England and Wales) Order 2002 and the general 'well-being' powers contained in the Local Government Act 2000, means that Local Authorities will be able to provide financial assistance through Loan Schemes to the full range of applicants and can attach such conditions or terms that they consider appropriate in the circumstances.

Further information including eligibility can be found in the Housing Grants and Loans Financial Assistance Policy as agreed by cabinet 8th May 2018.

Financial Conduct Authority

The FCA regulates the provision of mortgages and conduct of parties engaged in regulated mortgage activity. Local Authorities are excluded from needing FCA permission for most consumer credit activities, but may still need permission for some types of lending.

Securing a 'land mortgage' over the property, either by legal charge registered with the District Land Registry or a local land charge (ie. a regulated mortgage) puts the regulation of the service under the Financial Services and Market Act 2000.

However, under the Financial Services and Market Act 2000 (exemption) (Amendment) (No.2) Order 2003 Local Housing Authorities offering mortgages have been exempt from the FCA regulatory regime, on the basis that a comparable quality service is provided to the client.

To ensure that Local Housing Authorities are able to meet the requirement of providing a comparative service, the LA should seek to follow the National Assembly of Wales issued Circular 20/02 (Renewal Guidance) and the Mortgage Sales Guidance for Local Authorities and Housing Associations 2000.

Distance selling

Where an LA provides a loan/ mortgage without any face-to-face contact with the customer at any stage this is classed as 'distance selling' and further information and regulations apply. *As set out in Distance Marketing Directive and incorporated within UK legislation via the Financial Services (Distance Marketing) Regulations 2004.*

In order to ensure this is not applicable, the LA must have a face-to-face meeting with the customer to discuss the loan/ mortgage.

Mortgage Administration Standards

1. Lending business must be conducted in an honest and responsible way, with due care and skill.
 - a. LA's should have in place a policy identifying eligibility criteria and produce a document clearly showing this for customers.
 - b. Lending procedure must be undertaken by a trained member of staff.
 - c. Interview methods must not leave customers feeling pressurised into taking out a mortgage to fund home improvement works.
 - d. Lending procedures must not result in any unfair treatment of customers.
 - e. Lending procedures must not give rise to any conflict of duty with customers.
 - f. Before giving any assistance the LA must be satisfied that the person has received appropriate advice or information about the extent and nature of any obligation (financial or otherwise) that they will be taking on.
2. Lending procedures must recognise the interests of the customer and treat them fairly.
 - a. Clear information on the terms of the loan should be given in advance.
 - b. Customers should be given time to consider whether this product is right for them, before signing documents.
 - c. LA must be satisfied that customers are fully aware of any financial commitment they are entering into
3. All contact and communication with customers must be clear, fair and not misleading.
 - a. Contact includes oral and written, telephone calls, face to face and correspondence (letters, emails).
 - b. Customer should receive written information about the product being offered. (Guidance document) This should include; who is providing the loan/ mortgage; fees; refund policy; complaint procedure. (Prescribed information).
 - c. Guidance document should be given at an early stage/ first contact.
 - d. Includes the availability of the loan or other products available through the lender which may be suitable.
 - e. On offer of loan/ mortgage, the customer should be given Mortgage Offer Document. This should include; customer name; date it was produced and how

long the offer is valid for; how to accept; what assistance has been given; fees applicable; amount of mortgage; repayments; value of property for security; interest rate; disposal terms/ risks; length of mortgage; total cost of mortgage; contact details. (Prescribed information)

4. Reasonable care must be taken to ensure that any mortgage offered to the customer is suitable for them, based on their needs and circumstances.
 - a. The LA must take reasonable steps to obtain from a customer all information necessary to assess whether the loan is suitable. Eg. Ownership capacity (personal/ business etc.), other secured debt, financial situation of applicant etc.
 - i. Customer can afford to take out the loan/ mortgage, consider income/ expenditure and likely changes in the future
 - ii. Loan/ mortgage meets customers needs and circumstances
 - iii. Customer meets eligibility requirements
 - iv. For Lifetime Loan, customers future needs and plans eg. Moving, or his/ her wishes for the estate.

Please refer to the National Assembly of Wales issued Circular 20/02 (Renewal Guidance) and the Mortgage Sales Guidance for Local Authorities and Housing Associations 2000 for more information.

State Aid

State Aid should only need to be considered for Landlord loans. The current de minimis thresholds are approx. £163,500 over a three year period. The aid component is not the loan itself (which must be repaid) but the advantage conferred on the borrower through not having to pay interest on the loan. Consequently, the amount of aid for each transaction would be counted as the present value of the interest that would be charged by a commercial lender. Provided that figure, plus the amount of any other state aid received by the borrower in the three years before the aid is given, does not exceed £163,500 from all sources of public sector aid, then the de minimis rules can apply. The benefit of such a loan under these schemes is well below the current threshold.

Statement of state aid implications should be given to landlord/ developer applicants.

Current Loan Products

This procedure can be adapted to include new loan sources should the Local Authority be in a position to offer them.

Current products include:

- Emergency Repair Assistance
- Home Improvement Loan
- Houses into Homes Empty Property Loan
- Lifetime Loan

Process steps

| | Emergency Repair Assistance | Lifetime Loan | Home Improvement Loan | Houses into Homes Loan | Town Centre Loan (not currently available) |
|---|-----------------------------|---------------|-----------------------|------------------------|--|
| Enquiry received. | | | | | |
| Initial letter or email sent including conditions/ info. (Guidance document) | X | | X | X | |
| Visit to property to determine works and chat through loan face to face. Discussion should take place with applicant to confirm when the finance is repayable. Explain the process of application and securing the charge. Confirm ownership. | X | X | X | X | |
| HHSRS carried out at the dwelling to identify Cat 1 hazards | X | X | | | |
| Schedule of works to remedy Cat 1 hazards at dwelling. Source quotations using Councils Minor Works Framework. | X | X | | | |
| Complete application form with applicant | X | X | | | |
| Application received | | | | | |
| Check proposed works match purposes | X | X | X | X | |
| Verify application ¹ . (first officer) (refer to financial assessment stages) | | X | X | X | |

| | | | | | |
|--|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|---|--|
| Verify application. ⁸ (second officer) (refer to financial assessment stages) | X | X | X | X | |
| Ownership status should be confirmed with Land Registry Title and consideration given to any other charges (mortgages) secured on the dwelling. | X | X | X | X | |
| Company applications to be referred to Finance for assessment. | | | X | X | |
| Check property insurance in place | | | X | X | |
| Approval of Loan to take place. | X ⁹ | X ² | X | X | |
| Legal Charge document to be drawn up. | | X | X | X | |
| Loan agreement document to be drawn up. | | | X | X | |
| Documents ¹⁰ to be sent to applicant, with cover letter of further explanation. Applicant to be encouraged to source independent advice. Signing of Documents will need to be witnessed by third party. | | X | X | X | |
| Obtain signed agreement from Corporate Managers Housing and Finance | | X | X | X | |
| Returned documents. ¹¹ to be sent up to Legal for signing/ sealing on behalf of Council and registration of charges. Once this is in place, return one copy to applicant for safe keeping. | | X | X | X | |
| Instruct contractor and check works on completion before payment. | X | X | X ¹² | | |
| Register costs with Local Land Charges | X | X ¹³ | | | |

⁸ Check ownership, costs of work, financial assessment, ID forms, viability/ due diligence, security options, debts with CCC, fee recieved. See financial assessment stages for further information.

⁹ Approval document to contain conditions, and reference to the approval being subject to charges being secured.

¹⁰ Mortgage Offer Document, Loan Agreement, Legal Charge, Direct Debit

¹¹ Legal Charge, Loan Agreement, Land Registry Title, ID1 form, Mortgage company agreement/ Deed of priority, Manager agreement document. Legal services to register Land Registry charge and Companies House, if applicable.

¹² Only instruct contractor for Home Improvement Loan if Supervisory Service is used.

¹³ Where costs are under £5000

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|--|
| Payment to be sent to Finance. Copies of documents to be saved in shared folder. Finance will monitor repayments etc. | X | X | X | X | |
|---|---|---|---|---|--|

NOTE: Loans above £100,000 should be subject to a Panel assessment protocol, to include input from Corporate Managers; Housing and Finance and assessing officers in both services.

Financial assessment stages

In order to minimise risk and carry out due diligence in assessment of applications for loan funding a stepped approach to financial assessment is carried out in line with the below.

| Owner occupier application - Loan amount up to £25,000 Home Improvement Loan | |
|---|---|
| Affordability form | Check against bank statements and wage slips provided to ensure the additional loan payments can comfortably be met. (Responsible lending) If not, consider altering loan amount, repayment time frame or alternative financing. |
| Loan to Value | Maximum 80% (using current value and accounting for other mortgage/ secured lending) |
| Security | First or second charge on property being renovated |
| Insurance | Check house insurance in place, against loss or damage, to full reinstatement value |
| Debt check | Carry out debt check with debtors and council tax in relation to applicant and property. Debts must be resolved prior to approval. |
| Payment of funds | On Invoice, after works, stages if required |
| Repayment | Monthly at min £50/ month over max 10 years |

| Individual Landlord - Loan amount up to £25,000 Home Improvement, Houses into Homes | |
|--|---|
| Affordability form | Home Improvement Loan Check against bank statements and wage slips provided to ensure the additional loan payments can comfortably be met. (Responsible lending) |

| | |
|------------------|--|
| | <p>If not, consider altering loan amount, repayment time frame or alternative financing.</p> <p>Houses into Homes Empty Property Loan</p> <p>Equity check</p> <p>Ability to complete scheme</p> |
| Loan to Value | Maximum 80% (using current value and accounting for other mortgage/ secured lending) |
| Security | First or second charge on property being renovated or alternative property where ownership is the same. |
| Insurance | Check property insurance in place, against loss or damage, to full reinstatement value |
| Debt check | Carry out debt check with debtors and council tax in relation to applicant and property. Debts must be resolved prior to approval. |
| Payment of funds | <p>Home Improvement Loan</p> <p>On Invoice, after works, stages if required</p> <p>Houses into Homes Empty Property Loan</p> <p>Up front after loan secured</p> |
| Repayment | <p>Home Improvement Loan</p> <p>Monthly at min £100/ month over max 5 years</p> <p>Houses into Homes Empty Property Loan</p> <p>Lump sum at end of term. (2y sale, 5y rent)</p> <p>Or upon sale if earlier</p> |

| Individual /Landlord - Loan amount £25,001 - £100,000 Houses into Homes | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| Affordability | Houses into Homes Empty Property Loan |

| | |
|------------------|--|
| | Equity check Ability to complete scheme |
| Loan to Value | Maximum 75% (using current value and accounting for other mortgage/ secured lending) |
| Security | First or second charge on property being renovated or alternative property where ownership is the same. |
| Insurance | Check property insurance in place, against loss or damage, to full reinstatement value |
| Debt check | Carry out debt check with debtors and council tax in relation to applicant and property. Debts must be resolved prior to approval. |
| Payment of funds | Houses into Homes Empty Property Loan Up front after loan secured, but release in stages/ tranches along with progress |
| Repayment | Houses into Homes Empty Property Loan Lump sum at end of term. (2y sale, 5y rent) Or upon sale if earlier |

| Individual /Landlord - Loan amount £100,001 - £250,000 Houses into Homes CORPORATE LEAD OFFICER in consultation with the Cabinet Member | |
|--|---|
| Affordability | Houses into Homes Empty Property Loan Equity check Ability to complete scheme |
| Loan to Value | Maximum 70% (using current value and accounting for other mortgage/ secured lending) |
| Security | First or second charge on property being renovated or alternative property where ownership is the same. |

| | |
|------------------|--|
| Insurance | Check property insurance in place, against loss or damage, to full reinstatement value |
| Debt check | Carry out debt check with debtors and council tax in relation to applicant and property. Debts must be resolved prior to approval. |
| Payment of funds | Houses into Homes Empty Property Loan Up front after loan secured, but release in stages/ tranches along with progress |
| Repayment | Houses into Homes Empty Property Loan Lump sum at end of term. (2y sale, 5y rent) Or upon sale if earlier Ability to require staged repayments is necessary |

| Business/ Company application - Loan amount up to £25,000 Houses into Homes | |
|--|--|
| Accounts | <p>Finance to carry out assessment of business/ company to include a review of the two most recent full year Statement of Accounts, to include a full Profit & Loss account and Balance Sheet. The assessment will aim to ensure the business is sustainable, has the capacity to undertake the proposed development, ability to service the loan and doesn't have any cash flow issues. Where possible a Dun & Bradstreet Business Credit report will be also be used in conjunction with the Statement of Accounts to evaluate the financial health of the business.</p> <p>Where a business is a registered limited company information available from Companies House and any other public source will also form part of the assessment.</p> |
| Loan to Value | Maximum 80% (using current value and accounting for other mortgage/ secured lending) |

| | |
|------------------|--|
| Security | First or second charge on property being renovated or alternative property where ownership is the same. |
| Insurance | Check property insurance in place, against loss or damage, to full reinstatement value |
| Debt check | Carry out debt check with debtors and council tax in relation to applicant and property. Debts must be resolved prior to approval. |
| Companies House | Charge registered against business entity with Companies House |
| Payment of funds | Houses into Homes Empty Property Loan Up front after loan secured |
| Repayment | Houses into Homes Empty Property Loan Lump sum at end of term. (2y sale, 5y rent) Or upon sale if earlier |

| Business/ Company application - Loan amount £25,001 - £100,000 Houses into Homes | |
|---|--|
| Accounts | <p>Finance to carry out assessment of business/ company to include a review of the two most recent full year Statement of Accounts, to include a full Profit & Loss account and Balance Sheet. The assessment will aim to ensure the business is sustainable, has the capacity to undertake the proposed development, ability to service the loan and doesn't have any cash flow issues. Where possible a Dun & Bradstreet Business Credit report will be also be used in conjunction with the Statement of Accounts to evaluate the financial health of the business.</p> <p>Where a business is a registered limited company information available from Companies House and any other public source will also form part of the assessment.</p> |

| | |
|------------------|--|
| Loan to Value | Maximum 75% (using current value and accounting for other mortgage/ secured lending) |
| Security | First or second charge on property being renovated or alternative property where ownership is the same. |
| Insurance | Check property insurance in place, against loss or damage, to full reinstatement value |
| Debt check | Carry out debt check with debtors and council tax in relation to applicant and property. Debts must be resolved prior to approval. |
| Companies House | Charge registered against business entity with Companies House |
| Payment of funds | Houses into Homes Empty Property Loan Up front after loan secured Staged payments as works progress |
| Repayment | Houses into Homes Empty Property Loan Lump sum at end of term. (2y sale, 5y rent) Or upon sale if earlier |

| Business/ Company application - Loan amount £100,001 - £250,000 Houses into Homes CORPORATE LEAD OFFICER in consultation with the Cabinet Member | |
|---|---|
| Accounts | Finance to carry out assessment of business/ company to include a review of the two most recent full year Statement of Accounts, to include a full Profit & Loss account and Balance Sheet. The assessment will aim to ensure the business is sustainable, has the capacity to undertake the proposed development, ability to service the loan and doesn't have any cash flow issues. Where possible a Dun & Bradstreet Business Credit report will be also be used in conjunction with the Statement of Accounts to evaluate the financial health of the business. |

| | |
|------------------|--|
| | Where a business is a registered limited company information available from Companies House and any other public source will also form part of the assessment. |
| Loan to Value | Maximum 70% (using current value and accounting for other mortgage/ secured lending) |
| Security | First or second charge on property being renovated or alternative property where ownership is the same. |
| Insurance | Check property insurance in place, against loss or damage, to full reinstatement value |
| Debt check | Carry out debt check with debtors and council tax in relation to applicant and property. Debts must be resolved prior to approval. |
| Companies House | Charge registered against business entity with Companies House |
| Payment of funds | Houses into Homes Empty Property Loan Up front after loan secured Staged payments as works progress |
| Repayment | Houses into Homes Empty Property Loan Lump sum at end of term. (2y sale, 5y rent) Or upon sale if earlier Ability to require staged repayments is necessary |

To further mitigate risk against non-repayment/ default, a buffer is to be maintained of £100,000 across loan pots, from the original grant funding.