



Town Hall, Penrith, Cumbria CA11 7QF  
Tel: 01768 817817  
Email: [housing.services@eden.gov.uk](mailto:housing.services@eden.gov.uk)

# **Eden District Council Empty Homes Grant Policy and Procedure**

August 2022

## Accessibility Information

A summary of the information contained in this document is available in different languages or formats upon request. Contact Eden District Council's Communication Officer, telephone: 01768 817817 or email: [communication@eden.gov.uk](mailto:communication@eden.gov.uk)

## Polish

Streszczenie informacji zawartych w niniejszym dokumencie można uzyskać na życzenie w innym języku lub formie. Prosimy o kontakt telefoniczny z Referentem Rady ds. Komunikacji Okręgu Eden pod numerem telefonu 01768 817817 lub pocztą e-mail na adres [communication@eden.gov.uk](mailto:communication@eden.gov.uk)

## Traditional Chinese

若閣下要求，本文件的摘要資訊可以其他版式和語言版本向您提供。請聯絡伊甸區地方政府專訊主任 (Eden District Council's Communication Officer)，其電話為：01768 817817，或發電郵至：[communication@eden.gov.uk](mailto:communication@eden.gov.uk)

## Urdu

اس دستاویز میں شامل معلومات کا خلاصہ درخواست کیے جانے پر مختلف زبانوں اور فارمیٹوں (شکلوں) میں دستیاب ہے۔ ایڈن ڈسٹرکٹ کاؤنسل کے افسر برائے مواصلات سے فون نمبر 01768817817 پر رابطہ کریں یا [communication@eden.gov.uk](mailto:communication@eden.gov.uk) پر ای میل کریں۔

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Eden District Council Empty Homes Grant Policy and Procedure .....          | 1  |
| 1.0 Introduction .....  | 4  |
| 2.0 What the funding will be spent on .....                                 | 4  |
| 3.0 Who will be eligible to apply for funding? .....                        | 4  |
| 4.0 How funding will be allocated? .....                                    | 5  |
| 5.0 Monitoring & Review .....   | 5  |
| 6.0 Other considerations .....  | 5  |
| Appendix A – Application for Eden District Council’s Empty Home Grant ..... | 6  |
| Appendix B – Assessment Criteria (checklist) .....                          | 10 |

## **1.0 Introduction**

1.1 Eden District Council's Strategic Priorities 2021 – 2022 highlight the following:

Housing Strategy – we will develop an action plan to deliver our new housing strategy setting out our vision for affordable decent homes for our local people, and to help us retain our young people and families.

1.2 Eden District Council's Housing Strategy 2021 - 2026 identifies three key priorities:

- Development of good quality new housing.
- Improving the condition of our existing housing stock.
- Improving access to housing for all.

1.3 The Housing Strategy includes the following objectives:

- Review our Housing Renewals Assistance Policy, incorporating our policy changes for Disabled Facilities Grants, empty homes, discretionary housing grants and Home Improvement Agency.
- Explore innovative ideas for Empty Homes Assistance as part of our wider Housing Renewals Assistance Policy review.

1.4 Empty homes blight an area, causing frustration for neighbours, and those in housing need who can see a potentially good home being left to decay.

## **2.0 What the funding will be spent on**

2.1 Empty Home Grant assistance is available to owners of Long Term Empty Homes ie properties that have been empty for two years or more as per Council Tax Records.

2.2 Grants must be used to undertake works to properties to achieve a decent home standard which enable the property to be made ready for occupation ie free of Class 1 hazards in accordance with Housing Health and Safety Rating System standards (HHSRS).

2.3 The Grant funding available is limited. To enable Eden District Council to support multiple homes the maximum assistance which may be applied for in respect of any one property is £5,000. The Council reserves the right to increase the grant support dependant on 'take up' of the grant and available funds.

## **3.0 Who will be eligible to apply for funding?**

3.1 To qualify the following criteria must be met:

- The applicant must be the owner of the property and provide documentation to support this.
- Works must be completed within six months of the approval of the grant.
- A preliminary inspection must be undertaken to ensure the scope of work planned is sufficient to meet decent homes standards.
- Grants will only be paid once the works have been carried out, a relevant invoice has been received and a Housing Health and Safety Rating System review has been undertaken ensuring the relevant standards have been met. Payment will

only be made once the property is in a habitable condition. Therefore the applicant must have sufficient funding in place to enable the completion of the works in advance of grant funding being paid. Eden District Council reserve the right to request evidence of the applicant's ability to self-finance the whole of the works.

- The property must be reoccupied within six months of claiming the grant funding by either the owner or a tenant on a tenancy of no less than 6 months. Were the property not to be reoccupied within the specified timeframe, the applicant would be deemed to be in breach of the policy and action would be taken to reclaim the monies paid out. Relevant Council Tax checks will be made to ensure the property has been reoccupied.
- The applicant must agree to a Legal Charge against the property. The grant would be recovered at the point of sale were the property to be sold within a five year period of the applicant receiving the grant.
- The funding must be for new works being carried out to the Property. Funding for retrospective works will not be considered.
- Any relevant planning permission, listed building consent or building control consent must be obtained before the works start.
- The owner must ensure that insurers and any leaseholders are made aware of the proposed works.
- The owner must inform any neighbours who may be affected by noise and vibration during the course of the work prior to the start of the works in compliance with the Party Wall Act 1996.

#### **4.0 How funding will be allocated?**

- 4.1 Applicants will be required to complete and submit the application form at Appendix A.
- 4.2 Eden District Council's Home Improvement Agency will undertake an initial assessment of the application using the criteria in Appendix B.
- 4.4 Final approval will be made by the Assistant Director Customers, Performance and Housing.

#### **5.0 Monitoring & Review**

- 5.1 This Policy will be reviewed every three years to ensure that the fund is being put to best use to bring empty home back into use.

#### **6.0 Other considerations**

- 6.1 The amount of funding available is finite and will be dependent on uptake and the repayment of grants.
- 6.2 While the funding under consideration is to bring properties to a decent homes standard applicants are asked to consider the viability of undertaking additional energy saving measures.

## Appendix A – Application for Eden District Council’s Empty Home Grant

The Empty Home Grant has been established to assist owners of Long Term Empty Homes i.e. properties that have been defined as empty for two years or more, to undertake works to their property to achieve a decent home standard and be made ready for occupation.

These properties are to be free of Class 1 Hazards. Successful applicants are required to have works completed within six months of the approval, with monies being paid once the works had been carried out. The property must be reoccupied within six months of claiming the grant funding. Were the property not to be reoccupied within the specified timeframe, the applicant will be deemed to be in breach of the policy and action will be taken to reclaim the monies paid out.

All grants will subject to a Legal Charge and will be recovered at the point of sale were the property is sold within a five year period of receiving the grant.

Please return the completed application form to: [housing.services@eden.org.uk](mailto:housing.services@eden.org.uk)

|   |
|---|
| <b>1. Applicant (property owners)</b>   |
| <b>Name:</b><br><b>Address:</b><br><b>Email:</b><br><b>Telephone Number:</b>  |
| <b>2. Address of the property where works are to be carried out including post code</b>   |
| Is this property a house <input type="checkbox"/> a flat <input type="checkbox"/>   |
| <b>3. Proposed Renovation Works</b><br>NB a HHSRS inspection should be undertaken to ensure essential works are included on the schedule. |
| <b>Please provide details of the new works to be undertaken.</b>  |

**4. Planning Permission and Building Regulation Approval**

**a) Have you applied for planning permission: Yes/No**

If yes please include tell us the

Application date:

Application reference number:

**b) Have you applied for building regulation approval: Yes/No**

**5. Who will carry out the works?**

**a) Will you or a member of your family be carrying out the works: Yes/No**

Contractors name/address/contact details:

**b) Have you already started the works? Yes/No**

**6. Ownership**

**a) Do you (or jointly with others) own the freehold? Yes/No**

**b) Do you (or jointly with others) have a lease with at Least 5 years to run? Yes/No**

## 7. Cost of works

- a) **What is the total estimated costs of bringing the property back to a decent homes standard?**

**Estimated Costs £**

- b) **How much grant funding is being asked for?**
- c) **Do you have available additional funds if final costs to complete the works are above the amount of grant asked for? Yes/No**
- d) **Are you undertaking any additional works to improve the energy efficiency rating of the property Yes/No**

If yes please provide details:

## 8. Declaration

Please read the statement below and sign if you agree to the terms of the grant application:

I/we understand that:

Long-Term Empty Home Grant funding can only be paid for new works being carried out to the Property (not retrospective works).

Payment will be paid on completion of agreed work and when the property is in a habitable state.

No payment will be made and I/we will be liable for any sums owed to the contractor if the works are not completed as agreed in the schedule of works and in the timings stated.

I/we certify that I/we will complete the works within six months and the property will be completed, in total, to a Decent Home Standard and available for occupation either by the owner or a tenant.

A local land charge will remain for a period of 5 years and will be repayable in the event of a sale or disposal of the property within 5 years of the grant being awarded.



I/we understand that it is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that any relevant planning permission, listed building consent or building control consent is obtained before the works start.

I/we must ensure that the insurers and any leaseholders of my home are made aware of the proposed works if necessary.

I am/we are responsible for informing neighbours who may be affected by noise and vibration during the course of the work.

I agree to the terms and conditions of the grant application:

Signed: Name: ..... Dated:

Signed: Name: ..... Dated:

**Data Protection Privacy Notice:** Regulatory Services of Eden District Council are committed to ensuring that your information is used appropriately. We will use your information for the purpose of providing you with a service. The full Privacy Notice which explains how your information is handled can be viewed at: [www.eden.gov.uk/about-this-site/website-legal-statements/corporate-privacy-policy/](http://www.eden.gov.uk/about-this-site/website-legal-statements/corporate-privacy-policy/)

We will take appropriate steps to ensure your information is secure, and we will only make it available to those who have a right to see it. Subject to the details contained within the Privacy Notice you have the right to withdraw consent at any time and you also have the right to access the information we hold about you. You can request this, seek further information or guidance, or make a complaint by writing to the Data Protection Officer Eden District Council, Town Hall, Corney Square, Penrith, Cumbria CA11 7QF [dcls@eden.gov.uk](mailto:dcls@eden.gov.uk) Tel: 01768 817817.

## Appendix B – Assessment Criteria (checklist)

- Has the property been empty for a minimum of 2 years? Y/N
- Has a preliminary HHSRS inspection been undertaken? Y/N
- Does the schedule of works indicate that the property will be brought up to a decent homes standard on completion of the works? Y/N
- If planning permission is required has this been granted? Y/N
- If required has an application for building regulations been submitted? Y/N
- Is this application funding new works? Y/N
- Has the applicant sufficient funds to meet the cost of works above the grant being applied for? Y/N
- Is the property either freehold or leasehold with a remaining term over 5 years? Y/N
- Are additional energy efficiency measures being considered? Y/N

Recommended for approval Y/N

Reasons for approval/refusal:

Officer Name/Date: