



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

Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant

FAQs

August 2026



Croí Cónaithe Towns Fund

1. What is the Croí Cónaithe Towns Fund?

Many areas of cities, towns, villages, and rural parts of the country face the blight of vacant properties, which, if brought back into use, could add real vibrancy, and provide new accommodation in those areas. The Croí Cónaithe Towns Fund is a key initiative which underpins these policy objectives set out in Pathway Four of Housing for All.

There are two schemes under the Croí Cónaithe Towns Fund which are delivered by local authorities. The **Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant** provides people with a grant to support the refurbishment of vacant properties while under the **Ready to Build Scheme**, local authorities make serviced sites available in towns and villages at a discounted rate to individuals who want to build their own home. Further information is available [here](#).

The Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant, funded by the Croí Cónaithe Towns Fund was launched on 14 July 2022 and benefits those who wish to turn a formerly vacant house or building into their principal private residence or a rental property. Building on the success of the grant, and in line with the agreed action in the new Housing Plan Delivering Homes, Building Communities 2025 - 2030, the Government in December approved extending availability of the grant to 2030.

2. What funding is available to applicants under the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant?

A grant of up to a maximum of **€50,000** is available for the refurbishment of vacant properties for occupation as a principal private residence and for properties which will be made available for rent and a tenancy registered with the Residential Tenancies Board (RTB), including the conversion of a property which has not been used as residential heretofore¹, subject to appropriate planning permission being in place. This is subject to upper limits for the types of work specified below (Q.23) having regard to a reasonable cost assessment by the local authority. The grant is inclusive of the VAT cost of the works.

Where the refurbishment costs are expected to exceed the standard grant of up to **€50,000**, a maximum top-up grant amount of up to **€20,000** is available where the property is confirmed by the applicant(s) to be derelict (i.e. structurally unsound and dangerous) or if the property is already on the local authority's Derelict Sites Register, bringing the total grant available for a derelict property up to a maximum of **€70,000**. In the case of a top-up grant in respect of a derelict property not on the derelict sites register, an independent report prepared by an appropriately qualified professional is required to be submitted along with the application, confirming, to the satisfaction of the local authority, that the

¹ This refers to buildings previously used for commercial or public use.

Note where "property /properties" are used in the document this refers to single dwellings and former commercial /public use buildings.

property is derelict i.e. structurally unsound and dangerous.

From 31st March 2026, where an entire former commercial /public use building is being converted into two or more residential units an additional top-up on existing grant levels is being made available.

Where two residential units are being created in the former commercial /public use building a top-up of up to €20,000 on existing grant levels of €50,000 and €70,000 will be available and where three or more units are created a top-up of up to €40,000 on existing grant levels is available.

The grant is subject to upper limits for the types of work specified below (Q.22) having regard to a reasonable cost assessment by the local authority. The grant is inclusive of the VAT cost of the works.

The level of grant will be contingent on the works approved by the local authority and will be paid based on evidence such as appropriately detailed invoice(s) / receipts following a final inspection by the local authority.

3. Can I avail of other grants / incentives for the conversion / refurbishment of vacant space in my property?

An SEAI Better Energy Home Scheme Grant³ may be available in combination with this grant. Works covered by SEAI Better Energy Homes Scheme should be separate to those being applied for under the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant. The local authority must satisfy themselves that proposed works are not claimed for under any other grant.

The Living City Initiative (LCI) provides tax relief of up to €300,000 for qualifying expenditure incurred on the refurbishment and conversion of both residential and commercial properties located within the historic centres of Cork, Dublin, Galway, Kilkenny, Limerick, and Waterford and may be available in conjunction with the Vacant Above the Shop Grant.

The relevant local authorities' website can provide more information and maps which identify the special regeneration areas in their administrative areas.

Further information is available at the links below: <https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-housing-local-government-and-heritage/publications/the-living-city-initiative/>

<https://www.revenue.ie/en/tax-professionals/tm/income-tax-capital-gains-tax-corporation-tax/part-10/10-13-01.pdf> .

Applicants availing of the grant and the LCI will have the amount of the grant paid deducted from the overall eligible costs applicable for tax relief under the LCI.

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4. What properties are eligible for the grant?

A vacant residential property that was built and completed before 2008. Additionally former commercial / public use buildings that were not previously used for residential purposes may qualify for the grant (subject to meeting all grant conditions). All properties considered for inclusion must be vacant for two years or more at the time of application, evidence supporting this is required as part of the grant application.

Agriculture buildings such as sheds/barns etc. are not eligible for the grant.

5. What application form do I complete?

Those applying for the grant for a single dwelling i.e., an apartment, house, and conversion of a former commercial/public use building where one residential unit is being created are required to fill out the application form titled **“Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant”**.

Those applying for the grant to convert an entire former commercial or public use building into two or more residential units are required to complete the application form titled **“Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant - Conversion of former Commercial/Public Use Building”**.

All applicants are required to indicate on the application form if they are applying in respect of a property that will become their principal private residence or a property that will be made available for rent or both in the case of a former commercial/public use building where more than one residential unit is being created.

All those applying for the grant are also required to indicate on the application forms if they are applying for the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant alone or the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant including the Derelict Property top-up Grant.

Applicants who have indicated that they are applying in respect of a property that will become their principal private residence are also required to indicate if they have applied for / intend to apply for the Local Authority Purchase and Renovation Loan (LAPR) or renovation only LAPR.

6. Who manages the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant?

The Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant is managed and administered by local authorities on behalf of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. Each local authority receives, processes,

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and decides on applications for the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant.

7. What steps are involved in applying for the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant?

The operation of the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant is delegated to local authorities who administer the scheme.

Steps for assessment and approval of the grant application:

The local authority to whom the application is made will:

- Check the application form to ensure it is fully completed, the declaration on the application form has been signed and that the required supporting documents have been submitted. A checklist of documents required to be submitted is available on the application form;
- Assess the application in line with the conditions of the scheme;
- Where the application is in order and required supporting documentation is provided, arrange for suitable technical staff to visit the property to check the works applied for are in order and assess the projected costs as set out in the application form;
- Write to the applicant(s) to let them know if the application has been successful and the amount of grant funding approved (approval in principle may be given where the applicant(s) is not in ownership of the property at time of application – see Q. 10 below).

Prior to the grant being paid:

- In cases where approval in principle was granted, proof of ownership must be provided **before** the grant can be paid;
- Where appropriate, a validated copy of the Certificate of Compliance on Completion may be required to be provided to the local authority before the grant can be paid (relevant where multiple residential units are created in the same building);
- The local authority will require applicant(s) to submit evidence, such as appropriately detailed invoice(s) / receipts for the completed works;
- The local authority will conduct a final property visit to review that the work has been completed in-line with grant application; in respect of a property that is being made available to rent, evidence that the applicant(s) has registered the tenancy /tenancies with the Residential Tenancies Board (RTB) is required;
- The local authority will provide an agreement to be signed by applicant(s) which contains the clawback agreement including a charge on the property;

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- the local authority will require applicant(s) bank account details of where the grant is to be paid and the applicant(s) tax clearance from Revenue for any grant payment being paid over €10,000.
- Tax clearance is also required to be supplied to the local authority for all contractors that carried out construction operations valuing over €650. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure they obtain their contractors tax clearance certificate prior to making any payment to them. Failure to provide evidence of all contractor's tax clearance may result in a grant not being paid. Please see Question No. XX below for further information in relation to this matter;
- If the applicant(s) has successfully availed of the Local Authority Purchase and Renovation Loan (LAPR) or the renovation only LAPR, the terms of that scheme require that the applicant(s) sign a Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant Payment Authority letter. Therefore, the grant payment will be made to the section of the local authority that manages the Local Authority Purchase and Renovation loan;
- Once the local authority is satisfied, the grant will be paid.

8. What is accepted as proof of vacancy?

The property must be vacant for two years or more **at the time of grant application**. Proof of vacancy is required to support grant applications.

Proof of can be provided by, for example, utility bills, which can help determine vacancy periods (e.g. continuous and consistent low or zero electricity usage or disconnection for a period of two years) or other appropriate evidence such as a sworn affidavit to the satisfaction of the local authority or other such proofs as are available. **Confirmation of vacancy must be validated and verified by the local authority prior to grant approval.**

In the case of a former commercial/public use building evidence of payment of commercial rates or rates relief/credit etc. can also be used as proof of vacancy.

Please note that applicants cannot leave a property unreasonably and purposely vacant for the purpose of qualifying for the grant.

9. What is accepted as proof of Dereliction?

For a property to be deemed derelict (i.e. structurally unsound and dangerous), the applicant(s) must confirm this by submitting an independent report prepared by a suitably qualified professional (meaning a registered building surveyor, registered engineer, or registered architect) along with the application form. The property / building can also be deemed derelict if it is on the local authority's Derelict Sites

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Register.

10. Do I have to own the property to avail of this grant and what are acceptable proofs of ownership?

Proof of ownership is required to support the grant application.

Where the applicant(s) does not yet own the property, a local authority may give approval in principle to the grant application where the applicant(s) is able to provide evidence of active negotiations to purchase a property i.e. confirmation of engagement from the estate agent or owner of the property and where the owner provides such evidence as to vacancy as is required under the scheme on behalf of the applicant. **If you are applying for the Local Authority Purchase and Renovation Loan (LAPR), evidence that your LAPR application has passed stage 1 assessment will be accepted as evidence of active negotiations to purchase the property.**

Such approval in principle shall not be confirmed as approval in full until ownership has transferred to the applicant(s). No grant drawdown may take place until such ownership has been confirmed to the satisfaction of the local authority.

Evidence of ownership for the grant payment, which the relevant local authority may consider, is outlined on table below:

Ownership requirements for grant payment	Examples of proof that may be submitted
The owner must be an individual who owns the dwelling (whether jointly or not), and the local authority must satisfy itself as to the ownership prior to approval of the grant.	• Title deed² or similar legal instrument proving ownership of the property: • Evidence of payment of Local Property Tax (LPT): • Evidence of payment of Commercial Rates: • Evidence of commercial rates relief/credit/adjustment due to building being vacant: • Mortgage statement dated within the last 12 months.

11. What do I need to submit if planning permission is required to complete the refurbishment works on the property?

Where appropriate, the applicant(s) must submit evidence of planning permission for the development

² A title deed can be obtained from the Land Direct, Tailte Éireann (www.landdirect.ie)

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/ works proposed or a declaration of exemption under the Planning Acts.

The refurbishment of a vacant property for occupation may involve development that requires planning permission. Where appropriate, an applicant(s) under the scheme will be required to submit evidence that planning permission has been attained prior to final grant approval. In cases where a question arises in relation to whether a proposed development needs planning permission or is an exempted development, an applicant(s) under the scheme will be required to submit a declaration of exemption under Section 5, of the Planning and Development Act, 2000. This question may arise in particular, in the case of a change of use, properties that have been vacant for a long period of time, and properties that are in a substantial state of disrepair and / or require substantial works.

A local authority may give approval in principle to a grant application where the applicant(s) is required to obtain planning permission for the development / works involved. In these circumstances the applicant(s) shall provide details of their current planning application to accompany their grant application. Any grant approval in principle shall not be confirmed as approval in full until a final decision has issued in respect of the planning application by the planning authority.

If you carry out work to a property which have not been included in the grant application and the local authority needs to satisfy themselves that planning permission is /is not required, the applicant may be required to apply for a Section 5 declaration or planning permission as appropriate. This will result in delay to payment of the grant. It is recommended that you contact your local authority if any additional works/demolitions/extensions etc. will be undertaken to the property following a grant approval issuing.

12. How many applications for the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant can be made by an individual?

Applications for single dwellings may be made in respect of one property which will be made available for rent, by the applicant, in addition to one grant for a separate property which will be a principal private residence of the applicant i.e. a maximum of two applications for a grant will be available per applicant.

Only one grant will be paid in respect of a vacant property being refurbished for rent as a single dwelling.

There is no maximum on the number of grants that an individual can apply for when applying for the Grant for the conversion of an entire commercial/public use building into two or more units, however only one grant, including top-up amounts, is payable per building.

13. Can I move into the property once I submit an application to the local authority?

Once proof of vacancy is submitted with your grant application and the local authority has been able to

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validate and verify same to their satisfaction, and this has been confirmed you may move into the property. Note – the property must be vacant for 2 years prior to date of application.

14. I intend to apply for the grant to make a property available for rent – what standards does the property have to meet?

In respect of rental properties, all landlords are required by law to comply with the standards for rental housing and ensure that their properties are fully compliant with fire safety and minimum standards regulations for rental properties. See www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2019/si/137/made/en/print. As part of the declaration to be signed in the application form, all applicants must agree to meet and comply with these standards.

15. Can I rent my property out / the units created in my building for Airbnb or short term / holiday rentals?

A condition of the grant for properties for rent / rental units is that a tenancy /tenancies must be registered with the Residential Tenancies Board, prior to the Grant being paid and for the 10 years of the clawback period following payment of the Grant.

Prior to payment of the grant the local authority will require evidence that a tenancy has been registered with the RTB. The local authority who pays the grant will make checks to ensure the property / units continue to be used for this purpose over the 10-year clawback period. Where the grant conditions are not being adhered to the grant will be repayable per the clawback provisions.

16. I wish to refurbish a vacant property located on an island – is any additional support available to me?

Since 1 July 2023, additional support under the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant is available to support the refurbishment of vacant and derelict properties located on the islands to help bring them back into use. A list of the qualifying islands where this additional funding is available can be accessed using the following link: <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/31da3-populated-off-shore-islands/>

The maximum rate of the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant payable is 20% higher for eligible vacant and derelict properties on the qualifying islands. This brings the maximum grant rates for refurbishing properties on islands up to €60,000 for the refurbishment of vacant properties and up to €84,000 where the property is confirmed to be derelict. The maximum cost limits for the individual works categories are also increased by 20%. Residential properties /unit(s) created or refurbished cannot be used for Airbnb or short term / holidays rentals.

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17. Can I apply for the grant if I am planning to convert a vacant commercial /public use building into a single residential home?

Yes, where the entire building is being converted into one residential unit, which will be your principal private residence or will be made available for rent, you may receive up to €50,000 or up to €70,000 where the property is confirmed to be derelict (where other scheme conditions are met). The application to be completed in this case is titled - The Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant. Planning exemptions may be available for the conversion of a commercial property into residential use. See <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/f3a0e-notifications-received-by-local-authorities-under-planning-permission-exemptions-for-converting-certain-vacant-commercial-property-into-homes/>

Where two or more residential units are being created within an existing former commercial or public use building one Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant is available, where scheme conditions are met, with additional top up amounts. (One grant is available for the entire building). For further information see section on the conversion of former commercial/public use buildings where two or more units are being created at Question 45.

18. Do I have to live in the property?

No, it is not a requirement of the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant that you live in the property. The property can be used as your principal private residence or made available for rent. Applicants are required to state on the application form the intended use of the residential units being created. Applicants are required to inform the local authority of any changes in the tenure of units for which works were approved.

A clawback condition is attached to the grant payment for a period of 10 years from the date of payment of the grant.

Where the applicant(s) is going to use the property as their principal private residence, the declaration (on the application form) that the individual(s) intends to reside in the dwelling on completion of the qualifying works to the dwelling must be provided to the local authority. Clawback conditions will apply where the applicant(s) ceases to reside in the dwelling as their principal private residence. The local authority may also look for evidence to satisfy themselves during the clawback period that the property is being used as a principle private residence and grant recipients must provide same to the local authority upon request.

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Where the applicant(s) is going to make the dwelling available for rent, the declaration (on the application form) must be provided to the local authority that upon completion of the qualifying works to the dwelling, the property will be made available to rent and that a tenancy /tenancy will be registered with the Residential Tenancies Board (RTB). Evidence of registration of the tenancy with the RTB to the satisfaction of the local authority must be provided before the grant will be paid. Clawback conditions will apply if the property is no longer available to rent within ten years. The local authority will look for evidence to satisfy themselves during the clawback period that the dwelling(s) is / are being made available for rent with the tenancy/tenancies registered with the Residential Tenancies Board. Grant recipients must provide same to the local authority upon request.

19. Is the grant open to developers or applicants who wish to refurbish their property and rent it out?

The grant is available to individuals (including sole traders) or households for which the property will be their principal private residence or applicant(s) who will make the property available to rent on the private market. It is not available to registered companies, developers, undertakings etc. Applications can only be made by named individual(s) who own the property for which the grant is being applied for or who are actively engaged in purchasing the property. Applicants may only avail of a maximum of two grants and local authorities will ensure adequate tracking and checking in this regard.

20. What is a principal private residence?

A principal private residence (PPR) is a property which you own and occupy as your only, or main, residence.

21. I am not normally resident in the Republic of Ireland, but I plan on buying a vacant property and living here permanently, can I apply for the grant?

Yes, if you are actively engaged in buying a property building that has been vacant for 2 years and built before 2008 you may apply for the grant. You must still provide proof of active engagement to buy the particular property /building and proof that the property has been vacant. The property will, however, have to be your principal private residence or available to rent with a tenancy / tenancies registered with the Residential Tenancies Board. The Grant is not available for investors, developers, or undertakings etc.

22. What types of work are covered under the grant?

The Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant scheme outline (page 11) and the application form provide Note where “property /properties” are used in the document this refers to single dwellings and former commercial /public use buildings.

details in relation to the categories of works which are eligible for grant assistance, subject to a reasonable cost assessment by the local authority and to the limits for specific works as set out. The works must be approved in advance, following inspection by the local authority of the subject property.

23. What happens if the cost of the works exceeds the grant amount?

A grant as approved for a single dwelling is up to a maximum of €50,000 or €70,000 in the case of a confirmed derelict property qualified for this scheme. Where a former commercial/public use building is being converted into two or more residential units' top-ups of up to €40,000 (dependant on the number of units being created) on the maximum grants is available. Any additional costs which exceed the grant amount are a matter for the applicant(s). You must indicate in the application form whether or not you can pay for any extra cost not covered by the grant.

24. Can I carry out the refurbishment works myself?

Yes. In order to do so, you need to provide an estimate of costs which are then assessed by the local authority's technical staff before deciding on your application and subject to a final site inspection by the local authority. Labour costs will not be covered where you are carrying out the works yourself, only the costs of materials. Works must be in line with all statutory and regulatory requirements.

Note – Where a former commercial /public use building is being converted into two or more residential units - you may also need the services of an assigned certifier to certify that the works completed comply with building regulations.

25. Can other works commence on the vacant property that are not being claimed for in the grant?

Yes, as the other works that are being carried out are not related to what is being applied for. This is something that will be checked on the first technical visit by the local authority to your property and the final visit after work has been completed. Only works that have not yet commenced can be applied for under the grant.

26. What happens when my grant application is approved?

A letter of approval will issue to applicants who are successful and will include the approved grant amount. Approval is granted from the date of issue of the letter and is valid for a period of 18 months. Applicants are required to sign and return the letter in order to confirm that they understand the terms and conditions applicable to the grant. The charge document referred to below (Q.30) must be signed and returned to the local authority, after completion of the works applied for, and prior to the issuing of

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the grant payment. The signed application form, signed letter of approval and the signed charge document, form the agreement between the applicant(s) and the local authority.

27. When can I start the approved works on the qualifying property?

Works can commence on the property/building once you have received a letter of approval / approval in principle from the local authority.

28. Is there a time limit from when the application has been approved to when the proposed works are fully completed?

Applicants have a period 18 months, from the date of the approval letter, to complete the approved works on the qualifying property.³

29. What happens if I sell my house (meaning a single dwelling)?

It is required that the applicant(s) will live in or rent the property for a period of at least five years from the date of payment of the grant. If at any time you sell the property, or it ceases to be your principal private residence, or the property is no longer being rented, with a tenancy / tenancies registered with the Residential Tenancies Board, within ten years, you must reimburse the local authority an element of the full value of the Grant, as follows:

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

In the event of a fall in the value of the property, the full monetary amount, subject to the percentage clawback above will still be repayable to the local authority.

Differing clawback thresholds apply for the conversion of former commercial/public use buildings where two or more units are created. Please refer to [Question Number 58](#).

An agreement (comprising of the signed application form, signed letter of approval and signed charge document) must be concluded between the local authority and the applicant which contains the clawback agreement, including a charge on the property, which shall be binding on the applicant(s)

³ In exceptional circumstances, at their discretion, the local authority may grant an extension to the 18-month approval period.

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upon drawdown.

30. What is a legal charge, and how does it work?

A charge involves no transfer of ownership but confers rights over the property as security. To secure the local authority's interest, and to ensure the integrity of the scheme, a charge will be placed against the property as security. Where the applicant(s) has a mortgage, it will always be the first or priority charge on the property.

Before payment of the grant to the applicant(s), when the works have been completed and checked by the local authority, a charge document will be signed by the applicant(s). The local authority will then place the charge on the applicant's property. The charge will be equal to the amount of the grant paid. The charge will remain in place for 10 years.

31. Can I sign the charge documents without obtaining professional advice?

To ensure applicants are fully informed of the implications of the charge being placed on the property, it is recommended and best practice that applicant(s) engage the services of an appropriately qualified independent professional to advise of the implications of the charge being placed on the property.

As the charge documents are legal papers they must also be signed by the applicant(s) and witnessed by an appropriately qualified professional.

32. How will the charge be registered?

The charge will be registered in Land Direct, Tailte Éireann or the Registry of Deeds⁴ (RODs) as appropriate by the local authority, having been signed by the applicant(s), before the drawn down of the grant. If the applicant(s) has taken a mortgage to purchase the property, the bank's charge will rank in priority. Should the property be sold, the bank, as the first charge holder, will receive the proceeds of the sale in the first instance.

The local authority, as the subsequent charge holder, shall receive any monies owing from the remaining proceeds.

33. I inherited a property and do not have a mortgage. Will the local authority's charge rank in priority?

If there is no mortgage or other charge against the property, the local authority's charge will rank in priority.

⁴ The charge in this context is referred to as a "deed". It must be noted that the process for the registration of a mortgage on land differs as regards registered and unregistered land.

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34. Does the local authority require my consent to register its charge?

Yes, the local authority requires the consent of the applicant(s) to place a charge against the property. A charge document must be concluded between the local authority and the applicant(s) before drawdown of the funds. This is stated in the application form which is signed by the applicant(s).

35. Do I require the consent of my mortgage lender to register the charge on my property?

A priority agreement has been signed with the main lending banks (AIB and its subsidiaries, EBS and Haven, Bank of Ireland, Finance Ireland, AvantCard, Dilosk and Permanent TSB). Therefore, individual consent is not required from those banks for applicants who have a mortgage with any of the above listed financial institutions.

Consent will be required from your lender if you have a mortgage with a financial institution not listed above. It is recommended that you **contact** your lender early in the process to ensure they are agreeable to having a charge placed on the property. The charge for the grant will always rank 2nd in priority to the mortgage on the property.

36. At what stage of the process does the local authority lodge the charge in Land Direct, Tailte Éireann or Registry of Deeds?

The grant will not be paid until ownership is registered. If the applicant(s) has full title to the property, the charge document will be submitted to Land Direct, Tailte Éireann or Registry of Deeds concurrent to the issuing of the grant. The Charge Document must be signed by the applicant(s) and local authority in the presence of a witness.

37. Who lodges the charge documents in Land Direct, Tailte Éireann or Registry of Deeds?

The local authority will lodge the required documents with the relevant body.

38. What are the fees to register a charge?

The fee to register a charge in Land Direct, Tailte Éireann is €175.

39. Do I have to cover the cost of the charge being placed on my property?

No, the local authority will cover the cost of the registration of the charge of €175. However, applicants are responsible for covering the cost of their own independent advice.

40. When will my grant be paid?

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The local authority will pay the grant when all required documentation such as invoices for works completed, evidence of planning **permission**, evidence of tenancy /tenancies registered with the Residential Tenancies Board (if applicable) and final inspection of the property /residential unit (s) created in the building has taken place to ensure that the works approved under the grant have been completed.

The legal charge documents are also required to be signed by both the local authority and the grant applicants.

Applicants are also required to submit their bank details, and evidence of tax clearance for both **them** and the contractors that carried out works on the building.

Invoices and or receipts (if only claiming for materials) are also required to be submitted so that the local authority can verify same. It is recommended that works/materials relevant to the approved grant are identified and highlighted for the local authority in order to speed up the checking and verification process.

41. Why do I have to submit tax clearance for both me and my contractor(s)?

This is a Revenue requirement for the payment of grants by public bodies. The responsibility for obtaining and checking tax clearance for contractors engaged to carry out grant approved works lies with the applicant.

It is recommended that applicants in advance of paying a contractor for construction operations undertaken seek the contractor's tax clearance certificate prior to making payment.

Evidence of the contractor(s) tax clearance will be required by the local authority for all payments issued to contractor(s) of €650 and over prior to issuing a grant payment. If tax clearance has not been sought by the applicant for their contractors or the applicant is unable to produce their own tax clearance this will result in a grant not being paid or a delay in payment.

Further information in relation to this requirement can be obtained here:

<https://www.revenue.ie/en/starting-a-business/tax-clearance/when-is-a-tax-clearance-certificate-required/to-apply-for-certain-grants-and-public-sector-contracts.aspx>

Appendix 2 of the Department of Finance Circular provides a definition of Construction Operations.

<https://circulars.gov.ie/pdf/circular/finance/2006/44.pdf>

Revenue also **requires** tax clearance for grant recipients for any grant payment paid over €10,000.

42. Can I appeal if my application for the grant was not successful?

Yes, if your application is not successful, you can download the template appeals form from your local authority's website. You must write within three weeks of the date of the original decision, and clearly

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explain why you are appealing. A local authority official who was not involved with the original assessment will then assess this appeal and contact you with the result. This process can take up to six weeks.

43. I have applied for the Local Authority Purchase and Renovation Loan (LAPR) to purchase and renovate a vacant property for my principal private residence, how do I apply for the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant?

Before applying for the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant, you must have passed the stage 1 assessment for the Local Authority Purchase and Renovation Loan (LAPR). Once you have passed the stage 1 assessment, you should submit your application form for the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant to your local authority.

You must include all required supporting documentation as outlined in the grant application form, including confirmation that your LAPR application has passed the stage 1 assessment for the Local Authority Purchase and Renovation Loan. This confirmation will be provided to you by the section in the local authority that manages the Local Authority Purchase and Renovation Loan.

44. Can I apply for the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant and the renovation-only loan under the Local Authority Purchase and Renovation Loan (LAPR) if I already own a vacant property which I intend to renovate and live in as my principal private residence?

Yes, applicants who already own a vacant property can apply for both the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant and renovation only LAPR, subject to conditions being met for both schemes. Applicants must indicate that they have / intend to apply for the renovation only LAPR on their Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant application form. Please note, further information may be sought from your local authority.

45. I have been approved for the Local Authority Purchase and Renovation Loan or renovation only LAPR and the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant, who will the grant be paid to once the works have been completed on the property?

The grant payment will be made payable to the section of the local authority that manages the Local Authority Purchase and Renovation Loan.

As part of your Local Authority Purchase and Renovation Loan application, you will be required to sign a Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant Payment Authority letter confirming that you authorise the local authority to pay the entire proceeds of the grant to the section in the local authority that manages the Local Authority Purchase and Renovation Loan.

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46. I have more questions on the Local Authority Purchase and Renovation Loan (LAPR), where can I find more information?

See <https://purchaseandrenovationloan.ie/> for more information, including frequently asked questions on the Local Authority Purchase and Renovation Loan.

47. I have more questions about the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant, who can I ask?

If you have any questions, please contact the Vacant Homes Officer in your local authority. For a list of all Vacant Homes Officers in each local authority and their contact details please see information [here](#).

Questions specifically relating to the conversion of former commercial / public use buildings where two or more residential units are being created.

48. I own a former commercial / public use building which I plan to convert in its entirety into two or more residential units. How much grant support is available to me?

Additional support on the aforementioned maximum grant levels is available in cases where two or more residential units are being created in a former commercial/public use building. A top-up on existing grant levels of up to €20,000 is available where two residential units are being created and up to €40,000 where three or more residential units are created in the former commercial/public use building. This will bring the maximum grant levels to: -

- €70,000 in the case of a vacant former commercial or public use building where two residential units are created and €90,000 where three or more residential units are created.
- €90,000 in the case of a derelict former commercial or public use building where two residential units are created and €110,000 where three or more residential units are created.

Note – where the vacant or derelict former commercial/public use building is being converted into one residential unit or one unit for rent – the ‘normal’ maximum grant rates apply i.e. €50,000 and €70,000.

49. I have already been approved for a grant for refurbishing vacant floors in my commercial building, can I now get the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant Conversion of former Commercial /Public use Building?

No, the extended grant becomes operational with effect from 31 March 2026.

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50. If there is more than one owner of building, can each owner apply for the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant - Conversion of former commercial /public use building?

No, there is only one grant (including relevant top-ups) available per building. All owners of the building must apply together on a single application form.

51. Do I need to provide a report from a qualified professional if I am applying for the derelict top-up grant for the conversion of my former commercial/public use building?

Yes, a report from an independent professional (meaning a registered architect, registered **surveyor**, or registered engineer) is required to be submitted if you are applying for the derelict top-up grant.

52. Do I need to provide a preliminary design/drawing for the conversion of my former commercial/public use building?

In cases where two or more residential units are being created a preliminary design/outline drawing must be submitted with the application form showing the proposed number of residential units to be created in the building.

53. What is the Expert Advice Grant?

Up to €5,000 will also be available for owners of a former commercial / public use building to seek an Expert Advice Grant in advance of applying for the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant. Engaging the services of a suitably qualified professional will assist in informing owners of the works required, planning, building requirements, statutory regulations etc. to be adhered to for undertaking such projects. There is no obligation on the owner to continue to make a grant application after receiving the expert advice. Further information on the Expert Advice Grant can be found here:

www.gov.ie/vacancy

54. Do I need to provide evidence of planning application/permission or exemption prior to my approved grant being approved/paid?

In cases where a question arises in relation to whether a proposed development needs planning permission or is an exempted development, applicant(s) under the scheme will be required to submit a declaration of exemption under Section 5, of the Planning and Development Act, 2000. This question may arise in particular, in the case of a change of use, properties that have been vacant for a long period of time, sub-division of a property and properties that are in a substantial state of disrepair and / or

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require substantial works. Please also refer to question 9 above.

55. What other regulations do I need to comply with?

In the case of conversion of entire former commercial / public use building into multiple residential units, the Building Control Regulations 1997 to 2024 require owners, builders, and registered construction professionals to demonstrate through the Statutory Register of Building Control Activity that the works or building concerned have been designed and constructed in compliance with Building Regulations.

The responsibility for compliance with building control regulations lies with each owner, builder. Further information can be found here: <https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-housing-local-government-and-heritage/publications/building-control/>

Where appropriate and prior to a grant payment issuing the local authority will seek evidence by way of a validated Certificate of Compliance on Completion for the works carried out.

56. What is a Certificate of Compliance on Completion?

A Certificate of Compliance on Completion validated and registered by the Building Control Authority confirms that the building /residential units may be used or occupied.

57. What types of works are covered by the grant?

The Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant scheme outline (page 14) and the application form provide details in relation to the categories of works which are eligible for grant assistance, subject to a reasonable cost assessment by the local authority and to the limits for specific works as set out. The works must be approved in advance, following inspection by the local authority of the subject property.

58. What happens if I decide to sell one of the units in the converted building?

It is required that the applicant(s) will live in and or rent (with tenancies registered with the Residential Tenancies Board) the qualifying residential units for a period of at least ten years from the date of payment of the grant. If at any time you sell the building or some/all of the residential units created in the building, or one ceases to be your principal private residence after declaring it will be used for same, or the residential units are no longer being rented within ten years, you must reimburse the local authority an element of the full value of the Grant, as set out on page 19 of the scheme outline (www.gov.ie/vacancy). As the charge is placed over the entirety of the building, the local authority will

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be required to grant a deed of partial release on repayment of the clawback amount.

In the event of a fall in the value of the residential units created in the building, the full monetary amount, subject to the percentage clawback above will still be repayable to the local authority.

Evidence of annual registration of tenancy / tenancies with the Residential Tenancies Board to the satisfaction of the local authority must be submitted to the local authority annually for a period of ten years after payment of the grant.

An agreement (comprising of the signed application form, signed letter of approval and signed charge document) must be concluded between the local authority and the applicant which contains the clawback agreement, including a charge on the property, which shall be binding on the applicant(s) upon drawdown.

59. If I have previously received a Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant in respect of a rental property can I also apply for a grant to convert a former commercial/public use building?

Yes, an individual who has availed of or has been approved for the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant can apply for the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant - Conversion of Commercial/Public Use building for a separate building that they own which is being converted in its **entirety** into two or more residential units.

60. Can I split my building into multiple different folios to avail of more than one Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant - Conversion of former Commercial /Public Use Building?

No, only one Vacant **Property Refurbishment Grant - Conversion of former Commercial /Public Use Building** (including any top-up amounts) will be available for the building. Splitting of folios in order to avail of more than one grant per building is not permitted.

61. What happens if a rental unit becomes vacant during the 10-year clawback period due to a tenancy being terminated?

In instances where a residential unit/s becomes vacant due to a tenancy ending due to termination by either party, the clawback conditions will not apply provided the building owner finds new tenant(s) and registers a new tenancy/tenancies with the RTB in a timely manner, to the satisfaction of the local authority. Evidence will be sought by the local authority of efforts to find new tenant/s.

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