



**Comhairle Contae
Dhún na nGall**
Donegal County Council

Croí Cónaithe Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant Scheme.

We are providing the following information which we hope is helpful to you when putting together your application:

1. Where do I get the Application Form?

The application form and information on the Scheme can be downloaded from our website at this link [Donegal County Council \(donegalcoco.ie\)](http://Donegal County Council (donegalcoco.ie)) or by ringing our offices at 074 9153900 and requesting an application form to be posted to you. Completed applications forms and supporting document can be posted to us at:

Vacant Homes Unit,
Donegal County Council,
County House,
Lifford,
Co. Donegal,
F93 Y622

or scanned by email to:

vacanthomes@donegalcoco.ie

2. What is the value of the Grants?

The maximum grant amounts are as follows –

€50,000 refurbishment of a property

€70,000 refurbishment of a property that is considered to be derelict (see note below)

€60,000 refurbishment of a property on an offshore island

€84,000 refurbishment of a property on an offshore island that is considered to be derelict.

The higher grant amounts for offshore properties are in recognition of the likely additional transportation costs of materials to the island.

3. My property is a protected structure?

The Conservation Advice Grant Scheme for Vacant Traditional Farmhouses will provide a grant of up to €7,500 (ex VAT) to cover the cost of having a conservation expert with proven and appropriate expertise to visit the property, conduct a survey, and compile tailored conservation advice for the property owner. The report will outline the condition of the building, suggest conservation repairs and improvements which would improve the building and enhance the building's character, energy efficiency, integrity, and amenity.

Further information, including the application process, is available at the following links.

<https://www.gov.ie/en/service/c8cba-pilot-conservation-advice-grant-scheme-for-vacant-traditional-farmhouses/>

<https://www.gov.ie/ga/seirbhis/sceim-phiolotach-chomhairle-caomhnaithe-maidir-le-tithe-traidisiunta-folmha/>

The Council's Conservation Officer is Collette Beattie who is available at 074 9153900 to discuss any refurbishment proposals for a protected structure.

4. What is the application process and how long does it take to process my application?

- The application is first validated by our team. This means that we check that all supporting documentation has been submitted with the application – please allow for up to 6 weeks for your application to be validated from the date of submission.
- A request for further information will be issued if all supporting documentation has not been submitted.
- Once your application is valid, you will receive a notification from us to confirm this.
- Your application will then be referred to our Technical Team to contact you (likely by phone) to arrange an onsite inspection - please allow for up to 3 weeks for our technical team to contact you.
- Our technical team will be checking that the property is vacant and will be checking the schedule of works provided by you match the works to be carried out.
- Once the technical inspection has been carried out, you will be notified of the decision on your application.
- If your application is approved, you will receive a letter of approval which is valid for 13 months, i.e. you have 13 months to carry out the works.
- The property must be vacant at the time of the first technical inspection. However, you can move into the property anytime after this while you undertake the works, if this is possible.
- Once you have completed the works, you should submit details of vouched expenditure (i.e. invoices, receipts, etc) and tax clearance details for you and any contractor engaged and a final inspection will be arranged.
- The final inspection is to check that the proposed works have now been carried out.
- Any grant award is paid out once the final inspection has been carried taking into consideration any cost threshold levels (please see page 6 and 7 of the application form).

5. How do I get a Tax Clearance Certificate?

You can apply for tax clearance using Revenue's online service at www.revenue.ie by using your PPSN or call Revenue on 1890 306706. If you do not have a PPSN you will need to apply for one through Revenue.

If a contractor is carrying out the works, you will need to submit their tax reference number so that we can check their tax clearance details.

6. What supporting documentation is needed?

The following supporting documentation must be submitted with your application

(a) Property Details.

Evidence that the property has been vacant for two years (from the date of application) or more and built on or before 2007. Such evidence may take the form of:

- Electricity bills to show low usage for the last two years. The bills must cover the full two years and clearly show the usage/value of the bills.
- A letter from ESB networks to confirm the date the electricity was disconnected or a letter confirming reconnection (however, this letter must show how long the electricity was disconnected).
- A sworn affidavit/declaration from the previous owner (if this is possible) stating when the property became vacant and the circumstances.
- Letter from the previous owner's solicitor stating when the property became vacant and the circumstances.
- Letter from the estate agent confirming the duration that the property has been vacant, if known by the estate agent.

(b) Ownership

Confirmation that you are the property owner must be submitted with your application and such evidence may include:

- A title deed or similar legal instrument providing ownership of the property. This document can be obtained from the Property Registration Authority of Ireland (<https://www.prai.ie>).

If you are not yet the registered owner, but you are in active negotiations to purchase the property, you may still apply for the grant. However, you will need to submit a letter from your solicitor to confirm that you are in the process of purchasing the property. Your application can be processed but you will need to submit a title deed or similar legal instrument to prove ownership of the property before any grant can be drawn down.

(c) Local Property Tax (LPT).

Evidence that the property is compliant with the Local Property Tax (LPT) which means either a letter from Revenue to confirm that the property is not liable for the LPT or a payment history for the property to confirm payment has been made (this can be obtained from your account). If the property is not liable for the LPT, i.e. it has been uninhabitable, you will need to send details of the condition of the property including photographs to Revenue before they will send you a letter to confirm the property is not liable for the LPT. The contact details for Revenue are www.revenue.ie or lpt@revenue.ie or 01 7383628.

(d) Details of the Proposed Works.

Page 13 of the application form must be completed as we need to know the schedule of works that you intend to carry out. An estimate cost of the works should be filled in on this page also. A quotation for the works (either one quote from a contractor or multiple quotes from different trades) must also be submitted. The quotation(s) must be itemized and match the schedule of works being proposed.

If any works have commenced prior to the first technical assessment, these are not recoupable under the grant scheme, but full details of the actual works undertaken and the associated cost should be provided on the application form.

You can do the works yourself or you can arrange for the works to be carried out by one contractor.

Please note that SEAI Better Energy Homes Scheme Grant may be available in conjunction with this Grant. Works covered by SEAI will, therefore, not be eligible under this Scheme. Details of SEAI grants are available at www.seai.ie

If you are carrying out any works that may require planning permission, you could contact our Planning Office for advice at 074 9153900. The onus is on the applicant to ensure that all building regulations and planning is complied with. At the final inspection, the Council must be satisfied that any development works carried out comply with planning permission, i.e. the applicant has obtained planning permission or the applicant has a certificate of exemption from planning permission.

(e) Derelict Property

If you think the property is derelict, i.e. it is structurally unsound and dangerous, you should seek the opinion of an appropriately qualified profession (i.e. engineer, architect, etc). If it is their opinion that the property is derelict, they will need to prepare a building condition assessment report for you to submit with your application. The building condition assessment report must:

- Include details of the condition of the property.
- It should include photographs of the property, both inside and outside, which clearly will show that the property is derelict.

- The report must clearly state that the property is structurally unsound and dangerous (if this is the case) and state exactly what is making the property structurally unsound and dangerous.
- It should include details of the proposed remedial works to make the property structurally sound and these works should be included and costed in the schedule of works.
- The qualified professional who prepared the report should attach a copy of this Public Indemnity Insurance with the report.

This building condition assessment report is only required if you are applying for the top up grants of €70,000 or €84,000 for a property on the offshore islands.

While demolition and extension work can form part of an application for the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant, such works must be part of a wider refurbishment of the existing property in keeping with the objectives of the Scheme.

(f) Additional Costs Covered.

It is not intended that the grant will cover all costs associated with the refurbishment and you must be in a position to confirm on page 14 of the application form that you can cover the costs over and above the maximum grant amount.

(g) Eircode

If your property does not have an Eircode, please provide the eircode of an adjacent property on a sketch map.

7. Who do I contact if my query is not covered in this document?

You may contact our team at 074 9153900 during office hours from 9 am to 4.30 pm Monday to Friday or email us at vacanthomes@donegalcoco.ie