

# Private Sector Housing

## Grants Policy 2019





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## 1 Introduction

This Private Sector Housing Grants Policy has been adopted in accordance with the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002. The 2002 Order repealed much of the previously prescriptive legislation governing the provision of renewal grants to homeowners, replacing it with a new flexible and wide ranging power to provide assistance for housing renewal based on local circumstances and needs. Underpinning the Order was the Government's view that the responsibility for home maintenance should rest with the owner, and local authorities should offer support to encourage residents to be less dependent on grants. The 2002 Order also stipulates that a local housing authority may not exercise the power to provide assistance unless they have adopted a policy for the provision of assistance, given public notice of adoption and made full and summary copies of the policy publicly available.

The Private Sector Housing Grants Policy complements the Council's Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy which identifies the renewal challenges within the Borough, and what the Council intends to do to address those challenges as far as is possible.

The assistance described in this Policy is not protected from the impact of budgetary changes that may occur during the lifetime of the policy and the Council's ability to offer assistance will be subject to available finance. Moreover, the amount of budget that will be made available annually will be subject to the annual budget setting processes during which the Council will determine which priorities it will continue to fund and by how much. The availability of money for assistance will be subject to competition with other local priorities.

## 2 Current Private Sector Housing Grants Policy

The table below shows how previous funding has assisted residents with renewal challenges over the last **five** years.

*Table 1: Outcomes from financial assistance provided under the terms of the Private Sector Housing Renewal Policy in the last five years*

Type of Assistance	Financial Year	Total Grant Spend	Number of Households Assisted	Average Spend Per Household
Adaptation via a Disabled Facilities Grant to assist a person to remain in and continue to enjoy their own home	2014/15	£307,801	68	£4,526
	2015/16	£192,636	53	£3,634
	2016/17	£406,529	79	£5,145
	2017/18	£464,191	88	£5,274
	2018/19	£535,429	90	£5,949

### 3 Links to Local Corporate Strategies and Priorities

This section identifies priorities within corporate and other housing related strategies that this Policy directly contributes to achieving.

#### 3.1 Sustainable Communities Strategy

While it is important to recognise that the Council's Sustainable Community Strategy is currently under review, the current Community Strategy includes several aims for the Borough that support this Private Sector Grants Policy. These include:

- 'to be successful through sustainable growth and regeneration, by ensuring that.....residents live in housing that is sustainable, affordable and of good quality...'
- 'to have healthy people who enjoy a good quality of life. To do this [Kettering Borough Council] will .....support vulnerable people to help them lead fulfilling lives...'

The Sustainable Community Strategy commits to work with residents, enabling people to stay healthy and safe in their homes, as well as improving the health and quality of life for the elderly and vulnerable people in our communities.

#### 3.2 Housing Strategy

The Council's Housing Strategy 2015-20 describes how the Council intends to meet the housing needs and aspirations of our residents. The three key strategic aims of our Housing Strategy are:

- Increasing housing supply across all tenures
- Ensuring decent, safe and healthy homes
- Helping people to live independently

Specifically linking to this Grants Policy, we will continue to provide a programme of disabled adaptations to Council residents and a Home Improvement Service offering Disabled Facilities Grants to those living in the private sector to enable them to continue to live independently.

#### 3.3 Strategic Priorities

This policy links to the Council's strategic objective to develop stronger, safer, cleaner and healthier neighbourhoods.

Ref	Priority	Description
B7	Improving health and wellbeing in the borough	Ensure that our policies and activities across the Council support the improvement of health and wellbeing across the borough.

### **3.4 Northamptonshire Health and Wellbeing Board**

The Health and Wellbeing Board enables key leaders from across the Northamptonshire health and care system to jointly work to:

- improve the health and wellbeing of the people in their area,
- reduce health inequalities; and
- promote the integration of services

The Private Sector Grants Policy links with the Health and Wellbeing Strategy Priority three: Promoting Independence and Quality of Life for Older Adults. Specifically, providing adaptations and support to ensure people's homes are enabling environments to live a good quality of life. The outcome this helps to achieve is enabling more people to live in their own homes for longer.

### **3.5 Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy**

In September 2018 a Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy was adopted. This policy sets out our approach to enforcement, both informal and formal action. This Private Sector Housing Grants Policy aims to support landlords by offering financial incentive to ensure homes are let in an acceptable standard.

## **4 Aims of the Private Sector Grants Policy**

The aims of this policy are to:

- 1 Provide mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) to assist people with a disability to remain in their own home;
- 2 Provide discretionary Disabled Facilities Grants where it is necessary and appropriate for certain finishing work to complete a scheme or to pay for an extended warranty for equipment being funded by a mandatory DFG;
- 3 Provide advice and discretionary financial assistance through a HomeMove Grant (Private Sector) to support an alternative action to a mandatory DFG (for example, to support a disabled applicant in a move to a more suitable home), where there are cost savings and/or socio environmental benefits for doing so;
- 4 Provide grants to private landlords to increase the supply of good quality privately rented homes available to local households in housing need.
- 5 Provide top up grant funding to eligible owner occupiers who qualify for a Warm Homes Fund Northamptonshire first time central heating grant.

## **5 Principles of Assistance**

When considering assistance to individual homeowners, including private landlords, the following principles will apply:

- Homeowners have the primary responsibility for ensuring their homes are properly maintained;

- Support and assistance should encourage private investment and maximise the impact of available public funds, for example, by securing nominations rights to private rentals in return for grant assistance;
- The Council will not normally approve an application for assistance if the eligible works have been started or completed before the application is approved. In exceptional circumstances, where the Council are satisfied that there are good reasons for beginning the works before the application was approved, this policy may be waived;
- The provision of financial assistance is subject to the availability of funding.

## **6 Available Assistance**

### **6.1 Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants**

#### **Preliminary**

The Council will continue to make mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants available in accordance with the Housing Grants, Construction & Regeneration Act 1996, and subsequent amendments.

The Council is required by law to provide the statutory Disabled Facilities Grant to adapt homes for people with a disability if the adaptation is considered necessary, appropriate, practical and reasonable.

The grant is means-tested for applicants over 18 years old and the maximum grant is currently £30,000.

The Council is required to consult the Social Services Authority (Northamptonshire County Council) to ask whether a proposed adaptation is, in their view, necessary and appropriate.

Olympus Care Services was formed on 1st April 2012 as a limited company wholly owned by Northamptonshire County Council. They provide a range of care and support services throughout Northamptonshire for adults with disabilities and older people.

In April 2017 Olympus Care Services and Adult Social Care were brought together to form NASS, Northamptonshire Adult Social Services with a combined vision to increase the wellbeing and outcomes of all adults in Northamptonshire. They want to provide the opportunity for the County's adults to live well, age well and stay well in a manner that helps people to take charge of their lives or be supported when they genuinely cannot help themselves.

Disabled Facilities Grants play a key role in enabling elderly and/or disabled residents to continue to live independently in their own homes with adaptations.

#### **Purpose of the Assistance**

This is a mandatory grant to adapt the home of a person with a disability, so that they can continue to live at home safely.

The purposes for which adaptations may be provided are:

- a) Facilitating access by the disabled occupant to and from the dwelling or the building in which the dwelling or, as the case may be, flat is situated;
- b) Making the dwelling or building safe for the disabled occupant and other persons residing with him/her;
- c) Facilitating access by the disabled occupant to a room used or usable as the principal family room;
- d) Facilitating access by the disabled occupant to, or providing for the disabled occupant, a room used or usable for sleeping;
- e) Facilitating access by the disabled occupant to, or providing for the disabled occupant, a room in which there is a lavatory, or facilitating the use by the disabled occupant of such a facility;
- f) Facilitating access by the disabled occupant to, or providing for the disabled occupant, a room in which there is a bath or shower (or both), or facilitating the use by the disabled occupant of such a facility;
- g) Facilitating access by the disabled occupant to, or providing for the disabled occupant, a room in which there is a wash hand basin, or facilitating the use by the disabled occupant of such a facility;
- h) Facilitating the preparation and cooking of food by the disabled occupant;
- i) Improving any heating system in the dwelling to meet the needs of the disabled occupant or, if there is no existing heating system in the dwelling or any such system is unsuitable for use by the disabled occupant, providing a heating system suitable to meet his/her needs;
- j) Facilitating the use by the disabled occupant of a source of power, light or heat by altering the position of one or more means of access to or control of that source or by providing additional means of control;
- k) Facilitating access and movement by the disabled occupant around the dwelling in order to enable him/her to care for a person who is normally resident in the dwelling and is in need of such care;
- l) Such other purposes as may be specified by order of the Secretary of State.

Note: The Disabled Facilities Grants (Maximum Amounts and Additional Purposes) (England) Order 2008 lists two further purposes specified by the Secretary of State:

- m) Facilitating access to and from a garden by a disabled occupant; or
- n) Making access to a garden safe for a disabled occupant.

### **Maximum Assistance**

Maximum statutory grant is £30,000.

### **Method of Application**

The Council will prioritise applications for mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants by the priority awarded to the applicant by the Community Occupational Therapist team. There are three different priorities that they award, these are critical, urgent and standard.



Where possible the Council will not split an application which has multiple different priorities. On occasions, however, this may be necessary. For example, when an exceptionally high number of critical and urgent applications are received.

Applicants for the mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant must complete and submit an application form which is supported by:

- Plans and/or schedule of work with sufficient detail to enable the Council to determine whether the adaptation is practical and reasonable;
- Evidence, usually in the form of original documents, to confirm the financial status claimed in the application form;
- Confirmation of tenure (Owner's Certificate or Tenant's Certificate see 'eligibility' below); and
- The Council requires original documents or copies that have been endorsed by an officer of the Council or appointed agent to confirm that the original was viewed by them and that the copy is an accurate reproduction of the original.

Applicants should contact the Council's Private Sector Housing team in the first instance who will explore options with the applicant, to establish whether remaining in their current home or moving to suitable alternative accommodation with adaptations better meets the applicant's needs and provides a more cost effective solution. If after options have been explored, the applicant decides that they wish to remain in their existing home, an officer will conduct a means test of resources prior to making a referral to the Occupational Therapy Service.

### **Eligibility**

The applicant must:

- Be aged 18 or over on the date of application (If the person with a disability is a child the applicant should normally be the parent or legal guardian).
- Be either the owner of the dwelling or be a tenant (including licensees), and be able to provide an Owner's Certificate or Tenant's Certificate. This will not necessarily be the disabled person for whom the works are required. A landlord may apply on behalf of a disabled tenant.
- Satisfy a means test as prescribed by the Housing Renewal Grants Regulations 1996 (as amended), if the disabled person is an adult, unless the application is being made on behalf of a child.
- The adaptation must be for the benefit of a person who is 'disabled' within the criteria in section 100 of the Housing (Grants, Construction and Regeneration) Act 1996.
- The grant is available to applicants residing throughout the Borough of Kettering.

### **Terms and Conditions Applicable**

The applicant, whether an owner occupier, tenant or landlord, must be able to provide a certificate which states that he/she intends that the disabled occupant will live in the qualifying property (dwelling, flat, houseboat or park home). In the case of a tenant's application, the landlord must agree to the works and produce an Owner's Certificate at the same time.

The applicant must provide three estimates of the cost of carrying out the work (two if the estimated value is below £2,500) through the Northamptonshire countywide register of contractors. The only exception is where specialist equipment is specified and a lack of suitable contractors means it is not possible to obtain three estimates. The applicant must also provide the particulars of any preliminary or ancillary services or charges.

In approving an application for grant, the Council will require that as a condition of the grant, the eligible works are carried out in accordance with any specification they decide to impose.

The Council will not approve an application for assistance if the works involved have been carried out before the application has been approved, except where the relevant works have begun but have not been completed. In this case, the application *may* be approved if the Council is satisfied that there were good reasons for beginning the works before the application was approved. Where the Council decides to approve an application in these circumstances, it may decide to treat the application as varied so that the eligible works do not include any that are completed.

The specific works must be carried out within twelve months from the date of the approval of the application. This period may however be extended by the Council if it thinks fit, particularly where it is satisfied that the eligible works cannot be, or could not have been, completed without carrying out other works which could not have been foreseen when the application was made.

If following grant approval, but before the certified date of completion, the applicant ceases to be a person entitled to a grant, the Council may refuse to pay grant and demand that any instalment be repaid.

Where an application for grant has been approved and the Council ascertains:

- that the amount of grant was determined on the basis of inaccurate or incomplete information; and
- exceeds that to which the applicant was entitled; or
- that without its knowledge the eligible works were started before the application was approved; or
- the works were carried out otherwise than as required (condition as to contractors employed).

The Council will refuse to pay the grant or any further instalment of the grant which remains to be paid; or make a reduction in the grant and it will demand repayment by the applicant in whole or in part of any grant paid.

The payment or part payment of grant is conditional upon the eligible works, or corresponding part of the works, being completed to the satisfaction of the Council and upon the authority being provided with an acceptable invoice, demand or receipt for payment for the works and any related preliminary or ancillary services or charges. For this purpose, an invoice, demand or receipt is acceptable if it satisfies the Council and is not issued by the applicant or a member of his family. In cases where the work is carried out by the applicant or a member of his/her family, then grant assistance will be limited to the cost of materials only. Where the assistance is paid by instalments,

the aggregate of the instalments paid before the completion of the eligible works shall not at any time exceed nine-tenths of the amount of the assistance.

It is a condition of payment that the specific works are carried out by the contractor, whose estimate accompanied the application or, where two or more estimates were submitted, by one of those contractors.

The Council may pay the full, or part of the, assistance by direct payment to the contractors, or by delivering to the applicant an instrument of payment in a form made payable to the contractor. However, in any case, the Council will not do so unless the applicant was informed before the application for assistance was approved that this would or might be the method of payment.

Where the works in question have not been completed to the satisfaction of the applicant, the Council may, at the applicant's request, and if the Council considers it appropriate to do so, withhold payment from the contractor. If the Council does withhold payment from the contractor, it will work with both the applicant and contractor to bring the matter to a satisfactory conclusion with the agreement of all parties.

The contract of works is between the applicant and the contractor. The Council will not be liable in anyway whatsoever, contractually or otherwise, for the payment of any works carried out by the contractor under the terms of the assistance.

Where the applicant dies after liability has been incurred or any preliminary or ancillary services or charges, the Council may pay grant for some or all of the works already carried out and other relevant works and associated preliminary or ancillary services or charges covered by the application.

Where the applicant dies after the relevant works have begun and before the certified date of completion, the Council may pay grant for some or all of the works already carried out and other relevant works covered by the application.

The applicant must take reasonable steps to pursue any relevant insurance or legal claim, if applicable, and to repay the grant from the proceeds of such a claim.

During the grant condition period where the eligible works consist of or include the installation into the property of either or both specialist equipment or portable accommodation for the disabled occupant, the applicant shall notify the Council if and as soon as the equipment and/or portable equipment is no longer needed so that the Council can explore the possibility of reusing it.

**For applicants who own the property**, in the event of a grant exceeding £5,000, it is a condition of the grant that the Council may demand the repayment by the recipient of such part of the grant that exceeds £5,000 (but may not demand an amount in excess of £10,000) if –

- a. the recipient disposes (whether by sale, assignment, transfer or otherwise) of the premises in respect of which the grant was given within 10 years of the certified date; and

- b. the Council, having considered—
- i The extent to which the recipient of the grant would suffer financial hardship were he or she be required to repay all or any of the grant;
  - ii Whether the disposal of the premises is to enable the recipient of the grant to take up employment, or to change the location of his/her employment;
  - iii Whether the disposal is made for reasons connected with the physical or mental health or well-being of the recipient of the grant or of a disabled occupant of the premises; and
  - iv 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 who is intending to provide care of which the recipient of the grant is in need by reason of disability or infirmity,

and the Council is satisfied that it is reasonable in all the circumstances to require the repayment.

This condition is a land charge and is binding on any person who is for the time being an owner of the dwelling.

### **Processing an application**

The Council will notify the applicant in writing as soon as reasonably practicable and, in any event not later than six months after the date of the application concerned, whether the application is approved or refused.

Where the Council decides to approve an application for assistance it will determine:

- Which of the works are eligible for assistance. Such works will be referred to as 'eligible works';
- The amount of the expenses which in its opinion are properly to be incurred in the execution of the eligible works (the eligible expense);
- The amount of assistance the Council has decided to pay;
- If the Council approves the application for assistance, it will notify the applicant in writing that the application is approved and the notification will specify the eligible works, the amount of eligible expense and the amount of assistance payable;
- If the Council notifies the applicant that his/her application for assistance has been refused, then the Council will, at the same time, advise the applicant of the reasons for refusal;
- If the applicant wants the grant money to be paid to another agent or direct to a contractor they must inform the Council.

## **6.2 Discretionary Disabled Facilities Grants**

### **Purpose of the Assistance**

Discretionary Disabled Facilities Grants shall only be made available to complement mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants, and shall be limited to:

1. Contributing to the cost to repair and make good to wall, ceiling or floor finishes disturbed by work to provide adaptations funded by mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants. In the interests of clarity, it is not always possible to match finishes back into existing finishes appropriately or to a reasonable standard, for example, colour, finish type, or tile type may be obsolete.
2. Paying for an extended warranty towards equipment such as stair lifts, hoists, through floor lifts, step lifts, etc.
3. Contributing towards the cost of an applicant's means test where the means test has established that the applicant has to pay a contribution and yet they don't have savings of over £6,000.
4. Contributing an additional amount towards works that are recommended by the Occupational Therapist and those works cost more than the mandatory grant limit of £30,000. For example, a ground floor extension to provide a bedroom and level access shower room is deemed the most reasonable and practical way of meeting the applicant's need but the cost of this work is above £30,000. The Discretionary Disabled Facilities Grant can be used to top up the maximum grant award possible.

Where this is the case, the Council will include such work as eligible discretionary works that are complementary to those identified as mandatory.

### **Maximum Assistance**

The maximum contribution that the Council shall make towards the cost of discretionary works shall be £1,000 in total for points 1, 2 and 3 listed above and £10,000 in total for point 4 listed above. In the interests of clarity no applicant can receive more than £1,000 in total towards points 1, 2 and 3 listed above. Furthermore, no applicant that qualifies under point 4 listed above, can receive more than £10,000 worth of Discretionary Disabled Facilities Grant. Any award of Discretionary Disabled Facilities Grant shall be shown separately to an award of Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant.

### **Process for Discretionary Disabled Facilities Grants**

Additional specifications shall be included along with those eligible works identified under a Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant and the award shall be made by officers authorised to approve a mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant at the time the mandatory grant is awarded. These works shall not be considered as extras to any mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants and must be approved at the same time as the mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant.

### **Terms and Conditions Applicable**

Discretionary Disabled Facilities Grants will be subject to the same terms and conditions as mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants. They can be withdrawn by the Head of Housing if budgets are not sufficient to meet the anticipated demand for Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants.

### **6.3 HomeMove Grants (Private Sector)**

#### **Purpose of the Assistance**

HomeMove Grants will be provided to fund more cost effective alternatives to providing a mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant. For example, the relocation costs for a disabled applicant to move to an alternative home that is more appropriate for their immediate and long term needs and that move (together with any costs of adapting the new home) is cost effective compared to remaining in their own home.

#### **Eligibility**

The applicant must:

- Be aged 18 or over on the date of application (If the person with a disability is a child the applicant should normally be the parent or legal guardian).
- Be either the owner of a dwelling or be a tenant of a private landlord or Registered Provider.
- Satisfy a means test as prescribed by the Housing Renewal Grants Regulations 1996 (as amended), if the applicant is the disabled person, unless the application is being made on behalf of a child.
- The HomeMove Grant must be for the benefit of a person who is 'disabled' within the criteria in section 100 of the Housing (Grants, Construction and Regeneration) Act 1996.
- The grant is available to applicants residing throughout the Borough of Kettering who are moving to suitable alternative accommodation located both in and outside the Borough.

#### **Access Criteria for a HomeMove Grant (Private Sector):**

The applicant must be eligible for a mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant as outlined in the criteria above. The Council will assess the costs of adapting the existing dwelling as well as the proposed dwelling to establish the costs benefits of pursuing a HomeMove Grant (Private Sector) compared to a mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant.

Full cost estimates will be presented in a report to the Head of Housing or an alternative officer who has similar delegated authority under the Council's constitution to decide whether or not the HomeMove Grant will be approved.

#### **Maximum Assistance**

The Council must be satisfied that there are tangible benefits for the HomeMove Grant (Private Sector) to be awarded as an alternative to an adaptation funded by a mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant. Such benefits will either be as a cost saving to the Council, or in the event that the cost of each option is broadly similar, tangible benefits to the disabled applicant.

The total amount payable as a HomeMove Grant (Private Sector) will not exceed £6,000. The total amount payable will be based on the cost of adaptations to the new home up to a maximum of £5,000, together with up to £1,000 to cover other expenses including removals, etc.

## **Process for HomeMove Grants (Private Sector)**

Given the flexible nature of this option, any decision to award or refuse the HomeMove Grant (Private Sector) will be taken by the Head of Housing or an alternative officer who has similar delegated authority under the Council's constitution, following the submission of a report compiled by a case officer. The decision shall be made within 6 months of the completed submission (the date at which the case officer confirms they have sufficient information to compile the report) and shall be in writing. In the event of a refusal, the letter shall include the reason for that refusal.

The Council will reserve the right to consult with an Occupational Therapist from the Occupational Therapy Service in respect of the suitability of this option.

## **Terms and Conditions Applicable**

The HomeMove Grant (Private Sector) is payable at the discretion of the Council and will only be awarded where there are tangible benefits for both the applicant and the Council.

## **6.4 Landlord Improvement Grants**

### **Purpose of the Assistance**

The purpose of the Landlord Improvement Grant is to provide grant assistance to private landlords to fund minor repairs or improvements to their properties to ensure that the Council's prescribed standards for privately rented accommodation offered to households who are homeless or threatened with homelessness are met. This would include existing tenants where the landlord agrees to issue a new fixed term tenancy of at least 6 months.

### **Eligible Works**

- Any minor repairs or improvements that are required to ensure that the property meets the suitability requirements of Article 3 of the Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2012, and in the case of an HMO any works identified to ensure that the property complies with the Council's adopted Amenities and Space standard.

### **Eligible Landlords**

Private landlords aged 18 years or over are eligible to apply for a Landlord Improvement Grant if they have a property in Kettering Borough that is available for single occupancy or as a house in multiple occupation (HMO) and:

- Their property is currently empty (or likely to become empty within 56 days) and they agree that the property will be occupied by a household/s nominated by the Council for a minimum of six months; or
- Their property is currently tenanted and occupied by a household owed a prevention or relief duty under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and the Council has no reason to believe that the household would be eligible for temporary accommodation should their tenancy not be renewed, and the

landlord agrees that the existing tenant can remain in occupation for a further minimum period of six months.

The following eligibility criteria also apply:

- The property must meet all other suitability requirements as stipulated in Article 3 of the Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2012 that are unrelated to physical property condition (e.g. HMO's must be licensed, or have submitted an application for licensing that is likely to be granted, if subject to mandatory licensing).
- The landlord must not be subject to any recovery procedures for monies due to the Council, and/or have any outstanding enforcement notices issued by the Council.

### **Maximum Assistance**

The maximum grant payable is £1000 per property. There is no limit to the number of grant applications a landlord can make.

### **Terms and Conditions Applicable**

The Council reserves the right to refuse to award the Landlord Improvement Grant despite all eligibility criteria being met, for example:

- if the council tax band is so high that it is regarded as unaffordable for the tenant or prospective tenant;
- if the property has been built within the past 10 years and is still under a NHBC warranty;
- the landlord has failed a fit and proper person test e.g. as part of a HMO license application
- The landlord has failed to take remedial / improvement action following an enforcement notice
- This list is not exhaustive

## **7 Warm Homes Fund Top Up Grant**

### **Purpose of the Assistance**

The purpose of the Warm Homes Fund Top Up Grant is to provide grant assistance to eligible households living in private sector accommodation that qualify for grant funding from the Warm Homes Fund to finance the installation of first time gas central heating in Northamptonshire. This is a three year project that Corby Borough Council are the consortium lead on for the other local authorities in Northamptonshire.

### **Eligible Works**

- Any works required as part of installing a first time gas central heating system at a property.



## **Eligibility**

The grant is only available to homeowners that qualify for grant funding from the Warm Homes Fund to pay for the installation of first time gas central heating in Northamptonshire. Eligible households will be determined against the Energy Company Obligation Help to Heat Local Authority 'Flexible Eligibility Statement of Intent' for Northamptonshire. This document can be found via the following link: <https://www.northantswarmhomes.com/files/2018/09/NWHP-SoI-FINAL.pdf>

## **Maximum Assistance**

The maximum grant payable is £1000 per property. No further top up funding is available from Kettering Borough Council.

## **Terms and Conditions Applicable**

The Warm Homes Fund Top Up Grant is payable at the discretion of the Council and will only be awarded where available funds will allow.

## **8 Resources**

The financial allocation to provide assistance described in this policy will be reviewed annually. The amount of money that will be allocated during 2019/20 is shown in Appendix A.

## **9 Enquiries**

All initial grants enquiries and applications for assistance should be referred to:

Private Sector Housing Team  
Kettering Borough Council  
Municipal Offices  
Bowling Green Road  
Kettering  
Northants  
NN15 7QX  
Tel: 01536 535617  
Email: [privatesectorhousing@kettering.gov.uk](mailto:privatesectorhousing@kettering.gov.uk)

## **10 Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually. The Council will consult on any major proposed changes to the policy in the future, and ensure timely publication of a revised document available to the general public.

A major change will be the introduction of a new form of assistance or deletion of an existing form of assistance. Changes to the access criteria, conditions or amount of assistance available will not constitute major change. Where changes other than major changes occur these will be publicised as updates.

## **11 Exceptions**

The Council will not fetter its discretion to consider exceptional circumstances where a resident is unable to access the assistance they require or the assistance is insufficient or not available.

Any such request for consideration must be made in writing to:

Private Sector Housing Team  
Kettering Borough Council  
Municipal Offices  
Bowling Green Road  
Kettering  
Northants  
NN15 7QX

The Council will consider each case according to the information provided.

Upon receipt of a request for consideration of an exception, the Council will contact the applicant in writing to determine the time period required to consider the request.

The decision regarding the request shall be confirmed in writing and in the event that the request is refused, it shall include an explanation as to the reason why this is the case.

## **12 Appeals**

Appeals must be set out in writing and must include the specific grounds on which the appeal is based. Appeals will only be considered where the appellant believes the policy has been incorrectly applied.

An appeal will not be considered if made because the appellant disagrees with the policy. This will be dealt with separately under the arrangements outlined for comments or complaints below.

The Head of Housing will consider appeals. Upon receipt of an appeal, the Council will contact the appellant in writing to determine the time period required to consider the case.

Once an appeal has been considered, a response will be issued in writing with reasons for the decision explained.

## **13 Comments on the Policy**

Kettering Borough Council welcomes any comments or queries about this Policy. Any such matters should be referred in writing to:

Carly Hohn  
Housing Solutions Manager  
Kettering Borough Council  
Municipal Offices  
Bowling Green Road  
Kettering  
Northants  
NN15 7QX

## APPENDIX A

### Resources Allocated to Delivering this Private Sector Housing Grants Policy

During the financial year 2019/20, the following resources have been made available to provide assistance described in the Private Sector Housing Grants Policy:

Type of Assistance	Allocation
Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant	£647,698
Discretionary Disabled Facilities Grant	Nil – any funding will come from the allocation to Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant
Landlord Improvement Grant	£23,000
Warm Homes Fund Top Up Grant	£25,000 (£75,000 over three years)