

Affordable Warmth and Boiler Replacement

How is the Affordable Warmth scheme working under COVID-19?.....	2
What are the Affordable Warmth scheme’s criteria to qualify?	2
How is the Boiler Replacement scheme working under COVID-19?.....	2
What are the Boiler Replacement scheme’s criteria to qualify?.....	2
What’s the Housing Executive’s responsibility?.....	3
How do I communicate with the Housing Executive?.....	3
<i>Affordable Warmth Scheme</i>	3
<i>Boiler Replacement Scheme</i>	3
<i>Restrictions on email size</i>	3
<i>Grant Office emails:</i>	4
What if I don’t have an email address?.....	4
What if I find it difficult to work a computer?	4
When can I start work?	4
What if I had an emergency and I had my boiler replaced?	5
<i>Affordable Warmth</i>	5
<i>Boiler Replacement</i>	5
I don’t want / can’t have people in the house.....	5
What will happen before you inspect my home?	5
What Covid related questions will you ask?	6
Where will I find out more about travelling and self-isolation?.....	6
What will happen during the inspection?.....	6
<i>Cavity Wall Inspections (for Affordable Warmth scheme)</i>	6
What can I do to help the inspection go smoothly?.....	7
What if the work allowed under Affordable Warmth is not completed within the three months stated in the letter?.....	7
When work is fully completed how will it be paid?.....	7
<i>Affordable Warmth</i>	7
<i>Boiler Replacement</i>	8
Who is responsible for Health & Safety / Social Distancing during work?.....	8
IMPORTANT INFORMATION on Final Inspections:.....	8

How is the Affordable Warmth scheme working under COVID-19?

During lockdown our Grants Offices were only able to address **emergency cases** (*those without heating*) which a Council referred to us that met the scheme's criteria.

If you were provided with grant-aid as an emergency case between 23 March and 26 June 2020 we will contact you to make arrangements to inspect your property.

During this inspection we will determine what other measures you may qualify for. These may include loft insulation, cavity wall insulation, windows, solid wall insulation and other work relating to the heating measure.

We are also in a position to take referrals for other cases from Councils who may qualify for the scheme.

What are the Affordable Warmth scheme's criteria to qualify?

You may qualify if you:

- live in Northern Ireland,
- own your home, have your day / life interest in the house or rent it from a private landlord; and
- have a total annual gross income of less than £20,000

Please read [full details of this scheme](#) which targets low income households who experience the effects of fuel poverty and energy inefficiency. It explains what measures you may qualify for.

How is the Boiler Replacement scheme working under COVID-19?

During lockdown our Grants Offices were only able to address **emergency cases (without heating)** which were sent to us that met the scheme's criteria.

If you were provided with grant-aid as an emergency case we can now arrange to inspect the work carried out at your property.

We are also in a position to take new enquiries.

What are the Boiler Replacement scheme's criteria to qualify?

You may qualify if you:

- Live in Northern Ireland;
- Own and occupy your property as your main residence;
- The property is NOT a holiday home, bed & breakfast or commercial establishment.
- Have a total household gross income which is less than £40,000 per year; and
- Have a boiler which is at least 15 years old

Please read [full details of this scheme](#). It explains what you may qualify for.

What's the Housing Executive's responsibility?

The Housing Executive administers the Affordable Warmth and Boiler Replacement Schemes on behalf of the Department for Communities, agreeing grant-aid and makes payment(s) at the appropriate time.

The Housing Executive cannot accept direct applications for the **Affordable Warmth** scheme, only referrals from a [Council](#). Any questions about the scheme should be addressed to your Council. Your contact at the Council will guide you on what steps you should take. **Information / evidence should be provided to your local Council** which will then arrange to send to the Housing Executive.

For an application form for the **Boiler Replacement** Scheme please [contact us](#) directly at the Grants Office [details below](#) or email: energyefficiency.psis@nihe.gov.uk [include name, full postal address (with postcode) and contact telephone number].

The Housing Executive is not responsible for contractors; contractor(s) are employed by the applicant.

How do I communicate with the Housing Executive?

During this difficult time to reduce risk and allow more electronic processing we would prefer to communicate by email. We may also contact you by telephone or post.

Affordable Warmth Scheme

Once we receive a referral from your local Council we will write to you to confirm that we have received your documents. We will provide you with details of our Officer who will look after your application.

Boiler Replacement Scheme

When we have received a request for an application form we will arrange for one to be sent to you.

Restrictions on email size

PLEASE NOTE there is a restriction on the size of email which we can receive. Therefore you must ensure that one email's total size does not exceed 30MB. This means you may need to send more than one email.

If you need to send more than one email it is vital that each email you send contains the same subject title detailing:

- the grant's reference number; and
- each email is marked as 1 of 4; 2 of 4, etc.

Grant Office emails:

Belfast / South East	belfast.grants@nihe.gov.uk Council areas: Belfast City Council Lisburn City and Castlereagh Ards and North Down
Derry/Londonderry	derry-londonderrygrants@nihe.gov.uk Council area: Derry City and Strabane
North East	northeast.grants@nihe.gov.uk Council areas: Antrim and Newtownabbey Mid and East Antrim Causeway Coast & Glens
South	south.grants@nihe.gov.uk Council areas: Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Newry, Mourne and Down

What if I don't have an email address?

The most well-known webmail providers are *Gmail*, *Outlook.com* (formerly known as Hotmail), and *Yahoo! Mail*.

If you need help to set up an email address you can get help from:

- [nidirect](#) [*opens and external webpage*]-the Government's website on setting up an email account.
- A member of your family or a friend may be able to help you set one up.

What if I find it difficult to work a computer?

We are increasingly moving services online to help process applications quickly and efficiently.

If you're having difficulty we'd encourage you to ask for help from family or friends in the first place. If you decide to do this we will need your permission to communicate with a family member. You must tell us who you wish to nominate to act as your representative.

If you are unable to use any of these options, we will work with you to ensure your application is completed. Please talk to us on 03448 920 900 (Textphone 18001 03448 920 900) about other options.

When can I start work?

DO NOT start work until you have received confirmation **in writing by email** that you qualify for the scheme.

If you qualify for the Affordable Warmth or Boiler Replacement scheme we will send an approval letter by email which will explain what grant-aid you will receive and in the case of Affordable Warmth, what measures your property qualifies for.

What if I had an emergency and I had my boiler replaced?

The Housing Executive is not able to accept / make payments for applications for work completed without permission.

The Housing Executive considered emergency requests which we were told about in writing between 23 March and 26 June 2020 (lockdown). An emergency was a case where a householder's oil / gas heating was not working and the boiler was broken down beyond repair.

Affordable Warmth

During Covid-19 lockdown if you qualified for grant-aid to install a new boiler as an emergency *Affordable Warmth* application, help for other measures was temporarily put on hold.

Now service has resumed, we will contact you to arrange an inspection at your property of the boiler work completed. We will also determine what other measures you may qualify for. These may include loft insulation, cavity wall insulation, solid wall insulation, windows or other works relating to the heating measure.

The Housing Executive will not pay for any work started / completed in your house before you have received written permission for additional measures.

Boiler Replacement

If you had emergency work carried during lockdown through the *Boiler Replacement* scheme we will be in contact to arrange an inspection of the work which was completed.

I don't want / can't have people in the house

If you are shielding, quarantining or are not comfortable yet to have someone inspect your home please tell us. We will arrange an appointment when it is suitable for you.

What will happen before you inspect my home?

The Housing Executive will contact you to arrange an appointment to visit and inspect your home for measures which may be grant-aided.

Before the inspection takes place we will:

- Write to you to confirm the date
- Send details of Covid-19 related information
- Contact you 24-48 hours in advance of our visit to complete a Covid-19 assessment

Before entering your home our Technical Officer will:

- Put on PPE, this includes gloves and a face covering (mask)
- Sanitise their hands and any equipment to be used
- Complete a final check that you are content they enter
- Show you their work pass



What Covid related questions will you ask?

We will ask:

1. Are you willing to let a member of Housing Executive staff into your home?
2. Have you or a member of your household tested positive for Covid-19 in the last 4 weeks?
3. Are any members of your household experiencing any [symptoms of Covid 19](#) [opens nirect]?
4. Have you or any members of your household recently returned to Northern Ireland?

Where will I find out more about travelling and self-isolation?

This link

www.nirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-countries-and-territories-exemptions

should be used to find the most up-to-date information about those countries which you can travel from and do not require self-isolation.

What will happen during the inspection?

The technical assessment may take 35-60 minutes depending on your property's size, type, location and energy needs.

Our Technical Officer will need access to all areas / rooms (eg bedrooms, hot press, roof space, boiler/oil tank location) in your property.

When in your home our Technical Officer will:

- Maintain a social distance
- Inform you where they will inspect at each step
- Tell you how they will inspect and what measurements they may need to take

Cavity Wall Inspections (for Affordable Warmth scheme)

Properties with cavity walls will have a borescope inspection carried out to identify the property's cavity needs. We will need your permission to carry out this assessment of your

[Back to contents](#)

Post COVID-19: FAQs for EES (V1.0)

Page 6 of 8

cavity wall and inspections may be affected by issues with access and safe working practices. You will need to confirm your permission with a signature. The pen will be sanitised before and immediately after you sign.

What can I do to help the inspection go smoothly?

Our inspectors would appreciate it if you could

- Keep the number of people in the house to a minimum
- Nominate one person to accompany the inspector during the visit – maintaining social distancing
- Have all internal doors open to keep touching surfaces to a minimum
- Open gates, doors and windows when asked
- Keep busy areas (hall / stairs / landing) free of people

What if the work allowed under Affordable Warmth is not completed within the three months stated in the letter?

Under normal circumstances we expect Affordable Warmth grant-aid work to be completed within three months of the date of approval.

However, a grace period is now in place for approved Affordable Warmth grant-aid work affected by the COVID-19 health crisis.

Grants offices will not cancel cases older than three months; we will be in contact once normal service resumes. A new date will be issued.

When work is fully completed how will it be paid?

In the Approval Pack sent, you will find information on what you need to tell us for payment to be processed.

As the applicant you can request final payment is made to you or agree with your contractor that they should submit information and get payment directly.

Please Note:

ANYONE KNOWINGLY MAKING A FALSE STATEMENT TO FRAUDENTLY OBTAIN MONIES IS LIABLE TO PROSECUTION

Affordable Warmth

As a reminder, the Housing Executive will need:

- Contractor's final invoice
- Completed 'Contractor's Completion' form – Contractor and Householder must complete and sign section for each measure within the List of Grant Aided Works;
- Completed 'Notification of Completion of Works' form for each measure;
- Payment form BACS 01 (pay applicant) or BACS 02 (pay contractor) for each measure, as appropriate;

- Confirmation from Building Control that works are satisfactory.

Where applicable the Housing Executive will also need:

- If cavity wall insulation has been installed a CIGA or other comparable 25 year certificate approved by the Housing Executive;
- If solid wall insulation has been installed a SWIGA or other comparable 25 year certificate approved by the Housing Executive;
- A copy of planning approval; and / or
- Copies of the written correspondence from the Housing Executive showing approval was given for additional funding during the course of the grant application.

Boiler Replacement

As a reminder, the Housing Executive will need:

- Completed 'Installer's Final Invoice' form
- Completed 'Notification of Completion of Work';
- Payment form BACS 01 if the payment is to be made to your bank account. If payment is to be made directly to your contractor BACS 02 form must be completed; and
- Confirmation from Building Control that work has been carried out satisfactorily

Who is responsible for Health & Safety / Social Distancing during work?

Your contractor is obliged to ensure that the site is maintained at a high standard of health and safety throughout the job observing Health & Safety regulations.

This includes implementing social distancing measures.

For more information on COVID-19 and social distancing go to the Public Health Agency website: www.publichealth.hscni.net/news/covid-19-coronavirus

IMPORTANT INFORMATION on Final Inspections:

Now the Housing Executive is able to resume technical inspections we will inspect all properties where payments have been processed without a technical inspection.

Where it is identified that a payment has been made but items have not been completed in accordance with the specification for the relevant works and in accordance with Domestic Energy Efficiency Grants (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2016, the Housing Executive reserves the right to recoup monies paid from either the applicant or the contractor.