

Affordable Warmth Scheme

(including AW Boiler Replacement)

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Information for Applicants

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

Our Grants Offices will only be able to address those **emergency cases** which a Council refers to us that meet the scheme's criteria.

What is an emergency case?

An emergency is where your oil / gas heating is not working – the boiler broken down beyond repair - and all scheme criteria are met.

What are the 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.

What's the Housing Executive's responsibility?

The Housing Executive administers Affordable Warmth Scheme 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.

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

What evidence will I need to give to the Council before work starts?

Your contact at the Council will guide you on what steps you should take. But below are details of what you will need providing you qualify:

- confirmation your boiler is broken beyond repair.
 - You will need a report from your boiler's manufacturer; if this is not possible, you will need to advise your council that you have contacted your manufacturer and it has confirmed a visit cannot take place due to Covid-19.
 - If this is the case, for oil boilers, an [OFTEC](#) – PUB100 report or, for gas boilers, a [Gas Safe](#) – CP12 report will be accepted for COVID-19 cases. Your contractor completes this;
- a summary by your contractor of the defects which caused the boiler to be deemed beyond repair;
- completed application form – your local council will help with this; and

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- a number of **clear photographs** of the current broken down boiler to include:
 - the boiler as one unit in its current location – we should be able to clearly identify it is your property from this photograph
 - the defects which means the boiler is beyond repair
 - close up of the current controls
 - the boiler's date plate with serial number

Information should be provided to your local Council which will arrange to send to the Housing Executive.

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 scheme we will grant-aid the emergency heating element (detailed above) initially. Your application will be put on hold until our service resumes and we can inspect your property to determine what other measures you may qualify for.

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

Who is responsible for Health & Safety / Social Distancing

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

Suspending work started due to COVID-19

It is your choice whether to have work suspended at your property. Please discuss the matter with your contractor(s) and agree the way forward.

My contractor is leaving the site what should I look out for?

If you and your contractor agree to suspend work because of COVID-19 it is vital your contractor ensures the site is closed properly and left in a safe manner.

Check with your contractor what s/he will do to ensure the property is safe if s/he has to stop work before the job is completed.

The Housing Executive is not responsible for your contractor as s/he is employed by you. It is therefore important that you are satisfied your contractor ensures the site at your property is safe in the event of work having to be stopped before it is completed.

What if the work 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.

Can any completed work be paid for?

Under normal circumstances the Housing Executive will only make payments based on an inspection by a Technical Officer. However, we have suspended these visits.

The Housing Executive has made arrangements to make payments without inspections but these will be based on evidence provided.

Please Note:

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

Please read '[Important Information on Final Inspections](#)'

What if the work is fully completed and needs to be paid for?

If the work is completed as an applicant you can make a request for final payment or agree with your contractor s/he should do this.

If you decide to complete the return 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 for each measure, as appropriate;
- Confirmation from Building Control that works are satisfactory (we may make a payment without this but it remains a requirement to return when Building Control complete the inspection. Please refer to section on [Building Control](#)).

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.

As the Housing Executive is not in a position to inspect it will also need [photographic evidence](#) showing work completed for each item on the List of Grant-Aid Work. No payment will be processed without this.

What photographic evidence should my contractor provide?

You should refer to the *List of Works* which you were sent when the *Approval of Application* pack was sent.

From this your contractor must provide photographic evidence of the grant-aid work for which a claim is being made.

Evidence of each individual item detailed on the List of Grant-Aided Works must be provided. A clear photograph of each item and a note indicating the location of the item is required. It should be evident from the photographs that they relate to the grant household.

Below are examples of items that may have appeared on your List of Works and what supporting evidence is required from you. Each List of Works will be specific to an individual property and the more information you and your contractor(s) can give the better.

Affordable Warmth Scheme

Loft:

- Tile Vents - photographs of back and front of the property to show all six / 6 tile vents in situ
- 300mm Insulation - photograph of internal loft with a ruler / tape to show the depth of insulation installed

Draught Proofing:

- 3 x Draught Proofing to External Doors or Windows: photograph to show the location of draught proofing installed

Cavity Wall:

- Cavity Wall Insulation: photographs to show boreholes on all applicable elevations
- Core vent: photograph should show installed core vent

Windows:

- New PVC Windows – photograph of each individual window replaced detailing their location
- Replacement Hinges - photograph of each individual hinge replaced detailing their location

- Replacement Handles - photograph of each individual handle replaced detailing their location

Solid Walls

Solid Wall Insulation photographs must show each elevation with new solid wall insulation

Affordable Warmth & Boiler Replacement Schemes

Heating

New Gas / Oil Boiler:

- Photograph(s) of the boiler clearly showing the boiler at the property and then a close up of the date plate

Time and Temperature Controls:

- Photographs showing
 - the new time clock,
 - motorised valves,
 - room stat and
 - cylinder stat

Please include details of the location for each item (eg Hall, Hot Press, etc...)

The above is required for boilers installed through the boiler replacement scheme, where applicable.

ALSO, for the Affordable Warmth scheme

Radiators:

- Photographs of each individual radiator clearly showing the TRV and Lockshield

Oil Tank:

- Photograph should show the new Bunded tank and base in situ

Additional heating evidence required

For both the Affordable Warmth and Boiler Replacement Schemes properties that have had boilers replaced your contractor must provide the following before a grant-aid payment is made:

Oil Boiler

- a copy of the completed Boiler Passport (a clear readable photograph will be accepted)

Gas Boiler

- a copy of the completed Benchmark Checklist (a clear readable photograph will be accepted)

Download and print this [quick reference guide](#) to evidence.

What happens where Building Control has not issued a certificate?

If Building Control is not able to inspect and therefore cannot provide a certificate of completion, evidence should be provided to confirm that Building Control Approval has been applied for.

Building Control should have been applied for before work commenced. The person who made this application should have received an acknowledgement receipt of payment from Building Control.

The Housing Executive may provide payment if no Building Control Certificate can be issued due to COVID-19, but the Building Control receipt and notification to the Council that the works are completed must be sent in as evidence.

Once the COVID-19 period has passed, a copy the final Building Control Certificate must be returned.

Where do I submit the request for payment?

All evidence must be submitted by email. In the subject line you must provide the reference number (see *Approval of Application* pack).

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 grants 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

West / Omagh

west.grants@nihe.gov.uk

Council areas:

Mid Ulster | Fermanagh and Omagh

IMPORTANT INFORMATION on Final Inspections:

Once the Housing Executive is able to resume technical inspections we will organise to inspect those 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.

Information for Contractors

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

Our Grants Offices will only be able to address those **emergency cases** which a Council refers to us that meet the scheme's criteria.

What is an emergency case?

An emergency is where the current oil or gas heating is not working – the boiler broken down beyond repair - and all other scheme criteria are met.

[Full details of this scheme](#) are on the Housing Executive's website.

What's the Housing Executive's responsibility?

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

The Housing Executive cannot accept direct enquiries for the Affordable Warmth scheme, only referrals from [Councils](#).

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

What evidence will be needed for the Council before work starts?

The Council will guide the applicant; but below are details of what are needed:

- confirmation the boiler is broken beyond repair.
 - A report from the boiler's manufacturer is needed but if this is not possible, we will accept, for oil boilers, an [OFTEC](#) – PUB100 report or, for gas boilers, a [Gas Safe](#) – CP12 report instead (this only applies during the COVID-19 period).
 - The applicant will have to advise their Council that they have been in contact with their boiler's manufacturer and it cannot attend due to Covid-19;
- a summary, including photographs, by the contractor of the defects which caused the boiler to be deemed beyond repair;
- application form – the council will work with the applicant to complete this; and
- a number of **clear photographs** of the current broken down boiler to include:
 - the boiler as one unit in its current location – we should be able to clearly identify it is your property from this photograph
 - the defects which means the boiler is beyond repair
 - close up of the current controls
 - the boiler's date plate with serial number

Information should be provided to the applicant's Council which will arrange to send to the Housing Executive.

When can work start?

DO NOT start work until your customer has received confirmation **in writing** that they qualify for the scheme.

If the applicant qualifies for the Affordable Warmth scheme and is awarded grant-aid for the emergency heating element we only expect this (boiler replaced) to be completed. If the property requires additional heating items urgently at this stage such as radiators, TRVs etc they must be requested once approval has been issued.

The application will be put on hold until our service resumes and we can inspect property to determine what other measures may be grant-aided.

The Housing Executive will not pay for any work started / completed in a property before written permission has been given for any additional measures.

Who is responsible for Health & Safety / Social Distancing

As a contractor you are obliged to ensure that you maintain a high standard of health and safety throughout the job observing Health & Safety regulations. This includes social distancing measures.

For more information go to:

Public Health Agency: www.publichealth.hscni.net/news/covid-19-coronavirus

HSE-NI: <https://www.hseni.gov.uk/news/coronavirus-covid-19-update>

FMB: <https://www.fmb.org.uk/about-the-fmb/policy-and-public-affairs/responding-to-coronavirus-covid-19>

Suspending work started due to COVID-19

The Housing Executive encourages contractors to discuss any suspension of work at the property with their customer. It is important to ensure you fulfil your obligation to customers around the health and safety of a site.

What if the work for my customer 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.

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Can any completed work be paid for?

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What if the work is fully completed and needs to be paid for?

If the work is completed your customer may ask you to make the request for final payment.

If final payment is requested on behalf of the Applicant by you as their Contractor the Housing Executive will need:

- Your Invoice;
- Completed 'Contractor's Completion' form – you must complete and sign section for each measure within the List of Grant Aided Works. It must be counter-signed by your customer;
- Payment form BACS 02 for each measure, as appropriate;
- Confirmation from Building Control that the works have been carried out satisfactorily (we may make a payment without this but it remains a requirement to return the certificate when Building Control has completed an inspection – please refer to the section on [Building Control](#));

Where applicable the Housing Executive will also need:

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

As the Housing Executive is not in a position to inspect it will also need [photographic evidence](#) showing work completed for each item on the List of Grant-Aid Work. No payment will be processed without this.

What photographic evidence should I provide as contractor?

You should refer to the *List of Works* which was sent when the *Approval of Application* pack was issued to your customer.

Evidence of each individual item detailed on the List of Grant-Aided Works must be provided. A clear photograph of each item and a note indicating the location of the item is required. It should be evident from your photographs that they relate to the grant household.

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Cavity Wall:

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- Core vent: photograph should show installed core vent

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Solid Wall Insulation photographs must show each elevation with new solid wall insulation

Affordable Warmth & Boiler Replacement Schemes

Heating

New Gas / Oil Boiler:

- Photograph(s) of the boiler clearly showing the boiler at the property and then a close up of the date plate

Time and Temperature Controls:

- Photographs showing the new time clock, motorised valves, room stat and cylinder stat (This is also Required to be submitted for Boilers installed under the boiler replacement scheme where applicable) Location – Hall / Hot Press Etc.

Radiators:

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- Photographs of each individual radiator clearly showing the TRV and Lockshield

Oil Tank:

- Photograph should show the new Bunded tank and base in situ

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Once the COVID-19 period has past, a copy of the final Building Control Certificate must be returned.

Where do I submit the request for payment?

The Housing Executive's preference is that all evidence is submitted by email. In the subject line you must provide the reference number (see *Approval of Application* pack) and property address.

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.

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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
West / Omagh	west.grants@nihe.gov.uk Council areas: Mid Ulster Fermanagh and Omagh

IMPORTANT INFORMATION on Final Inspections:

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