



torbay housing partnership



# Discretionary Financial Assistance

Information on discretionary  
housing grants and how to apply



*We want to help YOU!*

# Financial assistance policy

Torbay Council is committed to help improve the safety and quality of housing in Torbay and supports our community and the Government's aim in providing decent homes for all.

With this in mind, the council has several types of financial assistance available, to help owner occupiers, landlords and long leaseholders to repair and maintain their homes.

This booklet aims to provide a breakdown of the financial assistance together with information on the eligible works and qualifying criteria.

At the rear of the booklet you will find information on how to apply.



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## Major works assistance

Qualifying criteria:

- **property fails to meet** legal minimum standards for safety (is not free of category 1 or 2 hazards), as defined under the Housing Act 2004 and confirmed by the Housing Standards Team.
- **you should be** owner occupiers or long leaseholders in occupation, subject to test of resources. Normally, a 3 year prior occupation period will apply.
- **the works should be** of repair or improvement to put the property in good repair and to make safe where necessary. May include insulation works in some cases.
- **the amount of assistance will be** a maximum eligible expense of £15,000. Contribution from applicant determined by test of resources.
- **conditions are** certificate of owner occupation for twenty years after completion of work. Repayment required if condition not met.



## Minor works assistance

Qualifying criteria:

- **disrepair to a dwelling** is damaging the fabric of the building and/or is having an adverse effect on one or more occupants.
- **you should be** owner occupiers or long leaseholders in occupation or tenants of mobile homes, subject to test of resources.
- **the works should be** repair or improvement to rectify the disrepair causing the damage and/or ill effects on occupant(s).
- **the amount of assistance will be** a maximum eligible expense of £3,000. Contribution from applicant determined by test of resources.
- **conditions are** no more than two applications in any three-year period. Certificate of owner occupation for twenty years after completion of work (repayment required if condition not met).



# Conversion grants

Qualifying criteria:

- **redundant space is available** in an existing large dwelling or in a commercial building which can be converted into a new dwelling(s).
- **you should be** landlord(s) who intend to make the new dwelling(s) available for letting as permanent residential accommodation for at least five years.
- **the work should be** conversion works (including repair and improvement) to create one or more new units of housing accommodation.
- **the amount of assistance will be a** maximum eligible expense of £10,000 per unit and £30,000 per scheme. The grant payable is 50% of the eligible expense.
- **conditions are** certificate of availability for letting as permanent residential accommodation for five years after completion of work. The council reserves the right to require nomination rights.



## Empty properties grant

Qualifying criteria:

- **dwelling is** in substantial disrepair and has been empty for at least one year before date of application..
- **you should** have inherited the property and wish to occupy it as your main residence or be landlords who wish to make the dwelling available for letting as permanent residential accommodation.
- **the works should be** works of repair/improvement to put the property in good repair and where necessary make the property safe (insulation works may also be included).
- **the amount of assistance will be** a maximum eligible expense of £10,000. Contribution from owner occupier/ long leaseholder determined by test of resources. For landlords, the grant payable is 50% of the eligible expense.
- **conditions are** certificate of owner occupation for twenty years or availability for letting as permanent residential accommodation for five years after completion of work. With letting certificate, council reserves the right to require nomination rights. Repayment required if condition not met.



# Insulation and Heating grants

Qualifying criteria:

- **privately rented dwelling** let on periodic tenancy or assured shorthold tenancy, complies with statutory standards and is in good repair but lacks effective thermal and/or sound insulation or effective heating.
- **you should be a** landlord.
- **the works should be** works to improve standards of insulation or heating.
- **the amount of assistance available** is a maximum eligible expense of £3000 per dwelling in single occupation or £1500 per dwelling in a house in multiple occupation. The grant payable is 50% of the eligible expense. These grants are not available in addition to other grants such as empty property or conversion grants.
- **conditions are** certificate of availability for letting as permanent residential accommodation for five years after completion of work. Repayment required if condition not met.



# Relocation grants

Qualifying criteria:

- **existing dwelling occupied by person entitled to mandatory Disabled Facility Grant, is unsuitable for their needs and cannot be adapted at reasonable expense.**
- **you should be** owner occupiers and long leaseholders resident in the property for at least three years before date of the application (unless unforeseen circumstances lead to application).
- **contribution towards** the cost of moving to a property suitable for the needs of the applicant, including differential in value of property, fees and removal expenses (minimum necessary costs only allowed).
- **the amount of assistance is a** maximum eligible expense of £8,000. Contribution from applicant determined by the same statutory test of resources as used for mandatory Disabled Facility Grants.
- **conditions are** certificate of owner occupation for twenty years after completion of work. Repayment required if condition not met.



## Special initiative grants

These grants are not generally available but may be given in exceptional circumstances (subject to specific approval) to facilitate block/area regeneration or deal with issues such as radon.

Where any such grants are given, owner occupiers or landlords receiving the grants will need to give certificates of future owner occupation or availability for letting respectively and agree to possible nomination rights.

## Discretionary grants

How to apply:

For further advice on how to obtain and/or complete an application form, please contact us at:

**Torbay Council, Housing Standards,**

**First Floor, Roebuck House, Abbey Road, Torquay TQ2 5EJ**

Telephone **01803 208717**

**[www.torbay.gov.uk/housingstandards](http://www.torbay.gov.uk/housingstandards)**

**Email: [housing.private.sec@torbay.gov.uk](mailto:housing.private.sec@torbay.gov.uk)**



## General Notes

No grant will be given for works that have started before an approval is issued.

Grants are prioritised so that those in most need are dealt with first. However grants are not intended to be a rapid solution to an emergency situation.

All grants are discretionary and are subject to the Council having sufficient resources. Submitting an application does not guarantee that a grant will be approved.

Upon completion of the works a local land charge is placed on the property for the duration of the grant condition period.

No grant will be given to applicants who are not adequately insured.



This document can be made available in a range of languages, on tape, in Braille, large print and in other formats. For further information please contact 01803 208717.



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