

Safe and Warm Grant Policy 2022-23

For owner-occupiers (on qualifying benefits, means tested or with health-related conditions)

A Safe and Warm grant is aimed at helping with the cost of a new gas boiler for qualifying owner-occupied properties, up to a maximum of £2,500.

What the grant funds

- Replacement of broken gas boilers up to a value of £2,500 (Gas Safe report is required highlighting problems).

Suggested additional measures you should consider when applying for a grant – these would have to be self-funded, but they might increase energy efficiency in the long term.

- draught proofing to doors and windows and loft insulation
- solid wall and flat roof insulation
- heating controls and smoke alarms
- security measures e.g.: mortice locks, door viewers/chains and window locks

Eligibility

Grant assistance is available for a household claiming qualifying benefits or if over 60 with severe health-related conditions.

Qualifying benefits:

- universal credit (**not** when your UC award is £0.00)
- income support
- income-related employment and support allowance (**not** contribution-based ESA alone)
- income-based jobseeker's allowance (**not** contribution-based JSA alone)
- guarantee pension credit (not savings pension credit alone)
- working tax credit and/or child tax credit where your household income for the purpose of tax credits assessment was **below** £15,050
- housing benefit

Severe health-related conditions (for over 60's – medical G.P. or NHS certification is required):

- dementia or severe mental illness
- respiratory disease
- cardiovascular disease
- autoimmune disease
- haemoglobinopathies

Means testing

Should your household not be on qualifying benefits or qualify under severe health related conditions you will need to provide financial documentation to calculate a 'Means Test' on your household. This may calculate that you may have to contribute some money towards the cost of works, or, if your contribution exceeds the cost of works, you may not be eligible for a grant.

Grant procedure

- Contact the Grants Team or the Energy Advice Team (see contacts details on page 4).
- The teams will ask some questions to assess if you qualify.
- If your boiler is not working, you will need to provide a Gas Safe report identifying the problem or the need for replacement.
- The Grants Team will then arrange a grant officer to visit you. On their visit, they will inspect your boiler and property for any energy improvements to your home and provide you with a schedule of recommended works.
- During this visit they will require documentary evidence of your qualifying benefit or health-related condition, or you can provide this with your application should it not be to hand.
- Once eligibility has been confirmed, we will provide a grant application form for you to complete. If you require assistance to complete the application, please contact the Grants Team.
- Owners should submit a completed application with two itemised estimates for the works.
- Once the Grants Team receive the fully completed grant application, they will inform you of approval or refusal of your application within 10 working days.
- You must consult Home Ownership (for Islington Council leaseholders), Planning and Building Control for permission for any alteration to the boiler flue outlet or any other approvals (see contact details on page 4). You will need to provide evidence that you have, with your application.
- On completion of works, a grant officer will inspect to ensure all works have been satisfactorily completed for grant purposes. However, as the owner of the property, if you are not satisfied with the work you must discuss your concerns with your installer/contractor prior to payment.
- You must claim the grant within 2 weeks of completion. This must include contractor's invoice, gas, electric certificates, any guarantees, building control certificate, copy of building insurance and planning/leasehold services consent (if required). The grant can only be paid on completion and payment will be delayed or declined if you do not submit the appropriate paperwork on time.

The contractor's estimates must show

- the contractor's name, address and contact details
- the contractor's Gas Safe registration number
- the contractor's VAT number (only if they are VAT registered, not all contractors are)
- the address where the work would be carried out
- a full breakdown of the proposed work, which should include an **itemised** list of all materials and labour with a cost given for each item, and a clear indication of the amount of VAT (if they are charging VAT)

A complete grant application must include

- a fully completed application form dated and signed by all owners of the property
- photographic proof of identity, for example passport or photo driving licence showing signature, for each owner
- a copy of a recent benefit entitlement letter for all owners
- professional documentation of health-related condition (if applying under this rule)
- an owner's compliance certificate, completed, dated and signed by all owners of the property
- freeholder permission (if required)
- planning permission (if required)
- two fully itemised estimates from different builders for the cost of carrying out the specified works (non-itemised estimates will not be accepted)

If you do not submit all the relevant information your application will be delayed as it cannot be processed or approved.

There are limited funds for this grant, and they will be awarded on a first come basis. Therefore, it is important to provide all the application information required, as delays may result with the limited funds being awarded to other applicants.

Safe and Warm Grant Conditions

General:

- All grants are subject to the availability of funding and on a first come basis.
- You must not start work or assume you have funding until written approval from the council is given. A grant will not be approved if you start works prior to approval.
- You will need to initially fund the works or discuss the terms with your contractor as a grant can only be paid on satisfactory completion of the works with a Gas Safe certificate and final invoice submitted.
- Works must be completed within 2 months of approval, or the grant will be withdrawn.
- The grant will be registered as a charge on the property. It will need to be repaid in full if the 5-year grant conditions are breached; the property is sold or no longer occupied as the main residence of the applicant. All registered owners are required to sign an owner's certificate agreeing to these terms.
- Please consider all options before signing to proceed with the grant. Should you cancel the grant at any stage you could incur charges.
- The council does not accept any form of behaviour from clients towards its staff, contractors or agencies that could be considered aggressive, offensive, racist or threatening. In extreme cases the council may withdraw or reduce their service. The person will be written to, explaining the circumstances and asking for a change in behaviour.

Exclusions:

- This grant does not apply to properties owned by Islington Council or housing associations.
- The scheme excludes commercial and residential/commercial combined systems.
- Electric boilers are not eligible under this scheme.
- No grants can be approved for works under £500.
- The grant will not fund: full decoration, boxing-in of pipe work, radiator replacement (unless damaged or leaking), gas connection where there is currently no gas supply, lifting of carpets, flooring or moving furniture/kitchen units to conceal pipework. Any works involving new pipework or electrics will be surface mounted due to the expense of lifting floors, redecoration etc.

Warranties and insurance:

- Where the applicant has an insurable interest in the grant-aided property, they shall arrange and maintain in effect adequate insurance for the property, subject to and with the benefit of the completed works, throughout the grant condition period. The home insurance company and mortgage provider should be notified as applicable.
- An applicant must take reasonable steps to pursue any relevant insurance or legal claim and to repay the grant, so far as is appropriate, out of the proceeds of such a claim.
- Ensure you obtain a warranty for the works carried out from the contractor.
- Outside a warranty, it is the owner's duty to maintain the boiler system following completion. A continued annual service must be carried out to the boiler system by a Gas Safe engineer. Failure to carry this out may affect any warranty and prohibit any future grant claims.

Contractors, work and VAT:

- The council encourages the use of local installers/contractors.
- The installer must be Gas Safe registered. Please visit <https://www.gassaferegister.co.uk> to check that your installer is registered.
- Replacement heating boilers must be new gas boilers with minimum efficiency level of 92% (ErP).
- An asbestos assessment must be carried out by the contractor.
- VAT can be included in the grant providing the contractor provides a valid VAT number at the time the quote is submitted. VAT can only be agreed at the rate of 5%, in accordance with HMRC guidelines on grant aided energy works. Please note: not all contractors are VAT registered.

If you would like this document in large print or Braille, audiotape or in another language, please telephone 020 7527 2000.

Islington Council – Useful Contacts

Main Switchboard: Contact Islington

T: 020 7527 2000

E: contact@islington.gov.uk

Grants Team:

T: 020 7527 3104

E: grants.residential@islington.gov.uk

Occupational Therapy Services

T: 020 7527 2299 (Access Team)

E: occupational.therapy.service@islington.gov.uk

Access and Advice

Resident Experience Division, Fairer Together

T: 020 7527 2299

E: Access.Service@islington.gov.uk

Energy Advice Team (SHINE Team)

T: 020 7527 2121 or 0300 555 0195

E: energy.advice@islington.gov.uk

E: shine@islington.gov.uk

W: (SHINE) <https://www.islington.gov.uk/environment-and-energy/energy/shine>

For low income and vulnerable residents. Over the phone energy advice, including support to access energy grants, home visits for in person energy support, and help to deal with energy debts.

Handyperson Service

T: 0800 694 3344, option 5 or from a mobile: 020 7527 5400, option 5

E: Repairs.handyperson@islington.gov.uk

The handyperson service can assist with some minor works.

Building Control

T: 020 7527 5999

E: building.control@islington.gov.uk

Planning

E: planningenquiries@islington.gov.uk

Home Ownership

T: 020 7527 7715

E: homeownership@islington.gov.uk

W: www.islington.gov.uk/housing/council-homeowner-services

Foundations

The National Body for Home Improvement Agencies and lead on the transformation of Disabled Facilities Grants.

W: www.foundations.uk.com