

Enhanced Defective Concrete Blocks Grant Scheme

Monthly Report to Elected Members

Date: 6th November 2023

Background

The Minister for Housing, Local Government & Heritage announced the commencement of the Enhanced Defective Concrete Block Grant Scheme on the 3rd July 2023.

Donegal County Council is tasked with administering the Scheme, on behalf of the Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage.

This report is provided as an update to Members on the implementation of the Enhanced Defective Concrete Block Grant Scheme. The report covers the period up to and including 6th November 2023.

At the commencement date, Donegal County Council had 1,296 applications received under the Previous Scheme which required transitioning to the Enhanced Scheme.

849 of the 1,296 applications received approval under the Previous Scheme. The current status of these 849 applications is outlined in **Table 1**.

Under the provisions of the Enhanced Scheme, the Local Authority has an administrative role. The technical assessment is the remit of the Housing Agency. The initial step for an application, following referral to the Housing Agency, is the Housing Agency's Determination of Damage Threshold. Details on this cohort of applications is contained with **Table 2**.

Table 3 provides an overview of the value and number of Payments made to applicants since the introduction of the Enhanced Grant Scheme in July 2023.

Table 4 provides an overview on the Enhanced Scheme including applications from the Previous Scheme which are subject to transitional arrangements.

Assistance to Applicants

The DCB Grant Office continues to actively engage with applicants across the full scope of the Scheme including in respect of Validations, Incomplete Applications, Payments (Schedule 6), Change of Competent Building Professional etc.

The telephone clinics continue to operate every Tuesday and Thursday (9am – 12.30pm) to assist applicant with any queries and the DCB Team follow up with applicants outside of the telephone clinics.

The Community Facilitators also continue to actively engage in their respective areas providing assistance and support to applicants. The DCB Office meet with the Facilitators on a monthly basis to discuss emerging issues.

Table 1: Status of Transitional Applications as at 6th November 2023

Categorisation and Priority	No. of Applicants per category at <u>3rd July 2023</u>	Information Received for Grant Calculations from applicants	Information Reviewed by Donegal Co Co and returned to applicant for follow up	Grant Amount Calculated under Enhanced Scheme and notified to applicant	Value of Grant Amounts
1A	40	27	3	19	€4,915,206
1B	39	31	5	23	€8,176,906
2	9	8	3	4	€1,413,506
3	58	53	18	34	€10,899,005
4	668	146	12	27	€9,592,589
Change of Remedial Option	35				
Totals	849	265	41	107	€34,997,212

Explanation of Categories at 3rd July 2023:

Category 1A - Remediation Works fully Completed

Category 1B - Remediation Works In Progress

Category 2 - Grant Amount notified to applicant but works had not commenced

Category 3 - Stage 2 documentation submitted, but Grant Amount not calculated

Category 4 – Applicant notified of Stage 1 Confirmation of Eligibility & Remedial Option

Table 2: Referral of Applications to the Housing Agency as at 6th Nov 2023

Referrals to the Housing Agency for Determination on Damage Threshold	440
Determination on Damage Threshold received from the Housing Agency and communicated to applicant by Donegal County Council	321
Determination by Housing Agency - Met the Damage Threshold	316
Determination by Housing Agency - Did not meet the Damage Threshold	5
Awaiting Determination from the Housing Agency	119

Table 3: Payments issued since the introduction of the Enhanced Scheme

Month	Value	No. of Applicants receiving Payment*
July 2023	€586,164	23
August 2023	€697,993	17
September 2023	€828,753	15
October 2023	€928,006	9

Value of Grants paid to date	€16,904,465
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*Payments are issued in Stages; therefore, a number of applicants will have received Payments across more than one month listed above.

Table 4: Overview of Defective Concrete Block Grant Scheme as at 6th Nov 2023

	Previous Scheme	Enhanced Scheme	Total
Applications submitted under Previous Scheme & remaining to be validated at the commencement of the Enhanced Scheme	122	N/A	122
Applications received under the Enhanced Scheme	N/A	110	110*
Total Applications			232
Applications transferred or pending transfer to Housing Agency	64	73	137
Applications Withdrawn by Applicant	3	0	3
Applications deemed incomplete and currently with applicant	9	15	24
Applications currently being reviewed by Donegal Co Council	46	22	68
No. of Confirmation of Grant Amounts from the Previous Scheme as calculated under the Enhanced Scheme by Donegal County Council	107	N/A	107
Value of Grant Amounts from the Previous Scheme as calculated under the Enhanced Scheme by Donegal Co Council	€34,997,212	N/A	€34,997,212
Number of Confirmation of Grant Amounts received from the Housing Agency	N/A	0	0
Value of Grant Amounts decided by the Housing Agency	N/A	N/A	N/A

*The applications received under the Enhanced Grant Scheme can be categorised as follows:

Principal Private Residence (PPR) - 102

Residential Tenancy Board (RTB) - 8