

Enhanced Defective Concrete Blocks Grant Scheme

Monthly Report to Elected Members

Date: 30th 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 provides an update on the implementation of the Enhanced Defective Concrete Block Grant Scheme and covers the period up to and including 30th 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.

Table 1: Status of Transitional Applications

849 of the 1,296 applications received approval under the Previous Scheme. The current status of these 849 applications is outlined in Table 1, and also details the volume of Grant Calculations completed to date, under the terms of the Enhanced Scheme.

Table 2.1 & 2.2: Referral of Applications to the Housing Agency

Under the provisions of the Enhanced Scheme, Donegal County Council 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.

For those applications that meet the Damage Threshold, the Housing Agency provides an indicative timeline for determination of the Remediation Option & Grant Amount.

The Housing Agency has issued the first batch of Remediation Options together with the Grant Amounts to Donegal County Council on 30th November 2023.

The DCB Office is currently reviewing this first batch and it is planned to notify applicants shortly. Further detail is contained within Tables 2.1 & 2.2

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

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

The Payments represent reimbursement of Professional Fees and costs associated with approved remediation works.

Table 4.1 & 4.2: Overview of Defective Concrete Block Grant Scheme

Tables 4.1 & 4.2 provide 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, Payments (Schedule 6), Change of Competent Building Professional and general queries.

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

In addition, the Community Facilitators provide assistance and support to applicants in their respective geographical areas. The DCB Office meet with the Facilitators on a monthly basis to discuss emerging issues.

Donegal County Council continues to contribute to the Enhanced Scheme National Implementation Steering Group. This Group provides a forum for the discussion of emerging issues with the key stakeholders ensuring a consistent approach across all Designated Local Authorities on the rollout of the Enhanced Scheme.

Table 1: Status of Transitional Applications as at 30th 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	30	1	25	€6,053,154
1B	39	32	3	27	€9,452,867
2	9	8	1	7	€2,160,114
3	58	53	1	43	€13,272,142
4	668	187	11	42	€15,149,133
Change of Remedial Option	35				
Totals	849	310	17	144	€46,087,410

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 30th Nov 2023

2.1 Determination of Damage Threshold

Referrals to the Housing Agency for Determination on Damage Threshold	460
Determination on Damage Threshold received from the Housing Agency and communicated to applicant by Donegal County Council	378
Determination by Housing Agency – Dwelling Meets the Damage Threshold	370
Determination by Housing Agency – Dwelling did not meet the Damage Threshold	8
Awaiting Determination from the Housing Agency	82

2.2 Remediation Option & Grant Amount

Remediation Option Grant Determined by the Housing Agency	45
Value of Grant Amounts decided by the Housing Agency	€17,939,455

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
November 2023	€857,790	14

Value of Grants paid to date	€17,762,255
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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 4.1: Overview of Defective Concrete Block Grant Scheme as at 30th 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	138	138*
Total Applications			260
Applications transferred or pending transfer to Housing Agency	64	77	141
Applications Withdrawn by Applicant	3	0	3
Applications deemed incomplete and currently with applicant	9	27	36
Applications currently being reviewed by Donegal Co Council	46	34	80

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

Principal Private Residence (PPR) - 129

Residential Tenancy Board (RTB) - 9

4.2 Remediation Option & Grant Amount

No. of Confirmation of Grant Amounts from the Previous Scheme as calculated under the Enhanced Scheme by Donegal County Council (Transitional Applications)	144
Value of Grant Amounts from the Previous Scheme as calculated under the Enhanced Scheme by Donegal Co Council (Transitional Applications)	€46,087,410
Number of Confirmation of Grant Amounts received from the Housing Agency under the terms of the Enhanced Scheme	45
Value of Grant Amounts decided by the Housing Agency	€17,939,455