

## Enhanced Defective Concrete Blocks Grant Scheme

### Monthly Report to Elected Members

Date: 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023

#### **Background**

The Minister for Housing, Local Government & Heritage announced the commencement of the Enhanced Defective Concrete Block Grant Scheme on the 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 31<sup>st</sup> December 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.

This table also details the volume of Grant Calculations / Recalculations 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 validation and 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 issued the first batch of Remediation Options together with the Grant Amounts to Donegal County Council on 30th November 2023 and issued subsequent batches in December 2023.

The DCB Office notified applicants of the Remediation Option Grant in December.

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

Table 4.2 provides an overview of Remediation Option Grants decided to date.

### **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 DCB Section of Donegal County Council's Website is updated regularly and contains all the information and links that an applicant may require at various stages of the application process.

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 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023**

<b>Categorisation and Priority</b>	<b>No. of Applicants per category at <u>3<sup>rd</sup> July 2023</u></b>	<b>Information Received from Applicants for Grant Calculations</b>	<b>Information Reviewed by Donegal Co Co and returned to applicant for follow up</b>	<b>Grant Amount Calculated under Enhanced Scheme and notified to applicant</b>	<b>Value of Grant Amounts under the Enhanced Scheme</b>
<b>1A</b>	40	35	3	28	€6,585,641
<b>1B</b>	39	34	3	29	€9,852,507
<b>2</b>	9	8	1	7	€2,160,114
<b>3</b>	58	54	0	50	€15,103,412
<b>4</b>	668	213	45	70	€24,152,707
Change of Remedial Option	35				
<b>Totals</b>	<b>849</b>	<b>344</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>€57,854,381</b>

- 40% of all approved applicants have submitted the required information to allow Grant Calculation by Donegal County Council.
- Donegal County Council have completed Grant Calculations / Recalculations on 53% of the submissions to date.
- The Grant Calculations are ongoing with required resources allocated. This important aspect of the Scheme will be kept under review.

**Explanation of Categories at 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 at 03.07.2023

**Category 3** - Stage 2 documentation submitted, but Grant Amount not calculated at 03.07.2023

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

**Table 2: Referral of Applications to the Housing Agency as at 31<sup>st</sup> Dec 2023**

**2.1 Determination of Damage Threshold**

Referrals to the Housing Agency for Determination on Damage Threshold	474
Determination on Damage Threshold received from the Housing Agency and communicated to applicant by Donegal County Council	430
Determination by Housing Agency – Dwelling Meets the Damage Threshold	420
Determination by Housing Agency – Dwelling did not meet the Damage Threshold	10
Awaiting Determination from the Housing Agency	44

**2.2 Remediation Option & Grant Amount**

Remediation Option Grant Determined by the Housing Agency	74
Option 1	72
Option 4	1
Blended Option or Combination	1
Value of Grant Amounts decided by the Housing Agency	€28,026,718

**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
December 2023	€2,165,626	28

<b>Total Value of Grants Paid to Date (Previous Scheme and Enhanced Scheme)</b>	<b>€19,927,881</b>
---	--------------------

\*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 31<sup>st</sup> Dec 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	160	160*
<b>Total Applications</b>			<b>282</b>
Applications transferred or pending transfer to Housing Agency	79	87	166
Applications Withdrawn by Applicant	3	0	3
Applications deemed incomplete and currently with applicant	9	11	20
Applications currently being reviewed by Donegal Co Council	31	62	93

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

Principal Private Residence (PPR) - 149

Residential Tenancy Board (RTB) - 11

#### **4.2 Remediation Option & Grant Amount**

<b>No. of Confirmation of Grant Amounts from the Previous Scheme as calculated under the Enhanced Scheme by Donegal County Council (Transitional Applications)</b>	184
<b>Value of Grant Amounts from the Previous Scheme as calculated under the Enhanced Scheme by Donegal Co Council (Transitional Applications)</b>	€57,854,381
<b>Number of Confirmation of Grant Amounts received from the Housing Agency under the terms of the Enhanced Scheme</b>	74
<b>Value of Grant Amounts decided by the Housing Agency</b>	€28,026,718