

A PATHWAY TO HOUSING



Housing for All is an ambitious, but deliverable plan. Fianna Fáil in Government will deliver it.

Fianna Fáil believe in home ownership.

We were the first political party to recognise the unique **importance of home ownership in Ireland**. From Eamon De Valera to Micheál Martin, Fianna Fáil have made **housing for all a priority**.

Our 'Housing for All' policy, is a plan which sets us on a pathway of delivering **300,000 new homes between now and 2030**, an average of **33,000 per year**.

This plan is backed by the largest multi-annual housing budget in the history of the State, at **€4BN annually**. For the plan to succeed, Housing for All's **213 actions** need to be implemented. **156** have now either been **completed or are being delivered on an ongoing basis**. There were 7,654 new dwelling completions in Q2 2022, up from 58.8% from Q2 2019 (pre pandemic) and more than any other quarter since 2011. We are delivering real change in housing. Progress is being made.

This newsletter details many pathways to housing, some new initiatives we in Fianna Fáil have launched and some other information on accessing housing supports.

Darragh O'Brien TD

Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage.



Some of the pathways that are available:

1 Help to Buy

What is Help to Buy?

Help to Buy is an incentive for first-time buyers. It will help you with the deposit you need to purchase or self-build a new house or apartment. Eligible homebuyers could get up to **€30,000**, by way of a refund of the tax they have paid over the past four years, towards their deposit.

How do I know if I am eligible?

To claim HTB, you must be a **first-time purchaser** at the time of the claim and you must live in the property as your main home for five years after you purchase or self-build it. You must be tax compliant and take out a mortgage as you ordinarily would with a mortgage provider. The home you want to buy **cannot cost more than €500,000**. Full details as well as the online application are available here: <https://www.revenue.ie/en/property/help-to-buy-incentive/index.aspx> for more info.



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First Home Scheme

What is the First Home Scheme?

The First Home Scheme is a new initiative aiming to **support people with home ownership**. The Government and participating banks will **bridge the gap** between the deposit and mortgage a person has access to, and the price of the new home. E.g. if the house you want to buy is €320,000 but the mortgage you've been approved for and your deposit combined totals €277,000 then the **First Home Scheme will provide the €43,000 shortfall**.

How do I know if I am eligible?

To avail of the First Home Scheme, you must be a first-time buyer or an eligible person under the 'Fresh Start Principle'. The home must be a new build home and must not exceed the price cap. See appendix A for breakdown of price caps per County. The Help to buy Scheme is available in tandem with the First Home Scheme. Full details including a comprehensive FAQ and an eligibility calculator are available at www.firsthomescheme.ie



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Croí Conaithe Towns and Villages Scheme – Vacant and Derelict Homes

What is the Croí Conaithe Towns and Villages Scheme?

The Croí Conaithe Towns and Villages fund is a new scheme which aims to tackle vacancy and dereliction in our towns and villages by giving prospective homeowners a **grant of up to €30,000 or €50,000 if you can prove dereliction**, for the refurbishment of a vacant property for occupation as a principal private residence. This is one of the **quickest ways to bring more houses into the market**, utilising the vacant and derelict buildings that exist in many of our town and villages.

How do I know if I am eligible?

Properties must be **vacant for two years** or more and built before 1993. Proof of both vacancy and ownership will be required to support the grant payment. The property must be **located within a town or village boundary** as defined as walkable to town / village centre along public footpaths primarily with a population of over 400.

The scheme is open to a wide range of people – first time buyers and 'fresh-starters', those with specific needs disabled people or older people and other people who wish to move from their current home which they are selling or have sold and want to live in a town or village setting. Full details including a comprehensive FAQ are available here: www.gov.ie/en/publication/c2183-croi-conaithe-towns-fund



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Fresh Start Principle

What is the Fresh Start Principle?

The Fresh Start Principle means that people who are divorced or separated or those who have undergone insolvency and have no interest in a family home, will be eligible for State backed affordable schemes such as the Local Authority Home Loan, the Local Authority Affordable Purchase schemes, Cost Rental and the First Home Shared Equity scheme.



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Local Authority Affordable Purchase Homes



What are Local Authority Affordable Purchase Homes?

Local Authority Affordable Purchase Schemes will be developed by each Local Authority. Each scheme will differ when it comes to the house type and the cost of the homes but essentially the aim is that the homes sold under the scheme will be **at least 15% cheaper to buy than the local market rate** with the Local Authority taking a stake in the home.

Each local authority will advertise details of any scheme when it opens for applications which will outline criteria for eligibility.

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Local Authority Home Loan



What is the Local Authority Home Loan?

A Local Authority Home Loan is a new Government backed mortgage for first time buyers and fresh start applicants. It's available nationwide from your local authority. It can be used to purchase a new or second-hand property or for self-build. A Local Authority Home Loan offers two fixed interest rate products: 2.845% fixed for up to 25 years (APR 2.88%)* and 2.945% fixed for up to 30 years (APR 2.99%)*. These rates are subject to change. Mortgage rates are set on the date of drawdown of your loan.

How do I know if I am eligible?

To be eligible for a Local Authority Home Loan you must be a first-time buyer or a fresh start applicant in employment for two years continuously. The income limit for a single applicant is not more than €65,000 (gross) in Cork, Dublin Galway, Kildare, Louth, Meath and Wicklow and be earning under €50,000 (gross) in all other counties. All other applicants have an annual gross income of not more than €75,000 (gross). The price cap on the home is €320,000. You must provide proof of insufficient mortgage offers of finance from two regulated financial providers. For more information visit: www.localauthorityhomeloan.ie

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Cost Rental

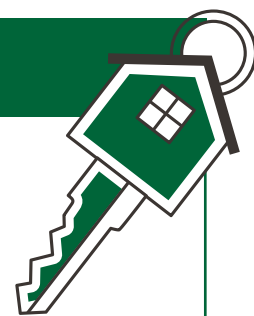


What is cost rental?

In Fianna Fáil, we want to help middle income earners secure an affordable rental property with security of tenure. We introduced Cost Rental Housing to achieve that. Cost rental housing provides **affordable rented accommodation** to people on **middle incomes**. It is aimed at people who are above the threshold for social housing but have difficulty affording private rented accommodation. Tenants are charged an amount that covers the cost of delivering, managing, and maintaining a home only. This means prices are not driven by market movements, making it more affordable. The rent for cost rental homes must be **at least 25% below regular market rents in an area**. It's State backed and the tenancies are long-term, a minimum 40 years.

How do I know if I am eligible?

Cost rental is aimed at middle income earners, so those earning too much to be eligible for social housing, a person cannot be earning in excess of €53,000 NET so approx. €83,000 GROSS. You cannot be getting any social housing supports, including the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP). Local Authorities and/or Approved Housing Bodies will advertise details of any scheme when it opens for applications.



Rent Supplement

What is Rent Supplement?

Rent Supplement is a means-tested payment for certain people living in private rented accommodation who cannot provide for the cost of their accommodation from their own resources. It is a short-term income support for people in the private rented sector.

How do I know if I am eligible?

You are only eligible for Rent Supplement if you are a genuine tenant and either received Rent Supplement in the 12 months or you were living in private rented accommodation for at least 6 months of the last 12 months, you could afford the rent at the beginning of your tenancy and you are unable to continue to pay the rent because of a substantial change in your circumstances which occurred after you started renting. The amount of rent supplement payable will be calculated by your local authority, subject to limits, and a minimum of €30 per non-dependent adult or €40 per couple will be deducted. This is because you must pay at least €30 towards your rent.

Rent Supplement is paid to you and you pay your landlord the full rental amount.



Housing Assistance Payment (HAP)

What is HAP?

HAP is a housing assistance payment by local authorities for households who qualify for social housing support on a long term basis, including many long-term Rent Assistance Scheme (RAS) recipients. Rent Supplement is only short term but Rent Assistance Scheme (RAS) which is more long-term is being transitioned into HAP.

Under HAP, local authorities will make a **monthly payment to a landlord directly**, subject to terms and conditions including rent limits, on a HAP tenant's behalf. In return, the HAP tenant pays a weekly contribution towards the rent to the local authority. This 'rent contribution' is based on the household income. It is calculated in the same way as the rent paid by a tenant of a local authority owned property. Tenants in receipt of HAP **can work full-time**. HAP tenants must find their own accommodation in the private rented market.

How do I know if I am eligible?

You must first apply for and be approved for social housing support by your local authority. If your household is already on your local authority's housing list, you will be eligible for HAP. If you are on your local authority's housing list and currently in receipt of Rent Supplement, you will be eligible for HAP.

In general, the rent must be within the prescribed HAP rent limits for your household size and the area you live in. However, flexibility of up to 35% may be provided, on a case-by-case basis, where a household cannot find suitable accommodation within these limits. As of July 2022, a single adult can avail of the couple rate for new tenancies.

The limits are as follows:

1 adult shared accommodation	Couple in shared accommodation	1 adult	Couple	Couple or 1 adult with 1 child	Couple or 1 adults with 2 children	Couple or 1 adult with 3 children or more
SEE APPENDIX B FOR HAP RENTS LIMITS PER AREA						

If your landlord requires a deposit, you will have to pay this yourself – the local authority will not pay it for you. In certain circumstances, you may be eligible to apply for assistance from the Department of Social Protection to help with paying a deposit.