

# RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

## REPORT TO HEALTH & HOUSING COMMITTEE

meeting date: JUNE 8<sup>th</sup> 2023  
title: AVAILABILITY OF THE HOME UPGRADE GRANT FOR RESIDENTS  
submitted by: DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING  
principal author: RACHAEL STOTT, HOUSING STRATEGY OFFICER

### 1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To make Members aware of the availability of the Home Upgrade Grant (HUG) and to encourage uptake across the borough.
- 1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities
- Community Objectives – To help make people's lives safer and healthier.
  - Corporate Priorities – To work with partners to agree priorities and secure investment in housing.
  - Other Considerations – N/A

### 2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Home Upgrade Grant (phase 2) scheme (HUG2) was made available from September 2022. Local Authorities were invited to apply for HUG2 home upgrade grant funding to support energy efficiency upgrades and low carbon heating to low-income households living in off gas grid homes. The details of the grant scheme can be found at [Air Source Heat Pump, Solar PV, Renewables & Insulation Grants Lancashire | Cosy Homes \(chil.uk.com\)](#)
- 2.2 HUG 2 is exclusively for those homes heated by oil, LPG, solid fuel, or electricity. The scheme therefore is particularly relevant to Ribble Valley as across the Ribble Valley only the market towns of Clitheroe, Longridge and Whalley and the village of Chatburn have mains gas. The remainder of the borough relies on alternative energy sources and therefore residents living in the more rural parts of the borough are potentially eligible to apply.

#### HUG 2 SCHEME

- 2.3 Blackpool Council is the lead authority and submitted the bid on behalf of a consortium of Lancashire Authorities comprising Blackburn with Darwen, Burnley, Hyndburn, Lancashire, Pendle, Preston, Ribble Valley, Rossendale, South Ribble, West Lancs and Wyre. The grant award is a total of £41,400,000. The scheme is delivered by Cosy Homes in Lancashire (CHiL). Blackpool will be responsible for monitoring and providing returns to the Government.
- 2.4 All enquiries will be signposted through the CHiL website [Air Source Heat Pump, Solar PV, Renewables & Insulation Grants Lancashire | Cosy Homes \(chil.uk.com\)](#). The factsheet attached as appendix 1 sets out the main points of the scheme.
- 2.5 A property will qualify if:
- There is no mains gas central heating; and
  - it has an EPC of D,E,F or G

A household in an owner-occupied property will qualify if:

- the household income is less than £31,000 or
- in receipt of means tested benefit

A landlord can apply for a grant (£5000 maximum) in relation to a rented property if:

- the tenant household meet the eligibility criteria as above, and
- 50% contribution is made towards the cost of the work.

2.6 The measures to be covered by the scheme are listed as solid wall insulation, cavity wall insulation, loft and underfloor insulation, replacement of single glazed windows and wooden external doors and installation of low carbon heating systems such as air source heat pumps, solar PV and solar thermal.

2.7 The borough has a high percentage of off mains gas properties and therefore it is important residents are aware of the availability of the scheme especially as often rural properties are not eligible for grant schemes. The availability of the scheme will be promoted across the borough through the website, parish councils and press releases. It is important that residents take advantage of the scheme now so that measures are in place for winter. However further publicity will be undertaken in Autumn when households are more likely to consider heating costs and energy efficiency.

2.8 Residents are encouraged to apply following the link [Air Source Heat Pump, Solar PV, Renewables & Insulation Grants Lancashire | Cosy Homes \(chil.uk.com\)](#)

### 3 **RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE**

3.1 Note the contents of the report and that the HUG2 scheme will be promoted across the borough.

RACHAEL STOTT  
HOUSING STRATEGY OFFICER

NICOLA HOPKINS  
DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
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#### BACKGROUND PAPERS

[Home Upgrade Grant Phase 2: delivery guidance for local authorities \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

For further information please ask for Rachael Stott, extension 3235.

**° COSY HOMES**  
**IN LANCASHIRE**  
Greener Homes, Warmer Homes

# HOME UPGRADE GRANT



**YOUR QUESTIONS**

**ANSWERED**

[www.chil.uk.com](http://www.chil.uk.com)

## What is Cosy Homes in Lancashire?

Cosy Homes in Lancashire (CHiL) is the Affordable Warmth Initiative set up by the Lancashire Local Authorities and embraces all the energy efficiency work that we do together across the county. Blackpool Council is the lead authority who bids for funding on behalf of the councils in Lancashire. CHiL has a central administration hub which is managed by Rhea Projects Ltd., our procured Managing Agent.

## Does my house qualify?

'HUG' is for properties that do not have a gas central heating system. So if your main heating system is: electric heaters, gas fires, gas wall heaters, oil, LPG or wood/coal etc then your house could qualify. Your house would also need to have an Energy Rating of D, E, F or G. Don't worry if you don't know your energy rating as we will check this for you.

## Who can apply?

If your household income is less than £31,000 then you would be eligible to apply. For those in receipt of a means tested benefit you would qualify automatically. If you're not sure then contact CHiL and the team will check your eligibility. 'HUG' is not the only scheme we have available so we may be able to help with other measures. Please contact the team if you're uncertain.

## I'm a private tenant. Can I apply?

Private tenants can apply if you are on a low income or in receipt of benefits, we would need to see evidence as to how you qualify. You will need your landlord's permission for any work to be carried out and your landlord would need to make a financial contribution. The maximum grant they could have is £5,000.

## How do I apply?

It is a simple application process. You can apply online [www.chil.uk.com](http://www.chil.uk.com), or ring the CHiL team on 0330 606 1488 and apply over the phone or request an application form to be sent to you. The team will do an initial assessment and let you know very quickly if you and your home qualify. If you're not eligible for 'HUG' we would look at any other funding options for you.

## What is a 'HUG'?

The Home Upgrade Grant is funding from the Government which has been given to those Local Authorities who have submitted successful bids. The funding is available to improve the energy efficiency of homes to make them warmer and greener.

## What is an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC)?

This is the energy rating of your home. To qualify for 'HUG' your home needs to be energy inefficient so has an EPC rating of D, E, F or G. The CHiL Team can check if your house has an EPC. If there isn't one, we will organize an EPC survey, free of charge.

## I'm working. Can I apply?

Yes, you can apply if your household income is less than £31,000. Please contact the team to check your eligibility for any assistance we have available. We will need to collect evidence of your income before the survey stage.

## I'm a landlord. Can I apply?

**Landlords can apply. However, you must have someone living in your house who meets the eligibility criteria and we would need to see evidence of your tenant's income/benefits.** The maximum grant you can receive is £5000 and you must contribute 50% towards the work. **There is** additional funding to do certain insulation measures free of charge, so contact the CHiL Team to check what are the best options for you.

## Where does the funding come from?

The funding comes from central government and awarded to Local Authorities who successfully bid for it. As it is a government scheme they set all the rules and criteria which we must adhere to.

### What can I apply for?

The funding is available to make your house warmer and we would always look at the (fabric of your house first which means insulation of your walls, floor and roof). We can offer loft insulation, solid wall insulation, room in roof insulation and underfloor insulation. If your house has any single glazed windows or old wooden external doors, then we can replace these. 'HUG' offers low carbon heating including air source heat pumps, Solar PV and solar thermal. A retrofit survey will establish the measures that are suitable for your property.

### I have old double glazed windows. Can I apply?

Unfortunately we can only upgrade single glazed windows to new double glazed windows. This is a central government rule and even though we know some older double glazing is draughty and inefficient we are not allowed to use the funding to upgrade them.

### Who will you share my personal information with?

Information you provide will be kept securely on our systems and will only be shared to partners working on the CHiL scheme. It will be used for the sole purpose of obtaining funding for those measures which you have applied for.

### I've submitted an application. What happens next?

The CHiL Team will contact you within 10 days to go through the eligibility process with you. If you and your house qualifies, a preliminary survey will be organized by a member of the CHiL team. The surveyor will be happy to answer any questions you may have at this time. If you have not heard anything within 10 days please ring on 0330 606 1488 or email [enquiries@rheaprojects.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@rheaprojects.co.uk)

### Will I have to pay anything back if I sell the house or move?

There are no conditions attached to 'HUG' so you can sell your house at any time after the work. Please keep any guarantees in a safe place and pass to any future owners/tenants.

### My house has had an initial survey. What happens next?

Following the initial survey you will move to the retrofit survey stage if 'HUG' measures have been identified. The CHiL Team will ring you following the initial survey to go through the results and at this time will organize the retrofit survey. We will always try to be flexible with days and times as we recognize most people are working.

### Will I need to pay a contribution towards the work?

The grant will cover the full cost of all the eligible work identified during the retrofit process. You will not be asked to contribute.

### How much is the grant worth?

The levels of funding varies depending on your property type but can go to a maximum of £38,000 for larger properties.

### If I qualify what happens next?

If you qualify we need to make sure your house qualifies so there will be a series of surveys which we will organize as quickly and efficiently as possible starting with an initial survey by CHiL to look at current heating, insulation and glazing situation. The results go back to the CHiL Admin Team and you will be contacted to go through the results.

### Will I save money on my energy bills?

Your home should feel warmer and your house will be more energy efficient. We will also offer advice on how to use your new heating system cost-effectively. However, the current energy crisis means that household bills are increasing, which is beyond our control.

### I'm not sure about whether to have the work done. How long do I have to think about it?

The scheme will run until 31st March, 2025 or earlier should the funding allocation be fully committed before this date. You will need to make a decision before November 2024.

### What is a retrofit survey?

It is a government requirement for all funded schemes that a retrofit process is followed. This is to give you peace of mind knowing that all work done on the scheme will receive the appropriate warranties and guarantees upon completion. A retrofit assessor will come to your house to do a full retrofit survey to establish measures that are suitable for your house as only recommended measures by a qualified surveyor can be undertaken. The results of this survey will be explained to you and if you agree, then specialist installers will be sent to do their own technical surveys. Please note that measures recommended in the retrofit survey may not be deemed possible at the technical survey stage.

### Who will do the work?

Rhea Projects Ltd and council officers have undertaken an independent assessment of products and systems that we believe are the most appropriate to use on our scheme. We have worked closely with manufacturers to establish a list of Lancashire-based installers to work on our scheme. For each element of the work to your property you will have a technical survey from a specialist installer so please expect several surveys if you are having insulation, windows and heating.

### Can I use my own contractor?

No. All contractors working on the scheme must have the relevant government certifications and must work to the Council's strict Code of conduct so for these reasons you cannot choose your own contractor.

### I have had work done on previous grant schemes. Do I still qualify?

If you have been benefitted from previous schemes through CHiL such as LAD or earlier HUG phases then some additional measures may be available but not all. Please ring the CHiL Team on 0330 606 1488 to clarify.

### What if I'm not happy with the work?

Technical inspections will be carried out in many instances. If you are unhappy with any aspect of the work, then please tell the surveyor at this stage so any issues can be rectified. If your property is not selected for a technical inspection, or if a problem arises further down the line, then please ring the CHiL Team on 0330 606 1488 who will organize a surveyor to visit your property.

### Will I get a guarantee for the work?

All 'HUG' work goes through a certification process so you will be given certificates for every element of the work. Please check your paperwork to satisfy yourself that you have a guarantee for everything. If you don't receive your paperwork, or are unsure about anything, please contact the CHiL Team on 0330 606 1488.

### I've had work done on my property and the workmen have left rubbish to clear up. Is this my responsibility?

All our installers have signed up to a Code of Conduct. They should leave your property clean and take away any rubbish. If they have moved any furniture they should put everything back in place. Please report any installer who you believe is in breach of the Code of Conduct as soon as possible. Please ring the CHiL Team on 0330 606 1488 to report any incidences.

Visit our website to check your eligibility

**0330 606 1488**

[www.chil.uk.com](http://www.chil.uk.com)

