

London Borough of Brent

Empty Properties Grant Process

<p>Web address</p> <p>Email address</p>	<p><i>http://www.brent.gov.uk/emptyproperties</i></p> <p><i>empty.property@brent.gov.uk</i></p>
<p>Contacts</p>	<p>Empty Property Officer tel: 020 8937 2539/2535 empty.property@brent.gov.uk</p> <p>Surveyor, tel: 020 8937 2307 jim.mcnamee@brent.gov.uk</p>
<p>Office address</p>	<p>Private Housing Services Brent Civic Centre Engineers Way Wembley Middlesex HA9 0FJ</p>
<p>Empty property grants criteria</p> <p>Decision criteria</p>	<p>Grant may be given to bring empty properties up to a lettable standard. In return, the owner will sign an Agreement to take tenant nominations through one of the council lettings schemes for a period of five years – <i>see the attached lettings options page for more detail.</i></p> <p>Decision on what may be grant aided can be made only after the councils surveyor has visited to the property - it is subject to the suitability of the property, the availability of funds and being able to find a tenant. For actual grant payment details see process stage 6 below</p> <p>Important..... Any works started before you receive written grant approval may not be given grant.</p>
<p>Refurbishment grants..... <i>for conversion grants see next section</i></p>	<p>Empty property grants may cover works such as: faulty and unsafe electrics; inferior heating system; windows that are so faulty as to be very poor insulation; inadequate kitchen food safety or food preparation arrangements; bathrooms that are very old and not satisfactory.</p>
<p>Conversions</p>	<p>Empty property grants may also be given towards conversion of a large empty house to smaller units or for conversion of empty commercial premises to residential units – <i>always subject to full planning consent.</i></p>

<p>Level of grant</p>	<p>Grant may be approved for up to 70% of cost of eligible works, depending on size of property: – one bedroom properties at 50%; two bedroom properties at 60%; three bedroom and larger 70% or at the level of £6,500 for every person that could be accommodated. The approved grant would be the lower of the two calculations i.e. either up to the set percentage rate or at £6,500 per person that could be accommodated.</p>
<p>Process stage 1 start of application</p>	<p>On your enquiry, we will explain the process of the empty property grant scheme. If you wish to proceed to empty property grant application, we will need the following: proof of ownership; proof of national insurance number (or company registration) and completed application form(s), authority to make application if an ‘agent’ is acting for the owner(s).</p> <p>If you are doing a conversion we will need: the planning consent; freeholders permission to any alterations to the property; full copy of existing and proposed plan drawings.</p> <p>The empty property officer will visit the property to confirm that it is empty, that there are items likely to attract empty property grant and that the property, when in good condition, would be suitable to be offered to prospective tenants.</p>
<p>Process stage 2 survey</p>	<p>The empty property officer will then pass the file to the Private Housing Services (PHS) surveyor, Mr McNamee, who will contact you to arrange a visit to confirm what items may be grant aided – from his written schedule you will provide Mr McNamee with two builders estimates. Full grant will be paid only when it is confirmed that the work was carried out by one of the companies/builders on these estimates. Any work done by you, as an individual, will attract grant for materials only.</p> <p>For refurbishment grants, there is a fee of £550 plus VAT for the PHS surveyor to visit and produce the schedule of works and this will be included in the owners grant calculation.</p> <p>For conversions, we ask that your architect draw up the schedule of works – Mr McNamee will give further guidance on this, if needed, and all professional fees can be included in your grant application.</p>
<p>Process stage 3</p>	<p>The owner will provide Mr McNamee with two builders estimates against his schedule or the schedule drawn up by the owners architect. From these estimates Mr McNamee will notify you of a provisional</p>

<p>estimates and grant approval</p>	<p>grant figure.</p> <p>When you notify Mr McNamee that you wish to go ahead, Private Housing Services (PHS) will issue a written formal grant approval.</p> <p>Once written grant approval is issued you are free to start the scheduled work, using one of the builders/company named in your estimates. <i>Any works started before grant approval, or not done by the named company/builder, may not be grant aided – works completed before grant approval will not be grant aided.</i></p>
<p>Process stage 4 works completed</p>	<p>On request from you (by returning the 'work completed' form) the PHS surveyor will check that all the works are completed.</p> <p>At this time, the owner will give to Mr McNamee the following:- final invoice; gas & electric safety certificates; energy performance certificate and bank details for grant payment.</p>
<p>Process stage 5 Nomination Agreement and grant payment</p>	<p>To finally qualify for the grant payment a tenant must be secured through one of the councils lettings schemes and be subject to a five year Nomination Agreement. The Councils accommodation (Procurement) Service will instruct legal services to draw up a five year Agreement and this will be sent to the owner from the legal services to be signed and witnessed. The owner should return this to legal services to be sealed and returned to the owner. The owner should then send a copy of the completed, dated and sealed Agreement to the grants caseworker.</p>
<p>Process stage 6 payment of grant</p>	<p>The application will have been approved for grant payment, by the Grants Head of Service, before you start work on the property. When a tenancy has started and when a copy of the completed and sealed five year nomination Agreement has been received at the Grants Department, your file can be passed through the payment system.</p> <p>Payment of grant will be made through the councils BACS service.</p>
<p>Information needed throughout the process at stage 1</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proof of ownership e.g. Land registry title or, letter from solicitor confirming date of purchase, owner(s) name(s) and, in the letter, the Land Registry Title number. • Proof of U.K. National Insurance numbers for the owner(s) or Company Registration (must be UK registered) • Proof of UK rental income tax • Authority from owner if 'agent' or other person is acting on owners behalf

<p>stage 1 continued</p> <p>at stage 3</p> <p>at stage 4</p> <p>at stage 6</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brent form 'Application for a Landlords Empty Property Grant' • Landlord confirmation of Void Period • Intention to Lease form • Certificate of intended letting form • Confirmation of void time • Acknowledgment of 'no grant' • Planning consent, certificate of lawfulness, permitted development or established use, if relevant • Drawings and Plans for conversions or alterations • Freeholders permission to alterations, if relevant <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two itemised builders estimates – against the schedule drawn up by the Councils surveyor, or your architect if it is a conversion <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gas and electric safety certificates • Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) • White forms – given as part of the approval process, to accept grant and request final visit by the PHS surveyor • Final invoice – from the company who carried out all work • Building Control completion certificate – if relevant <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copy of the completed, dated and sealed five year Agreement following a tenant having been nominated from the one of the councils lettings schemes
<p>For any enquiries or further information contact</p> <p>The Empty Property Team on 020 8937 2539/2535</p> <p>or email to: empty.property@brent.gov.uk</p>	