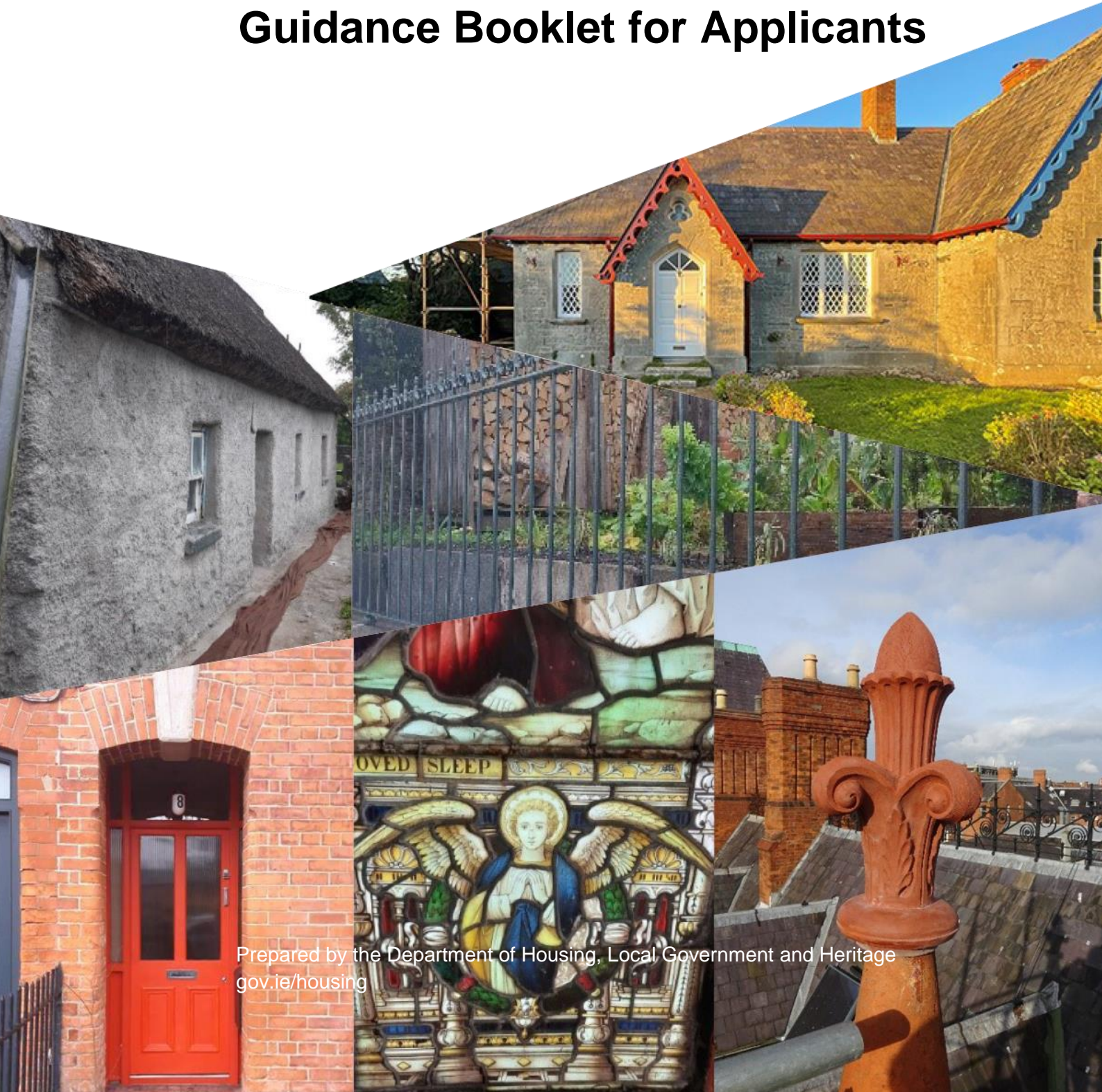




Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

Built Heritage Investment Scheme

Guidance Booklet for Applicants



Prepared by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
gov.ie/housing

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Background and Purpose of Scheme

This guide provides **applicants** with information in relation to the application process and operation of the **Built Heritage Investment Scheme (BHIS) 2023**.

The quality of our historic built environment profoundly affects our everyday lives. It contributes to the vitality of our cities, towns, villages and countryside, instils a sense of pride of place, and makes a significant contribution to our economic prosperity.

The primary custodians of structures protected under the Planning and Development Acts are their owners and occupiers, and they, along with the Local Authorities, are responsible for their protection. The BHIS is designed to support owners and custodians in caring for these structures. The BHIS runs alongside the Historic Structures Fund (HSF) which enables larger scale conservation works to be carried out on heritage structures. The BHIS scheme will operate for the duration of 2023, with funding to be claimed within that calendar year. The scheme will be administered by the local authorities, with each allocated a fixed amount from the overall fund of **€4.5m** as determined by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (the Department). Funding awarded through the scheme to applicants can range from €2,500 up to a maximum of €15,000.

The aims of the Built Heritage Investment Scheme are to:

- Provide funding to owners and custodians of historic properties to support investment in small-scale, labour-intensive conservation projects throughout the country.
- Support the employment of conservation professionals, craftspeople and tradespersons in the repair of the historic built environment.
- Assist with the repair and conservation of structures that are protected under the Planning and Development Acts, including Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs), where this is deemed appropriate by the Local Authority.
- Support training in traditional skills such as roofing, thatching, lime mortar, dry stone walling, ironworks and masonry. Any such projects must be agreed in advance by the Department and the relevant Local Authority.

Scheme Overview – Who Can Apply, Eligible Projects

The Built Heritage Investment Scheme provides capital funding for works to qualifying structures which include the following:

- (i) Protected structures (listed on the Record of Protected Structures)
- (ii) Proposed protected structures (proposed to be listed on the Record of Protected Structures)
- (iii) Structures in Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs), or within the amenity of a National Monument

If the applicant is in doubt as to the eligibility of a particular structure under this scheme, they are encouraged to contact their Local Authority with their query.

Note: Only one application will be considered per structure or applicant. Applicants may apply to both the Historic Structures Fund and Built Heritage Investment Scheme, but may not avail of funding from both schemes. In cases where an applicant has been awarded funding under both schemes, they must indicate which scheme they wish to continue with.

All works under the BHIS must be approved, completed and paid for before recoupment is sought from the Department. Work can include an associated training element.

Qualifying and Non Qualifying Works

Below is a list of Qualifying and Non-Qualifying Works.

It should be noted that the Department will again be providing a funding stream under this scheme for works of routine maintenance and minor repairs, which were not previously eligible for funding under the scheme. Applicants for this routine maintenance and minor repairs scheme should use the standard application form for BHIS 2023.

Qualifying Works

- Works essential to stabilise a structure or part of a structure
- Repair (or renewal) of roof structures, coverings and features
- Repair or replacement of rainwater goods
- Works to repair external walls
- Repairs of external joinery
- Repairs to stained glass windows
- Repair and conservation of external fixtures
- Repair and conservation of internal structures and features
- Repair of machinery which is an integral part of a structure
- Works to stabilise or protect masonry or other elements at risk
- Certain works to increase the energy efficiency of the building in line with the relevant Advice Series guidance
- Works to structures which contribute to the character of an ACA
- Works to functional services where required in the course of conservation repairs
- Works to reduce the risk to a structure
- Professional fees incurred for the portion of capital works funded, including surveys and method statements

Non Qualifying Works

- Routine maintenance and minor repairs (see above paragraph)
- Alterations or improvements
- Demolition
- Restoration and reconstruction
- Non-essential works
- Pre-existing works
- Certain works relating to external walls and damp-proofing
- Certain external joinery, e.g. double glazed units, storm glazing, replacement of historic glass with energy-efficient glass
- Certain energy efficiency works, e.g. installation of micro-renewables
- Public Realm Works (ACAs)

The full details of the qualifying works can be found on the Built Heritage Investment Scheme Circular, available on all Local Authority websites.



How to Apply

Private applicants or community groups who are the owners or custodians of historic structures should:

- Complete Form A
- attach a comprehensive Method Statement
- submit to their Local Authority before the closing date. **This date is determined by each Local Authority, applicants are advised to check with their Local Authority for correct date.**

Submitting Your Application

Applications which meet the criteria should be submitted to the Local Authority for consideration by the deadline.

Please check in particular:

- The amount of funding requested does not exceed the maximum grant available
- The amount and source of matching funding is clearly stated
- Details of other exchequer funding have been declared

Information on how to correctly complete an application is provided through the guidance application form, available from your Local Authority as well as on the Department's website.

Assessment

Eligible applications will be assessed for selection under the following criteria:

1. **Significance** of the structure.
2. **Efficacy** of the works.
3. **Quality** of the methodology and technical merit of the works proposed.
4. **Employment Benefits**

Funding of Projects

The minimum funding awarded for successful projects will be **€2,500** up to a maximum of **€15,000**. Based on the assessment of applications, the individual local authorities will allocate funding to each of the successful applicants. Priority will be given to small-scale, labour-intensive projects.

The minimum amount does not apply to projects awarded funding under the pilot scheme for works of routine maintenance and minor repairs. The maximum award for such projects is **€2,500**.

Matching Funds

Under BHIS, the **total value of all public funding provided for individual projects must not exceed 50% of the total project cost**, including funding received from other public agencies including the SEAI, the Heritage Council, LEADER and other government departments and local authorities. Voluntary work (benefit-in-kind), local authorities' own funds/contributions or funding from other exchequer sources cannot be used to satisfy the match funding requirement.

In exceptional cases, the applicant can contact the local authority, who then makes the case to the Department for a change in match funding division. The applicant should contact the Architectural Conservation Officer to discuss the matter.

Monitoring of Project Progress

Regular Progress Reports

As part of the process of funding under BHIS 2023, the Local Authority is required to carry out physical site visits, where possible and appropriate, during the course of the project, and are required to update the Department at regular intervals on the progress of the projects. The Applicant is required to provide the Local Authority with relevant information on the works a project is receiving funding for, including completion of works, commencement, progress, and any changes that may occur during the calendar year.

Claiming Payment of Grant from Local Authority

Local authorities are responsible for payment of funds under the scheme to successful applicants. Once works have completed the applicant must contact the local authority to inform them of the completed works. The applicant must provide the Local Authority with the relevant documentation including copies of the final invoices, tax clearance cert for grants over €10,000 (if not already submitted), and details of number of days contractors and professional advisors have spent on the works. The completed works and submitted documents must be certified by the Local Authority as being in accordance with the terms of the grant before payment can be made to the applicant.

Local authorities later recoup funds from DHLGH.

A Guidance Note on Method Statements

The **Method Statement** is completed by the Conservation Professional and must describe the condition of the structure, and give details of how conservation/repair works will be carried out. This document does not need to be unduly long but it must be appropriate to the nature and scale of the proposed works, e.g. a Method Statement in relation to re-thatching will not require as much detail as one for structural or masonry repairs. It should not exceed **TEN A4** pages.

The Method Statement must include:

1. A concise description of the structure.
2. A description of the works proposed.
3. Impact statement and proposed mitigation measures (if applicable).
4. A cross reference of the Method Statement to the training plan, where relevant.

Conservation works must be designed, specified and overseen on site by an appropriately qualified and experienced building conservation professional(s) who will be required to confirm on completion that works have been carried out to a satisfactory standard and in accordance with good conservation practice. The building professional should have **conservation accreditation from a relevant professional body or a demonstrable competence** in the relevant area of building conservation.

Where the specific expertise lies with a practitioner, e.g. a thatcher or stone mason, they may be considered to fulfil the role of the conservation building professional for a particular project

For additional details on method statements, please consult the Built Heritage Investment Scheme Circular, available on all Local Authority websites.

Contact Details

For further information regarding this scheme, please contact the **Architectural Conservation or Planning Office of your Local Authority** or **Built Heritage Policy Unit, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage**, Custom House, Dublin 1, D01 W6X0 or email BHIS@housing.gov.ie.

Grant Terms & Conditions

Please note grant-approved works must meet all statutory requirements, including planning permission and all applications are subject to FOI. For a full list of terms and conditions, please consult the Built Heritage Investment Scheme Circular, available on all Local Authority websites.



Thatched House, Galross, Shannon Harbour, Co Offaly – funded under BHIS 2021

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