

## Press release

---

# New pilot scheme offers grants to ready vacant farmhouses for refurbishment

From [Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage \(/en/organisation/department-of-housing-local-government-and-heritage/\)](/en/organisation/department-of-housing-local-government-and-heritage/).

Published on 14 June 2023

Last updated on 15 June 2023

The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage is introducing a new pilot scheme to provide grants for expert conservation advice to owners of vacant farmhouses in private ownership who are availing of and/or considering the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant.

The Conservation Advice Grant Scheme for Vacant Traditional Farmhouses will provide grants of up to €7,500 (ex VAT) to cover the cost of having a conservation expert with proven and appropriate expertise visit a property, conduct a survey, and compile tailored conservation advice for the property owner.

This expert advice will include a report which outlines the condition of a building and suggests conservation repairs and improvements which would improve the building and enhance its character, energy efficiency, integrity, and amenity.

---

## Buildings that qualify

Traditional (also known as ‘vernacular’) farmhouses are a key part of our rural landscape and shared heritage. Sometimes described as ‘cottages’, these buildings generally comprise old houses constructed using traditional techniques and locally available materials such as thatch, stone, slate, earth, wattle, and timber. Later on, corrugated iron, despite its imported, industrial origin, was also used.

The new scheme will provide access to expert assistance for vernacular farmhouse owners considering availing of the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant, which provides funding under the Croí Cónaithe (Towns) Fund for the refurbishment of vacant and derelict homes in both rural and urban areas or properties that have previously not been in residential use.

The Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant provides a grant of up to €50,000 to renovate a vacant property. It can be used in conjunction with the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) grants to help improve the energy efficiency of a home provided works are eligible.

Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Darragh O’Brien, said:

“The Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant has proved very popular with more than 1,500 applications received. We have recently announced an expanded grant for off shore islands and I am delighted to launch this new pilot which further emphasises our desire to tackle vacancy and dereliction. Traditional farmhouse buildings present unique challenges when it comes to refurbishment and this new pilot scheme will help remove some of these obstacles by allowing owners to obtain the expert advice needed to restore these structures and bring them back into use. These traditional farmhouse buildings have the potential to become homes and this scheme can help make that happen.”

Minister of State for Heritage and Electoral Reform, Malcolm Noonan, said:

“I welcome the launch of this new pilot scheme, not only because it will provide an additional source of support to help bring more vacant properties back into use, but because it will do so in a way that respects our national heritage by allowing owners to get the expert advice needed to breathe new life into these traditional buildings which form such a distinctive part of our rural landscape.”

Those interested in availing of the scheme can apply through the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage website:

[Pilot Conservation Advice Grant Scheme for Vacant Traditional Farmhouses \(/en/service/c8cba-pilot-conservation-advice-grant-scheme-for-vacant-traditional-farmhouses/\)](/en/service/c8cba-pilot-conservation-advice-grant-scheme-for-vacant-traditional-farmhouses/)

---

## Notes

Information on the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant can be found on the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage website:

[Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant \(/en/service/f8f1b-vacant-property-refurbishment-grant/\)](/en/service/f8f1b-vacant-property-refurbishment-grant/)

This pilot scheme may be of particular interest to residents of offshore islands where many such farmhouse structures often exist. The government's strategic plan for Ireland's offshore islands which was launched last week offers additional island-specific grant supports under the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant (Croí Cónaithe) to encourage utilisation of existing properties for the provision of long-term residential accommodation:

[Our Living Islands. \(https://www.gov.ie/en/policy-information/a7188-our-living-islands/\)](https://www.gov.ie/en/policy-information/a7188-our-living-islands/)

## Part of

Policies

[Housing \(/en/policy/aa076a-housing/\)](/en/policy/aa076a-housing/).

**BETA**

This is a prototype - your feedback will help us to improve it.

**Help us improve gov.ie**

[Leave feedback](#)

## Departments and publications

[Circulars \(/en/circulars/\)](/en/circulars/).

[Consultations \(/en/consultations/\)](/en/consultations/).

[Directory \(/en/directory/\)](/en/directory/).

[Policies \(/en/policies/\)](/en/policies/).

[Publications \(/en/publications/\)](/en/publications/).

## About gov.ie

[About gov.ie \(/en/help/about-govie/\)](/en/help/about-govie/).

[Accessibility \(/en/help/accessibility/\)](/en/help/accessibility/).

[Privacy policy \(/en/help/privacy-policy/\)](/en/help/privacy-policy/).

[Who does what \(/en/help/e170a-who-does-what/\)](/en/help/e170a-who-does-what/).



**Rialtas na hÉireann**  
Government of Ireland

## Manage cookie preferences

[Manage preferences](#)