

Householder hardship grant eligibility - Floods December 2015

We will operate 2 schemes in relation to those domestic properties affected by the floods caused by December 2015 storms.

- The £500 grant compensation scheme is to help householders recover from the floods.
- The Council Tax Relief scheme recognises the longer term issues caused to residential properties by the flooding caused by December 2015 storms.

Eligibility

£500 hardship grant

Details of the scheme:

- The Flooding Incident that this scheme applies to is where domestic properties have been flooded as a result of December 2015 storms.
- The definition to be used for this scheme is from the National Flood Emergency Framework for England. Therefore the definition of flooded properties is :
Properties Flooded are those homes where it is considered that the property has been flooded internally i.e. water has entered the property:
 - Basements and below ground level floors are included
 - Garages are included if in the fabric of the building. Garages adjacent or separate from the main building are not included
- The definition of a **household** is where a family/ group of people live together in one property, in a bedsit or in a flat
- For households that fit within this definition a payment of £500 for each household will be authorised. Authorisations will be checked against a list of flooded properties that will be collated by the Revenues and Benefits Management Team.
- For flats e.g. upper floors that have not been flooded (see definition above) or not affected by flooding the household payment will not apply.
- For flooded properties which are rented, the payment is intended to be made to the tenant (household not individual) rather than the landlord. Other than HMOs, the tenant should be the Council Tax payer and so the tenant should receive the payment (whether automatic or not).
- For Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) a payment will be made to the each household affected (this is expected to be limited to those in ground floor or basement properties).

- Where flooded properties were empty (using the Council Tax definition) immediately prior to the flood incident these will be excluded from the scheme.
- Second Homes (empty by definition) are excluded from the scheme.
- For domestic properties, excluding Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO), where the property has been identified as flooded (see definition above) automatic payments will be made if there is information held on the Council Tax system and we have direct debit/ bank detail information. We will write to residents to confirm that an automatic payment is/has been made.
- Where a domestic property has been flooded but no bank details are held, we will complete a grant application form to obtain the relevant information. Once that information has been received, we will make the £500 payment.
- All claims against this scheme need to be made by 10th April 2016.

Payment of £500 grant

This will be either an electronic payment or a cheque payment to householders affected rather than a discount against Council Tax. The payment will be administered through the Council's Accounts Payable system and checks will be made against Council Tax records to ensure residency and eligibility.

Council Tax Relief

We will apply a 100% discount where applicable domestic properties have been flooded as a result of December 2015 storms. The discount will apply for a minimum of 3 months or while anyone is out of their home if longer up to a maximum of 6 months.

Definition of **Properties Flooded** will be as set out above in the £500 Recovery Scheme.

Occupied and Partly Occupied Properties

- We will apply a 100% discount for a 3 month period automatically where we already have details of properties flooded.
- The relief will apply to both occupied and partly occupied properties.

Unoccupied Properties

- A 100% Council Tax Discount will continue to apply to all properties that have been rendered uninhabitable by the December 2015 storms beyond the minimum 3 month period due to the flooding.
 - This relief will apply for the period the property remains unoccupied and uninhabitable up to a maximum of 6 months.

- It will cease on reoccupation or after 6 months whichever comes first.

Second Homes and Empty Properties

- Properties which were empty or Second Homes at the time of the flooding cannot normally claim the discount. However, discounts may be allowed in exceptional circumstances.

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