



Home Purchase Grants information sheet

Updated 2021

Aim of the Scheme

The aim of the scheme is to provide Housing Association tenants with a grant towards purchasing a property on the Open Market. Applicants will be required to contribute the remainder of the price through a mortgage and/or personal savings. This releases general needs properties back to the Housing Association for re-letting to homeless families and those on the Council Housing Register.

HomeBuy Schemes (Formerly known as Shared Ownership) and Elderly Persons' Dwellings are currently excluded.

What money is available under this scheme?

The council has secured a programme of a limited number of Grants of up to £60,000 per qualifying household. The amount of grant available to a successful and qualifying household will be dependent on income and savings/capital. This will be assessed by the Council.

Grants will only be made to those who could not otherwise have afforded their house purchase. The payment is subject to applicants being able to meet the "criteria" as laid down by the Council.

To qualify for the Grant, applicants will need to meet the following criteria:

1. To have been a tenant of a Housing Association property within Bracknell Forest for at least two years and be registered for a transfer. In the case of a joint application, both applicants must normally have been registered as tenants for at least two years. Where joint applicants have not been joint tenants for two years it may still be possible for the application to be considered, subject to the new property being bought in the joint names of all purchasers. All joint purchasers would be subject to all the criteria and conditions of this scheme.
2. To have had a clear rent and Council tax account for at least 6 months. This means that you must not have been in arrears for more than four weeks in any one period in the six months prior to your application.
3. To satisfy the Council of their financial circumstances Grants will only be made to those who could not otherwise have afforded their house purchase.
4. To provide evidence to the Council that they will be able to keep up the payments on the mortgage for the purchase of the chosen property without suffering any immediate hardship.
5. The mortgage must be a repayment mortgage.
6. The price of the property being purchased must not exceed the purchase levels in the table below. It must be either a "Freehold" purchase, or a "Leasehold" with a

minimum of 21 years unexpired. (This may depend on the Mortgage Lender's regulations). It is not possible to purchase a caravan or mobile home under this scheme.

Property Type Maximum Purchase Level

1 bed flat £200,000
2 bed flat £220,000
2 bed house £330,000
3 bed house £350,000
4 bed house £400,000

NB: We will calculate your mortgage potential on 2.7 x Joint Income or 3.5 x Single Income

7. The dwelling to be purchased can be anywhere within Great Britain but will exclude property overseas.
8. To give an undertaking (a legally binding promise in writing) that the property currently occupied will be vacated and left in a clean and tidy condition on the date of completion. The Grant will be given subject to this promise being kept.

Is the grant repayable?

NO – Subject to the applicant living in the property for 5 years. However, if the property is sold within the first 5 years the grant will be repaid on a sliding scale. £48,000 in year 1 to £12,000 in year 5, (eg this is based on the maximum grant of £60,000).

NB: The grant is subject to the applicant not returning to the Council for re-housing at any future date. Should for any unforeseen circumstances an applicant gets into difficulties they should seek advice immediately.

How will the grant be paid?

Arrangements will be made for the grant to be paid as follows:

1. Once the offer of a grant has been made, it is valid for 3 months up to exchange and completion of contracts, after which time an extension may be allowed subject to negotiation, provided the matter is finalised before the end of the financial year.
2. Grants will be released to Solicitors acting for tenants on the completion date of the sale, following vacation of the property. In exceptional circumstances some of the grant may be released on exchange of contracts.

PLEASE NOTE: There is a risk of court proceedings for recovery if any information is subsequently found to be inaccurate.

How to apply

An application form is attached, and further details are available from:

Should you wish to discuss the matter further, please contact Housing Register Team on 01344 352045 or email housing.register@bracknell-forest.gov.uk