

HUG2 Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Home Upgrade Grant (HUG 2)?

Wiltshire Council has been successful in securing funding from the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero called the Home Upgrade Grant (HUG 2). HUG 2 is a grant to assist Local Authorities with the installation of energy efficiency measures to owner occupied homes. The scheme targets low-income households which do not have gas central heating and have an energy performance certificate rating of D or below. The funding is for the improvement of 175 homes, and works must be completed by March 2025.

Am I eligible?

The grant eligibility criteria has been set by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ).

In summary, the criteria for a household to be eligible for HUG2 is:

- your property is within Wiltshire Council area
- your property is not connected to the mains gas grid
- you own and live in the property
- you have an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) between bands D-G.
- you have a household income of £36,000 a year or less. **This is the total income for all adults over 18 years of age living in the property.**

Household financial criteria

Applications must prove one of the following:-

- A household occupant is in receipt of means-tested benefits.
Means-tested benefits that auto-qualify a household's financial eligibility:-
 - ◆ Universal Credit Council Tax Reduction/Support Benefit (not Single Occupancy or other discount).
 - ◆ Income Related Employment & Support Allowance.
 - ◆ Income-Based Jobseeker's Allowance.
 - ◆ Income Support.
 - ◆ Housing Benefit.
 - ◆ Pension Credit.
 - ◆ Winter Fuel Payment or Cold Weather Payment.
 - ◆ Child Tax Credits.
 - ◆ Working Tax Credits
- A gross annual household income of £36,000 or less, before tax/NI deductions. Benefit payments, salaries, self-employed income, lodger rent payments, dividends, shares, and investments are all income that counts towards the threshold and must be declared accurately.
Where lodgers are present, rent paid is counted towards household income and the lodger must be listed on the application, but income they receive is not counted. A rental agreement must be provided.
Other discounted adults whose income does not count include: Full time university students. Adult dependents residing in a property for care. Those in prison. Discounted adults must still be listed on the income declaration and evidence provided (e.g., student enrolment/finance letter, carer's allowance, HMP notice).
- Referral from a charity or public service (e.g. health/social care) where low-income status has already been determined by these services.

- [reside within an automatically eligible postcode area \(IMD income decile 1-3\)](#)

What evidence documents might customers be required to provide?

- Application form completed in full.
- Evidence of income/benefits declared in the application form to evidence eligibility. (*If residing in an auto-eligible postcode area, this will not be required.*)
 - a) To qualify with means-tested benefits, receipt is evidenced by a valid, recent means-tested benefits letter/certificate. Online PDFs from official sources can be accepted provided they are shown in full and include the recipient's name, address, and date.
 - b) To qualify under the income threshold of £36,000 gross annual income, the following must be provided where applicable:
 - o 3 months of PAYE slips (more may be requested where pay is variable)
 - o State pension letter and P60 pension statement(s)
 - o Benefits certificate(s)
 - o SA302 & Tax Overview (for self-employed income)
 - o Rental agreement showing lodger payments
 - o Dividends/investments statementWe may require bank statements where the above cannot be provided or nil income is declared
- Proof of Address.
- Homeowner Retrofit Agreement; this gives the council consent to place works orders with the retrofit contractor.

For sole occupiers: applications must be supported by a Council Tax Bill for 2023-24 as Proof of Address. Utility bills can be used as proof of address where there is more than one adult residing in the property, or the property is situated in an auto-eligible postcode area.

Land registry information must also match the application to prove owner-occupier status. By signing the customer commitment form, the customer is stating they are the named owner of the property and consent to a land registry check at any stage.

Wiltshire Council will confirm the customer's permission to pass their details on to the contractor.

I am a private sector tenant; can I apply for this grant?

Yes, if you meet the eligibility criteria. You will need your landlord's permission for any work to be carried out and they must agree to contribute one third towards the cost of works.

I am a private sector landlord; can I apply for this grant?

Yes, however you must have someone living in your house who meets the eligibility criteria and we would need to see evidence of your tenant's income/benefits. Please Note: Landlords with a portfolio of more than four houses will not be eligible.

I have a shared ownership property; can I apply for this grant?

Shared ownership properties where the scheme owner is liable for building upgrades will follow the same process as a private landlord, including financial contribution amounts

I own a park home; can I apply for this grant?

Yes, park homes are eligible.

What do I do if my property does not have an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) or it is out of date?

If the property does not have a valid EPC, Wiltshire Council will arrange for this to be completed during the Retrofit Assessment. The property will only be referred for a Retrofit Assessment once financial eligibility has been fully verified.

Installed measures should improve Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs) to a band C or above or D for those homes which start as an EPC band F-G.

The energy efficiency measures to be installed must be within the cost cap available from funding.

What types of energy efficiency improvements are available?

If you're eligible, Wiltshire Council will arrange a home survey to see how your home could be made more energy efficient. After the survey, suitable energy efficiency improvements will be suggested, and you will be advised on how these measures will affect your bills and make your home more comfortable. Improvements will focus on improving the building first to reduce heat loss and heat demand.

These improvements may include:

- Wall and loft insulation
- Solar PV
- Air source heat pumps

Eligible households can receive funding towards the cost of Solar Photovoltaics (PV), Solar Thermal (Hot Water) systems, and Air Source Heat Pumps, provided that the property has appropriate levels of insulation and ventilation. If the required levels of insulation and ventilation do not exist, funding will first be used to insulate and ventilate the home. This is mandatory for all funding applications to meet the conditions of the grant.

The viability of air source heat pumps will be considered following survey as to whether it is an appropriate replacement for the current heating system.

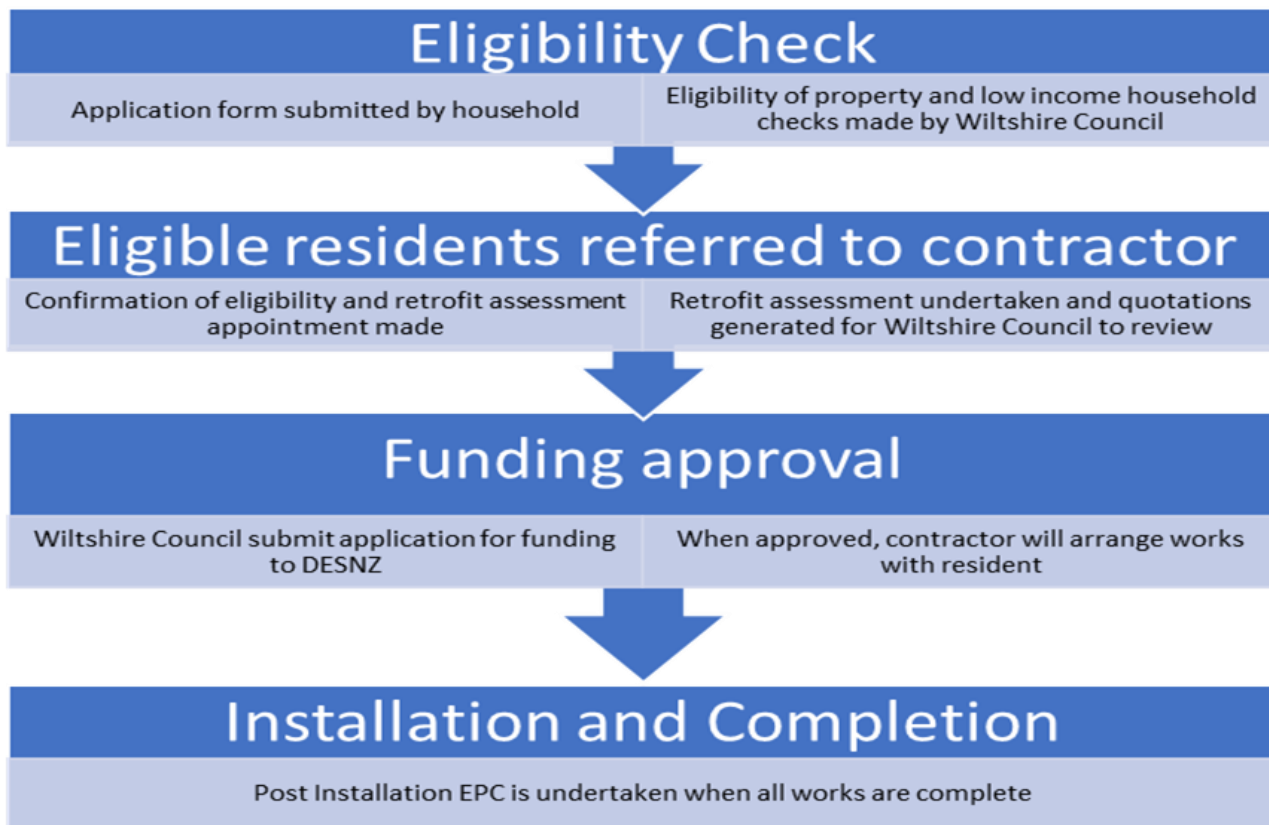
Wiltshire Council will organise and pay for the survey and any improvement work they've agreed with you. You will not need to pay for it. You can choose if you want to take up the suggested improvements or not.

(Please Note: If a property has received any funded measures under the preceding HUG1 phase, measures that can be funded under HUG2 will be restricted)

How will energy efficiency measures be installed?

The Council is working with a specialist retrofit installer who will arrange the survey of your home, confirm your eligibility, make recommendations for energy efficiency installations, and install the improvements. They will also provide aftercare and advice. They will not sell you any services and will never ask you for bank details.

What is the process?



How do I apply?

HUG2 funding is now open to private tenants, landlords and homeowners and will be available until March 2025.

Apply online - [Apply for help to improve a home with no gas boiler \(Home Upgrade Grant\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/apply-for-help-to-improve-a-home-with-no-gas-boiler) or, if you don't have access to a computer to go online, by calling the Home Upgrade Grant Helpline on 0800 098 7950 and an advisor can complete the form on your behalf.

How do I provide the relevant documents that may be needed?

Once an application is received, the team will advise which documents are required to support the application. You can send these to us by email, post or they can be brought into a Wiltshire Council hub and we will scan the documents and give the originals back to you.

I don't have use of a computer to go online, how would I provide any information required?

If you want to speak to an adviser, call our Home Upgrade Grant helpline on 0800 098 7950, which is open from Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm (except bank holidays) and Saturday from 9am to 12pm.

What if I don't meet the eligibility criteria?

There are other avenues to receive support with heating costs and energy efficiency. Here is a list of current grant and funding for home energy efficiency improvements :-

[Grants & funding - Centre for Sustainable Energy \(cse.org.uk\)](https://www.cse.org.uk). or call on 0800 038 5722

If you are looking for impartial and independent advice to help reduce your energy bills see [Energy advice for your home - Energy Saving Trust](https://www.energy-saving-trust.org)

Where can I find further information? If you have any further questions about HUG2 you can contact Wiltshire HUG2 team: HUG2@wiltshire.gov.uk