

HOW IS THE MEANS TEST CALCULATED?

... by following these four steps

(1) YOUR AVERAGE WEEKLY INCOME IS CALCULATED

This is done by:

Looking at your earnings over the past twelve months including interest on savings of more than £6,000.

and deducting:

Income Tax, National Insurance, Pension Payments and eligible child-care costs.

(but no account is taken of mortgage payments for buying your home)

(2) PERSONAL ALLOWANCES ARE SUBTRACTED FROM YOUR INCOME

This is similar to the principal of Housing Benefit where fixed allowances are made for your personal circumstances including:

- Number of dependant children
- Special disabilities
- Retired persons
- Single parents etc

(3) THE AMOUNT WHICH IS LEFT IS USED TO ESTIMATE THE MAXIMUM THAT THE GOVERNMENT SAYS YOU CAN BORROW

The proportion of your income in excess of your personal allowances is used to calculate the maximum loan you could, in theory borrow to finance the works. You would be expected to obtain this loan through the private sector

(4) AMOUNT OF LOAN AVAILABLE

The amount you are considered to be able to afford is then deducted from the cost of the eligible works and what is left will be the amount of Council loan you are entitled to subject to the loan limit of £15,000

HEALTHY HOMES LOAN

FOR OWNER OCCUPIERS



You can contact us by telephone on
Stroud 754478

or write to us at:
**Environmental Health Service
Stroud District Council
Ebley Mill, Ebley Wharf, Stroud GL5 4UB**

E-mail:
environmental.health@stroud.gov.uk

Website:
www.stroud.gov.uk



**STROUD
DISTRICT
COUNCIL**

**ENVIRONMENTAL
HEALTH SERVICE
EBLEY MILL
EBLEY WHARF
STROUD
GLOS. GL5 4UB**

HEALTHY HOMES LOAN FOR OWNER-OCCUPIERS

If you are an owner occupier you may be entitled to a Healthy Homes Loan (subject to qualification under the Means Test) of up to £15,000 for essential repairs to your home.

Can I apply?

You can apply for a Healthy Homes Loan if:

- ✓ You are over 18 years of age
- ✓ Your property is in Council Tax bands A, B, C or D and category 1 hazards exist (see below).
- ✓ You have current building insurance

Loans are **NOT** available if:

- ✗ Your property is a second home or holiday cottage
- ✗ Your property was built or converted less than ten years ago
- ✗ You want to carry out works that are not considered to be essential
- ✗ Your property is under-occupied.
- ✗ Works needed are less than £500.

What sort of works are eligible under the Healthy Homes Loan?

Any works the Council believe are necessary to reduce defects in your home that threaten the health and safety of the occupants. For example, if your property suffers from persistent condensation, penetrating damp or is hard to heat. Such defects are termed Category 1 Hazards (under the Housing Health & Safety Rating system). There are 29 categories of hazard, please see the HHSRS leaflet for more information.

All eligible works will be agreed with you prior to your application and confirmed in writing by the council. The loans are only available for work to your main dwelling house, not for garages, outbuildings or conservatories.

During times of limited resources, priority will be given to applicants over 60 years and those living in homes in extreme disrepair.

Will I have to pay anything towards the cost of the works?

A means test will normally be required to assess your income and savings. The means test is applied to ensure that loans are paid to people who would not be able to afford the cost of the works themselves.

This leaflet gives you an idea of the principles which are involved (see overleaf). BUT it will not show you how to calculate the loan you might receive.

If you would like more detailed information please ask us to give you an estimate of your likely contribution under the means test. This will be based on your particular case, but it is important to remember that the final figure cannot be decided until you make a full application.

If you qualify for Income Support, Income Based Job Seekers Allowance, Income Based Employment and Support Allowance, Pension Guarantee Credit, Council Tax Benefit or Working/Child Tax Credits (with income less

than £15,050) it is assumed that you cannot afford the cost and the loan should pay for all of the eligible work up to a maximum of £15,000.

Will I have to repay the loan?

When a property is sold or transferred, or you don't live there the loan must be repaid in full.

How can I apply?

If you think you may qualify for the loan, please complete a Preliminary Assessment Form available from the Housing Renewal Team at the Council Offices at the address overleaf or telephone 01453 754478 for further information.

What happens if the property is in joint ownership?

In these cases, all parties need to apply for the loan and the loan application will be assessed jointly.

Are there any other checks before I take out the loan?

Credit references may be taken up. Stroud District Council reserves the right to refuse applications from people with a record of bad debt.

