



## AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

ST ERNAN'S, RATHNEW, WICKLOW

### AFFORDABLE HOUSING APPLICATION: ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA & FAQ

**Applications portal will open between 14<sup>th</sup> November 2024 @ 12 noon until the 13<sup>th</sup> December 2024.**

**Applications must be made online only. In line with the Scheme of Priority, applications will be assessed on a First Come, First Served basis.**

*This FAQ document will be updated on a regular basis.*

The following document sets out information on the eligibility criteria, shared equity, application process and required documentation and addresses frequently asked questions for an Affordable Housing residential development at St. Ernan's, Rathnew, Co. Wicklow, in line with the Affordable Housing Act 2021, please see link below for further information on the Act.

[Affordable Housing Act 2021 – No. 25 of 2021 – Houses of the Oireachtas](#)

Wicklow County Council has an arrangement in place with Rathnew SPV Limited and O'Gorman Properties for the sale of 2 affordable homes at St Ernan's, Rathnew to eligible affordable housing applicants nominated by the Council.



There is one house type available within the affordable housing development (see table below)

| No. units | of | Beds          | Type  | Market Value | Minimum House Purchase Price |
|-----------|----|---------------|-------|--------------|------------------------------|
| 2         |    | 3 Bed Terrace | House | €330,000     | €280,000                     |

- Section 1: Eligibility
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- Section 3: Shared Equity
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All criteria must be met and documentation received in-order for applications to be processed.

## SECTION 1: ELIGIBILITY

In order to be eligible to apply for Affordable Housing in St Earnan's, Rathnew, Co. Wicklow applicants must satisfy the following criteria:

- Be classified as a first-time buyer (please see note below) or qualify under the fresh start principle and do not own or have legal interest in a dwelling
- Have the right to reside indefinitely in Ireland. Intending purchasers from a member state of the EU/European Economic Area can apply for an affordable home, provided they are living and working in Ireland.
- The affordable home must be the household's normal place of residence.
- Where intending purchasers are not an Irish/EU/EEA citizen, they must have indefinite leave to remain in the State.
- Gross income for the preceding 12 months should be below the max income for each property given in Table 1 below:



Table 1:

| No. of Units | Beds          | Type  | Max Household Income calculated. |
|--------------|---------------|-------|----------------------------------|
| 2            | 3 Bed Terrace | House | €70,538                          |

**Note:** Under the Scheme of Priority for Affordable Dwelling Purchase Arrangements, as adopted by Wicklow County Council, where the number of eligible applicants exceeds the number of affordable dwellings for which applications are made, applications will be prioritised in accordance with Wicklow County Council's Scheme of Priority.

### **First Time Buyer Exception (\*\*)**

First Time Buyer Exceptions are documented in the Affordable Housing Act 2021, which does allow particular categories of exceptions to the First-Time Buyer eligibility criteria, to include circumstances of divorce or separation, personal insolvency or bankruptcy and others, subject to terms and conditions. For more information on the Fresh Start Principle, please see the affordable homes website [www.affordablehomes.ie](http://www.affordablehomes.ie)

In addition to the above eligibility criteria, a Scheme of Priority, which applies to the affordable units in the St Ernan's Rathnew, Co. Wicklow was approved by the Elected Members of Wicklow Council on 25<sup>TH</sup> August 2022. The purpose of the Scheme of Priority - outlines a methodology to be applied to determine the order of priority accorded to eligible households where the demand for such arrangements exceeds the dwellings or resources available. The main points are as follows:

- The Property must be suited to the applicant household's needs.

The Initial 70% of confirmed eligible applicants:



- The ranking mechanism will be on a First come first served basis, based on date & time of application.

The balance of 30% of confirmed eligible applicants:

- Priority to be given to eligible households whose current address as given in the application form is within the County of Wicklow the relevant affordable scheme & ranked on a First Come First Served basis.

## SECTION 2: AVAILABLE HOUSES AND PRICING

### What type of property is available for purchase in this scheme?

The homes that are being made available for purchase in this affordable housing scheme are as follows (table 2)

Table 2

| House Type    | No. of Units | Market Value | Min. Purchase Price (€) | Max Household Income Limit (€) |
|---------------|--------------|--------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 3 Bed Terrace | 2            | €330,000     | €280,000                | €70,538                        |

### When will the properties be available?

The development at St Ernan's, Rathnew, Co. Wicklow is nearing completion.

### What is the market value of the properties?

The market value of an affordable home is the price for which the affordable home might reasonably be expected to achieve on the open market. The initial market valuation of the dwelling to calculate the equity share is carried out by the Wicklow County Council. For subsequent valuations of the property, a valuation mechanism will be set out in the Affordable Dwelling Purchase Arrangement. A valuation will be required when a redemption payment is being made by the purchaser.

Over time, if the value of the affordable home increases, the amount owed on the value of the equity share will increase in line with the prevailing market value.

The market value of the properties is as follows;

- 3 three bedroom dwellings €330,000



## **What is the affordable purchase price of these properties?**

The affordable purchase price for the properties will be discounted on the market value and based on the specific purchasing capacity of eligible applicants. The Council will provide an “Affordable Dwelling Contribution” to reduce the purchase price payable now by successful applicants.

Discounts ranging from a minimum of 10% of the market value to a maximum of 20% of market value will be available depending on successful applicants’ income, deposit (which can include support from the Help to Buy scheme) and savings, with price ranges as follows:

| <b>Property type</b> | <b>Minimum Affordable Purchase Price</b> | <b>Maximum Affordable Purchase Price</b> |
|----------------------|--|--|
| 3 Bed Terrace        | €280,000                                 | €313,500                                 |

Applicants must apply for the **maximum mortgage** available to them. This will determine the equity percentage Wicklow County Council cover and the property type they qualify for.

**Please note Wicklow County Council are unable to sell the dwelling at a price less than the minimum affordable purchase price.**

## **SECTION 3: SHARED EQUITY**

As outlined in the Affordable Housing Act 2021, Part 2, all purchasers will sign up to an ‘Affordable Dwelling Purchase Agreement’ with Wicklow County Council. Wicklow County Council will retain an ‘Equity Share’ in the property, equal to: ‘The difference between the open market value of the dwelling and the Purchase Price paid by successful applicants’ expressed as a percentage of the Open Market Value of the dwelling’

As outlined in Section 16 of the Affordable Housing act 2021, Wicklow County Council may not seek realisation of this Equity Share for a 40-year period (with exception where a breach of the agreement occurs e.g. you sell the property). However, successful affordable purchasers can choose to redeem or purchase the Equity Share in the dwelling at any time by means of one or a series of payments to Wicklow County Council. The minimum amount of redemption payment is €10,000.



Note: If you sell the property, the value of the percentage Equity Share must be repaid in full at the time of sale.

### **How is purchasing capacity calculated?**

The purchasing capacity of applicants will be calculated as the combined total of:

- Maximum mortgage capacity, i.e., 4 times gross household income (or if you have mortgage approval for a different amount), plus,
- A minimum deposit of 10% of the affordable purchase price, plus,
- Relevant savings, i.e., any savings in excess of the combined sum of the required deposit amount plus €30,000.
- This will be calculable on a Affordable Housing Calculator.

## **SECTION 4: APPLICATION PROCESS & DOCUMENTATION**

The application process will be via an online platform, which will be hosted on the website closer to the launch date.

There will be a number of pages to this application and documentation will be required to be upload.

### **1: Property Type**

You will need to choose the property type(s) that best matches your accommodation needs. In this case there is only one property type.

### **2: You & Your Household**

This tab will contain the specifics of the principal applicant, name, date of birth, PPS number, marital status, contact telephone number, email, current address & Eircode.

There will also be details to be completed for a joint applicant, if applicable.



Please note if you are married, in a civil partnership or in a committed relationship with a partner who will reside in the affordable dwelling a joint application must be submitted you will be asked to do so and resubmit if not done in the first instance.

### **3: Eligibility**

You are required to provide your Nationality details here & specify if you are applying as a First Time Buyer or under the Fresh Start Principle.

All those on the application must have the right to reside in Ireland.

### **4: Dependants**

Details of all dependants should be completed here. Your partner if they are to reside in the dwelling with you is not a dependant.

### **5: Employment Status**

Details of employment are required here.

Please note the Employer Registration Number must be completed.

### **6: Financial History**

Details of any savings & proof of your income is detailed here.

Please see below for further details on the type of acceptable documentation for proof of income.

### **7: Declarations**

You will need to agree to our declarations and confirm you have read & understand our Data Privacy notice.

### **Click to Submit**

You must submit your application.

Do not close this page without submitting your application as you will lose your application. There is no facility to save & return at a later stage.

### **REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION:**

You will be required to upload documentation under TAB(s) as follows:



## **PROOF OF INCOME**

- If EMPLOYED, please provide your most recent Employment Detail Summary (previously known as P60) which is available via [www.revenue.ie/MyAccount](http://www.revenue.ie/MyAccount) and you will need to supply a salary certificate signed and stamped by your Employer. Payslips are NOT acceptable evidence.
- If SELF EMPLOYED, please upload Accountants Report/Audited Accounts (2 Years Required), Current Tax Balancing Statement & Current Preliminary Revenue Tax Payment Receipt.
- If NOT EMPLOYED upload Statement of total benefits received from social welfare which can be requested via email from your local social welfare office

## **FINANCING THE PURCHASE**

- A mortgage letter of approval in principle or
- Proof of savings in the form of a current bank statement dated within the last 6 months.

## **PROOF OF CITIZENSHIP**

- Passport or Birth Certificate

If you upload a Birth Certificate as proof, you will also need to upload photographic ID such as valid passport, EU Identity Card, EU/EEA Driving Licence (must contain a photo) for each applicant.

## **PROOF OF RIGHT TO RESIDE IN IRELAND (if applicable)**

For non-EU/EEA applicants:

- Please submit a copy of your Irish Resident Permit (IRP or GNI Stamp 4) card, indicating which stamp/permissions you have.





- Single/joint applications where both applicant(s) are Non-EEA/EU, applicants must be legally resident in Ireland for a period of 5 years; or have leave to remain extending to potentially permit 5 years reckonable residence; or have indefinite leave to remain in the State.
- An application from a non-EEA/EU national, who is a spouse or civil partner of the EU /EEA national, may be considered as part of a joint application for that household, provided they have a valid residence card or permanent residence card with a valid Stamp 4EUFam.
- UK citizens will be regarded as being legally resident in Ireland. (This accords with the Common Travel Area requirements).

## **PROOF OF FIRST TIME BUYER STATUS/FRESH START PRINCIPLE**

- **First time Buyer** - Please upload confirmation from Revenue that your Help to Buy application has been accepted or if not applying for help to buy a sworn affidavit from a Solicitor confirming you have never owned a property in Ireland or any other state. If you are applying as joint applicants both parties must be first time buyers.
- **Fresh Start Principle** - if you have previously built or purchased a home but are divorced/separated or left a committed relationship and no longer have a vested interest in the property you must submit a Court Decree or Solicitors letter confirming same or if you have previously purchased or built a home but it has been divested through insolvency or bankruptcy proceedings proof of same must be provided. e.g. Solicitors letter confirming the process has been completed and applicants status on the bankruptcy register and confirming that applicant has no interest in said property  
Applicant who's dwelling because of its size, is not suited to the current needs of their household, please provide an up to date valuation of your current property

## **PROOF OF RESIDENCY (if applicable)**

- To qualify under the 30% residency Rule you must provide proof that you have resided in the administrative area for a minimum of 5 years. You must provide at least one document per year for each of the 5 years e.g. series of utility bills. Bank or Credit Union Statements. They must state your name, address, date and year clearly marked.

## **SECTION 5: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

**Q: Am I eligible if I am not a first-time buyer?**



**A:** No, with the exception of certain exemptions such as under the Fresh Start Principle which are set out in the Affordable Housing Act 2021, which does allow particular categories of exceptions to the First-Time Buyer eligibility criteria, to include circumstances of divorce or separation, personal insolvency or bankruptcy, subject to terms and conditions.

**Q: What documentation is needed to support my application?**

**A:** Please see above

**Q: How do I apply for the scheme?**

**A:** Applications and supporting documents will be accepted through an online application system. The system will allow for input of all relevant data and uploading of all supporting documentation. Details of the online application portal will be released in print media and on the Wicklow County Council website, [www.wicklow.ie](http://www.wicklow.ie) All queries on your application will be sent through the portal so it is important you ensure the contact details e.g. email address you supply are correct. Please respond to all queries even if you feel it does not apply to you.

**Q: What type of property is available & prices?**

**A:**

| No. of Units | Beds  | Type    | House Price/<br>Open Market<br>Value | Minimum<br>House Price |
|--------------|-------|---------|--------------------------------------|------------------------|
| 2            | 3 Bed | Terrace | €330,000                             | €280,000               |

**Q: Where can I view the various House Plans?**

**A:** There is a link to the Developers website on our own page which has house plans.

**Q: Will I be able to select which house I want?**

**A:** Houses will be distributed by lot to successful applicants.

**Q: Will there be a management company in charge of this property?**

**A:** Yes details upon request.

**Q: How much deposit do I need?**

**A:** Financial institutions require that a minimum 10% deposit must be raised from your own resources. This 10% is of the purchase price you are able to pay for the property.



Example: A property with a market price of €243,000 you will need a deposit of at least €24,300.

The Help to Buy Scheme (HTB) operated by The Revenue Commissioners can be utilised towards this deposit amount where the applicant does not have savings to account for same. If you are eligible the Help to Buy Scheme can provide for 10% of purchase price up to €30,000. Please check [revenue.ie](http://revenue.ie) to see if you are eligible.

**Q: How does the Help to Buy Scheme impact on the amount of the Loan.**

A: Please refer to the qualifying criteria defined by the Revenue Commissioners for eligibility for the scheme. ([www.revenue.ie](http://www.revenue.ie))

**Q: Do I need to apply in sole or joint names?**

A: Where a person is married, in a civil partnership or in a committed relationship with a partner with whom he or she intends to reside in the affordable dwelling, he or she may not apply to purchase an affordable dwelling under an affordable dwelling purchase arrangement on his or her own but should make any such application together with his or her spouse, civil partner or partner, as the case may be.

**Q. If not an Irish National, how do I prove residency in Ireland?**

A. Applicants need to be an Irish/EU/EEA citizen or have indefinite leave to remain in the state. There is no time limit on residency once that is the case. In the absence of same, a letter of confirmation from the Department of Justice – through either the Immigration Service and/or the Garda National Immigration Bureau would be required to confirm your residency status. All those on the application must have the right to reside in Ireland.

**Q: If I am approved for the scheme, where am I allowed to source a loan?**

A: Finance can be secured from any one of a number of financial institutions. However, you should ensure the financial institution is aware of and accepts the shared equity agreement.

**Q: How do I provide evidence of the ability to fund the purchase?**

A: A Mortgage letter of approval in principle from a Bank / Building Society / Local Authority stating the maximum mortgage available to applicants, and Proof of savings and deposit in the form of a current bank statement on headed paper dated within the last 6 months. (If applicable, please include proof of Help-to-Buy).



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**Q: How is a decision made on my application?**

A: The decision on your application is made by Wicklow County Council in accordance with the eligibility criteria set out in section 1 of this document and a Scheme of Priority adopted by Wicklow County Council on 25th August 2022.

**Q. How long before I am notified that my application is successful?**

A. It is intended applicants will be notified in January 2025.

**Q: I have a query that is not answered in this document, who can I contact?**

A: For any queries that you are unable to find an answer to, please email your query to [affordablehousing@wicklowcoco.ie](mailto:affordablehousing@wicklowcoco.ie)