Warmth and Wellbeing Scheme
Warmth and Wellbeing Scheme

The Warmth and Wellbeing Scheme aims to make homes warmer and healthier to live in. It does this by providing extensive energy efficiency upgrades to the homes of those in energy poverty who are living with chronic respiratory conditions\(^1\).

This initiative is being led by the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment (DCCAE), in conjunction with the Department of Health and the Health Service Executive (HSE).

This scheme is administered by the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) on behalf of DCCAE, in association with the HSE. This scheme is a pilot scheme established initially for a three-year period and will be subject to review.

---

\(^1\) Such as Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease and asthma
Benefits to the homeowner

The scheme carries out home energy upgrades delivered through SEAI’s Better Energy Warmer Homes appointed contractors. Works include:

- Standard attic insulation and appropriate ventilation;
- Wall insulation: cavity, dry lining and / or external with appropriate ventilation;
- Boiler replacement as appropriate (oil or gas);
- Draught proofing as appropriate;
- Other energy efficiency related upgrades where recommended.

The aim of the scheme is to improve the living conditions of people with chronic respiratory conditions. It also aims to reduce the requirement of these citizens to attend hospital especially during the winter months when the weather is coldest. The measures provided should improve the overall living environment and ensure that homeowners experience additional comfort levels in their home during the coldest winter periods.

Who is eligible for the scheme?

As a pilot scheme eligibility for the scheme is limited. To receive support the following criteria must be met:

- The applicant is aged 0-12 inclusive\(^2\) or aged 55 and over;
- The applicant must be habitually resident in the house where the works will be carried out;
- A member of the household must be in receipt of fuel allowance or the one parent family payment in respect of the child applying;
- The applicant must be living with a chronic respiratory disease and be referred to the programme by a HSE official;
- The applicant must reside within the area designated for the pilot scheme, namely Dublin 8, 10, 12, 22 and 24;
- The home must be owner-occupied or rented from a local authority/approved housing association.

\(^2\) Up to day before 13th birthday
Clinical Eligibility Criteria

For Adults
Adults aged >55yrs with chronic respiratory disease such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, asthma, bronchiectasis, pulmonary fibrosis.

For Children
Children aged 0-12 inclusive with chronic (lower) respiratory disease under the ongoing care of Paediatric Respiratory Physician for conditions such as:

- Congenital malformation of airways including primary ciliary dyskinesia
- Chronic lung disease of prematurity
- Chronic interstitial lung conditions (eg post chemotherapy etc)
- Bronchiectasis
- Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease
- Chronic respiratory failure
- Specified disease of bronchial tree including tracheobronchial malacia/malformation
- Cystic fibrosis
- Conditions for which child is on invasive home ventilation

OR

Children aged >2yrs with doctor-diagnosed asthma currently on daily preventer medication (listed below), continuously for at least the previous six months.

Daily Preventer Medication

- Inhaled corticosteroids: such as Fluticasone, Beclomethasone, Budesonide, Ciclesonide, Mometasone
- Inhaled combination treatments: such as Fluticasone/Salmeterol, Budesonide/Formoterol
- Oral agents:
  - Montelukast
  - Theophylline
  - Prednisolone – long-term treatment course
How to apply

Applications are currently only possible where health care officials approve an application and the criteria have been met. This is a referral based scheme and no direct applications to SEAI are possible. Instead, if you think you or someone you know could be eligible please call the phone number on the back of this booklet. The service is free to all participants; there is no fee to the homeowner for this service.

How the scheme works

Once an application is approved the home must be surveyed in order to establish what energy efficiency measures are suitable for the home. SEAI has an appointed team of surveyors who are expert in recommending energy efficiency upgrades. SEAI’s surveyor will complete a full survey of the home and recommend what works are appropriate and available under the scheme. This service is similar to the Better Energy Warmer Homes Scheme where no fees are involved.

Duration

Once an application is registered and deemed eligible, SEAI anticipate that a home will be surveyed within 6 weeks. This survey will identify what energy efficient measures are suitable for your property.

Following the survey, and if suitable for measures under the scheme, SEAI will allocate an application to an appointed SEAI Contractor. SEAI anticipate that it may be up to 4 months from registration to getting energy saving measures installed.

Once the contractor commences work in your home, the period of time taken to complete the works may vary as follows;

- A number of days for attic and cavity wall insulation only work
- 2 to 3 weeks where a heating upgrade or external wall insulation is installed.
Where windows and doors are recommended, it may take up to 5 to 6 weeks from placing the order to completing the window / door installation.

All homes that receive services under this scheme will receive a post-works Building Energy Rating (BER) and in many cases a full inspection.

The inspection will verify that the measures installed are in accordance with SEAI’s Technical Specification and relevant Standards and Regulations.

**Guarantee**

SEAI offers a two year guarantee on all works. Product manufacturers, in some instances, offer longer warranty and where these are available SEAI’s contractors will offer the extended warranties as part of the standard service.
Better Energy Warmer Homes measures and what they look like

**Attic insulation**
A substantial amount of energy is lost through the roof, up to 35% in some cases. This is remedied by having insulation fitted in the attic at the joist level. This ensures that heat is kept in the house.

**Cavity wall**
Homes are typically built with a cavity wall type construction. Insulation material is placed between the walls to ensure the inner walls hold the heat longer.

For new buildings sheets of insulation material are placed between the walls. For existing buildings where there is an existing cavity, the insulation material can be pumped into the cavity space under pressure.

**Internal insulation**
- Outside wall
- Insulation
- Vapour barrier
- Plasterboard

**Cavity fill insulation**
- Outside wall
- 1 metre
- Pumping machine
- Insulation
- Inside wall
Up to the late 1980s most of the homes constructed in Dublin and surrounding areas were built with a cavity block.

It is not possible to pump the cavity in these blocks. If a surveyor determines that a home is built with this construction type he will deem it unsuitable for cavity insulation. The remaining options to insulate this type of building are to dry line the inside wall or externally clad the insulation to the outside of the home.

**Dry lining insulation**

Dry lining is an insulation option where external insulation is not possible. It involves insulating the internal walls of a building. An illustration of the process is below.
External insulation

External insulation requires an external layer of insulation to be wrapped around the existing structure. There are a range of finishes and colours available but the general technology is similar in all instances. A delivered system like this will require a number of weeks of scaffolding outside a client’s home. There should be very little if any disruption to the inner working of the home unless other measures are being deployed to the home. It is important to note that there may be circumstances where it is not possible to install these works for technical reasons.

Ventilation

After insulating an attic or wall it’s important that appropriate ventilation is installed to comply with current Building Regulations. The requirement for ventilation measures is set out in the Building Regulations.

Roof ventilation is provided through two methods, soffit vents or slate / tile vents. Soffit vents appear as circular vents installed along the soffit at eaves level. Roof slate / tile vents appear as raised tiles or slates installed within the roof covering. Both types of provisions are installed at specific centres to achieve the required levels of ventilation.
Wall ventilation is provided by coring the wall and installing a wall vent which consists of a sleeve (or pipe) through the wall with internal and external covers. Ventilation can also be provided through trickle vents on windows / doors. Wall vents with permanently open covers are necessary where a permanent air supply is required to a room containing an open flued heat producing appliance such as an open fire.

Proper ventilation of a home is necessary in order to ensure:

- adequacy of fresh air for a healthy and comfortable environment for the occupants
- adequacy of the air supply for safe operation of particular types of fuel burning appliances
- minimisation of condensation risk
- avoidance of radon accumulation in affected areas

Blocking up vents can result in an increase in moisture in the room that can condense on the walls and cause mould.
**Gas boiler replacement**

In the Dublin region a significant proportion of homes are heated by gas fired boiler systems. These systems are probably the most efficient methods of heating your home. Over the last decade new high efficiency boilers have become available which improve the efficiency of these systems to 90%. Gas boiler replacements may be offered where a surveyor indicates that a system is at end of life or is of an age that will require replacement in the very near future.

**Oil boiler replacements**

There are certain areas where a gas main is not available and then homes typically would use oil based systems as their principal source of home heating. This technology along with gas has seen improvements in the type of boilers now being produced and the efficiency rates have significantly increased. In line with gas systems where a surveyor identifies a system at end of life or is of an age that will require replacement in the very near future, a replacement system may be offered.
Energy Saving Tips

• Compare tariffs of other energy providers: Websites such as bonkers.ie and switcher.ie can help you to find the cheapest provider for your energy

• Avoid net curtains and blinds as they prevent light from getting into the room, thereby increasing the cost of lighting your home

• Turn off appliances overnight as they use energy even in standby mode

• Run your washing machine on a cooler cycle and hang clothes out to dry instead of using the tumble dryer

• Keep your freezer full to use less energy – you can use water bottles or newspaper to achieve this

• Ensure sufficient ventilation in all rooms in the house to avoid mould growth, don’t block up vents

• Bleed your radiator as trapped air in the radiator can cause them to run inefficiently
Contact us

All queries in relation to the scheme should be directed to the SEAI call centre freephone 1800 250 204

Or contact the HSE at 01 427 5032

Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland
Wilton Park House, Wilton Place, Dublin 2, Ireland.

\[\text{t} \quad +353 \ 1 \ 808 \ 2100 \quad \text{e} \quad \text{info@seai.ie} \]
\[\text{f} \quad +353 \ 1 \ 808 \ 2002 \quad \text{w} \quad \text{www.seai.ie}\]