

NEWS

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COUNCIL APPROVES FIRST EQUITY LOAN

North Dorset District Council has approved its first interest free equity loan to enable a low income homeowner to carry out essential repairs.

The Council's new loans are designed to help low income home owners perform essential repairs and reduce health and safety risks within the home. The loan can specifically help with ensuring that roofs, windows and doors are weather proof, wiring is safe, sufficient heating and thermal insulation is provided and other risks within the home are reduced, for example the risk of falls, a particular concern for older homeowners.

The loan has no regular repayments and is repaid in full, interest free, upon the eventual sale of the property.

The first recipient of one of the Council's loans, a Shaftesbury resident who wished to remain anonymous, said: "This loan has enabled me to carry out essential works that otherwise I would not have been able to afford, I'm really not sure how I would have paid for the repairs without it and would probably have had to 'make-do' or sell my home."

North Dorset District Council's portfolio holder for Affordable Housing, Cllr Graham Carr-Jones, said: "This new loan is a key part of the Council's strategy to ensure that lower income households are able to perform essential repairs and live safely in decent homes. It also helps our older residents to 'stay put' in their own home, something they are consistently telling us that they want to do. In the current climate interest free help is a great offer from the Council and the fact that it's a loan means that the Council can recycle its funds to help more people in the future."

Additional information and a no obligation provisional enquiry pack is available from the Environmental Health and Licensing Team (01258) 484313 envlicens@north-dorset.gov.uk. Applicants need to own their own homes, as their main residence, be on lower incomes and have sufficient equity in their properties.

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For more information contact: Steve March, Senior Environmental Health Officer at North Dorset District Council on 01258 484313.