

Foundations Cash ISA



Building a greener society

Tax free savings that protect the environment



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Authorised and regulated by the Financial Services Authority

We subscribe to the Banking Code, copies of which are available on request



Tax-free savings that protect the environment

The environment faces unprecedented challenges as a result of modern lifestyles. The throwaway, consumer orientated economy is causing increased pressure on eco-systems around the world, while many people are deprived of the basic necessities of life.

You are concerned that your financial wealth may be contributing to this process. You want to put your savings where they will not damage the environment.

The Foundations Cash ISA allows you to invest your money in a tax efficient way whilst simultaneously seeking to protect the environment, that sustains us all, and avoid funding unethical practices.

Mutual benefits

The Ecology Building Society is a mutual organisation strongly committed to the principles of mutuality. This means we are run for the benefit of our members and can concentrate on providing competitive products and excellent service, rather than generating profits for shareholders.

Benefits at a glance

- Tax-free
- An ethical and ecological investment
- No fixed term
- Regular savings option
- Low contribution levels
- You can vary the level of contributions at any time

All the photographs in this booklet are of actual Ecology borrowers and their homes.

Investor protection

We are members of the Financial Services Compensation Scheme established under the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000. Payments under the Scheme are limited to a maximum of 100% of the first £50,000 of an investor's total shares and/or deposits (other than deferred shares). Most investors are covered, including individuals and small firms. Although most shares and deposits in UK building societies are denominated in sterling, the euro and other European Economic Area currencies are also covered. Further details are available on request from the Society.

Management of the plan

There is a reporting mechanism in place between the Society and HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC). This enables HMRC to identify investors who have broken the ISA rules.

The Society will notify you if your ISA fails to meet the provisions laid down in the regulations, or if it receives instructions from HMRC, which cause your ISA to become taxable, or void.

If your Foundations Cash ISA becomes void it will be transferred to an Eco-Instant account where the interest will be subject to tax. We will notify you in writing if this happens.

You may terminate the plan at any time by giving us written notice.

IMPORTANT

If you do not subscribe to your cash ISA in any tax year, under government rules you will be required to complete a new application form should you wish to recommence making subscriptions in the subsequent tax year.

The Society accepts no liability for any losses or delays caused by industrial disputes, failure of power supplies, telecommunications or other equipment or any other circumstances beyond our control.

The ISA investments will be, and must remain in, the beneficial ownership of the investor and must not be used as security for a loan.

Further information on ISAs is provided in the Building Societies Association Publication *Individual Savings Accounts and Building Societies* which is available from the Society on request.

This leaflet should be read in conjunction with other Ecology leaflets *Saving with the Ecology*, *Current savings rates and charges*, *Savings Account identification requirements* and *Our Range of Savings Accounts*.



Can I transfer my ISA to another provider?

You may transfer the whole of your Foundations Cash ISA to another provider by notifying us in writing. On receipt of your instructions and within the time stipulated by you (we require minimum notice of seven working days) your ISA with all rights and obligations will be transferred to your new ISA manager. Partial transfers are not permitted.

What happens if I die?

The plan's exemption from tax automatically terminates on your death at which time the proceeds will revert to your estate. There is no loss of exemption on interest paid or credited for the period before the date of death.

Terms and conditions

The Ecology Foundations Cash ISA is an Ecology Building Society share account and, as such, is subject to the terms and conditions which affect all share accounts. A copy of the brochure *Saving with the Ecology* which contains these terms and conditions will be sent to you if you do not already have one.

Cancellation rights

We want you to be completely satisfied with your Foundations Cash ISA. If you are not happy with the choice you have made, you have a 14 day period within which to consider whether or not to keep the plan open. This period (which excludes public holidays) begins on the day after the account was opened and runs until the end of the 14th day after that. If you wish, we will help you to switch accounts or we will give you all your money back straightaway together with interest and without any charges being imposed. Notice of cancellation must be given to us in writing and, if sent by post, will be treated as having been served on the day it was posted.

Solving problems

Our aim is to provide a high standard of service to all our investors. However, occasionally things can go wrong. When this happens, we want to put matters right as quickly as possible. We will handle any complaints which arise while you are a customer fairly and speedily and will let you have details of our internal complaints procedure on request. If we cannot resolve any complaint to your satisfaction, you will be able to refer it to the Financial Ombudsman Service, South Quay Plaza, 183 Marsh Wall, London E14 9SR.



What is an ISA?

An ISA is an Individual Savings Account that allows you to protect your savings options from income and capital gains tax.

Currently there are two ISA savings options:

- Cash ISAs, suitable for short-term savings as your money is easily accessible.
- Stocks and Shares ISAs, appropriate for long-term investments where you wish to leave your money untouched for several years. This investment may go down in value as well as up, and you are not guaranteed to make profit.

The ISA described in this brochure is a cash ISA, managed by Ecology Building Society.

How does the Ecology use my money?

The Ecology Building Society was formed in 1981. We now have over 10,000 savings accounts with more than £82 million in total savings balances.

These savings have created a fund which we use to provide mortgages on homes and properties that give an ecological payback. We have financed a number of innovative and exciting projects, all of which are generating environmental benefits. Examples of our lending include: the rescue of derelict properties (a form of recycling); building eco-homes to minimise environmental impact; affordable housing; organic farms; ecological businesses and housing co-ops.

Money not lent out is deposited in a range of banks and building society accounts. The financial and ethical record of each bank is always checked before we place funds.

How much can I invest?

You can start saving from just £25 a month or you can invest a lump sum of as little as £25. Under current regulations the maximum you can invest in each tax year in a cash ISA is £3,600.

What interest rate will I receive?

We aim to offer savers a competitive rate of interest. Please refer to the leaflet *Current savings rates and charges* or call us on **0845 674 5566**, email: savings@ecology.co.uk or visit our website at www.ecology.co.uk to confirm the current rate of interest.

Interest is earned on your savings from the day following receipt up to and including the day funds are withdrawn or the account is closed. Interest is calculated on a daily basis and will be credited annually on 5 April each year, or on closure, if earlier.

Interest rates are variable. We may vary them at any time we consider is necessary, for example to reflect market conditions or due to general movement in interest rates. Any changes will be notified to investors by post within 30 days of the change. Our website is updated with all interest rate changes.

You can choose to have your annual interest paid to another account (either with EBS or to your bank account).

Are there any risk factors?

The interest paid is variable and may decrease. For your ISA to have interest paid tax-free your account must be operated within the rules laid down by the Government. Favourable tax treatment may not be maintained if any of the rules are broken, a change to your circumstances means you no longer qualify for an ISA, or the Government either alters the rules of the ISA scheme or withdraws it all together.

Can I withdraw my money?

You can withdraw funds at any time by completing a withdrawal form, which are available on request or can be downloaded from our website, or by sending a signed letter. Withdrawals can be made by cheque or funds can be transferred directly to most bank or building society accounts. The minimum amount that can be withdrawn is £25 and we aim to settle requests within 3-4 working days.

The minimum balance required to maintain an ISA is £25. If the balance drops to £0 and remains so until the end of the tax year, the ISA will be closed.

If a withdrawal is made, the value may only be replaced by further subscription where the annual investment limit for the relevant tax year has not been reached.

How will I be kept informed about my investment?

You will receive an annual statement each April. If you would like any additional information, please telephone us on **0845 674 5566** or sign up for the Ecology Interactive service at **www.ecology.co.uk** which will enable you to view your account online at any time.

May I invest in other ISAs?

In each tax year you can invest in one cash ISA and one stocks and shares ISA.

You can invest up to £7,200 each tax year in an ISA. This includes a maximum investment of £3,600 for a cash ISA, with the balance being invested in a stocks and shares ISA.

Stakeholder standards

The Foundations Cash ISA is not a Stakeholder account. Please contact us if you would like further information about the Government's Stakeholder Standards.



How do I apply?

Applying for this ISA is simple. Just complete the Foundations Cash ISA application form in BLOCK CAPITALS and indicate your chosen investment level. Please remember to include your National Insurance number and date of birth. Before applying, please read all the information in this brochure.

To make monthly deposits into your Ecology Foundations Cash ISA, simply complete a separate Direct Debit form. Both the Foundations Cash ISA application and Direct Debit form are available to download on our website.

For a lump sum investment please make your cheque payable to:

Ecology Building Society re: (your name)

Proof of identity

By law all banks, building societies and financial institutions are required to verify the identity of anyone who opens an account with them. This is necessary to protect the organisation, its customers and the public from fraud and also to help combat money laundering.

If you are a new member, we will make an electronic search to verify your identity. Should this not be possible, we will ask you to provide us with suitable evidence of identification as specified in our leaflet *Savings Account identification requirements*. If you do not already have a copy, please request one from our Savings Department on **0845 674 5566**. If you are an existing member of the Ecology, please quote your account number on the application form so we can see whether you have previously provided us with sufficient identification, in which case we will not normally require any further details from you.

Transfers from other providers

If you hold a cash ISA with another bank or building society, you may transfer it to the Ecology. Please note we only accept full transfers. We do not make a charge for such transfers, however, your current provider may.

Cash ISA savers are able to transfer funds saved in the current tax year to stocks and shares ISAs - but not the other way round.

Please contact the Ecology for further details on the transfer process.

Eligibility

You must be aged 16 years or over. You must be resident and ordinarily resident in the UK for tax purposes or, if not, a Crown employee serving overseas, or married to/in a civil partnership with a Crown employee serving overseas. If you invest in this cash ISA, you must not invest in another cash ISA in the same tax year.

You must tell us if you cease to be eligible as above.

