

# Shopfront Improvement Grant Scheme

## Guide for applicants

### Introduction

Business property owners and tenants are encouraged to apply for grant assistance to undertake external property improvement works to enhance the streetscape frontage of shops and businesses in Arundel, Bognor Regis and Littlehampton centres.

The quality of shop fronts is of great importance to both the character of the district and the vitality of local business and retailing.

### Aim

The aim of this grant scheme is to assist business property owners to invest in their buildings and improve the quality of the building stock in the district. This will, in turn, make our towns and villages more attractive for people to visit and invest, shop and live in. Therefore, it is important that improvements carried out within this scheme are appropriate to the character and age of the host building and high standards of materials and workmanship are used, especially within the conservation areas.

### Objectives

Arun District Council (hereafter referred to as 'the council') is particularly interested in funding projects which:

- Improve the complete street facing property façade
- Impact positively on the overall streetscape/townscape
- Tackle prominent buildings or blocks of buildings, therefore achieving greater impact for the townscape
- Repair/reinstate traditional architectural/historic features of the building, using traditional materials, where appropriate
- Provide a high quality design element to modern buildings

Priority will be given to projects that will enhance the complete front elevation of the building.

Works to the side or rear of a building will only be funded if they are clearly visible from the street and if they are associated with an overall project which includes improvements to the front façade of the same building.

### Eligibility

This scheme allows owners of business properties within the district to apply for shopfront improvement grants. Tenants may also apply with permission from the property owner or agent. The owner's/agent's signature will be required on the application form confirming consent for the project works.

Strictly one grant application to be submitted per property. Where an individual wishes to apply for works to more than one property, separate applications must be submitted for each property address.

Priority will be given to independent retailers.

### Funding

The grant offered will fund 50% of project costs up to a maximum of £2,000. Applicants must fund 50% of the project costs up to the maximum award and any further costs.

**NB:** There is no minimum level of grant award.

FOR EXAMPLE:

Total cost of works	Grant contribution	Owner contribution
£700	£350	£350
£1,200	£600	£600
£3,000	£1,500	£1,500
£5,000	£2,000	£3,000
£8,500	£2,000	£6,500

The council will not fund:

- Statutory fees
- Architect/consultant fees
- Professional fees (e.g. solicitor/surveyor)
- Insurances
- Interest

### **Timescales**

**This is a rolling programme and applications will be assessed as they are received. There is a limited amount of funding and once that is used the programme will be closed to applications.**

**Incomplete applications will not be assessed.**

It is in the applicant's best interest to ensure all the required information is supplied with the application to ensure it is assessed. 'Letters of Offer' will be issued to successful applicants with time bound completion dates. Works should not commence until a successful applicant has received a 'Letter of Offer' from the council. Applications will be accepted until the funding has been expended.

### **Assessment criteria**

Assessment of applications and allocation of funding is a competitive process, with all applications considered on their merits and allocated a score by an assessment panel.

Arun District Council holds ultimate discretion over how the scheme is operated and reserves the right to enhance assessment criteria in the event that the number of applications exceeds the funds available.

Applications will be scored by the panel using the following criteria:

- (a) Value for money (cost v benefit) (50 marks)
- (b) Need for the project (existing condition of property) (25 marks)
- (c) Impact on streetscape (extent of positive impact) (25 marks).

### **Eligible works**

Only items that will enhance the exterior, street facing element of the property are eligible for funding. No interior works will be eligible for funding. The council will consider all minor property enhancement works and encourage larger scale projects particularly those considering new shop fronts, with the relevant statutory consent.

Examples of eligible items:

- External painting
- New/replacement rainwater goods (RWG)
- Fascia, soffit, bargeboard repairs
- Window sill repairs - wooden/masonry
- Repairs to timber doors/windows
- Removal of redundant signage, shutters, wiring, alarms etc.
- Removal of vegetation from guttering
- New windows/doors (with appropriate consent)
- Traditional timber shop-front repairs
- Stone or masonry repairs/repainting
- Signage replacement (like-for-like)
- New signage (with planning permission)
- New shop fronts (with planning permission)
- New awnings (with planning permission)
- Replacement feature lighting to signs (new lighting may require planning permission)
- Repairs of decorative features
- Access improvements e.g. disability access (with appropriate consent)

**NB:** This list is not exhaustive and can include any other minor frontage improvements that you can demonstrate will enhance the overall appearance of the streetscape.

### Quotations

Quotations for all labour and materials included in the application must be submitted. Each quotation must include name and contact details of the person/company providing the labour/materials, and must be on letterheaded paper. A minimum of two quotations must be submitted.

If the applicant plans to undertake work themselves, only the cost of materials can be included and these should be submitted as a simple list with their individual cost.

### Statutory consent

It is the applicant's responsibility to make enquiries as to whether any statutory consent is required for their project and ensure the relevant applications are made e.g. planning permission/building control/listed buildings etc.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that all statutory approvals required are legally complied with. A 'Certificate of Lawful Use or Development' may be requested to prove that planning consent is not required if there is any uncertainty.

### Insurance

The applicant, agent and/or contractor is responsible for all risks in connection with public or employer liability associated with the building works.

### Payment of grant funding

- Do not start your project until you receive a 'Letter of Offer' for the grant being awarded. The council will not retrospectively fund projects.
- Grant funding will only be released for payment following inspection of the property by the council. It is the responsibility of the applicant to notify the council when works have been completed so they can arrange inspection.

### Next steps

- Step 1: Seek written quotation(s) from your chosen contractor/painter/workman and submit with the application.
- Step 2: Take a photograph of your property and submit with the application.
- Step 3: Complete an application form.
- Step 4: Return completed application to the council by email to [miriam.nicholls@arun.gov.uk](mailto:miriam.nicholls@arun.gov.uk)