



GUIDE FOR APPLICATIONS



Armagh City
Banbridge
& Craigavon
Borough Council



SHOP-FRONT IMPROVEMENT GRANT SCHEME

GUIDE FOR APPLICATIONS

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 the Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council area (hereafter referred as the Borough). The quality of shop fronts is of great importance to both the character of the Borough 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 Borough. 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

Armagh City Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council (hereafter referred to as 'Council') are 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 Borough to apply for shop-front improvement grant aid. Tenants may also apply with permission from the property owner. The owner'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.

Properties which have previously received grant assistance are eligible to re-apply, but the application must not be for the same scope of works which has previously been funded. Applicants who previously received a 'Letter of Offer' but did not complete their project in time may re-apply for the same works.

FUNDING

The grant offered will fund 50% of project costs up to a **maximum of £1,500**. Applicants must fund 50% of the project costs up to the maximum award and any further costs exceeding £3,000.

NB: There is no minimum level of grant award.

FOR EXAMPLE:

Total Cost of project:	Grant contribution	Owner contribution
£700	£350	£350
£1,200	£600	£600
£3,000	£1,500	£1,500
£5,200	£1,500	£3,700

Council will not fund

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

TIMESCALES

CRITICAL DATES 2018:

This is a rolling grant scheme, however the assessment panel will meet to score complete applications quarterly, as per the below dates:

12th June 2018

12th September 2018

12th December 2018

NB: If your application is received after the panel has met for that quarter it will not be scored until the next scheduled meeting date.

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. Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council hold ultimate discretion over how the scheme is operated and reserve the right to enhance assessment criteria in the event that the number of applications exceeds the funds available.

Applications will be scored by an independent panel using the following criteria;

- i. Value for Money (cost v benefit) (50 marks)
- ii. Need for the project (existing condition of property) (25 marks)
- iii. Impact on Streetscape (extent of positive impact) (25 marks)

COUNCIL APPOINTED QUANTITY SURVEYOR

The scheme will be administered on behalf of Armagh City Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council by Ian Donnelly Associates Ltd. who have been appointed through Council's competitive procurement protocol.

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. 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:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ 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 Building Control Consent)▪ Render repairs (if area more than 25%, Building Control Consent required)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Traditional timber shop-front repairs▪ Stone or Masonry repairs / repointing▪ 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 will require planning permission)▪ Repairs of decorative features▪ Access improvements e.g. disability access (with Building Control Consent)
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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 letter headed paper.

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.

Local Planning Office

Phone: 0300 200 7830

Email: planning@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk

Website: <http://www.armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk>

Building Control Department

Armagh – **028 3752 9616** Banbridge – **028 4066 0603** Craigavon – **028 3831 2500**

Website: <http://www.buildingcontrol-ni.com>

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. **Council will not retrospectively fund projects.**
- Grant funding will only be released for payment following inspection of the property by the Council appointed QS and upon issue of a completion certificate. It is the responsibility of the applicant to notify the QS when works have been completed so they can arrange inspection.
- Payment of grant will be made to the applicant via direct BACS payment.
- Payment will only be made on receipt of a completed Claim form with the following documentation:
 - Copy of invoice/s for works and materials
 - Copy of cheque/BACS payment to contractor/s & supplier/s
 - Copy of Bank statement showing associated cheque number/BACS payment leaving applicant's account
- Payment for materials and to contractors must be made via cheque/BACS.

NB: Cash expenditure will not be eligible for refund from Council.



WHAT TO DO NOW?...

- 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 Council either by post or email.

Email: shopfront@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk

OR Post to:

Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council
REGENERATION DEPARTMENT
The Palace Demesne
Armagh
BT60 4EL

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