

**DAVENTRY DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**Daventry Town Centre**  
**Shop Front Improvement Grants**  
**Guidance Notes**



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**1. Background**

- 1.1 The appearance of shop fronts has a considerable influence on the overall character of a place. They are an essential element not only of the buildings in which they are set but also of the wider streetscape. A shop front that has been designed with respect given to the architecture of the building and character of the surrounding area can add charm and vitality, making it attractive to both the occupier and visitors alike.
- 1.2 The shop front improvement scheme aims to improve ground floor shop fronts in Daventry Town Centre as a means of supporting the growth of local businesses, improving the local environment and raising the image of the town among local residents and visitors.
- 1.3 The Scheme is administered by Daventry District Council with a total budget of £70,000 available for 2018/19. Applicants can apply for a maximum grant of £20,000. The fund is intended to benefit as many businesses in the town as possible, therefore the grants allocated may depend on the number of good quality applications received
- 1.4 These guidance notes are provided to help you understand the aims of the Shop Front Improvement Grant Scheme and how you can make a grant application. If you would like to know more please contact our Strategic Economic Development Officer on 01327 302444 or email [business@daventrydc.gov.uk](mailto:business@daventrydc.gov.uk)

**Who can apply?**

- 2.1 The shop front improvement scheme is open to all freehold owners and lease-holders with a ground floor commercial shop-frontage facing the street within the Daventry Town Centre. Tenants must have the building owners' prior approval.
- 2.2 Commercial premises include ground floor:
- Shops
  - Financial and professional services
  - Restaurants and cafes
  - Public houses and wine bars
  - Hot food takeaways
  - Hotels
  - Betting shops
  - Charity shops

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**3. What does the grant cover?**

3.1 Money is available to cover up to 50% of the total expenditure on the project. This means that you will still need to finance the remaining 50%.

3.2 The Chief Executive will make the final decision on the level of grant funding awarded to applicants.

3.3 The application window will be open until 31<sup>st</sup> October 2018. If the budget is not fully allocated, after this round of applications, a second window may open later in the year.

3.4 You can claim against the following costs:

- professional fees or other information required as part of the planning process and;
- physical work necessary to deliver the improvement (see 3.5 to 3.7)

3.5 The following work will be considered eligible for support:

- new shop fronts (following published guidance where available)
- visible repairs
- re-instatement of original architectural features
- repainting of shop front in suitable colours
- repair and reinstatement of guttering and down-pipes to match historic materials and details
- repair and replacement of external stonework
- re-pointing using traditional materials
- pedestrian access improvements - these must be compliant with the Equalities Act
- appropriate signage (following published guidance where available)
- fixed window display equipment
- internal or external shutters with security grilles and or security glazing (e.g. laminated or strengthened glass), which allows window-shopping to take place in the evening
- lighting

3.6 All work is subject to the relevant permissions being secured

3.7 The scheme will not support:

- remedial action to comply with any planning enforcement
- improvements to property above ground floor level
- improvements to residential property, including residential property located above commercial premises
- works which have already been undertaken or any works which are started prior to a formal offer of grant funding being made
- structural repairs including re-roofing
- internal repairs and alterations (with the exception of fitted internal security grilles)

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- external shutters and other security devices (e.g. CCTV)
- recoverable VAT

3.8 The scheme will only provide grants to ground floor commercial premises within the Daventry Town Centre, see map at the end of these guidance notes. Please note that grants are discretionary and subject to availability of funds. The inclusion of a building within an eligible area does not give any automatic entitlement to a grant.

#### **4. Do I Need Permission?**

4.1 Most alterations to shop fronts within Daventry will require permission under the Planning Acts, Advertisement consent or both, and work carried out without consent may result in enforcement action or prosecution by the Council and potentially removal of works.

4.2 **Planning permission** maybe required for works that involve a material change to the external appearance of a shop. Such works include alterations to the fascia, the windows or the doorway, changes to the materials used or the installation of blinds or security shutters.

4.3 Any alteration which affects the special historic, artistic, or architectural interest of a listed building (including character and appearance) will require **listed building consent**. Such works include alterations to architectural details, alterations to the interior, the installation of shop front security measures, and in some cases the repainting of a shop front in a different colour.

4.4 **Advertisement consent** is required for the display of certain types of signs in particular locations

4.5 Please note that it takes the District Council about two months to decide on a planning application, advertisement consent or other statutory consent. You need to build this into your timetable for carrying out your project.

4.6 If you are unsure about permissions required for your proposed work, please contact Daventry District Council and request to speak to a Planning Officer.

#### **5. How do I apply?**

5.1 The deadline for applications is 31st October 2018 (see point 3.3)

5.2 Please email your completed application form to [communitygrants@daventrydc.gov.uk](mailto:communitygrants@daventrydc.gov.uk)

5.3 In order to consider your application we require the following:

- Completed application form including the full details of the work that you wish to carry out and any supporting evidence including drawings of proposed changes

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- Proof of ownership/lease, if you do not own the property, you will need to provide proof that you have permission from the owner to carry out the works. The building owner must provide a supporting letter to show that they have given permission for the works to be carried out.

**6. How is the decision made?**

- 6.1 Applications will be considered by a panel of relevant officers. This panel will then make recommendations to award grants to the Chief Executive who will make the final decision on all applications.
- 6.2 Applications will be judged on their merits.
- 6.3 Where there are a high number of good quality applications that exceed the amount of budget available, the amount of grant awarded to each may have to be reduced, or only those applications that demonstrate the greatest merit will be funded.
- 6.4 Factors which may undermine the quality of an application include:
- Questions not answered.
  - Supporting documentation not supplied.
  - Poor business viability (as evidenced in recent accounts).
  - Unacceptable debts (eg. unpaid business rates).
  - Poor explanation of the proposed improvement works
  - Lack of consultation with planning/conservation officers
  - Lack of consultation with other relevant professionals, eg. architects
  - Lack of robust costings or quotes for the works
  - Inability to explain where the balance of funding will come from.
- 6.5 All applicants will be notified in writing if their grant application has been successful. Any offer letters will detail the terms and conditions of the grant award.
- 6.6 All grants will be conditional on any required Planning / Conservation Area or Listed Building or Advertising consent being granted. The grant scheme operates independently of the planning process and any offer of a grant does not imply in any way that these consents will or have been granted. If any required consents cannot be secured within a year of a grant offer being made, Daventry District Council reserves the right to withdraw the grant offer and make it available to other applicants. If you are unsure about permissions required for your proposed work, please do get in touch with us prior to making your application.
- 6.7 You will be required to maintain the property to a satisfactory standard for a minimum of five years following payment of the grant
- 6.8 Grants will be paid on production of invoices from contractors showing detailed breakdown of costs. Payment will normally be made after all works are completed, but

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for larger projects interim payments may be considered. Payment will be made to the applicant; the responsibility for paying contractors lies with the applicant.

- 6.9 The officer grant panel reserve the right to request that alternative competitive quotes are sourced for works that are estimated to cost over £1,000.
- 6.10 The officer grant panel reserves the right not to recommend the award of a grant if an application received is considered to be of poor quality, or non-compliant.

