

Guidance Notes

Design principles

A business frontage 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 shoppers and visitors alike.

The scheme is not intended to create a uniform style to shop front design in Burnham-on-Sea. Within the scheme we encourage diversity and distinctiveness in terms of designs, details and colours whilst retaining the principles of good design associated with the historic town centre.

We recognise that some buildings require a more 'modern' look and that high quality modern design can add significant value to the townscape. As a general principle we ask that projects seek to balance imaginative design with the historic context of the building and the wider area.

Who can apply?

The shop front improvement grant scheme is open to all freehold owners and leaseholders and tenants of premises with commercial shop-frontage facing the street within the town centre of Burnham-on-Sea (as defined in the Sedgemoor District Council Core Strategy adopted in 2011 - Page 212: "Map 12.2 Burnham Town Centre Retail Policies")

www.sedgemoor.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=9260&p=0

However, tenants must have the building owners' prior approval. You will be asked the length of your lease on the application form and those with a shorter lease may be offered a lower grant.

Independent retail includes:

- Shops – including hairdressers, beauty salons, funeral directors, launderettes, dry cleaners etc.

Commercial premises includes:

- Financial and professional services (e.g. accountants, estate agents, solicitors etc.)
- Restaurants, public houses, cafes and food takeaways
- Buildings that are being used to provide a community service.

Application for first floor improvement grants will be considered from the leaseholders, tenants and freehold owners of offices and residential property located above shops and businesses.

What is covered?

The grants cover front renovation and decoration, new signage and replacement of historical features including lighting. The main objectives of the scheme:

- To improve business frontages including shops, commercial businesses and social enterprises.
- Enhance the appearance and appeal of the town to visitors, customers and the local population.
- To preserve and enhance the special characters of the Conservation area, it's listed buildings and other buildings of public importance.
- Assist towards encouraging further inward investment
- Stimulate business and consumer confidence.

Applicants are able to claim against the following costs:

- Planning pre-application advice
- Planning fees
- Photos, drawings, material samples or anything else required as part of the planning process
- Physical work necessary to deliver the improvement

The following work will be considered eligible for support:

- New shop fronts
- Repair and reinstatement of any part of a shop front fixture that is visible from the street

- Re-instatement of original architectural features e.g. ornamental masonry, stucco and other applied finishes or details, historically patterned woodwork, ornamental metalwork or other features of historic significance.
- Repainting of shop front in suitable colours (following the published guidelines for the Burnham on Sea Conservation Area where applicable)
- Repair and reinstatement of guttering and downpipes to match historic materials
- Repainting or re-rendering prominent elevations in suitable heritage colours
- Repair of external stonework and brickwork and replacement of stonework or brick work
- Re-pointing using traditional materials
- Pedestrian access improvements – to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act
- External signage (following the published guidelines for the Burnham on Sea Conservation Area where applicable)
- Lighting

All work is subject to the relevant permissions being secured

The scheme does not support:

- 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
- New external shutters (repairs are permissible) and other security devices (e.g. CCTV)
- Window display equipment
- Internal security grilles and or security glazing (e.g. laminated or strengthened glass)
- Recoverable VAT

How the funding works

Grants are available in two ways. Grants are allocated on a first come first served basis provided eligibility has been met. Retrospective applications for work already being completed cannot be considered.

Grant 1: Up to 50% of the costs of eligible repairs and improvements to shop fronts, up to a maximum grant of £5,000. The minimum amount of grant available is £2,500, so the minimum value of works eligible for grant will be £5,000. The maximum grant available is £5,000, so the maximum value of works eligible for grant will be £10,000.

Grant 2: A maximum one off grant of up to £1,000. There is no minimum value of works.



For all projects you will still need to finance the remaining amount. 'In-kind' contributions such as DIY labouring/painting are welcome but will not contribute toward the match-funding.

Each applicant (this would be payable even if your application was unsuccessful – but not if the reason was the scheme was oversubscribed) must also pay a £25 (inc.VAT) administration fee, payable to Burnham on Sea & Highbridge Town Council.

We have set a maximum grant of £5,000 per project in order to assist as many businesses as possible.

The scheme is funded directly from the Section 106 moneys from the expansion of the Tesco store on outskirts of the town.

The grant fund holds £25,000 once this sum is exhausted the scheme will close.

All applications for funding must be received by 28 February 2015 and all works completed by 31 May 2015.

If the Fund is exhausted prior to 28 February 2015, no more applications will be considered.

Administration of the scheme

The scheme is administered by Burnham on Sea & Highbridge Town Council with the support of the planning department of SDC.

The steering group comprising two Town Councillors, Cllr Young and Cllr Miss Parkin, a representative from SDC's planning department and Beverley Milner Simonds Burnham on Sea Town Centre Manager, will meet once per month to process applications. We will publish the dates of meetings once they are finalised.

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.

Your application should be sent to: bostowncentremanager@gmail.com
Alternatively you can post it to the Town Council, addressed to: Beverley Milner Simonds, Town Centre Manager, Burnham & Highbridge Town Council, Jaycroft Road, Burnham on Sea, TA8 1LE.

All grant offers will be made in writing. If your project requires planning permission and your grant is approved we will write to you making an in-principle offer of funding, we will then issue a formal grant offer letter as soon as permission is granted. Full details of the conditions that apply to the grant will be set out in the grant offer letter.

All grants will be conditional on you securing appropriate planning consent. The scheme operates independently of the planning process and any offer of a grant does not imply that planning consent will be granted.

You will be required to maintain the property to a satisfactory standard for a minimum of five years.

Grants will be paid on production of invoices from contractors showing a detailed breakdown of costs and proof of payment. Payments will normally be made after all works are completed, for larger projects interim payments may be considered.

How do I apply?

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

- Completed Application form including the full details of the work that you wish to carry out and any supporting evidence
- 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 countersign your application to show that they have given permission for the works to be carried out.
- Details of the permissions that will be needed to carry out the work and proof that the permissions have been granted. If you are submitting your grant application prior to receiving the permissions, please submit a copy of the decision as soon as you get them. Please note that we will not make any payment until this has been provided.
- A current photo of the shop front and any available visuals of what it will look like following the work.
- Cost estimates including any professional fees. Any individual item with a cost exceeding £1,000 will need to be supported by three valid quotes and your justification, if you do not intend to use the lowest. If you cannot supply three quotations you will need to provide reasons why this is.
- If applicable, evidence that you cannot reclaim VAT.

If you would like to know more about the Business Frontage Improvement Grant in Burnham-on-Sea or have any queries regarding your application please contact Beverley Milner Simonds by emailing: bostowncentremanager@gmail.com