



## **Aspatia Town Centre Business & Residential Frontage Improvement Grant Scheme**

### **Guidance Notes**

#### **1. Background**

1.1. Cumberland Council has created a scheme to assist shop and residential property owners, tenants, and landlords to improve the external appearance of their premises. The modest grants are to be match funded by the applicant themselves.

1.2. The historic core of the town centre contains the commercial centre of the community. For this reason, the appearance of shop and residential building frontages has a considerable impact and influence on the character of a place and that of the wider streetscape. Well maintained buildings in the town centre can add charm and vitality, making it attractive to shoppers and visitors alike.

1.3. The shop & residential frontage improvement scheme aims to improve shop fronts and building facades in the town centre of Aspatia as a means of supporting the growth of local businesses, improving the local environment, and raising the image of the town centre amongst locals and visitors.

1.4. The scheme is administered by Cumberland Council.

1.5. Funding for the scheme is being provided by Cumberland Council as part of their corporate objective in enhancing town centres.

1.6. These guidance notes are provided to help you understand the aims of the shop & residential frontage improvement grant scheme and how you can make a grant application.

1.7. If you would like to know more about this grant scheme or have any queries regarding your application, then please contact the Specialist Business Manager, Mr Toni Magean

**Telephone:** 01900 516764

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#### **2. Who can apply?**

2.1 The shop & residential frontage improvement grant scheme is open to all freehold owners and leaseholders with at least 5 years on their lease and tenants of premises with commercial shop or residential frontage facing the street within the defined town centre area of Aspatia. However, tenants must have the building owners' prior approval.

2.2 Commercial premises include:

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

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.

2.3 Priority will be given to premises in Aspatria main shopping streets: Queen Street, King Street, West Street and Outgang Road. However, all premises within the Aspatria Town Centre qualifying area are eligible to apply. Please refer to map displayed on the council's website.

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

3.1. Funding is available to cover up to 90% of the total expenditure on a project, up to a limit of £1000. This means that 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.

3.2. We have set the limit of the grant to £1000 per project to support as many shops and residential premises as possible.

3.3. If the limited grant fund becomes exhausted, no more applications will be considered.

3.4. Applicants can claim against the following costs:

- Materials and Physical work necessary to deliver the improvement.

3.5. The following work will be considered eligible for support:

- Mineral based repainting of shop or residential premises frontage within the provided colour pallet.
- Repair and reinstatement of guttering and downpipes
- External lighting – shops only

3.6. All work is subject to the relevant permissions and consents being secured and in place.

3.7. 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
- External shutters 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

3.8. The scheme will only provide grants to premises in the eligible area. 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. Your application may require permission under the Planning Acts, Advertisement regulations or both. It may require Planning permission, conservation area consent, listed

building consent or advertisement consent. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure permissions and consents are in place prior to start of any works.

4.2. If you are unsure whether any permission is required, consult with the planning department at Cumberland Council. Please note, it takes about two months to decide on a planning application, advertisement consent or other statutory consent. You will need to build this into your timetable for carrying out your project.

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

5.1. To consider your application, we would require the following:

- To fully completed the online 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 and consents that will be needed to carry out the work and proof that the permissions and consents 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.
- Full cost estimates, supported by three valid quotes and your justification if you do not intend to use the lowest.
- If applicable, evidence that you cannot reclaim VAT.

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

6.1. Applications will be considered by a grant panel.

6.2. The panel will meet once a month and a decision will be made on your application at the next possible meeting unless further information is required from you. All grant offers will be made in writing. The grant panel's decision will be final, and no appeals will be accepted. Full details of the conditions that apply to the grant will be set out in the grant offer letter.

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

6.4. You will be required to maintain the property to a satisfactory standard for a minimum of 3 years.

6.5 Grants will be paid on production of invoices showing a detailed breakdown of costs and proof of all works have been completed.

6.6 Failure to comply with the terms and condition of the grant offer will result in action being taken by the Council to recover full costs.