

Swaffham – A Historic Market Town

# Shopfront Repair and Redecoration Application Form



## Shop Front Repair and Redecoration Small Grants Scheme – Eligibility Guidance & Application Form

### Introduction

These guidance notes are provided to help applicants understand the aims of the Shop Front Repair and Redecoration Scheme and to set out how to make a grant application.

### What is the Scheme?

Shop fronts and well-maintained buildings make an impact on the appearance of a shopping area and contribute to people's impression of that area. High-quality shop fronts make an area feel more welcoming to local residents and visitors alike. They improve the area's image, help to define a stronger sense of place, and encourage a greater number of shopping visits.

Unfortunately, the appearance of some buildings has been spoilt by inappropriate shop fronts which harm the character and appearance of some buildings and detract from their wider surroundings.

Swaffham has a Historic Building Grant Scheme aimed to carry out major repair and reinstatement works in co-ordination with Historic England. This smaller fund is administered and funded by Breckland Council and is designed to support smaller scale repairs and redecoration not eligible under the larger scheme. It is a community-led initiative to encourage and support the improvement of shop fronts to help local businesses to grow and prosper and to attract new investment in Swaffham. The overall improvement in the local environment will help in attracting customers, raise awareness of the market town among visitors and residents and aid the overall regeneration Market Place area.

### Who can apply?

The Shop Front Repair and Redecoration Scheme is available to both existing businesses and owners of vacant units which are located within the Swaffham Conservation Area.

The scheme is open to all freehold owners and leaseholders who are named on their lease and tenants of premises with commercial/community services shop-frontages within Swaffham. Tenants must have the building owner's prior written approval.

The grants are discretionary and subject to the availability of funds. The inclusion of a building within the eligible area does not give any automatic entitlement to a grant.

The scheme cannot support works that have already been undertaken or any works which are started before a formal offer of grant funding has been made. If you are unsure of whether your business will qualify for a grant you should contact - [Joe.Warburton@Breckland.gov.uk](mailto:Joe.Warburton@Breckland.gov.uk)

### How much is the Grant For?

Businesses can apply for a grant towards the external renovation or improvement of ground floor and upper floor shops. The grant will cover 75% of the eligible costs up to a maximum of £5,000.



## How do I Apply?

In order to apply for the Shop Front Improvement Scheme you will need to complete and return the application for which is attached to this guidance note.

Please note that grant availability is subject to funding and is available for a limited period only. To be considered for a grant applications need to be received by COP **Friday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2024**.

## Design Guidance

The scheme aims to encourage the use of good quality materials, appropriate detailing and sympathetic signage, to improve the building and its contribution to the wider appearance of the area. The Project Officer on the scheme is happy to discuss any proposals and will work with the property owner to agree an acceptable proposal. This includes ensuring that paint colours and signage are appropriate for the building.

The property owner will be responsible for applying for any planning permission, listed building consent and advertisement consent where necessary. Any associated costs in applying for relevant permissions will need to be funded by the applicant.

## What will the Scheme Fund?

Not all improvement works will be eligible for a Shop Front Improvement Grant. The grant will only fund “eligible works.”

The following generally will be considered as eligible for support:

- Repair and reinstatement of all or any part of a shop front fixture that is visible from the street, including the upper floors of premises where they are used for retail or commercial activities.
- Repainting of shop fronts in suitable colours
- Removal of paint from Masonry
- Re-pointing, repair and cleansing of external stonework and brickwork at and below fascia level.
- Fascia signage in keeping with the character of the building – e.g. hand painted signage.
- Scaffolding costs to facilitate redecoration where required
- Replacement of oversized advertisements/fascias
- Removal of vinyl advertisements
  
- Fabric roller blind awnings and canopies

The scheme generally will not fund the following:

- Lighting within window displays
- Window display equipment
- General pedestrian access improvements
- Externally mounted security features
- Dutch, balloon or plastic awnings and canopies
- Cleaning not part of a wider scheme of works

## Will I Need Planning Permission?

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

Planning permission is required for works that involve a material change to the external appearance of a premises. Such works include alterations to the fascia, the windows or the doorway, changes to the materials used or the



installation of blinds/awnings or security shutters.

The complete or partial demolition of an unlisted building within a conservation area will require conservation area consent. This includes the removal of features which give the shop front character, such as stall risers, fascia or window frames.

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.

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

Please note that it takes the approximately 6 weeks to determine a planning application, advertisement consent or other statutory consent. This consideration should be built into the project timetable.

Breckland Council can be contacted prior to making a grant application, if there is any uncertainty about permissions required for the proposed work.

### **How do I apply and what do you need?**

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

- Completed Application form including the full detailed schedule of works to be carried out and any supporting evidence.
- Proof of ownership/lease – The applicant will need to provide proof in writing that they have permission from the owner to carry out the works if not the owner.
- The building owner must countersign the 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 the grant application has been submitted prior to receiving the permissions, a copy of the permission should be submitted as soon as it is received. Please note that until this has been provided, funds will not be released.
- Cost estimates including quotes and fees – evidence that you have obtained three quotes from contractors. You should state which of the three contractors you would like to employ and why. Please note that any grant offer will usually be based on the lowest quotation.
- A current photo of the shop front and any available visuals of what it will look like after the improvements have been completed.
- If applicable, evidence that you cannot reclaim VAT.

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

Applications should be sent for the attention of [Joe.Warburton@Brecklnd.gov.uk](mailto:Joe.Warburton@Brecklnd.gov.uk)

Applications will be considered by a small Grant Panel.

The Grant Panel will decide on the application within six weeks.

All grant offers will be made in writing. If the proposed project requires planning permission and the grant is approved, the applicant will receive a letter making an in principle offer of funding. A formal grant offer letter will be issued as soon as relevant permission is granted. Full details of the conditions that apply to the



grant will be set out in a grant offer letter.

All grants will be conditional to the securement of appropriate consent. The scheme operates independently of the planning process and any offer of a grant does not imply in any way that planning consent will be granted.

A requirement of the scheme is that maintenance of the property to a satisfactory standard must be carried out for a minimum of 3 years.

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

The Grant Panel reserves the right not to make any grants if the applications received are not appropriate or compliant with the Shop Front Repair and Redecoration Scheme.



**Shop Front Improvement Scheme Application Form**

Applicant Name:		
Applicant Address:		
Name of Business:		
Address of property for which grant assistance is requested (if different from above)		
Applicant telephone number:		
Applicant Email:		
Website:		
Type of business		
Are you VAT registered?	Yes	No
Please provide the VAT number if registered		
Name and Address of Agent (if applicable)		
Telephone number and email of Agent (if applicable)		
Applicant's interest in the property	Freeholder	Leaseholder
If you are a leaseholder please state the date when the lease expires.		



(Please enclose a copy of the lease agreement)		
If you are the leaseholder, do you need the freeholder's permission for this work?	Yes	No
If YES, please provide evidence of the freeholder's permission	Please attach to application	
Please attach photographs showing the current front elevations of your shop/business front	Please attach to application	

### The Project

Please provide the following information in support of your application:

- A brief description of your project
- How will your project meet the priorities in the Shop Front Repair and Redecoration Scheme Guidance?

[Open Text]

**Statement of Works**  
Please describe the changes that you propose to make including:

- Reference to whether doors, windows or entrances are to change
- The nature of changes to the front including details of features you wish to add or remove
- Changes to retail display units
- Details of colours and styles to be employed

Please attach an architectural sketch plan showing the proposed new front elevation and detail any specific areas of change)

[open text]



Please list the items of work proposed and their estimated costs	Estimated Cost (£) – excluding VAT	
1.	£	
2.	£	
3.	£	
4.	£	
5.	£	
6.	£	
7.	£	
8.	£	
9.	£	
10.	£	
11.	£	
Subtotal		
VAT		
Total		
What is your expected start date for the work?		
What is your expected completion date for the work?		
Is your finance for the project in place?	Yes	No
Please give details of how you have established the project costs. This should include at least three quotations.  [open text]		
Quotations enclosed	Yes	No



Declaration

The information given in this form and the attached details are true and accurate to the best of my knowledge and no information has been deliberately withheld.

I understand that any misleading statements whether intentional or accidental, given at any stage during the application process, or any material information knowingly withheld, could render my application invalid and may require repayment of any grant.

I have read and understood the criteria for this grant.

I will notify Breckland Council in writing of any changes in the details of this application and in particular the award of any further funding from other sources.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Name (in block capitals): \_\_\_\_\_

On behalf of (if signed by an agent) \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_

Date: \_

If you are not the property owner, the application must be signed in support by the property owner.

I confirm that I am the property owner of

.....

and I agree to the current leaseholder using a Breckland Shop Front Improvement scheme to improve the front of the property.

Signature:

Date:

Print Name:



## Terms and Conditions

The agreement is between Breckland Council and the applicant(s) as named in the offer letter.

Businesses/organisations accepting grant offers from the Shop Front Improvement Scheme will be required to abide by and agree to the following terms and conditions:

There is a fixed threshold of £315,000 of Subsidy per enterprise in the current financial year and two previous financial years (i.e. this is a rolling time period). You will not be eligible for a grant and should not apply if this grant would take your enterprise over the threshold.

## General Terms and Conditions

The approval or refusal of a grant is at the absolute discretion of Breckland Council.

### Grants will not be given for expenditure incurred prior to the grant offer being made and the contract signed

- The grant must be used for the purpose intended as outlined in the Grant Offer letter. (This will be supported by producing original invoices for the grant claim)
- In the case of tenants, payment of the grant requires the building owner's approval.
- If the business/organisation ceases trading/operating within 12 months of the payment of the grant or the building is sold, the applicant must notify Breckland Council within 14 days and in such circumstances the Council may require the applicant(s) to repay, in whole or part of the grant paid.
- The grant must not be used for improvements to residential property, cleaning of buildings for without a wider programme of works, structural repairs including re-roofing, internal repairs and alterations, external security features, CCTV systems or recoverable VAT.
- If at any point the organisation/business becomes VAT registered, the applicant must inform Breckland Council and discuss repayment of VAT expenses claimed.
- The grant will only be paid to proposals which have been granted planning permission. Nothing in the agreement or negotiation of the grant will affect the Breckland Council's decision over planning permission. An offer of agreement in principle will be made until planning permission has been granted. Only then may a Grant Offer letter be issued and works commence.
- The applicant must inform Breckland Council of any changes to the business or changes of business address and telephone number.
- The grant is made on the condition that the property will be maintained to a satisfactory standard for a minimum of three years, or the term of the lease, whichever is the shorter.
- Any grant must be taken up within the period stated in the Grant Offer Letter unless a prior arrangement is made.
- Payment will be made in arrears upon the production of the grant claim form along with supporting documentation (e.g. copy invoices)
- Payments of grants to successful applicants will be in one sum on the receipt by Breckland Council of evidence that the applicant has incurred the expenditure.
- Expenditure must be incurred using a debit/credit card or cheque. Payments of grants will not be made towards expenditure incurred using the payment method of cash.
- Grants are dependent on applicants being required to complete a short questionnaire 12 months after the receipt of the grant.
- The offer of grant assistance will be for a period of 6 months with effect from the date offered.
- If, at any time during the term of this Agreement or within 5 years thereafter, it is discovered that any payment or benefit provided to you under this Agreement was based on false information, misrepresentation, violation of applicable laws, or breach of any material provision of this



Agreement, Breckland Council shall have the right to claw back and recover such payment or benefit from you. Breckland Council shall provide written notice to you specifying the basis for the clawback and the amount to be recovered. You are required to promptly return the specified amount to Breckland Council within 30 days of receiving such notice.

- Additionally, if the recipient is found to be in breach of any material provision of this Agreement, Breckland Council reserves the right to claw back any payments made to you for not meeting the agreed-upon standards. Breckland Council shall provide written notice to you specifying the basis for the clawback and the amount to be recovered. You are required to promptly return the specified amount to Breckland Council within 30 days of receiving such notice

