



Town Centre Façades Improvement grant

Guidance Notes:

Rugby Town Centre business property owners and tenants can apply for a grant to undertake projects for repairs and other works to improve the condition and appearance of the outside of their building.

All projects must be in accordance with the guidance outlined in the Council's Shopfront Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document which can be found at <https://www.rugby.gov.uk/w/shopfronts-design-guide-supplementary-planning-document-spd->

- **Grants Applications open:** Monday 16th September 2024
- **Grants Applications close:** Friday 3rd January 2025 4:00pm

We will not be running drop-in sessions for this grant fund. As applications are likely to be very bespoke, we are offering individual appointments to provide assistance and guidance on your application. If you would like to book an appointment, please email businessconnect@rugby.gov.uk with your preferred dates/times.

Summary

Description	The aim of this fund is to enhance the character of Rugby Town Centre. This is in line with Government's Communities and Place investment priority as part of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and the new Rugby Shopfront Design Guide. The relevant UKSPF objectives are: 1. Strengthening our social fabric and fostering a sense of local pride and belonging, through investment in activities that enhance physical, cultural and social ties and amenities, such as community infrastructure and local green space, and community-led projects.
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	<p>2. Building resilient and safe neighbourhoods, through investment in quality places that people want to live, work, play and learn in, through targeted improvements to the built environment and innovative approaches to crime prevention. The Rugby Shopfront Design Guidelines MUST be followed by your intended project. The PDF version is available as part of this application pack.</p> <p>Your project must have high potential to fulfil at least one of the following indicative outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jobs created • Jobs safeguarded • Increased footfall • Increased visitor numbers • Reduced vacancy rates • Greenhouse gas reductions • Improved perceived/experienced accessibility • Improved perception of facilities/amenities <p>N.B. In applying for a grant, you are entering into a competitive process.</p>
Funding Type	Grant
Grant Intervention Rate	<p>Grants will be offered at 90% of the cost of works unless special circumstances dictate otherwise.</p> <p>Example: if your total costs for the repair work is £5000 you can apply for up to £4,500</p>
Accessibility and Inclusion	<p>We welcome and encourage applications from people of all backgrounds and are committed to making our application process accessible to everyone. This includes making reasonable adjustments for people who have a disability or a long-term condition and face barriers applying to us.</p> <p>You can contact us at any time to ask for guidance whilst the fund is available. We recommend you contact us at least 15 working days before this grant's closing date to allow us to put the most suitable support in place. The support we can provide may be limited if you contact us close to the grant closure deadline.</p> <p>You can contact us for assistance by email: businessconnect@rugby.gov.uk</p>
Marketing and Promotion	On completion of the work, Rugby Borough Council will require a short case study to detail the difference and impact that the funding has made to your business including evidence of the changes made, i.e. before and after photographs and a

short write-up. A Case Study template is provided in the application pack and we may be able to help you to produce this short document – see contact email in the ‘Extra Help’ section at the end of this guidance document.

Eligibility

Who Can Apply	<p>To be eligible for a grant you must be:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The registered owner of a building or have a repairing lease which covers the external fabric of the building with the lease running until at least 31 March 2025. 2. The building must be located within Rugby Town Centre Area. A map showing the boundary of the area is included in the application pack.
Eligible Works	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Replacement of shopfront elements, such as signage. 2. Repairs and improvements to the external fabric of the building. Works could include repairs to the ground floor such as facing walls, windows and doors, rainwater goods, and any other elements of the external fabric of the building. 3. Any fees associated with required permissions and consents. 4. All proposals must be in accordance with the guidance outlined in the Council’s Shopfront Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document which can be found in this application pack and at https://www.rugby.gov.uk/w/shopfronts-design-guide-supplementary-planning-document-spd- <p>For works to be eligible for a grant they must use appropriate, and where relevant, traditional building methods and materials.</p>
Ineligible Works	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Any works solely above ground floor level 2. Any works within the interior of the building 3. Any works that have already commenced or been completed before your grant agreement is signed
Value Added Tax (VAT)	<p>VAT may be payable on eligible items of the proposed works. Where it cannot be recovered by the grant recipient (i.e. you are not VAT registered) it is eligible to claim as part of your application. Any costs that are inclusive of VAT should be clearly identified on submitted quotations.</p>

Scope

Your Proposal	<p>The aim of this grant is to enhance the character of Rugby Town Centre by improvement of the building frontages. Your project must have high potential to fulfil at least one of the indicative outcomes (impacts) outlined in the Summary section of this guidance.</p>
	<p>All proposed works must comply with UK Government procurement procedures, this includes seeking 3 quotes for the purchase of any goods or services to demonstrate best value. We will request all 3 quotes prior to issuing a funding agreement, and a minimum of 1 quote should be submitted with your application.</p>

	If you have any issues getting quotes due to the nature of the works, for example where there are only one or two businesses able to undertake the work, please make this clear in the application.
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How to apply

Before you start	You must read the guidance on applying for the grant before you start your application. Please answer all questions on the application form to ensure it is a valid application.
Application acknowledgements	We aim to acknowledge receipt of your grant application by email within 5 working days. If your grant application is not eligible for funding (due to the location of the building and/or the works being ineligible) we aim to advise you with 5 working days from receipt. If your grant application is eligible, we aim to provide you with a formal response as to whether a grant will be offered as soon as practicable after the application has gone through panel appraisal.

Assessment process

Application Assessors	All applications will be assessed by the Economic Development and Planning teams with a recommendation made to a panel of relevant officers, internal and external to the Council, to confirm whether the grant application meets outlined outcomes and the objectives of the grant fund investment priorities. We will also check and inform you if planning permission will be required for the works to go ahead. If planning permission is required AND your application is agreed, we will notify you and send the relevant application (planning / advertisement consent / Listed Building Consent) at the earliest possible time. The associated planning costs can be rolled into your grant application.
Consents and permissions	In most cases it is unlikely that planning permission or advertisement consent will be required, however, you can check on the Planning Portal . Our planning team will check your improvement plans as part of the initial assessment process. If required, a Planning Officer will provide advice on the need for such permissions and consents, so that these can be addressed before your application goes to the panel. If the proposed works are to a listed building, then appropriate or like-for-like repairs are also unlikely to require consent. If consent is required, the Conservation Officer will provide advice on the need for such permissions and consents as part of the initial assessment so that these can be addressed before your application goes to the panel. It is unlikely that many works will require compliance with Building Regulations. However, it is strongly recommended that advice is sought from the Warwickshire Building Control Partnership prior to the submission of a grant application. Your preferred contractor should also be able to advise.
Application Prioritisation	This a competitive process and a limited fund so we may not be able to fund all eligible applications for proposed works. Therefore, applications will be assessed on a 'first come, first served' basis . Assessment of applications is continuous, until all the money has been awarded, in the order complete applications were received by the panel. Once the full allocation of funds has been met, the Council will retain a "stand by" list of grant applications that will be considered should any proposed works become unviable, undelivered or if further funds become available.

Once the fund has reached fund allocation, we will notify you that this is the case on the grants website.

Grant funding arrangements

Grant Agreement	<p>Successful grant applicants will enter into a Funding Agreement with the Council. If we approve your application and offer you a grant you must:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Ensure required consents and permissions have been obtained before commencing with the works. Such consents may include:<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. If the grant recipient is the tenant, providing confirmation that the landlord/freeholder has given permission for the undertaking of the proposed worksb. Planning permission / advertisement consentc. Listed building consentd. Building Regulations Approval2. Ensure any required Insurance is in place for the works3. Ensure compliance with the UK Subsidy Control regime (see Annex 1 of the grant application)4. Ensure the works are completed in a timely manner and by 30th June 2025 at the latest.
UK Subsidy Control	<p>Applicants must ensure that any proposed works are compliant with the UK Subsidy Control regime and will be asked to demonstrate this within the application form and any subsequent grant agreement. Applicants will be asked to declare whether they or any businesses/organisations they are formally linked with have received funding from EU or other public sources when they apply. For further information see section Annex 1 of the grant application form.</p>
Grant payment	<p>If you successfully pass the panel appraisal, a Funding Agreement will be sent to you. To accept the grant, you will need to read, sign, and return a copy of the agreement to us within 3 business days. If we do not receive this from you, we reserve the right to withdraw the offer. After you have accepted, a grant payment for the agreed amount will be issued to you as soon as is practicable.</p>

Supporting Information

Support Guidance	A pre-completed example application form is included in this pack.
Data sharing	<p>The Data Controller is Rugby Borough Council. The data you provide on the application form will only be used in connection with funding and services provided by the Borough Council. By signing the application form you are agreeing that any financial assistance granted by Rugby Borough Council, will be repayable on demand or future payments not made if any information provided is found to be incorrect.</p> <p>By submitting your application, you are consenting to the council verifying your information against other records it holds (for example, business rates records) to secure the effective financial management of the council. Where you are an individual or individuals, please note that the council is the Data Controller for the purposes of the Data Protection Act 2018 (the “Act”) and the information in this form will be used for the purposes of assessing your application and cross-checking with other information the council holds relating to you, in accordance with the provisions of the Act.</p> <p>For our full privacy notice please see: https://www.rugby.gov.uk/w/privacy#business-support-and-economic-development</p>
Extra Help	<p>If you need more information or help with completing your grant application, email us at businessconnect@rugby.gov.uk and we will arrange a suitable time to chat with you.</p> <p>Please note: Rugby Borough Council will not tolerate abusive language in any written or verbal correspondence, applications, social media or any other form that might affect staff.</p>