

GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS

Argyll and Bute Shopfront Improvement Grant 2021/22

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This guidance has been designed to assist business owners in Argyll and Bute who are interested in improving their **shop frontage** to make an application for grant. Please read this guidance note, and frequently asked questions, in full before completing an application.

GRANT AVAILABLE

There is a strict total budget of £65,000, which is being split equally between the council's four administrative areas as follows:

- **Bute and Cowal – £16,250**
- **Helensburgh and Lomond – £16,250**
- **Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands – £16,250**
- **Oban, Lorn and the Isles - £16,250**

Applications are invited from business owners from Argyll and Bute looking to make repairs to their shopfront, with the exception of 6 towns highlighted below.

Applications are therefore encouraged from businesses in smaller settlements and rural retail businesses.

Please note, the grant is **not** available to business owners in the main town of a Business Improvement District (BID) or a Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS) town. Applications cannot therefore be considered from: **Campbeltown, Dunoon, Helensburgh, Lochgilphead, Oban or Rothesay.**

Applications will be treated on a first come, first served basis. There is therefore no guarantee that all applicants will be successful in securing grant, but it is hoped that the funding will widely support business owners who have not yet benefited from shopfront improvement schemes. The amount of grant that remains in each pot (as above) will be updated on a weekly basis.

Applications cannot be made retrospectively. You are therefore urged to apply as quickly as possible if you have been considering making improvements to your property.

You can apply for up to 75% towards the total costs of the improvements, up to a maximum of £5,000 inclusive of VAT.

Works must be able to be completed by 30th June 2022.

This is a discretionary fund for which there is no right of appeal.

You can apply if :

- Your business is located within Argyll and Bute and is not in one of the **ineligible BID or CARS towns listed above.**

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- You wish to make eligible improvements to the physical appearance of your shopfront, i.e. the **outside** of your business premises.
- **A full list of eligible elements is contained within the guidance note at Question 5.**

A full list of what you can apply for is provided on pages 3-6.

You are unable to apply for the following:

- Funding for work already/being completed;
- The amenity area/area of ground in front of your business unit;
- Any ancillary or removable items, such as planting, benches, trellises and hanging baskets;
- Painting of stonework, where paint has never before been applied;
- Any area above ground floor, and therefore not considered to be your shop front;
- Dutch canopies;
- Illumination;
- Plastic windows, plastic doors, plastic signs, and plastic cladding;
- Any non-physical shopfront elements, such as photography or web/digital elements;
- Any signage not attached to the building, such as 'A' boards;
- Any security related items, such as roller shutters;
- Works to the interior (with the exception of screens related to making your premises safer in terms of COVID-19 related measures);
- Works to elevations that cannot be viewed from the street (with the exceptions of applications for canopies on rear elevations to support hospitality businesses);
- VAT (where the applicant is VAT registered, and VAT is therefore recoverable);
- Insurance; or,
- Temporary signage.

Please use the following guidance to assist with completion of the accompanying application form.

A list of Frequently Asked Questions, found on the [shopfront improvement grant webpage](#), has also been produced to support you in applying for grant. Please also refer to this for guidance.

- 1.** Provide your business/trading name. A business bank account should be available. If the application is successful, payment will be made via BACS transfer.
- 2.** We will liaise directly with the main contact, as provided.
 - 2.a.** Please tell us the contact's position in the business.
 - 2.b.** This should be the address of the property which you would like to improve.
 - 2.c.** Only add a correspondence address if this is different from 2.b.)

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2.d. Provide contact details for the business.

3. Tick to confirm whether you are the owner, or the tenant of the premises. If you are the owner, please provide a copy of your Title to confirm ownership, and if you are the tenant please provide evidence to show you have consent to make alterations to the property.

4. You can confirm if your shopfront is within a listed building via the following link:
<https://www.historicenvironment.scot/advice-and-support/listing-scheduling-and-designations/listed-buildings/search-for-a-listed-building/>

5.a. We want to understand what your shopfront will look like when the works have finished. Specify details of the proposed improvements and the finishes, e.g. staining/colours (with the British Standard Colour Chart number referenced), drawings (showing the dimensions), signage proof etc. and explain how the appearance of your business premises will be improved for potential customers. Without the detail and finishes specified, your application cannot be determined.

Where statutory consents are required, it will be sufficient to provide the reference number for these, instead of enclosing the drawings with your application.

Remember to make use of the [Frequently Asked Questions](#).

Photographs describing the current condition of the property must also be provided. **Please note that we may then use these, alongside ‘after’ images on our website, and to generally help publicise and promote the scheme.**

You can apply for the following:

General Repairs

Small-scale repairs can include the following:

- Glazing repairs to windows, doors, and transom or fan lights.
- Joinery repairs to fascias, stall risers, and to windows and doors.
- Tiling repairs to doorstep and recessed doorways.
- Ironwork.
- Masonry repairs (where this area abuts the shopfront).
- Cladding repairs (where this area abuts the shopfront).
- Leadwork, coping and guttering repairs (where these abut the shopfront).

Repair/Restoration of Traditional Architectural Elements

Traditional architectural repairs can include the following:

- Joinery repairs to decorative features such as mullions, consoles, pilasters etc. and to windows and doors.
- Masonry repairs/restoration to decorative traditional aspects.

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- Canopies – Repairs to traditional blinds and awnings.
- Decorative ironwork.

Painting

Painting is grant eligible, provided a heritage colour is used:

- Painting of timber in a heritage type colour.
- Painting of masonry in a breathable paint, of a heritage type colour.

Please note that the painting of stonework, where paint has never before been applied will not be an eligible cost. Where stonework has traditionally been painted however, a breathable paint from a heritage colour palette would be eligible.

- Paint removal is also an eligible cost, provided this is undertaken in a sensitive manner and a methodology statement is supplied to detail the approach.

Please note we strongly recommend you buy and test a paint colour sample, prior to purchasing the paint.

Signage

Signage can include the following:

- Repairs to existing sign boards – fascia signs and hanging signs.
- Replacement of plastic fascias with timber. (Please note that all timber should be sustainably sourced from managed forests).
- Sign writing, either painted or cast vinyl raised letters (of a traditional style only).

Replacement

Replacement of modern shopfronts with a traditional shopfront of classical proportions. (Please note that all timber should be sustainably sourced from managed forests and surviving traditional fabric should be restored wherever possible).

- Replacement awnings and canopies (with the exception of Dutch canopies).
- New steel beams (where these abut the shopfront).
- Glazing (replacement shatterproof glass is encouraged, unless the glass is historic and part of the traditional shopfront character).

New Additions

- Provision for enhanced disabled access.
- New timber hanging signs and brackets.
- New traditional style awnings and canopies (with the exception of Dutch canopies).
- Canopies for the rear of hospitality businesses will also be considered eligible for grant.

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- Interior screens.

Professional Fees

Professional fees are eligible if directly linked to grant eligible works as follows:

- Architect, surveyor, structural engineer and agent fees.
- Statutory consent fees, i.e. for planning permission, advertisement consent, listed building consent and building warrant fees. (Please note that fees are only grant eligible where these are linked to works, i.e. fees are not an eligible cost in isolation).

Contingency and VAT

- It is expected that contingency will be a component of every project, and provided this is used during the course of the works, it will be considered a grant eligible cost.
- VAT will only be a grant eligible cost in cases where the applicant is not VAT registered.

For further information regarding shopfronts please refer to Historic Environment Scotland's, [Scottish Traditional Shopfronts Short Guide](#).

5.b. Use this space to indicate when your project would start and finish. This can be an estimate at this stage.

Please note that works must be completed by 30th June 2022.

6. It is the responsibility of the applicant to check whether any statutory consents are required, and to secure these prior to works.

- Planning Permission is usually required for any alteration that materially affects the external appearance of a building, including canopies/awnings, and painting within conservation areas.
- Listed Building Consent may also be required for shopfronts as part of listed buildings.
- Many proposed signs require advertisement consent. For signage, please refer to Argyll and Bute Council's, [Technical Working Note Advertisement and Signage 2017](#)
- A building warrant may also be required, depending on the level of intervention.

Where required, please confirm that the relevant planning/advert/listed building consents and building warrants will required to be/ have been secured.

It is not necessary to have secured consent before making an application for grant, but you will have to show in writing that you have discussed your proposal with the relevant department.

Should you require any statutory consents, proof of consent will be required for the release of any grant payment.

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For shopfront design principles, please refer to Argyll and Bute Council's, Local Development Plan, [Supplementary Planning Guidance 2016](#) (from page 95).

E-mail addresses for contacts in the [Planning](#) Department are as follows:

- Bute and Cowal: planning.bandc@argyll-bute.gov.uk
- Helensburgh and Lomond: planning.handl@argyll-bute.gov.uk
- Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands: planning.maki@argyll-bute.gov.uk
- Oban, Lorn and the Isles: planning.olandi@argyll-bute.gov.uk

Telephone number: **01546 605 518**

Information on [Building Standards](#) can be found as follows:

<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/planning-and-environment/building-standards-advice>

7. You are asked to be specific in your funding request, and to list all items for which you require grant.

You are required to identify the cost against each item, which must be based on quotations received.

Quotes for works, labour and professional fees should be based on a clear and single specification distributed to all contractors asked to quote. Both the specification, and written quotes received, are required in support of your application, as follows:

- **2 quotes are required for works up to £999.**
- **3 quotes are required for works with a value of £1,000 and over.**

Copies of original tenders should be on contractor's headed notepaper.

If you are not using the lowest quote please explain why.

If you have the relevant skills to undertake works of repair to your own property, you can apply for grant towards the cost of the goods required. A receipted invoice would be required to evidence any such purchase(s). You will be expected to show how you have chosen where to purchase the item(s), and for larger purchases of £1,000 and over you will be expected to provide 3 quotes/note of phone calls/links to websites to show best value.

8. Grant is offered at 75% of eligible items up to a maximum award of £5,000. An example is provided in the following table:

Cost of eligible works	Grant offered at 75%
£500	£375

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Cost of eligible works	Grant offered at 75%
£1,000	£750
£2,000	£1,500
£3,000	£2,250
£4,000	£4,000
£5,000	£3,750
£6,000	£4,500
£6,666	£4,999.50

Please clearly state how much grant you require towards your project.

The only exception to this cap on the grant available would be if you were considering the full reinstatement of a traditional shopfront with one of classical proportions. In this case, and assuming that the project is sufficiently advanced to ensure that it would be possible to deliver within the required timescales, consideration would be given to increasing the maximum value to better reflect the scale of the project.

An example of a classically proportioned shopfront is provided as follows:

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(1) Stallriser, (2) plinth, (3) pilaster, (4) area for console bracket, (5) cornice, (6) fascia,
 (7) recessed entrance, often enclosed by timber panelled storm doors (8) inner glazed doors

If you are successful in your application, on conclusion of the works you will be required to recognise your grant via a small vinyl sticker to be placed in your window or door. A sticker would be provided to you at the relevant time.

9. Please tell us if you are VAT registered. Grant is only paid on VAT in cases where the business is not VAT registered and therefore unable to recover VAT.
10. Please tick to declare that you have read and understood the criteria of the grant for which you are applying.
11. Please sign and date the application.

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Only when all boxes of the check list can be ticked, please submit to: shopfrontsupport@argyll-bute.gov.uk

12. The following documents **must be** enclosed with your application for your application to progress to assessment stage.

- Evidence of title, or formal lease with the consent of the owner.
- Confirmation of VAT status.
- Drawings and specification of the work (if you have made an application for Planning Permission or Listed Building Consent, a note of the relevant planning reference in response to Q6 will suffice).
- Quotations for either 2 or 3 competitive tenders (depending on the value of works).
- Photograph of the current business frontage/façade (in a jpeg format).
- Evidence of pre-application discussion/Statutory consents (i.e. in relation to planning consent/ advert consent/ listed building consent/ building warrant).
- Application form signed and dated on final page.

Please submit your application, and all supporting information, to:
shopfrontsupport@argyll-bute.gov.uk