



## BRENTWOOD, SHENFIELD AND INGATESTONE SHOP IMPROVEMENT SCHEME

Grants of up to £2k are available for shop front and accessibility improvements. A total of £30k will be distributed to town centre businesses in Brentwood, Shenfield and Ingatestone in 2024. This scheme is funded by the UK government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

### BEFORE YOU START

We want to make sure that your application is successful. Please complete a short expression of interest form to outline the improvements you would like to make to your business premise. We will liaise with our planning department to see if your improvements may require planning consent. If your business is in a listed building and/or located in [Brentwood town centre](#) or [Ingatestone High Street](#), there may be planning constraints to consider when undertaking works to your property. Completing an expression of interest form is not confirmation that your funding request has been approved.

### WHO IS ELIGIBLE

The grant is available to anyone who owns or rents commercial premises in (including registered charities) in these areas:

- Brentwood town centre (including the Brentwood High Street, Kings Road, Ongar Road, Coptfold Road, St Thomas Road, Moores Place, Crown Street and Ingrave Road)
- Shenfield high street (Hutton Road, Shenfield Road)
- Ingatestone high street

Due to restrictions on the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, we cannot fund shop improvements outside these areas.

### WHAT CAN BE FUNDED

The grant can contribute towards expenditure including:

- replacement shop front, windows and doors
- reinstatement of traditionally styled shop fronts, sash windows and doors
- painting of existing shop fronts and upper floors (including render)
- replacement gutter and downpipes
- replacement signage
- external lighting schemes
- repair and reinstatement of all or any part of a shop front fixture that is visible from the street, including the first and second floors of premises where they are used for commercial activities
- accessibility improvements such as nosing on steps, widening of doorways, ramps for doorways or removal of steps, handrails, portable ramps, power assisted doors, disabled access signs, doorbells and training staff to assist disabled customers
- professional fees (e.g. architect)



The scheme will not support:

- Improvements to residential property, including residential property located above commercial premises
- Retrospective applications i.e. for work already completed or underway structural repairs including re-roofing
- Internal repairs and alterations
- External security features
- Works that require consent where consent has not been granted

### GRANT CONDITIONS

- Grant funding is limited and will be on a first come first served basis.
- Applications will close when the funding is fully allocated.
- Grant applications are assessed on their individual merit against the grant funding eligibility criteria on behalf of the council by the Economic Development Team.
- The grant cannot fund projects retrospectively, or elements of works already completed.
- The applicant must give consent for Brentwood Borough Council to involve the business in publicity e.g., press releases and photographs.
- The applicant must not have any other outstanding debts payable to the council.
- **All the necessary statutory approvals and legal requirements must be complied with before payments will be made.** You will need planning permission for any alteration to shop front which would materially change the appearance of the premises. For example, replacing doors, shopfronts or windows is likely to affect the outward appearance of the property and therefore planning permission is likely to be required. Listed Building Consent may also be required and advertisement consent for replacement signage. **You must cover the cost of obtaining approvals and legal requirements yourself.**
- It is important that businesses located within the [Brentwood](#) and [Ingatestone](#) Conservation Areas are aware that any changes must be appropriate and sympathetic to the area's character. The controls over advertisements in these areas are stricter. We require that any signs are in line with the [Advertising Regulations](#), the [Adopted Local Plan 2016-2033](#) (Strategic Policy PC04: Retail Hierarchy of Designated Centres) and [Brentwood Town Centre Design guide](#).
- The grant is repayable should any of the conditions be breached or if the project is not implemented in full.

### MATCH FUNDING

No match funding is required, however you will need to funding in place to cover any costs above £2k. We will pay you up to the agreed grant value (maximum £2k). Please note that all the necessary statutory approvals and legal requirements must be complied with and paid for by yourself before any payment is made.

## WHO CAN APPLY

- Eligible businesses can take the legal form of Sole Trader, Partnership, Limited Company or Social Enterprise/Community Interest Company (CIC).
- The business cannot be in administration, insolvent, in a situation where a strike-off has been made or in arrears with Brentwood Borough Council.
- National retailers/chains/multiples with more than 3 locations are ineligible.

## HOW TO APPLY

- Applications must be made online and will be available on the Brentwood Borough Council website.
- If you do not own the property, you will need have agreement from the owner to carry out the works.
- An application is deemed to have been made when a duly completed application form, including the required additional evidence such as planning permission and a photo of your current shop front, is received via our online procedure.
- Once your online application is received, we will acknowledge receipt of your grant application via an email. If you do not receive this email within 2 working days, please contact [business@brentwood.gov.uk](mailto:business@brentwood.gov.uk) as soon as possible to check your application has been received.
- Applicants will be required to provide statutory information and upload the following evidence:
  - confirmation that you have permission from your landlord if you are the tenant
  - copy of a bank statement dated within the last 3 months in the business name (the financial information can be redacted, we just need confirmation of your trading address)
  - confirmation of compliance with Subsidy Control restrictions

## DECISION PROCESS

- Grant applications are assessed on their individual merit against the grant funding eligibility criteria on behalf of the council by the Economic Development Team.
- A decision will be made on your application, unless further information is required from you, within 28 days of the application being made.
- All grant offers will be made in writing via email. If your project requires consents or permissions it is your responsibility to ensure that these are in place prior to starting the work. The scheme operates independently of the planning process and any offer of a grant does not imply that planning consent will be granted.

## OFFER OF THE GRANT

- All offers will be made via email and must be accepted within 10 working days by the applicant.
- After this date the offer will be automatically withdrawn. The applicant will then have to re-apply if they still wish to proceed after this date.
- If you wish to withdraw your interest, please confirm this in writing via email to [business@brentwood.gov.uk](mailto:business@brentwood.gov.uk)
- Our expectation is that projects will be completed by 31 January 2025.



## PAYMENT OF GRANT

- The grant will be paid in full in advance of works taking place. Please note that all the necessary statutory approvals and legal requirements must be complied with before any payment will be made.
- VAT is excluded.
- **You must provide photographic evidence by 31 January 2025 to show that works have been completed.**
- If the costs of the proposed project exceed the maximum grant awarded as agreed in the offer letter, the council will not increase the grant amount.
- Payment of the grant will be made into the applicant's business bank account (or 'trading as' account) via BACS.
- Material changes to your project may mean that your offer is withdrawn and you may be advised to reapply.

## REPAYMENT OF GRANT

The council reserves the right to recover all or part of the grant it has provided if:

- works have not been completed by 31 January 2025
- information provided in the application form or other correspondence is found to be substantially incorrect, misleading or incomplete

## SCHEME OF DELEGATION

Officers of the council will administer the scheme and the Section 151 Officer is authorised to make technical scheme amendments to ensure it meets the criteria set by the council.

## REVIEW OF DECISIONS

- The council will operate an internal review process and will accept an applicant's request for a review of its decision.
- All such requests must be made in writing to the council within 14 days of our decision and should state the reasons why the applicant disagrees with the decision. New information may be submitted at this stage to support the applicant's appeal.
- The application will be reconsidered by a senior officer, as soon as practicable and the applicant informed by email of the decision.

## SUBSIDY CONTROL

- The Subsidy Control Act 2022 (the "Act") came into force on 4 January 2023. The Act sets out the UK's prevailing subsidy control rules.
- Payments received by the applicant from any business grant schemes administered by local authorities or anything similar from the government, for all business properties they are responsible for, counts as Subsidy Allowance. Full details can be found in the Statutory Guidance for the United Kingdom Subsidy Control Regime on GOV.UK.
- To qualify for this grant your business must not have received more than £315,000 of subsidy allowance in the last 3 years.



## COUNTER FRAUD

- Local authorities will not accept deliberate manipulation and will work collaboratively across the region and nationally to share intelligence and resources to detect fraud.
- Any business found to be giving false information in order to gain a grant will be investigated.
- The council will recover money paid in error and fraudulent claims will be prosecuted in the courts.

## FULL GRANT APPLICATION

If your expression of interest is successful, you will be asked to submit a full application. You will need to include the following information:

- your contact details including name, position, email and phone number
- the business details including
  - your name
  - trading name
  - address
  - website
  - any unique company number, such as Companies House, VAT or tax reference numbers
- the number of full and part time employees
- date you began trading

You will also be asked to upload the following documents, please have them ready:

- details of the proposed projects including a current photo of the premises and any drawings/plans showing the proposed changes
- at least one quotation
- letter from landlord giving permission for the works (if you are a tenant)
- confirmation of any necessary approvals if required; for example planning permissions, advertising consent, listed building consent, building regulations

## GRANT AWARDS

- Total funding for the Shop Improvement Grant Scheme will be £30,000.
- It is unlikely that there will be enough funding for every application received. Some applicants may be offered a lower level of grant, and some will be unsuccessful.