

HIGH STREET IMPROVEMENT GRANT SCHEME 2021

Supporting High Street Businesses in Our Town Centres

Guidance pack

Overview

The London Borough of Redbridge (LBR) recognises that high streets are the civic heart of the local community. We also recognise that the negative impact of Covid-19 restrictions have affected business continuity and consumer behaviour. In response, we have allocated funding to create a small capital grants programme aimed at developing initiatives brought forward by local high street businesses/retailers.

The grants programme aims to support business owners and operators through the wider recovery and increase the economic stability of Redbridge town centres by providing a grant fund to deliver a range of improvements and adaptations.

Some examples include:

- **Shop front grants**, which have a positive impact on the street scene. This could include signage, awnings, disabled access, or window replacements;
- **Permeable shutters**, which allow a view of goods or service on display from outside the property, whilst enhancing security with additional light cast onto the footpath;
- **Greening and sustainability measures**, including insulation, energy efficient adaptations, greening/green walls particularly where this can enhance otherwise unattractive facades and side elevations
- **Internal Layout/Visual merchandising**, including modifications that enable premises to become covid-secure, or altering the layout to ensure goods and services are clearly displayed from outside the property
- **Meanwhile uses**, providing the capital costs to convert premises for alternative uses such as art galleries, creative uses or start-up businesses enabling long-term vacant units that require minimal modification to be brought back into use; and
- **Digital technologies**, introducing technology to adapt and improve trading opportunities.

We welcome applications from high street businesses in Redbridge town centres to fund capital projects that can be covered in a “one-off” payment. On-going revenue or maintenance costs are not covered by the grant.

Essential Criteria

- The grant will cover up to 50% of the total costs of works carried out, and the maximum grant award is £10,000.
- The type of proposal considered must be a 'one-off' capital cost, revenue expenditure will not be granted towards ongoing costs.
- Written permission from the freeholder is required to carry out improvements to commercial property
- The improvement works must be completed before September 2022
- The applicant business/group must be located within Redbridge (see further information in 'where can the grant be used' heading below)
- Food related businesses must have a minimum of a 4-5 food standard star rating
- Business rates or other outstanding payments owed to LBR and impending enforcement action will be considered. Applications may be rejected if there are outstanding debts to consider (see Grant Conditions)
- Businesses applying for the grant must be formally registered with HMRC (6 months minimum period).

Purpose of the Grant Fund / Key Priorities

- To enable businesses to carry out small scale improvements to commercial property in Redbridge town centres.
- To bring vacant high street property into use.
- To address issues identified by businesses that will enhance trading conditions.
- To support businesses to create additional exterior trading space where possible.
- To support aspirations developed through joint collaborative working from a range of businesses/retailers to address common issues. We welcome applications from businesses located next to each other or in the same parade.
- To stimulate private sector investment in Redbridge whilst encouraging improvements that will benefit customers and the high street environment.
- To assist businesses and sectors that were most affected by Covid-19 restrictions.

Who Can Apply?

The High Street Improvement Grant Fund is open to all freeholders and leaseholders with at least 5 years remaining on the lease for property related applications. Applications will only be accepted within Redbridge's district and local town centres. Applications can be made by individual businesses or by business groups that meet the criteria listed above.

Eligibility

Those businesses that can apply for a grant include:

- All high street facing businesses in Redbridge district and local town centres can apply. We particularly encourage applications from businesses most affected by Covid-19 related restrictions.

The following organisations/businesses are not eligible:

- National retailers/chains/multiples with stores in more than 3 locations
- Betting Shops/Pawnbrokers/payday loan providers
- Banks and buildings societies

How the Grant Can Be Used

Businesses can apply for funding for the following (this list is not exhaustive):

- Painting, decorating, decluttering and repairing shopfronts
- Energy efficiency improvements
- Shop jacket or screening of vacant and empty shops
- Permeable shutters
- Signage and awning renewal
- Create wider DDA compliant access.
- Empty space activation (to bring long-term vacant commercial units back into use)
- Interior layout (shelving, sight lines, window display, stock arrangement)
- Digital technology to enhance trading conditions

The Grant Will Not Fund:

- Recurring or other revenue costs (including: maintenance, salaries, stock, rent, utility charges)
- Repaying existing loans or debts
- Fund projects where other public funding has been accessed
- Works to part of the building that are residential or not used by customers
- Proposals from businesses with outstanding or impending enforcement action

Where the Grant Can Be Used

The scheme is exclusively aimed at the borough's district and local town centres.

Several regeneration initiatives and high street focussed activities are already underway or planned for Ilford town centre.

The High Street Improvement Grant Scheme aims to support the rest of the town centre network in Redbridge.

We welcome applications from businesses that trade from any of the locations listed below:

District Town Centres		
Barkingside	A123 High Road Barkingside	Fulwell Cross to Tanners Lane
Chadwell Heath	A118 High Road	Belfairs Rd to Station Rd (inc. Wangey Rd)
Gants Hill	A12 Eastern Ave A400 Woodford Ave A123 Cranbrook Rd A123 Cranbrook Rd	Roundabout to Beehive Lane Roundabout to Gants Hill Crescent Roundabout to Bramley Crescent Roundabout to Shere Avenue
South Woodford	B168 George Lane A1199 Woodford High Road	Woodford High Rd to Kenwood Gardens Glebelands Ave to Woodford Health Centre
Wanstead	High Road	Woodford Rd A1199 to A12 Eastern Avenue
Neighbourhood Town Centres		
Goodmayes	B177 Goodmayes Rd A1083 Green Lane	A118 High Rd to Green Lane Goodmayes Rd to Bloomfield Rd
Ilford Lane	A123 Ilford Lane	Winston Way to St Lukes Ave
Manford Way	Manford Way	Fallow Close to Fernie Close
Newbury Park	A12 Ley Street Horns Road	Cranley Drive to 752 Eastern Avenue Eastern Ave to Clifton Road Eastern Ave to Greengate Parade
Seven Kings	A118 High Road	Cameron Rd to Goodmayes Rd
Woodford Broadway	Snakes Lanes West Snakes Lane East Barnabas Road Parade Hillside Avenue Parade	Croft Lodge Close to Broadway Close Woodford Station to Theydon Grove
Woodford Bridge	A113 Chigwell Road	Ashton Playing field to no.694

How to Apply

Complete the on-line application form which can be found on the website:
www.redbridge.gov.uk/regeneration-and-growth

You will need to complete the application form and provide supporting documentation. This should include (where appropriate):

- The last 3 months business bank statements
- Schedule of proposed works
- 2 quotes for the proposed works and justification for the quote you chose
- Planning/Licencing/Environmental Health consents/details – (copy of permissions, if applicable)
- Copy of tenancy (if tenant) and copy of written consent for the works to be carried out from the freeholder of the property
- Photographs showing the current front/side elevations and internal images of your shop/business (relevant to your proposed improvement)

- Visuals of proposed alterations

Applications open from 29th June 2021 and close on 30th September 2021, or when all funds have been allocated. Works must be completed by 30th September 2022.

Design Guidelines - Basic principles include:

- Compliance with relevant guidelines for proposals in conservation areas
- Declutter signage and display window
- Sympathetic colour, design and scale to surrounding businesses
- Compliant with disabled access guideline (DDA Compliant)

Decision Process

Applications will be considered by the High Street Improvement Grant panel.

A decision will be made on your application at the next available meeting following your application submission. If further information is required from you, this may delay the decision.

All grant offers will be made in writing. If your project requires planning permission and your grant is approved we will issue a formal grant offer letter as soon as permission is granted. Full details of the conditions that apply will be set out in the grant offer letter.

All grants will be conditional on you securing appropriate planning consent if it is required. The scheme operates independently of the planning process and any offer of a grant does not imply that planning consent will be approved.

Grant Conditions

- Grants are discretionary and Redbridge Council reserves the right to refuse any grant at its sole discretion. The Council reserves the right to vary the amount of grant at its sole discretion.
- Where applications have any amounts owing to Redbridge Council, this will be taken into consideration in determining grant eligibility.
- Award of grant will be conditional on the applicant(s) proving that they comply with all current statutory employment and related legislation.
- Written approval of the Grant must be received before any expenditure is made on the project.
- The provision of false information may lead to prosecution.

Score Weighting of Applications

- | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| • Ability to meet set eligibility criteria | 40% |
| • Impact on High Street environment and/or business process | 30% |
| • Impact on customers | 20% |
| • Innovation & Sustainability | 10% |

Payment of the Grant

Payment of Grant will be on receipt of paid invoice and evidence of completed work(s).

Assistance

Applicants may avail of advice from both the Planning and Regeneration teams on design proposals and planning permission requirements. Please direct enquiries to hsifs@redbridge.gov.uk