



## HISTORIC BUILDINGS AND AREAS GRANT Application for Grants

### WEST WILTSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

#### Information and Procedures for Applicants

##### 1. Eligible Works

- 1.1 Historic Buildings and Areas Grants are available for two categories of works, *Repairs to Historic Buildings* and *Improvements to Historic Areas*. The procedures and standards are the same for both categories unless otherwise stated.
- 1.2 Grants for *Repairs to Historic Buildings* are principally aimed at repairs to listed buildings identified by English Heritage's criteria as being 'at risk' of dereliction or loss through neglect and decay.
- 1.3 Grants for *Improvements to Historic Areas* are for the enhancement of the setting of historic buildings or within conservation areas including hard landscaping in conservation areas. Eligible works might, for example, include paving in natural stone, reinstatement of railings or co-ordinated control of street signs.
- 1.4 Grants for *Repairs to Historic Buildings* will be limited to works required to bring the building into a condition where it is no longer categorised as being 'at risk'. The repairs will normally be for works to the exterior of the building, though repairs to badly decayed internal timbers, for example, would be eligible if their condition endangered the stability of the building. Repairs to roofs will be one of the main items. Many churchyard monuments are also in a state of decay and will also be eligible for these grants.
- 1.5 Maintenance works, such as redecoration or re-pointing, will not normally be eligible for either category of grant, nor will temporary works unless they are concerned with an emergency situation.
- 1.6 A high standard of work will be required, according to best practice, using traditional materials and techniques. Replacement railings in a scheme for *Improvements to Historic Areas*, for example, would need to be to an historically accurate design, probably set with lead into a stone plinth.

- 1.7 A grant will not be offered in cases where the applicant/owner is able to make an insurance claim for the work.
- 1.8 A grant will not be offered in cases where the building is subject to an Urgent Works or other statutory notice.
- 1.9 In the case of grants for Repairs to Historic Buildings, only principal listed buildings will be eligible for grant aid.

## **2. The Applicant**

- 2.1 Grants are normally paid to the freehold owner of the property. There is no limit on how recently the property was purchased, however, grants will not normally be considered until after the purchase of a property has been finalised. It should be noted however, that, the condition of the property should be reflected in the value attributed to it.
- 2.2 A tenant may, if appropriate, be chosen as agent. Alternatively the owner may choose to be professionally represented.
- 2.3 In some cases the engagement of a professional adviser, such as a structural engineer, an architect or a landscape architect may be a condition of grant owing to the extent or complexity of a job.

## **3. Selection may include the following considerations**

- 3.1 **The relative urgency of the works will be a prime consideration in the selection of Repairs to Historic Buildings.** Buildings deemed to be 'at extreme' (1) or 'grave risk' (2) will normally be considered a priority for grant aid over those that are 'of risk'.
- 3.2 **The higher the listed grade of the building, the greater the priority it will be given.** In some cases, however, grants may be directed to grade II buildings because funds are not available from any other source.
- 3.3 The use of joint grants (from town and District levels) may be essential in some cases to finance expensive works. Where, however, adequate alternative funds are already available *Historic Buildings and Areas Grants* may be better directed elsewhere. **Priority will therefore be given to repair works to buildings and structures, which are not eligible for any other form of grant.**
- 3.4 **A prominent location may prove an advantage in the selection of buildings or sites for grant aid** since the Council will wish to optimise the impact and public benefits of its investment.
- 3.5 **Priority will be given to buildings/structures which are of little commercial value**, but which make a contribution to the local distinctiveness and the character of the district. Examples could include dovecotes, milestones, walls and gate-piers.

**3.6 Priority will not be given to cases where there is evidence of sheer and wilful neglect of a building/structure.**

**3.7 Priority will be given to buildings/structures which are in, and will remain in, their original use** and where they contribute to the economy of the district. E.g.:  
Agricultural buildings that still operate as a farm.

#### **4. Calculation of Grant Payment**

4.1 Grants will normally be for up to 40% of the cost of eligible works up to a maximum value of £10,000. Higher 70% grants may be considered on an occasional basis but will be subject to careful consideration and availability of funds.

4.2 Grant will not cover VAT where this is recoverable by the applicant.

4.3 The value of the applicant's own time is not eligible for grant, whether as administrator, labourer or professional supervisor. The cost of materials is, however, eligible for grant where the applicant carries out the work in person.

4.4 Professional fees are grant eligible provided the advisor is appropriately qualified and provides a full service from specification through supervision to certification of payments.

4.5 *Historic Buildings and Areas Grants* are not available in conjunction with other grants funded by West Wiltshire District Council.

4.6 Payments for supplementary works will not be made. It is important to ensure that the original specification is based on a proper survey of the building or site and is comprehensive. Should major additional works be required for some unforeseeable reason a second, new application may be made.

#### **5. Application Procedure**

5.1 Your grant application will consist of:

- A completed application form (either enclosed with this guidance or available from the Planning Policy and Conservation Section at West Wiltshire District Council);
- Three quotations to the same specification. (In some specialist cases two may be acceptable);
- In cases where grant aid of £2,500 or less is being sought, two quotations for the work will be acceptable;
- Photographs of the building or site illustrating the need for grant aid;
- Drawings, where appropriate, explaining your proposals.

5.2 There is no limit on the use of the property, but a viable use, or provision for continuing care, is a condition of grant aid. Vacancy is often a prime cause of a building falling derelict or a site becoming an eyesore.

5.3 In some cases where the repairs may affect the character of the listed building, Listed Building Consent may be required. The Officer dealing with your application

will be able to advise you if this is necessary. In all cases where this applies no grant aid will be paid until evidence of the successful outcome of the Listed Building Consent is provided. There may also be Conditions imposed on the Consent that need to be complied with before works can be implemented.

- 5.4 Your application will be acknowledged within 5 working days of receipt. This acknowledgement will also name the Officer dealing with your application. Grant applications will be submitted to the Partnership Panel for consideration four times a year. If your application is ineligible, however, or is unlikely to receive grant, you will be informed as soon as possible. There may also be a possibility of grant aid from other parties who meet at the Panel.
- 5.5 If successful you will normally receive an offer letter, together with grant conditions, within two weeks of the Partnership Panel meeting. You must not start work before you receive this written offer or you will lose the grant.
- 5.6 If the works are so urgent that they cannot wait until after the next meeting please discuss this with the Conservation Officer who is dealing with your application. Written authority may occasionally be given to start works, prior to an offer, without prejudice to your application.
- 5.7 After receiving an offer of grant you are asked to accept the offer within 21 days, and to complete the work within 12 months. In exceptional circumstances the Manager of the Planning Policy and Conservation Services Section may give written authority to extend the 12-month deadline for the completion of the works to a revised date.
- 5.8 You will need to notify the Conservation Officer at start of the contract, at significant stages of the development and upon completion of the works to allow appropriate inspection while all the works are accessible.

## **6. Supervision of the work**

- 6.1 Responsibility for the works rests between the applicant and the contractor. The Council's inspections will be limited to its own, grant authorisation purposes. The Conservation Officer will be pleased to give you help and advice but the Council accepts no liability for professional advice offered by its officers. It will often be in your interests to engage an architect, surveyor or other professional as your representative and to ensure that the work meets the approved specification.

## **7. Grant Payment**

- 7.1 Payment of grant will be subject to submission of a receipted final account or professional certification and to inspection of the works as satisfactory by the Council's officers.
- 7.2 Interim payments can be made either to you or directly to your contractor if the works are spread over several months and involve substantial sums.
- 7.3 If you sell your property, or otherwise dispose of it, within three years of receiving the last grant payment you may be required to repay the sum in full.

## **8. Grant conditions**

- 8.1 Grant will be offered subject to conditions. Some of these are already referred to in this leaflet. Please note that the conditions also set some requirements for supply of supplementary supporting information at application stage, and that it is most important that these requirements are fully understood by the applicant before submission of the application.

## **CONTACTS**

### **Conservation Officer / Assistant Conservation Officer**

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