

# **Mid Suffolk District Council (MSDC) Stowmarket Town Centre Shopfront Scheme**

Grant guidance notes

# About the fund

This is a Mid Suffolk District Council funded grant scheme, with a total budget of £400,000 to assist with funding towards enhancing the aesthetic appeal of business premises and key frontages within Stowmarket town centre, making vacant units more attractive to new occupiers, encouraging increased footfall and providing a vibrant and mixed retail offer.

The maximum grant is £10,000 per property, which could be increased to £20,000 for exceptional applications. The minimum grant amount is £500.



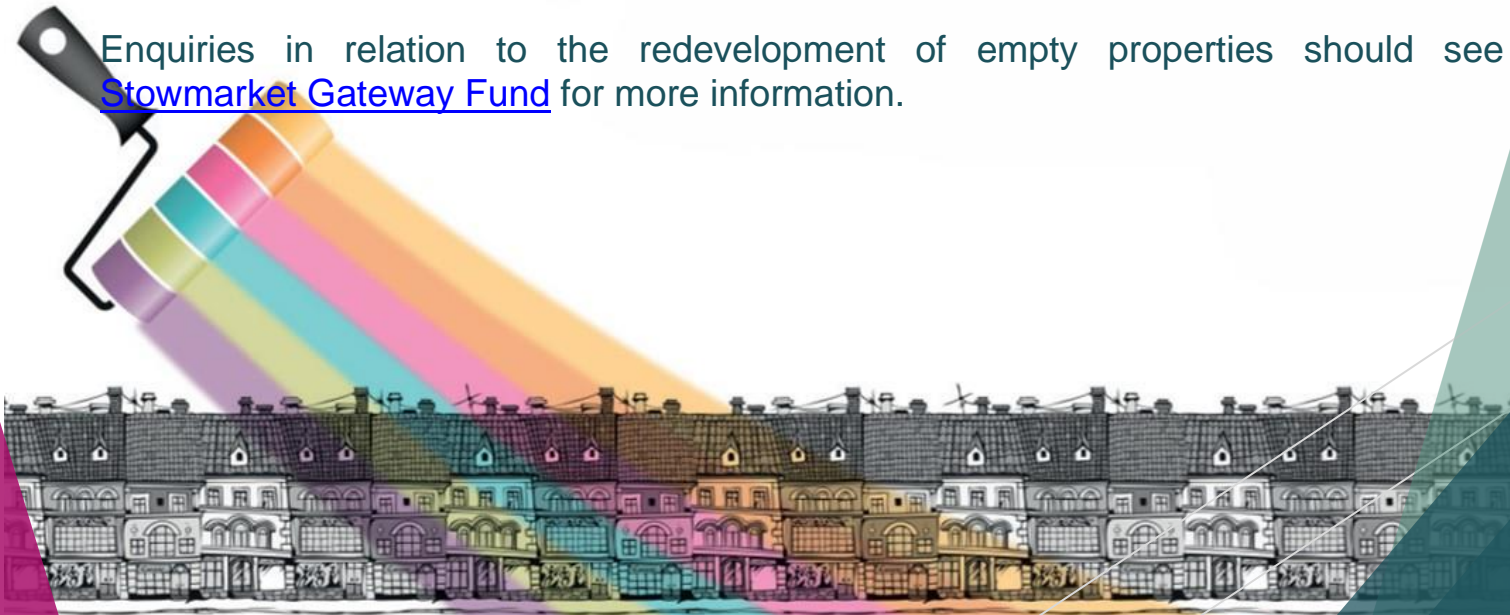
# Who can apply

Shops, other commercial properties and community run properties in the centre of Stowmarket, including:

- ▶ Ipswich Street
- ▶ Bury Street
- ▶ Tavern Street
- ▶ Station Road West
- ▶ Market Place
- ▶ Wilkes Way
- ▶ Crowe Street

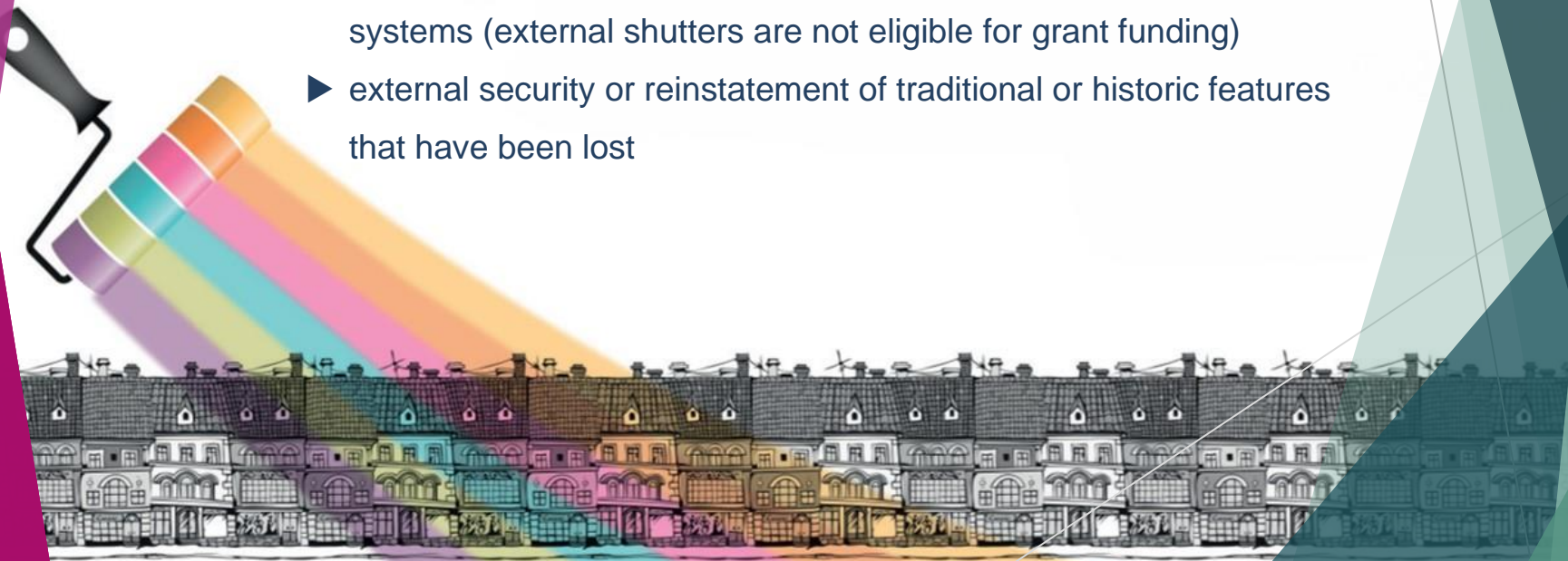
Each application will have a 40% match funding requirement, which can be decreased in exceptional circumstances.

Enquiries in relation to the redevelopment of empty properties should see [Stowmarket Gateway Fund](#) for more information.



The fund will support shop improvements with a focus on high-visibility frontage works, including:

- ▶ rebranding shops with new signage
- ▶ vinyl graphics and signage
- ▶ canopies
- ▶ cladding
- ▶ accessibility improvements
- ▶ lighting
- ▶ new windows/doors
- ▶ internal shutters e.g. replacing old external shutters with internal systems (external shutters are not eligible for grant funding)
- ▶ external security or reinstatement of traditional or historic features that have been lost



# Further information

# Project Enablement Support and other sources of funding



For additional information on available funding or business support, please contact the following organisations:

- ▶ New Anglia Growth Hub – business advice for all sectors and sizes of business: [Contact Us - New Anglia Growth Hub](#)
- ▶ MENTA – business start-up support : [Business Support, Training & Space Across Norfolk and Suffolk – MENTA](#)
- ▶ Groundworks: - Net Zero Consultancy <https://groundworksbs.org.uk/pathways-to-net-zero/>
- ▶ Small Business Grant Scheme – Revenue grants are available ranging from £5,000 - £10,000 to provide support to businesses across Suffolk to grow and become more productive, to encourage innovation and to become more environmentally sustainable. For further information please visit <https://www.newangliagrowthhub.co.uk/contact-us>

Alternatively, the following schemes are also managed by Babergh and Mid Suffolk, please read the information available on the following links for further information and contact details to discuss further:

- ▶ Rural England Prosperity Fund – Capital grants available ranging from £5,000 - £30,000\* depending on eligibility. For further information please review the guidance available [here](#).
- ▶ Through our Community Grants team, a range of grants are available for projects that deliver clear community benefits within our districts. For further information please visit [Babergh & Mid Suffolk District Councils - Community Grants](#).

*\*Rural Business Growth Fund, grants of up to £30,000. Rural Culture & Creativity Fund and Rural Communities Fund, grants of up to £10,000 available*

# Match Funding

The project must be match funded at 40%\*

You must be able to fund 40% of the total project costs, and the grant will fund the remaining 60%.

For example, if your project costs are £10,000, the grant scheme would cover 60% (£6,000) and you would have to cover 40% (£4,000) via company reserves, bank loan or credit or other funding sources. It cannot be matched against other Mid Suffolk District Council funds.

**You must provide evidence within your application of other match funding has been secured / you are seeking and how you will fund the remaining costs of the project.**

**All payments are made at the end of the process, so you will need to be able to fund the project fully by yourself before any reimbursements are made.**

**We may be able to phase payments to assist with cashflow, but please contact us prior to applying to discuss this. Funding cannot be used to pay for items purchased prior to the grant being determined.**

*\*May be decreased in exceptional circumstances*



# Quotations for works and services

As a condition of the grant, all capital (physical assets) expenditure, and services provided by another organisation on behalf of the applying organisation over the value of £5,000 will require evidence of three quotes obtained to ensure value for money. Please provide any quotations that you have obtained for the project along with the completed application form.

This shall include adopting the following minimum procedures:

Value of Purchase	Procedure to be followed
£0 - £5,000	For projects involving multiple items under £5,000, only one quotation per goods, works and / or services will be required.
Over £5,000	3 written quotes or prices sought from relevant suppliers of goods, works and / or services will be required for any goods or services totalling £5,000 or more in one transaction.
Exemptions	In exceptional circumstances we may accept one quote, you will be asked within the application form to give reasoning why you have only been able to supply one quote. Examples may include there only being one specific supplier of a specialist item, or you are under contractual arrangements to a specific supplier.



# Planning permission and license requirements

- ▶ If you are applying for any physical upgrades or improvements that will require planning permission or building control permissions, grants will only be approved if the relevant permissions have already been provided or if there is evidence that planning permission is currently being sought and the grant will be awarded on a conditional basis that planning permission is approved.
- ▶ To find out more about how to gain planning permission or if it is needed for your project, please visit [Mid Suffolk Planning](#)
- ▶ You will also be asked within the application form to declare any other permissions or licenses that are required for your project and when they will be obtained.
- ▶ If your project is taking place on rented / leased / tenanted land or premises, please ensure you submit a letter of authority from the land or premises owner or that the owner applies for the grant funding direct.

# Subsidy control

Please be aware that all applicants are expected to complete the subsidy declaration within the application form.

The EU State aid rules no longer apply to subsidies granted in the UK following the end of the transition period, which ended on 31 December 2020. This does not impact the limited circumstances in which State aid rules still apply under the Withdrawal Agreement, specifically Article 10 of the Northern Ireland Protocol. The United Kingdom remains bound by its international commitments, including subsidy obligations set out in the Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) with the EU.

Mid Suffolk District Council is providing this grant to any business / organisation as a Minimum Financial Assistance (MFA) subsidy under the Subsidy Control Act (2022).

MFA subsidy limit is £315,000 over a three-year period (including your current financial year and the previous two financial years).

For more information on UK subsidy control please visit:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/subsidy-control-a-guide-for-beneficiaries/subsidy-control-a-guide-for-beneficiaries>

# What we cannot fund

- ▶ Retrospective applications i.e. for work already completed or underway
- ▶ Structural repairs including re-roofing.
- ▶ Recurring revenue costs
- ▶ Internal repairs and alterations
- ▶ Professional fees or planning fees
- ▶ Recoverable VAT
- ▶ National charities, national chains, betting shops, vape shops, pawn shops or faith-based services

## Terms & Conditions

- Only 1 application permitted per property/occupier – where a ground floor and upper floor have different owners/occupiers, this will allow for an application from each one, but works will need to be consistent/to the same standard
- Compliance with Subsidy Control Regulations (all grants will be issued under Minimum Financial Assistance scheme)
- Applicants cannot already be in receipt of MSDC or public funding for the project
- 3 like-for-like quotes for works over £5,000 – the grant will be awarded based on the lowest quote.
- Grants will be paid in arrears upon satisfactory completion of works; submission of relevant invoices and proof of payment (we can be flexible and offer staged payments to support cashflow challenges)
- Reference to MSDC in publicity
- Applicant must agree to participate in case studies
- Need for other permissions is the responsibility of the applicant

# How to apply

Applications can be submitted using the online application form found on <https://heartofsuffolk.co.uk/invest/business-support/grants-and-funding/stowmarket-town-centre-shopfront-scheme/> Applicants will be required to provide statutory information and upload the following evidence:

- Valid business/organisation insurance certificate
- A copy of a bank statement dated within the last 3 months in the business name which clearly displays the account number and sort code.
- Confirmation of compliance with Subsidy Control restrictions [UK subsidy control regime - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/subsidy-control)
- Evidence of match funding required at 40% (e.g., copy of savings account or bank statement)
- Quotes for the proposed works and justification for not choosing the lowest quote (if applicable) – multiple quotes will be required for projects over £5,000. Grant offers will be made based on the lowest quote.

Additional quotes and information can be sent to [BMSDCeconomicdevelopment@baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:BMSDCeconomicdevelopment@baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk). Please reference your business name and grant reference number.

# Project plan

If you are unsure of what to put in a grant application, here are some suggestions that you may wish to consider:

- **What are you going to do?** Provide a statement about the activity you want to fund using this grant money.
- **Why do you want to do it?** Describe how this will add value to your business / organisation / community and what difference it will make,
- **How much will it cost?**

We need to see a breakdown of how you have reached the total fund you are asking for. This doesn't need to be to the penny but should evidence your main costs, confirmation of match funding, and estimates or quotes which could include detail of equipment costs, suppliers etc.

- **When will the project start and finish?**

Provide expected dates including any milestone dates that will occur during the project, for example if new equipment is arriving when will it start to be used.

Our expectation is that projects will start within 3 months and will be completed within 12 months unless a longer delivery timeframe is agreed at the time your offer letter is issued.

# Support

For business support and advice relating to areas such as training, grants and funding, land and premises, business associations and more, please visit our dedicated business support website, [Home - Heart of Suffolk](#)

Or email:

[BMSDCeconomicdevelopment@baberg  
hmidsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:BMSDCeconomicdevelopment@baberg<br/>hmidsuffolk.gov.uk)

If you are a VCFSE, (Voluntary, Community, Faith, Social Enterprise) organisation and seeking support and funding advice, please contact our grants officers in the Communities Team by emailing:

[bmsdcgrants@baberg  
hmidsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:bmsdcgrants@baberg<br/>hmidsuffolk.gov.uk)



# The Process

- Once an application is received you will hear from a member of our team within two weeks should any additional information be required.
- We will make decisions on applications at a monthly panel meeting.
- If an exception needs to be applied in relation to the value of the grant or the intervention rate, the application will need to be reviewed by an additional stakeholder panel before a final decision is made.
- Applicants will be informed of the decision by email, and for those that are approved the applicant will receive a grant acceptance / offer letter.
- All payments are made at the end of the process, so you will need to be able to fund the project fully by yourself before any reimbursements are made. We may be able to phase payments to assist with cashflow, but please contact us prior to applying. Funding cannot be used to pay for items purchased prior to the grant being determined.
- Applications are reviewed on a first come first served basis, so we advise applicants to apply as soon as possible. We anticipate there will be a high demand for this fund so not all applications will be successful.
- Please note applications may close early if all funds have been fully committed.