

Belper and Milford Townscape Heritage Initiative

How to Apply for a Grant

Guidance Notes For Applicants

These notes provide information on how to apply for THI Grant Assistance. This document sets out the process involved and is for guidance only.

Each grant project will, to a degree, be unique; therefore regular contact with the THI Project Officer is recommended throughout your project.

Before You Apply

You are advised to read the guidance notes, 'A Guide to Eligible Works' and 'Summary of THI Grant Conditions' carefully before making an application.

Interest in the Property

To apply for grant you must own or lease the property and in the case of a lease it must have at least 10 years still to run. If you do not have such an interest, you must get the owner or leaseholder to make the application with you jointly.

A lease with a break clause in it will not be acceptable.

Other Grants and Loans

If you have made a successful application to the Heritage Lottery Fund for any other grant or loan towards this project, you will not be eligible for THI grant.

Step 1 Initial contact

Contact the THI Project Officer for a preliminary discussion about any proposed works. This initial discussion will help you to gain a clear understanding of whether your proposal is eligible for Grant Assistance, consider which works are eligible for grant aid under this scheme, the likelihood of you receiving grant aid and if any Local Authority Consents or notifications will be required.

These discussions will often involve a site visit to discuss the project and the requirements for any grant application.

Simultaneously, the Project Officer will provide you with a THI Information Pack, containing the details of the scheme, the application form and guidance documents.

Prior start

Remember, Applications for THI Grant cannot be made retrospectively. You will not be paid any grant money if.

- You start the eligible works before your application is approved.
- You start eligible works after you have been awarded a grant but before you have entered into a grant contract with the THI Partnership (see 'Summary of Grant Conditions') i.e. before you have received written Notification of Grant Assistance and returned the Grant Acceptance Notice.

Step 2 Full application

Once you have a clear idea of which works are likely to be eligible for grant aid, you will be asked to draw up a schedule of works. This information is necessary to identify specific repairs and enable further discussions about eligible works with the THI Project Officer.

When a schedule of eligible works has been agreed, a specification for the works can be drawn up which itemises the details of the repair, including materials and methods to be used. All repair works to the building must be undertaken with respect for the character and integrity of the building, and of the area in which it lies. Advice on appropriate materials and techniques of repair can be obtained from the THI Project Officer and must be in accordance with relevant national policies and advice issued or endorsed by English Heritage.

Once your schedule of works and specifications have been agreed, you will be asked to provide (usually within a period of six weeks), quotations (or tender prices) for the works detailed in the 'schedule of works'.

Professional advice

You must appoint an appropriately experienced and qualified professional, such as an architect, to plan and oversee the works to completion if the grant contribution is likely to be over £50,000.

if the grant contribution is likely to be less than this amount, you are still advised to appoint an experienced and qualified professional to oversee the works. Professional fees are eligible for grant aid.

Making an application

The application form must be completed and returned with a substantial amount of detailed information about the proposed works. Incomplete applications will not be processed until all information is supplied.

The following documents are required in addition to the application form in all instances:

- You must be able to demonstrate your interest in the property and provide proof of ownership and/or possession of the property. This documentation must also identify any encumbrances.
- If the proposed works require any statutory consents (such as planning permission, listed building consent, scheduled monument consent or building regulation approval), copies of any relevant notifications must be attached.
- Any outstanding issues of Planning Enforcement or unauthorized work to the property need to be resolved in writing to the satisfaction of Amber Valley Borough Council. Copies of such correspondence/ notifications must be attached. (Additional conditions of approval may be imposed to address such issues.)
- If you have had any grant offers or awards from other sources, you must attach copies of any relevant letters. These should indicate the amount and any conditions attached to the grant offer. You must also tell us if you have applied for any other grants.

You will be asked to include a summary of the eligible works proposed. However, you must attach full details of the proposed works, which should include:

- A full specification of works

- Drawings - Relevant annotated plans, elevational and cross sectional drawings at an appropriate scale
- Photographs of relevant elevations and details
- Work programme and cost plan etc. as appropriate.

3 tenders are required based on the schedule of works and cost plan for all eligible work totaling more than £5000. A minimum of two quotations for works totalling less than £5000. The lowest tender must be broken down to show how any totals have been achieved.

You should only invite tenders from contractors known to be able to achieve the standards required and with demonstrable experience of working on conservation projects.

If you want to accept a tender other than the lowest, you must submit written reasons why when submitting your application. If the THI Partnership does not agree with these, any grant awarded will be reduced by a percentage, which reflects the difference between the lowest acceptable tender to the THI Partnership and the one you accept.

For Development Projects only (a project which will bring vacant floorspace back into use) a development appraisal is also required. Grants for Development Projects are calculated on a deficit basis.

Development appraisals (if grant is on deficit basis) form the financial basis for calculating grants towards the 'conservation deficit' - that is the difference between the costs of the conversion and the external and internal repair works and other development costs, and any added value when converted.

A development appraisal takes the form of a residual valuation. This is a technical term for an assessment of all the costs in bringing a building back into use in comparison with the value of the building once the works have been completed. Valuations must be carried out by an appropriately qualified independent professional valuer.

The residual valuation

The following costs are considered as part of the residual valuation:

- Acquisition costs
- Construction costs
- Professional and statutory fees relating to the development
- Legal fees on acquisition and disposal
- Estate agency fees on disposal
- Financing charges

Step 3 Assessment procedures

Applications for grant aid for properties are assessed on a property-by-property basis, and against the following criteria:

- Whether the building is a 'target property'. These properties are a priority for grant funding.
- The conservation and townscape merit of the building, and the extent to which the proposals will enhance this.
- The need for repair of the building.
- The use of appropriate materials and techniques of repair, in keeping with national conservation standards.
- The extent to which architectural details will be reinstated.
- The implementation of a comprehensive repair strategy to ensure the long-term life of the building.
- The regard paid to the special character and interest of the property and the area in which it lies.
- Whether the proposals fully meet the criteria set out in the Guide to Eligible Works.

You will be notified of the outcome by letter as soon as possible after the decision has been made.

An offer of grant assistance will be set at a maximum level, which normally will not be increased. The Borough Council may, however, decrease the level of grant assistance offered, but normally only where the final costs for work undertaken is less than the quoted price or where less than the full schedule of works is undertaken in agreement with the Borough Council.

Step 4 Accepting the grant offer

You will be required to formally accept the offer of Grant Assistance in writing (using the form which will be provided) within 4 weeks of it being offered and agree to abide by the Terms and Conditions of Grant Assistance. You may be required to agree to additional Terms and Conditions, which will be detailed in the Notice of Grant Offer.

An offer of Grant Assistance and the formal acceptance of that offer together constitute a legal contract, which binds both parties to abide by the Terms and Conditions and advice leaflets detailed in the Notice of Grant Offer.

Step 5 Commencing work on site

You must start the work within six months of the grant offer, unless otherwise agreed with the Project Officer. Once you have formally accepted the Offer of Grant Assistance, you should notify the Borough Council of your intention to start on site (using the Commencement Notice that will be provided) 7 days before work is due to commence. This is to enable a pre-start meeting to be arranged between your contractors and Officers of the Borough Council. After this meeting has taken place then your project is ready to begin.

The work carried out and methods used must comply with the agreed Schedule of Work and the relevant advice leaflets. Failure to do so will result in the offer of Grant Assistance being withdrawn, or require the return of Grant Assistance where payments have been made.

Inspection

The project officer (or their authorised representatives) will inspect the work on site periodically to ensure that it is progressing satisfactorily. If you wish you may be present at any of these site meetings.

Note: The THI Partnership accepts no liability for the professional advice offered by its representatives.

Completion

You must complete the works within a time period agreed in advance (generally within 6 months of acceptance) with the THI Partnership, unless they agree in writing to extend this period.

Publicity

The partnership reserves the right to use illustrations, photographs or details of your project in promotional literature and information.

During the contract period and whilst works are being undertaken on site you may be required to erect, on a conspicuous part of the property, a sign board (provided by the THI Partnership) which acknowledges the contribution made to the project by the scheme funding partners.

Step 6 Claiming your grant

During and/or soon after the completion of works (or at "Practical Completion" where allowed in the case of professionally supervised Building Contracts), the project will be visited by officers of the Amber Valley THI Partnership, to assess the quality of work undertaken and ensure that all conditions have been complied with.

Single claim

Following this meeting you will be requested to submit original copies of paid, receipted invoices for the Grant Assisted Works which will normally be paid by the Council direct to you as Applicant.

Interim payments - if previously agreed by the Borough Council

If Interim (or Stage) Payments are to be made, rather than a full final payment, then Grant Assistance may be paid against original copies of paid, receipted invoices (or architects or surveyors Interim Certificates) for the completed elements of Grant Assisted Works. Interim Certificates can only be paid to 90% of the Grant Assistance awarded until the site has been finally inspected and approved by Officers of the Borough Council or their representatives and, where a Building Contract has been entered into, a "Practical Completion" Certificate has been issued.

On completion of all works on site you will be requested to submit a full set of invoices for all works to the property and not just those which have been Grant Assisted. This information is necessary for audit and monitoring purposes.

Retention

10% of the total grant will be withheld until the THI Partnership is satisfied that all works have been completed to the required standard and has received a copy of the practical completion certificate.

Notes and Advice

Further advice regarding Grant Assistance or any aspect of the application process, can be obtained from:

Robert Thorley
e-mail: rob.Thorley@ambervalley.gov.uk
tel: 01773 841582

or

Rachael Coates
e-mail: rachael.coates@ambervalley.gov.uk
tel: 01773 841585