

SHOP FRONT IMPROVEMENT SCHEME 2020

DUBLIN
SOUTH WEST
INNER CITY
AREAS

DETAILS OF SCHEME



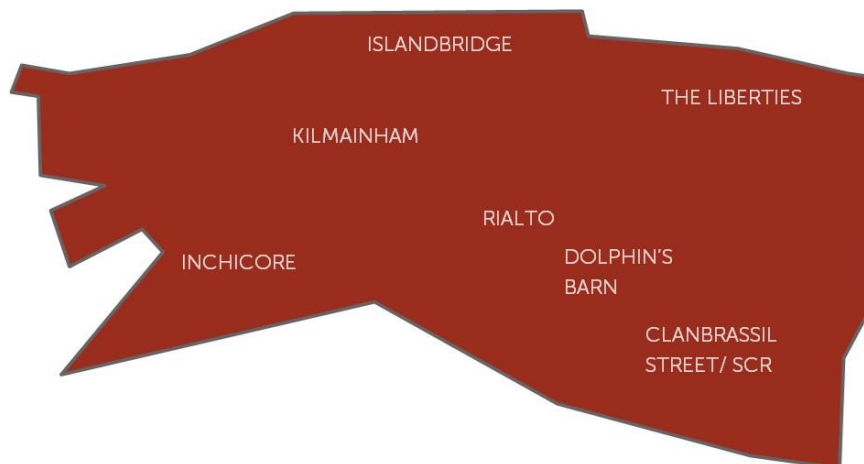
Comhairle Cathrach
Bhaile Átha Cliath
Dublin City Council

SHOP FRONT IMPROVEMENT SCHEME 2020

Supporting a Better Business Environment

Improving the appearance of shopfronts and business premises and promoting the commercial potential of neighbourhoods in South West Inner City area, is a key objective of Dublin City Council as part of the wider regeneration of some of Dublin's oldest and most distinctive areas.

Dublin City Council South Central Area Office now invites applications from commercial premises in South West Inner City for support funding under the Shopfront Improvement Scheme 2020. The South West Inner City (SWIC) area includes The Liberties, Clanbrassil Street/Leonard's Corner/Blackpitts, Dolphin's Barn, Rialto, Islandbridge, Kilmainham and Inchicore.



The objective of the scheme is to support commercial premises owners who contribute positively to their local environment, and who in turn attract increased local and visitor footfall to their area.

The scheme also seeks to encourage best practice approaches to shopfront design, maintenance and presentation; the conservation of historic features where appropriate; and the overall enhancement of commercial streets and shopping areas.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The improvement scheme provides for up to 50% of the cost of a ground floor shopfront refurbishment, depending on the work proposed (see table below), with a **maximum allowable contribution of €3,000 per applicant**. Assistance will not be offered in retrospect to costs already incurred for the improvement of shopfronts.

Within the Thomas Street & Environs Architectural Conservation Area (ACA), the scheme may also be used for specific works to upper floors that contribute to the maintenance of the historic built environment, namely:

- i. repaint and repair of traditional timber windows;
- ii. repaint and repair of **existing** painted masonry and rainwater goods;
- iii. removal of high level signage, redundant utilities, etc.

Where the applicant is a lessee, the application should be made with the consent of the landlord. This requirement will not apply in the case of rolling leases where the lessee can demonstrate continuity for a minimum period of 2 years.

The applicant must not be in arrears as to any payments of rates or charges to Dublin City Council. Participation in an agreed payment plan with the Commercial Rates Office will be considered as compliance. Under Revenue rules, applicants are also required to confirm tax compliance.

GRANTS AVAILABLE TO INDIVIDUAL SHOPS

Type of Work	Up to Max. of
a) Paint and redecorate shop front	€2,000
b) Decluttering and repair of shop fronts	
c) Measures to 'green' and enhance attractiveness of shop fronts or outdoor terraces/seating areas through planting	
d) Replace shopfront and/or signage (planning permission generally required)	€3,000
e) Material changes to shopfront such as new entrances, changes to windows etc. (planning permission generally required)	
f) Specified works to upper floors (as per eligibility criteria above)	
g) Removal of high-level signage within the Thomas Street & Environs ACA (first floor and above)	
h) Changes to facilitate universal access (planning permission may be required)	

PLANNING PERMISSIONS AND LICENSING

Planning permission is usually required for substantial works to the front of a building, such as material changes to the façade or installing a new shopfront. Generally minor work to redecorate or repair shopfronts is termed 'exempted development', meaning it does not require planning permission.

However, in The Liberties, Thomas Street and its environs is designated as an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) with specific policies and conditions in place for buildings in the area designed to protect the historic character of the area. This places additional restrictions on the type of works that might be considered to buildings in the area.

Applicants should also be aware that any works to a protected structure (sometimes called 'listed buildings') require planning permission or the prior agreement of Dublin City Council.

Within the ACA or where a building is a protected structure, works that materially alter the character or appearance of the building, such as the replacement of windows or doors, replacement or addition of signage, addition of canopies and awnings, externally-mounted security shutters, replacement of upper floor windows or other features integral to the building **require prior agreement or a grant of planning permission**. You can find further information on planning permissions at www.dublincity.ie/planning

The operation of an external seating area on the public pavement is subject to licence by Dublin City Council. For further details, please see: [Apply for a Tables and Chairs Licence](#)

ASSISTANCE

Advice on how to undertake a successful shopfront refurbishment and source suitable contractor is available under this scheme. In certain instances, applicants may avail of advice from both the Planning Department and City Architects Division on design proposals and planning permission requirements.

Note that it is the applicant's responsibility to gain the necessary planning permissions, and applications for planning permission will **not** be dealt with through the application process for this scheme.

DESIGN PRINCIPLES FOR BETTER SHOPFRONTS

An attractive shopfront to your premises will support the overall attractiveness of your street and help to improve footfall to the area. This scheme supports the following design principles:

1. **Shop signage should be limited:** For the most part one main fascia sign and, where previously permitted, one projecting signage to be located at fascia level. However, it is Council policy under the Thomas Street & Environs ACA not to permit projecting signage on streets like Thomas Street, Francis Street and Meath Street.
2. **Signage should be of good quality:** Traditional painted lettering or individual fixed mounted lettering is preferred for signage. Plastic fascias, light boxes, foam board and canvas banners are **not** supported.
3. **Signage should be at ground floor level.** The addition of high-level signage (i.e. from first floor up) is inconsistent with the objectives of the Thomas Street & Environs ACA **and will not be permitted**. The removal of old high-level signage is supported (and you may benefit from a higher grant level if this is facilitated).
4. **Choice of colour is important:** The use of garish or visually strident colours across the entire shopfront is not supported and careful use of colour, that works in harmony with the materials of the building, is encouraged. Matt paint finishes are generally more durable and work best with other materials such as brick or masonry.
5. **Open and engaging shopfronts, even after dark:** Security shutters should be internally-mounted wherever possible, and a clear and attractive shop window maintained at all times. Lighting fixtures should be attractive and good quality. Architectural lighting to illuminate upper floors is encouraged.
6. **Clutter-free for a tidier street:** The removal of redundant wiring, alarm boxes and utilities on premises is encouraged and requested under this scheme.

Further information on good shopfront design can be found by consulting [Dublin City Council Shopfront Guidelines](#) or Section 16.24: Development Standards for Retail of the [Dublin City Development Plan 2016-2022](#) available at www.dublincity.ie.

HOW TO APPLY

- Complete the Application Form.
- Enclose relevant plans, design and specification for proposed works.
- Enclose quotation/s from your chosen contractor/s to match the expenditure outlined.
- Enclose evidence of ownership of the unit or lease agreement if required. Please note it is the applicant's responsibility to ensure they have permission to undertake work to the building under their lease or rental agreement.

The closing date for applications is 4pm on **Thursday 30th April 2020**. Incentives awarded under the scheme will be notified to applicants in writing. Grants will be disbursed, **subject to available funding and the recommendation of an Assessment Panel**, to projects that offer the most benefit to their streets.

Works should be carried out within 4 months of approval of the grant or within 4 months of planning permission being granted where required.

Please contact [Stephen Coyne, Economic Development Officer, South West Inner City/ Liberties Business Area Improvement Initiative](#) for further details on this scheme - tel: 01 222 5180 / 083 194 9009 or email stephen.coyne@dublincity.ie.