

**Liscard Town Centre Programme
Business Grant Scheme – June 2021**

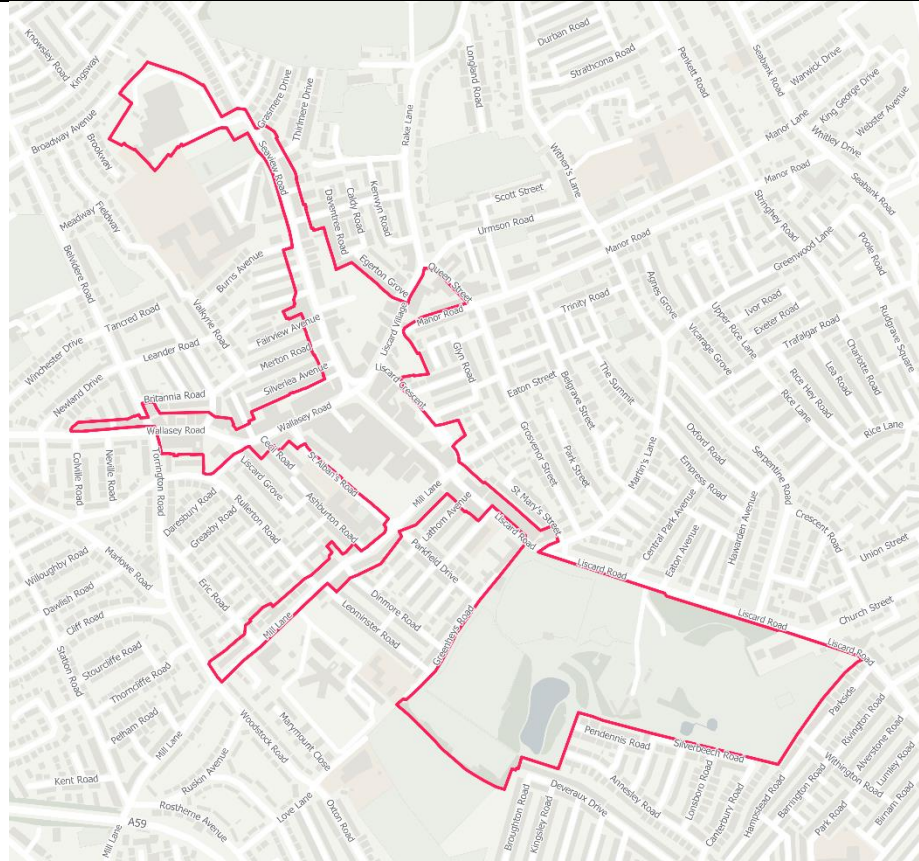
Guidance Notes

Programme	<p>Liscard Town Centre Business Grant Scheme, Wirral Council</p> <p>The funding for this scheme has been secured via the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Town Centre Fund, which has been created to improve the vitality and viability of the region's town and district centres.</p>
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Context	<p>Liscard is one of the town centres nominated by Wirral Council to receive investment from the Liverpool City Region Town Centre Fund.</p> <p>Eligible projects must be based within the defined town centre area (please see map).</p> <p>Funding is available to eligible businesses to undertake capital improvements which contribute to the regeneration and sustainable growth of the town centre. Grants can be used to make improvements in line with the aims of the scheme. Examples could include:</p> <p>Fitting out vacant/existing premises</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • upgrading internal fixtures & fittings; • new or upgraded equipment including point of sale technology; • catering equipment; • customer facilities; • improved internal security features; • internal lighting; • equipment hire costs <p>Upgraded shop frontages;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • repair/restoration of architectural elements; • signage, painting and lighting; • replacement of awnings/external furniture; • removal of shutters and replacement with toughened glass; • external CCTV; • access improvements. <p>Please see Eligibility Criteria Section below for further guidance about planning permissions.</p> <p>The applicant is responsible for covering their costs in relation to rents, business rates, utilities, other running costs, and professional or administrative costs.</p> <p>You are urged to apply as quickly as possible if you have been considering making improvements to your property.</p>
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<p>Key Objectives</p>	<p>Successful applicants will need to demonstrate how the funding will contribute to this ambition for Liscard, through one of more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • bringing vacant premises back into use – through proposed temporary (meanwhile or pop-up) or permanent use • increasing footfall in the town centre • making the town centre more diverse and attractive • encouraging the establishment of start up independent businesses in Liscard • supporting existing businesses to diversify or expand, or open a branch in Liscard
<p>Who can Apply?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Existing small and micro businesses</u> already operating from a commercial premises within Liscard Town Centre. • <u>New/expanding small and micro businesses</u> which are seeking to open a new branch in Liscard Town Centre to bring empty retail premises back into use. • Only small and micro-businesses as defined under the Companies Act 2006 are eligible to apply: • To qualify as a small business, you must satisfy two or more of the following requirements in a year: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ turnover not more than £10.2 million ○ balance sheet total not more than £5.1 million ○ number of employees; a headcount of staff of less than 50 • To qualify as a micro-business you must satisfy two or more of the following requirements in a year: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ turnover not more than £632,000 ○ balance sheet total not more than £316,000 ○ number of employees; a headcount of staff of not more than 10
<p>Scale of grants available</p>	<p>Business capital grants - up to £10,000 improvement grant</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The maximum grant award will be £10,000 • Organisations may apply for up to 100% of the total eligible project costs, up to a maximum grant of £10,000. We expect most awards to be in the region of £5,000 or less. • Where applicants are applying for grants over £5000, priority will be given to those which include cash match funding, and include outputs that provide real impact against the desired objectives.
<p>Geographical Targeting of Funding</p>	<p>Liscard Business Grant Scheme Area</p> <p>Grant funding will be allocated to eligible applicant businesses which are based (or about to locate) in commercial premises within the Liscard Town Centre boundary - i.e. within the red line boundaries on the attached map.</p>



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Eligibility Criteria for applications

Eligible projects must:

- be located in Liscard Town Centre as shown on the attached map
- be 'ready to go' - to be implemented and completed before December 13 2021
- Demonstrate how funding will contribute to the ambition of the Liscard Town Centre Fund objectives

Applicants must:

- Ensure they check and either have obtained or be in the process of obtaining relevant consents for their project e.g. planning permission, licenses, freeholder consent.
- **Planning consent:** if you are unsure whether or not you need planning consent, you should visit www.planningportal.co.uk in the first instance.
- Copies of decision notices for previous planning approvals (for use as evidence) can be found via: <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building> by searching for planning applications.
- Guidance in relation to Licenses and Permits at Wirral Council can be accessed here: <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/licences-and-permits>
 - **Shopfront improvements** - general principals: planning approval will likely be required for material changes to external appearance of a building (new/changes to shop fronts). Existing historic or traditional shop front features, including signboards, corbels, stall risers, cornices, window fanlights, console brackets, transoms, pilasters, canopies and lobbies should be retained and enhanced. Fascia boards should be proportionate to the



	<p>shopfront and neighbouring uses. Security shutters should ideally be internal and perforated so as to maintain an active street level frontage.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Advertisement consent should be sought for external signage and for anything within 1 metre of a window (measured internally). ○ Uses within buildings: From 01 September 2020 the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 was amended and introduced changes to the system of use classes. Class A, D and B1 were revoked and replaced with the new broad commercial class - Class E. Class F was introduced and covered local community and learning. ○ Further details can be found here: https://www.planningportal.co.uk/info/200130/common_projects/9/change_of_use. ○ New revised permitted development rights will be introduced from 31 July 2021. Currently changes between E to F and vice versa will likely need planning approval. <p>Please email liscardgrants@wirral.gov.uk if you have specific enquiries about permissions or building control and include the subject line PLANNING.</p>
<p>Ineligible businesses/ activities</p>	<p>Your business is not eligible if it is classed as a:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ charity retail shop ➤ hot food takeaway ➤ pawn brokers ➤ adult/private shop ➤ betting shop/amusement arcade ➤ national and international chain store ➤ A home-based business, operating and registered to a residential address <p>A business cannot apply if it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● is dissolved or about to be dissolved ● is a dormant company/organisation ● is insolvent or if insolvency action had been instigated against it ● is located outside of the boundary areas (as defined on the plan) ● is not a small or micro business ● is not able to demonstrate and evidence that it is compliant with subsidy control allowances at grant agreement stage ● owes money relating to Business Rates or relating to rent arrears associated with Council owned premises
<p>Application Process & Payment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Grant applications can only be made on-line. Draft applications can be saved through the on-line portal if applicants do not complete them in a single attempt. ● Please read the Guidance thoroughly before attempting to complete the application. ● The application form has 4 sections: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Applicant/organisation details including current and proposed staff numbers ○ Proposed project details, budget, grant request, timescales ○ Project benefits and fit with the Town Centre Fund objectives ○ Evidence requirements and declarations. ● Some sections of the on-line form are character restricted with a clear maximum character count/approximate word count included on the relevant questions. The character count includes spaces and punctuation, and you will not be able to exceed the specified amount when completing each section.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-line applications must be submitted by noon on 19 July 2021. • Successful applicants to be informed by week commencing 9 August 2021. • Successful applicants will be able to claim any agreed grant in a single stage payment: all grants will be paid on submission of evidence of commitment to spend. • Payments will be made by BACs.
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Evidence requirements	<p>Eligible applicants must be able to provide the following evidence when applying:</p> <p>Existing Businesses/Organisations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copy of a lease or mortgage deed for the premises which they occupy which proves that they operate from a commercial premise within the defined town centre area • Proof of Landlord’s permission to undertake works • Provide written quotes or evidence for all project costs/items. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ For projects of a total value between £5,001 and £10,000: provide 2 quotes for works plus quotes for individual capital items. ○ For projects with a value of £5,000 or less: provide one quotation for works plus quotes for individual capital items. • Quotation(s) must be obtained from suitable sources i.e. qualified trades/companies to undertake the work • The costs should be itemised and sufficiently descriptive to allow us to determine which costs are eligible. To get the best value for money you are expected to shop around and get quotes from other potential suppliers with a track record of delivering similar services. • Evidence of any necessary planning permissions obtained/being sought. Copies of decision notices for previous planning approvals can be found via; https://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building by searching for planning applications. • A copy of a business bank statement dated within last 3 months • A copy of the organisation’s most recent accounts • A digital photograph of the existing frontage of the commercial premises where the works will take place, which also shows adjacent property/units frontage. <p>New Businesses/Social Enterprises:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For newly establishing businesses and social enterprises without evidence of trading, please provide all above information (as applicable), plus a copy of your business plan/viability report.
Subsidy Control	<p>If successful, all applicants will be asked to disclose all subsidies received in the 3 years prior to its application from the public sector and complete the declaration attached so that the Council can check that any grant award complies with subsidy control.</p>
Assessment & Administration of Grant:	<p>The decision to grant funding (if any) are subject to a formal decision-making process. A panel will assess and score all applications and inform successful applicants. The decision of the Panel is final and there is no right of appeal on the decision made.</p> <p>Due Diligence</p> <p>If your application is successful, your organisation’s status, governing documents and financial accounts will be subject to a due diligence process. We reserve the right to ask for</p>



	<p>additional information should we need it. Please note that you will not receive any funding until the due diligence process is completed.</p> <p>Grant making decisions and responsibilities You must not place any reliance whatsoever on the support of Wirral Council until formally notified in writing and your authorised signatories have executed and returned a funding agreement with which you will be provided by Wirral Council should your application prove successful.</p> <p>Accordingly, any expenditure that you incur and/or to which you commit (including that which you have incurred or committed to in relation to the preparation of your proposal for funding) prior to formal notification and execution and return of the funding agreement is incurred and/or committed entirely at your own risk.</p> <p>Grant Offer If your application is successful, we will contact you and the grant will be subject to the signing of a final grant funding agreement.</p> <p>Grant Monitoring and Reporting If you are successful in being awarded a grant, you will need to complete a monitoring form on completion of your project. You will be provided with monitoring documentation on award of the funding. Successful applicants will need to provide evidence of defrayment on completion of project delivery i.e. evidence of how project costs have been paid from the grant recipient's bank account. Further guidance will be provided at grant agreement stage.</p>								
<p>Declarations Required</p>	<p>At the end of the application form, you will be asked to indicate your understanding and compliance with a full list of elements and complete your name and position information once you are satisfied that you have completed the form correctly. These include the following requirements for applicants:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="320 1361 1509 1993"> <tr> <td data-bbox="320 1361 1509 1480">I certify that to the best of my knowledge the information contained in this application is true and accurate, and fairly and reasonably represents the circumstances of my organisation.</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="320 1480 1509 1599">I understand that if any regulatory or other third-party permissions are required to deliver the approved project, the organisation will not be eligible to receive financial support until this is in place.</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="320 1599 1509 1677">I consent to the sharing of information relating to any information the council holds about our organisation to verify the details of this application.</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="320 1677 1509 1718">I have read and understand the accompanying privacy notice</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="320 1718 1509 1796">I further confirm that I am an authorised signatory within the organisation with full power and authority to make this declaration.</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="320 1796 1509 1836">I understand that making this application does not entitle me to a grant as a right</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="320 1836 1509 1915">I will not commence or commit any expenditure before receiving written approval of the grant.</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="320 1915 1509 1993">I understand that I will need to provide evidence of defrayment on completion of project delivery i.e. evidence of how project costs have been paid from bank account.</td> </tr> </table>	I certify that to the best of my knowledge the information contained in this application is true and accurate, and fairly and reasonably represents the circumstances of my organisation.	I understand that if any regulatory or other third-party permissions are required to deliver the approved project, the organisation will not be eligible to receive financial support until this is in place.	I consent to the sharing of information relating to any information the council holds about our organisation to verify the details of this application.	I have read and understand the accompanying privacy notice	I further confirm that I am an authorised signatory within the organisation with full power and authority to make this declaration.	I understand that making this application does not entitle me to a grant as a right	I will not commence or commit any expenditure before receiving written approval of the grant.	I understand that I will need to provide evidence of defrayment on completion of project delivery i.e. evidence of how project costs have been paid from bank account.
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	<p>I understand that the Council will claw back any grants awarded in error or in the case of fraudulent application</p>	
	<p>I understand that to make any misleading statement in relation to this application could make the application invalid or may mean I have to repay the grant to Wirral Council.</p>	
	<p>I confirm that all project delivery undertaken by our organisation will be compliant with the Equalities Act 2010</p>	
	<p>I understand that if my application is successful, then I will need to disclose all state subsidies our organisation has received in the 3 years prior to its application from the public sector and complete the declaration provided with the grant agreement, so that the Council can check that any grant award complies with subsidy control.</p>	
Timing	<p>Launch fund and invite grant applications Closing date for applications Anticipated allocation of funding Project delivery</p>	<p>21 June 2021 19 July 2021 – 12 noon w/c 9th August 2021 September – December 2021</p>
Help & support with applications	<p>If you need any help or assistance in applying for this grant scheme, please contact us by email at liscardgrants@wirral.gov.uk</p>	