
Elmbridge Business Boost

Guidance notes

This document intends to give information to those completing an Business Boost application form.

More information can be found at [Elmbridge Business Boost](#). Alternatively, if you need any further guidance then please contact Organisational Development on 01372 474 216 or business@elmbridge.gov.uk.

Please note the following:

- Use black ink or complete the form electronically.
- Please only return your form once it has been signed.
- Please be as concise as possible. Any additional information can be provided on separate A4 sheets.
- Your application will be checked and then determined by the decision-making body which is made up of chief officers and/or councillors (depending on the amount of grant applied for).
- There is no right of appeal against the decision.
- Retrospective grants will not be paid
- Projects should commence within 6 months and be completed within 12 months of the date of any grant offer letter.

Who can apply?

The scheme is only open to improvements that take place within Elmbridge. Individual applications from independent retail businesses will be accepted for specific categories of improvements, in addition to applications from business groups, trade associations, chambers of commerce and community organisations.

Priority will be given to projects that enhance the area, are likely to attract business and where the improvement will be long lasting (e.g. 5 years).

What projects are eligible for financial assistance?

- Restoring or replacing shop fronts or signage in the style appropriate to the building.
- Initiatives to bring an empty shop back into commercial use that have been empty for at over 3 months.
- Street furniture and street scene improvements.
- Initiatives that promote community improvement projects where:

- a) There would be a significant benefit to the local economy; or
- b) There would be a significant benefit to the environmental sustainability of the town centre.

What is not eligible?

- It will not be possible to fund projects that require an ongoing revenue cost – should there be an ongoing cost, the applicant must commit to providing that revenue or demonstrate robust arrangements.
- Works that have commenced or been completed before an offer of grant has been made.
- Items of routine maintenance and repair e.g. painting of existing windows or shop fronts.
- Grants are not available to fund the re-branding of premises.
- It may be determined that some projects or initiatives could be funded by other national grant schemes.
- Professional fees are excluded from the scope of the scheme such as planning fees or consultants.
- Initiatives promoting a political party.
- Initiatives that conflict with existing council policies.
- We cannot accept applications from a business that has previously been awarded an Elmbridge Civic Improvement Fund grant or Business Boost grant for the current business. The shop front and signage grant is limited to one per business (irrespective of changes of ownership) per every 10 years.

How much money is available?

You can apply for a grant of up to 50% of the eligible costs, excluding any fees (i.e. A maximum of 50% of any invoices submitted up to the grant offer will be paid).

Applicants are expected to fund at least 50% of the total project costs.

All applications are assessed on an individual basis.

Please see below for maximum award amounts:

Eligible Projects	Maximum award (50% of project costs)
Shop front or signage improvements	£2000
Street furniture and street scene improvements	£1000
Support to bring an empty shop back into commercial use	£2000
Support for town or village wide projects to drive new footfall, investment or sustainability	£1000

Completing the application form

Questions 1 to 5

Ensure you put the full name and address details. Your main contact does not have to be the person signing the application, but it should be someone with authority concerning this application.

Question 6

Indicate which type of application you are submitting.

Questions 7 to 10

Complete these questions if you are making improvements to a property.

Question 7

We need to know the actual address with postcode of the property to be improved.

Question 8

If you rent or lease the property you will need to include the landlord's written consent to make the improvements. Evidence of freehold and leasehold interest may also be required.

Question 9

A check will be made to ensure that business rates are not outstanding, and we will review the history of your business rates.

Question 10

If you are VAT registered and the funding would be put towards VAT eligible goods or services, then any grant would exclude VAT.

Question 11

Applicants will have to secure all the necessary statutory consents such as building regulations, environmental health licences or planning permission prior to the submission of an application. Please also note that it may be necessary to contact statutory undertakers to get necessary consent for instating street furniture and other fixtures. Statutory undertakers are the various companies and agencies with legal rights to carry out certain development and highways works – e.g. gas, water electricity, telecommunications and other 'cable' companies.

Question 12

Provide a description of your proposal, why you are seeking the grant, how the funding will be used, whether the funding is to contribute to a project/fully fund a project and the benefits it will bring to the local economy, including how it meets the council's vision and priorities. Also refer to the information required depending on your application type, which is shown in Appendix A. If you are asked to provide information on outcomes, please include any targets for your project as these will be used to monitor your project should your application be successful (the council will therefore be monitoring your organisation on what you said you will do).

An additional criterion to consider is whether the benefit can be considered to be long lasting.

Vision 2018-23

A responsive and effective council, protecting and promoting the interests of residents and businesses and safeguarding our environment, while maintaining a community for all.

Further information can be found in our council plan, which is available to download on our [Council page](#).

Question 13

Describe the impact your business has on the environment. Detail any strategies you have implemented to mitigate this impact. Please also outline the impact of the proposed project and how you will minimise its impact.

The Council declared a climate emergency in July 2019, including a commitment to becoming carbon neutral by 2030. Effective climate action will involve the whole community and businesses are expected to give due consideration to sustainability when undertaking projects. The [climate emergency motion](#) is available via the committee calendar on our website.

Question 14

List all drawings, plan numbers (planning application reference numbers), plans and project documents that you are including as part of your application.

Please see Appendix A for the information required based on the type of application you are making and ensure that you include these documents.

It may be necessary for us to contact you further if these are not included, but this is likely to delay processing your application.

Question 15

Please provide some more detailed information on the project costs, including any professional fees, which cannot be funded by the scheme and therefore will need to be excluded when determining the level of grant.

Please use the correct section when summarising costs. Please only complete one box.

Please make sure you include budgets and quotes for the work as appropriate (outlined in Appendix A).

Three comparable, detailed quotes (including VAT amount) for each item of the project must be provided (including one from an Elmbridge-based supplier where possible).

Question 16

Indicate the amount of money you would like to apply for from the fund. Let us know if there are any contributions from third parties – i.e. other organisations or grant schemes or individuals and then show what contribution you or your organisation/business are putting into the project / improvement. Reserves are pots of money which organisations have “put to one side” for either specific reasons dictated by their own future plans or by funding restrictions or for use in emergency situations. If you have any reserves, please attach a separate A4 sheet headed “Reserves”.

You need to let us know if you are applying for funding from any other organisation as this might affect the amount of funding awarded. You will need to let us know if you receive any funding from other parties whilst we are processing your application. Failure to do so may result in withdrawal of funding or a request to return any funds awarded.

Question 17

Please just provide full name of person and position within Elmbridge Borough Council, if known.

Question 18

We do not expect all small businesses to be able to provide all of this information. If you are making improvements to a property then we will need to ensure you have the correct planning permission, have met building regulations and have provided a lease/freehold document and permission to carry out works from the landlord where necessary.

Question 19

You may want to inform your ward councillor of your intention to apply to the fund. There may be an opportunity to join up with other applicants and put in a joint application. You can find out your local ward councillor under “My Neighbourhood” on our website.

Question 20

Please make sure you read the declaration carefully, sign the form and return it.

What happens next?

You will receive an acknowledgement that we have received your application form. Your application will be assessed against our existing criteria and we will carry out checks on business rates and other payment history.

We may ask you to provide further information and we may undertake a site visit to assess the scope of the eligible works/costs. The application and any additional information will be presented to the decision-making body and you will be informed of the decision. There is no right of appeal.

When will the grant be paid?

Grants will only be made following:

- A site visit to confirm the completion of the works.
- A summary report of promotional event or evidence of marketing material.
- The submission of verifiable invoices.
- All conditions of the grant offer have been met e.g. Required planning consent

Appendix A - Table 1. Assessment Requirements

Shop front improvements

Category	Eligible works or project	Information required	Grant
Frontages and signage	Cleaning brickwork, stonework etc. Restoring traditional detailing Restore/replace joinery, iron & stonework. New shop fronts, fascia, signage etc. Remove redundant features. Structural improvements. Enhancing private forecourts.	Before photo; Scale drawings; Design in keeping with surrounding area; At least three detailed, comparable quotes (inc VAT); statutory permissions; and landlord's written consent. Planning consent where required. Please check planning requirements.	Grants up to 50% to a cap of £2,000

Street Scene and Street Furniture Improvements

Category	Eligible works or project	Information required	Grant
Street Furniture	Hanging baskets (excluding maintenance which needs to be undertaken by those bidding) Lighting Signage Seats Bins Trees and planters	Description of works and three written estimates of cost (inc VAT amount) Where applicable arrangements for ongoing costs e.g. cleaning, electricity.	Grants up to 50% to a cap of £1000

Empty Shop improvements

Category	Eligible works or project	Information required	Grant
Support to bring an empty shop back into commercial use	The empty shop grant can be used for one off support to a new business that helps bring a shop that has been empty for over 3 months back into commercial use. This could include support for equipment, anything external or internal premises related. Signage or shop front improvements. Upgrade a website to e-commerce.	Before photo; Scale drawings; Design in keeping with surrounding area; Three comparable, detailed quotes (inc VAT amount); statutory permissions; and landlord's written consent. Planning consent where required. Please check planning requirements.	Grants up to 50% up to a cap of £2000

High Street Boost

Category	Eligible works or project	Information required	Grant
Town or village wide projects to drive new footfall, investment or sustainability	This can be: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Projects that are of benefit to the local economy or attract people to services or2. Projects by a group of retailers that improve environmental sustainability of the town centre or high street	All projects require three comparable quotes, statement of aims with details of initiative, budget, sources of income, measurable outcomes	Grants up to 50% of the project, with a cap of £1,000