

The Town and Village Regeneration Scheme Guidance

ISSUED BY THE DEPARTMENT FOR ENTERPRISE

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Contents

Introduction and Background	2
1. The Town and Village Regeneration Scheme 2024.....	3
1.1 Purpose and Scope	3
1.1.1. External improvements and civic amenity projects	3
1.1.2. Internal accessibility improvements projects	3
1.1.3. Internal works to vacant business units	3
1.1.4. Internal works to convert vacant units above town centre retail premises into residential premises ...	4
1.1.5. Installation of Payment or Point of Sale Equipment in Occupied Premises.	4
1.2 Overview of Available Support.....	5
1.3 Eligibility.....	5
A) Regeneration Area and Eligible Premises	5
B) Eligibility requirements	5
C) The Applicant	6
1.4 Application Process.....	6
A) Information to be submitted	6
B) Assessment criteria	6
C) Approval process	7
D) Pre-payment checks	7
E) Payment process	7
F) Declined applications.....	8
1.5 Public Disclosure.....	8
1.6 Application Form	8

Introduction and Background

The aim of the Town and Village Regeneration Scheme 2024 (“the Scheme”) is to provide financial assistance towards the cost of initiatives carried out in, and in support of, a regeneration area with the aim of improving the appearance and enjoyment of the area, to encourage footfall and to help fill vacant units.

The Scheme was initially launched in 2013 to improve the appearance and vitality of the Island’s main town centres to increase footfall and trade. The Scheme provided funding towards major infrastructure projects usually completed by the Department of Infrastructure and also provided grants up to 50% for shop front improvements.

The Scheme was relaunched in 2019 for an initial 4-year period, with funding capped at £10,000 per application and a maximum grant contribution of 50% of the eligible costs. The Scheme was amended in October 2020 under an Economic Recovery Group (ERG) initiative, to temporarily increase the amount of support available to £25,000 and support up to 80% for local authorities to stimulate economic activity on the Island following the Coronavirus pandemic. The ERG changes were effective until 31st October 2022. Following a one-year extension, the 2019 Scheme closed for new applications on 31st March 2024 and closed fully on 31st March 2025.

In 2024 the Department for Enterprise completed a review of its business support schemes and in 2025 launched the [Local Economy Strategy](#). The 2024 Scheme has been created to incorporate the recommendations of both the schemes review and the Local Economy Strategy.

Further details regarding the Scheme, the Guidance, factsheet and application form can be found [here](#).

The Tynwald Scheme can be found [here](#).

Note that the Department for Enterprise provides other forms of grants and assistance, details of which can be found at [here](#).

For further advice and guidance regarding the Department’s grants and assistance schemes and the criteria for eligibility, including the Scheme, potential applicants are encouraged to complete the online enquiry form hosted at [here](#).

Disclaimer

The information contained within this document is intended to be general in scope and should not be relied upon as advice.

Provision of financial assistance is discretionary and a decision to provide assistance is based on the merits of each particular application.

Any offer of a grant is also subject to the availability of Department funds.

The Department may amend the Scheme Guidance from time to time. While every effort has been made to ensure that the content is correct and up to date at the time of publication, the Department does not accept any responsibility, legal or otherwise, resulting from any errors or omissions and shall not be liable for any losses or damage that anyone may suffer as a result of relying on the information contained herein.

The Department cannot assist any projects which have commenced prior to the submission of the application form.

1. The Town and Village Regeneration Scheme 2024

1.1 Purpose and Scope

The purpose of the Scheme is to support initiatives that are likely to (directly or indirectly): -

- a) Improve, or assist in the improvement of the appearance, accessibility, use of technology or amenity of a regeneration area (see [Section 1.3a](#));
- b) Increase footfall in the Isle of Man's city, towns and villages; or
- c) Reduce the number of unoccupied premises in that area.

The Scheme works in six parts summarised below.

1.1.1. External improvements to buildings

This part of the Scheme can offer 50% up to £25,000 to improve the external appearance of buildings such as: -

- Access - Doors, automatic doors and ramps etc;
- Signage;
- Shop fronts;
- Lighting schemes;
- Painting and rendering;
- Windows; and
- Any other measures at the Department's discretion.

Applicants are encouraged to consider how they can improve the energy efficiency of their property when completing external works.

1.1.2. Civic amenity projects

This part of the Scheme can offer 50% up to £25,000 to develop civic amenities through visual improvements, facilities, points of interest and improvement to public areas such as: -

- Lighting;
- Access;
- Public art;
- Planting;
- Signage;
- Seating; and
- Any other measures at the Department's discretion.

1.1.3. Internal accessibility improvements projects

To improve accessibility within existing properties, applicants can receive 50% of the cost up to £25,000, items supported include: -

- Permanent modifications including (but not limited to) signage, handrails, step edges, door handles, automatic doors, ramps, lifts, lighting, contrasting floor coverings, stair lifts and other facilities that increase accessibility;
- Specialist furniture, counter or room inductions loops; and
- Other reasonable accessibility adjustments at the Department's discretion.

These works can be undertaken in occupied or unoccupied premises.

1.1.4. Internal works to vacant business units

This part of the Scheme can offer 50% up to £25,000 to eligible businesses and organisations to improve the internal function and appearance of vacant units to open as a business to serve the local economy. Eligible works such as the following may be supported: -

- Professional fees;
- Plumbing and electrical works;
- Permanent modifications including (but not limited to) installation of walls and storage etc;
- Service counters;
- Shelving and racking;
- Signage;
- Technology such as payment terminals; and
- Other reasonable costs at the Department's discretion.

1.1.5. Internal works to convert vacant units above town centre retail premises into residential premises

This part of the Scheme can offer 25% up to £50,000 to turn storage or vacant units into residential units, such as:

- Professional fees;
- Plumbing and electrical works;
- Plastering;
- Decorating;
- Permanent modifications and installations including (but not limited to) installation of walls, external doors, fire escapes etc.; and
- Other reasonable costs at the Department's discretion.

1.1.6. Installation of Payment or Point of Sale Equipment in Occupied Premises.

This part of the Scheme can offer the following support: -

- 25% up to £400 for businesses upgrading or replacing equipment; or
- 50% up to £400 for first adoption.

To fund the following technology such as: -

- Payment terminals;
- Barcode readers;
- Point of sale terminals or devices;
- IT equipment (I-Pads, laptops and printers etc); and
- Other reasonable costs at the Department's discretion.

1.2 TVRS Footfall Stimulus Projects

In exceptional cases, applications to the Town and Village Regeneration Scheme may receive additional funding (up to £100,000 and 100%) funded through the Local Economy Fund if an applicant evidences a collective effort to generate increased levels of footfall in a regeneration area by: -

- Significantly improving the public realm of the regeneration area;
- Significantly improving the amenity of the regeneration area;
- Significantly improving accessibility to premises and other places within the regeneration area; or,
- Significantly enabling the use of technology in the regeneration area.
- Etc.

Projects eligible for funding as per section 1.2 of this guidance could include: -

- Signage and information points;
- Public art installations;
- Creation or replacement of street furniture;
- Civic building upgrades;
- Public facility upgrades;
- Public lighting projects; and
- Public realm accessibility projects
- Etc.

1.2 Overview of Available Support

The Scheme offers a grant payable towards the following projects: -

- For external improvements and civic amenity projects, a one-off payment capped at £25,000 per project, offered at 50% of the project's eligible costs;
- For internal accessibility improvement works, applicants can receive a one-off payment capped at £25,000 per project, offered at 50% of the project's eligible costs;
- For internal works to vacant business units, a one-off payment for 50% of the cost capped at £25,000; and
- For internal works to convert vacant units above retail units into residential premises, a one-off payment capped at £50,000 per project, offered at 25% of the project's eligible costs; and
- Installation of Payment or Point of Sale Equipment in Occupied Premises, a one-off payment capped at £400, offered at 25% for those seeking to upgrade or 50% for first adoption of the project's eligible costs.

Important note - Enhanced support is available through the TVRS Footfall Stimulus for projects which also meets the aims of the Local Economy Fund

1.3 Eligibility

A) Regeneration Area and Eligible Premises

For the purposes of the Scheme, "Regeneration area" means any area in the Isle of Man which is used for the following purposes as defined by Planning and is visible from the public highway: -

- Mixed-use (including town centre);
- Public open space;
- Retail;
- Tourism;
- Office; and
- Commercial use (includes industrial estates, business parks and factories and excludes agricultural buildings).

B) Eligibility requirements

The main eligibility requirements are as follows: -

- For building projects, support is limited to external improvement works, unless there is an improvement to accessibility, or the unit is vacant;
- Projects must make improvements to the regeneration area;
- Projects that have commenced before the application has been submitted (and receipt acknowledged by the Department) will not be supported, unless prior written approval from the Department is received;
- For each building contractor quote with a value greater than £10,000, wherever practical **Construction Isle of Man (CIOM)** members must be used for any building works projects. If CIOM members cannot be used, justification must be supplied and prior approval of the Department is required. If applicants wish to use non-CIOM accredited contractors, they must prove to the Department that they have taken reasonable measures to secure the services of CIOM accredited contractors and have been unable to do so. Reasons for not using CIOM contractors could include pricing, availability of CIOM contractors or not having the required skills and/or experience to complete the project.
- Residential properties, including nursing homes, are excluded unless in respect of **Section 1.1.5** of this Guidance;
- Where buildings are of mixed-use, grants can only be claimed against the commercial element of the premises, although some works may be permitted to be claimed against the residential element if they are incidental to the overall project. Applications of this type will be treated on a case by case basis;
- Normally only one application per site per year;
- Normally one application per company/local authority/charity etc per year;
- Projects can receive support from different Government schemes (e.g. this Scheme, the Business Emissions Savings Scheme, the Financial Assistance Scheme and the Arts Council etc) as long as individual item costs are not being supported by more than one scheme. Applicants who are seeking support from more than one Government scheme are encouraged to contact the Department before applying to discuss their project in more detail.

- Support is not available for: -
 - Recurring costs;
 - The cost of labour provided by the recipient or by persons employed by the recipient;
 - The operating costs of the completed project;
 - Any costs payable to a Government Department, a Statutory Board or Local Authority;
 - New builds;
 - Events as these are support by the **Domestic Event Fund (DEF)**; and
 - General repairs and maintenance works which do not improve the appearance and/or amenity of the area.

C) The Applicant

- The business or activities of the applicant must be conducted lawfully in the Island;
- Applicants must declare whether or not they are up to date with paperwork and payments for Income Tax, NI and VAT, or on an approved VAT payment plan. The Department will seek advice from Treasury regarding these matters and this may result in the application or payment being declined;
- If the applicant is a business, the business must provide the Department with a full list of all beneficial owners;
- The Scheme is not available to Government Departments;
- Any retailer that is liable to pay corporate tax is ineligible for support; and
- The Scheme is open to local authorities, charities, not for profit organisations, partnerships, sole traders and such other persons and organisations as the Department consider appropriate.

Important note: Grants are offered entirely at the Department's discretion. Even if an applicant is eligible via the criteria set out above, applications are reviewed on a case-by-case basis on their own merits with no guarantee of a grant being offered.

1.4 Application Process

All applicants are encouraged to engage with the Department before submitting the application form.

This is achieved by completing the brief online enquiry form which can be found [here](#).

A) Information to be submitted

The Department must receive a completed online application form and all required information before an application can be assessed. The absence of a fully completed application form and all required information will result in the application being considered incomplete by the Department.

The applicant must provide the following information: -

- Contact and business/organisation details;
- Address/registered business address;
- Location of the project to be undertaken;
- An overview of the project;
- One quote is required for all elements of the project (works or products) against which the grant is being sought;
- For building works project quotes of a value greater than £10,000, these quotes must be from **Construction Isle of Man (CIOM)** registered contractors;
- On Island suppliers and tradesmen must be used whenever possible;
- Approval from the property owner if you are a tenant;
- Photographs of the site prior to commencement of works (If applicable). The applicant will also be required to submit photographs on completion of the project;
- Project timescales;
- If required, planning approval or a planning application reference number if not yet approved. The Department can provide a conditional offer subject to the applicant receiving planning permission; and
- A declaration regarding the applicant's Tax, NI and VAT status (if applying as a business).

B) Assessment criteria

The Department will assess each application based on a range of criteria including: -

- Applicant eligibility;
- Project overview and eligibility;
- Alignment to the Local Economy Strategy;
- Location of the premises/project;
- Building/site owner approval (If required);
- Tax, NI and VAT declarations. Concurrence with Treasury will be sought if not up to date;
- Concurrence with Business Isle of Man;
- Planning permission requirements; and
- Available budget.

C) Approval process

A report will then be prepared for consideration. The Enterprise Support Manager, Head of Enterprise Support or the Director of Policy and Strategy, under delegated authority from the Minister for Enterprise will consider the report and determine whether financial assistance will be provided and if so, to what level.

The Department aims to provide written notification of the decision within 3 weeks of receipt of all required information.

If the project meets the objectives of the Strategy and Local Economy Fund and eligible for enhanced support, a report will be produced. Depending on the level of funding this report will be reviewed and commented on by the Chief Executive Officer of Business Isle of Man and the Political Member for Business Isle of Man.

The report will then be submitted to the Department for Enterprise Board for decision. If the Department for Enterprise Board supports the application, the report will be submitted to the Isle of Man Treasury for consideration.

The Department for Enterprise will seek Treasury's decision regarding: -

- whether they consider the application to be suitable for approval; and
- if additional funding would be released to finance the project if required.

Applications receiving a higher level of funding may require an extended period of time as a more complex approval process if required.

The applicant will then be advised of the decision and the reasons for it in writing.

If approved, the applicant will be issued an offer letter which will outline the items supported, the level of support (both in terms of value and percentage) and the contractors which must be used etc plus any other terms or conditions. This must be signed and returned to the Department confirming the applicant's agreement to the offer.

Important Note: Applicants must only use contractors who have been approved by the Department to undertake the works. Should alternative contractors be used without the prior agreement of the Department, the grant offer may be rescinded.

Normally, all works must commence within 3 months of approval, with all projects being completed within 6 months of commencement.

D) Pre-payment checks

On completion of the project, the Department will usually conduct an on-site inspection of the finished works. Only once this has been successfully completed can the payment process begin.

E) Payment process

The applicant will be required to pay for the works in full and provide evidence to the Department that the payment(s) has been made. In exceptional circumstances the Department can make payment to the contractor

following confirmation from the applicant that the work(s) are complete, photos of the work upon completion and evidence that the deposit has been paid. Phased payments are not usually possible. Applicants are required to provide good quality photographic evidence of the completed works.

Payments will then be made directly into the applicant's business bank account approximately 2-3 weeks later.

F) Declined applications

Where the application for the grant has been refused, the applicant will be informed in writing and if possible, details as to how the application can be rectified will be provided. The applicant has one month to request in writing a review of the decision by the Department.

The review will be completed by a Department officer who was not involved in the original decision making process.

An application may only be reviewed once.

1.5 Public Disclosure

It is a statutory requirement that the names of businesses and organisations which have received financial assistance provided under the Scheme are published in an annual report prepared by the Department which is laid before Tynwald (the Isle of Man's Parliament).

Applicants should also be aware that both parliamentary and freedom of information questions may be asked about particular applications or applicants. The Department will seek to answer all parliamentary questions and freedom of information requests in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2015 and the Data Protection Act 2018.

The Department may also request photographs and information for case studies, media and PR opportunities. This is optional and not a mandatory requirement for Scheme eligibility.

1.6 Application Form

To apply for the Scheme please follow the link [here](#).

Application forms are completed online, any queries or supporting documentation in relation to applications can be emailed to enterprisesupport@gov.im

Alternatively supporting documentation can be sent to:

Town and Village Regeneration Scheme
Department for Enterprise
St Georges Court
Upper Church Street
Douglas
Isle of Man
IM1 1EX