

# YOUR SHOP FRONT IS YOUR

# SILENT SALESMAN



## SHOP FRONT IMPROVEMENT SCHEME 2023



Comhairle Cathrach  
Bhaile Átha Cliath  
Dublin City Council

**South West  
Inner City**



# SHOP FRONT IMPROVEMENT SCHEME 2023

## Supporting a Better Business Environment in South West Inner City

Dublin City Council South Central Area Office now invites applications for support funding under the Shop front Improvement Scheme 2023 - South West Inner City Area (SWIC). This scheme supports projects that enhance the appearance of shop fronts and business premises in the main commercial areas and urban villages of the South West Inner City and that help to create more inviting and attractive neighbourhood centres.

The scheme encourages best practice approaches to shop front design, maintenance and presentation; the conservation of historic features where appropriate; and the overall enhancement of streetscapes.

The South West Inner City area includes: The Liberties, Clanbrassil Street/ Leonard's Corner/ Blackpitts, Dolphin's Barn, Rialto, Islandbridge, Kilmainham and Inchicore.

## HOW TO APPLY & TERMS

01

Complete the  
Application Form



02

Enclose relevant plans,  
design and specification  
for proposed works



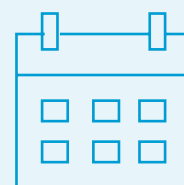
03

Enclose quotation/s  
from your chosen  
contractor/s to match  
the expenditure outlined



04

The closing date  
for applications is  
Friday, 26th May 2023



Advice on how to undertake a successful shop front refurbishment and source a suitable contractor is available under this scheme.

Applicants should ensure they have permission to undertake work to a building under a lease or rental agreement. It is the Applicant's responsibility to gain any necessary planning permission (see *Planning Permission & Licensing*).

Applicants must not be in arrears as to any payments of rates or charges to Dublin City Council (\*applicable only to pre-March 2020 rates). Under Revenue rules, Applicants are also required to demonstrate tax compliance.

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. Grants awarded under the scheme will be notified in writing.

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

## GRANTS AVAILABLE

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

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, repair and reinstatement of traditional timber sash windows;
- ii. repaint and repair of existing painted masonry and rainwater goods;
- iii. removal of upper floor-level signage, redundant utilities and wiring, etc.;
- iv. conservation and repair of historic or heritage features.



Key Items Covered by the Grant	Up to Max. of
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Paint, redecorate or repair a shop front</li> <li>– Measures to ‘green’ or enhance attractiveness of a shop front or outdoor terraces/ seating areas through planting</li> </ul>	€2,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Replace a shop front and/or signage*</li> <li>– Material changes to a shop front such as new entrances, changes to windows etc.*</li> <li>– Specified works to upper floors within the Thomas Street &amp; Environs ACA</li> <li>– Removal of high-level signage within the Thomas Street &amp; Environs ACA</li> <li>– Changes to facilitate universal access* (*planning permission may be required)</li> </ul>	€3,000

## PLANNING PERMISSION & LICENSING

Planning permission is usually required for substantial works to the front of a building, such as material changes to the façade, installing an entire new shop front, or replacing or adding signage. Generally, minor work to redecorate or repair shop fronts is termed ‘exempted development’, meaning it does not require planning permission.

**In the instances of protected structures (sometimes called ‘listed buildings’) planning permission or the prior agreement of Dublin City Council is generally required for all works.**

Within designated Architectural Conservation Areas (such as Thomas Street & Environs ACA) there are specific policies and conditions in place designed to protect the historic character of these areas. This places additional restrictions on the types of work that might be considered to buildings in these areas.

Typical works that materially alter the character or appearance of a building and generally require prior agreement or a grant of planning permission include: the replacement of a shopfront surround, windows or doors; replacement or addition of signage; addition of canopies and awnings; addition of externally-mounted security shutters; replacement of upper floor windows or other features integral to the character of building. Further information on Planning Permissions can be found at [www.dublincity.ie](http://www.dublincity.ie).

The operation of an outside seating area on the public footpath is subject to licence by Dublin City Council. Further details can be found at [www.dublincity.ie](http://www.dublincity.ie) and search ‘Street Furniture Licence’.





# DESIGN PRINCIPLES FOR A BETTER SHOP FRONT



**An attractive shop front showcases your business but is also important to the overall attractiveness of your street a key driver of footfall to an area. This scheme supports the following design principles:**

**Shop signage should be limited:**

For the most part one main fascia sign and, where permitted, one projecting signage to be located at fascia level. However, it is Dublin City Council policy under the Thomas Street & Environs ACA not to permit any projecting signage on streets like Thomas Street, Francis Street and Meath Street and to encourage the removal of existing projecting signage.

**Signage should be of good quality:**

Traditional painted lettering or individual fixed mounted lettering is preferred for signage. Plastic fascias, light boxes, printed foam boards and canvas banners are not supported.

**Signage should be at street 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).

**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.

**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.

**Clutter-free for a tidier street:**

The removal of redundant wiring, alarm boxes and utilities on premises is encouraged and requested under this scheme.

**For further details on this scheme, please contact:**

**Stephen Coyne** Economic Development Officer,  
South West Inner City/ Liberties Business Area Improvement Initiative

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