



ORKNEY
ISLANDS COUNCIL



Economic Development Grant Scheme

**Rural Shop
Improvement Scheme**

Economic Development Grant Scheme

Full details of the Council's Economic Development Grant Scheme can be found in the Scheme Guidelines, available on request from the Council or via the Council's website. This flyer provides outline details of the Rural Shop Improvement Scheme. All prospective applicants are required to discuss their project proposal with a member of staff in the Council's Economic Development Service, before submitting an application.

Please note that the Council's policy is that assistance cannot be given retrospectively. Therefore **you must submit a completed application before you commence work on the project, or commit to any of the costs involved.** Once your application is received, you may start work, although this will be at your own risk as there is no guarantee of assistance until you have a formal written decision from the Council.

Please note

Grants are paid out only on submission of evidence of actual expenditure.

Rural Shop Improvement Scheme

Shops outwith Kirkwall may qualify for grant support towards a range of improvements. A General Store or 'Qualifying Food Shop' will be considered eligible if a range of goods, including basic foodstuffs (e.g. tea/coffee, bread, dairy, eggs, meat, fruit and vegetables) and household goods (soaps, paper products, detergents, etc.) is offered for sale.

Projects which are considered to be repair and maintenance, or a direct replacement of existing assets, will not be considered eligible for grant assistance.



Available support

The level of grant available is determined by the location of the shop, as follows:-

- 1 isles' shops where that shop provides the only such service on the island: a grant of up to 75% of project costs may be available;
- 2 other isles' shops and mainland shops outwith Kirkwall, Stromness, St. Margaret's Hope, Dounby and Finstown: a grant of up to 50% of project costs may be available; and
- 3 independent shops located in St. Margaret's Hope, Finstown, Dounby and Stromness: a grant of up to 25% may be available.

Eligible rural shops may make one application per financial year. The minimum eligible project cost is £500. The maximum total grant(s) that each shop can apply for over a rolling three year period is £10,000. Applicants should therefore consider their likely requirements during that timescale and submit applications accordingly. The whole Rural Shop Improvement Scheme, i.e. for all eligible shops in Orkney, has a budget limit of £50,000 per financial year, so any subsequent applications will be 'held over' accordingly.

Requests for grant support towards the upgrading of petrol pumps will be considered by the Council on their own merits, and with reference to the relevant EU State Aid regulations, although it is unlikely that any support could be offered where there is existing alternative provision either within six miles by road or, for the North and South Isles, anywhere on the same isle.

In exceptional circumstances, the Council may consider more significant shop improvement proposals on their own merits.

Please note that:

- the Council may require you to produce a business plan to support an application for grant assistance towards larger projects (Business Gateway can help with the development of business plans); and
- assistance under this measure will most likely be provided in terms of the EC's *de minimis* regulation.

Further information on these points is available from Council staff.

For further information please visit www.orkney.gov.uk

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Version 2: January 2018