

Ashfield

Enterprise Development Grant Scheme

Guidance and information notes

**  **

Updated: 14 June 2023

What is this grant?

This scheme will provide grants for new and existing businesses that have a viable business growth plan which will lead to the creation of new jobs. It will also help to encourage new businesses to relocate to defined geographic areas in Ashfield, thereby supporting the development of a vibrant entrepreneurial business sector and increasing the number of occupied retail, hospitality, leisure, evening entertainment and professional services premises in our town centres.

**Certain businesses are excluded from applying for this grant** - these include pawn brokers, adult/private shops, betting shops, national and international chain stores.

**Eligible Locations** – applications for commercial premises located in areas covered by Policy SH1 District Shopping Centre and Policy SH4 Local Shopping Centre of the Ashfield District Council Local Plan 2002 will be prioritised, however applications slightly outside of this zone can be considered. Please contact our Business Support team to discuss your location and project requirements.

This grant scheme will end on 31st March 2025. The closing date for applications is 31st October 2024.

What can I use the grant for?

This grant can be used towards the following business expenditures:

* Costs relating to research and development work e.g., product development, including production of prototypes and research of new marketing opportunities.
* Advertising, and other marketing costs, including web design, promotional materials and business stationery etc.
* Costs associated with staff training to improve skill levels.
* Internal building refurbishments. (**Shop fittings are not eligible)**.
* Internal and external refurbishments for disability access e.g., toilets, doors, ramps to access building.
* Shop fronts that have no external roller shutters involved and the design must be agreed with planning team.
* Costs to support energy efficiency improvements e.g., solar panels. (**Not eligible to any applicant that has previously been awarded a Decarbonisation Grant from the Ashfield Accelerator Project)**
* Costs associated with specialist advice to support the business e.g., HR, Legal, Financial, I.T etc.

**Important**

The Council has a strong preference for the use of local suppliers and businesses to be utilised in any grant funded work, for the benefit of the local economy. Applicants should use suppliers located within a 45min travel area of applicant premises address wherever possible.

How much could I receive?

This scheme will provide a grant up to £6,000 that will contribute towards 75% of the total eligible cost of the project (excluding VAT).

To obtain the maximum grant of £6,000, applicants will need to spend £8,000
(total project cost excluding VAT). The applicant contribution is 25% of the total project cost, which for the maximum available grant would be £2,000.00 (excluding VAT).

**The basic formula for calculating the matched grant is:**

Grant amount you are seeking £\_\_\_\_\_ / Divide by 0.75 = Total Project Cost

Total Project Cost – Grant amount = 25% applicant contribution

How is it paid?

This grant is paid in arrears. Applicants will need to pay for the total project before receiving the grant.

If a grant application is approved, applicants will have **up to four months** to submit copies of relevant invoices and bank statements showing that eligible expenditures have been made. Failure to produce the relevant information with this timeframe may result in your grant being delayed or withdrawn.

All invoices and bank statements must be dated **after** the grant application approval date. **Items purchased using cash will not be eligible for grant payment.**

The grant amount paid will be the lesser of the agreed amount or half of the eligible expenditure (excluding VAT).

To draw down the maximum grant of £6,000, applicants will need to provide evidence of any expenditures for agreed items valued at: £8,000 (excluding VAT).

The grant payment will be made directly into the applicant’s business bank account via BACS.A business bank account is a trading commercial account in the name of the applying business. All purchases must be made via the business account and all claim payments will be made to the same business account. Personal or current accounts are **NOT** eligible.

How do I apply?

**Step-1:** Applicants will need to contact the Business Support Team at Ashfield District Council by email at business.support@ashfield.gov.uk and request an online meeting with one of our team to discuss their business growth plans. This meeting will help us to evaluate the suitability of this grant for your needs.

**Step-2:** Applicants will need to providethe following documents and submit these via an online portal.

* An application form
* A business plan
* A 12-month cash flow forecast and profit & loss
* Three written quotes for any single item costing over £3,000

Confirmation of any necessary approvals, if required, e.g., planning permission, building regulations. Businesses will need to evidence that all required permissions have been obtained or produce written confirmation from their District Council that no permissions are required before a grant can be paid.

We recommend applicants seek support to undergo an appropriate course of business advice that leads to the production of a suitable business plan that demonstrates the viability of their business idea, together with a 12-month profit and loss forecast. Further information on where you can find help is shown here:

* [Ashfield District Council Support for Start Up Business Plans](https://www.ashfield.gov.uk/business-licensing/business-support/support-for-start-ups/business-plans/)

For building control advice in Ashfield, please email Building Control at buildingcontrol@erewash.gov.uk or telephone: 0115 907 2244. Please note that whilst we make decisions on building control in Ashfield, Erewash Borough Council handles applications and payments for Ashfield District Council. Further information is available at :[Ashfield District Council Building Control Regulations Advice](https://www.ashfield.gov.uk/planning-building-control/building-control-regulations/)

If you need additional support completing your online application form, please contact Ashfield District Council's Business Support email at business.support@ashfield.gov.uk and ask to make an appointment to complete your application at our offices in Kirkby in Ashfield. One of our team will assist you with the application. However, please note that we are not allowed to complete the application for you.

What happens after I apply?

All applications will be subject to an assessment by a Panel and the amount offered will be at the discretion of the Panel and only whilst funds are available. The Panel’s decision is final and there is no right to appeal.

In all cases, applicants need to apply for the grant by submitting their full application and obtain a written approval of the application **before any work is undertaken** OR **items/equipment purchased**. This grant will not be paid towards the cost of any transactions that have occurred before the date of the approval.

If your grant application is successful, the applicant must agree to remain trading within the district for **at least 12 months post award**. The Council reserves the right to seek repayment of part/all of the grant if this condition is not met.

Am I eligible to apply for a grant?

This scheme is available to established small and medium sized enterprises (SME) who have been located in the district of Ashfield for at **least six months OR who are located outside the district and are looking to move into the area**. A small or medium-sized enterprise, or SME, is defined as a business or company that has fewer than 250 employees: and has either (a) annual turnover not exceeding 50 million Euros (approximately £40 million) or (b) an annual balance-sheet total not exceeding 43 million Euros (approximately £34 million)

* Individuals looking to move into the district to start a business.
* Businesses already located in the district that have been registered as trading for more than six months (e.g., with HMRC or Companies House)
* You must have a ‘Business Growth Plan’ in place and require additional funding to take it forward which will potentially create new jobs.
* Your businesses must be located within one of the following locations: [Ashfield District Council Enterprise Development Grant scheme eligibility map](https://adc.dynamicmaps.co.uk/mapthat/Login.html?user=high-street-grant)

Eligible businesses can take the legal form of Sole Trader, Partnership, Limited Company, or Social Enterprise/Community Interest Company (CIC). Eligible businesses must meet due diligence checks with HRMC and Companies House, and provide evidence of their business bank account, home, and business trading addresses.

**Important:**

You cannot apply for this grant to support ]energy efficiency projects’ if you have already applied to the **Ashfield Accelerator Project** – **Decarbonisation Grant** and you must declare this in your growth meetings with the business support team prior applying online.

Important notes

The amount of grant funding a business can apply for from Ashfield District Council is restricted to £12,000 in a 12-month period. This can be made up from multiple eligible grants available from the Council that total up to a maximum of £12,000.

Any applicant who is offered and claims up to the scheme’s maximum amount (in this case £6,000) will not be eligible to apply to the same scheme again, even after a 12-month period has passed.

Applications submitted by Agents or Consultants **will not** be accepted. All applications must be submitted by the applicant. If your intended works require planning permission or building regulation approval and you require advice, please see the following webpage:

* [Ashfield District Council Planning application advice](https://www.ashfield.gov.uk/planning-building-control/planning-applications/)

Alternatively, you can contact the Ashfield District Council Duty Planner by email at dutyplanner@ashfield.gov.uk or call 01623 457388.

Due diligence checks

Ashfield District Council will undertake due diligence checks and will hold the following information on all applicants:

* Name of business
* Business Trading Address including postcode.
* Unique identifier (preferably Company Reference Number (CRN)) if

applicable. If not applicable, VAT Registration Number, Self-Assessment Partnership Number, National Insurance Number, Unique Taxpayer Reference (UTR), Registered Charity Number are acceptable)

* Nature of Business
* Date business established.
* Number of employees
* Business rate account number (if applicable)
* Cumulative total of previous funding received under all grants schemes.
* Any outstanding debt to the Council

Next steps

If you think your business growth project meets the criteria of this grant scheme and you would like to apply, then please request an online meeting with a member of the Business Support team to discuss your business growth plans. Email Ashfield District Council Business Support at business.support@ashfield.gov.uk

Please note this meeting is required before you can access our online portal to complete an application form and make a submission.