

Living and Working Over the Shop (LOTS/WOTS)

Guidance Notes

Details of Scheme

Living and Working over the Shop grants are part of Leicestershire Competitive Market Towns Initiative, a comprehensive development programme to promote the economic wellbeing of market towns and rural centres.

The initiative provides a range of support including grants for conversion of upper floors of shops and frontage improvements for shops and commercial premises. Living over the Shop (LOTS) and Working over the Shop (WOTS) grants aim to increase residential and office accommodation available in Market Towns and Rural Centres in Leicestershire, by encouraging the conversion of vacant floor space above shops and other commercial properties.

Criteria

If you own a property with vacant floor space and/or upper floors capable of being converted into flats or workspace, then you could be eligible for a grant under this initiative.

The following criteria will be taken into account in determining how grant funds will be allocated:

- Leasehold Properties must have at least 5 years remaining in the terms of the lease.
- Whether the economic re-use is sympathetic to the town's needs.
- Impact on the environment.
- Relevant approvals such as planning permission, building regulations and any others required for the new use.
- Overall cost of scheme and amount of grant applied for.
- Prospects for early completion of the building conversion work.

Priority areas

Priority will be given to proposals that result in the creation of new residential or commercial units. However, if you are upgrading or improving an existing flat, grants may be offered for up to 25% of eligible works up to a maximum of £1750 per residential unit.

Priority will be given to applications from businesses whose project aims to:

- improve the vitality and viability of local businesses,
- contribute to safer, livelier communities
- reuse and improve under-used property, reducing the need for green field development.

Eligible Activities

- Creation or modification of independent access to upper floors and associated safety measures.
- Installation of fire escape or escape staircase.
- Installation of fire doors.
- Replacement or repair to staircase.
- Internal alterations essential for the creation of useable accommodation.
- Installation of services, toilets, baths, showers and other sanitary facilities.
- Repair/maintenance/replastering of internal walls and ceilings.
- Painting of internal walls and ceilings (where related to other eligible works).
- Replacement or repair of floors.
- Replacement/upgrading/repair of electrical services.
- Repair or replacement of windows.

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Non Eligible Activities

- General property repairs, repointing, replacement of rainwater goods.
- Repairs to roofs or roof structure and/or their replacement, or the repair and replacement of windows, where these works have already received financial assistance from HERS.
- Installation of carpets or floor coverings, application of wallpaper or decorative finishes - other than paint - to internal surfaces.
- Purchase of furniture, and gas or electrical appliances.
- Costs involved in letting or marketing of accommodation.

Funding Levels & Grant Payment Details

If you are proposing to form a new residential or commercial unit, grants will be available for up to 50% of the costs of eligible works, not to exceed:

- £3500 per unit for private renting.
- £5000 per residential unit for lettings to be administered by a housing association or registered landlord.
- £5000 per commercial unit for lettings administered by a voluntary or community organisation.

Grants will be payable upon satisfactory completion of the works and production of paid invoices relevant to the claim. Grants will be reclaimed if the building is converted to the owner's private use within a three year period following funding.

Additional Support Agencies

District Councils

Information required in the Application Form

(The General Guidance notes provide details on completing the application form, however the following specific information is required to apply for a LOTS/WOTS Grant)

3. Your Project

Project Description

In addition to the general requirements under Project Description please provide building details such as location and a description of the building, its size and general condition, type of access available and any services such as gas and electricity. A location map and photograph of the building should accompany the application form if possible.

Please indicate if the building is listed as of architectural or historical importance or located within a Conservation Area.

Contact Details (for queries and completed applications to be sent to:)

For further information or to return a completed form and relevant details please contact:

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