

GUIDANCE NOTES

INTRODUCTION

The grant scheme is intended to encourage the proper preservation of historic buildings. The benefits are that a well maintained town will add to its own prosperity by creating an air of well-being which will attract further investment and will bring more enjoyment to its inhabitants.

GRANTS

The high cost of certain historic building repairs is recognised and grants are provided to assist owners in the upkeep of their property and to help maintain the architectural and historic quality of the town. Where grants are provided they cover only a (small) percentage of the cost of works. Grants are also not available for improvement, conversion or extension works, or for items of routine maintenance. Grant aid is not normally made available to new purchasers where the need for repairs could reasonably have been foreseen.

OPERATION OF THE SCHEME

Repair proposals will be examined by the Technical Officer and inspections will need to be carried out before any work starts and on completion before the grant is paid. Inspections may also be made during the course of the work. The Technical Officer has a duty to ensure that work is carried out to a proper standard but cannot supervise the work for each applicant. Applicants who require surveys, schedules of condition, and who want the work supervised should seek the services of a professional adviser.

CONDITIONS

Certain conditions will be imposed. When a grant is made it is on the understanding that all necessary repair works are carried out, and conditions may be imposed to ensure that this is done. There could otherwise be the risk that expenditure on one part will be rendered worthless by decay occurring in other parts of the building.

Work should not start before an application is determined. It may be possible for prior approval to be given to the repair proposals without prejudice to the grant application in cases where urgent work is necessary.

CONSENTS

Where any alteration (internal or external) or extension is to be made to a Listed Building, then Listed Building Consent, and in certain cases planning permission, will be required. Consent is not required for repairs to Listed Buildings where the original appearance or character of the building will not be affected.

STANDARDS OF WORKMANSHIP

To qualify for a grant all repair works must be correctly detailed, fully specified and carried out in accordance with good building practice. Repairs which do not deal with fundamental problems in a building will not attract grant aid. For example, re-roofing works can only be carried out satisfactorily where any necessary repairs are made to the roof structure before the roof is re-covered.

All works must be carried out using natural or traditional materials; modern imitation materials such as concrete roof tiles or re-constructed stones are not acceptable. Detailed guidance on specification requirements and standards of work is available.

Repair works to historic buildings must respect the original structure and any repairs or alterations must not weaken the building. Structural considerations and methods of taking water away from the building are the basis of traditional building construction, and grant assisted projects are usually related to dealing with these problems. Many expensive repairs are due to neglect, and regular inspection of properties is strongly recommended. Owners should, therefore, take immediate action when a defect is noticed.

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