

Building Repair Grant Scheme

The Building Repair grant scheme is an important part of Falkirk Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI). It aims to preserve and enhance the appearance of Falkirk Town Centre through repairing and maintaining buildings and features that give the area its special architectural character and sense of place.

The THI is able to offer grant funding for up to 85% of the cost of eligible repair work. Certain buildings have been identified as 'Priority Projects' due to their heritage need, listing and/or prominence within the town centre - these schemes will be given first-refusal of money pre-allocated towards their repair. The remaining unallocated funds will be available to other owners within the THI area, with the maximum grant being determined by the priority category assigned to the property and the nature of the works.

The purpose of the THI Building Repair Grant Scheme is to put into good repair the structure and external fabric of buildings and structures that make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of Falkirk Town Centre Conservation Area. Repairs should be comprehensive in scope and use appropriate techniques or methods of construction. The general principle is that all repair work should follow best building conservation practice using appropriate natural or traditional materials - such as natural slate, sandstone, lime mortar and timber joinery work - on a like-for-like basis. Repairs using substitute or artificial materials are NOT eligible for grant aid and their use is unacceptable on grant aided buildings.

The following pages contain a list of works that are eligible and ineligible for grant funding. If you have any questions, or require further information, please contact the THI Project Officer on:

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“ to put into good repair the structure and external fabric of buildings and structures”

Eligible works:

- Consolidation or reinforcement of the existing structure using the most conservative method practicable. Limited reconstruction in line with the existing structure is eligible if it is unavoidable and supported by documentary evidence.
 - Appropriate** repairs to timber frames, roof structure, beams, floor joists and other structural timbers are eligible but must be based on a careful and comprehensive survey of the existing structure.
 - Dry rot eradication and appropriate* conservation-based timber preservation treatments. These must be based on an analysis and specification by an independent consultant with conservation expertise.
 - Damp-proofing by traditional methods are only eligible where damp is causing structural damage to the building. Damp eradication measures are preferable where practicable.
 - Re-roofing in natural, traditional materials to match the historic roof covering is eligible. This should include re-using sound existing materials where possible. Re-roofing with inappropriate*, substandard or artificial materials is not eligible.
 - Repairs to chimneys, including lining or rebuilding if structurally necessary, provided that the chimney is reinstated accurately to the historic height and profile. The replacement of the historic style of chimney posts is also eligible for grant.
 - Leadwork repair or renewal in line with the details and codes recommended by the Lead Sheet Association.
 - Repairing or replacing rainwater goods to match the historic material and sections - generally in cast iron. Plastic, PVC, GRP or Aluminium rainwater goods are not eligible.
 - External stonework and brickwork repair, including decorative elements, to an appropriate* specification. Plastic or in-situ resin-based repairs are not usually eligible.
 - Selective rebuilding of existing stonework and brickwork if structurally necessary. This will usually involve using salvaged existing materials and/or new matching materials.
 - Re-pointing which is structurally necessary and kept to a minimum, using appropriate* mortar, is eligible. Comprehensive re-pointing for cosmetic reasons is not.
- The repair or, if necessary, reinstatement of external joinery work such as windows and doors is eligible. This should be carried out to the historic pattern and detail. Well-designed secondary glazing may also be considered for grant funding.
 - External render, harling or stucco repairs and limited areas of renewal.
 - Cleaning of external stonework and brickwork is eligible where is required to assess the extent of necessary repair, where the surface build up is damaging the fabric of the building. Any cleaning must be done to an approved specification, based on trials, and carried out by a specialist conservation consultant.
 - The repair or reinstatement of retaining walls, boundary walls or railings that contribute to the stability of the building or enhance the character of the conservation area.
 - Restoration of architectural features is only eligible where the building is otherwise in good repair and clear documentary evidence is available. This can include the reinstatement of missing details, which is particularly relevant to historic shopfronts. Other eligible works would include: repair to the historic pattern and detail of features such as sculpture, tiling, or decorative ironwork; the repair of applied details and features like cornices, string courses, window architraves, columns, pilasters etc. Any repair and restoration should be carried out as accurately as possible to the historic form or profile.
 - Professional fees are eligible for grant provided the advisors belong to a recognised institution - i.e. architects will be members of the RIBA/RIAS, and chartered surveyors members of the RICS with an appropriate* level of specialist conservation expertise. Full professional fees for architectural services are only eligible if the professional advisor inspects work in progress and is responsible for its certification on completion.
 - Planning fees such as those associated with planning permission, building control, listed building and conservation area consent are eligible, provided they clearly relate to the project the grant is being used for.
 - Necessary preliminaries such as setting up a site before work begins, ensuring site security, meeting health and safety requirements, scaffolding, putting up portaloes etc are all eligible for grant funding in principle.

- VAT, where is cannot be recovered, is eligible for grant.
- Building surveys, feasibility studies, appraisals and plans that are vital to developing a project or determining a new use are eligible.
- Archaeological works such as recording and analysing historic buildings of early origin or complex evolution as a means for devising conservation works, any required monitoring during works or publishing of results necessitated by works that are eligible for grant aid.

Ineligible works:

- Repairs using substitute or artificial materials are NOT eligible for grant aid and their use is unacceptable on grant aided buildings.
- Routine maintenance
- Redecoration is not eligible for grant funding unless it is needed as a direct result of eligible repair and the public has access to the building, such as in a restaurant or shop.
- Internal repair work unless it is necessary for structural stability of the building.
- Conjectural restoration - i.e. work for which there is no firm historic evidence surviving either on the building or recorded in photographs or drawings.
- Any works that involve the reversal of features that may not be original to the building, but that have quality and interest in their own right.
- Stand alone surveys, studies, appraisals and plans that are not vital to the development of a building repair project.

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** Please contact the THI Project Officer if you are unsure whether a certain technique or method of repair will be considered appropriate for grant funding.

