

**Heritage Policy and Architectural Protection Section,
Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local
Government.**

**Civic Structures Conservation Grant
Scheme, 2009**

Circular CS1/09

January, 2009



Comhshaol, Oidhreachta agus Rialtas Áitiúil
Environment, Heritage and Local Government

Circular Number CS 1/09

29 January, 2009.

Civic Structures Conservation Grants scheme, 2009

1. This circular contains information in relation to an updated scheme of grants for the conservation works to protected structures, which are in civic ownership or occupation and generally open to the public, known as the Civic Structures Conservation Grant Scheme.

2. Background

The Civic Structures Scheme is additional to the scheme of grants for protected structures, administered by county councils and county borough corporations, generally referred to as the 'Local Authority Conservation Grants scheme' and various Heritage Council schemes. The scheme is not intended to assist in carrying out routine maintenance, alterations or improvements.

3. Eligible Structures

The Civic Structures Conservation Grant scheme will provide support for local authorities, Civic Trusts, and other "not for profit" bodies to upgrade buildings of significant architectural and heritage merit and which are in public ownership and open to the public generally.

Typically structures eligible for grant assistance under this scheme include churches, public statues and monuments, canal bridges, harbours, libraries, gate lodges, piers, clubhouses and follies and any qualifying protected structure. A protected structure is a structure that is included on the Register of Protected Structures (RPS) as maintained by each Local Authority.

4. Ownership or Occupation

A structure may qualify if it is owned by a public authority. A structure may also qualify if it is in the ownership of a charity or community organisation or in long term use of a charity or community organisation.

For this purpose, "public authority" means: -

- a) a Government Department,
- b) the Commissioners of Public Works,

- c) a local authority or a regional authority,
- d) a harbour authority,
- e) a board or other body established by or under statute,
- f) a company in which all the shares are held by, or on behalf of, or by directors appointed by, a Minister of the Government, or
- g) a company in which all the shares are held by a board, company, or other body referred to in paragraph (e) or (f).

It is necessary that the consent of the owner is acquired by the project promoter before a grant application can proceed.

5. Qualifying Works

Grant-aid under this scheme is only available for conservation works. Works involving the restoration or reinstatement of lost or destroyed elements of a structure do not qualify. However, where a structure has largely retained the integrity of its design, the reinstatement of lost elements of the design may qualify. Further details regarding qualifying works are contained in Appendix A.

It is recommended that an architect, conservation expert or other suitably qualified professional advise on the project for the duration. This person will have a responsibility to ensure that all necessary procedures are observed, that best conservation practice is adhered to throughout the course of the project and that work is completed to a satisfactory standard. Costs relating to these services are eligible for payment under the Scheme.

6. Grant Levels

The maximum grant level will be set by the Department from year to year and in 2009 will be a maximum of **€40,000**. The maximum grant is set at this level in order to assist a larger number of demonstration projects throughout the country in preference to a small number of major capital projects. **The grant level is intended as a contribution to the overall cost of conservation works only and not as a funding mechanism for major capital works.** Due to the level of grant assistance available applicants intending to undertake large capital expenditure are encouraged to phase the conservation work over a number of years.

7. Combining Funding

Where an applicant has applied for or received funding from a scheme financed by the Exchequer or the EU for the works concerned, **the aggregate of such funding and the grant under this scheme must not exceed 80% of the cost of the works.** Where qualifying and non-qualifying works are combined in a single project, the cost of non-qualifying works is not reckonable for calculating the approved cost of works.

8. Matching Funding

Any grant sought is required to include **matching funding of at least 20% of total project expenditure**. It should be noted that funding from other State sources cannot be used to satisfy the matching expenditure requirement.

9. Sharing of Information regarding funding

The Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government funds the conservation of structures, which are of architectural significance through various grant schemes. These schemes are administered by Local Authorities, the Heritage Council and the Housing Section within the Department.

In some cases projects receive funding from more than one of these schemes. To ensure that the maximum level of exchequer funding allowable is not exceeded, information provided in the Civic Structures Conservation Grant Scheme application form will be cross-checked by the Department with that held by these organisations to verify eligibility for this grant.

10. Duration of grant

The grant scheme is an annual scheme, with the grant award to be claimed within the financial year of the grant offer. Applicants may apply for funding for further phases of work in subsequent years provided the scheme is continued. This will require a separate application to be submitted in the year in question.

11. Application Process

Applications will only be accepted on the prescribed form in hard copy. 6 good quality copies should be submitted. Please enclose recent photos of the condition of the building. Additional information, condition reports, method statements should not exceed 10 pages in all as only the first 10 pages of additional information will be circulated to the independent advisory panel. Late applications will not be passed on to the panel but will be recorded as late. Applications will not be returned.

Further details and copies of application forms are available on the Department's website at www.environ.ie.

12. Assessment Process

The Department will convene an independent advisory panel to assess and rate each application. The panel will be chaired by an official of the Department and consist of a minimum of 3-4 people with relevant experience and qualifications in architecture, conservation and heritage.

All applications received by the deadline in a given year will be assessed by the panel under the following headings:

- 1) Significance of Structure**
- 2) Priority/Urgency of Conservation Works**
- 3) Project Methodology and Quality of Proposal**

Each application will be given rating as follows:

- 4. Excellent;**
- 3. Good;**
- 2. Fair;**
- 1. Not sufficient.**

The grant award will be proportionate to the score gained having regard to the limited resources available, the amount of grant assistance sought and the number of projects that can be grant aided.

13. Complying with Legislation

Works for which a grant is being paid must meet all statutory requirements in the normal way including planning permission, National Monuments Acts, environmental and labour law. Confirmation of Ministerial consents and planning permissions, if relevant, must be provided when claiming a grant.

14. Tax Clearance Certificates/C2

A Tax Clearance Certificate (TCC) is required by any group or organisation that does not have charity status and is in receipt of Government grant funding in excess of €10,000. Applications for a TCC can be made on-line at www.revenue.ie and are generally valid for a period of 12 months.

As per Department of Finance Circular 44/2006, any contractor who carries out construction operations greater than the value of €650 is required to provide a Tax Clearance Certificate or C2 Cert to the Organisation/Project Promoter in order to allow them to fully draw down their grant. This requirement is fully applicable to registered charities. Relevant C2/TCC details of the contractor(s) should be provided to the Department at the time of grant application and again when claiming the grant if the certificate has expired.

14. Procurement

It is recommended that the contract for project works might be awarded on the basis of responses to specifications to at least three suppliers or service providers.

15. On Site Verifications

Projects in receipt of funding under the scheme may be inspected by officers of the Department for the purposes of the grant scheme, capital appraisal, audit or other relevant official business. A separate file must be maintained by the project promoter and contain all relevant material in relation to the project. This file must be available for inspection by the above personnel at all times.

17. Information and Publicity Requirements

The contribution of the Department should be publicly acknowledged in all advertisements and publicity and by means of a notice on site.

18. Advertisement

The scheme is scheduled to operate annually and will be advertised with a closing date for applications for the relevant year of the scheme. Advertisement will be via the Conservation Officer of each Local Authority and on the Department's website, www.environ.ie

19. Closing date

The closing date for receipt of completed applications for the 2009 scheme is **4pm, Friday, 27 February, 2009.**

20. Contact Details

For further details please contact the Heritage Policy and Architectural Protection Section in relation to this Circular at:

Tel. (01) 8883037 Seamus Hadrill (Seamus.Hadrill@environ.ie) or Tel. (01) 8883049 Catherine Delaney (Catherine.Delaney@environ.ie)

Address:

Heritage Policy and Architectural Protection Section
Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government
1, Ardavan Business Park
Ardavan,
Wexford.



Appendix A: Civic Structures Conservation Grant Scheme

Qualifying Works

1. Objective of works

The fundamental objective of undertaking conservation works on a structure should be to restrain the process of decay without damaging the character of a structure or altering the fabric and features which make the structure of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest. To qualify, works should normally be carried out using traditional materials, appropriate to the structure, its history, and its condition. When replacement is necessary, it should be done on a like-for-like basis. Because of the importance of retaining historic fabric, a number of small repairs, e.g. piecing-in of new elements in a historic window, will often be more appropriate than complete renewal.

The Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government's Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines, 2004, (www.environ.ie) set out the methods and standards of conservation required for works grant-aided under this scheme.

2. Qualifying and non-qualifying works

The attached Table 1 gives guidance on the types of works that are qualifying works. Grant assistance will be given for conservation surveys and the preparation of method statements when carried out in conjunction with capital works.

Grant-aid under this scheme is only available for conservation works. Works involving the restoration or reinstatement of lost or destroyed elements of a structure do not qualify. However, where a structure has largely retained the integrity of its design, the reinstatement of lost elements of the design may qualify. In each case, the potential gain in the special interest of a structure should be balanced against any likely loss of integrity.

Works consisting of maintenance, alterations and improvements, or demolition (including the removal of a complete structure or any part or element of a structure) do not qualify. This includes all new work and additions to or within an historic structure to increase the comfort or convenience of the occupier or user, e.g. new heating systems, insulation, and loft conversion work. In the case of demolition, however, possible exceptions can be made for careful dismantling necessary to safeguard elements of a building.

Windows in historic structures are typically timber-framed. Works consisting of the repair of an existing window or the replacement of a window in the manner of the original window qualify. Super-imposed glazing bars on double-glazed windows, even where the bars are facsimile, do not qualify.

Works involving the installation or repair of services (e.g. water, electricity or gas) do not qualify unless it can be demonstrated by the applicant that they are necessary for the purpose of properly conserving the fabric or features of the structure concerned.

Professional Fees

Professional fees are eligible only for the portion of project work which is being grant aided. Professional fees towards the total cost of works will not be considered.

Value Added Tax (VAT)

The cost of VAT is eligible only in circumstances where such VAT is not recoverable by the beneficiary by any means. Other taxes and charges (in particular direct taxes and social security contributions on wages and salaries) do not constitute eligible expenditure except where they are genuinely and definitively borne by the final beneficiary of the grant.

Table 1: Qualifying Works

Category	Description	Comment
Professional Fees	Professional fees incurred for the portion of works grant aided to include surveys and method statements indicating methods and sequence of works, on site supervision and monitoring, reasonable travel and subsistence costs and sign off on project.	Eligible in conjunction with the approved works programme only.
Stability	Works essential to make a structure or part of a structure stable	
Roofs	Repair of roof structures Repair or renewal of roof coverings Repair of roof features	Appropriate materials e.g. slate types, must be used. e.g. parapet or valley guttes, dormer windows or skylights chimney stacks or pots, cupolas or balustrades

<p>Rainwater disposal</p>	<p>Necessary repair or replacement of rainwater disposal systems</p> <p>Provision of overflows and weirs to rainwater disposal systems so that, in the case of a blockage, water is visibly shed clear of the structure</p>	<p>Lead and cast iron should be replaced like-for-like. Where theft, vandalism, or maintenance access is problematic, the use of suitable substitute materials may be considered. Snow boards in gutters do not qualify.</p>
<p>Lead Work</p>	<p>Necessary renewal of roof lead work</p> <p>Use of lead welding to extend the life of lead of historic interest</p>	<p>While it may be necessary to redesign the substrate to comply with current good practice, the visual and physical implications of this need to be carefully considered before changes are made. Where there is a history of lead theft from a roof, a visually acceptable alternative to lead may be considered.</p>

Category	Description	Comment
Walls	<p>Necessary repair of external walls (including work to the structure, surfaces, and decorative elements on the wall surface, or wall coverings or claddings)</p> <p>Repair or replacement of elements set in walls</p>	<p>The removal of render from a previously rendered exterior and associated repointing are specifically excluded.</p> <p>e.g. panels, windows and doors (including frames), glazing, ironwork and fittings</p>
External features	<p>Necessary repair or replacement of existing external features which contribute to the special interest of the structure</p>	<p>e.g. urns, statues, balconies, canopies, barge boards, shutters, clock faces, flagpoles, weather vanes, or sundials</p> <p>Repair or replacement of clock machinery is not eligible.</p>
Internal structure and features	<p>Works to conserve internal floors, ceilings, walls and partitions, doors, floor boarding, wall panelling, plain or decorative plasterwork</p>	
Dampness	<p>Measures to combat rising or penetrating damp, where this is directly damaging the fabric or contents of an historic structure</p>	<p>Qualifying work includes the provision of surface water drainage or improved internal ventilation where this is essential. Traditional lime-based plasters should be retained and repaired instead of replacing with modern cement-based plasters.</p> <p>The provision of a damp-proof course simply because the existing structure was built without one, or the provision of dry lining, do not qualify.</p>
Machinery and services	<p>Repair of machinery which is an integral part of a structure</p>	<p>e.g. moving parts of windmills, watermills, tidemills, and stage machinery for theatres</p>

	<p>Works to functional services, e.g. electricity, gas, heating and foul drainage, where they are necessarily disturbed in the course of other grant-aided repairs and re-instatement is necessary</p> <p>Works to light fittings, switches and other fittings where their design or provenance is itself of interest</p>	<p>The repair or renewal of machinery or services does not qualify just because cases or fittings may qualify as internal or external features, or as fixtures. For example, repairs to radiators of special architectural or historic interest may qualify while a new boiler does not.</p>
--	---	--

Category	Description	Comment
Temporary works	Works to reduce the immediate risk to an unoccupied structure from probable collapse, weathering, fire, vandalism and unauthorised access	Adequate ventilation of the structure must be maintained.
Fixtures	Repair or conservation of fixtures, provided that they are 'fixed' or integrated with the structure (rather than an easily removed piece of furniture) and that they contribute significantly to the special interest of the structure	The fixture must urgently need conservation, and urgent structural repairs should always be given priority over fixture conservation.