

General Grant Guidance Notes



Photo by Keith Robeson

Selkirk Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS) is a partnership project developed by Scottish Borders Council in conjunction with a community based Selkirk CARS Steering Group, which successfully obtained funding from Historic Scotland in January 2013 for a heritage led regeneration project for Selkirk town centre.

Selkirk CARS is focused on a range of heritage and conservation based regeneration activities within the town centre over a five year period. The scheme will offer grant aid towards repair works to traditional buildings as well as supporting complementary initiatives, such as community heritage projects and traditional skills training, to increase awareness and understanding of the town's rich heritage.

The project has an overall budget of just over £1million, funded by Historic Scotland (£795,000) and Scottish Borders Council (£215,000), and will run until March 2018.

This leaflet provides general guidance on the Selkirk CARS grant funding categories, eligibility and prioritisation as well as information on accepted conservation principles and standards.

1 Grant Funding Categories

All traditional properties in the Selkirk CARS area are eligible for funding for traditional repairs but a number of priority buildings have been identified by the Selkirk CARS Steering Group as being located in prominent positions and currently having an adverse impact on the town centre due to their condition or appearance (see CARS plan). These buildings will be the focus for the Selkirk CARS funding.

However, this is not intended to exclude acceptance of applications for funding for the repair of other traditional buildings within the Selkirk CARS boundary. A range of criteria will be used to assess these applications, including:

- Conservation value of the building
- Listed building category
- Level of repair required
- Potential impact of repair of building on Priority Buildings and the Selkirk CARS area generally

Selkirk CARS funding can be used for the following types of repair/restoration:

General Building Repair – The most common funding request. This relates to structural and external fabric repairs to historic buildings which are still in use.

Re-instatement of Architectural Detail – Covers the restoration of missing architectural features. The building **MUST** be in an otherwise good condition, or will be upon completion of associated works, and there must be firm historic evidence to support the application. Any works which involve reversing alterations that are of good quality or interest will be excluded.

Public Realm Work – This relates to improvements to public spaces and other townscape features such as old walls and railings.

Shopfront Improvement – This is similar to Re-instatement of Architectural Detail and covers the restoration of traditional shopfronts. The building **MUST** be in an otherwise good condition, or will be upon completion of associated works, and there must be firm historic evidence to support the application. Any works which involve reversing alterations that are of good quality or interest will be excluded.



1.1 Priority Building Projects

Funding has been allocated to specific buildings identified by the Selkirk CARS Steering Group as being located in prominent positions and currently having an adverse impact on the town centre due to its condition or appearance. The scheme aims to help these buildings establish a sustainable future as well as demonstrating the benefits of Heritage Led Regeneration.

The grant level for Priority Building Projects will be determined through 'before and after' valuations, carried out by the independent district valuer, to ascertain the buildings conservation deficit value. However, the final applied grant level may be increased to encourage development subject to approval from the Selkirk CARS Steering Group and Historic Scotland.

Applications can be developed, submitted, assessed and offers made at any point until March 2016. The current Priority Building Project list will be subject to regular review and, where necessary, funding will be re-allocated to an alternative project if progress cannot be made, subject to approval from the Selkirk CARS Steering Group and Historic Scotland.

All Priority Building Projects MUST have an appropriate professional agent appointed to be eligible for Selkirk CARS funding (see note).

Maximum Grant Rate	90%
Maximum Grant Amount	Dependant On Funding Allocation

1.2 Small Grants Scheme (Major Repairs)

Projects seeking CARS funding of between £5,000 to £15,000 will be assessed in this category. Applications will be invited in a series of quarterly rounds and will be assessed via a set of criteria (including need, prominence, quality and deliverability) by a panel drawn from the steering group members.

The Small Grants Scheme (Major Repairs) will only be open to properties located in the Market Square until August 2014. Thereafter, any project throughout the identified Selkirk CARS boundary will be eligible to apply until March 2016 or the grant fund is fully committed.

Successful projects seeking funding between £5,000 to £10,000 will be supported at a standard grant rate of between 50% to 75% up to a maximum of £10,000.

The grant level for projects seeking funding between £10,000 to £15,000 will be determined through 'before and after' valuations, carried out by the independent district valuer, to ascertain the buildings conservation deficit value and subsequent grant rate up to a maximum of 75% of the eligible costs or £15,000.

All Small Grants Scheme (Major Repairs) projects MUST have an appropriate professional agent appointed to be eligible for Selkirk CARS funding (see note).

Maximum Grant Rate	75%
Maximum Grant Amount	£15,000

1.3 Small Grants Scheme (Minor Repairs)

Projects seeking CARS funding of up to £5,000 will be assessed in this category.

The Small Grants Scheme (Minor Repairs) will only be open to properties located in the Market Square until August 2014. Thereafter any project throughout the identified Selkirk CARS boundary will be eligible to apply until March 2016 or the grant fund is fully committed. Applications can be developed, submitted, assessed and offers made at any point subject to the above restrictions.

Successful projects seeking funding of up to £5,000 will be supported at a standard grant rate of between 50% to 75%, up to a maximum of £5,000.

Small Grants Scheme (Minor Repairs) projects should identify if an appropriate professional agent should be appointed through discussion with the Selkirk CARS Project Officer (see note).

Maximum Grant Rate	75%
Maximum Grant Amount	£5,000

2 Prioritisation of Grant Funding

Grant funding will be prioritised to the essential repairs to secure and/or stabilise a property, and works to the primary facades (usually the street elevation) of eligible properties including associated works (for example roofs and chimneys) to secondary facades.

Generally, works to the rear of an eligible property will not be grant funded unless the applicant can demonstrate a clear need for the works to be undertaken that meets the aims of the overall Selkirk CARS project.

The following categories will be used in the assessment of grant funding:

Category 1	Essential (for the security of the building and the general public)
Structural Stability	Evidence of structural movement or defects in the building fabric will require to be assessed by a suitably qualified building professional. A proposal to rectify the defect will be required as part of the grant application and grant funding will only be paid subject to confirmation of the works being satisfactorily undertaken by a suitably qualified building professional.
Roof Durability	Evidence of defects to the main roof of the property (pitched roofs and flat roofs) are to be assessed by a suitably experienced building professional or contractor. Roof durability includes condition of general roof coverings, valley, hip and ridge flashings, abutments with adjoining structures and condition of traditional rooflights and cupolas.
High Level Masonry	Evidence of defects to high level masonry is to be assessed by a suitably experienced building professional or contractor. High level masonry includes chimneys stacks, pots and cans, cope stones, skewes and skew putts, as well as any other high level masonry structures.

2 Prioritisation of Grant Funding (continued)

Category 2 Necessary (for the long term usage of the building)

Rainwater Goods

Evidence of defects to rainwater gutters, hoppers and downpipes to be assessed by a suitably experienced building professional or contractor and should include the need for redecoration or replacement of inappropriate materials.

General Walls

Evidence of defects to natural stone walling and/or render coverings are to be assessed by a suitably experienced building professional or contractor.

Category 3 Desired (for the enhancement of the buildings appearance)

Windows and Doors

Evidence of defects to windows and doors to be assessed by a suitably experienced building professional or contractor and includes accuracy of style and use of inappropriate materials.

Architectural Features

Evidence of missing architectural features to be assessed by a suitably experienced building professional or contractor and identification of relevant information to provide proof of missing elements to be gathered (archive photos, drawings, supporting material etc.)

3 General Principles For Repair

A key objective of Selkirk CARS is to ensure the continued use of historic buildings whilst conserving their character and enhancing the conservation area.

The aim is to also help restore or enhance the features of a building which gives it historic or architectural importance and thereby assist in the creation of a more pleasant environment.

A number of general principles should be adhered to when working with traditional buildings.

- **Avoid unnecessary damage**
Public interest generated by historic buildings depends upon the development of the building fabric and design. Unnecessary replacement of sound historic fabric should be avoided.
- **Analysing historic development**
Identifying the appropriate method of repair requires an understanding of how the building developed. An accurate record of the repair process is therefore recommended.
- **Analysing the causes of defects**
The causes of decay should be investigated and fully understood before repairs are undertaken. Failure to do so will potentially encourage the repetition of defects.
- **Adopting proven techniques**
Repairs should be matched to existing materials and methods of construction. Exceptions should only be considered where the existing fabric has failed due to poor design or specification.
- **Restoration of missing features**
Restoration works based on appropriate evidence will be encouraged, but maintaining the building in a good state of repair must take priority.
- **Safeguarding the future**
Historic buildings should be regularly monitored and maintained and, where possible, provided with a sympathetic use. In this way they can contribute to the future of local communities in a sustainable manner.

4 Repairs Eligible For Grant Funding

Eligible repairs for grant funding may include the following:

- **Strengthening or reinforcing the existing structure**

Must use the most conservative approach that is practical. Limited reconstruction (in line with the existing structure) may be eligible if it cannot be avoided. The survival of vernacular building techniques which are often found in buildings behind later finishes is important so repairs should be in compatible materials.

- **Appropriate repairs to timber frames, roof structure, beams, floor joists and other structural timbers**

Repairs should be based on a careful and comprehensive survey of the existing structure. In-situ reinforced-resin repairs to structural timbers will not be acceptable unless justified on the grounds of avoiding major disturbance of historic fabric.

- **Dry rot or timber preservation treatments**

This should be based on an analysis and specification by an independent consultant and the use of non-destructive techniques and non-toxic applications wherever possible.

- **Damp-proofing by traditional methods**

Only eligible if damp is causing structural damage to the building. Measures to get rid of damp, such as improved drainage using French Drains or lowering ground levels, should be put into practice where possible.

- **Re-roofing**

Should be carried out using natural materials that are traditional to the area, new materials to match, or re-use the existing materials where possible. Repairs to the roof structure and high-level external elements should be carried out at the same time. Re-roofing with artificial or alternative materials (such as concrete tiles, asbestos cement slates, reconstructed slates or artificial stone slates) will not be eligible for grant nor is the use of roofing felt for flat roofs or lining gutters.

- **Repairs to chimneys**

Repairs can include lining or rebuilding of the chimney if structurally essential. Chimneys must be repaired accurately to the historic height and profile and should include restoring the historic style of chimneys pots and cans.

- **Repairing or renewing existing leadwork**

This may also include the provision of weathering and the reforming of gutters to adequate falls, normally in line with the details and weights recommended by the Lead Sheet Association in The Lead Sheet Manual.

- **Repairing or replacing rainwater goods**

The existing historic material, sections and profiles, including decorative details such as hoppers and brackets, should be matched where possible. Generally this will be in cast iron, but occasionally in lead, timber or stone, where appropriate. Plastic, PVC or glass reinforced plastic (GRP) rainwater goods are not eligible.

- **Cleaning external stonework and brickwork**

This is only eligible if there is such a build up of dirt, paint or resin coatings on the surface that it must be removed to either assess the extent of the necessary repair or where it is damaging the fabric of the building by chemical action. Cleaning for cosmetic reasons is not eligible for grant assistance. Any cleaning which is found to be eligible must be carried out to an approved specification by a specialist conservation contractor.

- **Repairing external render, stucco or harling**

Repairing limited areas is preferred but total or substantial renewal will be eligible if it cannot be avoided. Specification of the material and method of application should be developed through investigation of existing fabric and may require verification by an independent consultant prior to application. If a coating has been removed in recent years and this has harmed the performance and appearance of the building, restoring it may be the most appropriate type of repair. Repairing applied details and features (such as cornices, string courses, window architraves, columns, pilasters and rusticated rendering) is also eligible. Repairing these details and features should be done carefully and accurately to the historic composition. Generally GRP or similar replacement mouldings are not acceptable for grant, nor are proprietary in-situ resin based repair techniques.

4 Repairs Eligible For Grant Funding (continued)

- **Repairing external stonework and brickwork**

Must be to an appropriate specification. Plastic in-situ resin based mortar repairs to brickwork and stonework are not normally acceptable or eligible except for minor areas.

- **Selective rebuilding of existing stonework and brickwork**

This should be structurally necessary and to an agreed specification. Generally this will be using salvaged existing materials or new matching materials (or both). Before the work is carried out, a record survey of the existing structure should be undertaken. Only re-pointing which is structurally necessary, kept to the absolute minimum needed and carried out to an appropriate specification is eligible.

- **Repairing or restoring external joinery (including doors and windows)**

External joinery including doors and windows should be repaired where possible and where unavoidable, replaced with the historic pattern and detail and in the historic material which contributes to the character of the building or the conservation area (or both). Replacement with plastic, PVC or glass reinforced plastic (GRP) external joinery items are not eligible. Upgrading of windows to double/triple glazing is also not eligible.

- **Repairing the historic pattern and detail of distinctive architectural features**

This may include decorative features such as balconies, canopies, railings, tiling and other historic features. Restoring architectural details must only be carried out if the building is otherwise in good repair (or will be repaired as part of the overall project).

- **Repairing or restoring boundary walls and railings**

Repair of retaining walls, boundary walls and railings are eligible for funding where they contribute to the stability of the building, improve its setting or are of particular interest to the conservation area.

General exclusions

The following works will usually be excluded from CARS funding:

- Routine maintenance and other minor repairs (including slipped slates or blocked rainwater goods)
- Alterations, extensions and internal work
- Demolition or unnecessary removal of historic fabric (including replacement of sound single glazed timber windows with double glazed units)
- Upgrading and renewal of services (including underground drainage and electrics)
- Stone cleaning and other invasive treatments undertaken for aesthetic only reasons
- Decoration without associated repair works
- Works undertaken prior to approval of Selkirk CARS grant applications and acceptance by applicant of grant offer and conditions.

Building contractors and professional agents working on Selkirk CARS funded projects are required to demonstrate to the applicants that they have the relevant experience and skills to undertake repair works to traditional buildings to the satisfaction of Scottish Borders Council and Historic Scotland. This does not, however, necessitate contractors and professionals to have formal accreditation from a conservation body in order to carry out works eligible for Selkirk CARS funding.

Specification for traditional repairs and standards of workmanship will be assessed by the Selkirk CARS Project Officer to ensure that accepted conservation standards are being achieved. Where specification and/or workmanship are deemed to be deficient grant funding will not be offered/paid until rectified.

An explanation and details of accepted conservation standards can be found in the Historic Scotland *Advisory Standards of Repair* document which is free to download at:

www.historic-scotland.gov.uk

For further information on Selkirk CARS please contact:

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