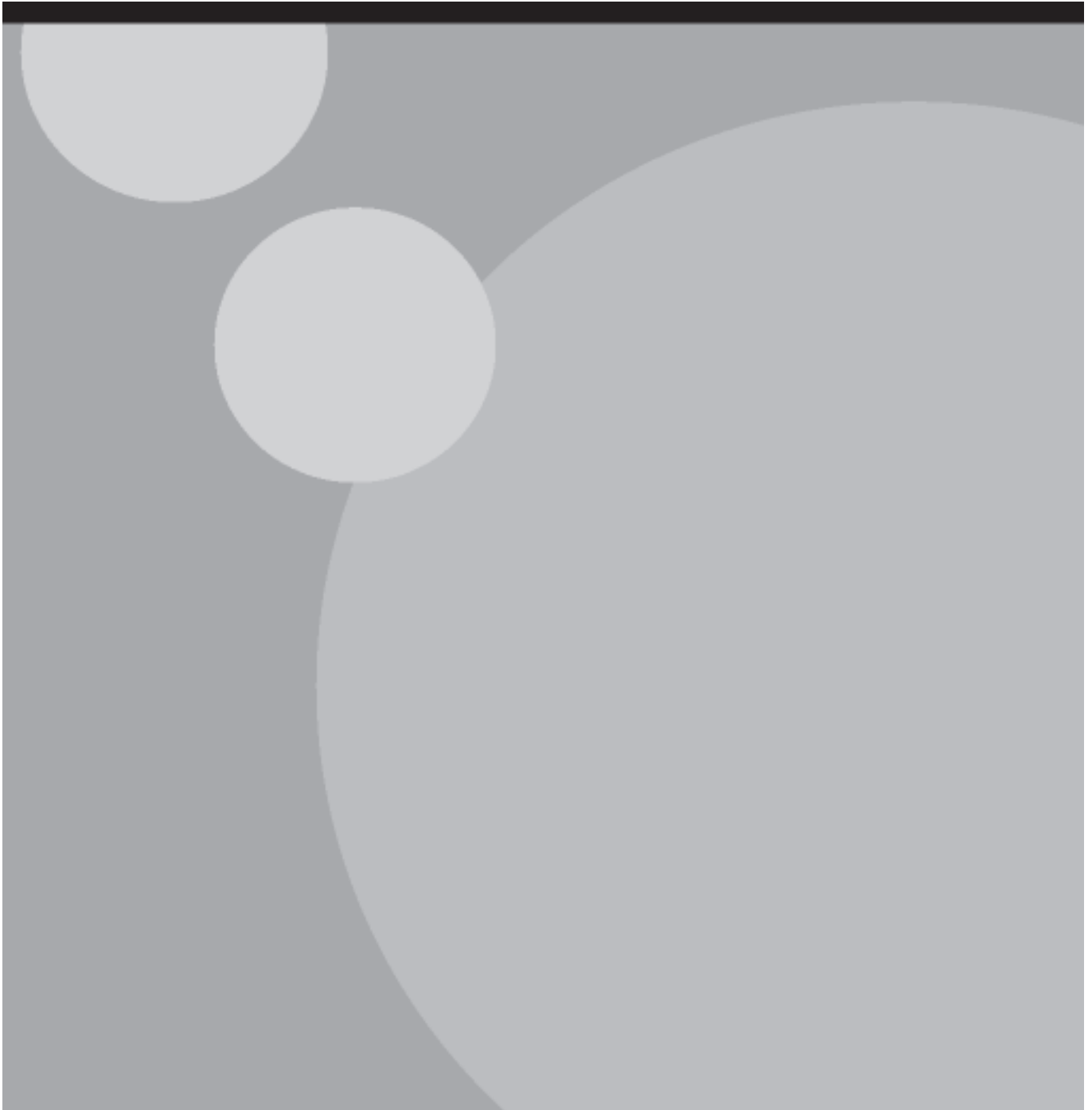




Portas Pilots

Prospectus: an invitation to become a Town Team





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Ministerial Foreword

I was delighted to be asked by the Prime Minister to take forward the Government's response to the independent review into the future of the high street that Mary Portas carried out last year.



In recent years our high streets have faced stiff competition from Internet shopping and out-of-town shopping centres - leaving them underused and under-valued. It's an issue I care about deeply, not just as a former shopkeeper, but as Minister in a Government committed to breathing new life into our town centres, supporting local shops and local jobs.

Mary's report set out a vision that "the High Streets of the future should be multi-functional and social places bustling with people, services and jobs which offer a clear and compelling purpose and experience that's not available elsewhere, and which meets the interests and needs of the local people".

Mary made a number of recommendations to help achieve that vision. The Government will publish its full response in the spring, but we are keen to act immediately on one proposal in particular - to run a number of high street pilots in England.

We are asking local leaders to come up with innovative ideas of their own to boost struggling high streets and town centres. I want to see local leaders ready to try new things, experiment and innovate so that their high streets and parades become **the** place to be for local people and visitors alike. We expect dedicated Town Teams - providing a vision and strategic management for their local high streets - to be at the heart of pilot bids.

We are inviting bids to become one of the pilots by 30 March 2012. Each pilot will get a share of extra resources to achieve their vision.

This is a golden ticket to demonstrate the ambition, enthusiasm and imagination needed to help your high street thrive. I hope that everyone who cares about their town centre will leap at the chance to get involved.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Grant Shapps".

GRANT SHAPPS MP

Introduction

High streets are a visible indicator of how well a local community and economy is doing. They are recognised as important hubs of social interaction and cohesion, as well as providers of employment and local commerce.

The Portas Review (available at www.communities.gov.uk/portasreview) made a number of key recommendations aimed at identifying what government, local authorities, businesses and communities could do together to promote the development of new models of prosperous and diverse high streets. The Government will be responding in full to all the recommendations in the spring. In the meantime, we have accepted the recommendation to “Run a number of High Street Pilots to test proof of concept”, and we expect areas to take forward the recommendation to “put in place a ‘Town Team’” as a central part of their pilot bid.

The purpose of the pilots is to test the ideas in the Portas Review and provide an opportunity for local partnerships to develop and share knowledge about the effectiveness of various options for high street improvement.

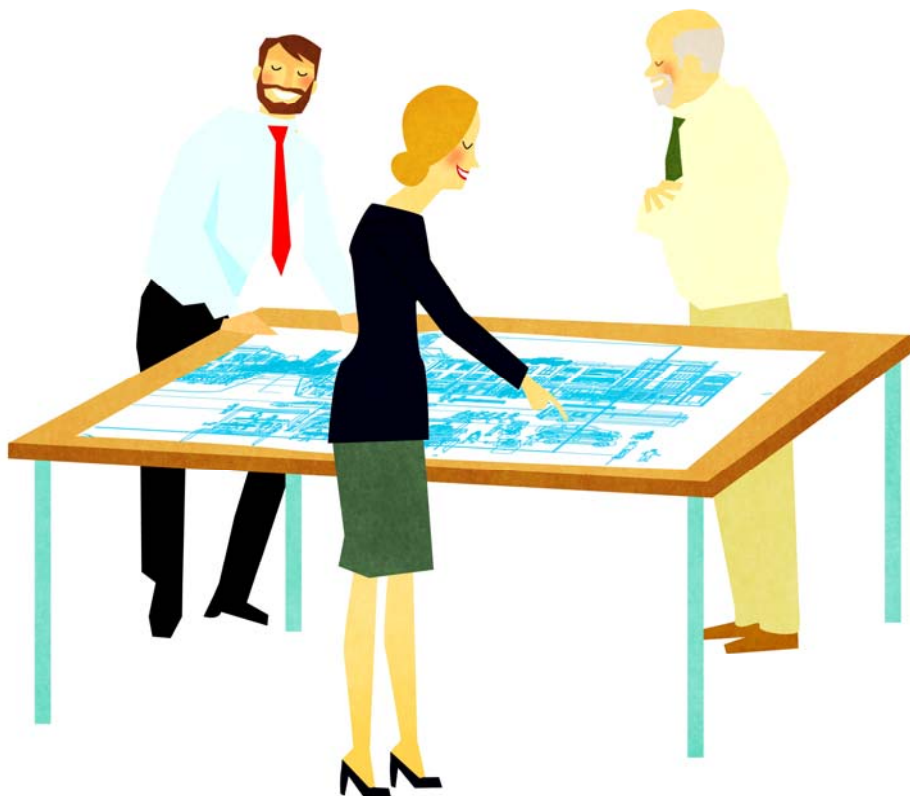


Illustration by Dermott Flynn

Pilots

1. We invite applications by **30 March 2012** from local partnerships and consortiums for grant funding under the Department for Communities and Local Government's (DCLG) Portas Review pilot scheme.
2. We are looking to support twelve pilots with funding of up to £100,000 for each, depending on the amount sought by and our assessment of individual bids. They will be awarded to partnerships in England that demonstrate the best fit with the selection criteria. This will be paid through s31 unringfenced revenue grant, paid directly to the relevant local authority. Each partnership will, therefore, need to identify an Accountable Body (local authority) to receive the grant, if they are not, themselves, a local authority. We expect local authorities in receipt of grant to work constructively with their communities, through their Town Team, in using funding. We will also be looking to provide other, non-financial support for the pilots.
3. Applications must be made using the template at **Annex A** (which is available in Word form on the DCLG website).

Town Teams

4. A key focus for the pilots is the proposal for a "Town Team" (as described on page 19 of the Portas Review) that will be able to drive innovation and improvement in the way the current high street is managed, develop a strategic and collaborative approach, and be made up of a wide range of local interests including landlords, retailers, local authorities and local communities.
5. Every high street is unique and will have different issues and priorities so we do not want to specify what ideas they want to explore or take forward. Nor do we want to limit pilots to testing proposals in the Portas Review. Each pilot will be free to determine its own priorities.
6. Selection of the pilots will be based on the following criteria:

Mix

7. We want the pilot areas as a whole to represent high streets and town centres or smaller parades of shops, including market towns, villages, large towns, new towns, coastal towns and suburban areas. We encourage everyone to apply and we will select pilots to ensure sufficient diversity to understand the effectiveness of the Town Team approach and how high streets can be improved in different settings. We want to ensure a good geographical spread, as well as areas with both high and low average income levels and high and low shop vacancy rates.

Strong Leadership

8. We are looking for pilots areas with a transformational vision for their high street and the backing to make it a reality. The lead partner should be able to clearly articulate this vision and demonstrate strong support for it from the local community and a wide range of local partners.

Commitment

9. We are looking for pilot bids to demonstrate maximum commitment to the Town Team approach amongst retailers, landlords, the local authority and the local community. Commitment could be demonstrated by local businesses match funding investment in the area, or by a high proportion of landlords and businesses becoming part of the Town Team.

Potential for improvement

10. Resources will be allocated on a value for money basis. Therefore, areas must be able to demonstrate the potential for improvement. For example, bidders should provide information on current vacancy rates in the high street and any other information that demonstrates need and potential.

Innovation

11. Bidders are asked to provide a very brief outline of what the key priorities for the pilot will be. We are looking for the most innovative ideas that will have maximum impact and could be replicated elsewhere.

How to apply

12. We have sought to make the application process as simple as possible, while ensuring decisions on applications will be fair, transparent, and soundly based, having regard only to the information and any relevant material supplied by the applicant. Applicants must also provide a supporting video submission setting out why your pilot should be chosen. This should be short, to the point, and, most importantly, not professionally made.
13. All applications must be received **on or before 30 March 2012**, and must conform to the requirements set out below, and include a short video submission in support of your application.

Information required

14. Please complete the **application form** at Annex A, which ensures we are able to understand:
 - Who will lead your pilot

- Which local authority will be the Accountable Body (a confirmation letter from the local authority and an accompanying statement on securing value for money for taxpayers in the use of the grant)
 - How your partnership proposes to use the grant
 - An outline of the key priorities for your pilot
 - How your pilot meets the criteria, demonstrates its suitability for funding, and meets the need for additional impact
 - How your pilot will deliver transparency in the use of the grant
15. We want to evaluate and develop a toolkit based on the outcomes of the pilots, and we will expect successful partnerships to take part in this process.
16. Proposals should be submitted electronically to the following address: portasreviewpilots@communities.gsi.gov.uk. Please compress if submitting significant supporting documentation.
17. We will assess applications with a view to announcing the successful bids in May. If you have any questions about the process, please e-mail portasreviewpilots@communities.gsi.gov.uk.



Illustration by Dermott Flynn

PORTAS REVIEW PILOTS APPLICATION FORM

AN ELECTRONIC VERSION OF THIS APPLICATION FORM IS AVAILABLE IN MICROSOFT WORD FORMAT ON THE DCLG WEBSITE AT:

www.communities.gov.uk/publications/regeneration/portaspilotsprospectus

Please ensure you fill in ALL sections of this form.

SECTION ONE Organisational details		
The Department will only consider applications from either local partnerships or a consortium with a single lead bidder. This is to ensure clear lines of accountability and communication.		
1.1 Organisation name (in whose name the application is being made – if a partnership/consortium/BID, state the lead)		
1.2 Contact name and main role		
1.3 Address		
1.4 Telephone number (a) organisation (b) contact	(a)	(b)
1.5 Email address of contact		
1.6 Website address (if any)	http://	

SECTION TWO
Town Team/Partnership

2.1 Who will lead the pilot?

2.2 Who will be the Accountable Body (Please attach a confirmation letter)?

2.3 Please indicate the other partners involved in your application.
Please add further rows if required

Organisation name	Organisation address and contact details	Main activities and role

2.4 Please explain how you will ensure information about the use of the grant, decisions made, and outcome of the projects, is made publicly available (maximum 300 words).

2.5 Please explain how you will monitor and evaluate the impact of the grant (maximum 300 words).

SECTION THREE

Criterion One: Mix

Please tick all boxes relevant to your application

TOWN/AREA NAME:

Local Authority (name):

Location Type

<input type="checkbox"/>	Market Town
<input type="checkbox"/>	New Town
<input type="checkbox"/>	Rural Town
<input type="checkbox"/>	Coastal Town
<input type="checkbox"/>	Village
<input type="checkbox"/>	Large Town
<input type="checkbox"/>	Suburban
<input type="checkbox"/>	Parade
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other

Where the following information is easily accessible:

Income (detail can be found on ONS website:

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/search/index.html?newquery=employed+earnings>)

<input type="checkbox"/>	High employed earnings
<input type="checkbox"/>	Low employed earnings

SECTION FOUR

Criterion Two: Strong Leadership

4.1 Please detail your vision for your high street, and describe how you have begun to secure local support and how you will build on this to make it a reality (maximum 300 words).

SECTION FIVE

Criterion Three: Commitment

5.1 Please attach any supporting letters (from those organisations and individuals who make up your pilot), detail of proposed match funding, and any other relevant information, including detail of the percentage of landlords and businesses signed up to the pilot (maximum 300 words).

SECTION SIX

Criterion Four: Potential for improvement

We will be awarding funding on a value for money basis. It is important, therefore, that your bid can demonstrate the potential for improvement in your area.

6.1 Please set out what you consider to be the key challenges facing your high street (including current vacancy rates) and why your high street has the potential to improve (maximum 300 words).

SECTION SEVEN

Criterion Five: Innovation

7.1 Please set out how you will test the Town Team approach, what your priorities are likely to be, and whether there are particular recommendations in the Portas Review you want to test. We are particularly looking for innovative ideas (maximum 300 words).

SECTION EIGHT

Expenditure

8.1 Please set out how you much you are bidding for, (maximum £100,000), and how you propose to use it. Please explain how the pilot will be innovative and deliver additional impact. Please also provide detail of other Government funding your partnership currently receives (maximum 300 words).

VIDEO SUBMISSION
Please upload your video to YouTube (www.youtube.com).
If you do not already have an account you will need to go to the website and use the "Create Account" option.
Please include the URL (link) below. You should not include the video itself with your application.
Video link: