



ABERGAVENTNY TOWN COUNCIL
LARGER GRANT SCHEME
APPLICATION FORM 2020/21

This application form is to be used to submit an application to Abergavenny Town Council Larger Grant Scheme. Please read the guidance notes carefully before completing the form.

Completed forms to be returned to Clerk@abergavennytowncouncil.gov.uk or by post to Town Clerk, Town Hall, Cross Street, Abergavenny, NP7 5HD.

Section 1 – Contact information

a. Group Name	Plas Gunter Mansion Trust
b. Contact Name	Deborah Holland
c. Contact Address	39a Cross Street
	Abergavenny
	Postcode: NP7 5ER
d. Contact email	administrator@plasguntermansion.org.uk

e. Position in Group	Office Administrator / Trustee
f. Contact tel no	07798610114
g. Bank Account Details	Account name: Plas Gunter Mansion Trust CYF Account number: 20282219 Sort code: 60-83-01

Section 2 – Tell Us About Your Group

a. Briefly tells us about the activities that your organisation/group undertakes

Plas Gunter Mansion Trust

Plas Gunter Mansion Trust is a building preservation trust, dedicated to restoring 17th century Plas Gunter Mansion in Cross Street, a Grade II* listed building at risk. The Trust acquired the building in early 2017 with a vision to turn it into an historical, educational and community resource celebrating its local roots and attracting national and international visitors.

The importance of Plas Gunter Mansion

Plas Gunter Mansion is a building of local, national and international importance and has the potential to be one of the brightest jewels in Abergavenny's tourism crown.

It played a key role in the political and religious struggles of the 1670s and has a very rare surviving recusant chapel directly connected with the 1679 martyrdom and subsequent canonisation of St Philip Evans and St David Lewis, the last Catholic martyrs in Wales. It also boasts a magnificent 17th century plaster ceiling. We aim to restore the building, preserve its historical and cultural integrity, and bring it back to life.

Our plans for the building

1. We want to restore and conserve the surviving historic fabric of Plas Gunter Mansion in accordance with best conservation practice, including 17th/18th century wall paintings in the chapel and the unique 17th century plaster ceiling in the first-floor parlour. We plan to restore external and internal features of the early building and remove later inappropriate additions and alterations.
2. We intend to adapt the property sensitively for sustainable and income generating activities, including a residential apartment on the first floor and two commercial spaces on the ground floor/first floor. There will also be a visitors' centre and exhibition space, and programme of community involvement.

3. We also want to reunite the original garden with the mansion by acquiring the land at the rear to create a flexible multi-use space and community garden, sympathetically developed to provide an appropriate setting for the building, opportunities for community use, and complementary income generating activity.

Progress to date

- We have been working on an application to the Heritage Fund (our Expression Of Interest having been accepted), but new applications have currently halted. We will be ready to submit once they are re-open for new applications. If we are successful, the Heritage Fund will fund the majority of the restoration, but we have to find a substantial sum in partnership funding. We are approaching the Heritage Fund for approximately £1,500,000 and are fundraising for £500,000.
- We presently have 40 volunteers who have been actively involved in managing and opening Plas Gunter Mansion to the public. Pre-lockdown, the exhibition was welcoming around 1,200 visitors a year.
- The space accommodated monthly guest exhibitions from local community organisations which have included the Girl Guides, Old Abergavenny, Cyfannol Women’s Aid, Abergavenny Arts Festival and Mind. We have strengthened community links and introduced Plas Gunter Mansion and its history to new audiences.
- Our project Steering Group includes representatives from Abergavenny Civic Society, Abergavenny Town Council, Abergavenny Local History Society, Abergavenny Museum and Our Lady & St Michael’s Roman Catholic Church.
- We have also made links with St Mary’s Priory Church, the RC church in Usk (where David Lewis was executed) and the greater Roman Catholic Archdiocese.
- In partnership with King Henry VIII School, we have run a Year 7 Humanities Study Day about PGM (history, tourism, regeneration), which includes a pupil visit to the mansion and meeting with our volunteers. We have engaged over 300 pupils in two years. Being able to visit a building referred to in history lessons has given students a real sense of connection with the past in a local context.
- Annually, we arrange an open evening and presentation to update the local community about the project’s progress.
- We accommodate two local businesses which generate footfall to the area. Our two commercial units provide spaces for new business to start-up and grow. The footfall and trade they bring to lower Cross Street support a fringe area of the town centre.

b. Charity Details (if applicable)	Charity Number: 11444813
i.VAT Registered?	Yes/No

Section 3. Tell Us About The Community Project/Activity You Want To Undertake

a. Which objective does this project **mainly** contribute towards (please tick one):

Giving Children and Young People the best possible start in life

Support for community wellbeing inc. volunteering and active citizenship

Supporting an economically thriving community

Protecting and enhancing our environment

b. Total Project Cost

£21,653

c. How much are you applying for from Abergavenny Town Council?

£2,500

d. Have you raised the balance of funds?

Partially

e. Are you seeking funding for more than 1 year? If so how many years?

No

f. Please specify how you will use the Town Council grant to contribute to the objective ticked above?

While we are waiting for the Heritage Fund to re-open its doors to new applications, we are facing a crisis. Our main concern is keeping the Grade II* listed building weatherproof during the autumn and winter months to protect the historic chapel and plasterwork ceilings. There is no doubt that without prompt intervention the building will fail.

Our two commercial tenants have managed to continue trading throughout the pandemic. The rental income allows us to operate and is essential to our survival. However, the roof of the building urgently needs repairs and with winter looming, we are very concerned that our tenants will be forced to leave if we can't repair it. This would be devastating for the project and it is doubtful we would survive.

Our project architects, Morgan & Horowskyj, have specified and priced urgent repairs to the roof at £21,650 (inc VAT). Abergavenny Civic Society has pledged funds, and we have a small amount of our own funds. To date, we have raised £3,500. We are applying for national level grants of c£10,000 and for other pockets of appropriate funding.

g. What difference will this grant make to your organisation and the community of Abergavenny?

A grant will help save this unique building which is currently at real risk of deterioration and ultimate loss. It will ensure that its most precious features are

protected while we continue working towards restoring the whole building.

If the building fails, we risk losing our two commercial tenants. Funding will ensure the continuation of our rental income and allow the two businesses to continue trading without the great upheaval of having to find alternative premises.

Funding will ensure the reopening of the temporary exhibition space when circumstances allow, which will enable around 40 volunteers to remain active through our project.

Ultimately, a grant will ensure the project can continue. Without it, the project may well die.

h. If your project involves working with young people does your organisation have a safeguarding policy?

Yes	No
x	

i. When will your project start and finish?

Start date

October 2020

Completion date

December 2020

j. Are there any outstanding permissions ie planning permission required before this project can start. If so please list together with expected dates when permission will be granted

No.

Section 4

This application is to be signed by a person holding a position in the organisation applying for the grant. Before submitting the application please ensure that you have all the required information as set out in the guidance.

Signed

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. K. H.', is written on a light grey rectangular background within a table cell.

On behalf of
(name of group)

Plas Gunter Mansion Trust

Date

30/09/2020