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Cunninghame Housing Association

Sourcing diverse range of funds with Idox's GrantFinder

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Hugh McGhee

Head of Social and Economic Development
Cunninghame Housing Association

Overview:

Delivering regeneration projects to promote community well-being
Cunninghame Housing Association is a leading not-for-profit social landlord and charity operating in North Ayrshire, East Ayrshire, and Dumfries and Galloway. In line with the Scottish Government's vision for regeneration, the housing association aims to build sustainable communities and promote economic, social, and physical well-being.

In 2020, Cunninghame Housing Association started working together with Raydale Community Partnership and Gretna FC 2008 to create a new community sports hub in the heart of Gretna for local residents. The project included the installation of a new all-weather synthetic 11-a-side 4G football pitch at Raydale Park, together with a new community gym, multipurpose fitness room and changing facilities. The idea behind the initiative is to promote well-being of the community by providing more opportunities to stay active through football, and other sports. The entire project was estimated to cost £650,000, so the task for Cunninghame Housing Association was to secure the funding necessary to complete the project. “Compared to years gone by, it's highly unlikely you can source £650,000 from a couple of funding sources anymore. So, there's a lot more research and work required to identify and pull together the necessary funds from a patchwork of sources”, reveals Hugh McGhee, Head of Social and Economic Development at Cunninghame Housing Association.

Challenge:

Identifying more diverse range of funding opportunities

In the pre-pandemic world, pulling together £650,000 was much easier as there were many funds available and specifically suited to fund a community asset like the one in Gretna. But due to the pandemic, many of these funds were repurposed to focus on COVID-19 recovery measures. Due to this, Cunninghame Housing Association had to widen its funding search to tap into resources it might not have considered previously. “In the past, we could have sourced £200,000 or £300,000 from one particular funder. But now, most funders have limited their funds to lower amounts as they've shifted their priorities to helping communities that have suffered in one way or another because of COVID-19. We've, therefore, had to think more creatively about how we can source the funding we need for our community projects”, Hugh explains.



Solution:

Simplifying the search process to find relevant funding

To help the regeneration team create the funding plan for the project, Cunninghame Housing Association invested in Idox's GrantFinder – a leading funding and information solution in the UK covering local, national, and international sources of funding. It offers real-time grants and funding information from diverse range of funders, thus helping local authorities, housing associations, charities, communities, and businesses find the right funding relevant to their organisation and project needs. By allowing users to personalise content and perform accurate searches using flexible filters, keywords, and phrases, GrantFinder simplifies the funding search process and ensures users are presented with the most suitable funds and the best chance of funding success.

GrantFinder presents filtered results from thousands of funds – detailing the latest opportunities which can be ordered and displayed by deadline or status. The solution helped Cunninghame Housing Association refresh its funding search and identify relevant funds from a broad range of sources including Keep Scotland Beautiful, Coastal Communities Fund, Awards for All, Sports Scotland, National Lottery, and many others. The multiple filters and search options in GrantFinder enabled the housing association to source not just sports-related funds but also other funds that were available for that geographical location. "GrantFinder had a big role to play in helping us deliver the project in Gretna. We assembled a capital package of £650,000 with contributions from 16 different funds. Without GrantFinder, the task of piecing all this together would have been protracted and painstaking but thanks to the solution, we ended up sourcing funds from places we would have never thought of initially", Hugh comments. GrantFinder also helped streamline the funding process for the project by enabling the housing association to keep track of available and relevant funds, matching their requirements, timescales, and priorities with potential funders.

Outcome:

Sourcing funds from broader streams quickly and efficiently

According to Hugh, in today's increasingly competitive regeneration market, a product like GrantFinder is extremely beneficial to keep your finger on the pulse as the solution alerts users of newly available funding streams. Hugh explains, "There are lots of funds out there but searching for them is a full-time job. The solution provides you with a simple, easy-to-follow synopsis on a particular fund – enough details to inform you of the application requirements and other crucial information, but not so brief that you need to go and perform your own research. So, it saves a lot of time and enables you to quickly zero in on the funds that you should be targeting to get the best results."

Cunninghame Housing Association is 'more than just a landlord' and are fully committed to 'making our communities better places'. As part of this endeavour, Cunninghame Housing Association is currently supporting many local organisations across multiple projects – from repurposing Victorian school buildings to building community assets for facilitating healthier living.. Frank Sweeney, Group CEO of Cunninghame Housing Association says, "At Cunninghame Housing Association, we do a lot of regeneration work – creating community assets, jobs and new services with partners in our communities. But being able to source capital and revenue funding is central to making these happen. That's why we continue to use Idox GrantFinder – so that we can progress more and more projects and support disadvantaged communities. We've been able to identify and access funding from broader streams and save time in our searching, so the solution is a perfect fit for our needs. It is a resource we increasingly rely on to help us stay ahead of the game."

Call us on 0333 011 1200 or email marketing@idoxgroup.com to find out more about GrantFinder.

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