

PROFESSIONAL FEES GRANTS



WHAT

Professional fees grants for specific commissions required by groups to make progress with their asset acquisition projects.

HOW HIE HELPED

Professional fees funding, such as:

- Urras Baile Fhlòdaigearraidh Community Company (UBF) (Flodigarry Township Trust) - contributing to the costs of commissioning a valuation of a potential development site.
- Mull and Iona Community Trust – supporting the cost of the group to become established as a Rural Housing Body.
- Ullapool Community Trust – contributing to the cost of a community ballot to determine support for a renewable energy project on leased forestry land.

Officer support:

- To develop the relevant briefs and help the groups to commission professional assistance at an appropriate point in the development of the project.

OUTCOME

Community groups receive support to proceed with their projects, through the provision of specialist information, advice or services.



BACKGROUND

The Community Assets Team's professional fees grant is available to community groups seeking small grants of up to £2000 for specific activities such as valuations, drawing up leases, incorporation and ballot costs. These grants may be relatively low in value but the acquisition process usually involves stages which require input from specialists. Supporting groups in this way enables them to access professional advice and expertise as required, providing them with the information and security they need to complete the acquisition. The examples described here are fairly typical of the support we can provide through this funding route.

PROJECT DETAILS

UBF – the community have been exploring the possibility of purchasing a small area of common grazings land, currently owned by the Scottish Government. To progress in their discussions with the Government and potential funders they were keen to have a market valuation of the site carried out by the District Valuer. Their intention is to develop the site for community benefit by establishing a heritage centre to include meeting, café, exhibition space and accommodation for language courses.

Mull and Iona Community Trust – are supporting Ulva Ferry School Community Association (USCA) with an affordable housing project and wished to apply to the Scottish Government for Rural Housing Body status. Such status will allow them to apply a Rural Housing Burden, which will help to ensure continued local affordability of the housing. This would incur costs to the group as it requires an amendment to their Articles of Association, notification of the proposed change to OSCR, and the necessary communication to members for an Extraordinary General Meeting to adopt the change.

Ullapool Community Trust - required assistance to carry out a community ballot as part of their National Forest Land Scheme (NFLS) application. The NFLS application is being developed to allow the Ullapool community to further investigate the energy potential of two burns in Lael Forest and, if appropriate, develop hydro schemes by leasing the land from the Forestry Commission for this purpose. The ballot was carried out by the Council's Election Office to demonstrate local support for the proposals and support their NFLS application.

HIE'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE PROJECT

We supported these groups with a relatively simple grant to ensure that they received the right kind of professional assistance at the right time for their project to make progress.

OUTCOMES

HIE support helped to:

- Support the groups to obtain valuable professional assistance to inform and progress their projects.
- Build community capacity and confidence to work with relevant professionals to bring their projects to acquisition.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Contact your local development manager – see the Community Assets section of the HIE website for details or call the number below.

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