

BRIEF FOR CONSULTANTS

TOTAL HOMES PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

Introduction and Background

The Total Homes project has operated a pilot over the past year and has involved the following partners:

- Re-Connect Glasgow Furniture Reuse and Recycling (Connect Community Trust)
- 2nd Opportunities
- Spruce Carpets
- Impact Arts
- GCC
- Glasgow Homelessness Network
- Fresh Start (Scotland)

The first stages of the project focused on the support to people who have been re-homed after a period of homelessness however, over the pilot it then expanded the client group to those 'most in need' through direction from housing associations.

The 'Total Homes' support package provides a different approach to providing the furniture, starter packs and support required to help sustain tenancies and for individuals to make long term differences to their lives. The 'Total Homes' package also provides an environmentally friendly option to provide furniture and starter packs for those most in need.

A consortium of partners highlighted the need to address the current (new) furniture packages that are on offer (which often trap people with debt and stop them from moving into employment) and provide a cost efficient, environmentally friendly, additional support package for people most in need.

Through the provision of quality reuse, furniture, white goods, carpets & starter packs we aim to provide the tenants with a low cost package of support which does not trap them with debt. By working on a 1:1 basis we are also able to help the individual/family to take ownership of their tenancy.

Furniture provision is important for a tenancy for several reasons:

- It turns a house into a home - turning a cold, empty shell into a warm and welcoming space
- It provides a sense of security – something as simple as a pair of curtains on the window can make all the difference to a family fleeing domestic violence
- It provides warmth, reducing draughts and noise
- It helps people settle and so helps to increase tenancy sustainment - if someone feels warm and secure, they are less likely to up and leave their home.

Pilot Project

The pilot worked with 25 individuals/families from housing associations such as Govan HA, Elderpark HA, Glenoaks HA, Wellhouse HA, Provanhall HA, Whitinch & Scotstoun HA, Cassiltoun HA, Parkhead HA and Thenua HA. It was also focused on people who were being rehomed after a period of homelessness or who were in danger of becoming homeless.

Each individual/family was assessed by the associated housing association and the following items provided where needed:

- furniture and white goods incl. essential items such as cooker, seating, bed(s), wardrobe
- carpets
- starter packs incl. cooking utensils, pots/pans, bedding, microwave, towels
- link to additional support incl. training, volunteering, addiction services, counselling etc..

There were varying successes achieved through the pilot project, not only for the individuals involved but also the improved relationships between the housing associations and the Total Homes consortium.

Funding was provided through:

- Awards for All
- Glasgow City Council

This funding enabled the pilot project to be provided free of charge to the individuals and housing providers.

The aims of the pilot project included:

People have better chances in life

- Provide choices to people to assist them to move into a home and sustain that tenancy i.e. through the decoration and the choosing of furniture/starter packs/ carpets (instead of just being 'given' a package). Treating everyone as an individual and helping people to make their own choices and take ownership instead of furniture packages being seen as hand outs or borrowed and then potentially not being taken care of.
- Provide alternative furniture and starter pack packages that provide individuals with a more affordable option for going into part time employment or low paid/training positions
- The integration of people into a community i.e. through the training, volunteering and employability support. Once in a house we aimed to make sure that individuals are given the best chance to move forward and in order to do this a consortium approach is created to remove the multiple barriers that may be faced by someone coming out of a homelessness situation. Each of the partners involved in this project have expertise to bring and have extensive experience of working within communities.

People have better and more sustainable services and environments

- Provide an affordable service for individuals and therefore enable people to access employment.
- Added support and integration into the community, individuals are more likely to sustain their tenancy. This not only supports the individual but also the local housing associations through fewer voids which result in large volumes of money having to be spent on re-letting the house/flat
- Support third sector organisations through the development of a business opportunity. Any surplus that is made through the project is then used to support the ongoing operations of these organisations including the development of training, education, volunteering and employment opportunities within a community setting.
- Through the use of recycled/reuse items we are able to support a Zero Waste Scotland and tackle environmental issues created through the production of new items
- Long-term and sustainable service due to the cost efficiency of the service provided and the link to the wider remit of the organisations involved

Objectives of the Study

There is a clear commitment from the partners of what could be provided however more in depth research is required on the financial sustainability, costings, demand and structure if we are to move forward with the development of the business idea.

The objectives of this piece of work are to:

- Engage with Local Authorities in an attempt to establish if a Reuse Pilot/Service for the Scottish Welfare Fund could be something they would be interested in establishing in their own area, highlighting the potential cost savings for the LA in terms of direct supply costs, administration costs (cf Midlothian LA example), increases in tonnage of goods diverted from landfill and promotion of proven creation of more volunteering and employment opportunities in the voluntary sector
- Investigate the cost of administering the provision of furniture packages by the Local Authority with a view to establishing the cost savings which could be achieved by the Total Homes model
- Investigate the current provision of furniture and starter pack packages and Scottish Welfare Fund provision including: who is providing the service, cost, number and types of applications, issues & successes.
- Review and report on progress to date including evaluation of pilot project and the provision of Commonwealth Games furniture distribution.
- Consult the consortium partners to be clear on each partner's vision.
- Consult potential clients on demand including individuals and housing providers.
- Assess the need and demand for the proposed service.
- Produce a suggested joint vision that meets partners' requirements and meets requirements of potential clients.
- Produce options on potential structure and operational plan for the Total Homes consortium.
- Produce a financial plan including pricing policies, financial projections and assess potential funding sources for work going forward.

Methodology

It is anticipated that the study will include both desk and field-based research. The process of community involvement in this study is viewed by the client as being of equal importance in the production of the final report / plan. The consultant should allow for time / travel spent in the community in his / her costs.

Timetable

It is estimated that this work will take up to 3 months and average of 12/14 days work.

Costs

The budget for this study will be in the region of £4,500.

Reporting

The study will be managed by the Total Homes project committee, with Connect Community Trust as lead partner. The nominated contact person is Pauline Smith, Chief Exec of Connect Community Trust – Tel 0141 781 2132 e-mail psmith@connect-ct.org.uk. The consultant is expected to meet with the full committee at the start of the project, liaise with the lead partner when required throughout and produce a ½ way report to the full committee, to ensure project aims are being met. A final study report should be submitted by **27th October 2015**.

Proposal to Tender

The consultant's proposal to tender for this study should include details of:

- the relevant experience and competency possessed by the consultant and other personnel who will work on the project
- the methodology to be used in the study
- full costs and expenses
- a study timetable

Please submit your tender to:

Pauline Smith, Chief Exec, Connect Community Trust, the hub, 49 Wellhouse Crescent, GLASGOW, G33 4LA Tel: 0141 781 2132 e-mail: psmith@connect-ct.org.uk by **5pm on Tues, 4th August 2015**.

Date of brief

21st August 2015