**Adviser – Community Ownership Support Service**

**Job Description & Person Specification**

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| Post | Adviser – Community Ownership Support Service |
| Location | West and South West Scotland |
| Responsible to | Community Ownership Support Service Manager |
| Salary | £34,406 - £36,298 pro rata + pension (currently 11.5% employer contribution) |
| Length of Contract | Permanent – subject to ongoing programme funding |
| Hours | Part-time 28 hours per week (excluding meal breaks). No overtime paid, but time off in lieu may be taken as appropriate |
| Leave entitlement | 25 days p/a plus public holidays – pro rata |
| Probationary period | 3 months |
| Closing Date | 12 noon on Monday 28th March 2022 |
| Interviews | Interviews will be held on Thursday 7th April 2022 |

**Background Information**

The [Community Ownership Support Service](http://www.dtascommunityownership.org.uk/), hosted by the Development Trusts Association Scotland, is funded by the Scottish Government to support local authorities, other public bodies and communities in the sustainable transfer of assets into community ownership. This adviser-led service covers Scotland, providing a range of services for communities from one-to-one advice at every stage of the asset transfer process, access to Expert Help, networking and training opportunities and access to a comprehensive web resource. The support provided to public bodies includes providing information and feedback on asset transfer processes, facilitating cross departmental meetings and providing ongoing CPD workshops on community ownership.

With the enactment of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 and the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2016, community ownership is increasingly being recognised as a powerful tool in developing strong, independent and resilient communities. This was particularly true during COVID where asset owning community anchor organisations were seen to have played a key role in the resilience of their communities throughout the pandemic.

With tightening public spending the opportunities to take on publicly owned assets has never been greater. Community ownership and management of assets is not however without its challenges. There is a real need to support community groups through the asset transfer process from forming appropriate governance structures, building their capacity and crucially developing sustainable operating models that will support their facilities into the future.

The COSS team comes from a wide range of backgrounds including community development, training and development, business and regeneration. For this post we are seeking someone who comes with a strong background in finance and /or business development; either as an adviser or with practical experience of developing community enterprises.

We anticipate that this role will be based in Dumfries or Glasgow, covering community groups in the local authority areas from Dumfries & Galloway, South Ayrshire, East Ayrshire, North Ayrshire, South Lanarkshire, East Renfrewshire, Renfrewshire and Inverclyde.

**About the Development Trusts Association Scotland**

The [Development Trusts Association Scotland](http://www.dtascot.org.uk/) supports and continues to develop a membership of over 330 development trusts, which makes it one of Scotland’s largest and most dynamic community-led regeneration networks.

Development Trusts are community-owned and led organisations, working to combine community-led action with an enterprising approach to address local needs. The aim of development trusts is to create social, economic and environmental renewal in a defined geographic area, creating wealth within that area and keeping it there.

**Job Description**

**Job Purpose:**

The purpose of the post is to contribute to the development and delivery of the DTAS Community Ownership Support Service, in particular supporting the community transfer, acquisition and development of assets – land and buildings.

Specific tasks include:

* Provide information and advice to community organisations interested or involved in acquiring assets.
* Provide developmental and business support to relevant community organisations and facilitate asset acquisition processes.
* Provide information and support to relevant authorities around the development and implementation of asset transfer processes.
* Contribute to the development of information and practical resources for parties involved in the transfer of assets to communities.
* Promote the Community Ownership Support Service, DTA Scotland and where appropriate, the development trust approach.

**Responsibilities and key tasks:**

The following is a summary of the main tasks:

**Community Organisations**

* Respond to enquiries from community organisations interested in acquiring or taking on an asset, provide information and advice, as appropriate
* Attend and speak at relevant public meetings and board / management committee meetings
* Tap into relevant resources, providing access to support or training opportunities and signposting to other relevant agencies
* Assist organisations assess viability of proposed acquisitions; assisting with options appraisals and early stage feasibility
* Provide a critical friend role with participating community organisations with regard to business plans, funding applications, etc
* Provide facilitation / brokerage role between community organisation and relevant authority
* Assist community organisations access legal and other technical advice and support
* Identify and analyse barriers to progress and seek opportunities to facilitate change
* Encourage and support the sharing of learning and information

**Relevant Authorities**

* Promote the service with relevant authorities and encourage uptake/ engagement
* Develop relationships with relevant authorities and identify asset transfer ‘champions’
* Field enquiries from Officers and Elected Members re asset transfer
* Respond appropriately to requests for information and support regarding the development or review of asset transfer strategies
* Encourage and support the development and improvement of asset transfer practice
* Deliver training to Elected Members or groups of Officers (departmental or inter-departmental)
* Facilitate or assist with specific asset transfers
* Encourage and facilitate peer support across relevant authorities on asset transfer

**General**

* Assist with the organisation and where appropriate the delivery of training events
* Contribute at relevant conferences and seminars
* Maintain up-to-date and accurate records within the DTAS/ COSS information systems for both internal operational use and to support the provision of reports to funders and other stakeholders
* Foster strong working relationships with key regional and national public agencies
* Contribute to the development of new information sheets and practical resources
* Liaise with DTAS core staff team, attending relevant staff meetings and contributing where appropriate to key DTAS events and conferences
* Contribute to earned income activities as appropriate, including the delivery of paid training, appropriate consultancy activities and participation in delivery of relevant programmes
* Carry out other activities in line with current and future operational policies of COSS and undertake any other duties relevant to the post.

**Person Specification**

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|  |  | Essential or Desirable |
| **Qualifications**  | Qualification to degree level or equivalent  | E |
| **Practical Experience** | Providing business planning, financial, operational and governance advice to organisations at different stages of their development | E |
| Experience of income generation and fundraising | D |
| Mentoring organisations/ groups through the various stages of their development | D |
| Working in partnership with a wide range of other organisations, including public bodies | E |
| Negotiation with a wide range of stakeholders | D |
| Organising/ managing events | D |
| **Knowledge**  | Experience of the community-based regeneration sector | D |
| Experience / knowledge of the relevant Community Ownership/ Land Reform policy and legislative framework | D |
| **Skills**  | Excellent verbal and written communication skills | E |
| Strong presentational skills and the confidence to represent COSS in external stakeholder forums | D |
| Ability to work proactively and professionally to deliver a work programme | E |
| Strong IT skills including Microsoft Office  | E |
| Ability to work well as a team | E |
| **Personal Attributes** | A strong commitment to development trusts and community-led enterprise | D |
| Self-motivated, able to work unsupervised, to take the initiative and meet deadlines  | E |
| Highly organised with good time management | E |
| Ability and willingness to travel throughout the country | E |
| Willing to work some evenings and weekends with occasional overnight stays | E |