

The logo for the CIPR Pride Awards 2019 Gold Winner. It features the text 'CIPR PRIDE AWARDS 2019' in white on a black background, followed by 'GOLD WINNER' in large, multi-colored letters (pink, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple).

Category: Community Relations Campaign

Company: Holyrood PR

Entry title: Investing in Communities – CALA Homes Bursary

Brief and objectives:

CALA Homes is the UK's largest upmarket homebuilder, headquartered in Edinburgh.

In 2019 CALA Homes (East) added Edinburgh to the geographic areas served by its expanding bursary scheme, which benefits community groups, local charities and good causes. That followed two successful years of operating a bursary scheme in East Lothian and the launch of a bursary in Midlothian in 2018.

The PR brief was to launch the Edinburgh scheme, without sacrificing momentum in East Lothian or Midlothian (with £10,000 available for each area) – and to deliver all three schemes concurrently, reaching more potential recipients.

Measurable objectives:

OBJECTIVE - Achieve local media engagement

MEASURABLE - Deliver at least three significant items coverage per bursary area

MEASURABLE – Secure effective media partnerships in each area and ensure Editor level participation in bursary panels

OBJECTIVE - Ensure coverage that engages the target audience

MEASURABLE – Attract 150 applications across all three regions (a 50% increase on 2018 target)

MEASURABLE – Ensure at least one application from each of the five most populated areas within each bursary area.

OBJECTIVE – Build engagement online

MEASURABLE – Ensure more than 500 unique page views of each dedicated application website page for each region

OBJECTIVE - Support CALA's wider business objectives

MEASURABLE – Deliver positive media coverage to support, particularly to support CALA's reputation as a sensitive developer across the region.

The idea, research and planning:

The growth of the bursary scheme (in all of CALA's regions across the UK), has underlined that local media coverage is essential to seek applications from deserving groups.

An integrated PR plan, centred on creativity, would be required since both East Lothian and Midlothian are served by individual weekly newspapers, while Edinburgh Evening News was the capital's preferred media partner. This is different from many other parts of the UK, where bursary areas are served by multiple media outlets.

It was also agreed that the most effective way to launch the Edinburgh scheme while building momentum for the other two, would be to focus on previous successful applicants. This would underline the reach, credibility and potentially lifechanging benefits delivered by the grants scheme.

Strategy, tactics, creativity and innovation:

Formal media collaboration was sought with each of the main, traditional media titles in each area – agreeing specific partnerships for the duration of the scheme.

Both the East Lothian Courier (ELC) and Midlothian Advertiser (MA) were delighted to resume previous, successful partnerships. Highlighting the prior successes, convinced the Edinburgh Evening News (EEN) to sign up – a huge early boost to the campaign.

Also reflecting previous success, editors Janet Bee (MA) and Robbie Scott (ELC) reprised roles as selection panel judges, while Euan McGrory (EEN Editor) agreed to join the Edinburgh panel – another significant early success.

A strict timeline was drawn up to highlight key dates in the bursary's calendar, including suggested digital activity threaded throughout, to support traditional media relations.

Extensive multi-use content was created to attract entries, including:

- Case studies of previous grant recipients
- Photography of beneficiaries and the work enabled by grants
- Targeted videos supporting positive reasons to apply.

We also conceived and delivered dedicated events in each bursary area which took place once the recipients were decided. Those events brought together the grant recipients to meet each other and to meet the CALA team.

These events not only proved extremely popular, but also allowed us to gather extensive story lines, quotes and to arrange photography/video for future activity.

Delivery:

A strict timetable of stories drove awareness and encourage applications:

Round 1: Launch: Announcing scheme in partnership with all three papers

Round 2: Tell Your Friends: First reminder to potential applicants, including case studies of previous beneficiaries

Round 3: Early success: Coverage on the successful uptake four weeks after launch

Round 4: Final reminder: with a week until cut-off deadline

Round 5: Digital last chance: Paid Facebook reminder, targeted at key postcodes, with case study video produced to cash in on algorithmic benefits

Round 6: Panel D-Day: Each attended by respective editors and Holyrood PR staff

Round 7: Announcement: in each region on the winners with a case study and images

Measurement and evaluation:

OBJECTIVE – 50 applications per region

ACTUAL – Generated 281 applications, (81 in Edinburgh, 83 in Midlothian and a record of 127 in East Lothian), 87% over target

OBJECTIVE – Three significant items of local media coverage per area

ACTUAL – 22 items of coverage between the MA, EEN, and ELC (144% over target) creating 305,198 Opportunities to See (OTS).

OBJECTIVE –100 unique page views (UPVs) for each bursary area online application page

ACTUAL – All regions had UPVs above 500. (East Lothian 815, Edinburgh 620; Midlothian 501).

OBJECTIVE: Build engagement online

ACTUAL: Facebook campaign drove 19% of all unique page views (including 26% for Midlothian).

CALA Homes Google Analytics showed that direct and organic searches accounted for at least 67% of all traffic to each online application page, suggesting high cut through rate of the awareness campaign.

Facebook activity surrounding the application process had a combined estimated reach of 486,004, while Twitter had 405,225.

TARGET – At least one application from each of the bursary zones' five most populated areas

ACTUAL – This target was exceeded with entries received from each of the five most densely populated areas.

TARGET - Deliver positive media coverage to support, particularly to support CALA's reputation as a sensitive developer across the region.

ACTUAL – All coverage included positive key messages about CALA Homes and its 19 site vision for Edinburgh and the surrounding area.

Budget and campaign impact:

TOTAL FEES (apportioned from standard monthly fees) £3,200

22 media articles created 305,198 Opportunities To See; 95 OTS for every £1 spent

Spend on tailored Facebook ads: £300 (£100 per bursary area) – the equivalent to £0.80 for every unique page view delivered to the bursary application pages (373); or £1.07 per application submitted (281).