



From mountain to sea

Asset Transfer Annual Report

1st April 2021—31st March 2022

Aberdeenshire Council has long been committed to a policy of Asset Transfer because it recognises that the community ownership of assets can make an important contribution to a range of innovative solutions which community bodies can develop to address local needs.

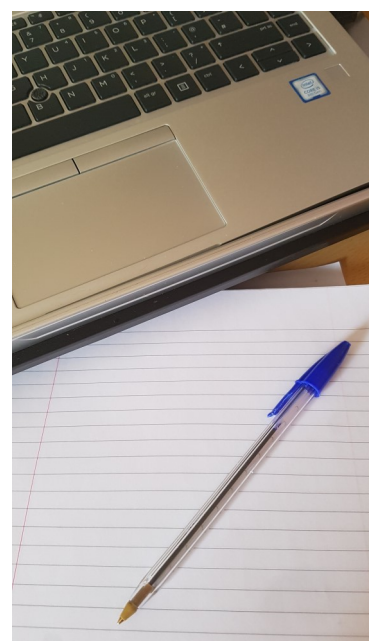
Asset Transfer involves the transfer of responsibility for an asset, either through lease or ownership, from the Council to a community body. In transferring the asset the Council will apply a discount to the commercial lease or market value of the asset in proportion to the perceived community benefits of the transfer.

Section 95 of the Act requires every relevant authority to publish an annual report setting out the numbers of asset transfer requests received and their outcomes. The Annual reports cover each year from 1 April to 31 March and must be published by 30 June.

This report has been produced in compliance with the Act. It is important to note that as the timescale for the Asset Transfer process may take more than 12 months to complete, the number of requests received in one year and the number agreed or refused in that year may not be the same.

Section 95 of the Community Empowerment Act requires Aberdeenshire Council to publish an annual report setting out:

- the number of asset transfer requests received.
- the number of such requests which the Aberdeenshire Council has either agreed to or refused.
- the number of agreed requests which have resulted in the transfer of ownership, a lease or conferral of other rights.
- the number of appeals which have been allowed, dismissed or have resulted in any part of the decision of Aberdeenshire Council being varied or reversed.
- any action taken by Aberdeenshire Council to promote the use of asset transfer requests and to support a community transfer body or community organisation in the making of an asset transfer request.



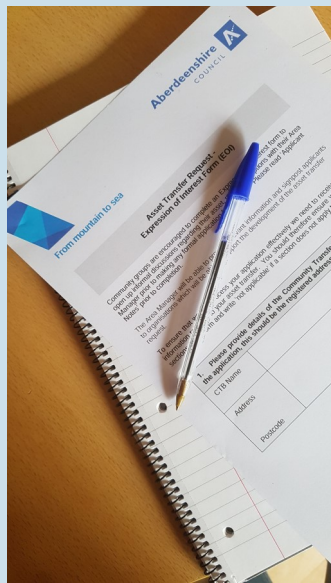
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Aberdeenshire Council Asset Transfer Process

The Council's Asset Transfer process offers groups the option to engage in an informal Expression of Interest (EOI) prior to making a full application.

This allows the group to be supported and provided with relevant information to support the development of a formal asset transfer request.

Not all EOI applications progress to a formal stage as groups may decide to withdraw for a number of reasons. Similarly some groups do not feel the need to make an EOI application and progress directly to the formal stage.



Community Empowerment Legislation

The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 moves forward from a voluntary approach by the public sector, and introduces a right for community bodies to make requests to all local authorities to either own or buy an asset.

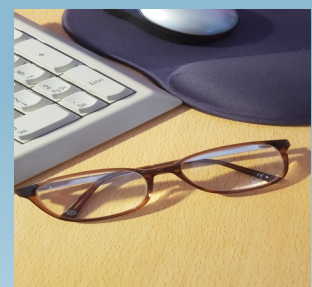
A request can be made in relation to any land or building which is owned or leased by the relevant authority.

The Act requires local authorities to transparently assess requests against a specified list of criteria, and to agree the request unless there are reasonable grounds for refusal.



A formal application is accompanied by a business case, an indication of social return on investment and a financial plan demonstrating how the community group will sustain the running of the asset.

The relevant Area Committee makes the final decision on the application, with the option of an appeal initially to the Council and subsequently to the Scottish Government if the group are unhappy with the decision made.



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Summary Information for Annual Report

Reporting period - start	01/04/2021
Reporting period - end	31/03/2022
Total number of asset transfer requests received	5
Number agreed	4
Number refused	0
Number resulting in:	
a transfer of ownership of land to a community transfer body	3
a lease of land to such a body	1
rights in respect of land being conferred on such a body	0
Number of appeals under section 85 relating to such requests made to the relevant authority:	
Allowed	0
Dismissed	0
Resulted in any part of the decision of the authority being varied or reversed	0
In relation to a decision of the relevant authority reviewed under section 86 or 87, the number of such decisions that have been:	
Confirmed	1
Modified	0
Substituted by a different decision	0

Number of formal Asset Transfer requests received: 5

Banff and Buchan—2

Fraserburgh Sea Cadets—Grampian House, 86-88 Commerce Street, Fraserburgh
Banff, Macduff & District Men's Shed—Former Fife Street School

Formartine —1

Ellon Wheels Park Group-Lower Gordon Park, Ellon

Kincardine and Mearns—2

Mackie Rugby Football Club—Forest Park Stonehaven
Stonehaven Tolbooth Association-Tolbooth Museum, Stonehaven

Number of formal Asset Transfer requests agreed: 4

Banff and Buchan—2

Fraserburgh Sea Cadets—Grampian House, 86-88 Commerce Street, Fraserburgh
Banff, Macduff & District Men's Shed—Former Fife Street School (reviewed under Section 86)

Kincardine and Mearns —1

Catalyst Community Regeneration Company, Former Community Centre, Laurencekirk

Marr—1

Alford Valley Community Railway—Former Alford Railway Station, Engine Shed and associated Aberdeenshire Council ground

Number of contracts concluded: 4

Banff and Buchan—1

Fraserburgh Sea Cadets—Grampian House, 86-88 Commerce Street, Fraserburgh-Transfer of Ownership

Kincardine and Mearns —1

Catalyst Community Regeneration Company, Former Community Centre, Laurencekirk—Transfer of Ownership

Garioch—1

The Scout Association—Land Adjacent to Inverurie Scout Hall—Transfer of Ownership

Marr—1

Networks of Wellbeing—34 West Park Street, Huntly—Lease

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Number of Expression of Interest applications received between 1st April 2021 and 31st March 2022:

Buchan – 1	Banff and Buchan—2
Formartine—5	Garioch—3
Kincardine and Mearns—2	Marr—5

Appeals

During 2021 – 2022 no appeals were made to the Council.

During 2021 – 2022 no appeals were made to Scottish Ministers.

Support to the Community

Workshop in Buchan

The Buchan Community Planning Partnership focused its December Joint Meeting on Community Wealth Building including a workshop on Land and Buildings as opportunities to build wealth in communities. Joint meetings are attended by Elected Members, Council officers, Community Planning Partners and members of the thematic Community Planning hubs in Buchan including wide range of community groups.

The workshop included a group discussion on Asset Transfer facilitated by Council Officers, and was attended by a representative from the Scottish Land Commission. The purpose was to increase awareness of the opportunities presented by Asset Transfer. Attendees included groups with experience of Asset Transfer which enabled peer to peer learning.

Application process

We have reviewed the way representations from interested parties on live applications are collected and are in the process of setting up an online form. This will streamline the manner the representations are collected, reviewed and passed on to the applicant.

We continue to promote the benefits of Asset Transfer through our website and regularly meet to discuss applications with groups either face to face or via Video conferencing as appropriate.

Each of the six geographic areas within Aberdeenshire Council have a dedicated team consisting of a wide number of services including Legal, Property, Estates, Finance, Live Life Aberdeenshire, Economic Development and the Area Manager. These groups review and feedback on each application made to their area.

In addition, an updated process for assessing the community benefit of each application to provide a basis for any discount applied has been created. This makes the calculation simpler and harmonises this with the Council's Strategic Vision and Priorities.

Aberdeenshire Council Area Manager Contacts

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