Community Ownership Support Service

COSS is a Scottish government funded programme, delivered through the **Development Trusts Association Scotland** since 2011.

An Adviser led service across Scotland which:

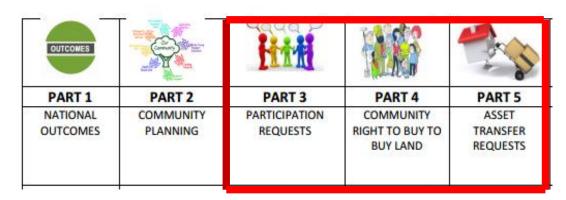
- Helps community-based groups take ownership of public assets for community benefit .
- Supports local authorities and other public bodies in the sustainable transfer assets in to community ownership.

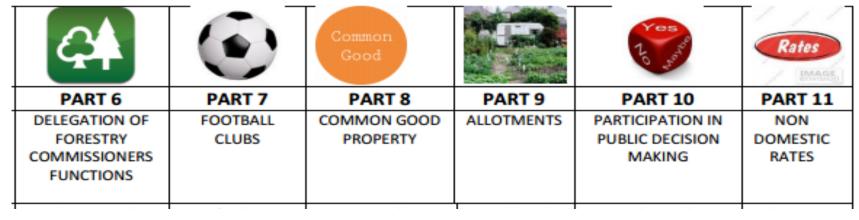
Community Empowerment Act

Reflects the policy principles of subsidiary, community empowerment and improvement outcomes and provides a strategic framework which will:

 Empower community bodies through the ownership of land and buildings and strengthening the decisions that matter to them

Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015





Part 3 – Participation Requests

Participation in an Outcome Improvement Process with a Public Service Authority

- To help start a dialogue
- Contributing to the decision making process
- Contribute to service change
- Seek support for alternatives which improve outcomes

- Presumption in favour of community unless there are good grounds for refusal
- Currently no formal appeal process





Part 4 – Community Right to Buy

A CRtB is a **pre-emptive right to buy land** for communities throughout Scotland under Part 4 of the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003

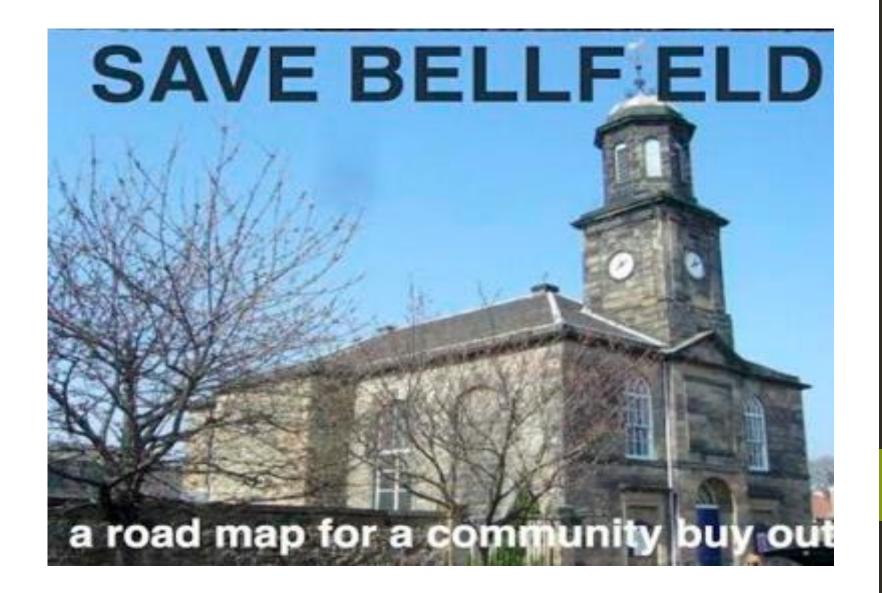




Tweaked eligibility criteria:

- 2-tier Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) and Community Benefit Society now also eligible
- No population ceiling
- More flexibility in defining area
- Minimum membership dropped to 10
- Now need 75% not 50% of members resident
- Must make meeting minutes publicly available
- Dropped audit requirement

Bellfield Church - Edinburgh



Part 4 – Abandoned, neglected and detrimental land

Eligible if:

- It is wholly or mainly abandoned or neglected or,
- The use or management of the land is such that it results in or causes harm, directly or indirectly, to the environmental wellbeing of a relevant community
- Need to contact relevant regulator to exercise their regulatory function – to remedy or mitigate harm
- Must have tried and failed to buy land
- Community compulsory purchase





Part 5: Asset Transfer Requests

Gives communities of interest and place -

- The <u>right</u> to request to purchase, lease, manage or use land and buildings belonging to **local** authorities and other Scottish public bodies
- The assets do not have to be on a "surplus to requirements" list
- Communities can state the amount they are prepared to pay – below market value.

Community Empowerment Act Part 5: Asset Transfer Requests

- The presumption is in favour of communities unless there are reasonable grounds for refusal
- Asset registers
- Annual Reports
- Timeframes for responses
- Review and appeal to Scottish Ministers

Inspiring Bridgend Farmhouse – Edinburgh



Current Trends Communities

- Interest in single category assets halls, community centres, public toilets
 - Reacting to closure
 - Mainly a stewardship operating model
 - Primarily lease arrangements
 - Local authority grant pots
- Strategic approach responding to need and opportunity
 - Often established community organisations (paid staff)
 taking a place based approach

Current Trends Communities

Communities of Place

- Community hubs
- Service specific public toilets/ tourist information
- Infrastructure harbours / car parks

Communities of Interest

- Sports pitches/ centres
- Men's sheds
- Growing spaces/ allotments/ meadow
- Health / nurseries
- Arts facilities
- Faith based organisations

Challenges Communities

- Development Funding pre and post acquisition
 - Scottish Land Fund
 - National Lottery Communities Fund
 - Scottish Government Capital Regeneration Fund
 - Robertson Trust

Capacity

- Established organisations
- Volunteers Board support

Viability

 Opportunity for revenue generation – income, grants, SLA, balancing assets, crowd funding, fundraising

Kinning Park Complex - Glasgow



Characteristics of Success

- Based on genuine community need Action Plans/ Place
 Plans
- The right asset is sought to meet those needs
- Being realistic about the condition of the building / land (contaminated beyond reasonable repair etc)
- Learning from others who have done it already
- The business plan shows how the asset can 'wash its face' (grants, revenue, SLA)

And finally.....

 Making good use of the free help and support (COSS, local support – Council, TSI, Business Gateway, Funders SE networks)

Further Information

Community Ownership Support Service www.dtascommunityownership.org.uk
0131 225 2080

Linda Gillespie

Linda@dtascot.org.uk

0131 225 2080

07579 008467