

**Asset Transfer Request
Reporting Template 2022/23 for Relevant Authorities**

Section 95 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 requires relevant authorities to produce an annual report on Asset Transfer Request activity and publish this no later than 30 June each year.

Following stakeholder feedback and in response to asset transfer evaluations, this template has been created to help gather asset transfer data for the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023. Information provided will help inform policy and practice at local and national level as the data will be collated and shared by the Scottish Government's Community Empowerment Team. However, it will be for each relevant authority to make their own annual report publicly available by 30 June 2023, whether using this template or not.

Please provide information in sections below and email completed template by 30 June 2023 to community.empowerment@gov.scot

Section One – Relevant Authority Information

Organisation: Highlands and Islands Enterprise

Address: An Lòchran, 10 Inverness Campus, Inverness, IV2 5NA

Completed by: Sandra Holmes

Role: Head of Community Assets

Email: sandra.holmes@hient.co.uk

Telephone: 01463 383309

Date of completion: 27 June 2023

Are you the Asset Transfer Lead Contact for the organisation: Yes

If not please provide the name, job title and email address for the lead contact for any queries:

Section 2: Asset Transfer Data in 2022/23

2.1 Please complete the following table for the 2022/23 reporting period :

Total Applications Received	Number of successful applications determined	Number of unsuccessful applications determined	Number received and yet to be determined	Number received prior to 2022/23 and yet to be determined
0	0	0	0	0

2.2 Please provide details of Asset Transfer Requests received which resulted in transfer of ownership, lease, or rights from your relevant authority to a community transfer body in 2022/23:

2.3 Please provide details of Asset Transfer Requests that went to a relevant authority appeal or review which were concluded in 2022/23:

Name of Community Transfer Body	Was the Asset Transfer Appeal/Review accepted? (Y/N)	Why was the Appeal/Review accepted/refused? <i>Please provide details of the asset transfer request and reasons for your decision.</i>
none		

2.4 Please use this space to provide any further comments relating to the above data:

n/a

Section Three – Promotion and Equality

3.1 Please provide information on any action you have taken to promote the benefits of asset transfer or any support provided for communities to engage with the Asset Transfer Request process.

We have a dedicated Community Assets Team that supports the community ownership of assets. This includes asset transfer as a route to ownership and the purchase of HIE assets. Details of the support available and our Ten Steps to Community Ownership resource can be found here:

<https://www.hie.co.uk/support/support-for-community-organisations/community-assets/ten-steps-to-community-ownership/>

Details of our asset transfer process and asset register can be found here:

<https://www.hie.co.uk/support/browse-all-support-services/community-empowerment-act/>

We also make groups aware of the asset transfer via our property marketing details.

Further, we promote the support available to communities via the Community Ownership Support Service (COSS).

3.2 In particular what action has been taken to support disadvantaged communities to engage with the asset transfer process?

We provide a tailored support offering, reflecting the needs and capacity of the community. Initial support is provided by our 'named officer'. Thereafter support is provided by a member of our Community Assets Team. Further support is often provided by our local area team; of which we have eight across our region.

The support includes meetings with, and visits to, the community body, a detailed explanation of the asset transfer process, assistance to set up an eligible community body – or to amend an existing one – guidance and support to develop the project and feedback on a draft asset transfer application

Section Four – Additional Information

4.1 Please use this space to provide any further feedback not covered in the above sections.

- A negotiated transfer of a 0.73 hectares was concluded with Uig Development Trust (Lewis) March 2023, for the purpose of amenity space and the construction of 5-9 business units for rent.
- A negotiated transfer of a 0.50 hectares was concluded with Broadford and Strath Community Company in March 2023. This development site is adjacent to BSCC's campsite, and will provide additional an amenity and community space, woodland, and an overflow camp site providing 12 pitches.
- We have, for another 12 months, continued to withhold our forest at Orbost (Skye) from normal disposal procedures while Dunvegan Community Trust investigate the viability of a community purchase.
- We have, for another 12 months, continued to withhold a development plot at Portree Industrial Estate from normal disposal procedures while Skye & Lochalsh Micro Abattoir investigate the viability of a community purchase.
- We are in the process of agreeing heads of terms with South Lochaber Community Company regarding the lease of a small area of land on which they wish to park a community minibus. The lease will give them time to consider an Asset Transfer Request to purchase the land.

Section 5 – Community Empowerment Act Review

The following questions relate to the Scottish Government review of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015. We would value your feedback as a relevant authority concerned with part 5 (asset transfers) of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015. Please note, any feedback offered in Section 5 would only be used for the purposes of the review, and all comments would be anonymised.

5.1 Has the legislation made things easier or more difficult to work with communities on asset transfers? Please provide some comments on your experiences as a relevant authority engaging with this legislation.

We have only received one Asset Transfer Request to date. This was the transfer of a light industrial unit [Unit 1, Hagdale Industrial Estate, Baltasound, Unst, Shetland, ZE2 9TW] to the Unst Partnership Ltd in December 2018. We have however concluded a number of negotiated transfers since the legislation came in to force.

The best value assessment is challenging for both the community body and HIE due to the understandable difficulties in evidencing and quantifying best value. Whilst supportive of the legislation and the benefits it affords community bodies, a transfer via the legislation is more onerous for both parties than a negotiated sale, largely due to best value considerations.

5.2 Where can things be further improved, and what needs to change?

We are satisfied with the legislation from the perspective of a relevant authority. As noted the challenges are associated with best value assessments as this is a relatively subjective process. We fully appreciate there is limited scope for this to be more objective and thereby easier to implement.

5.3 Are you aware of what support is available to you when engaging with this legislation, and how you can access this? Please provide comments where possible.

HIE sits on the National Asset Transfer Action Group so we are aware of the support available when engaging with the legislation.

5.4 What would you like to see now, to further empower Scotland's communities?

HIE submits responses to relevant consultations on land reform and community wealth building. We consider there to be scope for Part 2 of the Land Reform Act 2003 (registering an interest in land) to be simplified.

Please email the completed template by 30 June 2023 to community.empowerment@gov.scot

If you have any queries please contact Malcolm Cowie, Asset Transfer Policy Manager at Malcolm.cowie@gov.scot