

Developing Assets in Uncertain Times

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COSS – Community Ownership Support Service

- Funded by Scottish Government to support Asset Transfer (now Part 5 of the Community Empowerment Act)
- Since 2011 we have supported 719 groups to explore taking on the ownership or management of community assets.
- We are a team of 6 part-time advisors supported by a full-time manager, a p/t Administrator and p/t legal advisor. We work across Scotland.

What is (Community) Asset Transfer?

A process to allow a community organisation to take over publicly-owned land or buildings, in a way that recognises the public benefits that the community use will bring. That may be at a discounted price, with a grant, Service Level Agreement or other support.

- Most groups come to us at an early stage – yet to form in to an incorporated group – and are often responding to an under-used or under-threat local asset.
- Some will go on to become development trusts, many will not.
- All are faced with the challenge of securing the development funding to both renovate the building or manage a new build, along with proving that they can be sustainable, often with no prior asset development experience.



Pre-capital stage – where to start

- Consulting the community and establishing needs – *The Place Standard Tool; Coalfields Regeneration Trust; Survey monkey and community event (small local fund to cover this); Enterprise Accelerator Fund.*
- Visiting similar projects –
Community Learning Exchange Fund (SCA partners)
- Business plan –
Enterprise Accelerator; The Hive (on-line business planning tool from Co-op UK) (other templates are available)
- Building condition survey, valuation, design and costings–
Scottish Land Fund Stage 1 and Community Assets, Heritage Lottery Fund (Resilient Heritage Fund)

'Difficult' Assets

- In many of our urban areas, assets were built that are no longer fit for purpose.
- But, they are valued by the local community
- How do we avoid the transfer of a liability rather than an asset?



Characteristics of success

- based on genuine community need –Action Plans
- the right asset sought to meet those needs
- learning from others who have done it already
- the business plan shows how the asset can ‘wash its face’ (grants, revenue – is there a market in that gap?, SLAs)
- Demonstrating economic/social/health/environmental value – the added value
- being realistic about the condition of the building/land (contaminated, beyond reasonable repair)
- making good use of free help and support (COSS, local support - TSIs, Business Gateway, Funders, SE networks)

The ever dwindling pots

- Since the National Lottery began in 1994, £35 billion has been raised and more than 490,000 grants awarded.
- Responsible for giving out 40% of the money raised by the National Lottery.
- Funds are diminishing in line with a reduction in sales of Lottery tickets (£200M drop in 2016/17).
- Heritage Lottery Fund - new Capital Grant programme from 2019, 50% cut in available funds.
- Community Assets – around £10M funding pot per annum and a typical grant size of £675,000. Expecting to fund 10-15 projects per year across Scotland.
- Awards for All – 43% success rate, an increase in applications between Feb to July 2018.

Not All Doom and Gloom

- Scottish Land Fund - Overall success rate of **67%** - for communities looking to purchase land or buildings.
- Community Led Activity – Overall success rate of **77%** - good news if you are a local organisation looking to involve your community in wellbeing activities!
- Improving Lives – medium grants **51%** success rate.
- Improving Lives – large grants (£150K+) success rate of **52%**
A two stage application process. This success rate of 52% covers both stages. 65% of applicants were successful at the first stage, and 80% at the second stage.



More Good News

- Regeneration Capital Grant Programme

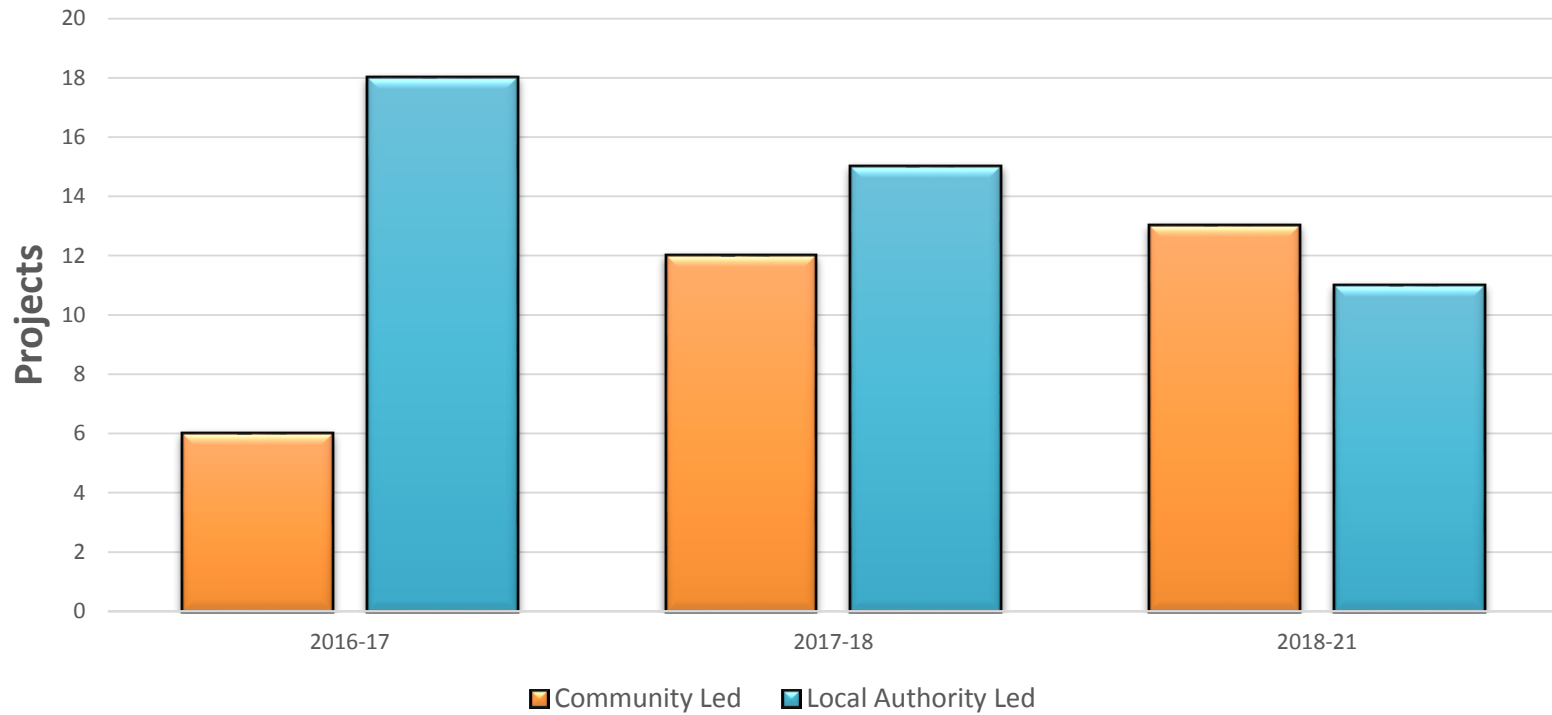
Annual fund, delivered in partnership with COSLA and local government, supports locally developed regeneration projects that involve local communities, helping to support and create jobs and build sustainable communities.

ie. A partnership bid with your Local Authority

Project focus

- Projects that primarily focus on areas that suffer from **high levels of deprivation and disadvantage**
- Projects that demonstrate **clear community involvement**
- Projects that will **deliver large scale transformational change** with strong **regeneration outcomes**
- Projects and programmes that can encourage **additional investment** and **address market failure**

Regeneration Capital Grant Fund



	2016-17	2017-18	2018-21
Community Led	6	12	13
Local Authority Led	18	15	11
Total Amount	£3,432,926	£9,874,055	£9,728,746

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Total Amount	£ 3,432,926.00	£ 9,874,055.00	£ 9,728,746.00

Taking a phased approach

- Starting with activity based projects to engage the community (small to medium grant programmes. Paid staff)
- Taking on a lease with break clauses in favour of ownership (depending on the building condition) or running from an interim venue.
- Strengthening the Board, the membership and developing your place.
- Building up your funding mix.



- Building up partnerships with Local Authority, Health and Social Care partnership etc to look at joint funding bids or SLAs to underwrite the business plan
- Trading your way to further development to top up grants



Unleashing the cash in your community

- With an underlying enterprise, and setting up (or changing to become) a community benefit society (which can be charitable), community shares could be considered.
- free support available to enterprises
here: <http://scotland.communityshares.org.uk/support>
- **£10M raised** through community share offers for 22 community enterprises over last 3 years.



Janet

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Thank you



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