Tandridge District Council

Community Asset Transfer Policy 2025 – 2030

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Document history

Version	Author	Date	Changes made
0.1 Draft	Tracey Marlow – Senior PMO	27th March	Initial draft – for officer review
0.2 Draft	Review/update by legal	7th April	Legal updates
0.3 Draft	Ricky Fuller	23rd April	Added financial section & amends to wording
1.0 Draft	Tracey Marlow	1st May 2025	Final draft version shared for feedback
1.1 Draft	Ricky Fuller	7th May 2025	Revised following further feedback.

Stakeholder review

Role	Name	Version	Review date
CAT Project sponsor	Ricky Fuller	V0.3	April
Communities lead	Julie Porter	V0.3	April
Head of Legal Services & Monitoring Officer	Lidia Harrison	V0.3	April
Deputy CX	Taryn Pearson-Rose	V0.3	April
TTP Programme governance	TOMDG	V0.3	April
Communities facilities board	Shared for information	V0.3	April
Member review	Strategy and Resources	V1.0	6th May

1. Aim of the Policy

Tandridge District Council's ('the Council') Corporate Plan articulates a vision for the District focused on protecting the environment, delivering affordable housing, prioritising residents' needs, and fostering economic growth.

Community and place leadership is an integral part of the delivery of the Plan with the Community Asset Transfer ("CAT") policy supporting this through the aim of devolving responsibilities to local communities.

The Council aims to empower the community by ensuring that local assets are managed for the benefit of the community itself. The Council is keen to collaborate closely with Parish Councils and other local organisations to deliver these benefits. This approach allows assets and services to be managed at a local level by the most suitable organisation.

The Council recognises the vital role that Parish Councils and other local organisations play in supporting its communities. It is committed to working closely with these groups to understand their vision and aspirations for the future. The Council is fully parished and has determined that working collaboratively with Parish Councils is the best way to foster and promote the benefits of Community Asset transfers.

The Council faces financial pressures and will need to continue to deliver significant savings going forward to continue to set a balanced budget. The medium-term financial outlook means that the Council is unlikely to be able to continue to provide and maintain the current level of community assets. Community assets are not a statutory requirement for the Council to provide and are funded by discretionary expenditure.

Community asset transfers therefore provide both a means by which assets can be owned and supported by and within local communities and which also reduce the management and maintenance costs incurred by the Council.

The purpose of this policy is to provide clear guidance and support within a fair and transparent framework that allows for the transfer of land, buildings, and facilities owned by the Council to community groups. This transfer may be at less than best consideration (i.e. transfer for a nominal or reduced purchase price – less than market value) where assets meet the appropriate assessment criteria.

2. Scope of the Policy

Assets held by the Council are categorised according to their primary use, with over 120 assets currently defined as Community Assets, categorised into the following types:

- Playgrounds, parks, and open spaces
- Public Conveniences
- Community Centres and other public buildings
- Other assets identified as suitable for local community management
- Sports & Recreation and Amenity Land
- Pavilions
- Playgrounds
- Allotments

Other assets are held by the Council for operational, investment or income-generation purposes. These include:

- Car Parks
- Leisure Centres
- Offices
- Depots
- Retail

The type of ownership and responsibility that the Council has for land and buildings includes:

- Owned Assets – The Council hold either a freehold interest or long lease (virtual freehold, usually in excess of 100 years) of the asset.
- Dedicated Assets – The Council has a responsibility to maintain land due to a historical contractual obligation but does not have the freehold ownership.
- Statutory Responsibility – The Council has the responsibility for maintaining assets and provide services under legislations, for example closed burial grounds.

Given the wide variety of assets, there is no "one size fits all" approach and each case will be evaluated individually.

Where the asset meets the appropriate assessment criteria, the goal is to transfer the asset whether it be partially, fully or through offering stewardship of the asset to the long-term benefit of the community and residents wherever possible.

3. Eligible Organisations

The CAT framework and policy is open to the following types of organisations:

- Parish or town councils
- Voluntary and community sector organisations
- Charities
- Community Interest Companies limited by guarantee
- Community Interest Company limited by shares
- Community Benefit Industrial & Provident Societies with an asset lock
- Unincorporated charitable organisations
- Companies limited by guarantee with charitable status
- Other organisations may be considered if they satisfy the criteria set out below

These organisations must be:

- Legal entities
- Be a formally constituted non-profit organisation
- Have a demonstrated track record of working in the local area and supporting community initiatives
- Demonstrate the capacity to manage and sustainably operate the transferred asset and have director or management committee members who have the necessary experience and skills
- Have community and/or social objectives
- Have good governance, robust financial systems and adequate policy framework to run a community organisation.
- Be located within the boundaries of the District area or can demonstrate that they provide services within the area to residents
- Have organisational goals aligned with the strategies and objectives of the Council.

Individuals or businesses that plan to primarily use the service or asset for commercial gain will not be considered.

4. Overall Assessment Criteria:

The Council will evaluate each asset transfer according to the following general principles. These are assessed at the Expression of Interest ('EOI') stage and in more detail at the business case stage (where necessary), before final approval by the Council.

Of particular importance are how the asset will be managed or controlled locally. The asset must remain open to the wider public. This does not disqualify special interest proposals or groups; however, evidence must be provided of how the asset will be used in an inclusive way.

All applicants must demonstrate effective governance arrangements and appropriate legal structures. Additionally, they must show sound financial standing and provide details of financial planning to ensure long-term support for the asset.

Where applicable, applicants should show how the use of the asset will contribute to the Council's ambitions regarding sustainability and efforts to tackle climate change.

- Community Benefit and support: The transfer will have a beneficial impact socially, economically, or environmentally, adding value to the local community. Applications demonstrate that there is broader community support, for example from public consultations, surveys, or relevant information from a community plan.
- Financial sustainability: The applicant can demonstrate the financial means to manage the asset effectively over the long term.
- Funding: The transfer will enable the applicant organisation to access funding that they or the Council could not obtain otherwise, ensuring the long-term financial viability of both the asset and the organisation.
- Capacity and Capability (depending on the transfer model ie full, partial or stewardship), applicants demonstrate that they can effectively manage and maintain the asset to ensure its long-term sustainability, including any relevant experience in managing assets.
- Local Ownership: Transfers empower Parish Councils and other organisations to take ownership of community assets, which will benefit residents and enhance local service provision.
- Value for Money: The transfer demonstrates social and economic benefits in relation to the local community.
- Financial benefit to the Council: The transfer delivers a financial saving to the Council in management, maintenance and other related costs.
- Service provision: The transfer should lead to continuation of or improvement in local service provision or address specific local needs or demands.

- Public accessibility: All community assets remain accessible to the wider public. While special interest proposals or groups are acceptable, applicants must provide evidence of how the asset will be used inclusively.
- Asset Stewardship: The Council has developed a model of Asset Stewardship where the Parish Council does not have the capacity or desire to take on full ownership but wishes to have a role in how assets are managed in exchange for funding the costs of these assets.

  Where this model is selected, the Council will retain ownership and management responsibilities, and a lower level of due diligence will therefore be required.

5. Management of Community assets

When assessing an expression of interest application, the Council needs to be assured that suitable measures are in place to ensure that these assets benefit the community and its residents into the future.

To that end, the following additional guidelines should be considered by those organisations expressing an interest in taking on responsibilities for assets:

- Sustainable Management: Ensure that community assets are maintained and used sustainably. This includes regular maintenance, responsible usage, and planning for long-term sustainability
- Accessibility: Make sure that community assets are accessible to all residents, including those with disabilities. This promotes inclusivity and ensures that everyone can benefit from the resources available
- Regular Audits and Monitoring: Conduct regular audits and monitoring to ensure assets are being used appropriately. This helps in identifying any misuse early and taking corrective action
- Training and Awareness: Provide training for staff and volunteers on the proper use of community assets and the importance of preventing misuse.
- Reporting Mechanisms: Establish easy-to-use reporting mechanisms for residents to report any suspected misuse of assets. Ensure that reports are taken seriously and investigated promptly.
- Insurance Coverage: Ensure that where there is full or partial transfer, those responsible have appropriate insurance coverage for liability, property damage, and other risks. This helps safeguard assets against unforeseen events.

6. Retained assets

Under this Policy, the Council will promote assets that are in community use for community asset transfer. This does not preclude consideration of other assets for transfer but there will be instances when Council-owned assets are not suitable for transfer.

Examples of this may include:

- assets which must remain under Council ownership and management to support service delivery.
- assets that provide an income for the Council which may need to be retained for financial reasons.
- assets which need to be prioritised for sale on the open market for financial reasons.
- assets which have restrictive covenants may need to be retained.

The Council has a financial and legal responsibility to ensure there is a clear and compelling rationale for any transfer and reserves the right to decline asset transfers for various reasons, including but not limited to:

- Uses related to statutory functions
- Income generation or capital receipts that support Council budgets
- Legal obligations associated with the land that the Council must adhere to
- The Asset being an important part of the Councils wider strategic objectives (eg around leisure and wellbeing).

7. Legal and Regulatory Framework

Local Authorities can dispose of property in several ways. However, guidance issued by the UK Government stipulates that any Local Authority who are disposing of publicly owned assets must do so in an appropriate manner and be correctly accounted for.

The Council will need to assess the full market value of any CAT asset, which may involve the taking of independent advice, so that any decision about transfer at 'less than Best Consideration' for the asset is transparent and issues such as government consents.

Similarly, proposals to transfer Public Open Space/School Land and / or Playing Fields will also need to be considered in the light of statutory provisions applying and any objections must be considered by the Council in deciding whether to

progress with the proposed transfer along with issues such as whether Secretary of State consent would be required for any disposal.

Land or buildings that are held by the 'Council in trust' will not be considered for a Community Asset Transfer unless the Council is prepared to approve of the disposal. Such a disposal will need to follow statutory requirements regarding advertisement of the disposal and any objections received.

In certain circumstances, such as when land or buildings were gifted to the Council or are held by the Council in trust for a specified purpose (for example for use as a public recreation ground), these proposed disposals may need to be referred to the Charity Commission for their approval under relevant statutory provisions applying.

In some circumstances the transfer of land or a building may have wider implications and result in the requirement for Council staff to transfer to the community organisation under Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) (TUPE) provisions. Usually this will not be the case, but if the land/ building is going to continue to be used for the same purpose it may apply. This is particularly likely to apply to premises which have a specific purpose such as recreation. In such circumstances Council staff may have rights under TUPE regulations. This will require the community organisation to employ any staff affected on the same terms and conditions as they currently have. This can be a burden on community organisations, particularly the requirement to provide pension protection that is the same as, or broadly comparable to, or better than the pension provision while employed by the Council. This issue requires careful consideration and staff in the Council's Human Resources service will be able to advise if TUPE applies and its implications.

There has been much case law confirming a council must exercise its fiduciary duties reasonably (constitutional law case Roberts v Hopwood 1925). Added to this are the public law principles, requiring the Council to have regard to the material consideration on the financial accounts with respect to capital and revenue impacts of any decision. Procurement laws can also apply if the disposal includes an agreement to carry out work or provide the Council with an interest in land, such as a sale and leaseback. This is a complex area of law, and each decision would be considered with appropriate legal and asset advice.

Appropriation

The powers to appropriate assets are found in the following laws:

- S122 of the Local Government Act 1972

- S232 Town and Country Planning Act 1990

Appropriation in this context means transferring the allocation of the assets from one purpose to another – where the land is no longer required for the purpose for which it is held immediately before the appropriation.

Local authorities usually allocate assets for specific purposes under different statutory powers. They may have acquired the land pursuant to a statute which then regulates how the land must be allocated or managed (e.g., housing or public health purposes) or they may have acquired land for general purposes (e.g., under s.120 of the Local Government Act 1972). If the local authority determines a need to transfer assets from one purpose or function to another, perhaps for redevelopment or service transfer, then it must document the appropriation of the asset.

The key procedural points are as follows:

- land must already belong to the Council
- land must be no longer required for the purpose for which it is currently appropriated
- purpose for which the Council is appropriating must be authorised by statute

Types of asset lease

The Council's CAT Strategy is flexible to allow for different circumstances as no two CATs are the same.

The strategy recommends the transfer of the freehold, or alternatively, where this is not appropriate, a long lease. The term of the lease would be agreed according to specific circumstances.

As part of the process of leasing or purchasing land and/or premises from the Council, legal and surveyors fees will be payable. This will also occur when existing tenants apply for consent from the Council for example to alter or improve the property. The Council and the voluntary organisation will each be responsible for paying their own legal and surveyor's fees as necessary.

8. Community Asset Management model types:

To simplify the approach to CAT, the Council has defined three models which provide options for parish councils and other organisations to consider. The models are summarised below:

Model 1 - Full Asset Transfer

- The freehold or long leasehold is transferred to the Parish Council
- The Parish Council takes full responsibility for operational, financial, and maintenance aspects
- Suitable where the Parish Council has the resources and capability to manage the asset

Model 2 - Shared Services Asset Transfer

- The freehold or long leasehold is transferred, but the Council and the Parish Council agree on shared services for maintenance and management
- This may include joint contracts for maintenance, cleaning, or repairs etc
- Collaboration can improve efficiency and reduce financial burden

Model 3 - Parish Stewardship Model

- TDC retains ownership but grants the Parish Council a long-term management agreement
- The Parish Council takes on day-to-day operations, minor maintenance, and contribute to major costs with the district
- This model is suitable for when a full transfer is not viable, but local management would provide better community outcomes

Further details of the steps and responsibilities for each model are set out in Appendix B.

9. CAT process

The CAT application process consists of three stages, which will benefit both the applicant and the Council. This approach helps avoid unnecessary expenditure on preparing and evaluating a more detailed agreement that may have little chance of advancing.

To begin the asset transfer process, any organisation interested should contact the Council's Communities team and complete a 'CAT Expression of Interest' form.

This initial discussion and form will focus on the asset being considered for transfer and its status within the Council's Community asset portfolio. By doing so, applicants can determine if the asset is eligible for transfer.

You can find more information about the Council's CAT process on its website.

CAT Application Stage 1: Expression of interest

Following completion of this form (see Appendix A), the Council will evaluate the suitability of the asset along with the scope of the proposed transfer. If an asset or any applications (if there are multiple) are deemed unsuitable at this stage, all applicants will be notified.

Following receipt of the EOI, applicants will be provided with an indicative timeline for the assessment process completion and details of any additional information required to support the application and finalise the process (such as a more detailed agreement or business case, where applicable). An overview of the decision-making process that will be applied to the specific asset will be provided, as this may vary depending on the asset under consideration.

As part of the assessment process, the Council will evaluate whether the asset transfer proposal demonstrates sufficient community benefits, financial viability, and the applicant organisation's capability to ensure the asset's sustainable future.

If the expression of interest is accepted, applicants will be informed about the decision-making process and the expected timetable in the Council's response to the EOI.

CAT Application Stage 2: Business Case

After successfully passing from Stage 1 Expression of Interest, depending on the scale and scope of the transfer and the transfer model that has been applied for, applicants may be required to submit a more detailed business case. The criteria for this are detailed further in Section 4.

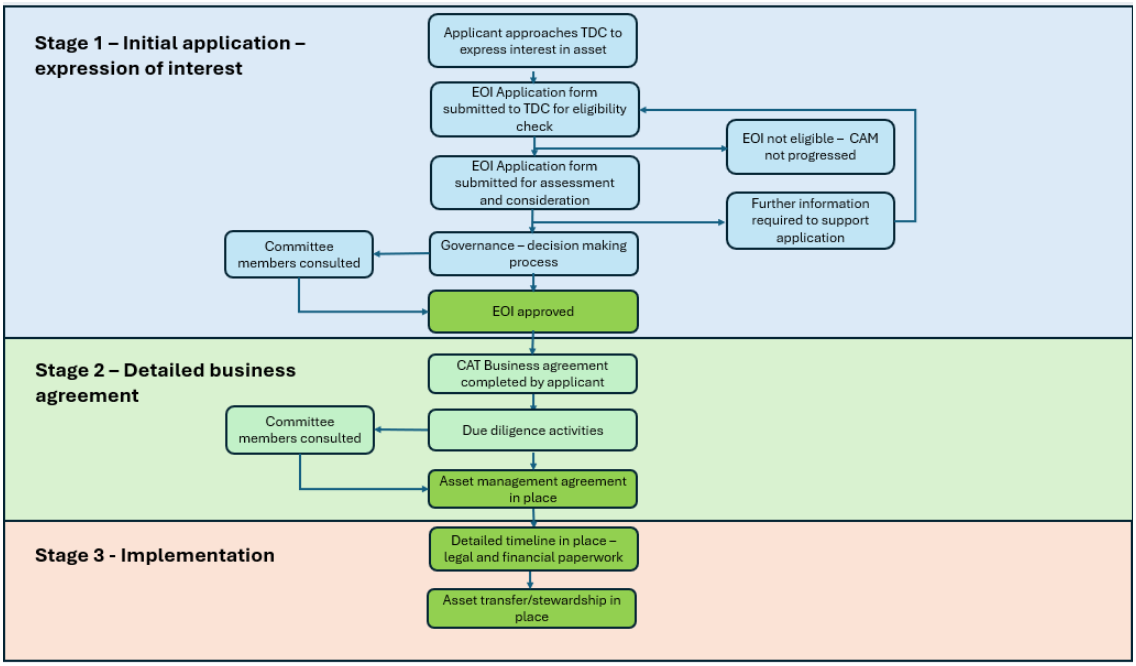
If a more detailed business case is necessary, this will require further details such as:

- Operational and financial plans
- Risk assessment and mitigation
- Community engagement and governance
- Timeline for transition and service delivery

Decisions to transfer assets will be made in accordance with the provisions as set out in the Council's Constitution. The asset management business case will be reviewed by Officers, shared with the Community Services committee for their comments, and then presented to the Strategy and Resources Committee for consideration and decision on whether to proceed with the transfer.

CAT Application Stage 3 – Implementation

The steps and timings of this phase will vary asset by asset and depending on the transfer model being requested. The applicant and the Council will work together to develop a timeline for transfer/stewardship of asset.



10. Community Asset Transfer process – Timescales

It is anticipated that a straightforward asset transfer could be completed within 3-6 months, subject to available resources. Timelines will however vary depending on the complexity of each application and responsiveness of applicants and some will take considerably longer where they involve other external parties such as the Land Registry of Charity Commission. The process of transfer takes time and must be fully understood by all parties and reflected in decision making and budget settlement.

11. Support during the CAT process

The Council is committed to supporting parish councils and other eligible organisations throughout the community asset transfer process. They offer guidance on available funding opportunities, including grant funding, and can facilitate resource sharing with organisations such as the Surrey Association of Local Councils (SALC). Additionally, they can provide insights from other parish councils and organisations.

12. Governance and Accountability

Under this policy, community organisations are responsible for obtaining their own professional legal and financial representation to understand their legal and financial obligations clearly.

The property and land may be subject to planning regulations and listed building controls. Applicants should ensure that they are aware of any relevant planning or other regulations.

Transfer Agreements

Any transfer agreements are likely to include clauses, such as:

- The Council (and its successors in title) to have first refusal should the asset subsequently be sold on (if within 10 years of transfer)
- A requirement that benefits the wider community i.e. maintains the community's access and use of the asset
- An overage agreement should the asset subsequently fall out of community use and be sold on the open market or leased at commercial rates to ensure that the Council (and its successor in title) receives an additional sum if the original purposes are no longer met.

Organisations and groups that receive a leased community asset will be responsible for establishing appropriate governance and accountability. This should include:

- Maintaining transparent and accountable decision-making processes.
- Ensuring sound financial practices.
- Engaging with the local community and stakeholders to consider their views and needs.

13. Review and Evaluation

The Council's CAT Policy will be periodically reviewed for effectiveness and community responsiveness. The Council will monitor asset transfer outcomes, gathering feedback from involved organisations through surveys, interviews, and consultations.

The Council will adjust the CAT policy based on review findings, which may include updating eligibility criteria and streamlining the application process. Where applicable, outcomes will be communicated to community organisations and stakeholders for transparency, with recommendations for improvements shared publicly. This review helps maintain a dynamic CAT policy that meets the

community's needs while promoting empowerment and sustainable asset management in the District.

14. Appeals

All applicants are entitled to appeal against decisions made if they feel that a decision has been unfair/and or there has been a breach of this policy.

Appeals shall be made in writing, stating clearly the issue or reference to the part of the policy that has been breached, within 28 days of the decision being made.

The appeal will be managed in line with the Council’s complaints procedures.

Appendix A – Expression of interest template

This form should be used to express your interest in applying for a Community Asset Transfer (CAT) of a particular property or land within Tandridge District.

Prospective applicants interested in applying for an asset transfer through Tandridge District Council's Community Asset Transfer Policy are required to complete and return this Expression of Interest Form as the initial step to submitting a formal CAT Request.

Community organisations are encouraged to submit this form promptly after deciding to pursue an asset transfer and identifying a suitable building or piece of land for transfer. By completing this form early-stage discussions can be facilitated, allowing the Council to assess your group's eligibility and suitability for transfer for the requested asset transfer.

Please note that under the Tandridge District Council CAT policy, community organisations are responsible for covering their professional fees, including the costs of surveyors and lawyers.

The property and land are subject to planning and listed building controls. Any community group or organisation interested in applying must consider the "Use Class" of the land and any listed build designation. Tandridge District Council mandates that the property must be utilised for community purposes, although alternative uses will be considered if there is evidence that it supports the community.

Please note that assets already in use by the council or acquired by the council for investment purposes may not be available for transfer.

Proposals that meet all the eligibility criteria under Tandridge District Council CAT Policy, will be considered further and the applicant will be informed whether further information is required and the next steps.

Please fill in all sections of the form. If a section does not apply, please write "Not Applicable".

When complete, submit the form to: customerservices@tandridge.gov.uk

You will receive an acknowledgment of your Expression of Interest and feedback within 28 days.

Section 1 - Please provide details of the group/body making this request Full Name of Organisation	
Name of organisation	
Address of Organisation	
Organisation Website	
Contact Email	
Contact Telephone Number	
Section 2 - Main Contact information (*Name of person to answer any questions regarding this Expression of Interest*)	
Main Contact name	
Position within Organisation	
Contact Email	
Contact Telephone Number	
Address	
Section 3 Organisation details	
Type of Organisation (*i.e. not for profit,* *CIC, Charity, Town/Parish Council*)	
If Applicable, what is the Company or Charity Registration Number	
Please confirm that the organisation has a formal written constitution or governing document. **Please attach a copy of this with this document** (*Please note that under Tandridge District Council's CAT Policy, requests will only be considered from eligible community-controlled bodies with a written constitution or governing document*)	
When was the organisation established?	

What is the purpose and main objective of the organisation?	
Section 4– Details of the Asset and Transfer type	
Name of the Asset (*Building name if known, or name building is known by. If a land Asset, please specify the asset, or detail what the land is part of, e.g., "adjacent to ..." or "to the rear of..."*)	
Location of the Asset (*Postal address if known, or grid reference*)	
Please indicate what type of Asset Transfer you are interested in; full, shared services or parish stewardship	
Section 5 - Applicant Interest & Community Benefit	
Please outline the reasons for seeking the transfer of the identified asset	

Please outline how you will utilise the asset to benefit the local community	
Section 6 - Financial Viability	
Please outline your organisation's financial sustainability and capacity to manage the asset/property effectively	
Provide details about your funding sources, including any grants, donations, or revenue streams that support your organisation's operations:	
Section 7 – Governance	
Please confirm that the organisation has a formal written constitution or governing document. **Please attach a copy of with this business plan.** (*Please note that under Tandridge District Council's CAT Policy, requests will only be considered from eligible community-controlled bodies with a written constitution or governing document)*	

Please confirm that the organisation has an up-to-date safeguarding policy. Please attach a copy of the safeguarding policy with this form.	
Please confirm that the organisation has an up-to-date health and safety policy. Please attach a copy of the health and safety policy with this form.	
Please confirm that the organisation has an up-to-date equality and diversity policy. Please attach a copy of the equality and diversity policy with this form.	

Data Protection: Tandridge District Council takes the privacy of your personal data very seriously. For more information, see our Privacy Policy https://www.tandridge.gov.uk/Your-council/Transparency-and-inclusive-service-standards/Privacy-Notice/Planning-Privacy-Notice

By signing below, I acknowledge and agree that the information provided in this Community asset management agreement, including contact details, will be shared ONLY with relevant officers within Tandridge District Council. This sharing of information is solely for the purpose of assessing the asset transfer request and, if necessary, providing specialised support to facilitate the progress of the request. I understand that my information will be collected and processed in accordance with these provisions.

Signature

Print Name **Date**

Where to send this form

You can submit this application: -

By post to: Customer Services Department, Tandridge District Council, 8 Station Road East, Oxted, Surrey RH8 0BT;

or by email to customerservices@tandridge.gov.uk

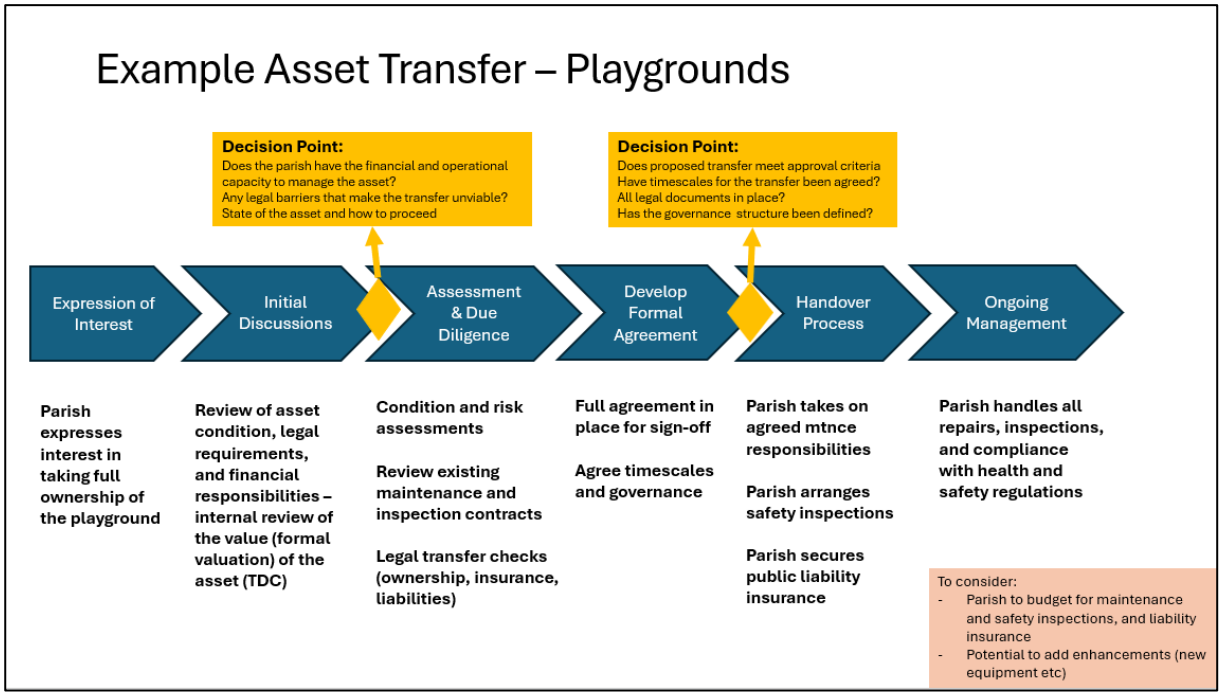
For the next steps in the community asset transfer process, please be aware that any organisation seeking to participate in a Community asset transfer will be asked to provide evidence of the following, for models 1 and 2, Full transfer or Full transfer with shared services.

Policies, Capacity and Capability	
Evidence of ability to take on management of the asset if interesting in model types 1 or 2.	
Evidence of capacity to take on management of the asset if interesting in model types 1 or 2.	
Following policies: **Up-to-date safeguarding policy.** **Up-to-date health and safety policy** **Up-to-date equality and diversity policy.**	

Thank you for your expression of interest, you have reached the end of the form.

Appendix B – Asset Transfer Models

CAT - Model one – Full transfer



- The parish council takes full ownership of the asset, assuming all responsibilities
- The asset is legally transferred to the parish, including deeds and liabilities

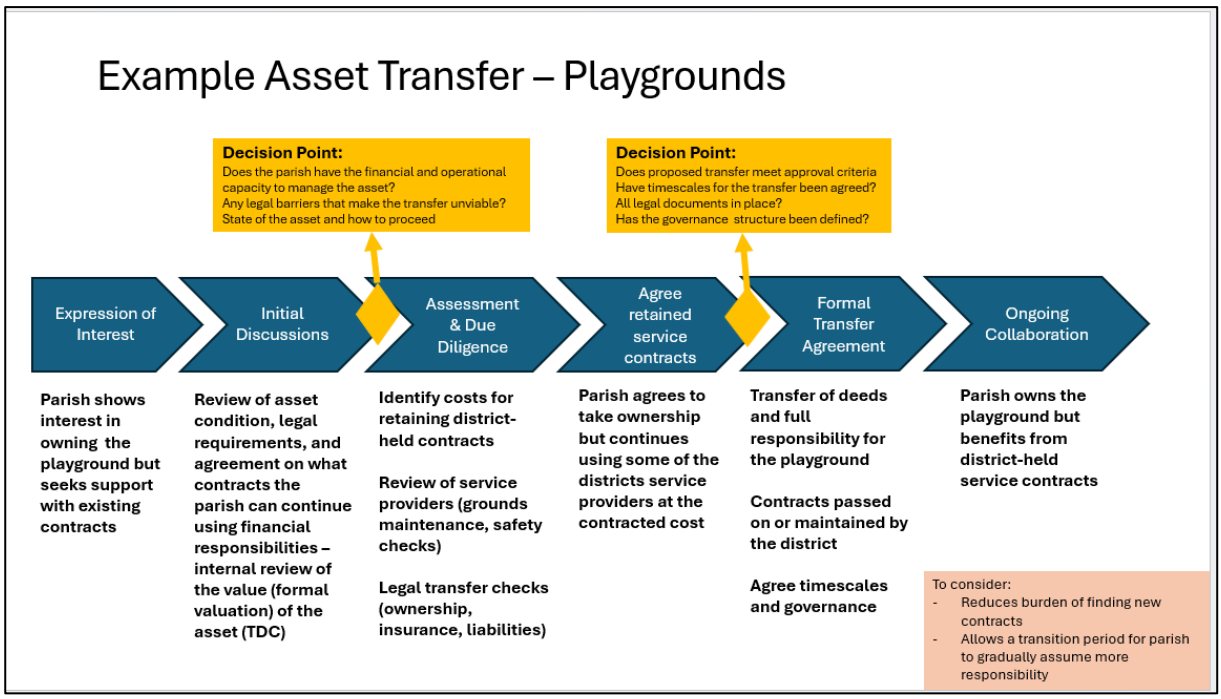
Parish Responsibilities:

- Ownership of the asset
- Full financial responsibility (running costs, maintenance, legal aspects)
- Management of all service contracts (cleaning, maintenance, water, sewage) - responsibilities extend beyond just grass cutting to include litter bin emptying, hedge cutting, tree inspections, and other maintenance tasks
- Insurance (public liability, building insurance)

District responsibilities

- Brings the asset up to an acceptable standard ahead of transfer
- Oversees and supports the transfer process

CAT - Model two – full transfer – shared services model



- The parish council takes full ownership but retains access to district council contracts for services
- Allows a transition period and ensures continuity of essential services

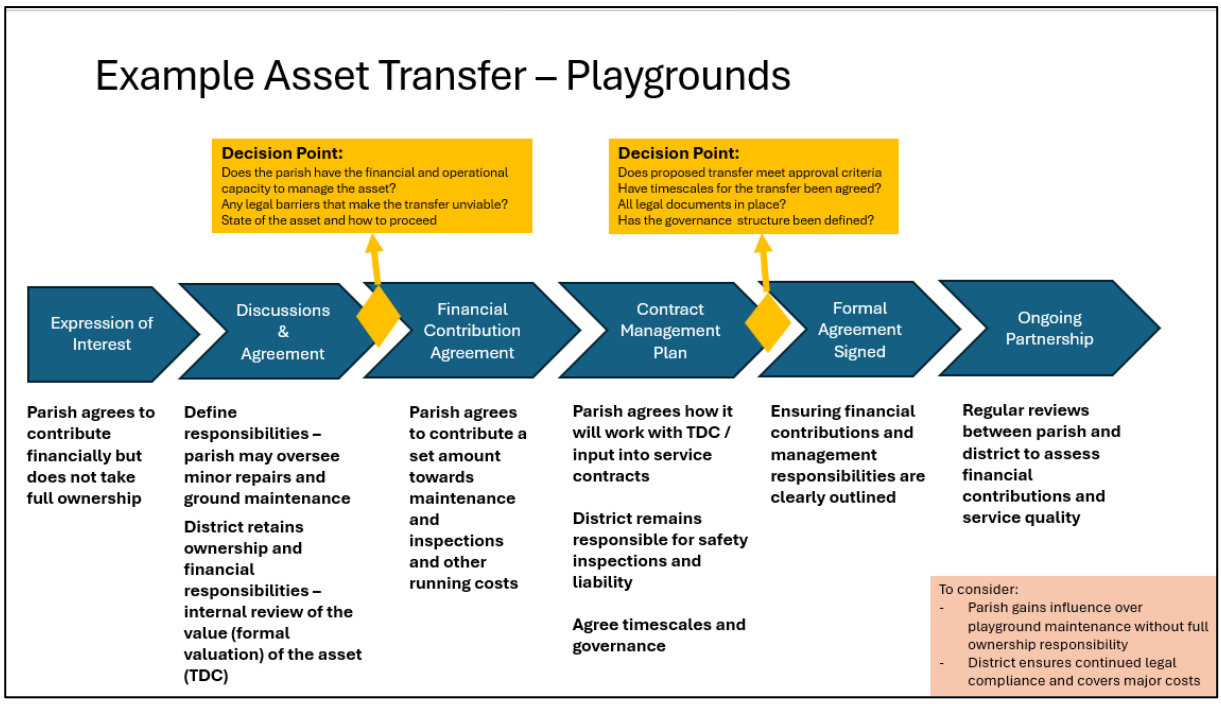
Parish Responsibilities:

- Owns the asset
- Financial responsibility for running costs and maintenance
- Ability to use district-held contracts for some services (cleaning, safety inspections, maintenance) -responsibilities extend beyond just grass cutting to include litter bin emptying, hedge cutting, tree inspections, and other maintenance tasks
- Insurance & Liability

District responsibilities

- Brings the asset up to an acceptable standard ahead of transfer
- Oversees and supports the transfer process
- Manages and provides access to shared contracts

CAT - Model three – Parish stewardship



- The district council retains ownership of the asset
- The parish council contributes financially and will have access to shared contracts managed by the district
- Costs for repairs will be shared (structural & insurance), and liabilities remain with the district

Parish Responsibilities:

- Financial contribution towards maintenance, retained services and management costs
- Input into the specification of the retained (paid for) contracts / services
- Dialogue with TDC (or successor councils) into the future of the asset

District Responsibilities:

- Retains ownership and legal liability
- Manages and provides access to shared (paid for) contracts / services