

SCOTLAND'S NATIONAL FOREST ESTATE - COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER SCHEME (CATS)

Introduction

Please read the relevant parts of the [Community Asset Transfer Scheme Guidance](#) before completing this form. You may also wish to refer to the Scottish Government's [Asset Transfer Guidance for Community Bodies](#).

The Request must be submitted in writing, either as a hard copy or by email. Please answer all the questions. You can attach additional information as extra sheets or electronic documents. Please be specific. When answering the questions do not repeat any information you have already given, simply refer to an earlier answer or attached document.

Please return the completed form and supporting documentation to:

Community Asset Transfer Scheme Team
Forest Enterprise Scotland
231 Corstorphine Road
Edinburgh
EH12 7AT

E-mail: communities@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

We will confirm receipt of your Request within 5 working days and you will receive a formal acknowledgement letter within 15 working days to confirm whether your Request is valid or requesting further information. We may need to ask you for more information during the assessment and evaluation process.

This is an asset transfer request made under Part 5 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015.

Information about the community transfer body making the request

1.1 Name of the community transfer body making the asset transfer request

Dronley Community Woodland

1.2 Community transfer body address. This should be the registered address, if you have one.

Postal address: Drummuir, Piper's Way, Auchterhouse, Angus

Postcode: DD3 0RG

1.3 Contact details. Please provide the name and contact address to which correspondence in relation to this asset transfer request should be sent.

Contact name: Mr Garry Stewart

Postal address:

Postcode:

Email:

Telephone:

We agree that correspondence in relation to this asset transfer request may be sent by email to the email address given above. *(Please tick to indicate agreement)*

You can ask the Forest Enterprise Scotland to stop sending correspondence by email, or change the email address, by telling them at any time, as long as 5 working days' notice is given.

1.4 Please mark an "X" in the relevant box to confirm the type of community transfer body and its official number, if it has one.

Company, and its company number is		
Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO), and its charity number is	X	SC047582
Community Benefit Society (BenCom), and its registered number is		
Unincorporated organisation (no number)		

Please attach a copy of the community transfer body's constitution, articles of association or registered rules.

1.5 If the organisation is **not** an eligible community transfer body under the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015:

a) Has the organisation been individually designated as a community transfer body by the Scottish Ministers?

No Yes

Please give the title and date of the designation order:

or b) Does the organisation fall within a class of bodies which has been designated as community transfer bodies by the Scottish Ministers?

No Yes

If yes what class of bodies does it fall within?

Section 2: Information about the land and rights requested

(see CATS Guidance Section 1.2)

2.1 Please identify the land to which this asset transfer request relates.

You should provide a grid reference and attach a map clearly showing the boundaries of the land to which this asset transfer request. You should also provide any name by which the land is known, and you may also wish to provide additional description. You can contact your local [Forest District](#) office for assistance in providing a copy of the map.

If you request if for a building, you should provide a street address and the Unique Property Reference Number if known. If you have identified the land on Forest Enterprise Scotland's [Register of Land](#), please enter the details listed there.

Grid reference: NO345366

Name and description of the land: Dronley Wood 504 – Tay, Scotland

UPRN (if known): n/k

Section 3: Type of request, payment and conditions

(see CATS Guidance Section 1.4)

3.1 Please tick what type of request is being made:

- for ownership (under section 79(2)(a)) – **go to section 3A**
- for lease (under section 79(2)(b)(i)) – **go to section 3B**
- for other rights (section 79(2)(b)(ii)) – **go to section 3C**

3A – Request for ownership

What price are you prepared to pay for the land requested (see CATS Guidance Section 2.2)?

Proposed price: £300,000

Please attach a note setting out any other terms and conditions you wish to apply to the request.

3B – request for lease

What is the length of lease you are requesting?

How much rent are you prepared to pay (see CATS Guidance Section 2.2)? Please make clear whether this is per year or per month.

Proposed rent: £ per

Please attach a note setting out any other terms and conditions you wish to be included in the lease, or to apply to the request in any other way.

3C – request for other rights

What are the rights you are requesting?

Do you propose to make any payment for these rights?

Yes **No**

If yes, how much are you prepared to pay? Please make clear what period this would cover, for example per week, per month, per day?

Proposed payment: £ per

Please attach a note setting out any other terms and conditions you wish to apply to the request.

Section 4: Community Proposal

4.1 Please set out the reasons for making the request and how the land or building will be used.

This should explain the objectives of your project, why there is a need for it, any development or changes you plan to make to the land or building, and any activities that will take place there.

The initial driver behind this request was FES's announcement to our local voluntary woodland group in February 2017 that it intended to put Dronley Wood on the open market in March 2017 unless we were interested in a community purchase.

Dronley wood is a small wood close to Kirkton of Auchterhouse village which has been a favourite place to walk for the local community and also those from further afield for many decades. Our local voluntary woodland group (ACWAG) has been actively helping to maintain the wood for over 15 years so the community's connection with the wood is strong.

Members of the community attending the Auchterhouse Community Council meeting to initially discuss the notified sale of the wood voted unanimously in favour of a community purchase and made it clear they did not want to see the wood sold to a private buyer with whom they might have no relationship and no control over the future of the wood. It's true that we have largely thought of the wood as "our" wood as it is so local and it is small enough for recreational walkers to become very familiar with the wood and it's wildlife.

This gave us our mandate to proceed with the purpose of achieving a transfer of the wood to community ownership and ensuring that we could determine the wood's future and decide how it would be used for the benefit of the local community and other visitors. Further meetings and consultation days brought forward more support and a plethora of ideas from the community.

This initial need, voiced by the community, to purchase the wood to maintain it as an accessible local amenity was followed by ideas for educational, health and further recreational benefits (see appendix 5 to feasibility study) and a wish to see the wood better maintained and the existing paths cleared and made more accessible. We discovered through a survey of visitors to the wood that the annual footfall is about 25,000 (see section 7.4) This is higher than we had thought and we believe there is the potential to increase it if we can enhance and diversify the amenities available in the wood and also improve it's accessibility.

We have selected from some of the most popular (and do-able) ideas put forward by the community for our initial plans. The wood has been deteriorating for some years now and high priority is woodland renovation, clearing of blocked paths and on-going maintenance of trees, paths and boundaries to create a healthy, sustainable and inviting wood which is safe, secure and enjoyable for everyone. We hope to raise funds for a part-time woodland manager for two years to kick-start and manage this work. The

timber and wood products from these operations will be a source of income. A level, hard-surfaced, fully accessible path is another priority so that push-chair and wheel-chair users, those with walking difficulties and families with small children can enjoy the wood more easily than at present and in all weathers (see business plan for details)

We intend to keep almost all of the wood as natural as possible, with continuous tree cover, for quiet recreational enjoyment and as a wildlife habitat but the plan for the first five years also includes the erection of an easily accessible wooden off-grid building for recreational and educational use, a composting toilet (a requirement for children's group activities) and a picnic area. Again, these were high on the community's priority list. We have a proposal from two qualified local residents to set up a Forest School and we plan for the wood to provide activities and educational projects for the children at the local primary school which will complement the existing school and community garden in the village. The wood is a favourite with dog walkers, both private and professional, and we intend to provide a fenced in "dog-poo" area as the initial access to the wood for dog walkers to try to reduce this frequently complained of problem elsewhere in the wood. Auchterhouse has close links with the "Gruffalo" and has support for a Gruffalo trail (see letter of support at appendix 4)

Volunteers have contributed significantly to the maintenance and improvement of Dronley Wood in the past and we intend to continue the tradition of regular volunteer work parties in the future.

4.2 Benefits of the proposal

Please set out the benefits that you consider will arise if the request is agreed to (see CATS Guidance Section 3.2)

This section should explain how the project will benefit your community, and others. Please refer to the guidance on how the relevant authority will consider the benefits of a request.

Owning Dronley Wood will enable the community to better manage and maintain this delightful but neglected wood to the benefit of a wider variety of users from the local community and beyond.

The proposals for its management and future uses will contribute to the delivery of up to eleven of the sixteen National Outcomes set by the Scottish Government. For full details see Section 11 of the Business Plan. The success of these outcomes will be measured in the variety of activities and the number of people who will engage in them.

The initial work needed to repair, upgrade and identify the paths and replanting of sections of the wood will require the appointment of a woodland manager and provide many valuable volunteering opportunities.

Volunteers are invaluable in the work they undertake and also deliver positive outcomes in terms of economic benefit as measured when the numbers of volunteer hours are costed. See Section 9.14 Dronley Doers.

Developing specific activities within the wood will be carefully balanced to ensure the essence of a peaceful woodland wander is not lost. Managing the whole area to ensure the wood meets the needs of the maximum number of users will be key to a successful community woodland.

Educating the community in environmental issues including the importance of trees in mitigating climate change, the appreciation of the flora and fauna in the wood will be of benefit to all age groups but particularly the younger school age children. Nature trails, bird and flower identification will all be made available to deliver greater understanding of the world around us.

Encouraging outdoor play with the help of a trained forest school leader will help build resilience, physical and mental wellbeing among the younger groups who will be encouraged to engage in woodland activities.

Contact with nature whether through simply walking regularly, or when engaging in volunteering activities provide demonstrable benefits to the mental and physical health and wellbeing of a wide group of people of all ages and abilities. Equally important is that this is at no extra cost to their purse. Equality in the woodland setting, improving socialising and building teamwork is all available to everyone regardless of wealth or status.

The planned training in woodcraft skills such as chainsaw use, drystone dyke building, path building, may require the further appointment of an assistant to the woodland

manager. A key element in the skills training is enabling individuals to access new employment opportunities, whether as youngsters setting out on a career path or an older person looking for a new direction.

The community has already shown impressive commitment to the project. The range of skills being offered, demonstrates the importance of this project in bringing together a wide group in the community to work together.

The proposed purchase of Dronley Community Woodland has inspired and galvanised action in the villagers of Auchterhouse and the surrounding area.

4.3 Restrictions on use of the land

If there are any restrictions on the use or development of the land, please explain how your project will comply with these. The local [Forest District](#) office can provide assistance in identifying any restrictions and how to comply with them.

Restrictions might include, amongst others, environmental designations such as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSI), heritage designations such as listed building status, controls on contaminated land or planning restrictions.

*A wayleave area through the wood, extending to about 5Ha, is under the control of SSE who employ a contractor to keep the area clear of trees. We will not be able to make use of this ground.
Great care will be needed when using tall equipment, eg. for extracting timber, to pass underneath the power lines.*

4.4 Negative consequences

What negative consequences (if any) may occur if your request is agreed to? How would you propose to minimise these?

You should consider any potential negative consequences for the local economy, environment, or any group of people, and explain how you could reduce these.

None

4.5 Capacity to deliver

Please show how your organisation will be able to manage the project and achieve your objectives.

This could include the skills and experience of members of the organisation, any track record of previous projects, whether you intend to use professional advisers, etc.

Amongst our 10 trustees there is a good mix of age and gender and a range of experience and expertise including in business, management, education, engineering, health and land management. (see profiles at Appendix 1 of FS). Some have farm machinery at their disposal and may be able to make these available for haulage.

When completing a survey questionnaire last year, 66 people volunteered their help in the wood and will be given every opportunity (and the tools) when the time comes to carry out improvements.

External bodies such as the Woodland Trust and the Community Woodland Association (we are a member) are available for advice in managing the woodland. Also, we have a retired forester who has volunteered his help – he has a long history of managing the wood up to 8 years ago, so his expertise will be valuable.

Members of ACWAG, a local group who supported FES in making the wood accessible to the public from 2001, are still active and have cleared trees from paths, resurfaced paths and mended fences in the last 12 months. They are now members of our group.

Some members have experience of account keeping and preparing reports for OSCR. Others have knowledge of risk management and of health and safety regulations.

Section 5: Level and nature of support

5.1 Please provide details of the level and nature of support for the request, from your community and, if relevant, from others (see CATS Guidance Section 3.2)

This could include information on the proportion of your community who are involved with the request, how you have engaged with your community beyond the members of your organisation and what their response has been. You should also show how you have engaged with any other communities that may be affected by your proposals.

There has been strong support from the community for this asset transfer. At a Community Council meeting on 16th February 2017 the 33 people present were unanimous in requesting that we should declare an interest and pursue a CAT. Further meetings held in the village drew more support to the extent that we now have the email addresses of 144 people who wish to be involved and kept up to date with the project – there are also others who have no access to the internet. Probably about 25% of our 600 strong community are on board now, but we expect this to increase substantially when we decide to invite residents (adult and junior) to become members of DCW.

On 25th February and 1st March 2017 questionnaires were given to people visiting the wood from the car park. 94 were completed, giving their address (including email), reason for visiting and preference for name of our organisation. 15 people came on both days (completing the questionnaire once) and at least 12 did not complete the survey (in a hurry or entered wood from other gates). In our village hall on 8th June we held an open day with a display of material on Dronley Wood. About 200 residents visited the display and discussed the project with our trustees. From this a list of ideas for developing the wood were submitted. At a village sports day on 26th August this exercise was run again. In total over 150 ideas were given to us and are listed in 15 categories at Appendix 5 of the Feasibility Study.

7 Board meetings have been held by our trustees over the last 11 months and a further 5 open meetings to carry our project forward. The Community Council give an update at all meetings now. Charitable status has been awarded to our organisation as a 2 tier SCIO and a website, www.dronleywood.org, created (still in its infancy).

Letters of support have been received from 12 Organisations/groups – see Appendix 4 of FS. In addition our MSP and 3 Angus councillors have written to voice their interest and support.

We are fortunate to have a retired FES forester, who is very familiar with the wood, willing to volunteer his time and expertise to help with the execution of the Woodland Plan.

Section 6: Funding

6.1 Please outline how you propose to fund the price or rent you are prepared to pay for the land, and your proposed use of the land (see CATS Guidance Section 1.5)

You should show your calculations of the costs associated with the transfer of the land or building and your future use of it, including any redevelopment, ongoing maintenance and the costs of your activities. All proposed income and investment should be identified, including volunteering and donations. If you intend to apply for grants or loans you should demonstrate that your proposals are eligible for the relevant scheme, according to the guidance available for applicants.

For the purchase and legal costs, we will apply to SLF for all of this: - £300,000 for purchase (see FS sect 12.6) and legal cost c £6,000.

For annual costs after acquisition, we will apply to SLF for a revenue grant for a part time woodland officer (2 days per week for 1st 2 years) @ £11,000 per year. SLF grants programme runs up to March 2020

Our annual cost for natural regeneration and overheads in managing the woodland will be met from projected income from Sale of timber, Sponsorship, Donations and Fundraising leaving a small surplus:- in year 1 of £275; year 2 £1,175 and rising to an accumulated surplus in year 5 of over £7,000 (see financial model at sect 9.9).

For all the development costs of projects itemised at sect 9.35, we will apply to the range of funders listed at Sect 10. DCW is eligible to apply to all of these and its plans for the wood are a good fit. The work done by volunteers will be costed to part fund some of these applications, eg. work on paths.

*In **phase 1** (year 1): £30,700 for Fit4Life and £2,140 for Fit4Nature (=£32,840 in total for projects)*

*In **phase 2** (years 2 – 5) £35,800 for Fit4Life and Fit4Nature woodland management and skills training > £5,000.*

*In **Phase 3** (years 5 – 10) Longer term projects from the ideas categorised at Appendix 5 eg. a Gruffalo trail, - see 9.38.*

Angus Leader, Paths fo All and Moncur Trust have already been contacted

Signature

Two office-bearers (board members, charity trustees or committee members) of the community transfer body must sign the form. They must provide their full names and home addresses for the purposes of prevention and detection of fraud.

This form and supporting documents will be made available online for any interested person to read and comment on. Personal information will be redacted before the form is made available.

We, the undersigned on behalf of the community transfer body as noted at section 1, make an asset transfer request as specified in this form.

We declare that the information provided in this form and any accompanying documents is accurate to the best of our knowledge.

Name Mrs Shiona Baird

Address

Date

Position Chair

Signature

Name Mr Garry Stewart

Address

Date

Position Secretary

Signature

Checklist of accompanying documents

To check that nothing is missed, please list any documents which you are submitting to accompany this form.

Section 1 – you **must** attach your organisation’s constitution, articles of association or registered rules

Title of document attached: DCW Constitution attached in Appendix 2 of FS (Feasibility Study and Business Plan for Dronley Community Woodland December 2017)

Section 2 – any maps, drawings or description of the land requested

Documents attached: OS map of Auchterhouse Area showing community boundary

Section 3 – note of any terms and conditions that are to apply to the request

Documents attached: no

Section 4 – about your proposals, their benefits, any restrictions on the land or potential negative consequences, and your organisation’s capacity to deliver.

Documents attached: in FS Summary and Sections 6,7,8,9,10

Section 5 – evidence of community support

Documents attached: FS Section 7

Section 6 – funding

Documents attached: In FS Section 10