



Property and estate rationalisation

As part of the Council's Transformation Strategy, the Property and Estate Rationalisation programme was established to reduce the number of buildings operated by the Council by 25%. The aim of this is to save £2.246m over three years.

In July 2013, management responsibility for all Council-owned community facilities transferred to the East Ayrshire Leisure Trust. The Trust is currently working with the Council to review these facilities to balance business objectives with future community needs and to identify those which may be suitable for transfer to community groups and organisations. Facilities are being assessed in terms of usage, running costs and physical condition.

Community Asset Transfer

Community Asset Transfer (CAT) involves the transfer of the responsibility for an asset from the Council to a Voluntary or Community Organisation. This can be done through either a transfer of management responsibility, short or long term lease or through the transfer of outright ownership.

This process presents local groups and communities with a unique opportunity to get involved in running facilities and delivering services - empowering them to help themselves and to make them more resilient with a sustainable future.

Community Asset Transfer has been successfully applied elsewhere in Scotland.

Visit <http://www.dtascot.org.uk/content/asset-transfer> for examples of successful CAT applications.

A dedicated team within Vibrant Communities has been set up to help and support sustainable Community Asset Transfer projects. Members of this team have been seconded from the Council's legal and estates services to provide vital support to the process.

Local Community Hubs

The Property and Estate Rationalisation programme will be the catalyst for some of the biggest changes in service delivery by the Council in recent years. Future provision of community services will be based on five hub areas approved by the Council's Cabinet in December 2012 and properties and facilities will be reviewed on a hub by hub basis.

The approved hub settlements are:

- Cumnock/Auchinleck
- Dalmellington/Patna
- Galston
- Kilmarnock
- Stewarton

Every hub will feature a range of high quality accessible amenities including, as a minimum, a sports facility, full service library, local office and a community facility.

Actions to date

- The Community Asset Transfer Policy is now in place, with detailed guidelines available to inform and assist interested parties.
<http://cat.eac.eu/policy.aspx>
- The review of all properties and facilities is well under way. Details relating to usage, running costs and physical condition are currently being collated.
- A website has been set-up to promote facilities and properties considered suitable for Community Asset Transfer.
<http://cat.eac.eu/> Property details are updated on a phased basis.
- The Vibrant Communities CAT Team is having ongoing discussions with community organisations in relation to the possible transfer of assets.
- 55 expressions of interest have been received so far. 28 of these relate to facilities currently being managed by East Ayrshire Leisure (as at 2 October 2013).
- Research on all other non-Council facilities available for community use is being finalised, to demonstrate that there may be other venues which can meet the needs of a community.

Future actions

- The Vibrant Communities CAT Team will be visiting communities over the coming months, encouraging applications and providing intensive professional support to community groups and organisations.
- As part of this process, detailed information on community facilities and properties in each community will be available.
- No decisions have been made at this stage. This is only the start of the process, but the Council must try to reduce the number of facilities and make savings.

Full details on the application process can be found online at <http://cat.eac.eu/>.

Alternatively, please call Caroline Gray, Project Support Worker, Vibrant Communities – CAT team, Civic Centre South, John Dickie Street, Kilmarnock KA1 1HW.
Telephone 01563 578189. E-mail: cat@east-ayrshire.gov.uk