



Wigan Council

## The Deal

# Quick Guide to Community Asset Transfer for community and organisations

**Douglas Valley Community Ltd**

Wigan Investment Centre

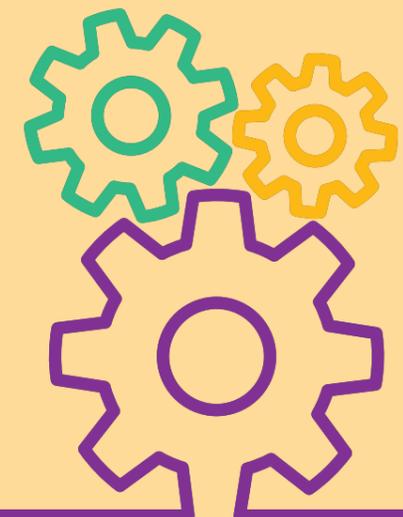
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# Introduction



The Deal is an informal contract between residents and the council, the council seeks to empower and develop communities across Wigan Borough. The aim is to create strong, resilient and supportive communities, where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others, while providing solutions to issues within their own community. As part of the Deal Wigan Council is seeking a new relationship with the community of Wigan and Community Asset Transfer is one mechanism which can contribute to that new relationship.

## What is Community Asset Transfer?

At its simplest level, community asset transfer is a change in management and / or ownership of buildings or land from public bodies, (most commonly local authorities), to communities, (community and voluntary sector groups, community enterprises, social enterprises, etc). The spectrum of transfer options can vary widely, but communities typically take on the

ownership or management of a community asset on a freehold, long lease, shorter lease or a licence to occupy basis. Any group interested in taking on an asset would take responsibility for the building/land including its ongoing repairs, maintenance and management.

## What is involved in Community Asset Transfer?

There are a number of stages involved in Community Asset Transfer process. The process is started by the Council. The Council advertise the building/land for asset transfer requesting interested organisations to submit an expression of interest form.

Wigan Council is working in partnership with Douglas Valley Community a local charity organisation. Douglas Valley Community will support organisations throughout the stages of the process.

## This guide sets out a summary of the key stages.

# Stage 1 – Your Proposal

- You need to submit your **Expression of Interest form**.
- Start developing your ideas about what you wish to do – where and for what you think their need is.
- Think about what you want or don't want to include and why?
- Look at your organisation and its legal structure. Does it need to change?

Following the Expression of Interest stage, **Douglas Valley Community** [www.douglasvalleycommunity.org](http://www.douglasvalleycommunity.org) who are working in partnership with Wigan Council will arrange to meet with you to discuss your proposal for the asset.

Douglas Valley Community have developed a Community Asset Transfer Toolkit & Diagnostic to guide you through the Asset Transfer process. The Diagnostic will help to assess whether your organisation is 'ready' for asset transfer – it can

help you to think ahead.

- Can you deliver as you are?
- Do you need to expand or change?
- Do you need new skills or knowledge?
- What staff or volunteers will you need?
- What equipment do you need?
- What's the impact on other people or organisations?

Douglas Valley Community will offer advice, guidance and assistance to your organisation or group throughout the Asset Transfer process.

## Expected Outcomes

- Clear understanding of the proposal
- The proposal meets The Deal Outcomes
- Agreement to move forward to the next stage.

# Stage 2 – Preparing for Asset Transfer



- You will be expected to be able to provide clear evidence that you understand what the community needs
- Find out what finance you will need to manage the asset
- Find out what funding may be available to you
- Develop a Business Plan
- Arrange necessary legal or other experts to act on your behalf
- Prepare your organisation for the asset transfer including your structure; skills, knowledge and ability to deliver what the community needs

- Make sure you have the policies and procedures you need
- Show how you plan to keep users safe and meet legal requirements
- If you plan to change a service or a building, then follow guidance

## Expected Outcomes

- All elements of the asset transfer are considered thoroughly
- A Business Plan is developed
- Funding is identified and available
- Agreement to move to the next stage

# Stage 3 – Taking Over the Asset

## What you need to consider and do:

- Meet with council staff to agree the heads of terms for the legal documents, e.g. lease
- Agree clear roles and responsibilities within the organisation
- Read and understand the Transfer of Assets Pack containing information about the asset including certifications; compliance checks you will need to do and when; any restrictions, policies and procedures.

- Inform service providers such as utility companies that you have responsibility for the asset and agree new contracts.
- Agree a communication plan for the wider community and interested parties

# Stage 4 – Ongoing Support

Wigan Council recognise that taking over an asset can be quite challenging. Once you take over the asset, Douglas Valley Community will continue to work with you to offer tailored capacity building support and advice to help you strengthen your organisation.

Support work could include further diagnostic work, linking you to other organisations working with similar aims, signposting you to service providers who may help you with your projects, improving knowledge and skills of your staff, signposting you to volunteers or signposting you to funding opportunities.