

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL
CONSULTATION DOCUMENT

COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER OF COMMON GOOD LAND

PURPOSE

1. The purpose of this consultation is to ascertain public views and seek representations on a proposal to dispose of property held on the Council's common good account.

BACKGROUND

COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER

2. Community Asset Transfer involves the transfer of responsibility for an asset from the Council to a community organisation. This can be done through a management agreement, short or long-term lease or through the transfer of outright ownership.

COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT 2015

3. A Community Asset Transfer application has been submitted by Kilmarnock Station Railway Heritage Trust in relation to the Old Men's Cabin situated in Howard Park, Kilmarnock. As Howard Park is held on the Council's common good account; the provisions of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 must be adhered to. The Act places a statutory duty on local authorities to publish details of any proposed disposal or change of use of common good property and carry out a consultation inviting representations before making a decision to dispose of or change the use of the property.

KILMARNOCK STATION RAILWAY HERITAGE TRUST

4. Kilmarnock Station Railway Heritage Trust, herein referred to as the Trust, are a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation formed in 2014 with the primary aim of bringing the redundant railway offices in Kilmarnock Railway Station back into community use. The first phase, which brought the offices back into use for the benefit of the public, was completed in 2015 and its success recognised as an integral part of the authorities successful SURF Award for Regeneration.
5. As well as regeneration of buildings, the Trust also have a strong portfolio of working to improve the lives of people within the community. The trust run art

exhibitions, creative classes, tai-chi and yoga classes among others. The Trust also engage in more targeted work to help those with poor mental health, isolation, loneliness and addiction issues re-connect with others around them.

HOWARD PARK OLD MENS CABIN

6. The Old Men's Cabin comprises a single storey brick building which was later extended to include changing facilities in the rear of the property. Situated in the west of the Howard Park the cabin can be accessed via Mews lane. The Cabin was constructed around 1897 and the style of the building was in keeping with the aesthetics of the park. Historic records indicate that the Cabin was originally intended as a place for veterans to meet.

The Cabin has had a number of uses over the years; however, it has now fallen into a state of disrepair and requires significant investment to bring it back into use.

PROJECT PROPOSALS

7. The desired outcome of this consultation is to ascertain public views and seek representations on a proposal to dispose of the Old Men's Cabin in Howard Park to the Trust, which would enable the Trust to fully refurbish the building and bring it back into community use. The project will see the development of a social enterprise café and the creation of multi-purpose let-able space for community groups and organisations.

CAFE

8. The front of the building will be redesigned into a welcoming social enterprise café offering a service to anyone enjoying the scenery of the park itself. It is anticipated that the café will provide volunteering/employment opportunities for those in the community and be the central hub for finding out about the health and wellbeing opportunities which the Trust offer.

MEETING SPACE

9. The rear of the building will host multi-purpose meeting space. The meeting space will be available to hire for small community groups. The meeting space will also be used as a space for counselling. A focus for the Trust in this building will be for those that suffer from poor mental health, have had suicidal thoughts or have been affected by someone who has committed or tried to commit suicide.

GARDEN

10. The proposal will enhance the existing green space at the rear of the building to create a quiet garden area for meditation and as a site where health and wellbeing activity can take place such as Qi Jong, Yoga and mindfulness practices.

SUMMARY

11. Kilmarnock Station Railway Heritage Trust have submitted a Community Asset Transfer application in respect of the Old Men's Cabin. Before a decision can be taken in respect of their application, a consultation has to be undertaken in terms of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 as the application relates to common good property.

The Trust believe their proposals will add value to Howard Parkin terms of the aesthetics of the park with the refurbishment of a currently derelict building, increased services available within the park, increased employment and volunteering opportunities, increased health and wellbeing provisions for the wider population and targeted wellbeing interventions for those who have identified as having poor mental health.

REPRESENTATION

12. You can make a representation on the proposal to dispose of common good property by emailing CAT@east-ayrshire.gov.uk or by writing to:

Community Asset Transfer
Vibrant Communities
Civic Centre South
John Dickie Street
Kilmarnock
KA1 1HW

In accordance with the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, the consultation will last for a period of 8 weeks (13 September – 7 November). The Council will consider all representations made and respond within 8 weeks of receiving any representations. The final response to representations will be published along with the original representations. The final decision will also be published and notified to all required parties in terms of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015.

The representations and final decision will then form part of the Community Asset Transfer assessment process and assist elected members in considering whether to approve the Community Asset Transfer application. If the Community Asset Transfer application is approved, the Council will require to seek consent from the Sheriff Court to dispose of the property in terms of the

Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973. If successful consent is attained the project would then need to find suitable funding sources and attain the necessary planning permissions for a change of use.