Aberdeenshire COUNCIL

From mountain to sea

Asset Transfer Request

This is an asset transfer request made under Part 5 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015. **Please read the applicant notes before completing this form.**

Section 1: Information about the community transfer body (CTB) making the request

1.1 Name and address of the CTB making the request. This should be the registered address, if you have one.

Name	Huntly Rugby Club
Postal Address	[redacted]
Postcode	[redacted]

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

Contact Name	Rachael Ashley
Position in CTB	Secretary
Postal Address	[redacted]
Postcode	[redacted]
Email	[redacted]
Telephone	[redacted]

☑ 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 relevant authority 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.***

1.3 Please mark an "X" in the relevant box to confirm the type of CTB and its official number, if it has one.

	Company, and its company number is	Huntly Rugby Football Club
	Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO), and its charity number is	SC053873
	Community Benefit Society (BenCom), and its registered number is	
	Unincorporated organisation (no number)	

Please attach

- **a copy of the CTB's constitution, Articles of Association or registered rules**
- A statement of accounts for the most recent 3-year period examined by an Independent Examiner. (see footnote) [1]

1.4 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:

[1] This is only applicable to organisations with a gross income in a financial year of less than £250,000 or companies limited by guarantee with a turnover of less than £500,000. Organisations with a turnover exceeding these figures must submit statements of audited accounts for the most recent 3-year period. For organisations which have not been established for a 3-year period, a one-year financial statement may be considered.

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1.5 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?

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Section 2: Information about the asset requested

2.1 Please identify the asset - land or building(s) - which this asset transfer request relates.

You should provide a street address or grid reference and any name by which the land or building is known. If you have identified the land on the relevant authority's register of land, please enter the details listed there.

It may be helpful to provide one or more maps or drawings to show the boundaries of the land requested. If you are requesting part of a piece of land, you must attach a map and full description of the boundaries of the area to which your request relates. If you are requesting part of a building, please make clear what area you require. a drawing may be helpful.

Name of Asset	Market Muir Playing Fields and Sports Pavilion
Address of Asset	[redacted]
Postcode of Asset	[redacted]

2.2 Please provide the UPRN (Unique Property Reference Number), if known.

This should be given in the relevant authority's register of land

UPRN: 151650971

Section 3: Type of request, payment and conditions

3.1 Please mark what type of request is being made (mark one only):

☐ 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 asset requested?

Proposed price: £ 1 per annum

Please give information setting out any other terms and conditions you wish to apply to the request.

For the existing grass cutting and grounds maintenance to continue, with pitches to be cut on a 10-day rolling basis to 25mm for playing surfaces and the perimeter to be maintained per the current schedule.

Separate arrangements (hiring of the ground) can be made for other users to access the site in a periodic basis (specifically the organisers of the travelling amusements/fair and car boot sale).

3B – Request for lease

What is the length of lease you are requesting?

99 years

How much rent are you prepared to pay? Please make clear whether this is per year or per month.

Proposed rent: £ 1 per year

Please give information 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.

Permission to upgrade and maintain the Sports Pavilion so it meets the guidance given in the Scottish Building Standards Technical Handbook (non-Domestic), the Scottish Rugby Union and Sport England. Permission from the freeholder will be sought prior to any applications for planning/building warrants, or work starting. We also wish to ensure that adequate pitch maintenance can be carried out by appointed contractors for drainage of pitches, removal of thatch, re-seeding and overlay of lawn sand to level the playing areas. Liason with the Estates team at the council will be expected.

3C – Request for other rights

What are the rights you are requesting?

Not Applicable

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.

Huntly Rugby Club (proposed leaseholder) request a lease on the Market Muir Playing Fields and Sports Pavilion to act as a 'home' for the club. Founded in the mid-1960s it has yet to secure its own playing pitches and clubhouse. Although the club used the Pavilion and pitches at Market Muir in the past the state of repair and flood damage to the Pavilion in 2021 make it non-viable for use at the present time. It order to make the Pavilion fully accessible and suitable for sports use it will need extending outwards, on both easterly and westerly elevations. The pitches will also need some improvement so the playing surface will cope will a full season of rugby.

The leaseholder's aims are three-fold. First, the Pavilion and lighting will be improved so they are fit for purpose. The club will fund raise to provide a set of changing rooms, a communal area and referees changing area/accessible toilet which meets building standards and Scottish Rugby Football Union (SRFU) guidance. There will not be a bar, restaurant or other commercial activities at the premises.

Second, the existing pitch lights are not fit for purpose as they are sodium-based floodlighting and will need changing LED alternatives to reduce the cost of operating the pitch side units. No further fixed lighting will be added.

Third, the pitches at Market Muir require a regime of maintenance additional to grass cutting. If this is not done then the pitches will become less viable for continual use in the winter, so adequate drainage, seeding, thatch removal and levelling needs doing on a periodic basis.

We wish to retain the current arrangement for grass cutting undertaken by Aberdeenshire Council, including the grounds maintenance of the perimteter. Grass should, as a minimum (per guidance from the SRFU) be cut to a 25mm height.

The club expects continued wider community use of the grounds, such as occasional users of the pitches for football, dog walkers and other member of the community. There are currently two paid users of the site - a travelling fair and an annual car boot sale. An arrangement can be put in place to permit access whilst at the same time ensuring the playing pitches and wider grounds are kept in good condition.

Benefits of the proposal

4.2 Please set out the benefits to the community that you consider will arise if the request is agreed to. Where applicable, benefits should include: - A sustainable economy, connected communities, living well locally and climate change.

This section should explain how the project will benefit your community, and others. You should also give an indication of the population number that will be directly affected by the transfer i.e., your target group. If your project is primarily aimed at a particular demographic, it is this number that should be used rather than the population of the area. Please refer to the applicant notes on how the relevant authority will consider the benefits of a request.

Huntly rugby Club has been an important contributor to Huntly and district for over 60 years. It has a track record of sporting achievement, which has in turn build camaraderie between players, garnered significant support from locsal sponsors, and has given a developmental path in sport for many age ranges of men and women.

The club faces a clear challenge in improving its track record of success requires a 'home' that the club can use as a base. Comparable clubs locally (e.g. Banff, Garioch) show how such a central location for sporting development and building community enables the club to grow. A home ground can promote the professionalism to potential players, provide a 'one stop shop' for training and matches, and gives the hub for building community. As Market Muir is a very visible location in Huntly it will show local and visitors to the town another example of the sporting heritage which is a strength of the area.

Alternative sites have been fully evaluated (specifically the Meadows and Cooper Park), but they have been discounted when compared with Market Muir. The playing field at Market Muir is the only locations which meets the SRFU prescribed size for league matches. The site is weel drained, has ample scope for improvement, and has facilities for training so the main match pitch is retained in as good a condition during the season as possible.

Restrictions on use of the land

4.3 If there are any restrictions on the use or development of the land, please explain how your project will comply with these.

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.

Not Applicable

Risk Analysis

4.4 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.

We do not consider there to be any obvious risks in taking over the lease of the land and Pavilion but the following are considered;
1. The Pavilion needs extensive repair, and this will need fund raising for, and execution of construction works. Mitigation: there are committee members of the club with extensive fund raising experience, and the appointment of a construction project manager gives enough capability to deliver these aspects.
2. Fund raising bids may not be successful, with a shortfall to be made up. Mitigation: the work on the site (the Pavilion and pitches) will be phased in such a way that sections of work can be completed, rather than attempting to complete all the work at once.
3. Local residents may object to a slightly larger Pavilion being constructed. Mitigation: the club will give timely and well explained updates to the local properties directly adjacent to the site. This will give a clear understanding of why the changes are necessary and what (if any) temporary disruptions will occur during the construction phase.
4. Commercial users of the grounds may object. Mitigation: The rugby club will work with the council to contact the relevant users (fairground operator, car boot operator) to agree terms for use and payment.
5. The club may become insolvent, or the charity may fail. Although the club has a 50-year history this may occur. In this event the lease will terminate. at worst the council will receive back a community facility which is in better shape that when it was leased.

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Capacity to deliver

4.5 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.

The rugby club has a vibrant committee staffed with a range of skills. There is an existing team of fund raisers who are split into two. One group has the remit of funding project-based activities (such as the successful purchase of mobile floodlights), whilst the other engages with sponsors & donors for rugby matches and kit. Both have a track record of success, and in particular the project-based team have been successful elsewhere (e,g. the Gordon Schools, Glass Community Hall) at raising significant sums of money.

The committee has decided to set up a sub-group to manage the community asset transfer, and subsequent work to achieve the improvements outlined. The 7-strong team have defined roles and a range of skill sets. This group have also engaged the services of an experienced project consultant who has given time (on a paid basis - funded by two donors) to get the administration of the community asset transfer complete and progressed decision-making about the scope of works (pavilion, grounds), along with indicating the size of funding required for these elements. The project consultant has a successful track record of a complete end-to-end retrofit of a community building, including liaising with architects, procurement, appointing contractors, managing site work, quality control, and dealing with unforeseeable complications in the build. He is a fully qualified (chartered) procurement & supply professional.

There are a number of capabilities which fall outside the skill sets of the rugby club, so they will have to be fund raised for and bought in. All will need to be competitively tendered. They are;

Architect - As the pavilion is classed as a commercial structure it will need both planning permission and a warrant. There are a range of architects we can work with (e.g. CT Architects, Annie Kenyon Studios, John Wink Designs) and a decision about who to appoint will be made later.

Structural Engineer - Any warranted work will need an SEC certificate, so we will approach Fairhursts LLP and Cameron & Ross for their proposals.

Quantity Surveyor - Above certain thresholds any funders require to see a bill of quantities for any building work. We will therefore approach local quantity surveyors for proposals, albeit the project consultant has an effective working relationship with McCue & Porter, Aberdeen.

Contractors: there are a range of skills required (asbestos surveyor, plumbing, joinery, electrics, site works, decoration, etc) and the project manager & committee have a range of options for approaching trusted suppliers.

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.

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, their response and how the community have contributed to the design of the project. You should also show how you have engaged with any other communities that may be affected by your proposals.

We have engaged with the community on multiple ways, and here is a summary;

Community questionnaire survey - the online survey was distributed using a snowball sampling method to reach as many people as possible. Survey results are appended as a file with narrative summary in the business plan. The survey shows overwhelming support from rugby club users and the wider public for the move to Market Muir.

Community engagement day (June 2026) - The committee presented the proposals for the pavilion to attendees at the annual Rugby Club open day. This meant the views of a wider range of people were gathered, including those from prospective players and parents / partners / supporters. We also encouraged as many non-rugby people to attend by marketing the event widely.

Aberdeenshire Council (Live Life Aberdeenshire) - the current operators of the pavilion were engaged with very early into the CAT process and the club agreed a way forward to ensure the pavilion is brought back into serviceable use.

Aberdeenshire Council (Environment and Sustainability) - the club are sensitive to the current grounds maintenance arrangements which cover the Huntly area. It is clear that by keeping the regime of grass cutting on the site and wider grounds maintenance this has been agreed as a win-win with representatives of this council department.

Huntly Sports Trust - We have engaged with a key stakeholder in the town and they are supportive of our move. The club will still need to make use of the trusts' astro turf pitch so a continuing commercial bond will be retained.

Huntly Community Council - We have asked for views about the transfer of ownership for the pavilion to the rugby club, via our contact at Live Life Aberdeenshire. The community council do not object.

Friends of Market Muir - An informal pressure group was formed some years ago to protect the site from commercial (shopping park) development. The chair of the friends group has been contacted and is supportive to the extent that their residual funds from their campaigning work (over £20k) has been offered for supporting the club's development of the grounds.

Huntly Development Trust (HDT) - We are fortunate to have the joint general manager of the HDT as a committee member at the club. The HDT support our taking on of the lease.

Local elected representatives - We have informed local councillors and the MSP for the area of our plans and they are supportive of the lease and associated plans. We have added letters of support in the business plan appendices.

Section 6: Funding

6.1 Please outline how you propose to fund the price or rent you are prepared to pay for the asset, and your proposed use of the asset.

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.

We detail the costs of the project in an Excel spreadsheet. We have a track record of success with the following organisations, and this example matrix of funders indicates who will be able to sustain the expected costs for the project, namely;

SRFU - The club have already been successful at winning funding (£15k per year) from the sport's governing body. The next steps have already been discussed with their funding representatives and they are keen to see a bid for £250k to contribute to the pavilion.

Clashindarroch Wind Farm Community Benefit Fund - The fund manager has already been approached and the panel who decide funding are aware of the project. The fund has already supported the CAT process with £10k and indicated more bids are welcome.

Edintore Wind Farm Community Benefit Fund - Although the location of the pitches is in the secondary area of funding for this fund the panel do consider applications from local (not not central) groups.

National Lottery Awards for All - 2 x £10k grants would easily be achievable from this source. Additional sports-based funding could be potentially available.

Garfield Weston Foundation - This source of funding has been successfully used by the project consultant before, so a grant of £25k is achievable.

EB Scotland - This group distributes landfill tax proceeds and has been successfully used by the project-based fund raising committee member before on another project. A bid in the region of £30k is feasible.

Local Energy Scotland - This is a specific funder who will be able to consider applications for the heating and electric system upgrades in the pavilion and for the change to LED floodlights. The project consultant has achieved a grant of £52k from this group on another project.

Fife Environment Trust - see EB Scotland (above).

Dummuies Wind Farm Community Benefit Fund - A small fund but the aims of the project meet their terms exactly. A £k contribution of multiple bids could be discussed with the operator of the fund (WPO).

Section 7: Business Plan including a 3-year financial forecast

7.1 Please give details of your Business Plan

You should include a statement of your goals, reasons they are attainable, plans for reaching them and a forecast of future revenues and expenses.

We append the business plan.

Signatures

Two authorised signatories (e.g. manager, 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	[redacted]
Address	[redacted]
Date	14/10/26
Position	Club Secretary
Signature	[redacted]
Name	[redacted]
Address	[redacted]
Date	14/10/26
Position	Club Chairman
Signature	[redacted]

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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 and a statement of accounts

Title of document attached: Constitution

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

Documents attached: Area map

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

Documents attached: Not applicable

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

Documents attached: See business plan

Section 5 – evidence of community support

Documents attached: See business plan and community consultation results, plus letters of support

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Section 6 – funding

Documents attached: See business plan

Section 7 – business plan including a 3-year financial forecast

Documents attached: Attached

Completed applications should be sent to your **local Area Manager** and marked '**Asset Transfer'**. **Contact addresses are listed below**:

BANFF & BUCHAN Area Manager Town House 34 Low Street Banff AB45 1AY Email: banffandbuchanamo@aberdeenshire.gov.uk	**BUCHAN** Area Manager Buchan House St Peter Street Peterhead AB42 1QF Email: buchan@aberdeenshire.gov.uk
FORMARTINE Area Manager Formartine House, Union Street, Ellon, AB41 9BA Email: formartineareaoffice@aberdeenshire.gov.uk	**GARIOCH** Area Manager Unit 7, Harlaw Industrial Estate Harlaw Way Inverurie AB51 4SG Email: garioch@aberdeenshire.gov.uk
KINCARDINE & MEARNS Area Manager Viewmount Arduthie Road Stonehaven AB39 2DQ Email: kincardineandmearns@aberdeenshire.gov.uk	**MARR** Area Manager Alford Area Office School Road Alford AB33 8TY Email: marr@aberdeenshire.gov.uk