



Community Asset Transfer Scheme (CATS) for our national forests and land

ASSET TRANSFER REQUEST FORM

Introduction

Please read the relevant parts of the [Community Asset Transfer Scheme](#) (CATS) 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 you do not need to repeat any information you have already given, but simply refer to an earlier answer or attached document.

Please return the completed form and supporting documentation to:

Community Asset Transfer Scheme Team
Forestry and Land Scotland
Apex 1, 99 Haymarket Terrace,
Edinburgh
EH12 5HD

E-mail: fls.communities@forestryandland.gov.scot

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 also ask you for more information during the assessment and evaluation process.

CATS: ASSET TRANSFER REQUEST FORM

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

SECTION 1: Information about the community transfer body making the request

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

Craigielands Community Woodlands

1.2 Community transfer body address

This should be the registered address, if you have one.

Postal address: Willow Cottage, Old Craigielands, Beattock, Moffat

Postcode: DG10 9RD

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: Andrew Macqueen

Postal address: [REDACTED]

Postcode: [REDACTED]

Email: craigielandswood@gmail.com

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 Forestry and Land Scotland to stop sending correspondence by email, or change the email address, by telling us at any time, as long as 5 working days' notice is given.

1.4 Type of eligible community transfer body

Please select **one** option and mark with an “X” in the relevant box to confirm the type of community transfer body and its official number, if it has one:

- a Company and its company number is _____
- or
- a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) and its charity number is SCO53132
- or
- a Community Benefit Society (BenCom), and its registered number is _____
- or
- Unincorporated organisation (no number)

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

- If the organisation is an eligible community transfer body under the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 go to **Section 2**.

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:

N/A

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?

N/A

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 Forestry and Land Scotland [Region](#) office for assistance in providing a copy of the map.

Grid reference: NT 075 014

Area in hectares: 35.17

Name and description of the land:

Craigiels is a diverse mixed woodland property within the Kirkpatrick-Juxta parish in Dumfries and Galloway. The woodland is located on the easterly face of Craigiels Hill, which overlooks the village. It is an area with rich heritage and biodiversity value, which is well-known to the local population, who have used it recreationally for several generations.

A detailed description of the property and its composition is provided in the attached Feasibility Study, section 2.2.

If your request is for a building, you should provide a street address and the Unique Property Reference Number ([UPRN](#)) if known.

Address: N/A

UPRN (**if known**): N/A

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: £226,772

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

3B – Request for lease

a) What is the length of lease you are requesting?

N/A

b) 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: £ N/A 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

a) What are the rights you are requesting?

N/A

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: £ N/A per

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

Section 4: Community Proposal

You may wish to refer to relevant sections in supporting documents.

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.

Craigielands Woodland is an integral green space serving the Kirkpatrick-Juxta community. Its location on the easterly face of Craigielands Hill makes it visually prominent, its rich flora and fauna makes it ecologically significant, and its proximity to the village means it has been widely used for recreation for generations.

In recent years, however, storm damage and sanitation felling of larch have negatively affected public access to the woodland. Many established walking routes became blocked and have not since been re-opened.

This gradual erosion of inclusive access particularly affects local residents who have limited ability to access other green spaces locally. According to recent census data, 44% of households either have no access to a car or van or share one car between more than one adult resident.

A key priority for community ownership is to open up the wood to the community once again, with a network of inclusively designed, waymarked paths, as well as seating and information boards.

In addition, there is strong community support for managing the woodland with wildlife conservation as a key objective. In particular, it is recognised that there are opportunities to participate in red squirrel protection, butterfly habitat creation, and conservation of locally scarce woodland flowers.

Community ownership of the woodland will also create opportunities for education provision. Specifically, there are aspirations to conduct forest walks for school-age children, promote public participation in environmental monitoring, and host woodland management courses. There is an aspiration for Craigielands to become a 'centre of excellence' which exhibits exemplary forestry practice and showcases low-impact silvicultural systems and management.

Community ownership will create opportunities for local enterprises to support volunteers with the maintenance of the woodland and sustainably produce woodland products such as firewood, sawlogs, bark chips and beekeeping products.

Finally, community ownership is expected to create enhanced cohesion within the community of Beattock and the wider parish, through shared enthusiasm for the woodland and participation in woodland activities.

Further detail on the proposed uses of Craigielands is provided in section 6 of the attached feasibility study.

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.

This request is expected to have far-reaching benefits for the community and the local area, against a range of Scotland's National Outcomes. These National Outcomes include:

- Children and young people*
- Education*
- Communities*
- Health*
- Culture*
- Economy*
- Environment*

For children and young people, the development of a community woodland will create opportunities for outdoor learning. The local primary school nursery has expressed a strong interest in partnering with the community woodland to provide experiences such as Forest Schools and Outdoor Classrooms. They have shared research from Learning Through Landscapes which highlights the benefits of these initiatives on attitudes to learning, behaviour, and social interaction.

Educational outcomes will also benefit the young adult and adult population. Through partnerships with local colleges (including SRUC Barony Campus) and training providers, there is an aspiration to use the woodland as a venue for the delivery of courses. This may include short woodland skills courses (such as one-day firewood production courses). The woodland may also be used as a practical training venue for local college students studying forestry and related subjects. In doing so, the proposal contributes towards addressing the well-documented skills shortage in the forest industry.

For the community, the shared interest in a community owned asset, and the creation of volunteering opportunities is expected to create enhanced social cohesion within the Kirkpatrick-Juxta parish. In addition, creating inclusive access to green space the proposal is expected to greatly benefit public health outcomes.

Culturally, the proposal will help to preserve the historic features contained within the woodland. These features, which span a range of historic periods (from prehistory up to the twentieth century), tell a vivid story of the history of the local area. Heritage walking trails and information boards will help bring these to light and create a greater sense of place.

Economically, as well as boosting forestry jobs through skills training and supporting local training providers, the proposal is expected to boost the economic development of the Kirkpatrick-Juxta parish. The provision of a visitor attraction within the village of Beattock will help bring more visitors to the parish, which is often overlooked in favour of nearby Moffat.

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In environmental terms, the ambitious wildlife conservation aspirations of the project will help to preserve locally and nationally significant species. The Moffat and District Red Squirrel group are emphatically supportive of the proposal and have committed to working alongside the community woodland on red squirrel conservation projects. In addition, Craigiels is significant for its floral diversity, which includes many local scarce woodland plants. The steady expansion of Rhododendron and cherry laurel has posed a threat to this diversity in recent years; under community ownership the management of these invasive species will be made a priority.

This proposal is also expected to have a benefit in terms of public sector costs. Immediate woodland restoration work items include the re-planting of ex-larch blocks, re-opening of existing paths, and fence maintenance. These works (all of which are considered essential) are expected to amount to £19,228 in the first two years; a direct cost which will not be borne by the public sector if ownership is transferred to the community body.

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. Your Forestry and Land Scotland [Region](#) 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 (SSSI), heritage designations such as listed building status, controls on contaminated land or planning restrictions.

The woodland itself contains no significant environmental designations, although the ancient woodland inventory classifies much of the property as semi-natural woodland which is “long-established (of plantation origin)”.

In terms of archaeology, five historic environment record features are recorded within the property boundary, and a further six more are within the grounds of adjacent properties. This includes several listed buildings, most notably a walled garden which is a B-listed structure, which falls mostly outside of the property boundary, but approximately 4m extends into Craigiels. The woodland is also designated as a non-Inventory Designed Landscape of local significance. This is not a statutory designation, but it is recognised by the local planning authority.

Whilst these archaeological features can be considered constraints and will influence woodland management decisions (such as operational planning, and the instatement of buffers around features), they do not fundamentally restrict the use of the woodland for the activities and objectives outlined in section 4.1.

Small scale timber harvesting is planned in the early years of this proposed project. This will involve the haulage of timber via the U305A which is a consultation route for timber haulage. As such, consultation will be necessary, and restrictions may be placed on the number of loaded movements. The local authority will be consulted prior to harvesting and control measures will be agreed and complied with. The local authority roads department were consulted as part of the feasibility study scoping and offered no response regarding the proposed harvesting.

Further details on the constraints are provided in the attached feasibility study, section 2.2.

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.

A key objective of the project is to open up the woodland for public access, however, this increased recreational use may also increase disturbance to resident wildlife if not sensitively managed. Adverse effects to be avoided include contamination from litter, dogs and the spread of non-native species.

This will be mitigated in several ways. Firstly, path improvement and creation will be designed to focus recreation in specific areas, whilst reserving other areas with wildlife conservation as their

primary objective. In these wildlife-focused areas, disturbance will be kept to a minimum beyond essential works, including conservation activity.

Secondly, information boards will provide an opportunity to educate visitors on responsible countryside access, with special notices at certain times of year, as required, such as during nesting bird season.

Finally, the benefits to wildlife from public access and engagement should be acknowledged. Community ownership will create volunteering opportunities, increase awareness, and facilitate conservation focused activities including habitat monitoring, invasive species removal, and the erection of bird and bat boxes.

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.

One of the key strengths of the organisation is the breadth and depth of experience contained within the board and the wider membership. The Kirkpatrick-Juxta parish has strong links to the forest industry, and this is reflected in the forestry knowledge and experience that is offered by certain members. This forestry capacity complements crucial skill sets offered by other members, including project management, stakeholder engagement, fundraising, and charity governance.

In addition, a budget sum has also been allocated within cash flow projections for the engagement of professional advice to supplement in-house capacity.

A summary of the skills and experience provided by members of the charity's board is provided below.

Andrew Macqueen

Andrew Macqueen is a local silvicultural consultant with expertise in forest soils, site recognition and hardwood silviculture. Andrew is the Chair of the Royal Scottish Forestry Society Southwest and Northern Ireland regional group, a committee member of the Institute of Chartered Foresters south Scotland regional group, and a member of the Scottish Forestry Resilience and Adaption Steering Group.

Andrew was the winner of Confor Future Forestry Leader in 2020, and the winner of Scotland's Finest Woods Award (new commercial woodlands category) in 2023. Andrew brings to the project strong connections with the local forest industry and a proven track record in sustainable woodland management.

Adam Murray

Adam Murray is a local craftsman and constructor of timber framed buildings. Adam has a long background in both the forestry and construction industries, and is an experienced fencer, drystone dyker, and forest machine operator, as well as a skilled craftsman. Adam's business has been previously employed by other community woodland projects to create seating, signage and outdoor classrooms, and he brings a range of valuable skills and experience to the team.

Paul Fotheringham

Paul Fotheringham is a career forestry professional and forestry lecturer, who has lived next to Craigielslands for over 30 years. Paul is a graduate of the University of Cumbria and the Kuru Institute of Forestry with international experience of forestry operations in a range of challenging environments. Paul is a qualified trainer and assessor in chainsaw, chipper, skidder, harvester, forwarder and ground preparation. He also holds certificates of competency in all-terrain vehicle use, pesticide application and strimmer/clearing saw.

Graham Ovens

Graham Ovens is a retired rural engineer, woodland owner and local resident. Through the course of Graham's long career, he has been involved in a number of woodland projects, including forest nurseries in the UK, forestry sector planning in Malawi, reforestation projects in Nigeria, and government planting projects in Zambia.

Closer to home, Graham has owned two woodland properties including a 133ha mixed woodland in Wales (1986-2016) and a 74ha mixed woodland in South Scotland. In addition, he is currently involved in developing several Woodland and Wetland Reserves around Dumfries and Creetown, and has direct experience of domestic grant schemes and practical woodland management.

Rachel Scott

Rachel is a marketing graduate with a background in land-based education, having previously worked for 12 years as the commercial training manager at a local college. During this time, Rachel presided over internal quality assurance, streamlining delivery, and achieving recognition as a centre of best practice. She also represented the college on the Forestry Industry Leadership Group.

More recently, Rachel has worked as a civil servant within Economy, Communities and NetZero. In this role, Rachel has worked on a range of projects, each with a focus on stakeholder engagement, programme and change management, risk management, governance and assurance. Rachel holds qualifications in leadership, project management, programme management and change management. She is also a board member for the Big Burns Supper, a not-for-profit organisation supporting arts and culture in Dumfries and Galloway.

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)

You should describe the community your body represents and 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.

In January 2024, an information document and survey were circulated to local residents by the board via a letter drop. This was also shared via community social media groups and via an advertisement in the local newspaper, to reach as wide a demographic as possible. This document explained the aspirations and outcome of community ownership and asked residents:

- a) If they supported the idea of a community woodland project for the parish.*
- b) If they were interested in becoming involved in any way, in the project.*

A free text box also invited respondents to share their comments, suggestions and ideas which they would like to see considered in the planning and execution of the proposed project.

This survey received 39 responses, of which, 100% were supportive of the idea. The vast majority (82%) were also interested in becoming involved. Numerous additional statements of support were offered in the free text box. A full summary of this consultation exercise - including specific feedback from residents, and how this has been incorporated into objectives – is provided in the attached feasibility study, section 4.1.

Separately, a close dialogue has been maintained with the Kirkpatrick-Juxta community council throughout the initial asset transfer enquiries, charity registration and the Scottish Land Fund Stage 1 funding application. On the 9th of November 2022, the community council were given a presentation on the aspirations for the community woodland, during which they gave their support in principle.

Other relevant organisations who are active in the local area were also consulted, each providing strong statements of support. This included Beattock Primary School Nursery, SRUC Barony, the Dumfries and Galloway Woodlands Initiative, Moffat and District Red Squirrel Group, and Dumfries and Galloway Council.

A detailed summary of this wider stakeholder consultation is provided in the attached feasibility study, section 4.2.

Section 6: Funding

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.

Independent valuation and discount

The woodland property has been valued at £295,000 based on an independent valuation carried out by Goldcrest Land & Forestry Group in August 2024. Craigielslands Community Woodlands is prepared to offer £226,772 to purchase this property, based on the following discounts.

*Community ownership is expected to save public sector costs of at least **£19,228** in the first five years post-acquisition. This sum covers projected costs for essential maintenance and re-planting works.*

*Planned expenditure of **£11,500** on the creation of new paths will provide recreation facilities to the benefit of local residents, which would not otherwise be provided. This will include wheelchair accessible paths which are extremely limited in the local area. This work will be carried out by local contractors, supporting the local forestry economy.*

*The planned use of volunteer labour in the first five years of the project for activities including environmental monitoring, invasive species removal, and other conservation work, has an estimated replacement cost of **£37,500**. This is based on 10 work-party days per year, each supported by 5 volunteers, and a day-rate of £150 (based on local market rates).*

Increased access to green space is also expected to contribute to positive public health outcomes, including improved physical health and improved mental health. This is expected to result in reduced need to access NHS services, and reduced health inequality.

Community ownership will facilitate the provision of learning outside the classroom in natural environment alongside local schools. Natural England (2022)¹ estimated the Social Return on Investment ratio for these projects as £4.32 for every £1 invested.

Financial model

The project will be supported by a number of revenue streams, including grant funding, donations, and enterprise revenue (including income from timber sales). The initial property acquisition will be

funded primarily by a capital grant from the Scottish Land Fund, which will be supplemented by grants from alternative private sector funds. Grant funding will also cover legal costs associated with the transfer of the property.

Following the successful transfer of the property, planned timber harvesting (comprising the recovery of windthrow timber, and the felling of over-mature trees at risk of windthrow) will generate substantial income, which will be used to fund project development expenses. These expenses include urgent maintenance, the re-opening of existing paths, and the creation of new, inclusive routes. This income will also fund essential re-planting works, and the funding of a cash reserve. This cash reserve will protect the project's long-term sustainability, which will have the co-benefit of providing funders with confidence in the charity's financial resilience and will therefore help to generate future grant revenue.

The aspiration is for recurrent maintenance expenditure to be covered by predictable, recurrent revenue, which is additional to the capital injections expected from timber sales and grant awards. Following the transfer of the property, it will therefore be made a priority to establish stable income streams, including recurring donations, corporate sponsorship (from local businesses), and fees for the hosting of courses on the site. This income will ensure that the project remains cash positive in years where timber income and/or grant income are not realised.

The detailed financial model for the project - including acquisition plans, and subsequent projected income and expenditure – is provided in the attached business plan. This also includes a detailed 5-year cash flow (showing monthly income and expenditure), an outline 25-year cash flow, and several sensitivity analyses.

¹ Social Value Business 2022. Social & economic benefits of learning in natural environments: A study of learning outside the classroom in natural environments (LINE) in primary school settings to provide a forecast of social value. NECR442. Natural England

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.

1. Name Andrew Macqueen

Address

Date 30.9.24

Position trustee

Signature

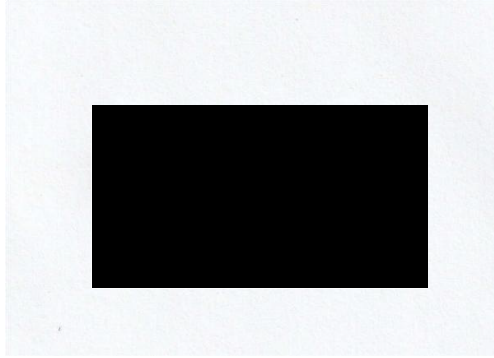
2. Name Adam Murray

Address

Date 5.10.24

Position Trustee

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:

Constitution

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

Documents attached:

Map of purchase area

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

Documents attached:

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:

Feasibility Study, Management Plan

Section 5 – evidence of community support

Documents attached:

[refer to feasibility study, section 4]

Section 6 – funding

Documents attached:

Business Plan