

Community Asset Transfer

Application Form

The purpose of Northumberland County Council's community asset transfer policy is to give eligible organisations the opportunity to take over the ownership either through a freehold transfer or the granting of a lease, those buildings that Northumberland County Council has deemed as surplus to the organisation's needs. The following 'Application Form' seeks to capture the information necessary to enable Northumberland County Council to make a decision regarding the suitability of an eligible organisation to be considered for a transfer of an asset.

Once completed please return the application form to:

Kirsten Francis
Principal Policy Officer
Policy and Research
Transformation Group
County Hall
Morpeth
NE61 2EF

Telephone Number: (01670) 624741

E-mail: kirsten.francis@northumberland.gov.uk

Section 1: About the property to be nominated

Name of Property	PRUDHOE EAST CENTRE
Address of Property	37 FRONT STREET
Postcode	NE42 5DQ

Section 2: About your Community Organisation

Name of Organisation	PRUDHOE TOWN COUNCIL		
First Name:	SARAH	Surname:	EDEN
Position in Organisation	ACTING CLERK		
Email Address	info@prudhoetowncouncil.gov.uk		
Address	589 FRONT STREET		
Postcode	NE42 5AA		
Telephone:	(01661) 835487	Mobile:	

Section 3: Status of your organisation

<input type="checkbox"/>	Constituted Community/Voluntary Group	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Parish/Town Council
<input type="checkbox"/>	Neighbourhood Forum	<input type="checkbox"/>	Un-constituted Community Group
<input type="checkbox"/>	Industrial & Provident Society	<input type="checkbox"/>	Community Interest Company
<input type="checkbox"/>	Company Limited by Guarantee	<input type="checkbox"/>	Charity

Section 4: Governance

		Year	
When was your organisation set up?		1974	
		Yes	No
Does your organisation have a written constitution, governing document or set of rules?		√	
How many people are involved in your organisation?			
Management committee		Paid staff full-time	1
Paid staff part-time	1	Volunteers	15
		Yes	No
Does your organisation have an equal opportunities policy, and has this policy been adopted at an Annual General Meeting?		√	
Please mark which of the following insurance cover your organisation holds and provide levels of cover?			
Public Liability	£15,000,000	Employer Liability	£10,000,000
		Professional Indemnity	£200,000

Section 5: Financial Stability

What was your turnover on the last two years?			
Year ending 2012/2013	N/A	Year ending 2011/2012	N/A
Please provide copies of your audited Financial Accounts for the last two years.			
Financial Accounts <i>(tick to confirm attached)</i>			Annual Return
		Yes	No
Has your organisation met all its obligations to pay its creditors and employees during the past year?		√	
If the answer to the above question is no, please explain why not:			

Section 6: What is the purpose and main activities of your organisation

Prudhoe Town Council (PTC) is a civic local authority and the first tier of Local Government. The main purpose of PTC is to supplement the provision of local government services and to enhance and promote the well being and success of the town for residents and visitors alike.

We have taken responsibility for and invested in Edgewell Cemeteries, Play Areas, Public Toilets, Bus Shelters, Litter Bins and the Town's War Memorial as well as enhancing the environment with additional grass-cutting and formal bedding.

Prudhoe Town Council holds community events and run community based competitions as well as supporting community groups and local charities through the allocation of grant aid.

Section 7: Executive Summary

In January 2017 Prudhoe Town Council were advised that Prudhoe East Centre was to be sold and the Youth Services therein transferred to the Fuse Media Centre; this was met with a negative reaction from Councillors and members of the public alike.

In September 2017 Prudhoe Town Council and Prudhoe Community Partnership jointly funded a consultant whose remit was to look at the possibility of an asset transfer of the building. The report established that the building although requiring investment is 'fit for purpose', that its central location was a major success factor and that although there was great potential it was underutilised at present.

Prudhoe Town Council feel the building should be preserved (over 40% of those surveyed agreed), improved and maintained for use by the wider community (over 60% of those surveyed agreed), as well as ensuring that a youth service provision is available from the building (35% agreed). The council hope the move the Town Council function into the old Adult Learning Building, as well as offering space to Northumberland Citizens Advice who are keen to have a central location in the town from drop-in sessions and appointments. Moving the Town Council function into this building would allow us to grow and expand our offer as well as reducing the outgoings on rent and service charges currently paid for our office and meetings rooms in The Spetchells Centre. Prudhoe Town Council has always funded, through Grant Aid, CAB services in the town, so as well as bringing CAB back into the centre of town, grant aid could potentially be in lieu of premises.

With regards the main building, the Town Council would aim to create a flexible space that could be booked and utilised by community groups and that would also allow the display of local information and memorabilia that presently has no home. At the moment the Town Council is undecided if it will manage the East Centre as a Town Council Asset, employing staff to manage, promote and maintain the building thereby absorbing the capital and revenue costs into the Town Council budget, or if it would be preferable to create a Charitable Trust or the like. The work on the East Centre would be the same regardless of this decision and the East Centre Advisory Group is keen to seek advice from Northumberland County Council on this matter.

Feedback from our survey and town council events has suggested that there is a demand for space in the town for community groups. The Spetchells Centre is at capacity, as is the Parish Hall and Prudhoe Methodist Church; space that community groups can afford is much needed.

Additionally, our survey shows that local people are travelling outside of the town to access clubs and groups and although this is often down to personal choice, in some cases there is a real demand in the town and if the Town Council took over the East Centre we could facilitate the new groups starting to meet that demand.

Section 8: Relevant Experience

The Town Council is sure that as the statutory body in the town we are best placed to take on the building as a community asset. We are financed by the precept taken from the people of Prudhoe and decisions taken regarding the building would be made with the public interest in mind and these would be open and transparent. We are accountable to the people of Prudhoe who will be using the building.

The Town Council is mindful that it would need to recruit staff in order to manage the building but with an on-site presence this would be overseen by the Clerk to the Council.

The Town Council maintains and manages a range of physical assets presently, from litter bins to play areas and has confidently approached each asset transfer from Northumberland County Council, whether that be floral bedding or the public toilets.

Section 9: Promoting the Asset

What are your plans to advertise and generate community interest in the asset?

Prudhoe Town Council has a regularly viewed website and Facebook page with over 400 followers; we are also in direct and frequent communication with most community groups in the town. Once established Prudhoe East Centre would have its own Facebook Page and the promotion of the building as a space would be the responsibility of the Centre Manager or Secretary.

We also now put out a quarterly Town Council newsletter so as well as promoting the building as a space to be booked and used, we would also be able to promote the activities being hosted from it.

The results of our survey show the residents want to see mixed use in the building, we will strive for this by reaching out in a number of ways as the target audience is not always online.

Section 10: What are the Community Benefits

If you are successful in securing the land/building, what would be the social and economic benefits to both the local community and wider Northumberland? Please provide evidence of need, and details of any consultation or engagement undertaken

The Social benefits are that the East Centre would be opened up to the wider community; including the young and the old and those with special educational needs. Only 10% of those surveyed has used the East Centre within the previous week. This would be the only community space available in the centre of town that is on one-level and has a car park; it is also on a bus route and nearby other local services.

The Town Council would ensure a fully accessible, flexible space at an affordable cost and we would be able to help promote the activities taking place in the centre. This would then help promote Prudhoe as a thriving town and would link in with NCC's plan to establish Prudhoe as a tourist destination, benefitting retailers on the Front Street also.

Having a space that is shared by users can help to promote understanding among groups in the town – the young and the old, for example. Creating opportunities for different social groups to come together can only help break the barriers that can be present at the moment.

There is great interest from the East Advisory Group, survey respondents and members of the Prudhoe and District History Society to having a place to celebrate Prudhoe as a mining community and to display memorabilia that over the years has been stored and without a home. The Town Council would be keen to give such displays pride of place and to help promote the best of the town and celebrate what we are good at.

The economic benefits are that the Town Council could divert the money previously spent on Rent and Service charges to pay for its own premises. Once the asset is transferred, the Town Council would look to apply for external funding to develop the space further, at no cost to the tax payer. Community Groups would benefit economically as there would be a greater choice of affordable space for them to hire. We know from the results of the survey and from Grant Aid applications to the Town Council that room booking hire is often the greatest cost to community groups.

At the moment the East Centre Building is dilapidated and the feedback we have received suggests that members of the public wish to see it repaired, improved and used. Members of the public believe it is a blight on the high street and that its run down appearance gives a bad impression of the town and of the young people in the town (as it is used by the Youth Service). There is also the suggestion that the lack of pride taken inside of the building is then transferred onto the street and we have experienced some vandalism of late.

Section 11: Evidence of Need

Please provide any surveys, research etc. In order to evidence a genuine need for the service/asset.

The results of our survey show that 26% of those survey state that the groups they attend require more space for current activities and 24% require space to expand their activities. 11% find that costs are a barrier to finding space to use and almost 16% find it difficult to book accessible spaces.

A huge 65% of those surveyed feel that the East centre should be opened up for use by the wider community and over 40% of those surveyed that the building should be protected and preserved.

Over 70% of those surveyed want the space to be used by community groups and for events and 73% want to see Youth Services retained there.

Section 12: Future Use

If you were successful in securing this property, what would your organisation use this building/Land for? (Please give as much information as possible)

Town Council Office

Premises for Northumberland Citizens Advice to offer drop-in services and one-to-one interviews

Community Space and venue for events and activities

Town Hall

Workshop for Men's Shed

Section 13: Risk of displacing current activity and undermining existing services

Are there any other organisations delivering what you are planning in the area, if so please give details of discussions on collaboration and on how your proposal will complement existing activity.

The Parish Hall in Prudhoe is at capacity so unable to take any more bookings for community groups on any given day or evening on a regular basis. We expect to create the opportunity for new groups to form rather than displacing current activities. Although Northumberland Citizens Advice is expected to move into The Manors, Adderlane Road very soon, this is a temporary solution as they are keen to be in the centre of town and neither The Spetchells Centre nor the Parish Hall is suitable or available. Northumberland Citizens Advice would be keen to move into The East Centre when the building is usable.

Prudhoe Poppets is a play group running from the East Centre and they have a presence on the East Centre Advisory Committee. We want to work with them and allow them to continue and prosper at the East Centre.

West Northumberland Youth Service currently operates from the East Centre and the Town Council is hopeful that this will continue. However, we are mindful that the results of a recent review of Northumberland Youth Services are yet to be released.

The Town Council will need to discuss with Prudhoe Community Partnership Trustees the intention to move the office of the Council from The Spetchells Centre to the Adult Learning Building at The East; it is hoped that there will be a mutual agreement reached as our move would detract from the offer of The Spetchells Centre as a one-stop shop with local services all under one roof.

Section 14: Boundary of Property

What do you consider to be the boundary of the property? Please give as much detail as possible (if possible, please include a plan).

Hopeful that NCC can provide the necessary plan.

Section 15. Risk Assessment

Please complete a risk assessment for the project, including how you plan to mitigate these risks?

Financial and Management Risk Assessment will be attached.

Section 16: Supporting Information for Nomination

Please provide any additional information concerning your application including where appropriate evidence of any funds secured to finance the project.

Section 17. Finances

Please show the financial projections for the next 3 years by completing the following cash-flow forecast. You should increase your costs by 3% each year. If you are a Parish/Town Council you should demonstrate how the budget will be managed within your overall budget. What are your plans for covering any deficit? You should demonstrate how you will build a maintenance reserve?

Following transfer PTC would expect to begin the plans to make the Adult Learning Building suitable for both the Prudhoe Town Council office and for Northumberland Citizens Advice. It is expected that by this time we will have already sought the services of an architect to create a flexible, accessible space for the main East Centre Building and we will use the asset reserve fund to off-set the cost of work to both buildings.

We currently have an Asset Reserve Fund of £30,000 and we will add to this in 2019/20. We expect to save over £6,000 on Office Rent and Rates which will off-set some of the typical running costs. All other running costs will be included in a budget heading created specifically for The East Centre. Once the building plans are complete we would expect to be able to hire out the space and we would expect that a grant would be paid to NCAB for the space they would use in the Adult Learning Building.

Name of Building:	Prudhoe East Centre		
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3

Income			
Room Hire		3600.00	
Northumberland Citizens Advice - Grant		10000.00	
Fundraising/Grants			
Rent & Rates Saving	6000.00	6000.00	
Asset Reserve Fund of PTC	30000.00		
Total Income for Year			

Expenditure			
Electricity	1800.00	1854.00	
Telephone	368.00	380.00	
Water	1283.00	1322.00	
Rates	4792.00	4936.00	
Insurance	350.00	360.00	
Compliance Testing	120.00	124.00	
Cleaning	3000.00		
Repairs	20000.00		
Maintenance	5000.00	3000.00	
Caretaker/Cleaner		16000.00	
Total Expenditure for Year	36,713	27,976	

Net Surplus/Deficit	713.00	8,376	
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Section 18. Details of additional documents submitted in support of the application (insert additional lines as necessary)

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Section 19. Declaration

I confirm that I have the authority to submit this nomination on behalf of the relevant body and that to the best of my knowledge the information contained in the application is complete and accurate.

Signed	
Position in the organisation	
Dated	

Scoring methodology for weighted questions out of 3

0	Response does not meet criteria and/or is unacceptable
1	Response partially meets requirements but contains material weakness, issues or omissions and/or is inconsistent
2	Response fit for purpose. Good in many respects. No significant weaknesses, issues or omission
3	Response meets criteria to exceptional standard. Robust and detailed in all material respects. Minimal omissions

DRAFT & BASED ON ESTIMATES