

Stage 2: Asset Transfer Form

Section 1: Information about the Community Transfer Body (CTB) making the request

1.1 Name of the CTB making the asset transfer request

Include Us

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

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

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) YES

1.4 Please tick the relevant box to confirm the type of CTB and its official number, if it has one

Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO), and its charity number is SC048168

1.5 Has the organisation been individually designated as a community transfer body by the Scottish Ministers?

No

Section 2: Information about the land and rights requested

2.1 Please identify the land to which this asset transfer request relates.

We have identified the area of land commonly known as Catherine Street Play Park sitting within the boundary wall running from The Usual Place Community Cafe, along the pathway of Academy Street (A701), back along Catherine Street and adjoining No 2 Catherine Street and garages which form the boundary of the park. The postcode is DG1 1JA on google maps. The map used for our planning application is attached as an accompanying document.

Section 3: Type of request, payment and conditions

3.1 Please tick what type of request is being made:

For lease (under section 79(2)(b)(i)) - go to section 3B

3B - request for lease

What is the length of lease you are requesting?

25 years

How much rent are you prepared to pay?

£1.00 per annum

3C - request for other rights

What are the rights you are requesting?

We are requesting a long-term lease with a Service Level Agreement to be negotiated with the Community Asset Manager (Nithsdale) D&G Council.

Do you propose to make any payment for these rights? NO

Section 4: Community Proposal

4.1 Please set out the reasons for making the request and how the land or building will be used.

BACKGROUND

When the flagship Dock Park development was opened in 2014 there was widespread delight and excitement but also disappointment among some families and others that there were no play facilities which considered the needs of disabled children and young people. Towards the end of 2015 some parents got together with supportive Third Sector professionals to discuss their concerns and to approach the Council to look at options.

When discussions with the Council started in January 2016 it was clear that no further changes could be made to Dock Park. The Usual Place Community Café had opened during 2015 and was becoming well used by families because of its accessibility and the fact that (at that time) it had the only Changing Places Toilet within 50 miles. Because of its position - adjacent to Catherine Street Play Park, parents asked if this park could be created into an accessible and inclusive space which all children and young people could use.

A multi-agency Working Group was created in April 2016 to consider how Catherine Street could be adapted in three stages including opening up the park into the café, carrying out a consultation with the community and fundraising to meet cost of the changes the community wanted.

WHO ARE WE?

Include Us is the local charity (a membership SCIO SC048168) which grew out of the original Working Group to develop the park and was created in February 2018. The Board of Trustees is made up of parents (some who have disabled children), professionals and local people.

During 2017 we undertook a full consultation and engagement process with over 200 children, young people, parents and local people so that they could tell us what changes they wanted in the park. We worked with consultation partners Sleeping Giants and took a participatory appraisal approach to engaging with the community.

We started the consultation in March 2017 with two Neighbourhood Meetings and then hosted ten Play Days and Workshops which offered families and others the opportunity to have fun while telling us what changes they wanted to see in the park.

At the suggestion of Inclusion Scotland, we worked with two play consultants who are internationally respected experts in inclusive play. By the end of 2017 a Design Brief had been created based on what people wanted and what we had learned about removing the barriers to play for all children.

In early 2018 we appointed a Landscape Architect to translate the brief into a design for the park and over the next eight months we worked together to refine the initial design to create a plan for the park which was presented to the public through an exhibition over 4 days and a further neighbourhood meeting in late October 2018.

WHY IS THERE A NEED FOR INCLUSIVE PLAY PARKS?

Play is important for ALL children and young people including those with a disability. Being able to play is one of the ways that children develop friendships, improve their confidence, self-esteem and independence, test their limits, improve their physical wellbeing, learn how to manage their emotions and grow into confident young people.

This has powerful knock-on effects on the lives of children and young people at home and school and can result in more positive transitions in life.

Being able to play is enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child:

- Article 31 Recognises the need for all children and young people to rest, play and leisure activities

- Article 23 recognises that a mentally or physically disabled child should enjoy a full and decent life which promotes dignity and self-reliance through active participation in their community

However, there are multiple, well researched physical, attitudinal and cultural barriers to play for disabled children. Poor accessibility and a lack of inclusive play equipment and limited opportunities to interact with non-disabled siblings and peers are only two examples of why disabled children feel stigmatised and excluded. The development of Catherine Street into an inclusive play park aims to address some of these inequalities.

WHAT ARE WE DOING?

We plan to make the park more accessible, inclusive and welcoming for more people. We will create a better, more accessible opening from the Catherine Street entrance and will make a new opening from the park into The Usual Place Community Café so that park users can access toilets, the café and retail section. We will make pathways around the park and through the trees. We will install new play equipment which is interesting and stimulating for all ages. Three pieces of play equipment will be suitable for children who use a wheelchair. We will build a multi-use outdoor classroom which will be roofed, closed on three sides and open onto a paved story telling area to the front. We will create quiet 'chill-out' areas which children and young people can use if they feel overwhelmed. We will install lots of sociable seating and create planting areas around the periphery of the park along with 10 meters of raised beds so that we can develop a small community garden.

WHY A COMMUNITY GARDEN?

The idea of developing a community garden within the park came while we were considering how we could create intergenerational opportunities for younger and older people to enjoy activities together. We also wanted to make something which would attract those who would not normally come enter a children's play park. Although Catherine Street is not huge, there is ample space around the periphery and towards the rear of the park to create planting areas which will be a mix of sensory planting beds and 10 meters of raised beds. The park currently has a very limited ecosystem because of most of the trees are one species.

We will plant native trees, naturalised bulbs and perennial planting which improve the biodiversity in the park and will encourage different bird and insect species. Older volunteers with gardening skills are keen to pass their knowledge onto children, young people and parents to teach them how to plant and grow soft fruits, herbs and salad veg. These are vital skills for life which families can learn with a focus on understanding where food comes from to how these skills can transfer from the park to their home environment. The community garden will also provide opportunities for young people with additional needs for work experience, volunteering and a modern apprenticeship. For older people, there will be opportunities to reduce loneliness and isolation through volunteering opportunities

WHAT EVENTS WILL TAKE PLACE IN THE PARK?

As well as continuing to be a public play park for everyone to enjoy, we will have regular free structured activities, events and play days in the park. The request for this came from parents who find themselves (or their children) socially isolated for a variety of reasons. Families very much enjoyed the structure play days we arranged in the park and asked for this to continue because it made them feel welcomed and valued. Activities will include getting involved in the community garden, family picnics in the park, art and craft activities, nature sessions and more structure events offered by our partners e.g. multi-sensory book bug sessions, storytelling, performances put on by the Theatre Royal or Arts Association.

Benefits of the proposal

4.2 Please set out the benefits that you consider will arise if the request is agreed to.

We believe that transferring the park to Include Us through a long-term lease will provide a range of benefits for the community. We referred to the Scottish Government Guidance for Transfer Bodies 2017 and have used the *"best value themes"* on page 55 to demonstrate the evidence of benefits to the community.

SOCIAL WELLBEING

The development of the play park is essentially a social equality project which aims to meet the needs of more people regardless of age or ability. We will improve the wellbeing of disabled children and young people by creating an accessible and inclusive space and providing opportunities for fun and friendship through the activities we will arrange which will

- reduce the feelings of stigma and exclusion experienced by children and young people with additional needs
- improve the wellbeing of parents and siblings who feel stressed and anxious about the disabled child being excluded

This meets the priorities of D&G Council stated on page 29 of the Council Plan 2017-2022 which makes a commitment under Children to *'Raise ambition and attainment, in particular to address inequalities'* by aiming to *'Reduce or remove barriers so that all children and young people have equality of opportunity'*

It is an aim of Dumfries and Galloway Council to support carers and young carers. The development of an inclusive park will ensure that parents who are carers and siblings who are young carers will experience less stress and anxiety because the disabled child in the family will be able to play on an equal level with others.

The creation of accessible entrances, level pathways, adapted seating and the development of the community garden with attractive planting areas will meet the needs of adults at different ages and stages in their life.

This meets the priorities of D&G Council as stated on page 38 of the Council Plan 2017-2022 which makes a commitment under Inclusive to *'Increase equality of opportunity'*

For these benefits to happen unless the park is transferred into the 'ownership' of a community group because funding from grant making organisations (which has already been secured) for new play equipment, seating, pathways and groundwork is subject to Include Us taking over 'ownership' of the park.

ENVIRONMENTAL WELLBEING

The creation of the community garden and the opportunity to care for the whole space will improve the ecology and biodiversity within the park. At present, 27 out of the 34 trees in the park are woodland lime. We have learned that this does not encourage a diverse ecology within the space and helps to explain why there is a limited range of birds and insects. We will improve the environment by helping children and young people to plant native trees, shrubs, naturalised bulbs, wildflowers and perennials which will attract more insects which in turn will attract more birds. We will avoid herbicide and pesticide use, will harvest rain water and make compost. We will teach children how to make bird boxes and bug hotels to install in the park and to take home and will take part in RSPB bird and butterfly surveys – all of which will provide opportunities for children and young people to get involved with the park and to learn about the importance of nature and biodiversity.

This meets the priorities of D&G Council stated on page 38 of the Council Plan 2017-2022 which makes a commitment to be inclusive by *'Empowering our communities to make the most of their assets'* by *'Supporting an increase in community growing schemes and allotments (community garden)'*

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT and REDUCING INEQUALITIES OF OUTCOME

It is a strategic objective of the Council to *'Improve the level of skills within communities and workforce'* and to *'Raise ambition and attainment, to address inequalities'*. The development of

the park by Include Us will contribute to this and to the development of the local economy of Dumfries in the following ways:

Providing employment opportunities

- We will employ a Park Manager who will take responsibility for all aspects of caring for the park and play equipment, recruit volunteers to care for the community garden
- We will employ a Project Manager who will take responsibility for the day to day management of the project, fundraise, engage with local businesses and partners and recruit volunteer play workers
- We will employ a Modern Apprentice with additional needs who will study for a formal qualification which will improve their employability opportunities

Providing learning opportunities

- The Park Manager will provide work experience opportunities for Secondary School, College students and will provide placements for Interns through working with our colleagues in Project Search and Project Scotland
- Children of all ages and abilities will benefit from the opportunity to learn about nature by getting involved with the community garden and the activities we will put on in the park

Providing volunteering opportunities

- We will recruit older volunteers with skills and experience who can act as mentors to younger volunteers and work directly with children and young people
- We will recruit young volunteers with additional needs who will have the opportunities for work experience and volunteering which will improve their chances for employment

We will employ the services of local storytellers, woodland rangers, craft makers/artists who will be contracted to deliver learning opportunities and activities in the park. This will help to contribute to the growth of small entrepreneurial businesses within our region.

REGENERATION

We believe that the development of Catherine Street will contribute to the regeneration of Dumfries town centre. It will become a destination park for many families, not just those with a disabled child. We know from national research and local consultation that families with a disabled child will travel many miles to find a resource that their children can use. This will impact favourably the local economy with increased use of nearby resources such as The Ewart Library, The Usual Place Café and retail shops in the High Street. Improving the look and feel of the park will have a knock-on effect to making nearby private housing stock more attractive to families.

The Scottish Government states that ‘Sustainable regeneration of our towns can only be achieved through collaboration and investment which include or are led by local communities’. We believe that by taking over ownership of the park and working in co-production with the Council we will contribute to the Councils’ vision for Dumfries to become a vibrant and exciting place to live, work and learn.

OTHER BENEFITS THAT MIGHT ARISE THROUGH THE ALTERNATIVE USE OF THE ASSET
Enabling asset transfer of the park will help to celebrate Dumfries and Galloway Council as an organisation who invests in Community Empowerment. The benefit of this locally and nationally is detailed below:

- The project has already been acknowledged as a “good practice example” and is gaining prominence with the Scottish Government and academic organisations nationally who are interested to learn more about what we are doing in partnership with the Council. “Free to Play” was published by Play Scotland and launched at the Scottish Parliament in May 2018. This is a guide to creating accessible and inclusive public play spaces for local authorities and community groups in Scotland. The guide features the early development of Catherine Street as a good practice example for consulting with families and the local community

- Those with physical disability and mobility problems will benefit from accessible entrances, pathways and seating in the park
- Adults with mental health problems will benefit from being in a natural, welcoming environment where engagement with staff and volunteers will increase their opportunity for social interaction with others
- Older people with dementia will benefit from engagement with children in a space that provides opportunities to enhance memories

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.

The park is located within a Conservation Area so the organisation will abide by any planning and other controls which are important in maintaining the integrity of the area.

Negative consequences

4.4 What negative consequences (if any) may occur if your request is agreed to? How would you propose to minimise these?

PARKING

Some residents are concerned about an increase in parking around the park. We believe that the increase in use of the park will be after school hours, at the weekend and during school holidays. During these times, Council carparks are available for use such as the two carparks for Dumfries Academy. We have discussed with the Council, the possibility of improving signage to car parks close by. In addition, we have requested that two disabled parking spaces will be made available for park users at the Catherine Street entrance.

ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

These concerns raised by neighbours will be addressed by a condition attached to planning permission which requires Include Us to install motion activated lighting to the outdoor classroom.

Other objections related to noise, pollution and the provision of an outdoor classroom. These concerns were addressed by the Planning Officer at the Committee Meeting and the majority of members made the decision to approve.

Capacity to deliver

4.5 Please show how your organisation will be able to manage the project and achieve your objectives

VISION AND LEADERSHIP

We have a clear vision and plan for how we can help to make a difference to children and young people through creation of an inclusive play park. We understand the reasons why there are barriers to development for some children and have evidenced throughout this application how we plan to address this through the creation of an inclusive and accessible play park and how this links to national and local priorities.

Trustees have a wide range of professional, public and personal knowledge, skills and experience. As a team there are sound values at the core of decision making with every individual being highly motivated to deliver this project in the best way possible for the community.

Chair of the Board is an academic who lives locally to the park and has in-depth knowledge regarding the use of green space

Vice Chair is a young disabled man, performer and an experienced board member with other voluntary organisations

Treasurer is a young Mum with a business background. She is also a carer to her disabled twins and husband

Trustee is a dementia nurse specialist who has been advising the Board on intergenerational issues and is an experienced ex-board member with other voluntary organisations

Trustee is a young Mum who has experience of park development/management and a wide network of contacts

Development Officer is a retired project manager with experience of developing services locally for disabled children

GOVERNANCE

- The Board of Include Us follows OSCR's Guidance and Good Practice for Charity Trustees which all Trustees receive as part of their Induction Pack on appointment
- Training and Board development is provided to all Trustees
- The Board has several essential policies and procedures which guides practice in e.g. the recruitment and approval of Trustees, Volunteers and Employees
- We have a clear vision for what we want to achieve, underpinned by a developing strategy
- We have a robust system of financial management underpinned by our Financial Policy

USE OF RESOURCES

To date we have secured capital funding of £338,229 and £64,500 of revenue funding for ongoing costs. We await the outcome of applications totalling a further £74,000. Our capital funding will ensure that Stage 1 of the park build will be completed this summer. Our revenue funding will ensure that we can employ the services of a Park Coordinator, Project Manager, Modern Apprentice and volunteers who will care for the park as an asset for the community to enjoy. We have been fortunate to work with a wide range of specialists including play consultants who have been able to advise on the design of the park.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

The organisation has robust evaluation and reporting processes in place to ensure that funders and the community can be confident in our ability to achieve positive outcomes. We will do this by seeking the views of park users; recruited volunteers; those attending activities and events; Council Officers in relation to how well we maintain the park. In addition, we will use best practice from Evaluation Scotland to measure outcomes for funders who require specific feedback.

SUSTAINABILITY

We believe that transferring the park to Include Us through a long-term lease will prove to be a sound investment for the Council. We have used the Scottish Government Guidance for Transfer Bodies 2017 to inform this application and have used the themes on pages 60/61 to demonstrate the evidence of our ability to manage the project and achieve our objectives in the long term. We have addressed concerns about claw back of the facility both through our Dissolution clause; reference to our funders and this will be addressed in full within the terms of the Lease agreement and SLA. Beyond funding from grant making organisations, we intend to generate income through the development of small social enterprise opportunities.

EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS

We have created strong partnerships with a variety of organisations who have an interest in the park. Our most established partnership has been with Dumfries and Galloway Council. Evidence of the strength and success of this partnership comes from the influence we have had in helping the Council to understand the play needs of children with additional support needs which led to the investment in inclusive play parks. Our partnership with The Usual Place led to them making a financial contribution to the development of the park. We hope they will benefit financially through an increase in business once the park is opened up into the Café. In return, families using the park will have access to the Changing Places Toilet. With the Board of The Usual Place we are working towards having access to the CPT out of hours. We opened the organisation up to membership on 1st August 2018 and to date have over 100 members and 700 Facebook followers.

EQUALITY

Throughout this application, we believe that we have provided sound evidence to demonstrate our commitment to ensure that equality issues are embedded in our vision, strategic direction and throughout every aspect of our work so far. Our consultation and engagement process are an example of this, being acknowledged as a good practice example by the Scottish Government and Play Scotland. We have taken into account the needs of different groups and how best to reduce inequalities of outcome from socio-economic disadvantage. An example of this is our wish to provide work experience and employment opportunities to young people who are vulnerable to leaving school with limited job opportunities.

The personal and professional experience and knowledge of disability has informed every stage of this project. Our knowledge of recent research from the 'Growing Up in Scotland' study informs us that disabled children are significantly more likely than non-disabled children to have missed key developmental milestones associated with gross and fine motor and skills. The provision of new, exciting play opportunities and regular structured activities in the park will encourage more children and young people into the space which will provide a benefit for their physical and mental health.

This meets the priorities of D&G Council stated on page 32 of the Council Plan 2017-2022 which makes a commitment to *'Support children to be healthy and active'* by *'Investing £500,000 in the development of flagship inclusive play parks in Dumfries, Stranraer and Annan'*.

We believe that the development of Catherine Street play park will make a significant contribution to the equality agenda locally.

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.

We have carried out a wide range of consultation and engagement with the community of residents around Catherine Street and the community of families and organisations who use the park currently or would use the park if improvements were made.

The evidence for this has been written into a Consultation Report which is attached.

Our consultation and engagement has been acknowledged by Play Scotland and the Scottish Government as a good practice example for other groups. See the "Free to Play" document under Key Reference Documents at the end of this application.

Section 6: Funding

6.1 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.

In addition to the £150,000 the Council invested in Catherine Street, we have secured over £250,000 in capital and revenue grants.

We continue to fundraise and await the outcome of £77,000 worth of further funding applications which have been made.

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.

Name: Dr Andrzej Zieleniec

Address: 21 Lovers Walk, Dumfries, DG1 1LR

Date: 19th March 2019

Position: Chairperson of Include Us

Signature



Name: Michael Greaves Mackintosh

Address: 10 Ashyards Court, Eaglesfield, Lockerbie, DG11 3EP

Date: 19th March 2019

Position: Vice Chairperson of Include Us

Signature



Please see checklist of accompanying documents over the page

Checklist of accompanying documents

Section 1 - you must attach your organisation's constitution, articles of association or registered rules

Include Us Constitution Feb 2018

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

Map of Land at The Usual Place

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

n/a

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

Catherine Street Play Park Plans and 3d plans from Catherine Street

Section 5 - evidence of community support

Catherine Street Play Park Consultation Report Feb 2019

Section 6 - funding

Include Us Catherine St Confirmed Funding