

NORTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE JOINT DELIVERY COMMITTEE		Item 5	Page 1 of 4
Councils Affected	All	19 th April 2016	
Report Title	COMMUNITY LAND TRUSTS		

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide members with information on Community Land Trusts and a potential approach in North Northamptonshire.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The previous coalition government established the idea of the Big Society, designed to give local people and organisations the resources to make a difference in their communities.
- 2.2 Community Land Trusts (CLT) are an example of this: local organisations set up and run by ordinary people to develop and manage (predominantly) housing as well as other assets important to that community, like public open space, community enterprises, food growing or workspaces. They are a charity or a not-for-private-profit distributing company that owns land and property for the benefit of a community and people living or working there.
- 2.3 When the bid for the Garden Community and capacity funding was written, a key element of the consideration was the long term stewardship for public assets such as public open space.
- 2.4 In looking further at what options may be available, research was carried out into what other large scale SUEs have done in the past and it was found that many such developments manage public open space by specific management companies with varying degrees of success.
- 2.5 More successful arrangements have involved community-based operations, such as the Land Trust, which has a track record in achieving good results for the benefit of the community (see Appendices 1 and 2).
- 2.6 Therefore, further research was required into how this stewardship may be possible to achieve, in practice, given that the SUEs are at different stages of implementation.

3. DISCUSSION

3.1 The Lands Trust (LT) is a charity organisation but, like a CLT, provides an alternative delivery mechanism to the public sector or private landowner for the benefit of the community.

3.2 Established in 2004 by the Homes and Communities Agency and Groundwork, it provides an opportunity to landowners (both public and private sector), who for a variety of reasons want to pass on responsibility (or liability) for the management of non-developable land, to find bespoke long term funding solutions for newly created open spaces around developments, or previously used land requiring management.

Their aim is to work with local partners, bringing local authorities, developers and communities together to find solutions where everyone benefits from development, through the creation and management of green spaces.

3.3 There are a number of opportunities in working in partnership with a Community Land Trust:

Opportunities	Challenges
Can help create communities and people take ownership of an area/service	Support – both from local communities and local authorities
Community has more input into what happens in their area.	Demands on volunteer time
CLTs can take on maintenance and regulate costs.	Funding
Economies of scale can be achieved across the 4 local authorities	Local authority planning – not many local authorities are geared up to support CLT's- commitment is needed within their local plans.
Liability of land/services transferred saving local authority/developer resource	Access to low cost land in rural areas.
Can provide a solution to perpetuity provision	Timing – sufficient timing is required to set up the organisation
Partnership working	Skills set – developing a group that has the correct skills and a wide range of skills can be difficult
Opportunity to access practical expertise i.e. Land Trust	All SUEs taking on the same concept of stewardship for public open space.
Housing built by CLTs is generally affordable – based on what local people can afford.	
Community input into housing/services ensuring that needs/wants are they key factors in proposals.	
CLTs have been known to bring forward sites for housing that others cannot.	
LA's working with CLTs can save making time consuming mistakes as CLTs can deliver council's strategic objectives.	
Working with CLTs you have 'buy in' through consultation.	

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Can ease relationships with the local community	
Long term ownership/management of land /services is taken on by a separate group taking pressure off local authorities and developers.	
CLT's can help match growth with aspiration.	

- 3.4 The Lands Trust has proven that it can work effectively with local communities and local authority partners to develop and maintain open spaces that are created for and used by the general public.
- 3.5 Land is normally acquired on a long lease or freehold basis and managed for the benefit of the community.
- 3.6 Larger developers are increasingly seeing the business case for working with the Lands Trust. A maintenance standard is agreed with the developer and the local authority and in general, a 20 year strategic plan devised (divided into 5 year blocks for maintenance planning).

“Building houses is not just about providing new homes; a good quality built environment can make a contribution towards economic development as well as improving well-being, social cohesion and skill levels.”

Beresford, Development Director, Grainger Plc, Wellesley (Aldershot Urban Extension)

It is also found to contribute to the sale of properties; the open space is designed and developed from an early stage with the Land Trust helping to create a positive open space environment for the housing development.

- 3.7 The local business community benefits from the partnership with the Lands Trust too as the Trust aim to work with local contractors as much as possible. From the outset of the scheme, local contractors are employed and as more houses are built, they would look to employ a managing partner organisation, also likely to be a charity, for example, Groundwork.

Stanton Cross

- 3.8 Bovis Homes has recently begun to work with The Lands Trust in regards to the future management of open space across the Stanton Cross site.
- 3.9 It is proposed that a levy of approximately £200 - £250 per dwelling (including affordable homes) will be charged to contribute to the open space on the development. This is included on the deeds of the property and collected by The Lands Trust. Bovis will also be expected to pay an upfront cost to fill the void between development progress and open space management.
- 3.10 The Lands Trust will be involved in detailed design of the open space areas from an early stage. A proposal pack will be provided to the council as part of the S106 agreement which will provide information and confidence that their involvement will provide quality of design, planting and a high standard of maintenance.

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Other SUEs

3.11 Discussions with the Land Trust have proven that it is possible to achieve common objectives and a single operation. They have had initial discussions with developers at Hanwood Park and Glenvale Park over the last 6 months and it is recommended that the Joint Delivery Unit actively encourage these discussions and work to progress them further across the other garden communities.

4. LOCAL AUTHORITY SUPPORT – A JOINT APPROACH

4.1 Initial discussions have taken place with the Lands Trust who are keen to work within the North Northamptonshire area and who are also open to seeking a joint solution for the garden communities area.

4.2 These discussions could be developed further and local authorities within the garden community encouraged in giving consideration to further working with the Lands Trust and with developers as part of their open space management strategy across the North Northamptonshire area.

4.3 Understanding of the scope of the land that could be taken on by a CLT needs to be explored further around adoptable and non-developable land. It is important to recognize that each SUE has different characteristics that need to be understood and the potential management explored.

4.4 It should also be recognised that discussion could take a significant amount of time to reach an initial package, and the earlier that this starts would be of benefit to the Local Authorities and the developments.

5. FUNDING

5.1 The Land Trust uses a standard service charge to raise funds for the work that is carried out. This would have to be ring-fenced for each SUE or development site. However the economies of scale in using an umbrella organisation to take on the responsibility for maintenance of open space across these sites is significant.

5.2 Potential funding is available through future S106 agreements on each development site. Current agreements such as that for Stanton Cross and Glenvale Park require the developer to provide information/management strategy on the future management of public open space.

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6. RECOMMENDATION

That the Joint Delivery Committee:-

- 6.1 Note the high significance of in perpetuity management as an integral part of the design and delivery of green infrastructure which starts at an early stage of the planning process.
- 6.2 Agree that the Joint Delivery Unit can progress this area of work in addressing the long term green space management stewardship issues across the North Northamptonshire SUE and explore with the Land Trust and the appropriate developers how they might work together for the long term benefit of the future communities.

Background Papers:

Title

Date

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