

**PEWSEY AREA BOARD**  
**12 MARCH 2012**

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**COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER**

**Land at Rectory Close, Alton Barnes**

**Executive Summary**

This report deals with an application for the transfer of land at Rectory Close, Alton Barnes to Alton Parish Council in accordance with Wiltshire Council's Community Asset Transfer Policy.

**Proposal**

The Area Board is asked to consider a transfer of land at Rectory Close, Alton Barnes to Alton Parish Council.

**Reasons For Proposal**

This proposal supports and implements Wiltshire Council's Community Asset Transfer Policy.

**Recommendation**

To approve the transfer.

**Caroline Brailey**  
Pewsey Community Area Manager

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**Purpose of Report**

1. The Area Board is asked to consider the transfer of land at Rectory Close, Alton Barnes (see plan attached at Appendix 1).

**Background**

2. Wiltshire Council is supporting the principle of the transfer of community assets in order to empower and strengthen local communities. The Council believes that transferring appropriate public assets to communities leads to more responsive services that better meet local people's priorities.
3. Transfer of an asset can also provide the opportunity to lever more resources into a community and provide a more accessible and responsive base from which to deliver local services.
4. A community group or organisation can benefit from greater financial stability and build confidence through having ownership (or long term security through a lease) of a physical asset. This financial sustainability can help the organisation become less dependent on grants, provide security for further borrowing and opportunities for further growth.
5. Typically, organisations that would be considered appropriate are Voluntary and Community Groups/Associations, Town or Parish Councils, Trusts or Charities, or Social Enterprise Groups.

**The proposal before the Area Board**

6. There is a proposal to dedicate land at Rectory Close, Alton Barnes as a Queen Elizabeth II field. If adopted, this will place the field in a charitable trust. In order to avoid potential complication when the leases to Alton Parish Council become due for renewal, it was prudent to give Alton Parish Council the opportunity to consider whether to take a transfer of the freehold interest in the land prior to the dedication. Alton Barnes Parish Council may or may not wish to dedicate this site as a Queen Elizabeth II Field once the transfer has taken place. The most appropriate basis for such a transfer would be on the terms set out in Wiltshire Council's community asset transfer policy.

7. The proposal meets the requirements for consideration by the Area Board.
8. The Community Area Manager has consulted with Strategic Property Services, who have undertaken appropriate consultation with service departments across the Council. Cllr Hall, the local member, has been apprised.

### **The views of Council officers**

9. On behalf of the Council, Strategic Property Services (who have overall responsibility for the Council's estates and property) has provided the following observations to the Area Board.
  - 9.1 Alton Parish Council Council holds the majority of the land on a lease from Wiltshire County Council for 125 years from 10<sup>th</sup> September 1996.
  - 9.2 The remainder of the field is held on a lease from Kennet District Council for 7 years from 1<sup>st</sup> March 2000. This has expired and the Parish Council is holding over on the terms set out in that lease.
  - 9.3 The transfer will be subject to a licence for access over the land to the east of the field to No. 5 Rectory Close.
  - 9.4 The land is to be transferred on the standard basis. This is that there will be a covenant restricting use of the land to community purposes. If the land should cease to be used for this purpose it will revert to Wiltshire Council.
  - 9.5 As the property has been used for public open space purposes the disposal of the freehold interest will have to be advertised in the local paper for two consecutive weeks.
  - 9.6 The land has no value other than as amenity land and Alton Parish Council has maintained it in accordance with the lease terms. Therefore, financial implications are limited to the loss of the licence fee for access to 5 Rectory Close.

### **Recommendation**

10. To approve the transfer.

**Caroline Brailey**  
Pewsey Community Area Manager

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