

Information Item

Subject:	Community Land Trust
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Summary of announcement:

Wiltshire Community Land Trust (WCLT) has been set up to help community groups to take on the ownership and management of assets, such as affordable housing, workspace, land for growing food and for recreation, wildlife reserves, pubs, shops and a range of community facilities and local services.

WCLT fosters 'bottom-up' development, strengthening communities by supporting local people to contribute to meeting their own needs and aspirations through the vehicle of Community Land Trusts. A Community Land Trust (CLT) is a legally incorporated, volunteer-led organisation that owns and manages assets for the benefit of a defined community. CLTs offer great opportunities for local ownership and control over the shaping of a community's future, and improving the quality of life for all, helping to create places where people want to return to or to stay in to live and work, bring up their children, or enjoy in their retirement.

A particular characteristic of a Community Land Trust is that it provides an asset lock – any benefit that accrues from an asset has to be used for the benefit of the community it works for in perpetuity, and it cannot be disposed of for the profit of individuals. WCLT hopes to echo successes elsewhere in England, where land owners have in many cases transferred land and buildings to CLTs at little or no cost, to be developed for a range of uses. CLTs are successfully bringing forward a number of exciting initiatives for the benefit of their communities, some independently, but many in partnership with their Parish Councils and local housing associations.

Through general information provision, targeted advice, setting up of appropriate partnerships, and one-to-one support, WCLT is set up to take community groups through the whole process of deciding whether a CLT is right for them, and if so, helping to set one up. We can even act as a development agent to take projects from start to finish.

WCLT aims to increase the amount of community-led provision of housing affordable to people on local salaries, as well as encouraging more community-run local services, and an increase in accessible jobs, with local people equipped with the skills and confidence to fill them.

WCLT was created by and is supported by Wiltshire Rural Housing Association, operating out of its offices in Bromham near Chippenham, but is independent of it.