

## **Communities Wanting to Take Over Local Buildings Fact Sheet July 2011**

Are you a community group or individual who want to save existing resources or create new services for your local community? If so here is some information and organisations that can assist you.

We will add to this when we receive requests for information that is not currently included.

If there is something specific that we can advise on please contact us at [mail@architecturecentre.net](mailto:mail@architecturecentre.net)

### **Where to get design advice and support**

Architecture and built environment centres are independent charities or not for profit organisations. Their role is to help people make better places.

Architecture and built environment centres can provide design support services, but are not designers themselves. They can assist you as the client or client group to develop a design brief; facilitate consultation; do mapping and characterisation studies; facilitate visioning exercises and provide on-going design advice.

### **Architecture and Built Environment Centres**

#### **Arc**

[www.arc-online.co.uk](http://www.arc-online.co.uk)

Arc promotes and fosters quality in architecture and public space in the Humber region.

#### **The Architecture Centre, Bristol**

[www.architecturecentre.co.uk](http://www.architecturecentre.co.uk)

The Architecture Centre's principal aims are to demonstrate the value of good design and, by increasing people's awareness and enjoyment of their built environment, to stimulate the demand for design excellence.

#### **The Architecture Centre Devon and Cornwall**

[www.acdandc.org.uk](http://www.acdandc.org.uk)

Architecture Centre Devon and Cornwall aims to raise public awareness of design issues, and support local authorities, communities and practitioners in the creation of high quality design.

#### **Beam**

[www.beam.uk.net](http://www.beam.uk.net)

Beam is a company dedicated to the imaginative understanding and improvement of the public realm — our urban and rural streets, buildings, neighbourhoods and public spaces. Beam is based in Yorkshire.

#### **The Building Exploratory**

[www.buildingexploratory.org.uk](http://www.buildingexploratory.org.uk)

The Building Exploratory, based in Hackney, East London helps people discover the secrets of their local area and gain a better understanding of the buildings and spaces that surround them. The Building Exploratory runs an extensive education programme, leads innovative learning projects and facilitates the engagement of local residents with changes taking place in the public realm.

**Fundamental Architectural Inclusion**

[www.fundamental.uk.net](http://www.fundamental.uk.net)

Fundamental seeks new ways for people to genuinely participate in the planning and development process of regeneration in their neighbourhoods. Fundamental is located in London.

**Kent Architecture Centre**

[www.architecturecentre.org](http://www.architecturecentre.org)

Kent Architecture Centre works with design professionals, decision-makers and the wider community to promote the value of good architecture and urban design. The centre works across the whole of the South East.

**MADE**

[www.made.org.uk](http://www.made.org.uk)

MADE Supports and promotes excellence in place-making in the West Midlands, bringing architecture, public space and urban design together to make better places for people.

**Northern Architecture**

[www.northernarchitecture.com](http://www.northernarchitecture.com)

Northern Architecture champions high quality design and focuses on raising aspirations for good design among professionals and the public.

**Open-City**

[www.open-city.org.uk](http://www.open-city.org.uk)

Open- City encourages Londoners to experience, explore and understand architecture, design and the built environment. Over the last 20 years, the organisation has grown from showcasing the capital's architecture annually to research, training, advice and campaigns that impact on the whole city.

**Opun**

[www.opun.co.uk](http://www.opun.co.uk)

Opun works with decision makers, design, planning and regeneration professional and communities to encourage investment in good design in the East Midlands.

**PLACE**

[www.place.uk.net](http://www.place.uk.net)

The mission of PLACE is to positively influence the creating and sustaining of excellent places and buildings, making Northern Ireland an environment of exceptional quality for all.

**Places Matter!**

[www.placesmatter.co.uk](http://www.placesmatter.co.uk)

Places Matter! is devoted to generating a strong sense of place in living, working and learning environments throughout the Northwest. Places Matter! Is delivering with partner organisations including RIBA North West, North West Development Agency (NWDA), DC CABE and English Heritage.

### **The Solent Centre for Architecture + Design**

[www.solentcentre.org.uk](http://www.solentcentre.org.uk)

Solent Centre for Architecture + Design (SCA+D) works in the Solent area (Hampshire and the Isle of Wight) and also the bordering areas of Dorset, West Sussex, Surrey and the Thames Valley. It aims to promote high quality design in the built environment, with an emphasis on achieving environmental and social sustainability.

### **Shape East**

[www.shape-east.org.uk](http://www.shape-east.org.uk)

Shape East works with communities, schools and professionals to increase understanding of the importance of good planning, urban design, architecture and construction, and to encourage people to participate in the planning process. Shape East operates across the East of England.

### **TransForm Places**

[www.transformplaces.com](http://www.transformplaces.com)

TransForm Places promotes good design and aims to inspire, encourage and help all those involved in development and growth in Milton Keynes and the South Midlands.

### **Urban Vision North Staffordshire**

[www.uvns.org](http://www.uvns.org)

Urban Vision North Staffordshire aims to inspire the people of North Staffordshire to demand high quality architecture and urban design, and make it a priority in all major regeneration schemes in the region.

**For more detailed information of what these organisations and other can offer see the Advice and Support Providers fact sheet on the resources section of our website:**

<http://www.architecturecentre.net/docs/news/resources/>

### **The Glasshouse Community Led Design**

The Glass-House is a national charity working to help people make better buildings, spaces, homes and neighbourhoods. They provide independent advice, training and hands-on support to communities and regeneration professionals working together to bring positive and lasting change to their area.

Address: 51 Tabernacle Street, London EC2A 4AA

Web: <http://www.theglasshouse.org.uk/>

Tel: 0207 490 4583

Email: [info@theglasshouse.org.uk](mailto:info@theglasshouse.org.uk)

### **The Development Trusts Association**

The DTA is a network of community enterprise practitioners dedicated to helping people set up development trusts and helping existing development trusts learn from each other and work effectively.

Web: <http://www.dta.org.uk>

Address: 33 Corsham Street, London L1 6DR

Tel: 0845 458 8337

Email: [info@dta.org.uk](mailto:info@dta.org.uk)

### **Centre for Accessible Environments**

For information on accessible buildings  
<http://www.cae.org.uk>

### **Charity Property Help**

An RICS service for charities  
<http://www.charitypropertyhelp.com>

## **Publications & resources**

### *Making Buildings Work for your Community*

A practical introduction to the design process, offering advice and guidance to ensure that your building can be the best possible facility for your local community. Produced in partnership with Glass-House Community Led Design, individual community organisations and architects, this guide draws together practical examples of approaches to refurbishment and design, as well as some key things to consider before you begin the design process.

<http://atu.org.uk/Support/toolkits/Design>

### *Pillars of the Community*

The Asset Transfer Unit has partnered with English Heritage, along with the Heritage Lottery Fund, the National Trust, the Architectural Heritage Fund and the Prince's Regeneration Trust to commission a new guidance note.

<http://atu.org.uk/Support/toolkits/heritageguidance>

*Dialogue by Design: A handbook of public and Stakeholder Engagement*  
Ackland A (2008)

### *The Community Planning Handbook*

Nick Wates (200), Earthscan

## **Where to get general information**

### **Asset Transfer Unit**

The Asset Transfer Unit will have or sign post you to all of the information that you need. The Unit helps to empower local people and organisations to transform land and buildings into vibrant community spaces whilst supporting the development of a thriving third sector.

They are the leading provider of expert advice, guidance and support concerning the transfer of under-used land and buildings from the public sector to community ownership and management - helping organisations to develop those assets and deliver long-term social, economic and environmental benefits.

The Unit is led and managed by the [Development Trusts Association](#) - the UK's leading network of community enterprise practitioners - in association with [Community Matters](#) and the [Local Government Association](#). It is funded by [Communities and Local Government](#).

Address: Asset Transfer Unit, c/o Development Trusts Association, The Community Hub, 33 Corsham Street, London, N1 6DR  
Tel: 0845 345 4564  
Email: [info@atu.org.uk](mailto:info@atu.org.uk)  
Website: <http://atu.org.uk/>

### **Community Matters**

Community Matters is the National Federation of Community Organisations. It works to promote, support and develop the action of ordinary people in response to social, education and recreational needs in their neighbourhoods and communities, build the capacity of community organisations and represent their interests at a national level. Their consultancy and training service provides support on the management of community assets to community organisations and also to those who work locally to support them, including CVS, local authorities and housing associations.

Address: 12-20 Baron Street, London N1 9LL  
Tel: 020 7837 7887  
Email: [communitymatters@communitymatters.org.uk](mailto:communitymatters@communitymatters.org.uk)  
Website: [www.communitymatters.org.uk](http://www.communitymatters.org.uk)

### **NAVCA**

NAVCA is the national voice of local support and development organisations in England. We champion and strengthen voluntary and community action by supporting our members in their work with over 160,000 local charities and community groups.

NAVCA believes that voluntary and community action is vital for vibrant and caring communities.

They provide our members with networking opportunities, specialist advice, support, policy information and training. NAVCA is a vital bridge between local groups and national government.

To find your local support organisations see: <http://webdb.navca.org.uk/home.aspx>  
Website: <http://www.navca.org.uk/>

## **Public spaces, parks, village greens etc.**

### **Village green designation**

A village green is an area where people in the community have enjoyed legitimate sports or pastimes as of right for at least 20 years.

Legitimate sports or pastimes include things like:

- cricket matches
- blackberry picking
- dog walking
- village fetes.

### **Claiming a new village green**

To register a new village green you must prove that:

- the land is mainly used by local residents (rather than, say, day trippers)

- it is used for legal activities
- it has been used for at least 20 years
- people haven't forced their way onto the land or used it in secrecy
- it has been used without the permission of the landowner.

If the land you wish to register as a village green your local authority may be responsible for dealing with your application.

### **How to apply**

Applications go through a three-stage process:

#### **Stage 1**

If you wish to register land as a village green, please first visit the Defra website. This includes guidance notes and an application form to download – the 'Town and Village Green Registration Application form':

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/rural/protected/greens/>

Send the completed form to Legal Services or similar at your local authority/ council.

You also will need to supply the following documents:

- A map showing the boundaries of the proposed village green.
- A map outlining the area that local users of the land come from.
- A completed Statutory Declaration. This is included in the Defra form above, and must be witnessed by a solicitor or magistrate
- Evidence forms or letters of support from residents. These describe when and how residents use this land – please download and print as many copies as you need: an example is: [Evidence form](#)

#### **Stage 2**

Once they receive your application, it is publicised and a period for people to comment on the application is opened. It may be necessary to hold a hearing to determine your application. The person hearing the matter will then write a report and recommend whether or not the land should be registered as a village green.

#### **Stage 3**

A committee with special responsibility for these applications – the Commons and Village Green Registration Panel or similar – has the final say about whether or not village green status is granted. They consider the report then write to all parties concerned to confirm the final decision.

### **Register of greens**

The LA should hold a register of village greens which is updated with all successful applications.

### **Useful organisations**

#### **Neighbourhoods Green**

Neighbourhoods Green is a partnership initiative which highlights the importance of open space for residents of social housing and works with social landlords to raise the quality of their design, management and safe use.

The project provides guidance, support and tools for housing associations, local

authority housing departments, arms-length management organisations (ALMOs), resident associations, community groups and their partners.

<http://www.neighbourhoodsgreen.org.uk/home>

### **Publications & resources**

*Community-led spaces: A guide for local authorities and community groups*

A guide to the issues involved in transferring ownership and management of public space from local authorities to community groups.

<http://atu.org.uk/Support/toolkits/communityspaces>