

Getting in on the Act

Communities across Scotland can make use of The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act. This quick summary should help you to get started...



Most significant parts of the Act

Part 1: National Outcomes

The Scottish Government sets itself a set of broad outcomes such as making Scotland healthier, safer and fairer. The Act requires Scottish Ministers to consult the people of Scotland on these outcomes and report on how it is meeting these outcomes.

The [National Performance Framework \(NPF\)](https://nationalperformance.gov.scot/) website contains all 11 National Outcomes.
<https://nationalperformance.gov.scot/>

Part 2: Community Planning

Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs) bring different public bodies and other local agencies together to plan services better. The Act makes CPPs a legal requirement and requires them to involve community organisations at all stages of community planning. Tackling inequalities is a specific focus.

The [Plain English guide](http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2016/12/4607) may be a start for those who are unfamiliar with community planning. <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2016/12/4607>

[This page](http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Government/PublicServiceReform/CP/statbasis) on Scottish Government website sums up the main provisions around community planning.
<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Government/PublicServiceReform/CP/statbasis>

Part 3: Participation requests

This is a new way for communities to have their voices heard in how services are planned and delivered. By making a participation request, a community body can start a formal discussion with public bodies about how to improve local outcomes. Public bodies must agree to the request or give good reason why not.

Get the basics with our [2-pager](http://www.communityscot.org.uk/media/resources/Policy/Participation%20requests%202-pager.pdf) on participation requests
<http://www.communityscot.org.uk/media/resources/Policy/Participation%20requests%202-pager.pdf>

Or read our [Frequently Asked Questions](https://www.scdc.org.uk/what/community-empowerment-scotland-act/participation-requests-faq) sheet. <https://www.scdc.org.uk/what/community-empowerment-scotland-act/participation-requests-faq>

Part 4: Community rights to buy land

Rural communities have already had the right to buy privately owned land and buildings that the owner is willing to sell. Now, the Act enables both rural and urban communities to do this and owners can now be forced to sell land and buildings which are abandoned, neglected or detrimental to the environmental wellbeing of the community.

Information leaflets and other guidance on community right to buy are contained on [this Scottish Government page](https://www.gov.scot/policies/land-reform/community-right-to-buy/). <https://www.gov.scot/policies/land-reform/community-right-to-buy/>

Part 5: Asset transfer

This part of the Act introduces a right for community bodies to make requests to all local authorities, Scottish Ministers and a wide-ranging list of public bodies, for any land or buildings they feel they could make better use of. They can request ownership, lease or other rights, as they wish.

A good source of support on asset transfer and community ownership is the [Community Ownership Support Service \(COSS\)](http://www.dtascommunityownership.org.uk/). <http://www.dtascommunityownership.org.uk/>

Other bits of the Act

- **Part 6: Delegation of Forestry Commissioners' Functions** - Allows for different types of community body to be involved in forestry leasing.
- **Part 7: Football Clubs** - Paves the way for future legislation to make it easier for football supporters to have a role in decision-making and ownership of their football clubs.
- **Part 8: Common Good Property** - Local authorities must establish and maintain a register of all property held by them for the common good. Also requires local authorities to publish their proposals and consult community bodies before disposing of or changing the use of common good assets.
- **Part 9: Allotments** - Updates and simplifies legislation on allotments. Requires local authorities to develop a food growing strategy for their area, including identifying land that may be used as allotment sites or for community growing.
- **Part 10: Participation in Public Decision-Making** – Enables Ministers to create further legislation to strengthen participation in public authority decision-making.
- **Part 11: Non-Domestic Rates** - Provides for a new power for councils to create and fund their own localised business rates relief schemes.

Further info

Community organisations should find the following policy guide useful <http://www.communityscot.org.uk/resources/policy-developments/>

For more general information on the Community Empowerment Act, a good page is the Scottish Government's 'community empowerment' webpage: <https://beta.gov.scot/policies/community-empowerment>.

The full Act is here: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2015/6/contents/enacted>

