



**CAMBRIDGESHIRE  
& PETERBOROUGH**  
COMBINED AUTHORITY

**JAMES PALMER**  
CAMBRIDGESHIRE &  
PETERBOROUGH MAYOR

# **COMMUNITY LAND TRUST SET-UP GRANT AND APPLICATION FORM**

The set-up grant of up to £5,000 is intended to provide steering groups or other appropriate community-based organisations with funding to pay for the professional fees and technical costs that are associated with the legal set-up for a local Community Land Trust (CLT), and contribute toward the costs of the basic community engagement activities that are essential to build local support and towards developing a business plan.

To be considered for a set-up grant the steering group/community based organisation should ideally meet the following key criteria:

1. The applicant group/organisation should have either a bank account or the means to administer the grant funds on their behalf
2. The applicant group/organisation must be representative of the community, with an open democratic membership structure
3. The applicant group/organisation must be clear about the community that it has been established to serve, with a clear vision for the type of CLT they wish to set-up and a description of the project
4. The applicant group/organisation's proposed project must contain an element of affordable housing
5. Any assets that are to be retained by the CLT in the long-term are expected to be permanently affordable for local people on local wages
6. The organisation must intend to provide evidence of meaningful public engagement and that the proposed project that requires funding has general community support
7. The project will need evidence of the backing of the wider community e.g. local planning authority

### **Supporting documents**

All applications will need to be on a CPCA CLT set-up grant application form. Any supporting documentation such as a vision or mission statement, evidence of need, letter of support etc will help the application process.

### **Application process**

Interested applicants should make contact in the first instance with the Community Housing Programme Manager for the Combined Authority who will review the project information and carry out the necessary due diligence to ensure the project is suitable. The Community Housing Programme Manager will then submit the application, with a recommendation, to the Combined Authority Housing & Communities Committee for decision. The decision of the Housing & Communities Committee will be final.

If a grant is approved by the Housing & Communities Committee then a grant offer letter will be issued within 14 days of the decision. Funds will be released to the applicant once any grant offer conditions have been met and the applicant has signed and returned the offer letter.

### **Reporting**

It will be a condition of the grant that applicants report regularly on project performance at least quarterly according to a pre-agreed timetable. Such reporting will include evidence of expenditure.

ABOUT YOUR ORGANISATION			
Organisation name (if known):	Houghton & Wyton Community Land Trust		
Name of contact:	Paul Boothman	Title: Mr	
Position held:	Member of the Working Group		
Organisation address:		Correspondence address (if different):	
c/o Houghton & Wyton Parish Council St Mary's Centre		[personal details redacted]	
Chapel Lane			
Houghton			
Postcode:	PE28 2AY	Postcode:	[personal details redacted]
Telephone:	01480 467209	Contact telephone:	[personal details redacted]
Email address:	[personal details redacted]		
<b>Does your organisation already have a bank account (delete as applicable)?</b> <i>Note: if there is a bank account, please supply a copy of the latest statement</i>			Yes / No
<b>If no bank account, is there another local organisation, such as a Parish or Town Council that could hold and administer the grants funds on your behalf? If so, please give details below:</b>			
<b>Houghton &amp; Wyton Parish Bank Account</b> <b>[account information redacted]</b>			

**In which geographical area do you wish to set-up your organisation?**

The parish of Houghton & Wyton and that part of the neighbouring designated open space which extends into St. Ives Town Council boundary.

**How many people are currently involved? 7**

**Please list the names and give brief details of your working group. so far as it is established (e.g. 'local resident', 'Parish Councillor', 'Local Authority Representative'):**

**Paul Boothman****Parish Councillor****Ray Baxendale****Parish Councillor****Brian Gilmore****Parish Councillor****Sassy Skinner****Parish Councillor****Keri Elborn****Resident****David Bonny****Parish Councillor****Nic Elborn****Parish Councillor****Signature of person responsible for set-up grant application:**

[Electronic signature redacted]

**Print name: Paul Boothman****Date: 20.02.21**

**What is your vision for your organisation?**

*The vision will explain the long-term changes that you expect to achieve through the work of your organisation.*

- To make the area a better place to live and have more control over how that happens;
- To help achieve the goals set out in the Houghton and Wyton Neighbourhood Plan;
- To deliver a 'Balanced' housing scheme with Economic, Social and Environmental benefits;
- To deliver more high quality, genuinely affordable homes for rental for Local People;
- To promote a positive environmental impact on the local area;
- To have an emphasis on quality –and low carbon/eco/environmental resilience;
- To maintain availability of affordable housing in perpetuity through retaining control of the right to buy;
- To protect and maximise open space, and provide public access;
- To increase the bio diversity net gain potential and create continuous wildlife corridors;
- To protect Land assets and prevent coalescence of village and town in-perpetuity through asset-lock;
- To improve flood prevention through careful planning, land use and mitigation;
- To achieve long-term financial sustainability through reinvestment of the surplus income streams that the scheme generates:
  - To ensure long-term financing of housing maintenance and management of green and community spaces;
- To utilise the CLT structure and income stream to fund potential future projects in the parish/local area, for example:
  - additional land management - green spaces, landscaping or re-wilding schemes, land for growing food, e.g. orchard, allotments or community farming;
  - the development potential of housing assets, including provision for specialist groups including the elderly and disabled locals;
  - non-housing assets – e.g. community energy and heat generation, heritage and character assets such as the Clock Tower, Sports Field and Pavilion;
  - other community projects, assets or enterprises, including purchase of leased assets.

**What type of organisation do you want to set-up (e.g. Community Land Trust, Co-operative)?**

A Community Land Trust

**Why do you think this is the most appropriate legal model for what you want to do?**

A Community Benefit Society will allow us to achieve our aims and is a well-used and trusted model for CLTs.

**Is the proposal for this organisation an outcome from Neighbourhood Planning?**

Yes

## ABOUT YOUR PROJECT

**Please describe your project.**

*It would be useful to know what type of community assets you want to create (e.g. houses, workspaces, open space etc), and the scale of your project, i.e. how many properties you hope to build in the current scheme?*

One remaining field, set on a hillside forming part of the Great Ouse Valley, exists to physically separate the village of Houghton & Wyton and the Market Town of St.Ives. The field is a sensitive site and part of a shared landscape for people who live in the wider area as well as the many thousands who flock to the area for its beauty and to gain access to the Great Ouse valley and meadows.

The field needs to deliver two important functions. Firstly, it forms part of a larger land area, earmarked for the housing allocation set down within the Local Plan, and secondly it has to deliver the anti coalescence policy, which is key part of the Houghton & Wyton Neighbourhood Plan.

To satisfy these two requirements we want to build genuinely affordable houses as part of a 50 – 70 home development scheme, whilst at the same time maximising the remaining open space between the village and town for social and environmental benefit, by delivering an integrated, financially sustainable management plan for this open space, extending an ancient woodland, providing a net gain in bio diversity and creating much greater public access, trails, pathways and cycle routes, educational opportunities and flood mitigation measures.

Most importantly we can see that under a traditional ‘for-profit’ house building model, there is a tension created because potential profits from a development scheme are affected by both the quantity of affordable housing provided, as well as the provision for the on-going, long term costs associated with the management of open space.

This typically results in development proposals coming forward which exceed the ideal housing numbers that a site and its associated planning policies should bear, whilst at the

same time typically delivering a lower percentage of 'genuinely' affordable, quality homes as part of the scheme and a minimisation of the open space left to be managed.

We are excited by the opportunities that a CLT model provides to be able to change this situation by requiring less compromise. With revenue streams generated on a 'not for profit' basis and being kept within the community, it allows greater scope to deliver a more balanced scheme, with housing numbers, type and quality more fully aligned with planning policy and the aspirations of the local community.

This would result in a higher percentage of genuinely affordable housing being provided, and the long term financially sustainable management of the remaining open space, which ultimately will preserve and enhance the economic, social, health and environmental benefits for the area.

**Approximately how many affordable homes are you looking to deliver? Are there any other types of homes you are looking to deliver (eg. market housing, homes for older people, starter homes)?**

We are looking to deliver between 20-30 genuinely affordable homes with rents pitched more favourably than the government's current definition of a minimum of 80% of market rentable value. The homes would be part of a mixed development scheme but primarily offering 2/3 bedroom accommodation to satisfy the local need at both ends of the spectrum from young to older residents.

The remaining units would be made up of market housing, again as part of a mixed development.

In order to secure the long-term income stream afforded by the CLT model, we want to protect the affordable housing in perpetuity by way of an asset lock and removal of the outright right to buy. Likewise, we wish to protect the remaining undeveloped land through the asset lock which a CLT model provides.

**Are there any other community assets or amenities (eg. open space, workspaces, and community facilities) that you are looking to deliver? If so, please give details.**

In addition to delivering genuinely affordable housing, at this stage we are also looking to deliver a considerable area of open space which would provide very valuable amenity for the residents and many visitors to the village, town and wider area.

Providing this valuable amenity, would also protect the Market town and village from coalescing and in doing so help preserve the uniquely different characters of the two settlements.

There are additional, smaller parcels of green space surrounding this land but as yet no overall vision or management plan linking them all together. The CLT would aim to address this by providing a vehicle to bring the associated parties together and an important source of long-term funding to help manage the area, enhancing its value to the community and visitors.

**Have you carried out any local needs surveys, such as housing needs survey?  
What were the results? If you have not carried out any surveys how do you know there is a need for your project?**

We have conducted numerous surveys which have helped assess our housing need, including for our Parish Plan and Neighbourhood Plan.

These surveys have consistently highlighted the problem many villages such as ours face whereby particularly for a younger generation who may have grown up in the village, they are forced to move away because they cannot afford to buy or rent in the village, if they wish to live an independent lifestyle.

The Parish Plan was the most comprehensive survey in terms of identifying specifics. Taking data from this, 280 people, nearly 30% of those responding the question of development need, wanted to see more affordable housing. Specifically on starter homes, a total of 229 people responding were interested in these being available and drilling even further into specifically housing association rented housing, we identified 50 people saying they were needed.

Surveys were undertaken in preparation for the Neighbourhood Plan and whilst more general than for the earlier Parish Plan still echoed these findings as well as also throwing light on the needs of the elderly, where there was a lack of smaller and more suitable purpose-designed and built accommodation for them to downsize and hence release family homes back into the village.

In September and October of 2020 we surveyed the entire village once more and received responses from around 15% of households. In this survey, villagers wanted to see a



mixed development, with 2 to 3 bedroom housing dominating. Nearly 20% of responses were in favour of starter homes in particular to form a key component of the mixed development.

The overwhelming response was to balance this by minimising the geographic spread of this housing across the hillside, so as to maximise the remaining gap between village and town in order to avoid coalescence.

Importantly when asked, over 90% of the households responding were in support of some form of parish ownership and management of the site.

**Other than the surveys have you directly engaged or informed your local community about your plans? If yes, how did you do this?**

As mentioned earlier, we produced a Neighbourhood Plan which was examined and made in 2018 through referendum with over 90% voting in favour.

Part B of the Neighbourhood Plan is entitled Community Aspirations and which took the survey work, comments and feedback from public consultations, exhibitions and meetings undertaken during the preparation phase and summarised the results. Here the needs of the local community wanting smaller properties, accommodation for first time buyers, and suitable housing for older people, as well as to provide for declining household sizes were all emphasised. Two-bedroom properties were highlighted as a preference over one bed because of the flexibility provided for occupiers as their needs change. Moreover, respondents were keen to ensure high standards of build quality, and low environmental impact.

There has been great interest in the development potential for the BBSRC field and what happens on this sensitive site for well over a decade. When the community felt the wrong approach was being taken, it raised money and successfully had the scheme quashed in the high court. It has therefore been a topic residents are familiar with and maintain an interest in. Not surprisingly it has once again been an agenda item for our Parish Council meetings since September 2020 and articles in our village magazine and social media platforms.

The launch of our last household survey was also promoted via the village magazine, as well as on the various village Facebook sites.

Because we share a landscape and many similar issues, we have a very good relationship with our neighbouring councils and have met with and presented our CLT proposals with all of them.

St.Ives Town Council produced figures which they had from housing waiting lists calculating that approximately 300 people were looking for accommodation in the area.

These Councils have written letters of support for our scheme and the CLT approach. They can see that it would help meet the housing needs of the immediate area, as well as provide greater access to and safeguard valuable outside amenity. They welcomed measures to mitigate flooding and screening of the precious landscape as well as welcoming the idea of extending the ancient Thicket woodland from north to south.

**Do you have any land identified? Is this land secured in any way?**

Yes – Government owned land, east of Houghton Grange, known as the BBSRC field.

**Who will directly benefit from your project (e.g. who will use or occupy the assets / properties)?**

The beneficiaries of the genuinely affordable homes that we hope to provide will be those individuals and families, both now and in the future, with strong connections to the area but who either cannot find properties in the immediate area and/or afford the very high rents that exist.

The communities of Houghton & Wyton, St. Ives, Wyton on the Hill and the Hemingfords along with the thousands of visitors to these settlements will benefit from the access to this protected open space in perpetuity, and this landscape forms the backdrop to the iconic view of St.Ives and of the Great Ouse Valley which even attracts international visitors.

The businesses and organisations in the parish, who rely on strong local community support as well as the many visitors attracted to this area as a destination location, such as the community shop, tea room, National Trust Mill and camp site, antique shop and art gallery, boat hire and fishing clubs and the pubs will all benefit and this will help to sustain the local economy.

**How will you select the occupants of any housing that you plan to build?**

We would aim to follow a similar approach to already established CLT's with occupants qualifying on a points based system which is weighted towards those persons with a

genuine need and connection to the area in question, typically through having grown up/previously lived in the area, having relatives, school, or work associations.

**Will the properties you intend to build be constructed using local materials or sustainable building techniques?**

*Answering no to this question will not necessarily affect our decision to offer you a grant*  
Yes.

We would hope to use modern building techniques and be able to deliver a low environmental impact housing scheme.

**What do you want to achieve in the short-term (i.e. within next 6 months)?**

We hope to have progressed from working group to forming the CLT, to have a viable business plan and have identified potential development partners.

**What are your plans for the medium-term (i.e. 6 months to 3 years)?**

To have our masterplan scheme approved along with detailed planning permissions, for our development partner to have begun building and hopefully the handover of the first phase of affordable homes.

**What are your plans for the long-term (i.e. once the current project has been completed)?**

For the scheme to be delivering a steady income stream to fund the management and upkeep of the affordable properties and open spaces for the community.

We would hope to have expanded the remit of the CLT into other community projects identified in the Neighbourhood Plan and others such as energy production scheme, community orchards/allotments/food production.

**ABOUT YOU**

**Why are you the right people to lead this project?**

All the members are committed to the promotion of this local community and are predominantly Parish Councillors elected to represent the best interests of residents. The Parish Council has a track record of successes including as authors of the Neighbourhood Plan and as the survey data shows we have been given a mandate to deliver this scheme through the formation and launch of a CLT.

**What skills do you have?**

Some of us have already been heavily involved in investigating Community Business Society models within the village and have successfully created a Community Benefit Society, raising £750,000 through 341 shareholders in the village, to acquire the assets of

the village shop, growing sales by over 70% since acquisition 4 years ago, and producing a net surplus for the community now in excess of the parish council precept.

Creating and running this venture has raised awareness, developed a bank of experience and support for non profit community ventures as well as for the importance and practice of good governance. Through the careers and backgrounds of the members of the WG it can be shown there is a deep understanding of the requirements of leadership, governance and good working practice.

In addition to the Working Group there is a reservoir of support covering all the required disciplines for success of the CLT within the village. We are aware that the steering group is predominantly made up of Parish Councillors at the moment and would look to address this by inviting members of the community that are not part of the Parish Council to join the Board.

**What skills are you missing and how will you acquire them?**

At this point, we do not have hands on experience of a housing manager, and as such would look to employ the services of someone, probably sharing this resource with another CLT in the area such as operates in Stretham and Wilburton CLT.

**Do you have the support of other individuals or organisations? If so, please outline (e.g. 'local authority', 'parish council', 'regional CLT Umbrella'):**

Houghton & Wyton Parish Council, St.Ives Town Council, Hemingford Grey Parish Council, Hemingford Abbots Parish Council, Wyton on the Hill Parish Council, Huntingdonshire District Council, the Cambridgeshire CLT umbrella, other CLT's/housing associations namely Haddenham.

**How did you hear about the Community-Led Housing grant fund?**

Through the Community Housing Programme Manager of the Combined Authority.

**Please let us know if there is anything else you would like us to know about your project:**

Using a professional architecture and design consultancy, Woods Hardwick based in Bedford, we have already produced a masterplan concept of the development we would propose.

Woods Hardwick were the chosen architects for the Houghton Grange site which this development abuts and which shares a common entrance from the road. Therefore they

are familiar with the site and all its features as well as how to design and integrate this new development such that it achieves a real sense of place making.

Morris Homes are the developers of Houghton Grange whom we also have a good working relationship with. We have already had conversations with them and kept them abreast of our proposals and would be hopeful of them being a willing partner in this venture.