

COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP HUB: GLAGOW AND CLYDE VALLEY

COMMUNITY*
LAND SCOTLAND
Members' Report
2021 / 2022

The Community Ownership Hub: Glasgow and Clyde Valley is an action research project with the aim of accelerating community land ownership in the towns, cities and countryside of the Clyde Valley. We do research to address challenges and expand opportunities of urban community land ownership, in conjunction with our direct work supporting communities in their land buy outs.

The project has three policy research objectives:

- * Vacant and Derelict Land;
- * Planning and community land ownership; and
- * Inclusion and diversity.

Our in depth work in the Clyde Valley gives insights which we apply throughout Community Land Scotland's national work.

2021-2022 year was our first year of operation, and our year 1 report demonstrated good progress on our objectives, as well as the exceptional level of interest we've had from communities.

URBAN LAND REFORM POLICY

Our policy work is structured to respond to community organisations' interest, to ensure that our action research reflects community priorities. As key issues have emerged, we have designed a research programme to advance policy.

In 21/22, we commissioned research on how Public Interest Tests could work; and co-produced the Urban Community Led Housing Report with SOSCH and Top Tips on Inclusive Engagement with Govanhill Bath Community Trust.

We began collecting data on the interest in community land ownership in the Clyde Valley; this includes an evidence base on urban land ownership patterns (and to ensure robustness of this database, we commissioned an external review).

We organised policy workshops on to push forward thinking on some key topics: Urban Public Interest Tests, How to Stop the Creation Ownerless Land, Inclusion and Diversity, and Support Gaps for Community Groups. We also provided input to Community Land Scotland policy consultation responses, such as for the National Planning Framework 4.

Our first year of operation has been busy, responding to the high level of interest from community groups, and developing a robust research agenda which reflects community priorities as well as ensuring that perspectives from communities in towns and cities are included in the land reform legislative programme.



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SPOTLIGHT ON: OWNERLESS LAND

Land becomes ownerless for a range of reasons. In towns and cities, company dissolution or organisational wind down without handover of assets are producing ownerless land sites on an ongoing basis. The ownerless sites that communities bring to our attention tend to be small, "left over" sites after development. These can be vacant or derelict, and community organisations typically get involved to address problems and bring them into productive use.

The Crown can claim ownerless property, including land and buildings. In Scotland this is undertaken by the King's and Lord's Treasurer Remembrancer (KLTR). We have been providing enhanced support to a Glasgow community group who is engaged in a pilot of the KLTR's Ownerless Property Transfer Scheme (OPTS).

The pilot aims to simplify the process of taking ownerless land into community ownership, with the possibility of transfer at cost (not market value). The KLTR is consulting on this scheme in Autumn 2022. If rolled out across Scotland, OPTS will make it easier for community groups to take ownership of ownerless land.

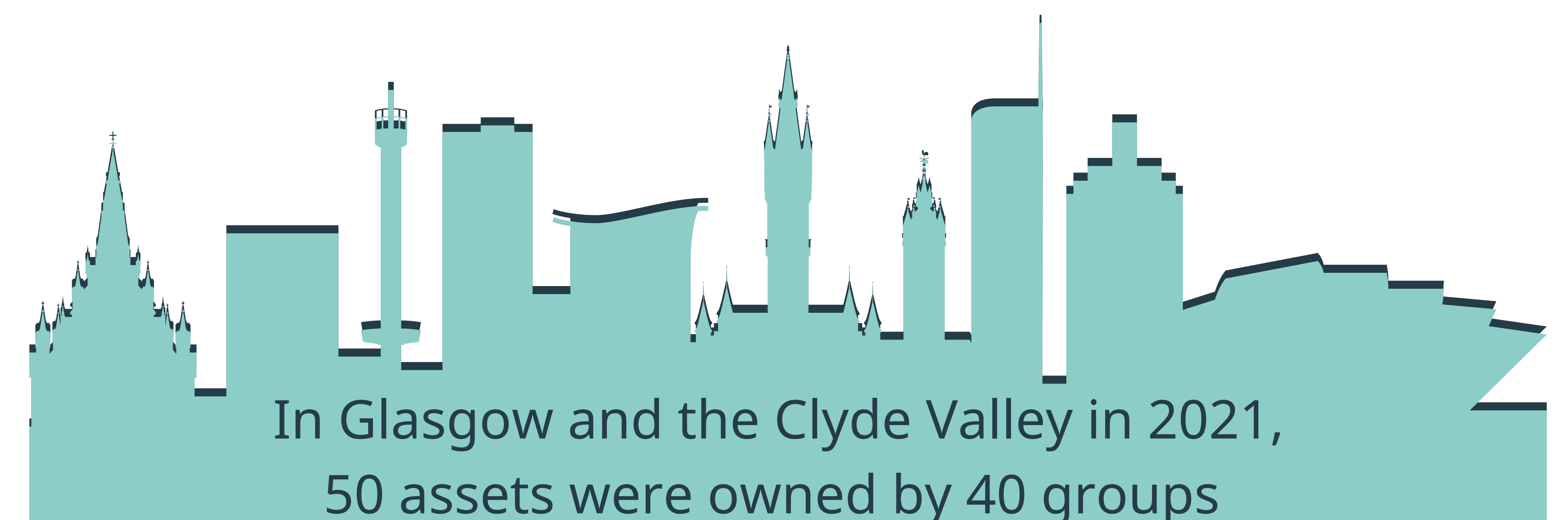
SEPTEMBER 2022 STATISTICS

From the start of the project until now, we have been in contact with 75 groups. 56 of these groups are early-stage, which we define as being pre-Scottish Land Fund Stage 1. There has been a high level of interest from communities to understand more about community land ownership.

A key trend is interest from those in neighbourhoods with less resources. 54 of the groups who have been in touch are from the most disadvantaged communities (those scoring 1 or 2 on the SIMD). Community groups are most interested in greenspaces (34 enquiries) and community centres (33 enquiries).

We are continually supporting 34 groups (regular contact). We also refer groups to existing support such as DTAS, Community Land Team, Scottish Land Fund, planning organisations and other community owners. We have made over 50 referrals.

The figures show that in Glasgow and the Clyde Valley there is a strong appetite for community ownership. It also highlights that disadvantaged communities are looking for ways to fill the gaps that they experience. Communities continuously highlight the need for spaces to get together and spaces to be outside.



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HOW WE HELP EARLY-STAGE GROUPS THROUGH OUR ENHANCED SUPPORT

The Community Ownership Hub work with all groups from early-stage to post-acquisition. In 2021-2022, we worked with predominantly early-stage communities, those that are not yet ready for Scottish Land Fund Stage 1. We have learned that the best way is to build relationships, spending time getting to know groups and providing a welcoming environment for questions about the complex community land buyout processes. We have prioritised making our work inclusive, and using plain language. The steps below explain a bit more about how we're supporting early stage groups to build a strong pipeline of community land projects in Glasgow and the Clyde Valley.



GROUPS MAKE THE FIRST POINT OF CONTACT

At the first contact, we assess whether a group needs support from us or if they can be directed to already existing forms of support.



MEETINGS TO UNDERSTAND PROJECT OR THE QUESTION

We meet with most groups with to better understand their enquiry.

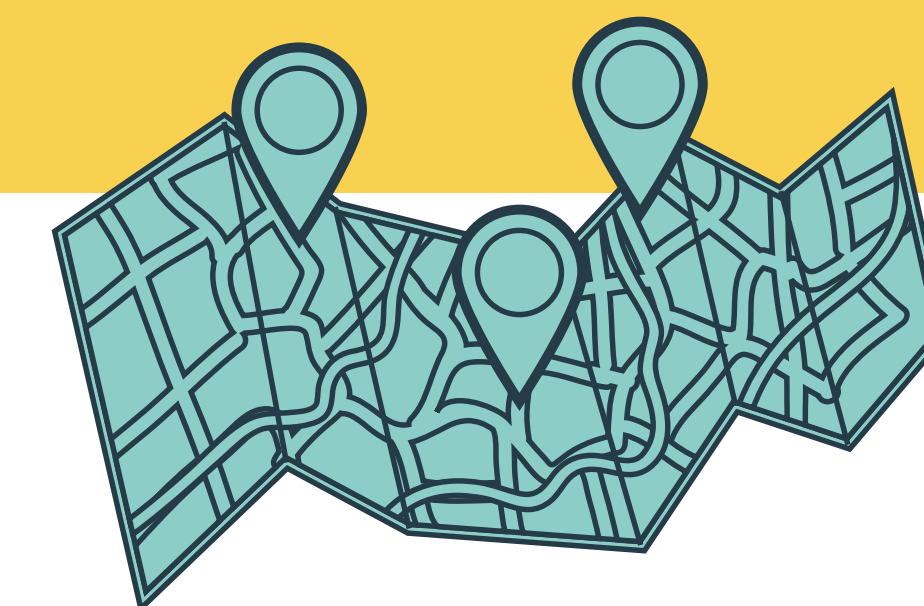
This also allows us to start building a relationship with the group.



IF NEEDED, PROVIDE OVERVIEW OF SITE INFORMATION

Groups are often interested in specific sites, so we provide information such as titles, planning history and other relevant registers.

This allows groups to understand the routes to ownership available to them and in some cases allows them to know who to contact about the land or buildings of interest.



PROVIDE DETAILED INFORMATION ON NEXT STEPS

Every group is different - they may need to start thinking about governance, they may need to look into becoming a community of geography or they may need to understand how Community Right To Buy works. We make sure they know where to go next!

Here is also another opportunity to refer groups on to existing support services.



ONGOING SUPPORT

We have learned that groups sometimes need time to move forward with their plans, so we check in and see how they are getting on.

If groups are getting stuck, we see how we can help!

We invite groups to events to support them with training and networking.

We attend events that our groups run so that they know we are there to support them.



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SPOTLIGHT ON: BOWLING GREENS

In our first year of work, bowling greens have proved to be particular sites of community interest. We have been in touch with six communities seeking to turn bowling clubs into community spaces.

Bowling clubs in Glasgow have been decreasing in popularity, with dwindling membership which can lead them to close. In some instances, these clubs are left vacant for long periods of time: they become overgrown and the buildings start to decay. Often they are under the ownership of trustees considering redevelopment. This land, which is at the heart of existing communities, could be put to many new uses. Some communities have become involved in objecting to planning applications on these sites, others are realising their value before there are development proposals or sales underway.

Communities are consistently recognising the value of these spaces in their local area. They are exploring how community land ownership may be a way to keep these assets in the community. They have visions of turning the land to a new community use, such as a community garden or community centre.

