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## CAT case study Hartcliffe City Farm

[HCF website](#)

### The challenge

Community-run farm on a sprawling [11 hectare site](#), established in the 1980s, in overall poor condition, and controlled for 40 years by an organisation that struggled to manage the facilities and balance the books.

Despite its condition, the farm was loved by local residents and schools.

Located on the doorstep of Bristol's most deprived communities, in an area with very few community facilities.

### The CAT process used

Strong political support enabled us to take the sitting tenant to Court and have them evicted.

A [prospectus](#) was published, expressions of interest were invited, and more than ten bids were received.

The imaginative joint proposal by two local organisations was selected and supported through the CAT process.

An initial CAT lease was granted in March 2021 for 5 years at a peppercorn rent. After settling in, the new tenant undertook wide-spread local consultation and developed a more in-depth business plan. A CAT lease for 35 years was then granted in Feb 2023.

### The outcomes

The new organisation published its proposals and raised over £800K of funding during its first 12 months.

It closed the site to the public, carried out major renovations, then gradually re-opened with volunteers and limited public access, and finally brought animals back onto the site, after its main funding bids had been successful.

The council's offer of a 35-year CAT lease [unlocked a £300K grant](#) from the Community Ownership Fund.

### Lessons learned

- Selecting two well-regarded local charities to take on the CAT reassured the local community and funders
- The two-stage lease (5/35 years) gave the tenant confidence, without them having to commit long-term from the start
- Working with another VCSE organisation to develop an independent community engagement report was crucial
- The value of the long lease was successfully used as leverage and 'match funding' for other funding bids