



## VENUE CHAMPIONS

**The Community Right to Bid** allows communities to nominate buildings or land for listing by the local authority as an asset of community value.

An **Asset of Community Value** is defined as a building or land used to further the social wellbeing in particular, though not exclusively, the cultural, recreational or sporting interests of the local community.

Under government rules, one of the groups that can nominate Assets of Community Value is an **unconstituted community group of at least 21 members**, i.e. at least 21 people that believe a building is of social/cultural value to its local community. The nomination does not involve lengthy form-filling; a **letter to your local authority** signed by 21+ people will suffice.

If an owner wants to sell property/land that is on the list, they must tell the local authority. If the nominating body is keen to develop a bid (or the Music Venue Trust in this case, on behalf of the nominators) they can then call for the local authority to trigger a **moratorium period** (of up to 6 months), during which time the owner cannot proceed to sell the asset. Assets remain on the list for at least 5 years.

### **Why this is important**

Independent music venues are currently classed as businesses. Their cultural value is not legally recognised by local authorities or national agencies in the way that arts centres, theatres and civic venues are. This means that they are not eligible for any support.

If a number of music venues across the UK were to be nominated as Community Assets this would have the effect of moving them into the cultural sector in terms of recognition from outside bodies. The outcomes of this would be:

1. The Music Venue Trust would have the ability to campaign for funding for these venues on the basis of their position as part of the arts infrastructure of the UK.
2. In the event of the venues coming up for sale the MVT could lead a campaign to raise the money to buy the venue and lease it back to the existing (or new if appropriate) venue managers - safeguarding the future of the building by basing a leasehold on the importance of the cultural value (i.e. music) in preference to the commercial value.
3. The MVT would be able to campaign on behalf of a collective group of venues to address shared concerns dealing with challenges such as licensing, noise control, touring budgets, national advertising etc.



This is why the Music Venue Trust needs a network of **Venue Champions** who are prepared to act as a lead voice in gathering support from their local community to register their local music venue as a community asset.

We can support you, offer advice and materials such as draft press releases, posters and social media, and even help you draft your nomination letter.

**A Venue Champion will:**

1. Be the first name on a letter to your local authority nominating your local venue as a community asset.
2. Be responsible for drumming up support locally to identify at least 20 other people prepared to sign your letter (obviously 50 people would be great!)
3. Be prepared to deal with local media (papers, radio etc.) to explain why this is important to you and the wider community.
4. Be our point of contact for your local campaign.
5. Be the 'face' of the local campaign on both a local and national level (Venue Champions will be featured in Music Venue Trust publicity).