

# RECLAIMING OUR COALFIELD COMMUNITIES

*Cardenden  
Community Action Plan  
April 2018*



# Introduction

The Coalfields Regeneration Trust's overarching priority is to develop community capacity; everything that we do is about supporting coalfield communities.

Community-led regeneration is at the heart of regeneration. It is about people:

- ❖ Identifying issues and opportunities in their local area
- ❖ Deciding what to do about them
- ❖ Making positive changes in their communities

The Coalfields Regeneration Trust (CRT) supports community-led regeneration that:

- ❖ Increases the number and strength of locally-controlled, enterprising community organisations
- ❖ Supports local organisations to take ownership of assets such as buildings or land
- ❖ Helps people to coordinate action and respond to challenges in areas where there are high levels of disadvantage
- ❖ Helps people identify and act on the priorities in their areas

The Electoral Reform Society operates on a simple premise - that politics can be better than it is. ERS Scotland wants to build a democracy fit for the 21st century, where every voice is heard, every vote is valued equally, and every citizen is empowered to take part. As the longest-standing pro-democracy organisation in the world, ERS works alongside parties, politicians, academics and other campaigners across the country to secure a better democracy.

Cardenden District consists of four villages – Auchterderran, Bowhill, Cardenden and Dundonald. There is also a sub-district called Woodend. It is an ex-mining area much like many towns and villages in Scotland's coalfields. There are issues affecting the area, such as a lack of employment, transport related issues and lack of youth facilities. These are faced head on by four villages with an amazing community spirit which comes to light in the many groups and organisations. There is a determination to do as much as they can to see the area reach its potential and a willingness to give their time to achieve this.



## Community Futures

CRT has been involved over the last few years in helping local people develop their own Community Action Plans, blueprints for development highlighting the needs to be tackled and new projects and services required for community regeneration. These have now been completed in 40 of the most deprived of Scotland's former coalfield communities.

The community of Cardenden has now completed their first five year Action Plan and it is now time for them to look to the future

CRT has worked with the Electoral Reform Society to consult the local community and create a new Action Plan based on feedback at consultation events – as well as comments left in the local library. The project to create the new plan is called "Reclaiming Our Coalfield Communities".

## Reclaiming Our Coalfield Communities

This project is rooted in a highly structured programme of engagement and development that has strengthened the ability of the community to define and achieve their objectives.

A vital factor has been that local residents, groups and organisations were assisted to participate in the project helping them to 'make the right connections' by facilitating development of the influencing skills and the relationships that less deprived communities benefit from.

Over a six month period the community has been working in partnership with CRT and the Electoral Reform Society Scotland to deliver the project. We delivered a series of bespoke workshops and seminars about redesigning their local democracy to work better for them, enabling them to thrive all the more by taking control of their community's future.





## How we did it

*Our Democracy: Act As If We Own the Place* has a simple starting point: that people flourish when they have control over their own lives. We think that the vast majority of Scots realise that freedom and power is best exercised as a community. As lone individuals we can potentially do some good things but as groups of individuals we have so much more power, can create and build better, and have more fun. By doing this we find out how capable we all are, building trust in ourselves and in each other to run our own places.

If democracy is about anything it is about running our own affairs. That's why we got as many people from the community together as possible to talk about how they want to run their local place. Over two half day events we spent time discussing out what people see as issues in their communities, learning about interesting ways that other places have taken back control, and coming up with local projects and solutions. By using different tools to draw out ideas and facilitating discussion, we ensured that every attendee's views were heard and considered.

Having a Community Engagement Worker based within the community for 6 months helped ensure that a large and representative group of people participated at each event. The findings of these events are given greater legitimacy by the fact that over the demographics of (1) education, (2) households with one member disabled or chronically ill and (3) families with children they are broadly similar to the overall community. Recruiting young people to attend the events proved the hardest, however a number of people under 25 did still come along.

## Event One

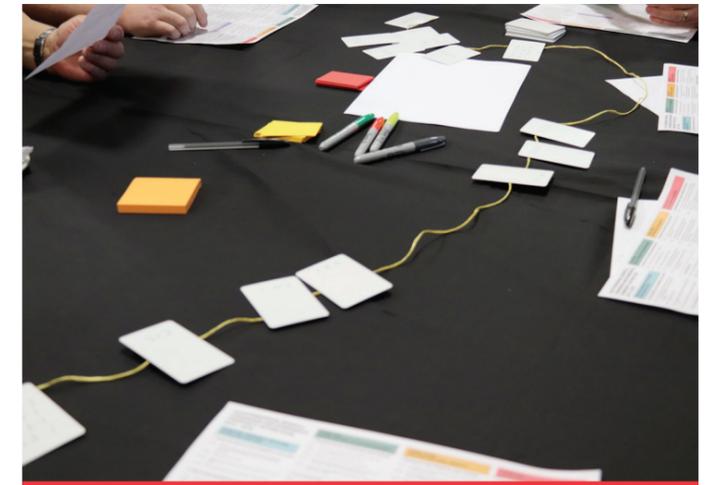
The intention was to give participants time to reflect on what had recently been achieved within their communities, as well focusing on what the current issues and concerns are.

It was important, before we looked forward to the next five years, to first look back in order to see if community members agreed on how successfully the previous Action Plan had been completed.

### Appraisal of the Past

For the Appraisal of the Past task the previous Community Action Plan was turned into a document where each action had a corresponding reference number (i.e. 1.1.1, 1.1.2, etc.). Groups were given a set of cards on which to write the actions reference number and a piece of string on which to attach the card, with the string representing a sliding scale of Successful to Unsuccessful.

Groups worked together to discuss whether specific actions had been achieved or not. The task also provided an opportunity to refresh people's memories and to learn about the successful (or unsuccessful) implementation of each of the community's actions.



### Asset Mapping

After appraising the past, the focus of the next task was to identify positive and negative community assets. Groups were given red and yellow cards to write down all the assets in their community (yellow = good asset, red = bad asset).

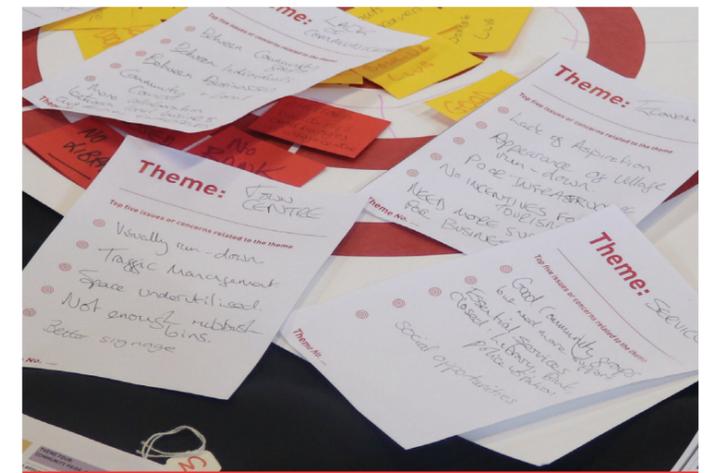
Next, groups were asked to map these assets onto a target. The centre of the target represented the assets which were most important to the community, with those that are less important placed towards the periphery. Related cards, whether they were yellow or red, were clustered together in order to generate themes.



### Themes and Priorities

The Asset Mapping exercise was used as a process to allow participants to discuss what the current issues and concerns were in their community and to begin to draw out - by clustering related cards together - new themes and priorities which would lay the basis for next Community Action Plan.

Groups were given worksheets on which to document their themes and priorities. After the first event, each groups themes and priorities were then analysed and collated in order to create a overall picture of the important current issues and concerns within the community.



# Event Two

The primary aim of the second event was to develop project ideas and community actions that would address many of the issues and concerns that had been highlighted at the first event.



## Organising Priorities

As some participants may not have come to the first event it was important to provide a space to go over the Themes and Priorities that were developed in Event One.

All priorities were turned into illustrated cards and on each table there was a traffic-light coding system. Groups went through all the cards and placed them on the corresponding colour depending on how easy or hard they thought each priority would be to achieve. The task created an opportunity for participants to think about what issues are most important, and also what is easy or hard to achieve.



## Top Five Issues

As a wide variety of priorities had been highlighted from the first event, ranging from systemic issues such as poverty to more surface level concerns such as dog fouling, it was important to narrow the focus and distill the issues and concerns.

After the priorities had been organised, groups were then asked to highlight their Top Five Issues from the deck of cards. Groups then placed related priorities around these cards in order to see how community issues were related. It also provided an opportunity for groups to reconsider the issues so that potential projects could tackle a range of associated priorities.



## Inspiring Projects

The next phase in the project was a Learning Phase. This involved presentations from people who have been involved in projects which might be inspiring for the community members to hear about and could provide information or insights which could help participants to think about what they could achieve in their own communities.

Speakers across the three communities were:

- Chris Strachan:** The Glasgow Tool Library
- Abigale Neate-Wilson:** Agile City
- Mike McCarron:** GalGael
- Enid Trevett:** CRT

## Projects and Actions

The last task of was focussed on developing community projects. For this phase, groups were given Concept Worksheets which provided a framework of questions which would lead participants towards well structured project ideas. For this task people were asked to work in groups of three or four.

Initially, participants were asked to rephrase their issues into questions. For example, the issue of Poor Transportation

Links was rephrased to How might our community... improve transportation links? Then they were asked to develop three project ideas for how to address the issue: 1, An easy option / short term thinking; 2, A hard option / long term thinking, and; 3, A radical alternative / something completely different. This format would encourage participants to not just think of the most obvious idea, but challenge them to think of other ways to tackle the issue.

Participants were then asked to either pick the best idea or to combine elements in order to develop a final project idea. Groups were then asked who would be responsible for making the project happen, where it would happen, whether the project would address any other community issues, and finally groups were asked to develop a project timeline which would highlight the steps and actions that would need to happen in order to make the project a reality.



# Participatory Budget

On 1st May the voting event took place in Bowhill Centre. This event was for the community to decide on which projects would receive funding through the Participatory Budget that was provided by Coalfields Regeneration

Trust. Additional funding was also provided by Fife Council. Representatives from each of the five groups who had applied for funding were present, showcasing and answering questions about their projects. Members of the

public attended and voted for their favourite projects. Each person had two votes and therefore tasked to vote for two different projects. All projects were successful in receiving funding. The results were:

**1**  
**Carden Avenue Playpark**  
 Cardenden Playpark Group

**2**  
**Youth Shelter**  
 Cardenden Community Development Forum

**3**  
**Gammie Place Upgrade**  
 Environment Group

**4**  
**Coaching Skills**  
 John Thomson Memorial Group

**5**  
**Poop yer Scoop**  
 Cardenden Community Development Forum



# Themes and Priorities

These priorities and actions highlight the main strategies that have been identified by the community over the previous two events. The community, in partnership with public agencies, supports and partners, will work towards achieving the Action Plan over the coming years.

120 people attended the events and we would like to thank everyone for contributing and helping to shape the future for Cardenden.

## 1 Buildings, Spaces and the Environment

### 1.1

**Priority:** Make improvements to the core paths

**Action:** Work with Fife Council to ensure that any essential works required on the core paths is carried out.

### 1.3

**Priority:** Plans for the Auchterderran School site

**Action:** Ensure that there is consultation with the community to work on the usage of the site

### 1.5

**Priority:** Upgrading of the community playparks

**Action:** Support the Cardenden Playpark Group and the community in their efforts to create a play area

**Action:** Work with Fife Council to ensure playparks are fit for purpose

**Action:** Continue to raise funding for improvements

### 1.7

**Priority:** Dog fouling/litter

**Action:** Support the Cardenden Community Development Forum to work on the 'Scoop yer Poop' project with youth groups

### 1.2

**Priority:** Deal with and revive run down and derelict buildings

**Action:** Work with Cardenden Community Development Forum, the building owners and the Scottish Government regarding repairs or compulsory purchase orders on dangerous buildings.

### 1.4

**Priority:** Plans for the old Institute

**Action:** Continue to support the work of Cardenden Community Development Forum, Ore Valley Housing and Fife Council

### 1.6

**Priority:** Upgrading of the Gammie Place site

**Action:** Support the work of the Environment Group with the first phase of the 'Watching the World Go By' project

**Action:** Continue to raise funding for improvements

### 1.8

**Priority:** Traffic congestion, inconsiderate/illegal parking and lack of traffic wardens

**Action:** Liaise with Fife Council to encourage enforcement

## 2 Infrastructure and Local Services

### 2.1

**Priority:** Need for improved transport

**Action:** Work with local businesses on mobility access and local bus group

### 2.3

**Priority:** Lack of doctors, especially specialist doctors and long waiting times

**Action:** Liaise with Local MSP's and MP's to lobby the Scottish Government

### 2.5

**Priority:** No facilities at weekends for young people

**Action:** Work with young people to ascertain their needs

**Action:** Work with Fife Council Community Learning and Development Team

### 2.2

**Priority:** Need for improved mobility access

**Action:** Identify where the issues are and work with local businesses to improve mobility access

### 2.4

**Priority:** Lack of car parking

**Action:** Work with Fife Council to identify areas in the villages where more designated parking is required.

**Action:** Identify areas of neglected land that could be redeveloped as car parks for local residents.

**Action:** Work with Fife Council to develop an exemplar community project which addresses parking and traffic management issues.

### 2.6

**Priority:** Lack of affordable and quality housing

**Action:** Work with social housing providers to ascertain how further developments can be provided

## 3 Community Safety and Security

### 3.1

**Priority:** CCTV required

**Action:** Identify priority areas

**Action:** Source prospective funding opportunities

**Action:** Work with Cardenden Community Development Forum, Fife Council and Police Scotland

### 3.2

**Priority:** Lack of policing/anti-social behaviour

**Action:** Continue to work with Police Scotland to look at increasing community policing

**Action:** Encourage residents to report any incidents to the police or relevant agency to help enhance response rate

**Action:** Explore ideas around setting up neighbourhood watch schemes

## 4 Activities, Events and Community Groups

### 4.1

**Priority:** Strong community pride

**Action:** Random acts of kindness to encourage the community to build on their strong community spirit

### 4.3

**Priority:** Christmas events, football days, fireworks and the community fair

**Action:** Continue to support those events which are already set up in the area

### 4.2

**Priority:** Promote what is already available

**Action:** Work with Fife Council Community Learning and Development Team, using social media, newsletter and local schools

### 4.4

**Priority:** MUGA to be completed

**Action:** Continue to work with Fife Council and Cardenden Community Development Forum to bring about the completion of the MUGA

### 4.4

**Priority:** Youth Shelter

**Action:** Work with Fife Council to identify suitable site for Youth Shelter, Work with Youth Club and Youth Forum to develop design for Youth Shelter, Identify suitable funders, encourage young people to develop fund raising campaigns and work with Fife Council CLD to apply for funding, Encourage local young people to take ownership of the Youth Shelter.

## 5 Economy and Poverty

### 5.1

**Priority:** Promote the local information booklet

**Action:** Work with Cardenden Community Development Forum

### 5.3

**Priority:** RWE Plant – the process causes dust pollution in the areas

**Action:** Liaise with and continue to support the 'Bowhill recycling and restoration facility liaison group.'

### 5.5

**Priority:** Harness strong community spirit to help alleviate poverty

**Action:** Continue to support the Community Shop, Auchterderran Church Drop-in and Tots to Teens project

### 5.2

**Priority:** Lack of Business Forum

**Action:** Encourage local businesses to set up a forum and work in tandem with Cardenden Community Development Forum

### 5.4

**Priority:** Training in to work opportunities

**Action:** Work with Fife Council and other appropriate agencies, such as Business Gateway, to investigate opportunities for increasing employability initiatives locally

**Action:** Encourage groups and businesses to create employment around the needs of the local area

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## Event One

*'Very good workshops'*

*'Worthwhile Event'*

*'I found it interesting'*

*'First workshop could have had more time for discussion'*

*'Listening to people's views/opinions'*

*'Good communication with groups'*

*'Need to add support to existing groups'*

*'I liked the methods used to gain the information'*

*'Less items to go through. It was quite rushed'*

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## Event Two

*'Enjoyed speaker talking about Syria Area [Rojava]'*

*'Thinking about democracy on a different level'*

*Found it all very interesting'*

*'Need to add support to existing groups'*

*'More time could have been spent on final two activities'*

*'Interesting to find out other people's thoughts/ ideas from the community'*

*'Local Empowerment is so important'*

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