

# WATERSIDE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN 2019-2024



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## Preface

The village of Waterside has a long history. Beginning, as many settlements across Scotland did, probably as no more than a small collection of farmworkers' cottages, Waterside underwent something of a transformation when linen weaving became the first 'cottage industry' in Scotland.

In due course the work of coal mining displaced weaving as the primary form of employment, and the village began to grow. More buildings were erected, the population increased in response to the demand for labour, and a subscription school was opened to provide basic education for the local children.

Over time forms of employment changed, and the village expanded, but that expansion was slow and steady. Now the village faces a very different future. Plans set out by East Dunbartonshire Council would transform the area and make the village a suburb of Kirkintilloch, taking away the community identity.

It is therefore timely that the Coalfields Community Futures project has stepped in to try to establish what the inhabitants of Waterside want for the future of our village. For too long communities such as ours have been subject to developments and alterations that have taken place with little reference to the needs, wants and aspirations of the people affected. This project has given us the opportunity to look at where we stand, and what kind of future we would like to see unfold for the good of our community.



## Introduction

**203** community household surveys were returned, representing the views of over **400** residents, and **70** people attended the Community Futures open event.

### Coalfields Community Futures

The Coalfields Community Futures programme is an approach to local community planning and sustainable community development that aims to encourage active citizenship and build local democracy. It enables communities to devise a community action plan which makes a case for the things that the community thinks are important and wishes to make happen.

The process builds on existing processes of community action research to identify local needs and priorities, using residents as co-researchers. Coalfields Community Futures works with local residents and groups to develop a common sense of purpose and produce a deliverable community action plan.

To support the action planning process the community receives a participatory budget which is available to local constituted community or voluntary groups.

This budget enables the community to fund small projects that are identified by the community through the results of the household surveys, stakeholder interviews and the Community Futures open event.

### Waterside Community Action Plan

The plan summarises community views and information about:

- our community now
- our shared vision for Waterside
- priority themes and actions
- making the links to community planning.

The steering group brought together representatives from Waterside Community Council, Waterside Village Events and Luggiewatch.

Thank you to everyone who took part in helping Waterside plan for a bright future!



## A shared vision for our community

### Waterside will

- be a community that takes pride in itself, with care and respect for others a top priority along with the safety and security of all
- be a community that works well together for the benefit of everyone (young, old and from every walk of life), with that thriving sense of community spirit that residents so appreciate
- continue to be a strong community, alive with volunteers, community groups and entrepreneurs all playing their part
- look after and encourage appreciation of its rich cultural and industrial heritage while also remaining forward-looking
- look after its natural heritage and encourage everyone to contribute to and enjoy a clean and tidy environment
- offer accessible paths and walks in a beautiful landscape
- continue to be a green place, full of trees and flowers, with excellent parkland and green open space where people can enjoy themselves outdoors
- go on putting on seasonal events and activities that bring the community together and welcome visitors
- have excellent local facilities (both indoors and outdoors) that cater for all ages and activities, with lots to do and spaces to meet and be active
- do everything it can to support the development of young people, who represent the future of our community
- continue to be a village with a unique identity that must never be lost.



## Our Community Now

### Background

This profile has been produced to give an insight into the Waterside area. It is part of a wider Community Futures process being delivered by the Coalfields Regeneration Trust across Scotland's coalfield communities to assist them to reflect on what is good, what could be improved and how to go forward.



### Location

Waterside is a small village on the eastern edge of Kirkintilloch in East Dunbartonshire. It is roughly 10 miles north-east of Glasgow.

### Population

The total population of Waterside is probably around 745, with a working age population of 475. **Source:** Mid-Year Estimates (ONS) 2016.

### Housing

Waterside has a range of semi-detached houses, bungalows, flats and cottages. Some properties are from the 18th century. Stakeholder interviews have highlighted drainage issues as well as some areas being prone to flooding.

The community is home to many young married couples; however larger properties at realistic prices are hard to come by. It has been observed that much pride and effort is made to maintain many of the gardens.

The highest number of houses (38.2%) are in Council Tax band C, which is classed as affordable housing.

**Source:** National Records of Scotland 2016.

### Health & Care

Nearest surgeries are in Kirkintilloch, with a two- to three-week waiting time for an appointment. The main hospital is the Glasgow Royal Infirmary, which is a 40-minute drive away. Home care is provided, but access to this service has been reduced. People living with a limiting long-term illness is 23.4%, which is higher than Scotland as a whole at 19.6% (Census 2011).

### Local Economy, Shops and Services

Waterside is serviced by an ice-cream van, a small mobile shop and a good local shop (Archie's), which also has a takeaway service. There are coach businesses and a busy industrial estate on Pit Road and a blacksmith at Duntiblae.

### Education and Childcare

Local schools include Gartconner Primary, Holy Trinity Primary, Kirkintilloch High, Merkland School and Oxgang Primary. The 2011 Census shows that just under 32% of people aged 16-74 have no qualifications, which is higher than Scotland as a whole at just under 27%. Over 14% of school-leavers go on to higher education.

### Community Activities and Facilities

Waterside Miners' Welfare & Social Club currently provides the only public meeting space in the village for community events and public meetings.

Waterside has good community websites and Facebook pages, eg the Waterside Community Council, Waterside Village Events, Waterside Past and Present and Luggiewatch ones. There is also a community noticeboard for local information. The food co-op supplied fresh fruit and vegetables using volunteers; however due to funding and restructuring at East Dunbartonshire Council it was closed.

## Environment

Waterside is blessed with a rich natural heritage and unique biodiversity. Luggiewatch carries out environmental improvement work and engages local children and adults in conservation as well as fun activities in nature. The village has a number of floral enhancements thanks to work by volunteers, who also care for the Luggie Water, a river that flows out of Cumbernauld. Eels and otters can be found in the river and there are herons, kingfishers and some large mammals here.

## Traffic & Transport

There is only one road into Waterside, which struggles to cope with the number of vehicles. There is limited parking in the village, causing severe problems with congestion and safety issues for pedestrians. Of particular concern are the parked cars at the bus turning circle on Bankhead Road, which restrict traffic. Speeding cars are another big concern that was highlighted as part of the community survey.

## Community Action Plan: Considerations

There is much local concern over the fact that much of the open green space is being developed for housing. In addition there is the threat of losing the large playing field as you enter Waterside, which has been earmarked for the building of an additional support needs school. This has created a strong lobbying group in the village. The existing lack of provision for safe outdoor play and sport will be further diminished if the plan for the school build goes ahead.

Waterside has only one community facility to speak of: the Miners' Club. The building is in desperate need of refurbishment and a plan must be drawn up whereby the community can make the most of this key community asset for the benefit of everyone in the village.

There is an issue regarding fly-tipping in the village and surrounds. Consideration needs to be given to how this type of local incivility can be addressed in an effective manner.



# The results from the community survey show us what the people of Waterside like.

What do you *like* about your community?

75%

of respondents say they like the community spirit found in Waterside



33%

of respondents say they like the green space / river environment



17%

of respondents say they like the civic pride



16%

of respondents say they like the local groups and events in Waterside

13%

of respondents say they like the location of Waterside



12%

of respondents say they like the quiet and peace in Waterside

10%

of respondents say they like the feel and size of the village as well as the walks and views

# The results from the community survey show us what the people of Waterside dislike.

What do you **dislike** about your community?

41%

of respondents say they dislike the lack of amenities / facilities



20%

of respondents say they dislike the state of the roads and pavements

18%

of respondents say they dislike the lack of services



16%

of respondents say they dislike the proposed development plans for Waterside

11%

of respondents say they dislike the fact that some gardens are not well maintained



11%

of respondents say they dislike the speeding traffic

10%

and under of respondents highlighted issues such as fly-tipping, dog fouling, housing and poor transport



## Quotes taken from the likes

- 'Community spirit, history of the area.'
- 'Surrounding fields, countryside and our river; friendly neighbourhood.'
- 'We are a close-knit community surrounded by beautiful countryside and a lovely river running through with lots of wildlife.'
- 'Sense of a strong community council.'
- 'The safe feeling you have when you are out. The community cares.'
- 'Wide green space, community spirit.'
- 'Its unique village identification.'
- 'It's friendly and welcoming.'

## Quotes taken from the dislikes

- 'Lack of swing park facilities – need to drive to Woodhead. The thought of losing our football park to a school.'
- 'Lack of facilities like a community centre. River path is too overgrown to enjoy a nice walk.'
- 'Lack of activities for all ages. No decent hall.'
- 'Areas unsafe for child play due to fast traffic and no playpark for kids. Loss of our community hall.'
- 'The Waterside football park being taken away for a school. There's no need for a school to be built on our football park. Our village will not be able to cope with the traffic if this school is built.'

## From our kids' perspective

Pupils from Gartconner Primary School made their contribution to the Waterside Community Action Plan by completing their own questionnaire, which asked pupils questions like *What things do you like to do most of all? What hobbies do you have? Are you a member of a club? What do you like most about living here? What do you dislike most about living here? What would you like to see happen here in the future?*

Thirty pupils took part and the results give an insight into the thoughts and feelings of our young residents. Their concerns about the village reflect those of the adults, with litter, dog fouling and village appearance being top-ranking in their dislikes. Community spirit and friends are top of their likes, with parks and school following next.

Also of interest is the fact that 72% of our young people appear to be involved in a group or club of some description, with only 2% giving TV as their favourite activity.

Looking to the future the three most important issues for our young people are:

- improving facilities
- improving the environment
- becoming eco-friendly.

If these aspiration are met, Waterside should offer a secure future for young people to live and grow up in the local area.



# Theme 1: Community Facilities and Activities

**These are the main strategies and priorities the community will work towards achieving in partnership with public agencies and other supporters.**

Building social capital is a key aspect of creating strong, resilient communities. Good-quality community facilities that are fit for purpose with regular opportunities for communities to meet and share in activities and conversation are the glue that binds communities together. This theme has emerged from the community survey and it is essential that the community can work with other stakeholders, support organisations and agencies to realise these outcomes over the term of the action plan.

## Improve playpark facilities for all ages and abilities

- Identify what's needed to suit all ages through local community engagement.
- Work with East Dunbartonshire Council and other appropriate agencies to take agreed plans forward.
- Identify suitable funding streams and apply for funding.

## Keep our green space

Work with East Dunbartonshire Council and other appropriate agencies and support organisations to:

- maximise and protect our green space
- maximise and protect our natural habitats, including woodland
- maximise and protect our local open space.

## Improve / upgrade Miners' Welfare Club for community use

- Make applications to Awards for All to cover costs for a consultant to carry out a feasibility study on improving the building.
- Use feasibility study to raise funding to make necessary improvements to the building.

## Develop activities for children and young people

- Work with the council community learning & development team to help find out what teenagers want in their area.
- Create a development trust.
- Work with partners to provide the necessary provision.
- Identify funding where required.

## Further develop community events for all

- Carry out community engagement to identify what types of activities and events would be supported by local people.
- Work with local council and other groups and organisations to deliver appropriate activities.
- Identify funding where required.

## Potential Partners

East Dunbartonshire Council, Waterside Community Council, CRT, Luggiewatch, Greenspace Scotland, Planning Aid, Paths for All, Development Trust Association Scotland (DTAS), Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH).



## Theme 2: Roads and Transport

**These are the main strategies and priorities the community will work towards achieving in partnership with public agencies and other supporters.**

We need to work closely with the East Dunbartonshire Community Planning Partnership to help alleviate the issues relating to parking, poor road conditions and traffic issues around accessing and leaving the village. We want an increased bus service to neighbouring areas. We also want to improve local residents' access to wider transport links.

### Improve parking

- Work with local council to explore ways of improving the safety issues around car parking in the village.

### Potential Partners

East Dunbartonshire Council, Waterside Community Council, Transport Scotland.

### Improve pavements and pathways

- Host a workshop to identify what needs to be done.
- Work with East Dunbartonshire Council and other partners to take this priority forward.

### Traffic calming measures

- Work with local council to look at enforcing a 20mph speed limit.
- Work with local council to investigate other traffic calming measures.

### Improve roads

- Carry out a mapping exercise to identify work needing to be done, and work with East Dunbartonshire Council to prioritise their road maintenance schedule.

### Improvements to street lighting

- Work with East Dunbartonshire Council on identifying areas needing improved lighting.



## Theme 3: Services

**These are the main strategies and priorities the community will work towards achieving in partnership with public agencies and other supporters.**

'Good-quality public services rank high on the priority list for the people of Waterside. Issues such as environmental health, use of green space and public transport have been highlighted. Partnership working, dialogue and effective use and sharing of resources are an essential part of moving forward with each of these priorities.'

### Address the dog fouling issue

- Work with local council on a joint approach to dealing with dog fouling.
- Encourage participation in a 'Clean Up Waterside' campaign!
- Carry out a mapping exercise to identify where bins are required as a matter of priority.
- Work with local council to ensure bins are emptied regularly.
- Work with local council to ensure a rapid response to dealing with fly-tipping.

### More benches around the village

- Carry out a mapping exercise to identify best locations for benches.
- Identify funding sources.
- Work with local council to have them installed.
- Work with appropriate organisations to carry out a community mapping exercise looking at green space and how it can be designed to suit the needs of everyone.
- Identify funding sources.

### Community Newsletter

- Create a campaign around building a positive story around living in Waterside. Positive news stories.

### Improved public transport services

- Carry out community engagement to establish level of community interest in this.
- Explore opportunities in partnership with transport providers.

### Potential Partners

- East Dunbartonshire Council, Greenspace Scotland, SportScotland, Waterside Community Council, local retailers & businesses, community.



## Theme 4: Village Environment and Heritage

**These are the main strategies and priorities the community will work towards achieving in partnership with public agencies and other supporters.**

Access to woodland, water and good-quality green space with good path networks is important for the health and well-being of a community. This also relies on such key priorities as feeling safe, having adequate play and growing spaces, with people having a sense of place and a sense of pride. A community that is attractive and cared for, with local people taking responsibility for their actions on a day-to-day basis, is essential in helping maintain a clean and tidy environment for everyone to enjoy.

### Develop a community garden

- Carry out further initial community engagement to identify level of interest.
- Carry out a mapping exercise to identify best location and work with East Dunbartonshire Council or landowner to agree terms for use of land.
- Source appropriate funding for setting up the garden.

### Make our village even more beautiful

- Work with local council to ensure a rapid response to dealing with fly-tipping.
- Contact Keep Scotland Beautiful for guidance on enhancing the village.
- Identify funding for more resources / equipment.
- Work in partnership with local council to make the most of environmental improvements.

### Make the most of our village heritage

- Investigate what signage and interpretation is needed within the village to raise awareness of natural and industrial heritage.
- Work in partnership with local council for planning requirements.
- Investigate funding and sponsorship from local businesses.

### Potential Partners

East Dunbartonshire Council, Waterside Community Council, Police Scotland, local businesses, local community groups, residents, Paths for All.



## Early actions funded through Participatory Budget

### Gartconner Primary School

After-School Clubs

### Luggiewatch

Bat Walks

### Waterside Community Council

EZS book – *Around Waterside: Images Old and New*

Waterside Living History Project

Public Access Defibrillator

Window Wanderland and Orienteering

Village Improvement Project

### Waterside Village Events

Event Equipment

Annual Christmas Celebrations

Waterside Christmas Panto

Children’s Health & Well-being



## Making the links to East Dunbartonshire Council

### East Dunbartonshire’s Community Plan

2017-2027 sets out six high-level outcomes, each with a number of long-term outcomes towards which the partnership groups will work alongside other key groups. Community Planning Partners have signed up to these shared outcomes. Lead partnership groups will work together with the people and communities to deliver these objectives, with each partner providing a unique and valued contribution.

East Dunbartonshire Community Plan High-Level Outcomes	
Economic Growth & Recovery	Safer & Stronger Communities
Employment & Skills	Adult Health & Well-being
Children & Young People	Older Adults, Vulnerable People & Carers

Waterside Community Action Plan	
Facilities & Activities	Services
Roads & Transport	Village Environment and Heritage

## Making it Happen

**This community action plan sets out the priorities for the development of Waterside over the next 5 years as identified by the community through an extensive process of community engagement carried out over a period of 4 months, June to September 2018.**

### The plan contains:

- a summary of the Waterside community profile
- our main likes and dislikes expressed in the community survey
- our vision statement for Waterside
- the main themes and priorities for taking action
- a list of the projects that are helping kick-start the action plan
- links between our Waterside Community Action Plan outcomes and the East Dunbartonshire ones in their community plan
- information on how to get involved or just be kept informed.

The community action plan is not just for the few but for everyone; we hope you will read it, consider its content and help toward making it work by taking action where you are, in whatever way you can.

If everyone did something positive for their community every day, then what a difference that would make!

Many thanks go to all those who took their time to share their views, and to the volunteers and participants who made the community voting day a great success.

Thanks to the villagers whose photographs are included, and to Edward Z. Smith for the use of images from his Waterside archives.

The participatory budget from the Coalfields Regeneration Trust is £20,000. This funding has been used on local projects which support the key themes found in the action plan.

To find out more information about the Waterside Community Action Plan or to volunteer with any projects please contact [waterside-cc@outlook.com](mailto:waterside-cc@outlook.com).



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