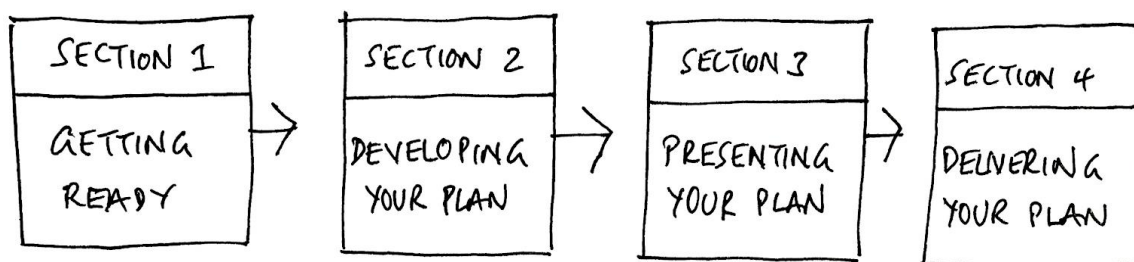# Introduction



Local Place Plans are a way for communities to achieve change in their local area. They are a tool for local communities to think about how to make their "place" better, agree priorities, and take action (often working with others) to make change happen.

They are more than just a plan: they can help your community understand what it wants to be like in the future, and for working together with your local authority and others to make positive change happen.

This Guide is designed to help communities decide whether a Local Place Plan is the right thing for them, and how to go about preparing one. It may also be of interest to anyone else who wants to support local communities in Local Place Planning, for example local authorities or Community Planning Partners.

The Guide is designed as a living document. As experience of Local Place Planning grows and evolves around the country, so this Guide should grow and evolve too. If you have suggestions, examples of good practice or personal experiences for inclusion, please contact us via the link in the footer.

## Structure of this Guide

The Guide is structured into four sections. You can read them in any order, depending on what you are most interested in. If you're completely new to the idea of community-led planning, we suggest you read **Getting Ready** first.

### 1: Getting Ready

- What is a Local Place Plan?
- Why prepare a Local Place Plan?
- Who needs to be involved and why?
- How should you define your local community?
- What resources and commitment will be needed?
- Is a Local Place Plan right for your community?

### 2: Developing your Local Place Plan

- Doing your research
- Engaging your community
- Planning ahead

## 3: **Presenting your Local Place Plan**

- Overview
- Think about the user
- Think about your format
- Use simple language
- Keep the Plan structure simple
- Think about your design
- Sharing your Plan with your local authority and others

## 4: **Delivering your Local Place Plan**

- Working collaboratively
- Finding support for delivery
- Funding and timescales
- Monitoring progress
- Celebrating achievements
- Reviewing, evaluating and updating your Plan
- Resources

## Explanation of terms

The following terms are used throughout the Guide:

| **Community** | Community is a group of people united by at least one common characteristic, including geography, identity or shared interests. |
| --- | --- |
| **Community development** | A process where people come together to take action on what's important to them. It supports communities of place and identity to use their own assets to improve the quality of community life, and helps communities and public agencies to work together to improve services and the way in which decisions are made. |
| **Community empowerment** | Scottish Government policy objective of supporting communities to do things for themselves, and to make their voices heard in the planning and delivery of services |
| **Community engagement** | Involving, engaging and consulting local communities about Local Place Planning |
| **Community learning and development (CLD)** | CLD practitioners in the public and voluntary sectors work with people to identify their own individual and collective goals, engage in learning, and take action to bring about change for themselves and their communities |
| **Community-led planning** | Communities themselves leading the preparation of plans for their future |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Community Planning** | Statutory process of public sector organisations (Community Planning Partners) working together as a Community Planning Partnership to plan and deliver public services in local authority areas, through Locality Plans and Local Outcome Improvement Plans |
| **Delivery** | Making things happen on the ground, for example projects, services and capital investments |
| **Land use planning** | Statutory town planning as defined mainly by the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 plus other primary and secondary legislation, consisting largely of development planning and determining planning applications |
| **Placemaking** | Broad range of activities to improve the physical quality of local communities, in order to create more sustainable and healthier places - including planning, transport, development and greenspaces |
| **Outcomes** | Outcomes are what you want to achieve (e.g. healthier lifestyles), in contrast to outputs which are the actions or items that contribute to achieving an outcome (e.g. reduced traffic emissions) |
| **Spatial** | Relating to physical space in or around communities |
| **Stakeholders** | Range of organisations who might be involved in Local Place Planning from the public, private and third sectors, from local community to central government |
| **Steering Group** | For the purpose of this Guide, a group of people from different stakeholders who are responsible for organising and delivering the Local Place Plan process |
| **Third Sector Interface (TSI)** | Single point of contact for third sector organisations (including community groups) in each local authority area. |

# [Section 1] **Getting Ready**
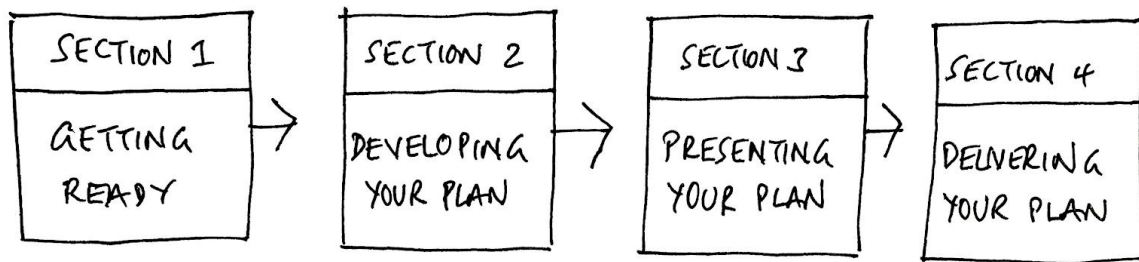


## Overview

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Local Place Plans provide a tool for local communities to think about how to make their "place" better, agree priorities, and take action (often working with others) to make change happen.

This first section of the Guide will help you understand what a Local Place Plan is, and whether it's the right thing for your community. You should read this section before you make a decision to start on a Local Place Plan.

> This section will help you work out:
>
> - Is a Local Place Plan right for you and your community?
> - The vital groundwork needed as a foundation for developing your Plan.
> - Who you'll need to work with to produce your Plan.
> - The level of commitment and resources you will need.

The section has the following headings:

- **What is a Local Place Plan?**
- **Why prepare a Local Place Plan?**
- **Who needs to be involved and why?**
- **How should you define your local community?**
- **What resources and commitment will be needed?**
- **Is a Local Place Plan right for your community?**

# What is a Local Place Plan?

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> **Key messages**
>
> - A Local Place Plan is an expression of community aspirations and solutions which can influence local planning policy and priorities for future development in the area, as well as help your community deliver its own projects.
> - It is a proposal by a community about the development or use of land within their local area, describing what changes people want to see made to the local authority's Local Development Plan for the area.
> - It should include a spatial vision for your community that maps where changes will happen; and an action plan laying out how changes will be delivered.

## Legal status of Local Place Plans

*[This will need to be checked after secondary legislation and formal guidance have been published]*

Local Place Plans were introduced by the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019, Section 14 of which contains a new right for communities to produce Local Place Plans as part of the new Scottish planning system.

Local Place Plans contain the community's proposals for the development and use of land, and so provide a new opportunity for communities to proactively feed into the development planning system. Local Place Plans also aim to improve public engagement and involvement in the planning system.

## Defining characteristics of Local Place Plans

- Local Place Plans must, if they are to be registered by your local authority, comply with legal requirements.

- Local Place Plans must belong to the local community. Aspirations, priorities and projects should emerge from and be co-designed with the local community, through inclusive and robust community engagement and development.

- As proposals for the development and use of land, Local Place Plans should express a clear vision for the future, including a spatial map, and key actions to deliver that future vision.

- Local Place Plans may contain a variety of proposals, from physical proposals like improvements to community facilities, new homes, and better streets and public spaces; to less tangible proposals like action to support mental and physical health, economic opportunity or community activities.

- Local Place Plans should be solutions-focused. Actions should be as specific as possible. For example, if a local community aspires to have more homes

or jobs, the Local Place Plan should specify what kinds of homes and where they should go, or what type of jobs or enterprise and where.
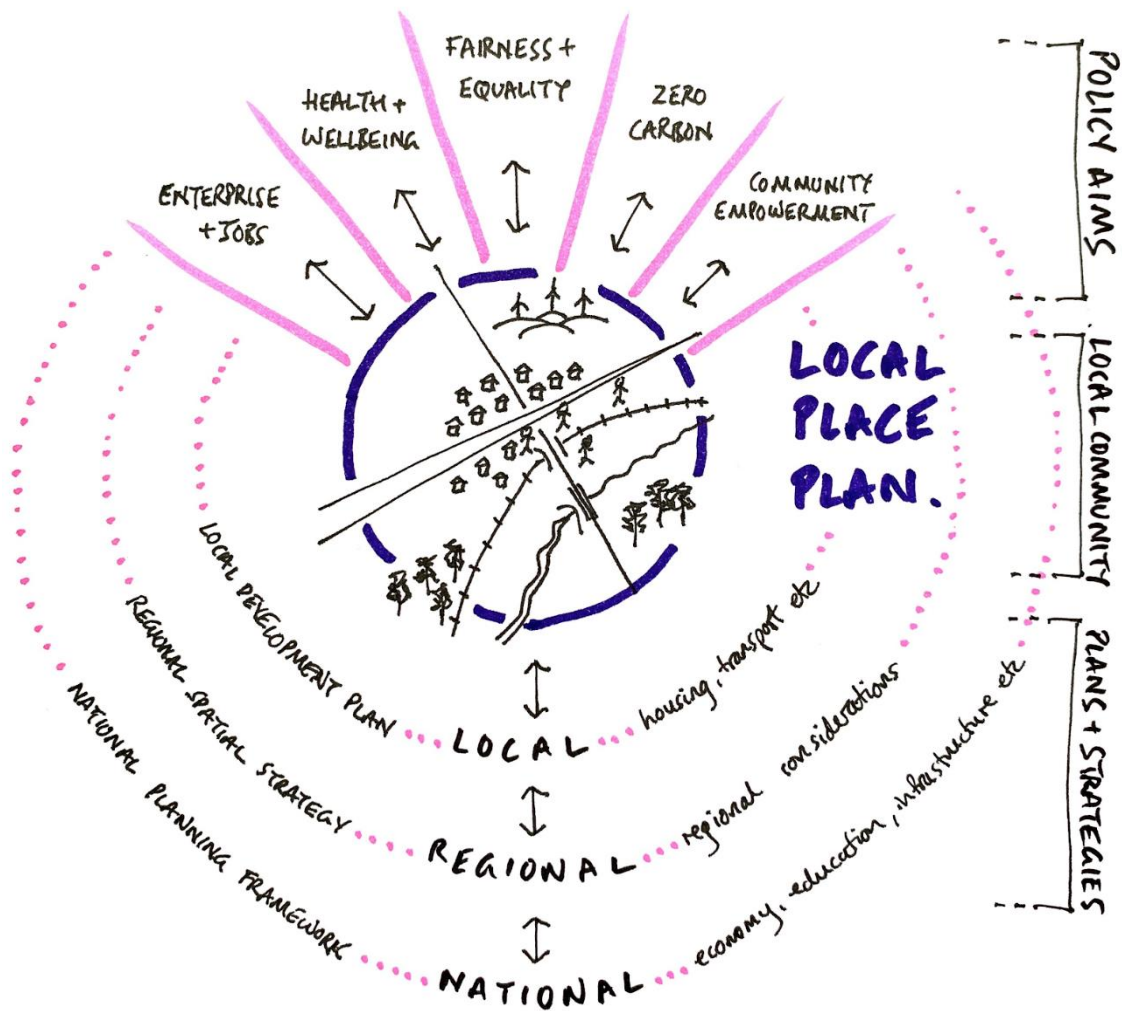
- Proposals contained in Local Place Plans should be realistic and deliverable. Some may be quick wins that can be completed in a few months, others might take a lot more planning and many years to deliver.

- Local Place Plans are tools to support community empowerment, to shape future land use planning policy, to influence public service delivery, and to tackle strategic agendas such as the climate emergency, health and wellbeing, inequalities and economic opportunity.

- Where possible, Local Place Plan boundaries should reflect local community boundaries.

Lots of communities around Scotland have already prepared community-led action plans which share many of these defining characteristics. There is no exact prescription of the level of detail needed for each of these defining characteristics, but this Guide should help you decide what is right for your community.

## How do Local Place Plans fit with other plans and policies?

Local Place Plans have a crucial role in creating a better, healthier, greener and more sustainable Scotland. These are government objectives, stemming from the Scottish Government's National Outcomes and explained in countless strategies, plans and policies produced by central and local government and covering everything from healthy environments to jobs and education. The important point is that they are intended to make your community a better place.

Your Local Place Plan is a way of your community, working with your local authority and other public sector organisations, to bring forward proposals that reflect National Outcomes and your local authority's Local Development Plan. Also, by reflecting those wider policies and plans in your Local Place Plan, your local community will find it easier to make change happen.

FAIRNESS + EQUALITY

HEALTH + WELLBEING

ZERO CARBON

COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT

ENTERPRISE + JOBS

LOCAL PLACE PLAN.

POLICY AIMS

LOCAL COMMUNITY

PLANS + STRATEGIES

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

REGIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY

NATIONAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK

LOCAL ... housing, transport etc

REGIONAL ... regional considerations

NATIONAL ... economy, education, infrastructure etc

## Why prepare a Local Place Plan?

Key message

- It's a big commitment, but worth it if you want to shape local planning policy and decision making, prioritise and support community action, bring the community together and focus their energies, and improve public services and relationships.

Local Place Plans provide a tool for local communities to think about how to make their "place" better, agree priorities, and take action (often working with others) to make change happen.

There are already lots of good examples around Scotland of community-led planning being used by communities to make their neighbourhoods better. Some of the best examples are where local communities and local authorities have worked together to make a difference, collaborating so that they can achieve more.

## How Local Place Plans can help your community

✓ **Prioritise and support community projects**

- Identify community priorities, actions and projects which will have most positive impact
- Demonstrate community endorsement to help secure commitment and resources from delivery partners and funders

✓ **Bring the community together**

- Build shared vision, priorities and projects
- Build momentum and confidence for action, to focus effort and increase support and capacity

✓ **Build relationships between community and government**

- Your community is likely to need support from the local authority and other public bodies to fulfil everything in your Local Place Plan. Equally, public bodies need your support to deliver their ambitions. Collaboration is fundamental: see Who needs to be involved and why?
- Harness support from politicians and other stakeholders to support delivery.
- Remember, the collaborative process of creating your Local Place Plan is as valuable as the plan itself - to build relationships, commitment and momentum for delivery.

✓ **Improve land use planning and public services**

- Provide a statement of community aspirations and projects which help landowners, local businesses and developers understand how their future investment can support the local community.
- Encourage development of solutions to local issues which need support from planning policy or local authority planners, for example flood alleviation measures where flooding is an issue, or land for new homes or community facilities where there is a local need.

### *HUNTLY: AGREEING PRIORITIES, DEVELOPING PROJECTS*



Huntly: Room to Thrive is a community-led strategy for the town that was developed over several months during 2018-19. A Town Team formed a steering group, which secured LEADER funding and local authority support to employ specialist facilitation and engagement support.

With this support, the community generated an open source Ideas Bank which was then used to create a town-wide strategy and 'to-do' lists. These action lists are Huntly's aspirations for the next ten years, which local community organisations will take forward, requesting collaboration from the local authority and others as and when they need it.

One of those action lists is around improving the town's learning and play facilities, with a more focused spatial strategy and action plan being developed by the community between 2019 and 2021. Again, funding was secured to pay for specialist support around community engagement and town planning, but with the local community staying in control through the Development Trust and a 'co-design' process of constant community engagement.

The action plan is due to be published in early 2021 and will contain a range of quick win and bigger ambitious projects, an ambitious community agenda for Huntly's education and leisure facilities that everyone can get behind - the aim being to secure funding and support which might otherwise go elsewhere and influence future planning policy and decision-making.

## What Local Place Plans are and aren't

Local Place Plans are a great tool for your community to be proactive and make positive change happen, particularly around proposals for future development and use of land. They can help you take the lead, rather than being on the back foot and having to react to proposals or policies that the local community might not support.

But it is important to understand the limits of Local Place Plans - what they can do for your community, and what they are less suited for.

| ✓ | ✗ |
|---|---|
| A statement of community aspirations<br><br>A way of informing future planning policy and development proposals in your area<br><br>A way of identifying and helping to deliver community projects<br><br>Through links with the Local Development Plan, a way of helping to deliver a community's development proposals<br><br>An opportunity to guide developers, local authorities and others towards community objectives, and to deliver projects or services which support the local community<br><br>Information for other organisations to adapt their activities or proposals to support delivery of community aspirations<br><br>A tool for collaborative working, within the community and with local authority etc. | A wish list to demand unrealistic investment from others<br><br>A top-down way of imposing change<br><br>Means of stopping live development proposals<br><br>An opportunity to promote individual interests of specific people or organisations<br><br>An easy way of getting what you want |

Equally, it's also important to recognise the commitment needed from the community to prepare a Local Place Plan. Be ready for challenges along the way. For more information, see What resources and commitment will you need? Below.

[Final Guide could include video interview from community volunteer with their experience of value of community-led planning]

# Who needs to be involved and why?

[once secondary legislation and formal guidance has been published, this section will need to be updated to reflect duties etc. on local authorities and others]

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Key messages

- The local community should lead, others support.
- Don't think you can do it all on your own! Collaborate for success, you'll achieve more.

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## Your potential partners

The table explains who your potential partners are, and how they might be able to help. Your local community and local authority must be involved. Others only need to be involved if appropriate, as the table below suggests.

Remember, your local community and your local authority are critical:

- Your **local community** should lead preparation of the Local Place Plan process. The aspirations of the community as a whole should be at the heart of the Plan.
- Legally, your completed plan must be registered by your **local authority** to become a Local Place Plan. You should approach your local authority before you start, not only to check legal requirements but also to ask for their input throughout the planning process. Please see the table below for more information.

[Final Guide could include a video interview with a community volunteer and local authority officer who've worked together on a community-led plan]

|  | *Who* | *Why* |
|---|---|---|
| **LOCAL COMMUNITY** | | |
| **Local residents** | • Everyone who lives in the local community<br>• All ages, genders, minorities and interests | Their aspirations should be at the heart of your Local Place Plan. |
| **Local community groups** | • Community Councils<br>• Development Trusts<br>• Tenants and residents associations<br>• Youth groups<br>• Heritage, amenity and civic organisations<br>• Self-help, faith-based and rights groups<br>• Sports and leisure clubs<br>• Grazing committees in crofting areas<br>• other civic and community organisations | These are organisations that are already active in the local community. They may not all exist in every community. They may have ideas to feed into your Local Place Plan, and are good ways of reaching out across the local community.<br><br>Remember, legally, a constituted "community body" must prepare the Local Place Plan. |
| **Schools** | • Local primary and secondary schools | Schools are an ideal way of engaging young people in Local Place Planning and the future of their community |
| **Local businesses and employers** | • Business Improvement District<br>• Traders association<br>• Local shops<br>• Social enterprises<br>• Employers (private, public and third sector) | These organisations may have future plans which could feed into your Local Place Plan. They can also be good ways of reaching out across the local community. |
| **PUBLIC SECTOR** | | |
| **Local authority** | • Planning department<br>• Community planning / development team<br>• Other departments such as transport, economic development, housing, estates | There are two good starting points:<br><br>1. The planning department can explain legal requirements for submission of registration of your Local Place Plan. They should also be able to provide you with useful advice, policy information, data, contacts and resources to help you prepare and deliver your Local Place Plan. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | | 2. The community planning or community learning and development team may be able to help you with community engagement and developing your organisation.<br><br>Depending on your community's aspirations, other departments are likely to be worth involving. For example, the transport department if there is an aspiration to improve walking and cycling. Different departments may have grants or loans available.<br><br>Remember that all local authorities have limited resources, and may not be able to offer as much help as they would like. |
| **Politicians** | • Councillors<br>• MSPs<br>• MP | They can be a big asset to help make things happen. Legally, you may have to consider how to involve local Councillors (a requirement of Schedule 19 of the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019). |
| **Regional and national** | • local Health and Social Care Partnerships, NHS Health Boards and Public Health Scotland<br>• national agencies like Creative Scotland, Architecture and Design Scotland, Historic Environment Scotland, NatureScot, Scottish Water, SEPA, Transport Scotland<br>• enterprise agencies: SE, HIE, SoSE | Depending on your community's aspirations, these organisations may be worth contacting for community advice, grants or loans. For example arts and creativity, placemaking, heritage, health and wellbeing, social care, economic development and infrastructure. |
| **THIRD SECTOR** | | |
| **Local** | This list could be huge! A few examples:<br>• Third Sector Interface<br>• Housing Associations | Depending on your community's aspirations, these organisations may be worth contacting. For example, local Third Sector |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | • Local disability panels or groups | Interfaces can be a great source of support for community groups, and Housing Associations can help if there is a need for more affordable or specialist homes. Some organisations may have grants or loans available. |
| **Regional and national** | Again, a few examples:<br>• DTAS, Senscot, SCDC, PAS and others for information and support on community engagement and community-led action planning.<br>• Scotland's Towns Partnership for information and advice on improving your town centre.<br>• Inclusion Scotland and other disabilities organisations for support on engaging with and planning for people with disabilities, particularly if you do not have a local disability organisation.<br>• Scottish Human Rights Commission and BEMIS can help on matters relating to equalities and ethnic minorities.<br>• Sustrans and Living Streets Scotland can provide information and advice on encouraging walking and cycling. | Depending on your community's capacity and aspirations, these and many other organisations may be worth contacting. Some may have grants or loans available to support Local Place Planning preparation or delivery. |
| **FUNDERS AND INVESTORS** | | |
| **Grant/loan making bodies** | • Charitable funds<br>• Public sector grants or loans | These organisations may have grants or loans available to support Local Place Planning preparation or delivery. Your local authority may have a grants officer who can help you get started. |

| Property and land industry | • Developers, housebuilders, landowners or investors who own land in the local community. | They may have future plans which could feed into your Local Place Plan. |
| --- | --- | --- |

## Working collaboratively

Your local community should be at the heart of your Local Place Plan. They must lead the plan, they must be involved throughout its preparation, and they will play a vital part in delivering the plan.

But, even if every single person in your local community gets involved, the community can't do everything on its own. That's because your community will need permissions, support and resources from others to make the Local Place Plan's vision, priorities and proposals happen on the ground. That might be by informing the Council's Local Development Plan policy, working with the NHS on improving health and social care, securing planning permission for a new community building, or securing financial resources to help deliver new cycle routes or affordable homes. Inevitably, the local authority will be a key player, but there are many others too.

That's why collaboration is vital, and why it is important to think about it from the very outset.

In Section 2, we explain more about how to work collaboratively. Here are some important things to think about while you're getting ready to start your Local Place Plan:

- Having a small group of proactive and committed local people is essential to share the burden and provide mutual support.

- Within that small group, it can help to have a respected person from the local community leading the process - someone collaborative who brings people, organisations and interests together, who knows the local community, and who understands how the public sector works.

- Setting up a Steering Group (or equivalent) early on will give a useful framework for the important players from different organisations to work together. Ideally this should have some involvement from the local authority as one of your most important partners for delivering the Plan.

[Final Guide could include video interview with community volunteer about their experience of reaching out to their local community]

Things to remember when working collaboratively:

! Your Local Place Plan should be community-led, not used to promote individual interests.

! When you ask someone to be involved, be clear about why you're asking them - it will help them work out how they can best help.

! Every organisation will have its own particular agendas and constraints. Local authorities, for example, have to act within legal constraints and have limited resources. Developers and landowners may not be familiar with the local community and are likely to have commercial interests.

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### *STROMNESS: SHAPING PUBLIC SERVICES*



Photo: Courtesy of Nick Wright

What's next for Stromness? is the name that the steering group chose for their pilot Local Place Plan, developed in 2019. Led by the local Development Trust, Community Council and other community organisations working in collaboration with the local authority, the various organisations worked closely together from the start.

Although a thriving community with many active voluntary groups and organisations, the steering group decided that they did not themselves have enough capacity to prepare the plan themselves, so the local authority secured funding to pay for specialist support on community engagement and plan preparation. Local Councillors were supportive throughout the community engagement process, encouraging the local community to get involved, committing to support delivery of the plan once complete, whilst being careful themselves not to steer the content of the plan.

Local authority collaboration, however, really came into its own once the plan was complete. The plan was "registered" by the local authority, even though the Local Place Planning provisions of the 2019 Planning Act are not yet in force; this committed the local authority to considering the plan when reviewing planning policy for the town. Similarly, the plan was endorsed by Orkney's Community Planning Partnership, giving it influence in the future planning and delivery of public services in the town.

This is already bearing fruit on an everyday issue - the provision of playparks in different parts of the town. With the changing nature of children's play and budget constraints on maintenance, this issue was discussed in the Local Place Planning process. Community views on the future of the town's playparks were fed back to the Council via the Local Place Plan process, helping the Council to make sure that its future investment in playparks is responsive to community aspirations - and in collaboration with the community, since the Development Trust is leading regeneration of one of the playparks.

You can find out more about how the plan was prepared on the dedicated 'storymap' website that was used for online engagement during preparation of the plan.

### Setting up a Steering Group

To act as a framework for collaborative working, your Steering Group (or equivalent) should involve all the important stakeholders who need to be involved in preparing the Local Place Plan.

The following checklist is based on one contained in the Argyll and Bute Community Action Planning Toolkit, and should help you understand who might be involved. Remember that the process should be community-led, but that local authorities will be key partners in supporting and delivering the plan.

| ✔ | **Local residents** *Essential: lead role* | Do you have representation from a good cross-section of your community e.g. all age groups, genders and minority groups? |
|---|---|---|
| ✔ | **Local community groups** *Essential: lead role* | Do you have representation from local organisations like the Community Council, Development Trust, Tenants and Residents Associations and other active civic organisations? |
| ✔ | **Local authority officers** *Essential: support role* | Do you have representation from officers in your local authority? This might just be from one co-ordinating department like planning, community learning and development, or community planning. |
| ✔ | **Other public services and agencies** *Optional* | Other public services and support agencies like Housing Associations, enterprise agencies, the NHS and the local Third Sector Interface can help with planning and delivery. If you have got funding for your Local Place Plan, your funder might offer advice. |
| ✔ | **Politicians** *Optional* | Local Councillors, MSPs and MP can be a big asset and help make things happen. They should understand Local Place Planning should not be used to promote political agendas. |

To work out who to invite to the Steering Group, you might want to:

- Undertake 'stakeholder analysis' to help decide if and how a particular organisation might be helpful on the Steering Group.  For more information on how to do this, check out SCDC ACE (Achieving Community Empowerment) Guide.

- Before actually forming the Steering Group, invite potential members to an initial collaborative discussion to work out who should be invited to join.  This will set the scene for collaborative working.  The accompanying panel suggests how you might run that event.

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**COLLABORATIVE PROCESS TO FORM A STEERING GROUP**

Invite potential Steering Group members to an initial discussion to work out who should join.  Split participants into 'groups': the core or lead group (that's you), other community groups, local authorities and other organisations, and ask them to consider the following questions:

Motivation
- What motivates and encourages you and your organisation to be involved in Local Place Planning?
- What benefits do you see for the community from your involvement?
- What benefits do you see for you and your organisation?

Capacity
- Do we have the ability, skills and confidence to do what's needed?
- Do we have the resources to do what's needed? (money, physical assets, time and energy)
- Is there anyone else who can bring skills and resources?

Opportunities
- Are there opportunities to involve more people from the community or other stakeholders?
- Are there any existing opportunities for us to achieve our purpose?
- Are there any quick wins?

Participants should be asked to write up and share their responses to everyone in the discussion. Everyone should then have the chance to discuss the responses and agree who should be invited to the Steering Group and why.  The process should also identify any gaps in community involvement or support from other organisations.  You may find you need to revisit some of the earlier steps if additional members are suggested, to give everyone an opportunity to take part.

# How should you define your local community?

Key messages

- It's your decision. Use local community identity as your starting point.
- Whatever boundary you decide on, be inclusive: make sure you include everyone within the boundary that you choose.

Before you start preparing your Local Place Plan, you'll need to decide on which areas make up your local community. This is important to consider early on because it will set the parameters for your Steering Group membership, community engagement, stakeholder engagement and information gathering (see **Section 2**).

The starting point for your boundary should be community identity. That might happen to coincide with administrative boundaries like Community Councils or Ward boundaries, but it doesn't have to be.
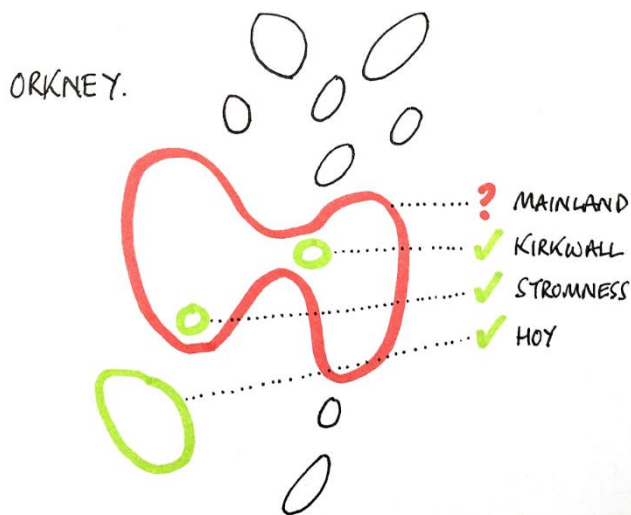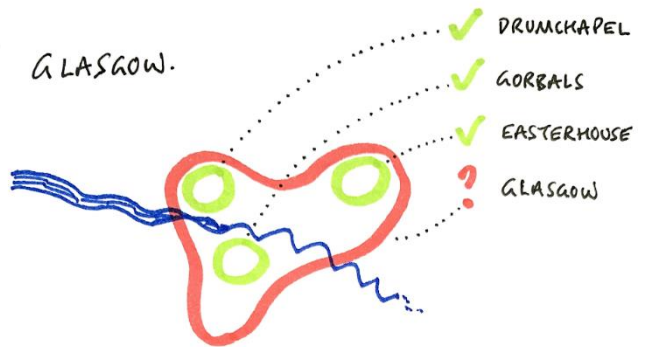
There are no firm limits on the maximum or minimum size of a local community for preparing a Local Place Plan, but as accompanying graphics show there are some areas that would be unmanageably large.

A community will have a sense of belonging, close relationships and community spirit. There will always be communities within communities e.g. young people, older people or people who have a shared interest which may not be constrained by geography.

Defining the extent of your community is your decision, but you should be prepared to explain why you've decided on the boundary that you have. It could be a useful thing to discuss with your Steering Group early on.



[Final Guide could include video interview with community volunteer about how they defined their community]

The Local Place Plan boundary need not be hard and fast initially. Think of it as the area that you will be focusing on. Then, if the Local Place Planning process throws up aspirations or solutions which spill across the boundary, you won't be prevented from including them in the Local Place Plan.

If your local community extends across a local authority boundary, bear in mind that you will need to collaborate with a second local authority as well. Since many public agencies follow local authority boundaries, you may also need to repeat that process with them too; for example, Third Sector Interfaces and often NHS Health Boards and enterprise agencies.

Within your Local Place Plan boundary, it's important that your community engagement is inclusive of the whole community. In other words, proactively invite everyone to take part in the process, make sure nobody feels excluded or ignored. You can find out more in **Section 2**.

# FOXBAR, PAISLEY: COLLABORATING FOR DELIVERY

| | | Civic Pride | Community Activity | Homes and Community Facilities | Parks and Green Spaces |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Community Events | | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| 2. "What's on" Directory | | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| 3. Community Growing | | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ |
| 4. Youth Projects | | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ |
| 5. Cycling | | | ✓ | | ✓ |
| 6. Durrockstock Park | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 7. Glennifer Braes | | | ✓ | | ✓ |
| 8. New Homes | | | | ✓ | |
| 9. Community Facilities | | | ✓ | ✓ | |

Foxbar is a neighbourhood of around 8,000 people in south-west Paisley, with its own Community Council and identity.

Preparation of the plan was initiated by the Community Council, local authority, Community Planning Partnership and Housing Association working together - all saw the opportunity to achieve positive change. They formed a steering group and took a few months to agree how to take the idea forward, deciding to secure some government funding to pay for community engagement and planning support. Only then did preparation of the pilot Local Place Plan itself begin.

Over a period of about 6 months, the facilitation team worked with the local community to understand community issues and aspirations, agree a vision for the future, and then agree realistic projects and priorities to realise that vision. You can read more about the process in the plan itself.

With resources and capacity for delivery both scarce, one key aspect of the co-production process was facilitating the local community to prioritise what was most important to them. This was done with a realistic understanding of the levels of funding that might be available, to make sure that the priorities were achievable.

This led to nine priority projects. Top of the list was building connections and confidence within the community by re-introducing local events like the gala day, and updating the existing 'What's On' directory of local activities and classes. Only one of the projects had a direct link with land-use planning: a longer term, but still deliverable, ambition of new homes on derelict sites.

There was still no guarantee that everything will be delivered: funds and commitment need to be secured. But a year on from when the plan was completed, three of the nine actions were being delivered: Community Asset Transfer of a derelict school site to enable a community growing initiative, funding applications for a cycle/walking route, and reinstatement of the community's annual Gala Day. Plans were also being developed by the local authority and the Housing Association to secure funds for new homes on those derelict sites.

# What resources and commitment will be needed?

> **Key messages**
>
> - Preparing and delivering the Local Place Plan will take time and commitment: allow 12 months to get ready and create the Plan, and several years to deliver it.
> - You'll need some money for essential expenses, and more if you want to buy in specialist support or have money ready to start delivery immediately once the plan is finished.
> - Remember, specialist support can be useful but is not essential. Make sure the local community is in charge - it's your plan!

## Time and commitment

Preparing a Local Place Plan can make a real difference to your local community and be immensely rewarding for those involved, but it will also need a personal commitment of time from the local volunteers who take a lead role (and from local community workers, if you have access to them).
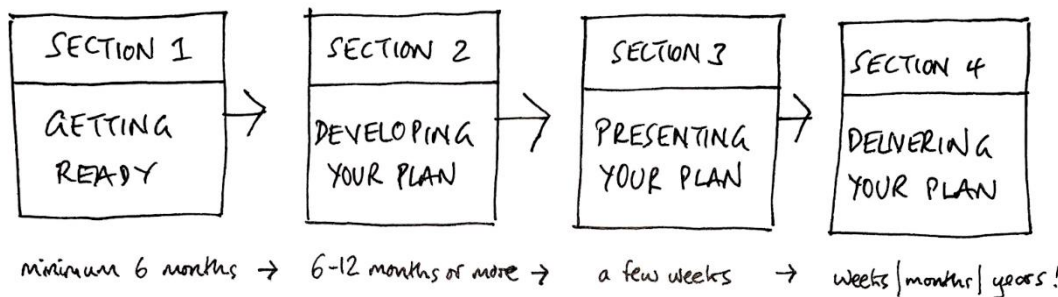


[Final Guide could include video interview with community volunteer explaining their experience of how community reps have shared the work amongst themselves at different stages of the process]

To help think about the time that community volunteers need to commit, it can help to break down the Local Place Planning process into stages:

1   **Getting ready** will probably take a minimum of 6 months, but it could be considerably longer if you need to build support around the community and amongst stakeholders. This is covered in this Section of the Guide.

2-3 **Preparing** and **presenting the Local Place Plan** is likely to take at least 6 months from when you get started properly, but could easily take a year if you're doing most of the work yourselves. (These parts of the process are covered in **Section 2** and **Section 3** of this Guide, including how to engage your local community.)

4   **Delivering what's in the plan** is likely to be spread over many years, with some quick wins that might take a few months and other bigger projects that take years (see **Section 4** of this Guide). Most of the work during this phase is likely to be on delivering individual projects that make up the plan.

| SECTION 1 | SECTION 2 | SECTION 3 | SECTION 4 |
| GETTING READY | DEVELOPING YOUR PLAN | PRESENTING YOUR PLAN | DELIVERING YOUR PLAN |

minimum 6 months → 6-12 months or more → a few weeks → weeks|months|years!

Different people will want to help at different stages.  Some people like planning and preparing, others like action and delivery.  Some like to talk, others like to write, draw or so. Some like to work alone, others in a group. There's room for everyone.   But it's good to have some continuity between stages if you can.

## CRIANLARICH:  BUILDING COMMUNITY



Photo: Courtesy of Nick Wright

The local community prepared their Community Action Plan a while back now, in 2011.  Some of the projects in the Plan were things that the community could do themselves, like painting fences to smarten up the village.  Others relied on the goodwill of others like the Council and the National Park Authority.   The community took the attitude that they would simply get on with what they could do without waiting for others, whilst challenging others to step up to the mark.

It worked.  Within days of the Community Action Plan being published, the National Park committed £15,000 to refurbish the public toilets.  That might sound mundane, but they are an important reason for people to stop in the village whilst travelling between the Central Belt and the West Highlands.  A few months later the local authority agreed to give the community control of a prominent disused railway yard in the very heart of the village, offering a 10 year lease to the local Community Development Trust. With local volunteers, the Trust quickly converted the yard into a visitor car park with picnic tables and attractive landscaping, encouraging visitors to stop and use the shop, cafe, bar and hotel.

One of the bigger projects in the Community Action Plan was to create a signposted path network around the village – another part of the Plan's strategy of encouraging visitors to stop in the village (and spend money!).  Since much of the path network was on land owned by the Forestry Commission and it needed

investment of over £100,000 to build new paths, the project took five years of hard work.

The end result, however, was a network of new signposted paths that give local residents an opportunity to have safe walks away from traffic, and visitors another reason to stop or stay. Equally importantly, new volunteers have come forward to get involved in the Community Council and the Development Trust, showing the importance of achieving results in keeping momentum and getting new blood.

## Money

[Once secondary legislation and formal guidance has been published, this section should be updated with potential funding sources for preparing and delivering LPPs]

Make sure you have funds to cover essential expenses associated with community engagement like venue hire, online hosting and printing.

| LOCAL PLACE PLAN BUDGET | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Essential expenses**<br>Engagement event costs; online engagement costs; printing posters, leaflets, plans etc. | £500-£1,000 | **Essential** |
| **Specialist support**<br>Community and stakeholder engagement; neutral facilitation; plan preparation; specialist advice on specific projects and priorities; fundraising for project delivery. NB - some of these skills may be available from local volunteers, your local authority or other stakeholders. | £0-£20,000 | Optional |
| **Delivery**<br>Funding pot for 'quick win' community projects to build momentum. Funding for bigger projects likely to be subject to funding bids after the Local Place Plan has been published. | £500-£5,000 | Optional |

Your costs will really start to increase if you decide that you need to buy in specialist support. You can find out more about that under Specialist support, below.

In an ideal world, having a pot of money available for community projects to start immediately the Local Place Plan has been published will demonstrate the value of the process and build local momentum. You might be able to link the Local Place Plan with a local Participatory Budgeting exercise, for example.

## Specialist support

Producing a Local Place Plan can be a daunting task. Some communities might already have access to all the skills and experience that are needed, either amongst volunteers who live in the local community or supportive local stakeholders like a Development Trust, Housing Association or local authority. Other communities won't.

What kinds of skills will you need to prepare and produce a Local Place Plan? Here's a quick checklist (see **Section 2** and **Section 3** for more details about each set of skills).

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ✓ | **Community engagement** | In-person, online and written consultations and surveys, neutral facilitation |
| ✓ | **Collaborative planning** | Agreeing priorities and projects |
| ✓ | **Project delivery** | Understanding what is involved in delivering different kinds of projects |
| ✓ | **Plan preparation** | Simple accessible report writing, graphics and presentation |

You don't need to have all of these skills within the local community, but you do need to be able to have access to them all somehow. Don't forget that there are lots of online sources with free advice from organisations like PAS, DTAS and SCDC, which are highlighted in **Section 2** and **Section 3.**

If you need more specialist support, local stakeholders might be able to provide specialist support, for example from a local Development Trust, local authority, Third Sector Interface, Housing Association or local university or college. This might take the form of support "in kind", internships, student projects and so on.

If you need more than is on offer, you may need to seek funding to buy in specialist support. Stakeholder analysis can help you work out what you might need (see Who needs to be involved and why?).

Specialist support, whether from local stakeholders or bought in, can be immensely valuable to help increase your own local community's capacity, and provide independent facilitation, knowledge and experience. But you need to carefully brief and manage the specialist support so that your local community remains in charge - the Local Place Plan must be your community's plan!



[Final Guide could include video interviews from community volunteer about their experience of using specialist support, tips and pitfalls]

Here are a few tips for working with specialist support:

| | |
|---|---|
| ✓ | **It's your community's plan!** Whether you pay for specialist support or it is "in kind", make sure you are crystal clear in what you're asking of them, what they need of you, and keep them focused on providing what's best for your community. |
| ✓ | Your **local authority planning department and community planning / community learning and development teams** should be your starting points for advice, but may not be able to give you all the support you need. |
| ✓ | **Work closely with your specialist support** rather than leave them to their own devices. Be prepared to put the time in to communicate and liaise with them: you will get more out of them. |
| ✓ | **Specialist support can focus on specific parts of the process.** For example independent facilitation, online engagement, preparing plans and graphics, or monitoring and evaluating impact. They can help you through the whole process, but they don't have to. |

### WESTER HAILES: SPECIALIST SUPPORT



Photo: Courtesy of Craig Stewart

Wester Hailes pilot Local Place Plan in Edinburgh had an interesting genesis: the motivation came from the local community, channelled through local community arts organisation WHALE Arts - the cultural anchor organisation in Wester Hailes, a charity and social enterprise set up by local people in 1992, and with an excellent track record which has expanded to include arts events, business support, online learning, community gardening, cooking and healthy living activities.

What's interesting about Wester Hailes Local Place Plan is the level of specialist support secured from the public sector. The local authority was keen to support the initiative because it fitted with their wider objectives for that part of the city. So, in partnership with the Scottish Government, the local authority rented space at WHALE Arts' base as a local base for several months, and an experienced architect-planner with a community development background was seconded to be based there.

Having a staffed local base in a community building for an extended period of time proved very useful, as it enabled the seconded member of staff to build up a community presence, relationships and trust over a few months. The base became a focus for activity relating to future ideas for the local Wester Hailes, for chats, cups of tea, meetings, workshops, exhibitions and even a community conference.

Other external support included a photographer to capture images, quotes and ideas from the local community, and the use of external professionals to help work community aspirations into 'placemaking' solutions. This is reflected in the nature of the process and the plan that was produced, and was made possible through local authority support and the contacts of the seconded member of staff. Although the costs were therefore relatively low, local authority support was essential.

# Is a Local Place Plan right for your community?

Is a Local Place Plan right for your community?  Use this checklist to decide:

| Will a Local Place Plan provide your community with what it needs at this point? | Yes/No | Not sure? Check - **What Local Place Plans are and aren't** |
|---|---|---|
| Do you have a small group of committed individuals who can work together to lead the Local Place Plan? | Yes/No | Not sure? Check - **Time and commitment** |
| Do you have a constituted "community body" to prepare the Local Place Plan? | Yes/No | Not sure? Check - **Your potential partners** |
| Do you have a committed Steering Group or equivalent in place?  Does it represent a good cross-section of the local community? | Yes/No | Not sure? Check - **Setting up a Steering Group** |
| Do you have support in place from local organisations to help you through the process? (e.g. other community organisations, local authority) | Yes/No | Not sure? Check - **Who needs to be involved and why?** |
| Do you have sufficient resources to develop your plan? (e.g. funding, volunteer and staff capacity, equipment) | Yes/No | Not sure? Check - **What resources and commitment will be needed?** |

If you've answered yes to these questions, the rest of this guide will explain how to prepare and deliver a Local Place Plan.  Carry on to **Section 2.**

If you've answered no, a Local Place Plan might not be right for your community.  Here are some alternatives:

| What do you want to do? | Where to look for help... |
|---|---|
| **Form a community group** | Visit Communities Channel Scotland for more information |
| **Get involved in a local planning issue** | Contact your local authority planning department or the independent planning charity PAS |
| **Acquire land or buildings for community use** | Community Asset Transfer<br>Community Right to Buy (by registering interest)<br>Community Right to Buy Land (compulsory right to buy) |
| **Improve how public services are delivered locally** | Contact your local authority, Community Planning Partnership or the relevant public organisation. You might wish to explore submitting a Participation Request. |

# [Section 2]  Developing your Plan
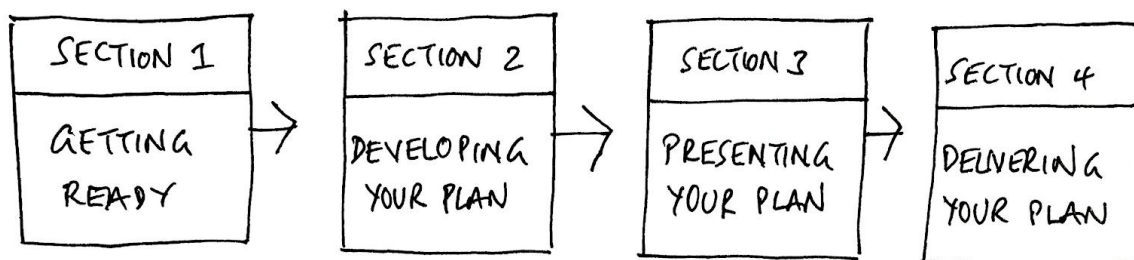


## Overview

This section of the guide will take you through the process of developing your plan. It will give you advice and tips on how to identify community priorities, engage all parts of your community, and set realistic and achievable goals. It will also give you advice and information on how and where to source evidence of needs and issues which will support the development of your plan.

The section is set out as follows:

- **Stage 1 - doing your research** - how and where to get evidence of community needs that will inform your plan priorities
- **Stage 2 - engaging your community** - reaching out to all parts of your community, when and how to do this and who you need to reach
- **Stage 3 - planning ahead** - advice and information on planning, target and outcome setting, and consulting on your draft plan

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**Key things to consider**

**In this section you will particularly need to think about:**

- Finding out about your community - there may be existing information you can use like community profiles or area profiles, don't give yourselves extra work! Don't forget to gather 'soft' data like people's perceptions and aspirations for their community, and 'hard' data like statistics.  A good plan should take account of both.

- Engaging with your community - how you do this is up to you but try and make sure you do this throughout the process. This will help to ensure you have the support and buy-in from all sections of your community.

- In planning sometimes less is more - your Local Place Plan should be able to set out your broad vision and aims for your area as well as the kind of projects and actions that can make a difference. Detailed project plans can come at a later stage.

# Stage 1 - Doing your research

Understanding the needs, issues and aspirations of your community is key to the whole Local Place Planning process. Developing plans that respond to the aspirations of your local community means that you must reflect the whole range of community views and needs that exist in your local area. There are many useful examples and resources that you can draw on to help you with this, which we will indicate as we go through this section.

## Understanding data – facts, figures and people's stories

Facts and figures about your area and the people within it form the bedrock of any local plan and it will be no different with Local Place Plans. Much of the statistical information (facts and figures) will already be available - you just need to know where to look for it.

Facts and figures only give part of the story about a local place. It's important to gather the views, opinions and ideas of the people who live, work and visit the area as these will provide a richness to your understanding of what concerns and inspires people about their community.

Gathering these views is a key part of developing your understanding of the community and its needs, issues and opportunities. This can be done in a number of different ways but the most commonly used method is using surveys (and/or interviews), either hard copy format or online (or both). Useful starter questions are:

- What makes your area a good place to live?
- What do you think would make it even better?
- What makes you sad/angry about your local area?
- What would help to make it better?

## Local information checklist

| Information | Source | Why is this important? |
|---|---|---|
| **Local community networks and experiences** | • Surveys and interviews | Understand the reality of life in the community |
| **Housing, buildings and land use** | • Local authority<br>• Local enterprise agency | Understand local housing issues and challenges |
| **Local economy -** businesses, employment and economic information | • Local authority<br>• Local enterprise agency or Scottish Enterprise | Understand what businesses and services are available locally, and which aren't |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Population -** size and demographics (age, gender, ethnicity etc.), income, accessibility, education etc. | <ul><li>Area-based census data</li><li>Datashine Scotland and Datashine Scotland Commute interactive census mapping</li><li>Understanding Scottish Places</li><li>Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation</li><li>Co-op Wellbeing Index – comparative data on your community's wellbeing, covering a range of indicators</li><li>Digital Scotland – broadband coverage map checker</li><li>Scottish Vacant and Derelict Land Survey – details of local authority contacts and registered sites</li><li>Local area profiles from local authority or Community Planning Partnership, Health Board, Health and Social Care Partnership</li></ul> | Understand if there are particular age groups or minorities which are present locally, particular assets or opportunities, or groups who face particular challenges |
| **Local designations and infrastructure** | <ul><li>Your local authority's Local Development Plan identifies protected areas</li><li>Planning departments have useful data, often freely available as online mapping</li></ul> | Understand protected areas, constraints, heritage or natural assets, etc. |
| **Local services, plans and strategies** | <ul><li>Local authority for Local Development Plan (can be found online) and other plans and strategies</li><li>Community Planning Partnership for Locality Plans and Local Outcome Improvement Plans</li><li>Local knowledge</li></ul> | Understand what future investments or changes in services are in the pipeline |
| **Existing or previous community plans** | <ul><li>Local community groups e.g. Community Council, Community Development Trusts</li></ul> | Helps to give an understanding of earlier priorities and information. These may still be of relevance. |

| Regional or national strategies | <ul><li>National Planning Framework and Regional Spatial Strategies (check with your local authority planning department)</li><li>National Transport Strategy and Regional Transport Strategies (check with your local authority planning department)</li></ul> | Find out if there are any regional or national priorities relevant for your local community |
|---|---|---|

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## LOCHGELLY: TURNING RESEARCH INTO ACTION

Lochgelly Community Action Plan is a good example of a local community-led plan which used community research to underpin the development of priorities and related actions. The research involved the group putting together a factual community profile from various easily available sources of data, as well as undertaking a community survey to understand community perceptions and aspirations.



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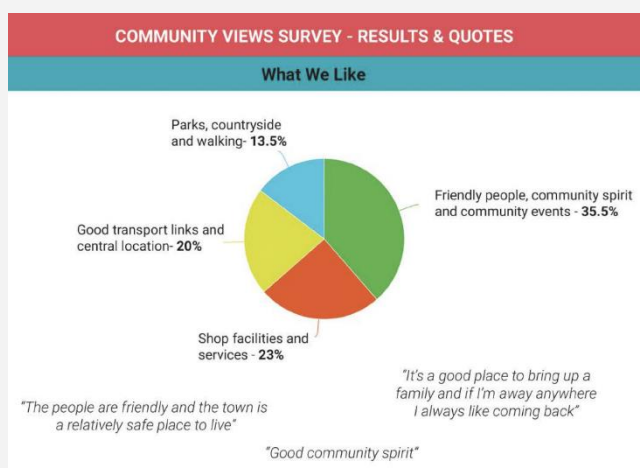
The Plan summarises the key findings from the research very effectively and succinctly with simple easily understood graphics, then linking the research to agreed priorities which are developed in the rest of the plan.

Other interesting aspects of the plan are the commitment by the local Council to fund the development of the plan, the short-term 'quick win' projects that are proposed within it, and the use of a dedicated website to share the plan.

**Resources**

There are a range of resources which you can use to help you through this process and these are listed at the end of this section. As a starter we recommend that you look at:

- **Knowledge is Power** This online resource helps community groups and projects to undertake their own research. The toolkit provides useful information about planning and evaluating research, as well as lots of information and guidance on community research methods.
- **ARC (Action Research by, in and for communities)** was developed by Scottish Community Development Centre to help community and voluntary groups carry out research in and with their communities. The guide provides a step-by-step approach to community-led action research.

# Stage 2 - Engaging your community

Once you have all your facts and figures and survey information it is time to reach out to your local community to begin to develop the vision for your place. A good community plan is based on good quality community engagement.



You may well end up using a variety of methods to reach out to your community so the important thing to remember is that you need to have a consistent approach to the information you're gathering. You need to be asking people the same basic questions online as well as in face-to-face workshops or events.

To help you do this, you should use the National Standards for Community Engagement. The Standards are statements of what good community engagement

looks like and they also give very useful checklists to help when you're engaging your own community. The Standards contain 7 key principles (see diagram) with supporting text and examples.

In working out how to engage your local community, the National Standards will help you make sure that people from throughout your community have the opportunity to shape the Local Place Plan, in ways that are meaningful for them personally as well as across the wider community.

That means you will need to offer people a range of opportunities to engage, rather than rely on one technique. The range you decide to use is likely to adapt as you go through the process of preparing the Local Place Plan with your community, but it needs to be a balance of in-person contact, online and survey-based methods.

| | | Why it's important | Examples |
|---|---|---|---|
| ✓ | **In person** | Great for building relationships and trust, discussing and exploring ideas in more depth, reaching consensus | • Visiting community groups, care homes etc.<br>• School classroom sessions<br>• Meetings<br>• Community gatherings<br>• Focus groups on particular issues<br>• On-street popup activities<br>• Stalls at community events<br>• Using a vacant shop as a staffed base |
| ✓ | **Online** | Wide reach: 87% of people in Scotland have internet access | • Social media<br>• Consultation website to share and gather information<br>• Email newsletters<br>• Online meetings<br>• Online surveys and voting |
| ✓ | **Surveys** | Gathering ideas and perspectives from across the whole community | • Community surveys delivered house-to-house<br>• Postcards in shops<br>• Online surveys<br>• Voting on options or priorities |

Whatever methods you use, you will need to be sure that you have made every effort to reach out to all sections of your community and have provided the appropriate support to help people to have their say. The Support Standard from the National Standards for Community Engagement provides a useful checklist when you're considering how to make your engagement inclusive.

[Final Guide could include video interviews with community volunteers about the engagement activities they chose and why]

## Thinking long term

At this early stage of your Local Place Plan process you need to try and understand what the community's vision is for their place: what it will look and feel like in 5 or 10 years time. This can be done in a number of different ways, examples of which are shown below.

| **Focus groups/ workshops** | Focus groups or workshops are normally relatively small sessions (between 10 and 20 people attending) which allow particular groups (perhaps young people or people staying in a particular part of the area) to discuss and develop their vision for their area in detail.<br><br>They can be useful to understand and explore a particular issue or location in more detail, or to work through potential solutions to a particular challenge - something which might be more difficult to do in larger community events.<br><br>Remember that the smaller numbers of people involved mean that you may need to check the findings of the discussions with the wider community. | **Your Kirkwall: youth summit** As part of the community engagement process for a pilot Local Place Plan for the whole town, a 2 day Youth Summit was held for 55 primary and secondary age young people across Mainland.<br><br>One of their priorities was to bring more activity to the rather uninviting parkland around the Peedie Sea, so much of the Summit focused on developing a brief for that future project, part of the wider context of the overall vision for the town.<br><br>The young people's suggestions were then fed into the wider 'Your Kirkwall' vision at a community event, on the project's social media and website, and through a press article.<br><br><br><br>Photo: Courtesy of Nick Wright |
| **Community events** | Community events are a good way to bring people together to discuss and develop their vision for their area. They are particularly valuable to | **Astley Ainslie Community Visioning:** In March 2019, the Astley Ainslie Community Trust carried out broad community engagement around the community's vision for the future of the Astley Ainslie hospital site in Edinburgh. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | enable people to meet others, share ideas, hear other perspectives, discuss and explore ideas and solutions, and build consensus around priorities. But remember that not everyone will want or be able to come to events, so you should ensure that people have other ways of contributing too.<br><br>You may want to have events at different stages of the planning process but an early event is always helpful in getting people on board with what you're trying to do. | This visioning process included 2 high profile public events on consecutive Saturdays: an Ideas Day which allowed people to contribute their ideas for what should happen to the site which contributed to a draft vision; and a Vision Day which took the draft vision and built on possible scenarios for its delivery.<br><br>The team had to work hard between to turn the ideas and turn them into vision scenarios, but the rapid turnaround helped to keep momentum.<br><br>The events were heavily promoted and very well attended, and were complemented by workshops in schools, a website, social media and on-street pop-ups.<br><br>**2** high street popups  **4** local schools participating  **40** event volunteers  **300** Facebook followers<br><br>**400** e-bulletin subscribers  **400** participants across 2 public events  **500** written comments at events and online  **5,000** flyers distributed |
| **Online engagement** | Engaging people online is a good way of involving people who cannot attend events or workshops because of timing or access issues, or may not be comfortable in those settings.<br><br>There are a range of interactive platforms available that enable people to share and discuss ideas with others. Each of these platforms have their own particular characteristics: some work in real time like a virtual face-to-face | **Kirkfieldbank Community Action Plan** was prepared entirely online during the COVID pandemic, with the website acting as the engagement hub.<br><br>Interactive mapping and an online survey were complemented with schools activities, a community steering group and Facebook Live for face-to-face discussions.<br><br>Check out the plan online for more information. |

| | meeting (like Zoom, Facebook Live and many others).  Others allow people to share and discuss text or images (like Miro, Mural and many others).

Careful research and discussion is needed to work out which is most appropriate for your community. | 

Use the map to tell us what's good and bad about Kirkfieldbank.
Click Add New Marker to write something.
Red markers are for things that are bad or need improvement.
Green markers are for things that are good. |
| --- | --- | --- |

**Resources for community engagement**

There are a range of resources which you can use to help you through this process. As a starter we recommend that you look at:

**National Standards for Community Engagement** provide a useful framework and checklist for anyone wanting to reach out to their communities and as a resource to support good use of other tools/frameworks such as the Place Standard.

**Place Standard** provides a simple framework to structure conversations about place. It allows you to think about the physical elements of a place (for example its buildings, spaces, and transport links) as well as the social aspects (for example whether people feel they have a say in decision making). The tool provides prompts for discussions, allowing you to consider all the elements of a place in a methodical way. Support is provided for the use of the Place Standard tool.

**PAS SP=EED community engagement in planning** focuses on community engagement in planning, development and placemaking.  It provides a helpful framework for framing engagement at three levels, depending on your objective. Level 3 (Partnership) is the level that you should aim for in preparing a Local Place Plan.

**Argyll and Bute Community Action Planning Toolkit** takes community groups through a community action planning process and provides useful advice for each stage. Of particular relevance to this stage is the Reaching Out section and the fact sheets on 'what makes a good vision' and 'running a visioning event'.

**West Lothian Engaging Communities Toolkit** is a visually engaging guide to engaging your community, and includes examples of various different techniques and their pros and cons.

**INVOLVE's People and Participation Toolkit** is a practical guide that combines how to choose and design engagement methods for different situations with information on the suitability of various well-established methods.

**Participatory Glasgow: Leaving No-One Behind** is a report from Glasgow Disability Alliance on the experience of involving disabled people in participatory

budgeting in Glasgow. The learning from the experience is particularly useful in highlighting the most important aspects of inclusive community engagement.

## Stage 3 - Planning ahead

You should now have all the information you need to be able to start planning in earnest. Once you are confident you have everyone involved who needs to be involved (see **Section 1**) it's time to create your plan.

Before you rush into getting the plan down on paper it's worthwhile sitting down with your Steering Group to work out how you're going to do it. This will help to ensure you spend enough time on getting the plan right, without wasting time with unproductive or unnecessary meetings. Steering Group members also need to be able to commit to any tasks that they take on whilst being realistic about the demands on their time. Part of the plan will involve the group in setting out how they are going to monitor and evaluate the delivery of the plan so at this stage it's a good idea to set up sub groups to work on different parts of the plan - possibly by priority theme. This can help to share the load and allow people to work on their own particular area of interest.

Remember, even if you are in the fortunate position to have outside help (for example from a local authority planner, community development worker or consultant), you still need to have control over the process and how the plan develops.

You can see an example below of what a planning process might look like. Remember that circumstances will vary depending on your area and your local structures. The important thing to remember is that you need to ensure you have the community fully engaged as you go through the process, checking that they are behind the plan's vision, objectives, priorities and projects.

## Example of a planning process



| 1 AGREE VISION | 2 AGREE OUTCOMES | 3 COMMUNITY REVIEW | 4 AGREE ACTIONS | 5 CONSULT ON DRAFT PLAN |

## Step 1 - Agree vision

Identifying priorities for your plan is the first stage in your planning process. This will be based on all the feedback you've had from your previous work on the Plan so far.

There is no set formula for deciding on what is most important but there are a few useful questions you can ask which may help you in your decision-making.

- How often was the issue/idea mentioned during your research and community engagement stages?
- Was it mentioned by a range of people across the community?
- Did it appear in the statistical information and in people's views?
- If it's a big, long-term issue can we break it down into more achievable chunks as part of the plan? Are there any quick wins?

**Who and how?**
The Steering Group might wish to set up collaborative sub groups (e.g. by priority themes) involving particular community groups and stakeholders as appropriate.

## Step 2 - Agree outcomes

This step is about the changes that you want to achieve as a result of the actions that you take (your outcomes). The key questions which will help are given below:

### *What needs to change? (outcomes)*

It is important that you start with the outcomes rather than the actions. If you rush straight to actions then there is a risk that you may waste time or energy in actions that may not achieve the kind of change you're wanting to make. It's important that your outcomes are SMART - specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timebound - rather than being too vague.

### *How will we know we've been successful? (measures of success)*

In order to be able to judge how successful you've been you need to set your measures for success at the outset and the evidence you need to provide. In some way these measures will influence the kind of actions that you take to achieve the outcome.

*An example of an <u>outcome</u> for a Local Place Plan might be:*

*Outdoor play and activity opportunities are improved for our younger children.*

*Examples of a <u>measure and evidence</u> for achieving that outcome might be:*

*There are more opportunities for young children to play and take part in outdoor activities. Evidence includes:*

- *completion of new or improved play areas*
- *development of new or additional outdoor activities for under 15s*
- *feedback from young people and other residents*
- *use of the play areas*
- *uptake of new or additional activities*

## Step 3 - Community review

By this stage you should have an initial draft of your plan which shows the priority areas and the aims and measures for each of them. This will give people a broad idea of what you're aiming to achieve in your Local Place Plan. It is a good idea at this stage to consult the wider community about this draft content in order to check that you're not missing anything of significance or going in the wrong direction.

## Step 4 - Agree actions

### *What will we do to achieve our changes? (actions and responsibilities)*

For each outcome you should now be able to identify actions that are appropriate to achieve the kind of change you want to make. These actions may vary from short-term (quick wins) to longer-term and larger scale actions. It is a good idea to try and identify at least one quick win and one bigger target for each outcome.

Quick wins are really important to build momentum and confidence in the plan, while bigger actions reinforce the ambitions and aspirations of the community.

It is also important to identify a person or people who will be responsible for progressing the actions as well as realistic timescales for achieving them. Many of your identified actions will not be able to be achieved by the community on its own and will need commitment from external agencies. This emphasises the need to have a strong collaboration in place from the outset (see **Section 1**).

Here are possible actions for our previous example of outdoor play and activities:

*Improve current outdoor play area*

*Short-term (quick win) actions: 6 - 12 months*

- Engagement with young people (lead responsibility: CLD and voluntary youth club)
- Replacement of broken equipment or equipment in disrepair, resurfacing of areas that are in disrepair (lead responsibility: Council Parks Dept, working with Community Council and local residents)

*Longer-term actions: 3-5 years*

- Develop plans and seek funding for a new outdoor play area, this to be co-designed and co-produced with local young people and residents (lead responsibility: Community Plan Play Sub Group, working with Council Parks Dept, Play Charities, CLD, the TSI and funders)

*Increase outdoor play activities*

*Short-term (quick win) actions: 6 - 12 months*

- Re-establish summer playscheme (lead responsibility: CLD with voluntary youth leaders)
- Ask local authority to consider designating extra play areas in specific neighbourhoods in the next Local Development Plan

*Longer-term actions: 3-5 years*

- Develop plans and seek funding for a new environmental/outdoor activity project, this to be co-designed and co-produced with local young people and residents (lead responsibility: Community Plan Play Sub Group, working with CLD, environmental charities, the TSI, and funders)
- Deliver designated extra play areas in specific neighbourhoods through the Local Development Plan

Once you have done this you should end up with a Planning Table which outlines your outcomes, actions, timescales and resource implications for each of your priority areas. An example of this in relation to the outdoor play example is shown below:

| Outcome (What change will we make?) | Activity (How will we achieve it?) | Actions and timescales | Responsibilities and resources |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Outdoor play and activity opportunities are improved for our younger children** | Improve existing outdoor play area | Engagement with young people *(4-6 weeks)* Replacement of broken equipment, resurfacing of areas that are in disrepair *(3-6 months)* | Local authority Community Development team work with local youth club Local authority parks department work with Community Council and young people *(e.g. parks and greenspace maintenance budget, local grant application)* |
| | Develop a new outdoor play area | Undertake local research into the need for and siting of a new play area Consult with Council Planning Dept re re-designation of play areas (3-6 months) Develop and submit a funding application on the basis of this research (9-12 months) | Local Place Plan 'Play Sub Group' working with local young people and residents, local authority departments (community development, parks, planning) and Play Charities *(seek small grant to fund research)* |

## Who and how?

Similar to Step 2 this part of the process can be done by the group as a whole or by sub groups working on separate themes which are then agreed by the full group. You may also decide to have working sessions where different sections of the plan can be developed in more detail with particular groups.

## Step 5 - Consult on draft Plan

You should go through this process for each of the priority areas and outcomes you have identified and once completed you should have a draft plan. Although there are no instructions for what should be in a Local Place Plan, here is an example of a table of contents:

| Summary | Key highlights of the plan - this could be a 2 page summary, a pullout or separate leaflet, so people can see at a glance what is proposed |
|---|---|
| Introduction | Who we are and what our purpose is |
| Our community | Facts, figures and people's views |
| Our vision | Community priorities - broad statements |
| Our plan | How we will achieve the vision - priorities, actions and responsibilities |
| Keeping on track | Monitoring and reviewing our plan |

Once you have your final draft ready it's time to go out to the community to let them know what you've come up with and to get their feedback on the plan. At this stage there will probably only be scope for fairly small changes, but it's important that people can see how their priorities are going to be taken forward.

**Who and how?**

This can be done in a number of different ways (as at your visioning stage) so you need to think about how you're going to reach the maximum number of people across your whole community.

You should try to use all of these three ways of consulting your community, making sure that they are all widely publicised and the local community has plenty of time to read and respond to the Plan:

- **Community event** - a launch event provides a good opportunity not just to consult on the plan and promote what you're trying to achieve, but to bring people together to share experiences and ideas for the way forward for their community. It can help to further develop community ownership of the plan and community buy-in to delivery of the plan.
- **Online** - this is the most effective way of reaching a large number of people across the community, so make sure that the draft Plan is available to view and comment on through websites and local social media platforms.
- **Hard copy** - not everyone is online, so you should make copies available in public places (community centre, libraries and so on).

**Resources for community-led planning**

These related toolkits and guides each contain additional useful information:

LEAP (Learning, Evaluation and Planning) is an outcome-focused approach to planning which helps guide people through planning, delivering and reviewing a project.

PAS Local Place Plan Guide contains lots of extra detailed information about the PAS approach to Local Place Planning.

[Renfrewshire Council How to Guide for Local Place Plans](#) gives a quick and visual guide to a Local Place Planning process. The sections on pages 14 and 15 are particularly relevant.

[Argyll and Bute Community Action Planning Toolkit](#) provides a useful step-by-step guide to this part of community-led planning.

[Cairngorm Community Action Planning Toolkit](#) is a helpful guide to community-led planning, and includes a wealth of sample materials to use.

# [Section 3]  Presenting your Plan
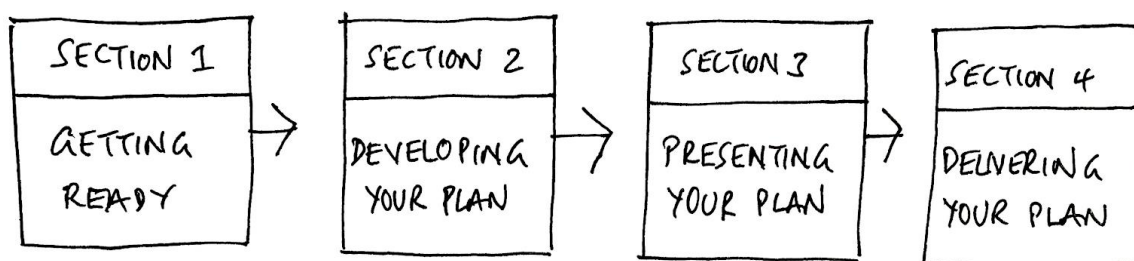


## Overview

By now you should have all of the content of your plan written and ready to put together. This section of the guide will help you to design and present it in an attractive and engaging fashion, but with an eye to who needs to read it and what you're expecting from the people who are looking at it.

This section includes:

- Think about the user
- Think about the format
- Use simple language
- Keep the Plan structure simple
- Think about the design
- Sharing your Plan with the local authority and others

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**Key things to consider**

This checklist is your starting point for thinking about design and layout of your Plan.

1. **Think about the user:** It's always good to consider what the user or reader might be feeling when accessing your Local Place Plan. They should be able to find out what they're looking for and understand the information they're presented with.

2. **Think about your format:** Where and how someone can read your Local Place Plan is really important. Think about how you're presenting it, whether that's in print, as a PDF, on a website or in a summary version.

3. **Use simple language:** It's best to write your Local Place Plan with everyone in mind - that means using plain English, reducing the use of abbreviations or jargon and using graphics and images to support your text.

4. **Keep the Plan structure simple:** Documents are easier to read when broken up with relevant headings, bullet points and use short sentences and paragraphs.

5. **Think about your design:** When designing your Local Place Plan, keep your design simple and spaced out. Make sure you use at least size 12 fonts and that there's enough contrast between text and its background.

# 1. Think about the user

It's always good to consider what the user or reader might be feeling when accessing your Local Place Plan. They should be able to find out what they're looking for and understand the information they're presented with. In the first part of this section we will think about who the users of your Local Place Plan will be and what you might need to consider about the presentation of your plan to these groups at different stages.

Remember that you will need to present and communicate information throughout the whole process even before you produce your draft plan. The following table gives a broad idea of when you may be needing to present your plan (or parts of it) and to whom.

| Content/format | Plan stage | Audience |
|---|---|---|
| **Summary** of issues and themes from initial research - presentations, posters/ leaflets | Visioning event | Whole community Agency stakeholders |
| **Interactive tables and diagrams** which allow people to contribute ideas or comments manually or online; presentations of summary information | Mid-point review | Whole community Community organisations Agency stakeholders |
| **Draft design** - divided into sections which allow people to contribute ideas or comments manually or online; presentations of summary information | Final draft plan | Whole community Community organisations Agency stakeholders |
| **Full plan** - online and pdf (hard copy). Versions produced in community languages if appropriate. **Summary plan** - 1 or 2 pages - in poster/leaflet form. | Final Plan | Whole community Community organisations Agency stakeholders Local Authority |

Writing for your audience is an important part of producing any type of document, but it's also to consider what they're feeling. In the design world, this is called user experience and is about making sure your reader, or user, can find what they're looking for and understand what they're presented with. There are various theories about user experience, but most can be distilled down to these general principles:

A. **Meet your users' needs:** Think about what they'll be looking for when reading your Local Place Plan. What are they trying to do? How can you make that as easy as possible?

B. **Use a clear structure:** Make it easy for your user to understand where they are in a document's hierarchy - using things such as contents pages, links and clear headings and subheadings.

C. **Be consistent:** Make sure you set clear rules for how your document looks and works. For example, if the links in your document are blue, make sure you don't use blue text for anything else.

D. **Be accessible:** Make sure you're not creating any barriers for the user. For example, using a light coloured text on a light background. It's also worth considering if translating your plan in different languages is appropriate. Inclusivecommunication.scot is a good place to start.

E. **Keep it simple:** People might be accessing your document when they're on the bus, or trying to do multiple tasks at once. Keeping things simple is the best way to meet your users' needs and get them engaged with your Local Place Plan.

## 2. Think about your format

People access information in lots of different ways and it's a good idea for the information in your Local Place Plan to match how people might want to view it. How people can access your Local Place Plan is really important.

**So what formats should you consider?**

| Format | Pros / cons |
|---|---|
| **PDF**: A complete, designed version that people can read in full. | • The most common format for published documents and is easy to open and distribute.<br>• PDFs allow you to layout your document and use a range of designs and images.<br>• A PDF version may need someone with design skills / software to develop it. |
| **Print**: A complete, designed version that people can read in person. | • Print is useful for getting your document read in a physical place and many people may still prefer a print document versus something posted online.<br>• However printed documents can be costly, so it's worth thinking about focusing any print versions on where you need them the most.<br>• Best used in a targeted way (e.g. for use at local libraries). |
| **Online**: Provides a searchable version that will show up in search results. | • Putting your Local Place Plan onto a website as a text is a good way to make it searchable and means you can include links and easily update it without having to change a fixed design such as a PDF.<br>• Website hosting is relatively inexpensive, but there are ongoing costs to consider.<br>• However, there is also the extra time to place the document online (creating pages, structure etc.), so it might be easier just to host the PDF. |
| **Summary version**: A way for people to quickly understand the Local Place Plan. | • It's good to consider creating a shorter, summary version of your Local Place Plan which includes the main points of the full document (see example below)<br>• A summary version will help you get more people to read it, especially those who might not consider reading a longer document.<br>• Along with this, if you use social media it's good to consider how you could shorten your main points to a social media post that could include a link to read more. |

An example of a Summary Plan is shown below. It was developed by the Kirkfieldbank Community Group in South Lanarkshire.

## Community Issues

The chart highlights areas of least community concern at the top, to the issues of more concern towards the bottom.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | Natural-space | 4.6 |
| 2. | Safety | 4.5 |
| 3. | Identity and belonging | 3.8 |
| 4. | Housing | 3.6 |
| 5. | Play and recreation | 3.57 |
| 6. | Walking and cycling | 3.56 |
| 7. | Decision making | 3.5 |
| 8. | Attractive and easy to navigate | 3.2 |
| 9. | Things to enjoy | 3.1 |
| 10. | Buildings and public spaces | 3 |
| 11. | Public transport | 2.9 |
| 12. | Spaces to meet | 2.3 |
| 13. | Local economy | 2.2 |
| 14. | Traffic and parking | 1.8 |

## Themes and Priorities

**1. Traffic and Travel**
- Tackle traffic and travel congestion
- Active Travel infrastructure
- Improved bus timetables and public transport links
- Traffic calming measures
- Safe crossing point

**2. Maintenance and Improvements**
- Paint buildings and install floral displays
- Make village a 'Litter Free Zone'
- Maintenance of paths, hedges and railings
- New signage, information boards and waymarking
- Path through orchard linking top with bottom of village
- Educational / History Trail
- Community garden
- Improve sports facilities at Kilbank Recreational Area
- Public toilets
- Flood prevention strategy

**3. Community and Enterprise**
- Community ownership of The Riverside Tavern
- Community Hub and Cafe
- Establish Kirkfieldbank Development Trust
- Community website
- Office and work space
- Overnight accommodation

## Community Projects

**The Riverside Tavern**

In order to ensure that the local pub remains open, the community are keen to consider taking ownership of the establishment to retain this much needed social space. This would provide jobs and increase footfall for the town centre, improving the local economy.

**Signage & Information**

Design and install new directional and informational signage throughout the village. This is needed to highlight (1) local walks and places of natural beauty (2) the history of the area, i.e. a history trail (4) tourist information and (5) community communication.

**Brightening up Kirkfieldbank**

Make the village more attractive by installing planters, hanging baskets and painting the buildings along Riverside Rd. Start a litter campaign to make Kirkfieldbank a 'Litter Free Village'.

**Top Park Improvements**

Develop the Kilbank Play Area at the top of the village to provide much needed football and sports facilities. Provide better quality play equipment for young people and develop the Pavilion into a multi-use community hub and changing facility.

**Development Trust**

Establish Kirkfieldbank Development Trust to take projects and actions forwards. A Development Trust can provide an organisational structure that can bring in funding and help address local needs and priorities.

# 3. Use simple language

Your Local Place Plan will be for the whole community, so it's really important that everyone can understand the language you use.

### Plain English

The [Plain English Campaign](#) defines plain English as:

- Keeping your sentences short.
- Preferring active verbs (Active: *"To support the development of our community we have written this plan"*. Passive: *"This plan has been written to support the development of the community."* There's more information [here](#)).
- Using 'you' and 'we'.
- Using words that are appropriate for the reader.
- Not being afraid to give instructions.
- Avoiding nominalisations (for example, use *'we should consider'* rather than *'we should take into consideration'*).
- Using lists where appropriate.

There is lots of [guidance about writing in plain English here](#). Overall, it's best to try and be as clear as possible.

### Reducing jargon

When writing for a broad audience it's good to think about which words might not be understood by those who aren't used to reading them. When writing your Local Place Plan you should consider what jargon you could either rephrase or remove.

Of course, sometimes it's important that specific phrases or words are used - in this case, you should explain what they mean, perhaps in a 'jargon-buster' or glossary

section (see Glossary in [Introduction section](#)), or somewhere prominently on the page.

## Using abbreviations

It's good practice to use abbreviations carefully and to help make the text clear and easier to read. When writing your Local Place Plan (LPP) and using abbreviations you should always include the full word or phrase when starting a new section and include the shortened version in brackets - just as above.

From there, you can continue to use the abbreviation in your Local Place Plan - just make sure that it's adding to the clarity and making the document easier to read.

## Using graphics and images

It's good to include images and graphics in your Local Place Plan to help make it engaging to read and easy to understand. Images can be used to illustrate ideas, represent people and communities or display information in a different way.

Images can come from lots of different sources, but it's important to make sure you're using images which you have the permission to use. **Most of the images that show up in web searches will be copyrighted, and you won't be able to use them in your Local Place Plan.**

Here are some tips around using images:

- Take photos of the engagement process, and your work generally, as you go. You can then use these when adding images to your design but always make sure you have permission from the people who are in them to use them.

- Pictures of the local area are always good to include - make sure you know who took the image and that you have permission to use them.

- It's good to show a broad range of people, cultures and ethnicities in the images you use.

- There are images online which are 'Creative Commons' - this means you can use them freely without having to pay. Most people [ask that they're credited](#) for any images you use. [Creativecommons.org has an image search engine you can use.](#)

- It's important not to use images that have text inside them - this makes it impossible for screen readers to understand them. Graphics and images should be used to support your text.

- There are various ways of sourcing plans and maps for your Local Place Plans, including asking your local authority for Ordnance Survey mapping, using [Open Street Map](#) or [Google Maps](#).  Bear in mind that each of these options has different copyright or licencing requirements.

Remember, a particular defining characteristic of a Local Place Plan (see **Section 1**) is that it should express a clear vision for the future, including a spatial map. That map might be a very simple sketch map showing roughly which actions in the plan might take place where, or it could be a more professionally drawn one such as the example below - both are equally valid. Remember that not every action in the plan might be capable of being shown on a plan. Actions like supporting particular groups of people or types of community activity might not be location-specific, but spread across the whole area.

### JOHNSTONEBRIDGE: THINKING STRATEGICALLY



Photo: Courtesy of Nick Wright
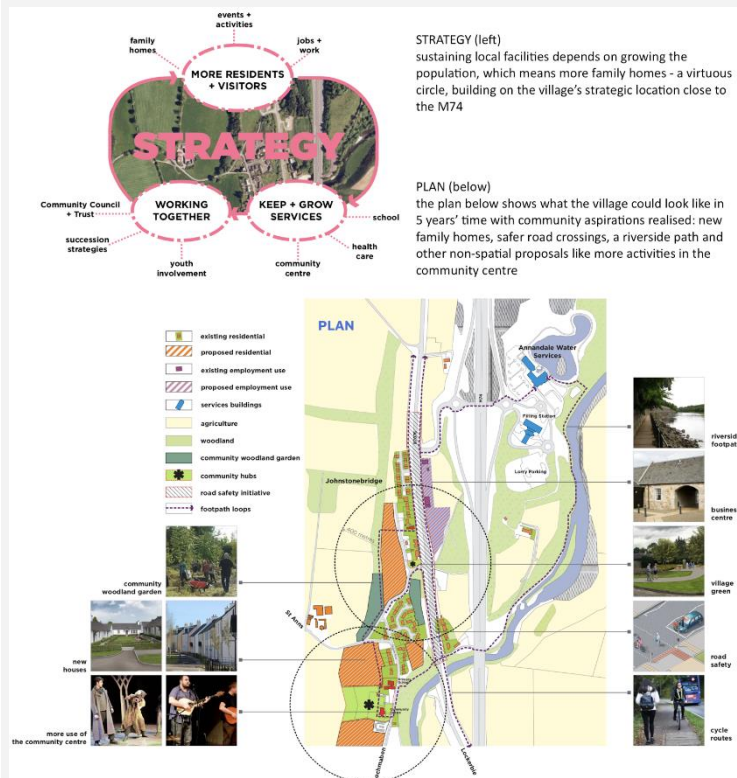
Johnstonebridge, a small village near the M74 between Lockerbie and Moffat, produced its Community Action Plan in 2018-19 to decide how best to use 'community benefit' funds which were available from local windfarms. Using a community-led process as described in **Section 2** of this Guide, the local community decided that the best way of achieving its aspirations - which included retaining local services and facilities, and improving the village for young people and families - was to encourage more families to settle in the village, which in turn needed new housing.

So the community action plan contained a simple strategy: more new housing (as proposed in the Council's Local Development Plan), focusing on family homes, which would mean more school children, safeguarding the school, creating more demand for services, and encouraging more activity in the under-used community centre. To illustrate how that strategy might change the village, a spatial plan was prepared which showed how the village might look in 5 or 10 years' time with the

community's main spatial aspirations having been delivered: new paths, safer road crossings, more family homes, maybe even new business spaces.

This was all laid out in a [full version of the plan](#) (that included more detailed background information about the process and the proposals) and a summary version - [a graphic leaflet](#) - for distribution to each household.

## 4. Keep the Plan structure simple

Once you've begun writing your Local Place Plan, it's good to think about how you're going to present the text. Before you think about design elements such as images or branding, you should try and create a logical structure for your document.

To do this it's helpful to use sections and headings that help split up different ideas. This can help you think about what you're writing, but also how readers might interpret your writing. You can get an idea of what a structure might look like for a Local Place Plan in **Section 2** (see Stage 3 - planning ahead; step 5).

### Using bullet points

It's also a good idea to use bullet points and bold fonts to break up text. This can help to:

- Break down complex ideas into manageable chunks.
- Reduce the 'wall of text' effect which makes things difficult to read.
- Make things easier to skim to read.
- Draw attention to important points.

If you don't use bullet points, even a few short sentences can become much more difficult to read. For example, the next paragraph is the same as the text above but is harder to understand:

*It's also a good idea to use bullet points and bold fonts to break up text. This can help to break down complex ideas into manageable chunks, reduce the 'wall of text' effect which makes things difficult to read and make things easier to skim to read and draw attention to important points.*

### Shorter is better

When writing it's best to use shorter sentences and paragraphs. This helps you get across your points clearly and means that what you say can be read by as many people as possible.

A good example is the [BBC News website](#). Their stories are almost always limited to one or two sentences per paragraph. And each sentence tries to bring together one idea.

You don't always need to write in this way, but it's good to consider it as the default way of doing things.

## 5. Think about your design

It's good to invest some time in thinking about how your document looks. Good design can be the difference between someone picking up your Local Place Plan or not - people like attractive designs.

There's also some basic principles to follow to keep your design attractive and accessible:

- **Use simple design ideas:** Less is more - it's good to use 2-3 colours and have lots of whitespace.
- **Make sure you use at least size 12 fonts for your main text**
- **Make sure your design has enough contrast:** It's very hard to read light coloured text on a light background.

Here are a few different resources which you could use to achieve high quality designs easily:

- Microsoft Word templates
- Canva
- Free logo designer

However, design isn't easy - most of the time we don't have the time or budget for professional design work - so it's important to remember that not every Local Place Plan needs to produce outputs of comprehensive technical quality.

There are plenty of good examples of strong community-led plan documents produced without external support such as Sustaining Dunbar Action Plan and Linlithgow: A Plan for the Future; and many examples of very simple plan documents like the community action plans in Cairngorms National Park, which deliberately follow a simple model to minimise cost.

## Sharing your Plan with the local authority and others

For your plan to be registered as a Local Place Plan and incorporated into the Local Development Planning process, you will need to submit it to the local authority. Although this is a legal requirement under the Planning Act (see **Section 1**), and your Local Place Plan can form part of the Local Development Plan, it is also a good opportunity to get buy-in from the local authority and others to help deliver what's in your plan.

Of course, you should have been working with the local authority throughout your Local Place Plan process, so this should be straightforward.  But it's important to check in advance what the particular processes are for you to do this in your area.

You may also want to present your plan to other agencies or partnerships that have related plans (see **Section 1**) such as the Community Planning Partnership or the Health and Social Care Partnership, to feed into their plans, strategies and future services. Similarly, if you have had staff from these organisations involved throughout your process, this should be relatively straightforward.

Presenting your plan to other organisations can be a daunting task. Don't forget there is plenty of help available to support you to do this, for example from your local authority Community Learning and Development team, planning department or local Third Sector Interface.

# [Section 4] Delivering your Plan
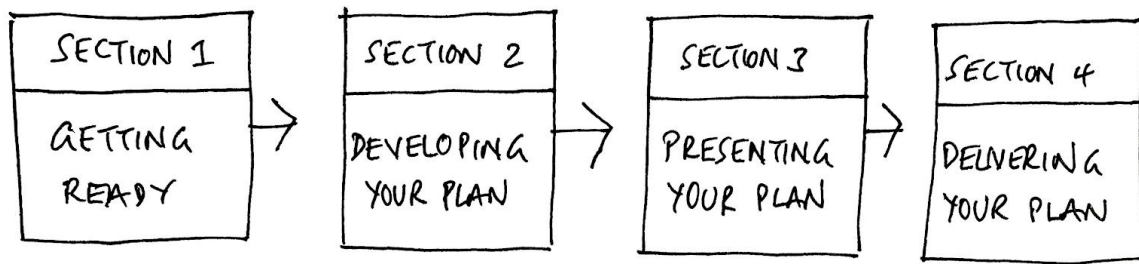


## Overview

You have now reached the most important stage of any planning process - taking action! It is important to remember that, although you have been leading the process of developing the Local Place Plan, it may not be entirely down to you to lead on delivery. At least some of what you have put in your Local Place Plan is likely to influence what is contained in your local authority's Local Development Plan.

The key thing is that you have ownership and influence over the delivery of the plan. In this section we will take you through what you need to think about to make sure your Local Place Plan is delivered:

- **Working Collaboratively**
- **Finding support for delivery**
- **Funding and timescales**
- **Monitoring progress**
- **Celebrating achievements**
- **Reviewing, evaluating and updating your Plan**

Having developed the plan, the community is now at the start of a journey to realise the stated ambitions. To make the plan a reality and to bring the outcomes to reality will take time, patience, and additional planning to realise the various sub-projects and themes which make up the overall plan.

# Working collaboratively

It will take a joined-up approach to deliver your Local Place Plan. This means bringing together people who are connected to the area or theme and identifying volunteers to bring the priorities identified in the plan to life. Through your community engagement you may well have identified people who are interested in bringing parts of the Plan (if not the whole Plan) to fruition. You will also have involved a range of officers from local agencies such as the Council, the TSI, the Health and Social Care Partnership, and Enterprise Agency. It is vital that they now stay involved to help you with the delivery of the plan (see **Section 1** - who needs to be involved and why?).

It is important that you have clear governance in place to ensure your plan can be delivered. You may want to continue with your Steering Group or create a new "Delivery Group". It is important that the delivery of the plan remains a clear **responsibility** which someone takes charge of and doesn't become diluted over time. So, at this stage you will need to give consideration to the form of governance or structure that is needed to best support delivery of the plan. Here are a few key checklist questions to help you decide what structure is most important:

- will responsibility for delivery of the plan rest with one group as lead (e.g. a community development trust or community council), or will it be taken on by a collaboration of local groups (e.g. a local alliance or network)?
- will the role of the lead group/alliance be to oversee the delivery of the plan or will it be involved in direct delivery itself?
- If the latter is the case then there will need to be a structure set up to enable the group to handle money and potentially to employ staff

For more information on appropriate forms of governance contact your local TSI or these national contacts such as SCVO or Senscot.

# Finding support for delivery

In addition to the support for developing the plan you will now need to find support for the delivery of the plan. This may come from various sources including:

## Community Learning and Development (CLD) teams

These teams are based within the local authority and play a significant role in making our communities more resilient. They empower local people to make change in their communities. They will often support activism and help people to use their skills and talents to bring positive change to the community. Community Learning and Development teams work with communities to enable them to shape services, influence decisions and become more inclusive. They will often be targeting their efforts to work with communities to reduce poverty and inequalities as well as supporting the development of adult learning and youth involvement.

> **East Ayrshire Community Learning and Development team** has been supporting the development of community action plans in up to 30 towns and villages across East Ayrshire. This support includes: working with groups to become organised and link with others, working alongside the groups to link in with appropriate parts of the Council and influence Council services, and supporting them to plan their community research and engagement.

## Local planning departments

Many local authority and National Park planning departments work closely with community organisations to support them to prepare and deliver community-led plans. Support tends to take two forms. Firstly, working alongside colleagues in community planning or Community Learning and Development to help community organisations get organised to plan and deliver their aspirations, which often involves putting community organisations in touch with the right people in other local authority departments or other organisations. Secondly, to provide more in-depth knowledge to support projects that relate to the environment, land, buildings or planning policy - which might for example be about housing, nature conservation or walking and cycling provision.

> **West Dunbartonshire** has two local planning authorities: the Council planning department covers the larger area outwith Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park, whilst the National Park planning department covers the smaller area within the National Park.
>
> Both planning departments work closely with local communities as much as they can within the resources they have available. The Council, for example, has included a policy on community-led planning in its proposed Local Development Plan 2 (Policy LPP1) and is helping local communities to prepare and deliver their own community-led plans. The National Park has worked for many years to support community-led plans; many communities are now onto their second or even third community-led action plan, and the National Park actively supports plan preparation and delivery.

**Local intermediary or support organisations**

These can be local authorities or other local public sector organisations like National Park authorities or enterprise agencies; or they can be community or voluntary sector organisations such as Community Development Trusts or Third Sector Interfaces (TSIs).

*Community Action Lanarkshire is a project managed by the Rural Development Trust, initially funded by Lanarkshire LEADER but now continuing to support action plan delivery by the National Lottery Community Fund. It has supported the development of numerous community action plans across rural Lanarkshire.*



[Final Guide could include joint video interview with local authority planning/CLD and community reps about how they worked together to deliver specific aspects of their plan]

**National organisations and other specialist support**

These can be national intermediary organisations such as Scottish Community Development Centre or Coalfields Regeneration Trust, or a range of independent consultants who can be commissioned to help local organisations with their action planning.

*PAS (Planning Aid Scotland) is a national charity which helps people to understand and influence the place where they live through the provision of impartial advice, skills, training and support. They offer specialist advice and support on community engagement in spatial planning through a national network of trained volunteers.*

## Funding and timescales

Funding to deliver the plan can come from agencies or through fundraising and sponsorship. The Local Place Plan should consider what communities can do directly and what they can expect from local organisations (community and voluntary sector) and agencies as the Local Place Plan will have to be funded to realise the themes/projects that are proposed. This should be considered as the plan is being developed and conversations should be taking place with local organisations and agencies so that the plan can be delivered as soon as possible when it is launched.

Remember:

- Quick wins are important (see **Section 2**) to keep people engaged in the relevance and practicality of the plan.

- Having an embedded working group / champion to lead on different aspects of the plan is important.
- Those leading on the delivery need to be realistic about timescales and resources to deliver different elements of the plan. Not every project can or will be delivered simultaneously so it is important to prioritise activities.
- Momentum must be maintained throughout the process which includes celebrating quick wins and supporting volunteers, organisations and agencies to be involved and learn from the process.

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### LANGHOLM: THINKING ABOUT DELIVERY FROM THE START



Leading up to the launch of their Community Plan (Dec 2019) The Langholm Alliance were in conversation with local politicians and the new agency South of Scotland Enterprise (SoSE) about tangible support for the new plan.

Following much negotiation and the support from local politicians SOSE paid for two posts, a Community Enterprise Manager and Project Assistant to take forward the priorities identified in the plan. Against a background of a resurging pandemic the Community Enterprise Manager has been able to build a database of community groups, individuals and stakeholders who will support the plan, increased the social media presence through a website and facebook, built a calendar of events for the coming 400th Anniversary of the town and published a newsletter promoting Langholm's achievements in 2020 including the purchase of 5,200 beautiful acres of Langholm Moor which will pave the way for the Tarras Valley Nature Reserve..

For more information, see this Langholm Alliance newsletter.

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[Final Guide could include video interview with a community organisation giving their experience of thinking about delivery from the start, with lessons learned]

# Monitoring progress

The success of any action plan is reflected in the *action* rather than the *plan*. That means it's important that you are able to keep on track of what's happening with the plan, what is being achieved (and what isn't), and the impacts on your community.

To help you to do this you should have a clear plan with SMART outcomes, clear allocated actions and responsibilities, and timescales for carrying these out (see **Section 2**). If this is in place then you will be able to use it as the basis for monitoring progress against the plan. As a means of doing this, you can see below the example planning table from **Section 2**. By adding another column, as shown, you can record progress against actions to easily keep on top of things.

| Outcomes | Activities | Actions and Timescales | Responsibilities and Resources | Progress - what have we done? |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Outdoor play and activity opportunities are improved for our younger children | Improve current outdoor play area | Engagement with young people *(4-6 weeks)* Replacement of broken equipment or equipment in disrepair, resurfacing of areas that are in disrepair *(3-6 months)* | CLD - working with local youth club Council Parks Dept working with Community Council and young people *(Parks Repair and Maintenance Budget, Local Grants Application)* | *24/3/21 - Engagement completed and results recorded. 18/4/21 - Walkabout arranged by Parks Dept. with Play Sub Group and young people.* |
| Outdoor play and activity opportunities are improved for our younger children | Develop a new outdoor play area | Undertake local research into the need for and siting of a new play area (3-6 months) Develop and submit a funding application on the basis of this research (9-12 months) | Local Place Plan Play Sub Group working with local young people and residents, CLD, Council Parks Dept and Play Charities *(Small Grant to fund research)* | *21/3/21 - First Play Sub Group meeting held to identify scope and plan the research. 7/4/21 - Research plan drawn up and tasks allocated.* |

| Outcome | Objective | Actions | Who | Progress |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Outdoor play and activity opportunities are improved for our younger children | Develop a strategy for outdoor play for the whole area | Prepare strategy for filling gaps in outdoor play provision in specific locations (3-6 months) Undertake community consultation on the strategy (6 - 12 months) Key changes incorporated in next phase of the Local Development Plan (1 - 2 years) | Local Place Plan Play Sub Group working with Council Planning and Parks Depts and others. | *18/4/21 - Working group set up to develop strategy 30/6/21 - First draft of strategy produced 30/9/21 - Community consultation by survey and focus groups completed. 15/12/21 - Final strategy produced and key recommendations incorporated into next phase of Local Development Plan process.* |

**Who and How?**

Local Place Plan progress meetings should take place on a regular basis. This will vary depending on the scope and scale of the plan but it is useful to hold them at least once every three months. The key questions for monitoring are:

- Are we doing what we said we would do, when we said we would do it?
- Is anything not going according to plan, and if so, what are we doing about it?

Alternatively, you may wish to appoint a plan implementation sub-group whose role is to keep an eye on progress and to alert the wider group to any issues and/or further opportunities arising from the implementation of the plan. Ensure that the group leading the plan are regularly looking for and gathering evidence of progress. The learning from the group will then be used to assess progress and to make decisions of future progress based on good evidence.

**ELIE AND EARLSFERRY: KEEPING ON TRACK**

A good example of a detailed plan which is easy to keep track of is the Going Forth Community Place Plan developed by PAS with Elie and Earlsferry Community Council. The Action Plan tables in particular highlight the actions, timescales and responsible parties for each of the plan's priorities.

# Celebrating achievements

It's really important that the wider community are kept informed on progress with the plan and have a chance to feed in their comments/views on progress. It is important to celebrate success, particularly if you have achieved the 'quick wins' you identified in your plan.

As previously recommended it is important that a variety of methods are used to ensure that information gets out (in an appropriate format) to the widest possible audience and that they have the opportunity to feed in their views, comments and ideas.

Some useful ways of doing this include:

- A Local Place Plan newsletter, e.g. twice a year
- A Local Place Plan Facebook page
- Local Place Plan update events, e.g. twice a year
- Occasional presentations to key local groups or stakeholders

Whatever methods are used to keep the community informed of progress it is useful to follow a standard template in order to ensure consistency of the kind of information that is presented. The following table is a guide to what you should be including in your feedback and how you should present it.

| Content | Notes |
|---|---|
| **Starting points - a summary of the original priorities and outcomes** | It's good to remind people what the original priorities and outcomes were as they can quickly be forgotten! |
| **Progress against identified actions** | As well as letting people know what has happened it's also important to keep people informed about lack of progress and why. Honesty and transparency in your feedback is key to maintaining community support and buy-in to the plan. |
| **An account of the process** | As well as letting people know **what** has happened it's really important to let them know **how** it has happened - plans don't just get delivered by magic! |
| **Next steps** | This is an opportunity to let people know what you're planning to do next and to alert them to any upcoming events relating to the plan and its delivery. |

**Key messages:**

- Keep your communications concise and clear. Make good use of visuals and pictures – particularly if you have pictures of physical developments happening as a result of the plan e.g. an area of derelict ground being cleaned up, or the development of a local playpark.
- Provide opportunities for people to feedback to you on progress with your plan – this could be online (e.g. through a facebook page or on twitter) and/or through comments boxes or notice boards in local venues.

### POLLOKSHIELDS BOWLING GREEN: GETTING ON WITH IT!



Following preparation of their community action plan, Pollokshields Development Agency (a local development trust) successfully developed The Bowling Green, a disused open space, as a productive community venue - but in an inclusive way with residents' input. The Bowling Green is now home to several exciting projects that benefit the local community including community garden drop-in sessions, spaces for local folk to set up businesses, and a summer programme for young people. The Development Trust has developed a website with video and pictures to promote and explain the new projects and programmes as they create them.

The Trust organised a launch event for the Bowling Green to kickstart activity - making good use of their local MSP Nicola Sturgeon by inviting her to cut the ribbon!

## Reviewing, evaluating and updating your Plan

The best plans don't end at a particular point but should lead into further planning and development. They should be dynamic processes rather than fixed-term documents. It is therefore important that the plan stakeholders are able to review the success of the plan along with their community.

The frequency of this review process will depend on the timescales set out in the Local Place Plan and taking account of Local Development Plan timescales, which your local authority publishes online in what is called its Development Plan Scheme.  It is important that your timescales are specified at the beginning of the process as they are an important checkpoint to make sure the Plan is on track and to be able to make adjustments if needed. While there is no fixed term for a Local Place Plan you will probably need to review and refresh it every 5 years or so.  Circumstances will change over time: for example, priorities may alter, the nature of your community may well evolve, and your local authority might invite you to participate in a new Local Development Plan.

The review process needn't be arduous, but it is important that you're able to reflect on and learn from what you have achieved (and haven't) over the lifetime of the plan.

You may want to consider enlisting outside help to evaluate your Plan's impact and review how it should be updated, as often people who are not directly involved with the process are more likely to be able to take an objective view on how things are going. This may be someone from another area who may be involved in community-led action planning themselves, or it may be someone from the local area who is not directly involved in delivering the action plan.

Evaluation Support Scotland provides a range of very useful resources about evaluation, which can be accessed here. A range of other evaluation resources is available on the Communities Channel Scotland website.