



Annual Report

May 2020 – April 2021

CWB
COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING

**NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL
COMMUNITY WEALTH
BUILDING STRATEGY**



North Ayrshire Council
Comhairle Siorrachd Àir a Tuath

This report reflects on the first year of delivering the strategy – amidst the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic – and highlights key achievements, progress and examples of how Community Wealth Building action and support is having a positive impact across North Ayrshire.

Executive Summary

This report marks the first year of embarking on a bold new economic model to deliver Scotland's first Community Wealth Building strategy. The strategy was launched in May 2020 and outlines our five-year action plan to become a Community Wealth Building Council.

The strategy was launched in the midst of the Covid-19 global pandemic, with unprecedented impacts on population health, the economy and society. The impacts on North Ayrshire have been severe and has thrown into sharp relief the need to focus on creating an economy that is more resilient to future challenges, such as the Climate Emergency.

As we emerge from the pandemic, it is clear that we cannot return to business as usual, and we must build back an economy which is better, fairer and greener.





Foreword

In May 2020 we launched our Community Wealth Building strategy setting out our ambitions to become Scotland's first Community Wealth Building Council. The impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic have laid bare the stark levels of poverty and inequality we continue face in North Ayrshire and as we emerge from the pandemic, it is clear we need to build back better, fairer and greener.

Our transformational five-year Community Wealth Building strategy seeks to create a fairer local economy by enhancing local wealth and the creation of fair jobs, maximising the potential of all our places through working in partnership with our communities and businesses.

For us, Community Wealth Building is about creating a new economic model focused on wellbeing and inclusion. It is not a short-term project but a long-term intention to create a fairer, more inclusive, sustainable and democratic economy from the bottom up. We can no longer rely on traditional approaches to economic development and a focus solely on economic growth, we must work in new ways to enhance social, economic and environmental wellbeing across North Ayrshire.

Mapping out a practical and ambitious approach to Community Wealth Building, the strategy aligns across all five pillars of Community Wealth Building: Procurement, Fair Employment, Land and Assets, Plural Ownership and Financial Power, as well as sets objectives for us to become a Community Wealth Building Council. Community Wealth Building is also a key tool for the Council to achieve our ambitious net zero carbon by 2030 target.

In our first year of delivery, despite the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic, we have made significant progress across all strategy objectives.

We have invested in ten new Community Wealth Building staff who are working in new ways to support local businesses and communities and regenerate our local area.

We have created an ambitious £11.2 million Investment Fund to support the delivery of a Green New Deal for North Ayrshire, ensuring an inclusive and green economic recovery and renewal.

Partnership working with our local and regional Anchor Institutions is at the heart of our Community Wealth Building approach and in summer 2020 I was pleased to welcome South and East Ayrshire Councils to our Community Wealth Building Commission, making it an Ayrshire-wide collaboration. During Challenge Poverty Week in October 2020, we launched the Ayrshire Anchor Charter which commits local and regional Anchor Institutions to a range of pledges across the five pillars and a sixth pillar of 'Climate Action' to create a strong, resilient and inclusive local and regional economy.

In January 2021, my Cabinet approved the installation of a Solar Photovoltaic farm at the former Nethermains landfill site near Kilwinning, which will provide a substantial amount of clean, renewable energy and create local green employment opportunities.

It demonstrates our commitment to reducing carbon emissions and achieving net zero by 2030, and the repurposing of our land and assets for the benefit of our communities and the environment. Later in 2021 we approved the installation of a second Solar Photovoltaic farm at Shewalton former landfill

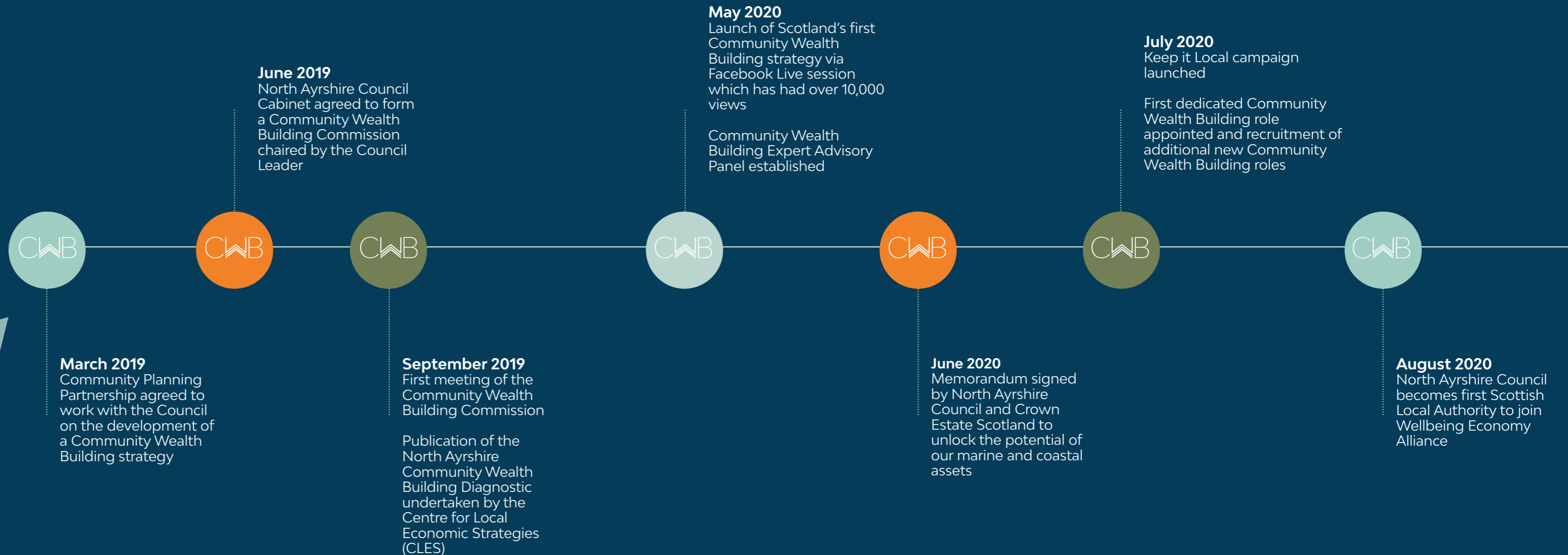
site, Irvine. In the year of COP26, this is just one example of our leadership role in ensuring a just transition to net zero, and this report includes many practical case studies of innovative locally-led activity to grow local wealth.

I am pleased to present this first Annual Report on the progress of our Community Wealth Building strategy. It has been a challenging year in many ways, however the impact of the pandemic has thrown into sharp focus the need to build a different kind of economy, one that works for people, place and planet. I hope this report, which highlights our key achievements and progress so far, demonstrates how Community Wealth Building is already making a difference to communities, businesses and the environment across North Ayrshire.



Councillor Joe Cullinane
Council Leader,
North Ayrshire Council

Timeline of Community Wealth Building Activities



September 2020

Economic Recovery and Renewal Approach (Green New Deal) published

East Ayrshire Council and South Ayrshire Council join the Community Wealth Building Commission

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November 2020

Ayrshire Growth Deal signed

The Ayrshire Community Trust signed the Ayrshire Anchor Charter

Council commitment to pay new Living Wage rate early during Living Wage Week 2020

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October 2020

Community Wealth Building Ayrshire Anchor Charter launched during Challenge Poverty Week, signed by North, East and South Ayrshire Councils, NHS Ayrshire and Arran, Ayrshire College, Scottish Enterprise.

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December 2020

Community Wealth Building Commission revised Terms of Reference and new Workplan agreed

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January 2021

Solar Photovoltaic farm at former Nethermains landfill site near Kilwinning approved by Cabinet

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February 2021

£500,000 Green Jobs Fund approved by Cabinet, with £250,000 of funds provided by North Ayrshire Ventures Trust (NAVT)

Stevenston Beach Hub and Millport Town Hall receive funding from Scottish Government Regeneration Capital Grant Fund

First meeting of the Community Wealth Building Commission Lead Officers Working Group incorporating regional Anchor Institutions

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March 2021

Ayrshire Growth Deal £3 million Community Wealth Building Project Full Business Case approved

Regeneration Delivery Plan agreed by Cabinet

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April 2021

First session of Cooperative Development Scotland upskilling programme to support business advisors on Cooperative business models.

Ayrshire Meet the Buyer event to grow local spend and support supplier development

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Introduction

This report marks year one of our five-year Community Wealth Building strategy. It sets out our key achievements in the first year of strategy implementation, provides examples of our new ways of working and how these are benefitting our communities and businesses, celebrates Community Wealth Building best practice from across North Ayrshire, and maps our progress against the fifty-five strategy actions.



Report Outline

The report situates our progress within the context of the extraordinary events of 2020 and the impact of Covid-19. The health emergency and economic crisis has highlighted the importance of creating a new economic model based on wellbeing and inclusion.

Taking each of the six Community Wealth Building strategy objectives in turn, we shine a spotlight on key achievements over the past year, identifying notable case studies demonstrating good practice and note our areas of focus for the forthcoming year.

Appendix 1 provides a breakdown of the status of the fifty-five strategy actions, including key outputs and activities.

The delivery of our Community Wealth Building actions will contribute to the achievement of key Council Plan performance measures. Appendix 2 provides an update on the status of these measures.

What is Community Wealth Building?

Community Wealth Building uses the economic levers available to Anchor Institutions to develop resilient, inclusive local economies, with more local employment and a more diverse business base, ensuring that wealth is locally owned and benefits local people. Anchor Institutions are organisations which are rooted within local economies and bring wealth to the area in the form of jobs and supply chains.

Community Wealth Building changes how we work as an organisation and with our partners to maximise local and regional economic opportunities. This includes the goods that we buy, the people we employ, the assets we own and the powers we have to bring about long-term, sustainable economic change for the benefit of our communities and local businesses.

Community Wealth Building Pillars

At the centre of the Community Wealth Building approach there are five pillars:



PROCUREMENT

Progressive procurement develops dense local supply chains of local enterprises, small and medium sized enterprises, employee-owned businesses, social enterprises, cooperatives and other forms of community owned enterprise.



FAIR EMPLOYMENT

Recruitment from lower income areas, commitment to paying the living wage and building progression routes for workers are all examples of the actions to stimulate the local economy and bring social improvements to local communities.



LAND AND ASSETS

Anchors are often major land holders and can support equitable land development and the development of under-utilised assets for community use.



FINANCIAL POWER

Community Wealth Building seeks to increase flows of investment within local economies by harnessing the wealth that exists locally.



PLURAL OWNERSHIP OF THE ECONOMY

Democratic Ownership of the Local Economy - Cooperatives, mutually owned businesses, small and medium sized enterprises, social and community enterprises and municipally owned companies enable the wealth generated in a community to stay in that local area.



Our Community Wealth Building Journey

Community Wealth Building sits at the heart of our 2019-2024 Council Plan making us the first Community Wealth Building Council in Scotland. The Community Wealth Building strategy sets out how the Council will work in partnership with local communities, businesses and wider regional Anchor Institutions to create a fairer local and regional economy to tackle poverty and inequality, embedding a new economic model focused on wellbeing and inclusion.

Our economy should work for people, place and planet and Community Wealth Building provides a pathway to ensuring a just transition to net zero in North Ayrshire, so that existing inequalities are not exacerbated.

North Ayrshire Council's third Environmental Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy (2021-2023) was published by the Council in May 2021 and outlines a roadmap of actions to achieve net zero carbon status across North Ayrshire by 2030. Accelerating action to tackle climate change is a critical part of our inclusive and green economic recovery and renewal from the impacts of Covid-19 and is demonstrated in the publication of a Green New Deal for North Ayrshire in September 2020.

Our Community Wealth Building Strategy Mission:

To support the achievement of the Council Plan's vision of a North Ayrshire that is 'Fair for All' by:

Enhancing local wealth and the creation of fair jobs, and maximising the potential of all our places through working in partnership with our communities and businesses.

The Community Wealth Building strategy includes a comprehensive 55-point action plan aligned to the pillars of Community Wealth Building and sets out six objectives to deliver Community Wealth Building:

Community Wealth Building Council

We will work across all our services and wider local and regional partners to implement Scotland's first approach to Community Wealth Building.

Procurement

We will use our spend to actively encourage and support a growing, diverse and resilient local business base, and to support our net zero carbon ambitions.

Fair Employment

We will encourage the creation of fair and meaningful jobs with progression opportunities to unlock the potential of our residents.

Land and Assets

We will support the wider regeneration of our communities by maximising all our land and assets including through alternative uses for community and business benefit.

Financial Power

We will invest locally and encourage regional and national institutions to invest in our communities.

Plural Ownership

We will support the creation and sustainability of a range of business models including SMEs, social enterprise, employee ownership, cooperatives, municipal activity and community enterprises.



Community Wealth Building Commission

We believe that working collaboratively with other Anchor Institutions in the region is the key to achieving transformational change through Community Wealth Building.

That is why in 2019 we formed the Community Wealth Building Commission, a group of key local and regional Anchor Institutions, with the aim of embedding the principles of Community Wealth Building within their organisations to support a more inclusive economy. In summer 2020, membership expanded to include East Ayrshire Council and South Ayrshire Council, meaning the Commission now spans the whole of the Ayrshire region.

The **Community Wealth Building Commission** includes representation from senior Elected Members, Council services, Health and Social Care Integration Joint Board and Community Planning Partners (CPP) including major Anchor Institutions like NHS Ayrshire and Arran, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, Police Scotland, Ayrshire College, Scottish Enterprise and The Ayrshire Community Trust (Third Sector Interface).



The Community Wealth Building Commission is a key vehicle for setting vision and promoting the development of a strategic approach to Community Wealth Building in Ayrshire.

In October 2020 the Commission launched the Ayrshire Community Wealth Building Anchor Charter.

The Anchor Charter commits local and regional Anchor Institutions to a range of pledges across the five pillars of Community Wealth Building and a 'sixth pillar' of Climate Action to improve collective wellbeing and create a strong, resilient and inclusive local and regional economy. To date, seven organisations have signed up to the Charter: East, North and South Ayrshire Councils, NHS Ayrshire and Arran, Ayrshire College, Scottish Enterprise and The Ayrshire Community Trust (TACT).





Community Wealth Building Expert Advisory Panel

Established in May 2020, the Expert Advisory Panel is a group of leading economic experts brought together to assist us with our Community Wealth Building strategy as it moves forward.

The Panel acts as a critical friend and sounding board, providing support and challenge on the implementation of the strategy. The organisations represented on the Panel include Wellbeing Economy Alliance (Scotland); Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES); Common Wealth; The Democracy Collaborative; University College London (UCL) Institute of Innovation and Public Purpose and Open Democracy; Community Enterprise in Scotland (CEIS); Cooperatives UK and Scottish Trades Union Congress (STUC).

// The Expert Advisory Panel acts as a sounding board and critical friend... challenging thinking and providing advice. We are committed to helping the region capitalise on Community Wealth Building as a bottom-up approach that hard wires social and environmental impact into how the economy works. //

Sarah Deas
Chair, Expert Advisory Panel

A diverse team of experts, the Panel bring ideas and lessons on Community Wealth Building practice from elsewhere in the UK and internationally to maximise the potential of our strategy. We have sought their feedback and challenge on a range of topics including:

Development of the Ayrshire Community Wealth Building Anchor Charter

Economic Recovery and Renewal approach (Green New Deal for North Ayrshire)

Regeneration Delivery Plan

Our approach to exploring the feasibility of a community bank

Community Wealth Building and Community Development

Environmental Sustainability and Climate Change strategy refresh



New Community Wealth Building Staff

To support the delivery and implementation of the Community Wealth Building strategy a total of ten new Community Wealth Building roles have been created.

These new positions are based within existing teams who play a key role in delivering Community Wealth Building and include Community Wealth Building Coordinator; Community Benefits Officer; Procurement Development Manager; Community Wealth Building Locality Business Advisors; Regeneration Development Manager; Regeneration Officers, and a Community Economic Development Officer.

In addition to the new roles created, existing jobs within the Council have been aligned to support the delivery of the strategy and ensure Community Wealth Building is firmly embedded across the Council.

These new roles will contribute to the delivery of the strategy by:

Working with our wider Ayrshire Anchor Institutions to develop a collaborative approach to Community Wealth Building, ensuring local businesses and communities benefit and Ayrshire remains at the forefront of Community Wealth Building in Scotland.

Working within our localities to support business and community-led activities around supply chain development, business start-up and sustainability. This includes social enterprises, cooperative development and community enterprises, to understand where we can make best use of locality buildings and assets and promote fair employment and entrepreneurship.

Enhancing our support to businesses to access public sector contracts and wider supply chain opportunities.

Supporting communities to develop their community regeneration ambitions, including within our town centres.

Delivering municipalisation opportunities for the Council's land and buildings to meet our economic, social and environmental priorities.

Maximising our approach to Community Benefits and in a way which is meaningful and relevant to the needs of our communities.



Ayrshire Growth Deal

Through the Ayrshire Growth Deal, we will work with partners across Ayrshire to unlock our potential and build a strong regional economy.

Jointly funded by the three Ayrshire Councils and the UK and Scottish Governments, the Ayrshire Growth Deal brings £251 million of investment into Ayrshire, of which £84 million will be delivered within North Ayrshire.

Community Wealth Building is at the heart of the Ayrshire Growth Deal and one of the key projects supported is a £3 million regional Community Wealth Building Fund. In addition, an £8.5 million Regional Skills and Inclusion Programme will provide work focused health support across Ayrshire for both residents and employers through the Working for a Healthy Economy project and will also provide an Ayrshire Skills Fund to support skills interventions.

The £3m Community Wealth Building project will be delivered through three key inter-related elements:

1. Community Wealth Building Locality Officers

Officers will take a place-based approach to facilitate Community Wealth Building action across public, private, and social economy on procurement, employment, assets and ownership, linking with existing local service delivery.

2. Community Wealth Building Fund

The Fund will support the work of Community Wealth Building locality officers, including but not limited to social enterprise fund, employee ownership transition, workplace innovation, supplier development and capacity building, supporting entrepreneurship.

3. Fair Work Ayrshire

A dedicated Ayrshire 'Fair Work' resource will be established to engage key employers (including Anchor Institutions) to ensure they recruit inclusively, provide quality and meaningful work and position Ayrshire as a Fair Work region.



Building Back Better, Fairer and Greener - 2020: A year like no other

The Covid-19 pandemic has had an unprecedented impact on the UK economy and the local impact on North Ayrshire has been severe.

Despite some sectoral strengths, the North Ayrshire economy was fragile even before the pandemic with levels of unemployment, economic inactivity, poverty and inequality well above the Scottish average. As demonstrated by the 2008 financial crash, we know that North Ayrshire's economy takes longer to recover than other areas of Scotland. Analysis by the Scottish Government undertaken for the Advisory Group on Economic Recovery (AGER) has shown that North Ayrshire has the least resilient economy in Scotland, highlighting the stark levels of regional inequality that exist in Scotland.

The pandemic has further exposed the high levels of inequality that exist within our economy and society, and it is now more important than ever that we take a Community Wealth Building approach.



Supporting Our Local Businesses

Since the start of the pandemic, the Business Support and Development Team have worked hard to help businesses in immediate distress and provide a support package focussed on business recovery, diversification and new opportunities aligned to Community Wealth Building and a green recovery.

Activities of the Businesses Support and Development Team include:

Proactively engaging businesses and social enterprises to understand their challenges and helping them navigate UK and Scottish Government support mechanisms;

Provided support to businesses via the Non-Domestic Rates Grants and the Newly Self-Employed Hardship Fund which has delivered more than £23.5 million to North Ayrshire businesses;

The Strategic Framework Business Fund has supported over 1100 businesses locally and paid out £22.6 million;

A Local Authority Discretionary Business Support Fund has been developed to augment the other national support schemes by using local knowledge to identify businesses that have fallen through gaps and are in need of financial aid. It has supported 239 businesses with awards totalling £1.18 million;

The team have worked with businesses looking at detailed financial impact of lockdown on cashflow and providing advice on minimising expenditure, protecting jobs and helping to secure what funding was available. The new Transition Fund helps support businesses adapt to new ways of working as they emerge from restrictions. The fund is focussed on supporting Digital and Green ways of working and as of summer 2021 has had 95 applications totalling £670,000.

The team have moved to a place-based approach to delivering business support by aligning resources to the six North Ayrshire localities and working in partnership with the existing Locality Partnership teams.

Mechanisms for driving a Community Wealth Building business recovery include:

Local supply chains

A positive lesson from the pandemic is the negative impact of international supply chains. The opportunity exists to build local supply chains, creating more local economic opportunities and innovation, as well as reducing environmental impact. Experience of the pandemic is driving more businesses to look locally, and we are supporting businesses on this, including through our Keep it Local campaign.

Plural Ownership

We are encouraging family-owned businesses and social enterprises to consider cooperative models of business ownership.

Fair Employment

We are providing specific support to embed a Fair Work approach including helping businesses map a strategy to allow for the payment of the Real Living Wage, develop flexible working practices, offer staff development and create mechanisms where the staff voice can be heard.

Green Economy

North Ayrshire has challenging targets for reducing carbon footprints and we are offering support and specialist expertise to businesses to adopt a green action plan to support industrial decarbonisation and reduce carbon footprints, including through circular economy approaches.



Supporting Our Local Communities

Immediately after the start of the pandemic in March 2020, locality community support hubs were established in each of the six North Ayrshire localities, working alongside existing community initiatives

Coordinated by a team of Council, Health and Social Care staff and local volunteers, the hubs provided a wide range of essential support to communities, children and vulnerable residents including food parcels and deliveries, prescription deliveries, money advice assistance, health and wellbeing advice, and phone calls relating to isolation.

The pandemic highlighted the need for community food support and to ensure everyone has access to affordable, quality food. It was recognised that it was possible to explore alternative mechanisms of community food provision and a Community Wealth Building approach was taken to support community organisations to co-produce a North Ayrshire community food network called North Ayrshire Fairer Food.



Supporting Our Local Labour Market

Statistics for the period January 2020-December 2020 show that North Ayrshire's economic inactivity rate was the highest in Scotland at 28.7%, and North Ayrshire had the lowest employment rate (67.6%) and the joint second highest unemployment rate (5.3%) in Scotland. In June 2021, North Ayrshire had the second highest claimant count rate in Scotland (7% of residents aged 16-64).

Building on the work of the innovative Inclusive Growth Diagnostic, national and local evidence has suggested that priority groups for support should be young people, disabled people/those with health issues, females and parents. This intelligence aligns with our Community Wealth Building Fair Employment actions to support excluded groups and delivery of our new 'Equal' Supported Employment service.

There has been a particular focus by the Employability and Skills team on supporting young people during the pandemic. Nationally and locally there has been a disproportionate negative impact on 16-24-year-olds and we recognise that young people and school leavers will be entering a very challenging labour market with fewer economic opportunities.

We have pressed ahead with our target to recruit 50 Modern Apprentices in 2020. We also extended the contracts of some apprentices who had their final months

of their placements disrupted by the pandemic, providing financial security and allowing them to complete their qualifications and plan for the future. In early 2021, the Council commenced recruitment of six temporary graduate-level roles funded through the Young Person's Guarantee Commitment. The opportunities were open to individuals aged under 25 who lived in North Ayrshire (or attended a North Ayrshire school) and were currently unemployed or underemployed.

The Council have also developed one of the largest Kickstart programmes in the country, using Department of Work and Pension (DWP) funds to support young people back into paid work placements. Over 100 young people have already benefitted from the scheme. The Council is funding an incentive to employers to pay the Living Wage to young people as a way of embedding this into the local business base.

» Economic Recovery and Renewal Approach (Green New Deal)

In response to the widespread economic and social impacts of the pandemic, in September 2020 the Council launched its Economic Recovery and Renewal Approach (Green New Deal) to build back better, fairer and greener.

The approach is based on the foundation of Community Wealth Building and sets out a Local Green New Deal for North Ayrshire. The twin priorities of a North Ayrshire Green New Deal to build back better, fairer and greener are:

1. To ensure an inclusive economic recovery by delivering our Community Wealth Building mission; and
2. To ensure a green economic recovery focused on achieving our net zero carbon ambitions through the creation of sustainable infrastructure and regeneration projects and creating fair jobs.

Our refreshed Environmental Sustainability and Climate Change strategy (2021-2023) sets out seven workstreams for how the Council will achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2030. These workstreams are intrinsically linked to economic recovery through their alignment to our Community Wealth Building approach and Green New Deal aspirations.

What is a Local Green New Deal?

A Green New Deal (GND) is an ambitious framework to tackle climate change and its consequences in a way which builds a fairer, more democratic society and economy. It is a form of radical transformation which recognises that environmental and economic challenges must be addressed together to build back better.

A local GND presents an opportunity to develop a place-based approach for decarbonisation and the achievement of net zero emissions targets in a way which builds upon the principles of Community Wealth Building. It is about using climate and capital investments to support an economic recovery that tackles climate change and creates fair green jobs, whilst tackling inequality and creating a fairer economy.

» Investment Fund and Supported Projects

At the heart of our approach to economic recovery and renewal is the £10.2 million Investment Fund which was increased at the year-end closure for 2020/21 and now sits at £11.225 million.

The fund will be utilised to accelerate our recovery and wider regeneration of our area, at the same time as tackling climate change. Some of the projects this fund will support include:

Installation of a ground mounted solar photovoltaic (PV) farm at Nethermains former landfill site.

In January 2021, the Cabinet of North Ayrshire Council approved the development of a solar PV farm at Nethermains, near Kilwinning. The development will require a total investment of approximately £6.768m which will be part funded utilising £4.5m of capital funding from the Council's Investment Fund. Following Cabinet approval in June 2021 it was confirmed that a second solar PV farm would be constructed at Shewalton former landfill site, Irvine.

North Ayrshire's 2030 Woodland: A Tree Planting strategy.

The Council has set a target of achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2030. In January 2021 the Council approved plans to deliver a large-scale woodland tree planting programme to provide carbon absorption to meet net-zero aspirations as well as a wealth of other benefits including employment and training opportunities, habitat creation and health and wellbeing opportunities. The planting will be funded in part by a £500,000 allocation from the Council's Investment Fund.

Green Jobs Fund to support just transition and green adaptation

The Council has agreed a £500,000 Green Jobs Fund to support a just transition in North Ayrshire by:

Working with community groups and businesses to explore renewable energy generation and circular economy schemes that would create local fair green jobs.

Supporting green business adaptation to encourage and support local businesses to adapt their processes and business models to support industrial decarbonisation and meet net zero.



Spotlight on Community Wealth Building Objectives – One Year On



We will work across all our services and wider local and regional partners to implement Scotland's first approach to Community Wealth Building



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

The Ayrshire Community Wealth Building Anchor Charter was published in October 2020 including pledges aligned to all five Community Wealth Building pillars as well as a sixth pillar of Climate Action.

Approval and start of implementation of the £3 million Ayrshire Growth Deal Community Wealth Building Fund to catalyse Community Wealth Building across the region.

Our Community Wealth Building Expert Panel chaired by the Wellbeing Economy Alliance (Scotland) was established in May 2020.

We were the first Scottish Local Authority to become a member of the Wellbeing Economy Alliance in August 2020. The Council also became members of the CLES Community Wealth Building in Practice group, and the Inclusive Growth Knowhow Network led by the Centre for Progressive Policy and supported by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation. As part of our membership of the Inclusive Growth Knowhow Network, we received support to develop an Inclusive Economy Dashboard based on the Doughnut Economics tool which proposes an economy with a social foundation we cannot fall below and environmental limits which should not be exceeded.

The Council supported community organisations to co-produce a North Ayrshire community food and supply chain network known as "North Ayrshire Fairer Food". The network was established following impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic to improve food security and provide local residents with access to low cost, healthy food.

In October 2020, North Ayrshire Cabinet approved the delivery of a £250,000 Islands Recovery and Renewal pilot project developed in partnership with the Scottish Government and Highlands and Islands Enterprise. The project will support an inclusive and green economic recovery and renewal of North Ayrshire's island communities in line with their unique needs. The pilot project is aligned to the delivery of the National Islands Plan and Community Wealth Building. As part of this, a Senior Officer (Islands) was recruited and will lead the development of Island Plans for Arran and Cumbrae in partnership with island communities and businesses.



AREAS OF FOCUS 2021/22

We will continue to focus on delivery of the Community Wealth Building strategy actions in partnership with business and communities.

Implementation of the £3 million Ayrshire Growth Deal Community Wealth Building Fund.

We will collaborate with Ayrshire Anchor Institutions via the Community Wealth Building Commission, Lead Officers Working Group and will annually measure progress on organisations who have committed to the Anchor Charter pledges. We will also explore ways to establish an Anchor Network with the inclusion of wider Anchor Institutions and particularly community Anchor Institutions.

We will continue with our plans to educate and engage staff on Community Wealth Building and what it means for their teams and roles.

Continue our conversations with young people about what Community Wealth Building means to them for example during our Summer 2021 Community Roadshows.

As a national Community Wealth Building Act is developed in Scotland, we will continue to engage with Scottish Government to encourage the creation of a national policy and legislative environment which enables delivery of locally led Community Wealth Building activities, learning from our experience of implementation in North Ayrshire and Ayrshire.



Case Study: Ayrshire Community Wealth Building Commission and Anchor Charter

Working collaboratively with other Anchor Institutions in the region is key to achieving transformational change through Community Wealth Building.

We formed the Community Wealth Building Commission, a group of key local and regional Anchor Institutions with the aim of embedding the principles of Community Wealth Building within their organisations to support a more inclusive economy. Chaired by the Leader of North Ayrshire Council, the Commission promotes a collaborative approach to Community Wealth Building in Ayrshire by jointly delivering on a workplan of activity and sharing examples of success and best practice with other Anchors.

In summer 2020, membership expanded to include South and East Ayrshire Councils, making an Ayrshire-wide Commission. On 5th October 2020 the Commission launched the Ayrshire Community Wealth Building Anchor Charter. The Anchor Charter commits local and regional Anchor Institutions to a range of pledges across the five pillars of Community Wealth Building and a 'sixth pillar' of Climate Action to create a strong, resilient and inclusive local and regional economy.

Who is involved?

- North Ayrshire Council
- East Ayrshire Council
- South Ayrshire Council
- NHS Ayrshire & Arran
- Ayrshire College
- Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
- Police Scotland
- Scottish Enterprise
- The Ayrshire Community Trust

What were the impacts?

Seven Anchor Institutions have signed up to the Ayrshire Anchor Charter, pledging to do all they can to support and embed the principles of Community Wealth Building within their organisation.

Acts as a forum to share knowledge and examples of good practice among Ayrshire Anchor Institutions

Provides opportunity for Anchors to add value through taking a regional approach to embedding Community Wealth Building.



Next Steps

A Lead Officer Working Group will focus on developing Anchor collaboration initially across three workstreams – Procurement, Fair Employment and Land and Assets. Develop action plans which identify opportunities for change as well as provide additionality to the work already underway at a regional level and within Anchor Institutions.

Progress against the Ayrshire Anchor Charter pledges will be monitored annually, with the first review in October 2021.



Case Study: Ayrshire Growth Deal Community Wealth Building Fund

Ayrshire is leading the way with Community Wealth Building in Scotland and the project will develop a pan-Ayrshire approach to Community Wealth Building. By providing 'boots on the ground' to engage and work with Anchor Institutions, private sector businesses and the social economy to support Community Wealth Building activities and deliver an inclusive regional economy.

As developed and agreed with regional partners this project will focus on the following Community Wealth Building pillars: procurement, employment, assets and ownership.

The programme will also establish a dedicated Fair Work Ayrshire team who will work closely with Ayrshire Anchor Institutions and major employers to establish Ayrshire as a Fair Work region.

The project also makes a wider policy ask of Scottish Government to explore how national body and agency spend can be used to support regional economies, particularly fragile regions, and help to achieve an inclusive economy.

Who is involved?

- North Ayrshire Council
- East Ayrshire Council
- South Ayrshire Council
- Funded by Scottish Government
- Ayrshire Regional Economic Partnership

What were the impacts?

The project commenced in Spring 2021 and aims to provide support to hundreds of Ayrshire businesses and community organisations to deliver Community Wealth Building aspirations.

The intended outcomes of the project are:

90 Employers undertaking Fair Work Action Plans.

920 Enterprises receiving support from the Community Wealth Building programme.

265 Enterprises receiving financial assistance on procurement, employment, asset or ownership pillars.

96 New Enterprises supported.

240 Enterprises being registered on Public Contract Scotland.

17 Enterprises being supported in the creation or transition to employee ownership or cooperative.





Case Study: Keep It Local Campaign

This marketing campaign was delivered by the Council and ran from July 2020 – September 2020 and again in April 2021 – May 2021. It focused on 'shop and visit local' but also expanded to include local employment and investment to promote the Community Wealth Building approach.

The campaign was also aligned to the local economic recovery plans around local spend and supporting local businesses as they reopen following lockdown. The key messages were:

Communities (including Council staff): shop and visit local to support local businesses and town centres

Local businesses: buy locally, employ locally

Local and regional anchors: buy locally, employ locally/fair wage employer, invest locally

A variety of communication channels have been used to reach both internal and external audiences:

Development of the campaign marketing material (from the Community Wealth Building brand)

Launched via local press, local radio and online

Social media promotion - Twitter, LinkedIn and Facebook across the Council network

Profile badges/twibbons (images applied to profile pictures) 'Proud to Keep it Local'

Branded Council vehicles

Town centre/shop local video

Who is involved?

- North Ayrshire Council Communications Team
- Local businesses – design and production of marketing material, local case studies



What were the impacts? Social Media (as of May 2021)



16,000

People Viewed our Keep it Local animation



15,000+

People Viewed our Town Centre Video



94,500+

Campaign Impressions (opportunities to see)





Procurement



We will use our spend to actively encourage and support a growing, diverse and resilient local business base, and to support our net zero carbon ambitions.



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

An Ayrshire wide virtual Meet the Buyer event was held in April 2021 with a total of 391 attendees.

The Procurement Development Manager has developed a new process including agreed principles for an improved collaborative working approach between procurement and business development teams. The new process proactively engages with local suppliers to provide support to bid for public contracts and includes undertaking a detailed analysis of the North Ayrshire Council Procurement wave plan to identify possible future opportunities and engaging with local businesses to overcome barriers and provide tailored support for tender development. The team have supported 28 local businesses to access and develop skills on Public Contracts Scotland (PCS), while specialist one-to-one procurement consultancy support to 82 businesses to enhance capabilities. The team have worked with 18 businesses to develop local supply chains resulting in 50 introductions for local businesses.

Procurement and Business Development Teams worked together to support local businesses to submit compliant tenders for a contract Framework Agreement for vehicle repair and maintenance services. All local businesses supported were successfully awarded places on the Framework.

The new Community Benefits Officer has undertaken a review of current Community Benefits in Procurement policy and reviewed against other Scottish Local Authority best practice. A suite of ten recommendations on amending our Community Benefit practice was approved by the Council's Executive Leadership Team in March 2021.

New steps in our Quick Quotes process allows the identification and support of more local suppliers, increasing the opportunities for local businesses to bid for public sector contracts.



AREAS OF FOCUS 2021/22

We will develop the corporate status of procurement as a key feature of Community Wealth Building by continuing to proactively engage and meet with staff across the council to explain the value of buying local and lotting principles. A Connected Leadership session on Community Wealth Building and Procurement was held in May 2021 to educate senior staff with responsibilities for procuring goods and services.

Through our Procurement Development Manager and Business Locality Officers, we will continue to proactively support our local business base to enhance their capacity to bid for public sector contracts, as well as increase our knowledge of local suppliers and identify market gaps to create locally driven economic opportunities.

To improve the delivery and relevance of Community Benefits for North Ayrshire communities, we are developing a community facing portal with a "wish list" of ways in which the community would like to be supported through Community Benefits.

Work with our Anchor Institutions to develop a better understanding of the local and national barriers to progressive procurement.



Case Study: James Frew Ltd

Winning public sector contract opportunities is a key component of James Frew Ltd's business growth strategy.

They are committed to delivering the best quality outcomes for all public sector contracts and building local supply chains – as both a main contractor and as a sub-contractor.

The business was supported with Procurement Consultancy Support which was organised and funded by the Council. This enabled the business to produce a "tender library" of key documents, skills and training records, health and safety documents, accreditations and references which can then be used as the basis for formulating tender responses – standardising responses, minimising mistakes and completing submissions much quicker. The tender library exercise also allowed the business to identify skills-gaps within the business and this led to upskilling of employees and the appointment of a PQQ (pre-qualification questionnaire) Co-ordinator.

The business has recently achieved re-certification of Gold membership of Constructionline – a register of 46,000 suppliers accessed by 4,000 buying organisations – confirming James Frew Ltd's commitment to environmental management, quality management, equal opportunities and anti-corruption and bribery policies – which are all key for public sector contract opportunities.

Who is involved?

- James Frew Ltd
- North Ayrshire Council Business Support & Development
- Supplier Development Programme



What were the impacts?

The business is more proactive on market research and identifying future opportunities rather than previous reactive approach of only becoming aware of opportunities when they went live on PCS. The Council's Business Support & Development team regularly assist with identifying potentially suitable projects and sharing relevant information.

Increased knowledge of marketplace and tender opportunities. Tender scores and contract wins have improved in North Ayrshire and across Scotland. Market led approach has improved competitiveness, boosted productivity and created further opportunities to develop employees.

Strengthening public sector work gives the business a secure, long-term base to build upon – which enables the senior management team to make strategic long-term investment and employment opportunities. Knowing what work is in the pipeline over the next 3-5 years gives the business certainty and enables them to continue their fantastic intake of apprentices in various disciplines – with the vast majority of these being North Ayrshire residents.



Case Study: Scrimsign (Micro-electronics)

This case study demonstrates how a small local business in North Ayrshire, supported by the Council and a framework contract consultant was able to tender for, and beat national suppliers from across the UK.

Scrimsign have won a significant contract with SEPA (Scottish Environment Protection Agency). The success of the award would not have been possible without this Community Wealth Building intervention. Intend Business Development Ltd assisted Scrimsign to submit an extensive and unusually highly complicated tender to SEPA.

The Council's Business Development team was able to fund and secure the consultancy services of Intend. This assistance was essential to support Scrimsign to submit a high-quality tender within the timeframe.

// We are very excited to be involved in this prestigious project with SEPA which has given us a great opportunity to showcase our technical ability in both software and hardware.

We are hopeful that once the new style displays are deployed that we can market similar solutions going forward allowing the company to grow and help bring prosperity to our local area. //

Keith Scrimshire
Managing Director, Scrimsign Ltd

Who is involved?

- North Ayrshire Council
Business Support & Development
- Intend Business
Development Ltd



What were the impacts?

Cashflow Stability

Scrimsign was awarded the contract which has resulted in a great increase in business stability as the contract is for 3 – 5 years of work.

Graduate Employment

This has allowed the company to take on a graduate engineer and plan for the future.

COVID-19 Recovery

The contract has also been of great benefit as the company have been busy with project work throughout the Covid-19 pandemic.

Investment

The company has also improved its profitability since the contract award.

The project will have a major “visible” impact on the communities and residents across Scotland. The visibility of electronic signage of beach waters at key locations for residents, showing the bathing water quality is of benefit to the health and wellbeing of residents, and the environmental monitoring of our beaches undertaken by SEPA.



Fair Employment



COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING

We will encourage the creation of fair and meaningful jobs with progression opportunities to unlock the potential of our residents



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

Through our new supported employment programme 'Equal' we have designed and implemented "See Me CV" – an option to upload a video CV within the Council recruitment process, removing barriers for people with language or writing difficulties and providing a more accessible recruitment process.

In demonstration of our commitment to leading by example, in November 2020 the Council agreed to pay staff the 2020/21 real Living Wage five months earlier than formally required. The commitment affects approximately 730 Council employees in predominately frontline roles.

The Council was successful in a bid to become an approved Gateway provider for the UK Government Kickstart Programme which is designed to provide financial incentives for businesses to create 6-month job opportunities for young people. Local companies have responded positively to the scheme which will make a material difference to young people and the local business community. It is one of the largest Kickstart Programmes in Scotland with over 450 new jobs approved.



AREAS OF FOCUS 2021/22

Implementation of the Fair Work Ayrshire programme with a dedicated 'Fair Work' resource to engage key employers, ensuring they recruit inclusively and provide quality and meaningful work, as well as develop practical steps with employers to position Ayrshire as a Fair Work region.

The Council is currently a Disability Confident Employer and will pursue Level 3 Disability Confident Leader status.

We will implement and deliver the 'Working for a Healthy Economy' Ayrshire Growth Deal project which seeks to improve the health and lifestyles of Ayrshire communities by offering a person centred and criteria free, single access point to provide focused health support.

Since our Employability Hubs were forced to close in March 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic, we will deliver a re-launch of a new employability hub service to ensure a best fit of services for our residents and one that provides a multi-channel delivery approach.



Case Study: Modern Apprenticeships – Work Experience for Young ASN

‘Equal’ is a supported employment service set up by North Ayrshire Council to support anyone over 16 years old with a physical or learning disability to find long term, fulfilling employment while providing all the support needed for their career aspirations and future employers.

This case study relates to the creation of Fair Employment opportunities for young adults transitioning from ASN (Additional Support Needs) schools into the world of work. Across Scotland, people with learning disabilities are massively under-represented within Modern Apprenticeship programmes.

Our client, Cameron, met with the Equal advisors 6 months prior to leaving education. Cameron is Autistic and was scheduled to leave school at the end of the academic year 2018-2019. He did not want to attend college for further education but expressed an interest in working in Horticulture. To continue with his interest in Horticulture, Equal advisors arranged a series of meetings between the Education Team and the Modern Apprentice team to allow for a ring-fenced place on the Modern Apprenticeship programme for Cameron. Training would include all aspects of a Modern

Apprenticeship in Horticulture based at ASN school gardens and within Streetscene via the Bereavement team. Cameron undertook all aspects of gardening including practical and theory-based activities, instruction in the use of heavy machinery, tools and equipment, Health and Safety at work and hazard perception.

In anticipation of completion of practical training and moving into employment, Equal advisors organised a series of photographs showing Cameron at work. Advisors are also supporting Cameron to develop a video CV which allows him to talk about his experience and showcase his work. Cameron will be supported to apply for paid employment when his practical training is completed and be provided with ongoing training and support. Continued support will be provided by the Equal Advisors and with additional support from the Young Person’s Guarantee funding.

Who is involved?

- North Ayrshire Council
- SVQ Training Team East Ayrshire Council
- Concept Northern (provision of specialist IT equipment)
- Personal Support Worker and family members
- Sunnyside Garden Centre, Kilwinning.

What were the impacts?

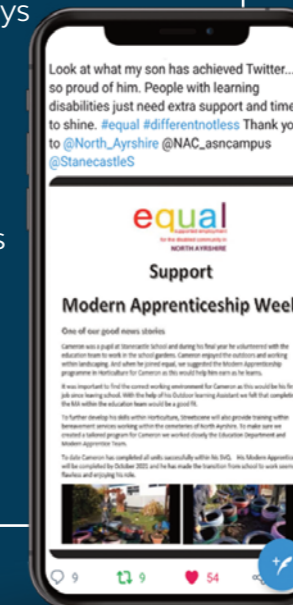
Cameron’s prospect of working with a local business doing the job he really wanted has increased dramatically thanks to the support of all involved. By improving communications between internal departments, external employers and agencies, we have been able to create tailor made industry training for Cameron.

By offering the continued support of a specialist employability team to internal departments and external employers, Equal could continue to assist in training and education of not only our clients but also of the greater workforce in creating mainstream roles for those who are disabled without any fears or prejudices being raised. By raising a positive awareness there is a greater confidence within the

mainstream workforce, for working alongside those with a disability and a real opportunity to dispel any preconceived ideas.

Equal’s approach to clients’ individual needs has always been to deliver a creative solution and to think outside the box.

This case study shows that through improved, effective communications and introducing a unique service Equal can support clients in gaining mainstream employment.



The Equal team will continue to further develop links with Council services, external employers and agencies to create bespoke opportunities for our client base.

Equal have developed the use of video CVs for individuals who have difficulties expressing their experience and skills in traditional written CVs. Through the use of ‘SEEME CV’ the Equal team have started to break down perceptions around the abilities of those with learning difficulties or disabilities.

By using video to showcase clients’ work and highlight their strengths, we can introduce the wealth and range of talents within our communities. The Council HR department are now piloting a scheme to introduce ‘SEEME CV’ as part of the application process for North Ayrshire Council vacancies.



Case Study: Core Timber Systems

Core Timber Systems are committed to paying the Real Living Wage and above. The Council's Business Support team have provided support to ensure the business has the ability to grow and support their employees.

Since starting trading in January 2020, the business has steadily employed local people to support business growth and expansion. Each employee has been paid the Real Living Wage and above. The first two employees have attended training courses to support their development as supervisors within the workplace.

// Since joining Core Timber Systems in Jan 2020 I have been supported in my role which has allowed me to step up and take on the role of Supervisor within the company. Core Timber Systems have provided me with the confidence to take this step and allowed me to enrol in management courses whilst rewarding me with much improved working conditions/pay and benefits. I have never had this support in any other job roles that I have worked in. **//**

Chris McGrath
(supervisor)

Who is involved?

- Core Timber Systems
- North Ayrshire Council Business Support & Development Team

What were the impacts?

As a result of the support, the business has grown from two staff in January 2020 to having sixteen employees in May 2021. The staff team has a voice and hold regular team meetings to ensure they can influence business decisions and be aware of the trajectory of the business.

The business is now employing more local people and have just started their first apprentices with the help of a local company who carries out inhouse and relative training to the employee's job role. This is a two-year programme for three current employees. Core Timber Systems have also been involved with the local Kickstart scheme and started two employees in Spring 2021.





Case Study: Gymmies Kitchen

Gymmies Kitchen has two main aims: to continue growing turnover and in turn, offer expanding employment opportunities for local people.

The Council have heavily supported the business with grant support and business advice to help the business expand and relocate to much larger premises within North Ayrshire.

The business has grown from four to thirteen people (10 full time and 3 part time). Financial support from the Council has quickened the business expansion and helped fit-out the premises, enabling Gymmies Kitchen to purchase business critical equipment. This has resulted in less pressure on cash flow on the business which has allowed recruitment of additional employees to meet growing customer demand.

The business has also engaged with the Council's Employability team and has recruited through the Kickstart programme. Gymmies Kitchen is keen to offer employment opportunities to individuals furthest from the labour market and is always looking at options to develop and promote staff from within the business.

Who is involved?

- Gymmies Kitchen
- North Ayrshire Council – Business Support & Development, Employability and Skills

What were the impacts?

The support from the Council assisted in a successful transition to new premises and has supported the business to grow and recruit additional staff, growing local wealth in North Ayrshire.

Gymmies Kitchen plans to support employees with training and upskilling – with marketing and operations manager identified as key roles within the business that will require support. These existing employees are North Ayrshire residents who will be supported with training and qualifications to improve their performance and skills set and assist the business to grow even further.





Land and Assets



We will support the wider regeneration of our communities by maximising all of our land and assets including through alternative uses for community and business benefit



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

Adopted by the Council in March 2021, the Regeneration Delivery Plan sets out priorities for delivering on our Community Wealth Building aspirations to redevelop strategic regeneration sites and places, redress underutilisation of land and assets and work in partnership with our communities to deliver their ambitions.

The Lochshore masterplan seeks to deliver a tourism and leisure destination within the Garnock Valley. Confirmation of funding in 2020 from the Scottish Government's Regeneration Capital Grant Fund, Nuclear Decommissioning Agency and Sustrans will see a total of almost £5m for the development of the Garnock Visitor and Community Hub. It is an example of a live regeneration project being considered through a Community Wealth Building lens with projected outcomes contributing to all five pillars.

Proposals to establish two community hubs in Stevenston and Millport were successful in securing awards from the Scottish Government Regeneration Capital Grant Fund (RCGF), highlighting the benefits of the Council and partners working together to improve economic and social outcomes. The Council is supporting local charity Raise Your Voice with Ardeer to secure a Community Asset Transfer to take ownership of the site and develop Stevenston Beach Hub.

Millport Town Hall Charity will use funds to create a multi-use flexible space with accessible entrance incorporating a community hub, arts and culture centre, starter Men's Shed, main staged hall and 3 holiday lets.

We commenced the development of a pilot project at 36 Bank Street, Irvine using a Council owned asset to show the potential of properties for town centre living. The ongoing shift from physical retail space and different forms of workspace can lead to many properties, particularly within town centres, becoming obsolete or difficult to let or sell. Too many properties within our town centres have become derelict. We see this as a model for other council assets, but also to encourage other private sector developers to intervene, and we will investigate potential barriers to delivering town centre living.

Using Council owned land to deliver quality housing and community provisions – the Council owned Montgomerie Park, Irvine site extends to 200 acres, with approximately 950 homes planned. Scotland's first Simplified Planning Zone (SPZ) has been development for the site. This approach has allowed the reinvestment of capital receipts from land sale for the benefit of local places. There may be other council owned sites where a similar approach can be adopted, providing the potential for further receipts.



AREAS OF FOCUS 2021/22

Following an initial review and analysis of our commercial property portfolio, a new Community Wealth Building Estates Officer has been appointed to ensure our portfolio supports growth of local businesses and entrepreneurial activity.

We will continue to engage with our communities, build capacity and support them to consider community ownership options including Community Asset Transfer. Future projects include North Ayrshire Fairer Food Network and Kilwinning Football Academy.

Following the forced closure of Quarry Road in Irvine in March 2020 due to the pandemic, when restrictions allow, we will restart our business incubation approach to supporting local small businesses.

We will deliver on the priorities identified within the Regeneration Delivery Plan. This will include making more of existing property assets within our town centres, such as exploring opportunities for town centre living. Other actions include developing an approach to prepare place frameworks for each town. We will seek to maximise the funding available to deliver on these priorities through applications under the Scottish Government's Place Based Investment Programme and Vacant and Derelict Land Investment Programme, in addition to the UK Government's Community Renewal and Levelling Up Funds.

Delivery of the major Lochshore regeneration project which will improve social, economic and environmental wellbeing.



Case Study: Lochshore

The Lochshore masterplan seeks to deliver a major tourism and leisure destination on the site of a former steelworks which will attract visitors to the Garnock Valley.

It includes provision for leisure uses, active travel routes and play facilities, tree planting and habitat creation, while creating the conditions for future housing development.

Construction started in May 2021 on the Garnock Visitor and Community Hub. The £4.2 million Hub includes contributions from the Scottish Government's Regeneration Capital Grant Fund, Nuclear Decommissioning Authority, Scottish Enterprise, Garnock Rugby Club, Sport Scotland and Land Trust. Garnock Rugby Club are one of the local partners, supported by the Lochshore Development Group. They will utilise the new facility to help encourage more people to get involved in the sport. Local sports, environmental and community groups will also have access to the facilities to support a variety of sports and events development. A café, public toilets and workshop space will further support a wider range of activity and leisure use across the site.

Leisure and walking routes are planned around the site, incorporating heritage interpretation and play. While access to the site will be enhanced through new active travel routes connecting to and through the site to Kilbirnie, Beith, Garnock Community Campus and Glengarnock station. The first of which will provide a direct connection to Kilbirnie and the NCN7. Construction will begin in Autumn 2021 with funding awarded through Sustrans' Places for Everyone programme.

In line with our municipalisation approach, the Council took ownership of land from Scottish Enterprise in June 2021.

Who is involved?

- North Ayrshire Council – Regeneration Team and Connected Communities
- Lochshore Development Group
- Green Action Trust
- Scottish Enterprise
- Lochshore Stakeholder Reference Group
- Scottish Government's Regeneration Capital Grant Fund, Vacant and Derelict Land Fund and Cycling Walking and Safer Routes
- Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA)
- Sustrans
- Sport Scotland
- Garnock Rugby Club
- Land Trust

What were the impacts?

Lochshore is a significant social, economic and environmental regeneration project within North Ayrshire which will deliver the following benefits:

- Regeneration of large vacant and derelict site.
- Environmental benefits through active travel, tree planting and habitat creation (approximately 14ha of new woodland is planned to be funded through the Council's Investment Fund with further funding applications to be made).
- Health and wellbeing benefits from sport, leisure and play provision and active travel opportunities.
- Opportunities for community ownership.
- Around 100 jobs could be created directly and indirectly as a result of investment in the site.
- The Hub building could attract up to 145,000 visitors per annum by the third year of operation.





Case Study: Stevenston Beach Hub

Stevenston Beach is recognised nationally for its biodiversity, often hosting education workshops attended by local businesses, schools and youth groups.

The need to promote this asset with an active shoreline with new facilities was initially identified through the 2018 'Three Towns' charrette and wider community engagement.

The project will take an under-utilised asset and develop a toilet, café, and a community hub, with workshop space and a classroom, and will be used to provide a programme of events. It will contribute to the redevelopment of the surrounding area, attracting visitors and increase local awareness of environmental issues, the coastal environment and habitats. Raise your Voice with Ardeer (RYVA) was created with the main aim of bringing together a range of groups and individuals to focus on improving the wider community through a range of projects. RYVA engaged with several local groups and organisations to identify community interest and support for the Stevenston Beach Hub.

The project was supported by an allocation from the Scottish Government's Town Centre Fund which was used to appoint a local design team to develop designs for the Hub. Successful bids to the North Ayrshire Community Investment Fund and the Scottish Government's Regeneration Capital Grant Fund will support construction of the Stevenston Beach Hub. The project will utilise off-site construction methods to fitout three shipping containers for installation on site. Along with environmental benefits, the preferred construction reduces on-site installation time and reduces the potential for adverse weather to impact on the works

Following completion of the build, RYVA Ardeer will occupy the Stevenston Beach Hub to offer a wide range of activities and facilities.

Who is involved?

- North Ayrshire Council – Regeneration Team; Connected Communities Team
- Raise Your Voice with Ardeer
- McMillan & Cronin Architects

What were the impacts?

When complete, the Beach Hub will address relevant issues such as food poverty, social isolation for all ages, mental health, and wellbeing by providing:

- Accessible events, groups, activities, and classes. Here the community can come together and build friendships and have fun and in turn encourage each other in all aspects of life.
- To be as environmentally friendly as possible tying in with the beach nature reserve. To be as allergen free as is possible so that everyone can be included in all events, classes, and activities.
- Help to create a sense of belonging, encourage community involvement. To share skills, strengths within the community through a variety of activities, classes, and groups.



// This is fantastic news for our Charity but also for the wider community as the hub will benefit many groups and individuals. It will also be a huge asset to Stevenston and the Three towns. It has been a very long journey to get to this stage, but we are very excited to be moving forward and for the development to get underway. //

Margaret Sweeney
Chairperson



Case Study:

Nethermains Solar Photovoltaic Farm

In 2019 the Council declared a Climate Emergency and announced a target date of 2030 to become carbon 'net-zero'.

As part of this journey the Council have been investigating the possible alternative use of Council owned land to generate renewable energy. Nethermains near Kilwinning and Shewalton, Irvine are two former landfill sites in North Ayrshire which have been explored as possible locations for ground mounted solar photovoltaic (PV) farms.

The site at Nethermains was identified as the most appropriate to progress initially and in January 2021, the Cabinet of North Ayrshire Council approved the development of a ground mounted solar photovoltaic (PV) farm at the former landfill site.

The solar PV farm demonstrates the alternative use and repurposing of our land and assets and commitment to reducing carbon emissions. It is an excellent example of a project which supports multiple pillars of Community Wealth Building, bringing a wealth of benefits to the region:

Procurement

Potential for local suppliers and supply chains to benefit from the significant investment through provision of services and materials both during construction and ongoing operational phases;

Land and Assets

Explores alternative use of our land and assets that currently are not productive and re-purposes those assets;

Financial Power

Commits capital investment to support actions to reduce carbon emissions across North Ayrshire;

Plural Ownership

Supports the Council's ambitions around municipalisation and shows Climate leadership.

Who is involved?

- North Ayrshire Council
- University of Strathclyde

What were the impacts?

This investment demonstrates the Council's role as a leader in the just transition to net zero. The solar PV farm at Nethermains will:

- Provide a substantial amount of clean, renewable energy, the projected annual project yield is 7,681 MWh.
- Create local green employment opportunities
- Make a further positive contribution to the Council's carbon reduction and contribute to the Council's net zero by 2030 target. The annual reduction in CO2 emissions is estimated at 501 tonnes of CO2 per year based on an annual yield of 7,681 MWh.
- Provide localised economic activity and long-term productive use for the former landfill site that would be otherwise difficult to develop
- Contribute to a reduction in fuel poverty through the availability of affordable energy

The design and build process of Nethermains solar PV farm is due to commence in autumn 2021. In June 2021 it was confirmed that a second solar PV farm would be constructed at Shewalton former landfill site, Irvine.





Financial Power



We will invest locally and encourage regional and national institutions to invest in our communities



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

In exploring the feasibility of a community bank and wider progressive finance options the Council sought the support of Cooperative Development Scotland to develop the strategic case and feasibility of a West of Scotland community bank. The Council continue to work closely with 1st Alliance Credit Union to develop progressive finance options and improve financial access for North Ayrshire residents.

In January 2021 Social Investment Scotland hosted two webinars for North Ayrshire community groups and social enterprises to find out more about social investment as well as how to prepare for social investment.

Throughout 2020 and during the Covid-19 pandemic we have continued to support and empower our communities through Community Investment Funding (CIF). Supported projects include Millport Town Hall, Stevenston Beach Hub, Irvine Youth Forum, Kilwinning Community Sports Club, Ardrossan Community Gym and Arran Youth Foundations, and in previous years the CIF has supported local organisations such as the Beith Community Development Trust and the Three Towns Growers.

The £251 million Ayrshire Growth Deal will help leverage more than £300m of private investment into Ayrshire and a Community Wealth Building approach is crucial to ensure the benefits and rewards of the investments are inclusive and shared across our communities.

In September 2020 the Council Leader and Chief Executive met with Strathclyde Pension Fund to open discussions on how the Fund could support local investment opportunities and enhance local wealth.

In early 2021 we launched a new advice service with the aim of making it easier for residents to access support with their personal finances. The new 'Better Off' demonstrator is initially being piloted for a two-year period and is available to residents in the Three Towns. The service explores a different way of providing financial support in North Ayrshire by bridging the gap in debt advice services currently offered and expanding on the traditional 'single service' approach by bringing together a range of partners from the across Council, Health and Social Care Partnership and the Third Sector. It will provide a 'one-stop-shop' for Three Towns residents seeking support and advice on benefits, money/debt, housing, energy costs and work skills as well as health and wellbeing - building a tailored package of support that allows the individual to achieve more sustainable outcomes.



AREAS OF FOCUS 2021/22

We will build upon our successful Keep It Local media campaign to encourage Council staff to shop and spend in local, independent North Ayrshire businesses.

We will continue to explore community banking and progressive finance options for North Ayrshire residents, including working in partnership with 1st Alliance Credit Union deliver financial inclusion support.

In June 2020, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed by the Council and Crown Estate Scotland to unlock the unique potential of North Ayrshire's marine and coastal resources. The partnership will now work together to explore opportunities to deliver projects associated with North Ayrshire's coastal communities including a jointly funded marine tourism post.

Work in partnership with local communities to deliver the innovative Community Investment Fund and Participatory Budgeting approach.

Deliver the Better Off demonstrator through a Public Social Partnership, working with the Social Value Lab to explore the impact of this model.



Case Study:

The Training Station

The Shibumi club is a karate club in Saltcoats and has been in operation for over 30 years. They had trouble hiring affordable space in Saltcoats, but they had a vision to convert and refurb part of the unused grade B listed train station building and bring this 81m2 space back into a purposeful multi use space community space.

The journey began to build the capacity of this community group to realise their vision. A consultation was carried out with 25 local community groups all interested in using the space, confirming the lack of facilities within this deprived area. A business plan was developed, and an architect identified for the building. Heritage Rail, Network Rail and Sports Scotland confirmed their support for the project and a lease was signed with Network Rail.

Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation status was granted by Office of Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) and the group was successful in securing funding via North Ayrshire Participatory Budgeting, the Community Investment Fund and Scottish Government Regeneration Capital Grant fund.

It is now a multi-agency working group, with a total of £500,000 secured for the project – to grow local wealth, repurpose a local asset and create opportunities for North Ayrshire residents.

The Covid-19 pandemic caused challenges to the development however work was completed in February 2021. The first class was held at the Training Station in May 2021. The building is now a fully functional exercise space and local community groups, and businesses are seeing the benefits.

The group plan to apply for a Heritage Rail award and will develop their Japanese garden. They aim to increase the number of community partnerships involved and employ local staff.

Who is involved?

- Shibumi Club
- Heritage Rail
- Network Rail
- Sports Scotland
- North Ayrshire Council – Community Development Team; Locality Planning Partnership; Planning team



What were the impacts?

- Community empowerment and aspirations have increased with the knowledge and experience of what is possible for communities to achieve.
- The project has cultivated positive working partnerships both with local business groups and national funders.
- It has created the use of a much-needed new multi-use space for community groups and businesses, keeping activities local and building strong community relationships.
- The Training Stations provides opportunities for the residents of Saltcoats to benefit from physical wellbeing, mental wellbeing and socialising.

// It's a dream come true. We have somewhere to call home for the karate club, but it is so much more than that. //

John Deans
Chairperson



Case Study:

Arran Participatory Budgeting

A successful Youth, Locality and Arts and Culture Participatory Budgeting (PB) approach was undertaken in Arran in 2021.

PB supports inclusive participation and deliberative democracy, enabling local people to make decisions about how Council and Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) budgets are spent on local priorities. Where groups are funded to purchase equipment and resources, they are encouraged to shop local in line with our Community Wealth Building strategy.

In this round of Youth PB on Arran, applications were invited for up to £1,000 (from a budget of £6,000) for youth projects/ideas around the following themes: Health & Wellbeing, Poverty and Inequality, Voice & Participation and Digital Connections.

For Locality and Arts and Culture PB applications were for up to £400/£1,200 respectively, with ideas/projects sought around the following themes: local life and community well-being, linking people up, positive mental health and well-being, healthy and active communities – from a budget of £13,500.

Short-listed Youth projects were voted on by young people aged 8-25 years – this was done either in school or via the Young Scot website. The Locality and Arts and Culture Projects were short-listed by the Locality Steering Group and those who met the agreed criteria secured funding. No community events and no voting took place this year due to the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic; however this will be reinstated in future years.

Who is involved?

- North Ayrshire Council Community Development Team
- North Ayrshire HSCP
- Arran CVS
- Arran LPP short-listing group – partners and youth and community representatives
- Youth Executive
- Modern Apprentices
- Young Scot

What were the impacts?

A wide range of groups secured funding for their ideas and projects – 4 from Arts and Culture, 11 from Youth and 12 from Locality Funds, allowing communities and residents to benefit from new/continued opportunities, delivered locally.

Local adults and young people were involved in all stages of the process from design to decision making, via the youth and locality steering groups demonstrating community empowerment and active citizenship. The Steering Groups spoke positively about their experiences and being involved in making decisions about their Locality.





Case Study:

Ardrossan Community Sports Hub

Ardrossan Winton Rovers Football Club (AWRFC) has been a major part of Ardrossan infrastructure for 117 Years.

The Trustees wanted to do more in the current climate of austerity and the lack of progress in moving Ardrossan out of the top 5% SIMD disadvantaged areas in Scotland. Provision of Sport and Leisure facilities were listed as key priorities by the community during the previous 'Our Place' consultations, with a gap in local infrastructure perceived as key to addressing other social issues such as loneliness, crime, and physical as well as mental wellbeing, particularly among children and youths. The Trustees decided to form Ardrossan Community Sports Hub (ACSH) – a company limited by guarantee with charitable status.

ACSH's aim is to advance public participation in sport through the development and maintaining of sporting and other facilities in Ardrossan for the use of the community, with the aim of improving health and wellbeing. Following community consultation and feasibility work in 2017 and 2018, ACSH are working on proposals for the creation a Community Sports Hub in Ardrossan which is essentially a collective of progressive sport clubs working together in a local community.

ACSH aim take the former Maximum Potential community gym assets and facilities, within the grounds of the derelict Seafield School site, into community ownership to operate it as a community gym. They have agreed in principle a rolling lease for the property and the gym equipment contained within it and have developed a coaching infrastructure to manage it which will involve both staff and volunteers.

ACSH want to deliver a cost-effective gym membership for the whole community within Ardrossan and the wider Three Towns with qualified coaches and a structure of volunteers (which is already in place), offering commercial style/quality gym facilities at a fraction of the cost to ensure access for local people. There is no other existing gym facility within Ardrossan and therefore, as a community gym, this would not be duplicating or displacing other existing provision.

Who is involved?

- Winton Rovers
- Ardrossan Community Sports Hub
- McLaughlin Construction
- North Ayrshire Council – Community Development Team; Locality Planning Partnership



What were the impacts?

- Community ownership of two facilities in Ardrossan (Glasgow Street and derelict Seafield School site).
- Employed 2 members of staff – creating local employment opportunities.
- Affordable membership prices for local communities.
- The re-opening of the gym and development of the outdoor space has resulted in more physical activity opportunities for the community with benefits such as weight loss, fitness, mental wellbeing and socialising.



Plural Ownership of the Economy



We will support the creation and sustainability of a range of business models including SMEs, social enterprise, employee ownership, cooperatives, municipal activity and community enterprises



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

Three new Business Locality Advisers have joined the Business Support and Development Team and building on the award-winning Team North Ayrshire approach, the team is now aligned to the six North Ayrshire localities to better support local businesses and plural ownership models. An improved Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system has been developed to collect customer relationship information and activities in relation to Community Wealth Building, allowing the team to more effectively tailor interventions to support local businesses.

In supporting our business base on progressive business models, we have provided Family Business and Succession Planning support, as well as supported the development of Employee Ownership Transfer / Cooperative Ownership strategies to five local businesses.

We are further developing our relationship with Cooperative Development Scotland who will provide three sessions to upskill Business Advisers on Cooperative Ownership models. This will allow advisers to proactively engage with the local business base and promote the benefits of a cooperative model and will support the delivery of the £3 million Community Wealth Building Fund.

As outlined above, the Council has agreed ambitious plans for municipal Renewable Energy Schemes to maximise local land and assets and become a leader in net zero.



AREAS OF FOCUS 2021/22

Through the work of our Community Wealth Building Business Locality Officers and the Community Wealth Building Ayrshire Growth Deal Fund, we will proactively engage with businesses and provide financial support to assist in the transition to cooperative or employee ownership models.

We will continue to encourage our business base to explore and consider the social and environmental impact of their activities and provide support to make positive changes, including through the £500,000 Green Jobs Fund.

The Regeneration Delivery Plan outlines the need to maximise our existing land and property assets to deliver net zero carbon projects, supporting the Council's ambitions to achieve net zero by 2030.

In summer 2021 we will engage with stakeholders and explore options for establishing a Repair Economy and Remakery within North Ayrshire, building on existing community and business led activities.



Case Study:

Isle of Cumbrae Distillers (IOCD)

In 2020, five friends and Cumbrae residents decided to work together to establish a limited company and create a gin distillery on the island.

Distinctively positioned as one of the few all-female distilling teams in Scotland, they bring together expertise from backgrounds in Tourism, Hospitality, Events Management, Customer Service and Project Management.

Contact was made with the Council's Business Gateway service through the Planning to Start (PTS) online portal. They met with the business advisor responsible for business start-ups in the North Coast area who introduced them to the support available from the Council's Business Gateway service and advised them of a crowd funding incentive specifically aimed at female entrepreneurs. This funding allowed IOCD to raise enough funding to get the business up and running.

The IOCD team attended several Business Gateway free business training and social media training courses as well as Digital Boost courses. They benefited from free one to one Digital Boost consultancy to get their digital offering correct and ready for the launch of their product.

In addition, the team accessed a one-to-one surgery from a Council framework consultant to discuss their accounts and how to record them. They received marketing support from Targeting Innovation and exporting advice from Scottish Enterprise. The IOCD team were also introduced to other Ayrshire businesses that were complementary to their business.

Who is involved?

- North Ayrshire Council – Business Support & Development; Licencing team; Employability & Skills team
- RBS (Back Her Business, Crowd funding incentive)
- Scottish Enterprise
- Businesses local to North Ayrshire
- Glasgow Caledonian University
- Targeting Innovation



What were the impacts?

- Small locally owned enterprises are more likely to employ, buy and invest locally contributing to local economic development. As a growing new business on the Isle of Cumbrae, the IOCD are keen to create employment and training opportunities for island residents.
- A Living Wage employer, the IOCD take their Corporate Social Responsibility seriously and plan to support several social enterprises on the island. Millport Town Hall is the first social enterprise recognised by the company.
- As a new tourist attraction, it is hoped that other local businesses will profit from the peripheral spend of tourists visiting the distillery.
- The IOCD plan to recruit up to three new, local employees by the end of 2022.
- The Council's Business Support & Development team will provide on-going support to the IOCD, helping the business to grow at a realistic rate. It is planned to equip the company with the skills required for them create a sustainable business. The IOCD are exploring the potential to grow into export markets.



Case Study: Garnock Valley Men's Shed

Garnock Valley Men's Shed tackles loneliness and isolation through providing activities that encourages interaction with others and the wider community in an inclusive and safe environment.

Financial support through the Locality Planning Partnership's Community Investment Fund (CIF) has allowed the group to nurture and develop a derelict building as a Men's Shed. This investment has made a huge impact on social isolation and loneliness amongst men across the Garnock Valley, resulting in a membership of 80+ men. In turn, the Men's Shed trustees have adopted a policy that ensures any payments they make for outside professional services, where possible, are kept local. The Shed also generates income from commissions, often with "seconds" from large companies which they repair or upcycle and sell on locally, making money for the organisation. Effectively the group are now investing growing local wealth in the Garnock Valley both financially and socially.

Supported by the Council, the trustees were interested in pursuing a Community Asset Transfer. A temporary occupational licence on the building was granted and license extended as the group required. This gave the Sheddors confidence to take temporary ownership of the building and make extensive renovations, safe in the knowledge that the Council were encouraging longer-term occupation. It also afforded the group many opportunities to use in-kind voluntary labour provided by their members, who had the existing skills, knowledge and experience to undertake building works.

The CAT enabled external funding to be secured but also allowed the group to shape the building to fit their needs with confidence. Support was provided by NAC Garnock Valley Locality Team and NAC Asset Transfer Team. A 25-year lease on the property was approved by North Ayrshire Council Cabinet in December 2020.

Who is involved?

- North Ayrshire Council Connected Communities Team
- Scottish Men's Sheds Association (SMSA)



What were the impacts?

- Empowering individuals to become more capable and resilient, learn new skills and build confidence.
- The wider community actively seek support with projects and hold the Shed in high regard.
- Local businesses have invested and supported the project via Community Benefit.
- Due to the Shed's 'Keep it Local' policy, many local businesses have benefitted significantly when renovations have been required.
- The local health centre is now using the social prescribing model to refer patients to the shed.
- Former Shed Manager, a local volunteer, has built his confidence to such a degree that he has gone on to secure full time paid employment.
- Further expansion is planned as well as a Training programme for Shed Supervisors.



Annual Report

May 2020 – April 2021

CWNB
COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING

NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL
COMMUNITY WEALTH
BUILDING STRATEGY



North Ayrshire Council
Comhairle Siorrachd Àir a Tuath