



A word cloud visualization of terms related to community development practice. The words are arranged in a circular pattern, with larger words indicating higher frequency or importance. Key terms include:

- Central/Large Words:** community, development, groups, partnership, opportunities, work, planning, funding, support, engagement, information, management, local, economic, area, role, staff, voluntary, challenges, social, inclusion, issues, unemployment, poverty, action, administrative, will, implement, positive, overcome, membership, formal, local, facing.
- Other Visible Words:** advice, seeking, helping, successful, January, increasingly, working, included, partnership, voluntary, side-ming, mental, flow, continuous, appropriate, working, studies, ways, Identify, reporting, academic, partner, planning, one, help, build, allocate, annual, shareable, regions, solutions, support, Partnership, Area, Engagement, Information, Management, Local, Economic, Community, Development, Groups, Opportunities, Work, Planning, Funding, Support, Engagement, Information, Management, Local, Economic, Area, Role, Staff, Voluntary, Challenges, Social, Inclusion, Issues, Unemployment, Poverty, Action, Administrative, Will, Implement, Positive, Overcome, Membership, Formal, Local, Facing.

**OSCR**  
Scottish Charity Regulator  
[www.oscr.org.uk](http://www.oscr.org.uk)

**Registered SCIO**  
**SC043548**

## Introduction:

This is The Garioch Partnership's seventh annual report since it formed in January 2012, to fill the gap in Garioch, at that time which was the only administrative area that did not have a Local Rural Partnership. The Garioch Partnership (TGP) is a community-led organisation that uses its members' networks to build stronger, more successful, more sustainable communities in the Garioch Area of Aberdeenshire. It gained charitable status in November 2012 and is recognised as a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO), Scottish Charity no: SC043548. It is governed by a Board of seven trustees. It employs one full-time development worker, and one administrator/researcher to support the partnership and its members, as well as the wider Garioch community. Membership again has grown during 2018/19 and there are currently 99 members (as of March 2019), from a wide range of voluntary and community groups.



Garioch consists of the following wards:

- 10 - West Garioch
- 11 - Inverurie & District
- 12 - East Garioch
- 13 - Westhill & District

## Our Role:

The role of the partnership is wide-ranging and involves working with community groups, statutory agencies and Community Planning Partners on local and Aberdeenshire wide issues, helping to advance sustainable economic, social and environmental development projects and increasingly helping to identify opportunities within the social economy, leading to future sustainability. The partnership is confident that it plays an important role in the development of the many diverse communities in Garioch and to the wider quality of life. TGP prides itself in the support and nurturing of its staff and volunteers, to this end, we continue to nurture our development worker, supporting her in further academic work, with a continuation of her studies as she continues to work towards a Masters Degree in Community Learning and Development.

## **Policy Context: Improved Outcomes:-**

Working closely with Economic Development and the Area Manager, The Garioch Partnership will:

- (i) Promote Community Economic Development by supporting groups throughout their area with information, implementation and community engagement, to build inclusive and sustainable projects.
- (ii) Provide a local advice service to groups seeking to develop community assets and facilities. This includes options for organisational structures, governance, funding, along with other areas required to help realise opportunities in their communities.
- (iii) Provide enterprise and administrative advice to social/community enterprises seeking to develop economic opportunities.
- (iv) Develop and support Community Action Plans and other appropriate processes for engagement of communities.
- (v) Identify and implement ways to help communities understand issues around community planning and budget allocation. Together with partner staff, they will seek innovative funding and management solutions to overcome challenges.
- (vi) Ensure and facilitate a two way flow of information relating to the needs and priorities of voluntary sector partners, wider community contacts, Aberdeenshire Council, Community Planning Partners, Aberdeenshire Voluntary Action and the Local Community Planning Group.
- (vii) Identify and implement ways to help communities understand issues around community planning and budget allocation. Together with partner staff they will seek innovative funding and management solutions to overcome challenges facing the community.
- (viii) Positively promote equality of opportunity for the whole population of the area. Where the opportunity arises work within groups with protected characteristics to help them achieve positive impacts. Provide evidence of the work undertaken and the positive impacts achieved in the annual reporting and monitoring arrangement



**TGP Board and staff at the Summer Forum 2018, picture from the Inverurie Advertiser, taken by Griselda McGregor**

### **Funding:**

To date TGP has mainly been funded by Aberdeenshire Council. The Council's investment this year (2018/19) was £35,616. Most of this came from the Economic Development Service (£32,616), with the balance (£3,000) from the Garioch Area Manager's budget. This budget is monitored through a Service Level Agreement (SLA) between the Economic Development Service and the Partnership, included with the SLA for 2018/19 is an action plan highlighting the outcomes, which is included in [Appendix A](#). An annual review is undertaken by a visit and interview with a CED business development executive. In addition, as in the previous financial year 2017/18, the Garioch Area Committee transferred £5,000 to TGP from its Area Top-up Budget to fund the Community Initiative small grants scheme, which it continues to administer on behalf of the Garioch Area Committee.

Additional funding for specific pieces of work has been sourced from the Aberdeenshire Rural Partnership Federation for work on Community Action Plans. TGP has again seen an increase in its demand from groups for Independent Examination of members and non-members accounts.

We also sourced additional income to support the Local Democracy Conversations that we hosted across Garioch to ensure our community voices were heard at a national level to influence policy and thinking

## **Activities and achievements:**

### ***Developing a strong partnership:***

We continue to build on the successful beginnings of the partnership by continuing to support a wide range of groups, building a strong network of members. As previously mentioned, we now have 99 member groups, an increase of 3% from the year before. These members are from a variety of community and interest groups, with formidable skills and experience to share through the networks supported by TGP. We also have excellent links with many external agencies, locally, Aberdeenshire-wide and nationally to ensure the advice and information we can offer is of a high quality and up to date, allowing us to maximise support to community groups and volunteers. With an increase in membership comes an increased expectation from these members to serve them all equally as and when their need arises, meeting with groups in venues that are community based and appropriate is an important part of the services that we offer.

We continue to utilise the Garioch Gazette and our presence online to increase awareness of TGP.

The ***Garioch Gazette*** is published quarterly as an electronic newsletter and circulated to members, partners and interested community members, it is also available on our website. Feedback remains positive, with many readers keen to contribute to future editions. Recipients are encouraged to share the newsletter and other TGP communications within their own networks. We continue to get positive feedback about the gazette and the weekly round-up bulletin of important news that we share. We have 187 email contacts on our membership list, linking us to many groups and organisations across the area, and this information is cascaded through to many more.

The newsletter has also been used to encourage the “refuse, reduce, reuse, recycle” message, sharing information on surplus equipment, either free or at low cost for use by community groups – in particular, printers and laptops which are often expensive pieces of kit that can be a barrier to new groups starting up.

Our twice yearly forum allow regular times for members to meet, share skills, good practice and learn together. The topics of these are chosen by the groups as important development/information for our groups.

### ***Supporting community groups:***

One task assigned to the partnership via the SLA is to promote community economic development by providing information, advice, and support to community groups and social enterprises. We do this for non-members as well as members.

For some groups this has been a single piece of advice or information, often on funding or

queries on governance. For others the support has been more complex, and is ongoing. In 2018/19 the partnership assisted 10 Garioch organisations to either change their legal status to become SCIOs or to establish a new SCIO, with currently 5 more in progress. This change of legal status will enable them to access a wider range of external funding streams. We have offered access to affordable Independent Examinations to 17 groups across the Garioch area. This is the one service we currently place a small charge on, £40 to members, £60 to non-members. Accessing affordable independent examinations and the skills to assist groups to understand the legislation and requirements can be a major barrier for groups to progress and grow. Finding affordable options to meet the statutory requirements is something that many smaller organisations can struggle with and this was a gap that TGP was able to fill at a low cost.

Since January 2014, we have directly assisted with a number of successful funding applications, with the funding draw-down now topping £445k, from a range of sources – LEADER, the Big Lottery, Crerar Trust and Robertson Trust to name a few. We have developed relationships with funders which enables us to offer the best support to our communities to apply. We have supported approximately 50 applications, with a good geographical spread across the 4 wards.

### ***Supporting Local Democracy Conversations:***

TGP accessed funding through Voluntary Action Foundation to allow us to host a number of “Democracy Matters” conversations as part of the Scottish Government Local Governance Review. The funding allowed us to host 7, of which we were able to deliver 5 locally based conversations – in Kemnay, Kintore, Inverurie, Newmachar and Westhill, and one of the two communities of interest conversations, with the learning disabilities group in Inverurie. TGP were also the first group to ask the Scottish Government for a translated copy of the documents into Arabic to support the Syrian New Scots to access the information.

However, there were sensitivities around the Syrian New Scots conversation, and in discussions with the Aberdeenshire Council Community Learning and Development worker supporting the Amal Project – the refugee led organisation in Aberdeenshire, it became clear that airing personal critical views of a political system in public is a frightening concept for those who have had to flee Syria. The experience of members of the group of what happens to people who speak freely and criticise the state certainly puts life here into perspective.

Whilst the translated document was widely appreciated, it was felt that people were still conditioned by their previous experiences and it would be difficult to get people to participate in group discussions on this topic.

The democracy matters conversation was therefore not accessible to the group, but has opened the door for education and upskilling on what democracy is, can be and could be used for in the future.

TGP have committed to support the AI Amal Project to work on raising awareness and understanding of the governance procedures and structures within the UK, but this is work which will take time to develop and share, and therefore the responses will not fit within the timescales for the democracy matters conversations.



**Pictures of the Democracy Matters conversation event in Inverurie.**

The full report of the Democracy Matters Conversations are attached here in [Appendix C](#).



## Testimonials:

The testimonies below give a flavour of the support we provide from the perspective of some of our member organisations and their clients:

“Working with The Garioch Partnership has been a key step for the Scottish Parliament’s Outreach Team in opening the door to communities in rural NE Scotland to help them engage with *their* Parliament on issues that matter to them.

Mutually beneficial relationships such as those with The Garioch Partnership are critical to the success of the Scottish Parliament reaching out into rural communities. Without this crucial local knowledge and expertise, the Parliament’s Community Outreach Team would struggle to make inroads within local communities in the area. The Partnership is a key player for us in this mission.

The Partnership is precisely the type of organisation the Parliament’s Community Outreach Team seeks to engage with – driven from the grass-roots, and focused on the needs of local communities – as expressed by local communities. It’s been a pleasure working with our colleagues at the Garioch Partnership, and we look forward to continuing and strengthening this relationship in future.”

Paul Anderson, Community Outreach Manager, Scottish Parliament



“Working with TGP has allowed us to take our project out to a new audience that we would not have reached without the introduction. This means we are able to have a greater community based impact, enabling us to widen our area of work to another community in Garioch, giving home energy advice in an effort to drive down domestic energy demand,

reduce domestic bills and reduce the carbon footprint of homes.”

AUDRA BOOTH and ALAN STILL – GST CCF project.

“Dawn’s knowledge of current government policies, and direction of travel, has been very useful to us when helping and advising community groups in our area. Working with Dawn has helped us de-mystifying the SCIO process has saved us a lot of time”

Duncan Leece, CEO, Boyndie and BPL



**BANFFSHIRE PARTNERSHIP**



“A source of knowledge and information - able to make complex processes simple and easy to follow. A great help as we completed the paperwork needed to apply to become a SCIO. Also welcome access to the community initiative grant scheme and benefited from funds this year to purchase room divider screens which have really helped us with the set up of our new office.”



Linda Singer, Development Worker, Grampian Opportunities



“Fly Cup would like to thank The Garioch Partnership for their continued support. Fly Cup has had an extremely busy couple of years and found the need to apply for some grant funding. Between the information in the newsletter (which has interesting and informative articles too) informing the Third Sector on different funding streams and Dawn’s extensive knowledge, we have been able to apply for and secure funding for a range of equipment. We were also fortunate to be successful in getting funding from The Garioch Partnership to purchase polo shirts for the trainees and staff to wear in the café. It is great to see everyone looking part of the team! Thank you.”

Fiona Allan, Chairperson, Fly Cup Catering

“During my time on the committee you made all my jobs much, much easier. I think the partnership is amazing and we were extremely lucky to have Dawn. I would highly recommend your incredible knowledge, advice, help and support to every group, new or well-established.”



Lena Thompson, outgoing Chairperson, Premnay Hall and Village Association



“The Garioch Partnership has been an ongoing support to SCDN for the last three years, particularly through the work of their Development Worker, Dawn Brown. She has facilitated workshops at our national conferences and is our SCDN Champion for the Aberdeenshire area. With her help and the support of The Garioch

Partnership, we have established an Aberdeenshire Network for community development practitioners to share practice issues, network and keep up to date with current policy. This is an excellent example of partnership working.”

Susan Campbell - CD Consultant - SCDN

“GDPR Regulations The training was excellent, very clear, concise and well presented. I personally took a lot from this.



Providing this training after 'hours' in the evening was greatly appreciated.

Have not attended further training but am aware a more is given - which is great to see.”

Wendy Glasspool, Secretary, Bennachie Community Council

**KINTORE ANGLING CLUB**



“I can only say thank you to the Garioch Partnership, for their financial support enabling us properly establish Kintore Angling Club with our own signage and equipment to maintain river banks for safe angling.

In our early years of establishment, it would have been a number of years before we would have been able to finance these items.

Dawn Brown was very helpful in her guidance during the application and we thank her for her assistance.”

Brian Johnstone, Secretary/treasurer, Kintore Angling Club

“The Garioch partnership have helped us no end of times. We have been supported via phone, email and have had the pleasure of having Dawn at some of our Action Kintore meetings. For advice on funding applications, The Bothie Project and our Town House project, the Garioch Partnership have always been on hand to support us and help prompt us in the right direction and we are very grateful to have them on board, not only for us at Action Kintore, but for all other community organisations.”



Rachel Lewis, Youth and Development Worker, Action Kintore

### ***Community action plans:***

Another key task allocated to TGP through the SLA is to lead on the production of community action plans in areas identified through the community planning process.

Over the past several years TGP have taken an initiative approach to this after analysing previous Action Plan Consultations and believe we can get to root of what local communities need, correctly identify these and document the outcomes. The two communities in the Garioch identified were Kelland's and a review of the Inside Inch Plan, initially completed in 2013.

The Kelland's action process plan was not a successful approach, but one we have learned from. The lack of wider community buy in became apparent through the engagements that meant there was no strong group to lead on any of the actions coming out of these events, although there were successes in working with partners to address local issues of speeding and anti-social driving near the hospital site, supporting the ongoing development of the Kelland's Parent Council, and working with the parent council to support wider engagement of parents who would normally not get involved in projects around the community.

The Inch plan is with the ICAN group (Inch Community Association) as we support the development of strong local groups to take actions forward.

Our CAP process is a two-pronged approach, identified with statutory partners and in partnership with the community. We only work in communities where there is a will and desire to work collaboratively to develop the plan, and then to support the actions moving forward.

All completed CAPs are distributed in printed format to community planning partner bodies and groups and also electronically available on the Aberdeenshire Planning and TGP websites.

We have been working with the community in Sauchen, through the Cluny, Midmar and Monymusk Community Council to develop an action plan for their community, particularly focussed on community facilities. The image here is a route capture of the delivery of leaflets for stage one of the Sauchen Action Plan, thankfully it was a lovely day and a great way to get to know the community TGP are working in!





## **Community Initiative Fund:**

This small grants scheme was introduced in 2012/13, utilising the underspend in the partnership's budget caused by the delayed appointment of the development worker, and topped up in 2013/14 year from the Garioch Area Committee's Area Budget.

This year the Area Committee agree to provide £5K to the partnership to continue the scheme. This year we were able to provide £6416.30 of grant support locally. The extra money for this grant stream came from donations for equipment use, and from the income from independent examinations. TGP were also successful in drawing down unused funds from another Youth Charity in Garioch which shut down in 2018, this was channelled into the CIG funding. There are pressures of a relatively small budget not being able to cover everything, and we have deferred 2 applications into the 2019/20 budget.



**KBASC presentation and the “Smoothie Bike” for the youth resilience project in action!  
(picture from Live Life Aberdeenshire Facebook post)  
Below: Picture from UryRiverside Park newsletter**

TGP continues to use a participatory budgeting approach through its “grants panel” of local

Some recent photos of the tree planting and new paths



Check out all the photos on our flickr page  
<https://www.flickr.com/groups/uryriversidepark>

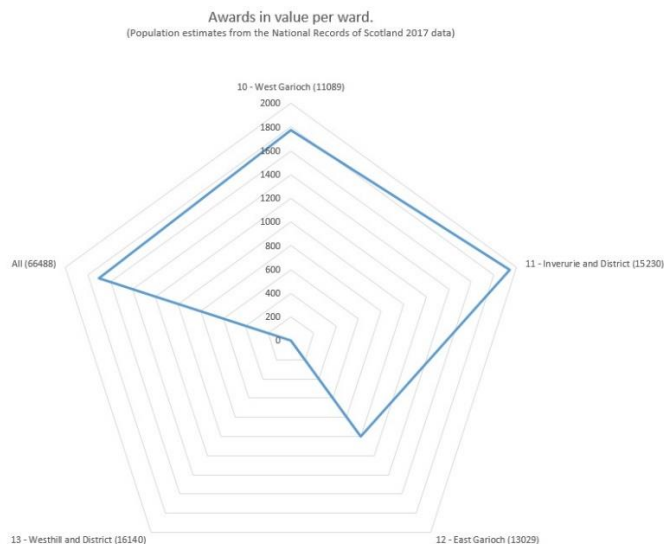
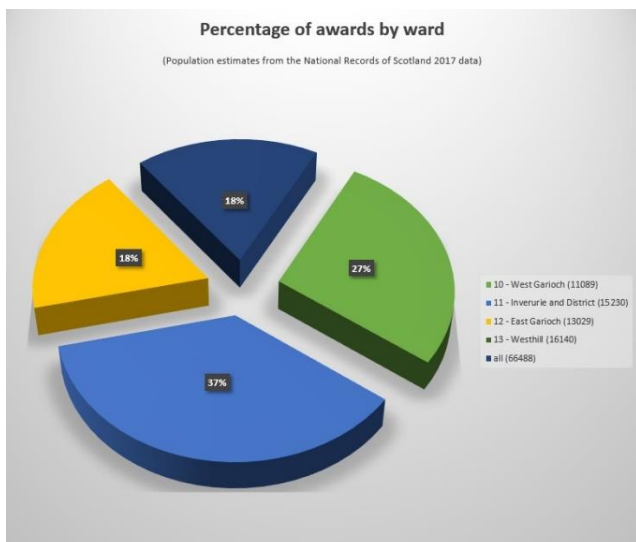
volunteers to assess applications and make recommendations to the Board, thus involving community members directly in decision-making. The scheme continues to attract applications from a wide range of groups. There is no doubt it is contributing to strong, resilient communities in Garioch, with local people leading, and taking responsibility for things that matter to them in their communities, whether geographic communities or communities of interest. Details are shown on the next page. For many groups, an application to the community initiative grants are the first time they have looked for external funding, and is a step to building confidence and capacity to apply elsewhere.

The panel are a group of 10 local people – we are currently recruiting for the 2 vacancies, across the 4 wards, all involved in their communities in a variety of groups. The panel meets virtually, so applications come in to the office either on email or paper, and get sent to the panel, with around a week to ask questions and give recommendations. These questions (if there are any) are then put back to the applicant, and the panel receive this information. Then the responses are collated, and shared with the board of TGP. TGP then prepare the funds to go to the groups. We aim to have this process completed within one calendar month.

TGP were also asked to host and administer the Garioch Flood Resilience fund, which we are administering on the same lines as the CIG fund, with the same easy application and same panel to agree on the use of the funding. Included below is the breakdown of both funding streams.

### **CIG AWARDS 2018/19**

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>Amount Awarded</b>
Kemnay Breakfast & After School Club	Rebranding / New Uniforms	£600.00
Steps into Wellness	The Clachan	£750.00
Kintore Angling Association	Equipment to support and develop the growth of KAA to allow them to sustainably manage the banks and fishery	£850.00
Kemnay Community Association	Update of computers for Newsletter Office	£324.96
Fly Cup	Creating a sense of team working	£750.00
Grampian Opportunities	Space 2 Be	£576.24
Spikin Autism and More (SAAM)	Inclusion for All – Training Workshops	£700.98
Newmachar Pre-school Playgroup	Arts & Crafts for Term Time Topics	£250.00
Ury Riverside Park SCIO	PPE and work wear for Volunteer days for tree planting etc.	£544.12
Alcohol & Drugs Action	Young People's Resilience Project (YPRP)	£1000.00
Philosophy Café	Inverurie Events	£70.00



## **GARIOCH FLOOD RESILIENCE AWARDS 2018/19**

Organisation	Project	Amount awarded
Fintray Community Council	Water Diversion, flood resilience equipment	£1000.00

A total of £5840.06 has been invested locally from the community initiatives grant fund, and a further £1000 from the Garioch resilience fund.



**Photo shows some of our recent grant recipients at our Winter Forum hosted at The Fly Cup, November 2018**

These funds are a direct investment in small community groups that supports and develops capacity, skills and confidence to go on and apply to larger funders and to deliver high quality, community based initiatives within our communities. Led by local people, delivering for local people.

## ***Community Planning:***



TGP is a key partner in the community planning process in the Garioch area, working with communities to build their capacity and to link their identified needs with the relevant delivering agencies. The development worker takes an active role in the Garioch Local Community Planning Group... The partnership contributes at Local Authority Level too, being engaged in a number of groups, such as the Local Learning Community Partnerships, and on the LEADER South Aberdeenshire Local Action Group.

As stated in the SLA, TGP, as one of the voluntary sector partners, acts as an intermediary between Aberdeenshire Council, Community Planning Partners and the Local Community Planning Group to ensure that they represent the wider community and to ensure a two-way flow of information relating to needs and priorities.

On a wider stage, we are also involved in supporting the Scottish Community Development Network Aberdeenshire forum for sharing practice in community development across practitioners, volunteers and community groups.



## **Community Engagement:**

Following our previous decision to launch our **Gad about and Gab about Garioch, (GAGAG)** Events, we have continued to get out and about and meet with our communities at their local events instead of expecting them to come to us.



The information we gather is shared with partners and if appropriate fed in to the Garioch Community Plan, or into a Community Action Plan. In some cases we will use our knowledge and experience to provide advice and information and make community connections. We have attended events like the Lourin Fair, Inch Strawberry Fair and the Westhill Gala, and others. We continue to attend these events to build relationships and trust with communities, to increase our profile and to meet new groups.

This year, we have been ensuring groups are up to date with the policy requirements, especially with the new regulations around GDPR, which has seen our development worker facilitate courses to a wide range of groups and organisations, including pan Aberdeenshire groups, working in collaboration with Active Communities section of Aberdeenshire Council, the Local Sports Hubs, and also contracted to deliver to SportAberdeen as a local expert. See Appendix D for feedback from Aberdeenshire events



We have also supported colleagues across the ARPF to deliver a workshop on “Participation Requests” and a Community Empowerment event in Kincardine. Similarly, colleagues are supporting the forthcoming Garioch and Formartine Community Empowerment Event to be held in May 2019.

### ***Community Led Local Development (LEADER):***

Again TGP has been heavily involved in the South Aberdeenshire Local Action Group (SALAG), on the main SALAG committee and on the Project Assessment Committee (PAC). We have also supported some local groups to examine whether LEADER is the right fund for them, and have supported one local social enterprise to apply, and successfully draw down the funds, navigating and using the LARCs system.

### ***Learning Community Partnerships:***

We continue to work closely with the local learning partnerships, supporting the resurgence of Inverurie, and attending Kemnay and Westhill as time and need permits. Our skills at being supportive of community development and all it encompasses has added something to the networks. Also through these partnerships, we have made contact with new groups and new social enterprises, widening our network, being able to offer our support to a wider range of groups. These are relationships we are looking to develop further in 2019, looking to support the development of a shared online document area, and to support the ongoing growth of these networks.

### ***Aberdeenshire Rural Partnerships Federation:***

We continue to play an active part in the Aberdeenshire Rural Partnerships Federation (ARPF) supporting the development of a strong and sustainable community sector in Aberdeenshire, working with colleagues to discuss and progress issues that affect pan Aberdeenshire. This allows us to offer a comprehensive service to our groups, calling on expertise of other development workers in the ARPF network.

Jacky Niven of Kincardine Development Partnership sums the value of ARPF up in the following quote... *"Over the past twelve months, KDP have enjoyed strong partnership working with our colleagues from the Aberdeenshire Rural Partnership Federation, whether at a strategic level working together to ensure we maintain a strong case for supporting our communities right across the Shire or on a local level sharing best practise and supporting each other at events and other joint initiatives. We are grateful to our colleagues from The Garioch, Banffshire, Buchan, Marr and Formartine Partnerships for helping to create this supportive, strong and cohesive network!"*

### ***Other Links:***

There is also a twice yearly meeting with Community Economic Development Partners to explore future sustainability issues for the partnerships. TGP also maintains regular contact, and has active working links, with people working for the economic and social prosperity of the area including, amongst others DTAS, Scottish Government, the Council's Community Learning and Development staff, AVA, NHS Grampian, and the Garioch Community Planning Officer, and also with SCDN (Scottish Community Development Network) SCDC (Scottish Community Development Centre) Scottish Rural Action (The Scottish Rural Parliament) and Scottish Parliament Outreach Team.

**Conclusion:**

TGP is confident that the funding Aberdeenshire has provided in 2018/19 through the SLA has been used efficiently and effectively to meet the Service Level Agreement and to deliver an effective and supportive service to communities in Garioch. TGP trusts that Aberdeenshire Council and its partners will recognise that the confidence they have placed in the partnership has been well founded and that the growth of the partnership has had a positive effect on Garioch's communities. TGP is eager to ensure that the high-level work continues.

**Final word:**

TGP are looking forward to their future, and continuing to support the development and growth of community groups across the Garioch area, to see the area flourish in terms of community activity and being a great place to live, work and play. Garioch is expanding, despite the downturn in the Oil industry which it has seen in past few years, population in Aberdeenshire has decreased however the population in Garioch has grown, contrary to Aberdeenshire as a whole. TGP have invested in technology to allow the development worker, administrator and board to work smarter utilising Office 365 which TGP acquired free licences using our Charitable Status with TT-Exchange. We are in the process of rolling out a SharePoint Portal to provide current, up to date information to our partners and members, in a secure access site. TGP also look at the development of staff, in particular the development worker to provide the best knowledge for her duties. TGP are grateful to both members of staff in the diligence of their work and also for their own development pathways they are using in their own free time, to personally develop themselves for their roles in The Garioch Partnership. My thanks also go to the board who have ably and cheerfully assisted in the past year, whilst managing work, family and community commitments, being engaged in a wide range of community activities.



John Chapman

Chairperson

13th May 2019

## The Garioch Partnership Action Plan April 2018 – March 2019

Key Actions	SLA actions	Intended Outcomes	Actual Outcomes
<p>Continue to develop the membership of TGP, providing ongoing support to our currently engaged 94 groups, both face to face and through social media and our newsletter, support local community participation, growing individual and group capacity, assistance to source and apply for funding on a local and national level, and continue to offer governance and structure support and information eg SCIO conversions, new groups, and support for the reporting requirements of OSCR on charitable groups.</p> <p>Also keep groups informed and compliant with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) changes.</p>	1, 2, 3 and 7	<p>Groups will feel supported and have an increased awareness of the opportunities locally and nationally for funding. Improved links within the groups in the Garioch area supported through our networking events (Summer and Winter Forum) and other learning events as required by the membership.</p> <p>Offer GDPR on a group by group basis as required</p>	<p>Membership has grown to 99, with 3 pending our next board meeting.</p> <p>We continue to offer bespoke support options to groups, working with them, volunteers, staff and boards to ensure they meet the governance standards required.</p> <p>The newsletter is circulated to 186 email addresses. We changed the format of our weekly mailing into a more consistent format. The quarterly newsletter is still well received.</p> <p>TGP have been asked to be one of the beta testers for OSCR's online application form for SCIO applications.</p> <p>We have supported 10 new groups to become SCIOs (5 more in progress)</p> <p>Deliver talks to groups wishing to find out more about TGP (eg The Garioch Heritage Society)</p> <p>GDPR training delivered to 9 individual TGP groups, as well as to the attendance at our forum.</p> <p>We were also contracted to deliver GDPR training in Aberdeen City for Sport Aberdeen, and in Banchory, Huntly, Peterhead and Portlethen through the Aberdeenshire Sports Hubs.</p>
Tailored support for community groups and projects – project management, business planning, support for groups going through the community asset transfer process, support for	1, 2, 5 and 7	<p>Groups will build capacity and confidence. Increase local knowledge of opportunities. Locally delivered tailored training and support to meet the group needs, around</p>	<p>Work with the Westhill and District Public Hall (Ashdale Hall) to move forward to a new constitution and support their development.</p>

ensuring governance structures are fit for purpose.		<p>roles and responsibilities of trustees, volunteering support policies, other relevant policies and funding.</p> <p>Develop the member's only area of the TGP website so that there is a resource bank for community groups to access "self-help" advice and information.</p>	<p>Oyne Victoria Hall – move to a new constitution, support to look for funding opportunities.</p> <p>Premnay Hall – supported them to set up new accounting procedures, look at the next steps for their constitution and to form a new and stronger committee.</p> <p>Continue to support the Fly Cup following their LEADER award, and to look for more funding.</p> <p>Continue to work with SensationALL at Westhill following their asset transfer.</p> <p>Work with Kirkton of Skene Hall to identify possible funding options.</p> <p>(This list is not exhaustive but gives a flavour of the work we do)</p>
TGP will work with our community planning partners, health and social care integration and other statutory bodies and our third sector to tackle barriers to participation, assisting groups to be engaged in consultations, community focused events and participatory budgeting locally	4, 6 and 7	<p>Recognise and support the opportunities for accredited volunteering.</p> <p>Continue to attend Community Planning meetings, LEADER, Third Sector Strategy group, relevant other third sector forums and other relevant opportunities, and ensure information is cascaded to our local groups in an understandable, timely manner.</p>	<p>TGP continue to play an active part in LEADER – both on the Project Assessment Committee and Local Area Group (PAC and LAG) for South Aberdeenshire.</p> <p>TGP supported 6 "Democracy Matters" conversations locally, and participated in the regional discussion. The seventh conversation that we applied for was to work with the Syrian New Scots project, but with discussion with the CLD worker supporting them, and the chair of the organisation, we discovered that it was a step further than the group were ready for. We have committed to support the project to work towards a better understanding of democracy locally and in Scotland.</p> <p>TGP are still involved in the PB Stakeholder group for Scotland.</p>
TGP will work with communities to develop, design and deliver on the community action	4, 5, 6 and 7	We will complete the Kelland's Community Action Plan	The Kelland's Action Plan has not been completed. There were issues

<p>plans, using a range of tools to support the engagement – Place Standard, Planning for Real, “How good is our...” We also have a commitment to support communities to be involved in ongoing review of the CAP. We will ensure that the CAP is shared with statutory partners and community planning.</p>		<p>Ongoing work with Insch to review and update their CAP (2017/18), and also support and assist the Health &amp; Social Care Partnership with the work they are planning in Insch</p> <p>We will also support and identify other communities that may be looking to develop actions plans in the future. Ongoing support to community planning partners for use of the Place Standard across Garioch settlements.</p>	<p>in the community that meant we struggled to pull together a group to take ownership of the plan. There was no point in developing a plan without a group to take ownership and drive implantation of the outcomes of the engagement. We are still working with a small group of residents of the area to try to support the development of a Friend of Kelland’s Park group.</p> <p>The Insch CAP was held up when HSCP did not communicate that they were no longer doing the work in Insch. The CAP review for Insch will be presented to the community at an event in April (it was scheduled to be earlier, but ICAN requested we support them to get a wider final engagement at the end of April)</p> <p>Premnay/Auchleven are in the early stages of examining the benefits of a CAP for their settlement.</p> <p>We have been working with Cluny Midmar and Monymusk community council to facilitate an action plan for Sauchen.</p> <p>TGP are still working with Kemnay to help move forward their action plan, and have supported the completion of a number of the identified priorities.</p> <p>TGP worked with planning for the Place Standard engagement events with the Garioch Community Councils and continue to support the use of Place Standard in terms of LDP design.</p>
<p>TGP will continue to offer our Independent Examination of accounts to support groups that this could be a financial barrier to.</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>Continue to offer independent examination of accounts. Increase capacity of TGP to deliver this.</p>	<p>TGP have completed 17 Independent examinations for small and medium sized groups in Garioch who have struggled to find affordable options.</p>

			This is one service we charge a small fee for - £40 for member groups and £60 for non-members.
<p>We will continue to work in partnership with the ARPF, AVA, wider third sector, Aberdeenshire Council, Local Community planning, HSCI, LEADER and other relevant local groups, like the learning partnerships, sports hubs, and local strategy groups.</p> <p>We will continue to be engaged in the Scotland-wide Participatory Budgeting Stakeholders group.</p>	1, 5 and 6	<p>Create and support links for groups to engage with decision makers.</p> <p>Contribute and assist with the community plan.</p> <p>Build relationships with locally elected members.</p> <p>Attend the PB stakeholders group and cascade information from it, ensuring Aberdeenshire is well represented.</p>	<p>TGP continue to be an active member of ARPF, taking on a lead role in the revitalisation of the CAP good practice guidance.</p> <p>We regularly link with the sports hubs, supporting Garioch to look at their way forward and to offer support to Westhill as required.</p> <p>We are working with Aberdeenshire Council CLD team to support the redevelopment of the Inverurie Local Learning Partnership, and still keep in touch with Kemnay. Westhill was in abeyance for most of the period.</p> <p>We continue to work with AVA, having a positive relationship with Meriem as the new area development worker for Garioch.</p> <p>We work closely with public health and HSCP when opportunities exist, taking part in the recent mental health strategy consultations, and shared training like the Firestarter event</p>
<p>Continue to engage with communities in a range of ways – our “Gad About and Gab About Garioch” (GAGAG) where we engage locally and support the community to share their views, and ensure this is represented at local community planning as an essential source of local knowledge.</p> <p>Develop knowledge and upskilling TGP members in learning with Summer &amp; Winter forums and sharing of with other TGP members.</p>	1, 3 and 4	<p>Continue to use GAGAG to engage locally where community events are already happening (fetes, coffee mornings, local events)</p>	<p>TGP regularly engage with the community at a variety of local events. We were at Groupfest in Inverurie, and have attended the Kemnay Friday Coffee, facilitated a community safety day in Insch, and also many other community events.</p> <p>Our Summer forum topic was GDPR as requested by our members, and we had an input on locally available funding opportunities. Our Winter forum topic was asset transfer, and we used the event to bring new groups together, and support a volunteer</p>



			<p>drive for "For the Love of Garioch" Community Christmas Day Lunch in Inverurie.</p> <p>TGP continue to "join the dots" and help create new networks of people who are likeminded and doing similar work.</p>
Continue to provide advice and support on sustainable projects.	1, 2 and 3	<p>Sustainable groups started up, ongoing groups supported and enhanced. Building the capacity of these groups to ensure they continue to be sustainable. Be available as support, and a critical friend to groups to enable them to feel supported and able to access opportunities, to help them grow and achieve their goals.</p> <p>Work with Aberdeenshire Council around the support, growth and further development of sports hubs across Garioch to support locally led community action for clubs and volunteers.</p>	<p>Ongoing support to both sports hubs – Westhill to support their ongoing development and widening their offering and appeal. Westhill hub have achieved sustainability within 3 years, through the development of the Westhill 10K as a fundraiser for the hub, which allows them to deliver a wide range of opportunities and training within Westhill.</p> <p>Garioch sports hub has been in abeyance, supporting them to look a re-visioning where they go from here.</p> <p>Work with a wide range of groups to ensure sustainability. Support groups like the Inverurie and District Men's Shed to continue to grow.</p>
Support the establishment of new community and third sector groups.	1, 2 and 3	<p>Support new groups, and groups that are looking to expand into Garioch, to identify the correct structures to enable them to move forward, and provide advice and information on governance, funding and capacity building.</p>	<p>Working to support the establishment of a new community group in Largie near Insch, to look at supporting a possible asset transfer there for community space. Supporting them to come together, work on a constitution and consider ways forward.</p> <p>Supporting the development and growth of "For the Love of Garioch" who did the Inverurie Christmas Lunch in the Town Hall as a voluntary group.</p>
Continue to work with Inverurie Business Improvement District	1	<p>Support Inverurie BID to ensure they meet the needs of the community and support the third sector that enhances the BID (Inverurie Environmental Group, and Inverurie Events)</p>	<p>Continue to work with BID. Young Pride of Inverurie didn't happen as the BID development officer left post and they had identified they would lead.</p>

		Support events that celebrate community involvement (Pride of Inverurie, Young Pride of Inverurie)	
Work with planners of large infrastructure projects in our area that have an impact on communities.	1, 4, 5 and 6	<p>Work with the organisations delivering large scale infrastructure projects locally (A96 dualling, train line improvements) to support communities to access the opportunities that the community benefit clauses of such work has.</p> <p>Support communities to have a say, and be engaged in the process.</p>	<p>Continue to work with the Amey/Arup project officers to ensure communities are aware of the small community funding that they have.</p> <p>Ensure we share information on events, consultations and community engagements around developments.</p> <p>Supported the LDP consultation process.</p>
Develop the idea and business plan for a possible asset transfer of Market Place Primary School.	1, 2 and 7	<p>Development of a third sector hub that is accessible and affordable for community groups to use. Develop high quality offering to the community to support the ongoing growth of the third sector locally.</p> <p>Build sustainability for the partnership and ensure our own longevity through the development of a building, offering services vital to the community to all come together in one space.</p>	<p>Ongoing work.</p> <p>Has been refused through the Aberdeenshire Council Garioch Area Committee, and the Aberdeenshire Council Appeals Panel. Is now lodged and live with the Scottish Government as an appeal under the community empowerment act.</p>

## Appendix B

### Future Action Plan

## The Garioch Partnership Action Plan April 2019 – March 2020

Key Actions	SLA actions	Intended Outcomes	Actual Outcomes
Continue to develop the membership of TGP, providing ongoing support to our currently engaged 94 groups, both face to face and through social media and our newsletter, support local community participation, growing individual and group capacity, assistance to source and apply for funding on a local and national level, and continue to offer governance and structure support and information eg SCIO conversions, new groups, and support for the reporting requirements of OSCR on charitable groups. Also keep groups informed and compliant with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) changes.	1, 2, 3 and 7	Groups will feel supported and have an increased awareness of the opportunities locally and nationally for funding. Improved links within the groups in the Garioch area supported through our networking events (Summer and Winter Forum) and other learning events as required by the membership. Offer GDPR on a group by group basis as required	
Tailored support for community groups and projects – project management, business planning, support for groups going through the community asset transfer process, support for ensuring governance structures are fit for purpose.	1, 2, 5 and 7	Groups will build capacity and confidence. Increase local knowledge of opportunities. Locally delivered tailored training and support to meet the group needs, around roles and responsibilities of trustees, volunteering support policies, other relevant policies and funding. Develop the member's only area of the TGP website so that there is a resource bank for community groups to access "self-help" advice and information.	
TGP will work with our community planning partners, health and social care integration and other statutory bodies and our third sector to tackle barriers to participation, assisting groups to be engaged in consultations, community focused events and participatory budgeting locally	4, 6 and 7	Recognise and support the opportunities for accredited volunteering. Continue to attend Community Planning meetings, LEADER, Third Sector Strategy group, relevant other third sector forums and other relevant opportunities, and ensure information is cascaded to our local groups in an understandable, timely manner.	

TGP will work with communities to develop, design and deliver on the community action plans, using a range of tools to support the engagement – Place Standard, Planning for Real, “How good is our...” We also have a commitment to support communities to be involved in ongoing review of the CAP. We will ensure that the CAP is shared with statutory partners and community planning.	4, 5, 6 and 7	<p>We will complete the Kelland’s Community Action Plan</p> <p>Ongoing work with Inch to review and update their CAP (2017/18), and also support and assist the Health &amp; Social Care Partnership with the work they are planning in Inch</p> <p>We will also support and identify other communities that may be looking to develop actions plans in the future.</p> <p>Ongoing support to community planning partners for use of the Place Standard across Garioch settlements.</p>	
TGP will continue to offer our Independent Examination of accounts to support groups that this could be a financial barrier to.	3	Continue to offer independent examination of accounts. Increase capacity of TGP to deliver this.	
<p>We will continue to work in partnership with the ARPF, AVA, wider third sector, Aberdeenshire Council, Local Community planning, HSCI, LEADER and other relevant local groups, like the learning partnerships, sports hubs, and local strategy groups.</p> <p>We will continue to be engaged in the Scotland-wide Participatory Budgeting Stakeholders group.</p>	1, 5 and 6	<p>Create and support links for groups to engage with decision makers.</p> <p>Contribute and assist with the community plan.</p> <p>Build relationships with locally elected members.</p> <p>Attend the PB stakeholders group and cascade information from it, ensuring Aberdeenshire is well represented.</p>	
<p>Continue to engage with communities in a range of ways – our “Gad About and Gab About Garioch” (GAGAG) where we engage locally and support the community to share their views, and ensure this is represented at local community planning as an essential source of local knowledge.</p> <p>Develop knowledge and upskilling TGP members in learning with Summer &amp; Winter forums and sharing of with other TGP members.</p>	1, 3 and 4	Continue to use GAGAG to engage locally where community events are already happening (fetes, coffee mornings, local events)	
Continue to provide advice and support on sustainable projects.	1, 2 and 3	<p>Sustainable groups started up, ongoing groups supported and enhanced.</p> <p>Building the capacity of these groups to ensure they continue to be sustainable.</p> <p>Be available as support, and a critical friend to groups to enable them to feel supported and able to access</p>	

		<p>opportunities, to help them grow and achieve their goals.</p> <p>Work with Aberdeenshire Council around the support, growth and further development of sports hubs across Garioch to support locally led community action for clubs and volunteers.</p>	
Support the establishment of new community and third sector groups.	1, 2 and 3	Support new groups, and groups that are looking to expand into Garioch, to identify the correct structures to enable them to move forward, and provide advice and information on governance, funding and capacity building.	
Continue to work Improvement District with Inverurie Business Assoc.	1	<p>Support Inverurie BID to ensure they meet the needs of the community and support the third sector that enhances the BID (Inverurie Environmental Group, and Inverurie Events)</p> <p>Support events that celebrate community involvement (Pride of Inverurie, Young Pride of Inverurie)</p>	
Work with planners of large infrastructure projects in our area that have an impact on communities.	1, 4, 5 and 6	<p>Work with the organisations delivering large scale infrastructure projects locally (A96 dualling, train line improvements) to support communities to access the opportunities that the community benefit clauses of such work has.</p> <p>Support communities to have a say, and be engaged in the process.</p>	
Develop the idea and business plan for a possible asset transfer of Market Place Primary School.	1, 2 and 7	<p>Development of a third sector hub that is accessible and affordable for community groups to use. Develop high quality offering to the community to support the ongoing growth of the third sector locally.</p> <p>Build sustainability for the partnership and ensure our own longevity through the development of a building, offering services vital to the community to all come together in one space.</p>	

# DEMOCRACY MATTERS

## RESPONDENT INFORMATION FORM



Scottish Government  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba  
gov.scot

**Please Note** this form **must** be completed and returned with your response.

If you answered the questions as part of a community conversation, we would like to know a bit more about your community group or organisation:

**1. In which town, village, or neighbourhood did your conversation take place?**

Newmachar, Inverurie, Kemnay, Kintore and Westhill in Aberdeenshire

2 x community of interest (learning disabilities/ASN/mental health/confidence/long term conditions and Syrian New Scots)

**2. How many people were involved in your discussion?**

Over the 5 locally based events, we had 55 people involved in the conversations, the 2 communities of interest, we had 20.

**3. Please indicate which category best describes you (tick one only).**

Individual	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community group	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Representative body for community organisations	<input type="checkbox"/>
Third sector/equality organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Representative body for third sector/equality organisations	<input type="checkbox"/>
Executive Agencies and NDPBs	<input type="checkbox"/>
Local authority	<input type="checkbox"/>
NHS	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other statutory organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Representative body for private sector organisations	<input type="checkbox"/>
Representative body for professionals	<input type="checkbox"/>
Private sector organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Academic	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other – please state...	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### 4. If you are an individual, organisation, or community group

Full name or organisation, community group's name:

Dawn Brown, development worker, The Garioch Partnership

Contact number:

07514 449127

Email:

Dawn@gariochpartnership.org.uk

The Garioch Partnership, First Floor, Wyness Hall, Jackson Street, Inverurie,  
Aberdeenshire

Address

Postcode:

AB51 3QB

The Scottish Government would like your permission to publish your consultation response.  
Please indicate your publishing preference:

- ☒ Publish response with name
- ☐ Publish response only (without name)
- ☐ Do not publish response

##### Information for organisations:

The option 'Publish response only (without name)' is available for individual respondents only. If this option is selected, the organisation name will still be published.

If you choose the option 'Do not publish response', your organisation name may still be listed as having responded to the consultation in, for example, the analysis report.

We will share your response internally with other Scottish Government policy teams who may be addressing the issues you discuss. They may wish to contact you again in the future, but we require your permission to do so. Are you content for Scottish Government to contact you again in relation to the Democracy Matters consultation exercise?

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No



## **Session one**

### **Getting involved – Question 1: Tell us about your experiences of getting involved in making decisions that affect your local community.**

- \* Local service (hospital) was under threat, went along to find out more, got involved with local community association. Have stayed involved since & widened out.
- \* Easy to get involved, load of folk will comment, not so many get engaged & do it.

### **Getting involved – Question 2: Tell us what sorts of issues your local community or community of interest should have more control over.**

- \* Services that affect the local community, e.g.
  - Post Office
  - Services/activities for older folk
  - Employment opportunities in building projects etc
  - Services communities need e.g.
    - Child care
    - Elderly
    - Leisure
    - Recycling
    - Waste
    - Transport
    - Roads
- \* Budget spend locally, on local matters, e.g.
  - Developer obligations money
  - Area committee budget

We talk of localising democracy, but yet organisations like the Police and Fire Brigade are going the other way into Scotland-wide organisations. Even the local authority area of Aberdeenshire is too big – I cannot have a say in decisions in areas that are so different from mine, that I don't know about!

**About your community – Question 1: Tell us what ‘local’ means to you and your community.**

Local can be a street, neighbourhood, village, area

Wider than that

For some decisions regional with awareness of smaller divisions

One size doesn't fit all

**About your community – More questions.**

**Tell us which groups help you get involved in making decisions in the community.**

- Local rural partnership
- Community councils
  - o Realising they can be part of the solution & drive change
- Community associations

**Tell us how groups could help people get involved in new local decision making powers.**

PB got more groups involved in Garioch through posters – widened out to groups who wouldn't feel confident to present normally. Raised awareness in communities through posters etc. at fairs etc. for voting on.

Be wary of “professionalising” volunteers – how does all this sit in terms of locally elected members? Where does being engaged and involved switch to being an unpaid job?

Can we ensure its fair to access local decision making? Not just about the powerful becoming even more important and the voiceless/disenfranchised left even further behind.

This is all fine and well, but we're seeing an increase in our area for access to foodbanks, folk living with high levels of debt, in poverty and not having their basic needs met – until we get the balance right where no one is left behind in our community, then for some being engaged in local democracy is a far-fetched idea – yet to exclude them widens gaps in our communities.

When am I there as me? When am I there to represent? How do I represent others – I'm not elected!

**Tell us how new ways of making local decisions could work well.**

Consultation – from beginning – not when ideas are already in place. Not rubber stamping current ideas/decisions already made.

Wide range of consultation styles - Get out where people are, not expect them to turn out.

Can we make some consultations easier to have a say in (e.g. how Garioch did participatory budgeting small grants) (For info – groups designed a poster to attract votes for their project idea, a small group of Aberdeenshire Council, NHS staff, The Garioch Partnership, and the third sector interface Aberdeenshire Voluntary Action then took the posters out to a range of summer fayres and even the supermarket to get people engaged where they were, who were not already tied to the organisation applying)

**Tell us what changes or support are needed for this to work properly.**

- Local authorities need training. A genuine community engagement & consultation to really listen to local experts – not just through partner groups.
- Plain language so everyone can understand
- Real budget decisions that make a difference, not just pottering with small grants.
- Where are the “National Standards for community engagement” in this?
- Golden thread of feedback – where ideas/influence come from
- Feedback what is do-able, but also what isn’t achievable – its an adult conversation.

**What the Scottish Government should know. Tell us about any other ideas you have or things you think we should know about local decision making.**

- Let people know the process e.g.
  - What happens next
  - What was agreed/not agreed
  - Where it goes
  - & then feedback in simple language – national standards of community engagement
- Find creative ways to get more people involved
- Not just online
- Pay expenses
- Some community councils are representing their community well, and have good links with the local folk, others are a bit more distant and hidden, with people not knowing who they are. Folk don’t know what a community council is or does. Some even have elections!
- Community planning can work well when staff are located and rooted in the community and get out & work with & engage with folk where they are, in language the understand.

**New forms**

- Something that appeals to & engages with young people (school age up to mid-30s)
- Young people not getting involved/staying involved with community councils

**Changes**

- Give community groups real budget to support them. They are volunteers (but volunteering should not equal free workers)
  - Real budgets & real control
    - Simple budget so groups can do it themselves to show what they do without needing a degree to explain it
  - Recognise the impact and inputs of groups here in our communities.
- 
- NHS could save money if they had more trust in community delivered solutions
  - Stop asking groups to work out “preventative spend” and other jargon
  - Awareness of value of different approaches e.g.
    - Sports
    - Community
    - Complimentary therapy
    - Talking
    - Music etc.

**Community of Interest 1 (learning disability/mental health/long term illness/social isolation)**

**Getting involved – Question 1: Tell us about your experiences of getting involved in**

## **making decisions that affect your local community.**

- Bus Forum – steps & not enough buzzers on buses
  - Very good
- Your voice, your choice ✓ (Participatory budgeting done in Garioch area)
- Ellon community centre no longer welcoming @ new campus
  - Local people
- LD Group
- Spoke to local MP

Where is the easier read version of the easier read? Some of the wording requires knowledge and understanding – assumptions being made. How do we support people when it's the first thing they might get involved in?

## **Getting involved – Question 2: Tell us what sorts of issues your local community or community of interest should have more control over.**

- Transport
- Not all towns are so welcoming eg. campus / services
- Access to housing
- Access to leisure services
- Quiet / relaxed sessions in more public places
- Access to open spaces & leisure outside

## **About your community – Question 1: Tell us what 'local' means to you and your community.**

- Local could mean whole town
- Where you use facilities
- Depends on issue
  - Local community
  - Local city
  - City/Shire/Moray
  - Scotland

## **About your community – More questions.**

**Tell us which groups help you get involved in making decisions in the community.**

**Tell us how groups could help people get involved in new local decision making powers.**

**Tell us how new ways of making local decisions could work well.**

**Tell us what changes or support are needed for this to work properly.**

#### Help

- GO (Grampian Opportunities), Aberdeenshire Powerful Voices, LD Group, bowling group, Zumba
  - National Involvement Network, Council Forum
- Meetings different days & times in accessible venues
- People should come to established groups to gather views – so come to where we are – not expect us to attend your meetings.
- Learning events where people get to know each other
- Easy read format / pictures / simple words
- Actually listen to what's being said – and feedback after it!
- Break down targets

**What the Scottish Government should know. Tell us about any other ideas you have or things you think we should know about local decision making.**

- Local councillors could spend more time visiting and feedback what happened
- Support people to learn how to get involved
- Not just online, more publicity
- Audio version
- Signed/subtitled version
- Message in multiple formats
- Bigger fonts, easier pictures
- Even more simplified
- Some software won't read PDF format
  - More accessible
- More regular feedback, face to face
- Voting awareness
  - People don't always understand voting and why it's important

#### **Session two**

**Getting involved – Question 1: Tell us about your experiences of getting involved in making decisions that affect your local community.**

#### Equality of opportunities

- Consultation docs need to be in various formats

- Intergenerational learning
- Cultural / age – Amal Projects

Community run so older folks homes etc and flow out in to community

- What help do you need
- Physical / money

Time banking

Old fashioned values

Networks

Much is said about involvement but does not always get delivered. Good example is with local development plan. All community councillors got involved, very little feedback on the outcomes of this engagement. Not wider than that though – very weighted towards developers and professionals.

Poor experience of being engaged on a strategic board

A community member of the H&SCP – felt additional needs were not understood

Needs to be more Open and transparent

Information not shared.

Too many papers.

Not allowed support worker which was a major barrier to engaging on a fair and equitable level.

There is a right place, right way for communities to get involved, and that's often not about attending meetings.

There was a feeling that Aberdeenshire Council approach not always right – it was felt that it was often “tick box” and the decision had been made prior to the consultation anyway.

Good intentions, structures there but not working.

Communities don't have power or resources – unequal opportunity

Devolving power to appropriate level, increase engagement – but requires support and funding. Capacity building support is vital to ensure that we don't just let it go to the already



powerful/skilled up in our communities

Accountability who is held to report on their strategies?

Community Councillors feel undervalued

Power back to communities → then communities thrive

Asset transfers – ok in areas of less land value. Feels like its not been applied fairly across Aberdeenshire

Com council not good turn out. Just often attracts complaints, and is very tied in to the statutory requirements around planning which often doesn't attract people who want to make a real difference.

- How do we attract younger people?
- Community responsibility – how do we ensure fairness, but also protect people from too much burden?
- Power in numbers & wider support
- Involved through interests. E.g. family links, business, sports
- Lack of feedback, over consulted
- Lack of sense of community
- Too much social media, more face-to-face – whilst there is a place for social media, people feel in terms of fair discussions and reducing loneliness, isolation and building community cohesion, face to face opportunities are required – but these need to be supported with budget for accessible venues and catering.
- Groups by demand. Necessity often drives groups to come together – particularly in terms of austerity and local authorities expecting communities to deliver more by themselves, for themselves for less money.
- “not sexy” groups and topics often get overlooked or less funding and support

Better links locally. Better networks. Support for organisations that bring people together like the Garioch Partnership and events like these.

Power is top down, and many folk feel decisions are done to them, made for them – without any awareness of the reality of lived experience.

Growth bottom up – communities can do great things when they are trusted and supported.

Times have changed from when people (particularly women) got involved earlier in their children's lives – e.g. Playgroup duty, fundraising committees, town galas etc whereas now, people feel less engaged and involved as many services moved to local authority provision,

and many people are now time poor as it is more normal for parents to work when their children are younger now.

Different society – services provided rather than delivered locally – yet now we are being asked to deliver more and more ourselves without funding, support or even suitable, affordable community venues.

In the experience of some community councillors, in terms of their work to the LDP responses input never acknowledged or doesn't seem to appear in the reports. Its frustrating to invest so much time and then get no feedback.

**Getting involved – Question 2: Tell us what sorts of issues your local community or community of interest should have more control over.**

- Lots of tiers – already cluttered – too many levels of decision making. Is the Structure already there? Do we use already existing structures, or rationalise them and find something else?
- Pavements/access etc – people in communities know what works and doesn't – yet are often not involved in any changes to pavements or access – often feel “done to”
- Local control over budgets that can be spent – participatory budgeting could be a great tool for this
- What helps the community, but is there funding for it – in terms of support for people who volunteer, and then for the actions they come up with?
- Transport – can people get there?
- Community bus – community ownership, community control
- Groups competing over limited pots of money  
Common cause – better working together, but groups often feel “precious” about their own identity, sustainability and future.
- Common/shared goals
- Community council scheme of establishment – lots of people discussed, debated and spent hours on this, believing it was a document they could shape, only to find their input was very limited to how the document actually looked.
- What is a community council? Lack of wider awareness – some people think it's just about planning and building/infrastructure developments
- Overall plans – there are too many, and often compete/clash/contradict one another – too much consultation, not enough genuine feedback or action
- Policy & procedure, folk a bit risk averse.  
People are precious of own interests

- Decisions made with right info not on what's actually there – feeling that sometimes information was kept hidden in terms of making important decisions.
- Sharing evidence/info. Learn from 'experts' i.e. those living it

Influence rather than control – but often that is even limited at times.

Important to work with communities to identify what matters – but not just those already involved. Important to allow time to develop relationships and build trust in communities to help them identify their own local issues, and to support locally delivered responses and solutions.

Smaller council areas – the area structure is fine but still feels too big for people to take ownership. Community council areas also not always where people feel they belong (particularly the rural ones that get joined with larger villages – small villages feel they lose out)

Identify which groups we have, work better together

Wider plan & focus – with areas identified that we can really change on a smaller very local level, but also how we can influence and change bigger issues.

Big task but not impossible

- Lack of community hub and focus e.g. Christmas day lunches. These things bring people together, and support growth of networks to let people get involved when basic needs are met.
- Access to spaces to meet, and to learn about others is vital to allowing local democracy to work – without shared spaces it is all about the individual, rather than collective answers
  - Town hall seems underused or difficult to get access to, and expensive.
  - Schools not available for community use.
  - Groupfest type events (Groupfest was a community council run initiative that brought all local groups together to network and share what they do)
  - Create opportunities for people to come together – share & learn
  - Find commonalities, share solutions, share skills

Resources – power follows the money! Without access to resources (whether in terms of direct finance, support agencies, space to meet, support to understand what is being presented, time to learn) then this will only get to the people who already have power and influence.

**About your community – Question 4: Tell us what 'local' means to you and your community.**

## About your community – More questions.

### Local

- Individual/family (in terms of basic needs)
- Small group
- Large group
- Town

### Local could mean whole town

- Where you use facilities?
- Depends on issue
  - Local community
  - Local town/village/city
  - City/Shire/Moray
  - Scotland
  - UK
  - Wider?

### Network of groups / towns

- Not geography, about interactions & working better together
- Share good practice
- About interest rather than folk (communities of interest)

Depends on decisions – some decisions are very local (e.g. a play park) others are bigger (e.g. housing development in a town) some regional (roads, infrastructure) and some national (independence, government) and some even bigger (e.g. Nuclear weapons)

Local area committee communities might not have much in common – eg people felt that Westhill (larger settlement on the boundary of Aberdeen city) would have very little in common with a small hamlet in the farming areas of Garioch.

Boundary communities tie into other areas – e.g. Blackburn/Kinellar and Newmachar access services in the city for healthcare, Westhill ties more closely to Aberdeen city in terms of public transport and services. How do we influence another local authority area – we don't have a vote for their local elected members, but yet have a sense of belonging to those communities.

Things in common, things different. Sense of belonging.

Local decisions to impact communities

**Tell us which groups help you get involved in making decisions in the community.**

### Community councils

- Folk not always sure where to go
- Information sharing, community places
- Local elected members, what is their role in all of this?

### Money makes power work – funds devolved to lower level

- Clarity on who can do things
- Accessible info, easy read, audio, braille etc.

### **Tell us how groups could help people get involved in new local decision making powers.**

- Promote to wider audience, get wider buy in. Get more people involved.
- Interest in finance and accountability
- More power to community council (but with wider appeal and more membership) & to local elected members.
- Network to support decisions

### Decentralisation – yet Police Scotland and Scottish Fire and Rescue are getting bigger

### Simple language

### Trusted sources of information

- How decisions are made & where
- Specific info made understandable and easy to access

### **Tell us how new ways of making local decisions could work well.**

### Trust & relationships

- Which decisions are made where – where are the gaps?  
Support for people to speak up
- One size doesn't fit all

Tension of local devolution of power yet big organisations like Police Scotland go the other way and become bigger rather than regional – feeling of mixed messages

Inclusiveness – important that we reach everyone, not just those who feel confident to go to meetings/consultations

Less passing on from call centre to different people – people felt it was pot luck and a

minefield to get to the right people to help and understanding.

Call back from unknown numbers (more services using skype telephony which can come up with a generic number so people don't know who is calling – can be an issue for anyone with anxiety etc) so people might not receive information/feedback about their issues and involvement

Concerns over mental health through lack of support / responsibility being placed on volunteers in the community.

Access to democratic processes – someone reported having to change place of voting for crossing roads and lack of access to building, postal signature not always the same

Simplify/clarify mix of new & old – some of the old structure works, important not to lose that.

**Tell us what changes or support are needed for this to work properly.**

Simplify / clarify roles and how it all fits with existing structures

No jargon

Bureaucracy.

Victim of own success – many groups can get funding for pilots, but when they work, no follow on funding to support growth and ongoing development.

Insurance fees can often be difficult to source as many funders see this as a cost they cannot cover?

Make it achievable

Share knowledge, resources & local talent

Not just pilot funding, how communities keep continuing work when it goes well.

### **Session Three**

**Getting involved – Question 1: Tell us about your experiences of getting involved in making decisions that affect your local community.**

- Community council
  - Consultations, ‘bombed’
  - Local development plan, main issues report
- Public meetings, big issues e.g. Kingsford
- LDP engagements were positive
- Waste consultations
- Street parking
  - Planning
  - Comment only
- No Kingsford Group, set up new groups
- West Aberdeenshire dev corridor
- Planning dev sense of influence
- Feel a sense of link to local elected members.
- Not enough sense of influence – e.g. com councils etc.
- Cross-borders of local authorities
- Lack of understanding of process of how it works.
- Folk get involved in big issues, not so day-to-day
- Previous planning for real – good exercise
- Place Standard got folk talking
- Folk like sweeties!

**Getting involved – Question 2: Tell us what sorts of issues your local community or community of interest should have more control over.**

- Transport.
  - Bus routes
  - Garioch Bus forum
- Shopping centre privately owned, lack of control locally. Lack of centre & focal point/community hub. Ashdale hall market once a month.
- Shopping centre in middle of town not supportive of local business. Start ups not supported.
- Access to local services



**About your community – Question 1: Tell us what ‘local’ means to you and your community.**

- Westhill – local – links to Kingswells & City & Skene & Dunecht
- Drive of approx. 10 minutes
- Walking distance
- Balance housing needs with infrastructure
- Local shop / local area

Big L / Little L local

- Access may affect local – barriers of roads etc.
- School catchment?

**About your community – More questions.**

**Tell us which groups help you get involved in making decisions in the community.**

- Community council
- Participatory budgeting
  - Residents deciding how to spend on services
- More local influence e.g. folk not from Westhill making decisions. Area Committee – Garioch wide & full council area too.

**Tell us how groups could help people get involved in new local decision making powers.**

- Not another level of bureaucracy
- Local place plans feeding into LDP
- Westhill bulletin
- Wider education to let people know processes
- Simplify process
- Trust in local councillors (elected members)
- Good community councillors, engaged & involved
- Involvement in LDP & main issues report to get involved

**Tell us how new ways of making local decisions could work well.**

- Wider engagement, get people more involved

**Tell us what changes or support are needed for this to work properly.**

- Accessible information – easy to find for communities
- Folk who aren't online - where do they get info?
- Support for groups to grow and develop

**What the Scottish Government should know. Tell us about any other ideas you have or things you think we should know about local decision making.**

- Citizenship in schools & democracy
- Finances / budget management
- Learning about local government
- Links between school councils and community councils
- Feedback process – ideas development & timescales
- Health board - no papers
- Patient forums – health services needs to be more open
- Doctors not on bus route. Accessibility

#### **Session Four**

**Getting involved – Question 1: Tell us about your experiences of getting involved in making decisions that affect your local community.**

- Community council or pressure group to have an impact
  - Complaints? How are they dealt with
  - Community council is good but needs support/financial input to widen engagement

Lack of knowledge of local councillors? They cannot know everything about every issue or group locally

People feel neglected, areas overlooked

- Apathy
- Lack of control over local developments
- Planning – petition – 300 signatures only count as one under planning, so people feel they are not heard.

Website not easy to use (Aberdeenshire Council)

Is there info online on grounds for objection? (for planning – people reported feeling a sense of lack of influence as they might not understand the process and then feel it was a waste of time)

- People objecting to planning but many were rejected. 95% of objections overlooked.
- “What’s the point?” “They’ll please themselves anyway”
- Planning could do with better engaging – advise objectors how to do it.
- Lack of normal folk (wider) engaging with community council
- Folk engaging on a one-to-one basis

**Getting involved – Question 2: Tell us what sorts of issues your local community or community of interest should have more control over.**

- Are there enough people who want to get engaged?
  - How do we ensure representative democracy works?
- Provision of community facilities
  - Catering for facilities, not just houses
  - Plan “communities” not just houses
  - Recreational facilities
- Local developments
- Paths / walks / community access

- Quality of life for people in communities. Provide more than houses.
- Town planning
- Integrated services
- LDPs – weighted for developers, communities feel a lack of control as often things they have said they wouldn't want are "inflicted" anyway

**About your community – Question 1: Tell us what 'local' means to you and your community.**

- Local → Kids walking routes - Pedestrian crossing at school at wrong side of junction
- Boundaries of Kintore?
- Follow boundaries of community councils for local issues
- Wider community consultation before things actually happen, before decisions are made
- 

\* Who decides if an issue needs community consultation\*

**About your community – More questions.**

**Tell us which groups help you get involved in making decisions in the community.**

- Community council
- Garioch Partnership
- Action Kintore (they run a youth work facility)
- Other groups

**Tell us how groups could help people get involved in new local decision making powers.**

- See results & actions
- Wary of raising expectations
- External to councils?
  - Online, digital structures?
  - Who moderates it?

**Tell us how new ways of making local decisions could work well.**

- Not more committees
- Publicise community councils
- Meaningful engagement

**Tell us what changes or support are needed for this to work properly**

- If they contribute must be listened to – better feedback mechanisms
- Community council works here because of good relationship with elected members
- How do we attract people to get involved meaningfully?

**What the Scottish Government should know. Tell us about any other ideas you have or things you think we should know about local decision making.**

Planning democracy - community councils to have right of appeal, give more power to local people

Things need to change – more effective use of technology

**If you would like to know more, or if you have any questions, please tell us here.**

Easy to read information

Ease of access

**Session five**

**Getting involved – Question 1: Tell us about your experiences of getting involved in making decisions that affect your local community.**

- Comm. Council scheme of establishment
  - Numbers
  - Put people off
  - Lack of power / discouraging
- Limited, exercise

- Why rush the engagement
- Process of committees doesn't engage people
- Community empowerment – but council still hold the power. People felt powerless. Lack of desire/trust from council. Birley Bush example.
- Lack of feedback
- Lack of communication
- Not giving up power
- Leverage to Scot Gov.
- Undermining communities from council
- Main issues report – lack of engagement with community – changes suddenly “appears” with no honest consultation
- Time for process
- Lack of master plan consultation - only recourse to object to planning
- Parking at Co-op – community issue being given run around. Buck passing
  - *Regulation – can we control this locally?*
- Flooding
- Silence → assent, not fair weight to objections
- Planning Scot reporter → not knowing areas

**Getting involved – Question 2: Tell us what sorts of issues your local community or community of interest should have more control over.**

- Speeding
- Budgets
- Energy efficiencies/turbine
- Flooding – bund etc.
- Road use – e.g. large combines on small roads – excessively large non-essential traffic
- Parking
  - In village, round schools

- Pedestrian & cycle rights
- Public toilets
- Cycle paths / walking routes
- Amenities
- Pavements
- Bogbeth hall – maintenance
- Public transport – timetabling to make sense
- Smaller councils, local representation
- Move to decentralise:
  - Policing
  - Ambulance
  - NHS
  - Coastguard

**About your community – Question 1: Tell us what ‘local’ means to you and your community.**

Can mean:

- A street
- Kemnay
- Garioch
- Aberdeenshire

Local “shop”

“Services”

“post office”

Interest groups

Changes – local can mean access to services

Can be influenced by access to car/bus/transport

**About your community – More questions.**

**Tell us which groups help you get involved in making decisions in the community.**

- Community council
- Garioch Partnership
- Local hall committee
- Local community association
- Parent council

**Tell us how groups could help people get involved in new local decision making powers.**

- Ability to pull together communities to get involved at local events etc

**Tell us how new ways of making local decisions could work well.**

- Radical reform
  - Clarify the bureaucracy!
  - Community councils – refresh and get new blood
- Support for communities to know who to go to
- Feedback from council officers on reasoning
- Small councils
- Informal community “get things done”
- “Flat pack” democracy
  - local elected members in community councils to be freed up to benefit the community rather than follow party lines
- Example of village halls
- Development trusts
- Volunteers – pool is limited?
- Parish precepts
- Consultations
- work – amount of papers - influence diluted
- AmeyArup consultation done well for dualling A96

**Tell us what changes or support are needed for this to work properly.**

- More local support for groups
- Access to information at an earlier stage
- Clear, plain language used
- Not just information online
- Why was the video clip not put onto TV?
-



**What the Scottish Government should know. Tell us about any other ideas you have or things you think we should know about local decision making.**

Scot Gov laws – government shouldn't control e.g. alcohol pricing, sugar tax (feeling of nanny state and prescriptive control – this was a minority view)

**If you would like to know more, or if you have any questions, please tell us here.**

- How do we widen engagement?
  - Activities, wider recruitment
  - Can we have more events like this, but where people are supported to come along – eg. More access to childcare costs, transport.

## **Democracy Matters, Syrian New Scots**

In discussions with the Aberdeenshire Council Community Learning and Development worker supporting the Amal Project – the refugee led organisation in Aberdeenshire, it became clear that airing personal critical views of a political system in public is a frightening concept for those who have had to flee Syria. The experience of members of the group of what happens to people who speak freely and criticise the state certainly puts life here into perspective.

Whilst the translated document was widely appreciated, it was felt that people were still conditioned by their previous experiences and it would be difficult to get people to participate in group discussions on this topic.

The democracy matters conversation was therefore not accessible to the group, but has opened the door for education and upskilling on what democracy is, can be and could be used for in the future.

The Garioch Partnership have committed to support the AI Amal Project to work on raising awareness and understanding of the governance procedures and structures within the UK,

but this is work which will take time to develop and share, and therefore the responses will not fit within the timescales for the democracy matters conversations.

The AI Amal project were grateful that their views were sought, but felt that it was something too far outwith their current sphere of understanding and comfort to answer the questions in their current form.

## Appendix D

### Support 4 Clubs Series

#### Data Protection Workshop Evaluation

	Huntly	Peterhead	Banchory	Mearns
No of Attendees	28	11	15	18
No of Evaluations Returned	4	11	15	19
<b>Workshop Feedback (Average Rating)</b>				
Rating Workshop Content	4.75 / 6	5.36 / 6	5.4 / 6	5.68 / 6
Appropriateness of content	4.5 / 6	5.36 / 6	5.27 / 6	5.42 / 6
Presenters delivery	4.75 / 6	5.73 / 6	5.2 / 6	5.68 / 6
Knowledge of subject	N/A	5.27 / 6	5.4 / 6	5.52 / 6
Overall rating	4.67 / 6	5.45 / 6	5.33 / 6	5.68 / 6
Comments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interesting update on what is to come</li> <li>• Very good for the use of generic and actual risk assessments</li> <li>• Some examples useful</li> <li>• Examples of “opt-in” statements for membership forms</li> <li>• Very quick slideshows, although informative</li> <li>• Further info required by participants depending on what organisation/circumstances we find ourselves</li> <li>• Would be useful to be given different examples of “opt-in” wording</li> <li>• Pre-reading materials? – A lot of the attendees aren’t aware of the implications at a high level – a pre-read might help</li> <li>• Sharing examples of policy and opt in statements would be useful</li> <li>• Please send sample statements for opting in and for an insight in the information booklets statements</li> <li>• To be even better, it might be useful to ask participants to think of a few key questions before attending</li> <li>• Workshop was great in terms of highlighting requirement for clubs versus what I experience day to day working in banking/finance. A very informative evening.</li> <li>• Add a slide for the ICO registration decision tool</li> <li>• Very informative and well presented</li> <li>• Very well presented, knowledgeable, realistic and dealt with al questions confidently. Very easy to understand. Excellent</li> <li>• Very good</li> <li>• Very informative, many thanks</li> <li>• Very informative and interesting</li> </ul>				

References:-

<https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/media/23884/gariochprofile.pdf>

<https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/statistics-and-data/statistics/statistics-by-theme/population/population-estimates/2011-based-special-area-population-estimates/electoral-ward-population-estimates>