

Leading the Way in Environmental Protection



West Dunbartonshire's new community plan is only the second in Scotland to have had a Strategic Environmental Assessment carried out on it.

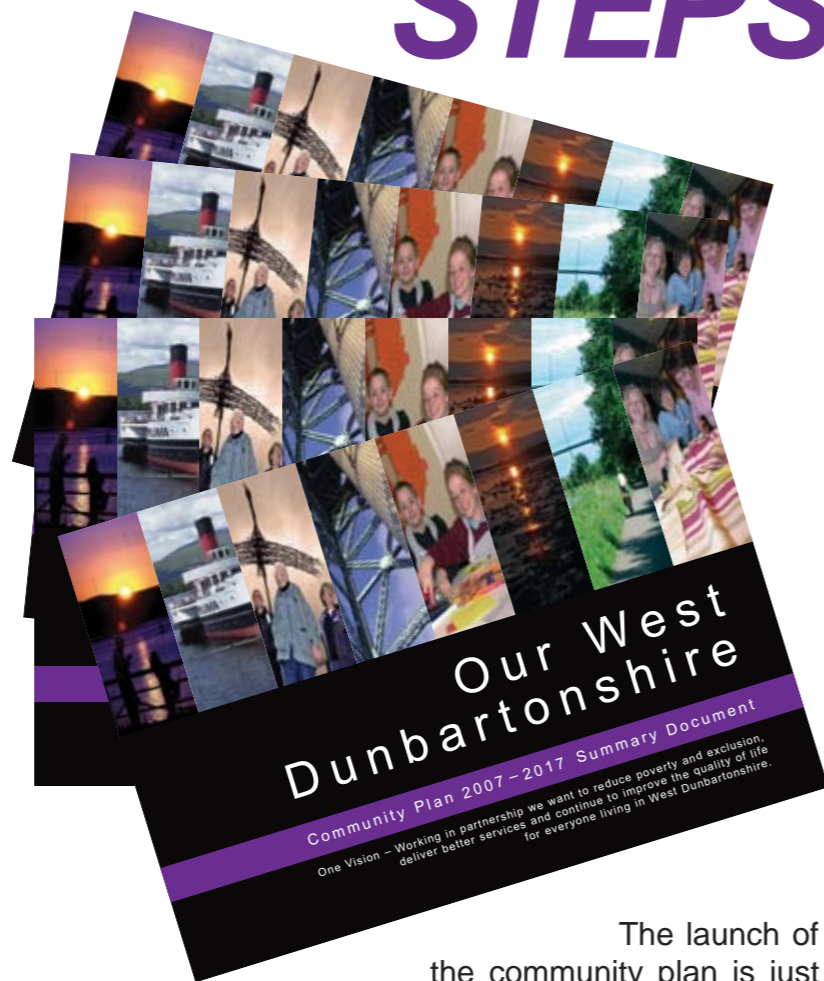
The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 which came into force in February 2006 requires all strategic plans that are likely to have a significant impact on the environment to have an assessment carried out on them.

Expert Gerard Couper from CAG Consultants assessed the Community Plan and a consultation exercise was held which involved statutory agencies such as SEPA, SNH and Historic Scotland as well as local environmental organisations and the community.

The assessment resulted in a number of changes and additions to the plan to ensure greater protection and sustainability of the natural, geographical and historical environment.

Since the completion of the SEA other local authorities that are updating their own community plans have contacted the WDCPP for advice on the SEA process.

NEXT STEPS



The launch of the community plan is just the start of the process of creating a better quality of life for people living in West Dunbartonshire in 2017.

Phil White, WDCPP manager, said: "This plan contains details of a vision but a lot of hard work is required if we are to realise this in 10 years."

"Agencies and organisations from the public, private and voluntary sectors and community representatives need to work together around the strategy partnerships to deliver on the targets that have been set."

A summary version of the Community Plan has also been produced and will be sent to every household in West Dunbartonshire with the council newspaper.



West Dunbartonshire Community Planning

News



Future Promise

A 10-year plan designed to transform West Dunbartonshire into a place people want to live, work in and visit has been produced by the local Community Planning Partnership (WDCPP) and its partners.

This newsletter brings you a behind-the-scenes view of how the plan was put together, a brief account of what you'll find when you have time to read the document in full, where to go if you want more information plus a look at what happens next.

Our Vision

'Working in partnership we want to reduce poverty and exclusion, deliver better services and continue to improve the quality of life for everyone living in West Dunbartonshire whilst protecting our natural environment.'

That, in a nutshell, is what partners involved in the planning and delivery of services in West Dunbartonshire hope to achieve by 2017.

Along with community representatives they identified six broad themes that need to be addressed if they are to achieve this vision. They are: - Building Strong and Safe Communities; Creating Sustainable and Attractive Living Environments; Developing Affordable and Sustainable Housing; Improving Health and Well Being; Promoting Education and Lifelong Learning and Regenerating and Growing Our Local Economy.

Each theme has a set of targets and explains what will be done to meet these goals and who will be involved.

To find out the details you'll have to read the Community Plan.



www.westdp.co.uk

Our Community Plan – The Process

George Gillespie, Chairman of WDCPP, was involved with writing the Community Plan from the start - he explains what happened.

Q. Why does West Dunbartonshire need a Community Plan?

It's the law – under the Local Government (Scotland) Act 2003 every local authority is required to produce a long term plan explaining how they will work in partnership with a range of agencies to deliver best value, sustainable, public services that improve the quality of life for the local community.

Q. Who was involved in producing this Community Plan?

Statutory partners – West Dunbartonshire Council, West Dunbartonshire Community Health Partnership, Strathclyde Police, Strathclyde Fire and Rescue, Scottish Enterprise Dunbartonshire, Strathclyde Partnership for Transport, Communities Scotland – along with agencies JobcentrePlus, West Dunbartonshire Council for Voluntary Services, Clydebank College plus community representatives were invited to participate in a Writing Group.

Q. What did the Writing Group do?

Five themes were agreed upon (housing was added following the consultation exercise) and a representative for each theme was tasked with working with relevant partners to complete a template providing an overview of their theme, the targets for 2017 and what needed to be done to achieve them.

Q. How was the Community Involved?

Community representatives attended meetings of the Writing Group and participated in the strategic partnerships responsible for compiling each theme. Then there was the consultation process, during which we held a number of public meetings, a Civic Forum and Youth Consultation evening. Also 1,000 copies of the draft Community Plan were sent to community groups and interested individuals.

Q. What Difference Did the Consultation Make?

A suggestion from the youth consultation has resulted in not only the Community Plan being printed on recycled paper but also a commitment to print all official documents on 80% recycled paper was included in the plan. We also added the theme on Developing Affordable and Sustainable Housing. These are just two major examples of how the CPP took on board the comments we received during the consultation exercise.

Q. What Happens to the Community Plan Now?

Copies of the document will be sent to partner agencies and the Scottish Government and a summary version will be distributed to all households in West Dunbartonshire by the end of the year.

Q. How Will We Know if the Plan is Working?

We have a series of baseline indicators that will be published separately and we will measure progress on our targets against these and report back on a regular basis during the next 10 years.

Community Voices

Since this is a 'community' plan the Writers' Group wanted to hear from the community so each theme contains an example of best practice that is benefiting local people right now.

This is what they had to say: -

Building Strong and Safe Communities

Evelyn, a member of the SILK (Survival, Independence, Legislation and Knowledge) group, left an abusive husband after 30 years. She said: "This group gives me the support I need – the other women have been through the same thing and believe me. We are all here for each other."

Creating Sustainable and Attractive Living Environments

St. Peter's Primary School gained Eco-School status and the Green Flag Award last year. Eco-monitor Luis, 11, said: "We have recycling bags in all our classrooms and I do the recycling at home. We have learned about saving energy and how we can all make changes now which will help stop global warming and damage to the ozone layer in the future."

Developing Affordable and Sustainable Housing

A tenancy sustainability project provides extra support for potentially vulnerable tenants like Stephanie. After tackling an addiction to tranquilizers she recently moved into her own home and with the help of Fab Pad learned how to decorate it. She said: "I appreciate my home now because I have decorated it myself and made the curtains I'm really going to miss it when I leave."

Improving Health and Well-Being

Members of the Workers' Education Association take part in a weekly Movement to Music session at the Hub in Clydebank. Violet, 80, said: "A lot of people see exercise as boring but this is really good fun and also relaxing. A lot of people are in the house all week without anyone else to talk to so coming here and having a laugh is good for all of us."

Promoting Education and Lifelong Learning

Chocolate tasting workshops or classes in using a mobile phone are the latest courses being used by CLAN (Community Learning and Numeracy) to help improve literacy and numeracy skills. Isabel, 63, said: "I have learned how to text, put my friends' numbers on the mobile and I know how much it is costing me as well."

Regenerating and Growing Our Local Economy

Building Better Futures is supporting people in Whitecrock, Drumry and Bellsmyre to tackle issues ranging from building new playparks to tackling anti-social behaviour to finding a job. Sinead, 16, said: "I came to the base when it first opened because I needed a job. I learned interview techniques and did up my CV. Starting work and college has been great because before I was just sitting in the house doing nothing."

