

Charter 11.14 Community Run Green Spaces

Improvement Project Title: Community Run Green Spaces
Executive Sponsor (Chair of Outcome Improvement Group): Sandra Macleod/Jillian Evans
Project Lead: Steven Shaw, Environmental Manager
<u>Aim statement</u> Increase the number of community run green spaces that are organised and self-managed, particularly in priority localities where satisfaction and use is low. Much good work is already taking place with regards to community run green spaces, community engagement, community gardens and volunteering. This includes partnership work in schools and communities and with businesses. 2020 Covid restrictions in place and this has delayed the project. Base lines and contacts remain in place and project will now recommence in 2021. Measure: Baseline 2020= 150+ Community partnerships and volunteer groups. These existing partnerships includes existing community run green spaces. Target 2021 = minimum of 8 new community run green spaces (4 in priority localities) / partnerships.
<u>Link to Local Outcome Improvement Plan:</u> Improvement Project is direct product of: <u>Prosperous People</u> Stretch Outcome 11 Healthy life expectancy (time lived in good health) is five years longer by 2026 Key Driver 11.3 Improving access to community facilities and green environment to increase the health and well-being for older people and people managing long term conditions. Improvement Project Aim Increase the number of community run green spaces that are organised and self-managed, particularly in priority localities where satisfaction and use is low. Improvement Project has links with: <u>Prosperous People</u> Stretch Outcome 11 Healthy life expectancy (time lived in good health) is five years longer by 2026

Key Driver

11.5 Working with staff, professionals, and employers to provide individuals and communities with the social resources needed to make informed decisions about health and lifestyle.

Improvement Project Aim

Increase opportunities for people who are retired to continue and increase their contribution to communities by 10% by 2021.

Prosperous Place

Stretch Outcome 13

No one in Aberdeen will go without food due to poverty by 2026

Key driver 13.2

Developing and supporting community efforts in making our green space productive and resilient.

Improvement Project Aim

Increase community food growing in schools, communities, and workplaces by 2021.

Stretch Outcome 14:

Addressing climate change by reducing Aberdeen's carbon emissions by 42.5% by 2026 and adapting to the impacts of our changing climate

Key Drivers 14.1

Reducing emissions across the city through delivery of Aberdeen's Sustainable Energy Action Plan 'Powering Aberdeen'.

Improvement Project Aim: Reduce Aberdeen's carbon emissions by 30% by 2021.

Key Drivers 14.2

Developing a bottom up approach to community resilience to encourage greater ownership and independent action towards preventing and mitigating impact of climate change.

Improvement Project Aim: Community led resilience plans in place across all areas of Aberdeen by 2026.

Business case

Extract from LOIP Refresh 2019. Prosperous People

The key causes of preventable ill health should be tackled at an early stage and be cross sector in approach to create a culture in which healthy behaviours are the norm starting with the early years and persisting throughout our lives. The importance of physical and mental health as well as the need to address underlying conditions which effect health such as social, economic and education can only be achieved by key public and third sector organisations working together.

It is not just about services provided, but what individuals want and those around them- families and carers - we need to design supports for individuals, families, and

communities. Improving health literacy is a critical empowerment strategy to increase people's control over their health, their ability to seek out information and their ability to take responsibility. Our efforts are to help individuals and communities look after their health, particularly through the choices they make and lifestyles they adopt. Building community resilience will have long term effects on the health of our population, ease the pressure on public services and improve our physical environment. We have paid attention to the importance of nature, our environment and socialisation in addressing mental well-being.

Our plans will include working with established staff and contacts to increase partnership working across Aberdeen's communities and to encourage members of the community to take the lead in running green spaces. This could be in the form of a Friends groups, a community group, a school / nursery, workplaces, or volunteers. The project is about communities – getting people involved, caring, and collaborating in looking after themselves, their neighbours, and their environment.

Much good work is already taking place with regards to community partnership work and volunteering. Aberdeen already has many very successful Friends groups and community run green spaces.

Across the city many communities, Friends groups and gardening groups are making use of Aberdeen's plentiful green space to create their own space. Schools are now more involved in community green spaces out with the school grounds.

The city has successful links with Keep Scotland Beautiful and RHS and has many groups who successfully participate IN Beautiful Scotland, It's Your Neighbourhood and Britain In Bloom. Aberdeen has had more success than any other Scottish Local Authority with regards to these initiatives and this is down to the number of community partnerships in place.

This project seeks to build on this success and create new community run green spaces that are organised and self-managed, particularly in priority localities where satisfaction and use is low.

The project will look to bring together groups of interested local people to come together to improve the appearance, facilities, conservation value and safety of a local green space.

Priority localities will be a priority and the project team will work closely with ACC Development Managers to identify and engage with key groups in these areas.

The Central locality, Tillydrone, Seaton, Woodside, will be a focus for the project team.

Community involvement and engagement is increasingly important as a way of shaping council thinking, contributing to service design and improvement focus and to respond to continuing resource pressures. It may also involve direct community involvement in service delivery.

The main benefit of a community led group is to fundraise and seek grants for improvements, give the community a voice, help with or take on the management of the asset or help with practical tasks to help care for and maintain the asset.

Therefore, this project aims to focus attention specifically on new community green space where in addition to the well-being benefits for those involved, it will help to change attitudes towards local green space and create positive role models for communities, helping to get broader sustainability measures in place to protect green space long term.

Therefore, our business case involves testing (catalysing, facilitating, and measuring success of) the development & implementation of additional community run green spaces. Forming new partnerships by end the summer of 2021. Our change ideas are focused on (1) promoting the availability of community green space and the opportunities for communities to run such spaces, as well as the wider benefits from this (as set below) and (2) introducing mechanisms to support and enable communities to feel confident and empowered in running their local green spaces knowing that there is a network of support, guidance available to them and being able to capture/promote the benefits they are delivering for their area and share this with others.

General benefits of community run green spaces:

- Improved health & well-being
- Enabling a sustainable culture that leads to an increased number of community champions, volunteers and community led green spaces.
- Improved access and use of accessible and safe green spaces
- Green space cared for and protected
- Developing skills and confidence around green space, volunteering, health, environment, gardening etc
- Improved community relationships
- Increased interaction and engagement within community
- Building / strengthening connections between council and communities
- Gives the community a voice

Measures:

Outcome Measures

- 1) Number of community run green spaces (city wide and in priority localities, with a particular focus on Tillydrone, Seaton, Woodside).
- 2) % of residents reported as being satisfied or fairly satisfied with their local green space (City Wide and priority localities).

Process measures

- 1) Number of members of the Green Space Network
- 2) Number of community champions
- 3) Number of community partnerships in place. This to involve communities, school, and businesses
- 4) Use of green space based on 'open space audit'
- 5) Confidence of communities/volunteers in running green spaces
- 6) Number of volunteers involved in community run green spaces
- 7) Number of green flag awards

- 8) Number of new community led green space projects and initiatives
- 9) Number of facilitated workshops and meetings

Change ideas

- Build a green spaces network of communities and partnerships that empowers communities to establish; take responsibility and run their local green spaces leading to more local engagement and an increase in volunteering and local community pride.
- Introduce and support visible community champions to raise awareness and change thinking about wider sustainability issues in communities.
- Create and build the number of collaborative and partnership opportunities i.e. NHS, CFINE, ACVO etc to increase the no. of community run green space by other partners
- Develop information packs and support tools to help the groups get started and work together to steer the groups / space in the right direction.
- Facilitate workshops and meetings to provide advice to potential and existing groups and to enable established groups to share good practice, support the green spaces network etc.
- Publicise availability of community green space through all available platforms and how to get started.
- Promote the benefits of successes and achievements of current community run spaces, as well as the wider community benefits such as health and wellbeing, new initiatives such as the network of communities and support available.

Potential Barriers:

- Getting the timing right for promoting project and encouraging community involvement.
- Slow uptake or lack of interest from communities.
- Securing community and volunteer attendance / participation in the process.
- Getting workplace / staff engagement and commitment at specific sites.
- Building / facilities management arrangement at specific sites.
- Aligning the aims and contributions of different project partners.
- Human resource commitment to develop / implement / monitor the project.
- Getting the right skills in place to support projects.
- Funding for site specific projects.
- Identifying / getting buy in from a suitable Champions.
- Not being able to monitor project and to record data and results.

Project Team:

- Steven Shaw, Environmental Manager, ACC
- Jacqueline Bell, NHS Grampian
- Lorna Graham, Environmental Services, ACC
- Friends of Seaton Park
- Powis Community Gardeners
- Lawrence Johnston, Scarf

- Stephen Bly, Community Engagement ACC
- Ian Talboys, Countryside Rangers, ACC
- Community Planning Team, ACC
- Participants in the Council Energy and Climate Awareness sub-Groups

Outline Project Plan		
Project Stage	Actions	Timescale
Getting Started (Project Score 1-3)	What initial activities are required to get started? Form the project team and prepare plan for 2021. This to look at building on existing success and to target areas where officers believe there is opportunity to engage further with community partners. This is timed specifically to coincide with wider sustainability activities, aiming to address the potential barriers (described earlier). Most of the actions at this stage are geared towards minimising the risk of low participation and engagement. Develop full list of existing community partners and build a pack of key messages and information to be made available to new partners.	When do you expect to complete this stage? September to December 2020
Designing and Testing Changes (Project Score 4-7)	What activities are required to start testing changes? Undertake a high-profile awareness raising promotion in early 2021 to promote the benefits of community run green spaces and community partnerships. Encourage groups and volunteers to sign up. Establish a digital platform for the green network. Link up with Community Planning and Development Managers to tap into their community links and prioritise groups within priority localities.	When do you expect to complete this stage? Early 2021 March 2021 March 2021

	<p>Link with ACH&SCP, ACVO, Scarf, Aberdeen Sports Village, NHSG and others with regards to their current promotions of the benefits of green space and community partnership.</p> <p>Identify 'Community Champions' (from any sector but someone able to speak for the benefits and really engage audiences, especially those traditionally harder to reach) to help promote this work and sustainability in general.</p>	April 2021
<p>Implementing and sustaining changes that demonstrate improvement (Project Score 7-10)</p>	<p>What actions would be required to implement and sustain the changes that have resulted in improvement?</p> <p>Follow up on interest from earlier events and talk with potential groups. Encourage and support these groups to take next steps. This to include support through meetings and workshops.</p> <p>Implement a minimum of 8 new community run green spaces (4 in priority localities) across city.</p> <p>Monitor each journey, and their outcomes in terms of benefits & barriers identified.</p>	<p>When do you expect to complete this stage? Spring / Summer 2021</p> <p>Spring / Summer 2021 through 2021</p> <p>Spring / Summer 2021 through 2021</p>
<p>Spreading Changes (Project Score 9-10)</p>	<p>What actions are required to reach the full scale of the project?</p> <p>Review progress and identify areas for continuation of improvements.</p> <p>Continued promotion of project. Encourage others to take part and talk up their success. Share positive, good news stories. Make use of various communication channels.</p> <p>Celebrate the continued success of all partners and the increase in community green space partnership.</p> <p>Host celebratory event.</p>	<p>When do you expect to complete this stage? End 2021</p> <p>2021 / 2022 and beyond.</p> <p>Throughout 2021</p> <p>End of Summer 2021</p>