



1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

1.1. Health and Wellbeing Networks are effective at building capacity in local communities to improve health. They offer opportunities for local communities to come together and prepare local projects to meet local need.

2. INTRODUCTION:

2.1. There are 8 Health and Wellbeing Networks throughout Argyll and Bute. Each is supported by a part-time paid coordinator and by a health improvement specialist from the Health Improvement team. There is a network for each of the 3 sub-localities of MAKI.

2.2. The Health and Wellbeing networks have a diverse membership of Health and Council staff as well as many third sector organisations. They offer their members:

- A regular meeting, at least quarterly, to plan activities, share information and best practice and support one another.
- A grant fund of £17,169 to MAKI.
- Regular news bulletins and updates.
- Local case studies of best practice.
- Opportunities for collaborative projects.

3. DETAIL:

3.1. The Health and Wellbeing Fund was evaluated in 2015 and demonstrated that it has:

- Provided activities for all ages from the very young to the elderly.
- Supported a transfer of skills and knowledge
- Increased the confidence of beneficiaries
- Offered new opportunities for social interaction, thereby reducing the effects of loneliness, and mitigating against social isolation.
- Increased the fitness of many participants.
- Improved mental health.
- The evaluation found that: *“the fund plays a pivotal role in addressing health inequalities, access to local services and reducing rural isolation.”* (Social Value Lab, 2015).

3.2. The allocation for the sub-localities in 2015-16 was as follows:

- Islay and Jura - £3,156
- Kintyre - £6,502
- Mid Argyll £7,511

3.3. The priorities for the local networks are determined by the Joint Health Improvement Plan (JHIP) 2013-2016, linking to SOA outcomes, and the National Outcomes and include:

- Smoking cessation, alcohol and drugs, healthy weight, early years, teenage transition, older people, health inequalities and mental health.

- Further, the fund supports the increase of capacity in the third sector by inviting members to sit on the panel of scorers to decide the allocation of funding, by offering a local pot that is accessible and does not require onerous paperwork, and *“delivers and essential resource for grassroots organisations for many of whom it is the only realistic source of funding”*.
- 3.4. The 3 networks in the Kintyre area are flourishing active networks, who have contributed to the improving of health at local level with regular news bulletins, collaborative activities and funding local projects. Between them they are likely to have over 250 members. The Islay and Kintyre networks have strong links to the Drug and Alcohol forums and meetings are held consecutively to facilitate attendance at both.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 4.1. That this report is noted.
- 4.2. That members of the Community Planning Group are invited to link to the local networks.

5. FOOTNOTE:

- Case studies are available on the website: www.healthyargyllandbute.co.uk