
16 August 2016

Community and Multi-Agency Partnership Working in Kirkmichael

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1** Residents living in the Kirkmichael area of Helensburgh have formed a new voluntary community association, the Kirkmichael Community Development Group (KCDG), with the aim of assisting local residents to bring about positive change in their community.
- 1.2** In tandem with the creation of KCDG, representatives from statutory and third sector organisations have formed the Kirkmichael Multi-Agency Partnership to help support KCDG. The Partnership has adopted an action plan based on the Public Reassurance Approach (PRA) model piloted by Police Scotland and West Dunbartonshire Council in four areas in West Dunbartonshire. The model aims to increase community engagement, build capacity in the community and reduce antisocial behaviour.
- 1.3** The Helensburgh & Lomond Community Planning Group has been an effective forum through which to initiate partnership working in support of the Kirkmichael community. This report updates members on the report provided to the CPG in November 2015.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1** The Community Planning Group is asked to consider the progress made by the KCDG and Multi-Agency Partnership, and suggest any additional ways CPG members could potentially provide support to the Kirkmichael community, for example, around creating diversionary activities for young people, family activities, employment and training opportunities and improving access to services for isolated older people.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1** Kirkmichael Tenants and Residents Association and the Sports and Recreation Association both dissolved approximately three years ago and the Kirkmichael community had subsequently started to lack a structure for tackling local issues and organising events and social activities. The area was also subject to negative local press coverage relating to antisocial behaviour and crime, which are ongoing issues for the community.

- 3.2** In 2013 the Council's Community Development Officer worked with members of Helensburgh Baptist Church (which was already active in the area delivering a Lighthouse Club for children in the Kirkmichael Centre) to organise a Commonwealth Games-themed gala day in 2014.

The Baptist Church secured grant funding from the Helensburgh & Lomond Health & Wellbeing Network and Argyll Community Housing Association (ACHA) and worked with a number of partner organisations, including the Council, Red Cross, Scottish Fire & Rescue, Police Scotland, Argyll and Bute Third Sector Interface (TSI), Helensburgh & Lomond Carers SCIO and others to deliver a successful event in 2014. A further Gala Day followed in 2015 which was less well attended and was disrupted by antisocial behaviour. However, the community rallied round after the disappointment of the 2015 event and this new energy, combined with the results of a community survey undertaken at the 2014 event, has helped the committee of the KCDG to focus on two areas: providing activities for young people and developing opportunities for older people to meet and socialise.

4. DETAIL

- 4.1** The Kirkmichael Multi-Agency Partnership is comprised of representatives from ACHA, Dunbritton Housing Association, Police Scotland, Argyll & Bute Council (representing Social Work, Community Development, Governance, Amenity Services, Youth Work and Adult Learning), Community Justice, NHS Highland and Argyll & Bute TSI. At the Partnership's meeting in February the group agreed to Police Scotland's proposal to adopt a Public Reassurance Approach (PRA) to partnership working. The three priorities in the PRA action plan, which have been agreed with KCDG, are:

- Tackling Youth Disorder and Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)
- Community Capacity Building
- To Improve Perception of Kirkmichael

The action plan is currently in development and agreement is being sought from each partner organisation to make the plan accessible on a shared platform, Microsoft SharePoint, to enable partners to be responsible for their own updates.

Scott McLelland, Team leader for Anti-Social Behaviour Services at West Dunbartonshire Council, attended a Kirkmichael Multi-Agency Partnership meeting in January to outline the PRA model and his presentation is attached to this report for more information.

A sample of further activity by the Partnership follows:

- Production of the first Kirkmichael Voice newsletter which was distributed with the Helensburgh Community Advertiser in March.

- The chair of the KCDG, Stevie Coates, led a walk-round the estate for Partners in April to highlight specific problem areas. Littering, fly-tipping, abandoned vehicles, overgrown hedges, under-use of the all-weather pitch were all highlighted as causing concern. The Community Payback teams reacted quickly and helped to clean up areas that were particularly badly affected by fly-tipping. The Payback team has also been very active in the area cutting back hedges, painting a Portacabin in the park and distributing survey forms and other information.
- Funding to Helensburgh Rugby Club and SKapade Studios to deliver a 6-week programme of touch rugby and DT training sessions at the all-weather pitch and Kirkmichael Centre.
- Support by partners, particularly the TSI and Youth Services, to help the community create a working group of KCDG focussing on activities for young people and older people.
- A number of young people from the Kirkmichael area, including some of those identified as engaging in antisocial behaviour, have taken part in Youth Services 'GIVE' summer programme – volunteering their time in various activities in exchange for free trips.
- Support to KCDG to submit a successful funding application to Argyll & Bute Alcohol and Drugs Partnership (ADP) for new goals and a community noticeboard.
- Improvements to the changing rooms by Dunbritton HA.

4.2 KCDG is now a fully formed voluntary association with a constitution, office bearers and bank account. The full committee has been meeting on a bi-monthly basis with between 10-20 people attending consistently.

Activity by the Group includes:

- Organising fund-raising bingo nights which have generated around £500 to be spent on the community.
- Working in partnership with the TSI to secure nearly £8,000 funding from the People's Health Trust to support weekly sessions for young mums and also older people, on alternate weeks. Discussions are underway with the head teacher of St Joseph's Primary School to host the sessions in the School's Family Learning Centre during term-time.

- Promotion of the all-weather pitch, repairs to worn patches of the surface, replacement of the goals and an informal agreement with the Council to 'hire out' the pitch, with donations going to KCDG for the community. Helensburgh Hockey Club is now using the pitch for training sessions on a regular basis.

4.3 In addition, members of the community have been organising fitness sessions in the park, litter-picking and mowing the grass in the play area.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 The Kirkmichael community, working in partnership with statutory and third sector organisations, has made significant progress during 2016. To help keep the momentum going, CPG partners are encouraged to think laterally about additional ways to support the community and provide new opportunities for young people, families, unemployed people and isolated older people in particular.

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