
ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL

**MID ARGYLL, KINTYRE AND THE
ISLANDS AREA COMMITTEE**

**DEVELOPMENT AND ECONOMIC
GROWTH**

2 DECEMBER 2020

**CAMPBELTOWN CONSERVATION AREA REGENERATION SCHEME (CARS)
PROGRESS REPORT**

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the progress of the Campbeltown Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS) Round 6.
- 1.2 Campbeltown CARS Round 6 is an extension of Campbeltown CARS Round 1 and the Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI). All three schemes have been delivered by the Council between 2007 and 2020 as part of the £10million regeneration of Campbeltown town centre. The Campbeltown regeneration programme has been shortlisted along with 2 other places in the 'Scotland's Most Improved Place' category of 2020 SURF Awards. The winning place will be announced in February 2021.
- 1.3 Campbeltown CARS was due to end on the 31st March 2020. Due to the COVID 19 pandemic Historic Environment Scotland have granted a one-year time only extension to enable final reporting and evaluation work to be completed. All of the main outputs of the project have been met including the completion of 8 priority building repair projects. This work has helped to safeguard the future of 44 flats and 21 commercial units and has provided opportunities for investment leading to a number of new businesses opening in the town centre.
- 1.4 The initial budget for the project was £2.2million. Additional funding has been secured increasing the budget to £2.9million allowing additional works to be carried out. A number of other initiatives have also been delivered including the release of a digital app and a shopfront improvement scheme that provided assistance to 28 town centre businesses.
- 1.5 **RECOMMENDATIONS**
That the Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands Area Committee:
- a) Endorse the progress that has been made on Campbeltown CARS Round 6 and note that all work is now complete bar the final report and evaluation.

ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL

**MID ARGYLL, KINTYRE AND THE
ISLANDS AREA COMMITTEE**

**DEVELOPMENT AND ECONOMIC
GROWTH**

2 DECEMBER 2020

**CAMPBELTOWN CONSERVATION AREA REGENERATION SCHEME (CARS)
PROGRESS REPORT**

2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the progress of the Campbeltown Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS) Round 6.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 That the Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands Area Committee:

- a) Endorse the progress that has been made on Campbeltown CARS Round 6 and note that all work is now complete bar the final report and evaluation

4.0 DETAIL

4.1 Campbeltown CARS Round 6 started on the 1st April 2015 and was due to end on the 31st March 2020. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic Historic Environment Scotland (HES) approved a one-year time only extension to enable final activities to be completed including end of project reporting and evaluation work.

4.2 The CARS budget included funding for external repairs to a number of priority buildings, a small grants scheme and an allowance for traditional skills training and complementary initiatives. All of the agreed outcomes have now been met and the project team are now working on other projects.

4.3 The original project budget was £2,170,422 including funding from Historic Environment Scotland (HES), Argyll and Bute Council, Private Sector Housing Grant (PSHG) and contributions from private property owners. Additional funding has been secured from CHORD surplus funds, PSHG and private owners increasing the budget to almost £2.9million. This has enabled us to grant aid major repairs to 8 priority buildings. This includes 7 tenement properties and one backcourt amenity deck. In all this involved 81 separate units (flats or shops).

4.4 **Priority Buildings** - Working in partnership with officers from Housing Services, the following projects have been successfully completed:

1. **10-20 Longrow South** (11 units) - Completed in July 2017, safeguarding 3 operational commercial units and 6 flats.
2. **9-15 Longrow South** (5 units) – Completed in March 2018 safeguarding 16 jobs and 2 flats.
3. **10-14 Main Street** (MacLean Place West - 8 units) – A significant repair project was completed in early 2019. The grant contracts included a condition that the 3 vacant commercial units must be brought back into use. So far two units have benefited from shopfront improvement grants and are now back in use. This includes one new business. Work is on-going in the third unit.
4. **22-30 Main Street and 2-8 Longrow South** (19 Units) – The largest project in the scheme was completed in June 2019. Works included; complete replacement of the main roof and rear stairwell roof; rot works, leadwork, chimney repairs, rainwater goods and extensive stone repairs. In addition to this the failing backcourt amenity deck and two balustrades were replaced. The project will safeguard the future of 4 businesses supporting 8 full time and 8 part time jobs. Two of the shopfronts have benefited from shopfront improvement grants. This project has won a number of national awards for bringing empty homes back into use.
5. **Amenity Deck Project** (30 Units) - This complex project was completed on budget in November 2018 following extensive development work. An innovative approach was used that led to the Council carrying out the work directly on behalf of the private owners. It involved the replacement of the failing back court amenity deck area which provides a drying area, refuse facilities and an amenity space for residents whilst forming a roof for 9 commercial units below. The failing roof had led to the closure of Macgochans Bar and threatened the future of Boots UK Pharmacy. The project safeguards the future of 21 flats and 8 operational businesses that support 19 full time jobs and 14 part time jobs.

Note: The amenity deck serves 5 separate tenements. This includes 44 Main Street, 3 Longrow South, 9-15 Longrow South and 2 others.
6. **44 Main Street** (7 Units) – Tenement repair scheme completed October 2020. Includes a new business selling local produce.
7. **3 Longrow South** (6 Units) – Tenement repair scheme completed October 2019. The vacant bar at No. 40-42 Main Street/Longrow South has now been brought back into use as a seafood restaurant. This was made possible by the repairs to the tenement and to the rear amenity deck (see item 4 above).

4.5 For some time there has been a demand for fully repaired commercial units in the Centre of Campbeltown. This has been evidenced by the number of vacant units in CARS repaired buildings that have recently been brought back into use. This includes a number of new businesses including a seafood restaurant and tearoom. There is an increased retail offer and bespoke shopping experience,

with a real emphasis on shopping local and a café culture during the tourist season.

- 4.6 In some cases additional works have been carried out to the common closes and backcourt amenity decked areas of these tenements. Private owners have made further investments in their flats carrying out internal refurbishments and installing doors and windows. This has led to a number of new tenants moving into town centre tenements. Many of whom have recently moved to the area.
- 4.7 **Training and Education Programme** – Ten traditional skills training courses were delivered in Campbeltown by specialist training providers. All courses were well attended by a mix of contractors, building professionals and public sector officers. A number of other events and initiatives were also delivered as per previous progress reports.
- 4.8 **Town centre businesses** – A number of initiatives have and continue to support Town centre business. These include:
- a) Shopfront merchandising seminar and one-to-one support to a number of retailers.
 - b) Business Gateway hosted three training events including graphics and video for social media. All events were well attended.
 - c) Funding was secured in September for a shop local campaign in the main towns.
- 4.9 **Digital App** – Following a lengthy design process we launched version one of the Discover Campbeltown App in September 2020. The App includes a number of town centre trails including the well-established Campbeltown Heritage Trail that has been on-going since 2011. Other trails include a Whisky Trail featuring existing distilleries plus the 30 former distillery sites and walking and cycling and family treasure trails. The app is proving popular with both locals and visitors. A web based version is due to be launched soon followed by version 2 of the app that will include additional features. It is hoped that the app will attract more people to the area and encourage them to stay for longer.
- 4.10 **Final reporting and evaluation** work has still to be completed. The plan is to include the fourteen year (2007-2020) regeneration programme in Campbeltown to demonstrate how the investment has benefited the town and Argyll area.
- 4.11 **Shopfront Improvement Scheme** – In 2019, £50,000 from the Town Centre Fund was allocated to a Shopfront Improvement Scheme for Campbeltown town centre. The plan was to complement the CARS and THI funded repairs and to support both existing and new businesses. The entire budget has now been committed. See below:
- 28 grants awarded ranging from £260 to £5,000
 - 7 new businesses opened

- 10 vacant shops brought back into use (mainly in tenement buildings that have been subject to CARS funded repair works)
- All work carried out by local contractors boosting the local economy
- Further improvement in the appearance of the town centre
- Further demand for funding

4.12 **Town Centre Capital Fund 2020** – An additional amount of £10,000 has recently been allocated to extent the Shopfront Improvement Scheme.

4.13 **Scotland's Most Improved Place** – In September officers submitted an application to the 2020 SURF Awards covering the Campbeltown Town Centre Regeneration work. The project has been shortlisted in the 'Scotland's Most Improved Place' category. The winner will be announced in February 2021.

5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 The focus for Campbeltown CARS Round 6 was to repair a number of key tenement buildings to help safeguard the future of town centre homes, businesses and jobs whilst creating opportunities for investment. By carefully allocating the original budget and securing additional funding it has been possible to fund repairs to 8 priority buildings

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Policy The Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) and Argyll and Bute Outcome Improvement Plan 2013-2023 support town centre Regeneration and a diverse and thriving economy.

6.2 Financial To satisfy audit requirements we provide an update on the overall financial position of the scheme to the Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee on a six monthly basis. A similar update is included below:

All grant funding is in place as part of the Campbeltown CARS Round 6 budget, including the Historic Environment Scotland grant, Council and PSHG.

At the start of the project the total common fund including owners contributions was £2,170,422.

With additional funding from; CHORD, PSHG and private owners the final common fund will be £2,872,233.

The total funding that was to be committed is £2,186,506

To date we have committed £2,176,062 as follows:

- **Priority projects £1,937,160**
- **Small grants £57,947**
- **Administration and Training £180,955**

It should be noted that Historic Environment Scotland retain 10% of their £990,000 grant award until the final reporting and evaluation has been completed

- 6.3 Legal None
- 6.4 HR Officer time to progress the project further.
- 6.5 Fairer Scotland Duty None
- 6.5.1 Equalities - protected characteristics None
- 6.5.2 Socio-economic Duty None
- 6.5.3 Islands None
- 6.6. Risk Historic Environment Scotland retain 10% of their £990,000 grant award until the final reporting and evaluation has been completed.
- 6.7 Customer Service The Council is responsible for administering the CARS grants on behalf of Historic Environment Scotland and for ensuring due diligence in the performance of its duties.

**Executive Director with responsibility for Development and Economic Growth –
Kirsty Flanagan
Policy Lead Economic Development Alastair Redman**

October 2020

For further information contact:
James Lafferty, Development and Economic Growth
01586 559049