

# Lochgilphead & Mid-Argyll Place Review

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Argyll & Bute CPP Management Committee  
UPDATE

6<sup>th</sup> October 2022



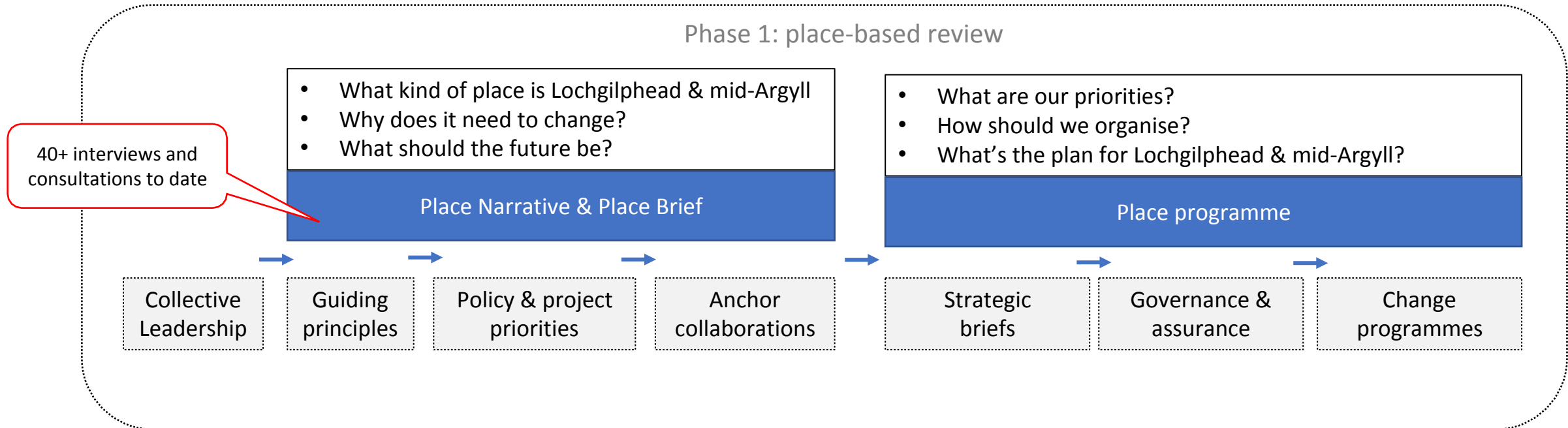
# Lochgilphead & Mid-Argyll Place-based review

## Purpose of the Place-based review

The aim of Phase 1 is to help partners working in Lochgilphead & the surrounding communities to take stock of activity, collectively consider priority outcomes, and to align plans and resources for the benefit of people who live, work, visit and invest here.

In line with wider national guidance on Place, the objectives are to:

- Identify what people and partners **need** for Lochgilphead & Mid-Argyll in the coming years
- Confirm what's currently happening, including developing a **portfolio/pipeline** of projects, investments and opportunities
- **Prioritise** those investments and opportunities to align with needs.



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## A Place Narrative (story of change)

### What kind of place is Lochgilphead & mid-Argyll?

- This is a special place to live and work in...rural and spacious...feels safe, with a strong sense of community...unemployment is low, with higher than average levels of self-employment
- There is access to significant assets in tourism, renewable energy (incl **Net Zero** enablers), innovative companies, forestry, food and drink locally... I
- It has a good position as a gateway
- Recognisable recent investment (e.g. the Front Green, the swimming pool, active travel routes linking the town centre with the joint campus, Crinan Canal and Ardrishaig developments such as the Egg Shed and pontoons)
- But there is a shared view that the place is fragile ...economically, demographically, and in terms of its physical and **digital** connectivity infrastructure
- Historically, there is a slow pace of change: perhaps due to the relative absence of decision-makers locally.

### Why does it need to change?

- We have an ageing population, with many young having to leave: there are long waits for social housing and limited opportunities to buy affordable homes
- Our people travel long distances to access specialist health services, leisure and shopping...public **transport connectivity** is limited, with strong reliance on roads and private transport...
- A heavy reliance on public sector (c 50% of workforce and 25% of land and property)... "the public sector estate is larger than it needs to be"
- Many jobs are difficult to recruit to – care workers, nurses, AHPs, chefs, forestry workers, tradespeople - due to a shortage of skills and housing locally
- Cost of living pressures will affect us disproportionately ...with local pay levels below the national average
- COVID impacts, cost of living crisis, and increased hybrid working will continue to reduce footfall...
- Frustration about tired properties in town centre...
- Limited opportunities for young people & adults to meet socially, especially evenings and weekends...
- Lochgilphead is a drive-through town with no 'stickiness' - little to attract visitors (events, festivals) during the day and to accommodate them at night.

### What should the future be?

- More balanced: we need to find new ways to attract, keep and support people living, working and investing in Lochgilphead & Mid-Argyll...
- ...to develop resilient, self-sustaining communities
- With significantly more affordable, supported and private housing – and better childcare and nursery provision
- Creative use of vacant or partial public sector property space for redevelopment in housing and enterprise
- Public sector partners co-designing & co-delivering collaboratively...more integrated public/civic services
- Collective resources (assets, services *and* staff) used to increase economic diversity locally – including via development of private *and* community sector responses
- Increased capacity & capability in **health, care & wellbeing** support – potentially via social enterprises, 'grow your own' via the College, and/or co-located 'Care Village'
- Linked (physically and thematically) developments e.g., accessible flow from Front Green, to a joint campus, a customer hub, from Ardrishaig to Crinan, via active travel and use of shared private transport e.g. car clubs & apps
- Exploiting/selling Lochgilphead's geographic position as a hub, connection point, fulcrum
- Improved hospitality infrastructure (including signage) to facilitate movement around the place and local assets
- In the long term, a need to be "investor-ready".

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## Guiding principles for Place Briefs and Programme

- **Improves the appeal and attractiveness of Lochgilphead and Mid-Argyll**
  - Makes it easier for working-age people to come here to work (housing, education and other social infrastructure)
  - Helps retain and attract people, business and investment
  - Improves services for the people who live, work, learn, and invest here
  - Enhances 'stickiness': a better place to visit, more to do and see, easily understood
- **Impacts positively on local wellbeing, inclusive growth and Net Zero aspirations**
  - Facilitates economic diversification, entrepreneurship, innovation and carbon reduction transitions
  - Increases footfall in the town and surrounding communities
  - Supports and encourages local resilience efforts and community-led action
  - Builds capacity across a range of health & wellbeing services (care at home, childcare, nursing etc)
- **Lochgilphead and mid-Argyll is more accessible**
  - 'Town centre first' approach
  - Easier, more equitable physical and digital access to relevant local and regional services
  - Improved public and social transport planning and provision
  - Better flow and opportunity for interaction between services and assets
- **Makes best use of (shared) resources**
  - Increased visibility, accessibility and efficient use of skills, resources, technologies and assets
  - Releases space for SMEs, entrepreneurs and micro businesses, affordable housing and other social infrastructure
  - Offers realistic opportunities for improved ways of working and savings across our public and civic partners

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## Next steps

Work continues on Phase 1 through to early November 2022, and includes:

- Development of Place Brief, diagrams and maps
- Presentation of a strategic change project portfolio for Lochgilphead & Mid-Argyll
- Draft Place Programme phasing
- Development of funding considerations (e.g. holistic Place-led leveraging of *Levelling Up, Place-based Investment Fund, Climate Challenge Fund, SNIB provisions* etc)
- Determining governance & assurance arrangements for Place in Lochgilphead & Mid-Argyll, and wider Argyll & Bute: to include CPP, the MAKI locality group)
- Planning detailed, additional engagement e.g. the MAKI locality group, voluntary and private sector