

Report: Helensburgh and Lomond Area Community Planning Group
Date: 7 May 2024
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Introduction

TSI activity for quarter four 2023-2024 has involved completing the final version of the TSI funded Community Wealth Building report, reviewing our budgets, supporting member organisations and the wider community as well as planning for our next business plan and new strategy.

Our new [website](#) also continues to grow as a space for collaboration and news and we would love to have your views on content and stories. We proactively invite third sector groups and organisations to promote their events and activities directly via the TSI website.

Scottish Government/The Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR)

Legislation was presented in the Scottish Parliament on 23rd February 2024 to activate some provisions of the Charities (Regulation and Administration) (Scotland) Act 2023, effective from 1 April 2024. The Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) is preparing to implement these changes to enhance benefits for charities and the public. No immediate action is required from charities or their trustees, but we should anticipate updates to OSCR's guidance on their website.

Key enhancements include:

1. **Increased Inquiry Powers:** From April 2024, OSCR will gain enhanced powers to direct charities to take specific actions, appoint interim trustees, and extend inquiries to former charities and trustees. This aims to protect charity assets and improve regulatory responses.
2. **Streamlining Information Requirements:** Changes will clarify and expedite the process by which charities must provide information, improving inquiry progress.
3. **Enforcement on Non-compliance:** Charities failing to submit accounts within 9 months or engage with OSCR will face removal from the Scottish Charity Register starting 1 April 2024. This enforces the duty of financial transparency essential for public and donor confidence.
4. **Registration Criteria:** New criteria effective from the same date will require charities to demonstrate a significant connection to Scotland, such as having a principal office or conducting activities in Scotland.

5. **Operational Flexibility:** The new act reduces bureaucratic hurdles, such as the need for a 42-day notice for certain changes, and permits flexibility in cases like charity mergers.

Future measures include creating a searchable record of disqualified trustees by October 2024, and further provisions by summer 2025, such as publishing trustee names and records of charity mergers. These steps are part of a broader effort to ensure charities are well-regulated and transparent in Scotland. More details here:- <https://www.oscr.org.uk/about-charities/charity-law/changes-to-charity-law-after-the-charities-regulation-and-administration-scotland-act-2023/>

The net impact of the changes is likely to be a more interventionist approach to promoting good charity governance and practice.

Community Wealth Building (CWB) report

Following approval of funding for a CWB report, the TSI has been working on the commissioning of a CWB strategy and action plan for Argyll and Bute's Community Planning Partnership.

The final report has been submitted to the CPP Management Committee.

Funders Fayre 2024 The TSI Funders Fayre held in Oban on 20th March 2024 was a great success with 8 funders in attendance and over 70 participants. Feedback has been positive, and we will look to repeat the event with different, but hopefully equally nationally significant funders, in six months' time in another part of Argyll and Bute. The message that we need to work together to support each other during a period of sustained financial pressure was well received.

Communities Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund – Year four announcement

It has been agreed that there will be a year four of funding at the same levels as for 2023-2024. National planning for the next round begins shortly.

TSI Board member recruitment

Owing to a number of changes the TSI is down to the minimum level of four trustees and we are urgently seeking to recruit from interested people in our locality. We meet five times a year and you will be helping to support third and social enterprise sector organisations to thrive, prosper and support our local communities. For an informal conversation please contact takkisulaiman@argylltsi.org.uk and visit <https://www.argylltsi.org/about-us/our-board-2/> to view the role description.

Argyll and Bute Climate Action Network (ABCAN)

The work of the TSI supported Argyll and Bute Climate Action Network ([ABCAN](#)) is now fully under way, led under the auspices of the Argyll and the Isles Coast and Countryside Trust (ACT). The TSI has just completed the disbursement of three rounds of seed and micro grant funding.

We are now moving onto the next phase and will provide governance support for the establishment of ABCAN's steering group.

Scottish Government funding has been approved for the next year of activity however seed capital funding for this coming year will be less than the £40k available for the year gone but we may collectively fundraise to increase this total.

Sustainable Food Partnership online event – 26th February 2024

In late February the TSI co-hosted an [online discussion](#) of setting up a [Sustainable Food Partnership](#) (SFP) in Argyll and Bute. There is an existing network of 85+ SFPs across the UK which are working collaboratively to support and encourage a transition to a healthy, sustainable and more equitable food system. The event was a great success with over 40 – mainly new groups to the TSI – in attendance. Next steps are currently being considered.

Consulting on a new strategy and a local sustainable funding campaign

The TSI is increasingly coming across groups in financial difficulties and we provide support and advice where we can. The TSI will be consulting widely on a new five-year strategy and we will be asking member third and social enterprise organisations as well as the wider community about priorities for the focus of our activity.

Mapping early intervention services

A proposal, written by the TSI and the Social Value Lab, was previously submitted and accepted by Argyll and Bute's Chief Social Worker. The proposal focused on mapping and investment in preventative support services for children that would be run by the third and social enterprise sector is now up and running.

The TSIs All Our Children Network has long identified that third sector services for children are patchy and this results in children and families going unsupported and needs becoming more serious as a result.

Hosting posts

The TSI is now hosting a Wellbeing Development Manager post funded by Macmillan Cancer Support and the HSCP and is subject to an SLA. The synergy with the TSI's work is significant as it involves capacity building third sector groups active in preventative healthcare as well as developing information and support tools such as our [community directory](#).