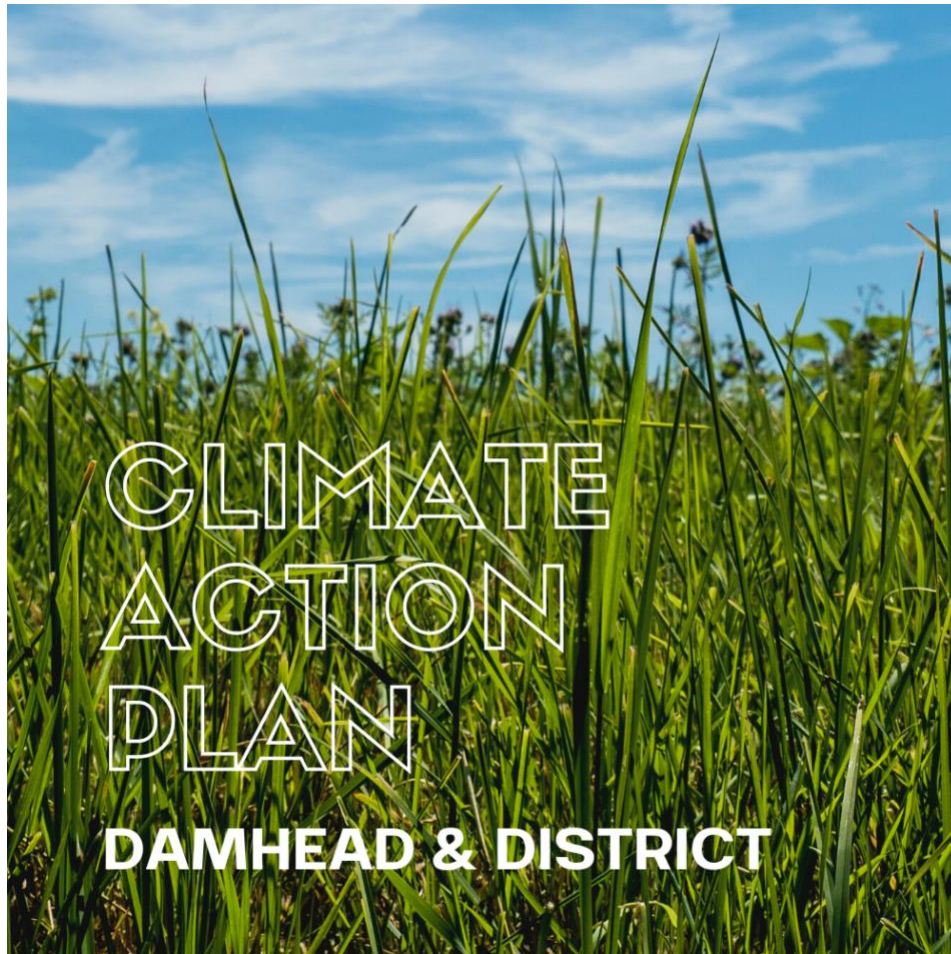


Community Climate Action Plan Damhead & District



Commissioned by:



Funded by:



Produced by:



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Table of Contents

1.	<u>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</u>	<u>3</u>
2.	<u>INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND</u>	<u>4</u>
3.	<u>METHODOLOGY & PROCESS</u>	<u>6</u>
4.	<u>ANALYSIS OF DATA COLLECTION PROCESSES.....</u>	<u>8</u>
5.	<u>20 MINUTE NEIGHBOURHOODS.....</u>	<u>15</u>
6.	<u>ACTION PLAN.....</u>	<u>17</u>
7.	<u>FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES.....</u>	<u>21</u>
8.	<u>APPENDICES.....</u>	<u>24</u>

1. Executive Summary

SKS Scotland CIC was commissioned by Midlothian Voluntary Action to undertake research in Damhead & District to support the development of a community climate action plan. The aim was to promote the importance of community-led climate action and encourage more people to get involved.

This project engaged with people that were already involved in climate conversations and those who were not. The aim was to discuss what the climate crisis meant to them on a local level and how they can tackle it.

The work was initiated in September 2022, having been awarded funding from the National Lottery’s Together for Our Planet programme.

The diagram below shows the work undertaken to produce this report.



From this research, a number of clear themes were established, which were discussed during both the drop-in sessions and workshops.

THEMES:

Energy use	Safe, active & sustainable travel	Re-use, recycling & upcycling	Biodiversity & land management
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During this process, the community was encouraged to consider actions that would address these climate action issues, whilst aligning with previous projects and being appropriate for the capacity of the community.

These actions have been put forward and developed into the community action plan given at the end of this report, creating a piece of work that is hoped will be used as a working document going forward.

2. Introduction & Background

[Midlothian Voluntary Action](#) (MVA) was awarded funding from the National Lottery's Together for Our Planet programme, to develop a community-led climate action project. The two criteria chosen from the programme list that this project will achieve are:

- It supports the development of longer-term climate action within communities
- It celebrates the importance of community-led climate action and encourages more people to get involved

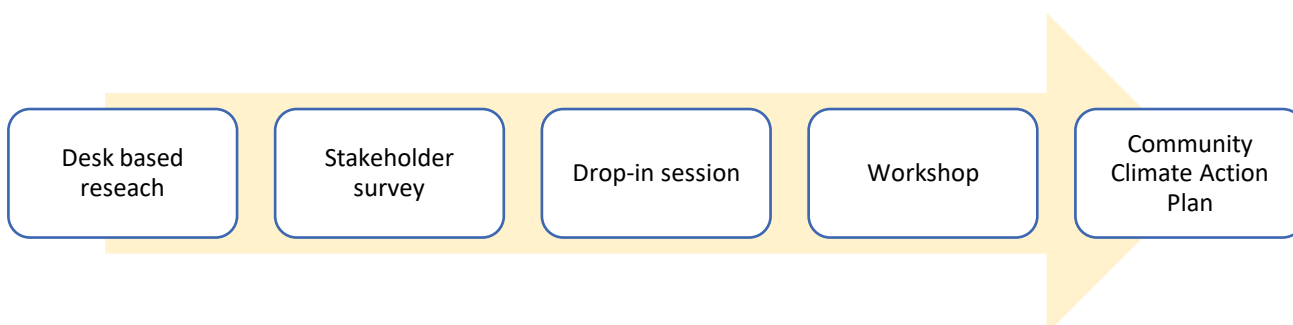
The project was awarded to [SKS Scotland CIC](#) (SKS) in September 2022, following a public procurement process.

Project Objectives

- A community climate action plan for Damhead that contains objectives that are relevant to their needs, wants, and capacity
- Summaries of discussions from the community engagement events that capture the issues raised, how action could be taken forward, to what extent can the community do so without external support and resources, and challenges they may face without support from other agencies
- Assessment of what a 20-minute neighbourhood means for the community
- Ongoing climate activities that are being undertaken in the communities
- Funding opportunities to support climate action

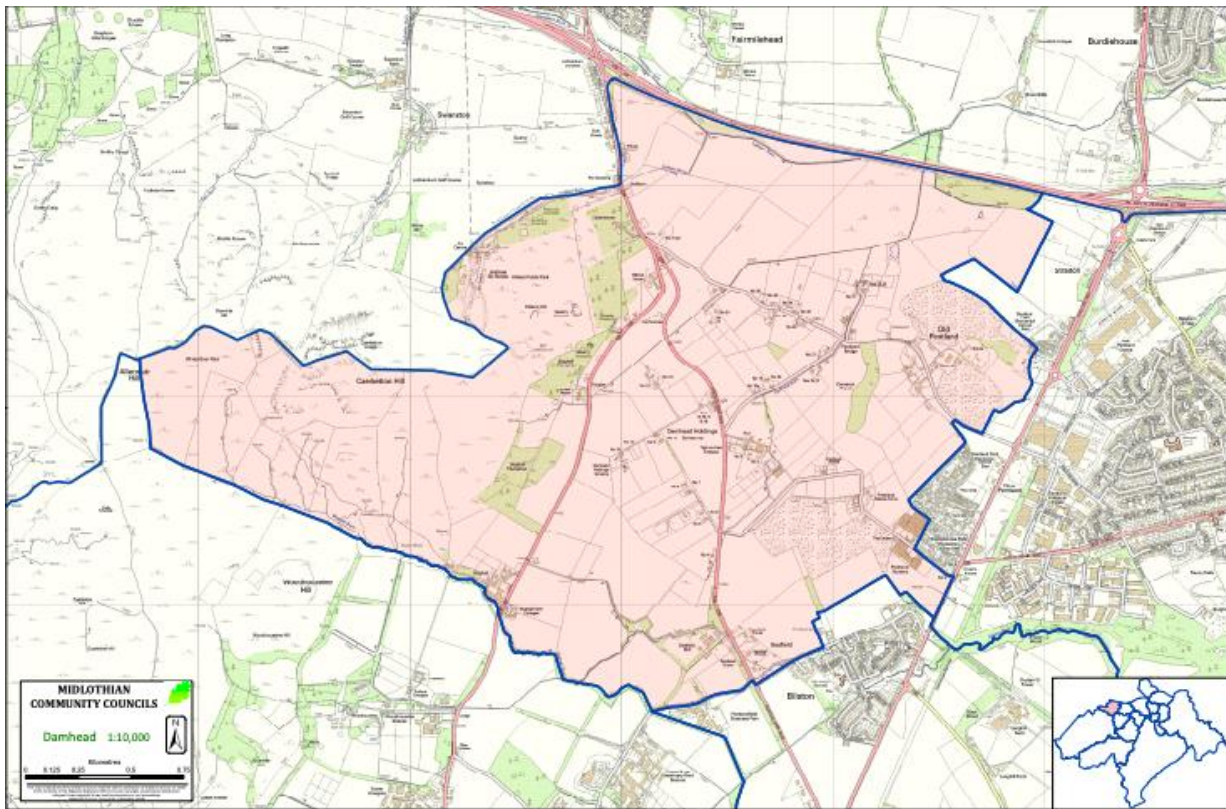
Project Approach

The preparation of this document took place between October 2022 to February 2023. It involved a number of different stages as summarised below:



Project Area

Damhead and District Community Council area is shown in the map¹ below, which illustrates a rural, sparsely populated district, of approximately 250 residents and just over 100 households.



¹ [file:///Users/clairewhyte/Downloads/Damhead and district Community Council boundary map.pdf](file:///Users/clairewhyte/Downloads/Damhead%20and%20district%20Community%20Council%20boundary%20map.pdf)

3. Methodology & Process

Inception meetings were held with MVA, SKS and the community working group to understand the work which has already been carried out and that is underway in Damhead & District with regard to climate action, along with **individual conversations** with key stakeholders. Previous initiatives were discussed, pinpointing previous successes and areas which could be built on or improved.

SKS then focused on carrying out **secondary research** to achieve a greater understanding of existing information that could be used by Damhead & District when considering taking their Community Climate Action Plan forward.

Community engagement

A programme of community engagement was then designed to understand concerns and create the basis for an action plan that would prove to be the most effective for Damhead & District and encourage more people to get involved.

SKS designed a **stakeholder survey**. Details of the survey's methodology and analysis can be found in section 4 and appendix 1 and 2 of this report.

A **drop-in event** was organised in the Secret Garden Café on 25th November 2022, which was well supported with a good attendance (9 people) and a diverse range of topics covered, including new roads, pavements, paths and field routes, new housing, public transport and the group's capacity looking forward.

An online **workshop event** was then held on 16th January 2023, to summarise the community engagement findings to date, explore the main themes to arise from this and encourage discussion and input from the attendees around the development of a climate action plan. The workshop was promoted on social media and set up via Eventbrite, which distributed to all the email addresses from the survey as well as stakeholders and local social media. 13 people signed up to attend, 9 people attended. The slides from this event are shown below:

Example comments:

Flooding & road erosion – overland water flow starts in the Pentland Hills and various downslope land holdings in Damhead itself. Ploughing issues and waterways. 9 different ownerships.

Cycling – there are more young people, opportunity to give bike maintenance. Vouchers to help purchase, but has to include safety. Roads/pavements are a barrier to use for families. (Railway line good to use.)

Repair & share: gardening tools (strimmers etc), also sewing machines, other appliances, knowledge transfer etc. List on a database, let people know they're available. Sharpen tools

See appendix 3 for full view of slides.

4. Analysis of Data Collection Processes

Desk based research

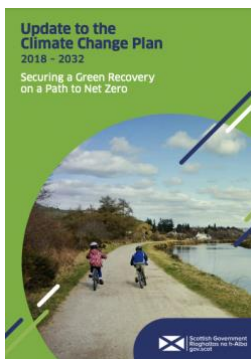
The following desk based (or secondary) research was carried out to enable a full understanding of the background and current context for the development and delivery of Community Climate Action Plans and the implementation of 20 Minute Neighbourhoods. A short summary of each is provided below, with further details provided in Appendix 1.

National context: policy and practice

(i) Climate Change and Net Zero

In response to the need to tackle the global climate emergency, the Scottish government published the [Climate Change Plan update](#) in December 2020, which reflects the increased ambition of the new targets set by the Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019. This legislation sets a target date for net zero emissions of all greenhouse gases by 2045.

To enable Scotland to meet these targets requires a rapid transformation across all sectors of the economy and society. The [Net Zero Nation website](#) is a 'one stop shop' for individuals, communities and organisations looking for information about what they can do to tackle the climate emergency, and learn more about the action that all of Scotland is taking. This resource identifies a number of key areas for groups and individuals to consider in relation to their everyday lives, and actions they can take to reduce their impact on, and help support our climate and the wider natural world.



These themes are as follows:

- Climate change
- Transport
- Food
- Waste
- Heating your home
- Nature

Midlothian Council was one of the first local authorities to sign Scotland's Climate Change Declaration, publicly acknowledging the challenges and opportunities that climate change brings. In December 2019, Midlothian Council passed a motion declaring a 'climate emergency'. This includes a commitment to make the council's activities net-zero carbon by 2030.²

[Midlothian Communities Climate Action Network](#) (MCCAN) was set up in 2022 to support community groups, families, social groups, organisations, individuals in Midlothian who are either active or interested in doing something to tackle the climate emergency. The network has been established and is being coordinated by a Damhead community member, Julian Holbrook on a voluntary basis.

² [Midlothian's Climate Change Strategy 2020](#)

(ii) Community Climate Action Hubs

Specifically in terms of working with individuals and communities, the Scottish Government recognises the need to:

- Engage with the public and encourage people to move towards low carbon living
- Supporting communities to tackle climate change
- Deliver a just transition – ensuring a fairer and greener future for all

To help support communities to tackle climate change, the Scottish Government is supporting the development of a network of regional community climate action hubs spread across the country. This will provide a strategic regional approach to climate change action. The intention is that these hubs will help local community groups to:

- Develop local plans
- Take up community funding opportunities
- Facilitate networking
- Ensure a joined-up approach is being taken to tackling climate change at a regional level.



This network is currently being hosted by the [Scottish Communities Climate Action Network \(SCCAN\)](#). SCCAN is a volunteer-led network that supports community-led action in Scotland to address the climate and nature emergency, and work for a just, thriving and resilient Scotland. Network Co-ordinators have now been recruited for each region in Scotland. These Co-ordinators are currently working to build a clear picture of actions local communities are taking to address climate change, what barriers to they face, and what additional resources are needed in communities to enable them to take action on climate change. They are also facilitating discussions on the shape and design of climate action hubs. Damhead is served by the Midlothian Network Co-ordinator.

Local context: Damhead and District Neighbourhood Plan 2015-2030

Neighbourhood Planning is focused on improving local communities in a way which brings together local residents with agencies in order to identify and find solutions to local issues. The development of the [Damhead and District Neighbourhood Plan](#) was led by The Damhead and District Steering Group and Community Council. The plan clearly sets out community concerns and aspirations, and includes a 'Neighbourhood Action Plan'. This identifies the following six themes as a focus for action:

- Planning
- Transport (roads, road safety, public transport, maintenance, lighting)
- Community development (assets and facilities, community spirit and resilience)
- Green Network (green spaces, active travel corridors, hedgerows and verges)
- Rural Land Use (local identity and local land use)
- Community Food (food growing projects)
- Vision to 2030 (climate action, energy efficiency, heating, flood risk, local business, bus service)

This plan clearly highlights the aspirations and importance of climate change action within the local community, and identifies a wide range of actions which will all play an important part in helping to address climate change locally.

Case study - Community Climate Action Plans

Funded by the Scottish Government, and delivered by Keep Scotland Beautiful, the [Community Climate Action Plan programme](#) supported seven communities to produce bespoke climate action plans, through providing:

- Support and advice from a community climate facilitator
- Inspiring ideas of what could be possible from communities across Scotland and beyond.
- Input from groups who have already developed a Community Climate Action Plan with Keep Scotland Beautiful, and access to a growing network of communities.
- Support to help plan activities that will be most suitable for each community.
- Signposting to potential funding opportunities and further technical advice if needed.

The communities involved were from: Islay, Jura and Colonsay; Arbroath; Newcastleton; Knoydart; Pollokshields; Ferguslie; and Shotts. The output from the work in [Kirriemuir \(Arbroath\)](#) provides a good example of a Community Climate Action Plan.

The [Sustainable Kirriemuir](#) website provides the most up to date action plans under four themes:



- Food growing
- Reducing waste
- Biodiversity
- Active Travel

The Action Plan under each theme identifies all current and planned activities, with a lead contact and timescale for delivery.

Alongside this work, KSB has produced a succinct '[Guide to Climate Change](#)', which provides information on everyday actions to help reduce people's carbon footprint. As a generic guide for individuals and communities in Scotland, this resource is not able to take account of the context specific issues of individual communities, hence the need for bespoke climate action plans in different communities, to ensure that actions are supported and achievable for that community.

Learning points from desk-based and case study research:

- There is a strong imperative and legislative framework for delivering Scotland's Net Zero emissions target by 2045.
- There are a large number of resources available providing generic guidance for individuals and communities about how to take action on climate change.
- Local communities are already undertaking a wide variety of actions to help tackle the climate emergency, and some communities now have Community Climate Action Plans in

place. However, more support is needed to help communities on their net zero journey, to ensure that they have the necessary knowledge, resources and confidence to identify, plan and deliver action relevant to their local context and circumstances.

- The new network of Community Climate Action Hubs co-ordinated by SCCAN is an important step in understanding how local communities can best be supported to tackle climate change.
- The Damhead and District Neighbourhood Plan 2015-2030 provides an important springboard for the development of a Climate Action Plan.

Stakeholder survey

Methodology

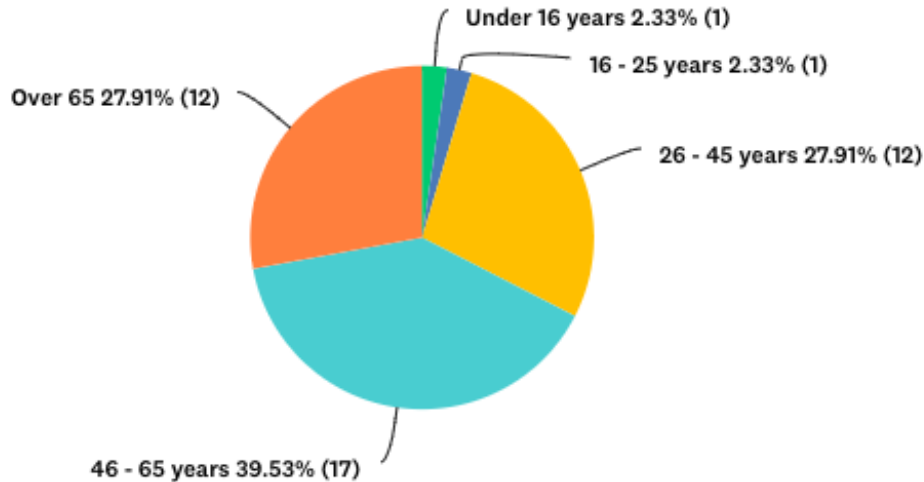
A community survey was undertaken on behalf Midlothian Voluntary Action to inform a Community Action Plan for Damhead. The survey was open during Oct – Dec 2022, and was available to fill out on-line using a link / QR code or on paper copies, and issued via:

- Facebook – Posts were made on SKS’s page, and local organisations requested to share.
- Paper copies were available to pick up and drop off at The Secret Garden Cafe.
- The survey was also sent to Penicuik High School (where it was shared with students by the Depute Head Teacher via Google Classrooms) and Beeslack High School. Damhead is within these schools’ catchment area.

A total of 43 surveys were submitted during this time.

All respondents bar one live in the Damhead & District area. 14% of respondents are disabled or have a condition that makes it hard to get out and about. There was a good age spread of respondents, as the chart below illustrates:





The summary of the main points to come out of the survey is shown in the table below. The full survey analysis is in appendix 1 and 2.

A significant number of respondents would like help or more info about:
⇒ Draught proofing & insulation
⇒ Installing a more efficient heating system
⇒ Carrying out a home energy audit
⇒ Recycling food waste
⇒ Buying local fruit & veg in season
⇒ Repairing items
⇒ Shared use of items e.g. tool library, sharing locally
⇒ Wildlife friendly gardening
⇒ Volunteering to care for the environment
⇒ Wildlife surveys e.g. birds, butterflies, hedgehogs
⇒ Caring for local parks and other green spaces
⇒ Help to establish a community meadow
⇒ Supporting a 20mph speed limit
⇒ Electric or hybrid car use

Additional concerns include:

- almost half of respondents feel that lots of improvement is needed to help walking and cycling around the community with safe, convenient and pleasant routes.
- 59% rated public transport as terrible or not good.

A selection of comments from respondents, when asked if there were other environmental issues which they thought were pertinent to the Damhead & District area, include:

- ⇒ *Drainage on roads*
- ⇒ *Local fields could be used more environment sensitively by local Agricultural college.*

- ⇒ *Limit new road development and focus on protecting the environment, farmland and biodiversity.*
- ⇒ *The overarching worry that Midlothian Council have no concern, consideration or respect for maintaining greenbelt or green space and would rather take developers money and build more houses, without improving the infrastructure we have*
- ⇒ *The new proposed road cutting up Damhead will cause massive environmental damage to our area. The A702/A703 Hillend Junction is dangerous for pedestrians, buses and cyclists.*
- ⇒ *I would like to draw attention to the dreadful condition of maintenance in the Pentland Regional Park.*
- ⇒ *Protecting bats and local deer populations; drainage*
- ⇒ *Poor hedgerow management, limited active travel options, unsustainable agriculture, poor deployment of climate change mitigation (ie need native wood establishment), the whole new road debacle, unsustainable housing being built, lack of Midlothian Council enforcing planning, biodiversity conservation etc. Lack of flood risk management / mitigation, on going filed drainage and canalisation of ditches, lack of speed restrictions*
- ⇒ *The proposed creation of the A702 relief road across the green belt is an environmental issue.*

SWOT Analysis from primary research

The following SWOT Analysis provides a framework for Penicuik on which to analyse the above information and note strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, building a bridge between perceived issues and possible opportunities to help address them through a variety of approaches.

Strengths

- D&D already has several community projects on-going which have proved successful, such as bird-box making, B-Line etc.
- There is a strong desire in the community to move climate action projects forward.

Weakness

- Capacity is an issue; small community with some volunteer fatigue.
- Lack of awareness as to what is already happening and set up

Opportunities

- Start with relatively small, simple project to encourage and motivate.
- Encourage community interaction through workshops, live walks etc.
- Collaborate with Penicuik (planning issues).
- Improve promotion around climate change to encourage input from a wider community.
- Improve active travel routes and connectivity to Pentlands, new housing developments etc.
- Talk to 'ChangeWorks' in Dalkeith re their support service (household basis atm).
- Funding eg active travel - Paths for All fund <https://www.pathsforall.org.uk/cmp-grants>.
- Examine community energy projects for bulk purchase of solar panel opportunities etc.

Threats

- Lack of volunteers/capacity prevent projects moving forward.
- New developments (housing, roads etc), the environmental impact of which hasn't been properly taken into account and has affected drainage, environment, travel routes, road speed etc (new road and Hillhead ski area noted in particular).
- Flooding & road erosion – issue may start at the College of Agric. Ploughing issues and waterways.

- Investigate the land at the 'Bing' for solar panels / small wind turbines / community base
- Examine possible housing gain in new housing developments eg connecting cycle lanes.
- Ask Scottish Agricultural College to reinstate walking edges round perimeter of fields.
- Start community repair & share: gardening tools, sewing machines, other appliances. Sharpen tools
- Glencourse Community Parish have good facilities which may be underused, use for workshops?

5. 20 minute Neighbourhoods

Policy context

The current Scottish Programme for Government 2022-23 supports the idea of 20 minute neighbourhoods, which defines this concept as a neighbourhood: “where people can meet their needs within a 20 minute walk from their house – enabling people to live better, healthier lives and supporting our net zero ambitions.” (ClimateXChange, 2021, p4). However, as identified by [ClimateXChange](#), broader definitions also exist, which include cycling and public transport as other travel modes within these neighbourhoods.

Research undertaken by ClimateXChange, draws together Scottish, UK and international examples and baseline evidence on the concept of ‘20 minute neighbourhoods’, and how it can be best translated in a Scottish context. The project identifies areas of good practice, and takes account of Scotland’s geography, demography, economy, governance and relevant policy drivers to inform the translation of the concept.

[Our Place](#) highlights that 20 minute neighbourhoods are not simply about accessing amenities. They can have real benefits for health, the environment and the local economy. They can help to reduce car use, encouraging people to walk, wheel and cycle more, provide easy access to green spaces and help to build connections and a positive sense of community and belonging. Generally, a 20 minute neighbourhood will have the following characteristics:

- **a safe, accessible, and well connected movement network** for pedestrians and cyclists
- **high-quality public spaces**, streets and open space
- **good access to services** that support local living
- **a variety of housing types**, of different sizes, affordability and tenure, that supports diversity, the ability to age in place, and housing densities and that support local services
- **inclusive and easy access to public transport** that caters for different needs, connecting people to jobs and other services further afield
- **high quality green spaces** for people to enjoy and opportunities for local food production
- **thriving local economies** with employment & opportunities for community wealth building
- **good digital connectivity** to enable flexible working, and remote access to public services
- **formal and informal play** spaces for children
- **community participation** and local engagement opportunities

20 minute neighbourhoods in practice

A recent study undertaken by [Forth Environment Link](#) into the applicability of the 20 minute neighbourhood concept within a local, rural community setting provides some valuable insights into the practicalities of putting this concept into action. Centred on the community of Drymen in Stirlingshire, this study found that whilst many drivers were keen to use alternative modes of transport, but felt it lacked the infrastructure to support active and sustainable. The need for good quality walking and cycling routes, safe from speeding cars, allied to a better, more dynamic public transport system were high on the community’s wish list.

The issue of alternatives to car use mirrors the findings from Damhead, where 59% of survey respondents rated public transport as terrible or not good. In addition, almost half of survey respondents felt that much improvement is needed to help walking and cycling around the community with safe, convenient and pleasant routes. Given that Scotland-wide, transport is the largest contributor to emissions in Scotland, with almost 40% coming from car journeys (Our Place, 2018), this is clearly a vital area for action within the Damhead & District Climate Action Plan, and will require significant resources to address.

More widely, the work in Drymen highlighted that the concept of a neighbourhood where you can 'live well locally' is the key – a neighbourhood that supports active travel, boosts the local economy and addresses inequality by ensuring people are better connected to services which benefit health and wellbeing.

Overall, whilst the concept of the 20 minute neighbourhood as significant potential to help communities to tackle climate change, whilst also supporting individual and community wellbeing. However, turning this concept into reality in communities across Scotland poses many challenges, and it is important to understand the challenges and opportunities in the context of each community setting.

Damhead and District 20-minute neighbourhood

The community was asked in the survey how easily their needs were met within 20 minutes of their home. 76% felt most of their daily needs could be met, however, most of the comments indicated that their needs could not be met, the general understanding of what a 20-minute neighbourhood meant was low.

"If I drive where I live is ideal. If I cycle where I live has some options but all within a minimum 20 minutes (one way) ride that is fairly dangerous with no designated lanes or routes."

Lack of pavements, no cycle paths and busy roads were mentioned as the main barriers to utilising services in a 20-minute neighbourhood.

"The challenge is, how do rural communities like Damhead engage with this notion. The concept has designed around cities. Midlothian Council may not be applying the concept to rural Midlothian as it prepares the next Midlothian Local Development Plan 2. Where does that leave Damhead."³

³ Feedback from a Damhead community member.

6. Action Plan

This Action Plan provides a summary of the main activities that are and/or could be developed in Damhead & District to help the community to take further action on climate change. Whilst there is overlap and interrelationships between these activities, for the sake of clarity, they have been grouped under five main themes:

Energy use	Safe, active & sustainable travel	Re-use, recycling & upcycling	Biodiversity & land management
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Under each activity, the plan identifies current action and potential avenues for future development. It also highlights the organisations key to taking this work forward, with an indicative timeline.

In developing this plan, a number of over-arching themes also emerged. These will need to be addressed and/or developed to help ensure that the community’s ambitions and desires to tackle climate change, and to live in a thriving, sustainable local community, can be met. These themes are also woven into the action plan where possible, and can be summarised as follows:

- **Community capacity** to get involved and take actions forward.
- **Development of a SCIO or other incorporated body** to enable acquisition and management of community assets eg land purchase for community renewables.
- **Funding**, in particular revenue streams, to support delivery and development of services

Notes on the Action Plan:

“Suggested Supportive People / Organisations” - These are potential partners to approach for the community to approach about the projects.

Activity	Current Action/context	Future Plans	Suggested Supportive People / Organisations	Timeline
Energy use				
Reducing energy usage & improving energy efficiency in homes	<p>Some individual homes have PV solar panels & other residents are interested.</p> <p>Changeworks provides support to households improve heat & energy efficiency – signposting & funding.</p>	<p>Explore demand, opportunities, and funds to support bulk purchase of PV solar panels for local households.</p> <p>Look at partnership working with other local communities to share knowledge & advice.</p>	<p>Midlothian Voluntary Action, Changeworks, Midlothian Council, Damhead & District Community Council.</p>	<p>Partnership working ongoing.</p> <p>Explore renewable energy generation 2023-24 & develop plan of action 2024-25 & beyond</p>
Community renewable energy schemes	<p>No community-wide schemes currently in development.</p>	<p>Explore potential of land acquisition on 'The Bing' for renewables (solar & wind).</p> <p>Explore establishment of SCIO/other incorporated body to lead asset transfer/land purchase.</p> <p>Look at partnership working with other local communities to share knowledge & advice</p>	<p>Midlothian Voluntary Action, Midlothian Council, Damhead & District Community Council, Midlothian Climate Action Network.</p>	<p>Partnership working ongoing.</p> <p>Explore land acquisition 2023-24 & develop plan of action 2024-25 & beyond.</p>
Safe, active & sustainable travel				
Creating a network of safe active travel routes	<p>Lack of opportunities for safe and/or segregated cycling routes, with no joined up network of routes to connect to wider landscape & other communities.</p> <p>New Midlothian Active Travel Strategy due for publication 2022/23.</p>	<p>Map out network of opportunities to create a safer cycling & walking network.</p> <p>Link in with Midlothian Traffic, Roads & Paths Group (MTRaP).</p> <p>Ensure that new developments eg housing, Hillend Ski Centre have active travel routes built into/connected – ensure planning conditions (Section 75)</p>	<p>Midlothian Council – Active Travel, MTRaP, Damhead & District Community Council, Scotland's Rural College (SRUC), Sustrans.</p>	<p>2023 & ongoing</p>

		<p>for active travel & public transport are built in and adhered to.</p> <p>Ask SRUC to reinstate paths around field perimeters.</p> <p>Identify & apply for funds to build case for active travel routes.</p>		
Road safety	Concerns about vehicle speeds and danger to both people and wildlife. Speed restrictions needed on A703 & Old Pentland Road.	Review with transport & other key agencies.	Midlothian Council, Damhead & District Community Council, Transport Scotland.	2023-24
Bicycle maintenance & skills training	No local opportunities to: learn about bicycle maintenance; improve/learn cycle skills & build confidence. Government's 'Fix Your Bike Voucher Scheme' now closed.	Explore opportunities to link with other local communities eg Penicuik who provide/want to extend these services. Explore potential link with Midlothian Council – CLLE workshop in Loanhead.	Damhead & District Community Council.	2023-24
Re-use, recycling and upcycling				
Sharing tools, skills and knowledge	Some informal sharing of tools between local residents.	<p>Develop on-line database of tools for residents to share eg gardening, decorating, DIY. Include opportunities to share skills & knowledge. Promote via social media.</p> <p>Contact Glencorse Community Centre to explore opportunities to use as a base for repair cafes and skills training.</p>	Damhead & District Community Council, Midlothian Council – CLLE.	2023-24 & ongoing
Biodiversity & land management				
Wildlife friendly gardening	Good take up of scheme to put bird boxes in local gardens (grant from local authority to Damhead & District Community Council)	Extend bird box scheme to create more wildlife-friendly spaces eg hedgehog boxes, small ponds, trees & shrubs.	Damhead Climate Action Group. Midlothian Council, Damhead & District Community Council,	2023-24

			Central Scotland Green Network Trust.	
Wildlife knowledge & awareness raising	Damhead & District Community Council promote RSPB 'Big Garden Bird Watch'.	Promote & encourage local residents to take part in citizen science projects eg. Big Garden Bird Watch, Big Butterfly Count.	Damhead Climate Action Group. Damhead & District Community Council	Ongoing
Patchwork farm nature network	Damhead Patchwork Farm Initiative are already taking action to support biodiversity on their land.	Develop a landscape scale plan across local area to join up and create a network of nature-rich land. Explore creation of B-Lines as part of nature network (and active travel corridors).	Damhead Patchwork Farm Initiative.	Ongoing – aim to develop plan by 2024-25
Flood management	Recurrent issue of local flooding and erosion of local roads.	Arrange 'walk-overs' of local land holdings to identify source(s) of flooding & to raise awareness of role of land management practices in flood management.	Land owners and land managers, Damhead & District Community Council, Midlothian District Council, SEPA, Central Scotland Green Network Trust.	
Local services				
Co-operative banking service	No current service provision of this type.	Explore opportunities by learning from other communities where this has been successfully established.	Damhead & District Community Council,	2024-25 onwards
Local community support	Engaged with climate actions needed. Have carried out community engagement.	Hold climate conversations. Working with residents to enhance wildlife habitats.	Damhead Climate Action Group.	2022 onwards

7. Funding Opportunities

Securing funds will be vital to ensure the development and delivery of a number of the activities, services and infrastructure identified in the Climate Action Plan. Whilst not exhaustive, the list below provides a guide to some of the funds that could help with this process. In addition, Midlothian Voluntary Action will be able to signpost to potential funding sources.

(i) Support for a range of climate/sustainability projects

[National Lottery Community Fund – Awards for All](#)

This is a relatively quick and straightforward way to apply for funds between £300 and £10,000 to support what matters to people and communities. The fund is open to voluntary, community and public sector organisations, and applications need to do at least one of the following:

- Bring people together and build strong relationships in and across communities
- Improve the places and spaces that matter to communities
- Help more people to reach their potential, by supporting them at the earliest possible stage.

[SCVO – Funding digest](#)

Even if you are not a member of SCVO, this website is a great source of information about everything to do with funding, including regular updates on funding available.

[Naturesave Trust](#)

This scheme awards funds between £500 and £5,000 to support nature conservation, renewable energy, circular economy and help to develop more sustainable communities.

[Vegware Community Fund](#)

This fund can provide revenue funding for a range of community projects with sustainability at their centre. Grants are intended to cover core costs, which could include: stationery, teas/coffees for volunteers, equipment hire, heating, web hosting, internet access and so on. It's the goal of the fund to provide a contribution to allow groups to engage in their chosen task, develop or expand existing projects, or provide a basis from which to apply for further project funding. Grants range from £240-£2,400 per annum, and are reviewed annually.

[Magic Little Grants](#)

Funded through the People's Postcode Lottery, this fund provides small grants of £500 for a range of community projects, including those supporting: improvements to biodiversity and green spaces; increasing community access to outdoor space, responding to the climate emergency and promoting sustainability.

(ii) Energy Use

[CARES Funding](#)

CARES can support a wide range of projects including installing renewable technologies in community buildings, community benefits and shared ownership. Applicants must be constituted

non-profit distributing community organisations, including organisations with charitable status, that are established and operating across a geographically defined community or faith groups. Funds include:

- Let's Do Net Zero Community Buildings Fund
- Let's Do Net Zero: Off-Electricity Grid Communities Fund
- Community Heat Development Programme

Energy Savings Trust

The Energy Savings Trust provides information, advice, grants and loans covering a range of areas to reduce energy use and carbon emissions. This includes support for home energy efficiency and low carbon travel. The resources available on this website provide an excellent resource for individuals, organisations and business.

(iii) Active and sustainable travel

Paths for All - Smarter Choices Smarter Places Open Fund

This fund aims to encourage people to change their everyday travel behaviours. Grants are available to encourage people to use public transport or other sustainable options such as buses and community car clubs for longer journeys; walking and cycling for short journeys, and home-working to replace daily commutes. This also includes grants to help build an evidence base for the need for sustainable travel interventions within a local community. The fund is open to a wide range of community, third sector, and other organisations. Grants are between £5,000 and £10,000 and need to be match funded (50% match in kind and cash).

There is also a Smarter Choices Smarter Places Local Authority Fund. This is only open to local authorities, to support them to encourage less car use and more journeys by foot, bicycle, public transport and car share.

Paths for All – Ian Findlay Path Fund

This fund supports the improvement of local paths within and between communities, making it easier for people to choose active travel and public transport for everyday journeys. The fund supports path management projects that:

- Demonstrate that they will make it easier for people to choose active travel and public transport to reduce dependency on car usage
- Improve accessibility and resilience of existing paths between homes, community facilities, active travel routes and public transport facilities
- Remove barriers to make existing paths more accessible to more people
- Link paths to community destinations such as homes and public transport connections
- Improve and create routes to aid the development of 20-minute neighbourhoods

The fund is open to a wide range of community and third sector organisations. Grants are between £5,000 and £10,000 and need to be match funded (30% match in kind and cash). For those at an early stage in their project, the funder can assist with a greater proportion of initial feasibility study and design costs.

(iv) Circular Economy & zero waste

[Zero Waste Scotland – Transition Fund](#) (links with this fund to energy use and renewables)

This fund is designed to support social support social sector organisations (SSOs) and the wider third sector to make the transition to carbon net zero. The fund will support projects that will reduce carbon footprint including activities that: reduce energy consumption; improve energy efficiency; develop or move to renewable energy sources; transition to sustainable transport options; undertake scaling of local food production and supply; minimise or re-purpose food waste; develop circular economy products, services, processes and practices. The fund provides loans from £10,000. A small grant may also be available for SSO's who have a particular circular economy focus or are proposing specific projects with a focus on re-use, repair and leasing/sharing models.

The Zero Waste Scotland website also has a great range of materials, training and support available to help organisations take action on waste in their community.

(v) Biodiversity & land management

[National Lottery Community Fund – Climate Action Fund](#)

This fund supports projects that focus on the link between nature and climate, and that use nature to encourage more community-led action. In particular, the fund is looking to support projects that show:

- How creating a deeper connection with nature will lead to a change in people's behaviours and greater care for the environment.
- How by bringing nature back into our communities, we can help communities to reduce or adapt to the impacts of climate change.

The fund is open to community and voluntary organisations, charities, and the public sector. Most projects will be between £300,000 and £500,000.

[TCV - The Chestnut Fund](#)

This fund supports grassroots groups and initiatives wanting to deliver practical volunteering that improves the natural physical environment locally and strengthens connections between people and green spaces. The fund offers small grants of up to £500 which have a big impact. All community, Friends and other groups who are part of TCV Community Network are eligible (it is FREE to join this network). Grants are used to support groups setting up, cover their first year of insurance, buy tools and equipment, and cover the costs of training or connecting with other groups in the TCV Community Network among other things.

[The Mushroom Trust – Improving Local Greenspaces](#)

The Trust supports the creation and improvement of greenspaces, particularly in urban environments, through an emphasis on horticultural aspects. The Trust helps to fund projects throughout Scotland, especially those in Edinburgh and the Lothians. The types of projects supported includes: improvement of public parks, the development of allotments, the commissioning of landscape designs for long term planning, the planting of community gardens and orchards, and the creation of therapeutic garden spaces. The Trustees encourage applications for

the initial costs for design work in connection with new projects where this has not yet been considered

NatureScot

The Future Routes Fund was launched in 2018 as part of Scotland's Year of Young People, with funding available for young people to deliver activities, projects and ideas which engage people with nature.

(vi) Future developments – A Community Climate Action Hub for Midlothian

As described in Section 4 (ii), the Scottish Government is supporting the development of a network of regional community climate action, currently hosted by the Scottish Communities Climate Action Network. The intention is that each region will develop a clear proposition to government for a Climate Action Hub, which will then act as a focal point for information and resources for communities in tackling climate change. It is important that this Damhead & District Community Climate Action Plan is fed into the developing plans for a Midlothian Climate Action Hub. This will ensure that the ambitions, needs and barriers identified by the community of Damhead & District are heard at the regional level, and can help to shape the nature of resources and support made available through any future climate action hub.

8. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Damhead and District Climate and Community Survey Analysis

Appendix 2 - Damhead and District Climate and Community Survey - Data Summary

Appendix 3 - Damhead and District Workshop Slides and Notes

