

South Ayrshire Community Conference 2013

Feedback from our Workshops

Four workshops were delivered by lead officers from a number of partner organisations, assisted young people from our local secondary schools.

Our Community Strengths and Assets - help us to identify the skills within your community

The workshop considered ways of identifying the skills within a community rather than taking a service view of the problems, or deficits, within that community.

The ABCD (Asset Based Community Development) approach highlights how we can engage with people in communities from a different perspective and to consider:

- Possibilities and not just problems.
- Shared ownership of work.
- Developing leadership and citizen led approaches within communities themselves.
- Doing things with people and communities and not to them

Through identifying local stories, capacity and skills within communities and using community connectors, people can be encouraged to participate more fully.

As part of this process groups were asked to consider things from the perspective of 'Hands (skills), Heart (passions) and Head (how)

Workshop 1

Hands

Cooking; IT; Staying Active; Music; Baking; Painting & Decorating; Writing; Creativity helping children to make things.

Heart

Caring about their community; Love for (his) community's identity; Encouraging a healthy and active lifestyle; supporting charities; People Skills; Finding People permanent employment; Faith and Music; Justice and Fairness.

Head

Identity/Empowerment/achievement; Experience; Lifeskills; Management Skills; Innovative ways of developing physical health initiatives for children; Passionate about people – finding people employment; Organisational Skills; Justice / fairness.

Workshop 2

Hands

Driving; Baking; Cooking; Gardening; Sewing; DIY; Playing with Children; Drama; Fixing Things; Fishing; Shooting; Arts & Crafts; Music & Singing; Piano; Art; Sculpture with children; Painting & Decorating; Making Films & Photography.

Heart

Providing more opportunities for youth and promoting education; Access to youth opportunities and encouraging their involvement; Elderly people being incorporated within the community and not feeling isolated; The outdoors and proper treatment of the environment; Making sure people get

what they deserve in life; Everyone getting the chances they deserve – no one is a failure; Old buildings and drama; Equality, fairness and life changes; Community and family; Ayr Town centre; The environment and renewables; Employment opportunities for youths; Community Empowerment; Getting people involved.

Head

Business project management; Info / experience of resources for child care; Works with people to make the best out of themselves; Good communicator; Helps people to control own life; Engagement Skills; Money Advice knowledge; Strategic thinker; Pragmatic; Knowledge of Addiction and Recovery issues; DIY expertise; Knowledge of Council Structure; Engineering Skills; Good networker; Experience; Organisational Skills; Good Fundraiser.

Everyone within a community has skills which can be used in an asset based approach. Through community connectors, people can get together with other like minded people within their communities to make a difference. Most people don't know how to help but can be motivated by others through a mapping of existing groups, coming together for community stories and looking at institutional assets. Economic exchange can also be developed with the bartering of skills by bringing people together to discuss their skills and interests or by holding events such as an 'Ideas Fair'.

***Designing Services Together - working with you to get services right.
'Nothing about us, without us'***

The workshop considered the topic of co-designing services, whether with the NHS, the local council or other organisations, and how this could benefit the users of these services. The main emphasis of this approach is that people often have the solutions to their own problems. Two examples of co-production in action were given - the enablement model and a COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disorder) self management pilot - to illustrate this.

Workshop Session 1:

The group was asked what for initial thoughts on the introductory video that was shown to the delegates "*Blobs and Squares*". A couple of the people expressed that they felt that it was condescending, patronising and did not illustrate the true manner of partnership working. A member of the group expressed their concern that they had been coming to the Community Conference for a number of years but that it had not made any difference and that true partnership working had not developed between partners and local communities.

The group was told that following the Christie Commission report and the impending Community Empowerment Bill, which would at some point within the next year become legislation, there will be a duty on organisations to work in true partnership with communities.

The group was then asked to split into smaller groups to consider the following questions:

- ❖ Can you discuss in small groups what services could be re-designed using this model?
- ❖ What are some of the tensions/challenges around this?

Feedback

- The first group that fed back had the young facilitators in it and their main discussion had been about secondary education. A view was expressed that there was no consultation with pupils regarding services, that pupils were concerned about the lack of teaching staff and that when a teacher left and the post was not filled this had a detrimental effect on

pupils, that school facilities required improvement but there was no discussion with young people about what the improvements should be, that the pupils had insufficient contact with the head teacher, there was no contact between the school and local community. A suggestion was made that a community school partnership could be developed.

- One of the group expressed that they felt that South Ayrshire Council often did not listen to what they were saying and that they did not feel like equal partners.
- SISG explained to the group that they service hearing aids for people but when they want to hold a clinic in a Council building they are charged whereas the NHS will not charge them for holding clinics in their premises.
- Frustration was relayed to the wider group about the closure of the Carrick Halls as it was felt that there was no consultation with services users or the wider community when this occurred. Older people living within sheltered housing complexes are concerned that a similar process will occur and the warden service may be withdrawn without consultation of the residents and their families.
- The council requires to look at its own structures and this will assist with partnership working.
- Councillors from rural areas, regardless of political parties, should be taking decisions about what happens within rural communities as they have a better understanding of the complexities and that same should be true of councillors representing urban areas.
- The council needs to work with communities to find out what they need, the 'Blobs and Squares' showed tokenism.
- The Girvan Youth Trust evaluation of the boating pond project should be circulated to all the councillors.
- Things are making a difference however this can take time within large organisations but things are starting to change.
- As the Change Fund is only for three years, how do we prevent good services being developed and then having to close because of lack of funding?
- There is a lack of consultation and communication about road works in communities when they can have dramatic effects on residents and businesses.
- How can we maintain stability of funding for social enterprises?
- How can the NHS develop services that prevent or maintain chronic conditions but have them in communities when they are closing local clinics and moving services out to the hospital at Ayr?
- How do we bring people together with a common interest?
- A representative of gardening leave explained about the local service that they provide for veterans. The group was told about the change in the way people can arrange their care and self directed support has now been introduced. This has had mixed results but the general consensus is it is a good piece of legislation however there has been limited take up of this way of managing care within the South Ayrshire.
- The group then had a general discussion about health services and the fact that in the past the doctor was seen as "God" however this has now changed with people being able to more readily research the condition on the internet. There has to be a sea change in how professionals deal with clients as Phil's explained.
- Within the Community Planning Partnership is not necessarily always SAC who is the lead partner.
- Work needs to be completed with faith based organisations as partners.

Workshop Session 2:

- The Men's Health Project in Maybole was highlighted as an example of partnership working where South Ayrshire Council and Ayr United have joined in partnership with men from the local community. This project was developed from a needs survey of the area and health assessments and a health assets survey and was based on two other projects that had been run successfully. The Men's Shed movement in Australia was discussed as an example of projects that have been very successful community led health initiatives however a note of caution was highlighted in that when professionals became involved with the project, and constantly consulted with the participants, memberships fell.
- Professional organisations need to be clear about why they are looking to co-design services so that local people do not just see it as being a way to save money.
- These ideas are very much shifting the responsibility to the individual; within the justice context this has the possibility of reducing reoffending. An example of this is a peer mentoring project for women offenders.
- Public Social Partnerships should be used as a tool to help to redesign services effectively before they go out to wider tendering. The Scottish Government has acknowledged that this is model should but has an understanding that it will take time and that a cultural shift has to take place within organisations.
- Assessing homes for energy efficiency measures used to easier when there were less agencies involved, it is hard to keep the client at the centre of the process.
- With the introduction of the Health and Social Care Bill will mean that health and social care services will be integrated, with this being the case concerns were raised that the health services were being regionalised at the hospitals and removing them from easily accessible places such as the Heathfield Clinic in Prestwick. One of the difficulties highlighted with the process was the poor transport links to hospitals and the car parking. People questioned how closing the Heathfield Clinic would improve services.
- The group was informed about the Partners for Change process with regards to Community Transport and how this will be used to look at how transport is delivered.
- Partnership working in the area is good and is improving, local discussion is helping to develop solutions to the constraints that agencies have with current resources.
- Education is important in instilling community values within young people, young people should be given guidance in these matters and should be taught that they have to fight for what they believe in and want.
- Intergenerational work is important as are early intervention approaches.
- An example was give of an early intervention approach that is being delivered in schools by Ayr Housing Aid. This project tells young people about what it is like to have a house and their responsibilities that they have from taking up a tenancy. This information is delivered over 2 classes of PSE.
- Concerns were raised about direct transport links being withdrawn between Annbank and the Hospital.
- There are good examples of where this approach is working such as the setting up of the Care and Share project in Troon is a good example of partnership working and allows professionals to meet with people that do not normally engage with services.
- Engaging young people in schools is important; work experience should be about showing young people what they require to do to be employable.

Stepping in Early to prevent a Crisis – how can communities help

Each group was given a brief overview of partner remits, emphasising various early intervention and prevention methods of working.

The workshop then split into 2 groups - one group considered a case study on antisocial behaviour. The case study highlighted an area with the following issues and complaints:

- Young people hanging around the area, causing a disturbance
- Noise, litter and underage drinking
- Alleged drug dealing
- Fly-tipping and dog-fouling in the local playpark
- Historically housed older generation where neighbours knew each other, but recently a mixed group of tenants have moved into vacant properties

The group was first asked to identify the main issues in the case study. They identified the following:

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| - drug dealing | - fly-tipping |
| - alcohol | - mixed generations |
| - noise | - mixed tenants |
| - youths | - children can't use the park |
| - litter | - lack of accommodation |
| - dog fouling | - lack of action from local authority/services |

The group was then asked how these issues could be jointly resolved. The following suggestions were made:

- There is a cost for diversionary (preventative) tactics and the council could facilitate grant funding and support
- One of the delegates spoke about a problem with litter in Maybole where it was identified that the young people from the school were dropping the litter. The group who tackled this problem spoke to the school and more bins were put on the route and this made a significant difference. They also organised joint litter picks in the area and proved that the community can make a difference.
- There was also an issue with young people throwing stones in Maybole and the community worked with the young people concerned and the problem has been resolved, proving that communication is very important.
- To tackle the problem of the new tenants moving into the area, it was suggested that community groups are a good method of helping to bring people together.
- Look at what is in the community and build on it. 'Come and Try Days'.
- Dundonald Bowling Club invites schools to visit and encourages inter-generational participation.
- Parental responsibility is important
- It would be useful to have a directory of what goes on in the community

The second group considered a case study about Tom who is 82 which highlighted the following issues:

- Tom admitted to hospital with significant injury to head and ribs
- He was discovered lying on the floor of his house by neighbours who called for an ambulance
- Tom's grandson is a known drug user and has various charges in relation to robbery, theft and violence

- Grandson often visits Tom leaving his 2 children (ages 8 &10) for whom he has parental responsibility for long periods
- Neighbours have noticed that Tom has sustained various injuries over the past 3 months but Tom tells them that he has been losing his balance, resulting in falls.
- Tom no longer walks to the shops which he used to do on a regular basis
- Police were called to Tom's house after neighbours heard raised voices, Tom denies he has been abused by his grandson.
- Tom has a support package including home support (1hr per day) meals on wheels and a district nurse to deal with his wound dressings.

From the case study the group identified the following issues:

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| - children at risk | - vulnerable adult |
| - drug issues | -Tom's reluctance to share |
| - health issues | - role of agencies |
| - falls prevention | - nutrition |
| - neighbours | -family relationship |
| - extended family | - finances – is he struggling with money |
| - housing issues | - potential physical disabilities |
| - education | - hearing/visual impairment |

The group then identified potential solutions:

- National register of elderly people
- Home visits to check on how old person is
- Ensure elderly people are aware of resources available to them
- Neighbourhood engagement and networks in the community – use volunteers as people in communities want to help
- Local community groups
- Multiple agencies – should be talking to each other
- Inter-generational work
- Encourage people to look after neighbours and develop neighbourhood culture/awareness
- Child protection – listen to the children
- Paul also needs support from agencies and support for family relationships
- Community activities

Planning for Places – a better understanding of 'place'

The group was asked "*How can we more effectively plan for the future?*" As an introduction the use of data in the planning process was explained and a short presentation gave examples of a variety of factors which are taken into account. Sources used included the Census, SA1000 and National Records for Scotland.

The group was told that at the other end of the scale, communities can be often be effective and help themselves without statistics or planning. The example of "*Incredible Edible Todmorden*", a community in Yorkshire which although took the initiative to try a new approach to foster community spirit. Success has been driven by locals for locals and proved that this can be done within communities. Slides provided some examples of the public spaces now used to grow fruit and vegetables which local people can pick for free (including the Police Station and Health Centre)

The workshop was asked “What does place mean to you?” and there was some discussion around a variety of ideas which the word place meant to individuals. For some, it could mean their street and it wasn't necessarily just at a local community level. It could be their town or even country level. A few delegates highlighted the difference between rural and urban ideas of “place”.

The young people commented that they felt that primary school had provided a sense of place but in moving to secondary education, their sense of place expanded as they got to know others from other schools. “Place” grows with experience and age. There was discussion around various administrative boundaries, natural communities, neighbourhood watch and church communities, the issue of poverty creating a common bond, access to services, Ayr as a university community and the built environment

Communities can often feel hemmed in by their own boundaries and at times it is difficult to plan effectively due to short term funding, lack of resources and planning process requirements – these can be compounded by the difficulties in defining ‘place’

Members of the workshop were asked to take 3 post it notes each and consider three things that could improve their communities from three different perspectives:

1. From a personal even selfish point of view – what improvement would benefit them
2. From the point of view of the whole community ie what would benefit the community but may or may not impact on them personally
3. From the point of view of a particular group within a community eg young people, unemployed, older people etc.

From a Personal Perspective

- Space to grow food locally (like Todmorden) for community use
- Better “place making” NOT “planning for places”
- Local community development officers
- Older people's services maintained and enhanced
- Voice in decision making for local plan
- 3 year funding for the Carrick Centre (£50k p.a. would be nice)
- Sports facilities and better parks in Dalmilling
- Regeneration and better use of town centre and High Street areas. More new businesses to set up in town centre – in particular eating places. Ayr Town – A central community venue covering all ages, for use by all smaller community groups and individuals. Multi cultural, multi use. Vibrant Ayr town centre. All people in wider Ayr area engaging with Ayr economic prosperity, free events, resources for all
- Residents' association for Girvan
- Any “place” must be accessible to everyone. As a disabled member of community, I find some places unavailable
- Prestwick – specific areas of beach dedicated to DOGS, NOT PLAYGROUNDS
- Less bureaucracy/easier communication. Who does what or is responsible for what? (M Connell, Maybole CC)
- Improve facilities at Ladywell Stadium: toilet facilities currently not fit for purpose; no disabled facilities; no female facilities. These would improve participation for above. Maybole Junior Footballing Club – Alex Meek
- Improved infrastructure, roads, cycle paths
- Transport/landscaping/sports/leisure and better consultation. Improved public transport links/reasonable public transport fares/ feel safe in neighbourhood. Better public transport/more frequent buses
- Council to take back grounds maintenance areas they maintained in the past.

- Improve bus service in evenings so non-car owners – often elderly people – can go out and socialise (Newton & Heathfield Community Council)
- More caring/sharing society, better use of Council properties
- Remove all barriers and allow groups in a community to act and start up things (not just what community partners approve)
- Improved public realm (Stuart Lindsay)
- Improve place you live: place is looked after/grass cut/rubbish cleared/look like it is cared for/no dog fouling/ buildings painted. Bins in nice areas (Wallacetoun)
- More creative interaction and interpretation of “place”
- Annoyed so many shops and business closing so why do rates and rents not stop increasing as due to cost of rent and rates we have empty buildings deteriorating.
- SAC closed the toilets at Barassie beach which is well used by the community; elderly walking their dogs and younger people surfing yet no toilets for them or day visitors in summer
- Access to high speed broadband; better communications e.g. wifi
- Getting everyone involved in more “things”
- Good relations with SAC, Police & Fire & Rescue
- Dog fouling situation being improved
- Parking situation around schools being improved
- Safety in the High Street
- Improve car parking to encourage people to stop and visit – signage
- More rugby pitches (one at present – 200 participants) Peter Lynn Maybole
- Very poor bus service in village – Rose Gallagher, Loans Community Council
- Lack of rural transport & provision of CLD services
- A change to the L.D.P. that means the village is not destroyed. Although from personal point of view I can move out when the village is destroyed. Mulholland, Symington CC.
- Promote tourism
- More help for hobby base activity
- Better supervision of services (including transport)
- 100% community owned energy/community owned energy companies providing and supply energy locally/sustainable, reliable, autonomous income – fund communities identified
- Corporate working within Council and from partners

From the perspective of particular groups

Older People

Additional retired persons funding and other support; Elderly – other facilities for them to use other than pubs (Dalmilling); disabled care; easily accessible facilities to maintain sense of community; better community engagement with young people to see them involved with their communities; senior citizens & Sheltered Housing: full time wardens who can really “do” for tenants; help to run lunch clubs and activities – not all elderly want to run things but would attend; help for elderly community transport; elderly – Leisure facilities and services for elderly people so they feel less isolated;

Young People

Increased activities for young people; young seniors i.e. S1 – S5 meeting place & youth group; young people’s sports clubs (Troon); more activity “places” for young people; young people 13 – 25: increased services for young people to find employment; rural youth – housing to rent or buy

(Stuart Lindsay); young People – transport; leisure & sport; meeting spaces; Young People – community facility required; Leisure facilities for young people. Girvan has 21/GYT but nothing else; Elderly – better provision of meals on wheels. South Ayrshire need to move away from the convenience processed food delivery. The Hairy Bikers programme highlighted better quality meals/locally produced/ sourced/volunteer involvement. The benefits would include health/decrease isolation/volunteering/social issues; Young people – need a real voice; Young people – offers opportunity, diversion and hope; Children – safe and secure play areas/leisure facilities; Group within community perspective: Encouraging and helping young people to connect to others (e.g. college, work, volunteering etc) in other places to help expand their horizons as well as their community through their enhanced knowledge and understanding

Unemployed

Unemployed – jobs; unemployed – better help for unemployed; more involvement in helping people gain confidence & employment

General

Community as a whole should be given respect as to their understanding & appreciation of their environment & place; Public – by-pass for Maybole & more car parking off High Street; Assistance with trainer for men's health forum and marketing referrals for same (Peter Lynn, Maybole); Rural transport; More co-operation between residents and the Council; Better partnerships with national agencies; Better communications – Internet provision

From a Community Perspective

- Prestwick perfect. Lovely area to live in.
- Ensure Maybole swimming pool is not threatened with closure when Girvan opens
- No dog fouling/place for kids to play/connecting kids with wildlife
- Community council/dealing with more/giving back to community – Joan from Prestwick
- Change culture – “allow” community members/individuals to act as good neighbours. Can support older people – not just “paid” Council staff
- More done for 65 Club which is used by lots of the elderly in Prestwick for social activities
- Improved parking for tourists (beach)
- Better use made of unused space – e.g. for community groups
- Todmorden growing group in Prestwick. All ages, all groups = Sallie Sillars Indoor and outdoor facilities
- Greater opportunities for engaging for socially isolated
- Better utilisation of skills resource
- A plan to make the property more attractive
- (Maybole) Community plan to make places more attractive to us and visitors
- New houses (Dalmilling)
- Better street cleaning. Weed removal and clearing up grass after cutting instead of leaving it all over the streets/pavements
- Litter removed before general grass cutting to prevent shredded litter!
- A club for children
- Better communications regarding local facilities (Troon)
- Proposals to change playground at Preswick Beach. Where was the consultancy with local groups? NONE!
- Treat communities as individuals rather than decide one size fits all. M. Connell Maybole

- Wider access – enable communities to access wider facilities – good access to good jobs (and local economic benefits that accrue) access to health care.
- One thing: make communities as self centred as possible; reduce the need to travel but specifically reduce the need for unnecessary journeys and the exportation of wealth/money/ population etc. Stop communities becoming dormitories.
- Access to funding; channels to facilitate improvements
- Ask people to engage with Community Planning in own existing groups NOT by attending large meeting
- Support to reduce household energy costs
- Local shopping facilities & access to local services at weekends
- Local health facilities – family support (e.g. dementia)
- More policing in rural areas.
- Establishing a group about an issue: will there be support from officialdom? Will decisions wait?
- Community employment (Stuart Lindsay)
- A vibrant community centre
- What would benefit community? Making area look like it is cared for – not just grey concrete jungle. More green space, wildlife (Wallacetoun)
- Vibrant Ayr town centre as a real resource for all not just immediate residents & businesses
- Leisure facilities/reduced fees for hire of halls
- A community hall at an affordable let rate available to the community. The school “Community Wing” is not affordable. (Old Belmont, Belmont area)
- We need a facility for events indoors which can take 1500 – 2000 people
- Communication between all groups to form long term plans and bring people together
- A multi faceted leisure facility for the area – knock-on effects in tourism and health
- Community officer to assist with interface with Council (Girvan)
- Rear access denied at Community Centre Girvan – an issue for many local groups
- More help from SAC
- Make Ayr town centre more attractive to residents and visitors
- This would improve the beach area. Toilets are a necessity for all ages in the community. (R. Miller Troon Cabin Club) therefore toilets are very important. If SAC can’t afford to employ a toilet attendant, they could put up portakabins and just employ 1 cleaner each evening for an hour or two
- Community: Who makes decisions? How do I contact them? When will they reply?
- More growing places for veg. edible (edible?) foods
- To try and help veterans in the community as they leave the Services
- Some kind of community facility that would allow groups of people to come together
- Although Alloway and Doonfoot is seen as an affluent community, Doonfoot has NO community facility since the IFE Wing of school was used by school during the day.
- No more wind farms spoiling our environment
- Traffic calming preferably & pedestrian crossing of A77.
- Prestwick is a small community. Could do with a face lift in terms of parking in Main Street. Not enough parking
- Community – older people. A central facility for (shared) use to bring dsparate groups together to work towards identifying common goals. Outreach service to rural areas
- Better transport provision to enable people to travel to work, education etc
- Better broadband
- Maybole town centre improved & Co-op building demolished. – Peter Lynn, Maybole

- Elderly care could be better. Meals on wheels – also raising awareness of their vulnerability. Poor bus service in village. Rose Gallagher, Loans CC.
- Leisure facilities NOT Townhouse refurb. SAC to realise Girvan exists!
- Listen to the objections of the community rather than just telling the community that they are wrong. The new LDP is wrong. Mulholland, Symington CC
- Resources for youth in villages
- Encourage retired activities
- Young people – more supervision to prevent bad behaviour