



# Larbert Stenhousemuir & Torwood Community Action Plan

Client: Larbert Stenhousemuir & Torwood  
Community Council

Title: Research Report for a Community  
Action Plan

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# Executive Summary

## Background

Larbert Stenhousemuir and Torwood Community Council is working with the support of Foundation Scotland, to manage community benefit funds which will come to the local community through the Todhill Windfarm project. The funds will bring an expected £24,000 annual income to the community. In order to ensure the best use of this money and that it is used in a way that meets the needs of the area the Community Council will develop a Community Action Plan which will identify the key themes and specific projects that will be adopted within the area over the next 10 years. To assist with the research and writing the Action Plan, the Community Council has commissioned the services of Community Enterprise.

The community consultation will aim to inform a Research Report and based on the findings of this research, a 10 Year Community Action Plan will be developed and distributed throughout the community.

Community consultation took place between March and May 2015. The consultation methods are described below.

The findings from this research will inform the Community Action Plan which will be finalised with short, medium and long term actions and will be launched to the public in June 2015.

## Methodology

Community engagement is a critical part of preparing a Community Action Plan and a wide range of methods were used to ensure everyone had an opportunity to share their views. The programme included a mix of both traditional and innovative methods of engagement:

- A community survey: a survey was produced and widely distributed both online and in paper format.
- Focus groups: two focus groups were organised, with young people from the local High School, and parents and working age adults from one of the Mums & Toddlers groups
- Facebook: The Community Council has an active Facebook page which was used to encourage participation and to facilitate information sharing across the area.
- Photography Competition; an online competition was held encouraging local residents to submit images of their community highlighting what they liked and didn't like about the town.
- Open Meetings: 3 meetings were held, one during the day and two in the evening. The meetings included group discussions and one to one feedback.
- Stakeholder meeting: this brought together a small number of key stakeholders including leaders from statutory services, the local authority, the business community and the third sector.

## Demographics and Statistics

### Population

Larbert, Stenhousemuir and Torwood has a population of 19,400 from statistics taken in 2011 but since then anecdotally the population has risen to around 22,000. Like so many other areas in Scotland, the population is ageing quickly, and has a higher than average proportion of children aged between 5 and 11, compared with Scotland as a whole. The population has grown by around 41% in Larbert and 30% in Torwood in the period between 2001 and 2011; the population of Stenhousemuir has dropped by 3% in the same period.

### Economy & Jobs

Households in these areas are generally more affluent than in the whole Falkirk area, with only two datazones which are more deprived in Stenhousemuir. This affluence is evidenced by the fact that 69% to 75% of the population in this area are economically active.

### Deprivation

Two datazones in Stenhousemuir appear in the top 15% of most deprived in Scotland and within these, 30% of adults are income deprived as compared to 15% for the rest of Scotland.

### Health

Focusing on the more deprived datazones shows that health indicators including diabetes and patients hospitalised as an emergency are statistically worse than the Scottish average. In these datazones, more adults are also on incapacity benefits and severe disability allowance against the average Scottish figures.

## Community Consultation

**Open Meetings** - two public meetings were held in late March, one in the afternoon and one in the evening to encourage both working adults and those not working, to attend. Lots of ideas were raised which are fully noted in the Appendices at the back of this report. In summary, those that came up more often were:

- Good things included the Tryst Sports Club, transport links, hospital, path networks, outdoor activities, community centre, hospital, schools and an active Community Council.
- Challenges were identified as people not knowing what's on, attracting businesses to the area, rising population and pressure on local services, no annual community event, a need for more youth activities – not just sports, lack of maintained green space and the Precinct.
- When asked what could be done to make life better they suggested youth activities, a community hub, community magazine, promotion, using empty spaces (shops) and a community event

- Funds could be spent on an annual event, supporting local new business start-ups, assisting schools projects, creating more of a community hub, filling up empty spaces, community café, and employing a co-ordinator.

## **The Surveys**

- A total of 465 survey responses representing 800 people were received
- 46% of those responding were aged between 36 and 49. The smallest age groups represented through the surveys were under 18s – 1%; 18 to 25 year olds – 1.5% and over 80s – 2%.
- 57% of those questioned live in Larbert and 33% in Stenhousemuir
- 88% said they think the area is a good area to live, marking it 7 or above (where 1 is strongly dislike it and 10 is love it)
- When asked about what people value they felt most strongly about friendly people (62%), good community facilities (54%) and strong community spirit (32%)
- Facilities that people use most are local walks 78% and local cafes 63%
- Only 18% of those responding said that they used the community centre
- Comments were received on several community facilities including library, garden centre and shops, pool and other sporting facilities. Full comments are available in the main Report.
- When asked to rate initial responses from the Open Meetings, 41% rated community assets and recreational provision as excellent and 40% rated infrastructure development as excellent. The most popular infrastructure development to invest in was creating a vibrant shopping precinct at 57% and improving cycle ways and footpaths with 54%.
- When asked what community assets they would like to invest in 62% said they would like to invest in additional sports facilities, 39% would prefer to support existing groups and 37% favoured investing in improving play areas.
- The least popular choice of how to spend money would be to employ a development officer.
- From the additional comments made, many favoured improving activities for young people.

## **The Focus Groups**

Two focus groups were held involving young people and parents or child minders from a local mums and toddlers group.

**Young People's Group** - the group was made up of 7 students in 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year of Larbert High.

- Generally a very positive response from the young people saying they feel safe, they like the shops, the Helix, good cycle routes, biking trail centre being built at the High School and it's a friendly community.
- They don't like the lack of decent shops, they said there are lots of sports activities but not much else to do and lack of spaces for groups to meet, and green spaces such as the Lido are not looked after, they don't know about any local youth clubs.
- When asked about what's missing they said a gym, café for young people, there's no gala day, and no art exhibitions/street art.
- They love the idea of an annual community event and creating a vibrant town centre, but they don't prioritise sports facilities

**Parents Focus Group** – this group was made up of parents, child minders and grandparents attending one of the local mums' and toddlers groups at Larbert West Church:

- Very positive response about good things including library, parks, woodland, sporting facilities for young kids, groups, transport links and churches
- They didn't feel much was missing but mentioned the need for play park equipment in the existing green spaces and there's not much for teenagers to do (other than sporting activities)
- They identified cost to hire hall space for use by community groups such as theirs, and are concerned this will become more difficult as the churches merge in the next 18 months.
- They like the idea of a gala day but also like the idea of more youth activities, somewhere for young people to go and this could be linked to how to use community space better through the idea of a community hub.
- They mentioned that people don't know what's going on so there needs to be more promotion

**Stakeholder Feedback** – the stakeholder meeting was presented with the key issues raised at both public meetings – good things, challenges, what could make life better and what to spend funds on:

- Good things include Tryst Community Sports Club, new cycle track and the history of the area
- When asked about how to action the priorities mentioned, they suggested making better links with schools and local groups, to make better use of existing green spaces and these spaces need to be cleared up - but this may be responsibility of the Council rather than being funded by other means
- They mentioned the need for better networking of groups already working in the community and more working alongside Council teams. Forums could be created according to beneficiary group i.e. low income, young people, older people etc.
- This group was keen to employ a co-ordinator who would be responsible for co-ordinating the projects, sourcing funding and improving networking.
- The group also raised questions about existing community buildings such as Community Centre and Dobbie Hall being under-used.
- The issue raised about empty shop spaces around the Precinct could be an opportunity to provide space for new business start-ups and social enterprises

### **Facebook and Photography Competitions**

The Community Council have an active Facebook presence which was used throughout the consultation to help to promote the process to the wider community. With over 2000 “likes” this marketing tool will be key to ensuring that messages are distributed to the community about the research process and about the findings, and actions or projects that will arise from the research.

A photography competition was held with 88 photographs submitted showing what people liked or didn’t like so much about their community. The winning entry is shown below.



## Summary of Findings

The findings below are not ranked in any order of priority at this stage.

### **Good Things about Larbert, Stenhousemuir and Torwood**

Schools, community spirit, outdoor activities, sports clubs, friendly people, hospital, library and woodland and green space, good housing, good transport links

### **Challenges**

Rising population putting pressure on existing services, people don't know what's going on in the community, attracting businesses into the area, empty spaces in Precinct, maintaining green spaces, regenerating the Precinct, nowhere for young people to go or meet up, under-used facilities such as Community Centre

### **How to make life better**

More youth activities, co-ordination and networking of existing community groups and Council teams, make better use of community spaces to create a community hub, hold an annual community event, maintain green spaces better, community café, supporting and promoting existing groups

### **How could community funds be spent?**

Employ a co-ordinator, projects that will fill up empty spaces such as pop up shops or cafes, create a community hub, support existing community groups, introduce more youth activities, improving play areas,

## Future activity; Emerging Themes

The following themes have emerged from the research and findings taken from public meetings, stakeholders, focus groups and those attending the final public meeting and voting on their preferences for future projects.

### **Theme - Supporting Local Voluntary Organisations and Groups**

#### **Priority No. 1 for Community Council**

#### **Priority No. 2 from Public Meeting**

Seen as a short-term project this activity could be implemented quickly and will be seen by the community as benefiting a number of projects.

#### **Actions for Community Council**

- Identify key Outcomes for organisations to align to
- Develop application criteria and process
- Develop evaluation methods – demonstrating social impact of monies spent
- Identify a Panel to interview and assess applicants
- Devise a communications/promotions campaign to publicise which groups were successful



- Confirm and advise if this process is to be an annual one

### **Theme – Employing a Development Officer**

**Priority No. 2 for Community Council**

**Priority No. 4 from Public Meeting**

Linked to the need for better promotion, the idea would be to employ a part time development officer to deliver all other projects being identified in this research document.

#### **Actions for Community Council**

- Establish Terms & Conditions for position
- Draw up Person and Job Specification
- Start recruitment process
- Identify key tasks to be undertaken by Development Officer
- Request monthly report from DO to update Community Council on progress on other projects

### **Theme - Regenerating the town centre and use of empty spaces**

**Priority No. 3 for Community Council**

**Priority No. 1 from Public Meeting**

There is an issue of empty spaces in the town and appetite to bring more businesses into the town centre, particularly around the Precinct which some feel has been impacted negatively by Asda arriving, and "splitting the town in half". The idea is that empty spaces in shop units around the town and McGowans Factory could be used as pop-up shops, cafes or could be developed into office space for new business start-ups, particularly encouraging social enterprises, and young entrepreneurs.

This project could integrate other projects including "supporting schools projects" and "youth activities".

This appears to be the largest project due to the fact that it integrates elements of other projects into delivering the overall outcome of "regenerating the town centre".

#### **Actions for Community Council**

- Investigate which units are empty and how these could be used – what do local people want to see in these spaces?
- Identify landlords and start discussions
- Discuss potential of McGowans Factory being used as "business and community hub" – would form part of a larger on-going feasibility study and funding application would be possible for this through BIG Lottery Investing in Ideas or Awards for All
- Identify potential partners including Larbert High School and the local primary schools and discuss and agree the role of each school and the outcomes they would be looking to achieve from this project

- Clearly identify outcomes:
  - more young people will have opportunities for work experience whilst still at school
  - more empty spaces in the town will be used to benefit the community as pop up venues for shops or cafes, according to research findings
  - more space will be made available with flexible lease terms to new social enterprises, young enterprises and new business start-ups
  - more space will be created for exhibitions around the Arts, local heritage and community groups stimulating interest and providing a “place to go” for all ages
  - Identify match funding opportunities for this project

**Theme – Community Events**

**Priority No. 4 for Community Council**

**Priority No. 3 from Public Meeting**

**Events for Local People and Visitors**

The research shows that people are keen to hold more community events, and to promote what is going on in the community better so that people can participate in events. An annual community event has been suggested. There are issues which will need to be overcome if this type of event is to be successful, not least of which is to recruit volunteers to be responsible for this.

**Actions for Community Council**

- Establish an Events Committee
- Investigate what type and frequency of events that people would like to see through further research
- Recruit volunteers to assist
- Develop Action Plan for this Event
- Establish a promotions campaign
- Establish how to make use of other community spaces including Tryst Community Centre and Dobbie Hall

**Theme - Community Facilities for all Ages**

**Priority No. 5 for Community Council**

**Priority No. 5 from Public Meeting**

Although there are existing facilities for the Community, these are considered to be expensive for groups to access, don't open at times when they're needed, or are not fit for purpose. The research suggests that people are keen to bring the community together at regular activities in venues which open during the day and in the evening, seven days a week. A key contributor to the success of such venues, will be to ensure that people know what's going on there which has been a key finding from the research.

### **Actions for Community Council**

- Review what options are available as a venue - making best use of existing space
- Establish any restrictions placed by the Council – hire cost, opening hours etc.
- Consider impact of merging churches on space available and hire costs for spaces – will this be a barrier for community groups?
- Consider impact of proposed consultation with Dobbie Hall – what ideas might arise from Feasibility Study?
- Research what activities would be popular, opening hours
- Provide full costings of such a venture
- Research potential demand and how much people would pay for such facilities
- Negotiate with the Council for subsidised rates for community events or spaces
- Undertake promotions campaign

### **Theme – Green Spaces**

#### **Priority No. 6 for Community Council**

#### **Priority No. 4 from Public Meeting**

The research shows that people think they have access to good green spaces and woodlands particularly with the Ranger service at Forth Valley Hospital and the work that is on-going with groups such as CATCA and in the Torwood area. However more use of space around the centre of Larbert and Stenhousemuir, particularly the Lido, could be encouraged if there was less litter or dog mess.

### **Actions for Community Council**

- Arrange a walk about with interested volunteers – involve CATCA – to identify where the problems are and what they are
- Draw up a “snagging list” to hand to the Council
- Establish what works the Council is planning to do
- Hand over responsibility for some of the work to the Council
- Discuss ideas of how the CC could help to keep areas clean – posters designed by local kids asking dog owners to clear up after their dogs
- Look at signage requirements on walkways and in woodlands for routes
- Ensure walkways and cycle routes are fit for purpose
- Identify ideas to encourage more people out into the green spaces – geocaching, organised fun runs, cycle runs, family treasure hunts, nature activity events etc.

The final stage of this consultation will be to consider the findings, and develop the Action Plan taking these projects forward for the benefit of the Larbert, Stenhousemuir and Torwood communities.

# 1. Background

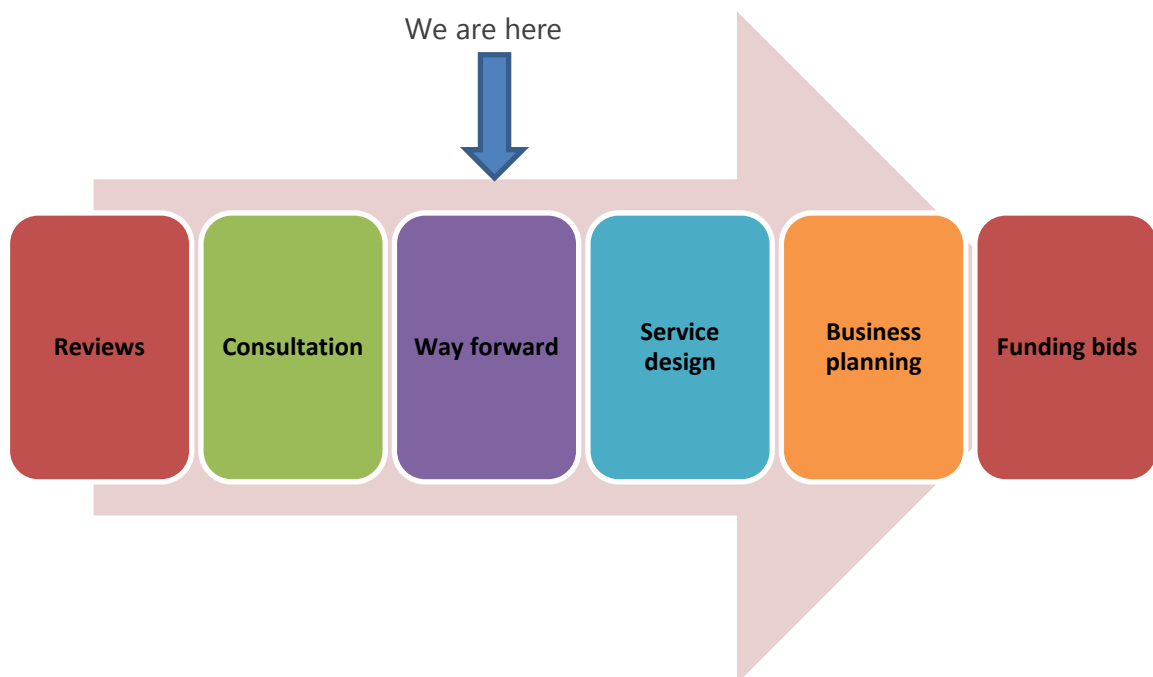
Community Enterprise was appointed by Larbert, Stenhousemuir & Torwood Community Council to conduct research and prepare a Community Action Plan for the area. Funding has been provided through CARES/Local Energy Scotland to enable the Community Council to proceed with this work.

Working with Foundation Scotland to establish a local community benefit fund linked to a commercial wind farm, the Community Council aims to maximise the effectiveness of the investment by engaging consultants to facilitate a community planning process and produce a vision within a Community Plan. The plan will have strategic short, medium and long term goals as well as ideas for implementation and monitoring.

It is anticipated that the Todhill Windfarm Development will bring an annual income to the area of around £24,000. This income will be used to benefit the whole community and this research has been commissioned to inform the ways that this money will be able to tackle the challenges faced and improvements suggested by the local community through the research.

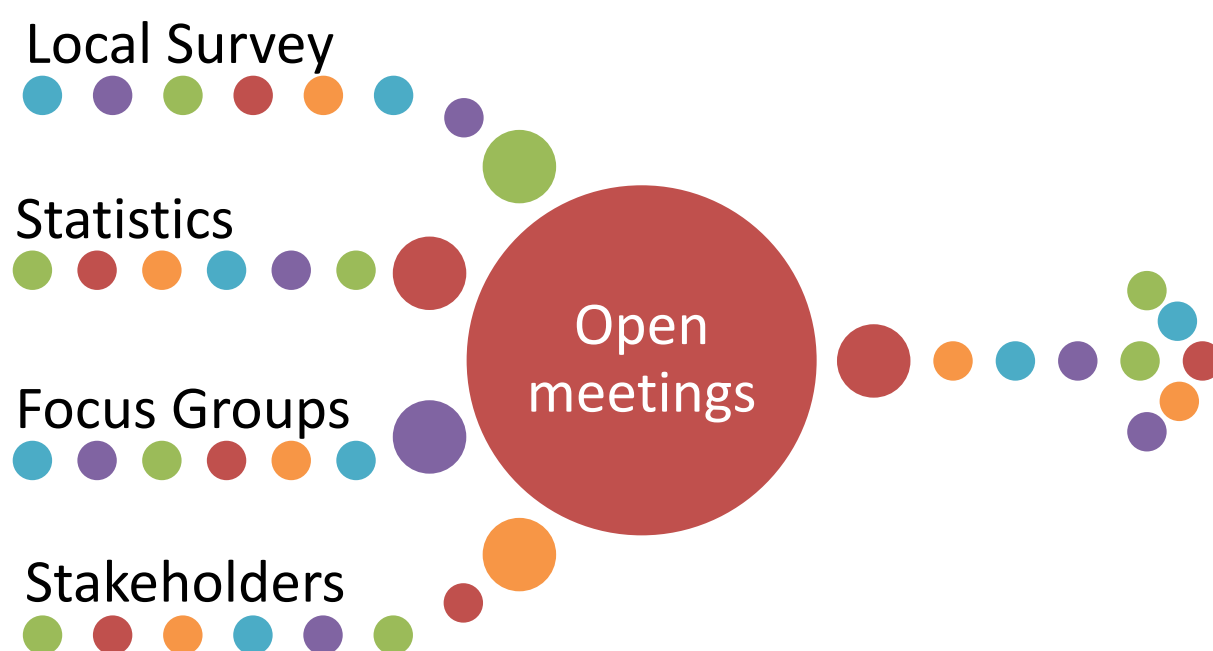
The community engagement and research work carried out since March 2015 is now complete and the findings will be presented to local people in June 2015. These findings will then be used to develop a Community Action Plan, due for launch in June 2015.

The purpose of this paper is to present detailed findings to the Community Council steering group on the research undertaken, and the key themes and future priorities that have emerged from our consultation with local people.



## Methodology

Engaging with everyone in the local community is a critical part of any Community Action Plan. Community Enterprise carried out extensive and highly participative research between March and May 2015 ensuring that everyone in Larbert, Stenhousemuir and Torwood had an opportunity to share their views. Our programme included time spent getting to know the area, encouraging engagement and building a presence in the community. An outline of the methodology for the community research and engagement is as follows:



### **Community Survey**

One survey was prepared to gather more quantifiable feedback from local people. This was made available online and distributed and promoted through a variety of local networks, through twitter, Facebook and newsletters. Hard copies were placed in key areas around the town, including the Tryst Community Centre and other public spaces. The team visited on one occasion and spoke to residents outside Asda. The Community Council helped to promote the survey on the ground. Detailed consideration was given to each of the questions on the surveys to ensure that they were both 'open ended' to give room for local people to share their thoughts, yet structured to ensure that the feedback and suggestions could be ranked by popularity and priority. At all points in the survey, there was

|                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                | an option for respondents to elaborate and give other suggestions.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Focus Groups</b>            | Two focus groups were held in the community to gather initial feedback from residents on what they like about Larbert Stenhousemuir and Torwood, what they would like to see change and the solutions to those challenges. Focus groups were held with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local parents and childminders</li> <li>• Local young people at Larbert High School</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Facebook</b>                | The Larbert Stenhousemuir & Torwood Facebook page has been used as a means to promote the community consultation, to encourage participation and to facilitate information sharing across the area. <a href="https://www.facebook.com/LSTCommunityCouncil">https://www.facebook.com/LSTCommunityCouncil</a><br><br>The Facebook page has also collated memories and views of the area and contributed to the knowledge of assets to be built on and challenges to be addressed.                                                                              |
| <b>Photography Competition</b> | A photography competition was held where local residents were invited to submit images of "our community" highlighting what they liked and didn't like about the town. Entries can be viewed here: <a href="https://www.facebook.com/LSTCommunityCouncil">https://www.facebook.com/LSTCommunityCouncil</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Public Meetings</b>         | Two public meetings were held in March 2015 at Dobbie Hall, Larbert, the first during the day, the second in the evening. The meetings included group discussions around likes and dislikes, priorities for improvements and what to spend the community funds on. Further participation in the consultation and beyond was actively encouraged.                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Stakeholder Meeting</b>     | A meeting was arranged to bring together a small number of key stakeholders with an interest in Larbert Stenhousemuir & Torwood who make an important contribution locally and have a working knowledge of the area. This included officials from statutory services, the local authority, the business community and the third sector. For a full list of attendees, refer to Appendix 1. Specific ideas emerging from the research were explored as were the challenges and possible solutions including how the different stakeholders may work together. |
| <b>Final Public Meeting</b>    | A final public meeting was held in late May to disseminate the findings of the research and identify any priorities that the community felt could be applied to the potential projects or areas of need.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |

## 2. Demographics and Statistics

### Geography

The Larbert, Stenhousemuir and Torwood Community Council area is part of Falkirk Council and situated in the Central belt of Scotland. The main towns in the council are Falkirk, Grangemouth, Bo'ness, Denny, Larbert and Stenhousemuir. Falkirk is one of the best connected areas in Scotland, within half an hour of Glasgow and Edinburgh, and just 20 minutes drive from Edinburgh airport. It has excellent motorway and rail links and 60% of Scotland's population is within a 60 minute journey.



Larbert, Stenhousemuir and Torwood attract young families who move to the area for the good schools and affordable housing. It is predominantly residential in character with 2,500 new houses to be built in the Falkirk Council local plan before 2020 with 1,844 due to be completed by 2015.

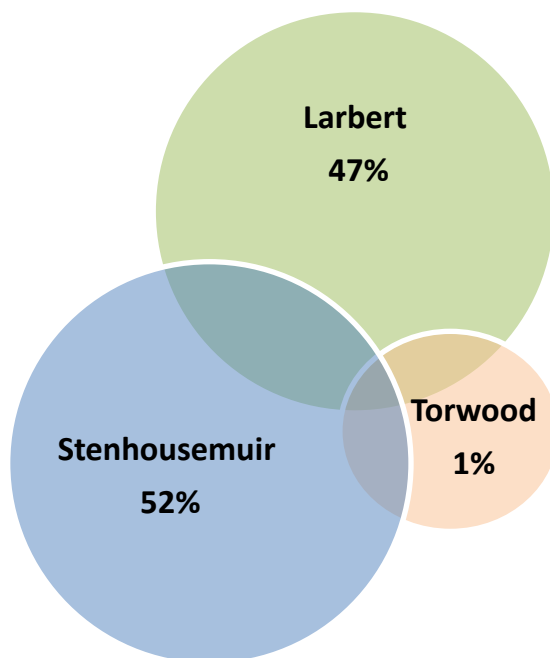
### Intermediate Zones and Datazones

The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) measures the level of deprivation at the local 'data zone' level in Scotland. It identifies small area concentrations of multiple deprivations. There are 3 intermediate zones in the community council area:

- Larbert Village and South Broomage
- Stenhousemuir East
- Stenhousemuir West

## Population

In 2015, the Larbert, Stenhousemuir and Torwood Community Council area has a population of around 22,000. Note that the figures below are based on the 2011 Census which are the most up to date figures available.



|               |              |
|---------------|--------------|
| Larbert       | 9143         |
| Stenhousemuir | 10049        |
| Torwood       | 245          |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>19437</b> |

The area has fewer single households than the Falkirk average. 37% of households are married or cohabiting couples with no children and 30% are couples with children. Torwood has a larger retired population with 18% compared to Larbert at 14% and Stenhousemuir with 16%.

The population is growing in particular in Larbert, which has increased by 42% between 2001 and 2011 and in Torwood where the population has increased by 31%. In Stenhousemuir the population figures have decreased by 3% in the same period. The population in all three areas is fairly equally male and female with the largest age groups being the 25-44 and the 45-59 year age groups. Larbert has a higher than average number of children aged 5-11 at 9.3% compared to 7% in Stenhousemuir and 7.6% being the average across the Falkirk area.



The population increases are having an impact on services in particular for primary aged children and the elderly.

## **Economy**

Based on Falkirk Council Research 2014 Larbert, Stenhousemuir and Torwood are statistically fairly affluent with the exception of two datazones in Stenhousemuir.

### Larbert

- 75% of people are economically active compared to the Falkirk average of 71.1%.
- 3% of people have never worked and long term unemployed compared to the Falkirk average of 4.9%.
- 13% of the working population are employed in higher managerial and professional jobs compared to 6.9% average in Falkirk. 29.2% of people are in lower managerial, administration and professional jobs compared to 20% in Falkirk.
- 28% of people own their houses outright compared to 26% in Falkirk and 50% own their own houses with a mortgage or loan compared to an average of 38% in the Falkirk council area.

### Stenhousemuir

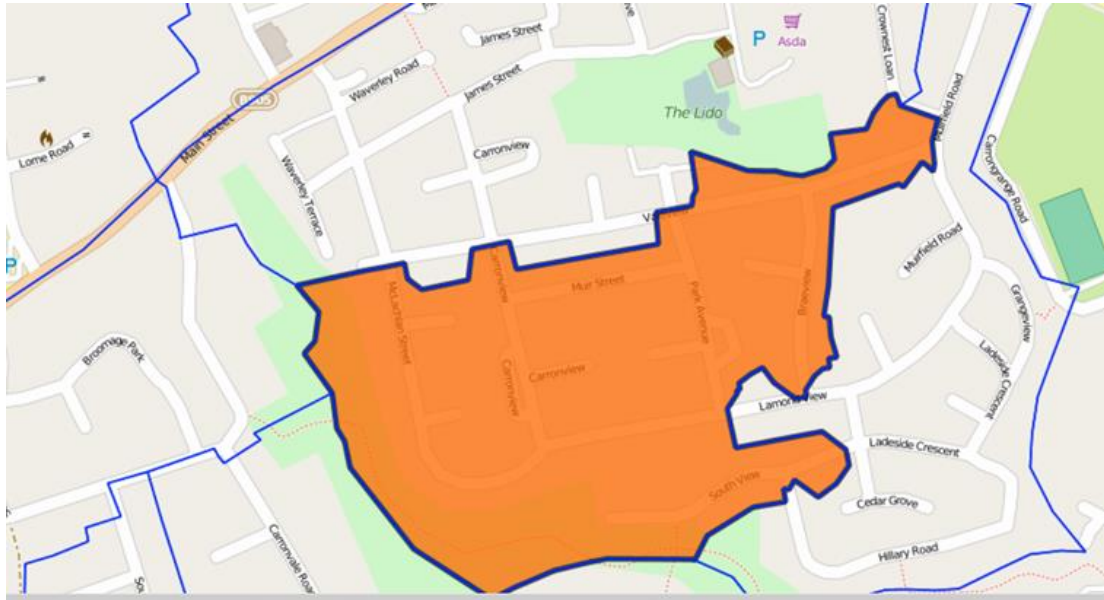
- 71% of people are economically active.
- 3% of people have never worked and long term unemployed compared to the Falkirk average of 4.9%.
- 4.2% of the working population are employed in higher managerial and professional jobs compared to 6.9% average in Falkirk and 22% of people are in lower managerial, administration and professional jobs compared to 20% in Falkirk.
- 29% of people own their houses outright compared to 26% in Falkirk, 39% own their own houses with a mortgage or loan compared to an average of 38% in the Falkirk council area. 22% of people rent their homes from the council compared to 9% in Larbert.

### Torwood

The statistics in Torwood are similar but the population is slightly older and statistically more affluent than Larbert and Stenhousemuir. The population density is significantly less with 0.59 persons per hectare compared to Stenhousemuir having 32 people per hectare.

- 69% of people are economically active.
- 2% of people have never worked and are long term unemployed compared to the Falkirk average of 4.9%.
- 12.6% of the working population are employed in higher managerial and professional jobs compared to 6.9% average in Falkirk; 29% of people are in lower managerial, administration and professional jobs compared to 20% in Falkirk.
- 38% of people own their houses outright compared to 26% in Falkirk and 39% own their own houses with a mortgage or loan compared to an average of 38% in the Falkirk council area. 3% of people rent their homes from the Council compared to 9% in Larbert and 22% in Stenhousemuir.

The exception is datazone SO1002533 in Stenhousemuir which is situated between the Lido and Carronrange Road. It has a population of 818 people and is rated within the 15% most deprived areas in Scotland.



- 30% of the population are income deprived compared to 13% in Scotland
- 25% of the working age population are employment deprived compared to 13% Scottish average

In addition this datazone is statistically worse than the Scottish average in the following areas:

- Patients hospitalised as an emergency
- Prevalence of diabetes
- Adults claiming incapacity benefits/severe disability allowance
- Dependence on out of work benefits or child tax credit
- People claiming pension tax credits
- Crime rate
- Low weight births

## Falkirk West Community Action Plan – 2013

Community consultation was carried out by Falkirk Council's Community Learning and Development and Community Planning Teams to identify key issues and concerns held within the communities of the two datazones in the Larbert, Stenhousemuir and Torwood areas which appear within the top 15% of the most deprived in Scotland as well as covering the Airth and Carronshore areas.

This research may be relevant to set the scene and will contribute to the new research presented in this report by documenting the key issues identified:

|                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Open Spaces/<br>Paths/ Parks        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clean up Lido</li> <li>• Rubbish clean-up</li> <li>• Tree cutting</li> <li>• Tidy up flower beds</li> <li>• Dog fouling</li> <li>• Improve roads/pavements</li> </ul>                                                      |
| Service Delivery                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-ordination voluntary groups/provision</li> <li>• Housing support</li> <li>• Increase credit union provision</li> <li>• Increase job clubs</li> <li>• Local information resource base (Welfare Reform)</li> </ul>        |
| Safer Communities                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vandalism</li> <li>• Tackle anti-social behaviour</li> <li>• Nuisance neighbours</li> <li>• Drug &amp; alcohol misuse</li> <li>• Traffic issues (Shore Road) Airth</li> <li>• Unruly dogs</li> </ul>                       |
| Equitable Access<br>to Local Health | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information on health support services</li> <li>• Health &amp; Wellbeing taster sessions (OAP)</li> <li>• Local based vitamin outlet</li> <li>• Co-ordinate food work in the area</li> </ul>                               |
| Regeneration                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family learning provision</li> <li>• Youth provision/Facilities (not enough for 12 to 18 yr olds)</li> <li>• Better communications/newsletter/community website</li> <li>• Improve adult learning opportunities</li> </ul> |

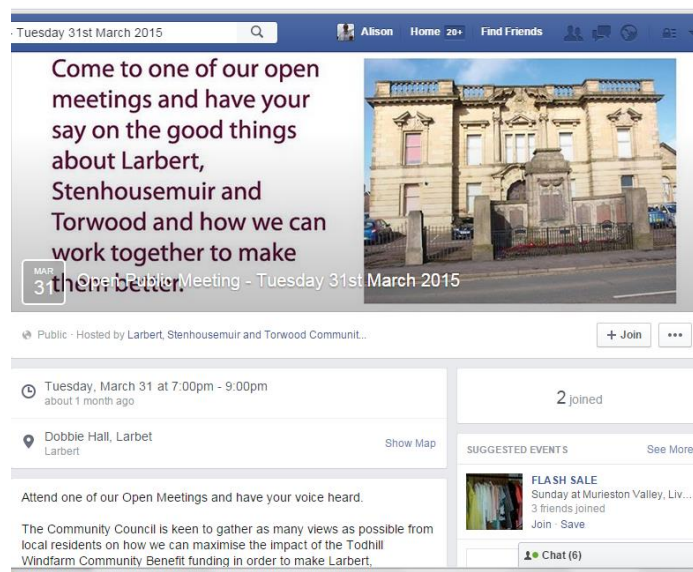
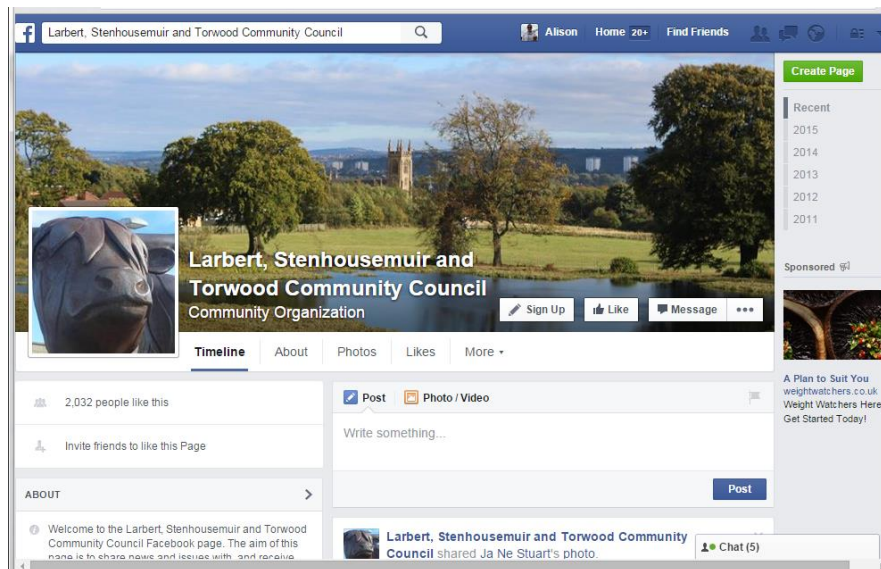
### 3. Communications Campaign and Engagement

The consultation has strived to ensure that a wide representation from the community is reflected in the research gathered. This has been done through the use of various communications media including:

- Social media – the Larbert Stenhousemuir and Torwood Community Council have an active Facebook page which was used as a key way to engage with its many followers
- PR – press releases were submitted to the Falkirk Herald and local radio station, Central FM, to advertise the consultation and the dates of the open meetings in March
- Emails were sent to a community database of key contacts within the local third sector as well as some small businesses advising them of the consultation and asking them to advise their clients, members and service users
- Posters and flyers were left at key community locations including shops, High Street businesses, the library, schools, advertising the open meetings

## Facebook

The Community Council (<https://www.facebook.com/LSTCommunityCouncil>) already uses Facebook actively and this resource has been used to regularly promote the research and actively encourage debate and discussion amongst local people. The page was also used to gather entries for the "My Community" photography competitions and to generally stimulate interest in activities and events that were taking place in and around the town.



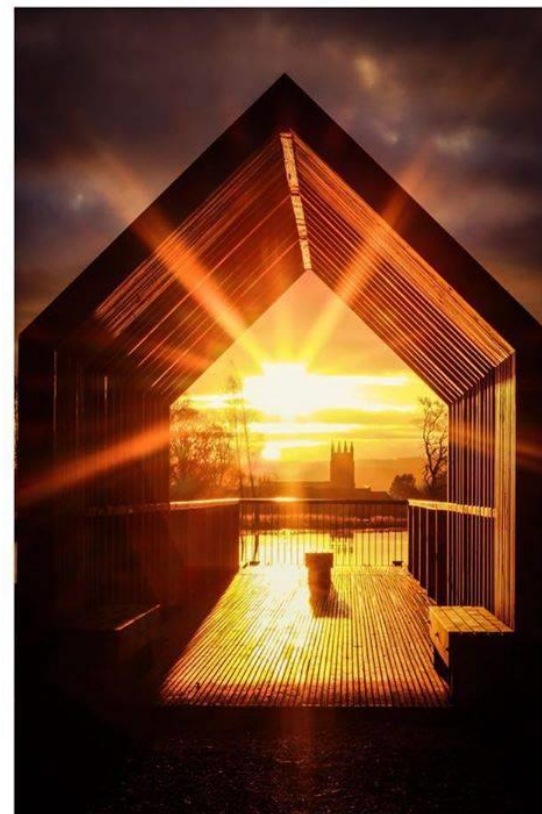
## Photography Competition

Members of the public submitted photographic images which captured 'My Community' for them. These images were judged by a panel of three.

Following is a sample of those images but they can all be viewed on the Facebook page of the Community Council.



Judging the competition was difficult, with 88 photographs submitted but after deliberation, the committee decided that the following picture, submitted by Jamie Burgoyne, entitled "New Dawn, New Hope" captured the best aspects of the local community.



# 4. Community Consultation

## Public Meetings

Two open meetings were held in March in the afternoon and evening to ensure both those working and not working could attend. These were held in the Dobbie Hall and were open to all members of the public. The meeting included group discussions around themes: what's good about the area; key challenges; what could be done to make things better; what community funds could be spent on.

The meetings also included some representation from local voluntary groups and charities working in the area on various projects including sports activities, environmental projects and the local Round table. Both meetings also featured two local primary school choirs to open the meetings.

Those discussion points which came up most regularly are shown below. The full list of issues raised can be found in Appendix 2 at the back of this Report.



## What's good about the area?

- Tryst Sports Club
- Transport links
- Hospital
- Path network
- Outdoor activities – opportunities
- Number of active youth organisations
- History
- Community Centre
- Low crime
- Good schools
- Active community council

## Key Challenges

- Promoting what's going on
- Community identity and cohesion
- Attract businesses/shops to area
- Pressure on schools and Health services
- Rising population
- No core/annual community activity
- Need more youth activities
- Lack of maintained green space
- Run-down appearance of buildings
- Precinct – splitting the community
- Road infrastructure overstretched
- Anti-social behaviour

## What can be done to make things better?

- Develop outdoor activities
- Promote what's going on
- Produce an asset map
- Community magazine
- Youth activities
- Community hub
- Co-ordinator – to promote and source funding
- Use of empty shops/space
- Community event
- Attract more businesses – social enterprises, youth enterprises, new start-ups



## How can community funds be spent?



## Community Surveys

### Survey Analysis

200 paper copies were distributed via Age Concern, the churches, the library and the Tryst Community Centre.

The survey link was promoted by email to all the local schools and community groups. The schools promoted it via Twitter or school blogs and the Larbert, Stenhousemuir and Torwood Community Council promoted it regularly via their Facebook page.

There were a total of 465 responses representing a total of 800 people, broken down as follows:

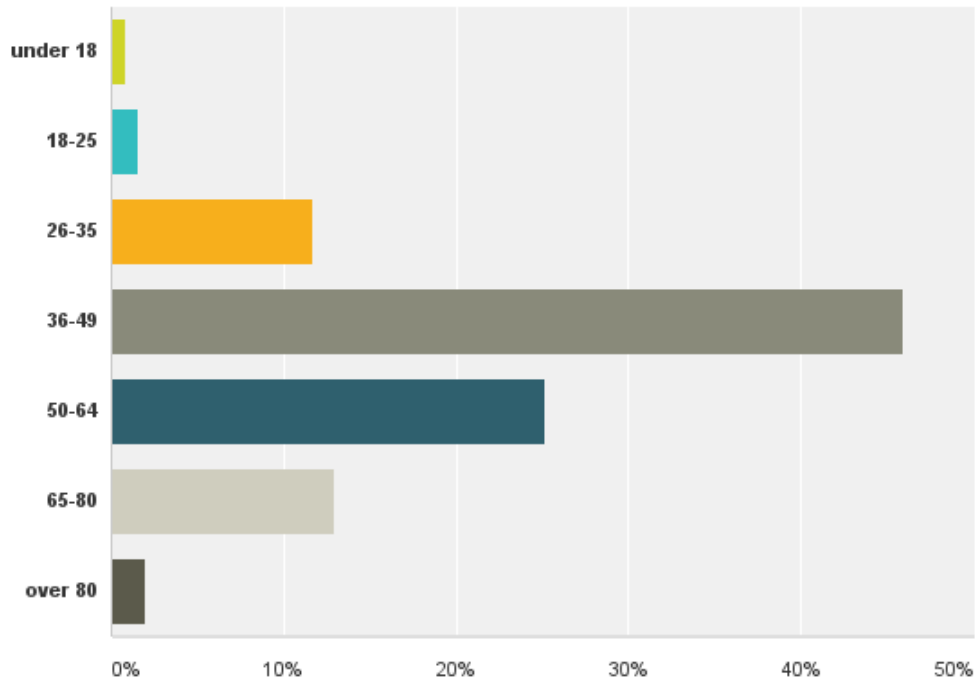


71% of respondents are female and 29% are male.

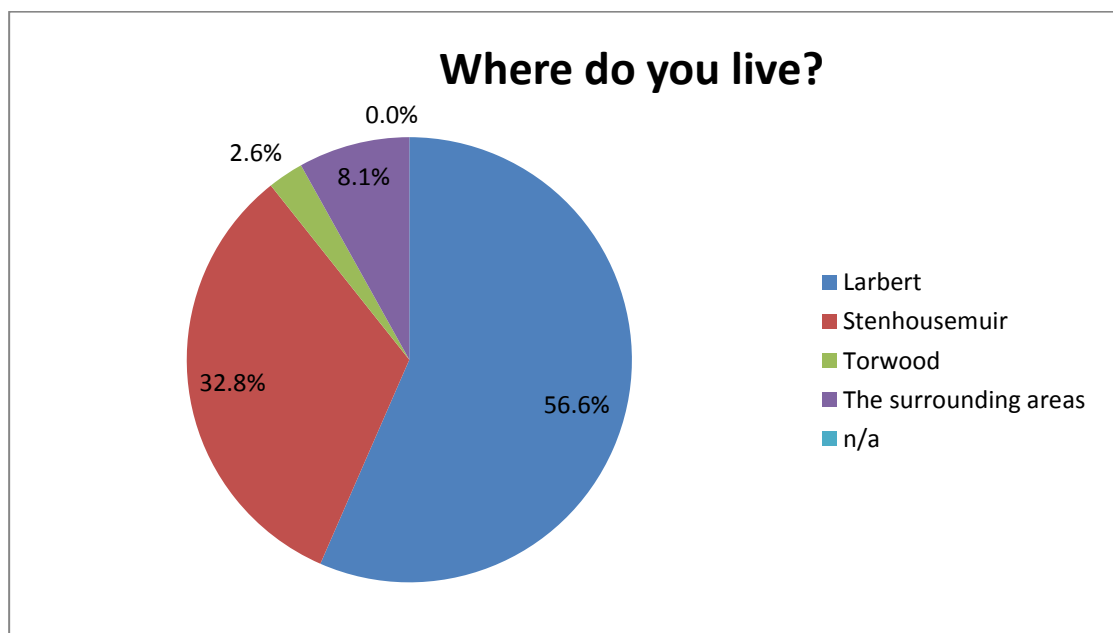
The largest group (46%) of respondents are aged between 36-49; 25% are aged between 50-64 years old; 13% are between 65 and 80 years; 12% between 26-35 and the smallest groups were over 80s (2%); 18-25s (1.5%) and under 18s (1%).

## Q14 Age

Answered: 462 Skipped: 9



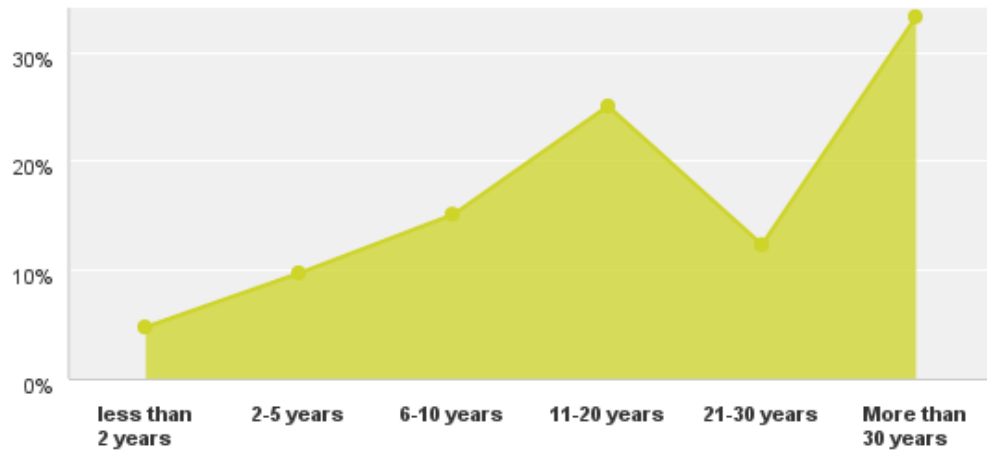
The majority of people (57%) live in the Larbert area with 33% living in Stenhousemuir, 3% living in Torwood. The remaining 8% of people live in the surrounding areas such as Carron, The Inches, Bainsford, Denny and Falkirk.



The survey shows that people tend to stay in the area for a long time as 33% of respondents have lived in the area for more than 30 years and 25% between 11 and 20 years.

### Q4 How long have you lived here?

Answered: 464 Skipped: 7

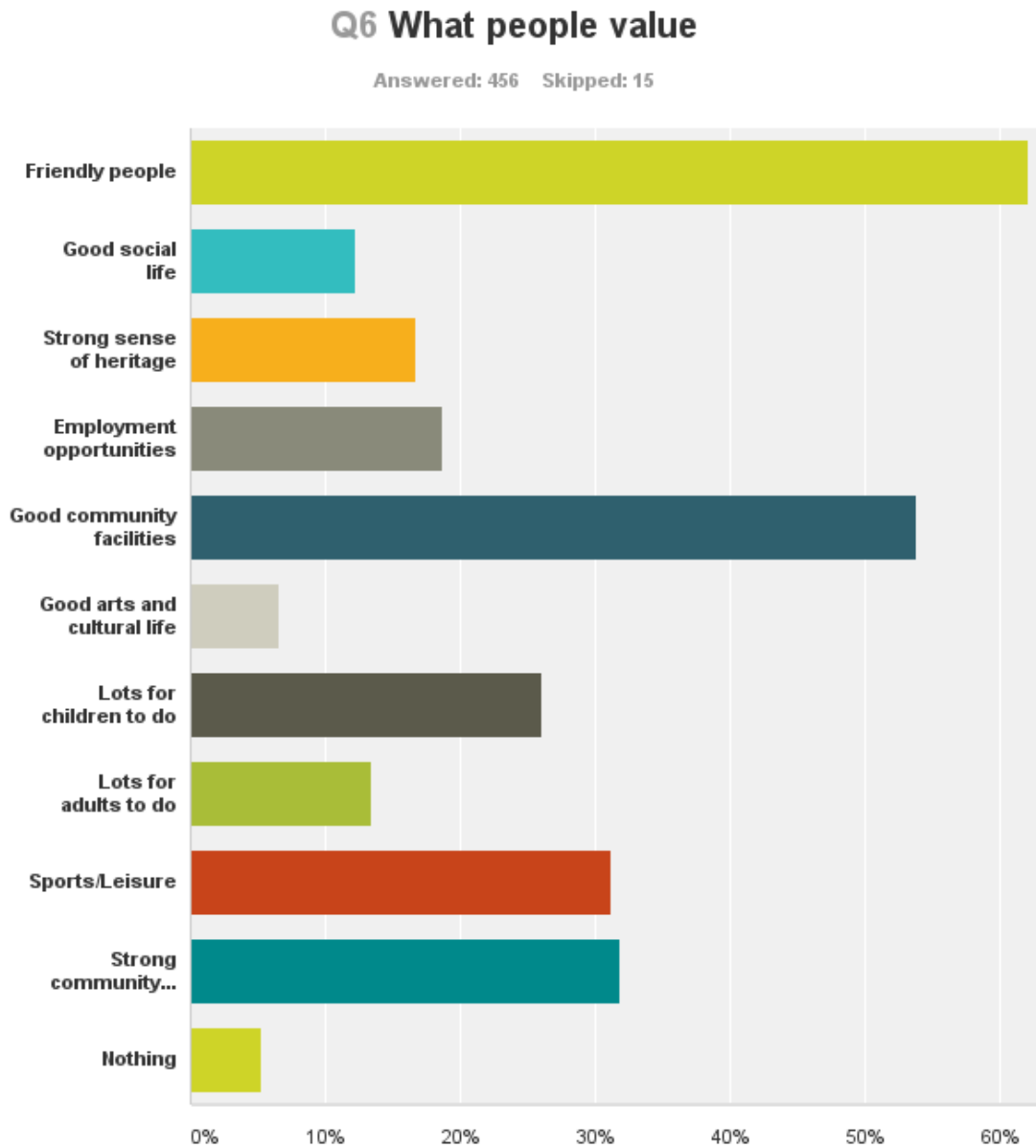


When asked to rate how people feel about the area (1 being strongly dislike it and 10 being love it) 88% of respondents rated it as 7 or above with 37.5% rating it as an 8. Only 6% rated living in the area as a 5 or less. The chart below shows the breakdowns:

| Answer Options              | Response Percent | Response Count |
|-----------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| <b>1 (strongly dislike)</b> | 0.0%             | 0              |
| <b>2</b>                    | 0.4%             | 2              |
| <b>3</b>                    | 0.4%             | 2              |
| <b>4</b>                    | 1.1%             | 5              |
| <b>5</b>                    | 3.7%             | 17             |
| <b>6</b>                    | 6.7%             | 31             |
| <b>7</b>                    | 16.6%            | 77             |
| <b>8</b>                    | 37.5%            | 174            |
| <b>9</b>                    | 15.5%            | 72             |
| <b>10 (love it)</b>         | 18.1%            | 84             |

What people value most about the area is friendly people (62%); good community facilities (54%); strong community spirit (32%) and sports and leisure (31%).

What respondents valued least was lots for adults to do (13%) and good arts and cultural life (7%).



When asked about the local facilities which respondents use the most popular were local walks (78%) and local cafes and restaurants (63%). Only 18% of people who answered this question said that they use the community centre. There were 62 comments mentioning other facilities which are broken down in the comments in below and in Appendices 3a to 3e.

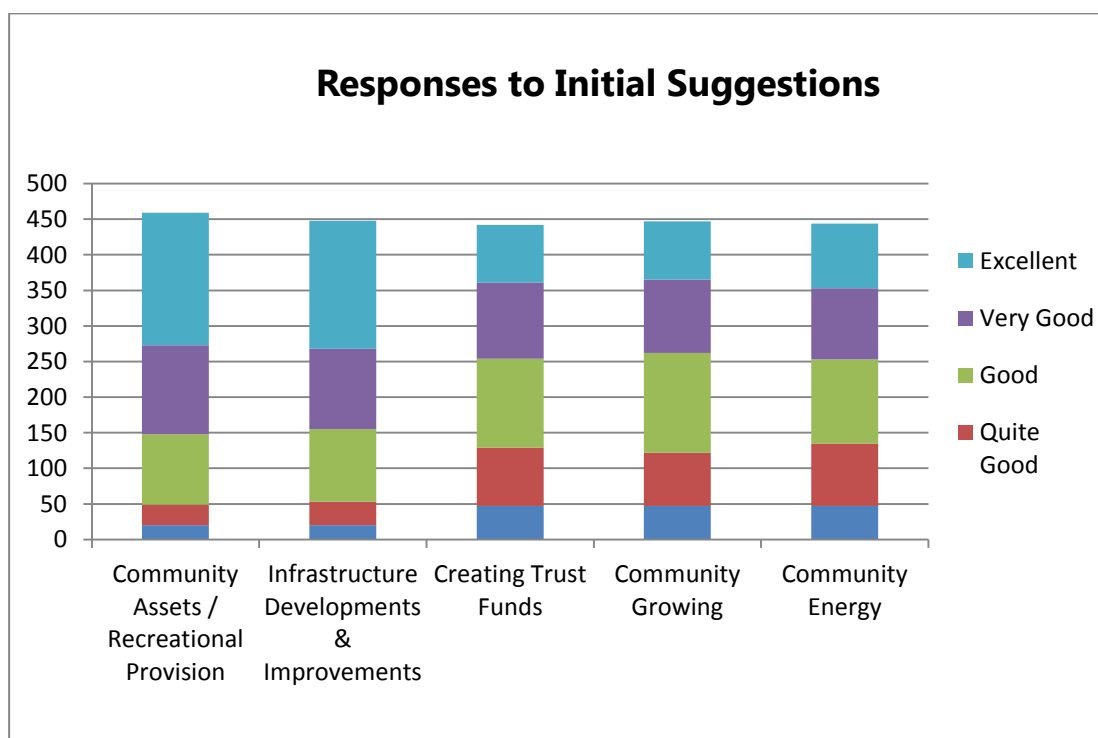
| <b>Answer Options</b>       | <b>Response Percent</b> | <b>Response Count</b> |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Church                      | 28.4%                   | 128                   |
| Community Centre            | 18.2%                   | 82                    |
| Local cafes and restaurants | 63.6%                   | 287                   |
| Local walks                 | 78.3%                   | 353                   |
| Cycle paths                 | 39.5%                   | 178                   |
| Playing field               | 22.2%                   | 100                   |
| Dobbie Hall                 | 46.6%                   | 210                   |
| Children's play park        | 37.9%                   | 171                   |
| Any others (please specify) |                         | 62                    |

| <b>Facility</b>                                              | <b>Number of Comments</b> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Larbert Library                                              | 13                        |
| Garden Centre/Shops/Post Office                              | 10                        |
| Tryst Golf Course                                            | 3                         |
| Walking Routes                                               | 6                         |
| Cycling Routes                                               | 2                         |
| Bowling Club                                                 | 4                         |
| Age Concern Hall                                             | 1                         |
| Pool, gym and other sports facilities at Larbert High School | 10                        |
| The train station                                            | 8                         |
| Tryst Community Centre                                       | 1                         |
| Stenhousemuir Sports Centre                                  | 4                         |
| Stenhousemuir Football Club – Warriors in the Community      | 1                         |
| Church Playgroup                                             | 1                         |

When asked to rate some initial suggestions from the open meetings, the most popular was Community Assets/Recreational Provision with 41% of people rating it excellent and 27% rating it very good.

The second most popular suggestion was Infrastructure Development and Improvements with 40% of people rating it as excellent and 25% rating it as very good.

The other 3 suggestions were rated fairly evenly with Creating Trust Funds marginally less popular than Community Growing and Community Energy.

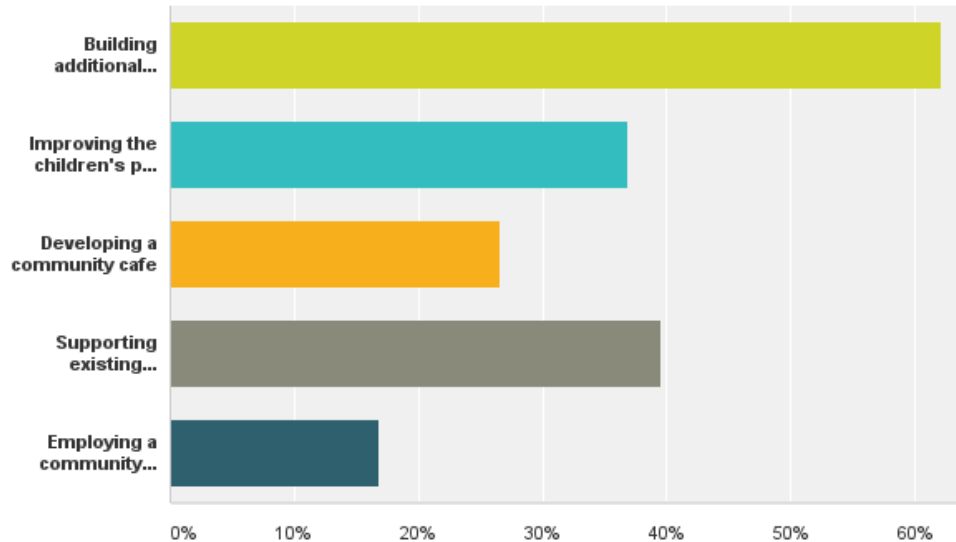


Respondents were asked to state which community assets they would like to invest in and the most popular was building additional sports facilities (62%) with supporting existing groups coming in second at 39%, improving the play park at 37%.

The least popular suggestion was employing a community development worker at 17%. See the chart below:

### Q9 If you think investing in 'community assets' is a good idea, which of the following would you prefer?

Answered: 428 Skipped: 43



There were 38 further suggestions many of which talk about providing facilities for all including bike tracks and county walks but in particular, activities for young people.

One respondent said "Somewhere for children to go as they get older to keep them off the streets. Whether that is leisure facilities, youth centres etc. I have kids ages 5 and 2 but notice that older children don't seem to have anywhere to socialise which I think would be good for them". Full details of the comments are in Appendix 3a.

Respondents were asked to state which infrastructure developments they would like to be invested in and the most popular was:

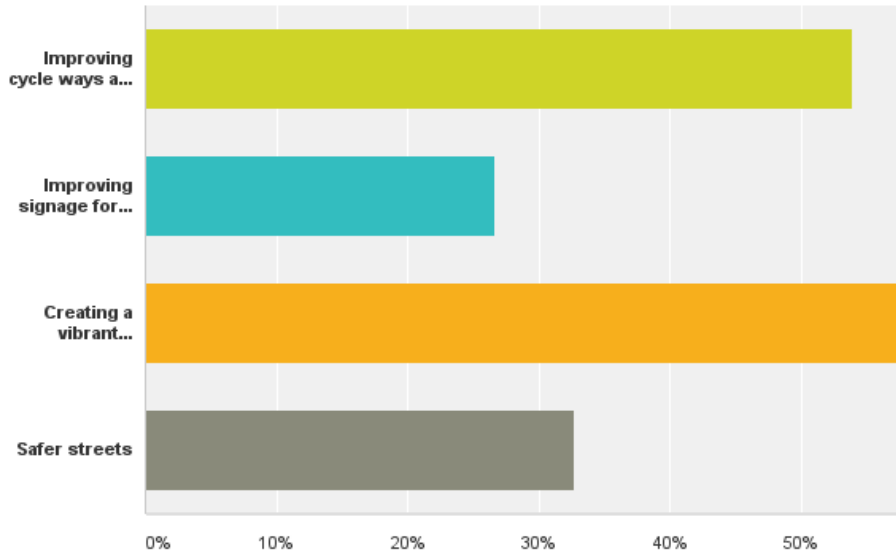
- creating a vibrant shopping precinct 57%
- the next most popular was improving cycle ways and footpaths with 54%
- Less popular was investing in safer streets 33% and improving signage for woodland and pathways 27%.

See the chart below:



**Q10 If you think investing in 'infrastructure development and improvements' is a good idea, which of the following would you prefer?**

Answered: 425 Skipped: 46



There were 22 comments and suggestions many of which talk about improvements to roads and street lighting. Also mentioned is better use of empty shops and supporting small businesses at start up stage. Full details are in Appendix 3b.

When respondents were asked what they would like to see improved in the area they could select up to 5 categories. The results are in the table below in popularity order with an improved town centre being the first choice.

| Category                                  | Percentage | Rated |
|-------------------------------------------|------------|-------|
| Improved town centre                      | 65%        | 1st   |
| Better local facilities                   | 52%        | 2nd   |
| Better youth facilities                   | 41%        | 3rd   |
| Better information about what is going on | 36%        | 4th   |
| Sports initiatives                        | 32%        | 5th   |
| More employment opportunities             | 29%        | 6th   |
| Better services for families              | 28%        | 7th   |

|                                   |     |                  |
|-----------------------------------|-----|------------------|
| Better services for older people  | 27% | 8th              |
| More arts and cultural activities | 22% | 9th              |
| More pride in local heritage      | 21% | 10th             |
| Improved public transport         | 20% | 11th             |
| More community health services    | 19% | 12th             |
| Better community spirit           | 19% | 13th             |
| Better social interaction         | 18% | 14 <sup>th</sup> |

There were 30 comments made some of which have been made already but there were a few about revitalising the town centre such as: "Fill empty shops with small businesses or community ideas – rented out for a nominal amount. A few pounds is better than nothing and interesting shops will attract people to the area." A full list of comments is detailed in Appendix 3c.

When asked is there anything else you feel is missing from the area respondents suggested:

- Social facilities
- Learning for all ages
- Support and development for local halls
- Support for community events including gala days

The full list of comments is detailed in Appendix 3d.

Finally, respondents were asked for any additional comments which are listed in Appendix 3e and 14 people said that they would like to be involved in the community action plan and left their contact details which are recorded separately in Appendix 3f.

## Focus Groups

Two focus groups were consulted, speaking to young people and parents and childminders, being adults of working age.

The focus groups were chosen as being those which had either not been represented well at the open meetings or who had not responded in high numbers to the survey. The focus groups covered a variety of income levels, age-groups and included a good mix of male and female contributors.

The responses from the groups is provided below.

### Young People's Focus Group - Larbert High School

The focus group was attended by 7 young people, 6 of which were in 3<sup>rd</sup> year and 1 from 4<sup>th</sup> year.

#### Good things about the area

- There are lots of extra-curricular activities at school in particular sports
- The school is building a mountain biking trail centre
- It is a close, friendly community
- It feels safe
- There is a good train station
- There are lots of shops
- Young people get in free to Stenhousemuir Football Club
- The Helix is good for dog walking and cycling
- There are good cycle routes
- There are golf clubs and swimming at Camelon

#### What could be improved?

- There are lots of empty shops
- Too many charity shops and pound shops
- Nowhere to buy clothes – people go to Stirling, Glasgow or Edinburgh
- There are lots of sports activities but not much else
- The running track at Camelon is a bit run-down
- There is a lack of places for groups to meet
- The Tryst funfair attracts drug users and is not suitable for young children
- Green spaces are not looked after – the Lido goal posts are dangerous and there is dog mess everywhere. At the Tryst the grass is not cut, it is not level and there is dog mess
- Young people are not aware of youth groups – they say they are not promoted well
- The Carron dam is overgrown, paths need an upgrade and there is litter everywhere

## What is missing?

- A gym
- No café for young people
- No fair day/gala day
- There are not good places to play football – some schools have astro pitches but they have to be booked
- More benches
- The nearest tennis courts are in Falkirk
- No driving range
- Art exhibitions/street art – empty shops could be used

## Challenges

- The train station is hard to get to
- Traffic lights are in awkward places
- There are not many places to go and play

## Ideas rated by popularity

1. An annual community event
2. Creating a vibrant town centre
3. Supporting existing groups such as Boys Brigade, Scouts, Guides
4. Improving cycle-ways and pathways
5. Community Café
6. Sports facilities
7. More youth activities

## Discussion around a community event

- A parade with floats from each primary school
- A Gala King and Queen
- Demonstrations from sports clubs and groups
- The Shows
- A mini petting zoo
- Dog shows
- Food vans

## Parent's Focus Group

### Larbert Mums & Toddlers Group, Larbert West Church

The focus group was attended by 12 parents, including some childminders (also parents) and grandparents. The age-range varied from people in their early thirties to grandparents in their 60s. Everyone attending the group lives in the Larbert and Stenhousemuir areas.

### Good things about the area

- Library
- Parks – in particular Lido was mentioned
- Schools
- Hospital
- Path networks
- Woodland around the Hospital
- Sporting facilities for young kids
- New gym – Strathcarron Hospice building/space
- Organised groups
- Golf clubs, cricket – active area
- Transport links – trains, buses and motorway
- New bike club at the Tryst Community Sports Club
- Churches

### What is missing?

- A big play park – we have green spaces but no really good play park that's safe for primary school age kids
- Not much for teenagers to do; they hang about the streets (but they're not necessarily making any trouble)
- Softplay for kids, for pre-school age kids in particular

### Challenges

- Merging churches means there may not be space available for small community groups like the Mums & Toddlers group to meet
- Concern that this will impact on lots of other groups including Brownies, Boys and Girls Brigade etc.
- Costs to hire space or a room at the Community Centre or Dobbie Hall are high
- Issues with health & safety for the Mums & Toddlers group in particular, when using space at the Community Centre or Dobbie Hall
- Asda – killed off local shops

## Ideas rated by popularity

1. Gala Day
2. Shops and use of empty space
3. Youth Activities – linked in with the idea of a Community Hub to provide space for activities in the evening (for teenagers) and during the day (for pre-school age kids). This would also bring people together.

Not keen on a Community Magazine – we have the Herald and websites, and good advertising in the Library

When asked about funding smaller projects with grants, they felt that these grants were generally available from other sources including employers in the area (Ineos). They felt that investing in a bigger project would be a better way to spend the money.

## Discussion around particular ideas:

1. Community Event
  - a. this is something that used to happen and they know happens in other surrounding communities. They understand this would need volunteers and they don't feel there's many people who would step up to this responsibility
  - b. would have to get all schools involved and all communities in the area rather than having a disjointed approach to such an event
  - c. they think that to make the best of this, it would need to be responsibility of a paid member of staff to co-ordinate and arrange such an event
2. Community Hub
  - a. Links a couple of the other ideas together: more youth activities and use of community space which is currently under-used
  - b. People don't know what's already available in the area or what's going on and if they knew they would use the facilities – someone mentioned Streetlife website where she found out about the new gym and bike park
  - c. A community hub could be used for youth activities in the evening and activities for pre-school age kids or older people during the day
  - d. A Hub would bring more people together on a long-term basis rather than on one day of the year by attending a community event

## Stakeholder Feedback

The ideas gathered from the two open meetings was summarised showing the most common themes as shown above, and presented to stakeholders attending the meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> April.

The stakeholders present discussed the issues raised at these meetings, and started to prioritise them in their opinion, and with their knowledge of the local community needs and groups working within the community.

### **More Goods Things/Opportunities worth discussing further?**

- Larbert High and Tryst Community Sports Club is working together to develop adult support groups aimed at introducing adult group activities to provide:
  - parent education classes including cookery, life skills, tying in with existing community based adult learning opportunities.
  - Kids –activity/sports
  - This programme will aim to work with more than 50 groups
  - Requirement for childcare/crèche
- Cycle pump track
- Credit Unions – saving and borrowing linking back to money management through classes (as described above)
- History – there is a local history group working on increasing locals knowledge of heritage, taking in existing points of interest including Dobbie Hall, Carron Works and The Tryst
- Arts projects with kids/schools

### **How could the priorities and opportunities be actioned?**

- Open green space – there are open green spaces around the area and this is one way to also achieve and encourage kids' activities which is another challenge emerging from the research to date.
  - Make best use of already established links between groups/schools.
  - Make better use of the spaces
  - Areas need to be cleaned up – this is the responsibility of the Council rather than being funded through community benefit funds from the windfarm development

- Local community radio station – the group agree with the priority of ensuring people know about what’s going on and as there is already a local community radio station this is a way to promote work and activities in the area
- Local community action networking – there appears to be a number of projects going on in the community that people don’t know about but which could tackle many of the challenges and opportunities that are emerging from the research. Could this be achieved through better networking?
  - Falkirk Council’s Community Planning and Community Learning and Development are aware that there are existing networks running in the area.
  - Networks or forums would potentially best be arranged by theme or beneficiary group i.e. financial inclusion, food poverty, health inequalities etc. to encourage groups to attend and be represented in those areas of interest to them and their work
- Co-ordinator – employing a worker to co-ordinate all community activities thereby achieving the priorities identified through the research.
  - Discussion required on the job description and skillset for this person.
  - Where responsibilities would duplicate those undertaken by other groups such as CVS Falkirk i.e. funding opportunities for projects and groups
  - Liaison and working with existing Falkirk Council services such as Community Planning and Community Learning and Development and CVS Falkirk
- Community centre – point made that the Tryst Community Centre exists and has under-utilised space. Discussion would be needed to clarify what is required from what people term a “community centre” when one already exists.
- Clarify who is responsible for what – Council, CVS, voluntary organisations and Community Council

### **How could Community Benefit Funds be spent?**

- Employ a Co-ordinator to
  - organise Community Event
  - network with other voluntary organisations, Council, CVS
  - build up an asset map of activities/organisations
  - source funding



- Youth activities:
  - education/activity Roadshow (to promote activities/classes already on offer and new projects such as the joint Larbert High/Tryst Sports Club activities)
- Use existing venues better (e.g. Community Centre, Dobbie Hall, Church halls, Tryst Community Centre, Tryst Sports Club, Stenhousemuir Football Club)
- Ensure that activities promoted will offer respite – targeting carers
- Ensure that where possible, activities promoted will have access to crèche provision to ensure take-up by single parent or vulnerable families as well as those that have adequate childcare support
- Businesses:
  - the research shows an appetite to encourage new businesses into the area, including youth enterprises, social enterprises and new business start-ups. Could this priority be linked to that of “empty spaces” to offer office or workshop space to new businesses and offer more flexible leases through co-working, daily hire of desks?
  - Is this an opportunity to fill empty shops in the Precinct and revitalise the precinct through pop-up shops, cafes or restaurant ideas? This opportunity for space should also be offered to voluntary organisations, charities as well as private businesses.
- Renewable energy - this is a way to offer a guaranteed income to those able to make use of solar panels for example. Linking this to “under-utilised” spaces, both Council spaces and other spaces such as empty shop units, may provide an income for other projects?
- Invest in projects in those projects identified above, rather than putting “money in the bank” where there is little financial return in the present economic climate.

## Individual Stakeholder interviews

A number of stakeholders were invited to attend a stakeholder meeting and those not able to attend who represented a group within the community that appeared to be one that would benefit from some of the projects or ideas being submitted at this stage, were called for a telephone interview. Their full responses are available in Appendix 3 at the back of this Report.

### Responses from Larbert Village Primary School

#### **Good things.**

- agree with all items on your list
- library
- good housing
- small businesses
- good nursery provision/childminders
- school links with local groups – Stenhousemuir Football Club, CATCA

#### **Challenges**

- agree with many on your list, particularly.  
As a school we have been affected by antisocial behaviour. Areas in our playground and nursery garden have been vandalised or destroyed.
- The green spaces we could make use of for outdoor learning have glass, litter and dog excrement.
- A local cafe in Larbert would benefit our families and children who have additional needs who would benefit from real-life experiences

#### **What could be done?/How to spend?**

- Developing school/ nursery gardens and Stewartfield green space areas for greater use in outdoor learning.
- Upgrade local swing parks in Larbert which are very well used by our children
- Community cafe (we are trying to bring locals into school once a month at present). Could extend.
- Brighten area through murals, painting grants to local businesses.
- Yearly community event involving all schools.
- Community transport would allow schools greater access to local events and resources as costs are prohibitive.

### **Role of Schools**

Mrs Gillespie was asked about how the schools in the area could be involved or add value to community projects that might come from community benefit funds.

The school has a great number of committees and groups and all children develop leadership skills from an early age.

- A Community Action Group or Pupil Voice could be formed to gather opinion and drive ideas forward.
- We could host forums or meetings in the school to hopefully involve parents and locals too.
- Where appropriate pupils could participate in all stages of the plans.

### **Partners**

- Local partners should take priority.
- Involving local youths would encourage pride in their community.

### **Community Wing**

We asked about the use of the Community Wing in the school.

- Community groups use this after 3pm or at weekends for Brownies, Boys Brigade, Taekwondo Clubs, Stenhousemuir take football clubs.
- We also have a number of other after school clubs arranged through our Active school coordinator for the cluster.

## Responses from Dobbie Hall Trust, Larbert

### Good Things?

- Agreed with items on the list
- Commended that the shopping centre should be seen as a good thing as it has revived the town centre; concern that without Asda there, the centre would be much quieter. Asda also brings people into the community rather than having to shop in Falkirk

### Key challenges?

- Ian made comment about the "no annual event". He stated that this was arranged but they ran out of volunteers willing to organise it annually; if this is to be revived there would have to be people willing to take it on
- The area has become so big that it is now encompassing on other areas such as Carron and Carronshore, making it the second largest urban area after Falkirk. However by comparison it doesn't have the same amount of funding spent on it or support from the Council.
- The Council is spending money on the new fitness centre, over £1 million? Could this money not have been better spent on developing existing facilities or under-utilised services?

### What could be done to make life better?

- The idea of a community hub – we need to make better use of existing community centre; aware that it seems to be under-used and isn't open as much as it may be needed
- Keen to encourage new businesses into empty shop units but does depend on type of business. Not keen to see "council services" taking these spaces, rather let young business start-ups or social enterprises come into these spaces
- Larbert train station bridge – keen to see a mural on both sides of the bridge, bringing out the local heritage of the area – Carron Ironworks etc. (project like the Shale People Project in West Lothian making use of photos of family members who used to work in the mines and turning this into street artwork)
- Made a comment that it is fine to build new projects/schemes and buildings, but they need to be maintained and money should be made available for building maintenance rather than new builds

### How would you prioritise these?

- Tryst Community Centre needs to be better used  
In the first year, Ian thinks that community projects should get to bid into a pot with grants of £1000. In the second year, start to concentrate on building up a larger project

**Opportunities that you see for Dobbie Hall?**

- The hall is very well used but more use means more wear and tear. There are times when it could be better used during the day.
- Rotary Hall – again could have space available.

**Partners that could work within the projects identified?**

- Churches
- Police
- Age Concern
- This does depend on the projects being prioritised or actioned

## How are the Needs prioritised?

At the meeting held with the Community Council on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2015, those present were asked to discuss the various projects noted, and to prioritise those suggested.

The basis of discussion came from the research taken from the surveys, focus groups and stakeholder discussions with the broad projects discussed including:

|                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|-----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Annual Community Event</b>           | An annual event in the Larbert, Stenhousemuir and Torwood area only but the type of event should be discussed further                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Youth Activities/Facilities</b>      | Sports activities are provided for young people, but people felt that there's not much else for young people to do or places to go, which is why they congregate in the town centre – this idea could be integrated into other projects |
| <b>Community Cafe</b>                   | The research suggested a community café might be a good idea as a place to go for all ages, run as a social enterprise, encouraging work experience as well as filling empty spaces – this could be integrated into other projects      |
| <b>Invest the Money</b>                 | Invest the money in the bank. This was not an idea with much support as the bank interest rates are so poor at present                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Incorporate renewables</b>           | Where possible people would like to see renewable energies used in most projects, in some way                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Employ a Development Officer</b>     | The idea of employing a development officer would provide a resource to promote projects, secure match funding and bring together networks and forums which would achieve the main project outcomes                                     |
| <b>Fill empty shop units</b>            | Need to fill empty shop units, and could integrate other projects with this achieving other key outcomes including working with schools and ideas such as pop up cafes with local young people gaining work experience through this     |
| <b>Community Magazine</b>               | Although the idea of promoting activity, the medium of a magazine was deemed to be a bit "out-dated" and this should be done through social media and the website                                                                       |
| <b>Support local business start-ups</b> | Integrate this into the "Improve the Town Centre" project idea, by encouraging local business start-ups, social enterprises and youth enterprises to make use of empty spaces in the town centre                                        |

|                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Assist School Projects</b>   | Integrate this into the "Improve the Town Centre" project idea, by encouraging "enterprising" groups within the schools to become involved in filling empty shop spaces through "pop up enterprises" including cafes etc. giving the young people work experience opportunities as well as life and business skills education |
| <b>Maintain existing groups</b> | create a Small Grants Fund and distribute it through a "dragons den" type setting, with application criteria for all local voluntary sector groups                                                                                                                                                                            |

The ideas presented above, from the research, were discussed by the Community Council with comments made as follows:

Priority No. 1 – Invest in Existing Groups – short term project

- Small grants fund
- Dragon's Den type selection process

Priority No. 2 – Employing a Development Officer – long term project

- Promotion/Communication
  - Community Website
  - Council Input
  - Part-time role

Priority No. 3= – Support Schools Projects – long term project

- Support School Projects
- Fill empty shop units including McGowans
  - Social Enterprises
  - Schools – Entrepreneurs (youth) High/Primary Schools
  - Forth Valley College
- Town Centre Manager – Alister Mitchell
- Work Experience Opportunities
- Special Needs Kids
- Art/pop up exhibitions – Larbert High
- Pop up café, shop

Priority No. 3= – Youth Activities – long term project

- Not sports activities
- A place to go
- Community café idea (Linked to theme 1)

Priority No. 5 – Community Event – long term project

- 2 day music festival
- Just LST area
- Long-term project/medium
- Use of community spaces – Dobbie Hall

Priority No. 6 – Green Spaces – long term project

- Walkways
- Cycle paths
- Outdoor places? Youth project
- Hand over parts to Council?

Priority No. 7 – Community Spaces – medium term project

- Tryst CC
- Dobbie Hall – consultation
- Churches merging? Impact of space, community groups using space



## Final Public Meeting



A final public meeting was held at Larbert Old Church Hall on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> May, the purpose of which was to present the research findings to the public and invite final feedback and discussion.

Twenty two people attended the meeting, together with representatives from the Community Council.

A brief summary of the findings was presented outlining what people like about the area, and what people thought could be improved.

The following was the list of project ideas that had come from the research; not all ideas were presented, only those that had been the most "popular":

- Annual Community Event
- Youth activities and facilities
- Community Café
- Invest the money (in the bank)
- Employ a Development Officer
- Fill empty shop units
- Community magazine
- Support local business start-ups – young start-ups and social enterprises
- Assist school projects
- Maintain existing community groups
- Improve green spaces – play areas, tidy up litter



Taken from the project ideas above, seven themes were presented for discussion:

**Theme 1: Improving the Town Centre**

**Theme 2: Youth Activities**

**Theme 3: Community Event**

**Theme 4: Invest in Existing groups**

**Theme 5: Green spaces**

**Theme 6: Community spaces**

**Theme 7: Employing a Development Officer**



**Community Spaces** - aim to make more use of existing community spaces including Tryst Community Centre and Dobbie Hall; also to consider the impact of lost space from the churches merging to other local voluntary organisations such as Brownies and local Mums & Toddlers groups

😊😊😊😊 (4)

**Youth Activities** – not sports activities, preference is for other things to do; a place to go

😊😊😊 (3)

## Partnership – which organisations should be involved and how?

In order to ensure that as priorities are identified and links made between groups and teams already working in the Larbert, Stenhousemuir and Torwood areas, during the research we have also identified key partners that may be keen to be involved in the implementation of an Action Plan and working on specific projects that will evolve from this Action Plan.

| Sector                      | Which Organisations/Groups?                                              | How could they be involved?                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>The Voluntary Sector</b> | Tryst Community Development Group                                        | Help with projects, linking groups, knowledge of the area; keen to become more involved and work with other groups                                                                                                                                |
|                             | Tryst Community Sports Club                                              | Use of space; Good potential links and existing activities/projects; links with young people and understanding of their needs; good dialogue with younger people - trusted                                                                        |
|                             | Princes Trust                                                            | Grants for young entrepreneurs; good links with young people; work with disengaged young people; links to other support services for young entrepreneurs                                                                                          |
|                             | Dobbie Hall Trust                                                        | Use of space and looking to identify how to use space better; keen to work with partners.<br>Structural issues and uncertainty about who is responsible for repairs may be a challenge/threat?                                                    |
|                             | Age Concern                                                              | Representing older people's interests/needs; understanding of needs in community; a number of active groups/activities                                                                                                                            |
|                             | Communities Along The Carron (CATCA)                                     | Help with environmental projects, linking groups, knowledge of the area; prominent role in the community                                                                                                                                          |
|                             | CVS Falkirk                                                              | Providing a link to information about funding and recruiting and training for projects identified within the research                                                                                                                             |
| <b>The Public Sector</b>    | Falkirk Council – Community Learning and Development; Community Planning | Already actively involved in community; have strong links with groups; understanding of needs of community; key partner. Involved with Community Action Plan 2013 (focused on 2 most deprived datazones in Larbert and Stenhousemuir, rather than |

|                           |                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|---------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                           |                                                      | the whole community).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|                           | Tryst Community Centre                               | Use of space; keen to be support groups and individuals                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|                           | All local primary Schools                            | Keen to engage in projects linking young people with community; educational opportunity for students                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|                           | Larbert High School and Carrongrange School          | Projects being discussed working with parents (adults) and students (young people); key link to young people in the community and linking to other potential projects (such as young entrepreneurs)                                                                                                                                                                |
|                           | Councillors                                          | Will help to provide links between projects; understanding of their Ward's priorities; understanding of the Council's outcomes – therefore funding opportunities for projects/match funding                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>The Private Sector</b> | Business Gateway                                     | Advise potential entrepreneurs of seed funding available to get them started; give advice on business plans and link them into leases for premises (such as those identified through "use of space" in the research)                                                                                                                                               |
|                           | Asda – landlord of some empty space in the Precinct? | Are the properties identified as "empty" some of those owned by Asda or Walmart? Could they offer attractive and flexible lease terms to young entrepreneurs, voluntary organisations or pop-up business opportunities?                                                                                                                                            |
|                           | Chamber of Commerce                                  | Opportunities for new businesses to network and promote their services; also opportunity for mentoring and "in-kind" support for local voluntary organisations and business start-ups linking this to "social responsibility policies" of larger employers                                                                                                         |
|                           | Other private employers                              | Potentially could sponsor activities or events – if an annual community event is taken on, employers may sponsor this or take advertising in a local Community Magazine. Could offer "in kind" support to small business start-ups and voluntary groups – training, use of meeting room space, mentoring – as part of their wider "social responsibility policies" |
| <b>Health</b>             | Forth Valley Hospital                                | The Ranger may provide links with the wider community; also provides an opportunity to use of green space for outdoor activities and kids' activities                                                                                                                                                                                                              |

|  |                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|--|---------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |                     | tackling some of the challenges the research has identified                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|  | Local Health Centre | Building a link with local health centres throughout Larbert and Stenhousemuir will enable projects to promote relevant services or activities and potentially to monitor impact of projects on general physical wellbeing and mental health |

## Recommendations for Future Actions

From the meetings held with the Community Council and the final public meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> of May, the priorities for future actions are presented below for discussion. Note, the tables below show the priority of both the community council and from the final public meeting.

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Theme - Supporting Local Voluntary Organisations and Groups</b><br><b>Priority No. 1 for Community Council</b><br><b>Priority No. 2 from Public Meeting</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Seen as a short-term project this activity could be implemented quickly and will be seen by the community as benefiting a number of projects.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Actions for Community Council</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify key Outcomes for organisations to align to</li><li>• Develop application criteria and process</li><li>• Develop evaluation methods – demonstrating social impact of monies spent</li><li>• Identify a Panel to interview and assess applicants</li><li>• Devise a communications/promotions campaign to publicise which groups were successful</li><li>• Confirm and advise if this process is to be an annual one</li></ul> |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Theme – Employing a Development Officer</b><br><b>Priority No. 2 for Community Council</b><br><b>Priority No. 4 from Public Meeting</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Linked to the need for better promotion, the idea would be to employ a part time development officer to deliver all other projects being identified in this research document.                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Actions for Community Council</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Establish Terms &amp; Conditions for position</li><li>• Draw up Person and Job Specification</li><li>• Start recruitment process</li><li>• Identify key tasks to be undertaken by Development Officer</li><li>• Request monthly report from DO to update Community Council on progress on other projects</li></ul> |

**Theme - Regenerating the town centre and use of empty spaces**

**Priority No. 3 for Community Council**

**Priority No. 1 from Public Meeting**

There is an issue of empty spaces in the town and appetite to bring more businesses into the town centre, particularly around the Precinct which some feel has been impacted negatively by Asda arriving, and "splitting the town in half". The idea is that empty spaces in shop units around the town and McGowans Factory could be used as pop-up shops, cafes or could be developed into office space for new business start-ups, particularly encouraging social enterprises, and young entrepreneurs.

This project could integrate other projects including "supporting schools projects" and "youth activities".

This appears to be the largest project due to the fact that it integrates elements of other projects into delivering the overall outcome of "regenerating the town centre".

**Actions for Community Council**

- Investigate which units are empty and how these could be used – what do local people want to see in these spaces?
- Identify landlords and start discussions
- Discuss potential of McGowans Factory being used as "business and community hub" – would form part of a larger on-going feasibility study and funding application would be possible for this through BIG Lottery Investing in Ideas or Awards for All
- Identify potential partners including Larbert High School and the local primary schools and discuss and agree the role of each school and the outcomes they would be looking to achieve from this project
- Clearly identify outcomes:
  - more young people will have opportunities for work experience whilst still at school
  - more empty spaces in the town will be used to benefit the community as pop up venues for shops or cafes, according to research findings
  - more space will be made available with flexible lease terms to new social enterprises, young enterprises and new business start-ups
  - more space will be created for exhibitions around the Arts, local heritage and community groups stimulating interest and providing a "place to go" for all ages
  - Identify match funding opportunities for this project



**Theme – Community Events**

**Priority No. 4 for Community Council**

**Priority No. 3 from Public Meeting**

**Events for Local People and Visitors**

The research shows that people are keen to hold more community events, and to promote what is going on in the community better so that people can participate in events. An annual community event has been suggested. There are issues which will need to be overcome if this type of event is to be successful, not least of which is to recruit volunteers to be responsible for this.

**Actions for Community Council**

- Establish an Events Committee
- Investigate what type and frequency of events that people would like to see through further research
- Recruit volunteers to assist
- Develop Action Plan for this Event
- Establish a promotions campaign
- Establish how to make use of other community spaces including Tryst Community Centre and Dobbie Hall

**Theme - Community Facilities for all Ages**

**Priority No. 5 for Community Council**

**Priority No. 5 from Public Meeting**

Although there are existing facilities for the Community, these are considered to be expensive for groups to access, don't open at times when they're needed, or are not fit for purpose. The research suggests that people are keen to bring the community together at regular activities in venues which open during the day and in the evening, seven days a week. A key contributor to the success of such venues, will be to ensure that people know what's going on there which has been a key finding from the research.

**Actions for Community Council**

- Review what options are available as a venue - making best use of existing space
- Establish any restrictions placed by the Council – hire cost, opening hours etc.
- Consider impact of merging churches on space available and hire costs for spaces – will this be a barrier for community groups?
- Consider impact of proposed consultation with Dobbie Hall – what ideas might arise from Feasibility Study?
- Research what activities would be popular, opening hours
- Provide full costings of such a venture
- Research potential demand and how much people would pay for such facilities
- Negotiate with the Council for subsidised rates for community events or spaces

- Undertake promotions campaign

### **Theme – Green Spaces**

#### **Priority No. 6 for Community Council**

#### **Priority No. 4 from Public Meeting**

The research shows that people think they have access to good green spaces and woodlands particularly with the Ranger service at Forth Valley Hospital and the work that is on-going with groups such as CATCA and in the Torwood area. However more use of space around the centre of Larbert and Stenhousemuir, particularly the Lido, could be encouraged if there was less litter or dog mess.

#### **Actions for Community Council**

- Arrange a walk about with interested volunteers – involve CATCA – to identify where the problems are and what they are
- Draw up a “snagging list” to hand to the Council
- Establish what works the Council is planning to do
- Hand over responsibility for some of the work to the Council
- Discuss ideas of how the CC could help to keep areas clean – posters designed by local kids asking dog owners to clear up after their dogs
- Look at signage requirements on walkways and in woodlands for routes
- Ensure walkways and cycle routes are fit for purpose
- Identify ideas to encourage more people out into the green spaces – geocaching, organised fun runs, cycle runs, family treasure hunts, nature activity events etc.

## Next Steps

The next step in this consultation is to develop a 10 Year Community Action Plan which will confirm priorities, detail tasks, timescales and identify which group/organisation will be responsible to deliver the task.

These will cover short, medium and long term strategy and will also include details of key actions to deliver projects as well as criteria for monitoring success of these projects.

Following the issue of a Draft Action Plan, the Community Council will recruit a Fund Panel to consider the Action Plan and finalise the priorities and actions to be taken forward to enable the best use of community funds arising from the Windfarm project in the area of Larbert, Stenhousemuir and Torwood.

# 5. Summary of Findings

## Demographics and Statistics

### Population

Larbert, Stenhousemuir and Torwood has a population of 19,400 from statistics taken in 2011 but since then anecdotally the population has risen to around 22,000. Like so many other areas in Scotland, the population is ageing quickly, and has a higher than average proportion of children aged between 5 and 11, compared with Scotland as a whole. The population has grown by around 41% in Larbert and 30% in Torwood in the period between 2001 and 2011; the population of Stenhousemuir has dropped by 3% in the same period.

### Economy & Jobs

Households in these areas are generally more affluent than in the whole Falkirk area, with only two datazones which are more deprived in Stenhousemuir. This affluence is evidenced by the fact that 69% to 75% of the population in this area are economically active.

### Deprivation

Two datazones in Stenhousemuir appear in the top 15% of most deprived in Scotland and within this datazone 30% of adults are income deprived as compared to 15% for the rest of Scotland.

### Health

Focusing on the more deprived datazones shows that health indicators including diabetes and patients hospitalised as an emergency are statistically worse than the Scottish average. In these datazones, more adults are also on incapacity benefits and severe disability allowance against the average Scottish figures.

## Community Consultation

**Open Meetings** - two public meetings were held in late March, one in the afternoon and one in the evening to encourage both working adults and those not working, to attend. Lots of ideas were raised which are fully noted in the Appendices at the back of the Report. In summary, those that came up more often were:

- Good things included the Tryst Sports Club, transport links, hospital, path networks, outdoor activities, community centre, hospital, schools and an active Community Council.
- Challenges were identified as people not knowing what's on, attracting businesses to the area, rising population and pressure on local services, no annual community event, a need for more youth activities – not just sports, lack of maintained green space and the Precinct.
- When asked what could be done to make life better they suggested youth activities, a community hub, community magazine, promotion, using empty spaces (shops) and a community event

- Funds could be spent on an annual event, supporting local new business start-ups, assisting schools projects, creating more of a community hub, filling up empty spaces, community café, and employing a co-ordinator

## **The Surveys**

- A total of 465 survey responses representing 800 people were received
- 46% of those responding were aged between 36 and 49. The smallest age groups represented through the surveys were under 18s – 1%; 18 to 25 year olds – 1.5% and over 80s – 2%.
- 57% of those questioned live in Larbert and 33% in Stenhousemuir.
- 88% said they think the area is a good area to live, marking it 7 or above (where 1 is strongly dislike it and 10 is love it)
- When asked about what people value they felt most strongly about friendly people (62%), good community facilities (54%) and strong community spirit (32%)
- Facilities that people use most are local walks 78% and local cafes 63%
- Only 18% of those responding said that they used the community centre.
- Comments were received on several community facilities including library, garden centre and shops, pool and other sporting facilities. Full comments are available in the main Report.
- When asked to rate initial responses from the Open Meetings, 41% rated community assets and recreational provision as excellent and 40% rated infrastructure development as excellent. The most popular infrastructure development to invest in was creating a vibrant shopping precinct at 57% and improving cycle ways and footpaths with 54%.
- When asked what community assets they would like to invest in 62% said they would like to invest in additional sports facilities, 39% would prefer to support existing groups and 37% favoured investing in improving play areas.
- The least popular choice of how to spend money would be to employ a development officer.
- From the additional comments made, many favoured improving activities for young people.

## **The Focus Groups**

Two focus groups were held involving young people and parents or childminders from a local mums and toddlers group.

**Young People's Group** - the group was made up of 7 students in 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year of Larbert High.

- Generally a very positive response from the young people saying they feel safe, they like the shops, the Helix, good cycle routes, biking trail centre being built at the High School and it's a friendly community.
- They don't like the lack of decent shops, they said there are lots of sports activities but not much else to do and lack of spaces for groups to meet, and green spaces such as the Lido are not looked after, they don't know about any local youth clubs.
- When asked about what's missing they said a gym, café for young people, there's no gala day, and no art exhibitions/street art.
- They love the idea of an annual community event and creating a vibrant town centre, but they don't prioritise sports facilities

**Parents Focus Group** – this group was made up of parents, childminders and grandparents attending one of the local mums' and toddlers groups at Larbert West Church:

- Very positive response about good things including library, parks, woodland, sporting facilities for young kids, groups, transport links and churches
- They didn't feel much was missing but mentioned the need for play park equipment in the existing green spaces and there's not much for teenagers to do (other than sporting activities)
- They identified cost to hire hall space for use by community groups such as theirs, and are concerned this will become more difficult as the churches merge in the next 18 months.
- They like the idea of a gala day but also like the idea of more youth activities, somewhere for young people to go and this could be linked to how to use community space better through the idea of a community hub.
- They mentioned that people don't know what's going on so there needs to be more promotion

**Stakeholder Feedback** – the stakeholder meeting was presented with the key issues raised at both public meetings – good things, challenges, what could make life better and what to spend funds on

- Good things include Tryst Community Sports Club, new cycle track and the history of the area
- When asked about how to action the priorities mentioned, they suggested making better links with schools and local groups, to make better use of existing green spaces and these spaces need to be cleared up - but this may be responsibility of the Council rather than being funded by other means
- They mentioned the need for better networking of groups already working in the community and more working alongside Council teams. Forums could be created according to beneficiary group i.e. low income, young people, older people etc.
- This group was keen to employ a co-ordinator who would be responsible for co-ordinating the projects, sourcing funding and improving networking.
- The group also raised questions about existing community buildings such as Community Centre and Dobbie Hall being under-used.
- The issue raised about empty shop spaces around the Precinct could be an opportunity to provide space for new business start-ups and social enterprises

### **Facebook and Photography Competitions**

The Community Council have an active Facebook presence which was used throughout the consultation to help to promote the process to the wider community. With over 2000 “likes” this marketing tool will be key to ensuring that messages are distributed to the community about the research process and about the findings, and actions or projects that will arise from the research.

A photography competition was held with 88 photographs submitted showing what people liked or didn’t like so much about their community. The winning entry is shown below.



## Summary of Findings

The findings below are not ranked in any order of priority at this stage.

### **Good Things about Larbert, Stenhousemuir and Torwood**

Schools, community spirit, outdoor activities, sports clubs, friendly people, hospital, library and woodland and green space, good housing, good transport links

### **Challenges**

Rising population putting pressure on existing services, people don't know what's going on in the community, attracting businesses into the area, empty spaces in Precinct, maintaining green spaces, regenerating the Precinct, nowhere for young people to go or meet up, under-used facilities such as Community Centre

### **How to make life better**

More youth activities, co-ordination and networking of existing community groups and Council teams, make better use of community spaces to create a community hub, hold an annual community event, maintain green spaces better, community café, supporting and promoting existing groups

### **How could community funds be spent?**

Employ a co-ordinator, projects that will fill up empty spaces such as pop up shops or cafes, create a community hub, support existing community groups, introduce more youth activities, improving play areas,

## Future activity; Emerging Themes

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Theme - Supporting Local Voluntary Organisations and Groups</b><br><b>Priority No. 1 for Community Council</b><br><b>Priority No. 2 from Public Meeting</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Seen as a short-term project this activity could be implemented quickly and will be seen by the community as benefiting a number of projects.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Actions for Community Council</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify key Outcomes for organisations to align to</li><li>• Develop application criteria and process</li><li>• Develop evaluation methods – demonstrating social impact of monies spent</li><li>• Identify a Panel to interview and assess applicants</li><li>• Devise a communications/promotions campaign to publicise which groups were successful</li><li>• Confirm and advise if this process is to be an annual one</li></ul> |



**Theme – Employing a Development Officer**

**Priority No. 2 for Community Council**

**Priority No. 4 from Public Meeting**

Linked to the need for better promotion, the idea would be to employ a part time development officer to deliver all other projects being identified in this research document.

**Actions for Community Council**

- Establish Terms & Conditions for position
- Draw up Person and Job Specification
- Start recruitment process
- Identify key tasks to be undertaken by Development Officer
- Request monthly report from DO to update Community Council on progress on other projects

**Theme - Regenerating the town centre and use of empty spaces**

**Priority No. 3 for Community Council**

**Priority No. 1 from Public Meeting**

There is an issue of empty spaces in the town and appetite to bring more businesses into the town centre, particularly around the Precinct which some feel has been impacted negatively by Asda arriving, and “splitting the town in half”. The idea is that empty spaces in shop units around the town and McGowans Factory could be used as pop-up shops, cafes or could be developed into office space for new business start-ups, particularly encouraging social enterprises, and young entrepreneurs.

This project could integrate other projects including “supporting schools projects” and “youth activities”.

This appears to be the largest project due to the fact that it integrates elements of other projects into delivering the overall outcome of “regenerating the town centre”.

**Actions for Community Council**

- Investigate which units are empty and how these could be used – what do local people want to see in these spaces?
- Identify landlords and start discussions
- Discuss potential of McGowans Factory being used as “business and community hub” – would form part of a larger on-going feasibility study and funding application would be possible for this through BIG Lottery Investing in Ideas or Awards for All
- Identify potential partners including Larbert High School and the local primary schools and discuss and agree the role of each school and the outcomes they would be looking to achieve from this project
- Clearly identify outcomes:
  - more young people will have opportunities for work experience whilst still at

school

- more empty spaces in the town will be used to benefit the community as pop up venues for shops or cafes, according to research findings
- more space will be made available with flexible lease terms to new social enterprises, young enterprises and new business start-ups
- more space will be created for exhibitions around the Arts, local heritage and community groups stimulating interest and providing a “place to go” for all ages
- Identify match funding opportunities for this project

### **Theme – Community Events**

**Priority No. 4 for Community Council**

**Priority No. 3 from Public Meeting**

#### **Events for Local People and Visitors**

The research shows that people are keen to hold more community events, and to promote what is going on in the community better so that people can participate in events. An annual community event has been suggested. There are issues which will need to be overcome if this type of event is to be successful, not least of which is to recruit volunteers to be responsible for this.

#### **Actions for Community Council**

- Establish an Events Committee
- Investigate what type and frequency of events that people would like to see through further research
- Recruit volunteers to assist
- Develop Action Plan for this Event
- Establish a promotions campaign
- Establish how to make use of other community spaces including Tryst Community Centre and Dobbie Hall

### **Theme - Community Facilities for all Ages**

**Priority No. 5 for Community Council**

**Priority No. 5 from Public Meeting**

Although there are existing facilities for the Community, these are considered to be expensive for groups to access, don't open at times when they're needed, or are not fit for purpose. The research suggests that people are keen to bring the community together at regular activities in venues which open during the day and in the evening, seven days a week. A key contributor to the success of such venues, will be to ensure that people know what's going on there which has been a key finding from the research.

#### **Actions for Community Council**

- Review what options are available as a venue - making best use of existing space
- Establish any restrictions placed by the Council – hire cost, opening hours etc.
- Consider impact of merging churches on space available and hire costs for spaces – will this be a barrier for community groups?
- Consider impact of proposed consultation with Dobbie Hall – what ideas might arise from Feasibility Study?
- Research what activities would be popular, opening hours
- Provide full costings of such a venture
- Research potential demand and how much people would pay for such facilities
- Negotiate with the Council for subsidised rates for community events or spaces
- Undertake promotions campaign

### **Theme – Green Spaces**

#### **Priority No. 6 for Community Council**

#### **Priority No. 4 from Public Meeting**

The research shows that people think they have access to good green spaces and woodlands particularly with the Ranger service at Forth Valley Hospital and the work that is on-going with groups such as CATCA and in the Torwood area. However more use of space around the centre of Larbert and Stenhousemuir, particularly the Lido, could be encouraged if there was less litter or dog mess.

#### **Actions for Community Council**

- Arrange a walk about with interested volunteers – involve CATCA – to identify where the problems are and what they are
- Draw up a “snagging list” to hand to the Council
- Establish what works the Council is planning to do
- Hand over responsibility for some of the work to the Council
- Discuss ideas of how the CC could help to keep areas clean – posters designed by local kids asking dog owners to clear up after their dogs
- Look at signage requirements on walkways and in woodlands for routes
- Ensure walkways and cycle routes are fit for purpose
- Identify ideas to encourage more people out into the green spaces – geocaching, organised fun runs, cycle runs, family treasure hunts, nature activity events etc.

# Appendices

## Appendix 1: Stakeholder attendees

Stakeholder Meeting 30<sup>th</sup> April 2015 @ Tryst Community Centre

| <b>Organisation</b>                                 |
|-----------------------------------------------------|
| Tryst Community Development Group                   |
| Larbert Stenhousemuir and Torwood Community Council |
| Tryst Community Sports Club                         |
| Community Learning & Development, Falkirk Council   |
| Larbert Churches Youth Trust                        |
| Stenhousemuir Football Club, Communities            |
| Larbert High School                                 |
| Community Planning, Falkirk Council                 |
| Councillor, Falkirk Council                         |
| Local business owner                                |

## Appendix 2: Responses from Public Meetings

### What's good about Larbert, Stenhousemuir and Torwood?

#### Open Responses

- Tryst Community Sports Club
- Lots of sporting opportunities for young people @ LHS – Saturday mornings especially good.
- Good motorway links x 2
  - Glasgow
  - Edinburgh
  - Rail
- Good large hospital
- Woodland walk
- Great local path network
- Community Garden at Larbert High
- Local Nature Reserve – Carron Dams
- Braveheart Walking Group
- Round Table/Rotary Club
- LASER Group
- Large number of youth organisations
  - All growing
  - Well Attended
  - Legacy of local support
- Business Park
  - Call Centre
  - Malcolm Allan etc
- Lots of new incomers
  - Kinnaird in North
  - Most keen to be involved
- Potential for cycling and walking friendly town
- Age Concern
- Dobbie Hall Trust
- Dobbie Hall for all sorts of things
- Reasonably cheap housing
- Quick access to countryside – walking groups etc
- Good library
- Good schools – Larbert High in Community School (Facilities)
- Torwood Woodlands and other woods e.g round hospital
- Community and Leisure Groups for different ages e.g seniors
- Generally feel safe
- Good community spirit
- Good sports facilities – S.F.C. & L.H.S.
- **Active Community Council**
- New Maggie's Centre
- F.V.R.H. – Identified with Larbert

- Grounds around hospital
- Network of cycle and walking paths – Heritage Trail
- Low crime area
- Outdoor activities
  - River Carron (Fishing)
  - Heritage Trail
  - Golf
  - Football
  - Playing Fields
  - Bike Pump Track
- 2 Rotary
- Youth Organisations
- Scouts, Guides, BB's, GB's, Football
- Community Centre
- L.H.S. & Primary Schools
- Day nurseries & school nurseries
- Sports Development (High School & Football club)
- Tryst community Sports Club
  - Stenhousemuir Sports Centre
- Events in Dobbie Hall
- Good small business with local commitment
- Larbert Woods/Hospital grounds
- Forth Valley Royal Hospital
- Good location & Growing area
- Safe environment
- Carron Dams/Outdoor areas
- Liaison between L.H.S. & local dental practice & dental health
- Access to high school for public use
- Bigger business
  - Asda
  - Sainsburys
- Parks
- Redevelopment of Lido
- Good community spirit
- Activities around churches
  - Youth groups
- Bike tracks at L.H.S.
- Library/Tryst Community Centre
- Slimming World gains 'Silver Award' meeting in Stenhousemuir Bowling Club
  - Support among members
- Restaurants (2 local establishments)
- Transport links
- Senior Citizens provision
- Good Primary Schools
- Sharing facilities and resources
- Larbert views on Facebook
- Community council Facebook page

- Good links to neighbouring communities
- Expand some existing groups
- Area is good for walking/cycling
- Good golf course and cricket ground
  - Green heart to the village
- Reasonable cost eateries
- Good garden centre
- Opportunities for development/(McGowans Factory)
- History/Tradition
- Motorway links
- Larbert house development
- Friendly people
- Stenhousemuir branding
- Asda retained customers from rest of Falkirk
- Active Community Centre
- Active age concern
- Tryst Theatre
- Dobbie Hall – more investment could establish a community centre
  - Arts
  - Music
  - Theatre
- Good transport system – rail and bus
- Local nature reserve
- Great local hospital and lots of GP provision
- Good path network
- Woodland – Torwood (history heritage) & Larbert Woods
- Tryst Community Sports Club
- Good set of local schools
- Multi region catered for – churches with good relationships
- Good libraries
- Very active Community football club
- Large number of organised youth groups
- Adequate retail provision
- Only Community cycle track in Scotland (based in a school) opening soon

## Key Challenges in Larbert Stenhousemuir & Torwood?

### Open Responses

- Torwood
  - Castle, Broch & Blue pool not publicised or accessible
  - Multi use of the woodlands are a challenge e.g different needs for walkers, cyclists etc
- Litter problems (cig butts, lack of bins) x 2
- Dog fouling x 2
- Parking at hospital
- Bus service – Larbert to Camelon
- Population rise
  - Health services and schools are stretched x 2
  - All schools have portacabins
- Play parks need to be renovated/improved
  - 'Biggie' off Bellsdyke Road
- No focal point in centre
- Maintenance of cycle, footpath etc
- Community ethos
- Lack of heart of the community
- Dispersed community
- Dormitory town
- Now commuter town e.g Kinnaird
- Maintenance of key buildings – run down appearance
- Travelling people
- Fly signage
- People not ready to accept that there are various groups existing
- No variety of shops
- Police lack of contact
- More activity areas for children and teens with supervision
- Lack of sufficient and maintained green space
- Larbert High well over capacity
- Funding squeeze affects services we enjoy
- Community groups being charged for community hall hire
- Road network overstretched
  - Increased housing in Kinnaird
- Lack of places to go
- Stenhousemuir precinct ripped apart
- Empty units in Stenhousemuir
- Issues with Falkirk Community Trust – Governance and influence



## What would make life better?

### Simple Survey: (open responses)

- Supervised youth activities
- Help in advertising local groups
- Community Development Officer
- Better use of empty spaces (shops)
- Swimming Pool
- Tennis Courts
- MUGA's
- Increase Community Wardens
- Maintaining existing projects/facilities
- Educating to improve social standards such as
  - Irresponsible quad bikes
  - Irresponsible living standards
- Improving a sense of community
- Vibrant shopping precinct
  - Eateries
  - Cafes
  - Pubs
  - Bistros
  - Family pubs
- Better recreational activities
- Attracting local business
- More things going on in the evenings
- Good quality community influenced green spaces
- More community events that attract a wider audience
  - Possibly a community events group
- Paid employee to support the community
- Old Torwood School
  - Historic visitor centre
  - For Castle, Broch, Woodlands Trust fair etc
- Improve roads
  - Too much traffic
- New health centre
  - Services overloaded
- Another new primary school
- Community events – outdoor space for it
- Allotments!
  - There are areas behind Bruce Drive
- Outdoor seating area
  - Benches etc
  - Café
  - Ice Cream booth
- Another community facility that is multi-use e.g McGowns Toffee Works
- Development of Hospital
- Orienteering/Geo Cashing

- Outdoor gyms
- Development of parks
  - Play areas
  - Tennis
  - Picnic Area
  - Garden
- Community cards – Discounts etc
- Creating database & mailing list
- Asking developers for lump sum (advance) towards something bigger
- Employ someone part-time to source other funds
- Social places for young mums and families
  - Cafes
- Integration between communities
- Improve community identity
- Find way to celebrate local history
  - Visitor Centre etc
- Breakfast clubs and After-School care
- Commissioning a community mural or other artwork
- Iron sculpture
- Community Magazine
- Signage of towns
- Do we "join up" the towns?
- More restaurants
- We need to attract people to spend their money here
- Litter/Presentation
- Give us somewhere "To go"
- More family friendly pubs
- Protect the infrastructure we do have
- Constructive activities for teenagers
- Ice Rink
- Easy access to facilities for non-drivers
- Travelling/mobile cinema
- Revitalising parks
- Promoting Larbert, Stenhousemuir & Torwood
- Hidden river project – working with schools
- Community centre "heart" – differentiating Larbert & Stenhousemuir
- Creating central hub
- Community cohesion
- Connect Torwood better

## How could community funds be spent?

### Open Responses

- Building refurbishment
- Through caring organisations
- Community transport – to be available for hire
- Development Officer Post
- Annual festival/Gala event
- Facilities for older teenagers e.g. Skate park
- Park spaces/facilities/activities for pre-5's
- Support for development of local businesses
- Convert ex-McGowan's building into a community hub for all-day use
  - e.g Pop-up shops
- Additional support for Stenhousemuir football club to help promote further activities
- Development of land behind Spar shop in Foundry Loan
- Improvement of 'Tryst' ground for more regular use
- Supporting schools in their Community activities and facilities
- Large project for match funds and long term gain to enrich life for whole community
- Old buildings at Farm Foods developed and generate income
- Support existing community groups
- Start small and build up to bigger ones
- Supporting Falkirk Council in improving road/path infrastructure
- Improving cemeteries
- Dobbie Hall
  - Cultural Centre?
  - Cinema screening?
- Making funding applications simple
- Event fundraiser
  - Sporting event
  - Cultural
  - Music
  - Film
- Activity week (Gala- Summer-July)
- Community magazine
  - Butcher, Asda – sponsorship
- Food festival
- Invest in Building
  - Post Office
  - Gospel Hall
- Invest money – scheme
  - Solar energy
  - Shares
- Young enterprise support
- New business
- Awareness signs for
  - Golf club
  - Rights of way

- Private Course
  - Not Public
- Park facilities limited
  - Tennis
  - Football pitches
- Dog fouling
- Broken glass
- School capacity and Nursery Capacity
- Health Centre Capacity and Services
- Some vandalism
- 
- Upgrade play parks/adventure park
- Bike track for younger kids – like old Lido bike park
  - Cycling proficiency
- Community café
  - Cups of tea etc
- More activities for Meg
  - Gardening, Wood-turning and pass skills on
- Better signage for woodland and open spaces
- Reinstate and improve old paths e.g hospital to Torwood
- Opportunities for Carronrange pupils in the community – facilitate
- Assistance for school projects
- Environmental enhancements – private and public
  - Larbert & Stenhousemuir in Bloom
- Approaches to area
- Encourage groups/school to own projects for specific areas
- Regeneration of McGowan's Building – Sweeties?
- Funding projects coordinator
- Generator at Carron on – Hydropower
- Riding for the disabled
- Age Concern – property maintenance – heating system needs to be replaced
- Website

#### Short Term

- Protect Tryst Community Sports Club
- Support existing community groups i.e. Scouts/BB's
- Supporting schemes that provide young people with work experience

#### Long Term

- Taking ownership of halls i.e. Dobbie Hall
- Regenerating town centre e.g. hotel/bistro
- Community Enterprise
- Social Enterprise
- Specialists to use fund money to generate more money

## Appendix 3: Survey Responses

### Appendix 3a

- Men's shed and a tool library
- Paths and bike tracks.
- Shops not so good
- Mountain bike tracks and walks around the Larbert, Kinnaird and Torwood. Larbert urgently needs a dedicated cycle track to join the canal systems and to the Kelpies
- Improving green space for wildlife / supporting local environmental groups eg CATCA, LASER and Carron Dams LNR
- Provide adequate facilities open to all
- Older kids need places to go to stop them wondering the streets causing bother
- Open spaces where dogs can be exercised off lead, all areas are being cut more and more
- More country walks well laid out and signposted
- Improving supported work placements for young people with disabilities
- Police
- More green space available for children to play in -lack of this in The Inches and Kinnaird area.
- Youth clubs
- Leaflet/magazine/website advertising existing community groups, upcoming events, local news and volunteering
- Opening the restaurant in Kinnaird Village
- Tennis courts
- Upgrade Stewart Field to provide proper football facility
- Maintain and enhance existing facilities initially
- Adults need somewhere to go with kids to have something to eat with a play area
- New play park on waste land in Edwards Avenue Stenhousemuir
- Improving Stenhousemuir football clubs facilities to make it a better community asset and someplace more enjoyable to attend.
- A community development / education worker should already be in post with Falkirk Council
- Torwood mountain bike trails
- Perhaps someone to encourage an area for teenagers to hang around to defer from vandalism at local schools such as Larbert village primary school
- Basketball court in Stewartfield for older children
- Policing litter
- Further Energy Production to generate more cash OWNED by us.
- Object to wasting money on employing a CLD etc. worker - would achieve very little for the money
- Need more local facilities for older children/teens
- Help Falkirk Tryst Golf Club in awareness that it is NOT public land
- Contributing to the upkeep of the new cycle track, improving the Lade area
- Could be good if appeals to a wide section of the population. Maybe community events and outdoor facilities. Probably best to study what other villages have done successfully.

- Especially since they are charging for the use of school buildings. BBs etc might not be able to survive.
- Modern facilities that cater to more than just the usual sports, e.g football.
- local family pub in Kinnaird village
- Installing a cinema screen within Dobbie Hall
- Continue to grow and develop the TCSC and make it accessible for all the community- toddlers, juniors/youths, adults, 50+. Change the culture and mind-set of the community by promoting healthy and active living and inspiring a community to be active today for a healthier tomorrow.
- Somewhere for children to go as they get older to keep them off the streets. Whether that be leisure facilities, youth centres etc. I have kids ages 5 and 2 but notice that older children don't seem to have anywhere to socialise which I think would be good for the kids and provide them with somewhere to go
- There is not much local entertainment.
- More arts and culture in the community centre please - painting, patchwork etc.

## Appendix 3b

- Play park for kids
- Mountain bike tracks and walks around the Larbert, Kinnaird and Torwood. Larbert urgently needs a dedicated cycle track to join the canal systems and to the Kelpies
- cleaning up of rubbish and litter
- Improved roads
- Access to shopping precinct is an issue though at times
- Getting rid of Asda Town
- Additional street lights on A9 at Torwood,
- Keeping public areas including streets clean & vibrant looking.
- Better use of empty shops - supporting small businesses at start up stage
- By cycle ways I mean decent roads not shared facilities.
- Again keen to enhance existing infrastructure
- Pot holes in roads
- Roads need improving
- improve walks to eg Torwood Castle and blue pool
- Improve arterial roads within Larbert / Stenhousemuir
- More street lights in Torwood A9
- Bring small businesses back to Larbert / Stenhousemuir to bring people to the area
- What do you mean by safer streets?
- Better shops and more dog /bins.
- Probably best to study what other villages have done successfully.
- I think the above should remain the responsibility of Falkirk Council, Police, land owners and agencies already in existence.
- Local roads such as Moss Road, Bogend Road and Hamilton Road all in a very poor state of repair.

## Appendix 3c

- Play park for kids
- Local museum, art classes, local orchestra.

- Parts of the area are disgusting with the rubbish lying around, some of which has been lying there for several years
- More cycle paths
- The big one for me is the development of the Main Street.
- As said before I am finding it harder and harder to exercise my dogs freely. I now have to put them in the car to take them for a walk!!
- A "grown up" school with enterprise opportunities for young people leaving secondary education (Carrongrange School) who have learning needs and disabilities. Somewhere in which they could have day care but also experience worthwhile and appropriate work and activity tasks eg run a cafe, make and sell crafts, learn life skills.
- Particularly public transport in the Muirhall Road, Inches and Bellsdyke Road area.
- More facilities such as cafes, restaurants for social gatherings (couples, families, friends)
- Better use of existing facilities eg although the shopping centre was revamped the majority of the units remain unoccupied. Consider how else these could be utilised. ? Community Information Hub
- Additional street lights on A9 at Torwood,
- Maintaining places we have to a high standard - eg the River Carron.
- Improved pavement connecting Kinnaird Village to Stenhousemuir centre. Currently Tryst Road isn't ideal - the bottom part still being 40mph limit which seems very unsafe if walking with young children, and not good for the amount of school children who use this route. Reducing speed limit and placing bollards/increasing pavement width would help to increase safety.
- With the expansion of Kinnaird and the influx of people the local restaurants are in great demand and there is not enough suitable parking space. A community restaurant that invest the profits back into the community would be a good idea.
- I'd like to see Larbert Village invigorated Also, how many folk know about the Glen in Torwood or the joys of Plein Country park?
- Music opportunities eg choir, childrens' band/orchestra hub for good quality lessons and making music together across generations and types eg traditional classical modern Support for new carriage driving group for disabled
- Bus shelters in the Broomage: many of the residents who moved in during the 1950s are now in their late seventies and early eighties, and they would appreciate such protection as they rely on the bus.
- Bring back a bus to Camelon
- Empty units in town centre could be turned into a community hub for kids, families or youths.
- the shopping precinct has cut the village in half
- Better social facilities e.g. restaurants
- A community pub in the inches/Kinnaird village Stenhousemuir town centre needs regenerated.
- Falkirk Radio car club is building an outdoor track that is aimed at kids over 7 years old.
- I think now is a fantastic opportunity for Larbert to invest in itself. We have a chance to setup a cashflow that will build and sustain the village for decades to come much like the Carnegie Trust in Dunfermline, but we must guard against the temptation to spend it all now and have no investment to bear fruit. Spend money for benefits by

all means, but invest some of it from day one to build a long term income and improve the lives of our children.

- Local employment options are limited and many people commute. However the only realistic way to commute is by train. Evening sport options are limited too which is the time that typical commuters are available. Reasonably priced yoga and pilates classes in a local hall in the evenings would be appreciated.
- Fill empty shops with small businesses or community ideas - rent for a nominal amount. A few pounds is better than nothing and interesting shops will attract people to the area.
- Empty shops are a poor advert to visitors to our area.
- However the money is used, it should be used as an "investment" not a "donation". Where possible, we should try to grow the fund over the coming years. We should use the money to initiate the sort of ventures that the people of the area want, but should get some sort of return (even without interest) in order to grow the fund, thus making it more effective as it grows.
- Road signs to remind people that Muirhall Road, Tryst Road and the Main Street etc are residential areas and they are not motorways for people who live in housing schemes. Traffic problems associated with the hospital particularly at the main Bellsdyke Road roundabout could be addressed by lane signage and lane painting etc to try to get people to use the correct lane. The new housing has brought city style of driving to the area which could be addressed by an awareness campaign that this is a village based environment. Possibly a village style community spirit can be brought back to the area as this has been lost over recent years. How that is done is another matter.
- I would love to hold a monthly ceilidh the Dobbie Hall which would be great for families but financially it might be too much of a risk. Supporting community events like this would be good.

## Appendix 3d

- Play park for kids
- Some social facilities (community Hall) at Kinnaird village
- U3A. Opportunities for further learning e.g languages, crafts.
- More robust support for local halls. They are a great medium for getting young and old out mixing, learning and keeping healthy.
- I think we have a lovely environment and actually facilities are very good. I would love to see the Dobbie Hall become more like the Albert Halls in Stirling attracting a wide variety of arts and cultural events. The restaurant at the Albert Halls is also a fantastic success. I think run properly the Dobbie Hall could even be revenue generating. It seems to me that there isn't much for older kids to do although the cycle park is very welcome. It was so disappointing to see the incident in the park where the trees were destroyed and the 'it'll just get wrecked' comments about the cycle park. Most kids aren't like this and helping them 'own' a valuable element of the community is surely worth a try. I think the Community Council do an incredible job and hope when my own children are older to have the time to contribute.



- More wind farm opportunities. Make Larbert, Stanny and Torwood a sustainable region.
- Help to get our youngsters off the streets. Programs to combat underage drinking.
- We have a great community football club at Stenhousemuir FC however the facilities for the many community teams to play on are really poor. The Lido pitch is unplayable in the winter, Larbert High has little grass on it and other pitches have fallen in to disuse and disrepair. It would be great to create a 3g astroturf pitch on the Tryst to allow the hundreds of young players to train and play in a top class environment. 2.
- Wildlife is in trouble. The State of Nature Report published shows that there have been huge declines in birds, insects, plants and animals over the last couple of decades. Larbert and Stenhousemuir is fortunate in having lots of open green space but much of this is managed as amenity grassland which is an ecological desert for wildlife. We could do so much more in these areas by creating wildflower meadows and other wildlife friendly features. T
- The River Carron is an important part of the heritage of the area, however from the viaduct to Carron the river needs some TLC. There's an opportunity to create some fantastic habitat for fish and other wildlife in this area. We could also make the river more attractive for visitors - riverbank paths, interpretation, etc.
- We need better family friendly food places to go also a play area like they have at Wellsfield in Denny we need to encourage a community spirit and take a pride in our area in general
- Local adult evening classes, various topics. Help for unemployed adults to gain new skills for future employment.
- Improving Stenhousemuir shopping centre.
- A sense of pride in the surroundings! Friends from Canada and Wales were disgusted by the amount of litter and rubbish lying beside paths in the area when we went for a walk. Repairs to potholes in both roads AND pavements in the area! Not enough attention is given to street and pavement cleaning particularly of broken glass which is dangerous to both
- A cycle/walking path from Antonshill Roundabout to link with the cycle path on the A905.
- A swimming pool. More cycle paths
- Better litter control and publicity to stop dog fouling more seating areas on cycle and pathways brighter shop fronts repair pot holes in roads
- We don't have a town centre as such. We have an Asda car park in Stenhousemuir and very little in Larbert. Larbert and Stenhousemuir suffer because they are separate towns with no space between. A proper town centre would start to generate the social interaction and community spirit. Another problem is that the area is simply a dormitory town. Many residents have no feeling of belonging.
- We must make the most of our local town centre. It is a disgrace that there has been new units sitting empty since Asda opened. We need to go back to small type shops eg. Fish shop, green grocers, family bakery and try to encourage small businesses to the area.
- The modern community requires modern and innovative solutions to problems which are often not defined in the forums dedicated to traditional community problem solving. A modern problem in today's world is that with both parents in a family

working, we have the in-efficient model of cooking in all 2000 homes individually and doing the same number of dishes taking time away from family and community. I would build community spirit by taking a brave shot at solving this key 5:30pm problem. I would start a community kitchen which delivered meals to families at a rate which people could afford to purchase every night. Eg. £2 per head for fish and chips delivered to your door on a Monday, steak pie on a Tuesday etc. The semi commercial model would sustain this and the area has enough scale to make it work as a concept. This might also be able to provide experience for young people as well as a sustainable income stream for the community. It would not affect local business because it is an everyday product and not the "special occasion" that other providers focus on. It would be a bit of a risk but think of the potential!! I would sign a weekly subscription if I could convince my better half!! :-)) if more information required.

- Finishing off the resurfacing works at the bottom of Carronvale Road adjacent to the bridge over the Lade. New surfaced footpaths provided throughout this area and all of Carronvale Road was resurfaced in recent years and this section has always been overlooked, ignored. It spoils what is otherwise an amazing new footpath network.
- Community farm
- A decent children's play and family facility or outdoor space like a park etc and more to do in the town centre. The Larbert in bloom idea is a great one and could really give the place a lift. Some encouragement to get folk to visit the area and spend some money might help local shops etc. as a new mum to be most of the children's or family activities or classes are in Falkirk.
- One of my 'dreams' was that if I won the lottery I would turn the area they have just put the cycle track on, into an outdoor running track for athletics and have seating arranged up the embankment. There is an old running track at Camelon playing fields that Woodlands High school used to use, maybe refurb that and that whole area at Camelon across the new Durator bridge be made into a sports hub?
- Support the restart of gala days in each community area or a central community / family day for all residents to come together and improve community spirit
- Cafe's where you can sit outside
- This area lacks a sense community these days as a lot of people are only interested in their own wee small community , we should be advertising all projects that go on in the area via a local website
- Improved park at Corrine Avenue area is big enough for a large adventure park for older kids
- Supporting people in work placements and social activities as this is where social work funding is being cut.
- Tennis & squash club - with club facilities and some kind of protection and maintenance for the courts.
- Bike path between Torwood and Larbert so that bikes and pedestrians don't have to be on A9.
- Would there be any mileage in dredging and using the lade?
- Improved facilities for dog waste and litter (particularly away from Main Street).
- Lighting of the path beside golf course.
- Work needs to be done to develop respect between youth groups and older people. The next generation need to change their values and attitudes towards others

especially older people and some of their lifestyle choices. Maybe some community groups could help?

- There does seem to be a mentality of ruining what is there and littering etc poss from youths.... With not much else to do....
- With the size that Larbert/Stenhousemuir has become there is not much for youth to do during holidays or evenings, really poor local youth facilities
- Larbert needs a nice community café/restaurant
- Better and more welcoming signage, cleaner streets and public areas
- Bridge over river Carron at Carronshore providing link to Helix park.
- More social facilities (cafe, pub/restaurant) in the Kinnaird area as this is removed from the main town centre with a large population with not many facilities nearby
- More classes in Tryst Community Centre and Stenhousemuir sports centre and a better variety suitable for residents in 50's, 60's age group.
- Redevelop McGowans Factory for community use
- A Community Development Worker could be employed to co-ordinate everything that happens within the area. Could be based within an unoccupied unit supported by various organisations of different natures. A good example is the Community Hub currently based within the old WRVS shop within Falkirk Community Trust.
- Additional street lights on A9 at Torwood,
- Sufficient sports facilities to cope with the actual population to encourage people to exercise
- Reinvestment in other renewables
- Leisure facilities ie gym
- Support for groups who are already showing initiative. I'd like to see people with a track record of getting things done supported rather than just throwing money at ideas which will disintegrated after the first burst of enthusiasm is passed.
- With an aging population, it is important to look for ways to improve people's health and wellbeing. It would be great if some of the funds could be put into areas that would encourage more people to get involved in exercise. Additionally, many elderly people don't have the opportunity to get out and about very often, especially those that live themselves. Any initiatives that provided some assistance to those people (e.g. Minibus to pick them up and take them out somewhere) would be very beneficial.
- A community card - by giving access to services/activities free or at a discount you would build a database which could be used to keep people informed and engaged.
- Improve facilities for people who are lonely
- Although it has only been mentioned once, I strongly feel that the youth have very little opportunity in the local area and therefore 'hang around' at night. One of the empty buildings in Stenhousemuir could operate as an internet/gaming cafe. Properly managed at affordable prices, this could generate an income for the fund. My own wish would be properly marked safe cycle ways on the road network, not the token effort the council have produced.
- Benches for people to sit when going for a walk if they are elderly or disabled
- Further develop the new Kinnaird Village, there is very little for young people over the age of 8 to do. Parks are small and youths use school grounds as a skate park. This area brings a lot of money into the area but there are too few facilities a

community play/sports indoor/outdoor area would be fantastic. Community cafe would be useful - which could facilitate toddler groups etc.

- Community spirit and events!
- Help to support small business at start up stage - there have been newly built units situated in the town centre next to Asda that have never been let and lay empty until a permanent tenant can be found the space could be used as a pop up retail space to support various types of local small independent businesses.
- Community events such as family fun days, Christmas markets, etc
- Lade clean up and filled with water
- More recreational stuff to do; cafes and hubs; we could do with more meeting places. I've watched Larbert grow from a wee village to a large commuter town. We could do with another large supermarket to compete with Asda, and just to have more amenities that a town of this size needs. That said, I love living here. It's a great location for getting to and from work and to get to other parts of Scotland quickly.
- Investment in safe and usable cycle ways.
- Regenerating old buildings creating employment and income. Possibly a Cafe/Bistro social enterprise
- Tennis courts
- Nothing commemorates James Finlayson in the area of his birth. A statue at the Cross might be prohibitive cost wise, however something along these lines might encourage (international) tourists to visit.
- A gym that also provides a variety of fitness classes for all ages. A youth centre.
- As a community we have most shopping / cafe needs. There is enough community halls /Dobbie hall. We are very lucky our parks are well maintained with good play things. Although the plants are lovely at road side etc. it is important to see real value from this money. Good safe cycle path ways for children to visit schools, activities etc, also for adult to attend work etc. Elderly using motor chairs would also enjoy these areas if tarmac is used providing leisure and pleasure.
- I feel we need parking for the local walks i.e. the Forth Valley royal woodland walks there is nowhere for walkers to park other than the main car park which is not ideal for dogs
- As stated above I think that there are already a lot of good things happening and I feel that initially efforts should be made to enhance and build upon these with maintenance and additions. Keen to see any money make a positive impact and not be spread too thin too soon. This is a long term project and so much can be achieved.
- Somewhere for teenagers to go and more parks for smaller kids
- Some parks are a little run down or could be added to. Litter is a problem at St Bernadette's muga pitch on holidays, money to provide addition bins, signage etc
- With more houses being built in the area this puts more pressures on infrastructure, schools, surgeries etc.
- Extending Helix type approach further into our area, maybe a cafe up towards Larbert House type area for walkers/ cyclists.
- Recreation for adults and families, a family restaurant / pub where families feel safe to go and not be surrounded by drunks/fighting etc.
- Use the income along with investment in the area to develop the site at the motorway (corner of Bellsdyke Road and Stirling Road and new Motorway Junctions)

to build a sports complex with quality facilities (swimming pool, tennis courts, floodlit facilities, gyms for classes, good fitness suite etc.). I have lived in the area for 3 years now and it is definitely an area which is lacking and I think this would encourage more socialising within the community too. There is a lot of money within Larbert / Torwood and parts of Stenhousemuir to create a membership based sports complex with discounts towards people in the area who are less well off. This is a fantastic opportunity to create a real social enterprise within the area and also keep bringing more money into the area via this exercise and the ongoing wind farm monies.

- Outdoor seating on some of the walks.
- Larbert town centre needs rejuvenation after the road closure which causes many business to struggle or vanish. They need more projects to link high schools to primary to support shared responsibility of our community. To give children a sense of responsibility and ownership. Development of a community recreational centre is needed for older children in their mid to late teens. We have enough parks but nothing to entertain older children.
- More facilities for children aged 5-18 than can be used at anytime e.g. the football pitch at Stewartfield could be upgraded, a basketball or tennis courts could be added. I feel it is currently a bit of a waste of valuable community land! There seem to be quite a few playgrounds for younger children, nothing for this a bit older.
- A cafe or pub in the. Kinnaird village area
- Restaurants and bars.
- Educating those who do not appreciate the lovely countryside and the improved parks and pathways about the need to contribute by keeping the area litter free.
- Upmarket restaurant wine bar
- More street lights on A9 in Torwood.
- Plenty of ideas above but preference would be to see the money invested with interest payments being used by the committee to make small grants available to local charities or individuals working with pensioners, unemployed etc.. A Long term income for the future.
- There is a danger we duplicate services the Council should be providing, rather than gaining any benefit from this.
- A gym/sports classes are missing from Larbert. There was word that the council would develop the empty unit in Stenhousemuir shopping area for a gym and for sport classes. However that has so far come to nothing; possibly due to lack of funds. For other areas the council operates a gym and a good selection of classes including yoga and pilates.
- More cycle paths
- Community funded beat police on foot
- just more of a sense that the area is attractive and the place to live, work and visit. Anything to attract people to come and spend time and money here.
- Decent publically accessible sports facilities
- Some councils have developed walking routes to schools with improved crossings wider footpaths and environmental improvements along the routes. Would be good with Larbert high expanding and large numbers from kids from the inches and no school bus from Carronshore
- There is a gap in things for older children and teens to do. Things like the tennis courts, bike park or community gardens could bring youths and adults together in a

positive way. Also likely to be good investments with cheaper ongoing costs than a pool. The Mariner centre, Stenhouse Sport Centre and Larbert High already have pools or games halls, why duplicate? I think a lot of the above are already available in the local area and some are not very well used.

- Funding for signage for Falkirk Tryst Golf Club for the public rights of way on the course to make it safer for walkers and remind them it is private land
- Protection for communities in the event of planning issues becoming a problem, eg the case of Dart Energy. The community had no resources with which to fight their corner.
- Local farmers market (monthly). Perhaps in the car park opposite Strathcarron furniture.
- Safe areas for parking vehicles around busy areas when events were on, such as football or the tryst fair. More support given to Girl Guides and Scouts, financially as some units are required to pay large amounts for space to run units.
- These huge windmills can be seen from miles around not just in the LST areas and the bribe cash should also be disbursed much further around our areas.
- Litter bins and dog bins.
- Grant funding for Schools and local groups to bid in for.
- We should give some thought on encouraging how people spend their money - with more of our money being spent, actually in Larbert. With the recent population growth, there is a large disposable income in the area, with few places to spend it, locally. The more we can provide (restaurants, pubs, entertainment) in the town, it will keep the money here. If we keep the money here, that will encourage more investment from other business, which will, in turn, improve the town centre.
- Funding domestic microgeneration and fuel efficiency/insulation.
- Community space, particularly for new mothers. This could be provided in the form of a cafe, or community meeting space where groups such as NCT could meet. There seems to be a shortage of this type of space in the area.
- Trying to retain the heritage of the area. (Renaming areas such as Bellsdyke Kinnaird maybe means this is a lost cause along with the over development of the area and no developments being in line with the outline plans such as Bellsdyke and the Stenhousemuir redevelopment. This is not directly relevant however they are examples of our heritage being lost)
- I feel there are limited facilities for the area's youth. While there's plenty of sports facilities which are great, if they aren't into sports (and even if they are, they can't play sport all the time) there's little else. Some kids just aren't sporty. So I'd like to see money invested in an environmental wildlife project like Jupiter at Grangemouth where there's a place for kids to learn about wildlife, potter around at the dipping pond etc and discover the area's natural heritage.
- Grants to improve the appearance of pivotal buildings.
- Modern facilities for kids ages 8 - 16, that isn't football or soft play. There is nowhere to take kids in this age bracket particularly through the winter months. Once they've grown out of soft play you're on your own! Need to start thinking out of the box a bit and create a multi-sports/activity facility (excluding football - they've got enough!), which includes things like a decent climbing wall, ice rink, skate park etc. and has a proper grown up cafe that you'd be happy to spend 2 hours of your life in while kids are burning off their energy whilst learning new skills.

- Tennis court, regular Farmers market and Gala day
- Local gym facilities, bistro/cafe and community centre for recreational activities and support groups
- Evening classes for a variety of age groups e.g. 14-18, 19-30, 31-55+ Not just sport or fitness classes but other interests such as baking, dancing, archery, sewing, computer skills, reading /book club
- Help restore the facade of the old Larbert hospital building in Kinnaird village into something local families can use like restaurant, family pub/bistro.
- A "Sport, Physical Activity and Recreation Barn" to be used by all community groups who would share resources and facilities. Be creative and think about what is not in area - ice rink, tennis courts, soft play, community cafe, over 50+ activities- dance, line dancing, indoor bowling etc. tie in local NHS, primary's and high schools and community groups.
- I think activities for kids on holidays and weekends that can get them more active and involved in teams and doing things outdoors.
- Support for required conservation work to the local war memorial - there is other finding (from the war memorials trust) which could also be used
- Invest in a proper children's play park, we feel we have to travel to go to a decent one Kings Park, Stirling Glasgow Green are our favourites The tiny one at the Lido is so basic and very boring
- Developing a community hub, I.E. McCowans Toffee works, applying for lottery funding to Develop a hub for all ages, mother & baby sessions, craft clubs for all ages, language classes, sports facilities, drop in health clinic, local history room, schools can use it, computer lessons. These are just a few ideas for the hub
- A local museum
- I moved to the area 7 years ago and Larbert has a fantastic community. More activities within our area for kids would save travelling to Falkirk and surrounding areas thus creating employment within our village and another source of income for Larbert. Our village is very friendly and very child orientated with the new development of properties housing mainly families with small children. I believe therefore that more should be done for the children

## Appendix 3e

- A swimming pool would be really good; more disabled activities for elderly
- Important to invest in children 0-16yrs, 16-21yrs, sports facilities, developing healthy relationships, building self-esteem, tackling the rise in suicide - more focus on hobbies,
- Try and do something about the drainage of the lido pond, I know there are people who come and clean up the pond on a regular basis but my concern is about the island which has never been the same since the redesign of the lido and is constantly in danger of becoming partially flooded in heavy rain, now the swans have nested which is one of the lidos greatest attractions I feel there is very little protection for the nesting pair or their eggs, perhaps this could be looked at once the pair have raised this years brood by trying to alter the height of island

and planting more bushy plants that would offer more coverage and protection to the nesting birds, also lets hope this year there are no more ducklings and cygnets lost by falling into the drain.

- I think it's great that you are asking for the views of the community. It's prohibitively expensive for adults to exercise. An example of this is the cost to hire a sports hall to play badminton. It's the best part of 8 pounds for 45 minutes. It's turning people away.
- I like the idea of a community worker. A central point to regenerate the place. Huge amount of work for one person though - and should Falkirk Council not be aware of the problems and seeking to regenerate?
- I would like to see more paths connecting the woodland at Forth Valley Hospital with Torwood so that people can walk or cycle between them. I would also like to see more made of local historical features, in particular the Iron Age broch and the castle at Torwood which many local people are unaware of. Information boards and signage would raise awareness and these important sites (plus the woodland setting itself) could offer excellent outdoor educational opportunities for local schools, scout groups etc. Having something of interest to go see encourages people to get out in the fresh air and walk, as seen in the popularity of the kelpies in Falkirk.
- Investment in our own community resources to bring in an income to provide further investment. Investments to cash in on connections with helix and Falkirk wheel via town centre would be good
- I'm originally from Stenhousemuir moved away years ago
- The money should be spent to help all parts of the community not just a specific area.
- Contacting local churches as many of them do outreach to different age groups within the community with limited cash availability
- See above re sports facilities developed on Camelon playing fields especially running track (so us local folk don't need to drive to Grangemouth if we want to do track running).
- Full of History A Visitor Centre should be built duplicating The Tryst for McCowans Toffee
- I feel the teenager market is missed. I feel they need somewhere that they can hang out for example internet cafe, boxing gym a place they seems cool to them but is really keeping them of the streets.
- Educate the Community that the Golf Club is private property and owned by the Club. Stick to using the clearly marked rights of way and not wander all over the course allowing their dogs to run free.
- I strongly recommend that the funds made available are split into short term and long term projects. Short term being where immediate benefit can be obtained to a group or organisation and long term being something that the community at large will benefit from perhaps located in somewhere central i.e. close to local shopping
- Delighted to see that local people are being consulted and the suggestions tabled at the Dobbie Hall meeting are both forward and future thinking. Well done to those involved. Cheers, Scott.



- A visitor centre could incorporate community cafe, put greater emphasis on local heritage, include play/adventure park for kids, and encourage use of woodland paths, encouraging walking to improve general fitness and wellbeing.
- More interaction for the elderly
- I would be happy to provide more help and would like to be kept up to date with the results of the survey.
- Anything to improve the community spirit and to support inter-generational activities would benefit this area.
- Very concerned that some of the suggestions are replicating existing resources eg sports facilities already exist eg pool and bike track almost constructed near LHS
- The focus should be on fully developing Kinnaird as a proper village with facilities for everyone.
- Returning to the Finlayson statue idea, in addition to turbine community cash, perhaps some Laurel and Hardy enthusiasts would contribute, or even the council might see clear to help with funding, which could bring further tourism benefits to the area, in conjunction with the Kelpies, Callendar House and the Wheel.
- Community growing is a brilliant idea. Need some allotments in Larbert! Planting verges is a good idea - Fife has some gorgeous verges planted with windflowers which look great and are good for bees etc.
- The money should not be used to replace or enhance something Falkirk council has responsibility for. If they see the community paying for something with the wind farm money they will just stop paying for it themselves and we will be no better off.
- Simple things can make a big impact would welcome flower and bulbs being planted on an ongoing basis to really make the area stand out to everyone.
- I feel a lot of children play parks around housing areas need updated with new equipment, benches and fences to ensure child safety.
- Seems to be wasteland in Edward Ave that has overgrown bushes etc..., never used. With school nearby and nursery could be developed into a wee play area with a community garden or something. Also St Bernadettes primary have adopted a piece of orphan land that would be helpful to get community involved in development of this land
- Larbert and Stenhousemuir has really improved over the last few years, the addition of the supermarket etc has really made an impact. We have an excellent butcher in the village but it would be good to also have a deli/greengrocer, bakers and a spacious welcoming cafe for families to go.
- More dog bins in some of the newer areas, and post boxes in the same areas
- Improving Larbert and attempting to restore a Stenhousemuir centre who's soul has been bought by Asda!
- The Kinnaird Village high street has never transpired which is disappointing for so many new houses as there's nowhere to meet the local community. It feels like a commuter town and the potential isn't being realised.
- People need to understand that it is not up to 'someone else' or the Council to maintain standards in the area. Everyone needs to contribute by taking care of their immediate surroundings and ensuring their children understand this too.
- The street lights in Torwood should be extended further towards Glenberrie on A9

- Another idea is providing community complementary therapies such as reflexology which can have great health benefits.
- Ensure local people are involved and informed about this work and how it can be positively influenced. If it is a tick box exercise people will disengage.
- While many of the suggestions for improvement are good, some are likely to be very expensive with little community benefit e.g. Improving public transport. My opinion is that any funds should be spent on something physical that will have low overheads and be long lasting. Providing recreation spaces e.g tennis courts/bike or scooter park/community gardens etc that will attract a wide range of the community especially older children and teens will have a greater community benefit by reducing anti-social behaviour and improve health and wellbeing. Not supportive of funding positions that will be short lived or attractive to a specific niche within the community. Again why fund established groups such as the Scouts? Many of the initiatives are covered by other organisations including the NHS and Falkirk Council.
- Would just like to know why the folks in Bonnybridge closer to these giant windmills than the folks in Stenhousemuir are denied access to same funds being disbursed to LST COMMUNITIES.
- Concern for the people using the new dance studio at Stirling Road, Larbert as regards the corner speed of cars and kids
- Empty shop units being filled as they have sat empty since they were built, crazy! Feel we are also in need of a good family pub/soft play in Kinnaird area as the family population is massive in the area and there is nowhere local like this for families to go.
- It would be good to see the local history celebrated. The Carron Iron works has a fantastic front gate area with the cannons on display, yet the roof is in poor condition and looks shabby. The large blue Iron Arch to the side is hardly known about. Perhaps a tidy up of this area and a display in the local library telling the history of this area and its importance around the world would be a good use of some of the money? 2. There is also a large park between Alloa Road and Doune Crescent etc that would be nice to see some park benches added too. Other areas could benefit from more outdoor seating too. 3. The area suffers from a lack of cafes and local restaurants. Perhaps some of the money could be used to create a cafe in or near the library.
- The Dobbie Hall is a great venue but looks a bit 'tired'. The outside paintwork and ladies' toilets in particular would benefit from some attention.
- As a couple we feel a coffee shop or shops centrally located e.g. Near the train station , Larbert Main Street or the library would allow people to meet, chat and spend money within our community. Within here a baking class or other could be run, volunteers could be sought and skills could be passed on down and across generations. Here local events could be advertised and promoted and money fed back into the area rather than to Falkirk or Stirling towns.

## Appendix 3f

List of People who would like to be involved in the process going forward is included in the full Research Report.