



Coalburn

2023 - 2028

Community Action Plan



What is a community action plan?

A Community Action Plan sets out the priorities and initiatives that local people want to see happening in their area. It is the result of a community coming together to identify its needs, understand its ambition and agree positive action to be taken which will make the area a better place to live, work, play and visit.

This is the second Community Action Plan for our village. The first, produced in 2016, included

Douglas and Glespin.

This plan was commissioned by Coalburn Miners' Welfare Charitable Society on behalf of the community and funded by CLLD.

It covers a 5 year period from 2023-2028 and focusses solely on Coalburn and the projects we want to see happening in and around our village.

The previous plan

A part time development worker was employed to build momentum and deliver initiatives in Coalburn. The impact of Covid and Cost of Living Crisis have diverted efforts to emergency and crisis care (including food parcels) but progress on the Action Plan's priorities has been maintained. Over the last 5 years, positive changes have included:

- **Young people:** Coalplay was set up to actively engage young people and get them involved. Sessions now provided weekly and holiday programmes in place.
- **Jobs:** Provided into work support for young people through the Skills Exchange Horizon Programme. Connect 2 Renewables Employability Initiative launched to support people into work. Broad based skills programme delivered to individuals and community groups.
- **Village improvements:** The Action Group was formed to tackle some of the problem areas and create trails including the Nature Trail along the Burn. New notice boards, planters and benches in the village. Active involvement has also been delivered through the Regeneration Group and Men's Shed.
- **Funding for community groups:** a range of funding accessed with the help of the development worker to improve facilities, host events and run classes. This included increased usage of CMW community asset..
- **Transport:** Shopping trips were organised for those in need. Active travel links between villages and towns have been progressed. E-bikes piloted and future roll out planned.



Preparing this Plan

This second Action Plan is the result of extensive community engagement and research carried out over a four month period in early 2023. The process involved:

- A community survey available online and delivered door to door.
- An Open Public Meeting at Coalburn Miners' Welfare.
- A series of interviews and group work with a range of community groups, local activists and volunteers and primary school children.
- Interviews with public sector representatives and service providers.
- Preparation of a community profile detailing facts and figures about our community and the assets we already have in our village.
- Review of future initiatives and development plans for the area.

Preparing this Plan



241

survey responses on behalf of 658 people.



16

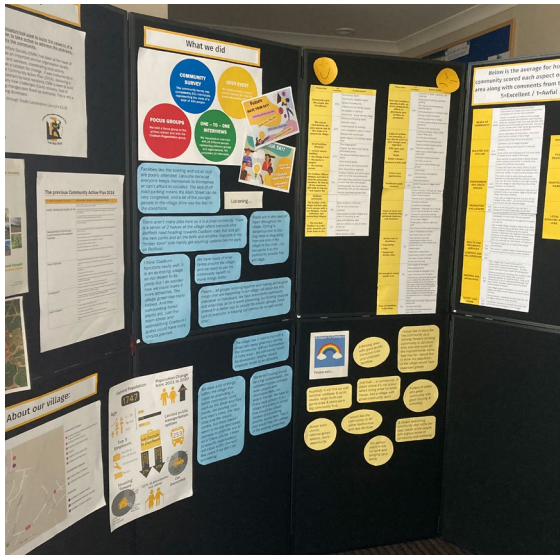
Local groups, businesses and service providers took part in group sessions and interviews.



30

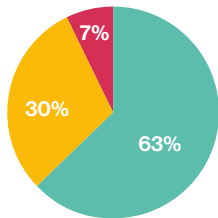
people attended the open event.

Thanks to everyone who took part.



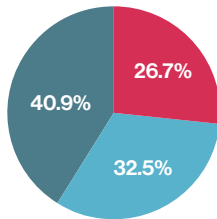
The Challenges

Data for our village shows that:



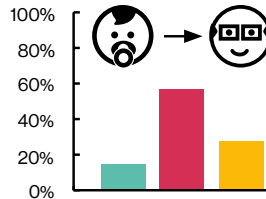
Housing Tenure

- Owner Occupied
- Socially Rented
- Private/Other Rented



Car Ownership

- One Car
- Two Cars +
- No Cars



Population Age

- 0-15
- 16-64
- 65+

Population:

There are 1,747 people living in Coalburn and our population is growing significantly faster than the regional and national averages. We have a high number of pensioner households in comparison.

Economy:

Job availability locally is significantly lower compared to other areas. Higher numbers of people claiming

Universal Credit are searching for work and young people face particular disadvantage.

Transportation:

Public transport is very limited with only one bus service. Over 32% of the local population has no car.

Housing: There are round 840 households locally. We have a diverse mix of housing but a lack of sheltered housing / houses for retirees

to downsize. Data shows the electricity consumption is higher than the national average. Some households are living in fuel poverty.

Health:

Compared to the national average, we have more people on incapacity benefits and / or living with chronic health conditions.

The Opportunities

Community assets: We have a strong volunteer base within the village and a high number of active community groups locally. Coalburn benefits from a range of community owned / managed buildings and other key assets including a leisure centre and primary school.

Green space: Coalburn has significantly more green space compared to the national average for local people to enjoy within the village and surrounding it. This potential extends to developing natural heritage, adventure tourism and leisure opportunities to bring visitors and jobs to the area.

Industry and enterprise: Coalburn's location near the M74 with access North and South is beginning to open up opportunities to develop industry and create local jobs. The new employability initiative Connect2 Renewables is well placed to support people into work.

Housing: The village is likely to grow with planning permission for an additional 600 houses to the North East. This may bring opportunities to create more diverse housing and better village infrastructure.

Funding: Coalburn benefits from significant and long term funding from the windfarm developments: £2.5m each year for up to 30 years is to be spent directly in Coalburn and nearby villages on projects identified as having community benefit.

What you said

Rating different
aspects of local life:

**“sense of
community”**

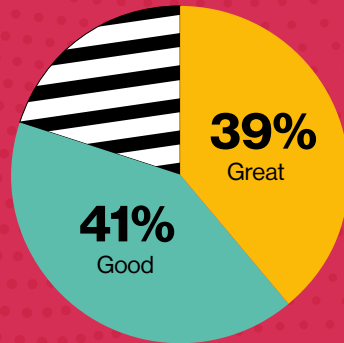
The best aspect

**“local economy
and jobs”**

The worst aspect

39% of people in the survey rated Coalburn as a ‘great’ place to live and a further 41% as ‘good’. Most local residents are committed to the area and see themselves staying here long term.

Survey rating Coalburn
as a place to live:



Rating different aspects of local life, **‘sense of community’** was the best aspect and **‘local economy and jobs’** the worst.



Good

OK

Poor

What you like

- ✓ Community spirit and friendliness
- ✓ Natural environment and green space
- ✓ Volunteering by locals
- ✓ Location and getting around
- ✓ Safe, quiet and peaceful

“It’s an amazing village for adults and kids. A true community.”

- a local resident

What you don’t like

- ✗ Lack of jobs
- ✗ Inequality and division
- ✗ Poor local amenities and services
- ✗ State of roads and traffic
- ✗ Poor public transport and active travel options
- ✗ Anti social behaviour and safety
- ✗ Neglected appearance
- ✗ Not enough for young people
- ✗ Community groups not working together
- ✗ Nothing on offer for visitors

Key messages

Hundreds of project ideas were put forward during the consultation. Some of these were small and easy to do (more planters and benches for example) and some longer term and more complex (such as creating sustainable jobs). Main points from the consultation included:

- **Be more ambitious.** Smaller 'quick win' projects are worth doing but the windfarm money presents an opportunity to make real, long term change for Coalburn. There is a need to be bolder and more strategic in how this money could be invested.
- **Encourage more joint working.** Community groups and agencies could work better together to increase the impact they have locally and make them more sustainable.
- **Make better use of the assets we have.** There is a need to future-proof the facilities and services that are already here but also capitalise on underused assets: using our location, heritage and green space to tap into the tourism market for example.
- **Regenerate the economy.** Local people want jobs and a thriving village economy. This means bringing business to Coalburn and ensuring local residents have the work skills that will be needed.
- **Bring back a 'heart' to the village.** People want a place they feel proud of and connected to. This included creating more of a physical village centre where people can meet and interact and a range of village improvements but also opportunities to develop our community spirit further.

What this led to

As a result of all your feedback and ideas, we have developed an action plan which will help us achieve our long term vision:

***“ A welcoming, thriving
and well connected village
offering a great quality of
life and good prospects
for all residents.”***

Theme 1

Local Jobs and Enterprise

Context: One of our major challenges as a rural community is our local economy. Job density is low and reliance on out of work benefits high. People travel further afield to access employment and this is 'hollowing out' the village with key services moving away and local spend reducing. We need to stimulate our local economy by attracting business into the area, creating the right environment for employment and developing our own enterprise activity.

Priorities	Actions
Attracting business to the area	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explore the potential for Coalburn to become a centre for renewable technology and innovative industry to create jobs and apprenticeships• Appoint an Enterprise Champion to work with partners to promote the area regionally and nationally as a good place to do business
Supporting training and employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maximise training and employability opportunities from all community projects especially opportunities for young people to gain skills, work experience and jobs• Work with existing employability services such as Connect2 Renewables to help people move into sustainable jobs• Explore the feasibility of creating a local enterprise hub as a co-working space for remote workers and a start up base for microenterprises• In partnership with neighbouring villages, explore the options to improve transportation including the options of community owned transport / local taxi service• Develop active travel routes between Coalburn and other villages to support people to access opportunities more widely

Theme 2

Connection and cohesion

Context: Community spirit is strong in Coalburn and one of the key reasons people stay. Over 80% of people see themselves still living here in 10 years' time. Despite this, there are divides. Local groups don't always work well together. People often go elsewhere to socialise and it can be difficult to find out what's going on locally. To work towards a more resilient community, we need to strengthen that sense of 'belonging' and create opportunities for people to connect with each other.

Priorities	Actions
Create focal points in the village and better social spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focus development plans on key areas in the village: (the leisure centre and football pitch / the Bowling Club and Miners' Welfare and a new site to the South) to create more obvious focal points throughout the village and stopping points (benches) along the way• Develop safe, clean, accessible outdoor places for people to meet up and for gatherings• Explore the potential for a permanent café (open weekends and after school)
Improve local volunteering and intergenerational activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop local volunteering for all age groups and all abilities to contribute to village life• Create a forum for community groups and local activists to work better together• Develop a community newsletter to communicate what is happening locally and things of interest, including volunteering opportunities• Develop more activities which are intergenerational and appeal to working families
Use heritage to create a sense of Place	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop heritage assets in and around the village to tell the story of Coalburn• Bring local people and groups together to develop interpretation displays and exhibitions and tell their own stories

Theme 3

Village improvements

Context: Local people want Coalburn to be attractive and a place that they are proud of, feel safe in and can enjoy. We live in an area of natural beauty and rich historic interest but there is concern our built and green landscapes are not as attractive, well maintained or well planned as they could be. People want the village to look better kept, with less derelict and unkempt spaces, better lighting and off road parking, better roads and pavements, more soft landscaping to make areas more attractive and defined and a better path network for walkers and cyclists.

Priorities	Actions
Neighbourhood improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Map derelict and unkempt plots in and around the village. Work with owners to make improvements which could be made voluntarily, through volunteer effort, or through Community Empowerment legislation• Develop a neighbourhood improvement plan (including lights on the village green, repairs to the Coal Burn, soft and hard landscaping, more litter and dog waste bins, better signage and trail information)• Create a programme of regular community litter picks• Establish 'Coalburn in Bloom' or alternative initiative to encourage people to look after their gardens and outdoor spaces
Network of paths and trails	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue to audit existing routes and identify new routes as needed• Mobilise volunteer work groups to improve existing paths and promote the path network through signage, events and other local information channels• Link up with the South Lanarkshire Outdoor Access Forum to develop a wider core path plan to link places within our community to places beyond
Roads and traffic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work with South Lanarkshire Council to introduce traffic calming measures and improve road conditions especially around the School• Identify unused areas of land which could be converted to off street parking and work with landowners to achieve this

Theme 4

Local amenities and facilities

Context: People value the amenities and facilities Coalburn offers, but they would like more and these will be needed as our population grows. There is an appetite for a permanent local café as a social meeting space, investment in the leisure centre, better medical facilities, improvements to our community buildings and a space for young people. There needs to be careful consideration about how we make the best use of facilities that are already available and the need to develop new facilities as demand grows.

Priorities	Actions
Improve existing facilities and amenities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop a volunteer group to work with South Lanarkshire Leisure to deliver an improvement plan for the Leisure Centre including cost plans for works and funding sources• Support the Jim Hamilton Heritage Centre to look at the options for expansion• Form a group of community facility operators, map challenges and devise solutions (which could be collective) and links to specialist external support where needed• Work with property developers and Council Planners to ensure housing developments include housing for first time buyers and retirees looking to downsize
Develop new facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deliver plans to develop a skatepark and multiuse games area for children and young people• Explore the feasibility of creating a community orchard, allotments and garden which would appeal to all ages and stages- including a tree house for children• Explore the need for better medical facilities, potentially in the new heart of the village• Investigate the option to replace the grass footballpitch with a synthetic alternative• Explore the option to develop an All Terrain Vehicle site by the bings to formalise, contain and potentially commercialise the offroading that happens illegally

Theme 5

Putting Coalburn on the map

Context: Coalburn has a lot to offer, not least an excellent location with good links north and south via the M74 and proximity to National Cycle Route 74 but the village can feel cut off and easy to bypass. We have significant potential to develop and promote our assets to attract tourists and visitors. We need to give people reasons to visit or stop off on the way through.

Priorities	Actions
Developing leisure and tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explore the development of a multi purpose Ranger Centre to offer education, training and employment in land management and adventure tourism• Contribute to area plans to link the main walkway from Ayrshire to Lanark to include Coalburn and create points of interest along the way (benches, viewing spots, interpretation, fishing ponds, adventure equipment)• Explore the feasibility of creating a walking & cycling hub in the village offering a café, bike wash, e-bike hire and public toilets which will be linked to young people and enterprise• Work with neighbouring villages to develop the 'boggy line' to Lesmahagow in the north and south across the heathland to Douglas to appeal to walkers, cyclists and runners
Promoting our heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop natural and industrial heritage interpretation in and around Coalburn including well marked heritage trails, interpretative boards, and signed landmarks• Explore the possibility of creating a memorial sculpture and a more visible 'wee museum' for visitors within the village• Support volunteers to develop digital resources and online promotion

Coalburn Futures



Map Key



Heritage Trail
Info-points



Outdoor Gathering
Spaces



Walking Hub



Allotments



Cafe



All Terrain Vehicle
Area



Village 'Hearts'



The Coalburn



Greenways
(Walking + Cycling)



Paths



New
Streetlights



New Tree Planting/
Orchards



Proposed Housing Development
Sites + Access Routes



Landscape Regeneration
Areas



New Parking Spaces



Savonius
Wind Turbines



Sites for New Community
Buildings



Reoriented
Football Pitch



Skatepark



Multi Use Games Area
(MUGA)



Leisure Centre 'Village Heart'

- Playing field reoriented to accommodate access for housing development.
- Existing sports courts converted to skate park, multi-use games area and space for raised beds/plantings.
- New community buildings (youth club, sports changing with grandstand seats on roof and possible health facility) to create courtyard around redeveloped sports courts.
- Covered links between buildings to provide shelter.
- Corkscrew windmills (Savonius) to provide heat for pool and lights for pitch.

Making it happen

This Action Plan is for the whole community and Coalburn Miners' Welfare Charitable Society hopes it will be of benefit to any individual, group or organisation working to make our community a great place to be.

A number of groups and agencies have already stepped up to take on some of the projects identified and we are actively working with them to develop project plans where helpful. Some of those groups include:

- **Coalplay**
- **Douglas Valley Advisory Group**
- **Coalburn Miners Welfare Charitable Society**
- **Coalburn Community Action Group**
- **The Regeneration Group**
- **Community Council**
- **Jim Hamilton Heritage Centre**
- **Men's Shed**
- **The Leisure Centre**
- **Coalburn Primary School**
- **Connect2 Renewables**
- **Healthy Valleys**

There will be more. The Development Worker we employ for Coalburn will continue to play a key role in coordinating and supporting groups and volunteers to implement this plan.

Making it happen

Looking ahead, we aim to:

1. Find people to help deliver the plan.

If you are interested in getting involved in a big way or a small way, please get in touch. We need people with skills, but most of all, we need people with enthusiasm.

2. Continue to gain the support of public, private and third sector partners.

Over the last 5 years, we have made good progress in building connections but we need to strengthen working relationships with local businesses, local landowners, statutory agencies and national voluntary and charitable organisations.

3. Identify and secure funding.

Whilst we have an annual income from Community Benefit Funds, some of the larger projects will need feasibility studies, business plans and significant funding. This will be a key task over the next 5 years.

4. Engage and listen.

This Action Plan was developed as a result of wide consultation but continued dialogue with local residents is important so we can continue to be informed and responsive. There will be regular opportunities for people to come together and review this plan.

Get Involved

We need more local people to get involved in delivering this vision for Coalburn. If you would like to find out more about what is going on in Coalburn or how to get involved in volunteering, please contact Coalburn Miners' Charitable Welfare Society:

www.coalburnmw.org.uk

The Coalburn Miners Charitable Society

Would you like to know more?

For news and updates:

<https://www.facebook.com/onestopshopcoalburn>

To get in touch:

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