



National Planning Framework 4 Call for Ideas

RESPONDENT INFORMATION FORM

Please Note this form **must** be completed and returned with your response.

Please send responses to scotplan@gov.scot. Further information about the National Planning Framework is available at www.transformingplanning.scot

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Are you responding as an individual or an organisation?

- Individual
 Organisation

Full name or organisation's name

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We will share your response internally with other Scottish Government policy teams who may be addressing the issues you discuss. They may wish to contact you again

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Yes

No

Starts:

NPF 4 consultation – ‘Call for ideas’: the role of *the community economy* in the longer-term planning for Scotland’s future (James Henderson, 30.04.20)

1.0: Introduction:

This response to the NPF 4 ‘Call for ideas’ draws from on-going research on the developing roles of community sector bodies – community organisations, enterprises, groups and anchors – and the networks between them that make for the community economy across Scotland (Henderson, 2014; Henderson, Revell and Escobar, 2018; Henderson, Escobar et al., 2019; Henderson, Revell and Escobar, forthcoming).

Sections 1.1 and 1.2 outline this research and related terminology I use in responding to this consultation: *see pages 2 – 6 ... or skip to the consultation responses in Section 2.*

In Section 2 (2.1 to 2.5), I respond directly to the five formal questions and related prompts presented within the consultation framework to illustrate and evidence the roles and potential of the community sector and community economy in building Scotland’s longer-term future and working with the spatial planning community and system – and, crucially, other forms of planning, e.g. local community-led plans, community planning partnerships, public health planning – towards the goal of sustainable development as understood through the UN’s 17 sustainable development goals and Scotland’s commitment to implementing them, as per the National Performance Framework. *See pages 6 – 19.*

An Appendix and Reference list follow at the end.

1.1: Our developing research and evidence-base on the community economy

I am a social researcher previously working on the What Works Scotland research programme through the University of Edinburgh and now with Heriot-Watt University’s The Urban Institute – note this is however an individual contribution to the NPF4 consultation process. My research – with colleagues Philip Revell (Sustaining Dunbar) and Oliver Escobar (University of Edinburgh) – over the last three-plus years has focused on the roles and

potential roles of the community sector. This provides the key evidence-base for the consultation responses below and includes:

(1) [What Works Scotland research programme's](#) project on *community anchors organisation* – exploring the roles and potential of these community-led bodies ([Henderson, Revell and Escobar, 2018](#)). The report draws on six community anchor exemplars from across urban, rural and remote (including Island/sparsely populated example) to consider the potential of the community sector in supporting community-led placemaking, public service reform and democratically-shaped sustainable development and social justice. The exemplars, referred to in the responses below, were as follows :

- Ardenglen Housing Association, Castlemilk, Glasgow (peripheral-urban city)
- Glenboig Neighbourhood House, Glenboig, North Lanarkshire (semi-rural)
- Govanhill Housing Association and Community Development Trust, Glasgow (urban city)
- Greener Kirkcaldy, Fife (urban town)
- Huntly and District Development Trust, Aberdeenshire (rural)
- Stòras Uibhist, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (South Uist, Western Isles) (remote, sparsely-populated)

(2) As part of the [Smart Urban Intermediaries](#) research programme, a [Scottish policy supplement](#) (Henderson, Escobar et al., 2019) has been produced that considers the role of boundary-spanning local urban practitioners and organisations in pursuing local socially, digitally and democratically 'smart' urban regeneration. This draws in particular on the learning from nine local practitioners in Govan – five working in community sector organisations, two in local third sector bodies (working more widely in the Southside of Glasgow), two in the public sector – and others from national intermediary bodies (SURF, SCDC, Inspiring Scotland, Involve). This Govan case-site is also referred to as a source of evidence in the responses below.

(3) A Discussion Paper on *Building the Community Economy: Frameworks for supporting learning, action and research* (Henderson, Revell and Escobar, forthcoming) is to be published online in May 2020 – *copy also obtainable by email as above*.

I also draw on a wider body of knowledge, in particular, through two further relevant research reports:

- Earlier research on community anchor organisations that provides case-study material on the following community organisations: Creetown Initiative (Dumfries and Galloway); Govanhill Housing Association and Community Development Trust (Glasgow, as above); and, Northmavine Community Development Company (Shetland) – ([Henderson, 2014](#)).

- Action research within a community planning partnership that illustrates the crucial importance of local economic, social and democratic development alongside public service reform in generating preventative approaches to inequality and aspirations for a more equitable society ([Henderson, 2019](#)).

A reference list of all material referred to is provided at the end of this response.

1.2: Understanding the community economy, community sector and other terminology used in this consultation response.

(1) Community economy: I use this term currently as a ‘broad space’ with which to consider the networks, relationships and developing systems across the not-for-profit, local community sector and the wider community sector – as local community sectors interlink with each other – as they pursue shared local economic and social development activity ... or community-led placemaking. Economic activity here is then understood in broader terms as ‘the social creation and distribution of resources’ ... rather than as solely market-coordinated trading activity. Community sector organisations and enterprises pursue a range of such activity – trading and income-generation (currency); partnerships and contracts with public services and state; and, supporting the development of and drawing on social capital including relational support, care and exchange networks. They are, therefore, well-placed to support and facilitate rich networks of diverse activity for local economic and social development.

There is a wider literature on these which identified in the Discussion Paper on the Community Economy – see 1.1 above.

(2) Community sector: this is the not-for-profit sector of local community organisations, enterprises and groups that includes:

- community social enterprises: over 6000 social enterprises currently working across Scotland with community-based ones often undertaking complex local roles (Nugent & Escobar, 2017).¹
- community development trusts: several hundreds in number – see community anchor below.²
- community-controlled housing associations and cooperatives: approx. 70 in number across Scotland – see community anchor below.³

¹ View 2019 Social Enterprise Census – most social enterprises are small and community-based: <https://socialenterprisecensus.org.uk/>.

² View Development Trust Association Scotland website for current listing – although further such bodies have yet to become formal members: <https://dtascot.org.uk/dtas-member-network/our-members>

³ View Glasgow and West of Scotland Forum of Housing Associations – most community housing associations and cooperatives in Scotland are listed here <http://gwsf.org.uk/members-list/>

- locally-led voluntary (other third sector) organisations
- community bodies – for local communities of interest and practice e.g. environmental, arts, sports etc.
- community bodies – for local communities of identity e.g. gender, ethnicity, class etc.⁴
- smaller community/neighbourhood groups and networks of almost endless variety.⁵
- local coordinating bodies such as community anchor organisations (see below) and community councils (Paterson, Nelis & Escobar, 2019)
- community finance – credit unions, community-led finance institutions e.g. Scottish Communities Finance, Community Shares Scotland.⁶

(3) Community anchor organisations: multi-purpose, community-led organisations using community ownership of assets to facilitate and develop responsive and committed community-led place-making over-the-longer-term (Pearce, 1993; Thake, 2001; McKee, 2012; Henderson, Revell & Escobar, 2018). In Scotland these are most likely to be *Community Development Trusts and Community-controlled Housing Associations and Cooperatives* – and have been formally recognised in Scottish Government policy-making – Community Empowerment Action Plan 2009 (Scottish Government and COSLA, 2009) and Regeneration Policy 2011 (Scottish Government, 2011).

A fuller discussion of their role is presented in the Community Anchor research report (Henderson, Revell and Escobar, 2018) (as 1.1) but they are diverse in terms of size and scope: can vary considerably in size – from a handful of volunteers or peers to a community housing association with a turnover approaching £10M; and, vary in scale from small neighbourhood groups (ultra-local) to local communities (self-defined) across sizeable urban areas or rural districts. But share the aspirations to lead and facilitate complex community-led place-making and advocacy.

(4) Community-led place-making and regeneration: an approach in which community sector organisations and related community are understood to take the leading roles in

⁴ Bodies for local communities of identity relate to: class e.g. local trades union and tenants union branches; gender and sexuality e.g. women and LGBTIQ groups; race, ethnicity and culture e.g. BAME organisations, cultural and linguistic minority bodies; disability e.g. groups and networks; faith and belief e.g. faith-based organisation; age e.g. younger and older people's groups Whilst recognising the intersectionality between different types of social and political identity and so overlaps between these differing bodies.

⁵ SCVO estimate 20,000+ community groups; <https://scvo.org.uk/policy/sector-stats>

⁶ Over 100 credit unions in Scotland – view: <https://scvo.org.uk/policy/sector-stats>. Community sector finance bodies such as Scottish Communities Finance: <https://scotcomfinance.scot/> and Community Shares Scotland seek to provide very low interest/cost patient capital to support community sector development: <https://communityshares.org.uk/region/scotland>

planning, directing and delivering significant local development – across local economic, social, democratic and ecological dimensions. In so doing, it is anticipated that they will need also to advocate more widely for suitable resourcing, investment and policy support (social and systems change). Increasingly this is coming to mean local sustainable development to support wider sustainable development.

(5) *The local economy and local economic development and regeneration:* in this response and the Community Economy Discussion Paper (Henderson, Revell and Escobar, forthcoming) the notion of the local economy points towards the broader range of local economic and related social development pursued – potentially collaboratively – by a much wider network of local and other stakeholders from across public, private and third sector. Such local development is, of course, a further crucial element in local regeneration and development processes, and collaborative working between the community economy, local economy and wider economic and social stakeholders is needed when pursuing local sustainable development.

(6) *Place-making and Scottish Government’s place principle:* again, as with the local economy, this broader sense of place-making points to a collaborative and participative approach across public, private and third sectors – as defined by the Scottish Government’s place principle <https://www.gov.scot/publications/place-principle-introduction/> .

2.0: Responding to the five NPF 4 consultation questions

I respond to each of the five formal questions within the consultation in this section. I use the research and examples/exemplars from it to illustrate key ideas for the NPF4 team to consider when developing the draft policy NPF 4 framework – and revising the SPP guidance. In illustrating and evidencing the capacity for the community sector to ‘deliver’ across complex, cross-cutting dimensions of economic and social policy-making – particularly in relation to the themes of climate change, well-being, inclusive economy, place-making and infrastructure – I begin to highlight the sorts of infrastructure that is needed for a step-change in the sector’s contribution to spatial planning and related implementation(s). As indicated in Section 1, I assume as per the Scottish Government’s National Performance Framework that sustainable development and the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals provides the over-arching objectives for this policy development.

In the final section, 2.5, I offer one model of the community economy as diverse local community-led hubs with the potential for: different foci, e.g. service provision, business/social enterprise, environmental/green, democratic innovation, community development, community resourcefulness etc; and, connecting with other such hubs across

neighbouring communities and beyond. Together, their development of the community economy and related partnership-working with other sectors (public services, third and private sectors) is concerned to pursue such local sustainable development. I make then some initial pointers as to the community economy re. national development, sites of significant investment and cross-cutting policy-making (SPP). Appendix 1 summarises a broader range of pointers for building community sector infrastructure – policy, investment and resourcing, and culture-change.

2.1: What development will we need to address climate change?

In the Community Anchor Research Report (Henderson, Revell & Escobar, 2018 – see 1.1 above) we illustrate the cross-cutting potential of community anchor organisations in pursuing local economic, social, democratic and ecological developments. In effect local community-led place-making that is concerned to pursue sustainable development (goals). Crucially, however, these organisations can link with a wider body of partners: local public, private and third sector stakeholders working for local economic and social development; the wider community economy – in neighbouring communities, for instance; and, policy-makers and politicians responsible for wider social systems and social/systems change.

Our research illustrates the potential for a suitably resourced community economy to play key roles in relation to the climate emergency and the other related local-to-global ecological challenges⁷. Key current community sector roles in developing and leading work relevant to a societal (and global) shift to committing to and implementing *net zero-carbon emissions* include:

- community renewables e.g. from our own research are of wind-turbine ownership (e.g. Huntly and District DT; Stòras Uibhist – see 1.1) ... but there are wider examples of developing micro-hydro and solar panels schemes by community sector organisations.⁸
- community-housing insulation development programme – as per the work of Fintry Community Development Trust using income generation from a wind turbine (see Development Trust Association Scotland, 2009).
- local development work for re. climate change, energy saving, environmental educational work with young people, shared vehicle schemes, local food production

⁷ Raworth (2017) notes eight other ecological constraints or planetary boundaries alongside greenhouse gases/climate change: ocean acidification; chemical pollution; nitrogen and phosphorus loading; freshwater withdrawals; land conversion; bio-diversity loss; air pollution; ozone layer depletion. Presumably further boundaries or ceilings for the global ecosystem will emerge ...

⁸ See, for instance: Harlaw Hydro: <http://www.harlawhydro.org.uk/about-us/people/>; and, Linlith-Go-Solar financed through community bonds managed by Scottish Communities Finance: <https://scotcomfinance.scot/community-bonds-linlith-go-solarphs2/>

e.g. Creetown Initiative; Huntley and District DT; Greener Kirkcaldy; Northmavine CDC ; Stòras Uibhist – see 1.1.

- planning and visioning for *community resourcefulness* and *climate-friendly places*: see, for instance, through the local democratic working of Sustaining Dunbar in working across the local community to develop an in-depth Local Resilience Action Plan – view: <https://sustainingdunbar.org/project/local-resilience-action-plan/> – and offering complex local leadership to achieve (Schonveld, Gallagher and Revell, 2019).
- land ownership/management – supporting carbon sinks: building local commitment to and maintaining local community-owned or managed woodlands (e.g. Creetown Initiative; Huntley and District DT); and working with local crofting communities (Stòras Uibhist).

I return in 2.4 below to illustrate how the income-generation from community renewables above, alongside other community sector income-generation and wider partnership-worked, can support both *demand-side and supply-side measures for relevant local job generation within wider local economies*. And, I return in 2.5 to consider what sorts of *infrastructure* would be needed to support the community economy and its local partners from other sectors in playing leading roles in addressing the Climate Emergency and the wider ecological crisis.

2.2: How can planning best support our quality of life, health and wellbeing in the future

The working relationship between spatial planning/planners and the community sector and community economy is very much in its infancy. Drawing from our research I point to a number of significant resources that this sector offers ‘the planning community and system’ as the latter seeks to facilitate and support inclusive sustainable development concerned for the well-being of all. These are as follows:

- Using community sector leadership to facilitate the development and implementation of comprehensive (cross-cutting) community-led plans for sustainable development (economic, social, democratic, ecological) that can support:
 - bottom-up visioning of *where we might want to live in 2050*;
 - development of community-led approaches to *local housing need* – prioritising social and affordable housing – and suitable investment planning to resource these housing initiatives and then manage and support, as relevant.
 - holistic, cross-cutting *community-led regeneration* informed by thinking on sustainable development – and suitable action planning and advocacy.

- Working with the community sector and its local leadership, and its networks across both the community economy and wider local partners to:
 - generate community-led place-making that invests its energies in stemming de-population and economic decline in *rural and remote Scotland*;
 - champion and advocate on social justice, preventing inequalities and uneven development, and eradicating poverty through maintaining focus on investment on low-income urban communities and for others facing poverty and inequalities (economic, social, health, environmental) in other communities – *longstanding differences in health and quality of life*;

This focus on building bottom-up collaborations between community sector leadership and spatial planners, wider state and others sector has the potential to generate locally-informed and committed approaches to community-led place-making for *inclusive, diverse, creative, vibrant, safe, resilient and empowered communities*.

However, our research continues to highlight that fundamental to this approach to community-led planning is the infrastructure (policy, resourcing, culture change) needed to support the community sector in leading and facilitating this local democratic and collaborative approach. To achieve this there needs to be networks of suitably-resourced community organisations on-the ground. Further that such an approach cannot be developed without meaningful engagement – on an ‘equal footing’ – with the wider body of (top-down collaborative) planning systems within the public sector. I illustrate through action research within a Community Planning Partnership (Henderson) the dilemmas of trying to develop preventative approaches to health and other inequalities without such an engagement across ‘planning’ – and the need for community-led planning to engage across public sector systems of:

- spatial planning with local and strategic planning authorities
- community planning partnerships across local public service provision, development of LOIPs and of locality planning
- national planning – as facilitated through the Scottish Government’s National Performance Framework.
- other state planning – for instance: for public health through the new agency Public Health Scotland; and, through health and social care partnerships and their locality planning activities.

The previous and extensive work undertaken by the Neilston Development Trust, East Renfrewshire Planning Authority and Local Authority, and a wide range of other local and national partners – through the [Scottish Renaissance Towns initiative](#) – explores the potential of such an approach. The resulting 20 Year Vision and Charter (2010) for that particular town can be viewed at:

<https://dtascommunityownership.org.uk/sites/default/files/neilston%20town%20charter.pdf> or https://www.scotlandstowns.org/neilston_community_empowerment.

There are currently policy and practice tools and opportunities that *may* be used creatively to support community-led approaches e.g. charrettes, the place standard, participatory budgeting – and perhaps the Local Place Plans as their actual form emerges (see 2.4, p14 for further discussion). However, this cannot simply be assumed – usually these initiatives will be led by other sectors and it would be misleading to call these community-led. Such local planning and governance needs to shift decisively towards local democratic approaches if it seeks credible local dialogue and meaningful decision-making, and this can be supported through:

- facilitation involving local community organisation(s) committed to developing local democratic practice and related ethos:
- informed and deepening deliberation, e.g. as citizen juries, mini-publics, action research; and
- credible resourcing both in terms of planning processes and plan implementation.

Further, and crucially, community-led plans need to hold sufficient leverage (empowerment) relative to other top-down collaborative planning process, so that there will be scope for communities to realistically lead the complex networks of local economic, social, democratic and ecological activities to improve the well-being of all.

I return in 2.5 to the issue of what sorts of *infrastructure* are needed to support the community economy/sector – and its partners from other sectors – and *where 'significant investment sites'* might be needed, and *what types, scale and distribution of land and premises will be needed*.

Finally, here, I point to relevant examples from our research to further evidence this developing local democratic approach:

- *improving local housing in a socially- and ethnically-diverse community*: e.g. the role of Govanhill HA/CDT in advocating for policy change and investment in relation to private-rental housing in the area and managing change into community ownership; in providing community-owned social housing and wider housing and welfare services, and working with community sector and public service partners to support community development in a complex, low-income working-class community setting (see 1.1: Henderson, 2014; Henderson, Revell & Escobar, 2018).
- *health and social care*: the role of Glenboig Neighbourhood House in North Lanarkshire (see 1.1) in working with public services to coordinate and deliver complex local services and community development activities including for older people in this semi-rural village – and the development of a community-led plan with local organisations (see 1.1: Henderson, Revell & Escobar, 2018).

- *community-led planning for well-being for all*: the role of Northmavine Community Development Company (see 1.1) in Shetland in leading, facilitating and sustaining a complex local plan (with economic, social, political and ecological dimensions) across five and more local settlements on the peninsula (see 1.1: Henderson, 2014).

2.3: What does planning need to do to enable development and investment in our economy so that it benefits everyone?

The complexity and magnitude of the shifts needed by 2050 across our economy if seeking a genuine approach to sustainable development are certainly daunting and not as yet possible to fully imagine. As will be clear from 2.1 re. climate emergency, 2.2 re. wellbeing, and 1.2 re. the nature of the community economy, I'm not seeking to make narrow distinctions between the economic, social, political and ecological dimensions of human and ecological systems – rather looking to understand how they engage and impact on each other and apply such learning. In responding in 2.3 re. the enabling role of the planning community and system, I would emphasise the importance of facilitating the dual roles of the community economy and building its capacity to:

- provide local democratic leadership and related inclusive processes that support community-led and deliberative decision-making and wider advocacy;
- coordinate, facilitate, implement and/or support a wide range of local economic, social, democratic and environmental activity.

In thinking, further as to more directly economic – as in income-generating – matters, I would highlight the potential for:

- a more decentralized, ecologically-sustainable, equitable and diverse pattern of ownership of assets and wealth, through investment in the community economy and the local economy (see 1.2), e.g. community ownership, local commons, local cooperatives, shared ownership (housing) so on – *what our economy might look like in 2050*;
- a deepening empowerment of bottom-up, community-led approaches to planning and local decision-making that would then be in a position to provide effective dialogue with top-down collaborative state planning (spatial, social, health etc.) – and thus increasing the potential to anticipate, plan for and provide capacity to work with 'natural crises' and/or 'unexpected consequences' – given increasing *economic (and social, political and ecological) challenges emerging from Brexit, the Climate Emergency, global pandemics, conflicts and so on*.
- the role of the community economy in providing leadership, organisational capacity and joined-up (demand-side and supply-side) approaches in *more deprived and economically-declining communities* (urban, rural, remote) and other groups facing

inequalities/poverty⁹, and in partnership with other sectors, that can work with *planners in stimulating and resourcing suitable economic development* – rather than pursuing uneven and unsustainable development across Scotland. For instance, through a range of preventative, pre-distributive and re-distributive measures including the ownership and provision of land, buildings and other infrastructure to support relevant business and social enterprise development and related employment – alongside and integrated with relevant social and ecological initiatives.

I return in 2.5 to the issue of what sorts of *infrastructure* are needed to support the community economy/sector in working with planners/planning system to achieve these roles – and *where ‘significant investment sites’* might be needed, and *what types, scale and distribution of land and premises will be needed*.

Here, I flag-up the following examples to illustrate the early potential of the community economy to work with planners/planning system and others to support an inclusive economy concerned to pursue the sustainable development goals:

Social enterprise/local business hubs: being explored and developed by the Creetown Initiative (Dumfries and Galloway), Northmavine Community Development Company (Shetland) and Govanhill HA/CDT (see 1.1: Henderson, 2014; Henderson, Revell & Escobar, 2018).

‘Community-led economic development agency’: the work of Stòras Uibhist in working with the local authority and HIE to build community-led ownership of infrastructure in South Uist and neighbouring islands, e.g. rural estate, harbour, crofting land, wind-turbines, community hub etc. ... and using these to facilitate wider local economic and social development (see 1.1: Henderson, Revell & Escobar, 2018)

Urban regeneration: range of initiatives in Govan across various larger community organisations, e.g. Govan Workspaces, Govan Housing Association, smaller community organisations e.g. Kinning Park Complex, Plantation Productions, Sunny Govan Radio, and local third sector bodies working more generally e.g. Govan Community Project, Urban Roots, that illustrate the potential for working with the local state and other partners for (see 1.1: Henderson, Escobar et. al, 2019)¹⁰:

- community-led regeneration of key local historic assets and land to support progressive local economic development and place-making;

⁹ Note: I would flag too the crucial role of the community economy in working in other ‘mixed’ and affluent communities (‘non-deprived’) alongside the many people there trapped in poverty and/or struggling to escape the impacts of inequalities (economic, social, health). Given this body of people is at least as large as those living in more visible low-income, working class communities (deprived), this is crucial work but will likely require different approaches from the community economy, spatial planning and the state more generally.

¹⁰ See also the potential of the ‘community wealth-building model’ (Jackson & McInroy, 2017) with its emphasis on developing: progressive procurement and the supply-chain; fair employment; pluralist democratic ownership models; use of public and social assets e.g. land, buildings; local finance and investment.

- community ownership of workspaces to build local economic activity and related community benefits – and in so doing generate local community-owned income streams and provide opportunities for local business, community/social enterprises and cooperatives to gain from local procurement as part of the local and regional supply chain.
- generating suitable, sustainable local employment for ‘hard-to-reach groups’ through integrating more ‘traditional’ supply-side measures (learning, training support, work with schools) with:
 - innovative demand side measures (on-the-job training, local job creation) - see also Cullingworth, Brunner & Watson, 2018;
 - income maximisation (welfare advice, support and advocacy);
 - fair employment and (real) living wage practices;
- socially-smart, bottom-up digital and democratic development – drawing on the digital expertise and resources across the local community sector and its collaborative potential to explore community-led digital hubs for social and democratic innovation and advocacy on wider digital/technological developments.

2.4: What policies are needed to improve, protect and strengthen the special character of our places?

The strengths of the community sector and community economy outlined in sections 2.1 – 2.3 above points to its/their capacity to lead, facilitate and support community-led place-making – *relevant to improving, protecting and strengthening the special character of our places* – through:

- leading and facilitating local decision-making and plans for holistic local sustainable development;
- delivering projects, services and complex local collaborations and partnerships; and,
- advocating and partnering for wider social and policy change – and which supports the development of relevant local infrastructure.

Here, I highlight through some examples from our research the potential of the community sector and community economy to undertake diverse roles to support and maintain the uniqueness of local places:

- *protection of special places for the future ... and strengthening the character and heritage of our many different places*: e.g. the leading role of Govan Workspace/Govan Heritage Trust in purchasing and maintaining historic buildings in Govan including the Fairfield ship-building museum, Govan Old Church that houses

the ancient Govan Stones, and other older buildings turned into offices and workspaces (see 1.1: Henderson, Escobar et al., 2019).

- *what the future might be for our rural, coastal and island communities: e.g.* the leading roles of Stòras Uibhist, Huntly and District Development Trust, Creetown Initiative and Northmavine Community Development Company in the development and implementation of local visions and plans concerned to build an optimistic and more equitable future for these rural, remote and coastal communities (see 1.1: Henderson, 2014; Henderson, Revell & Escobar, 2018).
- *how we could unlock the potential of vacant and derelict land: e.g.* the role of Stòras Uibhist in leading the community purchase and development of a failing large private estate; and, of Govanhill HA/CDT in the long-term advocacy and then implementation of work re. the private rental housing crisis in Govanhill. (see 1.1: Henderson, Revell & Escobar, 2018).
- *what our city and town centres might look like in the future: e.g.* the role of Huntly and District DT in working with public, third and private sectors to re-vision Huntly town centre; and, likewise, the community sector (Govan Housing Association, Govan Workspace, Plantation Productions) in working on high street regeneration in Govan with public sector and other partners (see 1.1: Henderson, Revell & Escobar, 2018; Henderson, Escobar et al., 2019).
- *how we can get the most out of our productive land: e.g.* Greener Kirkcaldy in developing an approach to community food use – sustainable local production; anti-food poverty as part of anti-poverty work more generally; and, cooking, nutrition and good community health (see 1.1: Henderson, Revell & Escobar, 2018).
- *how we can plan blue and green infrastructure; e.g.* the role of the local community sector and related community ownership and management in Creetown in maintaining local green, open and ‘blue’ spaces – including community park and river; community woodland and lake; and town square and main street (see 1.1: Henderson, 2014).
- *what we can do to protect and enhance biodiversity; e.g.* the role of Huntly and District DT in taking a farm and 60 hectares into community ownership and through it developing local woodland and links to the community and schools for educational and training purposes (see 1.1: Henderson, Revell & Escobar, 2018).

The breadth of these examples illustrates the potential of the community economy and community sector to lead on both planning and delivery of complex place-making in Scotland. Whilst the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 creates provision for Local Place Plans (LPLs) – formal guidance is awaited – its tone *would seem* to give the Planning Authorities the leading role in directing and resourcing the development of these LPLs and in

formalising their status, influence and access to resources.¹¹ This may prove in practice an unnecessarily pessimistic summary of their potential. Certainly, enlightened Planning Authorities and wider public sector partners could work in extra-ordinarily creative ways with the community sector/communities to support the latter in using LPLs to generate rich visions for local sustainable development – where local policy, resourcing and culture-change significantly shifted the balance of powers to support the community sector.

Either way our research (Henderson, Revell & Escobar, 2018; Henderson, Escobar et al., 2019) – and the case I’m presenting here for leading roles for the community sector/community economy – highlights the need to build suitable infrastructure; including:

- *investing in community-led*: emphasises the need to empower and resource community-led place-making and planning – such that is a genuine partner on ‘equal footing’ able to drive relevant change for sustainable development, rather than a subsidiary to top-down processes (no matter how collaborative the latter are).
- *community sector proofing policy*: obliging all local and national policy-making (cross-cutting) to be ‘community sector proofed’ so that the holistic role of the sector is considered, supported and developed.
- *concerned for public sector culture change*: to support the community sector in playing a leading role in facilitating culture change within state and public sector institutions (systems) – e.g. training, mentoring, championing (sustainable development, anti-poverty), facilitation local democratic activity and so on.

The spatial planning system clearly then has considerable potential to support and benefit from the development of the community economy – through policy, guidance and resourcing (including community benefits, planning gain, asset transfer). Further, it has a role in advocating for the potential of the community economy within other key policy-making and ‘planning systems’ national and locally e.g. community planning partnerships, public health and so on.

In 2.5 below we consider further how spatial planning system can support investment in the community sector and community economy.

2.5: What infrastructure do we need to build to realise our long-term aspirations?

Across 2.1 – 2.4 above I have used our research re. community anchors, community sector and community economy to make the case for their complex leadership and coordinating roles within the current economic, social, democratic and ecological infrastructure in Scotland; and, as a crucial element in creating change for suitable future infrastructure as

¹¹ Likewise, seemingly too the *Rural Planning Policy to 2050: Research to Inform Preparation of NPF4* (Dalglish, Dodd, Mackay and Belford, 2019) through its Recommendation 15 which would seem to be advocating for the lead role of Planning Officers (and Planning Authorities) in enabling Local Place Plans – and potentially Masterplan Consent Areas – view: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/rural-planning-policy-2050-research-inform-preparation-npf4/>.

Scotland seeks to meet the ecological, social, political and economic challenges that lie ahead as we head across turbulent times to 2050.

In 2.5, one immediate answer to the question above re. infrastructure for Scotland's long-term aspirations (What infrastructure will we need for the future?) is 'simply' to focus and develop the complex roles and potential of the community economy ...for instance, as community sector proofing of all policy-making (see 2.4).

However, such an answer begs further questions as to:

- (1) how the community economy can itself build and support relevant infrastructure for sustainable development in Scotland (infrastructure for the future)? and,
- (2) what sorts of infrastructure are needed to the develop the community economy (infrastructure for the community sector and its networks)?

I consider these two elements below using the consultation prompts.

(1) The role of the community economy in developing Scotland's future infrastructure

The community economy is already a rich, complex system of networks and through relevant investment these can be extended and strengthened – although any such development must through dialogue with the community sector and respective communities.

However, one particular articulation or 'model' of the community economy (not the only one) can help current cross-stakeholder dialogue: that is the increasingly popular notion of a 'hub', whether neighbourhood (ultra-local), community-based or wider still. Increasingly the community sector (see 2.3 above) is providing a variety of interlinking community-led hubs within and across into neighbouring communities that are focused on being either:

- more particular developments and services; e.g. health and social care, welfare and services, business/social enterprise development, community development (anti-poverty/inequalities), local democracy, environmental/green and so; and/or
- being holistic and multi-purpose as per the community anchor 'model' – and so with the potential to focus on integrated local sustainable development.

Such an emerging network(s) of community-led local hubs has the potential to support coordination of diverse activities across local communities and more widely. In the process, it can provide spaces for:

- local social, democratic, economic, ecological and digital innovation; and,
- advocacy for social and systems change towards sustainable development (e.g. anti-poverty, reducing inequalities, working within ecological constraints).

For instance, from existing examples:

Making better use of existing infrastructure capacity, including through innovation: e.g. Glenboig Neighbourhood House and its work in providing, supporting and coordinating complex local services and community development – in particular for older people. (see 1.1: Henderson, Revell & Escobar, 2018)

Where transport connections will be needed to support future development; e.g. the role of Huntly and District DT in exploring with the public sector the potential of more sustainable rural travel through pool of local hybrid vehicles, promoting cycling, and supporting local community transport provision (see 1.1: Henderson, Revell & Escobar, 2018).

How we can sustain our lifelines: work between the community sector and the ‘blue light services’ and wider public services in terms of emergency and crisis is beyond the scope of our current research, but this is a very obvious area for further development given the capacities of the community sector to provide local leadership, staff and volunteers in ultra-local setting ... and its relevance given the likelihood of increasing numbers of crises given climate change and wider ecological crises¹².

How digital connectivity could change the way we live and work: our research on ‘smart urban intermediaries’ has highlighted the potential of the community sector and its local partners to take the leading role in developing bottom-up approaches to complex social, democratic and digital innovation, development and coordination – see the example from Govan given in 2.3 (from 1.1: Henderson, Escobar et al., 2019).

Where our natural resources for energy are: community renewables, whether as solar, wind, micro-hydro, heat pumps, and related opportunities for local digital energy-use coordination, district heating systems, reduced transmission costs/losses and energy conservation measures, can provide rich opportunities for developing locally-controlled net zero-carbon energy production, distribution and re-use systems. As illustrated in 2.1 above the community sector is already seeking to develop many such options, and with the right forms of investment and support from the state and other sectors could provide a step-change in the scale of local democratic control and local income-generation through the development of local energy systems.

What emerging and future technologies we will need to plan for: we’ve highlighted the potential role of local digital coordination and ownership above, and there is clearly considerable scope for community ownership of digital assets as well as the development of local and wider digital commons to provide resources and training accessible for all. Indeed, voluntary (unpaid) labour and creativity has and continues to play a crucial role in the development of open source operating systems (e.g. Linux) at work across the world and global economy (Wistreich, 2013). The community economy and its committed pool of staff,

¹² Some, for instance, have highlighted the potential for links between the current Covid 19 pandemic – and potential for future pandemics – and the destruction of tropical rainforests alongside are fast-moving, globally-interconnected world. See John Vidal’s Guardian article (March, 2020): <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2020/mar/18/tip-of-the-iceberg-is-our-destruction-of-nature-responsible-for-covid-19-aoe>

activists, volunteers and local leaders, where suitably resourced, offers opportunities for locally-controlled, small-scale and rapid piloting, development and coordination of such approaches to digital and AI developments – both digital innovation and social innovation. In parallel, and crucially, it also offers a means of significantly increasing democratic participation and deliberation, and related transparency and accountability, and building local knowledge and wider advocacy – democratic innovation for an empowered citizens and communities. The development of such digital and related technology provides both considerable challenges and opportunities re. ownership and control of data, meaningful and creative employment etc., and bottom-up versus top-down strategies. The community economy offers a distinctive decentralised vision, approach and vehicle to such social and technological change: one with the potential to sustain a committed focus on local democracy and the sustainable development goals.

(2) What sort of infrastructure is needed to the develop the community economy ... infrastructure for the community sector.

Across the examples and discussion outlined across 2.1-2.5 above I have put emphasis on the potential of the community economy to lead and facilitate sustainable development given its capacity for planning, delivering and advocating for local economic, social, democratic and ecological development and wider relevant social and systems change. The development of the community economy therefore offers the spatial planning community and system substantial shorter and longer-term opportunities for pursuing a 2050 vision for Scotland focused on the sustainable development goals ... given a step-change in investment in community sector infrastructure is pursued.

In Appendix 1 I highlight a more general listing of key pointers via our research (Henderson, Revell & Escobar, 2018; Henderson, Escobar et al., 2019) that can be used to support dialogue on developing this community sector infrastructure – of relevance to the spatial planning community and more generally. Many of these have already been illustrated in 2.1 – 2.5 (1) above.

However, directly below, I offer some more particular recommendations for this consultation on ‘Key ideas for NPF4’ – as follows:

The community economy as an NPF 4 decentralised ‘National Development’: the community economy cannot be developed through top-down policy-making. There is no ‘one-size fits all’ approach to building it across urban, rural, remote and under-populated Scotland ... rather it must be developed as relevant to local contexts and with local community sector practitioner, activists and communities, national community sector membership bodies, and other partners. That said ‘the development model’ I have offered above in the introduction to 2.5 re. the community economy through *inter-linking local community-led hubs* offers a starting point for such local, regional and national dialogue with the spatial planning

community and wider stakeholders across Scotland on the infrastructure (policy, investment, culture-change).

In this decentralised sense, one proposal as a National Development in relation to the community economy would be for community-led planning across Scotland for networks of diverse community-led hubs (or other suitable community sector-based strategies) as infrastructure for the community economy. This would provide local bottom-up policy development spaces for informed deliberation in concrete local terms: *what types, scale and distribution of land and premises will be needed* e.g. land reform, community asset transfer, suitable investment for community ownership.

Significant investment sites for the community economy: local dialogue as part of such a 'National Development' outlined above offers considerable scope for identifying urgently needed pilot areas for networks of community-led hubs – or variations and alternatives to this – in support of sustainable development and the climate emergency. Key community membership bodies and networks can provide pointers to key current local contexts best placed to pilot such development work e.g. the Development Trust Association Scotland, Glasgow and West of Scotland Forum of Housing Associations, Sencot and its related Social Enterprise Networks, the Scottish Community Alliance (and its 20+ membership networks across finance, environment, health, transport etc.) and other bodies relating to local equalities networks, e.g. local trades unions, anti-poverty networks, faith-based organisations, women's groups and so on¹³. Such investment in local and diverse pilot sites offers huge scope for learning and policy development as to the role of the community economy in leading and supporting sustainable development in Scotland.

Community sector-proofing the Scottish Planning Policy: the SPP is currently written from other perspectives and with other policy purposes, where the role of 'communities' is most often understood as 'engagement, participation, consultation, co-production' in support of state-led and other sector-led approaches. The notions of community sector and community economy concerned for sustainable development offers a distinctive perspective in reviewing this key spatial planning policy document. There is therefore scope for the spatial planning community to work with the community sector and wider stakeholders through participatory and deliberative processes in order to take a fresh look and propose recommendations for wider consideration and dialogue.

¹³ The full range of local equalities groups and organisations are relevant re. socio-economic class, gender, race/ethnicity, disability, faith/belief, LGBTIQ+, age, culture and language.

Appendix 1: Key pointers for dialogue with the sector on developing community sector infrastructure

Development of community sector infrastructure for a community economy concerned for sustainable development cannot be pursued without dialogue between the community sector – and related communities and citizens; the spatial planning community and system; and, the wider body of cross-sector practitioners, policy-makers and researchers in Scotland. Below, we offer through our previous research (Henderson, Revell and Escobar, 2018; Henderson, Escobar et al., 2019; Henderson, Revell and Escobar, forthcoming), the following pointers and prompts to support development of such dialogue.

Re: Policy-making:

- community sector proofing of all local and national policy development (economic, social, democratic, ecological, digital/technological) – and advocacy roles for the sector within this.
- step-change in investment and aspirations for local democratic and community-led planning process – e.g. ‘Local Place Plans max’ for instance.
- integrated local-to-national approach(es) to investment and funding that brings together different state resources and streams to build core-funding across the community sector – for instance, as Local Community Infrastructure Investment Budgets and Plans.

Re: Resourcing:

- further development of national and local policy and investment in community ownership and community enterprise to build the capacity of the community sector and economy – including through community-led patient capital initiatives such as Scottish Communities Finance and Community Shares Scotland.
- policy and investment focus and prioritisation on the development of community sector organisations:
 - within low-income working-class communities (as per SIMD); and
 - who are focused on working on *anti-poverty and inequalities* (health, social, economic, democratic) working, prevention and reduction more widely in all communities across Scotland – organisations for local communities of place, identity and interest/practice.
- building local social capital:
 - investing in local activists, volunteers and staff – many of whom have low and unreliable sources of income e.g. citizen allowances, citizen incomes, benefit allowances;

- likewise, suitable investment in training and learning – including change-agent programmes – for people playing these crucial local roles.

Re: Culture change:

- investing in locally-developed and community sector-led culture change and mentoring programmes ... to support the spatial planning community, the public sector, and other sectors in understanding the community sector, its capacities, and its potential to lead, facilitate and support shorter- and longer-term change for sustainable development.
- working with the community sector to develop local democratic governance and autonomy through interweaving of participatory, deliberative and representative approaches to democratic innovation and practice ... including longer-term local visions.
- formalising and resourcing community sector roles as champions and/or advocates (outside of the state) on poverty/inequality, the climate emergency, sustainable development, local democratic practice.

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