

West of Scotland Chapter NPF4 Workshop

5 March 2020, Mercure City Hotel, Glasgow

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Background and Attendance

This event was organised as part of a series of NPF4 events with RTPI Scotland Chapters organised for Scottish Government across Scotland in early 2020. The purpose of each two hour event was to give planning professionals an opportunity to voice their suggestions for National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) in a workshop setting, as well as discuss the issues and challenges in taking these ideas forward. This allowed Scottish Government to gather professionals' views to support them as they draft NPF4. Representatives from Scottish Government Planning and Architecture were on hand to outline the background, timeline and main goals of NPF4, and answer any questions.

Participants took part in facilitated discussions, having been asked to come up with a policy or project for NPF4 that would contribute to achieving Scotland's becoming a zero carbon society by 2045. These policies or projects were fit under the theme of People, Work or Place. Presentation of ideas, discussion and voting followed, to pick the 'best' project – judged on innovation, effectiveness and deliverability.

The West of Scotland NPF4 Chapter event had 30 participants from a range of professional backgrounds. The main ideas generated are discussed below:

People

Group 1 – Presumption in favour of sustainability

- This links to proposed and existing infrastructure out with the central area (i.e. rural areas)
- The main purpose of this project is to strengthen infrastructure to encourage people to live in more remote areas by allowing people to work more flexibly
- This means improving active travel infrastructure to make sure people are well connected and able to make healthier and more sustainable choices in terms of their commute
- Central is reducing reliance on the car as a mode of transport
- Private developers would pay a roof tax to help fund the project and there would be subsidies for some people in order to make the project accessible for everyone, not just wealthy people

Work

Group 2 – Localised incubator units

- The main discussion in this group was around working flexibly and journeys to work
- The group's idea was a main hub or hubs that are located in large existing buildings in the town centre (to reduce the commute length and bring people back to the town centre)
- This would be a local facility for local people and local businesses
- This would bring in activity to town centres whilst kick-starting regeneration and place-making
- It would also leverage investment and reduce individual's risk of isolation
- The focus would be rural towns not satellite towns

Group 3 – Integrated green land use policy

- This idea was about creating a policy that uses derelict land for employment and skills building and integrates nature into these activities
- Multi-functional open spaces to work and learn would be created. They would be high quality, not over developed and involve some regeneration and retrofit of existing spaces
- The spaces would essentially be a skill-building space for green jobs
- There would be re-forestation in these spaces and parking would be discouraged
- There would be a strong crossover with biodiversity, place, economic development and water management policies

Joint 'winners' with group 5 in the world cup

Positives include:

- Aims to improve mental health
- Uses land productively
- Personal empowerment
- Attracting investment
- Immerses people in nature

Challenges include:

- Cost i.e. who pays/delivers
- There are often complexities behind derelict land, including ownership
- There is a desire to protect existing biodiversity

Group 4 – Megabytes from megawatts

- At the moment, onshore wind farms generate funds that are spent on helping fund local community projects
- This group wanted to scale up these funds to focus on national priorities in NPF4, therefore guaranteeing local economic benefit from windfarms
- The project would take a strategic approach to identifying priorities in the area for community benefit, using a tiered system that targets specific infrastructure projects
- The group provided ideas of priorities to support:
- The first was supporting and enabling remote working by encouraging the installation of high speed broadband to more remote areas – this would help reduce rural depopulation and instead encourage re-population



Positives include:

- Straightforward and deliverable
- It would reduce the number of people travelling to work (and therefore emissions)
- Reduce inequality (digital exclusion)
- Upskilling of locals
- Reduces social isolation

Place

Group 5 – Protecting and creating great places to combat the climate emergency

- This group created a radical place-making policy, which sets a cross-cutting theme for other policies
- The fact that the Scottish Planning Policy is merging into the NPF4 gives more 'teeth' to implementing place-making
- It will provide a clear definition and 'gold standard' of place-making and will set this in the context of climate change
- It will use place-making to develop individual themes and will have 4 or 5 key policy objectives underneath each of these

Joint 'winners' with group 3 in the world cup. Positives include:

- Drives carbon reduction through good place-making
- Provides high design quality to make places liveable

