

Response to Community Engagement survey undertaken by Community Enterprise



Purpose

Earlier this year we commissioned a study to find out how Linlithgow Community Development trust could help across the voluntary community sector.

What we did

- Online survey completed by a broad range of 52 local community organisations
- Two focus groups
- Numerous stakeholder conversations

Key themes	What you said
Managing volunteers, in particular recruiting and retaining them	"We are always in need of adult volunteers to step forward and offer to help on a week to week basis as we are only one 'resignation' away from the whole pack of cards falling down around our ears"
Communicating what organisations do and opportunities for the community to get involved	"We would benefit from mechanisms to get our message out to a wider range of community groups and local businesses"
Most groups would like to improve their turnover/income	"The organisation is dependent upon grant funding and if this dries up we will be in deep trouble"
Unfamiliarity of support services from core bodies	"Not really aware of what support is out there nor what support we might need!"
Breaking down a sense of insular working	"To help organisations see commonalities rather than thinking we won't be much help to each other"
Places to meet and hold events is a common concern	"Our biggest challenge is appropriate facilities for hosting training sessions"
Ensuring Linlithgow's well-established community sector has opportunities to explore new ideas and ways of working.	"There can be rigidity in within organisations 'sticking to what has always worked and failing to take on flexible working and new ideas"

Next steps

- Work to review and prioritise the substantial detailed recommendations in the full report. This will inform our future strategy and focus.
- Create bi-monthly opportunity for face to face contact with community groups to enable collaboration, increased efficiency, sharing of resources and ideas, and mutual support.
- Develop opportunities for shared learning on areas of key interest, including volunteer management, funding and communications.
- Continue to build a central source of data including; groups and their purpose/aims, volunteer opportunities, local skills database, venues database and much more.
- Raise awareness of available support, for example from Voluntary Sector Gateway West Lothian including signposting policy information, funding and training opportunities.
- Continue to develop EH49 Hub: Community and Business project as both an online network, and then as a physical hub for use by both community groups and local businesses.