



# Foreword

Community Action for a Sustainable Scotland (CASS) is a set of 7 educational resources on sustainable development for community organisations. The CASS resources were adapted from material produced as part of the Every Action Counts programme in England, which aimed to embed sustainable development into the work of community groups. They were produced as part of the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (UNDESD) programme, funded by the Scottish Government and administered through the Community Learning and Development Working Group. The Community Learning and Development Working Group was established in 2010 to ensure that Scottish communities are supported and encouraged to engage in active learning on local sustainable development.



This set of resources is aimed at community projects and groups and offers advice ranging from how to develop a sustainability plan to simple tips for recycling and saving energy. The resources support both large and small scale community organisations to carry out their activities in ways which protect the environment without impacting on efficiencies and which ensure greater levels of sustainability for the longer term.

Sustainable development is a priority which cuts across all aspects of community life. Many local groups and organisations are already taking forward highly innovative approaches to local sustainability and a range of activities is taking place in schools and within informal education settings.

This publication aims to build on work taking place across communities and to help extend and enhance holistic community approaches to local sustainable development. We hope that the resources will be useful to community organisations themselves and also to people working with them, whether within Community Learning and Development, sustainable development or other related contexts.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Fiona Garven'.

**Fiona Garven**  
Director, SCDC

Community buildings are important hubs in a community, often bringing people together for activities, groups and events. How they are run and built can have a strong influence on the wider community, and community buildings can demonstrate how to take the following sustainable measures:

Save energy – reduce your energy bills and have a positive impact on climate change at the same time.

Travel wisely – help members get to know each other by travelling in ways which save fuel and reduce carbon dioxide pollution from cars and mini-buses.

Shop ethically – use your shopping choices to buy local food which cuts transport pollution and supports local businesses; buy fairly traded goods to help producers and workers in some of the world's poorest countries.

Save resources – by saving waste and water you can save money for your organisation as well as help protect the environment.

Care for your area – take an interest in your local environment, help protect local wildlife and have your say on local plans affecting your area.

We hope that this publication will help you to make your community building more sustainable by minimising its impact on the environment and helping to further inspire and inform your community.

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## Acknowledgements

This guidance was produced as part of the Scottish Government's commitment to the United Nations Decade for Education in Sustainable Development and was adapted from material written for Every Action Counts by Eleanor Pryde of bassac. Every Action Counts was the result of a thorough consultation process which was designed to produce guidance that is relevant and realistic for people working in the voluntary and community sector. To this end, a range of people from local and national organisations in England came together for a facilitated discussion around an initial draft. In order to adapt the materials to a Scottish context SCDC consulted a range of community organisations about their work. SCDC would like to thank all those projects who contributed information and photographs that should help to inspire other groups to make similar changes.

Also, find more sustainable development resources at <http://www.justact.org.uk>  
Education Scotland website [www.ltscotland.org.uk/learningteachingandassessment/learningacrossthecurriculum/themesacrosslearning/globalcitizenship/supportmaterials/resources](http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/learningteachingandassessment/learningacrossthecurriculum/themesacrosslearning/globalcitizenship/supportmaterials/resources)

# Introduction

## Preparing the ground



All community buildings are at the heart of their local communities, reaching out, inspiring people, providing useful space and acting as catalysts for change.

From the management committee and the users to the caretaker and the cleaner, the people involved in community buildings

are all special. Many already tackle one of the greatest challenges of today: creating a more sustainable future for us all, within the limits of the planet's resources. Many already live their lives knowing that every individual positive action counts.

“If something is sustainable, it means we can go on doing it indefinitely. If it isn’t, we can’t.”

Jonathon Porritt CBE,  
Chairman of the UK Sustainability Development Commission

If you manage or use a community building, this guide shows how you can contribute to a more sustainable future. **Laying the foundations** provides an outline of first steps to get you started and ways to involve other people. **The five building blocks** propose actions to help you save energy, travel wisely, shop ethically, save your resources and care for your area. Use **shouting from the rooftop** to remind users and employees to act wisely in your building and to let other people know about your achievements. Then turn to **extending your reach** if you want to be more ambitious. Here you’ll find ideas for construction projects. **Take the lead in your community** provides ideas of how to involve others even further.

There are inspiring case studies throughout the guide that may give you an idea of what you can do in your own community building. Important terms are explained and checklists are provided to help you plan your priorities and activities. Further information and helpful resources are sign posted in a list in each section.

## What does that mean?

**Sustainable development** is “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” – or “not cheating on your children”. Sustainability is often described as the goal, while sustainable development is the journey, achieved by balancing economic, social and environmental aspects.

**A sustainability audit** means checking how your lifestyle, building or business lives up to these ideals.

# Laying the foundations



## Start with the management committee

Community buildings are usually run by management committees that make the decisions on how it is run. Committee members are in the best position to influence users and to work with other organisations, like local authorities. Suggest that the committee finds out how your building measures up by developing a Sustainable Development Action Plan.

## Appoint a champion – or several

Appoint a member of the committee as the building's sustainability champion, responsible for developing a policy, implementing it and monitoring its progress. User groups could appoint their own champions to form a Green Team for the building. Each champion could be responsible for action on a specific topic.

## Find out how your community building measures up

Use the Sustainable Development Action Plan template in Community Action for a Sustainable Scotland: A guide to sustainable planning to find out how sustainable your building is.

Use your action plan to share ideas and find out what expertise you might draw on. Involve the caretaker, cleaners and other support staff right from the start.

They usually have very practical ideas about what you can do. Use an online carbon calculator to work out how your building contributes to greenhouse gas emissions, or survey your use of energy or water. The results will give you a baseline against which you can check your progress and success.

# Checklist

## Sustainable Development Action Plan checklist

Decide what you can do in your community building to make it more sustainable

List the actions in a table

Record whether an action should be done NOW, SOON or LATER

Record what you need to do to make an action happen

Record who is responsible for ensuring that it happens

See [http://media.justact.org.uk/media/resoucesPDF/15/Action\\_planning\\_game\\_combined.pdf](http://media.justact.org.uk/media/resoucesPDF/15/Action_planning_game_combined.pdf) for a useful game to help you decide what your building's priorities are.

## Agree a plan of action

Pick some easy wins, and set aside more ambitious ideas for the long term. Look at your management systems and see how sustainability might be included – in job descriptions or appraisals, for example. Ask Champions to come up with ideas of how their group might get involved and work together to implement suggestions.

There are simple things that everyone can do, like switching off lights and separating rubbish for recycling and composting.

**“The mark of a good action is that it appears inevitable in retrospect”**

Robert Louis Stevenson (1850-1894)

## Money talks

Going green isn't necessarily more expensive.

Find out

- Which of your funders require evidence of a sustainability policy
- How your sustainability plan could add weight to funding applications
- How your green reputation could encourage new users and volunteers

## 5 building blocks

There are five building blocks to help you ensure your community building's sustainability:

- **Save energy**
- **Travel wisely**
- **Shop ethically**
- **Save our resources**
- **Care for your area**

The next section provides a checklist of actions in each of the five areas. Tick those you're already doing, those that aren't applicable, or which need regular reminders. Decide on target dates for the rest.

# Save Energy



Cut down the energy use in your community building as much as you can. This will save money and reduce the carbon dioxide emissions that contribute to climate change. A handheld electricity meter (about £20) is useful to measure how much electricity any appliance uses (including on

standby), and what it costs. It's guaranteed to give you a few surprises. After you've sorted out your energy efficiency, then think how you might get more energy from renewable sources, though for this you'll mostly need to think big.

## Here's how it's done

Glenkens Community & Arts Trust wanted to ensure their new Catstrand Centre was energy efficient. After discussions with architects and in parallel with funded research, they decided to approach the Scottish Communities Household Renewables Initiative (SCHRI) and, with help and advice from the Energy Savings Trust, installed a biomass boiler using wood pellets. The boiler came from Austria and was installed by 3G from the Borders. The longest flexible auger ever to be fitted was installed. There were difficulties in designing the external hopper in which to store the pellets as the size of hopper needed would have been higher than the level of the school railings. As the Catstrand was being built in a conservation area, the planners would not agree to this so GCAT settled for a slightly smaller hopper which requires more deliveries of pellets in the winter.

During the first year an issue arose with the flexible auger; whenever the pellets were moving up the auger from the hopper, the auger would grate on the inner sides of the tube. This was fixed by a replacement tube for the auger which was lined in plastic. Since then the mechanics have generally been fine although the boiler does require constant maintenance.

Initially there were also problems with the pellets which could not be sourced locally. The Catstrand began receiving deliveries from York which were therefore costing more and having an impact on the building's carbon footprint. It is good news that suppliers are now becoming more prevalent in Dumfries and Galloway and South Ayrshire, and the Catstrand currently sources from only 40 miles away.

## What does that mean?

**Climate change** – The earth is surrounded by a blanket of gases, such as carbon dioxide, which keeps it warm and able to sustain life. However, the gases produced by burning fossil fuels are making this blanket thicker, trapping heat in. As a result our climate is starting to change. This means higher sea levels, as the polar ice melts, and more extreme weather-storms, floods and droughts.

**Carbon dioxide** is the commonest of the gases causing climate change. It crops up in all sorts of combinations. For example, carbon calculators help you calculate how much carbon you are personally responsible for – known as your carbon footprint. Activities or products which produce no carbon dioxide are carbon neutral.

**Renewable energy** refers to energy from sources, such as the wind, waves or sun, which never runs out and produces no carbon dioxide. It can refer to wood or other energy sources that grow, as these take in carbon dioxide and then release it when burnt. They are carbon neutral. The opposite of renewable energy are fossil fuels: coal, oil and gas. They produce carbon dioxide when they are burnt and contribute to climate change.

**Fuel poverty** refers to people who have to spend more than 10% of their income on energy bills. Two million UK households live in fuel poverty and some households cannot afford to heat their homes properly, or have to choose between spending on food or heating.

## Here's some help

- **Energy Saving Trust in Scotland:** Gives free advice to individuals, communities and organisations on reducing carbon dioxide emissions and saving money on energy bills. It provides a Building Energy Review for community groups and more details can be found at [www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/scotland/Take-action/Communities-in-Scotland/Building-Energy-Review](http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/scotland/Take-action/Communities-in-Scotland/Building-Energy-Review)
- **Carbon Trust:** Provides government-funded advice on energy reduction for businesses. Telephone advice and free materials (stickers, posters) for everyone. [www.carbontrust.co.uk](http://www.carbontrust.co.uk)
- **The Scottish Government's Community and Renewable Energy Scheme (CARES):** Launched in February 2011, the CARES Loan Fund provides loans to renewable energy projects which aim to benefit and engage with communities. See [www.communityenergyscotland.org.uk/cares.asp](http://www.communityenergyscotland.org.uk/cares.asp)
- **The Climate Challenge Fund:** Administered by Keep Scotland Beautiful, this fund supports community projects which undertake sustainable development, including cutting emissions, recycling and producing local food. See <http://ccf.keepsotlandbeautiful.org>

## Checklist

### Easy actions!

- Work out annual energy usage from electricity and gas bills; use for planning, then monitor regularly
- Turn heating thermostat down 1 degree – no cost, can save 10% of heating bills
- Turn hot water thermostats down to a comfortable temperature – no cost
- Turn electrical appliances off at mains – no cost
- Make sure users know how to turn individual radiators down; don't open windows when heating is on – no cost
- Install energy saving light bulbs; start in rooms that are used most – under £5 per bulb, savings of about £10 per year
- Put reflective panels behind radiators on outside walls; don't block radiators with furniture – under £5 per radiator
- Draught proof windows and doors; use thick curtains – under £10 each
- Put an insulating jacket at least 75mm thick around hot water tank – under £10

### Getting Harder...

- Review heating controls – are they zoned or lockable? Do they have frost thermostats? – saves on running costs
- Provide a single and total switch-off facility at main entrance – saves on running costs
- Install a point of use water heater – about £100, saves on running costs
- Insulate lofts to 270mm; add insulation if it's just got a few inches – £100+ depending on size and existing insulation
- Fill uninsulated cavity walls (most buildings after 1930) – £100+, require professional installation, but can cut heating costs by a third
- Fit self closing doors – can be done as part of health and safety review – £100+
- Choose A, A\* or A\*\* energy rated appliances (fridges, freezers etc) with no clock display – more expensive but can save £50-£100 per year
- Install timers or movement sensors on light and heating switches
- Buy electricity from renewable sources

# Travel wisely

Community buildings contribute significantly in the quest to travel wisely. They provide activities within communities and a meeting place for communities to use without having to travel far, if at all. Community buildings can encourage more users to make use of their facilities or provide information that can help people to make wiser choices when travelling.

Travelling wisely brings other benefits in addition to reducing carbon emissions. Walking, cycling, car-sharing or travelling by public transport can help people to feel that they belong in their local community. Travelling less – eating out within walking distance, or holidaying in the UK – can also enhance local economies. Individual choices can make a difference, but they need to be supported by local and national initiatives to make wise choices more possible, desirable and affordable – so let your local authority know what you think.



## Here's how it's done

Comrie Development Trust encourages the use of public transport, cycling and walking to the office. Three members of staff live locally and therefore walk or cycle to work, with other members of staff cycling, taking the bus or driving from seven miles away. Board Members tend to walk, cycle or car share to meetings.



Comrie Development Trust

## What does that mean?

**Eco-driving** can help you cut fuel bills and carbon emissions. Check your tyre pressure regularly, empty your boot and keep to a steady 50mph.

**Car sharing** means that several people travel together in one car. The committee could do a survey among regular users, and put people coming from the same direction in touch.

### **Green motorists pay less road tax!**

Drive an electric vehicle, which will be carbon neutral, or a more flexible hybrid electric/petrol vehicle. Liquid petroleum gas (LPG) is another option, but fuelling stations are limited. Avoid biofuels (unless it's locally recycled chip oil): they may lead to destruction of tropical forests and rising food prices in some poor countries.

## Here's some help

- **Sustrans Scotland:**  
Tel: 0131 539 8122  
[www.sustrans.org.uk](http://www.sustrans.org.uk)
- **Carplus:**  
Tel: 0113 234 9299  
[www.carplus.org.uk](http://www.carplus.org.uk)
- **Energy Saving Trust in Scotland:**  
Tel: 0131 555 7900  
[www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/scotland](http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/scotland)
- **Environmental Transport Association:** Tel: 0845 602 1425  
[www.eta.co.uk](http://www.eta.co.uk)
- **Transform Scotland:**  
Tel: 0131 243 2690  
[www.transformscotland.org.uk](http://www.transformscotland.org.uk)



## Checklist

### Easy actions!

Work out mileage, financial and carbon costs of everyone travelling to the building

Consider having access to computer and office facilities in your building for people in the community occasionally working from home – cost implications, but can provide income

Promote public transport – put bus timetables on your notice board or website and in promotion for meetings and events – no cost

Schedule events to fit in with public transport – no cost

Encourage lift-sharing

Promote eco-driving

### Getting harder...

Provide safe cycle storage – may be available free

Provide shower for cyclists – medium cost

Consider environmental performance when buying a vehicle – saving on road tax

# Shop ethically



Imports account for 95 per cent of fruit and half of all vegetables consumed in the UK.

What we buy is unlikely to transform our lives as suggested by adverts. But what we buy can change the world. Shopping ethically means thinking about what you buy, weighing up the impact in terms of social and environmental justice. It may mean changing your buying patterns, or convincing others that it is important, and you may have to do a bit of research. Most importantly, it is about making informed choices, and setting a good example.

In larger towns and cities, it may be easier to change your buying patterns. Shops and supermarkets are increasingly sensitive to people who choose to buy local produce or fairly traded products. In rural areas, it is sometimes more difficult to source local and organic produce. Farmers' markets are good sources of local produce, but are only sustainable if local people support them. Some management committees of community buildings encourage people to shop ethically by hosting farmers' markets.

## Here's how it's done

Twechar Environmental Project's eco-friendly policy for purchasing food was to plant a community orchard and begin a Green Aware food project that demonstrates and promotes the skills of growing organic home produce, thus decreasing food miles and encouraging the community to grow their own.

## What does that mean?

Fairtrade Mark means that a guaranteed minimum price and a premium for investment in local projects were paid to disadvantaged producers in developing countries. UK certification is run by the Fairtrade Foundation. There are over 200 Fairtrade towns, which fulfil the five criteria set by the Fairtrade Foundation. [www.fairtrade.org.uk](http://www.fairtrade.org.uk). Organic Certification Organisations: There are several organic certification organisations in the UK, of which the best known is the Soil Association. The organic logo means production adheres to strict standards, with minimal use of artificial chemicals, such as pesticides, drugs or antibiotics. Organic farming benefits wildlife and does not use artificial fertilisers (responsible for another greenhouse gas, nitrous oxide).

Eco-friendly cleaning materials are designed to break down quickly and completely, so they don't pollute rivers. Most are made from plant products and natural minerals.

Community ownership is often the only viable option for villages wishing to retain or introduce a village shop. These shops are often very successful and provide a valuable resource for communities. The Village Retail Service Association (ViRSA) has a directory of 150 community-owned shops in England, Scotland and Wales on its website. ViRSA supports rural communities wanting to set up and run a shop. It provides practical assistance through a network of community retail advisers, a national office and several publications.

## Here's some help

- **Big Barn:** Find local food outlets. [www.bigbarn.co.uk](http://www.bigbarn.co.uk)
- **Ethical Investment Research Services (EIRIS):** Free guides to ethical mortgages, pensions and banking. Find an ethical financial adviser. [www.eiris.org](http://www.eiris.org)
- **Fairtrade Foundation:** Information, promotional materials, speakers, Fairtrade towns action guide and ideas for getting involved. Tel. 020 7405 5942 [www.fairtrade.org.uk](http://www.fairtrade.org.uk)
- **Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens:** Starter packs and support for projects. Tel. 0131 623 7058 [www.farmgarden.org.uk](http://www.farmgarden.org.uk)
- **Soil Association Scotland:** Information on organic food and One Planet Agriculture. Tel: 0131 666 2474 [www.soilassociation.org](http://www.soilassociation.org)
- **How 2 create a community shop and post office:** Useful toolkit developed by Oxfordshire Rural Community Council for those wanting to set up their own shop or post office. [www.oxonrcc.org.uk/Content/Sites/oxonrcc-org-uk/Documents/ORCC%20Setting%20up%20a%20community%20shop%202010.pdf](http://www.oxonrcc.org.uk/Content/Sites/oxonrcc-org-uk/Documents/ORCC%20Setting%20up%20a%20community%20shop%202010.pdf)
- **Traidcraft:** National charity and trading company. You could set up as a Traidcraft outlet, selling Fairtrade goods. [www.traidcraft.co.uk](http://www.traidcraft.co.uk)
- **ViRSA:** Support for community shops through network of retail advisers. Tel. 01993 814377 or [www.virsa.org](http://www.virsa.org)



## Checklist...

### Easy actions!

- Ask suppliers where products come from, how they are made, and how they can be disposed of
- Buy local produce in season for events; use local catering services – can be cheaper
- Buy Fairtrade – slightly more expensive
- Buy organic – usually more expensive, but buying direct or in bulk reduces cost
- Buy eco-friendly cleaning products – can be more expensive, best to buy in bulk

### Getting harder ...

- Buy in bulk, perhaps setting up a group purchasing scheme including users and others – savings can outweigh higher costs of organic or Fairtrade products
- Act as drop-off point for a local vegebox scheme, encouraging staff and users to take part – buying direct saves costs
- Set up as a Traidcraft supplier, with a monthly stall or even an honesty box system – buying in bulk saves costs
- Buy financial services from a company with an ethical policy – insurance, mortgages, bank accounts, loans
- Buy services from local companies with an environmental and ethical policy – not always more expensive

# Save our Resources



Composting at Cultybraggan (an ex POW camp now owned by the Comrie community).  
Source: Comrie Development Trust

Saving resources means to “reduce, re-use resource and recycle”. In your community building it is important to think first about using less material, energy and water, using them more efficiently, using and re-using things for longer and finally recycling whatever you can.

## Here’s how it’s done

**Comrie Development Trust** use low energy light bulbs in their office and turn computers off completely overnight. They also use a current cost monitor to show exactly what energy they are using at any given time.

They also recycle their paper, cardboard, cans, plastic, glass, batteries, printer cartridges and mobile phones and compost food waste.

**Twechar Community Action** operates from a council owned building and have a number of recycling schemes in operation. This includes a furniture recycling, garden waste recycling and also cardboard, paper, aluminium, plastics and glass recycling. Vegetable waste from the cafe is composted on a daily basis and the project is beginning to collect food waste from the local primary school canteen to be treated and recycled into compost. In addition the project helps to sustain itself through money earned from a textile recycling scheme.

## What does that mean?

### **Sustainable community strategies:**

The government requires local councils to join with local communities to create a long-term sustainable vision of the future in their area, then work to implement these sustainable community strategies. Priorities are included in the Local Area Agreement, which shows how central government funding is spent locally. It is important to get official support for your plans by making sure they are included. Sustainable community strategies may cover a whole district or even county, while parish or neighbourhood plans are similar exercises at town or parish level.

## Here's some help

**The Community Resources Network Scotland (CRNS):**  
Tel. 01786 469 002  
[www.crns.org.uk](http://www.crns.org.uk)

**Furniture Re-use Network:** Also white goods, computers.  
Tel. 0117 954 3571  
[www.frn.org.uk](http://www.frn.org.uk)

**Aluminium cans:** Raise money by recycling cans.  
Tel. 01527 597 757  
[www.alupro.org.uk](http://www.alupro.org.uk)

**Association of Charity Shops:**  
Tel. 0207 7255 4470  
[www.charityshops.org.uk](http://www.charityshops.org.uk)

**Community Repaint:** Recycling unused paint  
Tel. 0113 3959  
[www.communityrepaint.org.uk](http://www.communityrepaint.org.uk)

**Freecycle:** Give away unwanted goods on the internet.  
[www.freecycle.org](http://www.freecycle.org)

**Junk mail:** Register free to stop junk mail via: Mail Preference Service, Freepost 29 LON20771, London W1E 0ZT.  
Tel. 0845 703 4599  
[www.mpsonline.org.uk](http://www.mpsonline.org.uk)  
Also for unwanted faxes (0845 070 0702)  
or phone calls (0845 070 0707)

**Recycle Scotland:** Social enterprise recycling office furniture and equipment.  
Tel. 0844 770 7059  
[www.recycle-scotland.co.uk](http://www.recycle-scotland.co.uk)

**Wateraid:** Lots of information, games, films and teaching material. [www.wateraid.org.uk](http://www.wateraid.org.uk)

**Water companies:** Websites usually include offers for subsidised water-saving devices.

**Waterwise:** Promoting water efficiency  
[www.waterwise.org.uk](http://www.waterwise.org.uk)

**Zero Waste Scotland:** Government initiative supporting waste reduction  
[www.zerowastescotland.org.uk](http://www.zerowastescotland.org.uk)

## Checklist...

### Easy actions!

Work out where you can save resources, and how to measure progress

Buy items you can re-use rather than disposables – may be costly initially, but saving long term

Buy or get donated second hand items – from charity shops, freecycle, or specialist schemes – saves money

Register with the Mailing Preference Service to stop junk mail – no cost

Say no to plastic – no cost, can save money

Compost garden, uncooked kitchen waste and cardboard or shredded paper – cuts fertilizer and waste disposal costs

Buy recycled, from loo paper to envelopes – consider bulk buying and shop around for the best price

Donate excess equipment (computers, tools, etc) to freecycle or specialist organizations – no cost

Install a water meter and water-saving devices like water butts and “hippos” for toilets

Put up notices reminding people what they shouldn't dispose of in toilets or drains – no cost; save on plumbers' bills

Put up notices reminding people not to leave taps running – no cost; save on water bills

Plant drought resistant plants; avoid containers which dry out

### Getting harder...

Explore options for composting food waste, such as green cones or wormeries – £40-£100 for simpler options, may save on waste collection

Establish collection points for recyclables, such as toner cartridges, mobile phones or aluminium – can provide small income through sales or local council credits

Consider setting up a community composting project

Install sensor operated or spray taps, and dual flush toilets; make sure urinals do not flush automatically

# Care for your area



Byshot Tree Planting  
source: Children's Inclusion Partnership

Some community buildings have outside areas where the local environment can be enhanced and so improve people's quality of life. Whether you have such an outside area or not, there is much you can do to participate or take the lead in organising local initiatives. Even negative issues like dog fouling, fly tipping, rubbish and graffiti can bring people together in community projects that have a real impact. Climate change is a great threat to wildlife and vegetation – so the links between reducing carbon emissions (covered under other sections) and caring for your area are strong.

## Here's how it's done

The Children's Inclusion Partnership (CHIP) in North Glasgow has conducted environmental work with children and families with a focus on bringing vacant and derelict land back into community use. This work is carried out in partnership with local youth organisations, housing providers and community groups. It aims to help people feel stronger and more optimistic through influencing the circumstances and decisions that affect them. CHIP and the network of community groups of which it is part has made steady progress towards environmental improvement that is sustainable, while involving local people and being appropriate to the needs of the community.

## Here's some help

**BTCV Scotland:** National charity providing expertise and opportunities to get involved in local conservation.

[www2.btcv.org.uk/display/btcv\\_scotland](http://www2.btcv.org.uk/display/btcv_scotland)

**Keep Scotland Beautiful:**

Runs Keep Scotland Tidy antilittering campaign.

[www.keepsotlandtidy.org](http://www.keepsotlandtidy.org)

**The Convention of Scottish Local Authorities, (COSLA):**

Information about local councils in Scotland.

[www.cosla.gov.uk](http://www.cosla.gov.uk)

**Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens:**

Starter packs and support for projects. Tel. 0131 623 7058

or [www.farmgarden.org.uk](http://www.farmgarden.org.uk)

**Scottish Natural Heritage:**

Funded by the Scottish Government to promote and look after the environment in Scotland.

[www.snh.gov.uk](http://www.snh.gov.uk)

**Scottish Wildlife Trust:**

Information about wildlife and wildlife activities in your area

[www.swt.org.uk](http://www.swt.org.uk)



## Checklist...

### Easy actions!

Contribute to your local sustainable community strategy, parish plan or neighbourhood plan

Find out what wildlife is special to your area and how you can help it thrive

Survey your grounds to find out how they could attract wildlife

Choose wildlife friendly plants that provide nectar, larval food, fruit or berries

Put up bird boxes and bird feeders – from about £10, or make your own

Help promote local conservation volunteering – no cost

Report fly-tipping and display the 'Dumb Dumpers' hotline number 0845 2 30 40 90

### Getting harder ...

Agree with users the top three things you can do to create a greener future; let your council know what you think it can do

Carry out a street audit to identify what you can improve yourselves and what your local council could do

Arrange your own green clean up event, to clear litter or graffiti in your area – no cost



# Shouting from the rooftop



Most community buildings are registered charities. Promoting activities may therefore not come naturally for a management committee. If you want to encourage people to make their actions count, you need to talk about your initiatives, the changes you have made, your successes and the lessons you have learned. Initially, make sure that your sustainability action plan is available in the building and that you incorporate its principles in all your processes and procedures, for example, in hiring agreements.

The best way to win people round is by talking to them directly. Promote what you

are doing as widely as possible, and remember to celebrate everyone's successes.

You could involve the users of the building in coming up with a plan to create publicity for your activities. Decide as a group who you want to reach with your message and the best way to get the message across. Maybe some of your users have marketing skills and could help you with your plan. Involve local people, businesses and local media in making people aware of your building's initiatives to protect and improve your environment.

# Extending your reach



Once your community building has implemented the easier actions, it is time to take a long, hard look at your building. What's the scope for making it a flagship example of green construction, especially if you have major building work planned anyway?

Take the lead in promoting sustainable lifestyles in your community. It is hard for individuals alone to break the habits of a lifetime, and working together is the key to change. A community building can be at the heart of this, with different user groups reaching out to different people, and creating real momentum.

Imagine a building that's warmed by the sun and the people who use it, with virtually no heating costs, except on the coldest days! Imagine a building with no need for artificial light in the daytime, or with minimal water use and much reduced water bills! Good sustainable design looks good, saves money on running costs and is a pleasure to use. And it can provide an inspiring practical example of sustainability in the centre of the community.

This is often complex, with new technology becoming available all the time. If you can, find a green architect or builder to join your management committee, and develop a long-term maintenance and refurbishment plan. There are different factors to think about, and your final choice will mean balancing different criteria. While the initial costs of building sustainably may be higher, this is usually offset by reduced running costs – and it is often easier to get grants for capital projects.

Renewable energy projects often capture the imagination. They require major investment and you should only consider them once you have made all the energy efficiency improvements possible. They may take a long time to repay their cost, even if you can get a grant. However, the energy market is changing rapidly, and renewable energy is particularly worth considering in rural areas off the gas network, where the price of heating oil or gas is high.

# Think big...

## Planning and design

Develop long-term plan for building, including green aspects

Design any new build or refurbishment with care; for example, capture heat from the sun and reduce need for artificial light – get professional advice

Consider low-impact building techniques, such as straw bale, earth or timber

Cut down construction waste: plan to use excavated material on site, be accurate in ordering materials, plan for final re-use of materials

## Choosing materials

Buy local

Cut down use of cement, lead, aluminium, glass, plastics and UPVC

Use recycled materials

Choose durable, low maintenance materials

Use materials from reputable sources, including Forest Stewardship Council certified timber

## Reducing energy and resource use

Install double glazing sealed units, or secondary glazing

Assess scope for renewable energy

Assess scope for rainwater harvesting or professionally installed composting toilet

Assess scope for an in-vessel composter if you have a lot of food waste (e.g. from a café)

# Take the lead in your community



Make the most of the enthusiasm you've generated to widen your impact in the community. Community buildings are perfectly placed to involve volunteers and local people through their user groups, and to draw in all sorts of local organisations.

Do a survey to find out what local people think of your community centre and its sustainability achievements. Ask for ideas on what else you might do. And seek out people who don't use the centre much, perhaps young people, or those from a particular ethnic community.

Develop your building as an environmental centre, with displays and practical examples for people to visit. Is there scope to set up a local food co-operative, community shop, or organic café, perhaps using produce grown in your own community garden?

Work with others to develop a local project. Adopt a "pocket park" or local patch of green space. Work towards becoming a Fairtrade town or climate friendly community. Encourage people to grow their own food, through a community gardening project or garden share scheme.

Visit other community centres to share ideas. Involve different users of the building.

Contact your local Development Education Centre to see what resources and support are available.

## And remember to celebrate your achievements!

## Here's some help

**Global Action Plan:** National charity supporting sustainable lifestyle change. Tel. 020 7405 5633  
or [www.globalactionplan.org.uk](http://www.globalactionplan.org.uk)

**Futerra:** Sustainable communications consultancy. "New rules: new game" shows how people can change their behaviour, focusing on climate change.  
[www.futerra.org/downloads/NewRules:NewGame.pdf](http://www.futerra.org/downloads/NewRules:NewGame.pdf)

**Development Education Centres:** 6 centres in Scotland, promoting local action on sustainability and global justice.  
[www.ideas-forum.org.uk](http://www.ideas-forum.org.uk)

## General resources and further reading

### Community Action for a Sustainable Scotland...

All seven CASS resources can be downloaded from:

<http://www.scdc.org.uk/community-capacity-building/community-action-for-a-sustainable-scotland>

### Carbon Trust

[www.carbontrust.co.uk](http://www.carbontrust.co.uk)

### The Climate Challenge Fund

<http://ccf.keepsotlandbeautiful.org>

### Energy Saving Trust in Scotland

[www.energysavingtrust.org.uk](http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk)

### Friends of the Earth Scotland

[www.foe-scotland.org.uk/](http://www.foe-scotland.org.uk/)

### JustAct Website storing large amount of relevant resources

[www.justact.org.uk](http://www.justact.org.uk)

### Education Scotland's website also has resources

[www.ltscotland.org.uk/learningteachingandassessment/learningacrossthecurriculum/themesacrosslearning/globalcitizenship/supportmaterials/resources](http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/learningteachingandassessment/learningacrossthecurriculum/themesacrosslearning/globalcitizenship/supportmaterials/resources)



This resource was adapted from 'Your community building counts: Helping community buildings lead the way to a better future' (Every Action Counts 2009) <http://media.justact.org.uk/media/resoucesPDF/15/yourcommunitybuildingv1.pdf>. Conversion to a Scottish context has been made possible due to the fact that Every Action Counts has been published under Creative Commons, and it is a condition of such copyright that Community Action for a Sustainable Scotland is also published under Creative Commons. This will encourage the widest possible use and adaptation of the material.

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