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OUR SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

NORTH BERWICK COMMUNITY CENTRE



We've taken some significant steps towards becoming a more sustainable community, acknowledging that our individual, group and collective actions all have an impact on our environment, social interaction and the local economy.

We have looked at where we are now, where we want to go and have identified key activities that will guide our future actions as a Management Committee. We have identified a range of actions that we believe are important in delivering our activities and this document sets out these actions. Each action is prioritised against the needs of our community and the available resources for delivery.

This document is a living declaration of what we will do to benefit our community over the next year or two. We undertake that it will not gather dust on a shelf, but will instead become dog-eared and ring-marked as a regular reference for us and everyone with an interest or stake in our work. We will record our progress in delivering our actions, and will review and update our Sustainable Community Action Plan ourselves on an annual basis.

Contents

Who we are 3
Our community 5
What we do 6
What we will do 7
Growing what we know..... 9
Working in partnership..... 10
Building our skills 11
Action plan 12

Who we are

North Berwick Community Centre Management Committee supports the management of North Berwick Community Centre serving the North Berwick Coastal cluster. A Management Committee has leased the centre since April 1987 working in partnership with East Lothian Council for over 24 years to ensure the smooth running of the centre. The Committee is made up of volunteer representatives from centre groups and other interested parties. There are a total of 16 members at present. The Committee employs a part-time Clerical Assistant and sessional tutors to delivery our Childrens' classes and meets on a monthly basis.

The Members

CHAIRPERSON: Nicky Fox (Stepping Out)
VICE- CHAIRPERSON June Douglas Hamilton (Friends of North Berwick Museum)

TREASURER: Jim Halley (Lip reading class)

SECRETARY: Eileen Wilson (Pottery class)

COMMITTEE: Sophie Armstrong (Youth Representative)
Janice McCann (Pottery class)
Claire MacKenzie (North Berwick Playgroup)
Joan McKenzie (North Berwick Floral Art)
Angela Pooley (Law Quilters)
Wendy Smith (Youth Representative)
Lindsay Twist (Brownies)
Kirsty Wood (East Lothian Special Needs Playschemes)

EAST LOTHIAN COUNCIL REP. Cllr. Neil Rankin

EAST LOTHIAN COUNCIL Sandra King
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
OFFICER:

EAST LOTHIAN COUNCIL Ann Kivlin
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
SERVICE:

COMMUNITY COUNCIL REP. Jim Goodfellow

We carry out the following activities:

- We work in partnership with East Lothian Council's Community Learning & Development Service in managing the centre and to offer a programme of learning, recreational and leisure opportunities.

We recognise the benefits of working with other organisations, groups and individuals in progressing our ideas and activities.

Our group relies on volunteer representatives who consult with the community on the types of activities required e.g. through centre open days and events. We have the interests of all our community at heart and we liaise with them in order to make sure that we are delivering activities that meet their changing needs.



We
are committed
to achieving
social justice and
well-being for all

Our Community

North Berwick is a picturesque town situated on the shores of the Firth of Forth, just 35 minutes by train from Edinburgh. The population is around 6000. Much of the activity in the town is centred around tourism and leisure. There is a mix of Council and private housing and the community centre is situated in the heart of the town, which makes access easy for most people.

Our programme of activity is designed to appeal to all those in our community and the activities include: pottery, floral art, playgroup, singing, Volunteer Stroke Club, Lip reading, English as a Second Language, Special Needs Playschemes, music therapy, gymnastics, dance, quilting, yoga, pilates, music tuition and the Stepping Out Mental Health Project. We have two halls, a kitchen and coffee lounge, snozelen room, pottery room, general purpose room, quiet room, community room and art room, outdoor play area and our car park is big enough to accommodate events such as fairs and car boot sales.

We will continue to consult with those who use our centre and also others in the community who may not use our facilities at the moment, but might do so in future. We welcome suggestions for new activities and will consider them carefully, but we try to avoid simply replicating other activities available elsewhere.

At present, we don't have wireless connection and a dedicated website. The development of a website would be another opportunity for people to find out what is going on at the centre and also in North Berwick generally.

We will continue to find ways of improving our activities and seek funding for our initiatives.

We believe in working in partnership with other community groups and organisations that have the interests of our community at heart. By working together we can deliver much more for our people than by working as individuals.



We make
our decisions
in an open,
inclusive and
accountable way

What we do



North Berwick Community Centre is the recognised vehicle to take forward new ideas, to generate funding, bring people together and manage new activities for the people that we work with in our community. The centre is a former school building built in 1894 which is much loved in the community and we aim to preserve this but also to bring fresh ideas and create a contemporary environment. We are instrumental in bringing our people together to vision and plan for the future.

During our Sus it Out Plus™ session, we identified the following statements which best describe what we do as an organisation:

- We create opportunities for our community to have fun
- We create opportunities for learning
- We make community life more accessible for people with disabilities
- We offer services to people who are vulnerable e.g. Special Needs Playschemes, Stepping Out Mental Health Project
- We encourage active citizenship and volunteering
- We develop the artistic life of our community
- We support members of our community to develop their health and wellbeing

These statements express our commitment to maintaining and developing the services we provide to people in North Berwick and the surrounding villages.

Children are the lifeblood of our community and we try to involve them as much as possible in our activities. We liaise with the local nursery and schools so that all of the

We
encourage
creative thinking
and problem
solving

children have the opportunity to participate in something at the centre.

What we will do



North Berwick Community Centre is committed to delivering our activities in a way that is consistent with the principles of sustainable development which include improving the quality of life in the community whilst safeguarding services for future generations.

Our main priority is to continue to represent and serve our community to the best of our ability and we have a number of ambitions that will help us to not only maintain the services that we currently have, but also enhance our services in order to meet the changing needs of the community.

Actions for a sustainable community

- We would like the centre to be fully accessible and will explore the possibility of increasing disabled access throughout the building. This could involve a feasibility study to look at different options e.g. installation of a lift, or building an extension to the centre. We may have sufficient space to do this, but we will need to attract funding from local and national grant distributors to enhance any fundraising efforts for this project from within the community.
- The Committee worked with other community centres throughout East Lothian to liaise with East Lothian Council who were considering moving community centres to 'Enjoy' a company limited by guarantee with charitable status. The Committee had concerns regarding this proposal which they felt would impact on their continued role in keeping the community centre, community managed. It has since been agreed by ELC not to transfer services to 'Enjoy' at this time. The Committee will continue to

work with other Community Centres to ensure Community centres stay community managed. We will continue to liaise with other community groups and also the community centres that operate in adjacent areas, in order to share ideas and initiatives.

- It would be good to have a dedicated website for the centre and this could link in to other local websites. This would widen awareness of our activities and be particularly useful for the launch of any new activities.
- We would like to install wireless internet access to the centre and have a community room available for hot desking, to be used by community groups.
- We support the Uprising group which has recently developed facilities for young people in North Berwick and will continue to work with the Youth Cafe.

Our Community Learning Account funds are available to us and we would like to consider options for training in website development or undertaking a feasibility study to extend our accessibility. This training will increase our capacity to deliver quality services to North Berwick and adjacent settlements.

We
build trusting
and collaborative
relationships with
others

We
challenge
negative images
of people in our
community



Growing what we know

The Management Committee acknowledges the voluntary commitment from local people and each year we aim to develop and deliver activities that engage people in volunteering.

The real value of this effort is often overlooked, and we undertake to acknowledge and value this commitment.

We are fortunate to attract a wide range of skills and experience which is put to good use for the community.

We look for 'win/win' solutions to problems in our community



Working in partnership



**We
make our events
accessible to
everyone**

We recognise the importance of building positive working relationships with organisations within and outside our community in order to deliver our activities.

We already work in partnership or have a positive working relationship with many organisations and groups including:

- East Lothian Council
- Stepping Out
- Uprising East Lothian (The Space)
- East Lothian Special Needs Playschemes
- North Berwick Youth Cafe
- North Berwick Children & Youth Network
- Oasis
- NHS Lothian
- Friends of North Berwick Museum
- North Berwick First Responders
- North Berwick Playgroup

We know that we need to work with further organisations to improve the value and sustainability of our work in our community specifically:

- Local businesses
- Past and potential funders



**We value
co-operation
and collaboration
more than
competition**

Building our skills

We have the opportunity to utilise up to £1,500 from the Sustainable Communities Learning Account towards technical support and training to enhance our ability to contribute towards a more sustainable organisation.

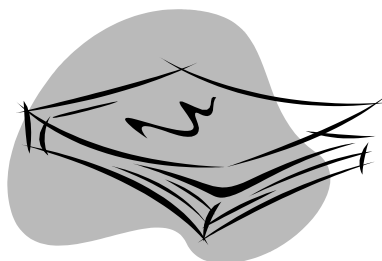
A number of areas have been identified for development and some of this may require us to access training, skills development or specialist advice to advance.

We will develop a Training Plan to be agreed with Future Balance within 6 weeks of approving this action plan, identifying supports, courses, providers and costs of delivery. This will include:

Actions for a sustainable community

Develop and agree an organisational training and development plan in line with our action plan:

- Website Design £500 (includes training for 3 reps)
- Action research – Access Survey £500 (includes training, printing of survey and survey report)
- Entrance /Hallway – signage and refurbishment £500



Summary Actions for a sustainable community

Action	Target	By when
<p>Marketing</p> <p>1.1 Promote the centre programme to the wider community</p>	Improved publicity leaflets. Raise the profile of the centre and improve its ability to reach out to the community, to increase attendance from a greater number of people and from a more diverse background.	September 2011
1.2 Install wireless internet in partnership with ELC	Wireless available in the centre, increased IT learning for the community (possible intergenerational classes – sharing skills)	November 2011
1.3 Install new PC for Clerical Assistant – link to ELC network	Internet access for staff.	November 2011
1.4 Build and regularly update a website /Social Networking Sites	Website up and running (Committee reps trained in website design/maintenance)	March 2012
<p>Refurbishment</p> <p>2.1 Adapt room in the centre for hot desking and one-to-one meetings for the community.</p>	Local voluntary groups use hot desking facilities. A safe place for one-to-one meetings.	November 2011
2.2 Create welcoming space in the hallway – upgrade seating, notice boards.	Centre users are encouraged to look at notice boards and enjoy the social space	March 2012
2.3 Explore the possibility of increasing disabled access throughout the building. Gather evidence and seek support from ELC for improvements.	Carry out action research with centre users and wider community to gather evidence of need. Agree access survey. Evidence gathered to support increased access.	March 2012
2.4 Improve the toilet and changing facilities. Decorate toilets/swap gents/ladies toilets to create a changing area for children in new ladies toilets.	Centre users have a safe comfortable space for changing, changing in communal areas ceases.	June 2012
2.5 Enhance interior of reception area in the centre – decorate walls, leaflet holders,	Centre users feel welcome and centre encouraged to enter the centre.	June 2012

pictures.		
2.6 Equip kitchen for use as learning area (cookery classes), coffee lounge upgraded	More learning opportunities to enhance cookery skills e.g. parents, Stepping Out, young people, Upward Mobility,	December 2012
2.7 Improve Storage facilities in the centre e.g. storage container? Better use of current storage areas.	Store staging equipment more safely	June 2012
Evaluation 3.1 Review and evaluate all children's classes including content, outcomes and fees.	Classes are meeting the needs of young people	March 2012
Governance 4.1 Prepare Management Committee Induction Pack	Increased awareness of roles and responsibilities of Committee members	October 2011
4.2 Continue to liaise with other Community centres in East Lothian.	Strengthen links with Community Centres across East Lothian. Keep community centres, community managed.	December 2011
4.3 Agree organisational training plan in line with action plan	Agree training needs analysis	December 2011
4.4 Consider application for SCVO 'Keystone Award'	Build capacity of Management Committee to ensure best governance	March 2012
4.5 Consider transferring Charitable Status to The Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO).	Build capacity and protect Management Committee - legal entity able to enter into contracts, employ staff, incur debts etc.	From Jan 2012 able to transfer? (June 2012)
Partnership 5.1 Support Uprising (The Space) and Youth Cafe to develop facilities for young people	Increased joint working with Uprising and Youth Cafe to meet needs of young people e.g. Music Initiative, Friday afternoon coffee lounge cafe run by Young People	Ongoing



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