

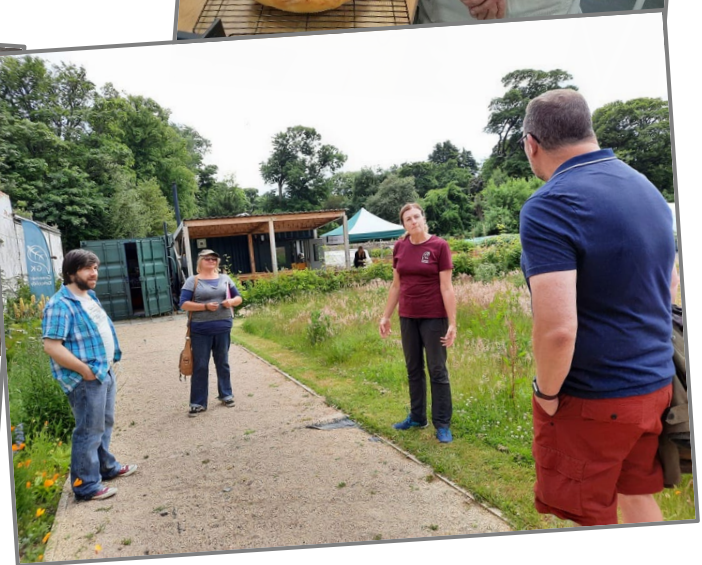
# Our Strategic Plan 2018 - 2023

## Report on our progress

July 2022



**Greener  
Kirkcaldy**



*This report was prepared by Lauren Brook. We welcome any feedback - please contact Lauren on [lauren@greenerkirkcaldy.org.uk](mailto:lauren@greenerkirkcaldy.org.uk), with any comments or questions.*

## Introduction

In April 2018, we published our *Strategic Plan for a Sustainable Future 2018–2023*. It described our aims:

- To broaden and deepen our community engagement
- To work towards financial sustainability by growing the proportion of our income that comes from social enterprise, service level agreements, donations and sponsorship
- To deliver an ambitious programme of work, meeting the needs and aspirations of local people

In this plan, we said we would prioritise six key areas of work:

- The refurbishment and fit out of our premises in central Kirkcaldy as a new base for Greener Kirkcaldy and a new social enterprise project, the Community Food Hub
- Delivering energy advice to tackle fuel poverty and climate change
- Exploring the potential for community-scale renewable energy
- Waste reduction education
- Natural Play childcare
- Developing our greener travel work, including a potential active travel social enterprise

In the summer of 2020, we carried out a review of our Strategic Plan, looking back at our progress towards the goals we set in 2018, and setting out our new priorities and updated plans for 2020 to 2023. This review also considered our response to two key external factors impacting our work at the time - the declaration of the climate emergency and the twin public health and economic crises of Covid-19. We consulted with hundreds of people through an online public meeting and community survey, held conversations with our partners and carried out scenario planning to consider what our “next normal” might look like.

As a result, we added the following new priorities for 2020-23:

- Redoubling our efforts to support our community to tackle the climate emergency
- Providing emergency support to vulnerable people during the pandemic
- Training and employability
- Town Centre regeneration
- New methods of community engagement

The full review, along with the original Strategic Plan, can be read here:

<https://www.greenerkirkcaldy.org.uk/about-us/our-strategic-plan-2018-2023/>

This report outlines our progress since reviewing our Strategic Plan in summer 2020.

## Our Progress

### The Community Food Hub

Most of the activities taking place in our Lang Spoon Community Kitchen were put on hold between March 2020 and April 2021 due to Covid-19. However, once restrictions eased we were able to start our programme again, with great success. Activities included:

- 'Food Works' employability courses, building skills and confidence, and helping people gain jobs or college places
- 'Smart Cooking' programmes teaching basic cooking skills and household budgeting, energy efficient cooking and introducing participants to other support services
- A regular cooking club for 'Smart Cooking' graduates to continue developing their skills
- Cookery courses and events for paying customers, including kids clubs, local and seasonal classes and a popular 'Taste Of' series with world cuisines
- Weekly community meals, run as a takeaway service during the pandemic, now a sit down meal
- 'Plate Up for Fife' workshops, encouraging climate-friendly food choices
- A Fife Food Summit, bringing together people, communities, organisations and businesses to explore how we work together to bring about good food for Fife and our planet

Our activities have been very popular over the last year, with most of our classes selling out, our programmes fully booked with waiting lists and 150-250 people joining us for our community meals each month. Participants were very enthusiastic about getting back in the kitchen and we have received excellent feedback from our community.



*Kids club in the Lang Spoon Community Kitchen*

The 'Lang Toun Larder' community pantry continues to collect unsold or surplus donated food and redistribute it in a friendly and welcoming environment. The pantry now has 100 members and there is a big demand for places, with a waiting list of people wanting to join. We also run a weekly pop up café where pantry members can pay-as-they-feel for a hot lunch and we invite



external support services to visit the café to chat to participants. Our 'Community Fridge' continues to run alongside the pantry, redistributing short-dated food, donated by individuals and businesses, to anyone in the community.

At Ravenscraig Walled Garden, after being unable to run activities during the Covid-19 lockdowns, we were able to start our programme of workshops, events and volunteer sessions again as restrictions eased in 2021. These have included: paid classes and courses on growing your own vegetables, fruit and herbs; climate-friendly gardening workshops; monthly community open days; and twice-weekly volunteer sessions.

In 2022-23, we are now turning our attention to the garden at our community building at East Fergus Place, with plans to run a new volunteer session and create a 'show and tell' climate friendly garden to inspire local people.

### **Energy Advice**

Our 'Cosy Kingdom' advice service, delivered across Fife in partnership with Citizens Advice & Rights Fife and St Andrews Environmental Network, continues to be in high demand. Between April 2020 and March 2022, our energy advisors supported over 7,000 households and helped participants receive over £2 million in financial gains. During the pandemic, we adapted our service to offer a hybrid approach of home visits and telephone advice. We are continuing to offer this approach going forward in order to meet the increasingly high demand of people asking for support.

In 2022, we secured renewal of our Service Level Agreement from Fife Council to help tenants in fuel poverty for a further three years. Five-year funding from Climate Action Fife will also allow us to support more households looking to reduce the carbon footprint of their homes.

We have carried out a number of engagement campaigns to reach 'hard-to-reach' households who we haven't engaged with before. We have also continued to develop new partnerships, including the Dunfermline Healthy Homes project, supporting people with long term illnesses and disabilities to heat their homes, and working with gas network utility SGN on the community engagement for their Fife H100 project in Levenmouth.

### **Community-scale renewable energy**

In 2020-22, we worked with Fife Communities Climate Action Network to carry out a feasibility study for a potential Fife solar energy cooperative, as part of the Climate Action Fife project. We identified five potential sites and were successful in securing funding from Fife Council's Vacant and Derelict Land fund and CARES (the Scottish Government's Community and Renewable Energy Scheme) to carry out technical feasibility work on these sites. This will take place in 2022-23 and will be led by Fife Communities Climate Action Network.

## Waste reduction

Our 'Ditch the Disposables' pilot partnership project with Fife Council, supporting Fife Pride and Kirkcaldy Parks Half Marathon to reduce single-use items at their events, was postponed in 2021 and eventually cancelled due to the continued impact of Covid-19.

## Natural Play

We have continued to mainstream children and family-friendly events into our projects with kids cooking club events in the Lang Spoon Training Kitchen, family cycling activities and family climate change events. The kids cooking clubs have been especially popular, booking up weeks in advance. During the Covid-19 lockdowns, we ran a series of online family activities on a variety of topics including climate change, food and wildlife. These were very popular and we are continuing to run these in the school holidays going forward.

## Greener Travel and Lang Toun Cycles

We opened our social enterprise community bike shop, Lang Toun Cycles, in November 2020 with start-up funding from the Scottish Government's Climate Challenge Fund. The shop offers cycle servicing and repairs, sales of refurbished bikes and of accessories, a bike lending library, bike maintenance training, volunteering opportunities and work placements. Our first 18-months have shown that there is a definite need for a community bike shop in Kirkcaldy. The Covid-19 lockdown and current cost-of-living crisis are meaning more and more people are now choosing to cycle, both for exercise and active travel, and we have seen a very high demand for our bike repairs, services and second hand bike sales. The bike library is also very popular, with people particularly keen to borrow electric bikes. We are currently trialing selling new e-bikes. This has been a great success so far, with the bikes selling within days of going on the shop floor. In 2022-23, we are exploring new options for business-to-business selling and creating an online presence for selling bikes and accessories.



*Group bike ride*

We also continued our popular programme of free community engagement work encouraging people to cycle or walk for short journeys instead of driving. Our 'Let's move up a gear!' project ran from 2020 to 2022, with funding from the Climate Challenge Fund and Smarter Choices, Smarter Places. Activities included:

- Led cycle rides and cycle training for a variety of audiences
- Bike maintenance classes, Dr Bike events and build-a-bike courses
- Bike borrowing scheme, including long term borrowing for key workers during the pandemic
- Annual Kirkcaldy Cycling and Walking Festivals and a Kirkcaldy Car Free Week
- A climate friendly holiday campaign encouraging people to reduce their air travel.
- Active travel champion volunteers
- Targeted activities in areas with high levels of deprivation

We were able to adapt the majority of these activities so we could deliver them through the pandemic. Feedback from our community told us that these activities played a vital role in keeping people active, connected and improving mental health during a time when many people were struggling and feeling isolated.

In 2021, we created the [Fife Community Cycling Action Plan](#) as part of the Climate Action Fife project. The plan proposes ten actions to get more people commuting by bike in Fife, across three main themes: route improvements, cycle storage and behaviour change measures.

## Climate Emergency

Our 2020-22 Climate Challenge Fund project delivered a programme of climate change engagement work including events, such as workshops, monthly climate cafes, walks, cooking demos and film nights, and a [Local Guide to Low Carbon Living](#). Alongside this, we led the 'Climate Action Fife' development project between October 2020 and March 2022. Funded by the National Lottery's Climate Action Fund, this was a partnership project working with Fife Council, Fife College and Fife Communities Climate Action Network (FCCAN). It delivered ten activities, grouped under four themes: engage, pilot, develop and building capacity across Fife. The project engaged over 2,000 people and our carbon evaluation shows that it will lead to savings of 3,346 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO<sub>2</sub>e) over the lifetime of the changes it has inspired. As part of the project, we became a Gold Climate Literate Organisation, accredited by the Carbon Literacy Trust. This recognises that we are improving carbon literacy in our community and provides us with greater authority and influence to make Fife a greener and fairer place to live.



*Climate Action Fife 'Line in the Sand' event*

We used the learning from our development project to successfully apply for a follow on 5-year project. This will be funded by the Climate Action Fund between 2022 and 2025 and is working with 12 community and public sector partners to deliver an ambitious programme of climate action, including:

- Climate change communications, training and engagement events for a range of audiences
- Fife Climate Knowhow training for communities and the public sector
- Innovative behaviour change activities encouraging climate-friendly businesses, climate-friendly homes and gardens, climate-friendly food, climate-friendly travel and community tree planting
- Capacity building to get more community groups and the public sector involved in action on the climate emergency

## **Emergency support**

Following our initial emergency response work in 2020, we have continued to offer support to help vulnerable people in our community to access food and heat their homes. With the current cost of living crisis, we are seeing that more and more people in our community are experiencing food insecurity and falling into fuel poverty.

We adapted our community meals, community fridge and pantry so that they could continue throughout the pandemic, enabling vulnerable people in our community to access good, nutritious food in a dignified way. These activities will continue to do this going forward. Our energy advisors also continue to distribute fuel vouchers to families at risk of disconnection and offer the 'handy' service to those struggling to keep their homes warm.

Since March 2022, we have also been part of the 'Cash First' partnership project. This is a pilot project offering shopping vouchers alongside income maximisation and financial capability support in the form of cooking classes, budgeting sessions etc.



## Training and employability

Our scenario planning research and consultation results during our 2020 Strategic Plan review identified employability and tackling unemployment, especially of young people, as high priorities for our future plans. We have started to scale up our employability work at our Lang Spoon Community Kitchen, Training Garden and Lang Toun Cycles shop by exploring new work experience and accredited training opportunities.

In 2022, we became a Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland (REHIS) accredited training centre, with staff qualified to deliver a variety of accredited food and cooking training courses. We have already delivered multiple courses for volunteers and members of the public. We are also working towards the longer-term goal of SQA accreditation for the Lang Spoon Community Kitchen and Lang Toun Cycles.

We have been supporting young people to gain work experience by offering placements in our kitchen, garden and cycle shop as part of the Government's 'Kickstart' programme and Fife Employability and Training Consortium's 'Bright Futures' project. Over 100 young people have been supported so far.



*'Kickstart' placement helping in our community pantry*

## Town centre regeneration

We have continued to play an active role in town centre regeneration, providing start up support to new community-led organisation Love Oor Lang Toun to: become a Community Interest Company; plan and run community engagement and marketing campaigns; develop a strategy; and secure funding. We will continue to work alongside Love Oor Lang Toun, ensuring both community interest and environmental sustainability are high on its agenda, and partnering with them on projects that benefit the Kirkcaldy community.



## New methods of community engagement

Lockdown resulted in changes in the way we engaged with our community. We offered more online activities and found that this helped us reach new audiences who were unable to travel to events. We have continued to offer a blend of online and face-to-face activities to cater for a range of audiences and to increase our resilience to any future Covid restrictions. We have also trialed hybrid events offering people the opportunity to take part in person or online, for example 61 people attended our 2022 Annual Gathering and AGM, with some people taking part in person and some people watching online.

## Organisational Development

We set ourselves a target of generating income of £62,000 from the Food Hub project by April 2021. The Covid-19 crisis meant that the project's income from sales was much lower, as we didn't run any social enterprise activities for over a year. We did, however, receive Business Support grants from the Scottish Government to help mitigate the lost income. Now that our social enterprise activities have started again we are seeing an increase in our income generation from classes and room hire. We are also exploring options to increase our income by offering an internal catering services for our room hire bookings. Overall, the pandemic has set back the Food Hub's business development by two years.

We also had a target for our other core projects and services to be covering some of their own costs. Cosy Kingdom is now in its third renewal of its Service Level Agreement with Fife Council, which funds part of its work. Our income generation at Lang Toun Cycles exceeded our expectations in its first year, with around £80,000 generated from bike repairs and servicing, sales, grants and sponsorship in 2021-22.

We put our fundraising plans for individual donations and sponsorship on hold during the Covid-19 pandemic. Prior to this, in 2019, we ran a successful fundraising event – our 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary ceilidh, and winter donations campaign – Help Fuel Fife Folk. We are now starting to put plans in place for new fundraising campaigns in 2022-23.

We have increased our membership from 500 to 865, with a target of 1,000 by 2023. We have also increased our number of regular volunteers from 50 to over 100, through the introduction of new Climate Champion, Cycling Volunteer, Bike Shop Volunteer and Community Food Volunteer roles. Between April 2021 and March 2022, over 7,700 people took part in our projects and services. This is well on course for our target of working with 8,060 people per year by April 2023.

We also committed to strengthening our quality management and impact evaluation systems. We will continue to do this in 2022-23 with the formation of new cross-team working groups to focus on this. We are also developing the organisation in other ways. We have developed a [Climate Action Plan](#) setting out an ambition for our operations to be carbon-neutral by 2030 and have established an internal 'Green Team' to do this. In 2022, we became a Bronze level

Equality Pathfinder Organisation with Fife Centre for Equalities. This scheme recognises the efforts made by organisations in furthering equality, diversity and inclusion as part of their day-to-day policies and practices. We are now working towards Silver level accreditation and have set up a working group to lead on this.

We are continuing to make good progress building strong local, regional and national partnerships. We still work closely with Love Oor Lang Toun and Fife Communities Climate Action Network and our new Climate Action Fife project has 12 community and public sector partners across Fife. We are members of the Food4Fife Partnership and the Fife Food Insecurity working group and work closely with the Fife Employability and Training Consortium. We also lead a new Fuel Poverty Taskforce of partners across Fife.

## **Looking ahead – our next Strategic Plan**

Our current Strategic Plan ends in 2023. We are now starting to form a plan for developing our next five-year plan. This will include consultations with our staff, volunteers, partners, members and community. The first community event will take place at our Annual Gathering in November.

We will also do some scenario planning to identify challenges and opportunities by analysing external priorities, examining shifts in people's preferences and expectations and predicting changes in policy and funding.