

Harthill, Eastfield and Greenrigg Community Action Plan 2019- 2024



COMMUNITY ACTION
LANARKSHIRE



What is a Community Plan?

Community Plans give people a real opportunity to say what’s important to them and what needs to happen to make sure that their communities are better places to live for everyone. This community plan sets out the priorities and aspirations of Harthill, Eastfield and Greenrigg residents and identifies ways of making these things happen. Harthill, Eastfield and Greenrigg are referred to collectively as Harthill throughout this Plan.

Why do a Community Plan?

- Local people are the best source of knowledge about their communities, which leads to better decision making
- The process of working together and achieving things together creates a sense of community
- Community involvement accords with people’s right to participate in decisions that affect their lives
- Many grant-making organisations prefer, or even require, community involvement to have occurred before handing out financial assistance

What we did for this Plan

- Held a Place Standard workshop with the Harthill, Eastfield and Greenrigg Community Plan Steering Group to draw out priority themes and key issues
- Developed a community survey based on these priorities to find out what the wider community thought
- The survey was distributed to households in Harthill, Eastfield and Greenrigg by the HEG Group along with the HEG quarterly newsletter in Spring 2019
- Community Action Lanarkshire attended two Learning Conversations at Alexander Peden Primary School to complete more surveys with parents
- A follow up community drop in was held in Harthill Village Hall on 25th May 2019 to discuss these actions with the community in more detail in order to develop project ideas
- The Plan was then developed based on the consultation, and further research undertaken on project ideas



Harthill is a village in North Lanarkshire, Scotland. It is located along the main transport corridors (A8 & M8) that connect Scotland’s two main cities of Glasgow and Edinburgh. Harthill is bordered by the two villages of Eastfield and Greenrigg, with Greenrigg located within the local authority areas of West Lothian.

Due to its proximity to the M8, Harthill has good transport connections with buses running every 15 minutes from Harthill services to Eurocentral and onto Glasgow in the West and Livingston, Ratho and Edinburgh to the East. While plans are in development to expand the Park & Ride Facilities, the area currently has 78 spaces.

The Harthill community developed as a result of coal mining within North Lanarkshire, with the last mine (Polkemmet) closing in 1984.

The nearest largest towns are Airdrie to the west, Shotts to the south west, and Livingston to the east.



What's Happening in Harthill?

Harthill and Eastfield Community Council meet monthly in the Harthill and District Village Hall. The community council have been established for many years and have supported a range of developments throughout the local area over those years. All local community members are welcome to attend the monthly meetings to talk about what is happening locally.

The Harthill, Eastfield and Greenrigg Community Group (HEG) are a charitable fund who have provided money for local environmental improvements to youth clubs and have supported the Gala Day.

The Harthill Community Facility is run by North Lanarkshire Culture & Leisure, and is available for hire throughout the year. Harthill and District Village Hall is a former North Lanarkshire Council senior citizens hall which is now a charity run by a board of trustees.

Community Groups in Harthill

There are a number of groups and activities running in Harthill currently including:

- Gala Day Committee & Gala Day
- Girls Brigade
- Boys Brigade
- Line Dancing
- Mothers and Toddlers
- Youth club
- Senior Youth club (Autumn 2019)
- Knitting & Crochet club
- Football club
- Horticulture Society & Flower Show
- Cancer Support Group
- Various church groups
- Lunch club
- Slimming World
- Dance classes
- Clubbercise



Alexander Peden Primary School have an active presence in the local community and are involved in many local activities. Older pupils from the school visit the Cancer Support Group; the school works with Ponies Help Children; there is a small community garden on school grounds for pupils; the school runs a breakfast club; there is a growing Parent Council; and parents recently have been involved in Groundforce days where everyone came together to paint, weed, and build a compost heap in the playground.

Harthill and Eastfield residents have recently (August 2019) taken part in a round of participatory budgeting, whereby local people had the opportunity to vote on a list of projects they would like to see taken forward in their community. The most popular projects were to be awarded a portion of £500,000 allocated across North Lanarkshire. The projects put forward in Harthill were creation of a Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) at Community Centre; building a play area adjacent to Health Centre; and development of walking routes by the River Almond.



Population

- 2017 Mid-year population estimates show that Harthill (inc. Eastfield) has a population of 2,528
- 18% of residents are under 16; 65% are working age; and 17% are ages 65 or over - in line with both the North Lanarkshire and the Scotland averages.
- The average age is 40.5 years old



Health

- Male life expectancy is 75.5 years, lower than the Scottish average of 77.1 years
- Female life expectancy is 78.3 years, lower than the Scottish average of 81.1 years
- 74% of people rate their health as good or very good; 9% rate it as bad or very bad
- Percentage of economically inactive people aged 16 to 74 who are long-term sick or disabled is 22.1%, compared to 16.6% across Scotland



Income & Employment

- 19.3% of the community are defined as being income deprived, compared to the Scottish average of 12.3%
- 42% of people work full time, 12% work part time, and 5% are self employed
- 11.3% of the community are defined as being employment deprived, compared to the Scottish average of 10.8%
- 17% of residents are retired
- The unemployment rate is 6.4%, compared to 4.8% across Scotland



Housing

- 25.1% of households are made up of families with dependent children
- 56% of homes are owned; 36% are rented (through Housing Associations or North Lanarkshire Council)
- The average number of persons per household is 2.2; equal to the Scottish average



Education

- 78% of 16-17 year olds are in education; compared to 80% across Scotland
- 6% of 17-21 year olds enter in to full time higher education
- 13% of people aged 16-19 are not in full time education, employment or training
- 43% of the community have no formal qualifications, compared to 27% nationally.
- Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation figures show that almost half of the village is considered education deprived, falling in the worst 15% of statistics nationally.



Access to Services

- 100% of the population live in the 25% least access deprived areas of Scotland
- The average number of cars per household is 1.1
- 74% of people travel to work by car compared to 62.4% nationally; 11% use public transport to get to work
- Average drive times to GP surgery, primary schools, Post Office, and a petrol station are all below 5 minutes; Average drive time to a secondary school is 10 mins

Community Consultation

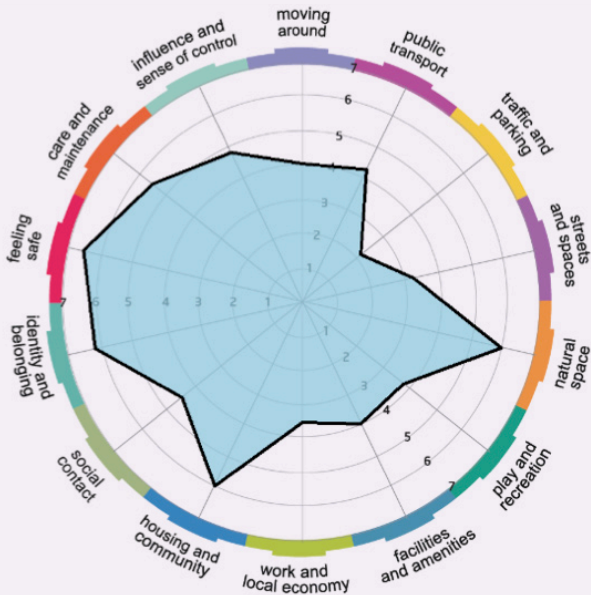
The community consultation carried out in support of this plan used a three-stage approach; this allowed us to draw out priority themes and issues early on, then test the popularity of potential actions focused on those themes with the community over the next two stages.



The Place Standard is a tool that is used to assess the quality of a place by providing a simple framework to structure conversations about place. In Harthill's case we used the tool to help identify priorities for development in the village. This was delivered as a workshop with Community Plan steering group members where, after a discussion around each aspect of Harthill, we were able to identify some of the key issues affecting the village and where village priorities were most likely focussed.

Priorities

- 1. **Traffic and Parking** Parked cars on residential streets, Parking at Alexander Peden School, Traffic on West Main Street
- 2. **Streets and Spaces** Littering within Harthill/ Council cut back maintenance
- 3. **Work and Local Economy** Need more volunteering opportunities/ Poor public transport links/ Little local employment
- 4. **Play and Recreation** Play park removed/ Not enough local activities
- 5. **Facilities and Amenities** Expensive facility hire/ Need to upgrade existing facilities
- 6. **Moving Around** No pedestrian crossing/ No cycle paths/ Parked cars on street/ Kerbs need lowered



Using these identified priorities as a starting point a survey was created which asked community members to say how important they felt a number of potential actions were, this was the second stage of the consultation. These actions related to the priority themes identified in the Place Standard. This process allowed us to prioritise activities and actions listed in the survey. The survey was posted to every household in Harthill along with the HEG newsletter, and an online version was also made available. We also attended the 'Learning Conversation' events held over 2 evenings 29th and 30th April at Alexander Peden Primary School where we engaged the children in handing out survey information to all the attending parents and children.

The third stage of the consultation involved hosting a pop-up community drop in event in the village hall which community members were invited to attend. The drop in was designed to ask questions which built on the actions identified by residents as most important to them in the survey; allowing us to flesh out actions and activities into more viable and detailed project ideas. The drop in also offered a chance to discuss the Plan with community members face to face, allowing them to see how their priority issues were being actioned as the consultation progressed, and offering residents an opportunity to input their own ideas and suggestions directly. This approach enabled us to develop more robust projects which better reflect what people living in Harthill want to see.

Community Survey

We received 223 survey responses from the community; 75 of these were paper surveys returned via post and 148 were online responses. This was a response rate of 13% of households and approximately 9% of the total population of the village. You can see below each of the activities listed in the survey and the percentage of the population who thought they were either very important or important.

Transport & Traffic

Improve parking arrangements on residential streets	83%
Address congestion at primary school	80%
Community bus initiative to get around local area	76%
Lower kerbs at crossing places	71%
Improve pedestrian crossings on Main Road	71%
Traffic calming measures on local roads	71%



Local Activities

Activities for young people	92%
Activities for older people	87%
Community clean-up events in Harthill	84%
More volunteering opportunities for local people	73%



Sports & Leisure

Better access to good quality play facilities for children	90%
Build a MUGA (multi-use games arena) in Harthill	77%
More affordable hire rates for football facilities	71%
More cafes/ restaurants in the village	61%



Environment

Improved maintenance of village's outdoor spaces	90%
Hold a community clean up event(s)	78%
Better maintenance of existing village planters	70%
More flower planting in and around the village	59%
Create a community garden	52%



Infrastructure

Access to sheltered housing in Harthill	80%
More affordable housing for rent	75%
Improve walking route to primary school	75%
Carry out improvements to Village Hall e.g. extension	60%
Increase number of indoor meeting spaces	56%
Enhance local cycling infrastructure	52%



Community

Better information about what's happening in Harthill	87%
More community involvement in local projects	80%
More community events throughout the year	75%
Increase opportunities for social contact locally	70%
Email/ social media updates of services/ activities	69%
Create 'Harthill In Bloom' type village improvement group	55%



Comments from the community

"What I think would be attainable to Harthill is more facilities in Harthill public park for the little kids after all they are the future!"

"With increase in football teams for youth, a facility is required for training in winter months and pitches for games."

"We really need to improve the shopping opportunities in the village."

"There are no buses out of Harthill to local villages Whitburn, Blackburn, and Livingston on Sundays or Saturday nights."

"A riverside walk to improve health and fitness. Clean up area bordered by Albert Road, Sidehead Road and Balbakie Road as it's a mess."

"Tree planting and existing trees properly maintained and replaced if required."

"More activities to be held in the community centre e.g. breakfast club through the school holidays for children whose parents work."

"Change the astroturf to 3/4G so it doesn't hurt"

"Various properties in Harthill Main Street are unoccupied and in serious need of repair; something should be done to make our Main Street more presentable."

"Sport facilities for indoor and outdoor activities would suit all ages."

"There are a number of empty shop units on West Main Street; would be great if they could be utilised for something. Main Street is pretty sad looking."

"The top half of Harthill had the children's play park taken away and there is nothing really going on in the community centre for the kids, sports facilities would benefit the kids in Harthill."

"A safe crossing at the Co-op as many young people use it. During rush hour on the M8, cars cut through the village at high speed."

"Improving parking around football pitch in Greenrigg opposite Baillie Avenue; cars block entrance making it dangerous to turn in"

"Car park beside Co-op requires serious attention. Speed calming on West Benhar Road, Breslin Terrace and Baird Terrace."

"Bus service to hospitals (Wishaw, Monklands, Hairmyres) and a better library service."

"There are a number of empty shop units on West Main Street; would be great if they could be utilised for something. Main Street is pretty sad looking."

"The most disadvantaged group in our village is the teenagers. They need a hall they can call their own, providing billiards, darts or even computer games with café services."

Community Drop In



Where specifically in Harthill do you think there is a need for extra parking?

The car park beside the Co-op was identified by residents as the most pressing issue given the seriously dilapidated condition of the surface, with many potholes and no parking bay markings. Parking along West Main Street was also raised by a number of residents who felt that there was often inconsiderate parking along the street, in front of driveways etc., particularly outside of the shops which are located on the street. Parking on residential streets was another major issue for people who were concerned about lane narrowing and crossing issues, with many homes in Harthill not having off street parking this means that many residents are having to park on the street.

What activities for older people would you like to see in Harthill?

Residents were interested in having IT classes available within the village for older people, this was the most popular choice under this question, with a walking group and more social events also being of interest to some people.

What activities for young people would you like to see in Harthill?

A youth club was the most popular choice for young people's activities, with significant interest also in better play parks. Other options that were of interest to some people were sports clubs, arts/ music groups, and a chill out area. Young people themselves responded positively to this question, and the responses shown reflect the interests of young people living in Harthill who attended the drop in.

What activities for young people would you like to see in Harthill?

The most popular event option among community members was the Gala Day which many residents wanted to see continued and possibly increased support for, in order to offer more attractions and activities on the day. There is an existing Gala Day committee which all local residents are welcome to get involved with to help support the event. Other popular options were sports events and Halloween themed activities, residents were keen to see more support for sports teams and youth organisations to enable these events to happen.

Where do you think a MUGA would be best situated in the village?

The most popular option was the have any future MUGA constructed beside the Harthill Community Education Centre, as many people thought this was a central location within the village, and it could then be used by any groups operating in the Centre. Preferred surfacing options for the MUGA were to ensure it could be used for multiple sports, and that it had artificial grass.

What equipment do young people want to see in play parks and where?

Climbing wall was the most popular option among Harthill residents for installing in a local play park; followed by trampolines and swings. Generally people wanted to see any level of improvement in the village's parks as they felt they were currently poorly looked after and in need of upgrading. A number of young people who attended the drop in with parents input to this question, and other options they liked were informal play equipment, a zip wire, and benches. The most popular choice for any new play park was to have it beside the Community Education Centre, where there used to be one but it has been removed meaning there is now no play park in the top end of the village.



What improvements would you most like to see made to the village hall?

Residents were also keen to see improvements to the Community Education Centre as well as the Village Hall, therefore responses to this question could be applied to both facilities. The priorities identified by the community were to build an extension to enable more and a wider range of activities to take place, improve parking, and to make wifi and computers available onsite. These improvements would make the facilities more accessible and useful for the community, allowing them to take full advantage of any services and activities on offer. Generally, residents were keen to see any sort of improvement in facilities available to them.

In terms of general village improvements, what would you like to see in Harthill?

Harthill residents were keen to see better entrance features to the village, they felt that currently the entrance to the village is not well marked and could be brightened up. Village heritage information was also popular with people keen to raise awareness of and increase pride in the village's history. More planting around the village and creating a community garden were supported by some residents; this ties into the wider interest among residents in upgrading the village's outdoor spaces.

What would you like to see in a community garden in Harthill?

Interestingly, having an outdoor gym in any community garden was the most popular option, depending on the size of the garden, this could be a possibility, with the privacy afforded by a garden possibly making it a popular choice in this instance, rather than gym equipment being situated in a public park. Gardening training and community events were also popular, these types of activities could be delivered in partnership with other local groups such as the Gala Day committee and the primary school; delivering more activities in any community garden would ensure that it was used by and accessible to as many



Do you have any ideas about where local nature walks and parks could be created?

Residents at the drop in who had dogs were very keen to see more dog walking routes around the village; both shorter routes through parks and green spaces in Harthill, and longer walks in the surrounding countryside. The health benefits of having more accessible and safe walking routes was also discussed, with people very keen to see existing walks better signposted and maintained, in addition to creating new ones. A river walk along the River Almond was suggested as an option for a new walk which could be created, this could also create better access to the nearby Polkemmet Park.





How would you prefer to be updated about events and activities happening in Harthill and the wider local area?

Facebook was by far the most popular option for keeping residents updated about village news and any activities and events which are happening. Harthill Community Help is an existing Facebook page which is well used by the community, with around 2,500 followers. Continuing to update this valuable community resource is important for the community. To make the page even more useful local community groups could coordinate with page admins to ensure that there is even better publicity about everything that is happening in the village. The village hall also has a Facebook page.

Which of the following would you be interested in being involved with and volunteering your time to support in Harthill?

Setting up a village environmental group and establishing a community garden were the two more popular choices that Harthill residents would be interested in volunteering their time to set up. These two outdoor and environmental activities could be delivered together by a team of dedicated community volunteers. Community clean up and setting up a community development trust were also discussed by the community as possible options for the village that they would be interested in supporting.

Other comments offered by the community at the drop in were:

"Traffic calming is needed on Main Street and West Behar Road."

"War memorial should be moved to a new site."

"Deal with derelict land on the high street."

"There's not enough North Lanarkshire Council presence in the area- the council need to do more in the village."

"We need a better bus service in the village to Wishaw and Motherwell- there's no direct bus currently."

"Speed cameras are needed on the approach road at both ends of the village."

"Would like to see better shops in the village."

"Traffic calming is essential- need to have experts come in to assess the situation and make recommendations to NLC about how to improve."

The images below show the consultation boards that were used at the community drop-in event. The top row shows the original boards; the bottom row shows the boards after the community indicated their preferences, and added comments using dot stickers and post-it notes.

The top row shows three consultation boards with the following questions and options:

- Board 1: What types of community events would you like to see in Harthill?**

Sports events	Arts events	Gala Day	Music events
Halloween	Fireworks	Christmas	New Year
Other			

How would you prefer to be updated about events and activities happening in Harthill and the wider local area?

Facebook	Harthill website	Notice board	Newspaper	Emailing list
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Which of the following would be interested in being involved with and volunteering your time to support in Harthill?

Community clean up	Youth club	Village environmental group	Gala day/ other events
Setting up a community development trust	Befriending service	Community garden	Evening clubs/ classes
Other			

Where specifically in Harthill do you think there is need for extra parking?
- Board 2: What improvements would you most like to see made to the village hall?**

Upgrade kitchen and toilets	Build extension	Better parking
More activities/ services available	WiFi/ Computer access	Upgrade outdoor area

In terms of general village improvements, what would you like to see in Harthill?

Heritage information	Planting	Community Garden
Entrance features	Village square	Public Art

What local outdoor spaces in particular do you think need better maintained?

What would you like to see in a community garden in Harthill?

Outdoor gym	Allotments	Community events
Benches	Formal Planting	Gardening training

Do you have any ideas about where local nature walks & parks could be created in or around Harthill?
- Board 3: Where do you think a MUGA would be best situated in the village?**

What equipment do young people want to see in play parks and where?

Bouldering	Climbing wall	Trampolines	Benches	Informal play
Zip wire	Wheelchair swing	Swings	Where?	

What activities for older people would you like to see in Harthill?

Walking group	Exercise classes	Lunch club	Social events	Arts/ music club	IT classes
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What activities for young people would you like to see in Harthill?

Youth club	Youth outreach worker	Chill out area	Shopping, cinema trips
Sports clubs	Arts/ Music club	Volunteering/ training	Play park

The bottom row shows the same three consultation boards as the top row, but with community feedback indicated by dot stickers and post-it notes.

- Board 1:** Shows dot stickers indicating preferences for Facebook, Harthill website, and Community clean up. Post-it notes include: "Traffic calming is needed on Main Street and West Behar Road.", "War memorial should be moved to a new site.", "Deal with derelict land on the high street.", "There's not enough North Lanarkshire Council presence in the area- the council need to do more in the village.", "We need a better bus service in the village to Wishaw and Motherwell- there's no direct bus currently.", "Speed cameras are needed on the approach road at both ends of the village.", "Would like to see better shops in the village.", "Traffic calming is essential- need to have experts come in to assess the situation and make recommendations to NLC about how to improve."
- Board 2:** Shows dot stickers indicating preferences for Upgrade kitchen and toilets, Build extension, Better parking, More activities/ services available, WiFi/ Computer access, Upgrade outdoor area, Planting, Community Garden, Entrance features, Village square, Public Art, Outdoor gym, Allotments, Community events, Benches, Formal Planting, Gardening training. Post-it notes include: "Traffic calming is needed on Main Street and West Behar Road.", "War memorial should be moved to a new site.", "Deal with derelict land on the high street.", "There's not enough North Lanarkshire Council presence in the area- the council need to do more in the village.", "We need a better bus service in the village to Wishaw and Motherwell- there's no direct bus currently.", "Speed cameras are needed on the approach road at both ends of the village.", "Would like to see better shops in the village.", "Traffic calming is essential- need to have experts come in to assess the situation and make recommendations to NLC about how to improve."
- Board 3:** Shows dot stickers indicating preferences for Bouldering, Climbing wall, Trampolines, Benches, Informal play, Zip wire, Wheelchair swing, Swings, Walking group, Exercise classes, Lunch club, Social events, Arts/ music club, IT classes, Youth club, Youth outreach worker, Chill out area, Shopping, cinema trips, Sports clubs, Arts/ Music club, Volunteering/ training, Play park. Post-it notes include: "Traffic calming is needed on Main Street and West Behar Road.", "War memorial should be moved to a new site.", "Deal with derelict land on the high street.", "There's not enough North Lanarkshire Council presence in the area- the council need to do more in the village.", "We need a better bus service in the village to Wishaw and Motherwell- there's no direct bus currently.", "Speed cameras are needed on the approach road at both ends of the village.", "Would like to see better shops in the village.", "Traffic calming is essential- need to have experts come in to assess the situation and make recommendations to NLC about how to improve."

Community Priorities

Young People

Many of the actions and activities that people felt for more important for the future of Harthill related to young people, highlighting the importance of providing better opportunities for you people to the community. The level of interest in a variety of youth oriented options suggests that people are keen to see anything happen locally which benefits young people. This was seen as particularly important given that a number of youth people's amenities and activities has reduced in recent years, and with more housing development and influx of young families expected, this would be an ideal opportunity to begin establishing Harthill has a more youth focussed area. More focus on positive activities for young people could also help to address anti-social behaviour issues which a number of residents mentioned.



Play Parks

The quality of the existing play parks in Harthill was possibly the key youth related issue raised by the community through the consultation with 90% of survey respondents thinking it was a community priority. The play park adjacent to Sprig Way has recently been upgraded which the community were very positive about and keen to see replicated elsewhere in Harthill. In particular, many people were unhappy about the recent removal of the play park at the top of Harthill beside the GP surgery, which they would like to see reinstated to provide young people nearby with play facilities. Having play facilities at this side of the village would also reduce the need for you people to cross Main Street; a concern for a number of parents.



Traffic

Speeding on Main Street was raised by many people at all stages of the consultation process, with people being particularly unhappy about the lack of traffic calming measures throughout the village. It was noted that people also use the village as a through road when M8 traffic is particularly heavy, in which instance speeding can be more common. The two approach roads to the village are national speed limit roads and there is nothing in place currently to slow traffic, meaning that high speed vehicles regularly enter Harthill. Residents were keen to see some form of physical traffic calming measure in place to help reduce speeding incidents; chicanes along Main Street were mooted as a possibility for Harthill.

Improve Main Street

General improvements in the quality of Main Street were popular among residents, with people raising concerns about the variety of shops, as well as the amount of littering, derelict sites, and ongoing maintenance. Littering and maintenance issues could be addressed through a community clean-up, which 84% of people were supportive of in the survey. With NLC budget cuts, it may be realistic for the community to undertake a level of maintenance themselves, coordinated through a village action group. In terms of attracting more shops to the area; this could potentially be realised if the proposed housing development goes ahead as this would bring a number of new families to the area to help support new shops. New shops could also utilise currently vacant and derelict sites, however this would also require engagement with property owners to look at options for future development.

Community Involvement

Many people who participated in the consultation were keen to get involved in activities in the village, but were unaware about how best to get involved. 87% of people wanted better information about what is happening in Harthill and 80% wanted to see more community involvement in local projects. A priority for the community going forward should be to identify the best option for coordinating volunteers and interested individuals within the community to help deliver projects. The existing community groups within the village who are in need of volunteers could also reach out to the community to publicise specific or time limited roles, rather than general appeals, to help encourage people to get involved without having to commit long- term.

Village Clean Up

Having a village clean up in Harthill was supported by 84% of respondents in the survey, highlighting the significant level of interest in this activity. Similar clean up events have happened in the village previously, organised by the HEG organisation, however these were not well attended by the community. Increasing community involvement in activities like this could be supported through smaller scale events targeting individual streets, encouraging people to get involved on a very local level.



Parking

This was raised as an issue for a number of areas within the village. On parking concern related to the amount of on street parking currently in residential streets within the village, particularly on streets with little to no off street parking. This has raised safety concerns, with people having to then walk on the road and cross between parked cars. Parking on main Street was another key problem area with many people finding the volume of parking outside shops and parking in front of driveways to be key concerns. Main Street parking is being made worse by the poor quality of off street parking for local shops; the car park at the Co-op in particular. This car park is uneven and dotted with pot-holes, and it lacks any designated parking bays. Finally, parking at the school at drop off and pick up times was a major issue, with 80% of survey respondents wanting to see it addressed. People felt that where possible, cycling or walking to school should be encouraged, and when driving is unavoidable, cars should park elsewhere and walk children to school gates as the excessive parking in the school car park is potentially very dangerous.

Community Facilities

The quality of Harthill's existing community facilities was raised and discussed by a number of people during the consultation. Improvement of these facilities would enable the delivery of many of the other activities and services that Harthill residents were supportive of, such as youth clubs, sports groups, and social events for older residents. Harthill has two good quality community facilities already which could be updated, rather than creating new facilities; the Village Hall and the Community Education Centre. Those responsible for these facilities could be supported by HEG to access funding to enhance the amenities in order to make them more useable for Harthill residents. Continued promotion of these spaces is also important in order to attract new groups to use the premises; by upgrading amenities Harthill can attract the best quality recreation and learning opportunities for its residents. Currently the cost of hiring the community centre is prohibitive for many people; there are charitable rates available but groups must register for this. Expensive hire rates are something the community could engage with NLC to discuss.

Project Development

The following sections of the Plan provide details on a number of potential projects and action points for the community to take forward. They have been designed to address the demands and aspirations of local people identified during the community consultation.

There are six project outlines.

These are ideas which the community could take forward themselves, with support from partner organisations.

- Community Development Trust
- Play Park
- Upgrade Community Facilities
- Activities for Older Residents
- Local Active Travel Routes
- Mutli Use Games Area

There are three joint projects

These are ideas which may be more feasible for neighbouring communities to undertake in partnership, sharing resources and benefiting a larger number of residents, making the project more viable in the long run.

- Community Development Trust
- Development Worker
- Community Bus

There are four action points.

Action points are things that the community may wish to be able to deliver themselves, but which the community could advocate on their own behalf, using the plan as evidence, to organisations who are better placed to affect that specific type of improvement.

- Better Communication with Community
- Parking Issues
- Traffic
- Outdoor Maintenance

The projects outlined in the proceeding pages have been designed to meet some of the demands identified by the local community. The onus should be on local people to take these ideas forward as a community; identifying suitable leader groups and organisations, as well as local volunteers who can to help make activities happen. Any community members who want to take these projects forward or to start new community groups should feel encouraged to do so, and can use this plan as a starting point.

Taking Projects Forward

Harthill, Eastfield and Greenrigg Fund

This charitable fund is provided by FIM Services Limited, the owner of the Torrance Wind Farm and Harthill Wind Ltd, the owner of the Torrance Extension Wind Farm. The Fund benefits the communities of Harthill, Eastfield and Greenrigg. The Fund was opened in 2014. An annual amount of not less than £42,000, rising in line with inflation, will be paid into the Fund for the operating life of the wind farm. These funds can be used by the community to take projects and ideas forward which benefit the local area.

Directors of the Harthill, Eastfield and Greenrigg (HEG) Community Group decide how grants are awarded from the Fund. Non- profit groups and organisations working to benefit people in the communities of Harthill, Eastfield and Greenrigg are eligible to apply to the Fund.



Community Development Trust

Setting up a Community Development Trust would offer an excellent means of delivering the various action and projects detailed within this plan, as a Community Development Trust could provide support to the Community Council and HEG Group to carry out certain tasks which neither group would be able to do, such as employing staff. The development trust would combine community-led action with an enterprising approach to address and tackle local needs and issues. The aim of the development trust would be to create social, economic and environmental renewal within Harthill, creating wealth within that area and keeping it there.

Contact: Development Trust Association of Scotland (DTAS) www.dtascot.org.uk info@dtascot.org.uk
Rural Development Trust www.ruraldevtrust.co.uk info@ruraldevtrust.co.uk

Community Land Ownership

Through engaging with Community Land Scotland, the Harthill community could receive support and advice to assess the options relating to the purchase of any specific areas within the local community and, if viable, undertake a community wide ballot to get agreement to buy these and take the land into community ownership for the provision of new or improved amenities in future.

Contact: Community Land Scotland www.communitylandscotland.org.uk info@communitylandscotland.org.uk

Community Development Worker

A development officer would work with the Harthill community to dedicatedly take forward the ideas and priorities identified in this plan. The worker would help the community to bring about social change and improve the quality of life in their local area. This role would work with individuals, families or whole communities, empowering them to identify their assets, needs, opportunities, rights and responsibilities, plan what they want to achieve and take appropriate action, and develop activities and services to generate aspiration and confidence. Community development workers act as the link between communities and a range of other local authority and voluntary sector providers, such as the police, social workers and teachers. This position could be funded through wind farm monies and employed and managed through an external organisation, removing this responsibility from the community while retaining control over the post's remit.

Community Development Trust

Aim

To establish a community development trust to help the Harthill community flourish through community-led activity, partnership working and enterprise.

Summary

Setting up a community development trust within Harthill (likely also incorporating Eastfield and Greenrigg) would equip the community with an organisation, led by local people, which was able to take forward and deliver many of the projects and activities which have been identified by them as potential future actions. The development trust would also be community-owned, working to combine community-led action with an enterprising approach to address and tackle local needs and issues. The development trust would be the driving force behind social, economic and environmental improvements within the village, helping to create wealth within Harthill and keep it there. Staff could be employed through the trust to coordinate community action and deliver outcomes, relieving pressure on existing community volunteers; staff would work for the community, who would be represented on the board, to bring about positive change within the village. The development trust could also enable facilities to be taken into community ownership by Harthill residents, as development trusts are also able to own property on behalf of the community. Management of any facilities, and of the activities and services delivered therein, could again be undertaken by a community development worker employed by the community through the trust. Similarly the trust could also acquire vacant premises in the village and take action to help establish new social enterprises (e.g. community café or shop) to fill the void left by retailers moving out of the village. This project would provide an excellent opportunity for Harthill to deliver a number of projects in a coordinated, supported, and community-led way.

Potential Partners

- Development Trusts Association of Scotland
- HEG Group
- Harthill and Eastfield Community Council
- North Lanarkshire Council
- Rural Development Trust



Existing Provision

There is no community development trust within Harthill currently, however the community do benefit from having the HEG Group well established within the village, and from having an active community council. Directors of the HEG Group decide how grants are awarded in the community from the community benefit monies delivered through, and the community council represent the community and facilitate their involvement in the local decision making process; however both of these organisations are limited in their capacity to take action owing to their legal status which prevents them owning property or employing staff members.

Supporting Evidence

A significant number of community supported projects could be more easily delivered through a community development trust than through the village's existing key organisations. For example community buses, community gardens, development workers, and MUGAs are all examples of projects that other development trusts have successfully undertaken. In particular, the trust would be more able to attract external grant funding to support these activities.

Funding Options

- Harthill, Eastfield and Greenrigg Community Group

Play Park

Aim

To provide a variety of high-quality play equipment for young people living in Harthill

Summary

This project would see the construction of a new play park within Harthill to meet demands for more and better recreation facilities for young people in the village. The new park would be situated to the south of Main Street, providing a much needed amenity for that side of the village; a popular location among residents was adjacent to the Community Education Centre. The play park will provide a variety of modern equipment for young people of all ages; ensuring there is adequate and suitable provision to meet the needs of all local young people. In particular the park should provide play equipment for older young people and infants; two age groups currently without age appropriate equipment in the village. This provision could include a climbing wall and informal play for older young people, as well as trampolines, swings and slides for younger children; all of these were popular options among young people and their parents who attended the drop in. Further consultation, potentially at the school, could help to further engage young people in the design process, engendering a sense of ownership and possibly helping to reduce future anti-social behaviour issues. The provision of play facilities is most commonly provided through the local authority which would require the play equipment selected to fit with appropriate and certificated safety standards. This then enables councils to adopt play equipment and including within their duties for management and maintenance. Alternatively a community owned park could be developed, led by a constituted community organisation which can provide a means to secure funding and to build the park and take on management duties. The community should engage with potential housing developers to ensure community benefit provides good quality play equipment.



Potential Partners

- North Lanarkshire Council/ NL Leisure
- Alexander Peden Primary School / Parent Council/ Alexander Peden Fundraising Friends
- HEG Group
- Harthill and Eastfield Community Council

Existing Provision

The only play parks in Harthill currently are the one on the playing fields adjacent to Sprig Way, north of Main Street, and the small infants park on Baille Avenue. While the Sprig Way park is fairly central, any young people wishing to use it would have to cross Main Street which residents identified as a road prone to speeding. There is play equipment in Eastfield at Brownhill Street as well as a paved MUGA, within Greenrigg there is an outdoor play area adjacent to Polkemmet Road.

Supporting Evidence

Young people's activities were exceptionally popular among Harthill residents who responded to the survey and attended the drop in event; this project would help to meet that identified demand. 90% of people thought that access to good quality play equipment was either very important or important for the future of Harthill. At the community drop in event, all types of equipment were popular with the community, evidencing the appetite for any sort of positive play development in Harthill.

Funding Options

- Scottish Landfill Communities Funds (FCC, Suez, Levensat etc.)
- North Lanarkshire Council Countryside and Park Department
- The Robertson Trust
- Supermarket Foundations (Tesco Bags of Help, Asda Foundation, Morrisons Foundation)

Upgrade Community Facilities

Aim

To provide an accessible, well- equipped community space in Harthill for the provision of a range of services and activities.

Summary

This project would initially see the development of a feasibility and options study for the upgrade of the existing community facilities in Harthill; the Village Hall and Community Education Centre. This feasibility study would determine the best option for carrying out works to the community facilities in terms of affordability, usefulness for the community and sustainability. The feasibility study will include input from architects, quantity surveyors, landscape architects (where appropriate), and experienced consultants. Their input will cover costing plans, design drawings, identifying potential funders, coordinating input from key stakeholders, and business planning. Upon completion of the feasibility study, assuming the project is indeed feasible, work could then begin on the chosen plan for the community centre. Based on the identified demand this plan would likely include an extension, more sports provision, a larger hall and more storage space. This project would ultimately see the development of a well- equipped community space for all of Harthill, and indeed the surrounding areas whose residents make use of the services and activities on offer there. By providing the community with an upgraded community facility it will enable more groups to make better use of the existing amenities and local people will have more opportunity to participate in a wide range of high- quality activities locally.



Potential Partners

- Culture NL
- Harthill Village Hall Committee
- Harthill and Eastfield Community Council

Existing Provision

There is a Village Hall and Community Education Centre within Harthill which are both well used for a number of activities and services. These facilities are however in need of updating and upgrading in order to continue being useful for the community.

Supporting Evidence

At all stages of the consultation the community were keen to see upgrade of the local amenities to make them more modern, useful and dynamic. This would allow more opportunities to be delivered within the community with the potential for increased letting income to be reinvested locally.

Funding Options

- HEG Group
- The National Lottery Community Fund (Scotland)
- Scottish Landfill Communities Funds (FCC, Suez, Levensat etc.)
- Trusthouse Charitable Foundation - Major Grants

Activities for older residents

Aim

To deliver high quality recreation opportunities for older residents living in the community.

Summary

This project would create more activities for older residents living in the village to participate in. The most effective way of delivering this type of initiative may be to establish an older residents social committee, or to create a social convenor role within an existing local group such as the community council; Another option could be for this initiative to fall within the remit of a community development worker employed by the community. This group/ role would be responsible for engaging specifically with older residents in the village to find out what they wanted to see happening in Harthill and the surrounding area and appealing to activity and service providers in the region to extend their provision to Harthill. An initial programme of taster sessions within the village could be a good way of letting local residents try activities before they are brought into the village on a longer term basis. The village is well furnished with community facilities in which these activities could be delivered. If the community also chose to pursue a community bus project then this could also be utilised to take older residents to activities, day trips etc. outwith the local community.



Potential Partners

- Harthill Village Hall Committee
- University of the Third Age
- North Lanarkshire Council

Existing Provision

Some of the activities which currently operate in the village which cater predominantly to older residents include the lunch club, Horticulture Society, and the knitting and crochet club.

Supporting Evidence

The community consultation identified that improvements in the variety of activities available for older residents was a priority for 87% of people. Suggestions at the community drop in for what type of events may be popular included walking groups, IT classes and social events.

Funding Options

- HEG Group
- J & J R Wilson Trust
- Hugh Fraser Foundation
- A E B Charitable Trust
- Dulverton Trust

Local Active Travel Routes

Aim

To create a better and safer local walking and cycling network in and around Harthill

Summary

Despite being well used by local people, especially dog walkers, the local path network is not well maintained or clearly signposted. To improve accessibility, and reduce maintenance, the footpath network could be improved by creating a more formal footpath with edging. Vegetation to either side of the footpath should be cleared to ensure a width of up to 1m at either side (where feasible) and would further reduce maintenance and issues with overhanging branches. In consultation with the landowner, the cycle path network could be extended to include a section through the centre of the village, better connecting residents to Polkemmet Country Park, through to Whitburn. Residents have also been interested in extending a path network alongside the River Almond. These are all options which could be investigated as part of a feasibility study into the upgrade of the local active travel network.

The introduction of small interpretation information and signage would enable walkers to have a better understanding of the existing network and encourage local people to improve their health and well-being by utilising these paths.



Potential Partners

- North Lanarkshire Council
- Central Scotland Green Network Trust
- Paths for All
- Sustrans

Existing Provision

There are few dedicated walking routes around Harthill and none of these are traffic free routes. The nearby Polkemmet Park provides some opportunity for people to walk and cycle, however access to this amenity is along the B7066, a national speed limit route. Recently the path to Polkemmet Park has been upgraded to provide a safer dedicated active travel route.

Supporting Evidence

In the community wide survey 52% of people were supportive of enhancing the local cycling infrastructure and 75% of people wanted to see creation of a safe route to school for young people. This was identified as a priority project for Harthill in the North Lanarkshire Participatory Budgeting round of 2019.

Funding Options

- Sustrans Places for Everyone Fund
- Scottish Landfill Communities Fund
- Smarter Choices Smarter Places – Open Fund

Multi Use Games Area

Aim

To create a new Multi Use Games Areas within Harthill offering better access to sports and recreation opportunities locally.

Summary

This project would see the installation of a new MUGA within Harthill to create more and better opportunities for sports and leisure activities in the village. The community are in desperate need of outdoor sporting facilities. At present there is nowhere within the local community for children to access these and limited safe places to play ball games outside. There are a number of options that this project could look at in terms of materials used in construction (surfacing etc.) and sports to be provided for on the site. Surfacing options include synthetic grass, rubber mulch or another form of rubber surfacing, the benefits of which are that it is durable, young people using the facility are significantly more protected against injuries, and are playable all year round. Consideration could also be made for the installation of a cover over the MUGA. This would be a costly option, however it would significantly increase the usability of the MUGA when weather is poor. The MUGA would be accessible to the local community to use throughout the year, at all times of day, for local teams and various other local organisations; this will have a huge impact on the variety of activities and opportunities which will be available locally. All local residents would really benefit from the installation of this facility which could realistically accommodate football, netball, basketball and hockey, as well as providing a venue for running fitness classes.



Existing Provision

There is no MUGA facilities available currently in Harthill, Eastfield or Greenrigg. There is a playing field in the village however use of this is limited in terms of the number of sports which can be played on it.

Supporting Evidence

After conducting a survey of local residents, 77% of those who responded said that would like to see a MUGA in their area. This is a real problem for the people of Harthill who want to be able to do these sorts of activities. There is a massive need for this project to increase fitness levels, and raise aspirations as there are few opportunities in our local area for children and adults to access this sort of fitness resource. Many children and their families cannot access this type of facility at all at the moment. This was identified as a priority project for Harthill in the North Lanarkshire Participatory Budgeting round of 2019.

Funding Options

- sportscotland - Sport Facilities Fund
- Cash 4 Clubs
- Scottish Landfill Communities Funds (FCC, Suez, Levensat etc.)
- HEG Group

Potential Partners

- North Lanarkshire Council
- NL Leisure
- Local sports teams
- Harthill and Eastfield Community Council

Joint Projects

These projects could potentially be undertaken in partnership with other communities in the local area, or between Harthill, Eastfield and Greenrigg. By pooling resources multiple communities could support the development of beneficial projects which one single community would likely be unable to support long term. There is also the option for North Lanarkshire and West Lothian Councils to work together to support the local community across Harthill, Eastfield and Greenrigg.

Development Worker

A Development Officer could be employed by the community, or potentially through a Community Development Trust, to help coordinate and deliver the projects detailed within this community plan. This position would be funded by external grant funding and could work across Harthill, Eastfield and Greenrigg. The Development Officer would alleviate the responsibility on the community to deliver the projects that are important to them, and would help to coordinate community action meaning that local residents could be involved in projects without having to commit an unrealistic amount of time to develop, monitor, and evaluate projects. This post would be managed by a group of local volunteers – potentially an already established village committee. The Development officer would also be responsible for the co-ordination, publicity and promotion of events and activities across the local area, and for developing and maintaining a dedicated website for the existing community facilities.

Development Trust

This project would be to set up a community development trust for the area with open membership to all people living and working in the area with the purposes to achieve a broad range of community renewal objectives for Harthill. As a charitable organisation (SCIO) the Trust would be managed by a local voluntary management committee drawn from this membership. The Community Action Plan would inform the Trust of the main priorities for area regeneration. The Trust would have powers to raise funds, acquire land and employ staff in order to achieve community renewal goals. There is no community development trust for Harthill or covering this wider rural district of North Lanarkshire. There is also no other community body which could deliver similar functions to that of a community development trust e.g. community council, tenants group or community action group.

Community Bus

This project would deliver a volunteer led transport initiative offering a more accessible and responsive transport option to local communities that helps people to stay independent, participate in their communities and access vital public services and employment. The project would provide a flexible and community-led solution in response to the currently unmet local transport needs of local people, particularly vulnerable and isolated people, often older people or people with disabilities, who do not have access to private transport, and for the wider population who would benefit from an alternative to expensive taxis in evenings and at weekends to nearby town centres.

The community would benefit from a community bus initiative as it would provide much needed support to local residents who feel isolated due to a dependence on limited public transport to visit relatives, hospitals for appointments, leisure activities or shopping. This type of project could operate on a taxi bus type service, an option which other rural communities have taken forward whereby local taxi firms do fixed rates to popular destinations subsidised by wind farm funding.

Another option would be to work with Getting Better Together, based in Shotts, who run community buses which cover the Harthill area, as well as a volunteer driver scheme whereby drivers are paid per mile to take people for hospital appointments etc. The community bus service is available to all non-profit making groups (Schools, Voluntary groups, Churches, Youth Groups etc.) and they come with a fully qualified Pats & Midas trained driver. This service operates on a paid membership basis with additional fees per journey; prices for this service are available on the organisation's website. The volunteer driver scheme is a free service for people over the age of 65 who have difficulty in accessing transport and attending their appointments but are not eligible for transport from the ambulance service. They may not have their own car, no access to public transport or live too far away from their clinic to walk. Patients are referred to the Volunteer Driver Service by a health professional in their area. GBT also works with Glenboig Development Trust and Cumbernauld Action for Care of the Elderly to deliver Community Transport across North Lanarkshire.

Action Points

Better Communication with Community

The community were keen to see better communication from local groups and organisations on what is happening in the village and the surrounding area. One option for this could be to set up a community website for Harthill which could be administered by a development trust and/or a community development worker. In particular people were keen to find out more about how HEG monies can be applied for by community members with ideas for new activities, and on how funding decisions are currently made.

Parking Issues

If a community development trust was established with Harthill, they could potentially take a vacant plot of land into community ownership, carry out improvements on it, and ultimately turn it into a community car park. This larger scale infrastructure project would require and options study to be carried out with significant input from landscape architects, NLC Roads Department, quantity surveyors, NLC Planning Department etc.

Traffic

The community were also keen to see speeding issues addressed also; existing speed bumps and traffic calming measures may also need replaced in due course on account of ongoing wear and tear. A survey of traffic issues would need to be undertaken by professionals in partnership with North Lanarkshire Council to determine what the issues in the village are in terms of speeding, as well as what types of improvements would be best suited to the village to address their issues.



Outdoor Maintenance

The HEG Group already undertake small scale environmental improvements around the village. A separate environmental group could be set up in the community to take responsibility for these activities going forward.

Should a voluntary village environmental group be set up, then they would be able to undertake small scale environmental improvements within the village such as flower planting and maintaining entrance features and the community garden, if those projects came to fruition. The group could help to make communal outdoor spaces more attractive and help to support more local people to take an active role in maintaining the village, for example a community litter pick could be organised.

A tool library or sharing scheme could also be established within the village to help residents to access tools and equipment for maintaining their own gardens. This would help to reduce the cost of every household purchasing their own equipment, it could also help to engender more community cooperation and a greater sense of community spirit, and there would also be the environmental benefits of sharing tools compared to buying new ones required.

Making it Happen

This Community Plan belongs to everyone in Harthill and we hope that the whole community will use it and be involved in taking the Plan forward to help make Harthill a great place to live.

Many thanks to the local groups who supported the creation of the Plan.

The Community Plan Steering Group had representation from each of the following groups and organisations:

Harthill and Eastfield Community Council, Harthill, Eastfield and Greenrigg Community Group, Alexander Peden Primary School, Harthill Village Hall Committee, and North Lanarkshire Council.

The Steering Group wish to thank all those who have contributed their time and skills at various times throughout this process.

Updating the Plan

A dynamic plan is essential for the ongoing development of the local community. This plan can and should be regularly updated by the community to ensure it continues to be representative of their wishes.

A yearly review and update of the plan should be undertaken by the Community Plan Steering Group, potentially tying into the AGM of the Community Council or HEG Group. This review and update should involve as many key stakeholders as possible, particularly those who have been involved in the delivery of any actioned activities or projects, or who would be involved in any proposed new activities or projects.

The community should also continue to be involved so that they can fully play a role in the decision making process. Ongoing involvement of the wider community will help people to see how their demands and aspirations are being addressed and reflected through ongoing work both in terms of delivering actions, and in reviewing the content of the plan.

Getting Involved

If you want to get involved in helping to progress or deliver any of the ideas and projects in this Plan, or if you have any other ideas for the future of the village, then please get in contact with Harthill and Eastfield Community Council or the HEG Group.

The HEG Group are contactable at: hegcommunity@hotmail.com

The community council are contactable at: marlenedickson@tiscali.co.uk

The groups both meet regularly and welcome input from the local community. Community Council meetings are open to all Harthill and Eastfield residents.

