
To: Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board

On: 15 March 2022

Report by: Director of Communities and Housing Services

Heading: Greenspaces, Parks & Play Areas and Villages Investment Fund

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report updates the Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board on progress made in supporting community projects through the Greenspaces, Parks & Play Areas and Villages Investment fund, and seeks Board approval for the provision of grant funding for the projects described in Section 3 of this report and set out in Appendix 1.
- 1.2 The key objective in allocating funding was to work with, and support, community groups to identify and deliver improvement projects in their local communities, improve their local greenspaces (including parks and play areas) and strengthen the identity, heritage, uniqueness and character of village life.
- 1.3 The Villages Investment Fund will continue to be promoted to members of the relevant Local Area Partnerships to encourage eligible communities to come forward to bid for their share of the remaining funds. 5 applications (including one detailed in Section 3 of this report) have been made since the initial promotional presentation. Almost £100,000 of funding remains available in the Villages Investment Fund.
- 1.4 In addition, a further 2 Green Spaces projects, detailed in section 3, have been submitted which total £89,675.20. A further 5 projects are currently being developed by communities. As the Fund is almost fully committed priority will go to supporting project development in areas which have not yet received awards. Current funding levels are detailed in Appendix 2.
- 1.5 Discussions between Spateston Community Development Trust, who are currently procuring their park equipment and their supplier have revealed that costs have grown beyond those initially expected when the original applications were submitted. Spateston Community Development Trust have

advised that they have identified external sport funds that could allow them to secure external funding support for the goal posts that are part of the overall scheme and they have requested that the £7,000 previously awarded by Board for the goal posts be allocated into the main park fund to enable them to continue to deliver as much of the overall park scheme as possible.

- 1.6 The Team Up to Clean Up Funding, awarded from Green Spaces, has seen twenty-five of the most active and willing volunteers provided with additional quality tools and protective clothing to support their activities. Further work is underway with Estates, Risk Management, Environment & Infrastructure and Health and Safety, to ensure processes are in place to permit the ground works required to undertake developments to proceed.
- 1.7 Funding for schools and for young people to deliver environmental improvements in line with the COP26 agenda has also progressed with a focus on increasing dialogue with schools throughout April for Big Spring Clean activities and current discussion with Youth Services to identify and support COP26 Youth champions and projects.
- 1.8 Section 5 of this report showcases the communities who have benefited from the Villages Investment Fund. Renfrewshire's villages have already delivered a range of improvements and there are also a number of projects under construction.
- 1.9 This report seeks approval for projects to the value of £89,675. Appendix 1, Table 1 details the applicants in this round.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board:
 - (i) note the work currently being undertaken to support communities as they develop projects to be funded using the Greenspaces, Parks & Play Areas and Villages Investment Fund;
 - (ii) agree to fund projects detailed in Section 3 of this report and appendix 1, awarding grant funding totalling £89,675;
 - (iii) note the impact of the funding and the benefits to the wider communities delivered by the projects set out in section 4 of this report;
 - (iv) note that the current projects being developed by communities and listed in Section 3 will (when final applications are made) fully commit the Green Spaces, Parks and Play areas element of the fund; and
 - (v) agree to transfer the award of £7,000 previously made to Spateston Community Development Trust for goalposts to their general parks fund allowing them to deliver as much as possible of their planned park improvements
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3. Summary of Applications

3.1 Renfrewshire Council has supported 73 projects since October 2018 that met the criteria for this fund. Further projects continue to be developed within communities with the following potential applicants currently active and expected to apply:

- The SUGAR project - McKerrell Street, Seedhill play park
- Elderslie Community Council – Phase 3 Queens Road Park Improvements
- Friends of the Oval – Linwood Community Planting
- Howwood Road Tenants & Residents Association – tables, benches and planters
- The Darkwood Crew – Teen Shelter
- Dargavel Village Residents Association- Play Park
- Gleniffer Parent Council – Sport Facilities in Durrockstock Park
- Knockhill Park – extension to pathway to support local runners

3.2 Reports will be brought back for the consideration of the Board in relation to these projects at future meetings of the Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board.

3.3 In this round, 3 applications have been assessed which meet the criteria for approval of grant funding. More information on these projects is detailed below, with a summary included in Appendix 1 to this report.

Application 1:	Johnstone Community Council
Funding Requested:	£48,000
Recommendation:	Approve

3.4 Johnstone Community Council has been constituted since 2015. They actively campaign and have worked alongside Environment & Infrastructure to deliver improvements in Thomas Shanks Park. The group further represent the local people in relation to infrastructure and the presentation of Johnstone town centre. Johnstone Community Council work closely with Johnstone Business Consortium, and other local Community Councils.

3.5 Thomas Shanks Public Park is Johnstone town's flagship park, it has a frequently visited play park and is further visited by local people to enjoy walking or exercise. The Park is geographically close to densely populated social housing areas such the Howwood and Quarrelton Road estates, Johnstone Castle and Cochrane Castle. Many of the children, young people and other residents from these communities spend time in Thomas Shanks.

3.6 Quarrelton Road Tenants Association, Howwood Road Tenants Association, Cochrane Castle and Johnstone Castle as well as the Thorn Athletic Sports Academy have all fed into the application and will broaden the reach of consultation.

- 3.7 Thomas Shanks Park benefits from a significant play area which was renewed by Renfrewshire Council in 2020. Further work has been delivered to enhance the infrastructure of the park, with paths resurfaced and lighting improved. The drainage system was also recently repaired to improve the green space at the football area, encouraging greater use for sports.
- 3.8 Johnstone Community Council, alongside their partner Community Councils, have submitted a bid for £48,000 to install a pump track which is designed for use by cyclists, skateboarders or people on scooters. A pump track is a circuit of rollers, banked turns and features designed to be ridden by wheeled riders to create momentum by up and down body movements as opposed to pedalling.
- 3.9 Renfrewshire currently does not offer such an installation, made popular during the skateboarding and BMX categories of the 2021 Olympics.
- 3.10 Johnstone Community Council are further working with partner organisations to raise additional funds to promote the arrival of the pump track to local people.

Application 2:	Robertson's Park Bowling Club
Funding Requested:	£16,675
Recommendation:	Approve

- 3.11 Robertson's Park bowling green was gifted to the people of Renfrew in 1900's. Robertson's Park Bowling Club have been responsible for the internal maintenance of the Clubhouse situated on site since 2000 through a long-term lease arrangement with Renfrewshire Council.
- 3.12 Over the 21 years of the lease, the group have painted and decorated the Clubhouse interior, purchased tables and chairs visitors comfort and installed a £40,000 extension to the Clubhouse, funded by Babcock's and the groups own grass roots funding.
- 3.13 Robertson's Park Bowling Club have applied to Green Spaces to install an irrigation system to ensure the greens are maintained throughout the year. It has proven difficult for members to maintain the grass across dry summer months and this system will negate the need to carry out this onerous task.
- 3.14 For this application, the Bowling Club consulted with their members, 4 Renfrew primary schools and local church groups. Participants agreed an irrigation system would benefit the Club ensuring the green was well cared for throughout the year.
- 3.15 Every Tuesday and Thursday morning pupils from Newmains, Arkleston, Kirklandnuek and St James' Primary Schools visit the club for exercise and to learn about the sport. The group are hopeful this will deliver long term benefits encouraging the next generation to engage.
- 3.16 The Bowling Club are also looking to host an Open Day in May to attract more members and have invited the local secondary schools in for a day.

- 3.17 Robertson Bowling Club have agreed to maintain and repair the irrigation system as required over its life cycle.

Application 2:	Lochwinnoch Social Garden
Funding Requested:	£25,000
Recommendation:	Approve

- 3.18 Lochwinnoch Community Development Trust (LCDT) became a constituted group in 2019, many of the current members were/are volunteers in Lochwinnoch Community Council. The LCDT's main aim is to support, maintain and develop enterprises with positive social and environmental aims. They further aspire to build resilience locally and create useful services for their community, by sustainable means.
- 3.19 LCDT have already arranged to lease the land behind Lochwinnoch Parish Church at Lochhead Avenue, they share the site with the Local Energy Action Plan (LEAP) who run Lochwinnoch's Community Larder. LCDT's objective is to build a Community Garden that will provide for the community through a weekly community market, foodbank etc. The group are also keen to protect the green space at this site, which is currently an open, barren unused space, and create a haven for insects through increasing carefully chosen plants and flowers.
- 3.20 As well as raised beds and vegetable patches, the group want to create a safe space for people to meet and socialise, a place to offer for hire for children's birthday parties with gazebos and furniture offered, they will build an outdoor classroom to encourage primary school pupils to connect with nature, create a sensory garden, and a learning space. LCDT further hope to link in with local businesses and encourage them to be part of the Social Community Garden presenting a genuine Lochwinnoch inclusive community.
- 3.21 The group plan to raise a small income to ensure ongoing maintenance costs can be paid independently.

4 Developing Communities

4.1 The Villages

- 4.2 At the January Villages Local Area Partnership meeting, Villages responded well to a presentation promoting the Fund. Five applications from villages have since been received and approved under Delegated Authority, and a sixth is contained within this Board cycle.
- 4.3 Engagement with the Team Up to Clean Up Campaign is evident from most of these applicants. Howwood are looking to improve the attractiveness of their village by boosting the groundworks service already provided by Renfrewshire Council and adding regular strimming and edging as well as other works to increase the appeal of their park.

- 4.4 Kilbarchan Smile, Lochwinnoch Community Council and the Bishopton community each engage with the Campaign too in an effort to present their villages as cleaner and more attractive.
- 4.5 Over £420,000 has been awarded to village applicants since October 2018. A diverse range of projects have been delivered or are under development, from new play and exercise equipment, a multi-purpose ball game area, 2 villages have procured land to protect their natural habitat, sustainable and community gardens have been built, and planters installed, all with the aim of increasing biodiversity. A teen shelter and larger community shelter are also underway in another 2 villages, encouraging outdoor socialising regardless of weather.
- 4.6 Collectively, the villages have been most pro-active throughout the Fund in relation to bringing external funding to Renfrewshire, with over £200,000 secured. This has significantly boosted Council awarded funds and enabled communities to achieve their full aspirations. Often, the success of the groups applications to external sources was due to their ability to evidence secured match funding from the Villages Investment Fund.
- 4.7 Sixteen villages Delegated Authority projects have so far been awarded, the projects from the last cycle are as noted below:
- 4.8 **Kilbarchan Smile** received funding for a bench and a raised flower bed to be installed on the grounds of the Mary Barbour Cairn on New Street, Kilbarchan. This will increase the appeal of the area encouraging visitors to visit and spend some time there, relaxing and enjoying the area. The raised flower beds will also feed into the villages aims to increase biodiversity. The group have agreed to maintain and care for the flower beds going forward.



Mary Barbour Cairn, Kilbarchan

Kilbarchan Smile's Gateway Garden



One of Kilbarchan Smile's latest projects

4.9 Friends of Howwood Park have actively woven their park into the fabric of their community. Howwood Park has become integral to the delivery of the village's mini projects such as the popular 'Little Free Library', Outdoor Bingo, fitness classes and fetes. The funds awarded under Delegated Authority will support upcoming events in 2022 as well as enable the group to procure a suite of tools to maintain the park grounds to the village's high standards.



Friends of Howwood Park
23 January at 21:07 · 🌐

Thank you to everyone who came along to today's Scavenger Hunt at Howwood Park.

The 35 children who attended enjoyed searching for hidden Scottish themed pictures, and won sweets and Irn Bru for their efforts, whilst the adults enjoyed tea, coffee and biscuits. We also had a bubble machine on the go, which proved very popular, and we were entertained by Arran Hughes on the bagpipes.

Thanks to Lynda and Arlene for all their help, and to the 'Scotland's Winter Festivals Fund' for providing us with funding to buy the urns, drinks, biscuits and more. ❤️

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A post demonstrating one of many activities in Howwood Park, and evidence of the group's ability to identify and apply for appropriate funding



The group are actively involved in Team Up to Clean Up



Litter Pick - Howwood Park

Sunday 11th April 2021

1.30pm – 3pm

Please come along and help clean up Howwood Park.

Particularly suited to supervised children as a vehicle free litter picking zone.
Arrive any time between 1.30pm – 3pm, collect a picker and bag,
and pick up what litter you can. All equipment provided.



“The Little Free Library”

- 4.10 The Walk for Life – Clyde Valley Walkway project, being delivered by the **Gryffe Rotary Club**, began as an idea during the pandemic. The group discussed how a notable increase in the number of villagers were exploring and enjoying the walkway, walkers were reconnecting with nature and also increasing their own social connections.
- 4.11 Using awarded funds, new signage will be erected ensuring visitors are able to navigate their way along existing footpaths and lanes from Loch Thom (near the source of the River Gryffe) down the valley the length of the river through Kilmacolm, Bridge of Weir, Houston, Crosslee, Linwood Moss and Linwood Community Woods to the Onyx Sports Centre in Linwood. The group will further procure soft materials to make the path easier to navigate for walkers at identified muddy or boggy points.

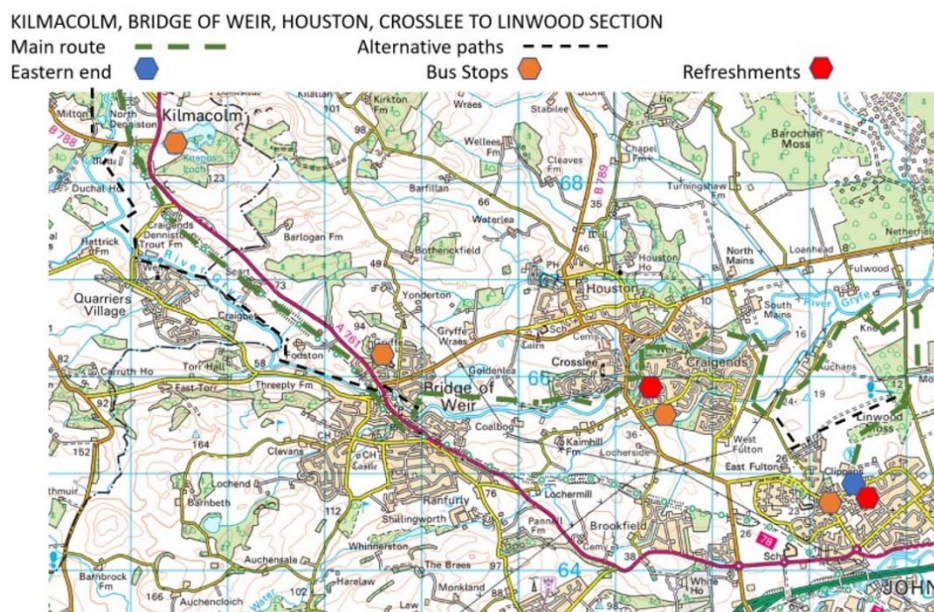


Signage design



The Gryffe Valley Rotary Club members at a fund raising event

The Walk for Life route



4.12 The **Bonnie Bishopton** concept had been considered for some time and after discussing the development with experienced volunteers from Bishopton Community Council and Brighter Bridge of Weir, Bonnie Bishopton created enough support to deliver their aspirations. Twenty-one local volunteers have so far committed to planting and caring for a number of planters strategically placed on the main thoroughfare going through the village. Awarded funds will procure planters, soil, plants, mobile watering equipment and PPE for the group.



The Bonnie Bishopton Group after cleaning up their village



Bonnie Bishopton

30 October 2021 · 🌐

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Bishopton Is Looking Bonnie

Paisley Daily Express 23 Sep 2021, by STEPH BRAWN

Photo - In the bag the Bonnie Bishopton team take a breather.

Bishopton residents who are keen to make the village a brighter place are being urged to get involved with a new community group that is looking to raise cash for plants and soil.

Bonnie Bishopton - launched by Councillor James MacLaren and chairman Roy Cox - had a successful first outing where volunteers collected almost 50 bags of rubbish in just one morning.

But the group is now needing to raise £2,000 to buy topsoil for a patch of land next to the community centre car park.

Bishopton Community Council has already pledged a £500 donation and the group is hoping residents will be able to dig deep to further help the cause.

Mr Cox said: "The reaction we got when we were out was quite astonishing.

"We just need to raise some money now so we can buy some topsoil and then hopefully we will be able to start other projects going forward like putting up plants and Christmas lights."

The group was started after Mr Cox and Councillor MacLaren both became frustrated with how Bishopton looked.

Councillor MacLaren said cleaning up the community could help attract people to the area as it recovers from the coronavirus outbreak.

He said: "The first meet-up of Bonnie Bishopton was a fantastic success and showed what can be done when there is the will among volunteers to clean up their community.

"This sort of attitude is crucial as we rebuild our communities from the pandemic and encourage people to come and visit and live here.

"With a small group of volunteers, almost 50 bags of vegetation were collected. Just imagine how much more we can do with more people getting involved.

"You will be made more than welcome and I would encourage you to sign up if you want to do your bit to spruce up Bishopton."

Anyone who wishes to make a donation to the cause is welcome to do so via the Bishopton Community Council or at the Co-op in Greenock Road.

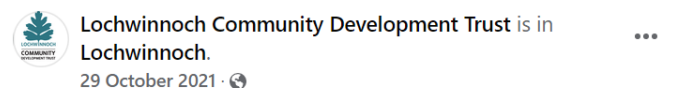
4.13 Lochwinnoch Community Development Trust have a subgroup with a focus on creating a Community Social Garden. Alongside LEAP (Local Energy Action Plan) the Social Garden have already established an agreement to lease the land to the rear of Lochwinnoch Parish Church on Lochhead Avenue.

4.14 The area is a significant size with a few raised beds currently used to grow veg for the local community foodbank. With the initial seed funding the group are looking to create designs of how best to use the space and what can be included. Ideally The group wish to landscape the whole area, repurposing with new opportunities for their community to connect with nature, garden, learn, play and socialise.



Calling out to their village to consider what should be delivered. A survey has since been developed.

Maintenance of the garden is ongoing

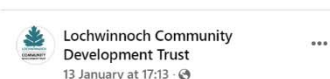
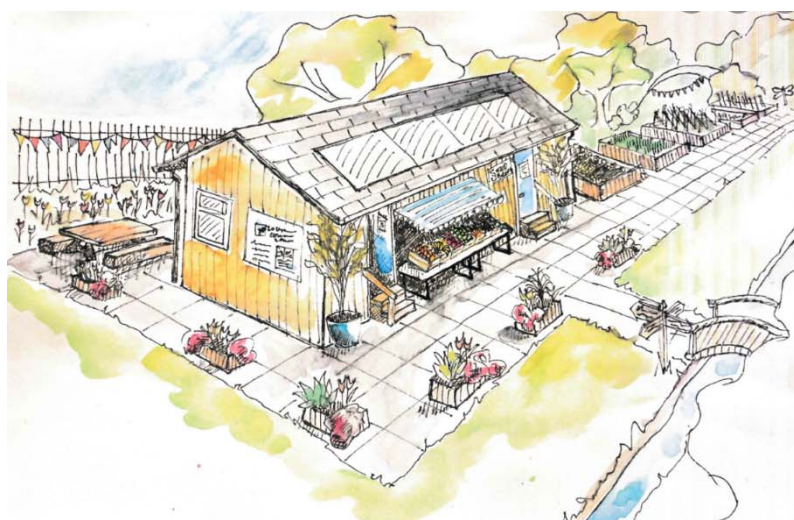


Over the next few days we're going to give you a look at some of the projects we are working on just now. If you're interested in joining any of the steering groups then send us a PM!

THE VILLAGE GARDENS:-

We took over this disused space between Lochhead Avenue and the Parish Church at the start of the pandemic, with the intention to grow vegetables on it to feed people in need. We now have 22 raised vegetable beds, a mud kitchen, log circle and children's picnic area used mainly by outdoor childcare service, EVIE'S WILDCARE, a flagstone path, portakabin for the local Community Larder, a wildflower area and a space for local community groups to use for crafts, festivals, performances, workshops and play groups!

If you've got an idea for this space, please get in touch!



Here is a sketch of the proposal for the Larder and the Trust's wee cabin which might become a site office, and the surrounding areas. What do you think?



- 4.15 Appendix 3 offers a full list of Villages Investment Funds projects awarded to date and their status.
- 4.16 A summary of the projects delivered through the Village Investment Fund not included in this Board report was provided as part of January 2022's Board report.
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Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** - Council approved the allocation of £2.020 million to establish the Greenspaces, Parks & Play Parks and Villages Investment Fund in March 2018. Due to the capital works being undertaken, Officers are ensuring that there are minimal recurring revenue costs to Services in the coming years.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – None
3. **Community/Council Planning** –
The Greenspaces, Parks & Play Parks and Village Investment Fund will be important to achieving and assisting the Community Plan by ensuring that Renfrewshire is thriving, well, fair and safe for residents, workers and visitors.
4. **Legal** - All legislative requirements will be taken cognisance of during this process wherever required e.g. health and safety requirements.
5. **Property/Assets** - There is the potential for property/assets to be included as part of this fund.
6. **Information Technology** – None
7. **Equality & Human Rights**
The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.
8. **Health & Safety** - Cognisance will be taken of health and safety requirements wherever required e.g. for play park equipment.
9. **Procurement** - There is no potential for the Council to be procuring and installing equipment of behalf of a community group as part of this grant funding process.
10. **Risk** - Discussions with the Council Risk Manager are on-going to ensure that the risk to the Council, as part of this grant funding process, is minimised.
11. **Privacy Impact** - None.
12. **COSLA Policy Position** – Not Applicable

13. **Climate Risk** – Not Applicable

List of Background Papers

None

Author: Oliver Reid, Head of Communities and Public Protection.

March 2022 Application (s)

Applicant	Project Description	Requested	Recommendation	Reason	Geographical Area
1. Johnstone Community Council	Johnstone community Council is seeking to procure a pump track which offers a new experience for wheeled activities. Bikes, Skateboards, scooters and roller skate users will all benefit.	£48,000	Approval by Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board.	Thomas Shanks Park is Johnstone's flagship park yet local people feel there is not special offering attracting the wider Renfrewshire audience there. This new apparatus would appeal to young people and sports enthusiasts far and wide however would predominantly serve Johnstone's local people.	Johnstone
2. Robertson's Bowling Club	An irrigation system to ensure the Bowling Green remains in top condition throughout hot, dry spells	£16.675	Approval by Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board	Robertson's Bowling Club members found themselves last few summers out watering the Greens to ensure they don't dry out over summer. An irrigation system would greatly reduce this requirement.	Renfrew
3. Lochwinnoch Community Development Trust	An intergenerational Community Garden in the Lochwinnoch village, to encourage socialising, learning how to, and the benefits of, growing your own food, and increasing biodiversity.	£25,000	Approval by Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board	Lochwinnoch Community Garden would provide fresh local produce for the weekly community market and increase biodiversity. The group have long term plans and are consulting with the community to ensure the garden evolves to meet the community's identified needs.	

Greenspace, Parks and Play Areas Funding

Project	Funding proposed	External Funding (or other Council funding)
Pump Track at Thomas Shanks Park, Johnstone	£48,000	Group are currently working with various local groups to deliver grassroots fundraising
Robertson's Park Bowling Green Irrigation System	£16,675	£50,000+ throughout the life of the groups long-term lease
Lochwinnoch Social Garden	£25,000	£20,000 applications in to various external funders

Funding	Allocated Budget	Committed Budget	Potential Additional Projects
Greenspace, Parks and Play Areas	£1,280,000	£1,219,649	£120,000
Village Investment Fund	£520,000	£420,625	£70,000
Staffing costs	£220,000	£220,000	-
Total	£2,020,000	£1,860,274	£190,000

Villages Improvement Fund Projects Awarded

Group	Project	Status
Bishopton Community Development Trust	Community Garden, Rossland Crescent	Funding Issued
Bridge of Weir Community Council	Improvements to Play Park (Horsewood & Lintwhite)	Complete
Elderslie Community Council	Queens Road Play Park Improvements – Phase 1	Complete
Elderslie Community Council	Queens Road Play Park Improvements Phase 2	With Procurement
Elderslie Community Council	Stoddard Square Seating	Funding Issued
Elderslie Community Council	Dog Fouling bags – Dispenser Unit	Complete
Elderslie Community Council	Multi-use Activity Unit Replaced in Dunvegan Park	Complete
Elderslie Community Council	Green Elderslie (planters and shrubs)	Funding Issued
Elderslie Community Council	Mural celebrating old Railway Station	Funding Issued
Elderslie Community Council	Village signs	Funding Issued
Houston Community Council	Outdoor gym	Delivery Imminent
Houston Community Council	Bee Happy Houston	Funding Issued
Houston Swing Park Group	Play Park Improvements South Street	Funding Awarded group raising additional funds
Howwood Community Council	Play Park Improvements	Completed
Howwood Community Council	Village Seating	Funding Issued
Friends of Howwood Park	Tools and Events	Funding Issued
Friends of Howwood Park	Community Shelter	Funding issued
Inchinnan Social Club	Renewed surface on car park	Awaiting paperwork
Langbank Swing Park Regeneration Group	Multi use games arena	Completed
Inchinnan Community Development Trust	Purchase of Tuecheen Woods	Completed
Lochwinnoch Community Development Trust	Lochwinnoch Public Park Upgrade	With Procurement
Lochwinnoch Sustainable Garden	Plants and Polytunnel	Complete
Paisley FM	Signal Booster to improve reach	Funding Issued
St Mirren Youth Team	Improvements to Inchinnan Playing Fields	Ongoing