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**To: Communities and Housing Policy Board**

**On: 22 August 2023**

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**Report by: Chief Executive**

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**Heading: Building Communities, Greenspaces, Parks & Play Areas, and Villages Investment Fund Update**

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## **1. Summary**

- 1.1 This report updates the Communities and Housing Policy Board on progress made in supporting communities including projects funded through the Greenspaces, Parks & Play Areas, and Villages Investment Fund(s). It provides updates for the Board on projects awarded under delegated authority over the last 3 months; and on other work undertaken to support active and engaged communities.
- 1.2 The key objective of the Green Spaces and Villages Investment funding is 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 Funds are promoted to members of the relevant Local Partnerships and through links with communities to encourage eligible groups and organisations to submit applications for funding. Current funding available is as follows:
- Villages Investment Fund: £290,000
  - Greenspaces: £68,000 (£40,000 for small green space projects and £20,000 ringfenced for school projects)
  - Volunteer funding: £28,000
- 1.4 Since the last update to board in May 2023, 11 applications have been submitted for approval under delegated authority for Greenspaces Funding (listed in Appendix 1).
- 1.5 An update on the status of previously awarded projects is provided in Section 3.
- 1.6 This report further updates the Communities and Housing Policy Board on progress of Team Up to Clean Up and the Environmental Taskforce. It

provides updates for the Board on key performance indicators, celebrates growing mutually beneficial relations with communities, and details the impacts Team Up to Clean Up and the Taskforce are having in Renfrewshire in supporting active and engaged individuals and groups.

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## **2 Recommendations**

2.1 It is recommended that the Communities and Housing Policy Board:

- (a) note the work currently being undertaken to support communities as they develop and deliver projects funded using the Greenspaces, Parks & Play Areas, and Villages Investment Fund.
  - (b) note the impact of the funding and the benefits to the wider communities delivered by the projects set out in section 3 of this report.
  - (c) Note the update on the wider Building Communities programme.
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## **3. Summary of Green Spaces Applications**

### **Applications Under Construction**

3.1 Renfrewshire Council has supported 108 community projects since October 2018. Further projects continue to be developed within communities, the following potential applicants are currently active and expected to apply or have only recently applied:

- Lochwinnoch play area fencing.
- Langbank Swing Park Regeneration Group – Play Park surfacing.
- Elderslie Community Council – Community Garden & Allotment
- Ralston Community Council – Play Park Surfacing

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

### **Live Application(s)**

#### **Langbank Swing Park Regeneration Group**

3.3 The #YouDecide project, together with the Environment, Housing and Infrastructure Service's Parks Team, will upgrade Langbank play area in early 2024. The Regeneration group's application for an outdoor gym was also successful and the facility will be installed alongside the new play area. The group are in discussion regarding an application to improve the surface area where the gym will be installed.

## **Friends of Jenny's Well**

- 3.4 The Friends of Jenny's Well group continue to bring new volunteers and biodiversity to the nature reserve using funding secured by the Green Spaces Fund and other external organisations. This latest project saw the onsite tool container painted by local artist BMore sketchy using Green Spaces Funding.
- 3.5 The football changing area in situ at Jenny's Well, has not been used for a number of years. This structure will be dismantled and removed imminently to make way for an onsite bicycle stop off and repair station the group have managed to secure, funded by Sustrans. Renfrewshire Council worked alongside Sustrans to renew the cycle path running through the nature reserve.



## **Elderslie Community Council**

- 3.6 The Community Council successfully secured funding for an outdoor gym around 18 months ago however were concerned about the installation being on top of the previous surface which had previously been a play area prior to the installation of the Green Spaces awarded play park in 2020. Working alongside colleagues in #YouDecide, the Elderslie community voted for a new surface on this area which has now been successfully laid and offers the perfect surface for the new gym which was installed at the end of July 2023.

## **Howwood Parent Council**

- 3.7 Howwood Parent Council were awarded funding for a multi-use games area (MUGA) in 2022 in the grounds of Howwood Primary school. This was installed at the end of May 2023 and local children have been making good use of the area over the summer holidays.





### Houston Swing Park Group

- 3.8 This group have worked hard to boost their awarded funding by almost £12,000 through local race nights, cake sales and gala day stalls – the group even created a Houston Cookbook and sold it at local events. “Helicopter Park” on the South Street Mound, was locally coined as such due to a popular previous helicopter climbing frame. The group were keen to incorporate this helicopter/sky theme in the park’s new design. Installation is due to commence autumn/winter 2023.
- 3.9 Again, delivery of this project has been complimented by a new path which was instructed by the community via the #YouDecide project. Access to the play area, which is situated at the top of the mound, may prove challenging for some. The new path, leading to the play area from the South Street carpark, will offer some additional support in this regard.



## **Johnstone Community Council – Pump Track at Thomas Shanks Park**

- 3.10 A meeting was attended by representatives from the Green Spaces Fund, Environment, Housing & Infrastructure's Parks Team, and Johnstone Community Council. Renfrewshire Council will oversee procurement of the and installation of the proposed new pump track which is expected in Spring/Summer 2024.
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### **4. Team Up to Clean Up**

- 4.1 Team Up to Clean Up member numbers and engagement levels continue to grow with 4,700 group members currently engaging, this is an increase of 350 members since May 2023. Facebook Analysis illustrates increased engagement statistics over the past 3 months evidencing a strong appetite from communities for information, engagement, and participation in achieving tidier, cleaner neighbourhoods.
- 4.2 To show appreciation of Team Up's volunteering efforts, prolific volunteers were invited to attend the Community Development Volunteer Appreciation event on Monday 5 June, part of national Volunteers Week. 26 Team Up to Clean Up volunteers received a certificate, and a small gift. Team up to Clean Up T-shirts and high-vis vests were distributed at the event. Further opportunities to obtain a t-shirt have been made available from 6 local libraries for a 3-week period, the locations are promoted on the Team Up Facebook page.
- 4.3 Team Up to Clean Up available volunteer funding facilitated the supply of a fully equipped trolley with power tools and hand tools to volunteers in Arkleston. The group are tackling litter, weeds, and flytipping in their neighbourhood and are enjoying the warm responses and feedback they are receiving from local residents. The group have enjoyed supporting their community and are now arranging with Engage Renfrewshire to set up their own Arkleston Tenants and Residents Association.

### **The Conservation Volunteers – Wildflower Planting Workshops**

- 4.4 Team Up to Clean Up volunteers are enthused by improving and increasing the appeal of their neighbourhoods and local green spaces. Many groups who participate in the Campaign focus on biodiversity and wilding, a topic which sits well with the wider volunteering network. As such bespoke workshops were delivered in July by The Conservation Volunteers (TCV). The purpose of the workshops was to educate those interested in creating their own wildflower areas in their gardens or in their community spaces.
- 4.5 Two community groups, Inchinnan Community Development Trust and Friends of Jenny's Well Nature Reserve, hosted TCV in local community halls. Camilo delivered sessions, a Permaculturist, who advised attendees on the best times to plant, which flowers work well in which areas, and how to maintain and encourage growth.

- 4.6 Bee Happy Houston have arranged for the final session in Houston, mid-August. Free wildflower seeds are provided as well as refreshments offering volunteers an opportunity to share experiences and information. The event, and associated costs, were funded by Team Up to Clean Up (Green Spaces) funding.

An excellent morning! A group of us met at Hunterhill community centre where Camilo from The Conservation Volunteers provided a fascinating talk & discussion about the complex world of wildflower meadow creation! We then made our way to Jenny's Well and got stuck in preparing some areas and sowing seeds! We'll manage this area over the next few years, learning as we go & hopefully creating a few more pockets of meadow around the reserve. Thank you to everyone who came along!



IDT were also delighted to host [TCV - The Conservation Volunteers](#) for a workshop on Meadow Creation & Management as part of our India Tyres Playing Fields event yesterday 🌻

We started off the day with a talk from TCV's Camilo - who provided an overview of wildflower meadow creation and maintenance, highlighting their value in our local ecosystems and vital role in preserving biodiversity!

Heading over to India Tyres Playing Fields, we then had a practical demonstration which gave us an opportunity to get stuck in and start creating our own wildflower patch on the playing fields (the first of many planned) 🌱

Big thank you to The Conservation Volunteers for such an informative and engaging workshop! We'd also like to thank [R34 Family Restaurant and Lounge](#) at India of Inchinnan for hosting the event, as well as to [@Renfrewshire](#) Council and Team Up To Clean Up for helping to bring it to Inchinnan.

[#inchinnan](#) [#renfrewshire](#) [#theconservationvolunteers](#) [#indiatyres](#) [#teamuptocleanup](#) [#meadowcreation](#)

### Take the Lead

- 4.7 Over 250 Renfrewshire dog owners have so far taken the pledge to be responsible dog owners and pick up after their pets. 'Take the Lead' merchandise, and Team Up t-shirts, were promoted and available for dog owners and volunteers at Barshaw and Robertson's Park Gala days.
- 4.8 The Environmental Taskforce further offered branded items to volunteers and those signing the Pledge at various drop-in sessions across the summer.

### Sustainable Food Scheme

- 4.9 Around 150 letters have been issued to businesses who either did not participate in the sustainable business survey or were found to be non-compliant with the Single Use Plastics (SUP) Regulations. A deadline of the end of September has been issued to these businesses who have been advised enforcement action may be considered where they continue to supply SUPs after this time. The Environmental Taskforce and Environmental Health's Business Regulation Team will support visits to each of the identified premises.

### Environmental Taskforce

- 4.10 The Environmental Taskforce continues to work with Renfrewshire's communities to reduce flytipping. The Taskforce recently visited and spoke with residents in Inchinnan in relation to increased numbers of flytipping reports in the area.



- 4.11 The Taskforce prioritises education, and further works closely with local businesses, supporting them to reduce flytipping where possible. Three commercial incidents have been reported this year directly outside a rural local business. After speaking with the Taskforce, the business owner installed a camera as a preventative measure and agreed to share future evidence obtained with the Team. A local organisation further provided evidence for a witnessed flytipping incident which resulted in the issue of a fixed penalty Notice, and the Taskforce received thanks for their support and attention at the Direct Parking site in Paisley which will reopen for business on 1 August after being closed for 3 years and was subject to large scale flytipping.
- 4.12 During a meeting with SEPA (Scottish Environmental Protection Agency), the Taskforce learned of their recent Fixed Monetary Penalty powers (FMP). This is a unique power to SEPA who can issue fines up to £40,000 for flytipping, avoiding the need for a submission to the Procurator Fiscal. One of the cases currently being prepared by the Taskforce for submission has been requested by SEPA to take forward. The case relates to the practices of a private waste removal service. SEPA have arranged for a block on all related social media promoting the individual/company, rendering them unable to advertise personally, or as the company name, for businesses. This is a useful tool going forward.
- 4.13 On 28<sup>th</sup> June, the Scottish Government, in partnership with Keep Scotland Beautiful, Zero Waste Scotland and the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency, released an updated National Litter and Flytipping Strategy. The strategy aligns future action closely with Scotland's circular economy and considers the positive impacts upcoming changes in legislation will have in tackling the current throw away culture. The strategy further links pollution, caused by litter and flytipping, in with climate change and biodiversity loss as recognised in the United Nations Making Peace with Nature report.
- 4.14 The accompanying 2023-24 Action Plan outlines significant actions which will be launched in the next 12 months:
- Powers to issue fixed penalty notices on the drivers of vehicles from which litter is discarded,
  - Fixed penalty notices issued to householders who fail to take responsibility for their household own waste,
  - Increased fixed penalty notice of £200 to £500 for flytipping, which may increase to £1,000 in future,
  - Working with SEPA to improve their scrutiny and control over applicants for a Waste Carriers License
  - Increased use of digital technologies to detect and disrupt unregistered or rogue waste carriers advertising on online forums, and
  - Powers to seize vehicles involved in flytipping.

4.15 The table below offers some key statistics of the work delivered by the Taskforce over this period:

<b>Action</b>	<b>April – 22 June 2023</b>	<b>Cumulative from 1 December 2022</b>
Proactive visits to identified hotspot areas	632	1301
Number of reports investigated	585	1198
Tonnes of flytipping removed	165	380
Number of sites secured to prevent further flytipping	2	8
Letters to private landowners	35	69
Visits to businesses to ensure Waste Disposal Arrangements in place	41	86
Fixed Penalty Notices Issued	14	49

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## **5. Youth Team – Working with Renfrewshire’s Young People**

- 5.1 The Youth Team continue to work closely with Police Scotland, patrolling hotspot areas where young people are known to congregate and exhibit antisocial behaviour. Over the summer the Team’s focus is on wilful fire-raising which occurs at identified pockets across Renfrewshire. The Youth Team are ideally placed to speak to young people, most already well-known to them and do not present in uniform.
- 5.2 Home visits and referrals from the Early Intervention Screening Group have increased from the previous year. During a home visit a plan is created, which may incorporate a curfew, alongside the young person and their parent or guardian. The aim of the plan is to support the young person, steering them toward an alternative, more positive path as well as reducing the impact of the antisocial behaviour presented.
- 5.3 Feedback from Safe Kids 2023 demonstrates the event was well received. Over 2,000 primary 6 pupils attended workshops with a focus on topics such as cyber bullying, water safety, railway safety, drug and alcohol issue awareness, the impact of antisocial behaviour, littering, dog fouling and flytipping. Feedback and lessons learned will be reviewed prior to delivery of the 2024 event.
- 5.4 The Youth Team further supported the delivery of the Summer of Fun activities over the summer period.

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## **6 Summer Camps 2023**

- 6.1 The Community Learning and Development team in partnership with Street Stuff, delivered a programme of summer camps across Renfrewshire in



Ferguslie, Foxbar, Gallowhill, Johnstone, Linwood, and Renfrew. The camps were funded this year by Fairer Renfrewshire and Scottish Government, with access to places prioritised for low income families.

- 6.2 Young people from P1 to S3 were entertained through participation in football, basketball, hand ball, hockey, badminton, tennis, dance, art, crafts, and games. A healthy meal was also provided as part of the activity.
- 6.3 Attendance at the camps was free of charge with all spaces fully committed, entertaining over 1,000 young people each week.
- 6.4 Joint working with Children's services has been key to ensure young people from across Renfrewshire have access to activities on offer. A full update on the summer camps will be provided to the next board.

### **Celebrating Renfrewshire**

- 6.5 The participatory budgeting project, Celebrating Renfrewshire 2024 was successfully delivered by this year's newly appointed youth Steering Group, supported by officers from across the Chief Executive's Service. Young people across the authority submitted a total of 126 projects, 47 of these were awarded funding. Projects supported this year's chosen themes which include cost of living, employability and life skills, climate change, drug and alcohol prevention and violence diversionary projects for young people.
- 6.6 The Celebrating Renfrewshire Announcement Event was held in the Student Union at the University of West of Scotland and was well attended. The steering group were supported in organising and delivering this event where successful applicant groups were announced and celebrated.
- 6.7 The Steering Group are now working with Local Partnerships to deliver successful projects.

## Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** - Council approved the allocation of £2.420 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. Council further approved £450,000 to establish the Taskforce in February 2022
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** – Data Protection Impact Assessments have been completed as part of this process
12. **COSLA Policy Position** – Not Applicable
13. **Climate Risk** – Not Applicable

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## List of Background Papers

None

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**Appendix 1****Current Greenspace, Parks, and Play Areas & Villages Investment Funding**

<b>Project</b>	<b>Funding proposed</b>	<b>External Funding (or other Council funding)</b>
Lochwinnoch Arts Festival Committee	£5,000	n/a
Lochwinnoch Community Development Trust	£5,000	n/a
Elderslie Community Council	£200	n/a
Elderslie Community Council	£2,650	n/a
Elderslie Community Council	£200	n/a
Lochwinnoch Gala Day Committee	£2,479	n/a
Friends of Howwood Park	£1,660	n/a
Lochwinnoch Sustainable Community Garden	£1,700	n/a
Bridge of Weir Community Council	£490	n/a
Lochwinnoch Art Group	£300	n/a
Kilbarchan Community Council	£1,000	n/a

<b>Funding</b>	<b>Allocated Budget</b>	<b>Committed Budget</b>	<b>Available Budget</b>
Greenspaces, Parks, and Play Areas	£1,205,000	£1,148,000	£57,000
Green Spaces – Allocated School Fund	£35,000	£8,000	£27,000
Green Space – Allocated Team Up Fund	£40,000	£12,000	£28,000
Village Investment Fund	£920,000	£630,000	£290,000
Staffing costs	£220,000	£220,000	£0
<b>Total</b>	<b>£2,370,000</b>	<b>£2,018,000</b>	<b>£404,000</b>