

# Stepps Community Action Plan

2019



AWARDS  
FOR ALL  
SCOTLAND

**STEPS**  
Community  
Development  
**TRUST**

Community Links Scotland  
  
REGENERATION SERVICES

# COMMUNITY PLANNING

## What is a Community Plan?

Community Plans gives 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 Stepps residents and identifies ways of making these things happen.

## 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 two Place Standard workshops with the Stepps Steering Group and other community/voluntary group representatives, 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 electronically attached to local facebook sites and delivered to e-mail addresses of local community/voluntary groups
  - Advertised the electronic link on 'Stepps on the Level'
  - Face to Face surveys were carried out at the Stepps Primary Schools Summer Fayre, the Stepps Scouts Barbeque afternoon, the Cardowan Colliery Booklet launch and the lunch club.
  - The surveys were also delivered via a bag drop at St. Joseph's primary school for pupils to take home to their families
  - A separate survey for young people was distributed to pupils at the two local primary schools
  - A second follow up community survey was distributed electronically to those residents who had indicated a desire for further involvement
  - The Plan was then developed based on the consultation and research was undertaken in support of project ideas
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- 2 Place standard workshops attended by 25 residents
  - 488 stage 1 community survey responses
  - 118 young persons responses
  - 68 stage 2 community survey responses

# STEPPS

## Background

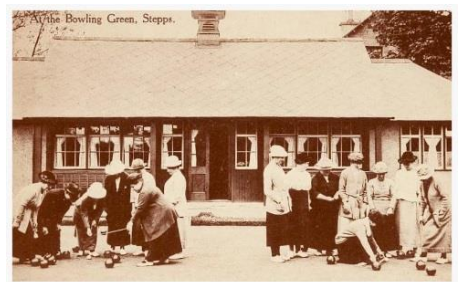
Stepps is a settlement in North Lanarkshire, Scotland, near the north-eastern outskirts of Glasgow, close to Easterhouse and Robroyston while also having close links to Bishopbriggs, Lenzie and Kirkintilloch in the north. It has a relatively new joint campus which includes Stepps Primary School, Library, and Cultural Centre while retaining a historic heart around the church in Whitehill Avenue and its Victorian and Edwardian housing. Stepps has a second Primary School, St. Joseph's with associated church together with two commercial business estates to the north. Stepps has excellent travel connections by road and rail mean residents work in Glasgow, Edinburgh, Falkirk, Stirling and beyond. At the same time its location means that excellent walks in the Seven Lochs Wetland Park are close by. It has a population of around 5,000.



The Garnkirk estate, on which the old village of Stepps is built, anciently belonged to the Church and was secularised in 1587 by Charter to John Stirling. In 1634 the estate was sold to John Dunlop, a Glasgow merchant. He built the first mansion house (now the clubhouse of Crow wood Golf Course). In the 1920's the Garnkirk estate still extended to about 1880 acres.



The name for the settlement appears to post-date that of the main road through its centre, Steps Road, which was named in the 19th century. The train station is sited on the former Garnkirk and Glasgow Railway, which originally opened in 1831 and later formed part of the Caledonian Railway main line from Glasgow Buchanan Street. A station at Stepps (originally known as *Stepps Road*) was opened on this line sometime around 1843/4 and is located 8km from Queen Street, Glasgow. The name and spelling *Stepps* only became accepted when the name of the railway station formally changed to Stepps in 1924. Cardowan Colliery opened in 1929 just south of the railway line, working eight seams it finally closed in 1983. The site of the colliery has been developed over the years by a series of new housing developments.



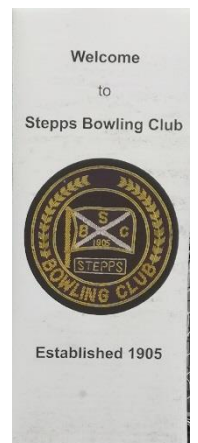
# WHAT'S HAPPENING IN STEPPS?

Stepps Community Development Trust Steering Group (SCDTSG) established themselves in 2018 with a view to consider the possibility of establishing a new local community Development Trust. SCDTSG, with the support of Stepps Community Council, accessed funding from The Lottery Awards for All fund to employ consultants to help prepare this community plan. SCDTSG are seeking to bring the community together through an engaging and dynamic consultative process designed to identify the community's priorities for improving the area, and develop community- led action to realise those aspirations.

The priorities identified in this Plan will form the basis of projects that the new Trust will take forward, in partnership with local residents, local community/voluntary groups/ statutory agencies/the private sector/ Scottish Government and North Lanarkshire Council. We hope to have established the new Development Trust by early 2020. In addition to this new organisation in Stepps there are already a wide range of groups providing services and activities for local residents including:

## *Community Groups and Organisations in Stepps*

- Wednesday lunch club
- Community Council
- Jumping Joey's Mother & Toddler Group
- Justice & Peace Group
- Stepps Parish Church
- St. Joseph's Parish Church
- Stepps Scouts/Cubs/Beavers
- Boys Brigade
- Girls Brigade
- Girl Guides/Brownies/Rainbows
- Garnkirk Football Club
- Stepps Bowling Club
- Stepps Tennis Club
- Stepps Hockey Club
- Auchengeich Boxing Club
- Stepps Songsters
- Stepps Floral Art Club
- Northern Corridor Volunteers
- Thursday Lunch Club



# NEEDS ANALYSIS

## Population

- 2017 Mid-year population estimates show that Stepps has a population of 5,076
- 23% of residents are under 16 compared to 19% for North Lanarkshire; 64% are working age the same as North Lanarkshire; and 13% are ages 65 or over compared with 17% for North Lanarkshire
- The average age is 37 years old

## Income & Employment

- 7% of people are income deprived
- 15% of households have at least one person who is unemployed
- The average age of someone who is unemployed is 33
- 6% of people are employment deprived

## Health

- Male life expectancy is 77.1% the same as the Scottish average
- Female life expectancy is 82.1, higher than the Scottish average of 81.1
- 14% of adults are being prescribed drugs for anxiety, depression or psychosis
- Stepps has the lowest early deaths from cancer rate in North Lanarkshire with 102 per 1,000v's 183 per 1,000

## Education

- 80% of 16-17 year olds are in education; the same as the Scottish average
- Around 8% of 17-21 year olds enter in to full time higher education
- 4% of people aged 16-19 are not in full time education, employment or training
- School pupil attendance is 91%

## Housing

- 9% of people live in households that are overcrowded
- The average number of rooms per house is 5
- 16% of household have one or more resident carers
- The average number of persons per household is 2.2; the same as the Scottish average

## Access to Services

- 56% of the population live in the 15% most access deprived areas of Scotland
- The average number of cars per household is 1
- The average travel time in minutes to a retail centre, Post office & GP by car is 9mins, 4 mins and 3 mins
- The average travel time in minutes to a retail centre, Post Office & GP by public transport is 21 mins, 15mins and 12 mins

# COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

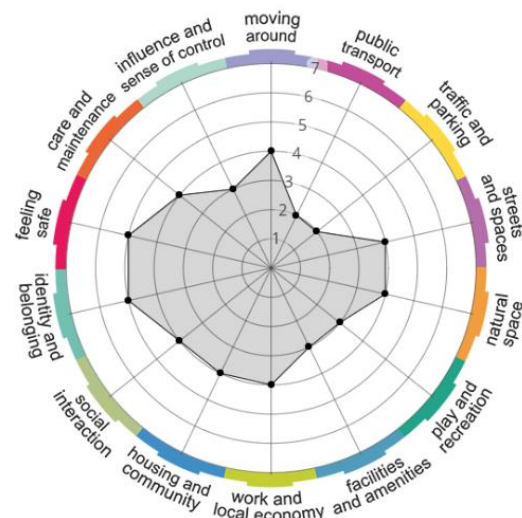
The community consultation carried out in support of this plan used a three-stage approach; this allowed us to draw out priority themes and issues early on, then test the popularity of potential actions focused on those themes with the community over the next two stages.



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 Steps' case we used the tool to help identify priorities for project developments in the village.

These were delivered as two workshops with steering group members and the wider community where, after a discussion around each aspect in Steps, we were able to identify some of the key issues affecting the village and where village priorities were most likely focussed.

1. **Public Transport** Unreliability of trains/ Bus route does not run to places people want to go
2. **Traffic and Parking** Parking at train station a problem /Parking at school pick up and drop off
3. **Play and Recreation** Poor quality parks and maintenance
4. **Facilities & Amenities** Need for better sports facilities and spaces for young people
5. **Influence & Sense of Control** Not a priority area for council/Need more community ownership



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 for an effective prioritisation of all activities and actions listed in the survey. An online version of the survey was created and pinned on local web sites and e-mailed out. Face to face interviews were carried out at four different village events giving a good demographic spread, survey forms were also sent out as part of a bag drop at St. Joseph's primary school.

The third stage of the consultation involved making available online a second stage survey. The second stage consultation was designed to ask questions which built on the actions identified by residents as most important to them during Stage 2. It allowed us to flesh out actions and activities into more viable and detailed project ideas, allowing residents 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 Steps want to see.

# COMMUNITY SURVEY

We received 488 survey responses from the community; this was a response rate of approximately 18% of households and 11% of the total adult population. The ten year age group with most respondents was the 40-49 years with 32%, we also had 4% between 80-89 years and one respondent over 90 years! 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 and Traffic

Improve reliability of train service	94%
Address parking issues at school	84%
More bus services from Stepps	83%
Improved parking on Cumbernauld Road at Stepps shops	80%
Traffic calming measures in local area	72%
Enhance local cycling network through village	68%

## Environment

Address littering in and around Stepps	94%
Improved maintenance of outdoor spaces in Stepps	92%
Preserve Stepps green belt	92%
More regular emptying of public bins	85%
Improved maintenance of Bluebell Dell	82%
More flower planting around village	63%

## Activities

More activities for young people	91%
More activities for older people	85%
Befriending service in the local area	75%
More events throughout the year	74%
Community cafe	73%
Set up village 'In Bloom' type group	49%

## Sports and Leisure

More play equipment for younger children	83%
Create sports and leisure hub in Stepps	82%
Grass pitches maintained to a higher standard	77%
Improve pavilion building at pitches	75%
Improved signposting of local walking routes	71%
Outdoor gym equipment in Stepps	58%

## Infrastructure

Upgrade existing community facilities	87%
Increase the number of dedicated walking routes	74%
Better connect Stepps to Seven Lochs Park	70%
Better availability of sheltered housing	69%
Better availability of affordable homes	62%
Create a Stepps business centre	40%

### Community

Better involvement of community in decision making	94%
Increase community involvement in Trust projects	77%
Better coordinate volunteering opportunities	74%
Projects to bring together different village areas	71%
Develop an app for promoting local activities & businesses	66%
Take local amenities into community ownership	59%

## OTHER COMMENTS AND IDEAS FROM THE COMMUNITY:

*"Installation of astro turf pitch which would benefit local sports clubs and extend the use of the pitches by other initiatives such as walking football, women's football, etc."*

*"Intergenerational work to tackle loneliness and social isolation and linking community regeneration efforts."*

*"Maintenance of local park to be improved to allow children to have a greater area in which they can run around and play."*

*"We have the potential to change our road infrastructure so we promote sustainable travel for our children and ourselves."*

*"More dedicated spaces/ units to create local businesses, including cafes and restaurants to support growth of area."*

*"A Stepps gala day would be good to develop a sense of community and bridge the gap between different areas of the village."*

*"Upgrade the play area in Cardowan."*

*"Agree a positive statement and logo about Stepps"*

*"A bus service to the Fort shopping centre, especially at weekends when young people could go".*

*"Of paramount importance is the preservation of a Stepps community identity".*

*"Post Office and Bank are needed now we have all these new houses".*

*"There is no Restaurant/bar for families to eat".*

*"We can create a plan that makes Stepps the most green, healthy and cyclist friendly village in Scotland".*

*"A bus service that goes into the new housing estates on a regular basis".*

*"The sports pavilion is a disgrace, can't we combine it with other clubs like the football, scouts and guides to make a sports/youth facility for the village".*

*"We need affordable socially rented housing, but not on the greenbelt".*

# STEPS YOUTH SURVEY

We received 118 responses from young people living in Stepps; these responses were generated through engagement with children at St Joseph's and Stepps Primary Schools

Community Actions	Very Important	Sort of Important	Not Important
More things for young people to do	79%	19%	2%
More bins in the village	72%	25%	3%
Improve the sports field	71%	22%	7%
Community litter pick	70%	26%	3%
Safer walking route to school	67%	25%	8%
More cycle paths	62%	32%	5%
Better pedestrian crossings	62%	34%	4%
More community events in Stepps	62%	31%	8%
Slow down traffic in the village	61%	31%	8%
More cafes and restaurants	58%	31%	11%
Less cars at the school	57%	34%	9%
More things for older people to do	51%	36%	13%
Outdoor gym equipment	49%	31%	19%
Make a community garden	47%	41%	12%

The clear priority for young people in Stepps was to have more things for them to do in the village; 98% of young people felt that this was either very or sort of important. Environmental issues were also important for young people with more bins and a community litter pick both popular options. Another important theme was road safety, with three related actions rated as very important by over 60% of young people.

## What do you like about living in Stepps?

The most common things were to do with the sense of community, friendly people, and having friends living nearby. The parks were a popular aspect of living in Stepps, both the number and quality of parks were mentioned. Young people also liked being near to nature and wildlife, and were generally positive about the outdoor environment. They also talked about how it was easy to get around Stepps and that local amenities were within walking distance.



## What do you not like about living in Stepps?

The amount of litter was the most commonly mentioned negative aspect about living in Stepps, along with graffiti and dog mess in the village. The lack of things for young people to do and a need for improvements in the local parks were also mentioned by a lot, as well as a need for more cafes, restaurants and shops in the local area. Traffic issues were another dislike among young people; speeding, the lack of pedestrian crossings, and the number of cars at the primary schools were all specifically mentioned.

## What do you think could be done to make Stepps a better place to live?

One of the most popular suggestions was to have a BMX track, running track, and/or skate park built in the village at Frankfield Park. There was a lot of interest in having more for young people to do in the village e.g. community events and clubs, as well as having more cafes, restaurants, shops, community facilities and sports facilities. There was also a lot of interest from young people in introducing new measures to improve the local environment, in particular having more bins installed locally and having more litter collections and community clean-ups.

## STAGE 2 SURVEY

The purpose of the second survey was to find out more detail about the most popular activities and actions identified by the community and in the first survey. The second stage survey was distributed to the 166 residents who had previously given their e-mail address to the Trust. We received 68 responses, 41% of those contacted, which was an excellent result for a follow up survey.

### Transport and Traffic

#### **At which time of day are trains going to Glasgow, most unreliable?**

Greatest problems of unreliability were at peak times, during the week at 7.30 and 8.00am. When asked what time of day there should be more trains there were two clear responses, the commuter weekday morning, and the later afternoon/evening at the weekend. The majority however consider the issue to be one of reliability rather than need for increased volume of trains.

#### **Which routes should a new bus service take?**

A new bus route to the Fort was the most popular, attracting almost 65% support. This was also identified in stage one consultation with many parents highlighting that older children could not make this trip due to the lack of public transport. A service to Kirkintilloch was considered important by more than 40% as this is now the nearest town with a bank. Access to Glasgow and to and from Cardowan as also raised. The lack of a bus service to and fro the High School was also identified.



### Environment

#### **Where should the Council place new litter bins in and around Stepps?**

The location seen as very important was the park with 67% although taken jointly (very important/important) the shops come out in first place. Around the schools also scored very highly in third place.

#### **Would you or someone from your household be prepared to help out with a voluntary litter pick once every two months?**

29 individuals stated that they would be prepared to get involved once every two months on a voluntary litter pick, a further three added their e-mails as being interested in this activity.

### Activities

#### **Which of the following activities for young people should we be supporting?**

The most popular activity that should be supported was a youth club, followed by Scouts/Guides/BB etc followed by the sports of football, tennis and hockey. Other activities including creating a BMX track, upgrading the cycle track in Bluebell Wood, Computer activities, creating somewhere young people could go and meet, and socialise without hanging around outside, activities for young people with disabilities, girls football and golf.

#### **Which activities for older people should the Trust be promoting?**

A Lunch club was the clear favourite with 82%, as a social event that would reduce isolation, improve health and be good fun! Sport also scored high alongside music/choir. Additional activities suggested were yoga and cycling.

## Sport & Leisure

### **Do you think Stepps should have a sports and leisure Hub at/near the existing pavilion building at the football pitch?**

More than 85% of respondents thought that Stepps should have an improved pavilion building at the site of the existing football pitch, 14% expressed no opinion with only 1% not in favour of the idea. Feedback highlighted the possibility of groups like the football team, scouts and guides all working together to have a shared hall on the site of the existing pavilion.

### **What should a new sports and leisure facility include?**

Changing facilities and toilets were the top responses and would be a huge improvement on what is currently there. A new multi purpose hall for sports and leisure activities including yoga, dance, martial arts etc was considered very important/important for more than 80% of the respondents. A running/walking path around the park perimeter was also something seen as a future action. A café at this location was not considered a great idea with only 22% thinking it very important and 39% important.

## Infrastructure

### **Which of the following facilities should be upgraded first?**

The response here were very close, with a dead heat at 29.41% for both upgrading the Scout Hall and upgrading the pavilion. Respondents were worried about the future access of the Stepps Cultural Centre as ongoing housebuilding puts pressure on space for the primary school which could mean the loss of this building therefore action had to be taken to preserve and or enhance existing facilities which were now in a poor condition. Bluebell Park with 27.94% came a very close third.

## Community

### **What are the best ways of involving Stepps residents in decision making?**

Articles on 'Stepps on the Level' were seen as the best way of informing residents by 68% of respondents, followed by regular e-mail surveys of which this group of respondents could be a focus group with 56%. Almost 40% thought that a Trust should be established. Under other comments there was also a desire to see a Steps Facebook with a properly administered page.

### **What should a new Trust for Stepps be called?**

The overwhelming majority of votes, 65%, were for the Trust to be called Stepps Community Development Trust with only 16% in favour of Stepps and District Development Trust.

## Additional comments from the community included

"More trains not really needed just more reliable for weekday peak times."

"Upgrade of small cycle track in Bluebell Park, to the same standard in the others in North Lanarkshire."

"Dewar Road has no bus service at all and the residents of the housing in the newer estates there need to either walk to the train station (at least 15 minutes) or walk to Buchanan Gate (25-30 minutes)."

"Somewhere young people can meet to socialise in safety without hanging around outside."

"There is an opportunity to enhance local green space and adapt it to provide much greater benefit for the community".

# COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

- Improve reliability of train service
- Preserve Stepps green belt
- Address littering in and around Stepps
- Improved maintenance of outdoor spaces in Stepps
- More bus services from Stepps
- More activities for young people
- Address parking issues at schools
- Better involvement of community in decision making
- More activities for older people
- More regular emptying of public bins
- Upgrade existing community facilities
- Create sports and leisure hub in Stepps
- More play equipment for younger children
- Improved maintenance of Bluebell Dell
- Improved parking on Cumbernauld Road at Stepps shops



**Transport**- transport to Fort, unreliable train service, local bus in Stepps, parking at shops, parking at schools, safe walking route to school, active travel infrastructure

**Environment**- outdoor maintenance, littering, more bins, wild spaces, protect green belt, dog mess

**Youth**- better play parks, space for teenagers, more for young people to do

**Community**- intergenerational work, involvement, community identity

**Amenities**- restaurants, café, bank, retain GP, bigger school, upgrade pitches, disagreement over housing development, more shops

**Activities**- gala day, encourage exercise, outdoor activities, socialising opportunities

**Safety**- Anti-social behaviour, better lighting, dog control, speeding, traffic calming, CCTV, police presence

## Reliability of Train Service

The train station is a focal point and a major attribute of Stepps which as a village has moved from heavy industry to a reliance on commuters, predominantly working in Glasgow. The issues of trains, particularly of their reliability rather than their frequency was a constant issues in all of the adult surveys. The Stepps service appears to suffer in order to keep timetables on schedule. In addition to the service itself, commuters also complained that the existing car park was too small to cope with the increased commuter usage as the new housebuilding has taken place in Stepps over recent years.

## Bus Service

The bus service was identified as a major issue for Stepps residents, particularly given the lack of amenities and services within the village which means many local people have to travel elsewhere to access shops, GP surgeries, banks etc. The lack of public transport has meant that many residents are limited in when they can travel outside of Stepps, or are reliant on taxis and private cars. A service that would run to the Fort shopping Centre was consistently called for from residents, particularly at the weekends.

### Activities for Young People

Providing more activities for young people within Stepps was the top priority identified by the young people in their survey, and by the adult respondents. Throughout the consultation residents were keen to see more things for young people living within Stepps to get involved in, not only would this benefit young people by giving them more opportunities to socialise, play, and learn, but also in some instances provide a positive alternative to anti-social behaviour. The popularity of the different options which were put to the community during the surveys suggest a high level of support for any new activity which targets young people in Stepps.



### Improving the Environment

Maintaining the local environment was a key priority for the community who showed a high level of interest in maintenance and littering issues in Stepps, as well as organising clean up events in the village, placing more bins around the village, and generally better maintaining outdoor spaces around the village. Young people were particularly concerned with environmental issues, as evidenced in the youth survey results, more support for young people to make positive contributions to environmental improvements in Stepps should be provided. All residents were keen to see the local environment upgraded and maintained in order to make Stepps a more attractive, safe, and sustainable place to live.

### Community Involvement

Many community members were keen to see more opportunities within Stepps for the community to get involved in activities happening locally. 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. Residents were also keen to see better publicity of what is happening already within the village, this could be through better use of existing social media channels, installing a community notice board, creating a new community website, or reaching an agreement with 'Stepps on the Level' to submit regular features. This could also be used for publicising any new activities which arise in future, using them as a tool for getting more residents to get involved and volunteer.



### Play Equipment

The existing play parks were identified as a key sites in need of upgrading. Residents wanted to see the play equipment in this park upgraded and better maintained in order to make it more attractive and safer for young people. Installation of new equipment was a top priority for young people and they had many ideas about what could be introduced including wheelchair swings, climbing walls, and infant play equipment. There are limited play facilities in the village currently, meaning that some residents need to cross busy roads to get to existing provision. By creating more and better play parks in Stepps, this would further contribute towards enhancing opportunities for local young people.

### **Activities for Older Residents**

The community were also very keen to see more happening in the village targeted at older residents. The broad interest in a variety of activities suggests that any level of increase in the opportunities available to residents would be welcomed. Of particular interest to the community were activities which specifically could help to reduce social isolation. Previous activities targeted at older residents were not well attended given the limited mobility of many older residents within the village and that to address this in future, a community transport initiative may need to be introduced.

### **Parking**

This was raised as an issue with both schools within the village and also at the shops on Cumbernauld Road. Parking at the school at drop off and pick up times was a major issue, with 84% 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. Cumbernauld Road parking is made worse by the poor quality of off street parking for local shops.

### **Community Facilities**

The quality of Stepp's existing community facilities was raised and discussed by a number of people during the consultation, in particular the scout hall and football pavilion and the threat to the cultural centre if Stepps Primary School expands. Improvement of these facilities would enable the delivery of many of the other activities and services that Stepps residents were supportive of, such as youth clubs, sports groups, and social events for older residents. Those responsible for existing facilities could be supported to access funding to enhance these amenities in order to make them more useable for Stepps residents or a new facility is created involving all user groups. Continued promotion of these spaces is also important in order to attract new groups to use the premises; by upgrading the amenities Stepps can attract the best quality recreation and learning opportunities for its residents. Currently the cost of hiring the Cultural Centre can be prohibitive for many people, expensive hire rates are something the community could engage with NLC to discuss.



### **Improved Maintenance and Development of Bluebell Park**

The Bluebell Park is at the heart of Stepps and enjoyed by children, dog walkers, people out for a walk, those taking a short cut to school or the bus stop. It contains both a very good selection of play equipment and the rural woodland feel of the countryside. There is scope however for improvements, whether in terms of existing beds and play equipment, or in the opportunity to create new play zones and areas of interest for all ages.

### **Creation of new Sports and Leisure facility**

Stepps has four main indoor halls, St. Joseph's, Stepps Church of Scotland Hall, The Cultural Centre and the Scout Hall, in addition it has the Pavilion at the football pitches. While it has a Ballantynes Gym Club the village could also benefit from a large yet simple hall suitable for a variety of sports and a venue for uniformed youth groups in the village, some of which have to meet in Chryston. A project which was to combine some of these uses with existing groups, allowing for sufficient car parking and access would be an extremely popular step for the village.



# 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 seven action points.** Action points are things that the community are unlikely to be able to deliver themselves, but which the community can advocate on their own behalf, using the plan as evidence, to organisations who are better placed to affect that specific type of development.

- **School parking issues/ Parking at shops**
- **Reduce irregularity of train service**
- **Retaining and reintroducing community amenities/ shops/ services**
- **Start up a community bus service/dial a bus**
- **Improve cycle land access in Stepps, especially to schools**
- **Work to protect green belt around Stepps**
- **More litter bins and regular collection**

**There are eight project outlines.** These are ideas which the community could take forward themselves, with support from partner organisations.

- **Establish a new Stepps Community Development Trust ensuring ongoing community engagement and involvement**
- **Create a new sports and leisure hub in Stepps**
- **Set up environmental community action group**
- **Upgrade of local play parks**
- **Establish Activities for young people**
- **Establish activities and events for older residents**
- **More Community Activities**
- **Establish Gala day/seasonal events**

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 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.

# ACTION POINTS

## School parking issues/ Parking at shops

The Schools through North Lanarkshire Council could introduce a smart parking programme with children and parents, this could be linked to road traffic safety in class and linked to a 'Parking Charter makes you Smarter'. This could be a car sticker for parents and a charter that is signed up by them and their children. In terms of parking at the shops in Cumbernauld Road NLC should be approached to consider if there are options that could be improved upon for the stretch between the GP surgery and the chemist at the other end of the block. This end of the street does have two small car parks which could be better set out and promoted to avoid simply parking on Cumbernauld Road.



## Reduce irregularity of train service

Given the huge number of residents who participated in the surveys, and who identified the irregularity of the train service as a problem it is essential that this strong backing for an improved service does not go wasted. Correspondence should be sent to Scotrail, North Lanarkshire Council and related transport/rail organisations highlighting the current deficiencies and asking for a dialogue and an improved service.

## Retaining and reintroducing community amenities/ shops/ services

Residents of all ages when keen to point out the lack café/informal dining in Stepps, with many particularly unhappy that the chemist had moved into the large building at the end of the parade of shops on Cumbernauld Road, rather than this be a café/pub/restaurant location. There is a limited amount of influence that the Community Council could bring to appeal against duplicate traders but this is difficult versus the private sector. There are examples of local groups approaching trade organisations to advertise the growing family population in the area and potential sites/buildings that are available. Community control of a café/restaurant is also evident across locations in Scotland, with not for profit organisations providing apprentices, entry level catering etc to local residents, such a venture however would have to be well thought through and may be for a later date.

## Community Bus Service

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. One option would be to work with Getting Better Together, based in Shotts, who run community buses which cover the 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 and 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.

### Improve cycle land access in Stepps, especially to schools

Stepps has a variety of pavements, roads and open spaces that reflect its changing history and make for a challenging cycle access programme in and around Stepps. While there are excellent footpaths at the Buchanan Tower end of Stepps there is much less space in the Victorian and Edwardian pavements of the old town. A cycle path strategy needs to be commissioned in tandem with North Lanarkshire Council, Sustrans, Safe routes to School and the schools themselves. This way the safest routes through the Park, along quieter roads could be established which would not only provide for healthy safe routes to school but would also address the school run parking problems that we have at present. Sustrans can provide 100% of design stage funding for cycling infrastructure projects through the Places for Everyone fund.



### Work to protect green belt around Stepps

Any existing derelict sites within the village and greenbelt areas on the outskirts of Stepps could be taken into community ownership through a new community development trust and then developed with a view to creating more enhanced community amenities. The sites would need to be purchased from existing landowners, with potential funding to do so from the Scottish Land Fund. Initial business planning and options studies should be undertaken first to identify what the best use of the sites would be for the community; undertaking this process will also help in securing funding for the preferred option.

### More litter bins and regular collection

There was high demand from the community to see more bins around Stepps; specifically Cumbernauld Road, the parks and around the schools, were identified as a priority areas. Stepps Community Council could engage with NLC to secure additional bins on the main thoroughfare through the village, this would be a very visible improvement and a 'quick win' from the community plan. Engagement with local school to design novelty bins with young people or have their art work displayed on the side of bins would help engage young people with the project and create a sense of ownership which could increase use of bins. Volunteers have been carrying out regular litter picks in the village which they plan on continuing, and have advertised on social media for more community involvement.

# PROJECT OUTLINES

## Community Environment Action Group

**Aim** To take care of and enhance the natural areas surrounding the village and bring about improvements to the appearance of the village where needed

**Summary** A community action group could take on small environmental and infrastructure projects within Stepps that could help to enhance the community for those living there. These types of groups often get involved in activities such as community clean ups, flower planting, and organising local events. By setting up a separate constituted group, they would be able to access other pots of funding unavailable to community councils. The group would be able to take forward a number of activities that the community indicated an interest in throughout the consultation process, working in partnership to provide a more attractive volunteering option for people who perhaps do not want the responsibility of joining the community council or new Development Trust, but would be interested in being involved on a more ad hoc basis. This project would help to stimulate the community to set up volunteer initiatives to enhance the environment and streetscape of Stepps and to engage local people so residents and groups can take pride in their community and their environment.



The community action group could also lead on the improvement of the local greenspace, which was identified as a potential action by residents. This may involve making the greenbelt around Stepps more accessible for local people on a variety of scales, for example in the short term through improvements in signposting, all the way to the larger infrastructure upgrade of informal paths and desire lines. A community action group could steer these activities to make sure local people can continue to enjoy high quality outdoor space. This could help to fill the gap left by council cuts to maintenance by engendering a greater sense of community ownership and responsibility, as well as increasing the capacity of local people to take up active roles within their community in terms of caretaking and maintenance.



**Existing Provision** The village does not have an existing environmental group set up to carry out these kinds of activities.

**Supporting Evidence** In the community survey 93% of people said there should be greater maintenance of outdoor spaces in Stepps while more than 200 people thought it was important to preserve the green belt.

### Funding Options

- North Lanarkshire Community Grants
- Awards for All
- Volunteering Matters - Action Earth Awards
- EB Scotland

### Potential Partners

- Keep Scotland Beautiful
- Community Action Lanarkshire
- The Conservation Volunteers (TCV)



## Establish Activities for Young People

**Aim** To support existing and facilitate the introduction of new activities and opportunities for young people in Stepps through a dedicated youth worker.

**Summary** The community could look to employ a youth worker for the local area who could engage young people through the two primary schools in the village and potentially help to set up a youth steering group in Stepps representing young people in the local area. The direct involvement of young



people in this way will ensure that the activities and services which are made available in the village reflect the interests and demands of the people who are supposed to use them. The group would steer the development of new activities in Stepps which cater to the interests and priorities of young people; as well as activities the group could also lead on projects and wider issues which are important to young people. For example environmental sustainability was a key priority for young people during the consultation; this could possibly be an action which young people themselves tackle within Stepps through the youth group.

The youth group could also help young people to be more involved in the decision making process in Stepps, and create more opportunities for young people to be independent, learn, and develop skills. All work of the group would be facilitated by the youth worker who would lead sessions, coordinate a pool of volunteers to run youth oriented activities, and work with existing youth clubs and other local groups to support their core activities ensuring all youth focused activities are able to access the resources they need to continue to provide opportunities for young people. Identifying interested young people through the school and existing youth activities would be a good starting point with young people potentially invited to attend community council meetings and participate in community projects as an introduction to the process before a separate group is created.

**Existing Provision** There is no dedicated youth group currently operating in Stepps.

**Supporting Evidence** More activities for young people was a top priority in the survey with 81% of people supportive of more being provided for young people locally. In the youth survey responses young people thought having more things for young people to do was very important; the most popular action in the survey.

### Funding Options

- Variety - Youth Club Grants
- Chance to Succeed
- Garfield Weston Foundation
- Dulverton Trust
- Robertson Trust

### Potential Partners

- North Lanarkshire Community Learning and Development
- NL Leisure
- Steps Primary schools
- Local sports teams

## Establish Activities and Events for Older Residents

**Aim** To deliver high quality activities and events for older residents living in the community

### Summary Proposal

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 resident' 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 Stepps and appealing to activity and service providers in the area to extend their provision to Stepps.

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 Stepps on a longer term basis. These taster sessions could be held in either of the church halls or the Cultural Centre. 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 Stepps.



### Existing Provision

Some of the activities which currently operate in the village which cater predominantly to older residents include the lunch club.

### Supporting Evidence

The community consultation identified that improvements in the variety of activities available for older residents was a priority for 82% of people. Suggestions during the survey process 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

### Relevant Partners

- Stepps Church
- St Joseph's Church
- University of the Third Age Lenzie
- North Lanarkshire Council

## Create a New Sports and Leisure Hub

**Aim** To create a new Sports and Leisure Hub within Stepps offering better access to sports and recreation opportunities locally in addition to improving the variety of sports pitches on offer.

**Summary** This project would see the installation of a new Sports and Leisure Hub on the site of the existing pavilion with new all weather playing facilities which could be owned by a new Sports Trust. The new facility would be accessible to the local community to use throughout the year, 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, bowls, badminton and hockey, as well as providing a venue for running fitness classes. The building could also be a venue for the uniformed groups such as the Scouts/Guides/BB's etc.



The Land and building could be purchased through a new arms length Sports and Leisure organisation formed by many of the local groups and working under the umbrella of the new Community Development Trust.

**Existing Provision** There is no Sports Hall in Stepps, other than the hall in the Cultural Centre where ball games are not allowed. 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 and issues of poor drainage

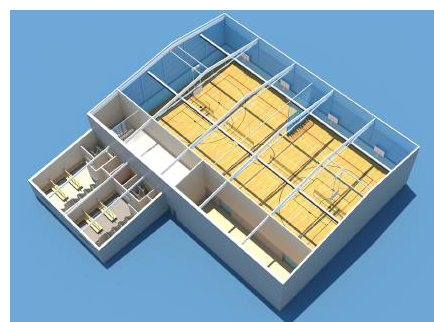
**Supporting Evidence** After conducting a survey of local residents, 85% of those who responded said that would like to see a new Sports and Leisure Centre in Stepps. There is a need for this project to increase fitness levels, and raise aspirations as there are few opportunities in our local area for children and adults to access this sort of fitness resource.

### Funding Options

- Sportscotland - Sport Facilities Fund
- Cash 4 Clubs
- Scottish Landfill Communities Funds (FCC, Suez, Levenseat etc.)
- Scottish Land Fund
- Regeneration Capital Grant Fund

### Potential Partners

- North Lanarkshire Council
- NL Leisure
- Local sports teams
- Stepps Community Council
- Stepps Scouts
- Garnkirk United FC
- Stepps Hockey
- Stepps Bowling



## Upgrade of Local Play Parks

**Aim** To improve and create better access to play facilities in Stepps Parks.

**Summary** This project would see the general upgrade of the existing play equipment at Bluebell Park. The existing layout within the park is in need of upgrade having been installed approximately 10 years ago, and has understandably been subject to significant wear and tear. The park should 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. The park at Cardowan was also highlighted as in need of investment in addition to the small ones in the new estates near Kilpatrick Drive and Jackson Drive.



As well as upgrading and maintaining the play equipment already within the village, residents were also keen to see more play equipment in other areas of the village. The lack of multiple play parks means that many young people may have to walk quite far to play currently, which many parents may be reluctant to let them do, particularly if roads are busy. In particular the parks should provide play equipment infants; one age groups currently without age appropriate equipment in the village.

**Existing Provision** Bluebell Park, located in the village centre behind Cumbernauld road, it is the main play park in the village, however many of the features were installed more than 10 years ago and are in need of upgrading.

**Supporting Evidence** 85% of respondents wanted to see improvements to Bluebell Park. Young people loved the park but it needs to be better maintained, with new additional features, especially for very young children where there is a perceived lack of appropriate facilities.



### Funding Options

- Scottish Landfill Communities Funds (FCC, Suez, Levensat etc.)
- Awards for All
- North Lanarkshire Council

### Potential Partners

- North Lanarkshire Council
- Stepps Community Council

## More Community Activities

**Aim** To increase and diversify the range of activity opportunities which are available in Stepps

**Summary** This project could potentially be best facilitated by a development worker with a remit in Stepps who could coordinate partnership working between the community, local groups, schools and businesses to create a wider range of community events and activities for all ages throughout the year with a particular focus on activities and events which bring people of all ages and backgrounds together. The development worker could engage with the community to identify popular activities that people would like to try, developing a programme of taster sessions to be delivered in the village. These taster sessions would allow people to discover new interests and allow for the feasibility of certain activities to be tested on a trial basis before a longer term commitment is made. They would also work with existing groups and premises within the village to identify any additional support groups might benefit from to allow them to accommodate more people, as well as to identify spaces in which activities could be delivered. The development worker could be bought in as a service rather than employed directly.



A new community activities committee could be introduced in the community to coordinate community interest and action to help attract new activity and service provides to the village; as well have supporting local people to set up their own. The project would engage fully with residents in the planning of all new activities and community events to ensure these programmes reflect local preferences and to recruit groups and volunteers to become involved in the planning, fundraising and the running of these events and activities. This project would link well with the proposed volunteering initiative.

### Existing Provision

There are a number of community groups and activities operating locally catering to a range of age groups, particularly older adults and young people. One age group potentially lacking in activity provision however are working age adults.

### Supporting Evidence

Having more things to do in Stepps was something that community members were very keen on throughout the consultation. New activities for older and younger people were supported by 84% and 95% of respondents in the community survey respectively. Sports activities were a popular option for all age groups at the drop in events, and setting up a youth club was a particularly popular choice for young people.

### Funding Options

- Awards for All
- Tesco Bags of Help
- Co-op - Community Grant

### Potential Partners

- North Lanarkshire Council
- Voluntary Action North Lanarkshire
- Community venues (churches, schools, Scout Hall)
- Existing community groups in Stepps



## Establish Gala day and community events

**Aim** To establish a village fun day until the community are in a position to deliver a larger scale annual gala day event. In addition to establish a series of events throughout the year that would bring residents together and highlight the work of the Trust.

**Summary** Stepps Primary School is well organised and attended with having the additional advantage of having sports groups from the village available on the astro turf pitch where people of all ages can learn about various sports and how to join. This project could support the community to continue and increase support for a fun day, with the aspiration to eventually turn it into a larger scale gala day incorporating a programme of community events and activities. Support for the fun day would focus on increasing the activities which are delivered as part of the event in order to grow attendance annually. This would help to get more people interested and involved in local activities. A community gala day could act as a catalyst for a wider variety of community action as more people feel empowered and encouraged to volunteer their time to facilitate valuable, fun community activities. A Social Events Committee could be established identifying key events throughout the year, eg Burns Supper, Easter Egg hunt, Summer Gala, Halloween, Christmas Dinner/Santa



**Existing Provision** There is no Gala day/fun day for everyone in Stepps. The primary schools run events but these are in the main aimed at parents. Chryston run a very well organised Gala day but nothing else throughout the year.

**Supporting Evidence** The strong sense of community within Stepps was identified in the surveys as a key positive aspect of living in Stepps, this project would enhance this even further by providing more opportunities for the community to come together. 76% of respondents supported having more events throughout the year. Having more opportunities to get involved with the community was something else that local people were keen to see. The gala day would also create more things to do in the village; something that young people were very keen to see.

### Funding Options

- Awards for All
- North Lanarkshire Council- Community Grant
- Asda Foundation - Local Impact Grants

### Potential Partners

- North Lanarkshire Council
- Local community and sports groups
- Local businesses



## Establishing Stepps Community Development Trust

**Aim** To establish a new not for profit, charitable Trust with a membership open to residents of Stepps to carry out a variety of activities and services for the village.

**Summary** This project would be to set up a community development trust for Stepps 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 Stepps. 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.

**Existing Provision** There is no community development trust for Stepps with the nearest one being in Glasgow. While there is an active Community Council, it does not have the same power over land and building acquisition and appointment of staff.

**Supporting Evidence** 94% of the first survey thought that residents should have more control in the decision making processes in the village, while in the second survey, 40% of respondents indicated they would support the formation of a new Stepps Trust.

### Funding Options

- North Lanarkshire Council
- National Lottery
- Scottish Government
- Land Fill Tax Funds

### Potential Partners

- North Lanarkshire Council
- Stepps Community Council
- Existing Community/Voluntary Groups in Stepps
- Stepps Residents
- Stepps Primary Schools/Churches

# MAKING IT HAPPEN

This Community Plan belongs to everyone in Stepps and we hope that the whole community will use it and be involved in taking the Plan forward to help make Stepps a great place to live. The Stepps Community Development Trust Steering Group wish to thank all those who have contributed their time and skills at various times throughout this process both local groups and agencies and individual residents who contributed.

## 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. 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 Stepps Community Development Trust Steering Group.

Stepps Community Development Trust Steering Group meet every month and are contactable on Facebook at 'Stepps Community Development Trust', where you can find out more about what is happening in the village as well. Stepps Community Council meetings are also held monthly and are open for all Stepps residents to attend.

## How Do We Achieve This

### Stepps Community Development Trust

Setting up a Community Development Trust would offer an excellent means of delivering the various actions and projects detailed within this plan, as a Community Development Trust could provide support to the Community Council and local organisations to carry out certain tasks which these organisations would not be able to, 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 Stepps.





**AWARDS  
FOR ALL  
SCOTLAND**

**STEPS**  
Community  
Development  
**TRUST**

**Community Links Scotland**  
  
**REGENERATION SERVICES**