This response is from Scottish Allotments and Gardens Society (SAGS) so will concentrate on examples and issues related to allotments. However we believe that these are also relevant to many other areas of community regeneration.

**Strategy and policy issues**

1. **How can the linkage between the various strategies and policies related to regeneration be improved?**

   The strategies and policies are fine in themselves but a little more support could be given that enables individual projects to integrate all these areas. The diagram below shows some of the strategies and policies that are relevant to allotments.

   Successful regeneration projects require hubs or anchor organizations that brings together the different strands of community activity to share knowledge and understanding. An allotment site provides a space where people from diverse background, age and ability can meet and share experiences. Meeting places are essential to provide linkages on the ground.

2. **Can physical, social and economic regeneration really be separate entities?** The Committee would find it useful to hear about projects distinctly focussed on one or more aspects, and the direct and indirect outcomes of such activity.

   Allotments contribute to physical, social and economic regeneration. However recent developments have concentrated on the social regeneration and neglected the physical and economic strands.
For example in Oatlands, Glasgow an old established site was moved to make way for town houses. The new allotment was placed in a housing development on the site of a road that was dug up. There have been problems with drainage, soil and resentment because the area did not have a shop or play park. The original site had rich soil nurtured over many years, established hedges and access to other areas of green space. The site was next to a church building and together these could have formed a viable economic unit with mutual support for practical training in horticulture, cookery classes and the possibility of developing small local enterprises in, for example fruit bushes, vegetable plugs, herbs, mushrooms and flowers. The activities could have been expanded into artisan crafts such as chutney, jams, wine, soaps and herbal remedies. However by isolating the site completely within the houses, these opportunities have been missed. Also in Glasgow, Well house is a better example of positioning with a small site, next to the community centre and local school although this site is so small there is not a critical mass for other activities.

3. Are we achieving the best value from investment in this area? If not, how could funding achieve the maximum impact? Could the funding available be used in different ways to support regeneration?

Very few development and regeneration schemes to date have included allotments but these contribute to the major themes of regeneration. In Oatlands there was no budget for the allotment. Funding is needed to set up a new site. However where grants have been applied for as in Reidvale or as in the case of Oatlands or High Carnynne where a site has been moved, the design of the sheds, green houses, community huts etc, while much appreciated has been at an unnecessary level.

It should be noted that for a beginning plot-holder a new plot can involve quite a large expense for tools and seeds. We understand that recently people have been deterred from joining an allotment site because of this. In the thirties the Government together with the Society of Friends and the National Union of Scottish Allotment Holders set up a scheme to help the plot-holders – the Scottish Allotment Scheme for the Unemployed.

Partnership Working

4. What delivery mechanisms, co-ordination of, and information on the funding that supports regeneration are required, to facilitate access by all sections of the community?

SAGS starts from the premise that the support and need for growing spaces represented by the high waiting lists in certain urban areas is an indicator of the untapped potential of allotments to contribute to the quality of life for a significant proportion of the population. However for allotments to be a success they need to be integrated into the design of any new development or regeneration area from the start and be part of the vision for the community. Initially, for a new scheme there may not be people who can be identified as proposing to live in the area. Potential plot holders should be identified as soon as possible and enabled to take ownership of the project. This group may not have the requisite skills to manage the project so may need support. Such support should be as a catalyst not director. Local networks, good practice examples and information sources are required. Funding should perhaps be in the form of interest free loans rather than direct grants since this ensures that only necessary work will be undertaken. Those implementing regeneration schemes should consult organisations such as SAGS for advice. (see Scottish Allotment Site Design Guide 2013). Many planners and landscape architects have no experience of the needs or potential problems that can arise on sites and money has been wasted in the past with bad and unnecessary design.

5. Should funding be focused on start up or running costs? What is the correct balance between revenue and capital funding? Please indicate reasons for your views

This balance between revenue and capital funding depends on the project. Allotments do not generate revenue per se but are a valuable contributor to the social fabric of the local community and to the local environment. Allotment sites need a certain initial investment for items such drainage, water, fences, paths. Once established privately owned sites (such as Holmlea and Berridale in Glasgow) have shown they can be self sustaining. Some sites may benefit from being
6. How can it be ensured that regeneration projects are sustainable in the long term?
Allotments once established and embedded in the community area sustainable in the long term - many existing sites in Glasgow are almost 100 years old. Allotments do not rely on paid staff or further large scale fundraising. Problems can arise from internal conflict but mostly, because they consist of a group of people working together on a common task for mutual benefit they survive.
An example of a new site that is flourishing is Ravenscraig walled garden in Kirkcaldy
www.kirkcaldyallotments.org.uk/Index.asp?MainID=14221

Practical Issues
7. What actions could the Scottish Governments forthcoming community capacity building programme include to best support communities to „do regeneration“ themselves?
New allotment sites need two different types of capacity. First practical gardening skills which many potential plot holders lack. An opportunity to gain experience, maybe first in a community site with raised beds and then making small plots available with full size plots for those who have the time and skills to cultivate them. Different levels of training, demonstrations and visits to see other sites is recommended.
Then there are the management skills for running a site including book keeping, minute taking, membership, site maintenance and conflict avoidance. For sites to be self-sustaining there has to be a critical number of people involved to provide a pool of people with the requisite management skills. The association must have a clear constitution and rules. Several private sites have failed or are in difficulties because of misunderstanding or conflicts.

8. What role should CPPs play in supporting the community in regenerating their communities?
CPPs work by liaising both upwards and downwards. They have a role to play in encouraging the local authorities to have a holistic vision and think laterally about projects that have a positive benefit such as allotments and ensure they are included in the SOA.

9. How can CPPs best empower local communities to deliver regeneration? Please provide any examples of best practice or limitations experienced that you think the Committee would find useful in its scrutiny.
The main areas in urban communities are the Area or Ward Committees which cover electoral areas. These are the areas which will vote for the local Councillors and where they have their power base. By bringing local committees together, disseminating information and demonstrating good practice CPPs will help to empower the local communities.

10. How can the outcomes of regeneration truly be captured and measured? What are the barriers to capturing outcomes and how should the success of regeneration investment be determined?
Measuring the success of a regeneration project takes time. Allotments are not instant gardening and it takes time to develop their full potential. A new award scheme being developed in Glasgow may be of interest. Allotments are assessed on sustaining the soil, supporting the plot-holder and engaging with the local community. They will be encouraged to develop these strands over the years. The self assessment is verified by a team of Champions representing each site. The assessment is thus based in the local community but knowledge is shared among the wider community and the final assessment is a joint affair.

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