This paper constitutes the Scottish Community Development Centre’s (SCDC) submission to the Local Government and Regeneration Committee’s call for evidence as part of its Scrutiny of the Draft Budget 2013-14.

SCDC is an independent voluntary organisation, registered charity in Scotland and the recognised lead national agency for community development. We work directly with communities to build skills, organisation, involvement and equalities, with people who work in communities at practitioner level to build their skills base and at a partnership level to support strategic community development approaches.

Through our direct experience working with communities and practitioners we seek to influence policy in favour of community development approaches to achieving positive outcomes for all.
What does 'regeneration' mean to you?

1.1 SCDC shares the view that regeneration is a broad concept. However, the element of regeneration that needs to be given stronger emphasis is social regeneration. Research findings from the GoWell study annual event focus on the inability of physical regeneration to improve health and wellbeing on its own, and that social regeneration needs to be given adequate attention. The research points to the lack of evidence that the "social health" of communities can be improved through physical regeneration.¹

1.2 SCDC's view is that regeneration activities will necessarily take different forms in different areas and that interventions must be designed according to local need. We believe however, that there must be a particular focus on our most deprived areas in Scotland. We know from statistical data that certain areas make disproportionate demands on services. These are normally small pockets of severe deprivation and social dysfunction, often found within larger areas defined as priorities in the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation. Such areas can readily be identified by service managers, and they can also be delineated as likely to fall within the 'worst' 2% of enumeration districts, or by geographic techniques of mapping service demand.

1.3 Residents of such areas are likely to have poor personal support and contact networks; experience severe physical and mental health issues; be both victims and perpetrators of crime and disorder, and to be without work and on little more than a subsistence income. As such they make heavy demands on the services of the police and emergency services, social work and primary care, housing providers and environmental health services among others. Moreover, the lack of coping mechanisms such as community networks, resources and facilities in many such areas exacerbates these problems as residents have nowhere to turn apart from the public services.

1.4 The reality is that Scotland has many pockets of 'entrenched' deprivation that seem to have been resistant to attempts to improve conditions over many years despite a sequence of project based approaches, the major flaw of which is the fact that interventions to date have been based largely on a treatment model. It is our view that direct intervention is needed to release potential, mobilise and build the capacities and skills that exist within those communities so that better outcomes for all can be achieved.

1.5 In these most challenging neighbourhoods the basic principles of an alternative approach would be based on the following:

- An assets approach, implying respect and recognition of the individuals and families involved, working with them in understanding issues and developing their own solutions

• A long-term commitment to the areas recognising that a sequence of short term projects that are the typical experience of deprived areas do not work and do not enjoy the trust or confidence of the community
• The key aims of the commitment being to build solidarity within the community, an atmosphere of attachment and cohesion, and the sense of coherence that is the foundation of a healthy and fulfilling quality of life, and the foundation of empowerment, employment and engagement in civic life
• A focus on early years and working with young people as the most critical life stages for the individuals involved and for the communities as a whole.

1.6 In recent years, the area of social regeneration has been largely neglected and under resourced, therefore there is little evidence of success at population level. However, there are many evaluative studies pointing to the benefits of this approach at local level and how investment in social regeneration activity has achieved positive outcomes for communities. Many examples are contained within the evidence gathered as part of the Meeting the Shared Challenge programme².

1.7 A good illustrative example is the development of CAMGLEN radio by Cambuslang and Rutherglen Healthy Living Initiative³. This initiative was developed through community engagement and supported by development workers and volunteers. It focused on the development of a local radio station managed and run by local people. In summary, the initiative has now progressed to;
  • Involve over 70 volunteers in the management and operation of the radio station
  • Provide accredited training opportunities and act as a bridge to employment or further education opportunities
  • Support intergenerational activities and promote community cohesion
  • Promote health awareness and healthy living activities
  • Provide a base and a support for local young people
  • Engage with local traders promoting local business
  • Give local people a voice on issues which affect them
  • Increased people’s sense of ownership, responsibility and pride in their area

Camglen Radio was recently successful in obtaining a 5 year FM license, which is a significant achievement⁴.

³ Ibid p13
⁴ http://www.camglenradio.org/index.php?id=153
The regeneration strategy, resources and funding

2.1 SCDC supports the People and Communities Fund's focus on community led regeneration and prevention and believes that this fund will help increase the ability of some community-led organisations in Scotland to work more effectively with local communities. However, more resources will need to be channelled towards community-led regeneration if we are to see a real, sustained difference in Scotland's most disadvantaged communities.

2.2 The People and Communities Fund is open to organisations which fulfill the criteria associated with the definition of a community anchor organisation. Our concern is that not all areas, particularly disadvantaged urban areas, have local organisations which can meet the criteria for funding or that the funding will be directed at the social regeneration, or community building, activity we refer to earlier in our response.

2.3 The Capital Investment Fund will provide resource injection in the form of funds predominantly for physical infrastructure and local employment initiatives but this investment will only be fully realised if accompanied by investment in the building of social capital.

2.4 Achieving a Sustainable Future states that 'Investment in a new community capacity building programme ... will focus on areas where there are currently few local organisations, weak networks amongst local people and where local people's skills and confidence need to be nurtured.' We are not aware that any action has been taken forward on this at time of writing yet we believe that community capacity building is a critical component of the strategy overall and is the area of work we can most productively engage with.

2.5 As an intervention, community capacity building must be taken forward in full partnership with communities and community organisations themselves if it is to succeed. The activity of capacity building must be firmly rooted in working with local people to recognise the assets they already have at their disposal and to identify what skills, processes and systems they need to develop in order for them to achieve their vision independently. So, whilst resources are essential for groups to operate, it is developmental support that enables them to grow and thrive - this support process is what SCDC defines as community capacity building.

2.6 Community capacity building can operate at three distinct levels;

1. At local neighbourhood level where community infrastructure is low - activity which helps bring people together to establish stronger social networks and to help them organise around the issues which are important to them, their families and the wider community (this activity is often referred to as 'community building' or building social capital)
2. With groups and organisations which are already established but who have limited resource to enable them to be more effective and achieve what they aspire to achieve

3. With well-established organisations who seek to extend their reach, grow or consolidate their organisation and formalise their plans and activities as recognised co-producers of local services

Our view is that capacity building activity should focus on supporting communities to develop;

- **Direction and structure**: strong leadership, sound management and effective decision-making structures
- **Resources and assets**: access to, and ownership of, the resources and assets needed to support activities
- **Links and networks**: contact with other community organisations, and with wider networks to access and share learning and ideas
- **Involvement and inclusion**: involving and including all sections of the community,
- **Effectiveness**: bringing about tangible and beneficial change in the community
- **Recognition**: being recognised as a legitimate and authoritative representative of community views and issues
- **Accountability and legitimacy**: remaining accountable to and representative of the community

2.7 One of the main issues in respect of community capacity building more generally is that any intervention is currently attached to a specific policy area. Social regeneration deals with a range of interweaving and complex factors directly related to local demographics, history and unique characteristics. This would suggest that one outcome cannot easily be addressed in isolation of another.

2.8 Our view is that national and local policy on community-led regeneration must be coherent with other national policy objectives, in particular, Equally Well, Achieving our Potential, Early Years, Community Safety and Public Services Reform. The actions we take forward must also take into account new duties which may come into force through the potential Community Empowerment and Renewal Bill. The implementation of the regeneration strategy should also take into account emerging thinking and models such as co-production and the recent emphasis - particularly by the Chief Medical Officer - on assets based approaches.

2.9 From a community led health perspective\(^5\), there is little mention in the Regeneration Strategy of strategic or operational link up to agencies and organisations working on health outcomes. Although health boards and community health projects are mentioned in the Annexes, it would be value to

\(^5\) See [http://www.chex.org.uk/](http://www.chex.org.uk/) for more on this perspective
see more synergy between policies such as the Healthcare Quality Strategy for NHS Scotland\textsuperscript{6} and connecting with work on the ground. In addition, the section on housing makes no reference to caring services and support needs. This needs to be consistently highlighted as part of any strategy on regeneration and preventative spend given we are 'Shifting the Balance of Care' away from institutions towards community solutions.

Regeneration, equalities and preventative spending

3.1 SCDC endorses the continuation of the Change Fund and components of the Scottish Futures Fund. We believe that those measures should be complemented by initiatives to enhance the supports available at neighbourhood community level and communities experiencing long term deprivation and that those at risk of degeneration and decline should be treated as priority.

3.2 Regeneration can be at the heart of the preventative agenda if community-led approaches are embraced and barriers, especially those around 'risk' and 'cost', are addressed. Communities that have been supported at a neighbourhood level to develop their own responses to meet needs and address local concerns are more resilient, more sustainable and can complement the role of public services as well as potentially drive down demand\textsuperscript{7}. Evidence suggests that more cohesive and settled communities impact less on public services in so far as residents are typically healthier, better supported, more fully engaged and able to provide mutual care and support\textsuperscript{8}.

3.3 Further backing for community led, neighbourhood-focused, approaches have been provided by the Young Foundation\textsuperscript{9}. Drawing on the experience of project work on three small housing estates in England where people experience "persistent and profound deprivation", the Foundation argues that, in areas of entrenched deprivation, "social and emotional support strategies" have to be in place as a prerequisite for any hope of success in taking forward other more physical strategies. This mirrors the evidence in the recent material from GoWell (mentioned above) that there has been insufficient attention given to the social and community aspects of regeneration as opposed to the physical and economic aspects.

3.4 Recent evidence gathered by SCDC underlines the following barriers to community-led approaches when working with public sector partners:

\textsuperscript{7} See SCDC (2011) 50 Streets: Addressing entrenched deprivation through neighbourhood work. \url{http://www.scdc.org.uk/media/resources/policy-and-practice/50\%20Streets\%20addressing\%20entrenched\%20deprivation\%20through\%20neighbourhood\%20work.pdf}
\textsuperscript{8} \url{http://www.scdc.org.uk/media/resources/what-we-do/mtsc/Making\%20it\%20Happen.pdf}
• Resistance to change: the struggle to stay the same (dynamic conservatism)
• Risk: of loss of control of the agenda and/or of political authority and of blame (both externally and by internal management) if anything goes wrong.
• Cost: lacking the conclusive evidence that working in a different way will really save money
• Competence and culture: challenges to professional boundaries and behaviour and the requirement for new competences associated with community and service user involvement
• Tendencies to 'reinvent the wheel': in response to new political imperatives and lack of realistic timescales for positive change to take place. 10

3.5 The move to greater involvement of local people in the influencing, shaping, complementing and delivery of aspects of public services, as recommended by the Christie Commission, requires a 'letting go' of professional authority and control. We believe that there is a requirement for new guidance, training and skills development for public sector staff at both strategic and practice levels on new ways of working which involve service users and local communities.

Regeneration and sustainable economic development

4.1 Where there is a healthy community infrastructure in place and where there are established and effective community organisations working in local neighbourhoods, many communities have been successful in addressing their own local issues. They have brought in income by drawing on the skills and experience of local people; they have put issues and solutions onto the policy agenda; they have set up food projects to make food more accessible and affordable, they have set up initiatives to combat fuel poverty and more besides. Indeed in many neighbourhoods it is possible to identify a distinct community sector where resident groups, housing associations, community centres, social enterprises, credit unions and health initiatives are community-led or community driven and, where they work in collaboration, share services or commission from each other. Such networks can encourage local employment and local procurement, thereby supporting the community economy and retaining wealth11.


4.2 Central to the regeneration agenda are the three outcome areas of economically sustainable communities, physically sustainable communities and socially sustainable communities. We recognise the importance of economic development to all of those outcome areas and suggest that interventions must take account off all three simultaneously in order to achieve most impact.

4.3 In this response we have argued for investment in building community infrastructure. Where there is a strong community infrastructure in place, communities are more able to contribute to the achievement of all of those outcomes and the broader outcomes contained within the National Performance Framework, for example, they can;

- provide learning opportunities in their communities (outcome: 'we are better educated, more skilled and more successful')
- improve the built and natural environment (outcomes: 'we value and enjoy our built and natural environment and protect it and enhance it for future generations' and 'we live in well-designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need')
- develop community led businesses, (outcome: 'we realise our full economic potential with more and better employment opportunities for our people')
- improve health through community led preventive activity, for example food and diet programmes (outcome: 'people live longer healthier lives')
- provide play facilities for children (outcome: our children have the best start in life')
- address experience of discrimination and promote inclusion (outcome: 'we have tackled the significant inequalities in Scottish society' and 'we take pride in a strong, fair and inclusive national identity')

4.4 Promotion and development of social enterprises should be part of all local economic development strategies. Achieving a Sustainable Future rightly refers to this sector as making a contribution to economically sustainable communities, and is important to emphasise the value of this sector in relation to giving disadvantaged or marginalised people employment experience and reinvesting profits back into the community.
Community led regeneration and CPPs

5.1 SCDC welcomes the emphasis in the national Regeneration Strategy on community-led regeneration. SCDC offers the following definition of community-led regeneration;

‘Community led regeneration is defined by actions that are based on the needs and issues understood by and experienced by communities themselves, where communities are supported to take the lead in identifying and implementing local solutions’.

5.2 We believe that community-led regeneration will be successful if we invest in the areas we have outlined earlier in this response.

5.3 SCDC has a national remit and cannot comment on the performance of individual CPPs or the effectiveness of individual SOAs. Our general view is that CPPs have responsibility to ensure that all partners work together to ensure that local regeneration outcomes are achieved and that, in doing this, they must fully engage local communities in the process. To achieve real progress and lasting and sustainable change, people and communities must be involved in identifying the outcomes that need to be achieved and in planning and implementing shared local solutions. Participatory, (i.e. involving communities) outcome-driven thinking and planning is essential to redefining the boundaries of the state and individual and community rights and responsibilities.

5.4 Although Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs) are tasked with the responsibility for engaging communities in planning and decision making processes at a local level, our view is that they function (broadly speaking) mainly as inter-agency planning vehicles at a strategic level. Their engagement with communities remains, in the majority of instances, driven by agency agendas as opposed to community needs and issues. Our view is that this is because there has been a lack of investment in engaging communities at an early stage in identifying what actions are needed to achieve positive change and also because there is currently limited opportunity or mechanism for communities to bring their own agendas to the table.

5.5 Some important community issues - in particular planning applications - are not part of the community planning process. This is frustrating at community level as place is vitally important in achieving better health and social outcomes.

5.6 If we are to move to a model where communities are supported to act as agents of change in their own communities, there needs to be a clear mandate at national and local level. This mandate is already set out in the National Standards for Community Engagement and the supporting guidance on the National Standards for Community Engagement across many areas of public policy. Community engagement is effective if and when it involves: Developing and sustaining a working relationship between one or more public body and one or more community group, to help them both to
understand and act on the needs or issues that the community experiences.\textsuperscript{12}

5.7 SCDC currently supports the VOiCE community engagement planning and evaluation framework\textsuperscript{13}, which has over 1100 registered users across 30 of the local CPP areas and the majority of health board areas (including specialist health boards). A recent consultation with VOiCE users as part of SCDC’s response to the consultation on the proposed Community Empowerment and Renewal Bill evidenced widespread opinion on the need to implement the National Standards in a deeper way to support genuine shared decision making, shared action with communities and the support of independent action by communities themselves. In addition, the response showed that there needs to be a reconfiguration of relationships between communities, local government and local partnership bodies at a local level, which should be managed in a way which sets out clearly the purpose, role and accountability of each stakeholder.

5.8 A recent conference co-hosted by SCDC on Participatory Democracy and Participatory Budgeting and supported by the Minster for Local Government and Planning, evidenced that there is benefit in Community Planning Partnerships using models of engagement which support more involvement of communities in shared action and that they should not be overly reliant on community participation or engagement being in the form of traditional representation on partnership groups or boards\textsuperscript{14}.

5.9 As highlighted earlier in this paper, not all communities have infrastructure in place which allows them to respond to demands to engage effectively or to become partners in local initiatives, and this is especially true of our most deeply deprived and fragmented communities. Although skills, knowledge and opportunities exist within all communities, investment in community capacity building is essential in areas of low community infrastructure where there is a need to support those communities to engage effectively as equal partners.


\textsuperscript{13} http://www.voicescotland.org.uk/

Regeneration and climate change targets

6.1 It is a double-edged statistic that the least affluent in the UK have the lowest carbon footprints\(^\text{15}\). However, issues concerned with climate change and global warming must be seriously considered as part of regeneration activity more generally - in the way new social housing is built, in the nature of the domestic services supplied to regeneration areas, in land use planning and investment in the renewables industry and community owned and managed renewables.

Evidence shows that community-led regeneration often works well when focused on issues such as green land-use, community growing and food projects, recycling etc. These issues can bring people together, improve community cohesion, enhance the local environment address local health and issues through locally grown healthy food provision\(^\text{16, 17}\).

\(^{15}\) BBC Website (2009) 'The rich have the biggest carbon footprints in the UK' http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/8393081.stm

\(^{16}\) http://www.scdc.org.uk/media/resources/what-we-do/demonstrating-links/demonstrating%20the%20links%20full%20evaluation.pdf

\(^{17}\) For examples of this see the Climate Challenge Fund Final Reports on Keep Scotland Beautiful's website http://ccf.keepscotlandbeautiful.org/page.aspx?id=22