



Community Learning & Development Plan 2021-24

Recovery, Renewal and Re-align

September 2021

The CLD Plan 2021-2024

Community learning and development in Fife is characterised by strong partnership working across public sector agencies, third sector providers and with communities. It is a vehicle for change in our communities and uses a distinct form of educational practice that is collaborative, anti-discriminatory and equalities-focused. It is concerned with the empowerment of individuals, families and communities to identify their individual and collective goals, to take part in learning and take action to bring about positive change.

Our practitioners and volunteers are guided by a professional practice framework based on competencies and values supported by a code of ethics and a critically reflective responsibility to how they approach their work. Its key priorities are to deliver:

- Improved life chances for people of all ages through learning, personal development and active citizenship.
- Create stronger, more resilient and inclusive communities.

Over the next three years the CLD Partnership will be prioritising work with disadvantaged communities, families and households to improve their capacity to participate in a broad range of learning-based programmes designed to overcome barriers to participation at personal, community and institutional levels. The CLD Partnership will work with and through the People and Place Leadership groups to plan, deliver and review the effectiveness of the interventions and alongside communities will continue to identify further areas for collaborative action.

The CLD plan is one of the key delivery vehicles for the Plan for Fife. It outlines how community learning and development activity will contribute to the Plan for Fife outcomes over the next three years. The plan identifies the needs and gaps in our current delivery around how we address poverty and inequality in Fife and sets out how we are going to collectively work to tackle these gaps and will report on progress through measurable impacts at a local and regional level.

Our plan uses local and national research to help us to understand different aspects of life in Fife. This has identified:

- Mid Fife presents a number of challenges. It has some of the poorest outcomes in Scotland in areas like jobs, health and deprivation.
- Population groups that aren't doing as well as expected include people living in rural areas and people in hard pressed circumstances.
- Inequality continues to increase and this is a major risk for Fife.
- COVID recovery is having a major impact on many people in Fife and on the local economy.
- Making better use of assets provides an important opportunity to improve outcomes.

Plan for Fife: Recover, Renew and Re-align

The three-year review of the Plan for Fife coincided with the Covid emergency. This has resulted in specific consideration being given to how we recover from the pandemic and renew our public services. Some of the most significant examples of Fife's response to the pandemic were characterised by people and services tackling problems locally, finding ways to overcome red-tape and working to a common purpose. We want to continue to build on this community action through a greater focus on place and to involve communities more.

Going forward, we will put community wealth building at the heart of all we do to:

- Recover from the pandemic: taking immediate action to support our children and young people, those people who have been most affected, and our business community.
- Renew our public services through a new commitment to work in partnership with our communities, with a focus on place.
- Re-align our strategies, plans and ways of working to make this happen and deliver our ambitions

We will use these themes to inform our CLD priorities over the next three years to help our communities become not just wealthier but healthier and greener too. We hope it will stimulate conversations locally about what needs to change next and how we can all play our part in informing local decisions and shaping future services.

Figure 1:
Our Journey Towards a Fairer Fife



Our Partnership Actions

The revised Fife Partnership structure is designed to provide the focus, leadership drive and accountability that will be needed to support the renewal of our public services, through our commitment to community wealth building.

People and Place Leadership groups have been established across Fife's seven local community planning areas, building on models established during the pandemic response. These groups will have a key role to play in ensuring that the delivery of agreed priorities and ambitions is built around effective local leadership and collaboration. Supporting this work will be a key responsibility of the Recovery and Renewal Leadership Group. This will also ensure that local community planning informs the priorities going forward.

The work of the CLD Partnership will be reported through the Health & Wellbeing Partnership, providing a strengthened opportunity to align public health and community learning & development activity placing an emphasis on tackling poverty and crisis prevention.

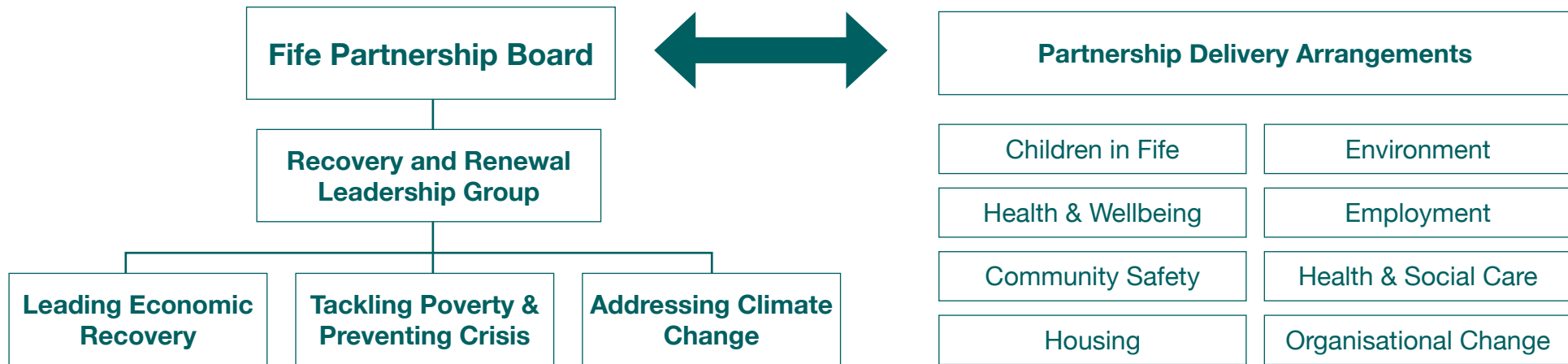


Figure 2: Leadership structure

Our Partnership Actions

Through strengthening our work with the People and Place Leadership groups we will capture and report on specific and measurable actions that our practitioners and volunteers are leading in local communities. In addition to these the CLD partnership are committed to:

- working directly with area partnerships and staff teams to create local CLD delivery plans that support the local community planning approach,
- working with education, colleges and youth work providers to develop a mechanism to track and report on young people's achievements,
- undertaking research with young people aged 11 – 21 years to understand the effects of COVID on their learning, emotional and social development and how best we respond,
- establishing learner pathways with recognised points of entry into our community learning programmes and onwards to college, training or employment,
- developing volunteering roles that offer meaningful, appropriate and learning based opportunities to support individuals to make a real and sustained difference to their personal situations and to the wider community,
- Improving community voice structures at local and regional level ensuring direct connectivity to decision makers,
- implementing a workforce development plan to support practitioners and volunteers respond to the expressed needs of local communities.

Our Partnership Actions

Reporting and Scrutiny Arrangements

The partnership members will monitor progress against the agreed actions through:

- developing service and partnership planning arrangements for the local delivery of CLD activities
- improving outcome focused planning and evaluation approaches in the sector
- gathering evidence and measuring Impact
- exploring management information and performance improvement
- establishing a process of peer review with the Tayside & Fife Alliance around reporting progress against the plan outcomes
- improving our workforce development planning

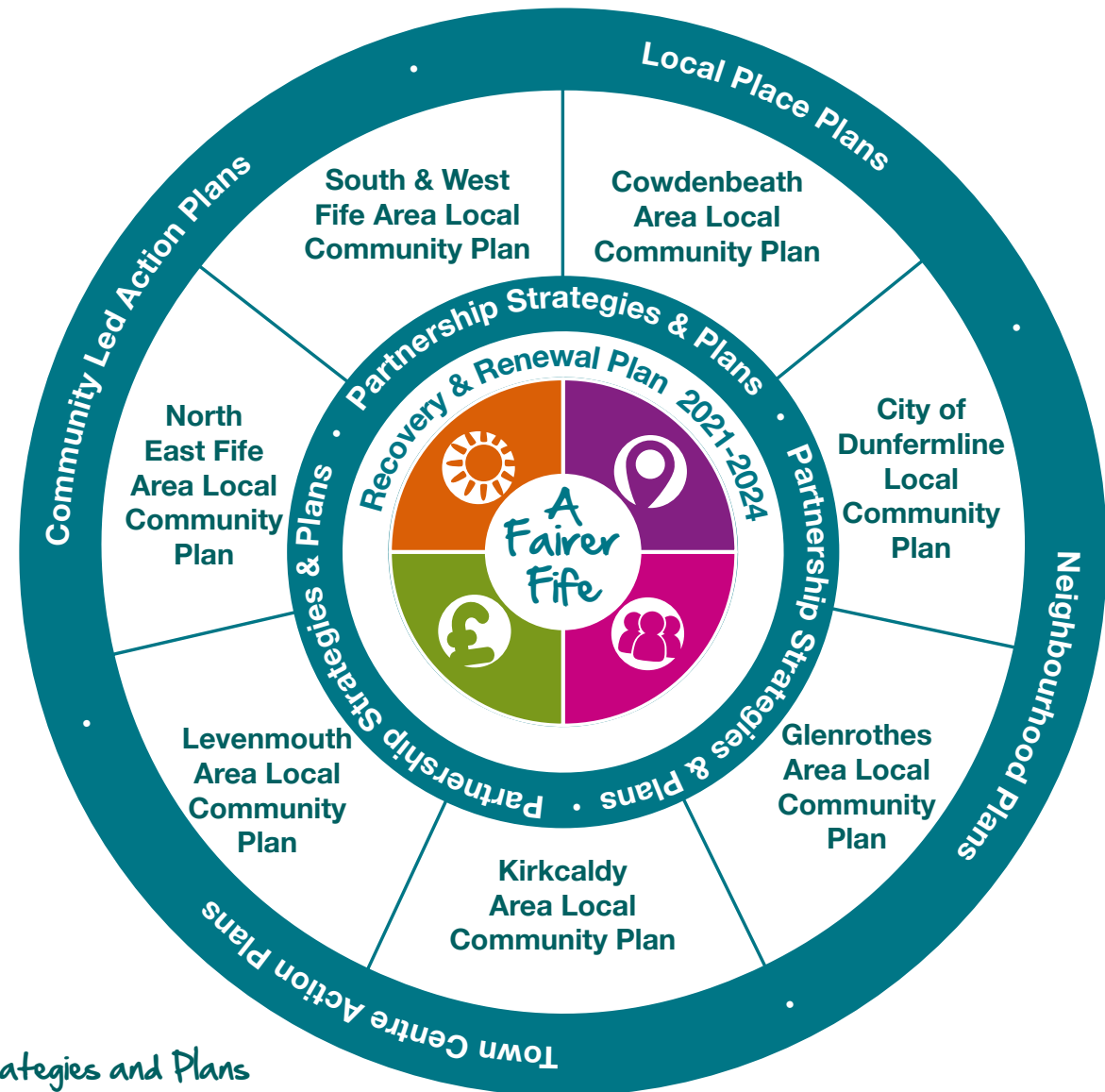


Figure 3: Aligning Strategies and Plans

Our contribution to the Plan for Fife

Opportunities for All

Ensuring that no-one is left behind. We aim to ensure that every Fifer can access opportunities in education, training, jobs and wider society, and that all Fifers have equal access to the support and advice they might need to support a fulfilling and decent life.

CLD activity will include:

- CLD practitioners and volunteers are focused on tackling poverty and providing earlier crisis prevention support. To achieve this CLD practitioners will be supported to work collaboratively to develop community programmes designed to
- enable households to better manage their household budgets through literacy and numeracy interventions,
- increase local opportunities to build confidence in the use of digital platforms to access benefits and provide job search support,
- build community ownership around access to low cost, high quality food products
- provide online access and support/advice to ensure income maximisation
- ensure a no wrong door approach is adopted to hardship and emergency payments and debt management

We will develop programmes in partnership with schools and others, targeting pupils in the Senior Phase to develop and transition to a positive destination using youth work approaches building on relationships and trust. We will support young people with tailor made social development experiences including volunteering and community-based youth work opportunities.

We aim to refresh our community learning programmes by better recognising, recording and celebrating learning success. We will achieve this through increased use of nationally accredited frameworks, by encouraging greater levels of participation by marginalised groups and by continuing to have community learning and development staff and volunteers visible in local communities as local champions for community-based learning and development opportunities.

We acknowledge that COVID-19 had an increased detrimental impact on our most disadvantaged communities. Many areas of high poverty have a higher-than-average instance of people struggling with mental health issues and issues associated with substance and alcohol use. Through our local partnerships we will direct resources to improve engagement and support in the areas of

- mental wellbeing
- tackling social isolation and loneliness

We will work together to gain a better understanding of the learning, emotional and social support needs of our communities. This will help us to increase the number of local opportunities for people to access help and support in their own communities.

Our contribution to the Plan for Fife

Thriving Places

Safe, well designed and maintained places that promote wellbeing, where people are proud to be, and where they have access to the services and facilities they need at different stages of their lives.

CLD activity will include:

Over the past 6 months feedback received from communities and partner agencies indicates that as a result of the COVID pandemic CLD practitioners have had a significant role in supporting local people and places across Fife. This was deemed particularly important during periods of enhanced social restrictions and the isolation from family and friends as a result. Consequently as we emerge from the pandemic CLD activities and resources will be directed to support people to

- reconnect with their local community
- rebuild their sense of community ownership
- increase their sense of place within community structures
- Increase opportunities to build community wealth

We will work with communities and partner organisations to develop and improve local places for all residents. To achieve this, we will support local campaign groups to secure the changes they want to see. In this respect we will

- provide direct support for political literacy
- raise awareness of the Community Empowerment Act
- support community groups to apply for external funding to cover the costs of improvement work
- work with communities to establish community gatherings to bring local residents together with a common area of interest

We see real scope to improve participation rates in our outdoor, leisure, culture and community-based youth work services through the active involvement of young people and families in how we design and deliver our offer. Equally, we recognise that for marginalised groupings such as migrant families or families experiencing significant levels of financial stress there are opportunities to work with them to explore how we can support their participation in local community delivered opportunities that allow them to experience new things, learn in new ways and reconnect with themselves as a family unit, or make new connections with the local community.

Our contribution to the Plan for Fife

Thriving places also presents new opportunities for the sector over the next three years as we begin to engage communities more with the environmental action agenda and explore how we adapt our lifestyles to reduce environmental impacts. Research from the pandemic shows

- an increased interest in families and communities growing their own food and supporting neighbours with excess produce
- a greater awareness of the benefits of buying local seasonal produce
- protecting local green spaces, woodlands and coastal trails for the future.

Communities have also been active in local community clean-ups to address the littering and low-level vandalism. This has indicated a renewed focus on communities coming together to identify how best to reduce instances of anti-social behaviour that affect local areas, neighbourhoods and particular groups of residents. As a partnership we recognise the important role we have in encouraging communities, families and young people to come together to address these concern areas through shared actions and collaborative approaches.

Our contribution to the Plan for Fife

Inclusive Growth and Jobs

Growth in the local economy should benefit everyone and shouldn't pass people and places by. We will therefore focus on improving investment, growth and participation by businesses, people and communities, particularly in the Mid-Fife area. We aim to support businesses to grow and to make sure that communities benefit from new business invest.

CLD activity will include:

We recognise that as we move beyond the COVID pandemic and look to renew our work with communities we need to begin to re-imagine how our CLD practitioners can best support the creation of new opportunities for local economic activity that is environmentally sustainable, delivers a fair society and led by community groups and individuals. As a first step to achieving this we will start with the re-introduction of our community-based learning programme and increase our delivery presence in disadvantaged communities and with key communities of interest such as migrant and refugee families. We will also focus on long-term unemployed adults and families living with low level literacy skills. In doing so we will provide support to people and communities to overcome challenges with lower levels of core skills in the areas of:

- literacy
- numeracy
- ICT
- problem-solving
- working with others

We will work as equal partners with Fife college and community-based training providers to develop supportive pathways for learners to progress from foundation building learning programmes into full or part time college or vocational learning programmes. Our sector will work with the college, the CLD Standards Council and others where appropriate, to accredit community-based programmes and to develop short courses in response to identified community needs.

We will support local community wealth building by working alongside organisations who are keen to develop into social enterprises offering local employment opportunities. Through our partnerships we will support them to utilise employment related funding to develop opportunities for young people and adults to participate in Modern Apprenticeship programmes, the Youth Guarantee and the Kick-Start schemes.

We will continue to develop partnerships with organisations and services in the culture, tourism and heritage sectors to strengthen opportunities for communities and individuals to develop skills, knowledge and experiences that will lead to increased employment and volunteering roles and contribute to new and innovative approaches to maximising local assets as economic drivers.

Our contribution to the Plan for Fife

Community Led Services

Putting communities and service users at the heart of how we design services and building on the strengths and assets we have in our workforce and in our communities in order to deliver valued services.

CLD activity will include:

We will create safe spaces for dialogue and deliberation with communities and continue to undertake social practice-based research. We will put in place the necessary support to enable the active involvement of communities in analysing the feedback and preparing recommendations for the community to take forward. This will help us to understand more about what has been learned from the COVID pandemic in terms of community readiness to respond, what groups within their community were most affected by the pandemic and what future responses the community want to have in place to minimise impacts and ensure a shared sense of community belonging. This will assist us to create new and innovative approaches to community engagement and community participation.

We will continue to build on the use of Participatory Budgeting approaches so that we begin to transition public spending away from reactionary spend, to a position where public spend can be used to address at an earlier stage, many of the community issues that lower the quality of life for residents in our neighbourhoods, towns and villages.

Through our connections with community groups and community forums, we will work to promote and support community leadership, community activism and volunteer roles ensuring that communities who have been hardest hit by the pandemic have champions who can convert community ideas to community action. This will involve the sector in developing a culture of upskilling, knowledge sharing and collaborative practice with communities to ensure that resources can be maximised to support the ambitions and goals of their community.

Acknowledging Areas of Unmet Need

The development of the CLD Plan has been undertaken with the backdrop of the COVID pandemic and a desire to rebuild, re-imagine and re-establish the learning and development offer that we make to our communities, families and individuals. In developing the plan we have developed a shared understanding of the complex needs and vulnerabilities that many in our communities face on a day-to-day basis. Our evidence base at present is highlighting a widening gap between the needs that the most vulnerable in our communities have and the availability of resource to enable the CLD sector to respond. We anticipate that as we engage and explore these community needs further over year 1 of the plan period we will highlight that growing gap and divide further.

As we continue to transition from the pandemic and slowly re-introduce our learning and development programmes we recognise that we will be unable to meet all the needs and demands of our communities. In particular a continued focus on targeting services at the most marginalised communities and households will mean that the pre-COVID universal offer may no longer be as readily available as we grapple with reduced community spaces and venues, lower numbers of volunteers and lower numbers of learners willing to engage. A focus in year one of the plan on exploring with communities the impacts of the pandemic and their hopes for the future will also mean that staff and volunteers have less time available during that period to re-introduce aspects of the community programmes that were in place before. A drive to support young people's recovery in school and in the transition stages of the 16 – 19 years, as well as a focus on supporting families affected by low-incomes and in-work poverty will require those delivering CLD services and programmes to review their offer to older people.

Workforce Development and Practitioner Upskilling

It is important that CLD practitioners and volunteers across the Tayside and Fife regions are able to access high quality, relevant and role appropriate training and development opportunities. We are committed to encouraging and nurturing a learning culture and we will do this with support from the members of the Fife CLD Partnership, the Tayside and Fife CLD Professional Learning Alliance (the Alliance) and the CLD Standards Council for Scotland. These will reflect the ambitions in Growing the Learning Culture in CLD: A Strategy Statement and Framework for Action published by CLD Standards Council for Scotland.

The Tayside and Fife CLD professional Learning Alliance commissioned research from Dundee University to identify future professional learning needs in the sector, combined with the learning from the COVID pandemic. This will be used to plan continuing learning opportunities for staff and volunteers.

The research identified six priority themes:

CPD Theme	Areas for Development
Information Technology	Social Media, digital media, digital engagement tools & approaches, online facilitation skills
Community Empowerment	Participatory Budgeting, participation requests, asset transfer, community resilience, community engagement (methods and tools), political literacy
Team/Service Based	Strategic planning, team management/ leadership, working smarter, performance and scrutiny, critical writing
Awareness	Mental health awareness, risk assessments, child and adult protection, impacts of poverty, dignity principles in action, UNCRC and the Equality Act duties.
Specialism	Dealing with challenging behaviour, dealing with difficult conversations, improving our communication skills, family learning
Professional	Entry level pathways into CLD qualification programmes, early career coaching, mid-career CPD and support, support for professional registration requirements, revisiting theory and practice, support for reflective learning

Appendix 1 • Action Plan

Description	Year 1 Milestones
<p>Work directly with area partnerships and staff teams to create local CLD delivery plans that support the local community planning approach and provide specific, measurable actions demonstrating the contribution the CLD sector is making to the Plan for Fife outcomes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 7 area CLD actions plans published by 31 August 2022 detailing specific, measurable actions for years 2 and 3 of the plan.
<p>Work with education, colleges and youth work providers to develop a mechanism to track and report on young people's achievements.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Short-life working group in place to explore the challenges and make recommendations in June 2022 on how best to capture and report.
<p>Undertake research with young people aged 11 – 21 years to understand the effects of COVID on their learning, emotional and social development and how best the CLD sector can respond.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Research framework and methodology agreed. ● Stakeholders panel established led by young people. ● Initial 6-month report provide in June 2022. ● Final recommendations presented to decision makers from March 2023.
<p>Establish learner pathways with recognised points of entry into our community learning programmes and onwards to college, training or employment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● College and CLD partnership group established to explore strengthened links and roles around progression routes from community-based programmes into college and training providers. ● Renewed agreement on delivery of ESOL programmes using College credits to address gaps in community based ESOL provision to be agreed and ready for implementation for the 2022 academic year.

Appendix 1 • Action Plan

Description	Year 1 Milestones
Develop volunteering roles that offer meaningful, appropriate and learning based opportunities to support individuals to make a real and sustained difference to their personal situations and to the wider community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Short-life working group to be established to explore the volunteering strategy for Fife and the role of CLD providers in achieving this.
Improve community voice structures at local and regional level ensuring direct connectivity to decision makers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Strengthen work with the National Standards for Community Engagement network and work with community groups and organisations to build opportunities for community influence.
Implement a workforce development plan to support practitioners and volunteers respond to the expressed needs of local communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Joint workforce development plan agreed through the Tayside & Fife professional CLD Alliance.● Financial support secured through CLD Standards Council for delivery of workforce action plan.

Community Learning & Development Plan 2021-2024



Alternative Formats

Information about Fife Council can be made available in large print, braille, audio CD/tape and Gaelic on request by calling **03451 55 55 00**



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