

2021 SURF MANIFESTO FOR COMMUNITY REGENERATION

SURF has developed this manifesto over the last nine months. It has done so by drawing on the knowledge, experience and ideas of its diverse, cross-sector network of regeneration practitioners, policy-makers and academics. SURF has strived to be as inclusive as possible in its extensive consultations. It is grateful to all of the organisations and individuals who were able to give time and attention to this process, despite the unprecedented pressures of the pandemic.

In addition to informing SURF's main priorities over the next five years, this Manifesto will be presented to, and debated with, the main political parties in advance of the May 2021 Scottish Parliamentary elections.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Section 1: Introduction and Overview

1.1 Purpose of the SURF Manifesto Process

- To consult with SURF's extensive network and produce an updated and widely supported formal statement on the contemporary challenges and options in Scottish regeneration.
- To shape the development of SURF's priorities, activities and partnerships over the next four years.
- To inform and influence the policy, practice and investment considerations of key players both within and beyond the SURF membership.
- To raise awareness more widely across civic Scotland on the nature and importance of evolving regeneration efforts and investments.

1.2 Building on SURF's 2016 Manifesto

SURF's 2016 Manifesto prioritised the links between poverty, place and wider economic policy. It set out nine bold and practical proposals ([available here](#)).

SURF has since worked with its key partners, especially the Scottish Government, in forming and promoting an interconnected set of national and local government policies for improving place based regeneration. These include the place principle, inclusive economic growth, community wealth building and, most recently, the 20-minute neighbourhood approach. This **2021 SURF manifesto** builds on that support for local regeneration, and connects it with the current challenges of the COVID pandemic and the Climate Emergency.

1.3 Tackling Old and New Challenges Together

SURF agrees with the Scottish Government that tackling poverty and inequality remains the top priority for regenerating a more successful and sustainable Scotland. National and local responses to the climate emergency, and the COVID pandemic, provide opportunities and challenges for addressing that shared priority.

Cross-sector connectivity between national, regional and local agencies and actions will be required to form a collective basis for delivering an updated national regeneration strategy. That new strategy should be firmly based on the subsidiarity principle and framed by clarity on the appropriate allocation of roles and resources at appropriate levels of geography, capacity and responsibility.

This would better balance regeneration processes and investments in support of different and distinctive contexts, assets and aspirations. It would produce a fairer and more sustainable national framework of localised infrastructure, enterprise and exchange; and leave Scotland well-placed to benefit from all of the talents, assets, resources and energies of its people and places.

1.4 Reconnecting Poorer People and Places

SURF's focus has always been on the poorest and most disconnected communities. It shares the Scottish Government view that tackling poverty and inequality is the central regeneration challenge for building a fairer, better and more inclusively successful Scotland. Disadvantaged and

disconnected communities will continue to need place-based support, but this Manifesto additionally promotes the shared benefits that come from greater interconnectivity between people and places - and the roles and resources of local, regional and national government agencies and enterprises.

1.5 Learning from COVID-19 Responses

COVID-19 has underlined and amplified previously existing inequalities in health and resilience, but it has also highlighted previously underappreciated assets of places, people and organisations. [SURF research identified many highly effective local initiatives](#) that even the poorest communities produced to provide emergency responses to COVID challenges. The shared challenge now is to productively connect and sustain those valuable local insights and assets, within the wider framework of services, investment and support.

1.6 Connecting Place and Climate Sustainability

SURF strongly supports the Scottish Government's stated commitment, that the essential transition to a much greener economy must not be at the expense of poorer people and places. If managed intelligently and creatively, the intended fundamental shift could be a powerful driver for the successful regeneration of presently disconnected places and communities, via new green jobs, skills, services and enterprises.

SURF's 2016 Manifesto noted that the interconnected issues of Land, Transport and Climate challenges, are collectively key to regenerating a more coherent and sustainable national framework of local assets, aspirations, production and exchange. The 2021 SURF Manifesto focuses on making the most productive links between those three overarching dynamics.

1.7 Consultees

This Manifesto is the result of an extensive consultation effort across SURF's network. This included detailed discussion with more than 60 relevant regeneration figures from across Scotland, covering a wide range of sectors and expertise (a full list can be found at the end of the document).

While COVID-19 limited some aspects of SURF's original consultation plan, we have striven to still be as inclusive as possible in covering a broad range of sectors and geographies, and adequately representing the responses of more marginalised groups and minority communities.

Many community groups and organisations could not take part because they were busy responding to unprecedented demand for services and support. Plans for the original consultation based on thematic round table events were amended and replaced with individual interviews and written responses. We found this encouraged a rich and diverse engagement with issues and policies.

As a result, the Manifesto consultation process has provided a valuable collection of experiential reflections and new ideas, at a time of great upheaval and change in Scotland's communities. SURF is well-placed to develop these further in cooperation with its network, and to deepen the cross-sector connections and engagement that will be required to take this work forward successfully over the next term of Parliament.

Section 2: 10 Key Recommendations In Brief

Climate Change

1) Take a Wider Approach to Retrofitting:

Retrofitting is the most widely effective approach to regeneration. Greater investment should be directed towards refurbishment, rebuilding and retrofitting to improve the energy efficiency of older housing and civic buildings, thereby supporting reductions in fuel poverty and carbon emissions, and improvements in health and wellbeing.



2) Make More Funding Available for Adaptation:

The failure of Scotland's infrastructure to adapt quickly enough to the impacts of climate change, has a disproportionate impact on poorer people and places. Greater public sector project investment is needed to address this, locally, regionally and nationally.



3) Grow Green Jobs for Young People

There is an opportunity to jointly resolve two urgent challenges – climate change and COVID-19 impacts on employment prospects for young people – through the creation of a substantial 'Green New Deal' style job creation programme.



Land Use & Ownership

4) Encourage Long-Term Leasing of Community Assets:

Persistent problems with capacity, liability and funding around the transfer of land and buildings into community ownership in poorer places could be alleviated by encouraging long-term leasing arrangements, in which public bodies manage asset maintenance and community groups manage usage and activities.



5) Increase Development on Brownfield Land:

A determined shift from building new developments on edge-of-town greenfield sites, to brownfield ones, would produce wellbeing, climate and urban connectivity benefits. More land remediation investments, would reduce the higher development costs and the complexities of post-industrial infrastructure and contamination legacies present in brownfield sites.



6) Prioritise Empty Homes:

Create more housing by converting vacant buildings in towns and cities, including retail and office premises and domestic homes, and scaling up the work of the Scottish Empty Homes Partnership.



Place-Based Collaboration

7) Create a New Regeneration Strategy Centred on Reducing Poverty and Supporting Places:

The 2011 National Regeneration Strategy needs to be updated. A new strategy should: take account of the COVID-19 lessons; simplify a complex regeneration policy and practice landscape; articulate a sustainable balance of roles, resources responsibilities; and focus on tackling poverty and facilitating longer-term place-based regeneration collaborations for inclusive growth.



It should also include formal guidance on how aspirations for more '20 minute neighbourhoods' – communities in which residents can meet most of their essential needs within comfortable walking distance – can be practically implemented in poorer places.

8) Provide Targeted Whole-Place Investments in the Most Deprived Places:

The Scottish Government's Place Principle is widely viewed as valuable and helpful, but practice is generally not aligning with expectations. The Scottish Government should directly fund a suite of exemplar large-scale, long-term Place Principle oriented collaborations, in the country's most deprived places.



Transport

9) Invest in Transport Infrastructure in Commuter Towns and Rural Areas:

Ongoing investment in bus lanes, walking and cycling routes, and park and ride schemes primarily benefit cities. The more varied circumstances and needs of smaller towns and rural regions should not be overlooked.



10) Reverse the Vicious Circle in Bus Services:

The decline in bus usage and the negative impacts on more deprived and disconnected places is a serious and increasing concern. The challenges are multi-layered and difficult to resolve, but for important and interconnected economic, social and environmental reasons, the Scottish Government needs to take further action to increase provision and usage.



End of Executive Summary

Supporting materials follow.

Further information on SURF's 2021 Manifesto for Community Regeneration can be found on the SURF website: www.surf.scot/2021-surf-manifesto/

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Section 3: Process Summary and Key Recommendations

About the Process

Since its formation in 1992, SURF has done more than connect and provide services to its 300 plus member organisations and its more than 3000 individual cross-sector contacts. It also draws on the **views, experience and knowledge** of that diverse network to positively influence policy and practice in community regeneration across Scotland.

A central element of that process involves SURF **consulting widely** in preparing a Manifesto for Community Regeneration, which it then promotes and debates in advance of each Scottish Parliament election. The Manifesto sets out the **reality** of the contemporary regeneration context, and what SURF members want the Scottish Government and its agencies **to do differently** in response to priority problems and opportunities.

SURF's 2021 Manifesto was inclusively developed throughout 2020, based on a range of consultation activities. It has been prepared for **formal submission** to political parties and wide promotion in early 2021, in advance of the 4 May Scottish Parliament elections.

The Manifesto focuses on a **complementary set of practical policy recommendations**, which link physical, social and economic regeneration priorities. SURF will follow up on the outcomes of this dedicated effort via its broader programme of work over the 2021-2026 Scottish Parliament term. The objective is to positively **inform and influence** the policies, processes and investments of the Scottish Government, local government, and other relevant public agencies.

Key Themes

SURF's 2021 Manifesto recommendations are informed by **telephone interviews** and **video discussions** with – and **written responses** from – key SURF members in particular sectors. This is in addition to accumulated learning outcomes from SURF events and projects, including electronic **voting and debate** at SURF's 2020 Annual Conference.

The main component in the manifesto consultation process was a series of **semi-structured interviews** undertaken by SURF's Derek Rankine and Christopher Murray. These one-to-one interviews with relevant SURF contacts who are active in community regeneration across Scotland, were split into the following themes:

1. Poverty & Inequality
2. Inclusive Growth
3. Culture & Heritage
4. Climate Crisis
5. Transport
6. Housing
7. Community Led Regeneration
8. Land, Place & Planning

Briefing papers on each of the eight Manifesto themes are available on the SURF website: www.surf.scot/projects/2021-surf-manifesto/

SURF is grateful to all contacts that contributed to this process, including the selected interviewees that are listed in section five.

Key Recommendations

Climate Change

Recommendation 1: Take a Wider Approach to Retrofitting

Retrofitting is the most widely effective approach to regeneration. Greater investment should be directed towards refurbishment, rebuilding and retrofitting to improve the energy efficiency of older housing and civic buildings, thereby supporting reductions in fuel poverty and carbon emissions, and improvements in health and wellbeing.



Policy Context

The Scottish Government's Climate Change Action Plan 2018-2032 was updated last year. It outlines the national approach to retrofitting and the wider de-carbonisation of buildings.¹ This includes targets for a 23% reduction in emissions from residential buildings, and a 53% reduction in emissions from non-domestic buildings, by 2032. The Scottish Government recently committed £1.6bn to decarbonising and modernising buildings as part of the 2020-21 Programme for Government, viewing it as central to its plans for a green recovery.

The main mechanism for delivery of retrofit to date has been the Energy Efficient Scotland Programme, which sets particular targets for 'fuel poor' households, and social rented, private rented and owner occupied sectors. The Scottish Government has been piloting the Energy Efficient Scotland programme since 2016. There have been three rounds of pilots, in which local authorities bid for funding to complete different aspects of the retrofitting work, including capital projects, local energy schemes, and advice and support for property owners.

The University of Edinburgh has been involved in evaluating the success of the pilot projects. The University's evaluations highlight the importance of local authority capacity in delivering large-scale and multi-actor retrofitting projects, draw attention to gaps in the detail and accuracy of available data, and emphasise a need for wider approaches supported by more flexible funding mechanisms than those currently available.

SURF joins other bodies including the Scottish Trades Union Congress, the Existing Homes Alliance, the Scottish Civic Trust, and Friends of the Earth Scotland in calling for a significant scaling-up in current retrofit programmes.^{2 3 4 5}

¹ The Scottish Government, *Climate Change Plan 2018–2032 - Update*, 2020:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/securing-green-recovery-path-net-zero-update-climate-change-plan-20182032/>

² Friends of the Earth Scotland, *A Green Jobs Recovery*, 2020: <https://foe.scot/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/FoES-Green-Jobs-Recovery.pdf>

³ Scottish Trades Union Congress, *News Item: New Analysis Shows Potential for a £13bn Green Stimulus Package to Create 150k Jobs in Scotland*, 2020: <https://www.stuc.org.uk/media-centre/news/1452/to-subject-sent-size-categories-dave-moxham-embargo-00-01-sunday-31st-may-stuc-new-analysis-shows-potential-for-a-13-billion-green-stimulus-package-to-create-150-000-jobs-in-scotland>

⁴ Existing Homes Alliance Scotland, *Manifesto for the 2021 Scottish Parliamentary Elections*, 2020:

<http://existinghomesalliancescotland.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/ExHAS-2021-SP-election-manifesto-Nov-20.pdf>

⁵ Scottish Civic Trust, *Action Plan for the Scottish Parliament Election 2021*, 2020: <https://www.scottishcivictrust.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Manifesto-2021.pdf>

The Scottish Council for Development and Industry has also made retrofit a key plank of their Clean Growth Manifesto.⁶

SURF members highlighted the wealth of robust academic evidence that backs up the claims that retrofitting investments leads to significant wellbeing and quality of life improvements in disadvantaged places. This stands in contrast to most other types of regeneration investment activity, where the evidence is unavailable or contradictory.⁷

Recommendation 2: Make More Funding Available for Adaptation

The failure of Scotland's infrastructure to adapt quickly enough to the impacts of climate change, has a disproportionate impact on poorer people and places. Greater public sector project investment is needed to address this, locally, regionally and nationally.



Policy Context

The Scottish Government published its adaptation plan, Climate Ready Scotland, in 2019.⁸ The five year programme articulates seven high level outcomes for climate change adaptation in Scotland. Outcomes 1 and 2 have particular relevance to SURF's interests:

- *Outcome 1: Our communities are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe in response to the changing climate.*
- *Outcome 2: The people in Scotland who are most vulnerable to climate change are able to adapt and climate justice is embedded in climate change adaptation policy.*

The Scottish Government funds the Adaptation Scotland initiative, operated by the environmental charity Sniffer, to progress targets. Adaptation Scotland provides support to communities, businesses and public sector organisations as they prepare and adapt for climate change impacts that are already 'locked in', i.e. that will happen regardless of any reduction in global emissions. Among other activities, Adaptation Scotland has produced guidance for the business sector and published a capability framework for the public sector.⁹

SURF consultees drew attention to a number of place-based adaptation initiatives in Scotland, including Aberdeen Adapts, Climate Ready Aberdeenshire, Climate Ready Clyde, Edinburgh Adapts, and Levenmouth Adapts. These examples are based on partnership between local authorities and other stakeholders, and are supported by the Scottish Government and Adaptation Scotland. Many are at a relatively early stage – Climate Ready Clyde published its first adaptation plan last year – while new area-based initiatives are also being developed in the Highlands and Outer Hebrides.

Adaptation Scotland runs a dedicated programme on community responses to climate change, called Climate Ready Localities, which is being progressed in collaboration with local community organisations across the country. Two new projects were announced last year, one in Marr in

⁶ Scottish Council for Development and Industry, *Manifesto for Clean Growth*, 2020: <https://www.scdi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/SCDI-Manifesto-for-Clean-Growth-2020.pdf>

⁷ Changeworks, *Scoping Study for a Warm Homes Programme - Existing Homes Alliance – Final Report*, 2019: http://existinghomesalliancescotland.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/EXHA_Deep-Retrofit-Scoping-Study_Jan2019_FINAL.pdf

⁸ Scottish Government, *Climate Ready Scotland: Climate Change Adaptation Programme 2019-2024*, 2019: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/climate-ready-scotland-second-scottish-climate-change-adaptation-programme-2019-2024/>

⁹ Adaptation Scotland, *Scotland Adapts: A Capability Framework for a Climate Ready Public Sector*, 2019: https://www.sustainabilityexchange.ac.uk/files/adaptation_scotland_psg_handbook_final.pdf

Aberdeenshire, and another in Loch Ken in Dumfries and Galloway.¹⁰ The initiative also published a well-received Climate Ready Places digital resource, which provides a vision of what six typologies of Scottish place, such as city suburbs, coastal towns and Highland villages, look like after climate change adaption investments are in place.¹¹

SURF joins other respondents to the Climate Ready Scotland consultation, including Climate Ready Clyde and Sniffer, in drawing attention to the gap between the adaptation goals outlined by the Scottish Government in funding available for adaptation measures.¹² SURF members identified a lack of funding opportunities as the main barrier holding back the delivery of practical work on the scale needed, from flood defences and community growing initiatives to new urban green spaces and restored woodland. SURF interviewees also felt there should be clear mechanisms that prioritise adaptation activities in poorer places, in line with Outcome 2 of Climate Ready Scotland (quoted above).¹³

SURF consultees in local government also highlighted the barriers to action that they face, including pressures on non-statutory funding, relatively low political buy-in for immediate adaptation investments, and the short electoral cycles that can make longer term goals harder to realise.

Recommendation 3: Grow Green Jobs for Young People

There is an opportunity to jointly resolve two urgent challenges – climate change and COVID-19 impacts on employment prospects for young people – through the creation of a substantial ‘Green New Deal’ style job creation programme.



Policy Context

The Scottish Government’s 2020-21 Programme for Government outlines the further development of a ‘Green New Deal for Scotland’, which was first announced in 2019.¹⁴ The commitments include a £3bn Green Investment Portfolio, a £100m Green Jobs Fund, a Green Growth Accelerator programme, and the opening of the Scottish National Investment Bank. The Investment Bank will be capitalised with £2bn over 2021-2031, and a primary objective of supporting the Scottish economy to transition to net zero carbon emissions.¹⁵

Collectively, these actions are designed to meet the twin aims of responding to climate change challenges while making the Scottish economy fairer and more resilient. Further actions in this area include a Youth Guarantee scheme that assures all young people in the 16-24 age bracket the opportunity for education, work experience, apprenticeship, or training.

Consultees felt improved career management and resilience skills in young people could help them navigate forthcoming anticipated disruptions, such as those stemming from climate change, rising

¹⁰ Adaptation Scotland, *News Item: Climate Ready Localities: Adaptation Scotland’s New Locality Partnerships*, 2020: <https://www.adaptationscotland.org.uk/news-events/stories/climate-ready-localities-adaptation-scotlands-new-locality-p>

¹¹ Adaptation Scotland, *Web Resource: Climate Ready Places*, 2016: <https://adaptationscotland.org.uk/climate-ready-places/>

¹² Scottish Government, *Consultation Hub: Scotland’s Climate Change Adaptation Programme 2019-2024*, 2019: <https://consult.gov.scot/energy-and-climate-change-directorate/adaptation-programme-2019-2024/>

¹³ Climate Ready Clyde, *Response to Climate Change Adaptation Programme Consultation*, 2019: https://consult.gov.scot/energy-and-climate-change-directorate/adaptation-programme-2019-2024/consultation/view_respondent?uuld=1067185043

¹⁴ Scottish Government, *Protecting Scotland’s Future Programme for Scotland 2019-2020*, 2019: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/protecting-scotland-future-governments-programme-scotland-2019-20/>

¹⁵ Scottish Government, *Protecting Scotland, Renewing Scotland: Programme for Scotland 2020-2021*, 2020: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/protecting-scotland-renewing-scotland-governments-programme-scotland-2020-2021/>

automation, an ageing society, and the long-term implications of Brexit. SURF consultees agree with the position of Skills Development Scotland and the Scottish Consortium for Development and Industry regarding the need for ‘meta skills’ – those least vulnerable to automation – to be prioritised in skills training and workplace learning to protect against labour market changes.

New strategies that combine inclusive growth and climate change targets are key to making sufficient progress on both fronts. SURF consultees also felt that economic strategies need to be bolder about supporting people, especially young people, to move from low growth to high growth industries, and that new green jobs should fully incorporate fair work principles.

Land Use and Ownership

Recommendation 4: Encourage Long-Term Leasing of Community Assets

Persistent problems with capacity, liability and funding around the transfer of land and buildings into community ownership in poorer places, could be alleviated by encouraging long-term leasing arrangements, in which public bodies manage asset maintenance and community groups manage usage and activities.



Policy Context

The Scottish Government’s current policy towards community ownership of land and buildings is to ‘normalise’ it. The objective is to support it becoming a typical, mainstream and routine form of ownership, rather than an infrequent exception, which only takes place in response to a problem, such as the closure of a town’s key civic building.¹⁶ This approach supersedes an earlier commitment to ensure one million acres of Scotland is in community ownership by 2020, which was criticised in some quarters for having an arbitrary target that focused on volume.¹⁷

In 2010, the Community Land Scotland membership body was established to provide a collective voice for community landowners in Scotland. The Scottish Parliament’s 2016 Land Reform (Scotland) Act led to the creation of a new public body, the Scottish Land Commission, to support land reform in practice and provide advice to Scottish Government Ministers. Both bodies provide extensive support to existing and potential community landowners.

SURF members are, in principle, highly supportive of asset transfers from the public and private sectors into community ownership. Many examples were cited of vacant buildings in key town centre and high street locations – such as former banks, industrial buildings, retail premises and Council offices – that had been successfully brought back into productive use under community ownership. Those include a number of community hubs highlighted in the SURF Awards for Best Practice in Community Regeneration.¹⁸

While acknowledging these successes, and the wider regeneration activities that community ownership can catalyse in a deprived area, SURF consultees generally reported that community ownership is too often promoted as a solution in itself, and sometimes in inappropriate or unsustainable circumstances. Many community groups, especially those with more pressing priorities in poorer places, lack the time, skills, funding, confidence and personnel to take on ownership of a significant local asset. There is a generally limited understanding, on all sides, of the

¹⁶ Edgar, L., *News Item: Community Ownership Should be Mainstream Across Scotland*, The Planner, 2018:

<https://www.theplanner.co.uk/news/community-ownership-should-be-mainstream-across-scotland>

¹⁷ Million Acres Short Life Working Group, *One Million Acres by 2020: Strategy Report and Recommendations*, 2015:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/one-million-acres-2020-strategy-report-recommendations-1-million-acre/>

¹⁸ SURF – Scotland’s Regeneration Forum, *About the SURF Awards*, 2020: <https://www.surf.scot/surf-awards/>

time, resources and effort involved in an asset transfer process, and the challenges and responsibilities that come with long-term ownership.

There were additional worries about the lack of funding for community asset transfers in general, and imbalances in what is available towards capital, instead of revenue funding. There were also concerns that financial payments to wealthy individuals for the acquisition of privately held land was not the most effective or appropriate use of limited public and charitable regeneration funding.

SURF consultees expressed a desire to see more long-term asset leasing arrangements come into common practice. In such arrangements, a local authority or other public body would maintain an asset, for a community anchor to manage. Such arrangements would potentially avoid the challenges community groups face around capital fundraising, transfer negotiation, and building maintenance. It would also promote closer cross-sector collaboration in line with Place Principle aspirations.

Participants said such leasing arrangements should not be seen as a panacea, and should not replace ownership or other approaches towards bringing vacant land and buildings back into productive use. Leasing may be unappealing to some local authorities, which may not want to commit to ongoing maintenance costs and risk management responsibilities. Even those maintenance agreements which have been made, may only cover a short period, leaving the community landowner with eventual responsibility. Other local authorities are only willing to negotiate such agreements if a tenant takes full responsibility for repairs, insurance and legal costs.¹⁹

The post-pandemic era, may, however, provide greater potential for leasing arrangements because of the combination of increased levels of organised community activity, and an anticipated rise in levels of vacant and under-used buildings. The Manifesto consultation outcomes reflect previous SURF research, resourced by the Scottish Land Commission, which reported that community groups in several deprived areas wanted access to and influence over important local assets, but did not view full ownership as desirable.²⁰ Community Land Scotland, in its 2021 Manifesto, has called for a general review of the existing suite of Community Right to Buy and Community Asset Transfer schemes, which could provide one mechanism for exploring the scope for encouraging more leasing arrangements nationwide.²¹

Recommendation 5: Increase Development on Brownfield Land

A determined shift from building new developments on edge-of-town greenfield sites, to brownfield ones, would produce wellbeing, climate and urban connectivity benefits. More land remediation investments, would reduce the higher development costs and the complexities of post-industrial infrastructure and contamination legacies present in brownfield sites.



Policy Context

Many of SURF's consultees highlighted the long-standing challenge of a large volume of vacant and derelict post-industrial land in Scotland's towns and cities, which has not been brought back into productive reuse, despite a policy landscape that encourages redevelopment. As brownfield development has been shown to have transformative effects on a place's physical, social and

¹⁹ Glasgow City Council, *Report: Transfer of Control of Assets to the Community*, 2019:

<https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/councillorsandcommittees/viewSelectedDocument.asp?c=P62AFQ81DX2U2UDX>

²⁰ SURF – Scotland's Regeneration Forum, *Land & Communities: Beyond the Echo Chamber*, 2019:

<https://www.surf.scot/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Land-and-Communities-Final-Report.pdf>

²¹ Community Land Scotland, *Land for the Common Good: Manifesto for a Sustainable Scotland*, 2020:

<https://www.communitylandscotland.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Land-for-the-Common-Good-CLS-manifesto-2020-2.pdf>

economic character, and help address climate change, these lost opportunities have a wide range of negative implications for local people and places.

In 2018, the Scottish Land Commission and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency established a working group to address this challenge of unrealised opportunities. The Vacant and Derelict Land Taskforce, which includes SURF in its membership, published a comprehensive report in October 2020. The report presented a range of recommendations to the Scottish Government, to encourage the productive use of derelict land.²²

SURF endorses these recommendations in full. They include reforms to the Vacant and Derelict Land Register, new legislation for Compulsory Sales Orders, a review of strategic funding streams, and proactive estate management obligations on landowners to prevent land falling into disuse. The Scottish Government recently announced a £50m commitment towards a five year programme dedicated towards bringing vacant and derelict land back into use, and highlighted the Vacant and Derelict Land Taskforce recommendations in the relevant news release.²³

The challenges and opportunities of vacant and derelict land have also been raised during discussions towards the Fourth National Planning Framework, the overarching priority of which is to aid the achievement of net-zero emissions by 2045. The position paper for the related consultation, published in November 2020, promises to significantly enhance policies on vacant and derelict land, to encourage innovation and redevelopment and promote a brownfield-first approach to development. It highlights a number of additional potential policy changes around brownfield land.²⁴

An analysis of responses to the first phase of consultation showed significant support for a more proactive approach towards vacant and derelict land.²⁵ Community Land Scotland have also called for the introduction of Compulsory Sales Orders. These would give public authorities more powers to bring derelict or unused sites or buildings into productive use. SURF was involved in the work on designing Compulsory Sales Orders and it supports the intended process and aims.²⁶ Discussions towards the development of a Fourth National Planning Framework also indicate the potential for improved approaches to brownfield first development.²⁵

Recommendation 6: Prioritise Empty Homes

Create more housing by converting vacant buildings in towns and cities, including retail and office premises and domestic homes, and scaling up the work of the Scottish Empty Homes Partnership.



Policy Context

The Scottish Government funds the Scottish Empty Homes Partnership, run by Shelter, which acts as a support network for empty homes officers in local authorities. The aim of the partnership is to

²² Scottish Land Commission, *Not so Pretty Vacant: Recommendations from the Vacant and Derelict Land Taskforce*, 2020: https://www.landcommission.gov.scot/downloads/5f73555fbfe93_VDL%20Task%20Force%20Recommendations.pdf

²³ Scottish Government, *News Item: Transforming Vacant and Derelict Land*, 2020: <https://www.gov.scot/news/transforming-vacant-and-derelict-land/>

²⁴ Scottish Government, *Fourth National Planning Framework: Position Statement*, 2020: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-fourth-national-planning-framework-position-statement/pages/5/>

²⁵ Scottish Government, *NPF4 Call for Ideas: Analysis of Responses*, 2020: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/npf4-analysis-reponses-call-ideas/>

²⁶ Scottish Land Commission, *Compulsory Sales Orders: Proposal*, 2018: <https://www.surf.scot/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/CSO-Proposal-final.pdf>

bring more empty private sector properties back into use as housing. Its activities include: offering advice to individual property owners; providing assistance to local authorities and other bodies; and developing policy and practice ideas.

The SURF network has particular concerns about the proportion of vacant properties in poorer urban and rural Scottish communities. Many predicted that the situation would worsen significantly throughout and beyond the pandemic, with sharp reductions in demand for vacant retail, office and hospitality premises in particular. As 'town centre living' is a key objective in the Scottish Government's Town Centre Action Plan, and well-suited to the 20 minute neighbourhood concept, SURF members believe more could and can be done to convert vacant buildings into good quality housing.

SURF contacts with particular experience in the property sector highlighted that while such conversions are far from cheap and straightforward, many can be viable with the right support. The Scottish Empty Homes Partnership made a number of recommendations in a 2019 report that could help to increase the number of empty homes conversions, including ensuring funding for a dedicated empty homes officer in all Councils, bringing in Compulsory Sales Orders for vacant buildings, and ring-fencing a proportion of the Vacant Dwelling Council Tax Levy for an empty homes service.²⁷

These recommendations were echoed by the Scottish Parliament's Local Government and Communities Committee in its 2019 report on empty homes. The Scottish Government responded to the Committee and agreed with a number of the recommendations. Legislation on some aspects is being progressed.^{28 29}

Place-Based Collaboration

Recommendation 7: Create a New Regeneration Strategy Centred on Reducing Poverty and Supporting Places

The 2011 National Regeneration Strategy needs to be updated. A new strategy should: take account of the COVID-19 lessons; simplify a complex regeneration policy and practice landscape; articulate a sustainable balance of roles, resources responsibilities; and focus on tackling poverty and facilitating longer-term place-based regeneration collaborations for inclusive growth.



It should also include formal guidance on how aspirations for more '20 minute neighbourhoods' – communities in which residents can meet most of their essential needs within comfortable walking distance – can be practically implemented in poorer places.

Policy Context

The SURF network welcomed the 2011 publication of a National Regeneration Strategy, which placed a stronger emphasis on tackling poverty and inequalities, while supporting regeneration initiatives that are developed and managed by community organisations. The strategy contrasted with the previous 2006 'People and Place' regeneration policy statement, which rested

²⁷ Scottish Empty Homes Partnership, *Annual Report 2018-19*, 2019: https://emptyhomespartnership.scot/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Shelter_Empty_Homes_Annual_Report_1819.pdf

²⁸ Scottish Parliament Local Government and Regeneration Committee, *Final Report: Empty Homes in Scotland*, 2019: <https://sp-bpr-en-prod-cdnep.azureedge.net/published/LGC/2019/11/10/Empty-Homes-in-Scotland/LGCS052019R10.pdf>

²⁹ Scottish Government, *Response to Empty Homes Inquiry*, 2019: https://www.parliament.scot/S5_Local_Gov/20191217KStoConvener.pdf

on a high level policy and investment view of business growth, employability & skills training, and the boosting of commercial and residential property markets.³⁰

Beyond citing the work of a single grassroots project in Glasgow, 'People and Place' featured no references to community groups, community assets or community led regeneration. Five years later, in the wake of the effects of the property and banking crash, community led regeneration became a Scottish Government central policy plank. As stated in the 2011 strategy:

*"The Scottish Government is clear that the involvement of local people in public sector led activity is not community led regeneration. Community led regeneration is about local people identifying for themselves the issues and opportunities in their areas, deciding what to do about them, and being responsible for delivering the economic, social and environmental action that will make a difference... This Regeneration Strategy places support for community led regeneration at the heart of its approach."*³¹

As a significant departure from the previous property-led regeneration model, the new focus on community led regeneration was broadly welcomed by regeneration stakeholders in Scotland. While sharing that view, SURF also articulated concerns, on behalf of its network, about the level of responsibilities and expectations being placed on underfunded community groups.³²

SURF contacts believe that the time is now right for consultation on, and the development of, a new Regeneration Strategy. Participants noted that the regeneration context has changed significantly since 2011, and that a new strategy would be well timed to incorporate evolving aspirations on inclusive growth, 20 minute neighbourhoods, climate change, community wealth building and 'building back better' as the COVID-19 pandemic subsides.

The Vacant and Derelict Land Taskforce has also called for an update of the 2011 strategy in its recommendations to Scottish Government:

*"Scotland's regeneration strategy should be updated and its status within the policy hierarchy enhanced to help embed a strong focus on place-based regeneration and land reuse in public policy and ensure that the opportunities of community empowerment, planning reform and community wealth building can be fully realised."*²²

The Scottish Government's Social Renewal Advisory Board, which was set up in early 2020 to advise on the nation's recovery from the pandemic, developed a set of thematic sub-groups called 'policy circles' to conduct its work. One of these – the Community-led & Place Based Renewal Circle – featured SURF Chair Kate Wimpress among its members. It made a series of recommendations that chimed with messages from the SURF Manifesto consultations, which could usefully inform the development of a new Regeneration Strategy.³³

³⁰ Scottish Executive, *People and Place: Regeneration Policy Statement*, 2006:
<https://www.gov.scot/Publications/2006/06/01145818/0>

³¹ Scottish Government, *Achieving a Sustainable Future: Regeneration Strategy*, 2011:
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/achieving-sustainable-future-regeneration-strategy/>

³² SURF – Scotland's Regeneration Forum, *A SURF Response to the Scottish Government's Regeneration Discussion Paper: Building a Sustainable Future*, 2011: <https://www.surf.scot/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/SURF-Response-Regeneration-Discussion-Paper-June-2011.pdf>

³³ Scottish Government, *If Not Now, When? Independent Report by the Social Renewal Advisory Board*, 2021:
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/not-now-social-renewal-advisory-board-report-january-2021/>

The timing of SURF's Manifesto consultations aligned well with the publication of the 2020-21 Programme for Government in November 2020. Both the SURF network and the Scottish Government have demonstrated a strong enthusiasm for the 20 minute neighbourhood concept, which featured prominently in the Programme for Government.¹⁵

Popularised in Oregon, Australia and Scandinavia, 20 minute neighbourhoods are places in which residents can meet almost all of their essential needs including employment, education, health care, shopping and leisure within comfortable walking distance from their home. The Scottish Community Alliance published a comprehensive overview of the concept and its use internationally in a 2020 report, and Sustrans have also produced a useful summary.^{34 35}

The approach is designed to create benefits for local economies, health and wellbeing, community cohesion, pride of place, and climate change. The Programme for Government announced that the Scottish Government plans to work with local authorities to develop 20 minute neighbourhoods across Scotland. At present, and understandably given how recent the commitment is, the Scottish Government has not yet provided details on activities, practical guidance for practitioners, or modelled what a 20 minute neighbourhood might look like in Scotland.

SURF consultees expressed concern that enthusiasm for the idea may not translate into practical action, particularly in poorer places. Consultees felt that the concept may lack applicability outside better-resourced areas, where market forces, land values, transport infrastructure, and property investment patterns make implementation more feasible. This recommendation calls on the Scottish Government to issue guidance that would help enable regeneration practitioners with responsibilities for deprived places to begin putting the concept into practice within broader regeneration efforts.

The Improvement Service has conducted an early scoping study, alongside colleagues from the Scottish Health and Inequalities Impact Assessment Network, and the Spatial Planning for Health and Wellbeing Collaborative Group, which explores how a 20 minute neighbourhood approach might work in Scotland. With a specific focus on Edinburgh's Local Development Plan, the study highlighted the interdisciplinary complexity of embedding characteristics of 20 minute neighbourhoods into current regeneration strategies, and called for more research into several thematic areas including urban design, health, service access and social capital.³⁶

Parallels can be drawn between the 20 minute neighbourhood approach and existing policies, including the Place Principle and the 2013 Town Centre Action Plan. The Action Plan is currently being revisited by an independent review group headed by Professor Leigh Sparks, which is advising the Scottish Government of changes that may be required in a post-pandemic context.³⁷

Some 20 minute neighbourhood principles were evident in the Scottish Government's 2019 £50m Town Centre Fund. Money was allocated proportionally to each Local Authority for regeneration projects that aligned strongly with themes of the Town Centre Action Plan, including town centre living, accessible public services, and vibrant local economies.

³⁴ Scottish Community Alliance, *Briefing: Just 20 Minutes*, 2020:

<https://scottishcommunityalliance.org.uk/2020/08/11/just-20-minutes/>

³⁵ Sustrans, *Briefing: What is a 20 Minute Neighbourhood?*, 2020: <https://www.sustrans.org.uk/our-blog/get-active/2020/in-your-community/what-is-a-20-minute-neighbourhood>

³⁶ Improvement Service, *Comparing the 20 Minute Neighbourhood and Traditional Scenarios in Edinburgh Local Development Plan*, 2020: https://www.improvementservice.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0021/19740/20-minute-neighbourhood-rapid-scoping-assessment.pdf

³⁷ Scottish Government, *News Item: Healthier, Greener Town Centres*, 2020: <https://www.gov.scot/news/healthier-greener-town-centres/>

The SURF network also echoed calls by a number of disparate organisations including Architecture & Design Scotland, the Corra Foundation, Scottish Community Development Centre, and the TSI Scotland Network, for more creative, community led use of vacant urban spaces to enhance neighbourhood amenities through programmes such as ‘Stalled Spaces’.^{38 39}

Recommendation 8: Provide Targeted Whole-Place Investments in the Most Deprived Places

The Scottish Government’s Place Principle is widely viewed as valuable and helpful, but practice is generally not aligning with expectations. The Scottish Government should directly fund a suite of exemplar large-scale, long-term Place Principle oriented collaborations, in the country’s most deprived places.



Policy Context

While the Scottish Government manages regeneration funding programmes such as the Regeneration Capital Grant Fund, the only current large-scale, place-based investment it directly supports, and which aligns with the type of intervention SURF consultees would like to see more of, is Clyde Gateway. Established in 2007, Clyde Gateway received £18m in 2018-20 to manage physical and economic regeneration in the east end of Glasgow and adjacent Rutherglen in South Lanarkshire.⁴⁰

Clyde Gateway is the only initiative still operating from six Urban Regeneration Companies that were set up in the early and mid-2000s. A 2018 report by What Works Scotland highlighted a wide range of key factors in Clyde Gateway’s success, including its legacy delivery role in the 2014 Commonwealth Games.⁴¹ The Scottish Government funds a range of smaller scale, place-focused regeneration activity, through community led funding programmes and intermediaries including the Coalfields Regeneration Trust and the Scottish Community Development Centre.

The Scottish Government and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities announced a commitment to the Place Principle in 2019.⁴² The Principle, developed with input from SURF and other place-based regeneration partners, encourages all spheres of local and national government to put place at the heart of decision-making, advocating enhanced levels of collaboration across sectors based on shared aims and resources. Importantly, it requests that partners work collaboratively with communities to identify and act on local priorities.

SURF participants welcome the strong and growing emphasis on place in Scottish Government policy and practice across multiple divisions, but called for a greater provision of targeted place-based programmes in some of the country’s most deprived places. Some argued that in many deprived places, the dominant regeneration activity was a short-term, single organisation project, rather than a longer term strategic collaboration.

There is scope for the Scottish Government to change the narrative by resourcing a suite of locally managed interventions that demonstrate the Place Principle in action. This recommendation repeats

³⁸ Corra Foundation, *Response to the Town Centre Expert Review Group Call for Evidence*, 2020:

<https://www.corra.scot/wp-content/uploads/Town-Centre-Revitalisation-Call-for-evidence-Corra-Foundation-1.pdf>

³⁹ Architecture & Design Scotland, *Stalled Spaces Scotland*, 2019: <https://www.ads.org.uk/stalled-spaces-scotland/>

⁴⁰ Clyde Gateway, *Annual Report 2018-19*, 2019: <http://www.clydegateway.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/CLYDE-GATEWAY-ANNUAL-REPORT-2018-19-DIGITAL.pdf>

⁴¹ What Works Scotland, *Economic Regeneration in Scotland Case Study: Clyde Gateway*, 2018:

<http://whatworksscotland.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/WWSEconomicRegenerationClydeGatewayCaseStudy.pdf>

⁴² The Scottish Government, *Place Principle: Introduction*, 2019: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/place-principle-introduction/>

a similar one that emerged from consultations towards SURF's 2016 Manifesto, which then called for the Scottish Government to:

*"Identify 15 strategically significant places in Scotland best suited to sustained and cooperative investment in a new generation of long-term initiatives. Convergence targets should be adopted to set social and economic outcome targets and monitor progress. Adequate processes to identify transferable learning and effective models of operation would add value to the limited geographical focus of these investments."*⁴³

Transport

Recommendation 9: Invest in Transport Infrastructure in Commuter Towns and Rural Areas

Ongoing investment in bus lanes, walking and cycling routes, and park and ride schemes primarily benefit cities. The more varied circumstances and needs of smaller towns and rural regions should not be overlooked.



Policy Context

SURF consultees felt that rural areas and small/medium towns were losing out in the current transport investment patterns, which are seen as disproportionately prioritising new infrastructure configurations in large towns and cities. Particular concerns were expressed about the impact on non-car owners in poorer parts of Scotland outwith the bigger urban centres.

These concerns are echoed by a 2016 Sustrans report into transport poverty in Scotland, which found that the most high risk areas for transport poverty were located in accessible rural areas (30% of all high risk data zones) and accessible small towns (28%).⁴⁴ Citizens Advice Scotland are among a number of bodies that have highlighted the poor state of rural bus networks, noting in a 2016 report, *Round the Bend*, that high costs and poor connectivity deter people in rural areas, particularly those on low incomes, from accessing public transport.⁴⁵

A number of responses by local authorities to the National Transport Strategy 2 consultation argued that towns and accessible rural areas were a blind spot in transport policy, perceiving a prioritisation of urban, remote rural and island-specific travel issues. In their response, for example, Aberdeenshire Council highlighted a perceived disconnection between transport policy and towns policy, especially the Town Centre First Principle, and argued that they were unable to access funding to progress town centre bus infrastructure plans.⁴⁶

SURF participants reported that the decline of bus services is most keenly felt in rural areas, where other public transport options are severely limited, increasing a general reliance on cars. Declining funding for subsidised bus routes is a particular concern for local authorities in these areas, as many routes are not considered viable by commercial transport operators.

⁴³ SURF – Scotland's Regeneration Forum, *2016 Manifesto for Community Regeneration*, 2016: <https://www.surf.scot/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/SURF-2016-Manifesto-Final-Draft.pdf>

⁴⁴ Sustrans, *Transport Poverty in Scotland*, 2016: https://www.sustrans.org.uk/media/2880/transport_poverty_in_scotland_2016.pdf

⁴⁵ Citizens Advice Scotland, *Round the Bend: A Review of Local Bus Provision*, 2016: https://www.cas.org.uk/system/files/publications/round_the_bend_0.pdf

⁴⁶ Aberdeenshire Council, *Response to the National Transport Strategy*, 2019: <https://committees.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/FunctionsPage.aspx?dsid=101196&action=GetFileFromDB>

New powers over bus service provision and funding for bus priority infrastructure have been welcomed by local authorities. But some, including Moray Council and Scottish Borders Council, argued in their response to the National Transport Strategy 2 that additional revenue funding investment will be required to support bus services in areas with a weak or non-existent commercial market.⁴⁷ A 2019 report by the North East Bus Alliance reached similar conclusions.⁴⁸

A general lack of consultation on transport policy was also highlighted as an area of concern by many respondents to the National Transport Strategy 2.⁴⁷ This resulted in one of the key outcomes of the strategy being a “more accountable” transport system. During the consultation, four Citizens Panels were held in rural, urban and island communities. These are to be maintained over the longer term as a means to assess public opinion on future changes to the transport system.⁴⁹

The National Transport Strategy 2 consultation had a specific question that asked:

“Should local communities be involved in making decisions about transport in Scotland? If so, how should they be involved, and on which specific issues should they be involved in making decisions on?”⁴⁷

Respondents to this consultation, like participants in SURF’s Manifesto interviews, were generally supportive of greater community involvement in local transport decisions, including bus routes and services. SURF participants noted that consultation in this area was often inadequate or non-existent. This was seen by some as a consequence of the privatised provision of bus services.

Participants acknowledged that regional transport planning is complex and challenging with regard to consultation, but felt that there should be more opportunities for individuals, rather than organisations, to share their views and experiences. A full range of regional Citizens Panels was among the suggestions for alternative approaches that could allow local and regional issues to be highlighted more effectively to national transport policy-makers.

SURF’s consultees differed on what mechanism is best-placed to act as interfaces between community views and national and regional transport decision-making, with local authorities, Community Planning Partnerships, Community Councils and Development Trusts among those suggested as suitable channels for local views. A number of local authority respondents emphasised that even extensive engagement with the community did not change the financial constraints – particularly in rural areas – under which decisions about service levels and routes had to be made.

In 2019, the Poverty and Inequality Commission recommended the creation of a front-end web portal to allow people to log complaints and issues regarding transport provision directly with Transport Scotland, regardless of where they are in the country. They also asked that specific efforts are made to seek the views of people in poverty and people from marginalised groups, who often rely heavily on public transport.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Transport Scotland, *National Transport Strategy 2: Analysis of Consultation Responses*, 2019:

<https://www.transport.gov.scot/media/47044/national-transport-strategy-2-analysis-of-consultation-responses.pdf>

⁴⁸ North East Bus Alliance, *Assessing the State of the Bus Network in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire*, 2019:

https://www.nestrans.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/5aapp-State-of-the-Network-Report_Final.pdf

⁴⁹ Transport Scotland, *National Transport Strategy 2: Protecting our Climate and Improving Lives*, 2020:

<https://www.transport.gov.scot/media/47052/national-transport-strategy.pdf>

⁵⁰ Poverty & Inequality Commission Scotland, *Commission Response to National Transport Strategy Consultation*, 2019:

<https://povertyinequality.scot/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/National-Transport-Strategy-Consultation-response-17-Oct.pdf>

Recommendation 10: Reverse the Vicious Circle in Bus Services

The decline in bus usage and the negative impacts on more deprived and disconnected places is a serious and increasing concern. The challenges are multi-layered and difficult to resolve, but for important and interconnected economic, social and environmental reasons, the Scottish Government needs to take further action to increase provision and usage.



Policy Context

The Scottish Government provides local authorities with funding to support regional bus services. This funding is not ring-fenced, but local authorities have a responsibility to ensure suitable service provision in partnership with private operators. In practice, this means subsidising non-profitable routes.

There have been significant reductions in Council-subsidised bus services over the past ten years.⁵¹ Additionally, there is a widespread perception that bus companies cherry-pick profitable routes, and neglect less profitable services, particularly where there is less subsidy.⁵²

The Scottish Government funds concessionary bus travel for over 60s, people with a disability, and Young Scots, and forthcoming legislation has been announced that extends this provision to all under-19s. Transport Scotland is currently investigating the possibility of extending concessionary travel across all modes of public transport to those aged under 26. SURF consultees welcomed this extended provision, but several noted that concessionary travel is of little use if communities do not have access to suitable or reliable bus services.

The Scottish Government and Transport Scotland have acknowledged the challenges faced by bus services. The ongoing decline in usage was highlighted, for example, in the recent National Transport Strategy 2.⁴⁹ The strategy highlighted a considerable decline in passengers and routes, and a rise in bus fares. Reforms to the regulation and provision of bus services are a central part of the Transport (Scotland) Bill in 2019, which makes it easier for local authorities to run their own bus services.

Provisions in the Bill include new Bus Service Improvement Partnerships, new and extended powers for local transport authorities to provide bus services to meet social needs, and new obligations on bus operators to make more information available to the public on services, including routes, timetables and fares. In addition, transport operators that are withdrawing services must now provide more information to local transport authorities. The 2020-21 Scottish Programme for Government announced a £500m Bus Partnership Fund, which aims to reduce congestion and improve bus priority infrastructure.⁵³

SURF shares the concerns a number of non-governmental groups have about the impacts of reduced provisions of bus services on deprived communities. In 2019, the Poverty and Inequality Commission published a report looking at the transport system as a whole, while in advance of the 2019 Transport (Scotland) Bill and National Transport Strategy 2, the Poverty Alliance called for urgent

⁵¹ Unison, *Statistics: Regional Local Government Cuts in Scotland*, 2019:

<https://www.unison.org.uk/content/uploads/2019/12/LG-cuts-regional.pdf>

⁵² Sunday Post, *Fears Over Scotland's Bus services as Investigation Reveals a Fifth of Routes Have Been Axed over Last Decade*, 2016: <https://www.sundaypost.com/news/scottish-news/fears-scotlands-bus-services-investigation-reveals-fifth-routes-axed-last-decade/>

⁵³ Transport Scotland, *Overview: Bus Partnership Fund*, 2020: <https://www.transport.gov.scot/public-transport/buses/bus-partnership-fund/>

action on extending concessionary travel and embedding strong anti-poverty dimensions into Bus Service Improvement Plans.^{54 55}

SURF members also highlighted the environmental benefits of reversing the decline in bus usage and service provision. In their 2020 Manifesto for Clean Growth, the Scottish Council for Development and Industry called for a shift away from investment in new roads and towards investment in infrastructure for trains, buses and active travel.⁶

Similar calls were made by a coalition of transport charities in response to National Transport Scotland 2, including Living Streets, Paths for All, Sustrans Scotland and Transform Scotland, who argued that the Scottish Government should:

“... prioritise reversing the decline in bus patronage and promote integrated transport options. (...) Sheltered bus stops and real-time information should be provided, as well as protected and secure cycle parking, especially at public transport interchange and at rural bus stops.”⁵⁶

Some SURF consultees felt bus services should be re-nationalised. This position is backed by campaigning organisations such as Friends of the Earth Scotland, Get Glasgow Moving, Unison and Unite.⁵⁷ A poll conducted in 2018 indicated that 58% of people in Scotland were in favour of publicly owned buses, and some investigations have been taken in local authority areas towards the practicalities of re-nationalisation.^{58 59 60} Wholesale re-regulation or nationalisation has been rejected by Transport Scotland, who argue that local authorities prefer the flexibility that the measures outlined in the 2019 Transport (Scotland) Act provide.⁶¹

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a massive negative impact on bus service usage, and bus operators have been compensated by central government economic relief packages.⁶² SURF consultees are particularly concerned at the pandemic impacts on bus service usage in the longer term. They cited remote working, digital retail, and longer-term infection concerns among the factors likely to cause further decline.

⁵⁴ Poverty & Inequality Commission, *Transport and Poverty in Scotland*, 2019: <https://povertyinequality.scot/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Transport-and-Poverty-in-Scotland-Report-of-the-Poverty-and-Inequality-Commission.pdf>

⁵⁵ Poverty Alliance, *Response to National Transport Strategy Consultation*, 2019: <https://www.povertyalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Poverty-Alliance-response-to-National-Transport-Strategy-consultation.pdf>

⁵⁶ Sustrans et al, *Joint Response: Six Priorities for the National Transport Strategy*, 2019: <https://www.sustrans.org.uk/media/5147/national-transport-strategy-joint-response.pdf>

⁵⁷ Friends of the Earth Scotland, *Campaign: We Need Better Buses*, 2017: <https://foe.scot/campaign/air-pollution/need-better-buses/>

⁵⁸ Source News, *Majority of Scots Back Public Ownership of Bus Services*, New Poll Finds, 2018: <https://sourcenews.scot/majority-of-scots-back-public-ownership-of-bus-services-new-poll-finds/>








⁵⁹ Glasgow City Council, *Funding for Glasgow's Transport Strategies*, 2020: https://www.getglasgowmoving.org/reports/gcc_bsip.pdf#page=5













⁶⁰ Evening Express, *Council in Fresh Bid to Buy First Aberdeen*, 2020: <https://www.eveningexpress.co.uk/fp/news/local/council-in-fresh-bid-to-buy-first-aberdeen1/>

⁶¹ Scottish Parliament, *Transport (Scotland) Bill: Policy Memorandum*, 2018: [http://www.parliament.scot/Transport%20\(Scotland\)%20Bill/SPBill33PMS052018.pdf](http://www.parliament.scot/Transport%20(Scotland)%20Bill/SPBill33PMS052018.pdf)

⁶² The Ferret, *Bus Firms Under Fire for Cutting Routes Despite 'Unprecedented' Bailouts*, 2020: <https://theferret.scot/bus-companies-cut-routes-despite-bail-outs/>

Alignment of SURF Recommendations with the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework and United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

Manifesto Recommendations	National Performance Framework	Sustainable Development Goals
1) Take a Wider Approach to Retrofitting		Affordable and Clean Energy Climate Action Decent Work and Economic Growth Good Health and Wellbeing Industry Innovation and Infrastructure No Poverty Reduced inequalities Responsible Consumption and Production Sustainable Cities and Communities
2) Make More Funding Available for Adaptation		Climate Action Life on Land Decent Work and Economic Growth Industry Innovation and Infrastructure Sustainable Cities and Communities Good Health and Wellbeing Reduced Inequalities
3) Grow Green Jobs for Young People		Climate Action Decent Work and Economic Growth Reduced Inequalities Sustainable Cities and Communities
4) Encourage Long-Term Leasing of Community Assets		Reduced Inequalities Sustainable Cities and Communities
5) Increase Development on Brownfield Land		Decent Work and Economic Growth Reduced Inequalities Sustainable Cities and Communities Responsible Consumption and Production Life on Land Industry Innovation and Infrastructure Climate Action
6) Prioritise Empty Homes		Sustainable Cities and Communities Climate Action Responsible Consumption and Production Industry Innovation and Infrastructure Decent Work and Economic Growth
7) Create a New Regeneration Strategy Centred on Reducing Poverty and Supporting Places		No Poverty Industry Innovation and Infrastructure Sustainable Cities and Communities Reduced Inequalities Responsible Consumption and Production Climate Action

8) Provide Targeted Whole-Place Investments in the Most Deprived Places	   	No Poverty Industry Innovation and Infrastructure Sustainable Cities and Communities Reduced Inequalities
9) Invest in Transport Infrastructure in Commuter Towns and Rural Areas	   	Sustainable Cities and Communities Good Health and Wellbeing Climate Action Industry Innovation and Infrastructure
10) Reverse the Vicious Circle in Bus Services	   	Sustainable Cities and Communities Good Health and Wellbeing Climate Action Reduced Inequalities No Poverty

The above icons correspond to key themes in the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework, as represented in the following illustration:



Section 4: Thematic Outcomes

SURF's consultation process was split into eight themes. This section summarises the main outcomes in each of the following areas, including a number of secondary recommendations:

1. Poverty & Inequality
2. Inclusive Growth
3. Culture & Heritage
4. Climate Crisis
5. Transport
6. Housing
7. Community Led Regeneration
8. Land, Place & Planning

4.1 Poverty and Inequality

Poverty and inequality is a central concern for SURF and informs all aspects of our work. For this manifesto topic we spoke to frontline community workers and third sector representatives from across Scotland.

Policy Context

Rising Poverty & Inequality

One fifth of Scotland's population lives in poverty. Relative poverty levels have increased since 2009-12.⁶³ After 20 years of decline, poverty rates for children and pensioners are now rising. Poverty amongst people of working age has remained steady over the past 20 years, but there are some significant exceptions. Men under the age of 25, for example, are most likely to be facing destitution.⁶⁴

The Scottish Government and poverty analysts such as the Joseph Rowntree Foundation and the United Nations' Special Rapporteur on Poverty state that the principle cause of this reversal has been the implementation of austerity policies by successive Westminster governments.^{63 64 65} These include changes to welfare policy: the benefit cap, the two child limit, the implementation of universal credit, and the enhanced use of punitive sanctions. There have been particularly negative consequences for those on low incomes, people who are in and out of employment, large and lone parent families, and on levels of child poverty.^{66 67 68}

Income inequality in Scotland has also been rising. In 2015-18, the wealthiest 10% of the population had 27% more income than the poorest 40% combined. This compares to 24% more income of the top ten percent in the previous three year period.⁶⁹

⁶³ The Scottish Government, *Poverty & Income Inequality in Scotland: 2015-18*, 2019

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/poverty-income-inequality-scotland-2015-18/pages/1/>.

⁶⁴ Joseph Rowntree Foundation, *Poverty in Scotland*, 2019 <https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/poverty-scotland-2019>.

⁶⁵ United Nations, *Visit to the UK: 2019 Report of the Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights*, <https://undocs.org/A/HRC/41/39/Add.1>.

⁶⁶ Child Poverty Action Group, *A Report on the Benefit Cap*, 2018 <https://cpag.org.uk/sites/default/files/files/page/CPAG-Scot-Benefit%20cap%20report%20Jan%2018%200.pdf>.

⁶⁷ Child Poverty Action Group, *A Report on the Two-Child Limit*, 2018 <https://cpag.org.uk/sites/default/files/CPAG-Scot-EWS-two%20child%20limit-Jul2018.pdf>.

⁶⁸ Child Poverty Action Group, *All Kids Count: The Impact of the Two-Child Limit after Two Years*, 2019

<https://cpag.org.uk/news-blogs/news-listings/two-child-limit-taking-heavy-toll-family-life-new-survey-finds>.

⁶⁹ The Scottish Government, *Poverty & Income Inequality in Scotland: 2015-18* <https://www.gov.scot/publications/poverty-income-inequality-scotland-2015-18/>.

Unequal Outcomes

Specific groups are at higher risk of being in poverty. Poverty is gendered, with women more likely to be in poverty than men. This is most acute in the case of lone parent families, which are most likely to be single women.⁷⁰ If a family includes an individual with a disability, the family are significantly more likely to experience poverty and food insecurity.⁷¹

Poverty in Scotland also has a clear racial dimension. 35% of minority ethnic people in Scotland live in poverty compared to 18% of white British people.⁶⁹ A 2011 study found that ethnic minorities experience discrimination and additional difficulties in accessing services, housing and employment in Scotland.⁷²

Spatial Dimensions

The recently published Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2020⁷³ (SIMD) demonstrated that poverty in Scotland has a clear spatial dimension, with stark inequalities between places. However, this does not reflect the full reality of poverty in Scotland, as two thirds of those on low incomes live outwith areas of concentrated deprivation and there remains no robust evidence showing 'area effects' as a determinant of poverty.^{73 74}

Nevertheless, people in areas of concentrated deprivation are most likely to experience conditions that limit their opportunities. Additionally, people in more dispersed rural areas experience poverty in different ways, with higher living costs, a smaller supply of jobs, and more barriers in accessing services.⁷⁵

Fuller background information on this manifesto topic can found in our [briefing paper](#).

Consultation

Participants were generally supportive of the Scottish Government's policies aimed at reducing poverty, believing that much of the necessary policy architecture was in place. Action on child poverty was praised – particularly the use of targets and the requirement for local authorities to produce child poverty progress reports.

However, all of those consulted noted that poverty was still rising. Issues like zero-hours contracts and no recourse to public funds (affecting minority ethnic and migrant communities) were identified as creating endemic precarity, which was difficult for the third sector and local authorities to respond to in the context of limited powers and funding.

While it was acknowledged that many crucial powers in this area are still controlled by the UK Government, participants agreed that the Scottish Government could do more to address poverty. There was a shared perception that while the Scottish Government readily set up listening exercises and policy working groups, limited progress has been made on practically implementing their

⁷⁰ The Scottish Government, *Every Child, Every Chance: The Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan (Annex 2 - Technical Annex)*, 2018 <https://www.gov.scot/publications/tackling-child-poverty-delivery-plan-annex-2-further-technical-information/>.

⁷¹ The Scottish Government, *Scotland's Wellbeing - Measuring the National Outcomes for Disabled People*, 2019 <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-wellbeing-measuring-national-outcomes-disabled-people/pages/13>.

⁷² Gina Netto, Filip Sosenko, and Glen Bramley, 'A Review of Poverty and Ethnicity in Scotland', *Joseph Rowntree Foundation: York*, 2011, 1–78 <http://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/files/jrf/poverty-ethnicity-Scotland-summary.pdf>.

⁷³ The Scottish Government, 'Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2020', 2020 <https://www.gov.scot/collections/scottish-index-of-multiple-deprivation-2020/>.

⁷⁴ Peter Matthews and Kirsten Besemer, *Poverty and Social Networks Evidence Review A Report for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation Anti-Poverty Programme*, 2014 [https://dspace.stir.ac.uk/bitstream/1893/21042/1/JRF final published report.pdf](https://dspace.stir.ac.uk/bitstream/1893/21042/1/JRF%20final%20published%20report.pdf).

⁷⁵ The Scottish Government, *Rural Deprivation Evidence Summary*, 2016 <https://www2.gov.scot/Resource/0051/00514495.pdf>.

outcomes. While the Scottish Government's headline anti-poverty targets were praised, the policy framework around them was identified as being in need of work.

A number of participants believed that for significant change to occur, the Scottish Government would need to look more fundamentally at the economic and political model of the country and how this affects processes and outcomes at the local level. Low wages in the public sector were identified as an area requiring immediate attention. One participant highlighted the longer term false economy of seeking 'best (financial) value' through public contracts. The Community Wealth Building model, presently being implemented in North Ayrshire, was viewed favourably in this regard, as it clearly linked local economic development strategies to anti-poverty work.

Particular groups were identified by participants as facing a higher risk of poverty, and were viewed as requiring additional targeted support to mitigate this. Minority ethnic communities were perceived as facing disproportionate levels of poverty, in large part due to structural racism. Another issue was 'no recourse to public funds' status, which excludes many migrants from the welfare system. Newer migrants with status were also identified as being particularly vulnerable, and seen as moving from a hostile immigration system into a similarly hostile welfare system.

Women were identified as being more at risk as a result of spending cuts, due to changes made to the social security system by the UK Government. People with a disability were also seen as being more vulnerable to poverty, facing significant additional barriers to accessing employment, housing and services.

The Scottish Government's new powers over benefits, with the recent creation of the Scottish Social Security Agency, were seen as a good opportunity to provide more targeted support to people in poverty. The forthcoming Scottish Child Payment was welcomed, but participants believed that payments should be increased, and eligibility expanded.

One consultee highlighted the low level of disability benefits as a particular issue, arguing that new powers in this area should be used to ensure a good standard of living for recipients. This echoed a more general ask, which was for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation's minimum income standards to be used to inform benefit levels. There was also support for more targeted payments for specific groups like lone parents. Finally, participants believed that there should be stronger links between the benefits system, volunteering, paid training and work placements.

All participants in the poverty section of the consultation were worried by rising levels of inequality. Participants argued that the Scottish Government should use its powers over taxation more progressively, with reform of wealth taxes and council tax, which some felt reinforce existing inequalities in their current form. Inequalities in the education system were a further area of concern. Participants welcomed the Scottish Government's targeted measures in this area, but believed that they were being outweighed by the wider impact of welfare cuts.

Access to public transport was another issue, with cuts to services disproportionately affecting poorer people by restricting access to work, education and other services. Digital inclusion was highlighted too, with inequalities in access clearly illustrated during the pandemic.

Participants were generally in agreement that there needed to be a blended approach to anti-poverty strategies, with effective national policy working hand in hand with targeted place-based work. Some policy issues, like welfare, were acknowledged to be inherently national, while it was felt others, like transport, should be developed on a place-by-place basis.

"There's a balance to be struck between having a national framework which should set a standard and the need to then empower people at the local level to meet that standard and go past it" (Community Worker)

Making adequate connections between the national, local and neighbourhood levels, was viewed as a particular challenge. With local authorities seen as being too big, and lacking the requisite community and economic development infrastructure to engage effectively at the community level. Worries were expressed that this situation would continue to deteriorate, with financial constraints on local authorities encouraging further centralisation of budgets, decision-making and staffing.

Participants welcomed the Scottish Government's extra support for local authorities, charities and community groups during the pandemic, particularly the speed and flexibility with which funding had been distributed. However, there was agreement that, while this extra funding was welcome, the key issue would be what happens next – given that most of the hardship and poverty experienced during pandemic, was pre-existing to a large extent. While the response to pandemic had illustrated strength and agility of community and voluntary infrastructure in many areas, participants saw a need for greater sustainability and standardisation, and a rights-based approach to provision of food, support and services.

4.2 Inclusive Growth

This broad topic encompassed economic development, place-based inequalities, private & social enterprise, business infrastructure, employability, and skills. We spoke to a range of policy makers and economic development practitioners from the public and private sectors.

Policy Context

Having increasingly gained traction in policy-making discourse internationally, inclusive growth was adopted as a central theme by the Scottish Government in its Economic Strategy in 2015. The Scottish Government use the following definition:

*“growth that combines increased prosperity with greater equality, creates opportunities for all, and distributes the benefits of increased prosperity fairly.”*⁷⁶

The Institute of Public Policy Research, in its 2019 study of Inclusive Growth in Scotland for the Poverty & Inequality Commission, reported a lack of consensus around what this means in practice.⁷⁷

Facilitating inclusive growth is a key aspect of the Scottish Government's Economic Action Plan for 2019-20.⁷⁸ Its policy interventions largely focus on the places and people that are furthest removed from the economy and the job market, and aim to tackle pressing issues such as: in-work poverty, poor job quality, inequality in access to labour market opportunities, and persistent poor outcomes for disadvantaged groups and those furthest from the labour market.

Place-Based Inclusive Growth

A key mechanism for delivering place-based inclusive growth are City Region Deals and Regional Growth Partnerships, a key feature of the Scottish Government's 2016 update of its Agenda for Cities.⁷⁹ The broad purpose of these cross-government partnerships are to promote enhanced growth in regional economies, through structured interventions including additional investments in

⁷⁶ The Scottish Government (2015), *Scotland's Economic Strategy*, Scottish Government/APS Group: Edinburgh. <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-economic-strategy/>.

⁷⁷ IPPR Scotland (2019), *Delivering Inclusive Growth in Scotland*, Poverty & Inequality Commission/APS Group: Edinburgh. <https://povertyinequality.scot/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Poverty-and-Inequality-Inclusive-Growth-final-report.pdf>.

⁷⁸ The Scottish Government (2019), *Economic Action Plan 2019-20*, Scottish Government/APS Group: Edinburgh. <https://economicactionplan.mygov.scot/>.

⁷⁹ The Scottish Government (2016), *Scotland's Agenda for Cities*, Scottish Government/APS Group: Edinburgh. <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-agenda-cities/>.

infrastructure and innovation.⁸⁰ The Institute of Public Policy Research has noted considerable variation in the extent to which inclusive growth is being actively pursued in different cities and regions.⁷⁷

The Scottish Government has demonstrated a growing interest in community wealth building, as an alternative to the failure of market centred trickle down approaches. It explicitly seeks to increase wealth retention in local economies through dedicated initiatives and interventions. The three local authorities of Ayrshire are managing a £3m Community Wealth Building fund as part of a pilot project supported by Scotland's Centre for Regional Inclusive Growth.⁸¹

Fuller background information on this manifesto topic can be found in in our [briefing paper](#).

Consultation

There were a range of views on what 'inclusive growth' should mean in the Scottish context. Some suggested that it could be summarised as "*no one being left behind*", with all places and people participating in the economy, spreading wealth to ensure equality and prosperity. Others stressed that inclusive growth was ultimately about viewing economic success in terms of wellbeing, rather than Gross Domestic Product.

The spatial aspects of inclusive growth were also highlighted, with previous policy in this area seen as compounding inequalities by focussing on wealthier city regions and clusters rather than on communities and towns. Participants were divided on issue of growth. Some believed that growth was essential to reducing inequality, while others did not think growth was required in order to make the economy fairer, and that growth-focused policy-making runs counter to agreed obligations to respond to climate change.

Participants had mixed opinions on the progress of the inclusive growth agenda to date. There was agreement that the Scottish Government was genuine in its appetite for change, and that this had encouraged other stakeholders to change their policies and the way they worked. The Scottish Government's decision to focus on mainstream services and broad issues like fair work, over specific projects, was praised.

Some participants, however, believed that this good work was being overshadowed by geographic patchiness, slow progress overall and a lack of setting meaningful targets. A number of stakeholders reported a lack of clarity over how progress should be measured as the most significant issue. Others stressed the need for a long-term commitment, arguing that it would take 10-15 years for the impacts of specific interventions to be fully known.

There was general agreement that more needs to be done to connect deprived communities with emerging economic growth opportunities, and with the national economy more generally. While national policy in this area, including the Place Principle, was viewed positively, a lack of capacity in local government was seen as a limiting factor on its implementation at the local level. Similar issues were identified with City Region Deals; while the plans and investments were welcome, these were viewed as only being valuable if they can complement ongoing actions and collaborations at the local level. The Ayrshire Growth Deal was highlighted an example of the good work that was possible in this area.

Traditional community benefit clause efforts were seen as lacking impact, with newer approaches based on deeper partnerships between the public sector, businesses and community organisations, viewed as being far more effective. The HALO Project in Kilmarnock, the re-development of the

⁸⁰ The Scottish Government (2019), *City Region Deals: Overview*, Scottish Government: Edinburgh.
<https://www.gov.scot/policies/cities-regions/city-region-deals/>.

⁸¹ McInroy, N. (2019), *Community Wealth Building in Scotland*, Centre for Local Economic Strategies: Manchester.
<https://cles.org.uk/blog/community-wealth-building-in-scotland/>.

Michelin Tyre Factory in Dundee, and the New Cumnock Masterplan were all highlighted as examples of good practice in this area.

Community Wealth Building (CWB) was viewed positively by participants, seen as providing a clear set of principles to deliver inclusive growth and preventing 'leakage' from local economies. North Ayrshire Council, which is responsible for Scotland's first CWB strategy, was praised for its clear practical commitment to putting the policy agenda into practice, with significant dedicated staffing and resource across the authorities' localities.

Participants stressed the need for this determined application to be replicated in other local authority areas. Some worried that it could become little more than a new 'buzzword' if not implemented properly. There was strong support for additional resources to enable the rapid spread of CWB pilots to socially and economically challenged places across the country, especially in the context of responses to the pandemic.

Participants were generally supportive of the Scottish Government's approach to additional funding for businesses and social enterprises during the pandemic. Money was seen to be going to the right places and sectors, with local authorities providing effective support and guidance. However, the scale of available resource was viewed as a clear issue, with demand far exceeding supply for many grant programmes. This was leading to some sustainable businesses, social enterprises and community organisations being lost. Tourism and the creative industries were identified as being particularly vulnerable and requiring of additional support. Rural areas were also a particular concern, with participants believing that they would take longer to recover than more well connected towns and city regions.

Consultees agreed that the UK and Scottish Government's emergency measures had stabilised the situation in the shorter term, not least in preventing mass job losses. Participants believed more radical action was required over the next Parliament, as the economic impact of the pandemic becomes clearer. Many more redundancies were considered inevitable, and a substantial package of support will be required for those losing jobs due to the pandemic. Youth unemployment was a priority concern, with strong support expressed for a job guarantee programme of two years or more, and additional investment in employability services, education and training.

Participants highlighted the role of the recently established Scottish National Investment Bank, believing it should be radical in its aims and prioritise support for struggling regions and businesses over commercial return on investment. There was also support for scaling up investment in climate change adaptation and mitigation as a part of a [Green New Deal](#), which would support a more sustainable economic recovery while contributing towards the realisation of net-zero targets.

The climate emergency, Brexit and the rising automation of work, were all identified as pressing longer term challenges to the Scottish economy and to securing sustainable inclusive growth. In response, some participants emphasised the need to make clearer links between inclusive growth and meeting climate change targets, in line with the principles of the [Just Transition](#). CWB and circular economy approaches were seen as being particularly relevant to that end.

Others were more focused on skills and fair work, believing further labour market interventions were required to ensure that young people were supported to handle economic change and had the skills required for new industries. There was also support for direct investment in local employment in specific places and for the further devolution of power to local authorities and communities.

4.3 Culture and Heritage

Culture and heritage, and its contribution to community regeneration, has been an area of longstanding interest for SURF. We spoke to a wide range of cultural practitioners and experts, working at both the local and national level.

Policy Context

The Scottish Government published a new Culture Strategy in February 2020, following three years of formal preparation and consultation.⁸² The strategy's vision is for Scotland to be a place:

*"...where culture is valued, protected and nurtured. Culture is woven through everyday life, shapes and is shaped by society, and its transformative potential is experienced by everyone. Scotland's rich cultural heritage and creativity of today is inspired by people and place, enlivens every community and is celebrated around the world."*⁸²

The Strategy has three main strands, all of which have relevance to place-based regeneration, inclusive growth, and community development:

1. *Strengthening Culture – Focusing on the nurture and sustainment of cultural activity and creative practitioners in Scotland.*
2. *Transforming Through Culture – Opening up the potential for culture as a transformative force in society, embedding it across all policy areas, including: regeneration, health and wellbeing, and equalities.*
3. *Empowering Through Culture – Recognising and promoting culture as a vital part of every community, in all its forms: the everyday and the formal, the established and the emerging.*

The Culture Strategy acknowledges the benefits of cultural participation to individuals and communities, extending its definition of culture to include 'everyday culture', which includes less formal activities such as gardening, craft clubs and knitting groups. Despite this broad definition, there are barriers to all kinds of cultural participation.⁸³ Access barriers are closely related to wider issues of deprivation and inequality, and have been compounded by the effects of austerity-based policy decisions.⁸⁴

The SURF Awards have highlighted the impact of successful community arts groups that work in areas of relative deprivation. Recent examples include WHALE Arts (Wester Hailes, Edinburgh), The Portal (Govan, Glasgow) and RIG Arts (Greenock).⁸⁵ Such initiatives provide accessible opportunities for people to build confidence, skills, and social connections by sharing knowledge and providing activities based on local heritage and assets. The associated improvements in social cohesion, pride of place, prospects for enhanced employment and education, and mental wellbeing are all highly beneficial to the wider community.

Fuller background information on this manifesto topic can be found in our [briefing paper](#).

⁸² The Scottish Government, *A Culture Strategy for Scotland*, 2020, Edinburgh: The Scottish Government. www.gov.scot/publications/culture-strategy-scotland.

⁸³ Ballantine, J. & Hearn, D., *Scotland's Culture Strategy: Overcoming Barriers and Unlocking Benefits*, 2020, Edinburgh: National Trust for Scotland. www.nts.org.uk/stories/overcoming-barriers-to-experiencing-scotlands-culture.

⁸⁴ Prof. Annette Hastings et al, *The Cost of the Cuts: The Impact on Local Government and Poorer Communities*, 2015, Joseph Rowntree Foundation: York. www.jrf.org.uk/report/cost-cuts-impact-local-government-and-poorer-communities.

⁸⁵ SURF, *The SURF Awards for Best Practice in Community Regeneration by Year*, 2019, Glasgow: SURF. www.surf.scot/surf-awards/.

Consultation

There was support for the general principles guiding the Scottish Government's Culture Strategy. There was also scepticism regarding its practical outcomes, particularly given the fact that it was perceived as placing additional burdens on organisations without a commensurate increase in funding.

The establishment of a National Cultural Partnership was welcomed, but some shared concerns that it would largely be made up of the 'usual suspects' and might have little practical effect. A key concern for a number of participants was how culture and heritage could be embedded more effectively across different areas of public policy, where it was seen as having a strong role, including for locally authentic and participative community regeneration.

More resources were viewed as vital for enhancing the levels of involvement of arts and heritage organisations in community regeneration activity. Some participants believed that there was too much competition for funding and influence at present, which discouraged collaboration and restricted the scope of locally relevant activity. Consultees pointed to the 160 expressions of interest to the recent [Creative Communities](#) programme as evidence of the appetite for undertaking this work, noting, however, that only 15 were to be funded. Asymmetrical power relations were also identified as an issue, with larger well-resourced cultural bodies soaking up resources and overpowering the aspirations of smaller organisations.

Increasing levels of cultural participation, particularly among people living in deprived areas, was viewed as a key challenge for the arts and heritage sector. Personal finances and a lack of free time were identified as significant barriers to participation in arts activity. A degree of exclusivity was also noted, with invisible barriers often stopping people from entering flagship cultural venues. Similarly, funding structures often excluded those not equipped with the correct jargon or connections.

A number of participants believed there was often also a degree of elitism at play in the way this issue was discussed; the Cultural Strategy highlights the importance of 'everyday' culture, yet participation was still largely viewed in terms of participation in monetised 'high culture'. More inclusive and responsive cultural mapping activities were seen as offering a more representative picture of cultural participation, particularly in deprived places.

Participants highlighted a wide range of projects which demonstrated the benefits of cultural work in place based regeneration. These included: the work of [Deveron Arts](#) in Huntly; [Tenantspin](#) in Liverpool; [Caterans Common Wealth](#) in Perthshire; Glasgow Life's [artist in residence programme](#); [Kilmarnock Townscape Heritage trail](#), and an ongoing project run by the [Coalfields Regeneration Trust](#) looking at community and memory using film and archival resources.

Despite the Culture Strategy's acknowledgement of everyday cultural activity like book groups, choirs and life classes etc. participants believed this dynamic remained overlooked and under-resourced in current policy, despite often being at the heart of people's participation in culture.

"We need to give validity to this organic activity – I think the sports sector is very good at seeing an absolute continuum between a kickabout and the Premier League. That you might start out very informal then into something more structured, maybe with education involved. It's a more open-ended process."
(Head of national arts body)

Scotland's intangible heritage was also viewed to be underappreciated in present cultural policy and activity – with largescale social processes like rapid industrialisation and de-industrialisation, which intimately shaped the lives of millions of people, not really being grappled with. Everyday physical heritage was also seen by some as being undervalued – with too little being done to maintain and highlight the rich histories of our towns, villages and neighbourhoods. This was having a particularly

negative and degenerative effect on the historic built environment in more deprived areas, which lacked the community infrastructure now required to access funding to maintain and breathe life back into these buildings. [Govan Workspace](#) was highlighted as an excellent example of what was possible in this area.

All participants viewed local knowledge and buy-in as essential to the success of place-based cultural activity. While there was a need for national frameworks governing funding and infrastructure, consultees believed planning and delivery of cultural regeneration initiatives should focus on the local level, and be based on genuine engagement with the local community.

A number of participants highlighted problematic examples in which organisations and artists had been ‘parachuted’ into communities. Difficulties in local governance and planning structures were also highlighted; one participant noted the changing role of local authorities, whose resources for cultural responsibilities had faced severe cuts in recent years. Another highlighted the potential of Local Place Plans to act as a bridge between local authorities, and community groups & arts organisations.

Unsurprisingly, participants welcomed the Scottish Government’s additional financial support for cultural activity and organisations during the pandemic. However, worries were expressed over the impact of acute competition for resources during such pressing circumstances. Many believed there was a need to deploy resources more strategically, and to use this opportunity to consider the longer-term future of cultural activities and institution, in line with the priorities outlined in the Culture Strategy.

There was a wide range of suggestions around what the Scottish Government could do in the longer term to ease the impact from the pandemic and encourage more cultural & heritage based regeneration activity. These included: multi-year and more flexible funding arrangements, more support for maintaining a regenerating the existing built environment, and prioritising libraries as accessible local cultural hubs.

4.4 The Climate Crisis

The climate crisis will be the defining issue of our time. It is a cross-cutting issue, affecting every area of policy and practice. For this strand of the consultation, we spoke to a wide range of stakeholders with expertise in various aspects of the climate crisis, including: energy, climate adaptation, and community responses.

Policy Context

The Scottish Government declared a climate emergency on 28 April 2019. Over half of Scotland’s Local Authorities have also passed resolutions declaring a climate emergency.⁸⁶ The immediate impacts of climate instability are becoming increasingly apparent in Scotland, with rising seasonal temperatures, sea levels and annual rainfall, and more frequent extreme weather events.⁸⁷

The Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019 set targets to reduced Scotland’s emissions of greenhouse gases to net-zero by 2045. While net-zero by 2045 is generally seen as an achievable target, some analysts have argued that it will require the mobilisation of policy and resources on an almost unprecedented level.

⁸⁶ UK Climate Emergency Network, *Full List of Participating Councils: Scotland*, 2020: <https://www.climateemergency.uk/scotland/>.

⁸⁷ The Scottish Government, *Climate Ready Scotland: Second Scottish Climate Change Adaptation Programme*, Strategic Environmental Assessment, 2019: <https://www2.gov.scot/Resource/0054/00546419.pdf>.

The climate crisis is fundamentally an issue of social justice. Climate change acts as a ‘threat multiplier’, most strongly affecting those already disadvantaged the most, who are also those least likely to have contributed to carbon emissions.⁸⁸ Climate risk is stratified unequally across society. Income is a major determinant of resilience, and therefore ability to cope with the multi-level impacts of climate change.

Concurrently, extreme weather is expected worsen existing inequalities in population health, with impacts felt most by those already vulnerable. At a community level, deprived areas are likely to have less green space and be at higher risk to pluvial flooding.⁸⁹ Residents of poorer places tend to live in lower quality accommodation and are least able to adapt their homes to deal with extreme weather, while rural and island communities are more vulnerable to becoming cut off and isolated.⁹⁰

Adapting to climate change is closely linked to wider community regeneration; both policy agendas call for enhanced community capacity and resilience, and the delivery of positive social justice outcomes from mitigation activity. Community resilience describes the strength to cope with the immediate effects of climate change like extreme weather events, and also in the handling of the longer term economic and social impacts of climate change. Resilience is closely linked to community capacity, in terms of local organisations, networks and individual skills.⁹¹ This has been demonstrated during the COVID-19 pandemic, where existing community organisations have reacted strongly and played a critical role in providing front line support in disadvantaged places across Scotland.⁹²

Increased capacity within the community, in terms of both organisations and individuals, has been identified as essential to climate resilience. While public policy is in place to support the activity of community organisations in this regard, it has been argued that there is a lack of clarity around its practical implementation. This is a common concern in communities across the country and a central topic of interest for SURF’s own place-based initiative, the *Alliance for Action*.⁹³

Fuller background information on this manifesto topic can be found in our [briefing paper](#).

Consultation

All those consulted on this theme were supportive of the Scottish Government’s decision to declare a climate emergency and to set a target of net-zero emissions by 2045. Nearly every participant was keen to stress the need for practical and immediate action to back up this ambitious rhetoric. A number of consultees argued that what we do in the next five years is more important than what we do 20 years from now.

Participants did not believe that present Scottish Government climate change commitments fully outlined the amount of work that is needed on the ground, to both reduce carbon emissions and to prepare Scotland for the changes in climate that are already locked in. It was also felt that more proactive action is required to relate what is often considered an ‘abstract’ issue to the day-to-day reality of people’s lives, particularly to those on lower incomes who have thus far largely been excluded from discourse around climate change centred on issues of ethical consumption.

⁸⁸ Sustainable Development Commission, *Sustainable Development: The Key to Tackling Health Inequalities*, 2010: http://www.sd-commission.org.uk/data/files/publications/health_inequalities.pdf.

⁸⁹ The Scottish Government, *Mapping Flood Disadvantage in Scotland 2015: Main Report*, 2015: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/mapping-flood-disadvantage-scotland-2015-main-report/>.

⁹⁰ Banks, N. et al, *Climate Change and Social Justice: An Evidence Review*, 2014: <https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/climate-change-and-social-justice-evidence-review>.

⁹¹ Twigger-Ross, C. et al, *Community Resilience to Climate Change: An Evidence Review*, 2015 <https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/community-resilience-climate-change>.

⁹² SURF, *Building Back Better – Showcasing Community Resilience*, 2020: <https://www.surf.scot/projects/building-back-better/showcasing-community-resilience/>.

⁹³ SURF, *Alliance for Action: Overview*, 2016: <https://www.surf.scot/projects/alliance-for-action/>.

Participants believed that a large-scale increase in Scottish Government investment was required at all scales to deliver the transformational change required. It was suggested that government should focus its main efforts on stimulating activity at a local level. Providing finance and setting national standards, but devolving decision making and control - allowing local authorities and other agencies to move quickly in their communities. Proposals made last year by the Edinburgh Climate Commission were highlighted as an example of what could be achieved at the locality level.⁹⁴

“(We need to) focus our efforts on that kind of community space, smaller than a city but greater than an individual, that’s where benefits can be realised. Can’t just have one size fits all, our work needs to respond to needs of each community and create an enabling environment for them to create their own action plan and take ownership of that.” (Academic)

Localism was viewed as essential to securing the wider social benefits of action on climate change, both in terms of empowering communities and making the most of investment and job creation. Participants highlighted a wide range of interventions which could effectively deliver social justice aims alongside carbon reduction and climate adaptation, these included: whole house retrofit; equipping new and existing developments with effective mitigation and adaptation measures (via nature based solutions or improved green infrastructure); shortening supply chains by building up domestic green manufacturing and investing in public transport.⁹⁵ A number of participants believed that, as a general rule, spending in all areas of government should be conditional on its climate and social justice impacts.

All those consulted on this theme believed that much more needs to be done to ensure that those on low incomes and living in deprived areas were not worst effected by climate breakdown. Communities suffering multiple deprivation were identified as being more vulnerable to a range of specific environmental, biodiversity and health challenges, including the urban heat island effect, fragmented and encroached habitats, and increased pollution, surface water and flooding.

Participants believed there was a need for planned top down and bottom up approaches to respond to these challenges, focussed on actively mitigating inequalities and empowering communities. As one consultee cautioned, we should be careful not to place too much emphasis on communities own ‘resilience’ as a determinant in the face of what will be massive structural shifts affecting all levels of society.

The importance of smaller scale community projects around green space, community growing and active travel was also highlighted. This ‘softer’ work on the ground, focussed on basic day-to-day needs, was viewed as essential in allowing communities to take ownership of their responses to climate breakdown. As one participant observed:

*“We need to focus on how we can give people agency, and let them be part of the solution – this is more effective than simply legislating – telling people what to do - and creates benefits in terms of social capital and health and wellbeing”
(Community worker)*

The post-pandemic context was viewed by all participants as presenting both opportunities and challenges for Scotland’s response to the climate emergency. The pandemic had shown how quickly communities could adapt and meet new challenges, and at a more fundamental level offered a chance to re-think how we do things. There were worries that the upheaval and stress of the

⁹⁴ Edinburgh Climate Commission, *Forward, Faster, Together: Recommendations for a Green Economic Recovery in Edinburgh*, 2020: <https://www.edinburghclimate.org.uk/forward-faster-together-recommendations-green-economic-recovery-edinburgh>.

⁹⁵ M McLintock, *Maximising the Benefits of Green Infrastructure in Social Housing*. 2018: <https://www.nature.scot/naturescot-research-report-1046-maximising-benefits-green-infrastructure-social-housing>.

pandemic could slow action on climate change at the local and national level, as fatigue set in and government and communities focused on getting back to some sort of normality.

All participants were clear that the economic recovery from COVID must prioritise climate mitigation and adaptation. The principles behind Community Wealth Building were highlighted by some as being essential to maximising the benefits of this green recovery, making the most of existing and new spending, shortening supply chains and creating jobs which are difficult to outsource. There was also support for the decoupling the recovery from traditional measures of economic growth, perceived as being incompatible with our climate obligations, instead shifting to an economic model focussed on wellbeing and sustainability.

4.5 Transport

Transport is a policy area of critical importance to community regeneration and to Scotland meeting its climate change obligations. For this topic, we spoke to a wide range of policy-makers and transport experts across Scotland.

Policy Context

Transport and Socio-economic Inequalities

The Poverty & Inequality Commission has highlighted a number of intersections between poverty and transport.⁹⁶ Poor quality and expensive public transport can limit access to jobs, education and training. The cost of transport, including public transport and the cost of having to run a car, can put significant pressure on household budgets. This has implications for other important household costs; for example, the cost of transport can restrict access to affordable fresh food.

Being unable to access transport can limit access to opportunities and services, reducing quality of life and increasing risk of isolation, worsening wider inequalities. Furthermore, research indicates that areas with higher levels of deprivation tend to have worse public transport provision than more affluent places.⁹⁷ Although not universally demonstrated, negative environmental impacts associated with transport, such as busy roads and poorer air quality, tend to be concentrated in more deprived areas.⁹⁸

Scottish Government National Transport Strategy

Following several years of consultation activity, the Scottish Government and its Transport Scotland agency published the second National Transport Strategy (NTS2) in February 2020.⁹⁹

This document does not outline specific plans or initiatives; instead, it sets out a strategic framework to guide decisions on investment and policy over the next 20 years.

NTS2 has four main priorities. It aims to develop a transport system in Scotland that:

- Reduces Inequalities;
- Takes Climate Action;

⁹⁶ Poverty and Inequality Commission, *Transport and Poverty in Scotland*, 2019: <https://povertyinequality.scot/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Transport-and-Poverty-in-Scotland-Report-of-the-Poverty-and-Inequality-Commission.pdf>.

⁹⁷ Lucas, K., Mattioli, G. et al, *Transport Poverty and Its Adverse Social Consequences*, 2016, published in Proceedings of the Institution of Civil Engineers: Transport, Vol. 169 Issue 6, pp. 353–65: <https://doi.org/10.1680/jtran.15.00073>.

⁹⁸ Lucas, K., Stokes, G. et al, *Inequalities in Mobility and Access in the UK Transport System – Future of Mobility: Evidence Review*, 2019: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/784685/future_of_mobility_access.pdf.

⁹⁹ Transport Scotland, *National Transport Strategy 2*, 2020: <https://www.transport.gov.scot/our-approach/national-transport-strategy/>.

- Helps Deliver Inclusive Growth;
- Improves Health and Wellbeing.

Fuller background information on this manifesto topic can be found in our [briefing paper](#).

Consultation

Most participants highlighted the decline of bus services as the most significant issue facing the Scottish transport system. Investment was perceived to be lacking, with routes being withdrawn and timetables cut, leaving people, particularly in more remote areas, which have far fewer transport options. This was contrasted with recent investments in the railways, which had seen improved services, shorter journey times and greener trains, leading to stable consumer demand. The need for an integrated smart ticketing system was also highlighted.

“The whole experience of using public transport and active travel needs to be more enjoyable. This means better buses but also better bus stops and shelters and better information – such as real-time timetables and journey planning and live service updates - and smart ticketing.” (National Transport Charity)

Public sector cuts were a key issue, disproportionately affecting transport budgets as they were not ring fenced. This was leading to higher travel prices and less provision overall – contributing to higher levels of transport poverty. Cuts were also adversely affecting the maintenance of existing roads and active travel infrastructure.

The Central Belt was considered to be relatively well serviced by public transport, however, other more remote places, particularly those without a train station, were often far more disconnected from the wider transport network, becoming more car dependant as a result. What investments there had been in rural areas (like the Highlands and Islands and Argyll and Bute) were perceived as being for the benefit tourists rather than residents. Some participants identified an urban bias in investment decisions, pointing to recently announced funds for active travel and congestion alleviation which were focussed on urban areas.

Suggested areas for investment included: more frequent sailings on key ferry connections; upgrading the Aberdeen-Inverness Highland mainline; the extension of the Borders Railway and the development of tram or light rail systems in Aberdeen and Dundee. However as one participant cautioned – a focus on big flag ship investments hinders small-scale needs. The maintenance of existing roads and pathways was identified as a particularly pressing issue, with transport funding too focussed on capital investment over revenue support for existing infrastructure.

Participants believed there was a general lack of public engagement in decisions around transport. Although Transport Scotland were praised for engaging with community groups during the NTS2 consultation process and for their strong links with local authorities. Lack of engagement at the local level was a particular issue, disempowering communities and service users in the face of cuts and changes to services and infrastructure. While national consultations were seen as benefitting bigger organisations and interest groups.

There was some support from those consulted for the desire to engineer a ‘modal shift’ in transport use away from cars and public transport towards walking and cycling. However, others believed that it was unhelpful to separate public transport from active travel, given the pressing need to reduce car use. One participant stressed the need to provide workable alternatives to car usage, worrying that implementing punitive measures alone would penalise people on lower incomes and those living in rural areas.

An example of the tensions between this desire for a modal shift and other policy priorities was town centre parking. Participants were divided on this issue. Some argued that there was a clear

demand from residents and elected members for town centre parking, especially in places with little in the way of public transport alternatives. Some viewed this as essential to support small businesses and discourage trips to out-of-town retail parks. Others believed that car parks were expensive to establish and maintain, and took up a lot of space. They felt such resources could be better used reimagining our town centres with a view to moving away from car use, with more space for pedestrians and better public transport links. An extension of park and walk/ride schemes were highlighted by a some participants as one possible compromise solution.

Rural areas were acknowledged to face additional transport challenges which made them far more car dependant. E-bike hire schemes, electric vehicles and car clubs were all suggested as possible alternatives to individual car use, reducing carbon emissions. However, there was a general acceptance regional imbalances in carbon emissions from transport were inevitable, and the we should be more radical in reducing carbon emissions in towns and cities, where public transport and active travel is more practical, to offset this.

The COVID-19 pandemic was viewed as creating significant challenges for Scotland's transport system. Public transport use had dropped massively causing serious revenue issues for operators, while reduced ferry capacity had caused significant issues for islands like Arran. Falling confidence in the safety of public transport had led to more people using their cars, meaning that emissions had not fallen as much as they might have – some consultees were particularly worried that this trend would be sustained as some sort of normality returned.

Participants were encouraged by the increase in walking and cycling seen during lockdown, arguing that new active travel routes developed during the pandemic should be maintained as a result. The rise in the number of people working from home was also viewed positively, with potential benefits for active travel, reduced commuter flows and corresponding cuts to emissions identified as up sides of this shift.

In the longer term, participants argued for stronger links between planning and transport, believing that this was key to both community regeneration and meeting climate target obligations. To achieve these goals, new infrastructure was also urgently required; consultees repeatedly asserted that net-zero was 'not cheap' and would require massive investment in public transport and active travel to reduce car usage. Participants also argued that planners needed to be more cognisant of the economic and social value of public transport, particularly to places like town centres. Stopping out-of-town development altogether was also suggested, as this was seen as making poor use of existing transport infrastructure and encouraging car dependency.

4.6 Housing

Housing has been a key focus of Scottish Government policy over the last Parliament and is an issue of great importance to SURF and its network. We consulted with a wide range of housing practitioners and experts, from both the social and private sectors, and from across rural and urban Scotland.

Context

Rising house prices and rents have forced an increasing number of people in Scotland into unsuitable or unaffordable accommodation, and into homelessness, adversely impacting living standards and

health, and contributing to rising inequalities.¹⁰⁰ Homelessness is currently a pressing issue for local authorities across the country.¹⁰¹

In 2019, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation reported that relative poverty levels in Scotland were lower than in the rest of the UK, largely due to generally lower housing costs attributed to higher levels of social housing.¹⁰² However, there are a growing number of families and young people who are unable to access the social rented sector or the housing market, facing higher housing costs and less security of tenure in the private rented sector as a result.¹⁰³

Increasing the supply of housing has been a key aspiration of Scottish Government policy and investment over the last five years. Its 'More Homes for Scotland' approach launched in 2016 with the target of delivering 50,000 new affordable homes by March 2021. Through significant capital spending distributed via the Affordable Housing Supply Programme to housing associations, local authorities and private sector developers, more than 35,000 new affordable homes, over a range different of tenures, were delivered by December 2020.¹⁰⁴

Fuller background information to this manifesto topic can be found in our [briefing paper](#).

The Consultation

Nearly every participant on our consultation identified increasing the supply of genuinely affordable housing as their key priority for the next parliament. Building on the success of the previous Affordable Housing Supply Programme and making up for the shortfall in completions due to the pandemic. All of those consulted supported the target for 53,000 new affordable homes, supported by £3.4 million investment over the life of the next Parliament, identified by the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations and the Chartered Institute of Housing.

Continued investment from the Scottish Government was viewed as essential to building affordable homes where they were most needed and to maintaining the development capacity within housing associations and local authorities that had been built up over the past five years. A number of participants were also in favour of new investment in targeted housing led area regeneration.

Participants were unanimous in the view that standards for development of new housing should be maintained and improved, avoiding the perceived slide in quality that has been seen in elsewhere in the UK. The need to improve the quality of the public realm around developments and the importance of accessible high quality green space were also highlighted, viewed as being particularly prescient given the impacts of the pandemic on work and leisure.

Build quality was viewed as essential to combatting climate change and fuel poverty. In this regard, it was widely acknowledged that the social rented sector in Scotland was in the vanguard of improved energy efficiency measures. Worries were expressed that some of the costs of this, in the form of higher rents, may end up falling on those least able to pay, often for relatively marginal savings on fuel. Some consultees argued that we should be setting building standards at a national level, as divergent standards at a local authority level skewed patterns of private sector development, and undermined effective place making and planning.

¹⁰⁰ Commission on Housing and Wellbeing, *A Blueprint for Scotland's Future*, 2015: <http://housingandwellbeing.org/assets/documents/Commission-Final-Report.pdf>.

¹⁰¹ Dunning, R., et al, *Affordable Housing Need in Scotland Post-2021*, 2020. Chartered Institute of Housing: <http://www.cih.org/resources/PDF/Policy%20free%20download%20pdfs/Affordable%20Housing%20Need%20in%20Scotland%20Post-2021.pdf>.

¹⁰² Congreve, E., *Poverty in Scotland 2019*, 2019. Joseph Rowntree Foundation: <https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/poverty-scotland-2019>.

¹⁰³ Alex Marsh and Ken Gibb, *'The Private Rented Sector in the UK'*, UK Collaborative Centre for Housing Evidence, 2019: https://housingevidence.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/TDS-Overview-paper_final.pdf.

¹⁰⁴ Scottish Government, *Affordable Housing Supply Programme Out-Turn Report 2019-20, 2020* <https://www.gov.scot/publications/affordable-housing-supply-programme-out-turn-report-2019-2020/>.

There was universal agreement that housing targets were about much more than numbers. The need to build new housing strategically, where it was needed and would be of most wider benefit, was stressed by most participants. Consultees on this topic also highlighted the need to look beyond headline market indicators and engage with communities, viewing housing as a key part of the wider picture of community development and regeneration.

In urban areas, there was widespread support for the prioritisation of development on brownfield land, with participants also highlighting the importance of building housing close to existing infrastructure and amenities. This was viewed as particularly important in light of the climate emergency and the pressing need to reduce car dependency.

The condition of existing housing stock was also a priority for consultees, with issues around energy efficiency their primary concern. Pre-1919 tenement stock was identified as particularly problematic, with high costs and mixed ownership acting as barriers to repair and improvement. This issue was the subject of a comprehensive 2019 report by the academic Douglas Robertson for Built Environment Forum Scotland.¹⁰⁵

Some participants were in favour of more support for social landlords to intervene in this area, where the purchase of run-down, privately owned properties allows for vital work to proceed, and at the same time generates more affordable housing. Recent work by South Side Housing Association and Govanhill Housing Association were highlighted as exemplars.

A shortage of affordable housing in rural areas was an area of particular concern for consultees. A number of participants highlighted the significant positive impacts that relatively small numbers of new affordable homes can have in rural areas, helping to regenerate communities and protect services. It was noted however, that rural housing development was generally considered unattractive for private developers, with higher costs and smaller sites limiting profit margins.

The success of the community-led housing model in rural areas was widely noted. However, consultees noted these projects required communities to be highly organised, and supported throughout often long and complex development processes. A key ask from a number of participants was for changes to funding structures and grant levels for communities and social landlords, allowing for the higher costs and longer timescales of rural development. Another was for the Rural Housing Fund to be re-modelled based on the Scottish Land Fund, with regional account managers supporting communities and stimulating activity.

The issues of second homes and holiday lets was also highlighted as a pressing issue in some areas, with high levels of absentee ownership associated with declining local affordability and community breakdown. Participants were generally in favour of increased powers for local authorities to limit these uses where they were proving detrimental to the community. They also stressed the diversity of housing and land markets, and the need to balance local needs with the economic benefits of tourism.

Participants believed investment in housing should form a key plank of the post-COVID 19 recovery. Spending on housing was viewed as having a strong positive multiplier effect, both in terms of the economic benefit of construction activity and in the wider social benefits that secure affordable housing provides. A recent report by a group of researchers, led by Ken Gibb, demonstrated that investment in housing has clear positive impacts across the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁵ Douglas Robertson, *Why Flats Fall down - Navigating Shared Responsibilities for Their Repair and Maintenance*, 2019 <https://thinkhouse.org.uk/site/assets/files/1345/befs0120.pdf>.

¹⁰⁶ Ken Gibb and others, *The Impact of Social Housing : Economic, Social, Health and Wellbeing*, 2020 <https://housingevidence.ac.uk/publications/the-impact-of-social-housing-economic-social-health-and-wellbeing/>.

4.7 Community-led Regeneration

Encouraging more community-led regeneration activity is a central focus of SURF's work. For this section of the consultation, we spoke to a wide range of community representatives, practitioners and policy makers from across Scotland.

Context

The Scottish Government's current regeneration strategy, *Achieving a Sustainable Future*, defines community led regeneration as:

*"...local people identifying for themselves the issues and opportunities in their areas, deciding what to do about them, and being responsible for delivering the economic, social and environmental action that will make a difference".*¹⁰⁷

This covers a wide range of activity at different scales, from informal volunteer-run community activity to established community anchor organisations such as housing associations, development trusts and other types of charities and social enterprises that employ staff, manage assets and provide local services.

Encouraging more of this community-led activity has been continually and prominently highlighted as a central aim of Scottish Government regeneration policy since the 2011 publication of *Achieving a Sustainable Future*. This has been backed up in a range of legislation and strategy, including the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2016, the Fairer Scotland Action Plan of 2016, and the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019.

Community led regeneration can act as a corrective to much-criticised 'top-down' approaches to regeneration, by commencing development from the 'bottom up', with communities defining and working towards their own goals and ambitions, as opposed to those set by distant or external bodies.

SURF Awards for Best Practice in Community Regeneration, delivered in partnership with the Scottish Government, have highlighted a diverse range of highly successful community led regeneration projects. Recent winners of the category have included: the Ochiltree Community Hub, which preserved and expanded a vital community space in a former mining village in East Ayrshire, and the Tomintoul & Glenlivet Regeneration Project, where local community members worked together on a package of activities that helped attract visitors and secure the economic future of a geographically isolated village in the Cairngorms.^{108 109}

There is, however, scepticism about the extent to which practice and investment is consistent with policy aspirations. For example, some formal community engagement processes, particularly those linked to large-scale regeneration initiatives, can be seen as tokenistic and undermined by fundamental imbalances in power between decision-makers and intended beneficiaries, and by conflicts of interest.

The Scottish Government has acknowledged that the emphasis on community-led regeneration over the past decade in part stems from the post-austerity financial context, which has seen local government budgets and community development support functions severely diminished. Furthermore, research indicates that more affluent communities are more adept at securing scarce

¹⁰⁷ The Scottish Government, *Achieving a Sustainable Future: Regeneration Strategy*, 2011. The Scottish Government/APS Group: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/364595/0123891.pdf>

¹⁰⁸ SURF, *2019 SURF Awards for Best Practice in Community Regeneration Winners Announced*, 2019. SURF: <https://www.surf.scot/2019-surf-awards-for-best-practice-in-community-regeneration-winners-announced/>

¹⁰⁹ SURF, *2016 SURF Awards: Winning Projects Revealed*, 2016. SURF: <https://www.surf.scot/2016-surf-awards-winners/>

resources for community led activity.¹¹⁰ In this context, the emphasis on communities taking the lead on identifying and responding to their own regeneration priorities, has been viewed by some in the SURF network as a route to worsening inequalities, and also as an inappropriate passing of responsibility to already struggling communities.

Poorer people and communities are not well placed to address deep structural issues of economic and social decline. One of the key learning outcomes from SURF's Alliance for Action place-based regeneration programme has been the need for dedicated funding and support to both increase capacities within deprived communities and to enable them to lead on their regeneration projects and crucially, to collaborate effectively with larger partners, processes and resources.

Fuller background information on this manifesto topic can be found in our [briefing paper](#).

Consultation

Participants were generally positive about the policy landscape governing community regeneration, particularly the Regeneration Strategy and the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015. Most of those consulted believed that the Scottish Government were sincerely supportive of community groups and community-led regeneration more generally at a national level.

However, there was widespread agreement that the picture at the locality level was far patchier and there was scepticism about how far power had really shifted towards communities and service users, particularly when measured against the recommendations of the Christie Commission in 2011. Participants noted the loss of community development infrastructure and staffing at a local authority level as a result of spending cuts since the implementation of post-2008 austerity policies. This was perceived as having a negative effect on individual and collective community resilience and capacity, particularly in areas already struggling with multiple deprivation.

Many participants highlighted the success of the community response to COVID-19, believing it showed the ability of communities to respond compassionately and practically to immediate front-line issues, like food insecurity and social isolation, faster and more effectively than larger agencies and established structures. There was a perception however, that community-led regeneration as a whole was not contributing to wider policy priorities as effectively as some policy-makers had hoped. Despite much good work, participants generally thought that it remains unlikely community-led regeneration activity, by itself, will overcome structural inequalities.

Some participants, particularly those based in rural areas, argued that funding for community groups should be unconcerned on economic growth, and instead directed at responding to more general need within communities.

"...a lot of the economic activity that sustains rural communities is not of economic benefit. Volunteering, unpaid caring, caring for assets etc. don't generate an income or a profit. But without these, you wouldn't have a community, you wouldn't have sustainable communities in rural and island areas." (Community representative)

Community development investment was seen as being essential to helping communities in disadvantaged places overcome barriers to effective participation; like lower levels of volunteering and less confidence in sourcing funding and managing local regeneration activities. It was also viewed as vital to making connections between local priorities and larger scale structural issues like climate change. Moreover, capacity to work alongside communities was seen as vital towards facilitating community engagement in the planning process.

¹¹⁰ What Works Scotland, *Research Report: Transforming Communities?*, 2018: <https://whatworksscotland.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/WWSExploringTheRolesOfCommunityAnchorOrganisationsInPublicServiceReform.pdf>

The work of the EU Leader Fund, Highlands & Islands Enterprise's Community Team and East Ayrshire Council's Vibrant Communities Team were all highlighted examples of good practice in this area. One of the biggest asks from participants was for more funding to extend and deepen this capacity-building work across the country, with targeting towards areas of multiple disadvantage and disconnection.

Relationships between local authorities and community anchor organisations were generally viewed as being stronger in rural areas, where local authorities and development trusts work well together to maintain services over larger areas. The situation in urban areas was acknowledged to be more complex, with more diverse communities and less agreement on shared priorities. One community representative, living in a small town, noted that while their organisation had a good relationship with the local authority's community development team, other departments, such as those responsible for housing and roads, were far less responsive.

Where the Scottish Government's Local Governance Review was raised directly, all were in favour of more devolution of power to the local level.¹¹¹ There was less clarity over structural changes needed to achieve this. It was pointed out that while subsidiarity in decision-making was generally more effective, this alone would not resolve issues that were fundamentally caused by cuts to spending. Most consultees felt there need to be adequate staff to act on decisions, regardless of where they are made.

Participants were all in favour of the continued growth of community ownership of land and buildings. There was a general perception that the process was still too long and drawn out, and excluded communities with less professional skills and capacity. This finding was echoed in a recent report from the Scottish Parliament's Local Government and Communities Committee.¹¹²

Some participants believed that local authorities, or in many cases individual departments, remained suspicious of asset transfers. As one participant observed:

"Local Authorities haven't quite figured out what asset transfer means for them – they are clunky big organisations, with legal departments that don't know how to work with communities. Even in Councils which work well with communities, there are examples where things are getting stuck and it's getting frustrating."
(Community development worker)

A number of participants also highlighted problematic cases where unviable assets had been transferred or leased to inexperienced community groups, largely as a means to remove them from the local authority estate and save money. This was viewed as highly counterproductive and damaging for the groups in question, and for the wider community. One specific ask from consultees was for more support for communities undertaking asset transfer, particularly at stage two of the process, at which groups are required to consult with the wider community.

The damaging effects of tension and conflict within community groups, particularly in smaller communities, were raised by some of those consulted, with a call for more support for mediation in particularly challenging cases. It was also noted that community groups were not inherently inclusive, and that a lack of visibility and representation could lead to tacit discrimination and exclusion of minority groups. In response participants suggested that the Scottish Government and other funders take proactive action to ensure that equalities become more than a tick box exercise.

¹¹¹ The Scottish Government, *Policy: Improving Public Services – Local Governance Review*, 2017. The Scottish Government: <https://www.gov.scot/policies/improving-public-services/local-governance-review/>

¹¹² The Scottish Parliament: Local Government and Communities Committee, *Community Empowerment : Taking Stock of Participation Requests and Asset Transfers Four Years On*, 2021
<https://digitalpublications.parliament.scot/Committees/Report/LGC/2021/2/26/1335d35f-ca3a-4a50-8d86-b4481ea2ba57#bca47a59-9fe5-4fd4-8d1c-2b1eb3771b23.dita>.

The response to the COVID-19 pandemic by community groups across the country, and the emergency financial support provided by the Scottish Government, were viewed positively by all participants. The COVID-19 funding was praised for its flexibility and for the speed in which it was delivered. Participants reported that the funding had allowed groups to respond to immediate needs in their communities as they saw fit, and undertake work which may have been difficult to source funding for previously. In the longer term, participants asked that this flexibility around funding be maintained, with longer timescales and dedicated funding for core activity and staffing.

4.8 Land, Place and Planning

This topic covered an interlinked set of fields including land use and ownership, area-based initiatives, the spatial planning system, and community empowerment. We spoke to range of stakeholders and experts from a range of fields, including: planning, infrastructure and community development.

Context

Place

The concept of ‘place’ has become an increasing focus of public policy in Scotland. The Scottish Government and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities announced a commitment to the Place Principle in 2018.⁴²

The Place Principle, developed with input from SURF and other national bodies, encourages all spheres of local and national government to put place at the centre of decision-making. It advocates enhanced levels of collaboration across sectors based on shared aims and resources, and encourages partners to work closely with communities to identify and act on local priorities.

In the 2020/21 Programme for Government, the Scottish Government made a commitment to work with local authorities to develop two place based policies - ‘20 minute neighbourhoods’ and Community Wealth Building.¹⁵ The former aims to create places in which residents can meet almost all of their essential needs including employment, education, health care, shopping and leisure within comfortable walking distance from their home. The latter is an alternative approach to economic development that explicitly seeks to increase wealth retention in local economies through dedicated initiatives and interventions.

Local Governance

The Scottish Government and Convention of Scottish Local Authorities launched a Review of Local Governance in December 2017. The purpose of the review is to examine how decisions over local services are made, how local governance functions, and what scope exists towards devolving more power to local communities.¹¹³ As Scotland has one of the most centralised systems of local governance in Europe, many stakeholders view further devolution as essential to enabling effective local place-based decision-making, and for building on existing community empowerment legislation.¹¹⁴

¹¹³ The Scottish Government, *Policy: Improving Public Services – Local Governance Review*, 2017. The Scottish Government: <https://www.gov.scot/policies/improving-public-services/local-governance-review/>

¹¹⁴ Bort, E., McAlpine, R., & Morgan G., *The Silent Crisis: Failure and Revival in Local Democracy in Scotland*, 2012. The Jimmy Reid Foundation: <http://reidfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/The-Silent-Crisis1.pdf>

Land

The first Land Reform (Scotland) Act was passed in 2003, giving rural and island communities the right to register interest in, and purchase, land.¹¹⁵ The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 expanded rights into urban communities. The second Land Reform (Scotland) Act, passed in 2016, led to the creation of the Scottish Land Commission, and made it easier for many local groups to progress aspirations for community owned land and buildings.¹¹⁶

The ambition to transfer a greater share of Scotland's land into community ownership has been a significant driver of community led regeneration activity, particularly in rural and island communities where historic patterns of concentrated land ownership have acted as a barrier to community development and regeneration.¹¹⁷ There has been a general shift away from policy-makers viewing land ownership and use as a private concern; it is increasingly seen as a vital and finite public resource with under-played potential in the realms of inclusive growth, community empowerment, health and wellbeing, and the climate emergency.¹¹⁸

There are related efforts to encourage the growth of community land ownership in urban areas, particularly around vacant and derelict land. The Scottish Land Commission's and Scottish Environmental Protection Agency's Vacant and Derelict Land Task Force, which SURF is a member of, was set up in 2019. The Task Force presented a range of policy recommendations to the Scottish Government in Autumn 2020.¹¹⁹

Planning

The Planning (Scotland) Act, which was passed in 2019, made a number of significant changes to the planning system in Scotland, with the broad objective of streamlining the process by which development is planned and regulated. The act aims to 'frontload' the planning process, enabling more transparent and quicker development through more effective early consultation with stakeholders.¹²⁰

The act is designed to offer more certainty for housing development in particular, and gives community bodies the right to draft Local Place Plans, which must be taken into consideration by planning authorities when they form Local Development Plans. The act also allows local authorities to implement an infrastructure levy, although it does not clarify how this will work in practice.¹²¹

The next National Planning Framework (NPF4) is currently under consultation. NPF4 will set out a long-term spatial plan for Scotland that will guide development and infrastructure decision-making priorities and designate projects of national significance. NPF4 has five priority areas of action: climate change, health & wellbeing, inclusive growth, place, and infrastructure.

Fuller background information on this manifesto topic can be found in our [briefing paper](#).

¹¹⁵ Reid, A., *SPICe Briefing: Land Reform in Scotland, 2015*. The Scottish Parliament Information Centre: http://www.parliament.scot/ResearchBriefingsAndFactsheets/S4/SB_15-28_Land_Reform_in_Scotland.pdf

¹¹⁶ The Scottish Parliament, *Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2016*, 2016. The UK Government National Archive: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2016/18/contents/enacted>

¹¹⁷ Glenn, S., et al, *Investigation into the Issues Associated with Large Scale and Concentrated Landownership in Scotland*, 2019. Scottish Land Commission: https://landcommission.gov.scot/downloads/5dd7d6fd9128e_Investigation-Issues-Large-Scale-and-Concentrated-Landownership-20190320.pdf

¹¹⁸ The Scottish Land Commission, *News: Land Reform Unlocks Opportunity as Scotland Tackles Climate Emergency*, 2019. The Scottish Land Commission: <https://landcommission.gov.scot/2019/10/land-reform-unlocks-opportunity-as-scotland-tackles-climate-emergency>

¹¹⁹ The Scottish Land Commission, *Transforming Vacant and Derelict Land*, 2020. The Scottish Land Commission: <https://landcommission.gov.scot/our-work/housing-development/vacant-and-derelict-land>

¹²⁰ The Scottish Parliament, *Planning (Scotland) Act 2019*, 2019. The UK Government National Archive: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2019/13/contents/enacted>

¹²¹ Mitchell, F., *Potential Issues Remain with Introduction of Infrastructure Levy*, 2019. Shoosmiths: <https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/articles/potential-issues-remain-with-introduction-of-infrastructure-levy>

Consultation

Those consulted were generally welcoming of the Scottish Government's increased emphasis on place in policy making. A number noted that this was not necessarily a new idea. Some expressed doubt about the practical impact of this shift on the ground, particularly in areas facing multiple deprivation. Participants believed that, while there were good examples of place-based work across the country, the challenge was to apply policy and resource to deepen and broaden this in a coherent and sustainable way.

All participants saw the shift towards localism that had taken place during pandemic as a generally positive change, one that starkly rendered the need to locate services and opportunities more closely to where people live. This was viewed as important both to improving measures of health and wellbeing and also for carbon reduction.

There was less clarity on how 20 minute neighbourhoods could be created across Scotland. Responding flexibly to a specific place's needs and circumstances was viewed as a central issue. As one participant acknowledged:

"It's quite easy to see how it could work in some areas. The main issue is probably transport infrastructure. But to make more disadvantaged communities more liveable, walkable and healthier is going to take quite a lot of work, particularly around availability of community space and access to services."
(Community development worker)

It was suggested that there was not much need for new policy, but instead for practical guidance on how 20 minute neighbourhoods can be implemented. Local government officers, in particular, reported that they felt inundated by continually evolving national policy requests, which were not backed by resources or practicalities to help them prioritise demands and implement emerging strategies.

All participants in this theme supported communities purchasing land and buildings, as long as the asset was viable in the longer term. The post-pandemic context, with the likely increase in vacant town centre retail space, was seen by some as an opportunity to develop new multi-use, community owned spaces. This was echoed in the Scottish Government's recently published Town Centre Action Plan Review, which proposed the creation of Strategic Acquisition Fund to finance purchases of strategically important town centre assets.¹²²

Despite favourable legislation, many participants believed that the land purchase and asset transfer process was still too long and complex. This was perceived as discouraging communities, and acting as a barrier to interested groups in disadvantaged areas, which are often lacking in the free time and professional skills required to see the process through to completion. Participants believed that more targeted support should be provided to help bridge this gap, particularly in urban communities where the barriers to asset transfer and purchase are greatest. The Scottish Land Commission's forthcoming Community Ownership Hub, based in Glasgow, was highlighted as an example of work already underway in this area.

The issue of vacant and derelict land was an area of concern for all of those consulted. The recommendations of the Vacant and Derelict Land Taskforce were highlighted by a number of participants as a comprehensive intervention in this area, and they were hopeful that the Scottish Government would adopt these in the new parliament. Ensuring the productive use of urban brownfield sites was a particular area of concern, with consultees supporting proposals for a 'brownfield first' development policy to be adopted across the planning system. Smaller gap sites

¹²² Town Centre Action Plan Review Group, *A New Future for Scotland's Town Centres*, 2021
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/new-future-scotlands-town-centres>.

were suggested as being more suitable for small-scale community uses like community growing, green spaces and play parks. Participants believed that there was often a need for additional community development support to initiate and sustain these projects.

There were mixed views regarding recent and ongoing changes to the planning system. Some considered the 2019 Planning (Scotland) Act a missed opportunity, arguing that the planning system needed to be more holistically orientated towards communities and that the new legislation should have been more clearly linked to existing policy on community empowerment. Others were more positive, particularly on the possibilities for Local Place Plans, though there was agreement that these would need appropriate guidance and support to work as intended.

Participants were encouraged by the more expansive vision for planning outlined in discussions around the Fourth National Planning Framework. Many wished to see the Scottish Government go further in this area, and develop a new Regeneration Strategy to work in hand with the new National Planning Framework, with an emphasis on moving away from green belt development and towards greater recycling of, and developing of, land in urban centres.

The Local Governance Review was viewed positively by those participants that were familiar with it. They noted the unwieldy scale of local government in Scotland and pointed to a relative vacuum in terms of democratic engagement at the local level, compared with some other European countries. Participants believed that addressing this challenge would require more fundamental reform than simply changing the roles and responsibilities of existing bodies. A new tier of local governance was raised as a possibility, but some participants felt the cost and upheaval involved in doing this effectively ruled this out.

There was a general perception that there was a lack of effective support for community regeneration activity on the ground. This was leading to greater inequalities, with wealthier communities better placed to engage in community regeneration activities than those facing disadvantage. Though there were good examples nationally of disadvantaged communities working effectively with local authorities and other agencies, consultees felt this was not as widespread as it could be. Resources and support available at a national level was welcomed, but local support, more immediately accessible to communities, was seen to be lacking. This was attributed, in part, to cuts in spending for local authority Community Learning and Development functions.

Participants were generally positive towards the Scottish Government's emergency package of support for communities during the pandemic, both at the speed of its distribution and for the lack of red tape and conditions attached to the funding given out. Worries were expressed that funding had bypassed community activity in areas, which weren't as well connected to wider networks, or did not have an obvious community anchor organisation through which to distribute money. To avoid this in the future, participants believed more should be done to connect national funding processes with appropriate local knowledge.

To ease the longer-term impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic for deprived places, participants identified investment in community infrastructure, including multi-use space for community activity and accessible retail and business space, as a priority. They viewed the pandemic experience as demonstrating long-standing inequalities in access to services and community spaces.

The co-location of services, in new community hubs, was suggested as a means to achieve this, making the most of spending on new health centres, schools and Council offices. Beyond physical spaces, participants believed there needed to be a focus on bringing people together as equal stakeholders and allowing them to develop a shared vision for their areas following the pandemic. This required resources beyond those directed at economic outcomes, and as such would have to form part of a wider process of democratic renewal.

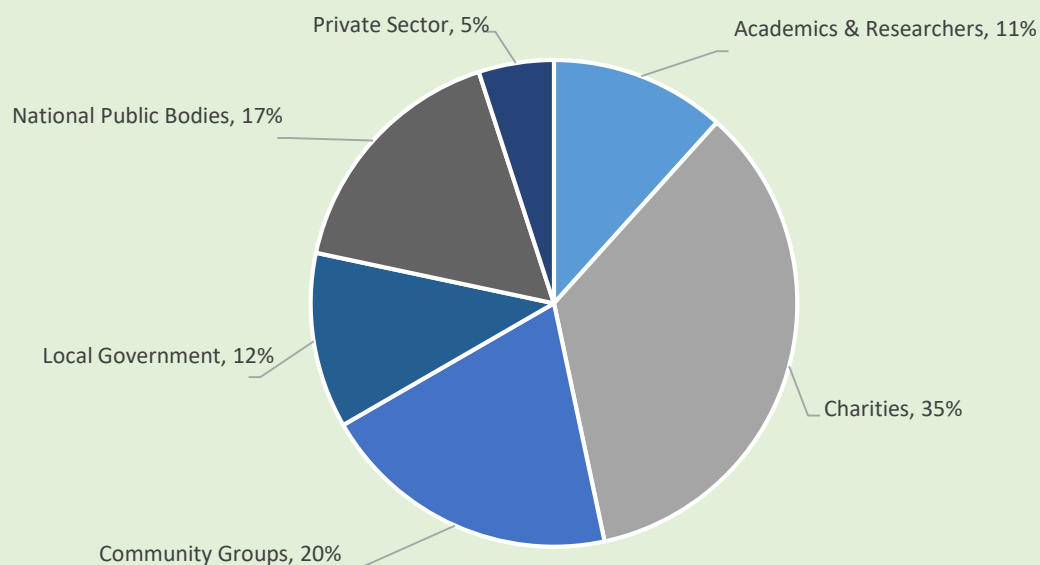
Section 5 – Special Thanks

SURF is grateful to all who contributed to the consultation process, particularly to the following individuals for their substantial input. Please note that the individuals and organisations listed in this section do not necessarily approve of, or agree with, all of the policy recommendations presented in this manifesto.

1. Ailsa Macfarlane – Policy and Strategy Manager – **Built Environment Forum Scotland**
2. Alex Baird – Chair – **Ochiltree Community Hub**
3. Alistair Grimes – Director – **SURF**
4. Andrew Faulk – Secretary – **Strathard Community Trust**
5. Andy Colvin – Community Worker – **East Ayrshire Council**
6. Andy Moseley – Empty Homes Policy Officer – **Scottish Empty Homes Partnership**
7. Angus Hardie – Director – **Scottish Community Alliance**
8. Artemis Pana – National Coordinator – **Scottish Rural Action**
9. Bridie Ashrowan – Chief Executive – **Space & Broomhouse Hub**
10. Bruce Whyte – Public Health Programme Manager – **Glasgow Centre for Population Health**
11. Clive Gillman – Director, Creative Industries – **Creative Scotland**
12. Colette McGarva – Coordinator – **Community Development Alliance Scotland**
13. Colleen Rowan – Policy and Research Lead – **Glasgow & West of Scotland Forum of Housing Associations**
14. David Kelly – Policy Manager – **Scottish Council for Development & Industry**
15. David Prescott – Chair – **Dunblane Community Council**
16. Davina Lavery – Regeneration Officer – **West Dunbartonshire Council**
17. Derek McCrindle – Head of Place – **Scottish Enterprise**
18. Dr Jayne Glass – Land Use Policy Researcher – **Scotland's Rural College**
19. Edward Fyfe – Energy Team Manager – **Citizens Advice**
20. Elana Bader + colleagues from the Green Infrastructure Projects Team – **Nature Scotland**
21. Ellie Murtaugh – Climate Resilience Project Coordinator – **Sniffer**
22. Fiona Garven – Director – **Scottish Community Development Centre**
23. Geoff Leask – Chief Executive – **Young Enterprise Scotland**
24. Gillian Easson – Co-Founder and Director – **Creative Dundee**
25. Gordon McLean – National Programme Manager (Getting Alongside Communities) – **Corra Foundation**
26. Graham Ross – Executive Director – **Austin Smith Lord**
27. Helen MacDonald – Housing Project Manager – **Mull & Iona Community Trust**
28. Helen Melone – Policy and Research Officer – **Energy Action Scotland**
29. Iain Martin – Project Manager – **Gilnockie Tower**
30. Iain Wardrop – Associate Director – **Scottish Futures Trust**
31. Ian McCall – Senior Development Officer – **Paths for All**
32. Jamie Brogan – Head of Innovation and Skills – **Edinburgh Centre for Carbon Innovation**
33. Jon Pope – Arts Producer – **Glasgow Life**
34. Jonathan Welch – Transport Planner – **Argyll & Bute Council**
35. Julie McLachlan – Senior Manager, Economic Policy – **North Ayrshire Council**
36. Kenneth MacEachan – Government & Parliamentary Manager – **Skills Development Scotland**
37. Kieran Wardrop – Community Workers – **East Ayrshire Council**
38. Leah Black – Chief Executive – **WHALE Arts**
39. Marcus Craigie – Lecturer, Integrated Land Management – **Scotland's Rural College**
40. Maria Rose Ngozi – Community Engagement Officer – **Radiant and Brighter CIC**
41. Matt Lowther – Head of Place & Equity – **Public Health Scotland**

42. Mhairi Donaghy – Vice Chair – **Scotland's Towns Partnership**
43. Michael Cook – Chief Executive – **Community Resources Network Scotland**
44. Neil Cowan – Senior Policy & Parliamentary Officer – **Poverty Alliance**
45. Neil McKay – Managing Director – **Urban Union**
46. Nick Wright – Independent Urban Planner – **Nick Wright Planning**
47. Oliver Escobar – Senior Lecturer in Public Policy – **University of Edinburgh**
48. Prof. David Adams – Emeritus Professor in Urban Studies – **University of Glasgow**
49. Professor Ken Gibb – Director – **UK Collaborative Centre for Housing Evidence**
50. Rachael Murphy – Director for Scotland – **Community Transport Association**
51. Robert Livingston – Director – **Regional Screen Scotland**
52. Ruth Lamb – Development Worker – **Govan Community Project**
53. Sara Collier – Parliamentary Liaison and FOI Team Leader – **Skills Development Scotland**
54. Shona Glenn – Policy Manager – **Scottish Land Commission**
55. Shona Simpson – Built Heritage Officer – **Glasgow City Council**
56. Stacey Dingwall – Senior Policy Manager – **Scottish Federation of Housing Associations**
57. Susan A'Brook – Evaluation and Impact Officer – **Dundee International Women's Centre**
58. Susan Love – Policy Manager – **Federation of Small Businesses in Scotland**
59. Tim Dodman – Secretary – **Papay Co-op**

Consultees by Sector



End of SURF's 2021 Manifesto for Community Regeneration

Andy Milne | Christopher Murray | Derek Rankine | additional editing by Elaine Cooper | March 2021

Further information on SURF and its activities is available on our website: www.surf.scot

SURF Scotland's Regeneration Forum. Orkney Street Enterprise Centre, 18-20 Orkney Street, Glasgow G51 2BX
Tel: 0141 440 0122 / Email: info@surf.scot / Website: www.surf.scot

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