



SURF 'Alliance for Action'

One Year On – Progress & Priorities



A report to the third meeting of the Academic, Policy and Practice Panel on 03.04.14

This paper is intended to provide an overview of progress under the SURF Alliance for Action initiative since the instigation of activity in the two Alliance sites and the first meeting of the APPP in April 2013.

WHAT

The **SURF led Alliance for Action** is a collaborative activity and shared learning programme that SURF is coordinating in the two case study areas of Govan in Glasgow and East Kirkcaldy in Fife.

In both of these disadvantaged communities, which have differing contexts but similar challenges, SURF is working with relevant local and national partners to:

- Build local capacity, strengthen resilience, increase practical outcomes and improve the wellbeing of local residents;
- Link local knowledge, initiatives and assets with national networks, policies and resources in support of more coordinated and holistic local regeneration activity.
- Draw out transferrable learning towards more successful and sustainable policy and practice in community regeneration.

The **Academic, Policy and Practice Panel** is convened by SURF on a biannual basis. Its main role is to provide a supportive reference point for oversight, advice and guidance with regard to the aims, activities and policy/practice impact of the Alliance for Action initiative.

HOW

An Alliance for Action 'Theory of Change'

Following useful discussion of the model and the aims of the Alliance at the last APPP meeting on 12.09.13, SURF conferred with Erica Wimbush, Head of Evaluation at NHS Health Scotland, and others, in confirming a 'Theory of Change' for the Alliance for Action process.

A diagram indicating the challenge, actions, scope, and intended results and outcomes has been produced for information, comment and any necessary amendments before it is circulated more widely. As well as being informative for relevant partners and contacts in this enterprise, the diagram will be an evolving tool in helping SURF and the APPP identify and implement appropriate monitoring and evaluation systems for the Alliance process.

WHO

A list of the main Alliance for Action partners at the national level and the projects and partners involved in the local case study areas are listed at Appendix 1

PROGRESS

The planned process for the first year of development as described in the 2013 SURF Alliance for Action diagram has been successfully completed.

What follows is a brief summary of the main elements of that progress and of SURF's plans and priorities for building on it in 2014.

Resources & Investments

Scottish Government Contract Support

SURF has only been able to undertake this additional stream of work as a result of the £75k investment by the Scottish Government in the process over 2013/14 and the commitment to repeat that investment in 2014/15.

Supplementary SURF Investments

As additional dimensions and connections have appeared in the first year of operation, SURF has drawn on its own limited financial reserves to make additional investment of £12k in staff time in order to capitalise on the emergent opportunities.

In October 2013, SURF committed to funding two 'Local Alliance Facilitators'. Their roles are to promote connections in Govan and East Kirkcaldy. A copy of their remit is available on request.

SURF has recently committed to making further investment of £25k from its reserves. This will be used to fund an Alliance for Action coordinator over 2014/15. SURF is also engaged in discussions with some relevant Alliance partners in an effort to negotiate the required level of support for sustaining and developing the linking and learning process.

Alliance Partner Investments

Financial and 'in kind' investments from Alliance partner organisations agreed in 2013/14 comprise:

Financial

- Creative Scotland - £16k
- Fife Cultural Trust - £5k
- Fife Council - £5k
- Highlands & Islands Enterprise (Rothesay Alliance Feasibility study) - £11.25k
- Scottish Government Capital Regeneration Grant Fund - £950k

In Kind

- Scottish Community Development Centre - community capacity building support
- Resilient Scotland – targeted 'Start and Grow' fund investments
- Children in Scotland with STV Hunter Foundation – schools/community links

Baseline Information

Reports

SURF's Local Alliance Facilitators have conducted face-to-face interviews with project representatives to produce baseline information reports on the existing aims, resources and connections as well as perceived future opportunities and barriers. A summary of the main messages from those reports is at Appendix 2 . There is scope for further and more detailed analysis of the information contained in the full written reports. Additional resources will be required to carry that out.

Films

These written records have now been supplemented with filmed interviews with 20 of the relevant local contacts. Short compilations of the filmed interviews have been edited and were shown at the recent 'One year on – Progress and Priorities sessions' in Govan and East Kirkcaldy. You can view them on our [YouTube Channel](#).

Resources Research

SURF has made additional investment in the time of an independent researcher, Katey Tabner. Over recent weeks, she has been interviewing the local project contacts about their awareness of, access to and use of, funds held by the Scottish Government that are dedicated to supporting local regeneration efforts.

She has also carried out a summary analysis of the extent, criteria and aims of these funds in cooperation with Scottish Government regeneration policy colleagues. A copy of Katey's brief is available on request. A first draft summary report of the emergent messages is attached as Appendix 3.

The full report is due to be completed by the end of May 2014. Subject to securing sufficient future resources, SURF is keen to build on this collaborative analysis by encompassing other national agency community regeneration support resources in a further phase of research.

Local Progress & Priorities

One year on 'Progress and Priorities' sessions were held in Govan on 13.03.14 and Kirkcaldy on 20.03.14. Over 80 community project and agency representatives participated.

Following presentations and discussion, the following priority themes of Alliance for Action activity were agreed for each area:

Govan

- Planning & Infrastructure / Govan Town Centre Development
- Creativity and Community Participation
- Building on Heritage and Assets

East Kirkcaldy

- Capital Regeneration Investment
- Spaces for Community Activity
- Creative Community Participation via Community Budgeting Health and Wellbeing (addressing inequality and preventative spending)

The Alliance for Action will now focus on:

- Developing investment and learning collaboration within and across these complementary priorities – see diagram (Appendix 4);
- Sharing experience and learning between Govan and East Kirkcaldy;
- Identifying and disseminating transferrable regeneration policy and practice lessons on a Scottish wide basis and beyond.

Additional Alliance for Action Links

- **Children In Scotland** – Chief Executive Jackie Brock is exploring and promoting options for enhancing mutually supportive links between primary schools in the Alliance sites and the resources and capacities represented by local community groups and agencies. She is doing so as part of a wider programme of investment and learning being supported by the STV Hunter Foundation.
- **NHS Health Scotland** – George Dodds, Head of Delivery, is linking with the Alliance for Action in exploring and promoting opportunities to focus on reducing health inequalities as a means of identifying and enhancing the wider financial and social benefits of preventative spend.
- **Resilient Scotland** – Chris Holloway, Fund Manager, is using the Alliance for Action connections to identify opportunities for making the best use of investments from the £15m JESSICA (Scotland) Trust fund, which is aimed at enhancing community enterprise activity.
- **Scottish Community Development Centre** – Head of Programmes, David Allan, is engaging with the Alliance to target support for community capacity building in community groups via the SG Community Capacity Building Fund.

Related Developments

- **Highland & Islands Enterprise** - Rachael McCormack, Head of Strengthening Communities, has engaged SURF to carry out a feasibility study for a potential Alliance for Action initiative focused on Rothesay and in cooperation with Argyll & Bute Council. The report is due for completion by the end of July 2014.
- **CoSLA** – SURF has linked with Chief Executive Rory Mair in the instigation of a study on practical options for enhancing third sector involvement in Community Planning processes and outcomes.

- **Glasgow Caledonian University** – SURF is supporting Prof. Darinka Asenova and other academic colleagues in a practical study of risk management processes in Local Authority service planning in the context of budget reductions.
- **University of Dundee** - Prof. Deborah Peel is working with SURF in exploring the options for linking SURF's Alliance for Action activity into UK and European cross-border networks.
- **Dundee City Council** – Stewart Murdoch, Director of Leisure & Communities, will work with SURF to convene a conference on 'Bridging Culture and Regeneration' consistent with the creative participation and infrastructure investment elements of the Alliance for Action.
- **University of Glasgow** – Senior Lecturer Annette Hastings focused the studies of a cohort of 25 urban regeneration postgraduate students with SURF's Alliance for Action work in Govan.
- **What Works Scotland Centre** - SURF has indicated the potential of its cross-sector Alliance for Action initiative for informing the work of this soon to be established Scottish wide research centre funded by the Scottish Government and the Economic & Social Research Council.

Next Steps

- Linking, investing and learning activity in existing sites and development of additional connections and opportunities set out above via additional SURF resource investment.
- Pursuit of additional investment to secure sustainability and development beyond March 2015.
- Reporting and promoting; over the next three months, SURF Chief Executive Andy Milne will be making a series of presentations on Alliance for Action progress, priorities and plans via the following Scottish and international links:
 - Scottish Government – Lesley Fraser (15.04.14), Sir Peter Housden (22.04.14);
 - CoSLA – President David O'Neill (date tbc);
 - International Association of Community Development (conference input 09.06.14);
 - UK Social Policy Association (conference input 15.07.14).
- A further progress report to the SURF APPP will be disseminated in September 2014.

End of report

Andy Milne, Chief Executive, SURF

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National Partners

- Big Lottery Fund Scotland
- Carnegie UK Trust
- Children in Scotland
- Creative Scotland
- Dundee City Council
- Fife Council
- Fife Cultural Trust
- Glasgow Caledonian University
- Glasgow Centre for Population Health
- Glasgow Housing Association
- GOwell
- Heritage Lottery Fund Scotland
- Highlands and Islands Enterprise
- Historic Scotland
- Improvement Service
- Jobs and Business Glasgow
- Joseph Rowntree Foundation
- Living Streets
- NHS Fife
- NHS Health Scotland
- Oxfam Scotland
- Planning Aid for Scotland
- Resilient Scotland
- Scottish Community Alliance
- Scottish Community Development Centre
- Scottish Federation Housing Associations
- Scottish Government
- University of Glasgow

Local Projects - Govan

- Central Govan Action Plan (CGAP)
- Fablevision
- Friends of Elder Park
- Friends of Pacific Gardens
- GalGael
- Gallus Games
- Govan Craigton Integration Network (GCIN)
- Govan Fair
- Govan Workspace
- Hidden Histories
- Ibrox Primary School
- Kinning Park Complex
- Plantation Productions/The Portal

- Showpeople
- Sunny Govan Community Radio

Local Projects – East Kirkcaldy

- Bike and Bowling Club
- Creative Participation and Community Engagement
- Food Project
- Gala Group
- Gateway to Gallatown
- KERF and Gestra
- Pathhead Primary
- Well on Wheels / Dad's Garden
- YMCA



SURF
Scotland's Independent Regeneration Network

SURF : sharing experience : shaping practice

Summary of Initial Benchmarking Reports: Opportunities and Barriers in Alliance for Action Case Study Areas

By Elaine Cooper, Alliance Facilitator

Sustainability

- The majority of projects have concerns about sustainability. Almost all projects have concerns about long or even mid-term funding. Project workers are frustrated that time spent seeking funds reduces time spent achieving aims. In Gallatown (east Kirkcaldy), recently constituted groups are struggling with the where and why of funds. In Govan, established projects have exhausted their access to some fund sources and need to find new ones. Some funds are only available for new projects or capital expenditure, rather than for the essential day to day resources required.
- Sustainability of activity also frequently depends on volunteer support. The majority of projects are heavily dependent upon their volunteers and many have succeeded in building up a pool of reliable supporters from within the community. However, some Govan projects have recently identified volunteer 'fatigue' with the original volunteers struggling to attract new blood for established projects. Certainly, the success of established projects can sometimes mean that their existence is taken for granted and only a crisis provokes the new support that is needed. In Gallatown, some projects are not yet embedded deeply enough within the community to attract support outwith the initial supporters and users.
- Sustainability also depends on security of tenure. Both communities have ongoing and serious issues with the fabric and adaptability of many of the buildings they use. In Govan, some projects need to find new premises and/or substantial investment in existing buildings.
- In Gallatown, Fife Council is proposing that some of the Scottish Government Regeneration Capital Grant Fund they have recently been allocated be spent on upgrading three existing premises to a standard where they could become valuable community assets and secure the future for the groups currently using them.
- In Gallatown, some projects have been initiated and supported by a LINKUP funded community worker. The work has been so successful that the Council and others sources are now funding a further year's work which will give the projects the time

they need develop the skills and confidence to survive without that support when that funding ends.

Partnership Working: Getting Along

- Most of the many projects that are run in Govan report close working relationships with each other and enjoy the mutual and reciprocated support which results. Some projects have collaborated to complement each other's expertise and make joint funding bids for large projects. Many projects share premises - or are seeking ways of doing so - and some of the older community facilities see themselves as a 'launchpad' for new initiatives offering cheap, safe and supportive environments while the newcomers find their feet.
- In Gallatown, close partnership working has led to the development of several projects branching out from one original source.
- Although many projects enjoy the benefits of close partnership working, there is an issue with the informal nature of many of these connections. It would be a useful exercise to map these connections in a way which demonstrated their added value and perhaps also reviewed any potential conflicts of interest or duplication.
- There is some evidence of issues of trust creating barriers in both communities. In Gallatown, there are historic problems/conflicts both within the community and between the community and those public agencies seen collectively as 'the authorities'. In Gallatown, these problems have been identified and are being addressed by the local council which has embarked on a widespread community engagement exercise. In Govan, there has been some conflict of interest over sites and buildings. For example, the Showpeople are in a long running dispute with formal authorities over the site they have occupied over the last 100 years or so.
- Local shops and businesses in both communities have played crucial roles in supporting projects. These include the Govan Asda's regular donation of food to the community through Sunny Govan radio and the support given to the Well on Wheels bus in the Gallatown, which couldn't function without the practical facilities of local businesses.

National Changes: Local Impact

- Almost all projects report increased pressure on time and funds because of the impact of the recession and welfare reform measures.
- A tightening up of the regulations about availability for work has caused difficulties for some project beneficiaries. In a classic Catch-22 situation, some individuals who have little prospect of finding a job because of low skills and poor confidence are being questioned about their availability for employment because they are taking part in projects which will increase their employability.
- In Govan specifically changes to benefits for immigrants and refugees has increased the numbers seeking support, without any corresponding increase in funding.

Understanding and Sharing Value

- Projects in Govan and Gallatown are producing benefits that exceed their original expectations or remit, but which are not always easy to quantify. There is a particular difficulty in measuring the 'preventative spend' benefits to other agencies and services which are accrued by the work of such projects. Projects that teach skills, encourage creativity or promote cultural or heritage learning are having a knock-on effect on the health, pride and mental wellbeing of participants. In some cases, such added value from projects is not initially recognised by the project itself.

- In Gallatown, the wider community is benefiting from improved relationships between two generations after the elderly members of the bowling club opened their premises to the local youth and bike club. In Govan refugees or immigrants who originally sought project support are now finding employment as translators or interpreters.

End of summary

Scottish Urban Regeneration

Research into Scottish Government regeneration funding 2014

Research Remit

The research has been commissioned by SURF to explore the accessibility, adequacy, relevance and benefit of Scottish Government regeneration funding for small-medium sized organisations in the two Alliance for Action case study sites.

The research involves a review of six Scottish Government funds; Climate Challenge Fund, Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme, People and Communities Fund, Regeneration Capital Grant Fund, Scottish Partnership for Regeneration in Urban Centres and the Vacant and Derelict Land Fund and will work collaboratively with the Scottish Government to access relevant source materials.

The research has additionally interviewed organisational leaders/figure heads from the communities of Govan and Gallatown to gain an understanding into their knowledge and experiences in applying for funding with a particular focus upon the six SG funds.

The research aims to produce a set of recommendations and learning points for ensuring the distribution of regeneration funds continue to be made available to community members.

Progress Update

The research has so far conducted 7/10 interviews in Govan and 5/7 interviews in Gallatown. The remaining interviews are proving difficult to arrange as many interviewees are often busy and in some instances the researcher has had to reschedule interviews several times. Where interviews do not appear to be possible the researcher has disseminated questions and asked participants to respond in writing if they have the time.

Emerging themes from the research

It should be noted that as all interviews have yet to be completed the following themes are only indicative until comprehensive analysis is done.

Whilst each of the case study areas presents unique challenges in the type of funding required e.g. Gallatown is clearly in need of investment in community space, there are several themes which are repeated throughout the interviews

regardless of the case study local issues. The key variable which appears to be impacting the research themes is the size of the organisation responding. Taking this into account and for the purpose of this research the researcher has grouped organisations into three sizes in line with the needs that they identified in relation to funding;

Larger organisations or those organisations which have ties to/a national remit

- ⑩ Large organisations interviewed for the purpose of this research did not appear to lack the skills in applying for funding. They stated feeling confident in applying for SG funds (even if they had not already done so) and that they had the skills in house to deal with the applications process.
- ⑩ One of the larger organisations highlighted frustrations in the lack of coordination of funds when trying to match fund, stating an example of losing a multimillion pound funding arrangement as they were unable to source a final half a million.

Medium organisations with a local/regional remit

- ⑩ Medium sized organisations appeared in most cases to have the relevant skills in house or have contacts with other organisations to make funding applications.
- ⑩ It was noted that for many of these organisations funding applications took up a considerable amount of time, with many organisations not having access to a member of staff full time to make funding/prepare and review applications.
- ⑩ It was additionally noted by some medium organisations that SG funding was not focused upon longer term sustainment of projects - often starter funding for investment rather than delivery of core services and because of this was not worth the long applications.
- ⑩ For local regional organisations there were some discussions about the use of complex/advanced language which was felt to act as a barrier in making applications, knowing how to work applications and the language of applications were identified as excluding some interviewees.
- ⑩ Some evidence emerged that the funds available failed to acknowledge the need for holistic services due to a focus upon employability, e.g. the need to mitigate absolute poverty before being able to get clients to employment opportunities. This was acknowledged to be a more recent development due to the negative impacts of welfare reform.

Small organisations or sole traders

- ⑩ Small organisations and 'sole traders' include organisations such as residents committees or voluntary organisations with little-no income and no paid staff. These organisations were found to particularly vulnerable as often time invested was on a voluntary basis. Sole traders included artists who may work across several organisations and fund raise for a range of projects.
- ⑩ Small organisations, mostly supported by volunteers often faced many difficulties in applying for and knowing about available funding opportunities. In most instances those interviewed felt that even if they did know about the funding opportunities they either would not have the skills to make the application or would not have the time to make the application.
- ⑩ There were further frustrations raised at the short sighted nature of some funds which often failed to acknowledge the need for a project worker to administer, manage, evaluate and report on funding once allocated- this was felt to be assumed to be done on a voluntary/underpaid basis.
- ⑩ There was a clear split across small organisations who wanted opportunities to build capacity within organisations and those needing the provision of a service to organisations to manage funds. This tension appeared to have a common theme concerning the lack of acknowledgement of the time and professional services many volunteers offered. Organisations which did not want to build capacity felt capacity development could lead to further exploitation of volunteers time, whilst other groups interviewed felt unable to make applications and would welcome the ability to pay other services to apply for and manage funds on their behalf.

General Themes

- ⑩ There was a noted need for funders to provide key contacts/support for organisations in the application process – one interviewee had experienced this from a funder and felt it offered a good model for organisations with less experience in managing funds.
- Distribution of information – there is little linkage between the national funds and how these are distributed at a local level e.g. via the Local Authorities – seems that some regeneration funding may be being allocated by LA from SG but that the 'branding' of these funds is not always consistent.
- Access to information about funds – only a small number of interviews conducted but it appears that awareness of the funds we are

investigating is low

- ⑩ Skills and capacity to complete funding applications - especially the case for smaller organisations. It is emerging that there is a case for both skilling up organisations but also to provide sufficient payment for services so that organisations have capacity to complete this work through paid posts or by hiring people to do this for them.
- ⑩ It was felt by many that there are unrealistic expectations about the ability of the third sector to provide services for less than the market value, especially as the sector relied heavily on volunteers.
- ⑩ More generally it was felt that there had been a shift in funding from social enterprise to jobs and business. This had resulted in a feeling that previous investments were being ruined as these projects were laid to waste.

Next steps in this research:

- ⑩ Complete outstanding interviews, where possible, by Friday 4 April;
- ⑩ Consult with Scottish Government colleagues on analysis of existing SG regeneration fund aims, criteria and capacity;
- ⑩ Complete final draft of research by Friday 25 April.

