



Scottish Communities Climate Action Network

Annual Report 2012-13

Scottish Communities Climate Action Network, or Scottish Communities CAN, is a new network of community groups taking action on climate change. Scottish Communities CAN first came together in November 2011, when a group of volunteers agreed to take forward the work initiated by the Framework for Community Action on Climate Change.

Our aim is to empower and enable communities to create a low carbon future, and promote local resilience and well-being. We do this by providing a network for mutual support, a shared vision and voice, creating opportunities for partnership working and working to tackle the barriers and challenges that community groups taking action on climate change face.

Membership of Scottish Communities CAN is open to all constituted Scottish community groups that are taking action on climate change. Partner organisations that support community action on climate change can become Associate Members.

Governance, membership and funding

Scottish Communities CAN has been developed by a volunteer interim Steering Group. At our first Annual General Meeting, on 6th March 2013, that group will be replaced by an elected Steering Group. Our activities are taken forward by a series of voluntary Working Groups.

At the time of writing, we have 47 members, plus 11 associate members. Our members hail from across Scotland – from the Orkney Islands to the Borders, and they are undertaking a huge range of different projects, from renewable energy to community food growing.

We have received support from the Scottish Government, who contracted Keep Scotland Beautiful to provide a secretariat service to us, and to manage funds (of around £14,000) for our development work. We are grateful to the Scottish Government for their support and to Keep Scotland Beautiful for their management of it.

We have become members of two networks of networks – the Scottish Communities Alliance, and the UK Communities and Climate Action Alliance.

Our activities – research projects

We are currently working on 3 research projects, each of which aims to start to tackle one of the key barriers for communities taking action on climate change.

- HOW CAN COMMUNITY GROUPS AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES WORK BETTER TOGETHER?

We're working with consultants Cambium Advocacy on a research project to find out what our members' experience of working with their local authority has been. This is a key relationship for many of our members - a positive relationship can 'open' the way to success, whilst a negative one can 'block the way'. The report, including a set of 'case studies' show-casing successful partnerships, will be published in March 2013, followed by a short 'good practice' guide for community projects to help them engage constructively with Local Authority partners.

- HELPING COMMUNITIES FIND APPROPRIATE FUNDING

Our second research project is to develop a funding "route map" for communities. This will help groups to think about what kind of funding is appropriate for them, navigate their way through the wealth of funding information, support services and resources that already exist, and be inspired to diversify sources of funding and move towards greater financial resilience. We're working with Alan Caldwell Associates on this, and the route map will be available in the Spring.

- **HOW ARE ENERGY SAVING TRUST'S SERVICES SUPPORTING OUR COMMUNITIES?**

Energy Saving Trust has invited Scottish Communities CAN to provide feedback on how well its support for community projects, through the Energy Saving Scotland advice centres is working. The workshops at the Scottish Communities CAN gathering and AGM on 6 March in Glasgow will act as a focus group and will start this project off.

Our activities – partnership working

We are keen to create opportunities for partnership working to tackle the barriers and challenges that community groups taking action on climate change face. We're working with the 2020 Climate Group, whose membership is comprised of some of the largest businesses in Scotland, the Government, local authorities, universities, charities and SMEs to put in place some pilot collaboration projects between Scottish Communities CAN and 2020 Group member organisations and to explore the best way to maintain channels of communication in future.

Our activities –communications

We have created an explanatory leaflet and website and are developing social media communication through Facebook and Twitter. We are keen to create new opportunities for community groups to network and work together, provide mutual inspiration and support and to develop a shared vision and voice to influence policy and support cross-sector partnerships. We have organised our first national gathering to put Scottish Communities CAN on a democratic footing, to encourage networking and to gain members' input to future workplans.

Future Plans

Our workplan for 2013-15 will be developed with the help of member's input at our first AGM/National Gathering, on the 6th March 2013. It is likely to include

- Continuing to develop networking opportunities for our members
- Continuing to work with 2020 Climate Group on pilot collaboration projects
- Follow-up work based on the outcomes of our current research projects
- Selection of additional key challenges to tackle

We will aim to increase our membership to 100 communities, and to increase participation in our Working Groups and other activities.

Report prepared by Suzy Goodsir, Chair, and Philip Revell, Vice-Chair. 6th March 2013