



Scottish Communities Climate Action Network

Annual Report 2013-2014

Introduction

Scottish Communities Climate Action Network (Scottish Communities CAN) is a network of community groups taking action on climate change.

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

Full 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 may become associate members.

Scottish Communities CAN was formally launched at our first General Meeting in Glasgow on 6th March 2013 when our current Steering Group was elected by our founding members.

There are currently 7 volunteers on the **Steering Group**: Philip Revell (Sustaining Dunbar), Suzy Goodsir (Greener Kirkcaldy), Lucy Gillie (South Seeds), Kieran Wild (Lambhill Stables), Eilidh Sinclair (Glasgow School of Art), Pat Abel (Transition Edinburgh South), Kelly McIntyre (Fintry Development Trust).

Emma Margrett (Comrie Development Trust), Jo Wright (Lambhill Stables) and Karen Hilton (Towards Zero Carbon Bute) had to step down during the year because of other commitments.

We are actively seeking new Steering Group members, including from associate members, and any members are welcome to join short-life task groups or to become involved in other ways.

Scottish Communities CAN seeks to be an active, self-organising network that encourages mutual learning and support, enables collaboration and collective action

and which connects our members to other Scottish community networks, to other sectors and to the Scottish Government.

We now have a total of 89 members: 66 full members (an increase of 20 over the past year) and 23 associate members. We aim to attract many more members over the coming year and to ensure a good geographic spread, from both urban and rural communities.

Activities

Following the feedback from members at our first Gathering in March 2013, the Steering Group agreed priorities and a detailed workplan for 2013-14. This year we have focussed on developing our membership and communications, establishing and building on relationships with potential and existing partner organisations, disseminating and following up on the results of our previous research and developing further resources for our members.

Membership and Communications

We gained 20 new full members and 9 new associate members this year.

We have continued to develop our website, Facebook page and Twitter presence and have sent quarterly newsletters to our members and other subscribers to highlight members' activity and opportunities.

We have started actively matching up and connecting our members so as to encourage peer to peer networking and accelerate learning and sharing.

We are keen to create new opportunities for community groups to network and collaborate and have started working with an EU funded research project to develop an interactive platform in order to facilitate this – as well as to network our members with projects across Europe.

A key activity has been the organisation of our second annual Gathering which aims to start the process of developing and articulating a shared vision for low-carbon Scotland and the role that community-led initiatives can play in bringing this into being.

Community Engagement

Our members have wide experience in community engagement and the practice of encouraging culture and behaviour change. We are developing a project to document and share their knowledge and experience and to set up training and mentoring. A series of case studies will be published shortly as a first step.

Resources

We have published and disseminated our research report into partnership working: *'Local Authorities and Community Groups - Getting the best for your project through supportive partnership'* and have produced a shorter, summary version: *'Top tips for community groups tackling climate change, to get the best from their local authority'*.

Our *'Funding Routemap'* for community groups taking action on climate change is a tool that we have developed to encourage and support community organisations to diversify their sources of funding and move towards greater financial, as well as environmental resilience.

We have also produced a 'How to' guide for our members responding to the Community Empowerment Bill consultation and offered a contact list to assist our members in working with their Local Authorities and other partners to plan HEEPS:ABS insulation programmes.

All of the above are accessible through www.scottishcommunitiesCAN.org.uk

Partnerships

We see working in partnership with other organisations across different sectors as crucial to aligning efforts and in tackling the barriers and challenges that community groups taking action on climate change face.

We network with other community networks across Scotland through the Scottish Community Alliance and have continued to work together and develop relationships with organisations including: Adaptation Scotland, Architecture and Design Scotland, COSLA, Edinburgh Centre for Carbon Innovation, Energy Saving Trust, Greener Together, Keep Scotland Beautiful (Climate Challenge Fund and Sustainable Scotland Network), Scotland's 2020 Climate Group, the Scottish Government, Scottish Environment LINK, Stop Climate Chaos Coalition, Transition Network, Transition Scotland, Zero Waste Scotland and more.

For example: we worked together with Nourish Scotland to respond to the Scottish Government's draft Climate Change Adaptation Programme; our members were given the opportunity to pitch ideas for collaboration to the business sector through Scotland's 2020 climate group; we worked with the Energy Saving Trust to distribute a survey amongst members to capture information about the service Home Energy Scotland provides - results were analysed and used by the Energy Saving Trust who manage the Home Energy Scotland advice centres; we also worked with the Energy Saving Trust to run two 'Green Deal and Communities' events in Edinburgh and Inverness; representatives participated in events organised by SSN, Scottish Environment LINK and Adaptation Scotland, among others.

Future plans

We will be reviewing our workplan in March 2014 and welcome ideas and input from members.

Our plans are likely to include

- Continuing to develop networking opportunities for our members including the development of an interactive platform, peer to peer support/mentoring and local/regional and 'community of interest' events
- Continuing to develop closer partnerships with other organisations across different sectors, to create and broker opportunities for joint working and collaboration
- Strengthening communication channels with Scottish Government and the public sector to seek to provide a supportive environment for community-led change
- Exploring opportunities for an enterprising approach to support our members' activities and enable collaboration and sharing of services.

Secretariat

Our secretariat support from Keep Scotland Beautiful finished at the end of March 2013. Changeworks was appointed to provide secretariat support in June 2013, following a Scottish Government tender process.

Thanks

Scottish Communities CAN would like to thank the Scottish Government for its continued support, Changeworks for efficient secretariat service, Steering Group and Task Group members who have given their time and energy, and all those who have given their time and support for our second annual Gathering.

Philip Revell
Chair, Scottish Communities CAN
February 2014