



scottish
community
development network

Seminar Report
February 2000



NATIONAL
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CHARITIES
BOARD

Scottish Community Development Network

Opportunities
and
Challenges

Seminar Report
February 2000

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1. **Introduction**

The Scottish Community Development Network's first seminar took place in early November 1999, at Stirling University. The main objectives were to:

- Update interested parties on the progress of the organisation.
- Attract members.
- Draw on the information and experiences of networking in the field of Community Development.
- Launch the organisation as an independent voluntary networking body.

The seminar was well attended with over 60 delegates participating in a discussion and debate with Antonina Byatt from SCCD Wales and Margaret Curran, MSP who both gave informative and thought provoking keynote speeches.

Delegates participated in workshop sessions, the titles of which were:

- The Role of Community Development in Active Citizenship and Capacity Building.
- The Role of Community Development in relation to Social Inclusion.
- Community Development: a way for an equitable society: a 4 nations approach.
- Effective networking and successful partnerships within Community Development.

Thanks and appreciation must go to the keynote speakers, who set the tone for the day, and to the workshop facilitators who gave their time freely to stimulated debate and encouraged participation.

The following sections in this report will summarise the inputs provided by Antonina and Margaret; give details and attempt to capture the flavour of the discussions within the workshops; briefly outline events and decisions taken at the Inaugural General Meeting and provide an analysis of the evaluation forms returned.

Those in attendance positively received the seminar, with a few lessons learned for the future, however, the strength of the Network remains in a commitment to the principles and practice of Community Development.

2. Keynote Speaker - Margaret Curran

Margaret Curran is the MSP for Ballieston and chairs the Social Inclusion, Housing and Voluntary Sector Committee at the Scottish Parliament. Her input can be summarised as follows:

The Social Inclusion, Housing and the Voluntary Sector Committee

- The committees have a powerful role within the Parliament. They combine standing and select committee functions; initiating policy and scrutinising legislation.
- The committee also has its own programme of work. This includes: looking independently at housing issues; homelessness; social inclusion strategies / boards; anti-poverty strategy as a distinct strand within / in addition to social inclusion focus; drugs and social inclusion enquiry.

Community Development and the Scottish Parliament

- There are a number of issues for the Scottish Parliament in relation to community development: questions on how far Community Education delivers on a community development agenda in communities; the need for community development skills across the spectrum of public services, but the lack of any means of getting resources into place to enable these to be developed.
- There is a need for sophisticated community development practice.
- Progress has been made in getting the importance of community development recognised in a number of sectors.
- There are real opportunities to get community development onto the agendas of Ministers - we need to look at the best way of doing this.
- A range of well-developed community organisations are now established - there is a need to look at how they can get more influence and move to the next stage of development.

- There is a need to move on from a "goodies and baddies" view of the world: for politicians to get away from fear of criticism, and the community organisations / community workers to avoid crude oppositionalism.

3. The Welsh Experience

Antonina Byatt is involved in Community Development Wales and is also a member of the Standing Conference on Community Development (SCCD) Executive.

- "Community Development Wales" has evolved from "SCCD Wales" as a result of people wanting to directly address issues as they effect Wales. SCCD has been supportive of this as part of the 4 nations concept.
- A conference to launch Community Development Wales as an out-going active organisation attracted over a hundred participants drawn from a wide range of sectors, with all but one of the local authority areas represented.
- Community Development Wales is now looking at: how best to become involved in policy issues; working on papers on values; principles and organisation, and producing an information bulletin.
- Community Development Wales identified the 4 nations approach as a two-way process - SCCD at the UK level can nurture and support the developing national bodies, with these strengthening SCCD at the grassroots level. Links with SCCD were viewed as positive; the process of establishing links with the equivalent Irish network has been initiated and it was hoped that the SCDN would be represented at the forthcoming Community Development Wales Conference (24th March 2000).

4. **Workshop Feedback**

After the initial input from the invited speakers the body of the conference was split into the first workshops of the day. Each workshop explored a topical tract to a community development approach, providing practitioners with an opportunity to support and share examples of good practice whilst identifying real barriers to this. The workshops were a healthy mix of community development practitioners both paid and unpaid from across Scotland.

It became apparent from each of the workshops that whilst there was a great diversity in the organisation of community development from one area to the next, common barriers and fears existed for practitioners on the ground. A summary of these are presented below, and in true development fashion options were given on how these could be overcome.

Community Development

Due to the fragmentation of previous provision and the ascent of 'development worker' in job titles, there was a strong feeling that practitioners should return to the basics and establish a common commitment on what constitutes an authentic community development approach; what are its defining characteristics? Once established, these would require to be actively promoted, at all levels, to protect the integrity of the approach from expedient dilution.

Community 'Led' Regeneration

The 'isolation' of both practitioners and issues was also seen as a real barrier to community led regeneration. The present fluid environment of community support work had built-in sustainability problems, which were identified, as incompatible with the long-term outlook required in overcoming structural exclusion. "Short-term answers were seen as more rhetoric than real." Real organisational barriers: culture, knowledge and time-scales, to community participation exist within provider agencies and in the past have proved resilient to quick fix solutions.

Establishing communication lines between interested parties is only the initial step on the participation ladder yet practitioners felt recent changes in the field had led to the erosion of even this basic tenet. It was felt that resource implications for effective networking are not being effectively addressed at any strategic level.

Commitment to Community Control

Practitioners expressed a strong commitment to the sustained benefits of a community development approach on tackling exclusion, and although numerous examples of positive practice could be cited with decision-makers community development retains an image problem. Communities could have ownership of the problems but control of the solutions prove to be more difficult to secure - resource decisions reflect other more central criteria.

5. Scottish Community Development Network - Future Role

The second sets of workshops were to focus upon what if anything the Network could do to tackle the issues identified in the morning session. Again to encourage participants to set the agenda the sessions were to be as participatory as possible. What follows is a short report on the main themes drawn from what by all accounts was a full and positive dialogue between practitioners.

Change Environment

There was genuine optimism that the new Scottish Parliament was a real opportunity to bring decision-making closer to the priorities of local communities and given time some of the rhetoric surrounding social inclusion will translate into practice on the ground. Practitioners felt the need for a body that would advocate, campaign and lobby with them, and on their behalf, that retained a strong grassroots base. There was a strong consensus amongst practitioners as to the value and sustainability of a community development approach to exclusion, what was required was a strong voice in measuring and promoting this.

If decisions were to be taken at the political level then they would have to be informed at this level. Practitioners required the Network to be pro-active in this arena and not shy away from so-called 'politically sensitive' areas. Constructing better arguments alone is not enough, change still requires those with power to actively listen. Communities of interest who fall outside the "norm" are too quickly dismissed by decision-makers, as being in conflict when they choose to actively participate to influence change - the Network will have to work at changing this.

More of the Same

Practitioners felt there was a need for a network to share and promote past successes; good practice is seldom done in isolation, sustainable change comes with implications to resource priorities. Securing resources for the promotion of good practice would have to be a priority for the Network.

The need for the Network to set clear tasks and be specific on how these would be measured and achieved was seen as central to its continued progress - promote through practice. Unpaid workers are not about "making up numbers" whatever the level and this has to be reflected within the Network's own practices. It was noted that other practice areas would benefit from some of the continual scrutiny practitioners of community development were exposed to.

The future worth of the Network would be directly correlated to the strength of its links with practitioners on the ground.

Common Ground

Practitioners attributed the success of the day to some of the basics of good community development practice: identification of the common ground, dialogue, collective action, power sharing and the willingness to change. Those participants present felt that in adopting this approach the Network could make a valued contribution to linking policy statements to the practice of change.

"If it becomes more of the same, why bother?" Resources, time, pressure and the isolation of individual practitioners requires the Network to constantly re-evaluate its links with its grass-root membership, using all mediums to consult with and be directed by the common issues on the ground. A primary function of the Network is the establishment and maintenance of these dialogue lines.

6. Inaugural General Meeting

The Inaugural General Meeting (IGM) was chaired by Antonina Byatt. Firstly, she sought agreement from those present that voting, nominations and election of committee members should only come from those who "signed up" as members at the beginning of the IGM. This was agreed unanimously.

After a lengthy debate on the proposed constitution and an acceptance by those present that the constitution be accepted in principle, the following office bearers and committee members were elected:

Chairperson	Hayat Hewitt
Secretary	Colin Ross
Treasurer	Gordon Terris
Vice-Chairperson	no nominations
Membership Secretary	no nominations
Committee Members	Siobhan Crawford, Ann MacFarlane, Gerry Lynn, Jackie Marno, Debbie McSally, Reni Milburn, Andy Colvin and Iftikhar Chaudray

It was agreed that the positions of Vice-Chairperson and Membership Secretary should be filled at the first full committee meeting. A minute of the IGM will be available to members at the Annual General Meeting, to be held in November 2000.

7. Evaluation

Conference evaluation forms were distributed to participants on the day. The main areas looked at were: contribution of the invited speakers; value of the workshops; the Inaugural General Meeting and the logistic of the day.

One the whole, the conference was received very positively by those in attendance, "a good event and worth the trouble." The contribution of the invited speakers and the opportunity to share practice was positively highlighted in returns. Participants recognised and acknowledged the hard work of the steering group to progress the Network idea, "well done to have got to this stage."

What criticism there was of the day centred upon the venue namely: accessibility, transport links, heating and the absence of creche facilities. These issues will be acted upon for any future event organised by the Network.

The value of a proactive Scottish Community Development Network was fully supported by the evaluation returns.

Last Name	First Name	Company Name	Last Name	First Name	Company Name
Aird	June	Red Road Women Centre	Lyall	Claire	Social Vork dept
Allan	Anne	Stirling Council	Macfarlane	Janice	GE.com.empow.project
Bain	Tom	Fife Council	Mackay	Barbara	Aberdeen city council
Baillanlyne	Fiona	Community Support	Macpherson	Heather	Stirling community support
Barker	Jacinta	BCDP	Malik	Bobby	MELDI
Beaton	Janice	Stirling Council Community Services	Marno	Jackie	Reidvale adventure playground
Bidwell	Laurie	Northern college	Marongwe	Priscilla	ELREC
Brodie	karen	Bluevale community centre	Marshall	Kate	Com.Education worker
Bruce	Colin	Community Education	Martin	Sam	Comm.srvices dept
Burton	Kate	Pilton health project	McCormack	Jamie	Student
Byatt	Ant	Wales	McDonald	John	Fife council
Chaudhry	Ifikhar	Dundee city council	McKay	Marie	
Closs	Jackie		McKinlay	Jean	Community education
Colvin	Andy	GCC Community development	McNeil	Mary	North Lanarkshire Volunteering Development Agency
Crawford	Siobhan	Student community education	Mcsalley	Debbie	Reidvale adventure playground
Cummings	Ann	Renfrewshire social work	Milburn	Reni	Moray council
Curran	Bridget	Social work	Moochan	Angela	Community learning Scotland
de Lima	Philomena	Inverness college	Morris	Jane	Aberdeen city council
Drysdale	Jackie	Glasgow university	Muir	Janet	The poverty alliance
Egan	James	Network	Mutch	Alistair	Fife council
Elrick	Dierdrie	Community learning scotland	O'hannon	Elaine	Health dev. officer
Farnham	Mary	Aberdeenshire council	Oliver	Martin	East Renfrewshire SWD
Farquhar	Alex	Aberdee city council	Paxton	Susan	Comm.services.dept
Frew	Jeff	Edinburgh vol. org. council	Player	Suzanne	Stirling council
Gessese	Tesfu		Purcell	Rod	
Gilliland	Dorothy	Nac	Richardson	Annette	Community activist
Gillin	Gerry	GE.com.empow.project	Ross	Colin	Social work services
Hameed	Faten	Glasgow city council	Ross	Sam	Stirling council
Hamilton	Christine	Polibeth health initiative group	Shaw	Mae	Moray house college
Hewitt	Hayat	SCDN	Smith	Carolyn	North Lanarkshire Agency
Hogg	Julie	Student	Smith	Karen	Renfrewshire elderly forum
Jamieson	Hugh	Inverclyde council	Smith	Kenny	East renfrewshire council
Johnstone	Graham	Inverclyde council	Sood	Seema	
Jordan	Lynette	D.A.C.E. Univ.Glasgow	Taylor	Clare	CAPS
Kebede	Solomon	International Centre	Terris	Gordon	North Lanarkshire council
Knox	Bill	East Renfrewshire SWD	Togher	Brian	
Kuman	Usha	Community dev. unit	Travers	Diane	East end Voluntary Fotum
Lees	Billy	Watch us grow	Urquhart	Alan	Maxwell Information Centre

Last Name
Vallance
Walker
Wardrope
Warren
Watson
Wellington
Yuill

First Name
June
Suzanne
Elaine
Annette
Hugh
Mike
Iain

Company Name
Falkirk :ARC
South Lan. planning group
Soc.work. comed team
Community work team
SWD/CD team
R.B.W.T.S.G.
South Lan. rural partnership

**Scottish
Community Development Network Group
Constitution**

General

The Scottish Community Development Network Group is a national voluntary organisation managed by a committee elected annually from the membership.

It is an umbrella organisation providing a forum for community workers, community development workers, community activists and community project workers, full time, part time, paid or unpaid, from the community, voluntary and public sectors, who support the principles and practice of community development as embraced by the Group.

The Group has adopted the definition and working statement on community development as described by the association of Community Workers and the Standing Conference on Community Development. It is committed to applying the principles of community development and of inclusiveness in all of the activities of the network and in all aspects of its organisation.

1. Name

- 1.1 The group shall be known as the Scottish Community Development Network Group.

2. Purpose and Objects

- 2.1 The purpose of the group is to provide a forum where members and supporters can come together for mutual support to exchange information on good practice and experience in community development, discuss and debate issues of common interest and acquire knowledge, skills and understanding aimed at generally:
- (a) The relief of poverty;
 - (b) The advancement of education; and
 - (c) The promotion of objects of general public utility.
- 2.2 The objects of the Group are:
- (a) To promote the provision of information and advice on community development policy and practice;

- 5.1 At the annual general meeting the Group shall elect a chairperson, a vice-chairperson, a secretary, a treasurer, a membership secretary and such other honorary officers as the Group shall from time to time decide. The honorary officers shall be elected for a period of two years except in the case of the chairperson and treasurer who shall be elected for a period of three years.
- 5.2 The chairperson and treasurer must retire at the Annual General meeting nearest the third anniversary of their appointment. The retiring chairperson and treasurer are eligible for re-election subject to the same conditions as for new candidates. At no time may these two posts be filled by the same person.

6. Management

- 6.1 The management of the Group shall be exercised by the office bearers of the Group assisted by a committee. In addition to the office bearers noted above, other Group members may serve on the committee whose total (including the office bearers noted above) shall not exceed fourteen (14).
- 6.2 After two years committee service committee members must retire at the Annual General meeting nearest the appropriate anniversary of their appointment. Retiring committee members are eligible for re-election for a further period of two years subject to the same conditions as for new candidates.
- 6.3 Six (6) members shall form a quorum of the committee provided that the chairperson or vice chairperson and two other office bearers are present.

7. Responsibilities of the Committee.

- 7.1 The committee shall have responsibility:
 - (1) To fill casual vacancies on the committee arising between Annual General Meetings. Such appointments must be confirmed (or otherwise) at the next Annual General Meeting;
 - (2) To organise the business activities of the Group;
 - (3) To maintain an up-to-date record of membership;
 - (4) To spend Group monies in accordance with the objects;

(5) To appoint an auditor and determine their remuneration (if any).

7.2 The committee may appoint such special or standing committees or sub-committees as may be considered necessary and shall determine their terms of reference, powers, duration and composition. All acts and proceedings of such special or standing committees and sub-committees shall be reported back to the committee as soon as possible.

7.3 In addition to the elected members and those serving through filled casual vacancy the committee may co-opt a further 2 members of the group who shall serve until the next annual general meeting.

7.4 Unless otherwise agreed all questions arising at any meeting will be decided by a simple majority vote of those present and entitled to vote.

8 Annual and Special General Meetings.

8.1 The Annual General Meeting of the Group must be held annually and within nine months of the end of the financial year for which reports are to be presented.

8.2 The chairperson of the committee may at any time call a special general meeting of the Group. The secretary shall call a special meeting of the Group within 21 days of receiving a written request to do so signed by not less than 20 members giving reasons for the request.

9. Alterations to the Constitution.

9.1 Any alterations to the constitution shall receive the assent of not less than two thirds of the members of the Group present and voting at a general meeting whether annual or special provided notice of any such alteration shall have been received by the secretary not less than 21 days before the meeting at which the alteration is to be proposed. Notice in writing of such a meeting setting forth the terms of the alteration shall be sent to each member of the Group provided that no alteration shall be made which would have the effect of causing the Group to cease to be recognised by the Inland Revenue as a charity.

10 Finance

10.1 All monies raised by or on behalf of the group shall be applied to further the objects of the Group and for no other purpose provided

that nothing herein contained shall prevent in good faith of any reasonable and proper remuneration to any employee of the Group and fees to professional and technical advisers or the repayment to members of the committee or of any committee or sub-committee appointed under paragraph 7.2 hereof of reasonable out-of-pocket expenses.

- 10.2 The honorary treasurer shall keep proper accounts of the finances of the group.
- 10.3 The accounts shall be audited at least once a year by the auditor or auditors appointed at the annual general meeting.
- 10.4 An audited statement of the accounts for the last financial year shall be submitted by the committee to the annual general meeting.
- 10.5 A bank account shall be opened in the name of the Group with a bank or building society as the committee shall from time to time decide. The committee shall authorise in writing four members of the committee one of whom shall be the treasurer to sign cheques on behalf of the Group. All cheques must be signed by not less than two of the four authorised signatories.

11 Dissolution

- 11.1 If the committee decides at any time that on the grounds of expense or otherwise that it is necessary or advisable to dissolve the Group it shall call a special general meeting of which not less than 21 days notice shall be given. If such a decision be confirmed by a two-thirds majority of those present and entitled to vote the committee shall have power to dispose of any assets held by or on behalf of the Group. Any assets remaining after the satisfaction of any proper debts and liabilities shall be given or transferred to such other charitable organisation or organisations having objects similar to the objects of the Group, as the committee may determine.

SCOTTISH COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT NETWORK

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

POST CODE: _____

TEL No: _____

FAX No: _____

Email: _____

Categories of Membership

Individual **£2**

Organisation **£5**

Name of the Organisation: _____

Network (Local/Regional/national) **£10**

Name of the Network: _____

I/we subscribe to the aims and objectives of the Scottish Community Development Network and support and support its "Statement of Principles and Values".

I/we agree to abide by the constitution of the Scottish Community Development Network.

I/we hereby apply for membership and enclose my/our membership subscription.

Signature _____ Date _____

Please indicate if you "do not" want your details on a computer database: Yes/No

The completed membership form and payment should be sent to:

Colin Ross (secretary)

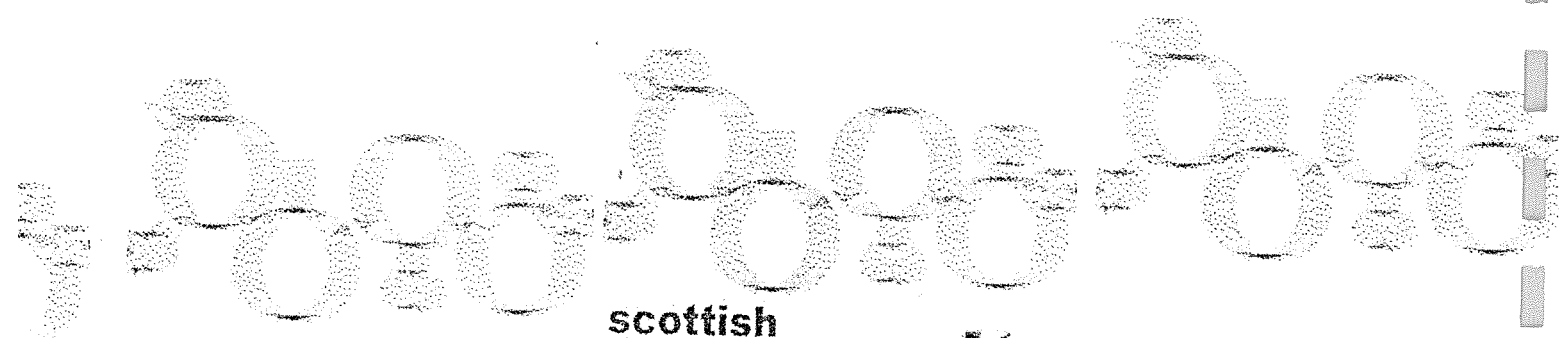
Scottish Community Development Network

C/o Bluevale Neighbourhood Centre

30 Abernethy Street

Glasgow G31 3SX

Please make your cheque payable to: Scottish Community Development Network.



scottish
community
development network

C/o Bluevale Neighbourhood Centre, 30 Abernethy Street, Glasgow G31 3SX