

# Scottish Community Development Network

*'Supporting people who  
support communities in  
Scotland'*

## A Community Development Vision For Scotland

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT VISION FOR SCOTLAND

### Introduction

*"How can people rise to the challenges and opportunities presented by governments' increasing emphasis on community engagement? This is a huge task which needs politicians, managers of public services and people who work in communities to think and do things in new ways. Governments recognise that power should be more widely shared and yet, community development, the occupations that enables this to happen, is partially and unevenly supported. At the same time, community development practice needs to become more effective." 1*

This manifesto is presented in an attempt to address these issues

#### Forward your comments to:

Scottish Community Development Network  
PO Box 26792  
Glasgow, G4 7AF  
[www.scdn.org.uk](http://www.scdn.org.uk)

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT VISION FOR SCOTLAND

The Community Development Network has a key role in the promotion of effective CD practice and agrees with the definitions and frameworks developed by the Community Development Exchange, which states that "Community Development is about building active and sustainable communities based on social justice and mutual respect".<sup>2</sup>

SCDN believes that the key purpose of community development work is collectively to bring about social change and justice, by working with communities to:

- Identify their needs, opportunities, rights and responsibilities
- Plan, organise and take action
- Evaluate the effectiveness and impact of the action all in ways which challenge oppression and tackle inequalities

Rooting Community Development practice firmly within universally recognised values, principles and approaches is crucial to achieving effective CD work.

There are a whole number of useful policies in Scotland that deal with aspects of Community Development, for example Working and Learning together to Build Stronger Communities, National Standards for Community Engagement, Community Planning, Closing the Opportunity Gap, etc. A community Development Strategy would, however, create a synergy of these elements to provide an overall framework for Community Development.

A report, on research commissioned by the Community Empowerment division of the Department for Communities (UK) (*Community Development Challenge*) and quoted in the opening paragraph of this document, places community development at the heart of Government policy and practice.<sup>1</sup>

We call on the future government in Scotland to implement a series of recommendations that will deliver real change for local communities.

These recommendations sit within the context of UK (Together We Can) and European policy (Budapest Declaration<sup>3</sup> adopted by the Scottish Parliament which seeks to strengthen civic society.)

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.cdx.org.uk/news/odds/communitydevelopmentchallenge.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.cdx.org.uk/about/whatiscd.htm>

# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT VISION FOR SCOTLAND

## Community Development Policy and Practice

### 1. Scottish Context

The importance of the position of Minister for Communities, with a remit that includes Community Planning and Community Engagement is recognised, valued and supported. The portfolio of this post should include championing Community Development as a foundation of effective Community Engagement and Community Planning

### 2. A strategic approach to Community Development

#### 2.1 Adoption of National Strategy for Community Development

The Scottish Executive will develop and adopt a National strategy for Community Development by 2010 in consultation with all key internal and external stakeholders. This would provide a framework for effective community development practice across all public, private and voluntary sectors at national, regional and local levels. *"Government and other stakeholders should recognise CD as an integral component in the delivery of good public services and local governance"* <sup>1</sup>

#### 2.2 Local Community Development Strategies

The Scottish Executive should require Community Planning Partnerships to develop Community Development Strategies in line with the national strategy.

#### 2.3 Understanding Community Development

National and Local CD Strategies should promote an understanding of what Community Development is and what it is not so that when public, voluntary and private sector bodies speak about community development, they do so in a way that demonstrates their understanding and commitment to the values, principles and approaches that are unique to Community Development

---

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.iacdglobel.org/documents/general/BudapestDeclaration4683D.pdf>

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT VISION FOR SCOTLAND

Community Development is a deliberate intervention in how people organise themselves on issues of joint concern. It is a holistic process which encompasses the following key components around helping people in communities to:

- Recognise and organise around issues of common concern
- Work together on those issues
- Build organisations which are autonomous, strong, effective, sustainable and accountable to the wider community
- Work within values of equity, inclusiveness and cohesion
- Influence and transform public policies and services
- Build social capital, social economy and community assets

CD also, uniquely, advises and informs public authorities on community perspectives and assists them to strengthen communities and work in genuine partnership with them.

Community Development Work is often confused with community development approach within other professions / roles. A national Strategy should provide clarity.

A Community Development approach is an approach (adopted by a range of professions and agencies) which strengthens local democracy and the capacity of communities to participate actively in determining the processes and outcomes of social and economic change'.

### 3. Community Planning

#### 3.1 Community Planning Partnerships

Within the context of developing a Local CD Strategy, Community Planning Partnerships should be encouraged to see themselves as major stakeholders in the Community Development process. CPPs should therefore carry out or commission (from an agency that understands CD) a thoughtful analysis of the CD support needs, of their communities (support which helps them to organise) and an honest evaluation of the capacity of existing resources to fulfil these needs.

# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT VISION FOR SCOTLAND

## 3.2 Community Engagement

National Community Engagement Standard 2 creates a commitment to ensuring that *“impartial professional Community Development support is available for groups involved in community engagement”*

National and Local CD strategies should recognise the importance of investing in the development of grass roots community activity and organisation as the foundation of effective community engagement. They should include commitment to adequate funding for Community Development to *“achieve and maintain a major step change in the level of community strengths and empowerment ..... especially in disadvantaged areas.”*<sup>1</sup>

## 4. Professional Standards

### 4.1 Recognise our distinctive Professional standards

It should be acknowledge that Community Development workers are responsible and accountable for providing the means of empowering communities to contribute to the benefit of civic society.

### 4.2 Recognise our distinctive professional values, methods and outcomes

Community Development / Community Work should be promoted as a nationally recognised occupation with a clear basis in values, methods and outcomes. <sup>1</sup> This is distinct from adopting a CD approach within other occupations.

Community Development should be managed and delivered to the highest standards, utilising the nationally endorsed (UK) Occupational Standards, developed by the LLUK National Skills Council <sup>4</sup>

### 4.3 Community Development is different from learning in the community

Community Development involves learning for community organisations and their members as they work to achieve their goals and is distinct from learning for individuals in the community.

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT VISION FOR SCOTLAND

The main focus of learning in the community is the personal development of individuals to help them achieve positive changes in their personal (rather than collective community) life.

Recognise that, whilst this has a valuable contribution to make to the development of civil society, it is not Community Development.

### **4.4 Community Development is more than Community capacity building**

Recognise that Community Capacity building is one part of Community Development / Community Work that focuses on working directly with community groups and organisations.

*“Community Capacity Building – activities, resources and support that strengthen the skills, abilities and confidence of people and community groups to take effective action and leading roles in the development of their communities”* <sup>5</sup> (Firm Foundations)

*“Community Development – the process of collective action to achieve social justice and change by working with communities to identify needs and take action to meet them”* <sup>5</sup> (Firm foundations)

### **4.5 Community Development Practitioners**

The complexities of demands and opportunities for communities to engage, places increasing demands on those practitioners, whose primary function is to work with communities to develop their skills, confidence, knowledge and influence to affect social change. There is, therefore, an increasing need to provide and resource an infrastructure of support which enables community work / development practitioners to share information, experience, skills and practice issues.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.cdx.org.uk/news/odds/communitydevelopmentchallenge.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.cdx.org.uk/about/whatiscd.htm>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.iacdglobal.org/documents/general/BudapestDeclaration4683D.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.fcdl.org.uk/publications/index.htm#StandardsSummary>

<sup>5</sup> (Still to track down a reference for this document)

# A Community Development Vision For Scotland

Published by  
Scottish Community Development Network  
PO Box 26792  
Glasgow, G4 7AF  
[www.scdn.org.uk](http://www.scdn.org.uk)