



*Supporting people who support communities in Scotland*

# Strategy

## 2018-2021

*We are a strong, dynamic organisation which provides a forum for CD practitioners to share experiences, exchange information, discuss and debate practice and policy issues within a framework which seeks to empower communities*

**Join SCDN by using our contact facility on our website: [www.scdn.scot](http://www.scdn.scot)**

## **1. Welcome to your SCDN Strategy 2017-2020.**

“The Scottish Community Development Network is a partnership of Community Development practitioners, drawn from across Scotland and from every conceivable sector of our practice; representative of agencies from statutory and mainstream organisations, to third sector, education, community and business representatives.

As our mission statement states; *“We are a Strong & Dynamic organisation established to provide a forum for CD practitioners to share experiences, exchange information, discuss and debate practice and policy issues within a framework which seeks to empower communities committed to working together”* and we, your executive committee take our roles as your representatives to make SCDN Strong and Dynamic as both a professional and personal challenge.

Our strategy will:

- inform people about SCDN, the opportunities, challenges and priorities
- provide clear direction to develop Community Development policy with all partner organisations
- Challenge all SCDN partners to deliver on our mission statement.

This strategy provides us with a direction of travel and belongs equally to each of you as much as it does to us and so, I call on each of you, members and partners alike to be proactive in involving yourself in the work of SCDN at regional networks, national events and through your involvement in local and national bodies and events and where no regional forum exists, work with us to establish them. It is only by working with you our SCDN membership and partners that we can truly achieve the Strong and Dynamic Organisation we all want to SCDN to be.

We cannot achieve the SCDN of tomorrow without the involvement of each of you today, the day after and for the lifetime of this strategy - so each year we'll hold events locally and nationally to measure our progress and build on further involvement with you in delivering our vision for SCDN 2020. We further promise to utilise all means available to us to feed back to you on what has been achieved in your name.”

*Chris M Woodness, Chair of SCDN*

## **2. Scottish Community Development Network**

SCDN is the only member led organisation for Community Development (CD) practitioners in Scotland who, paid or unpaid: (students, volunteers, community activist, part-time or full time practitioner)

- Have community development as their main role or part of their remit
- Actively use and endorse community development approaches
- Support the values, principles and approaches of community development
- Aspire to use community development approaches in their practice

Membership is open to individuals and organisations who ascribe to the principles and practice of community development.

## **3. What is Community Development?**

When we talk about community development practice, we mean:

‘Community development enables people to work collectively to bring about positive social change. This long term process starts from people’s own experience and enables communities to work together to:

- Identify their own needs and actions
- Take collective action using their strengths and resources
- Develop their confidence, skills and knowledge
- Challenge unequal power relationships
- Promote social justice, equality and inclusion

in order to improve the quality of their own lives, the communities in which they live and societies of which they are a part.’

[\(Community Development National Occupational Standards\)](#)

Put more succinctly:

‘The purpose of community development is to help create the conditions for a just, inclusive and sustainable society by supporting communities to engage in collective action for transformative change.’

[\(Community Development in Europe: Towards a Common Understanding, European Community Development Network\)](#)

#### **4. What’s the need for and benefits of SCDN?**

The demands on, expectations of and opportunities for communities, places those who support communities in increasingly complex arenas. Developing communities’ skills, confidence, knowledge and influence to bring about positive change, requires skilled and knowledgeable practitioners. SCDN works to build an infrastructure which enables practitioners to share information, experience, skills and practice issues and, in doing so, can make a significant contribution to developing the confidence and ability of practitioners.

- By joining, members can: contribute to having a strong collective voice within Community Development across Scotland; be part of a practitioners’ national forum to share experiences; champion value based CD practice; exchange information and debate practice and policy issues; and have opportunities to link with like-minded people through local, national and virtual events and activities.

If you ascribe to the principles practice and values of community development and wish to improve your knowledge and practice through connection with other Community Development practitioners and access relevant and up to date information, then SCDN is for you. We currently have members from all regional areas across Scotland and from a broad range of public, voluntary, private, educational and community bodies working to achieve positive change in their communities. We believe bringing together paid and unpaid CD practitioners is vital in creating and developing a strong practitioners’ voice for community development in Scotland.

#### **5. What are the relevant legislative and policy drivers for community development in Scotland?**

The strategic context in which community development is operating should provide a strong driver for the recognition and resourcing of skilled CD practice. Aspirations to empower communities, reduce inequalities, and alter

the way in which public services are planned and delivered with more emphasis on prevention, are central to current public policy in Scotland and are recognisable as potential outcomes of skilled CD practice. Some of the key pieces of legislation and policies to support CD are highlighted below:

- [Community Empowerment \(Scotland\) Act 2015](#)
- [New Strategic Guidance for Community Planning Partnerships: Community Learning and Development](#)
- [Commission on the Future Delivery of Public Services](#) (Christie Report)
  - Fairer Scotland Action Plan 2016  
<http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2016/10/9964>
  - Participatory Budgeting  
<https://pbnetwork.org.uk/category/geographic/scotland/>
- [Achieving a Sustainable Future: Regeneration Strategy](#)
- [COSLA and Scottish Government Joint Statement - Building on Working and Learning Together to Build Stronger Communities](#)
- [Public Bodies \(Joint Working\) \(Scotland\) Act 2014](#) (Health & Social Care Integration)
- [Good Places Better Health](#)
- [Equally Well](#)
- An introduction to the Equality Act 2010 -  
<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/equality-act-2010/what-equality-act>
- Equality Act 2010: guidance - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance>

In addition the implications for communities of the UK government's welfare reform policy should be of concern to CD practitioners. More information on this and other useful web-links can be accessed via our website [www.scdn.scot](http://www.scdn.scot) at our links page.

## **6. SCDN Mission Statement**

Our mission statement or high level 'outcome' is:

*"We are a strong, dynamic organisation which provides a forum for CD practitioners to share experiences, exchange information, discuss and debate practice and policy issues within a framework which seeks to empower communities"*

Our mission is translated into a series of measurable outcomes, which are interdependent. These are set out in the following table.

<b>Scottish Community Development Network Outcomes 2017 - 2020</b>
<b>CD practitioners are better connected and have a stronger collective voice to represent their views and perspectives</b>
<b>CD practitioners have a national forum to share information and experiences to help them improve and develop practice that empowers communities</b>
<b>CD is recognised and valued by CD practitioners as an approach that achieves and contributes to social justice, equality and human rights</b>
<b>CD practitioners are better able to inform and contribute towards CD related policy and practice development</b>

## **7. Key Activities**

In order to achieve the outcomes above, our main activities will be:

- Organising national conferences & regional practitioners' workshops
- Maintaining and developing an up to date website with access to downloadable resources and materials
- Providing quarterly bulletins on policy and practice developments
- Creating on-line opportunities for members to voice their views, debate issues, work with key national partners and make contributions towards formal policy and practice consultations.
- Building, developing and expanding our membership base across Scotland, and so ensuring as many practitioners as possible have access to the Network and to each other.