



# New Cumnock Development Trust

## Strategic Plan 2020 – 2025

*Towards a positive future for New Cumnock Development Trust and New Cumnock*



**For more information on this plan contact:**

New Cumnock Development Trust

21 Castle, New Cumnock, Cumnock, East Ayrshire, KA18 4AN

Phone: 01290 338887

Email: [general.ncdt@outlook.com](mailto:general.ncdt@outlook.com)

<b><u>Contents</u></b>	<b><u>Page</u></b>
<b>1. Introduction to New Cumnock Development Trust</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. How we Developed our Strategic Framework</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>3. Our Strategic Plan</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3.1 Our Vision</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3.2 Our Mission</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3.3 Our Values</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3.4 Our Core Activity Areas</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>3.5 Our Outcomes – the differences we want to make</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>3.6 Our Improvement and Delivery Plan</b>	<b>8</b>
- what we are going to do	
<b>3.7 Our Community Engagement Approach</b>	<b>9</b>
- making sure we keep our communities involved	
<b>3.8 Organisational Development</b>	<b>9</b>
- being the best that we can be	
<b>4. Monitoring and Evaluating our Plans</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Appendix 1 – Our Core Activity Areas in More Detail</b>	

# **1. Introduction to New Cumnock Development Trust**

New Cumnock Development Trust was granted charitable status in October 2018 and is owned and managed by the local community. It was set up to:

- spearhead the regeneration of New Cumnock
- work in partnership with other private, voluntary, and public sector organisations to realise the hopes and priorities of the local community
- reduce dependency on grant support by generating income through enterprise and the ownership of assets

Since NCDT first began, our trustees, staff and volunteers have already brought alive some substantial projects that, through the creation of the New Cumnock Regeneration Masterplan, the community have prioritised using windfarm community benefit income and other funding.

Many of the ideas generated by the community require either a building or land and one of the common themes to the priorities is finding new uses for vacant and derelict buildings and land. Much of the work of NCDT since its inception has focussed on property including engagement with property owners and local authority as well as purchasing 3 properties and developing plans for sustainable use of these buildings.

Other NCDT activities have focussed on New Cumnock's heritage as well as connecting local people, supporting local groups and building partnerships and relationships with stakeholders.

We have achieved much in a relatively short period of time including:

- purchase of property now refurbished to provide an office base, open to the public 5 days a week
- purchase of former Castle Hotel and development of plans for a desirable and sustainable use of the building
- purchase of former hairdresser's shop – to be incorporated into former Castle Hotel development
- providing a gardening group with use of the office garden to develop plots for use by local people
- grant making to local groups
- participatory budgeting event in conjunction with East Ayrshire Council
- Knockshinnoch refurbishment and 70th Anniversary community commemoration project
- employing staff to take forward development of the Masterplan
- supporting community groups including New Cumnock Working Men's Club, New Cumnock Community Sports Hub Steering Group, Kids Cove, New Cumnock Gardening Group, New Cumnock Golf Club
- working with East Ayrshire Council to develop a Placemaking Plan for New Cumnock, based on the Masterplan
- being gifted the Burns Statue by NERV
- formally adopting the lease of Mary Morrison Memorial Garden
- refurbishing New Cumnock gateway signs
- creation of the New Cumnock News, a quarterly local newspaper
- working with New Cumnock Primary School to provide opportunities for children to be involved with NCDT activities
- working in partnership with volunteers and other local groups to support the community during emergency lockdown

## 2. How we Developed our Strategic Framework

Although NCDT have achieved a great deal in a very short space of time, we are still a very young organisation. To make the most of our flying start, and to build trust with local people and organisations, NCDT needed to develop its own structures and management systems to ensure that the organisation itself is 'fit for purpose', ready and able to deliver on the hopes and priorities of the local community.

To help make this happen, between April and September 2020, our Trustees, staff and some key volunteers worked together to develop our **strategic framework** (or 'roadmap' for our way ahead) to identify what our unique role is in helping to deliver a positive future for the people of New Cumnock. Although we've tried to make this roadmap easy to understand, sometimes planning can involve some jargon, so please see our footnotes which aim to help explain more about what we mean.

This framework strives to achieve positive changes in the lives of our **key stakeholder groups**, based on what they tell us they need. Our key stakeholders include:

1. People of all ages who live, work, or visit New Cumnock (**public**)
2. Organisations, groups, and businesses from the public<sup>1</sup>, third<sup>2</sup> and private<sup>3</sup> sectors (**partners**)
3. Funders, commissioners, and investors including windfarm developers (**funders**)
4. Members, trustees, staff, and volunteers of New Cumnock Development Trust (**internal**)

Lots of consultation has already been undertaken with the people of New Cumnock, with the New Cumnock Regeneration Masterplan<sup>4</sup> being the most recent document which outlines the community's hopes for the future of the village, including how to make best use of community benefit windfarm payments.

We have taken on board the community's priorities within the Masterplan; we have asked a range of local organisations and individuals for their thoughts and we have done a lot of thinking ourselves. Based on these views, we have developed the strategic framework outlined below, including:

- A 5-year **strategic plan** (this document), including a vision<sup>5</sup>, mission<sup>6</sup> and set of strategic outcomes (or positive changes) that we want to see for the people of New Cumnock
- A 2-year **improvement and delivery plan** which includes the actual activities to be delivered / tasks to be done, and from which team and individual **workplans** can be developed
- Accompanying **thematic plans**, including a **short-list of development opportunities** based on the priorities of the local community; a **community engagement plan** (developed in consultation with the people of New Cumnock); a **communications plan** (both for internal and external communications); an **organisational development plan** which will help NCDT to continue with our own development and to ensure that are the best that we can be
- A **monitoring framework** so that our Board can effectively track the delivery of the plans above and to make sure that we stay accountable to the local community

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<sup>1</sup> Those organisations paid for by Government such as the local authority, NHS, police, fire etc.

<sup>2</sup> Those organisations who provide services to the community on a not-for profit basis such as charities and community groups

<sup>3</sup> Private businesses and companies which generally run to make a profit for owners / directors, shareholders etc.

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.east-ayrshire.gov.uk/Resources/PDF/N/New-Cumnock-Regeneration-Masterplan.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> Our 'dream' of how we hope New Cumnock will be positively changed for generations to come

<sup>6</sup> What our unique role is in achieving this vision and a positive future for New Cumnock

### **3. Our Strategic Plan**

#### **3.1 Our Vision**

*New Cumnock Development Trust has the vision of a friendly, welcoming, and inclusive New Cumnock with a prosperous and sustainable future that builds on all our strengths, and which is led by a thriving and active community.*

#### **3.2 Our Mission**

*To help make this future a reality, New Cumnock Development Trust works in partnership with the community and local organisations - supporting, co-ordinating and leading a range of projects and developments which deliver on the hopes and priorities of the people of New Cumnock.*

#### **3.3 Our Values**

Our core values are the foundation for all our work. They outline what is important to NCDT and guide how we aim to operate. We know that we will only be able to make a positive difference to New Cumnock if we are able to live our values.

Our values should be reflected in the behaviours of our Trustees, staff and volunteers and we aim to be held accountable by the local community and partner agencies for upholding our values.

***New Cumnock Development Trust aims to be:***

- ***Open, honest, and accountable***
- ***Community-led***
- ***A champion of equality and inclusion***
- ***Enabling and empowering***
- ***Respectful, treating all people with dignity***
- ***Collaborative, working well in partnership***
- ***Entrepreneurial***

### 3.4 Our Core Activity Areas

Through consultation, NCDT have identified three **core activity areas** to help us structure our work and which will help us to deliver our mission and vision for New Cumnock. You can read more about these in appendix 1, however in summary, these are:

#### 1. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Supporting and achieving the community's **capital and project** development ideas<sup>7</sup> which contribute to the sustainable development of New Cumnock

#### 2. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Adopting community development approaches which run through all the work above, including:

- **involving local people**, through volunteering, active participation, and high-quality community engagement
- **building the skills, abilities and confidence of people and community groups** to take effective action and leading roles in the development of their community
- **working in partnership** and in joined-up ways with other groups, organisations, and businesses, for the benefit of the people of New Cumnock
- Making best use of **community benefit funding**, including **grant-making** to other groups and organisations

#### 3. MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

Internal business management, ensuring the effectiveness of New Cumnock Development Trust<sup>8</sup>

### 3.5 Our Outcomes – the differences we want to make

To help get closer to our vision and to ensure we fulfil our mission we have developed ambitious **outcomes** to motivate and challenge us and to help give focus to our work.

These outcomes are basically the positive differences we want to see achieved through our own and others' work, and are structured around our 3 core activity areas above (sustainable development, community development, and management & governance) and are tied to our vision and mission.

We will measure our success by involving local people to assess our progress against these outcomes, however NCDT cannot achieve these outcomes alone, and we are clear that to be successful in achieving them even in part, we must work closely with local people, community groups and organisations, valuing the role that we all have to play.

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<sup>7</sup> CAPITAL here refers to developing the community's ideas for the buildings and physical infrastructure of New Cumnock which will help improve the economy and people's lives (empty buildings, new builds, access paths), whereas PROJECT refers to developing the community's ideas for new or better opportunities and services (social, sport & recreation, health, transport, tourism, learning & training, enterprise / economic development etc.)

<sup>8</sup> For example, through good business support and planning, financial management and development opportunities for its Board and staff

## **1 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES**

- 1.1 New Cumnock is better designed, with the **infrastructure, amenities, facilities, and services** we need
- 1.2 New Cumnock reduces the local **environmental impact** of our consumption and production
- 1.3 New Cumnock improves its **economic potential**, with more and better **opportunities** and a more skilled and confident local workforce
- 1.4 New Cumnock becomes a destination of choice, where our **culture, environment and heritage** is protected and enhanced for visitors and locals
- 1.5 The people of New Cumnock are more able to **connect with each other** socially, for leisure and for play
- 1.6 The people of New Cumnock live longer and **healthier lives**, and have better support at all **ages and stages**
- 1.7 People in New Cumnock are more **included**, treated more **fairly** and enjoy more **equality of opportunity**

We hope that by making progress against these outcomes, ***New Cumnock will become a vibrant and sustainable village; an attractive destination to visit and a great place to live; where the economic, social, environmental, and cultural needs of our whole community are met.***

## **2 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES**

- 2.1 The people of New Cumnock have better **access to information** which helps with understanding, participation, and involvement
- 2.2 The people of New Cumnock have more meaningful opportunities to **give their views** about issues and decisions which affect their lives
- 2.3 The people of New Cumnock have more opportunities to be actively **involved in decision-making** within NCDT and their local community
- 2.4 The people of New Cumnock have more and better-quality opportunities to **volunteer and be active** within NCDT and their local community
- 2.5 People and community groups within New Cumnock have more of the **skills, abilities and confidence** required to take effective action and leading roles in the development of their community
- 2.6 New Cumnock has a stronger **community spirit**, where people show **pride** in where they live
- 2.7 NCDT works better in **partnership with a range of organisations** for the benefit and resilience of the local community
- 2.8 NCDT is a fair, transparent, and enabling **grant-maker**, working in partnership with local groups to **make best use of community benefit funding** for the benefit of the people of New Cumnock

We hope that by making progress against these outcomes, ***New Cumnock will become a strong, active, and resilient community; where people and community groups work collaboratively, and have the resources, skills, abilities, and confidence to take effective action and leading roles in the development of their village.***



### **3 MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE OUTCOMES**

- 3.1** The **Board** of NCDT is accountable to its members and the local community, providing excellent **governance** to ensure that charity manages risk and is run ethically, legally, efficiently, and effectively
- 3.2** NCDT has effective **HR policy, systems and processes** which help to maximise its human resource for the benefit of staff, volunteers, and users
- 3.3** NCDT has the required **funding, revenue, and resources** to enable us to achieve our aims now and in the future
- 3.4** NCDT has effective **admin, finance, IT, and business support functions**
- 3.5** NCDT has accessible, safe, and welcoming **buildings** which enable us to deliver our work
- 3.6** NCDT has an effective **outreach, promotions and communications strategy** which allows us to reach and engage with all members of our community
- 3.7** NCDT is a **learning organisation** which understands stakeholder need, is reflective about the impact of our work and involves our stakeholders in evaluation and planning to make improvements

We hope that by making progress against these outcomes, ***NCDT becomes a transparent, effective, sustainable, and values-driven charity, demonstrating best practice in leadership, management, business support and governance.***

### **3.6 Our Improvement and Delivery Plan – what we are going to do**

We know that the people of New Cumnock want to see progress and expect NCDT to use our funding and resources wisely, and to do things which bring about real and lasting benefits for the community that people can actually see.

In response, NCDT has an ambitious programme of work planned; both projects which have already been funded and new activities and projects we want to develop and focus on over the next 2 years.

Our **Improvement and Delivery Plan** (which is attached to this document) is where a summary of all our planned work for the next 2 years can be found. Like our outcomes, this plan is structured in 3 sections to match our 3 core activity areas of sustainable development, community development, and governance & management. It is however much more **action-focussed**, and is used to develop Trustee, staff, and volunteer workplans. It summarises what we will DO to bring about positive changes.

We pride ourselves in being doers rather than dreamers, and our plans help us to approach the work that we must do in an organised way, to make sure that we are successful and that we are an organisation that the community can trust and believe in.

All the projects and activities we run are based on what the community have told us they need and help us on the journey towards achieving the outcomes highlighted above. By focussing on outcomes, we make sure that all of things that we do are designed to make an actual positive difference to people's lives.



### **3.7 Our Community Engagement Approach - making sure we keep our communities involved**

Making sure that our communities are involved in all that we do, and that our work is based on the priorities of the people of New Cumnock is very important to us. As you will have seen above, we have made community development a core activity area to make sure that we are always thinking about how we can:

- keep people informed by giving them the information we need
- make sure we are asking people for their views
- involve people as best we can, in ways that suit them
- work in partnership with people, communities, and other organisations
- build the skills of people and communities so that they can take the lead
- give as much power and control back to the community as we can

To help us do this in a way which feels relevant and useful to local people, during August 2020, we asked a wide cross-section of our local community what they thought of our plans, and how they wanted to be involved with NCDT in the future. We used this feedback to develop our work around community development and engagement which can be found in our Improvement and Delivery Plan.

We also use the National Standards for Community Engagement<sup>9</sup> and the Ladder of Participation and Engagement<sup>10</sup> to check our plans against so that we can be sure that we are always adopting best practice in the way that we involve local people and community groups, and giving our communities as much control in our work as possible.

### **3.8 Organisational Development - being the best that we can be**

Although we have a great many skills in our Trustee, staff and volunteer team, and have achieved lots of successes already, we also know we are a very young organisation and we need to keep learning and developing at every level of the organisation.

As part of our planning journey, we looked at our own skills and experience as well as how well we were doing to meet the 5 core principles of the Scottish Governance Code for the Third Sector<sup>11</sup>. Through doing this we discovered that we already had a lot of strengths but there were some key areas that we would like to see ourselves improve in.

In response, we have developed an Organisational Development Plan which outlines the improvements we would like to make as an organisation - tasks and activities from this plan have also been mapped across to our wider Improvement and Delivery plan, under the section on Management and Governance.

We have dedicated a core activity area to Management and Governance because we recognise that we need to run efficiently and effectively, and according to our values to make a real difference to our communities.

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<sup>9</sup> <https://www.scdc.org.uk/what/national-standards>

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.partnerships.org.uk/guide/ideas.htm>

<sup>11</sup> <http://goodgovernance.scot/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Scottish-Governance-Code-Final-PDF.pdf>

## 4. Monitoring and Evaluation

Even although the staff and volunteer team are responsible for most of the day to day delivery of our work, the Board of Trustees of New Cumnock Development Trust is overall responsible for making sure we are successful in achieving what we set out to do in our plans.

The Improvement and Delivery plan is monitored and reviewed at staff support and supervision sessions, as well as quarterly at our Board of Directors meetings to ensure we are on track. We have also developed some systems to help us monitor and evaluate progress such as sign-in sheets and evaluation forms for events etc.

It is also important that we involve all our key stakeholders in regularly evaluating our work, especially the people of New Cumnock. How well we are doing largely depends on how well we are meeting the needs of people and communities, so their views on our progress are most important.

We want to gather feedback on a regular basis and not just once every couple of years, so we have set up a **Stakeholder Advisory Group** (made up of a cross section of volunteers, partner agencies and members of the local community), which helps us track our progress, as well as making suggestions for future priorities.

Our work over the year is written up into an annual report which is presented at our AGM.

# Appendix 1 - Summary Description of Core Activity Areas

## 1. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Supporting and achieving the community's **capital and project** development ideas which contribute to the sustainable development of New Cumnock

Under this core work area, we will focus on work around:

- Buildings, facilities and services such as the Castle Hotel, provision of office facilities, tackling disused buildings and community-led housing development
- Environment, culture and heritage such as the Knockshinnoch 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary commemoration, adoption of the Mary Morrison Memorial Garden and Burns Statue, support for local initiatives including the garden group and Friday Tidy litter picking or support for initiatives to improve the local environment and development of sustainable and active travel initiatives
- Economy and workforce development such as the Castle Hotel visitor accommodation, creation of a repair skills hub and Station café enterprise
- Leisure, play and social connections such as publication of the New Cumnock News, support for the development of a Community Sports Hub, creating volunteering opportunities
- Health and Wellbeing including social opportunities through initiatives such as the Station café and working with groups to develop food and growing initiatives
- Inclusion and equality such as digital inclusion, energy efficiency and fuel poverty initiatives

## 2. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Adopting community development approaches which run through all the work above, including:

- **involving local people**, through volunteering, active participation, and high-quality community engagement
- **building the skills, abilities and confidence of people and community groups** to take effective action and leading roles in the development of their community
- **working in partnership** and in joined-up ways with other groups, organisations, and businesses, for the benefit of the people of New Cumnock
- Making best use of **community benefit funding**, including **grant-making** to other groups and organisations

## 3. MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

Internal business management, ensuring the effectiveness of New Cumnock Development Trust. We have undertaken a review of our management and governance as part of our planning