



Sustaining Places, Sustaining People

A Community-led Plan of Action; By Our Community, For Our Community

Draft 22 June 2021

Introduction

Dunbar and District sits within the beautiful, easternmost part of East Lothian with the John Muir Country Park to the north, the Lammermuir Hills to the south, Traprain Law to the west, and Thornton Loch to the east.

At Sustaining Dunbar we believe this wonderful landscape should be home to thriving people, where nature flourishes on the land and in the sea, where we live, work and play in ways that respect the wellbeing of all people, and the health of the whole planet.

Dunbar and East Linton is and has always been a community-minded place with a fiercely responsible get-it-done attitude to solving problems for local people, by local people. This resilience has been put to the test during the pandemic, and multiple community-led initiatives have risen to this huge challenge, proactively and with agility.

This is a practical example of the strong, resilient communities that we will increasingly need as government provision is constrained and as society is impacted by the long term effects of COVID-19. Such communities will also be best placed to respond to local impacts of global crises including economic disruption, climate crisis and ecological destruction.

At the heart of everything we do is a commitment to caring for the environment and making our towns and villages a better, safer and fairer place for all, now and in the future.

Sustaining Dunbar is proud to be a Community Development Trust in a community full of passionate people. We will continue to support, enable and empower our community wherever possible to ensure the aspirations, aims and objectives are achieved. We started out on a journey around a year ago to build a partner network to “[build back better](#)”. We are delighted to present this report, which shares the findings of our incredible ‘What If?’ journey so far and takes us to the next part of our journey, ‘What Next?’

You may be an organisation or perhaps a project leader or champion, who might assist with an existing project or have the ability and capacity to lead on one of the proposed projects - all deemed to be worthy of further development by you, our community.

You might be a funder, a political leader or a local authority officer, with the scope to support a particular project. You may simply enjoy reading the information provided and be as astounded, as we are, at the huge amount of activity under the realm of our partner networks.

This report is a working and reference document. A document that can be visited at the readers leisure. It will develop and evolve or be adapted to meet changing priorities. For now it presents a wonderful picture of our successful journey so far. We welcome your views on how Sustaining Dunbar can continue to support our networks as our exciting journey continues.

Jo Macnamara

Chair - Sustaining Dunbar, June 2021

Geographics

Dunbar and District, Ward 6 within the East Lothian Council multi-member ward system, is situated at the eastern end of East Lothian. It is geographically one of the largest wards in East Lothian. It includes the towns of Dunbar and East Linton and the villages of Tynninghame, West Barns, Stenton, Spott, Innerwick, Oldhamstocks and Whittinghame, and a number of other small settlements.

East Lothian Area Partnership Locations

- Musselburgh
- Fa'side
- Haddington & Lammermuir
- Dunbar & East Linton
- North Berwick Coastal
- Preston Seton Gosford



Demographics

On **30 June 2019**, the population of East Lothian was **107,090**. This is an increase of **1.2%** from **105,790** in **2018**. Over the same period, the population of Scotland increased by 0.5%.

Between 2018 and 2028, the population of East Lothian is projected to increase from **105,790** to **113,403**, an increase of **7.2%**.

East Lothian is projected to have the **2nd highest percentage change in population size** out of the 32 council areas in Scotland.

The **average age** of the population of **East Lothian** is **projected to increase** as the baby boomer generation ages and more people are expected to live longer.

Data on East Lothian can be found here [East Lothian Council Area Profile](#)

Scotland's population is ageing. The increase in the population of older age groups has been much higher than younger age groups over the last 20 years. The **largest increase** has been in the **75 and over age group (+31%)** whereas the population of **children aged 0 to 15** has decreased the most (-8%).

Data on Population Estimates can be found here: [Mid-Year Population Estimates Scotland, Mid-2018](#).

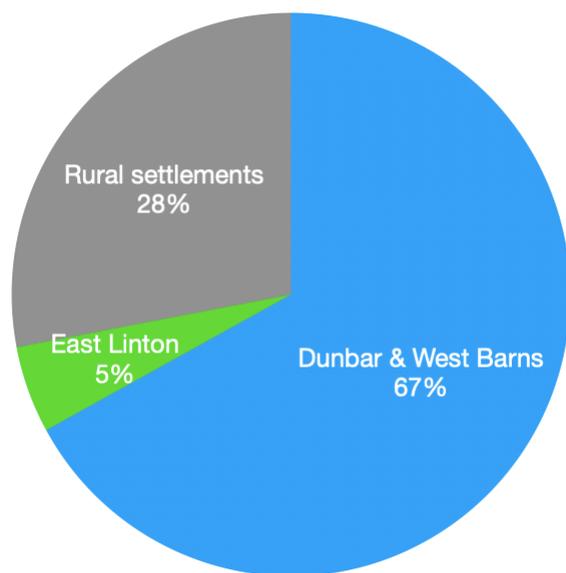
The Population of Dunbar & East Linton Ward:

In 2017, it was estimated that **14,041** people live in Dunbar and East Linton.

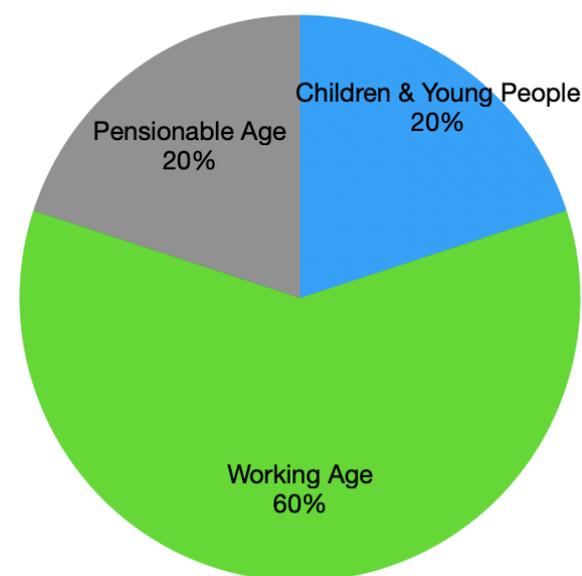
Our population is growing and the demographics are changing. It is therefore critical that we are inclusive in *all* that we do, to ensure that *all* in our community are provided with equality of opportunity.

- **13.5%** of the population of **East Lothian** live in the **Dunbar & East Linton** ward, two thirds of these in Dunbar and West Barns.

- **81.8%** of people in **Dunbar and East Linton** identify themselves as **White Scottish** - lower than the rate for East Lothian or Scotland as a whole
- **5.2 %** of the population in this ward was **born outside the UK**. Of these people **2.3%** were born in **other EU countries** and **2.9%** were **born elsewhere** in the world
- **4%** of the population in the **Dunbar & East Linton** ward use a **language other than English** at home
- In the **Dunbar & East Linton** ward **48.6%** are male and **51.4%** are female



Where people live in Dunbar & East Linton Ward.



The age of people in Dunbar & East Linton Ward.

Income and Employment:

- Approximately **6.9%** of the working age population of the **Dunbar and East Linton Ward** is considered to be **employment deprived**, compared to East Lothian (8.5%) and Scotland (10.8%)
- Approximately **7.4%** of the population in the **Dunbar and East Linton ward** are considered to be **income deprived**, compared to the overall East Lothian rate of 9.8%

Neighbourhood and Place:

- The East Lothian Residents Survey showed that **99%** of people in the **Dunbar & East Linton ward** thought that East Lothian was a **good place to live**, with 98% feeling the same way about their own neighbourhood

Note: Data on Education and Health, which have relevance to this report, have not been included as it is anticipated that there will have been substantial change to these factors in the last 18 months as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Likewise, data on the impact of COVID on local businesses is not yet available.

You can download the Dunbar and East Linton Area Profile, November 2017, which provides substantial Ward 6 data, here: [Dunbar and East Linton Area Profile](#).

Recovery from Covid 19 must create a better, fairer, greener society

We might look back longingly to the time before the pandemic and the restrictions and disruptions it has brought. But while life was easier for many of us, below the surface, often out of sight and out of mind, “normal” was not good. “Normal” meant rising inequalities, with food banks getting ever busier, rising levels of mental ill health and loneliness, widening social and political divisions and, of course, the environmental and climate emergencies. These problems are still there and are getting worse.

That’s why Governments, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), think tanks, business groups and even the Financial Times said that as we recover from the pandemic we must fundamentally rethink the economy so that we can tackle these social and environmental crises together. This is the background to the call to “[build back better](#)” as we recover from the pandemic.

Our aims have been developed with five objectives clearly in mind:

1. Supporting more local action that meets real needs, right now, especially for those who are most in need.
2. Strengthening our communities and developing relationships with statutory agencies and other stakeholders so we are all more able to overcome emerging challenges and to respond rapidly to existing and new opportunities.
3. Putting in place a local infrastructure, along with principles, values and processes to allow the shared vision for the future of our community to emerge.
4. Ensuring that our own ability to thrive is not at the expense of other people elsewhere in the world.
5. Recognising the importance of the living world, locally and globally, to our own lives and for its own sake.

Connecting the local with global, social with ecological

To help us understand our projects in this wider context at Sustaining Dunbar, we are trialling a framework being developed and applied in many cities, towns, and communities across the world. The 'four lenses framework' comes from the 'Doughnut Economics' movement.

By considering our activities and plans through these four lenses we can ask questions and develop solutions that help us ensure that everything we do is working towards our vision of Dunbar and district being home to thriving people, where nature flourishes on the land and in the sea, where we live, work and play in ways that respect the wellbeing of all people, and the health of the whole planet.

The local-social lens: *What does it mean for the people of Dunbar and district to thrive?* This will include topics like good mental and physical health; strong, welcoming community; well paid, secure and meaningful work; etc.

The local-ecological lens: *What does it mean for nature and wildlife to flourish in Dunbar and district?* This will include not just the health and biodiversity of 'natural areas' like woodlands, moorlands, rivers and coasts, but also of farmlands, gardens and parks.

The global-social lens: *What does it mean Dunbar and district to respect the wellbeing of people worldwide?* This will include topics like fair trade; sweat shops; modern slavery; etc.

The global-ecological lens: *What does it mean Dunbar and district to respect the health of the whole planet - beyond our local area?* This will include the pollution and carbon emissions caused by producing and transport the food, goods and services we buy, from across the world.

The Impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic on Health & Wellbeing

The pandemic has greatly impacted on the health & wellbeing of our community. We hear stories from our friends, families and colleagues of deteriorating health as a whole. However, we know that the mental health of our community is particularly fragile - for people of all ages and all walks of life.

- Dignity: Everyone has enough to live in comfort, safety and happiness
- Nature: A restored and safe natural world for all life
- Connection: A sense of belonging and institutions that serve the common good
- Fairness: Justice in all its dimensions at the heart of economic systems, and the gap between the richest and poorest greatly reduced
- Participation: Citizens are actively engaged in their communities and locally rooted economies

You can read more here about the [Wellbeing Economy Alliance](#).

Whilst it is acknowledged in research, so far, that the evidence base is still developing and the quality is variable, there is no reason to doubt that any of the data available is not representative of the current position, or that the situation for Scotland equally translates to the situation within local communities.

What we know is that pre-covid, there was a rising public awareness and a demand for mental health treatment that was

outstripping supply. That there are, and will be, different impacts on different populations mostly associated with traditional inequalities. That whilst the early impact is a higher level of distress, that this can later transform into formal anxiety and depressive disorders are likely to emerge, as will greater rates of substance misuse, traumatic reactions, self-harm and suicide. An 8% current worsening of the incidence of mental health disorders is estimated. In particular, relating to anxiety and mood disorders and especially in young people and females.

You can read more about this here: [Mental Health Effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic in Scotland: A Think Piece](#) Dr John Mitchell, Principal Medical Officer, Mental Health Directorate, Scottish Government - July 2020

This information presents a grim picture but we must not lose heart. We are a driven and proactive community with a strong, committed network of people, who recognise the current situation and who have leapt into action, to embrace the issues and support the recovery of our people, our community!

We recognise that mental health is widely affected by the environment, that inequalities have an important impact on mental ill-health, and that it is closely linked to deprivation, financial and food insecurity. It leads to general disempowerment, with a direct correlation to the local housing crisis, lack of access to land or workspace and other fundamental needs which support a thriving community.

This is why health and wellbeing is enshrined in the existing projects and new initiatives suggested by the [What If](#) Partner Network. Projects, which will improve the environment we live in, provide an opportunity to live healthier lives and create opportunities for employment and learning. There is already an enormous amount of activity within our community to encourage and support our community. However, with the support of our

allies, there is a real opportunity to make an even bigger difference. Through our partner networks, we will continue to:

- Deliver innovative projects to encourage people to grow natural produce and eat healthier foods, reconnect people with wilderness and nature, provide opportunities for apprenticeships and employment, and provide activities to promote active and healthy lifestyles; and,
- Call upon those who can to support our work, as funders, leaders or volunteers, to aid recovery to ensure we create a resilient and sustainable community now, and for generations to come.

Our Partner Networks - *Who Are They?*

Back in the early summer of 2020 we spoke with lots of local groups, many working at the sharp end helping people cope with the pandemic. We asked if it would be useful to work together and plan for the future. Most said 'yes' and there are now around 30 partners in the What If network. A network of multiple and varied organisations and 100's of volunteers. Since then, the partners have been engaging and listening, sharing stories and turning ideas into action.

The Partner Network has a broad representation. With fishermen, church and foodbank representatives, a vast range of community organisations and more, we are confident that we have a diverse range of people, from home life to business, representing people of all ages and people with differing need. Ensuring that we are connecting with all in our community, working toward recovery and resilience in the knowledge that what we do, is what our community wants!

The Partner Network has grown enormously since its inception with:

- A Local Good Food Alliance with over 50 members
- A Local Community Halls Network with more than 20 members

Climate Action East Lothian (CAEL), an affiliated organisation of Sustaining Dunbar, are actively involved. We work closely with the relevant East Lothian Council officers and with organisations, such as, our local Community Councils, and Dunbar and East Linton Area Partnership (DELAP), who act as a conduit between the community and the local authority. All widening the scope of opportunity and the ability to achieve our community aims!

You can read more about some of our Network Partners here: [Who's Who](#).

Our Journey - Part 1 ‘What If?’

At the beginning of our journey, and with our partners, we wanted to explore the aspirations of our community. The ‘What If’ Project was initiated, where we spoke with many groups, meetings were held, events took place and relationships developed.

We discussed how we would work together to support our community to recover from the pandemic, how to ‘Build Back Better’ - to provide a safe and fair place to work, live and play, in an environment which is protected and enhanced, and where our community were empowered with opportunities for learning and working. An inclusive, equal and resilient community, where people feel valued, supported and respected.

The ‘What If’ Project has become a tribe of likeminded people, with a shared goal, and a strong foundation to make a real difference - to achieve the aspirations explored in the early days. Evolving into a true community asset, where people can share ideas, collaborate and deliver.... together!

You can read more about the project here: [What If?](#)

Our Journey - Part 2 - ‘What Is?’

And so to the next part of our journey. Through a process of network Partner Conversations, data was gathered on what is happening in our community - the existing projects and the synergies within. Together we analysed the gaps and considered the priority areas for further action. New initiatives came to light. Ideas for projects that would further support our community, build upon ‘What If’, and continue to lead the way to recovery. Building a community that would be more resilient, stronger and sustainable for our children our future!

When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the Universe John Muir

The words of John Muir could not be more profound as it became clear that the majority of the existing projects and activities were intertwined, connected and with one aim, to Build Back Better!

The findings of the conversations were astonishing, a mountain of activity, led by an army of volunteers - from promoting healthier lifestyles to saving our planet. A realisation that the network is achieving great things with successful projects underway.

Our Journey - Part 3 ‘What Next?’

Despite the broad range of activities and outcomes, it is clear that most of the ongoing and proposed projects are based in specific places and fall into one of two categories:

1. **Sustaining Places:** Projects where people come together to look after particular places: like volunteers creating new woodlands or maintaining and developing village halls.
2. **Sustaining People:** Projects that provide services and support people: like classes and activities based in community halls and gardens.

In fact, these two categories overlap considerably: the benefits of volunteering for health and wellbeing means that sustaining places projects also sustain people, while sustaining people projects frequently involve volunteers and clients looking after and sustaining places.

This *sustaining places, sustaining people* approach creates a virtuous cycle for the benefit of individuals, the community and the natural world - regardless of the primary objectives and outcomes of each project.

Within this overarching approach, we have grouped projects under four broad themes:

- Connecting with Nature for Health & Wellbeing
- Connecting with Food & Growing for Sustainable Lives
- Letting Nature Thrive for a High Quality Environment
- Learning & Acting for Sustainable Lifestyles

And one cross cutting theme:

- Collaborating for Common Good.



These themes are described below, with a table of relevant projects. The table also shows for each project:

- The people and groups the project serves
- The places where the project takes place
- The main support or involvement the project is seeking at this time.

Below each table we have listed the main local and national outcomes that projects in each theme support.



To read about the projects listed in each table, visit the [online version](#) of this document.

Theme 1: Connecting with Nature for Health & Wellbeing

Projects in this theme enhance health and wellbeing through activities that connect people with nature, generally in gardens and parks. They include projects for people recognised as suffering from anxiety etc, as well as those who simply want to take part in such activities.

Projects in this theme directly support:

- East Lothian Plan: Outcome 3.2 People in East Lothian are enjoying healthier lives.
- National Outcome: Health - We are healthy and active
- The local-social lens

And contribute to:

- East Lothian Plan: Outcome 2.1 East Lothian has strong resilient communities where people respect and support each other.
- East Lothian Plan: Outcome 2.2 East Lothian People can live affordably and contribute to a thriving community life in a high-quality environment.
- National Outcome: Communities - We live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe
- National Outcome: Health We are healthy and active

Aa Projects	☰ People & Groups	☰ Places	☰ Seeking
Just Friends	Adults: anxious depressed or	Gardens Parks Other	Project Champion Funding
Wilderness & Nature	Adults: anxious depressed or	Gardens Parks	Project Champion Funding
Belhaven Community Garden	Open to all	Gardens	Funding Volunteers
The Secret Garden	Open to all	Gardens	Volunteers Funding



Click here to view the projects online!

Theme 2: Connecting with Food & Growing for Sustainable Lives

Projects under this theme connect people with growing, cooking and eating good quality, local, sustainable food, and creating stronger links between local growers and consumers. The benefits include individual health and confidence for people from all walks of life, and increased markets for local growers.

Projects in this theme directly supports:

- East Lothian Plan: Outcome 2.2 East Lothian People can live affordably and contribute to a thriving community life in a high-quality environment.
- ELC Climate Change Strategy: Outcome 7 East Lothian's Communities are places encouraging a Low Carbon Lifestyle and are prepared for the effects of Climate Change
- National Outcome: Environment - We value, enjoy, protect and enhance our environment
- The local-ecological lens

And contribute to:

- East Lothian Plan: Outcome 1.2 - Local businesses are thriving and the business base is expanding.
- East Lothian Plan: Outcome 2.1 East Lothian has strong resilient communities where people respect and support each other.
- ELC Climate Change Strategy: Outcome 4 A Resource Efficient and Sustainable East Lothian and the route to Zero Waste
- National Outcome: Communities - We live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe
- National Outcome: Fair Work and Business - We have thriving and innovative businesses, with quality jobs and fair work for everyone
- National Outcome: Children and Young People - We grow up loved, safe and respected so that we realise our full potential
- National Outcome: Environment We value, enjoy, protect and enhance our environment
- The local-social lens
- The global-ecological lens

Aa Projects	☰ People & Groups	☰ Places	☰ Seeking
 Dunbar Basics Bank	Open to all	Halls Other	Funding Volunteers
 Local Good Food Alliance Coordinator	Open to all	Gardens	Funding Volunteers
 Time to Cook	Adults: anxious depressed or Older people	Online	Project Champion Funding
 East Linton Community Garden	Open to all	Gardens Parks	Funding Land Volunteers
 Micro College	Children & Young People	Other	Funding
 Kids' Cook-Outs	Children & Young People	Gardens	
 The Beehive Garden	Children & Young People	Gardens	Funding Volunteers
 Therapeutic Gardening	Community Groups Adults: anxious depressed or	Gardens	Funding
 Local Food Markets	Businesses Open to all	Halls Other	Project Champion Volunteers
 Waste Reduction Project	Businesses Open to all	Online	Project Champion Volunteers
 Community Assisted Agricultural Scheme (CSA)/ Local Food Growing Cooperative	Businesses Landowners Open to all	Farms & Smallholdings	Funding Project Champion Volunteers Land



Click here to view the projects online!

Theme 3: Letting Nature Thrive for a High Quality Environment

Projects under this theme focus on protecting, restoring and enhancing the local natural environment, from designated parks to private farmland and gardens, through enhancing biodiversity, increasing awareness and reducing negative visitor impacts.

Aa Projects	☰ People & Groups	☰ Places	☰ Seeking
 Green & Blue Spaces Network	Community Groups Businesses Landowners	Parks Other	Project Champion Funding
 Rewilding	Open to all Landowners	Parks Farms & Smallholdings Other	Funding
 Trees in the Park	Open to all Children & Young People	Gardens Parks	Funding
 Wildlife Network	Open to all	Gardens Parks	Funding
 Twa Burns Wood	Landowners Open to all	Woodland Farms & Smallholdings	Funding



Click here to view the projects online!

Projects in this theme directly supports:

- East Lothian Plan: Outcome 2.2 East Lothian People can live affordably and contribute to a thriving community life in a high-quality environment.
- ELC Climate Change Strategy: Outcome 6: A Healthy and Resilient Natural Environment and the route to Carbon Neutral
- National Outcome: Environment - We value, enjoy, protect and enhance our environment
- The local-ecological lens

And contribute to:

- East Lothian Plan: Outcome 3.2 People in East Lothian are enjoying healthier lives.
- ELC Climate Change Strategy: Outcome 7 East Lothian's Communities are places encouraging a Low Carbon Lifestyle and are prepared for the effects of Climate Change
- National Outcome: Environment We value, enjoy, protect and enhance our environment
- National Outcome: Communities We live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe
- The local-social lens
- The global-ecological lens

Theme 4: Learning & Acting for Sustainable Lifestyles

Projects under this theme focus on learning about our positive and negative impacts on other people and the living world, and taking action to make a meaningful difference. Actions range from making personal choices as a consumer to advocating for local and national policy change.

Aa Projects	☰ People & Groups	☰ Places	☰ Seeking
📄 Earth, Planet, Universe	Open to all	not place specific	Volunteers
📄 Advocacy	Open to all	not place specific	Volunteers Funding
📄 Fixing for a Future	Open to all	not place specific	Volunteers
📄 Rebellious Threads	Children & Young People Open to all	not place specific	Funding Volunteers
📄 The Phone Box	Open to all	Other	Funding



Click here to view the projects online!

Projects in this theme directly supports:

- East Lothian Plan: Outcome 2.2 East Lothian People can live affordably and contribute to a thriving community life in a high-quality environment.
- ELC Climate Change Strategy: Outcome 7: East Lothian's Communities are places encouraging a Low Carbon Lifestyle and are prepared for the effects of Climate Change
- National Outcome: Environment - We value, enjoy, protect and enhance our environment

And contribute to:

- East Lothian Plan: Outcome 2.1 East Lothian has strong resilient communities where people respect and support each other.
- ELC Climate Change Strategy: Outcome 4: A Resource Efficient and Sustainable East Lothian and the route to Zero Waste
- National Outcome: Education - We are well educated, skilled and able to contribute to society
- National Outcome: Environment We value, enjoy, protect and enhance our environment
- The local-social lens
- The local-ecological lens
- The global-social lens
- The global-ecological lens

Theme 5: Collaborating for Common Good

This is a cross-cutting theme, where projects bring people and groups together to explicitly collaborate to deliver multiple benefits which include capacity building, coordination and public engagement. For this reason some projects appear in this theme as well as the four other themes.

Aa Projects	☰ People & Groups	☰ Places	☰ Seeking
 East Linton Community Hall	Open to all	Halls	Funding
 Soil	Landowners Open to all	not place specific	Funding Volunteers
 Community Hub	Open to all	Other	Funding Project Champion Volunteers
 Climate Beacon	Open to all	not place specific	Funding Volunteers
 Community Halls Resilience Project	Community Groups	Halls	Funding
 Green & Blue Spaces Network	Community Groups Businesses Landowners	Parks Other	Project Champion Funding



Click here to view the projects online!

Projects in this theme directly support:

- East Lothian Plan: Outcome 2.1 East Lothian has strong resilient communities where people respect and support each other.
- ELC Climate Change Strategy: Outcome 7: East Lothian's Communities are places encouraging a Low Carbon Lifestyle and are prepared for the effects of Climate Change
- National Outcome: Communities - We live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe

And contribute to:

- East Lothian Plan: Outcome 2.2 East Lothian People can live affordably and contribute to a thriving community life in a high-quality environment.
- ELC Climate Change Strategy: Outcome 6: A Healthy and Resilient Natural Environment and the route to Carbon Neutral
- National Outcome: Environment - We value, enjoy, protect and enhance our environment
- National Outcome: Communities We live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe
- National Outcome: Culture We are creative and our vibrant diverse cultures are expressed and enjoyed widely
- The local-social lens
- The local-ecological lens
- The global-social lens
- The global-ecological lens

Our Journey - Part 4 ‘What Now?’

Where are we now? We are grateful to all our partners and allies who have supported the work of the partner networks so far. Without the support, whether volunteering, providing leadership or awarding funding, it would not have been possible to achieve the success that is!

We are a truly supported community - a community which benefits from excellent relationships with East Lothian Council, politicians and our hybrid organisations, such as Community Councils and Dunbar and East Linton Area Partnership (DELAP), who provide guidance and act as conduits between the community and governance. Providing strength, unity and the much needed funding contributions, as we have travelled through our journey.

A journey, which has been informed by the community, developed by the community and led by the community. This cannot and should not change. We will continue to rally as one, as a united force, with a common goal to aid recovery.

Our Community:

- Where we work together to further develop Dunbar and District to ensure it is a vibrant lively place, where businesses grow, community groups are supported and inclusive activities take place.
- A community which embraces a culture of caring, sharing and collaboration, where everyone is respected and valued.
- One which builds in strength and resolve, so that we are not only able to weather the storm, but we have the resilience to manage the ever-growing issues that are upon us, both locally and globally.

Our journey is shared as a review of our communities aspirations ‘What If’, a celebration of what you are doing ‘What Is?’ and an opportunity for you to achieve our ‘What Next?’. It represents a milestone in the the journey, an important time where we have taken the space to reflect and review the journey from beginning to where we are now. The results have proved to be both exciting and astonishing.

We know there are hundreds of volunteers doing an incredible amount for the towns of Dunbar and East Linton, the surrounding villages and the smaller rural settlements.

We invite our Partner Network and our allies to absorb the findings of our journey, to celebrate the achievements so far, to consider the new initiatives and the opportunities presented, your priorities and then.....

Our Partner Network, *What Now?*

We started this process in the summer of 2020 - we asked local groups if it would be useful to work together and plan for the future. Most said 'yes', and this report, recognising a milestone in our journey, is one of the outcomes.

The plan has been collated and coordinated by Sustaining Dunbar, but it is not our plan - it gathers together existing and proposed projects, most led by other groups. We hope that this report will:

- Help groups find opportunities to collaborate and learn from others, to create even better projects and outcomes together;
- Provide groups with source of data and context to support their funding applications;
- Enable statutory bodies and other stakeholders to identify community-based organisations that they might support and work with to achieve shared outcomes.

In addition, we believe that the plan and the projects described, highlights the potential for local groups and stakeholders to achieve more by collaborating and coordinating some of our many and varied activities. The Local Good Food Alliance and the Local Community Halls Network demonstrate that this can be a useful approach. If other members of the What If Network, would like Sustaining Dunbar to provide some kind of coordinating and supportive role, we will seek funding to enable us to do so.

Conclusion

We have taken you through our journey of What If, What Is and What Next. An incredible and exciting journey full of enthusiasm and inspiration. We have developed a strong foundation, a partner network with more than 30 partners, with multiple organisations and hundreds of volunteers. An infrastructure to assist and aid our community to build back better. A solid foundation upon which we can build to ensure an even stronger and more resilient community.

In 2017, Dunbar and District was home to 13.5% of East Lothian's population, of which 40% or 5,600 people are under 18 or of pensionable age. Dunbar's population is still growing and East Lothian is projected to have the 2nd highest percentage change in population size - out of the 32 council areas in Scotland. We know that mental health is deteriorating and we know that the number of people living with dementia is on the increase. We are experiencing a global pandemic and if we continue to live as we do, our world is unsustainable.

Exciting and innovative projects, active or proposed, are contained within the report. From healthier eating to the regeneration of farm land, growing food to planting trees, and forming supportive friendships to community hubs, there is nothing considered too small to be unworthy or too mighty to take the challenge.

We have a partner network full of active, passionate and motivated people. People with the skills, knowledge and expertise, and importantly, the desire to support the community and work with the community to ensure a sustainable future, now and for generations to come.

This demonstrates a small part of the community development and activity within Dunbar and District to ensure our community is a home to thriving people, where nature flourishes on the land and in the sea, where we live, work and play in ways that respect the wellbeing of all people, and the health of the whole planet, but an important part and one to be recognised and celebrated.

We would welcome your views on this report, in particular:

- Would support from Sustaining Dunbar be helpful in taking forward specific projects? If so, what are the priorities?
- Would it be helpful for Sustaining Dunbar to offer a coordinating role of some kind? If so, what would be most useful?

Our gratitude is expressed to the many who have taken part in our journey so far and who have contributed to this report. We hope you will continue to travel with us for many years to come!

Yvonne Wemyss, Engagement Manager; Naomi Barnes, Local Good Food Alliance Coordinator; & Osbert Lancaster, Development Manager; on behalf of the Board of Trustees, Sustaining Dunbar

22 June 2021