



NEWTONGRANGE

COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

2017 – 2022





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*206 Community Household Surveys were returned representing the views
of approximately 500 residents*

300 people attended the Community Futures Open Events

INTRODUCTION

Coalfields Community Futures

The Coalfields Community Futures Programme is an approach to local community planning and sustainable community development that aims to encourage active citizenship and build local democracy. It enables communities to devise a community action plan which makes a case for the things that the community thinks are important and wishes to make happen.

The process builds on existing processes of community action research to identify local needs and priorities, using residents as co-researchers. We work with local residents and groups to develop a common sense of purpose and assist them to produce a deliverable community action plan.

To support the action planning process the community receive a Participatory Budget which is available to local constituted community or voluntary groups.

This budget enables the community to fund small projects that are identified by the community through the results of the household surveys, stakeholder interviews and the Community Open Event.

Newtongrange Community Action Plan

The Action Plan summarises community views and information about:

- Our community now
- Our shared Vision for Newtongrange
- Priority themes and actions

Newtongrange Community Futures Steering Group

The Steering Group brought together representatives from Newtongrange Community Council, Newtongrange Gala, Newtongrange Parish Church, Newtongrange Silver Band and Midlothian Council.

Thank you to everyone who took part in helping Newtongrange plan for a bright future.



OUR COMMUNITY NOW

Background

This Profile has been produced to give an insight into the Newtongrange area. It is part of a wider Community Futures process being delivered by the Coalfields Regeneration Trust across Scotland's coalfield communities to assist them to reflect on what is good, what could be improved and how.

A Place of Distinction

Newtongrange is a former mining community situated in central Midlothian. The A7 runs along the eastern side of the community, connecting Newtongrange with the rest of Midlothian and Edinburgh. Newtongrange has a library, swimming pool, community learning centre and leisure complex as well as the Scottish National Mining Museum. The mining museum is located on the site of the former Lady Victoria Colliery and is rated as one of Midlothian's top tourist destinations.

The Newtongrange Conservation Area incorporates the Lady Victoria Colliery (a category A listed building), Monkwood, First Street to Fifth Street and The Square. Green spaces within Newtongrange include Welfare Park and The Square. As a former mining community, Newtongrange still has a number of terraced houses with their unique vennels that are a characteristic of this historic Village.

Population

At the time of the 2011 Census the number of residents in Newtongrange was 5,431 compared to Midlothian's population of 83,187. We can expect an increase in figures due to the increase in housing development.

Newtongrange accounts for 6.52% of the total Midlothian population but has a higher proportion of working age people than the Midlothian average and a lower proportion of over 65s.

Housing

Midlothian has particularly high demands for affordable housing due to its proximity to the capital. Although the council has invested heavily in new build social housing in recent years, the council's waiting list for affordable housing continues to increase. Indeed this was the main concern of Newtongrange residents according to the the Midlothian Citizens' Panel Winter Survey 2015/2016.

Newtongrange holds $\approx 4\%$ of Midlothian's council housing stock and is the 3rd most popular place in Midlothian for council home applications. (Midlothian Council Annual Housing Land Audit 2014)

At the time of the 2011 Census, there were 2,252 households in the Newtongrange area. Two new development sites have been identified in Newtongrange with construction already underway on one of them. These will add a further 296 homes to the area.

Health

The vast majority of the population (80.7%) of Newtongrange consider their health to be either good or very good.

Newtongrange has 20.3% of residents living with a long term illness which is higher than Scotland as a whole at 19.6%. Source Census 2011

The two most common reasons for hospital admission in Newtongrange are for Alcohol related issues or Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD). For both of these conditions the number of hospital admissions is significantly greater in Newtongrange than in Midlothian or Scotland.

The numbers of drug related admissions in Newtongrange is approximately double the admissions for Midlothian and Scotland.



OUR COMMUNITY NOW

That said, life expectancy in Newtongrange is either equal to or greater than life expectancy in Midlothian or Scotland as a whole.

From stakeholder interviews, there is disappointment related to not being able to book an appointment directly to see a doctor. Having to wait on a call back to find out if an appointment could be offered is stressful when family members are ill and in need of medical attention. New residents are happy that the Dental Practice has vacancies available for new patients.

Employment and the Economy

Newtongrange has a higher percentage of those working in caring, leisure and other service occupations than in Midlothian or Scotland.

The 2011 Census showed that 72.6% of people aged 16-74 were economically active with 43.4% being full time employees.

The vacancy rates of shops, supermarkets, and warehouses are an important indicator of the economic health of an area. As of April 2016, out of a total of 40 shops, supermarkets, or retail warehouse units in Newtongrange, the vacancy rate was 5.0%. Across Midlothian, the vacancy rate for these types of units was 6.7%.

Stakeholder interviews show that the Tesco supermarket at Hardengreen is used by many for their major food shopping. In addition, the closure of the baker's and the RBS bank gives the impression of a shopping area that needs rejuvenating.

Education and Training

The village has two Nursery Schools and one non-denominational primary school, Newtongrange Primary. Newtongrange is within the catchment area of St Andrews Roman Catholic Primary School.

The Secondary school pupils in Newtongrange can attend Newbattle High School, St David's Roman Catholic High School (with a catchment area encompassing all of Midlothian), or Lasswade High School Centre.

The highest level of academic achievement for over half of the population of Newtongrange is either level 1 qualification (e.g. standard grades) or no qualification.

Residents of Newtongrange can learn additional skills at the Newbattle Community Learning Centre located in northern Newtongrange.

Social and Community

Newbattle Parish Church provides religious services for residents.

Social facilities are provided throughout the area including Newbattle Bowling Club, Newtongrange Leisure Centre, Newtongrange Library as well as several public houses. Stakeholder interviews welcomed the concept of the Gothenburg public house which the Dean Tavern operates under. This means that the profits made are used for the benefit of the village as a whole.

It is also home to Newtongrange Silver Band who, over the last few years, hosted 'Brass in the Park', with bands from all over the United Kingdom taking part in a three day event.

There is one library in Newtongrange, located at St David's. A large variety of events are run at the library aimed at adults and children/ teens and include (but are not limited to) story times, community group sessions, displays/ exhibitions, learning activities and competitions.



OUR COMMUNITY NOW

Environment

Newtongrange has the benefit of plenty of green space for people to enjoy including several areas of parkland, sports facilities and play parks.

Newtongrange Park Facilities include:

Artificial Sports Pitches, Changing Facilities, Formal/Memorial/Floral Display, Children's Play Area, Multiple Play Area, 11-a-side Grass Football Pitch, Wheeled Sports Facility

Abbeylands Pitch Facilities include a synthetic pitch, 11-a-side grass pitch, 2 changing rooms, accessibility with ramped access and a dedicated disabled toilet.

Transport

The opening of the Borders Railway in September 2015 also linked Newtongrange with Edinburgh, as do a number of bus services.

Newtongrange is on the long distance 95A/X95 Edinburgh to Carlisle "Borders Buses" route which runs hourly Monday to Friday and approximately once an hour at the weekend.

<https://bordersbuses.co.uk/timetables>

First bus 86/86A between Edinburgh and Birkenside runs through Newtongrange up to six times an hour at peak times during the week and less frequently at the weekend. First Bus 302 between Dalkeith and Orchard Grange routes through Newtongrange hourly from 09.00-17.00 Monday to Saturday.

The Lothian Community Transport Services bus R2 runs through Newtongrange every day linking it to Dalkeith via Gorebridge and Bonnyrigg.

In the Midlothian Citizens' Panel Winter Survey 2015/2016, Newtongrange residents were asked to

rank 14 different road issues according to their level of concern. The top three include:

1. Unfilled potholes
2. Road closures due to utility works
3. Concern over dangerous junctions.

Community Action Plan: Considerations

Newtongrange is well provided for with amenities and the opening of the new railway link has been much welcomed by the local residents. It has already brought an improvement in traffic calming with the installation of traffic lights at the end of the Main Street. The new station is likely to make Newtongrange an even more attractive choice as a place to live with easy transport links to Edinburgh and therefore housing development is likely to rise over the coming years. This brings with it the associated impact on services and puts pressure on existing amenities.

There is also an uncertainty about the future of the village centre, its community facilities and what changes may take place as a result of the new community hub and high school being built and due to open in June 2018.

This will replace the Newbattle Community High School. It will be built on the site of the Mayfield Complex and will include a new library, gym, swimming pool, sports facilities, including an all weather pitch and a range of community facilities on campus.

It is crucially important that any plans for the future of Newtongrange include in depth dialogue and engagement with local residents and voluntary groups who currently benefit from the existing facilities and amenities that Newtongrange offers.



A SHARED VISION FOR OUR COMMUNITY

Newtongrange will have an excellent range of services and facilities to cater for all ages and sectors in our community, with a responsive relationship with Midlothian Council and other service providers.

Actively working to create more job opportunities.

Somewhere safe for our children to grow up in, with the right activities, support and education.

A place that keeps community at its heart while embracing a new vision of the future.

A pleasant place to live, somewhere everyone is welcome.

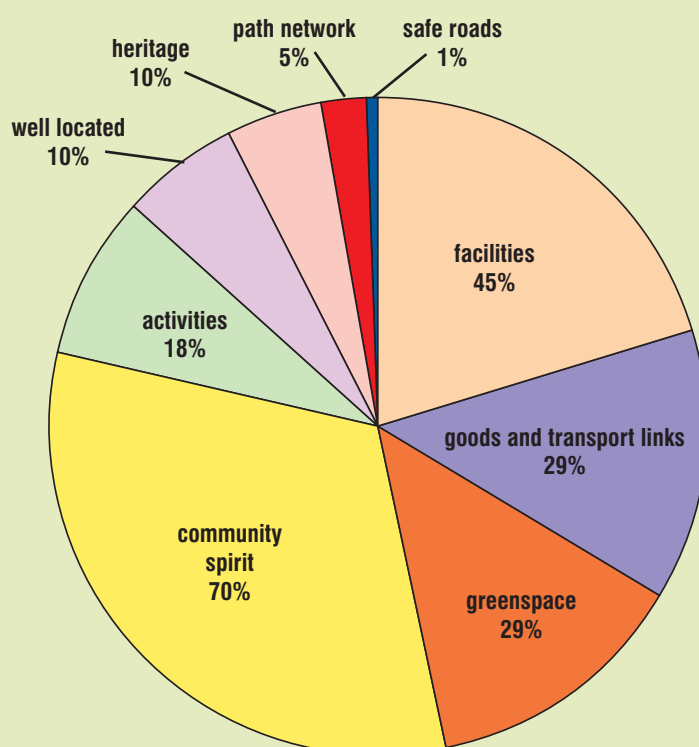
A clean quiet village, with pride in itself and its people.

A thriving community with a collective desire to nurture the village, and its people.



From our community survey:

NEWTONGRANGE LIKES



WHAT PEOPLE SAID

Countryside on the doorstep, nice for walks with the dogs

Brilliant rail link to Edinburgh and the Borders

We love the community spirit and close knit feeling. Having great facilities on our doorstep like the library, swimming pool, shops, bus service to Edinburgh and now the train station makes Newtongrange a really great place to live too. We like the feeling of being close to lots of things here.

on the whole it is a pretty friendly place to live with a rich history and community identity

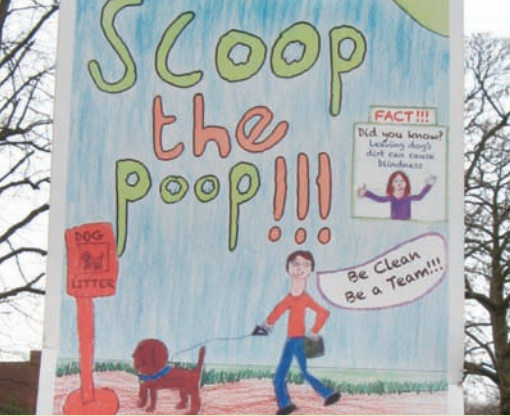
as an ex mining village, it has retained its connections with the coal industry more than any other community in Scotland, with the National Mining Museum, and the Border Railway to show for it, and it also has a public park second to none.

Welfare Park is amazing and well maintained.

Our library - great resource, great variety of books and helpful staff

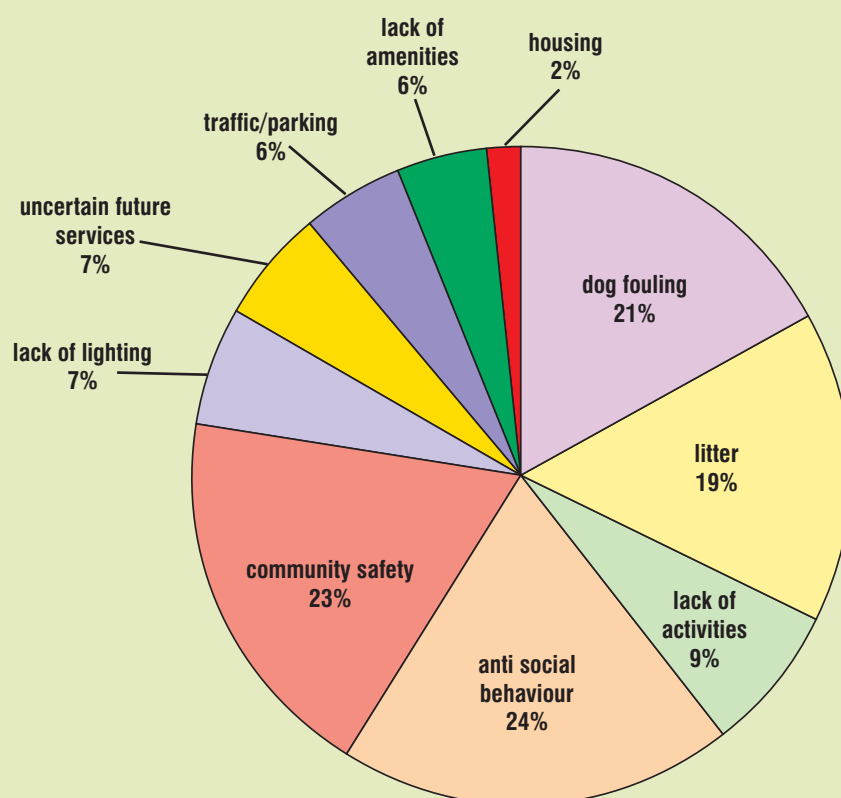
Houses have decent size gardens





From our community survey:

NEWTONGRANGE DISLIKES



WHAT PEOPLE SAID

Not enough dog poo bins in the park and in the village. Fly tipping of household goods in public places, even when the council has an uplift service.

The park at night, walking through it in the dark is not pleasant, I no longer use that route home.

There are more houses than facilities for the people who live in them - that infrastructure needs to be addressed.

I have windows smashed for no reason - that is quite scary.

Lack of activities for young people.

Dog poo and litter in streets and parks.

Main Street shops - some look run down, not a good image for the village especially others that make such an effort to make them look good.

Not many places to shop – clothes, no bank.

Cannot get an appointment with a doctor for love nor money.



The Voice of Youth in Newtongrange

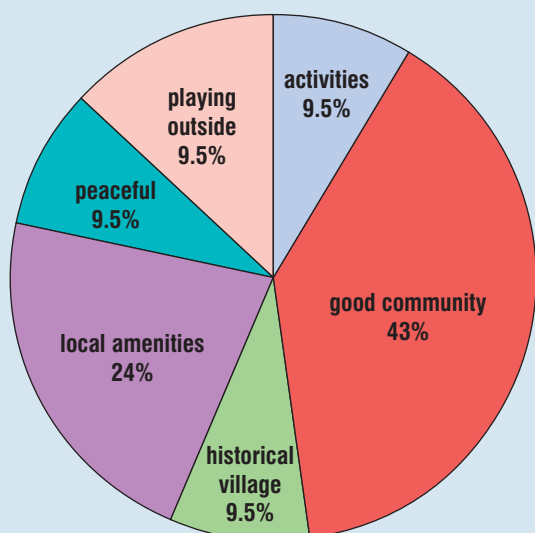
Engaging with the Pupil Voice group in Newtongrange Primary highlighted what some of the positives and negatives of living in Newtongrange are for young people. 21 pupils ranging from P3 to P7 took part in the Coalfields Community Futures by completing a youth survey about what they liked and what they didn't like about living in their village. Many thanks go to all the pupils who participated and here is what they said.

The Pupil Voice survey highlighted four activities that young people enjoyed in equal measure, these include:

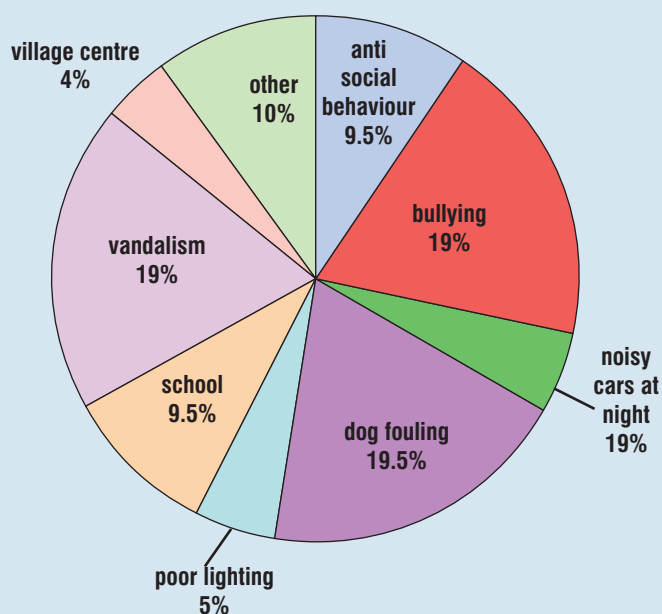
- Computer gaming
- Reading, watching TV and other indoor activities
- Outdoor play
- Playing with friends

The majority of these young respondents are members of a club (81%).

Things I like most about living here



Things I dislike about living here



Things I would like to see in the future

Everyone having a happy life
No dog poo!
Zebra crossings at the school
More things at the park
No bullying
Less litter and vandalism

I would like to see the potholes filled in
Stop destroying stuff
All of the spray paint in the park is gone
More clubs
More houses and shops
A new Scout Hall



Our main strategies and priorities that the community will work towards achieving in partnership with public agencies and other supporters

THEME 1: Public Services

Public services rank high on the priority list for the people of Newtongrange. Issues including improved access to health services, better lighting and speed calming measures are all issues carried forward from the last neighbourhood plan in 2012. A cleaner environment, better roads, paths and parking as well as more visible policing have also been raised as issues in this most recent survey.

Partnership working and working together people and resources are an essential part of moving forward with each of these priorities.

PRIORITIES	ACTIONS
Better access to health services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a proposal for a new GP surgery and it is important that any new provision has adequate staffing to cover the growing demands of an increasing population. Explore opportunities for an enhanced medical service at the pharmacy.
Increase visible policing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to work with Police Scotland to increase visible local community policing.
Better lighting in the village	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with Midlothian Council on identifying priority areas needing an improved quality of lighting.
Improve the bus service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to lobby for improved bus services.
Speed calming measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Due to the new railway some of this issue has been addressed with the installation of traffic lights at the junction at the end of the Main Street. Liaise with Midlothian Council regarding putting additional measures in place including good use of speed signage.
Improve car parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carry out a mapping exercise to identify potential parking areas. Work with Midlothian Council and other agencies to take this forward.
Potential partners	Midlothian Community Planning Working Group, Midlothian Council, Police Scotland, local community, Community Futures Action Group, NHS Lothian, Transport For Edinburgh, Newtongrange Community Council.



THEME 2: Community Facilities and Activities

Building social capital is a key aspect of creating strong, resilient communities. Good quality community facilities that are fit for purpose with regular opportunities for communities to meet and share in activities and conversation, this is the glue that binds communities together. This theme has emerged from the community survey and it is essential that the community can work with other stakeholders, support organisations and agencies to realise these outcomes over the term of the action plan.

PRIORITIES	ACTIONS
More activities for young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote use of Midlothian Council web link to local directory of existing activities. http://www.midlothian.gov.uk/downloads/download/300/community_directories Carry out further engagement with young people to find out what type of activities they would like to see happen. Work with partners to create activities to meet these needs.
Support the gala day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support and develop the tradition of the annual Newtongrange Gala Day.
A new community hall to host activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a co ordinated approach to identifying the need for and the use of community facilities. Promotional campaign using newsletter, social media, noticeboards to encourage more use of local facilities. Work in partnership with Midlothian Council and other local organisations to explore the opening of facilities at weekends in order to host community activities. Carry out further community engagement specifically around the type of community hall that is needed and where it could be situated.
Create a Youth Cafe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carry out a feasibility study to identify the level of interest and possible venue for a Youth Café. Work with appropriate partners to take this forward.
More activities for families and older people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the needs of families and older people through appropriate engagement and work with partners to create activities / events to meet these needs.
Potential partners	Midlothian Council, local community groups, Community Futures Action Group, Newtongrange Community Council, Newtongrange Gala.



THEME 3: Environment

The environment in which we live can be a reflection of the people who live in that area. For many local people, there is a desire to get involved, and make action, in order to improve the environment for the benefit of themselves and others. In this way they will be encouraging others to take responsibility for the environment where they live. Some issues highlighted in the previous plan are still “work in progress” including dog fouling, lighting and play equipment in the park, as well as the idea of setting up a community garden.

PRIORITIES	ACTIONS
Deal with the dog fouling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will work together with Midlothian Council, other agencies and members of the community to address the issue of dog fouling. Map where the dog litter bins are and identify any need for more bins. Raise awareness that ordinary bins can be used. Dog litter bags are available free from the Library, encourage dog owners to use this facility and take responsibility for their dog. The survey suggests the park is the area that needs most attention.
Action on litter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with Midlothian Council to make sure there is an effective response time to litter and dumping. Organise regular litter picks on an area by area basis involving local volunteers. Run a litter awareness campaign.
Better lighting in the park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carry out further community engagement and work with Midlothian Council on this. There is an Astro turf pitch but this is not lit all the time. Look at options to improve on this. Carry out an options appraisal to look at what alternative lighting solutions exist as well as their associated costs.
More play equipment in the park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss options with Midlothian Council and other agencies on this. Visit other communities who have been successful with funding play parks through setting up voluntary groups.
Set up a community garden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carry out further community engagement on this to identify level of support. In addition to the existing plot located at Newbattle Community Learning Centre, work with Midlothian Council and other local organisations to identify suitable land for setting up a community garden. Contact support organisations who support this type of initiative eg Trellis or the Federation of City Farms and Gardens.
Floral enhancements to brighten village	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Newtongrange already has floral displays and we will work to encourage the continuation of using floral displays as a way of making the village more attractive.
Potential partners	Midlothian Council, local community groups, Community Futures Action Group, Newtongrange Community Council, local community.



THEME 4: Village Centre

Access to local shops that can provide a positive shopping experience is an important aspect of community life. Well maintained streets and path networks are also very important, with adequate lighting and accessibility. Business development featured in the previous plan and current feedback highlights being aware of our Carbon Footprint. Also raised was the importance of partnership working and the temporary use of empty spaces for the benefit of the community. The village centre is well served with local amenities and has been said to be the most liked thing about living in Newtongrange. Any future development plans should ensure that genuine and considered community engagement is carried out so that local people are fully involved in any future design process.

PRIORITIES	ACTIONS
Further development of village centre as the heart of the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set up an action group to help co ordinate further community involvement in plans for the further development of the village centre. Build positive partnerships with all stakeholders involved in developing future plans for the village.
Improve the vennels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Vennels are a unique asset to the village but maintenance and improvements can be problematic due to their mixed ownership. They need to be dealt with on an individual, case by case basis. One solution won't fit all.
Improve our shopping experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with local traders to see how they can work together to improve the shopping experience for local people. Promote the benefits of supporting local retailers and businesses.
Business development of Main Street area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify what older people would like to do through local community engagement and work with voluntary groups and Midlothian Council Communities team and Lifelong Learning and Employability team to create and develop activities to meet their needs. Visit other areas who have set up Main Street initiatives such as Community Markets, Pop up Café's, Fruit and Veg Barras etc. Use the learning to try out new initiatives locally.
Improve links with Mining Museum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate opportunities for making stronger links between the local community of Newtongrange and the National Mining Museum.
Potential partners	Local Community, local retailers and businesses, Midlothian Council, Community Futures Action Group. Other Community Futures communities, Newtongrange Community Council, National Mining Museum, Midlothian Community Planning Working Group.



Early actions funded through Participatory Budget

APPLICANT	NAME OF PROJECT
21st Midlothian (Newtongrange) Scout Group	Exterior Painting of Scout Hall
Newtongrange Silver Band Youth Initiative	Newtongrange Silver Junior Band Development Plan 2017
Newtongrange Silver Band Senior Section	New Equipment
Newtongrange Primary School Parent Council	Educational Art Sessions
Newcastle Community Education Centre	#smileforshellie Initiative
Newcastle Community Education Centre	First Aid Training for the Community
Newcastle Community Nursery	Sensory and Technology Initiative
No 1739 (2nd Midlothian) Squadron Air Training Corps	Camping Equipment for outdoor expedition training
Newtongrange Community Council	Public Access Defibrillators
Newtongrange Children's Gala Day	Newtongrange Community Radio Hire

MAKING THE LINKS TO THE MIDLOTHIAN COMMUNITY PLAN

Midlothian's Community Plan 2011-2020 sets out three high level outcomes, each with a number of long term outcomes towards which the partnership groups will work alongside other key groups. Midlothian Community Planning Partners have signed up to these shared outcomes. Lead partnership groups will work together with the people and communities of Midlothian to deliver these objectives, with each partner providing a unique and valued contribution.

Our Newtongrange Community Action Plan aims to support in the delivery of these objectives.

Midlothian Community Plan High Level Outcomes	Newtongrange Community Action Plan Themes
1. Reducing Inequalities	1. Public Services
2. Increasing Employment	2. Community Facilities and Activities
3. Tackling Climate Change	3. Environment
	4. Village Centre



MAKING IT HAPPEN

This Community Action Plan sets out the priorities for the development of Newtongrange over the next 5 years as identified by the community through an extensive process of community engagement carried out over a period of 6 months, June to November 2016.

The Plan contains

- A summary of the Newtongrange Community Profile
- Our main Likes and Dislikes expressed in the community survey
- Our Vision Statement for Newtongrange
- The main themes and priorities for taking action
- The Participatory Budget projects that are helping kick start the Newtongrange Community Action Plan
- Making the links between our Community Action Plan outcomes and Midlothian outcomes for the Community Planning Partnership.

Information on how to get involved or just be kept informed.

The Newtongrange Community Action Plan is not just for the few but for everyone, we hope you will read it, consider its content and help toward making it work by taking action where you are, in whatever way you can. If everyone did something positive for their community every day, then what a difference that would make!

Many thanks go to all those who took their time to share their views, to the volunteers and participants who made the Community Open Day event a great success. Thanks go to members of the community who contributed the images in this community action plan.

The Participatory Budget from Coalfields Regeneration Trust is £25,000. This is funding which has been used to help take forward local projects which support the key themes found in the community action plan.

To find out more information about the community action plan or to volunteer with any projects please contact: newtongrangecommunityfutures@gmail.com

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