

Urban Hub Year 1 Policy Recommendations

Our work so far has identified the following nine priorities for policy change, further research and funding.

These are initial priorities, provided to shape policy and build consensus on how we can grasp the potential of community ownership across the Clyde Valley.

<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Expected Impact</i>
1. Build interest into buy outs	
<p>The strong interest in urban community ownership needs strategic and consistent support to translate into purchases of land and buildings.</p> <p>This starts with providing direct support and funding to groups as they build capacity and develop the plans for their land projects. However, more than this is needed-- communities consistently meet barriers put up by others. Political and policy support is needed which embraces the potential of urban community land ownership.</p>	<p>Community groups easily find high quality support for their land projects.</p> <p>This allows them to develop community owned land and buildings across the Clyde Valley, all of which create employment, better environmental, cultural and health outcomes, and build wealth in their local areas.</p> <p>Community land owners are a significant players in regeneration across the Clyde Valley, working collaboratively with public and private sectors to deliver change.</p>
2. Not another pilot: next steps in community-led resolution of Vacant and Derelict Land	
<p>There have been a number of high-profile Vacant and Derelict Land (VDL) projects in recent years, including the Scottish Land Commission's Task Force. Now is the time for strategic thinking on next steps, and this needs to include a particular focus on community experiences.</p> <p>The recommendations of the VDL Task Force should be implemented urgently, including particularly the reform of the VDL register and a need to provide accurate and transparent data on site ownership and use.</p>	<p>There is a clear path forward for next steps on VDL for all stakeholders. Community groups are meaningfully involved, and reflected in, the VDL policy agenda. There is support which allows communities to develop their short and long term plans for VDL and build wealth.</p>

<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Expected Impact</i>
3. Innovative support for greenspace projects	
<p>There is substantial interest in greenspace projects of all kinds, illustrating the need for local urban greenspaces and appetite for community-led approaches to climate change projects. Ways to support this interest need to be prioritised. Developing revenue funding options for community owned urban greenspace could make a significant difference.</p>	<p>Community owned and managed greenspaces across the Clyde Valley significantly address inequalities in access to quality green space, including food growing spaces. Working collectively with public and private sectors, these sites are well maintained for the common good.</p>
4. Establish clearer ownership routes from temporary management	
<p>We appreciate that leases and management agreements offer the ability for community groups to build capacity and trial approaches. However, community groups can suffer from lack of control about leasing and other temporary arrangements, and there can be difficulties delivering long term projects due to the nature of temporary agreements.</p> <p>Additional research on community experiences of temporary asset management and implications for land reform priorities, would be timely and beneficial. Generally, there is a need to create a clearer path from lease to ownership, for those groups who want to proceed to ownership.</p>	<p>There are clear steps from short term community projects to long term and owned projects. This provides a straight forward process for communities to build capacity. It allows communities meaningful control over land, addressing land ownership inequalities.</p>
5. Establish a coherent policy framework for proactive communities over land	
<p>Scottish communities benefit from a range of policy and legislative tools to implement their vision over land in the public interest, such as Community Rights to Buy, and Local Place Plans. These tools are complex from community perspectives, and would benefit from being rationalised into a coherent framework.</p>	<p>Everyone understands and benefits from a series of "stepping stone" policy supports for communities to influence land use and ownership. These start with relatively simple things for communities to use initially, and progress to strong powers such as Community Rights to Buy.</p>

<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Expected Impact</i>
6. Develop the land pillar of Community Wealth Building	
<p>The Scottish Government has adopted Community Wealth Building policy. Scotland's land reform process and community ownership model is an excellent foundation to build community wealth. However, more is needed to centre land in the Community Wealth Building approaches to economic development. Pilot projects to scale up socially productive uses of land, particularly privately owned land, would be a good next step.</p>	<p>Community Wealth Pilots establish models for socially productive use of land which benefit all.</p> <p>These are then applied successfully across Scotland.</p>
7. Inclusion review	
<p>Given the levels of interest in community ownership in locations with less resources, the inclusivity implications of current community land supports need to be reviewed, such as requirements for match funding and limitations on revenue funding by the Scottish Land Fund. Existing experiences of buy outs in resource-deprived areas should be researched to understand how community ownership support could be more inclusive.</p> <p>Due to the level of challenge we have evidenced from groups which focus on inclusion and diversity (e.g. immigration-focused), research should be prioritised on experiences of those already significantly disadvantaged in terms of place, such as due to the practicalities of immigration or suffering from long term and systematic exclusion from land assets.</p>	<p>We have high quality research on how successful currently support for Community Land ownership have been to include everyone, and we learn from this to make community land more inclusive.</p> <p>We have better understanding of the experiences of those significantly disadvantaged in terms of place, such as due to systematic exclusion from land assets. This allows us to make the changes needed to create a socially just land ownership and use in Scotland.</p>
8. Review Land Fund Cap	
<p>The £1 million limit on Scottish Land Fund awards should be reviewed, and the Land Commission's forthcoming research on community ownership funding approaches will need to be acted on to support urban community land acquisitions at current market prices.</p>	<p>Funding options which reflect current markets across Scotland will better support inclusive growth of community land ownership.</p>

<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Expected Impact</i>
9. Introduce Land Reform Act	
<p>A new land reform act is urgently needed to address challenges in urban community ownership, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved, integrated and accessible land information. • Review and amendment of Community Rights to Buy and the Community Asset Transfer Scheme to ensure they are fit for purpose. • A public interest test on land transactions and uses which harm communities due to their size, scale (such as due to local monopolies), and duration, such as long term vacant and derelict land. 	<p>Land reform is a process not an event. To this end, the forthcoming Land Reform Act seizes the learning from urban areas. Priority urban challenges, such as accessible land ownership and use information, and a public interest test on long term vacant and derelict land, are addressed.</p>