



Creating a Local Place Plan: **By Communities For Communities**

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By Communities* For Communities

Communities have a new right to produce their own land use plans called 'Local Place Plans'. **Kinning Park Complex** (Because We Say So!) and **Wester Hailes Community Trust** completed some of the first Local Place Plans in 2022.

While there are guides on preparing a local place plan, the community perspective has been absent. Kinning Park Complex and Wester Hailes Community Trust shared their experience at an **event in May 2023**, and these Top Tips have been written to share learning from the event.

Community Land Scotland has published this as part of our work in sharing community-led approaches. These Top Tips provide key things for communities to consider; detailed approaches are in the government guidance.



Starting Out

A Local Place Plan is an expression of a community's aspirations and solutions which can influence the local land use planning policy.

It sets out priorities for future development in an area, as well as helping communities to develop and deliver their own projects.

[The Our Place website](#)

Read the official guidance

There are many guides to Local Place Plans (LPPs) produced by professionals - a good starting place is [Local Place Plans | Our Place](#), which contains the Scottish Government guidance.

Details on what needs to be provided are in [Planning Circular 1/2022](#), which summarises the legislation.



What Do You Need?

One of the first considerations would be whether the issues you expect to be identified by your community can be addressed through spatial planning policy through a Local Place Plan (LPP), or if another approach would be more appropriate.

- * **LPPs can change land use planning policy.** Once validated, they are a material consideration in the determination of planning applications by the local authority. They can also be included in the Local Development Plan, which guides all development in the local authority area – but note the timescales for Local Development Plans are every 10 years, so you need to time things correctly.

If you want to create a policy for how land should be used in your local area, the Local Place Plan can do that.



- * Perhaps you want a **community action plan**, identifying community priorities, but there is not a need to create land use policy.



- * If you're interested in a specific site or two, perhaps you want a **community land purchase**.

- * **Do you want to do a wide ranging community plan, or focus it on a smaller area, a topic, or a theme?**

Local Place Plans are designed to be flexible.



- * If you want to get involved in a particular policy area, like greenspace, **you may not need a LPP**, you may be able to influence council policy directly.

- * **Build your network and ask questions.** Speak to people about your potential LPP- those who have done them, other community groups in your area, your local planning authority, anyone who you think may be interested.

There are specific organisations who can help with planning questions: **Planning Aid Scotland** provides guidance on this as well as **Planning Democracy**.



Who?

Developing a Local Place Plan should involve community members from the outset.

// In Kinning Park, historically engagement with any kind of consultation has been low to none existent. Through consistent and deliberative community development and engagement, 'buy in' and enthusiasm within the localities began to increase as our methodology focussed on place-based interventions that allowed for a reimagining of that space from the perspective of community aspirations. //



For example, Kinning Park had walkabouts which any resident could join in, to talk through areas of interest to them in the area. They also held community meetings, as well as project-based actions like a community garden, and brought in expertise on key topics like active travel and green space. They even held a community music festival to bring people together!

The approach to engagement was similar in Wester Hailes. Historically, Wester Hailes residents had either been not engaged with at all, or engaged with for projects that eventually fell flat, resulting in engagement fatigue and a lack of trust in the planning process. To avoid these same outcomes, consultants employed by the trust - 'UrbanPioneers' and 'Dress for the Weather' worked closely with the Trust - to ensure that engagement was reciprocal and built off of the community led ethos of the Trust and its membership.



In addition to this, UrbanPioneers established a steering group with local stakeholders, and Dress for the Weather constructed a cart with a wooden model of Western Hailes which UrbanPioneers toured through the different neighbourhoods, using it as an interactive tool to engage with residents while asking what improvements they'd like to see.

UrbanPioneers conducted surveys, delivered interactive community design workshops, held project and improvement sessions with high school pupils and local residents, attended events by local organisations, and led a month-long exhibition with interactive sessions on the final proposals. Lastly, residents that partook in these engagement sessions were encouraged to keep in touch with the Trust. As a result, the Trust's membership has increased drastically and community members continue to lead the implementation process today.

You can build and nurture relationships on a reciprocal basis, with the understanding that the LPP can inform the direction of travel for both your own, and their own, outputs.

A Local Place Plan needs to be completed by a **Community Body** (which is defined in the Local Place Plan regulations, and explained in **Circular 1/2022**). This Community Body will need to do consultation with the local communities, which includes many different groups– residents, other community organisations, as well as public bodies like community councils, local councillors, elected representatives, and community planning partnerships.



Compared to other planning frameworks, LPPs are one of the most sustainable ways to plan - they ensure that the community's desires are put first and foremost and therefore that the plans implemented are what people really want, need, and will use.

Wester Hailes Community Trust

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For too long marginalised and disenfranchised communities are termed apathetic. In our engagement strategy we planned for as broad a consensus as possible by building trust.

Kinning Park Complex

Where?

What area are you going to cover in your plan? How does this relate to your goals? For example, those living in the area covered by the Kinning Park Complex 'LPP' boundaries could feel overlooked, bookended by the neighbourhoods the Gorbals and Govan which have received extensive regeneration.

How long?

It can take quite some time to publish a Local Place Plan, and after publication it needs to be validated by the local authority planning department, before it can go through the process of being adopted into the local development plan.

The fastest local place plans so far have taken ~1 year to publish, and the Kinning Park and Wester Hailes pilot plans took much longer than that over the Covid19 lockdown years. And that is just the time to publish – validation by the local authority, and adoption into the local development plan, will take even longer. It can be useful to think about your timescales – and how you're going to keep the momentum up.

Delivering some 'easy win' projects can be useful. Kinning Park Complex held fun days, planted a community garden, and commissioned a mural, among other projects they had going while doing the Local Place Plan. This helped keep the community engaged, while they worked on the longer term process of creating policy and delivering bigger projects.



The process of writing a plan can be empowering for community members, activists and stakeholders; from experience, the timescales of validation had the opposite effect.

Kinning Park Complex



Resources

How will you resource the LPP? There is very little funding for LPPs.

What expertise do you have as a community / individuals undertaking the LPP? Which expertise is missing and where would it be useful to bring consultants/ specialist support in?

Who could you collaborate with? If you do it yourself it is a lot of work, but you will be totally in control. You can get consultants / specialist support to work for you, but then you will need to manage (and pay!) the consultants.

Making the Plan

Using Policy

There are requirements about how you take other policy into account (see [Circular 1/2022](#)). For example, you will need to explain in your plan how you've taken existing policy, like the National Planning Policy Framework and the Local Development Plan, into account.

If you are going to recommend that the Local Development Plan be changed, you will need to provide reasons for this.

Start out by exploring current local development plan guidance relevant to where you're thinking of developing LPP policy.

You may want to form a steering group of interested residents, potentially into thematic groups; for example vacant and derelict land transformation, green space, biodiversity, or active travel. Will you need specialist support? Are you planning on recommending that policy is changed?

Because We Say So! Researched current plans and spatial strategies to consider how the generative themes from community engagement on 'Active Travel' would align with current spatial planning. A number of local level policies indicated that 'active travel' aligned with their aims and objectives.

Moreover, without the leverage of local level policy discourse Because We Say So! and local activists might have been reluctant to follow this intervention.

Kinning Park Complex



Engaging with Others

How are you going to ensure wide ranging community perspectives are included? What methods are you going to use? Do you want to use some artistic approaches? Are you reaching everyone; perhaps you need to expand your methods to involve some people who are being missed out?

Local Place Plans are new to everyone - new to community bodies, community councils, planning officers, councillors, and to private developers. There is more success to be had from collaborating with others, sharing ideas and resources.

Identify and get local stakeholders, community groups, etc on board to get their insights. You may be able to use their connections with local residents but also develop working relationships and identify potential delivery partners.

Kinning Park Complex found that sharing with a nearby local area partnership, even outside their boundary, was valuable. Wester Hailes Community Trust found that an ongoing dialogue with the council planning officer for local place plans was very useful.

It's best to engage where people are already gathering, rather than a separate, new place like a community hall. Kinning Park Complex scheduled walkabouts with people, and held events. WHCT had an engagement cart, attended events by local community groups and met regularly with their board members and steering group.



* When you engage with the wider community lots of ideas and projects are likely to be suggested (even if you try to focus your plan!). How are you going to respond to projects which are suggested? It may seem like a question for the future, or for others, but it is best to capture community insight as it is given and channel it in the right direction.



* Include some "quick wins". LPPs can take years to make, and years to be adopted by local councils as official planning policy.

* LPPs are an incentive to consolidate all of a community's projects in one place. This is not only practical, but creates common goals to work towards which, in turn, brings the community together and helps solidify your collective values.



If possible, engage with local authority from the beginning to be aware what their plans are for the LPP area, take them along the journey with you and identify already some potential collaboration on the delivery of the LPP.

Gathering Evidence

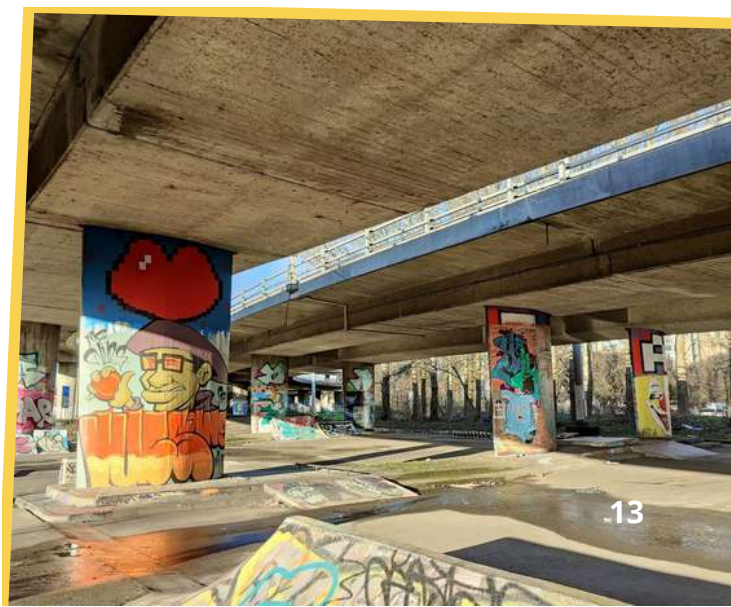
There are many ways to gather evidence. Both Kinning Park Complex and Wester Hailes Community Trust did a lot of walks, and engagement in public places, to bring in different perspectives. You will need to explain all your evidence in the format required by the regulations, so review the requirements and keep good records.

The Kinning Park Complex Because We Say So! Team, in collaboration with 'Planning Aid Scotland', ran workshops in the community, utilising the place standard tool to gather a community-led evidence base that supported "Active Travel". Once we had co-researched with community members, Planning Aid Scotland collated these findings into a report. This report then informed the Local Place Plan.



? **Communities aren't used to making planning policy, and council policy officers also aren't used to communities making planning policy either. It's a big change with huge potential. It brings up important questions like: Who are experts? How is expertise created and who benefits from that?** ?

? **If a community group conducts detailed community engagement relying on volunteers for their LPP, is it appropriate for a private consultant to incorporate their work without credit?** ?



Publication

The Local Place Plan will need to be written up and published. It can be a short, clear, visual document, but it needs to contain all the things in the regulations, including identify the Community Body, and contain a map of the area and land use proposals.

When you are ready to publish, there are a number of steps you need to go through to comply with the legal requirements so that the plan is validated. For example, the proposed plan needs to be sent to each elected councillor and the community council for comment.

All the steps and information required is in [Planning Circular 1/2022](#)



Validation and Adoption into the Local Development Plan

When you've written and consulted on the plan, it can be submitted to the Local Planning Authority. In Wester Hailes, the community found speaking to the local planning officer very useful before and during the submission process. If you've complied with all the legal requirements, the planning authority must accept it and register it. Each planning authority is supposed to publish a register of local place plans. An example of this is at the [Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park website](#).

To get your plan validated you'll need to provide all the things listed in the Regulations. Local Authorities may have a checklist, which they will use to confirm all the required information has been provided.

If they determine that the plan is not valid, they are required to tell you, and give reasons why.

Once validated, the policy may be included in the new Local Development Plan, when that is updated. Given these uncertainties, and that this is a new process, it will be useful to work closely with the council planning officer. If your Local Place Plan is included, in whole or parts, in the Local Development Plan, that will guide decisions on land use development.



Implementing projects identified

There is no specific funding for implementing any projects which come from LPPs, although a range of funding sources exist for community projects. If you want to create change quickly, you need to think of implementation from early stages. Prioritising projects may help.

You may also want to focus on the narrow goal of LPPs – creating land use policy (e.g. what should go where!) instead of identifying projects and delivering them in the same timeframe.

Alternatively, you may decide that the projects coming out of the LPP are too exciting to wait or for others to do, and you might move on with implementation before the policy is officially adopted.



Redefining Success

If validation and adoption by the local authority takes a long time, and are not guaranteed, there is a risk of wasted effort and frustration by communities. How can we redefine success for communities writing Local Place Plans to better embed empowerment? You may want to think of success more widely. Community successes from the Local Place Plan process can include a range of things, like the Kinning Park Complex examples below:

1 Quick Wins

Like seasonal gardening, or bringing together neighbors to discuss challenges on their street.



2 Informal spin-off projects

For example, in Kinning Park the team collaborated with a DIY skate park.



3 Supporting formal spin off projects

For example, the Kinning Park team supported a group of residents at Clifford Lane to form a community group to address waste dumping on their back lane. The group has now set up formally, and secured funding to upgrade their lane.



4 Surprise discoveries

KPC held a 'pond dipping' event at Festival Park with the Glasgow Science Centre. To everyone's surprise, they discovered protected Newts. The site is now officially a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation, and a biodiversity corridor in the neighbourhood is now being planned.



Redefining Success

5 Building experience

Building community experience of conducting a big project like a LPP is valuable in itself!



6 Influencing policy before Development Plan adoption

Having parts of your plan included in emerging council policy, like the nature conservation designation at Festival Park.



7 Accepted!

Having your plan officially accepted by the council.



8 Local Place Plan

Having parts, or all, of your plan, incorporated into the Council's Local Development Plan.



THE FIVE PILLARS OF LOCAL PLACE PLANNING IN WESTER HAILES, EDINBURGH



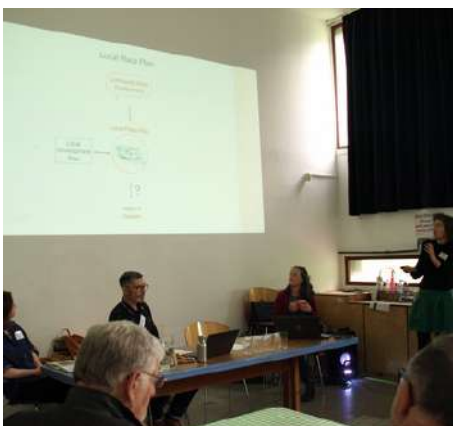
The five pillars of local place planning in Wester Hailes, Edinburgh



Kinning Park Complex, Local Place Plan, 2022

Local Place Plan events May 2023

Kinning Park Complex & Wester Hailes Community Trust





Credit photos May events 2023: Michael Bowdidge
Project photos: [Kinning Park Complex](#) and [Wester Hailes Community Trust](#)
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