



South Islay Development Community Action Plan 2019-2024

South Islay's

Community Action Plan 2019-2024

This community action plan is a working document to aid the South Islay community to achieve its aspirations for its geographical area and to make Port Ellen and surrounds a better place to work, live and play for now and all generations to come.

Within this plan we:

- Outline the priorities and aspirations as identified by the community of South Islay.
- Explain how we engaged with the community to develop this plan.
- Provide an indication of expected timelines and suggest those who we hope to work with to achieve our goals.

Together as a community we will continue to work towards achieving our top priorities alongside the support and advice of our partnerships in the near and far community.

Our previous 'Growth Plan' in 2011 and 'Forward Plan' of 2016 enabled the Community and SID to develop and build upon projects in the village over the last 8 years. This includes the pontoons, children's playpark and the new harbour facilities.

South Islay Development has prepared this action plan with the support of the Scottish Community Development Company (SCDC).

The Green, Port Ellen, Isle of Islay



This document outlines South Islay Development's (SID) plan for the next 5 years. It is based on an extensive community consultation exercise carried out during 2018 and early 2019. Through this process the community told us what really mattered. This is our plan to address these issues and realise community aspirations.

South Islay's 2019-2024 Priorities

1. Develop the playing fields and facilities – including the creation of a multi-function community facility and centre.
2. Look at projects to address litter and dog fouling.
3. Develop community-led responses to the maintenance of the beach and the green.
4. Address the lack of facilities for all ages
5. Proactively engage with the bus service on its performance and the location of bus shelters.
6. Proactively engage with the Co-op to improve the grading situation.
7. Work with the Cyber in a mentoring and development role to help build community capacity

Why this plan now?

This plan builds on the SID Forward Plan of 2016. In the intervening years SID has gone from strength to strength. Key highlights in our journey include the development of The Filling Station and Mobile Home Service Point, The Community Garden and working partnership with The Port Ellen Harbour Association to open a new Harbour Office with Facilities for the pontoons. South Islay Development has worked alongside many local organisations which has helped the community of South Islay to Thrive.

On one hand, since 2016, the story is one of continuity: the area served by SID hasn't changed from the point of view of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation¹. South Islay remains mid-ranked in terms of deprivation and some acute challenges remain. Affordable housing and high-quality career opportunities remain challenging and complex community concerns. In addition, the development of community facilities is still a community priority.

¹ <http://simd.scot/2016/#/simd2016/BTTTTT/12/-6.1256/55.6973/>

On the other hand, there are new opportunities: SID taking responsibility for the Playing Fields makes the development of a community facility more achievable and there is an enabling policy environment ushered in by the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015. This *should* make it easier for us to facilitate positive change in South Islay.

In addition, the continued growth of the whisky industry offers opportunities for new developments and relationships. Social housing development is on the rise again in South Islay which will begin address some of our housing issues – but it is only the tip of the iceberg.



Port Ellen Filling Station



Port Ellen Sports Day, Playing Fields

Important challenges remain: grant funding for community-led projects will come under increasing pressure in coming years; there remains ongoing political uncertainty; and our infrastructure is under severe pressure.

In this plan we will describe how SID will meet some of these challenges directly and work with others to address those which are beyond our gift. Well supported community organisations with strong governance structures and a track record of success like South Islay Development are well placed to take advantage of new opportunities – in terms of both funding and developing influence with other organisations.

Community Consultation

Robust and well-designed community consultations are a vital part of what we do for two reasons. Firstly, they give us a strong evidence base from which to develop this plan. Secondly, because we can demonstrate community need, we are better placed to access funding.

SID, with the assistance of SCDC, carried out a substantial community consultation exercise during 2018 and into early 2019. This engagement process offered the opportunity for the whole community to get involved in shaping our community priorities (full reports can be accessed here: <http://www.scdc.org.uk/sid>).

- A community survey was delivered to every house in the area and 278 responses were received (from a population of around 900 – an excellent response). Through the survey the community were able to identify their aspirations, issues, and suggest responses.
- The Local Development Officer visited the local High School, Primary School and Pre-Five Unit to engage the children in a very varied discussion of their environment.
- During the consultation period the survey was available through various media. Hard copies were delivered to every door and left in local shops for completion. An electronic version was created using Survey monkey. Together, these methods ensured we gave all the community every opportunity to participate.
- The collated survey results were fed back to every household shortly after the closing period. The clear infographics made it easy for the community to see a strong thread of priorities and strong sense of appreciation for their area.
- A community consultation event was held on the 27th of October 2018 in the Columba Hall where the community ranked their priorities and suggested projects to address issues. A survey – on the same basis as the consultation – was carried out in November 2018.

The priorities detailed and outlined in this action plan flow directly from this community consultation. The feedback from the 278 responses was of very high quality and gave many constructive comments to their priorities and in many cases a way to possibly address their aspiration for the overall benefit of the community.

Consultation first stage summary

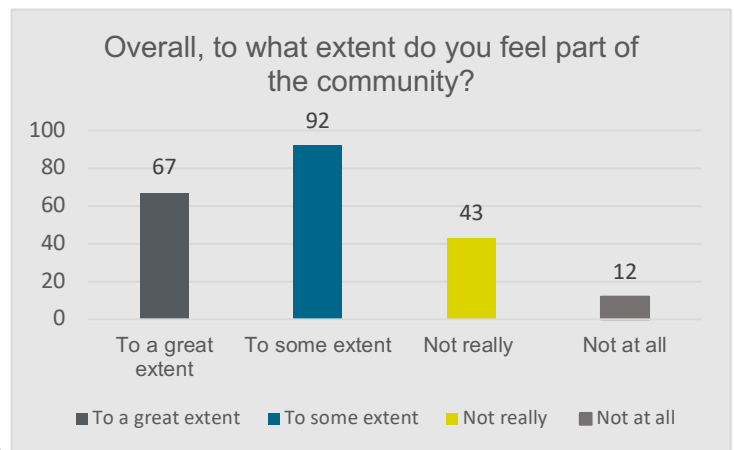
A summary of what the community told us in the first stage of the consultation is as follows:

What we like!

1
135

Agreed what they liked most was the people

“South Islay has always had a really super community spirit”



“Friendly and helpful people”

“I love observing the sea in all its moods, glorious sunsets and occasionally sunrises”

PLACE OF BEAUTY

80
Landscape /scenery

64
Beaches

49
Nature

FACILITIES

22
Cyber

24
Filling
Station/mobile
home service

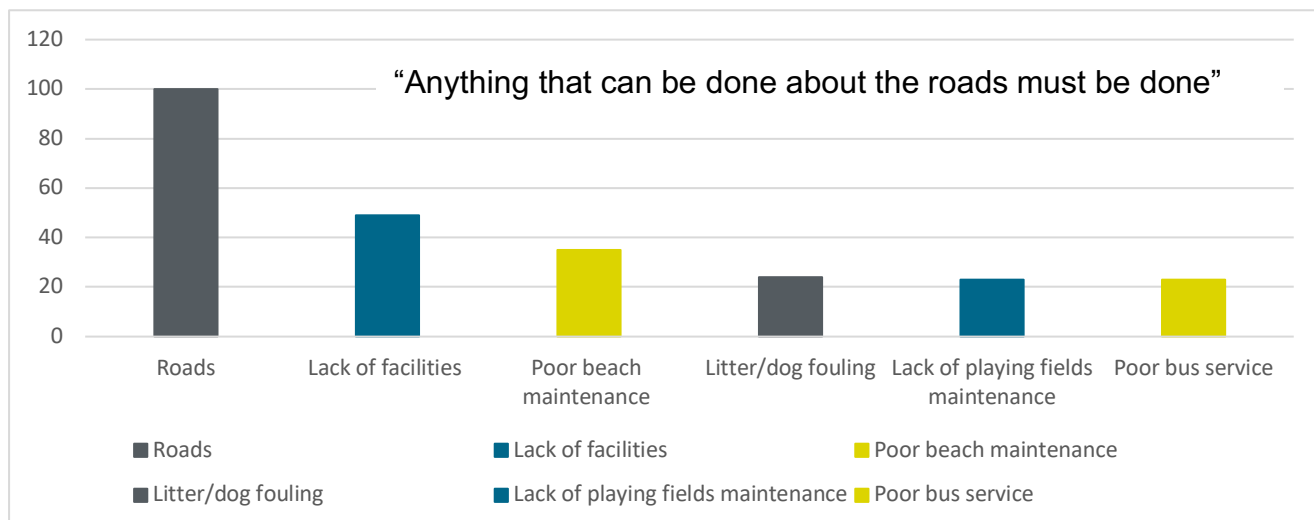
48
Three
Distillery
paths

34
Playing
fields

28
Pontoons

Great community resources such as The Cyber cafe, Distillery Path etc

What we dislike!



Lack of Facilities

“Not a lot to do with the kids unless it involves a long walk or beach. No facilities for adults either holiday makers, locals apart from bowling”

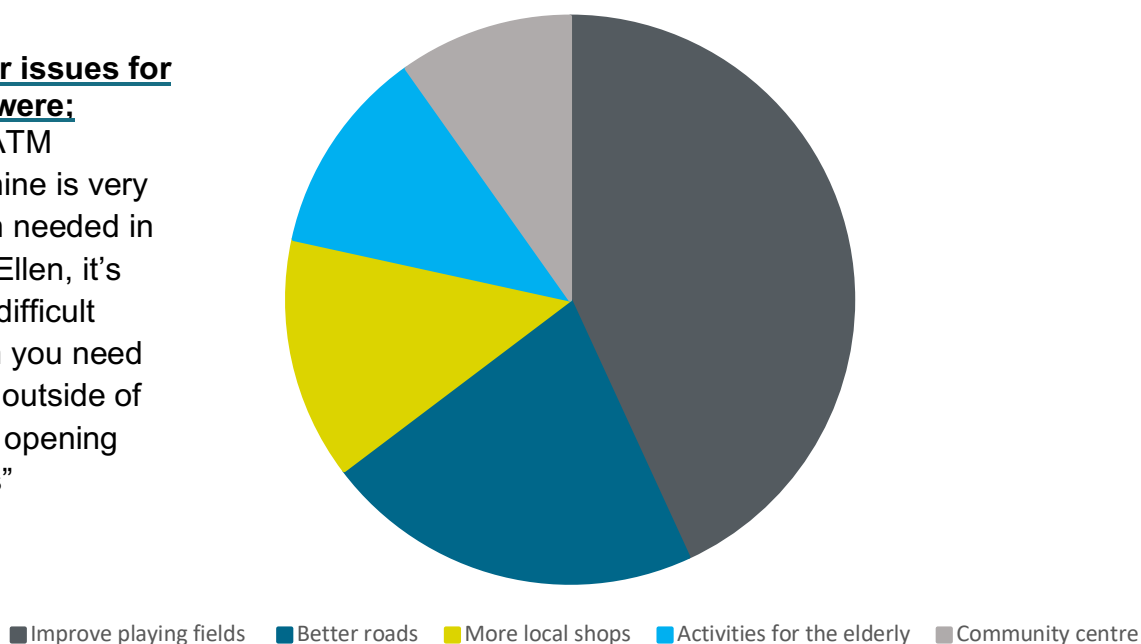
Poor Beach Maintenance

“The mess of the beaches looks good for the rugby and that’s all”

Developments or changes folk would like to see over the coming years in South Islay!

Other issues for folk were:

“An ATM machine is very much needed in Port Ellen, it’s very difficult when you need cash outside of shop opening times”



Lack of Playing Fields Maintenance

“Lack of more modern sporting facility, meeting venue etc for community use”

Litter and Dog Fouling

“Dog fouling on foot path and other places like fields, beaches and housing schemes”

Roads

“Roads are in poor state of repair”

Bus Service

“Lack of frequency in buses and no Sunday service which impacts on independence of both our older residents and those becoming more independent (as well as non-drivers)”

Other great quotes from our residents!

“We should be showcasing South Islay as a great place to visit as part of the Island as a whole. It is only by doing this that people will really see the place for what it is”

“Port Ellen is in a lovely situation and two of our major assets are our two bays. Nothing has a bigger **‘feel good’** factor for residents than to see clean, seaweed and little free, sandy bays. Every effort should be made to maintain these”

“I love my adopted village!!!”

“Make footpaths to and around local beauty and nature spots easier and safer to access. Improve roads and public transport”

South Islay's Community Priorities

Having carefully studied the results from the survey and community consultation exercises SID has identified seven projects which the group believe will have the potential to meet a wide range of the ambitions put forward by the community.

The Community Plan is not just a document for South Islay Development and their individual aspirations and projects. It is a document for the whole community and as such will feature projects which are owned or managed by other community organisations where SID will aim to support or assist however possible to achieve the desired community benefit.

Combining and coordinating the efforts of the various groups, services and organisations in the area will help to form a sustainable, capable and more cohesive task force which can collectively deliver the needs and wants of the South Islay community.

We will develop The Playing Fields and its Facilities – including the creation of a multi-function community facility.

1

SID have embarked on an ambitious project of redeveloping The Playing Fields and associated facilities. In many ways this will be a keystone project for SID: it will allow the development of a range of other priorities such as the creation of community facilities and amenities. The input of the community through the consultation will be essential in shaping the details of this redevelopment. However, it should be noted that this will be a medium to long term project – the first phase will be to develop business cases and plans for the activities. A rough timeline is as follows:

- **Sept-Dec 2017** - SID worked with the Port Ellen Playing Fields Association (PEPFA) to find a solution for the community. At the PEPFA AGM the community voted that the future was with SID;
- **Jan to May 2018** – SID with a working party to organised the season ahead, completing necessary paperwork with PEPF. SID surveyed the community to review their community action plan
- **May to Dec 2018** – SID and the working party volunteered to bring more people into the asset, applying for small funds to have some quick wins.
- **Jan to May 2019** – SID secured funding to start the consultancy and architects plans for the future development of the Playing Fields. Preparing to open for our second season, reflecting on our first.

- **June to Sept 2019** - Extensive options appraisal was carried out to present options for the Ramsay Hall.
- **Sept – Oct 2019** – The SID Board alongside funders considered the options and feasibility of The Ramsay Hall. The decision from the board was to work in partnership with Live Argyll to improve and manage the hall more effectively. SID is currently approaching and applying for funding solutions to take the different phrases forward.

2

We will look at projects to address Litter and Dog Fouling in the community.

Like many communities across Scotland, litter and dog fouling are a persistent nuisance. Over the next five years we will explore practical measures to tackle this issue and improve environmental conditions. We will also look to work with the Council, Primary School, Pre-Five Unit and local groups to develop solutions and initiatives to tackle this problem in community spaces.

3

We will develop community-led responses to the maintenance of the beaches in the South of Islay and The Green in the centre of the village.

The beaches in the South and The Green in the centre of the village were identified as our main community assets for both residents and visitors alike. But there are issues with maintenance cleanliness. We will identify community-led responses to improve the amenity and look of these key community spaces by working together with local organisations.

4

We will address the Lack of Facilities for All Ages.

The redevelopment of The Playing Fields will open-up opportunities to improve the provision of facilities for the whole community. This will be an area where combining and collaborating our efforts with local organisations will best realise the community's aspirations. The Lunch Club has started back up in Port Ellen and is proving a hive of activity for people to meet up for a sociable lunch, mix with new and old friends and occasionally have some live entertainment from local artists, children or groups. Based on our recent consultation we now have a sense of community aspirations in this area and we will consult further on this in due course.

5

We will proactively engage with the bus service on its performance and location of bus shelters in the centre of the village.

We have already started to engage with Argyll and Bute Council and the local bus company on the service and the location of the bus shelters in the village which connect to the local ferry service. The feedback from the community about the Charlotte Street bus shelter was reviewed by the relevant parties and has resulted in new shelter for Charlotte Street. Discussions are beginning regarding the pier bus shelter through the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015. We recognise this is a key community concern and will continue to work with relevant partners to address this issue.

6

We will proactively engage with the Co-op to improve the grading situation.

The community told us that grading (the range and price of products) was an issue in the Port Ellen Co-Op. The community emphasised strongly that the staff work very hard to make the best of a difficult situation. We recognise this is a key community issue and will continue to work with relevant partners to address this issue. We will start to engage with the Co-op to make positive changes in this area.

7

We will work with the Cyber in a mentoring and development role to help develop community capacity.

Community facilities are a vital part of life in Port Ellen. The Cyber has been running for over 20 years, catering for all ages through the changes in technology. The management committee have discussed several options for the future and together with the community look forward to securing a new manager and encouraging new members onto the board. Over the past few years they have worked hard to secure funding to upgrade the building which is now a fresh new community space for everyone to enjoy. Over the coming years, we will work more closely with the Cyber to support this important community asset.

A note about these projects

The most significant activity we plan to undertake is without doubt the development of The Playing Fields. We also anticipate that the successful completion of the project will help us achieve some of the community's other objectives - most obviously the provision of improved community facilities for all. By combining and collaborating with the community and local organisations island wide we will strive to achieve the aspirations of South Islay.

Some of the work is already underway - for example our engagement with Argyll and Bute Council and the local bus company. Some of the works proposed will take longer than anticipated – whilst others may even be rendered unfeasible. And some new issues and challenges may arise unexpectedly. This is, as per the title, a plan – and we know what can happen to even the best laid schemes!

South Islay Development will be continuously reviewing the community's priorities and will report against these themes annually over the next 5 years.



Islay & Jura Community Pipers - Port Ellen Sports, Playing Fields

Community Priorities we can work together on

Through the consultation process, the community identified a range of other issues, ideas and priorities. Not all of these are the sole responsibility of SID, but where we can we will engage with other organisations to make a positive case for community-led change. Here are many of these priorities below:

1. Condition of the Roads

Many raised concerns about the condition of the roads on Islay. We will highlight this issue with Argyll and Bute Council, Islay Community Council and through other forums as a community priority. Working closely with your local councillors, we hope to help rectify this situation over the next 5 years.

2. Lack of ATM

During our initial feedback sessions and priorities workshop, it was brought to our attention that the local shops, The Blue Letterbox and Iain Laurie's Spar Shop have already got services and/or are amid improving their service. We will continue to keep you up-dated on these services and the shops will be advertising their service locally in their shop windows for locals and tourists alike.

3. Careers and Job Opportunities for Young People

Whilst unemployment is low, there is a need for high quality jobs and training especially for younger people. We will support the creation of careers and job opportunities for people where we can – for example through any employment opportunities we create through our projects. We will seek to influence others to do the same – for example by encouraging apprenticeships to be included in any local developments in the future. SID is working closely with local Colleges to provide opportunities for internships throughout the year in our projects. We are always actively seeking volunteers for our projects, offering free training when possible to encourage community involvement.

4. Housing

The lack of affordable and suitable accommodation was identified as a community concern. We are not looking to become a housing provider– but we will seek to provide evidence and influence others where we can. Working with local partnerships and Housing Associations in the community we will feedback your aspirations and use this to improve the social housing situation over the next 5 years.

5. Ferry Service and Pier

The ferry service and the pier area were a cause for concern for many who completed the questionnaires. We will advocate for improvements to the ferry service and the pier, and we are supportive of the Islay Ferry Group. Working closely with these groups will be key to achieving your aspirations. We will endeavour to keep you up to date and gather your feedback throughout the years ahead.

6. Affordable Places to Eat and More Shops

We will support efforts to increase the number of affordable places to eat and more shops in Port Ellen. The community's aspirations for the playing fields include the upgrade of a café facility which would aim to offer affordable food at the centre of a community hub. South Islay Development will seek to influence others to do the same to enable people locally and visiting to have more places to eat.



The Lochiel Memorial Garden, Port Ellen, Isle of Islay

Our Action Plan 2019-2024

Priority	What projects will we undertake	Key stakeholders we anticipate working with	Milestones	The difference this will make to our community	Timescale for full delivery
Playing Fields	We plan to redevelop The Playing Fields and facilities available – this will be subject to further consultation.	Highlands and Islands Enterprise; North Highland Initiative; Local Distilleries, Live Argyll; Argyll and Bute Third Sector Interface; Argyll and Bute Council local businesses and trusts	Business plan and feasibility study; Architect engaged; Funding secured for phase 1	Health and wellbeing improved Greater opportunities in our community Increased employment and sustainable economic development	3-5 years
Dog Fouling and Litter	Involve local authority Dog Warden and encourage greater presence; more signage and dog waste bins; explore practical measures that have been successful elsewhere.	Argyll and Bute Council; Islay Development Initiative; Community Council; Local Primary School and Pre-Five Unit	A plan for action; measurable improvements	Improved environment for the community	1-2 years

Local Beaches Maintenance and The Green	Explore community-led ways of improving The Green and local beaches. Some ideas already suggested have included: remodelling The Green to make it more family and visitor orientated; promoting access, safeguarding and cleaning the beach.	Islay Development Initiative; Argyll and Bute Council; Harbour Association; SEPA; wider community, Primary School & Pre-Five Unit; Churches, Machrie Hotel; Feis Ile; Cyber; Local Distilleries; local organisations and groups	Development of a plan for The Green; community involvement in solutions to these issues; tangible improvements to cleanliness.	Health and Wellbeing improved Improved environment Greater aesthetic appeal Greater usage	3 years
Lack of Facilities for All Ages	We anticipate that the redevelopment of The Playing Fields will provide a community space for diverse users; support for the Cyber; work with others to develop and support new activities locally.	Argyll and Bute Third Sector Interface, Argyll and Bute Health and Wellbeing Network; Chit Chat; Health and Social Care Partnership; local businesses; Live Argyll; Cyber; Schools; Community Groups and Organisations	Development and operation of The Playing Fields and facilities Greater publicity of available community activities Encourage a broader range of community activities	Health and Wellbeing improved Increased employment and sustainable economic development	5 Years

Bus Shelters and Service	Consult with community and express their voice to bus company; Explore the possibility of making a 'Participation Request'	Argyll and Bute Council, Islay Coaches, Elected members, Community Council	Ongoing dialogue and participation request	Improved transport and mobility	1-2 Years
Co-op Grading	Ask Co-op to re-consider pricing and grading to equal with Bowmore	Co-op, Elected members, community co-op community group	Arrange dialogue with Co-op	Cost of living reduced and quality of life increased	1-2 years
Cyber	Mentoring support and advice on governance and management	Cyber, TSI, Inspir Alba, Local groups	Development of business plan; community engagement activity	Greater community capacity and improved community wellbeing	1-2 years



Images are provided by kind permission of David Livingstone, Port Ellen, Isle of Islay
& Anna MacDonald during her Scot Grad Placement.

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