



Ayrshire 21

growing rural communities together

# Dalry Community action PLAN



Produced as part of the  
Rural Ayrshire 21 Initiative.

Local delivery by Scottish Community  
Development Centre (SCDC) and  
supported by North Ayrshire Council

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## Section 1: Introduction and Background

Rural Ayrshire 21 is a programme to encourage local action across 21 rural communities in Ayrshire. The initiative was funded from January to December 2013 through the Ayrshire LEADER programme.

In North Ayrshire Scottish Community Development Centre (SCDC) has been working with 7 rural communities to help them gear up for sustainable community development.

The 7 communities participating in North Ayrshire are: **Dalry**, Beith, Kilbirnie, Skelmorlie, Fairlie, Springside and Dreghorn. The work in the 7 participating communities was carried out by the Scottish Community Development Centre (SCDC) and supported by North Ayrshire Council.

The communities which have been selected for the support programme are those who qualified for the LEADER programme – that is rural communities who have a population size below 10,000.

As well as offering a range of training opportunities and networking events for community activists, the programme has helped the wider community in each area to develop community action plans that highlight the priorities of the community. These plans will be used to guide future funding and decision making processes locally.

This is the Community Action Plan for Dalry. It has been developed in conjunction with a wide range of local community organisations and has been informed by the views and opinions of local residents.

## Section 2: Methodology

The engagement exercise involved a number of different activities from consultation with representatives from community groups to feedback from residents through questionnaires. A 'Community Strengths' meeting with representatives of community organisations was held on 16 May 2013. 24 people representing 13 community organisations attended the 2 hour meeting. The participants mapped out what provision Dalry currently has and what the strengths of the community are. A report was produced and disseminated to those attending the meeting.

Building on the information from the 'Community Strengths' meeting a further open meeting was held on 21<sup>st</sup> June 2013 to plan the community engagement initiative for the town.

Two local Community Agents were employed between May and December 2013 to engage the community using the questionnaire developed at the planning meeting. Over this period the Agents were able to get face to face questionnaire responses from **240** residents of Dalry. Community Agents worked with the local schools to get the views of young people.

On the 11 November 2013 a community reference group came along to an open meeting to discuss the collated results from the survey and to identify priorities for the town. The priorities identified by local people at that discussion are contained within this report.

# Section 3: What is Our Community Like?

## Community profile and statistics

### Profile Information<sup>1</sup>

Dalry has a population of 5,657 (2011 Census) and is situated in the Garnock Valley area of North Ayrshire on the west coast of Scotland. It is around 27 miles south-west of Glasgow and approximately 8 miles north of Irvine. The town has a vibrant community and a long history from evidence of prehistoric dwellings to one of the first hydroelectric plants in Ayrshire, installed in 1892 and generating electricity for Broadlie House.

### Population and age profile

The age breakdown of the population for the Town as a whole is as follows:

Total resident population	5,657
% 0-4 years old	5.4
% 5-15 years old	12.8
% 16-29 years old	15.6
% 30-44 years old	19.2
% 45-59 years old	21.8
% 60-74 years old	16.9
% 75 and over	8.3
<b>% under 16</b>	<b>18.2</b>
<b>% 16-pensionable age</b>	<b>63.6</b>
<b>% pensionable age and over</b>	<b>18.2</b>

The overall population is largely made up of people of working age 16 to pensionable age and an even distribution for young people under 16 years (18.2%) and older people of pensionable age (18.2%).

### Housing

In terms of housing, the majority of the 2,587 homes in the village are privately owned (59.8%). The remainder are split between social rented (31.9%) and private rented (7.5%).

### Employment and benefit receipts

302 of the working age population (16-74 yrs) in Dalry were classified as “employment deprived” as at 2011 (Census 2011).

Of the 302 people unemployed in the area 29.8% (90) are between 16-24 years.

<sup>1</sup> Please note that statistics have been rounded to the nearest decimal point.

## Health

18.7% of Dalry residents (16 to 74 years) are economically inactive with longterm sickness or disability issues. This is slightly above the average for North Ayrshire which is 17.9%.

## Education

Dalry has one of the highest levels of people aged 16 and over with no qualifications. Of the 4,628 people aged 16 + in the area, 34.4% have no qualifications. The average for North Ayrshire is 31.3% and for Scotland is 26.8%.

## Community Strengths and Assets

Dalry has a number of community groups which cover a wide range of issues, interests and activities. At a community mapping session carried out in May 2013 participants identified 40 active groups/clubs within the Town. Well over half of these groups are involved in sports, leisure or cultural activities (e.g. Burns Club, Older People's Welfare, Cameo Club, Dalry Curling Club, Dalry Rovers, Dalry Farmers Association, and Dalry Camera Club).

A reasonable proportion of the groups are involved in cross-community activities aimed at tackling issues of concern and/or the development of local resources/assets. These include Blair Residents Association, St Palladius Women's Guild, Dalry Community Council amongst others. Other groups are working with young people and children, for example Dalry Toddlers, Community Sports Club, Scouts, Brownies and Boys Brigade.

These groups are well organised individually but are not working together for the improvement of Dalry. There is little or no interaction between groups and wider networking is not happening. There is a general lack of resources which is growing each year and closure of a key community building in the town has led directly to a lack of space for groups to meet and grow their membership. Many groups have not taken advantage of charity status which would help them access more funding. There is a need for more training around governance and status, the council has provided this training in the past but there was a poor take up by groups.

Generally the groups felt that they lacked influence at community planning and North Ayrshire Council level. They advised that "We have 'walk abouts' in the community with service providers/politicians but it is on their terms not the communities so has little impact on the real concerns of the community." The groups feel that problems are being articulated locally but there is a degree of tokenism on behalf of the council and the NHS and little evidence of joint working.

## Community Views

As part of the Rural Ayrshire 21 programme in Dalry we undertook a survey of community views to ascertain what residents felt about the town, what it's like to stay in Dalry and what they think about local issues and services.

Although the survey was undertaken during the summer months and with a short timescale for returns a good cross-section of residents responded and a summary of their views are shown here:

### What do you like about Dalry?

Good schools; Public Park; Library; Great place to live; friendly; everyone knows each other; good community spirit.

### What do you dislike about Dalry?

Amount of litter in town; busy traffic/speeding cars; youth disorder; increased drug use and dealing; derelict buildings; rural paths overgrown; not much for kids to do; dog fouling on pavements; poor choice of shops; no swimming pool; large park but nothing in it; no petrol station.

### What improvements would you like to see that will make your community a better place to live?

- » CCTV, police patrols & wardens on the beat
- » Petrol station
- » Transport after 5pm
- » Refurbish the town hall and rundown buildings, a local museum, wider pavements, less litter in the town, farmers market, improve the cross (plants/sculpture)
- » Upgrade the park (lights at night/more activities/toilets), make swing park suitable for pre 5s, a cycle route, maintain the walking areas, pedestrian crossing at park
- » More support for businesses by the wider community
- » More activities free of charge
- » A youth club/activities for young people (secondary school age) at night, weekends and over the holidays, a skate park, outdoor & indoor sports facilities for young people and adults
- » Improved path networks

## Section 4: Action Plan – key priorities



The community reference group agreed that to take the identified priorities forward agencies need to work in partnership with local people and that solutions to the issues identified should be discussed in a transparent way. Partners should adhere to best practice in partnership working (including seeing the community as a partner) and observe the Scottish Governments National Standards for Community Engagement.

Based on the survey results the group decided that the priorities for Dalry are:

### Healthy Dalry Project – Multi-use community resource

**Issue:** The park is a valuable resource for the community but is underused because it is often waterlogged and does not have lighting at night. There has been no investment in the park and it has been neglected for a long time, the group agreed that it needs to be upgraded for community use. The survey indicates that many people in the town want to see the park improved and to be a useful resource for the community. Dalry Sports Club has plans to develop the park as a 'Healthy Dalry' Project. The Sports Club will build on the Ayrshire 21 survey and engage with the wider community to determine their specific needs. Following consultation with the community and identifying potential partners the Sports Club proposes to create a Master Plan which could include ideas like developing a community building, dealing with drainage problems, Astroturfing a section of the park for multi-use activities and installing lighting. It is expected that it will be a resource for the whole community.

#### ***Partners who should address this issue:***

- » Dalry Sports Club
- » Wider Community Groups (engaged through focus groups/questionnaires)

#### ***Consult with:***

- » North Ayrshire Council: Community & Culture – Community Development
- » North Ayrshire Council: Planning, Environment & Related Services and Streetscene Service

### Day time and evening classes for residents

**Issue:** There is increasing demand for evening leisure activities. There are some venues available but demand in the town is high for meeting and activity spaces. More needs to be done to co-ordinate venues and learning providers and identify the needs of community learners.

#### ***Partners who should address this issue:***

- » Dalry Community Association
- » North Ayrshire Council: Community & Culture – Community Development
- » 3<sup>rd</sup> Sector Training providers
- » KA Leisure
- » James Watt College

## More Support for job seekers in Dalry

**Issue:** Residents are using resources in Kilbirnie at the moment to support them with their job search. Young job seekers are being supported by 'MATES' in Kilbirnie however this involves significant travel to and from Kilbirnie. The Library currently supports people but has limited resources, facilities and space. Job seekers in Dalry need access to computers and specific support for job searches and creating CVs.

### ***Partners who should address this issue:***

- » Job Centre
- » North Ayrshire Council: Community & Culture – Community Development
- » North Ayrshire Council: Community & Culture – Arts and Culture Services
- » Business Dalry Group
- » MATES - Kilbirnie

## Practical support for the development of civic events in Dalry

**Issue:** Community groups are struggling to maintain events in the town. Over the years a number of long established events have had to be cancelled as a result of low numbers of volunteers to organise them. Current events in the town are falling on the shoulders of the few and as a result there are fewer large civic events taking place. Practical and financial support is needed to make sure these events happen on an annual basis. The events are becoming increasingly technical, requiring increased understanding of legal and insurance responsibilities. These factors are combining to put off local volunteers.

### ***Partners who should address this issue:***

- » Dalry Community Council
- » North Ayrshire Council: Community & Culture – Community Development
- » BeGreen (local funder & energy advisor)
- » Dalry Business Group
- » Local volunteers
- » Police
- » The Ayrshire Community Trust (TACT)
- » Dalry Thistle Football Club

## Full size indoor bowling

**Issue:** Residents are traveling to Ardrossan to use the full size indoor bowling facility. There is considerable effort for people to travel this distance and increasing demand to have a facility within the town. There is space in the town but it requires a large indoor mat at the cost of approx. £1,500/£2,000.

### ***Partners who should address this issue:***

- » Dalry Sports Club
- » North Ayrshire Council: Community & Culture – Community Development
- » KA Leisure
- » North Ayrshire Council: Library & Information Service – Facilities Team

## Outreach/drop-in project for young people

**Issue:** Young people are increasingly hanging around the streets in Dalry with no activities or places to go at night and at weekends. The recent Community Warden Scheme (Summer 2013) made good contacts with these young people and really demonstrated the need for a good outreach project which can make contact with young people and support them into more constructive activities. It is anticipated that a good development process involving young people could lead to the development of a much needed drop-in facility for teenagers.

### ***Partners who should address this issue:***

- » Dalry Sports Club
- » Youth organisations in Dalry – youth representatives
- » North Ayrshire Council: Community & Culture – Community Development
- » Police – (e.g. Campus Cop)
- » Community Wardens



Photos: The Dalry Camera Club

## Section 5: Making it Happen

Our vision and priorities mean that a number of different agencies and local groups need to be involved and work together to make this Action Plan a reality and help bring about improvements in the quality of life in the town.

### **For further information contact:**

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Photo: The Dalry Camera Club



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The Dalry Community Action Plan  
**January 2014**



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