Role / Aim: Central Source of Knowledge about: Third Sector Locally; Local & National policy and how it might affect local third sector, communities and citizens; how third sector can contribute to those agendas				
Local Situation	**Activities**	**Short Term Outcomes**	**Medium Term Outcomes**	**High Level Strategic Outcomes**
Following the December 2022 volunteer conference, small-scale survey and anecdotal evidence from networking roadshows it was clear that TSOs are struggling to recruit volunteers and that volunteer fatigue is now commonplace in our locality.

A new on-line volunteering system was launched by the TSI in April 2020, and it worked well for the coronavirus response but new volunteers are needed and the system needs a relaunch.

Local TSOs require support to identify and write high quality and engaging volunteer opportunities, that excite the community. | Update the site and seek cross sectoral agreement to promote/signpost to volunteerargyllandbute.org and to share volunteer resources | Communities are more aware of the need for volunteers in Argyll and Bute

Individuals find it easier to identify available volunteering opportunities

TSO's have more volunteers to fill their vacancies

Volunteers feel supported and valued

Volunteering as a pathway into employment | 1. People are more involved in their local community

2. Improved cross sector collaboration | **National outcomes**
• We live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe.
• We have a globally competitive, entrepreneurial, inclusive and sustainable economy.
• We are well educated, skilled, and able to contribute to society.
• We are healthy and active.
• We tackle poverty by sharing opportunities, wealth and power more equally

Social Enterprise Strategy
• Priority 1 - stimulating local development.
• Priority 2 - enabling the development of stronger organisations.
• Priority 3 -helping realise market opportunities.

Volunteering for All
• There are flexible, diverse, quality and inclusive opportunities for everyone to get involved and stay involved.
• The places and spaces where we volunteer are developed, supported and sustained.

UN Sustainability Goals
• Good Health and Well-being
• Decent Work and Economic Growth
• Reduced Inequalities |
	Further support the development of new and engaging volunteer opportunities.			
	Widen the volunteering aspect of the Young Person's Guarantee as it transforms into the Positive Destinations project funded initially by UKSPF. Continue to evolve the offer for other groups such as those with mental health needs, people with learning disabilities, care experienced young people and those returning to the workforce.			
	Building on the principles of the local 2020 Strategic Volunteering Framework and the 2022 national Volunteering Action Plan, with statutory partners and TSOs develop an updated strategy and local plan.			
	Continue to promote Saltire to young people within all settings to encourage volunteering from a young age.			
	Establish twice-yearly volunteering conference in 2023-2024 and volunteer action plan by end Q3.			
	As an accredited organisation support the rollout of Volunteer Friendly across Argyll and Bute.			
A community directory (www.abcd.scot) was launched in September 2022 containing data from 1300 voluntary sector services. There is an opportunity to develop this tool to build a comprehensive analysis of TSOs network health in Argyll and Bute as well mapping provision to the needs of local communities.	Explore and expand the opportunities arising from the directory by working with CPP partners to identify gaps in provision and unmet need. Work with partners to connect data sets to build picture of local poverty, social isolation and inequality.	Communities, people working in the statutory sector and external funders can more readily access up to date, current information relating to organisations/services available.

Local policy makers can co-produce and redesign services using an evidence base to support the prevention agenda. | 4. Third sector organisations are better able to respond to local need.

6. Third sector organisations are better able to contribute to a strong and inclusive local social economy | |
	Commission an evaluation of the impact of TSOs on the local health and social care economy to produce a clear evidence base of the capacities and capabilities of the sector to take advantage of new procurement opportunities and service redesign.			
	Build on the TSI funded April 2023 co-production and prevention workshops, ensure and test that these training events are leading to a change in approach.			
	Explore opportunity to cement status as local sector advocates and influencers through surveys, research, polls and case studies.			
Information about the local Social Enterprise sector is needed to understand current strengths, opportunities, composition and economic contribution to Argyll and Bute.	Commission drill down of SE census data from Social Value Lab with local partners – May/June 2023.	Improved understanding of SE sector and adjust local policies, strategies and plans as appropriate.		
TSOs being squeezed by savings at HSCP and council level, lack of visibility of third sector spend on grants and commissioned services	Commission research on the value of local third sector on the local health and social care economy to support investment in preventative and early intervention services. Evaluation tools promoted.
Promote co-production of services and budgets.

Map existing local funding sources for TSOs | Report commissioned by Q3/Q4 – identify partner organisation Q2 2023.

Workshops on co-production end Q1 and Q2 | | |

No clear sector plan across Argyll and Bute – work with key partners to produce high level strategy and plan. Improve national profile of TSOs and in particular boost understanding of the impact of rurality on local communities and the needs of TSOs to be effective community organisers.	Scope to provide consultancy services to local TSOs to support such things as contract bidding, partnerships and mergers, communications and marketing and interim management services, etc. Work with National TSI network and SCVO to promote the role TSOs play in communities:- • ABTSI to organise national TSI conference in Glasgow June 2023 • Support National TSI network to grow its voice Work with colleagues in Scottish Government on a local conference to discuss the proposed National Care Service. Promote local networks of lived experience service users and use this to inform policy nationally and locally.	A three-year strategy for supporting TSOs and local communities Communities have easier access to up-to-date information around high quality training and support provision Stakeholders can more easily understand the landscape in relation to social enterprise/social enterprise support		• Sustainable Cities and Communities • Quality Education
TSOs who use the TSI's Knowledge Hub, support services and engagement mechanisms give very positive feedback. The TSI needs to continue to deepen and build relationships, networks and engagement.	Completely renew TSI website with options to develop improved functionality, including, but not limited to; • Survey TSOs needs for information – more interactive content • Online health check and diagnostic tool • Provide one-stop "portal" for social enterprises • Ensure sector knows where to find relevant information. Review and develop communications and engagement plan.	TSO's know where they can get information about, and can become involved in national and local policy-making The third sector has access to high quality training opportunities, at affordable prices, to ensure equality of access.		

Role / Aim: Voice - Ensuring a strong third sector voice at a strategic level within local planning structures and nationally				
Local Situation	**Activities**	**Short Term Outcomes**	**Medium Term Outcomes**	**High Level Strategic Outcomes**
Support A&B Council in their Covid recovery programme, impact from EU exit transition and response to the cost-of-living crisis.	Continue to play an active leadership role in the design, delivery and evaluation of the local (Argyll and Bute) recovery plans. Out-with Argyll - Work with Scottish Government, and other national bodies, to ensure that they properly understand the realities remote/rural/island organisations face, particularly where there is an ageing population.	The third sector is able to build on the work to "building back better", respond to the cost-of-living crisis as well as any adjustments required to manage EU exit transition and its impact on communities and the local economy.	1. People are more involved in their community 2. Improved cross sector collaboration 3. Third sector organisations are better able to lead and develop shared agendas.	**National outcomes** • We live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe. • We are well educated, skilled and able to contribute to society. • We value, enjoy, protect and enhance our environment • We have a globally competitive, entrepreneurial, inclusive and sustainable economy. • We are healthy and active.
TSI will support TSOs to input into the new 10-year CPP plan. TSI will continue to work on various workstreams such as developing a Community Wealth Building approach and volunteering.	Support TSOs to engage with development of the new CPP local plan. TSI to lead on the commissioning of an audit of Community Wealth Building approaches in Argyll and Bute in May 2023. Working with the local CPP develop third sector anchor institution model. Produce CWB strategy and plan by end Q3 2023. - Propose CWB reference panel with TSO representation	The third sector is more effectively engaged in relevant aspects of community planning in Argyll and Bute A local CWB plan that supports third sector and social enterprises to contribute to a local wellbeing economy including sustainable food and energy.		

Local Situation	Activities	Short Term Outcomes	Medium Term Outcomes	High Level Strategic Outcomes
Adults & Children's Commissioning Strategy moving to service redesign stage. Commissioning & market facilitation group in place with TS representation, to facilitate co-production approach to future service design. Strengthen TSO knowledge sharing, advocacy and representation.	Continue to ensure HSCP provides the mechanisms for the third sector to be engaged in all aspects of the final Commissioning Strategy. Develop prevention strategy to include co-production principles at its core – series of cross sector workshops to be held facilitated by ABTSI. Support TSOs to ensure that contracting with statutory partners is fair, consistent, allows for Full Cost Recovery and collectively supports early intervention and preventative planning and services. Continue to ensure that TS representation is about whole sector representation, as opposed to individual organisation representation, through implementation of robust engagement processes.	The third sector has a better understanding of the importance of such pieces of work as the Commissioning Strategies. Third Sector understand that commissioning can mean opportunities to better serve communities.	4. Third sector organisations are better able to respond to local need.	• We tackle poverty by sharing opportunities, wealth and power more equally **Social Enterprise Strategy** • Priority 1 - stimulating local development. • Priority 2 - enabling the development of stronger organisations.
Argyll and Bute has many very small TSO's who cannot attend central meetings away from their services and cannot afford travel costs to attend (unfunded at present by statutory partners in Argyll and Bute).	Further develop the role of Third Sector Engagement by continuing to facilitate two-way communication between private, public and third sector organisations in Argyll and Bute; specifically, to: • Identify key gaps in third sector engagement, and the key reasons for these • Continue to support the delivery of potentially challenging messages from the third sector to public sector colleagues • Hold monthly TSO breakfasts (8 per year) in all localities of Argyll. Attend national TSI forums/networks sharing knowledge/information. Facilitate themed forums and networks to share by creating a Hub at Inveraray that will enable rural communities to participate remotely.	Engagement in planning structures and discussions is made easier through the Inveraray Hub using technology for interactive sessions as well as facilitating recorded material. The third sector have increased access to technology to support development of organisations locally.	5. Key decision making includes third sector input 6. Third sector organisations are better able to contribute to a strong and inclusive local social economy.	**Volunteering for All** • The places and spaces where we volunteer are developed, supported and sustained. **UN Sustainability Goals** • Decent Work and Economic Growth • Sustainable Communities
The impact and added value of the third sector and the TSI's role in ensuring the wider third sector voice is heard is now recognised and the TSI represents the sector on a number of strategic bodies. This needs to be translated into meaningful co-design and open resource allocation decision making by statutory partners.	Ensure that other partners understand the role of the TSI, and its mandated responsibilities, especially; • Social Enterprise • Volunteering • Role of TSOs in supporting communities as we Build Back Better Ensure that the third sector makes a demonstrable impact on determining local plans and that this includes adequate resourcing and time for consultation that leads to meaningful co-production. Establish prevention working group and local workshops with Live Argyll and Macmillan. Engage with Community Councils to ensure they are aware of the support available to the third sector across Argyll and Bute Increase the reach and impact of communications using a three month forward plan which is evaluated	Statutory partners better understand the challenges facing the third sector locally and embeds this into service redesign. The third sector are supported to ensure a strong third sector voice at strategic levels		

Role / Aim: Capacity Building: Developing the capacity of volunteering, community groups, voluntary organisations and social enterprise to achieve positive change

Local Situation	Activities	Short Term Outcomes	Medium Term Outcomes	High Level Strategic Outcomes
Lack of capacity; there are very few national or regional TSO's in the area and few organisations covering Argyll. Most TSOs are very small with very small staff groups, or run entirely by volunteers.	Provide support to third sector organisations in a range of ways and settings, including: • As well as 1:1 sessions, host training & development sessions, forums, networks and action learning groups • Research and test opportunity for local consultancy TSO services • Build funding application system by end Q3 2023 and offer it to local funders such as energy companies and distilleries as a means of being transparent in community grant making as well as	Third sector organisations have greater access to the knowledge and expertise they need to be able manage a resource constrained public spending environment. Greater awareness and sharing of skills and resources.	1. People are more involved in their community	**National outcomes** • We live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe. • We are well educated, skilled and able to contribute to society.

Challenge	Action	Outcome	Objectives	Outcomes/Strategies
	increasing opportunities for groups. Create micro fund and attract private sector investment. • Active involvement to avoid duplication and support coalition building between and within localities to avoid duplication.		3. Third sector organisations are better able to lead and develop shared agendas	• We have thriving and innovative businesses, with quality jobs and fair work for everyone. • We tackle poverty by sharing opportunities, wealth and power more equally • We respect, protect and fulfil human rights and live free from discrimination **Social Enterprise Strategy** • Priority 2 - enabling the development of stronger organisations. **Volunteering for All** • There are flexible, diverse, quality and inclusive opportunities for everyone to get involved and stay involved. • The places and spaces where we volunteer are developed, supported and sustained. • There is an environment and culture which celebrates volunteers and volunteering and all of its benefits. **UN Sustainability Goals** • Good Health and Well-being • Decent Work and Economic Growth • Reduced Inequalities • Sustainable Cities and Communities • Quality Education
Many trustees/Board Members are community leaders across several organisations; organisations struggle to attract new Board Members especially those requiring specific skills e.g. treasurers.	Develop our training offer further through; • Following the launch of our bespoke online Learning Management System, continue to expand access and increase the range of courses. • Continuing to upskill our third sector support team not only to deliver workshops online and in person but to offer consultancy and diagnostic services for small to medium TSOs in Argyll	Stronger boards, more sustainable organisations and increase in partnership and collaboration opportunities from within the third sector and with others.	4. Third sector organisations are better able to respond to local need/	
Social Enterprise Strategy identified the need for tailored support for social enterprises with real ambition to grow	Recruit and deploy network of mentors (i.e. volunteers with specific expertise looking for short-term placements), including; • peer support for asset-owning organisations • scoping to engage high quality, industry leading experts as mentors	Social Enterprises with ambition are supported to develop and succeed and are contract ready		
Shortage of volunteers within Argyll and Bute, and an increased prevalence of "volunteer fatigue". During COVID-19, there were plenty of volunteers available, but not utilised by TSOs.	Support the further development of volunteering and volunteer management through promotion and development activities, such as volunteerargyllandbute.org and a Volunteer Assistance Programme to cover 1800 employees and volunteers. Deliver volunteer analysis survey methods and regular local conferences to explore volunteering and its promotion Build on the work set out in the Strategic Volunteering Framework, including; • Adoption of Volunteering Principles • Promotion of the impact of Employer Supported Volunteering	Third sector organisations offer / volunteers enjoy an improved volunteer experience Deliver Volunteer Assistance Programme for all TSI members by end Q3.	6. Third sector organisations are better able to contribute to a strong and inclusive local social economy	
TSO's who use our support services (redesigned Feb 2019) give excellent feedback, but there is scope to expand the offer. There is evidence of duplication of back-office functions in the sector.	Further expand and continue to promote the support offered to third sector organisations, e.g. advocacy in disputes with statutory funders, critical friend reviews of funding applications and online health check tool. Establish a sector baseline to determine real needs and challenges, to ensure that TSI is providing an holistic service, focussing intense support where it is needed to achieve positive outcomes. Consider development of shared local platform services in HR, finance and other back-office functions. Area plans to match third sector development needs to CPP and other priorities.	Third sector organisations have a better understanding of where to go for support and training TSOs understand our values and approach to support TSOs better able to respond to needs and develop services.		
In the past there were continued challenges pertaining to the crowded social enterprise landscape, with multiple intermediaries funded for similar work "competing" in the area. Groups now working together with a combined Social Enterprise Network.	Conduct census of the Social Enterprise sector by June 2023. Support further development of an enterprising third sector and of its ability to lead place and asset-based community-led local development, and seek resources to facilitate its fuller participation in new local CPP priorities of Transport, Housing and Community Wellbeing. Scope creation of a single point of access for support in Argyll and Bute, based on service design principles and interagency referrals, to ensure the right support is received, from the right intermediary, at the right time, to achieve best outcomes for organisations.	The third sector is better able to influence at strategic level and collaborate accordingly through a coordinated approach to SE planning and development. Deliver CWB report, audit and plan by end Q3 and SE census by Q2.		

	Deliver baseline assessment and research of existing Community Wealth Building activities, case studies and opportunities. To include review of procurement practices.			

Role / Aim: Connect: Providing leadership, vision and coordination to the local third sector to better respond to local priorities, including through partnership and collaboration

Local Situation	Activities	Short Term Outcomes	Medium Term Outcomes	High Level Strategic Outcomes
Organisations in Argyll and Bute are keen to take advantage of national policy initiatives such as Community Wealth Building but need a focal point to coordinate activity.	Maximise the impact that third sector representation has in appropriate areas, such as cost of living response, Climate Change and Community Wealth Building, and ensure that the needs of the third sector and the communities of place/of interest that the third sector represents, are taken into consideration when determining local plans Partner with local SSCAN team to deliver a local Climate Change Hub.	TSOs are involved in and leading, via TSI, the approach to Community Wealth Building and commission an audit, plan and business cases to drive action by end Q3.	1. People are more involved in their community	**National outcomes** • We live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe. • We are well educated, skilled and able to contribute to society.
Access to resources becoming increasingly challenging: the very large number of small third sector organisations continue to face challenges in accessing the resources they need; grant funding, Board Members, other volunteers.	Facilitate links, collaboration and/or consortia bids between organisations facing similar issues or working on similar approaches (e.g. groups working in similar areas and struggling to attract volunteers, organisations trialling different approaches to management and governance) to enable mutual support, including collaborative projects and mergers when appropriate, and shared learning	TSOs have a greater understanding of the changing funding landscape and the opportunity to work together to combat associated threats to future viability	2. Improved cross sector collaboration including statutory partners using local TSO evidence to inform service design.	• We have thriving and innovative businesses, with quality jobs and fair work for everyone. • We are healthy and active. • We tackle poverty by sharing opportunities, wealth and power more equally • We respect, protect and fulfil human rights and live free from discrimination
	Ongoing support provided to the third sector around the changing funding landscape and ongoing challenges with grant funding, grant reliance and collaborative tendering. Needs and referral pathways to be mapped to facilitate collaboration, partnership working, avoid duplication and facilitate access to services. Develop application platform that can be used by other funders Q2/Q3 2023-24 – approach energy companies and distilleries. Commission impact research by Q4 on the value of TSOs in the local Health and Social Care economy including review of existing evaluation tools to better support funding proposals.	TSOs can attract more board members and other volunteers – including younger people. Sector as a whole displays increasing contract readiness using local evidence and data.	4. Third sector organisations are better able to respond to local need	**Social Enterprise Strategy** • Priority 1 - stimulating local development. • Priority 2 - enabling the development of stronger organisations. • Priority 3 -helping realise market opportunities.
Challenging landscape in relation to geographical area third sector organisations in Argyll and Bute cover, as well as TS capacity and capability to engage in conversations that shape their future.	Ensure that the third sector is represented in appropriate areas, such as Recovery Planning, cost of living response, and ensuring that the needs of the third sector and the communities of place/of interest that the third sector represents, are taken into consideration when determining local plans Enable connection and communication between third sector organisations, and between them, the public and the statutory sector, in a range of ways, including through: • dissemination of information • facilitation of meetings (e.g. forums and networking events)	Third sector organisations, volunteers and communities are better connected and better able to cooperate, including in relation to the development of: • innovative solutions to new challenges including EU Exit and transition and Covid-19 recovery, and • new management and governance approaches to	6. Third sector organisations are better able to contribute to a	**Volunteering for All** • There are diverse, flexible, quality and inclusive opportunities for everyone to get involved and stay involved. • The places and spaces where we volunteer are

	• facilitation of electronic collaboration platforms • shared leadership on local priorities Continue to provide opportunities for the third sector to come together via eight roadshows to engage in conversations that shape their future.	respond to pressures associated with volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity	strong and inclusive local social economy	developed, supported and sustained. **UN Sustainability Goals** • Good Health and Well-being • Decent Work and Economic Growth • Reduced Inequalities • Sustainable Cities and Communities • Quality Education
Crowded social enterprise landscape; multiple intermediaries funded for similar overlapping/duplicate work, conversely gaps in provision remain.	Review Social Enterprise Strategy for Argyll and Bute to ensure that it remains fit for purpose and relevant post-COVID, and is congruent with the outcomes within Scottish Government's Social Enterprise Action Plan. Strengthen the position of social enterprises in the anchor institution procurement market place with a mapping and opportunities baselining analysis with regard to Community Wealth Building – i.e. virtual market places/hubs to support small enterprises. Continue to ensure that other partners understand the role of the TSI, and its mandated responsibilities in relation to; • Social Enterprise (especially HIE) • Volunteering • Third Sector Representation (especially IJB)	Third Sector Organisations, especially social enterprises, understand the importance of collaborative working to respond to local priorities resulting in improved outcomes and smarter, more locally relevant delivery models.		

Generic assumptions underpinning our plan

- The third sector encompasses charities, social enterprises, small community groups and voluntary organisations. Each have different support needs and link into different strategies.
- Volunteers are fundamental to thriving communities; all third sector organisations are run by voluntary boards, and many organisations involve volunteers to deliver services.
- Volunteering is a freely made choice of the individual – if there is any compulsion, threat of sanctions or force, then any such activity is not volunteering.
- Volunteers should not carry out duties formerly carried out by paid workers nor should they be used to disguise the effects of non-filled vacancies or cuts in service. However, to ensure need is met the TSI will respond to requests from communities for support where gaps in service emerge.
- Volunteers should not be used to reduce contract costs nor be a replacement for paid workers in competitive tenders or procurement processes.
- Many third sector organisations contribute to the local economy through their spending, their investment and their employment of staff.
- TSIs are independent bodies and are able to use that to take a leadership role in challenging others.
- TSIs role is to act as brokers and facilitators for local third sector perspectives and community needs, to create connections between people and showcase how the third sector can contribute to local outcomes.
- TSIs embrace a human rights approach by championing the involvement of local people and communities; this will be imperative in ensuring that Community Wealth Building is successful in geographically disparate areas, such as Argyll and Bute.
- TSIs gain their intelligence in part through supporting and connecting the sector, but may use different models for doing this, dependent upon who else is supporting the sector locally.
- In Argyll and Bute, the TSI is entirely dependent on its Scottish Government grant. Our local third sector is clear that it does not want its TSI to compete for grant funding and all previous projects the TSI ran, from which the TSI received a contribution to its overhead costs, have ceased with effect from 1st April 2021. There is still space within the TSI's remit to support projects such as the UKSPF project Positive Destinations which supports people's employability using a volunteering and mentoring model.
- Neither Argyll and Bute Council, nor Argyll and Bute HSCP "top-up" the TSI's core grant but we will pursue more joint funded projects such as funding the Community Directory, Volunteer of the Year and the SE census 2023.
- Two-year funding from the Scottish Government would allow us not only to redefine, but also expand our support, advocacy and service provision offer to the TS but will allow us to explore other revenue generating intermediary activity. However, we are producing a three-year plan so two years will have uncertainty.
- Continued support to TSOs (i.e. for grant funding, collaborative tendering, capacity building etc.,) relies upon;
  - capacity for third sector organisations to release staff to engage
  - capability of third sector organisations, given their small size
  - willingness to work outside of very tight geographical boundaries.

Generic external factors

Extent to which:

- COVID continues to impact the capacity and resourcing of third sector organisations, impacting their ability to work at local level and also their longer-term funding and viability. This is particular the case in the return to using some face to face services and in recruiting volunteers.
- TSIs have support to stay ahead of policy developments by a joined up approach across government.
- TSI's can come together to raise common concerns with government and other national organisations.

Specific external factors:

- Cost of living crisis in a rural area means volunteering and running services is more expensive than in urban settings.
- There is no local financial support currently to facilitate the engagement and contribution of TSO's in relation to HSCP Adult and CYP conversations, which will in turn adversely impact the ability of the local third sector to engage productively in these conversations.
- Social enterprises and the TSI are now working together more closely – TSI has a leading local role in the Community Wealth Building agenda.
- Argyll and Bute has 23 inhabited islands – ensuring equality of service provision needs to be at the heart of any new workstreams we establish.
- Argyll and Bute Council's Community Development Team will review its work and its priorities this year, which may in turn impact the TSI.
- Establishment of new 10-year CPP plan (2023) may have an impact on the sector, as well as increased pressure placed on the sector by communities – TSI will need to play a vital role in ensuring TSOs do not over promise and are remunerated appropriately for any additional work undertaken.