



A year of Community Learning and Development 2023 to 2024

A Perth and Kinross where everyone can live life well, free from poverty and inequality

Working with communities

Transforming lives and communities



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Foreword

I'm pleased to write the foreword for the Annual Review of the Community Learning and Development (CLD) Team 2023 to 2024.

The team's core activities are [Adult Learning](#) and [Community Capacity Building](#) and the report you're about to read will give you more information about this valuable work which takes place across Perth and Kinross, in small community centres, community campuses and libraries. The CLD Team focus on improving life chances, with adult learners returning to learning, learning new skills or learning English. The team contributes to strengthening communities through funding support, advice and help to community organisations, and creating connections and networks. The recent Education Scotland Progress Visit by HM Inspectors commended us for working with those most in need. We engage in positive partnerships with PKAVS Third Sector Interface, Live Active Leisure and Culture Perth and Kinross, and our commissioned services in the Adult Learning Partnership, Churches Action for the Homeless and Perth University of Highlands and Islands.

The Community Learning and Development team contributes to a wide range of corporate priorities, particularly 'working with communities' and 'developing a resilient, stronger and greener local economy' as well as the Community Planning Partnership's priorities of increasing employability and skills and improving mental wellbeing.

Enjoy the information and case studies in the report and finally my thanks to all the team staff who make a difference to people's lives, day in, day out.

David Stokoe

Service Manager, Community Learning and Development and Equalities

CLD Team introduction

“Community Learning and Development (CLD) supports primarily disadvantaged or vulnerable groups and individuals of all ages to engage in learning, with a focus on bringing about change in their lives and communities. CLD activity has a strong focus on early intervention, prevention and tackling inequalities.” (Education Scotland)

Our team consists of Community Learning and Development Workers, Community Learning Assistants, ESOL and Literacies Workers, and Community Council Officers. We cover Perth and Kinross and work in locality teams divided into 5 areas: Perth City, Eastern Perthshire, Highland Perthshire, Strathearn and Strathallan, and Kinross-shire, Almond and Earn.

Key priorities that we have been focusing on in 2023 to 2024 and are highlighted in our Perth and Kinross Community Learning and Development Plan (2021 to 2024) are Poverty; Mental and Physical Wellbeing; Employability and Adult Learning; and Digital Participation.

The CLD values that we practice are:

- self-determination – respecting the individual and valuing the right of people to make their own choices
- inclusion – valuing equality of both opportunity and outcome, and challenging discriminatory practice
- empowerment – increasing the ability of individuals and groups to influence issues that affect them and their communities through individual and/or collective action
- working collaboratively – maximising collaborative working relationships in partnerships between the many agencies which contribute to CLD, including collaborative work with participants, learners and communities
- promotion of learning as a lifelong activity – ensuring that individuals are aware of a range of learning opportunities and can access relevant options at any stage of their life.

These values have been identified by the CLD Standards Council.

A year in numbers

708

adult learners
signed up to
courses

160

learners
improved their
digital skills

233

people were
learning English
as a second
language (ESOL)

67

people undertook
accredited ASDAN
short courses

103

community
groups received
support, advice
and information

£846,131

funding was
distributed to
community
organisations

33

languages are
spoken by our
learners

45

Community
Councils were
supported

186

people
completed
NCASS Food
Hygiene Level 2
Certificate

17

people were
improving their
basic literacy
and numeracy
skills

Adult Learning



Maths class

"For some, the idea of a formal learning institution can be daunting, particularly, if a learner faces barriers or has been out of education for a long time. Community-based learning provides the right learning environment for many taking their first steps into or back into learning."

Adult Learning Strategy for Scotland 2021 to 2026

Adult Learning

Who is it for?

Our programmes are for adults with limited or no qualifications, those who may not feel confident in their communication, reading, writing, number or English language skills, as well as people who haven't had much experience with computers.

How?

We work in small groups, in person or online, to ensure personalised attention, and a supportive space for learning.

Typical time commitment required is just a couple of hours per week, for approximately 5 to 8 weeks. Our programmes are free.

Where and when

Most of our courses run during the day, Monday to Friday, with some being available in the evenings, to accommodate learners' needs. We currently operate in Perth, Kinross, Bridge of Earn, Birnam, Aberfeldy, Pitlochry, Crieff, Alyth, Rattray, and Blairgowrie.

Key achievements

Over the past year, **708 learners** have signed up to our courses. These have included English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), digital skills, literacy and numeracy, and a range of ASDAN short courses.

Our ESOL offer over the past year has been developed and expanded to include Conversation Café, ESOL for Employability, and ESOL for Academic Writing.

Our Digital Skills offer has been developed in response to identified needs and now includes a basic digital skills course, with learners having the option to progress onto SQA Core Skills Unit in ICT.

Our ASDAN short courses offer includes a wide range of topics for learners to choose from. Favourite topics over the past year have included Expressive Arts and Gardening. ASDAN courses have proved to be a great way for adults to get back into learning, and they enjoy the challenges in a supportive environment.



Digital skills class

'Thank you for your help, I got this English course from the Council, thank you for your interesting teaching, my English has improved, and it can help me in my daily life, I hope it can continue to help improve my English ability to integrate life in UK thanks.'

'Hello, I took the Foodwise course. The course was interesting enough for my level. Also, at every stage I felt supported, and this gave me more confidence regarding my plans for my future work. Since English is a language I only recently started learning, I was worried that the course would be difficult. But this did not happen. Thank you for your support and I hope for future co-operation.'

'I am proud of myself for getting out of the house and coming to the group.'

'I have been waiting for years to get help, then I saw you and a week later I'm in a reading and writing class and I'm starting a digital skills class.'



Read our case studies:

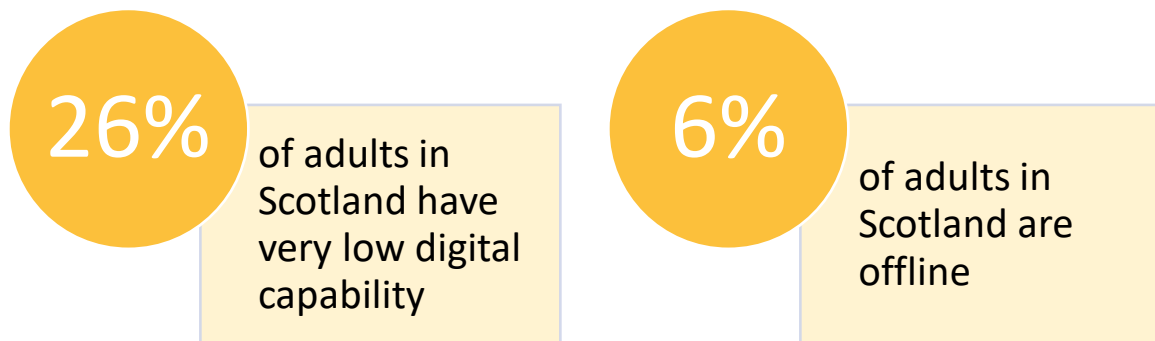
Grappling with dyslexia

Finding refuge in Scotland

Learning a new skill

Developing digital skills

Did you know?



Source: Lloyds Bank Consumer Digital Index 2023

Strengthening our communities



Tulloch Community Christmas Lights Switch On

"The (Stronger Communities) Network is a fantastic resource in the area, this is so beneficial to everyone who comes along to find out what is happening, sharing information and resources and being able to find out information such as funding and new developments is so important and encourages us to work together."

What do we do to support communities to become stronger and more empowered?

Our work involves developing, supporting and strengthening new and existing community organisations. **Over the past year we have supported 103 community organisations.** We do this through our funding programmes; through helping groups to develop appropriate constitutions and policies; helping and advising groups who are interested in community ownership of buildings; making connections between groups so that they can support each other through networks and partnerships both informal and formal. **31 community organisations enquired about Community Asset Transfer this year** and were given information and advice to explore the process and their options. This resulted in **12 formal Expressions of Interest being submitted for Community Asset Transfer.**

Many of the community organisations we support are run by volunteers giving up their time to help their community, from community gardens to community cafes and much more. Communities are made stronger by the commitment of volunteers who in turn are becoming more knowledgeable and skilled in their roles, serving on committees and helping with a vast range of community activities. The CLD team worked closely with the Third Sector Interface (TSI) to develop a new website for volunteering: [Volunteering Made Easy | Be the Change \(Perth and Kinross\) \(bethechange.org.uk\)](http://bethechange.org.uk) This was launched at an event to thank volunteers who had supported the Warm Welcome venues across Perth and Kinross over the winter months. **35 volunteers came along to represent their organisations** and receive certificates from the Provost.

The CLD team work closely with our colleagues in the HSCP Community Engagement Team to support and organise **7 Stronger Communities Networks across Perth and Kinross.** The networks bring together Community organisations, public sector services and community activists who meet on a regular basis to share information, ideas and find opportunities for collaboration.

CLD support plays a pivotal role in enhancing local democracy through initiatives like Local Action Partnerships, Community Councils, and Local Area Committees. These entities are instrumental in fostering community engagement and participation in local governance. **Over the past year we have supported 45 Community Councils and 7 Local Action Partnerships.**



Strathearn Better Place to Live Fair 2024

Did you know?

87.9%

Currently 87.9% of residential and business premises in Perth and Kinross have superfast broadband – just over 7% below the average for Scotland (95.1%). The cost and quality of connectivity and lack of confidence in using digital technologies are key challenges for people across Perth and Kinross getting online.



Read our case studies:

Switching on Christmas lights at Tulloch

Empowering community members at Bajka Education Centre

Engaging with tenants at Double Dykes

Building skills and resources at Strathmore Hub

Transforming Oudenarde Community Garden

Developing community in Coupar Angus

Fostering connections at Bertha Park

Strengthening partnerships in Strathearn

Food insecurity



Community Cook It session

“I don't see other people apart from my children, unless I come here. I have been out of my comfort zone, but I have enjoyed trying new foods, getting out the house and learning about where my food comes from. Trying different things and learning new cooking skills has been brilliant. Helpful support with nutritional advice. Location is fab!”

Our Community Food Worker engages with food groups across Perth and Kinross to identify need within communities, educating and upskilling in healthy eating and cooking skills. Locality Food Networks have been set up around Perth and Kinross working with local groups and organisations to provide information, support around funding, learning opportunities, and signposting. Links are made to introduce newer groups to existing groups and aims to join up all sections of the food system, from community gardens to community cafes or foodbanks.

‘Community Cook It’ which is based on a ‘train the trainer’ model continues to be offered to volunteers and services who want to run a cooking group but want to develop their skills, knowledge and confidence. In 2023, **12 individuals** completed the Community Cook It Training.

The Good Food Fund

The Good Food Fund aimed to take a more dignified approach to tackling food insecurity between 2023 to 2024 and supported **25 different projects** across Perth and Kinross which aim to tackle food poverty, promote healthy and sustainable food, and build community food knowledge, skills, and resources.

Key achievements

- A total of **£48,157.58** was distributed to projects across Perth and Kinross from the Good Food Fund.
- **3,426 people** benefited from the fund.
- **41 people** were referred to Welfare Rights.
- **80 volunteers** supported running the projects.
- **17 cooking projects** have been supported across Perth and Kinross from the Good Food Fund.



Read our case studies:

Cooking together at Perth Hope Hub
Networking in Eastern

Did you know?



Perth and Kinross has a multicultural population including Gypsy Traveller, Polish, and Chinese communities with long-established roots in the area, and newer communities who have settled in the area over the past decade.

(source [Culture Strategy 2023-2028 \(pkc.gov.uk\)](https://pkc.gov.uk))

Community funding



Warm Welcome in Bridge of Earn

"Abernethy Pavilion is a community asset and run as such. It's used for scouting, elderly groups, as well as football, Abernethy Amateurs and community events. The Community Investment Fund has allowed the committee to upgrade the building to make it fit for the next 30 years."

Community funding

Community funding programmes are made available annually to local community groups and organisations, and with the relationships we have built within communities, we play a key role in distributing these grants, often in partnership with PKC Community Planning Team. We work with and inform our communities of these funds and upskill volunteers in the application, monitoring and evaluation process. And with our knowledge and understanding of our communities, we can encourage groups to come together to strengthen resources.

Warm Welcome Fund

In 2023, Perth and Kinross Council granted a budget of **£250,000** to support community groups and organisations in their delivery of the provision of Warm Spaces and Warm Home Packs over the winter months. This would help alleviate the cost of living whilst also contributing to a reduction in social isolation. **94 community groups** took part in a series of workshops which were facilitated by the Community Learning and Development Team in each Ward area to encourage community groups and organisations to work more collaboratively with each other, avoiding duplication of their offer and recognising what their communities' needs were. Funding was then allocated through collective agreement with each other based on what they could offer and what local needs were.

Celebration of volunteers event

In March 2024, the Provost held a civic reception to honour the contributions of the **350 volunteers** involved in delivering Warm Spaces in their communities.

Volunteer representatives were also presented with certificates for their group and each individual volunteer as a token of appreciation for their efforts throughout the winter months.

During the event, Perth and Kinross Third Sector Interface (TSI) also launched a new online Volunteering Platform which aims to encourage volunteering in local communities. The '[Be the Change](#)' platform is a self-service directory of opportunities for community groups and organisations to promote their volunteering roles and for residents to sign up and take part in volunteering activity in their local community.

Key achievements

£400,000 was allocated to tackle local inequalities through PKC Community Investment Fund (CIF) in partnership with PKC Community Planning. **108 applications** were submitted from community groups with a total of £383,075 awarded.

89 community members and elected members were involved in CIF funding panels.

£215,386 of Green Living Fund was allocated to local community groups addressing the cost of living and climate change through a Participatory Budget (PB) Process. Decision-making was carried out by the public, and with a total of **2,050 individuals placing votes** on their favourite projects, 41 out of 53 groups received funding.



Voting pop-up

"The grant for Free Football Project (in Blairgowrie and Rattray) allowed over 70 members of our community to take part in physical activity on a weekly basis for the last year. The programmes were all about bringing people together to play football and take part in sports on a weekly basis, going from being inactive and not taking part in any organised activities, to active and attending weekly sessions."

"The Ukulele group at Auchterarder and District Men's Shed Music Project has now 17 members who play regularly every Tuesday. We have been playing to patients in St Margaret's Hospital and have plans to play at local care homes. The mission of the Men's Shed is to improve wellbeing and physical and mental health of our members, and this music project is an excellent addition to our other activities."



Read our case studies:

Opening Warm Spaces in Kinross-shire
Participating in local decision-making

Did you know?

153,800

The population of Perth and Kinross is 153,800. The population per square mile of Perth and Kinross is 75. The population has increased by 1,900 in the past year. The population has increased by 31,900 since 1981.

(2022 Census)

If you would like to know more about the work of the CLD Team, contact:

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