**G15 Thriving Places**

**Strategic Community Development Plan 2024 – 2027**

* **Executive Summary**

This document outlines the G15 Thriving Places Strategic Development Plan for the three-year period 2024-2027. The Plan is strategic because it links global issues to the local context of Drumchapel. It also understands that the process of social change in Drumchapel is linked to the many processes of social change occurring across the world. Hence the reason for starting with a description of the current context within which the Plan will be situated. The document then captures the historical context of Drumchapel Thriving Places and how this evolved into G15 Thriving Places.

From the context presented, the Plan opts for four main themes which form the basis for the activities then proposed. These activities are also a result of the evidence of need accumulated over the past seven years during which Drumchapel Thriving Places worked in Drumchapel. To deliver these activities, the document presents a list of Outputs and Outcomes which will guarantee the implementation of the Plan.

Towards the end, the document describes the organisational structure proposed and how accountability will be guaranteed. Finally, the document concludes with the costings necessary to sustain the implementation of the Plan.

* **Context**

According to the Oxfam report 2023, presented at the World Economic Forum in Davos, the world is in a moment of unprecedented crisis. A combination of the effects of climate change, which reach out to every corner of the planet, with the poorer nations disproportionally affected, giving rise to climate injustice, in tandem with war in many parts of the world and the recent covid pandemic, millions of people across the globe have lost their livelihoods and, in many cases, their lives. Covid 19 has highlighted the injustice and inequality in our societies, which already existed before the pandemic, but are still very real in the lives of many people, mainly the poorest, both in Scotland and around the world. However, in contrast, while people were dying during the pandemic, big pharmaceutical companies made millions producing the vaccine, others made millions producing PPE equipment while Amazon almost produced the first trillionaire in history!

Another key issue facing humanity, in particular the Western world, is the war in Ukraine. The invasion of Ukraine is destroying a country’s infrastructure, water and energy supply, people’s homes, schools and even hospitals, but most of all people’s lives, provoking a mass exodus of over three million people to other countries. However, Ukraine and Russia are not the only countries at war; Sudan, Saudi Arabia, Libya, and Palestine are only four of a long list of countries engaged in conflicts of different natures, all at war. Again, in contrast, while millions of people suffer from hunger because of these conflicts, billions of pounds of public money have been, and continue to be, spent on weapons.

While the multinational companies boost their profit margins, whether through producing the vaccine, PPE equipment or weapons for wars, for the majority survival has become even more difficult. In the UK the uncertainty of finding work has seen many forced into the “gig” economy, on zero-hour contracts, or temporary contracts, while others are forced to take on part-time work on the minimum wage. Coupled with this exploitative work scenario, young people leaving school, college, or university are still not able to follow on with work related to their studies.

Even before the invasion of Ukraine, the big energy companies were announcing steep increases in electricity and gas bills. Coupled with the war, and in many European countries the dependence on Russian gas and oil, the cost of energy has rocketed. For a short period of time, the government subsidised people’s energy bills, but there was no talk about challenging the big energy companies who continue to rake in enormous amounts of profit. Shell published its profit in 2021 as $19.3 billion compared to $4.85 billion in the previous year. Now with the US banning any further Russian gas and oil and the UK phasing out Russian gas and oil, instead of taking advantage of this moment and investing more in alternative forms of generating energy, the discussion around digging further oil wells in the North Sea and the possibility of fracking have returned to the political debate.

The overall context of poverty has never been so dire with millions of people across the world not having their basic needs of food, water and shelter recognised. In the UK, and consequently in Scotland, austerity has accompanied many families over the past ten years. The Joseph Rowntree Foundation report on Poverty in Scotland 2023 found that over one million people in Scotland are living in poverty, with 490,000 living in very deep poverty. Foodbanks have become the norm, and during winter now warm banks have emerged where people can go for a heat and a hot meal. According to the Trussell Trust one in five Scots are currently experiencing food insecurity. People are not able to feed their families and heat their homes, and this is affecting not only families on benefits, but also families where two people are working. Cuts in public funding have affected family members who have disabilities as support services have been reduced considerably, while the NHS has a backlog of years for people needing any type of long-term care.

For G15 Thriving Places, now preparing a three-year plan, these global issues mentioned above will influence any activities that we intend to deliver locally. Climate change points immediately to how Drumchapel will occupy the many empty spaces that have resulted from the demolition of the tenements and the many public and community spaces that have been taken from the community. Occupying sustainably the many empty spaces in Drumchapel is a challenge that could also alter the demographics of Drumchapel and the community must be involved in this process. Wars all around the world have already changed considerably the demographics of the Drumchapel community which is now multicultural with many asylum seekers and refugees making this community their home. According to a recently created third sector organisation called the Honorary Scotians, there are 4500 asylum seekers in Glasgow and an even greater number of refugees. The SIMD data illustrate how many people in Drumchapel are living in poverty which is reflected in low attainment at school, alcohol and drug dependency, physical and mental health illnesses, and in general low self-esteem, all of which are part of the reality of many people living in Drumchapel.

However, even in the face of these enormous challenges, in Drumchapel, several

organisations and individual people have, and continue to, engage in activities of solidarity and care to help the community through these difficult times. If we have learned

anything from this context, it is that we need to continue in our struggle to challenge inequality and injustice, in any shape or form, wherever we are, while continuing to transform our community into a more equal, just, and caring place to live and work. It is a mammoth task, as the dominant structures in place insist on dividing, separating, and individualising us. Our task is to collectivise, create community, bring people together in the belief that another world is possible and depends, not only, but also, on our contribution, which starts from where we are and with what we do every day, both individually and as a community.

* **Background**

Thriving Places (TP) in Glasgow was set up as a ten-year strategy to be delivered in 10 areas in Glasgow. In Drumchapel TP started in October 2016 and on completion of ten years, should terminate in 2026. Each TP is organised differently, according to the needs of each area and has an anchor organisation, which in the case of Drumchapel is Cernach Housing Association. In Drumchapel, to become more visible, TP opted to have a presence in the Drumchapel Shopping Centre and after an initial six-month experience in a shop front, was invited to establish a presence in the local charity shop. Since May 2018, TP has worked from a space in the Chest, Heart & Stroke Scotland charity shop in the shopping Centre, which served as a drop-in for any resident in Drumchapel, and beyond.

Due to recent budget cuts experienced by several organisations across Glasgow, and information from GCC that it could only guarantee funding for Thriving Places for the year 2023-24, we had to decide on the future of Thriving Places. As a result, after consultation with current funders and the anchor organisation, TP in Drumchapel opted to recreate itself as G15TP, in the form of a Third Sector organisation.

**G15 Thriving Places**

G15 Thriving Places is a new community-based organisation in Drumchapel legally structured as a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO). We are a collective of three community development workers with a small board comprised of people who live and work in Drumchapel. Continuing with our daily drop-in service, which we started in the Chest, Heart & Stroke Scotland charity shop in the shopping centre, we now attend to the public at the Drumchapel Community Centre. We are open to the public and engage with an average of 20-25 individual people per week who come to us for support on a wide range of issues ranging from housing, benefits, to CV compilation. We also engage with, and at times support, different community groups and due to our links with most organisations in Drumchapel, when we cannot support people directly, we signpost to other organisations who can help.

In terms of community work, now as G15 Thriving Places, we will continue with many of the activities supported, promoted, or delivered by Drumchapel Thriving Places. As during the past 7 years, we will continue to work with a variety of themes and issues, and, as much as possible, work in partnership with other relevant organisations.

**Evidence of need**

We have now accumulated 7 years of community development work in Drumchapel which have given us more insight into the needs and aspirations of the community. During this time, we produced the “Living in Drumchapel” Report 2018-19, Community Hub Report 2022, the Community Conversation Report 2023, and the Area Partnership Report 2023. This evidence of the need for our work has also given us the opportunity to revisit our vision, aim and objectives, which are:

**Vision:**

We will contribute towards building a more democratic and participatory society based on the values of care, solidarity, and social justice.

**Aim:**

* To bolster the personal and collective empowerment of the people and Third Sector organisations who live and work in the G15 area.

**Objectives:**

* To respond to the findings in our research and reports, with a focus on equality and diversity.
* To contribute towards the mitigation or relief of poverty.
* To promote and exercise participatory democracy.
* To encourage, promote and organise active involvement in the social, economic, political, and environmental development of Drumchapel.
* To stimulate the advancement of critical citizenship and community development.
* To actively engage in activities to relieve those in need whether by reason of age, ill health, disability, financial hardship or other.
* To connect local people to services available.
* To make Drumchapel a happier place to live and work.
* To help the people of Drumchapel become all that they can be.

To reach our aim and objectives, we will engage in a wide range of activities, both on an individual and collective basis. However, as community connectors, our focus is more about collective participatory activities. These activities include support for, or the creation of, relevant forums, whether thematic or issue-based, participatory budgeting, group creation and activities that generate more local control over the individual and collective development of the people of Drumchapel. The uniqueness of G15TP is that, with our ability to dialogue and engage with all organisations in Drumchapel, without excluding anyone, we focus and build on the positive aspects which bring the organisations and the community together.

We regularly revisit what we are doing and reflect upon how the activities we promote, deliver or support are contributing towards reaching our aim and objectives. Our activities imply also creating groups of people who can lead and take forward, under local control, the future social and physical development of Drumchapel. From this perspective, we are clearly prescriptive in our approach linked to creating an alternative narrative and practice to that which the dominant classes in society continue to force upon each one of us. As community development workers, we are contributing to fulfilling our own personal goals in life, supporting each other in solidarity, caring for the community, believing in the possibility of social justice, and generating hope, no matter the obstacles and challenges we encounter.

As a collective of community development workers, our narrative and practice detailed in the activities listed below, is broad-based and encompasses a wide variety of activities that align to our vision and contribute to reaching our aim and objectives. Due to the nature of community work, we will continually revisit our Plan to verify that it is attending to the needs and aspirations of the community.

Four themes emerge from the context within which our plan is situated, and they are:

**Theme 1: Climate Change – Climate Justice**

**Theme 2: War - displacement**

**Theme 3: Austerity - poverty**

**Theme 4: Collectivising - building community**

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| **Theme 1 Climate Change** | | | |
| **Issue** | **Activity** | **Delivery** | **Timescale** |
| Social and Physical Environment | Promote awareness and activities about the physical and social environment. | Organise three seminars, one per year on climate justice and strategic plans for Drumchapel. | April 2024 – April 2027 |
| A clean and healthy place to live and work. | Raise awareness on the benefits of living and working in a healthy place, | \*Participate in 8 litter picks per year  \*Support engagement in the “Growchapel” project  \*Engage in campaigns to promote Drumchapel as a healthy place to live and work | April 2024 - April 2027 |
| Introduce the discussion on Climate Justice in Drumchapel | \*Reduce our carbon footprint.  \*Create awareness on the issue of climate justice | \*Plant 100 trees in Drumchapel over a three-year period  \*Organise a campaign around Climate Justice | April 2024 – April 2027 |
| **Theme 2 War - Displacement** | | | |
| A Welcoming Community | Promote activities to exchange the rich cultural mix in Drumchapel. | \*Increase the offer of ESOL classes locally  \*Organise workshops on intercultural exchange  \*Support different cultural festivities  \*Support weekly gathering at Friendship House | April 2024 – April 2027 |
| Zero Tolerance | Promote positive messages on race, ethnicity & sexuality.  . | \*Produce marketing material (banners, posters, leaflets)  \*Engage in thematic campaigns  \*Engage with the WOW women’s group | April 2024 – April 2027 |
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| **Theme 3 Austerity - Poverty** | | | |
| Access to food, with dignity | Raise the issue of a community pantry in Drumchapel. | Engage in the possibility of establishing a community pantry. | April 2024 - April 2027 |
| Skills building | Increase local people’s ability to intervene in society | \*Engage with schools on relevant themes  \*Deliver 3 GU “Activate” courses in Drumchapel  \*Engage in participatory research activities | April 2024 – April 2027  April 2024 – April 2027  April 2024 – April 2027 |
| Financial hardship | Support with income maximisation | \*Channel residents to DMAC  \*Engage with all housing associations  \*Access funding packages to support families and groups through the cost-of-living crisis | April 2024 – April 2027 |
| **Theme 4 Collectivising - Building Community** | | | |
| Community Participation & Power | Generate more local awareness and control over the development of Drumchapel. | \*Organise 2 community gatherings per year (thematic or general)  \*Promote community budgeting  \*Engage in participatory action research as appropriate | April 2024 – April 2027 |
|  |  |  |  |
| Challenge Isolation & Loneliness | Increase connectivity between local people | \*Organise 2 outings per year  \*Engage with asylum seekers & refugees through weekly gatherings  \*Support specific celebratory cultural events, Christmas, EID and others | April 2024- April 2027  April 2024 – April 2027  April 2024 – April 2027 |
| Community Hubs | Support the creation of a variety of community spaces with a focus on local control | \*Continue to engage in processes around the future of the Community Centre and the Orchard Trust  \*Support the Community Council in decision-making processes about the future development of Drumchapel | April 2024 – April 2027  April 2024 – April 2027 |
| An Informed Community | Inform every household in Drumchapel about services, activities, and organisations available in Drumchapel. | \*Produce 4 newsletters per year to every household in Drumchapel  \*Create a G15 TP website  \*Support and engage with Drumchapel TV | April 2024 – April 2027 |
| Challenge “silo” Working | Incentivise partnership work and networking | \*Guarantee 6 weekly Breakfast & a Blether meetings  \*Participate in relevant networks | April 2024 - April 2027 |

**Outcomes**

* More localised financial support on a weekly basis
* More local people with the ability to maximise their income.
* More localised access to literacy activities, including ESOL.
* Asylum seekers attending ESOL classes and other local people up-skilling their reading and writing thus better prepared to participate in society.
* More information about Drumchapel and the activities ongoing in the area through the Drumchapel News and the community gatherings
* Local people more aware of places, services, and organisations available in Drumchapel
* More possibilities of free recreational activities to support people suffering from mental health issues as well as support for poorer families who are on low incomes and do not have the financial resources to visit other parts of the country or different cultural venues.
* More opportunities to discuss the future of Drumchapel through the community gatherings.
* More opportunities to challenge certain stereotypes and stigmas existing in the community, for example sectarianism, racism, homophobia.
* Increased awareness around issues of discrimination of any sort
* A more friendly and welcoming shopping centre promoting different cultural events.
* Increase in partnership delivery of services.
* Increased sharing and solidarity with New Scots
* Less isolation and more connectivity between neighbours and community members in general.

**Outputs**

* 78 Literacy sessions organised yearly in partnership with Anniesland College or another relevant partner.
* 12 issues of the Drumchapel News delivered to all 7858 households over the three years.
* 2 community gatherings per year promoted around relevant themes.
* 6 outings organised over the three years to tackle isolation.
* Several sessions, in 5 primary schools and 1 High school, on relevant issues and research projects delivered in Drumchapel.
* Paid work for 3 community development workers, directly responsible for the delivery of the plan
* Regular meetings, as required, between workers, the board, and funders.
* Yearly activities and financial reports produced within agreed deadlines.
* Reproduction and dissemination of the Strategic Community Development Plan to local people and organisations, as considered appropriate.
* **Structure & Accountability**

Ever since Thriving Places (TP) initiated in Drumchapel, in 2016, TP has evolved. We have now established a small team of three community development workers with a focus on democracy and local people’s participation. The team consists of Tracy McKenzie, from Drumchapel, with a rich experience in volunteering in the community, Michelle Donaldson, a community activist of many years in Garthamlock, who did her three-year student placement with Thriving Places. Both Tracy and Michelle are University of Glasgow graduates, with Tracy funded until August 2024 through the National Lottery and Michelle funded until March 2024 by the Scottish Refugee Council, both as self-employed workers. Ted Scanlon, the third member of the team, educated to PhD level in community education with international experience in community work, funded through GCC and HSCP until March 2024, is employed by Cernach Housing Association, the Thriving Places host-anchor organisation.

Internally, as a collective of community development workers, we decided to keep our governance as simple as possible and embrace a flat organisational structure. We meet weekly to decide upon the tasks ahead and distribute among ourselves, accordingly. Our intention is to try and reach a consensus on the challenges we face. If this is not possible then we go for a majority vote. Should any issue arise where support out-with the collective is required, we will engage with the board for further guidance.

The collective delivers an update on our activities to the board who meets every two months. At the Breakfast & a Blether sessions, every six weeks the collective informs of the G15TP activities and receives relevant feedback. The collective guarantees the reports to funders within the agreed deadlines and meets with the funders, as required.

* **Costings**

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| **Item** | **Unit** | **Total** |
| Salaries, NI, Pension | £25,100 X 3 workers = £75,300 X 3 Years = £225,900 | £225,900 |
| GCVS & Auditor | £3000 X 3 | £9000 |
| Community Centre rent | £5,600 X 3 | £16,800 |
| Activate Course | £4740 X 3 | £14,220 |
| Outings | £2500 X 3 | £7,500 |
| Seminars/Workshops/Gatherings | £1500 X 3 | £4,500 |
| Drumchapel News | £4000 X 4 X 3 | £48,000 |
| Stationary, IT, Insurance, Petty cash | £7,000 X 3 | £21,000 |
| **Sub Total** |  | **£346,920** |
| Contingency | 5% of £346,920 | £17,346 |
| **Total** |  | **£364,266** |