

Tales of hope: Community-run assets at the centre of community responses to Coronavirus.

Local, community organisations have been at the forefront of the coronavirus response in Scotland. At the [Community Ownership Support Service](#) we are not surprised that many of the groups we work with to take on assets have been so well placed to provide effective support in their communities during this time. Who better to support those who need it than these organisations who know the people and the places they are rooted in so well? We wanted to share just a few stories of what fantastic work these organisations are doing. Maybe they will inspire you, or maybe you are already doing similar work, in which case we would love to hear from you.

Kinning Park Complex, Glasgow

[Kinning Park Complex's Acts of Kindness Project](#) is a coordinated community response to the current situation caused by the coronavirus pandemic. KPC formally took ownership of their community space in an asset transfer in 2018 following a long-term lease. In response to the pandemic, KPC have expanded their regular support list to 86 people, recruited 60 volunteers (and counting!), delivered 20,000 flyers and carried out 100s of acts of organised kindness - from phone calls with the community to delivering food and finding out what else people need.

KPC's emphasis on ensuring the local community has access to the goods, services and support they need has never been more important. The catch ups, food deliveries, dog walking and online activities have all helped the community stay connected during this time.

Martin Avila, Director of Kinning Park Complex said:

As a community asset with existing services, partnerships and links we are in a position to act and support our community. We think it's a really important time for people to reach out and link up with their community owned assets and for the community organisations running the assets to do everything they can to support the communities they serve ”

If you would like to learn more about this fantastic project visit:

<https://www.kinningparkcomplex.org/covid-19>



Food Delivered by Kinning Park in May 2020

The Inverclyde Community Shed, Renfrewshire

Inverclyde Shed submitted an asset transfer request in November 2019. This was agreed by Inverclyde Council in May 2020. Whilst waiting for the outcome of their asset transfer request, members of the Shed have been busy. Despite having to operate in a challenging landscape, volunteers have continued to tend the community garden and organise regular virtual meet-ups.

Inverclyde Shed members have been making links with Sheds and community gardens across Scotland by hosting 'Virtual Sheds' and inviting others to join and share knowledge and learning. Maintaining contact with the Shed's members has helped at a time when social isolation is being felt by people more than ever.

To enhance the community garden beds, volunteers who live within walking distance have used their daily exercise time in the community garden to undertake improvement works.



They have worked alone in a phased and coordinated way to ensure social distancing is observed, with the local gardening centre delivering necessary materials to the garden. Once harvest time comes, the Shed plan to deliver the freshly grown salad vegetables and herbs to local elderly people's homes.



Shore Street Community Garden – Inverclyde Shed

Cowie Rural Action Group (CRAG), Stirlingshire

Since the pandemic started, Cowie Rural Action Group have been working from the Cowie Community Centre, which they manage, to provide frontline support to the local community. This support has taken diverse forms - from preparing meals for older people to delivering 300 Easter eggs to houses in the community. Increasing connections and partnerships across other local organisations in the area has been essential to their success and this collaborative approach to supporting communities is something we hope is here to stay after this challenging time has passed. Groups such as CRAG have been the best placed to be there for their communities at this time. Please read on to hear from the group directly about the fantastic work they have been doing.

“When lockdown was announced CRAG’s first thought was to our older members who attend our Thursday Group; we have between 25 -30 regulars. We got to work preparing meals and delivering these, and quickly got an offer of help from Bella’s Takeaway to make hot meals daily. Word spread and our numbers grew to daily delivery to 68 older residents. Having delivered for 5 weeks, it was clear our small band of volunteers also needed a rest so we ordered 520 ready meals to provide our elderly with a meal for every day and to allow us time to recharge the batteries. Meals have been topped up with bread, eggs, cakes, grocery bags and butcher packs for extra help and support during this time.

We recognised other families in the village would also be in need of help at this time and, through a generous donation from Norbord, we were able to send out a butcher pack to 60 families who were nominated from both primary schools. This help was extended thanks to a grant from Foundation Scotland, so we have now delivered over 160 grocery and butcher packs to families in the village. We made contact with High schools and the Health Centre and asked them to help us help the community by providing to those most in need. We are receiving referrals daily and delivering ad hoc packs to those in need.



Using a community-run asset for good: CRAG prepare food deliveries for people in the community



Butcher and Grocery Bag Delivery

CRAG also want to keep supporting our younger members. We delivered 300 Easter eggs - one to every house that had a rainbow in the front window. Our Facebook is filled with great photos. We needed another competition or activity to keep the kids interested and one of the Cowie United Football Coaches contacted us and offered to donate 200 sunflower packs. Grahame provided seeds, soil, tubs, instruction sheet and colouring pages to keep the kids involved and amused during this time. Grahame delivered all the packs and the photos are flowing onto Facebook with all our young planters showing off their tubs and pictures.

We have been extremely busy over the past weeks, and there is more to come. We plan to deliver activity bags and have linked in with the schools who have provided a printed off pack to go along with the fun filled activity bag. Our daily meals started back up on 4th May and we are hoping to make another round of grocery and butcher packs to those families who are most in need. We are still actively looking for funding to support us.

Thanks to those companies who have helped us achieve so much in such a short time, Bella’s Takeaway, Norbord, Londis, Colin Nicol Butcher, Christine Laurie Butchers, Morrison Supermarket, Kitchen 44 and Strathmore Foods.”

Written by Clare Stevenson, Cowie Rural Action Group.