

Business Workshops

Review of Workshop 1:

The first of two workshops was held in the Cove & Kilcreggan Burgh Hall on Monday 29th January, 4 – 6pm. The aim of these workshops is to bring the business community together to discuss challenges, work collaboratively to find solutions and create an action plan. The second one is being held on Wednesday 21st February, 4 – 6pm.

They are being promoted through personal letter drops, via email, posters in the village, word of mouth and multiple posts on Facebook.

Thirteen local business people attended the first workshop, representing:

- Airbnb hosts
- Innovate Rural
- Short Stay Certified
- Pedalling Peninsula e-bikes
- Kilcreggan garage
- The Creggans Bar
- Potential water taxi business
- Sailing club representative
- Farmer
- Community Council rep
- Medical centre representative
- Cove Burgh Hall rep
- Yvie Vintage shop
- Post office
- Forces family



During workshop 1 we discussed:

- What are the challenges?
- What would we like to see?
- What do we need to do next?

The feedback given from participants is recorded in the SWOT analysis below.

Challenges and vision for the future:

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • C&K's location and beautiful setting • Its accessibility to the water • Its accessibility to wild open spaces • C&K is a 'mini-Scottish destination' • The ferry • The Victorian pier • Its architecture and heritage • Strong community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not enough footfall in local shops and service providers to be sustainable in the long term • Parking in Kilcreggan centre is lacking and often congested, discouraging visitors to stop and visit shops, pub, café etc • Poor transport links • Poor paths network • Poor signage, no advertising • Sits outside the National Park • Businesses tend to be firefighting rather than thinking strategically • To date, businesses have had little collaboration or joint thinking • The villages lack an attractive 'centre' • The villages lack facilities to attract visitors or encourage them to stay • Difficult to source builders and tradesmen • Difficult to attract qualified staff
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a unique selling point for C&K • Create a brand and identity that all the businesses share • Examine parking issues and propose solutions to relevant agencies • Re-invent the centre of Kilcreggan • Have better signage to the villages and within them • Investigate early start-up and microbusiness support • Promote the villages and what they offer visitors eg advertising, website, leaflets etc • Promote the villages to ferry users • Improve transport links eg connectivity, water taxis etc 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Footfall continues to drop until businesses become unsustainable • Lack of signage confuses potential visitors • Parking issues continue to put potential visitors off (arrive at village and cannot find anywhere to stop) • Transport links are not improved • Ferry service is discontinued • Population decline • No jobs for younger people, so they move away

- Improve communication between businesses and the community
- Create marketing tools that all the businesses share
- Create an informal Business Improvement District to encourage collaboration, joined up thinking etc
- Target visitors / markets eg activity market, grey pound etc
- Develop community hub
- Use C&K's unique connection with the water as a selling point
- Set up a gift card scheme to keep the money local
- Develop a community petrol station and fast charging EV points
- Develop e-bike stations
- Create a 'C&K building company
- Grow the list of annual events eg shop window decorations, Halloween etc
- Encourage pilot projects – experiment. See what works and doesn't work
- Improve the paths and connectivity between C&K
- Training opportunities for apprentices (garage already does this)

What will be discussed in Workshop 2?

Case Study

Dornoch Visitor Management Plan

The Plan (2020 – 2021) sought to establish a sustainable approach to improving the way visitors to Dornoch enjoy its special qualities and their impact on the local environment, community and businesses. **It brought together ideas from businesses and the community, providing some “joined up thinking”.**

Issues and possible solutions were identified through engagement and consultation with:

- the community,
- Dornoch Area Community Interest Company (DACIC),
- Dornoch Focus Group, Dornoch Area Community Council (DACC),
- tourism businesses,
- The Highland Council, including traffic management & control
- Highlands and Island Enterprise (HIE) and
- Other community representatives.

Summary of Action Plan

Communication and capacity were seen as key. Adding information to the Dornoch websites and social media allowed visitors to plan their trip before arriving. Information on where to park and where facilities are located, was mirrored by the local signage. Capacity issues were tackled in the short term by looking at areas that could be used as overflow car parks and for overnight parking. Improving the layout and information at current parking hotspots has also been reviewed.

Short term solutions



Long term solutions



Next steps for C&K Business Group:

(TO BE DISCUSSED IN WORKSHOP 2)

PHASE 1 – DEVELOPMENT OF C&K BUSINESS GROUP				
Area	Projects	Proposed Lead	Potential Funding	Indicative and Desirable Timescales
Plan schedule & agree objectives of the group	Create timetable of meetings. Decide what you want to achieve eg ‘To improve the business environment in C&K; attract more investment; attract more visitors, work collaboratively etc.’	C&K BG	C&K Our Community	April 2024
Increase capacity of the group	Promote the group and its objectives to other local businesses, including non-forward facing.	C&K BG		April 2024
Create a project priority list	Examine previous stakeholder consultations eg through C&K Our Community / SKS and combine with the insight and knowledge of C&K BG to create priority list	C&K BG		May 2024
Create working processes	Eg consider having small (2-3 people) working groups to focus on individual priorities eg <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Visitor & market analysis ● Parking ● Branding ● Website ● Events 	C&K BG		July 2024
Identify possible solutions	Approach external agencies (A&B Council, MOD, Police Scotland) to discuss issues and possible solutions	C&K BG		September 2024
Feed into Local Place Plan				

PHASE 2 –INDIVIDUAL PRIORITIES EG PARKING				
Agree solution routes	Discuss plan of action with relevant agencies	C&K BG & others		September 2024
Online Communications	Add parking and other visitor info to relevant websites & Social Media – repeat posts regularly	C&K BG	DACIC & DACC	Late 2024
Car Parks	Carry out necessary works to improve existing car parks, control parking in existing car parks, add additional capacity	A&B Council / C&K BG	A&B Council (Local Roads)	2025
Information Signage	To direct traffic to the most suitable areas.	Designed and installed by A&B Council (Local Roads)	A&B Council (Local Roads)	2025
Etc, etc....				