

CARES CASE STUDY



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MURIESTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

BACKGROUND

Murieston Community Council wanted to create a Community Action Plan. The area will soon be able to access community benefits from nearby wind farms; a Community Action Plan will outline the community's vision and provide a strategy on how to achieve it.

Project name: Murieston Community Council

Location: Murieston district of Livingston, West Lothian

CARES funding: Enablement Grant £9,912



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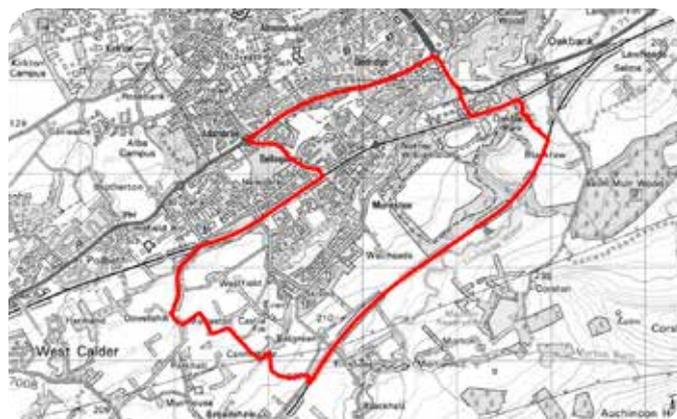


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PROJECT AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Murieston is a district on the southern edge of Livingston, West Lothian. Murieston Community Council applied for CARES funding to support the creation of a Community Action Plan.

The area will soon be able to access community benefits from nearby wind farms; the community intends to set up a development trust which will provide the framework to access and manage these community benefits for Murieston.

In order to identify the community's needs and priorities, the community council commissioned Community Enterprise consultants to produce a Community Action Plan; this will outline the community's vision and provide a strategy on how to achieve it.

The plan will not only document the aspirations of residents, voluntary groups and businesses, but will also plan projects that will make a

difference to the whole community, in the short and longer term. A plan will also make sure that any monies received, and any other funding sources that may be available, are put to the best use in the community to make it a great place to live, work and visit.

OUTCOMES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

The community was keen to build on consultation work already undertaken to create an exciting and ambitious Community Action Plan that reflects the wants and needs of local people.

To find out what people thought should be the priorities for Murieston, an online survey was conducted. Paper questionnaires were also available at several commercial premises, ensuring that anyone who preferred this method could participate. Meetings were held with key stakeholders, elected members and community groups, drop-in events were hosted, and forums were held with children at the local primary and secondary schools.

The results of the survey were discussed with local community groups, organisations and school pupils. Feedback received was then collated and used to prepare the Community Action Plan. At the end of February an initial draft plan was outlined at a public drop-in session held at Murieston Village Hall, where members of the community could give their views and feedback on the plan.

At the time of writing (March 2020) the Community Action Plan is in the process of being finalised and

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will be published by Community Enterprise at the end of the month. Once it is published, work will begin on promoting the plan's vision and strategy.

So far, residents have indicated that they would like to see:

- The creation of a café/ community hub possibly run by the community or a local organisation (a link has been suggested to the local Cricket Club)
- Protection and maintenance of green spaces including tree planting and grass cutting
- Traffic calming measures and increased parking provision
- More activities and groups for toddlers, children, young people and their parents and carers
- Improved and extended walking paths, including installation of better lighting
- More bins and seating areas installed on walking paths e.g. picnic areas, fire pits, BBQ areas
- A new pub/restaurant in the local area
- A stronger community voice on local development issues.

LESSONS LEARNED

A spokesperson for Murieston Community Council said:

“The process has been less demanding than we expected, primarily because Community Enterprise has operated without need for much direction and involvement from members of the Development Trust Steering Group. This is mainly

as a result of them using an established framework for consulting the community and developing the Community Action Plan. The overall experience has been positive, with no real downside.”

“In terms of lessons learned so far:

- A few community groups and facilities decided not to engage with the consultation; however, these organisations provide services covering a single activity and are not central to the overall community action strategy.
- Community events, such as the Burns Supper and pub quiz, are a good way to converse directly with members of the public. There weren't many events taking place in Murieston during the consultation period, and more would have provided a better opportunity for direct engagement with the community.
- Reaching people who do not use digital media services can be challenging, as this generally requires more resource and cost. One way of addressing this is doing a leaflet drop to households, but the project budget meant that only 15% of Murieston households could be covered in this way. We put paper-based surveys at the local shop, medical practice and so on, and these were used by a several residents who preferred to use this form of response. Community Enterprise also visited the local 50 Plus group to consult members.”

To find out more about funding from the Community and Renewable Energy Scheme, visit localenergy.scot/funding

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