Drongan, Rankinston & Stair

Prepared by Drongan, Rankinston and Stair Community Action Plan Steering Group

Our Vision is to be an area proud of its identity, that is flourishing and prosperous, where our community aspires to greater things while working together.

Community Action Plan 2014 - 2019

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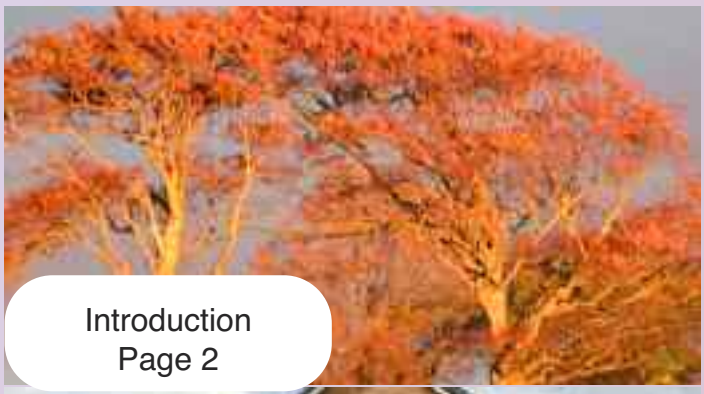

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I live in little Rankinston that sits on Ayrshire Hills
The sight of it might sadden some but me with joy it fills
For Rankinston it is my home and home is sweet to me
In all the world, less Rankinston, means more than naught to me

John McKelvie

Introduction

DRONGAN, RANKINSTON AND STAIR COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

This community Action Plan summarises the community views about:

- Drongan, Rankinston and Stair now.
- The vision for the future.
- The issues that matter most to the communities.
- The priorities for projects and action.

The plan is our guide for what we as a community will try to make happen over the next five years.

DRONGAN, RANKINSTON & STAIR COMMUNITY STEERING GROUP

The preparation of the Action Plan has been guided by a local steering group which brought together representation from the Community Council, the three Community Associations, Drongan Primary School, Shaw Kirk, the Premier Store, Rankinston Mother and Toddler group, young people and local residents.

LOCAL PEOPLE HAVE THEIR SAY

The Action Plan has been informed by extensive community engagement carried out over a six month period from December 2013 to May 2014.

The process involved:

- Stakeholder interviews with different groups and individuals representing all aspects and ages of the community.
- A community views survey, which was delivered to all households.
- Young people's survey, conducted through the primary and secondary schools and youth club.
- Preparing a community profile detailing facts and figures about the community.
- A Community Event.

SURVEY RETURNS

486 community views surveys from 1207 houses

70 surveys from primary schools

58 surveys from young people aged 12-17

20 stakeholder meetings

222 people attended the Community Event and voted on their top projects for action.

Thanks to everyone who took part - it's a great response and gives weight to the priorities identified in this plan!

Our Community Now

Facts and Figures

We have summarised below some of the main facts and figures from the Community Profile - from which a report was produced by the Steering Group to give a picture of Drongan, Rankinston and Stair now.

Drongan originally known as Taiglum, is a former mining village situated on the western edge of Ayrshire, some 8 miles from Ayr and 8 miles from Cumnock. In 1946, it was proposed that Drongan should be developed as a 'new town' and families from various small mining communities were also re-housed in Drongan.

Rankinston is situated approximately 12 miles south-east of the town of Ayr. The village was built to allow coal miners who worked in the local pits to have housing close to their work. The village has gone from a bustling mining village with over 800 residents to a rural village of approximately 260 residents.

Stair is located midway between the villages of Mauchline, Ochiltree, Drongan and Tarbolton. The River Ayr serves as a boundary to the north and west of the locality.

The area is mostly agricultural with some spectacular scenery. It has been identified as a **' hidden treasure'** of East Ayrshire.

POPULATION

The population of Drongan has declined over the past decade from 3,003 in 2001 to 2921 in the 2011 Census. The largest population reduction is reported in the number of children being reduced by 13.7% in the last 10 years. The number of pensioners has increased by 16.6% over the same period.

Please Note: there is limited information available on Stair and Rankinston through the 2011 Census.

It's how things were
With those unchanging ways
To be a cobbler boy
For the rest of your days

Our Community Now

Facts and Figures

HOUSING

- **Drongan** reports to have a lower level of owner occupied housing than the East Ayrshire and Scottish average. As a result the area reports a higher level of local authority renting. Irvine Housing Association currently own 194 properties with no plans for future development at the moment. Over the past 10 years Hope Homes developed 250 private houses in the area.
- **Rankinston** East Ayrshire Council has 122 properties.
- **Stair** is a dispersed community consisting of over 100 private homes.

EDUCATION

Pre-Schools /Primary Schools

- Drongan Primary and Early Childhood Centre.
- Littlemill Primary and Early Childhood Centre.
- Jacaranda Nursery (private).

Secondary Schools

- Auchinleck Academy.
- Doon Academy.

Further Education

- Ayrshire Colleges (Ayr, Kilmarnock & Cumnock Annex).
- University of West of Scotland (Ayr).

EMPLOYMENT

Loss of the deep coal mining and manufacturing industries has had a major affect on the communities and has taken its toll on the economy. Unemployment is traditionally higher than the East Ayrshire and Scottish averages in Drongan and Rankinston. However, there are a variety of shops and businesses in the area which have provided local employment and training opportunities, e.g. Hope Homes, Glenbuild, R.W. Brown, Stair Inn, Gemmells Garden Centre, beef, dairy and poultry farming and two fisheries.

HEALTH CARE SERVICES

- Taiglum Medical Practice provides GP and primary care services within Drongan.
- Riverside Medical Practice provides a weekly service to Rankinston for GP and primary care.
- East Ayrshire Council provide care at home and community alarms.
- Rowantree Court Sheltered Housing unit provides 18 flats with onsite care and activities to suit the residents.
- The nearest hospitals are Cumnock, Crosshouse and Ayr.

COMMUNITY AND RECREATION

Community Facilities

- **Three Community Centres:** Drongan, Rankinston and Stair.
- **Churches:** Schaw Kirk, St Clare's Chapel and Stair Church.
- **Sport Facilities:** An Astro Turf, Games Hall, football pitches and sports cages in Drongan and Rankinston.
- **Library Facilities:** Drongan.

Community Groups and Activities include:

- **Drongan Games Hall:** Taekwondo, Youth Club and gym.
- **Drongan Community Centre:** Junior and Senior flute bands, Arts and Crafts, Zumba, Somme group, Careers Officer, Computers, dancing, bingo, dog club, fishing club and Drongan Community Association.
- **Rankinston Community Centre:** Knit and Natter, Baby Boot Camp, Carpet Bowls, Unemployed/ Retirement Group, Coffee morning, bingo, crafts and Rankinston Community Association.
- **Stair Community Centre:** Trabboch Fiddlers, Mauchline Young Farmers, SWRI, Social Club, Craft Club, Crosshill Bowlers Club, Stair Parish Church. Ayrshire District Young Farmers Club and Stair Community Association.

Did you know?... Barskimming Mill was one of the largest water-powered corn mills in Ayrshire.

Our Community Now

Facts and Figures

HERITAGE AND ENVIRONMENT

Drongan
In the 1390s, Drongan lands were granted to the Craufurds whose stronghold for 250 years was Drongan Castle. The estate passed to the Cunninghams then to the Earl of Stair. Around 1760, the Drongan Estate was purchased by the Smith family who built Drongan House and set up a pottery near Coalhall. The village developed through the early coal mine industry and by 1900 consisted of 65 houses.

Sites of special significance include an old Granary Mill and the Trysting Thorn, originally a roadside hawthorn, mentioned in Robert Burns' poem 'The Soldier's Return'.

Environmental Assets include Hannahston, Sinclairston and Kyle Woods. Water features to be found in this area are the Water of Coyle, Drumbowie Burn, Taiglum Burn, River Ayr, Hannahston Pond and Loch Shield (drained).

Stair and the Barony of Trabboch
The lands of Trabboch were first recorded between 1303-1304. King Robert the Bruce gave Trabboch Castle to the Boyds of Kilmarnock for services rendered at Bannockburn in 1314. By 1451, the lands had passed to William, Earl of Douglas and later to the Boswells of Auchinleck.The hamlet of Trabboch was built as a miners' village in the 1880s and at one time it had 94 dwellings with a population of around 430. Trabboch pit closed in 1908 and the miners' rows stood until demolition in 1969, when many of the villagers were moved to Drongan.

Other places of interest include Stair School, located in Trabboch, with as many as 150-200 pupils, later became Stair Community Centre serving the local community to date. Stair House was built in the mid-15th century by the Dalrymple family. The church was first built in 1706 and replaced with it's existing building in 1864.

Twa Brigs - Stair Brig is a three-arch bridge built in 1745 to cross the river Ayr and is located near Stair Inn and in 1700 was a place for farmers to meet and sell their cattle. The Barskimming Mill Bridge is located on the Barskimming road and is associated with Robert Burns in the poem 'Man Was Made To Mourn'.

Environmental Assets include the forests and woodlands of Stair, Pant, Wyndford and Barskimming. Stair nestles at the bottom of a glen beside the River Ayr which is joined by the Glenstang Burn. Other water features include Water of Coyle, Trabboch Loch and the Loch of Stair.

Rankinston
On a clear day, Rankinston offers outstanding panoramic views over the Doon Valley, that stretch north 20 miles over the towns of Ayr, Prestwick and Troon with some fantastic views of Arran.

Environmental Assets include easy access to many forest walks and water features, such as Belston Loch and the Dookie.

Interesting Facts during the reign of Robert the Bruce, tradesmen, merchants and farmers were encouraged from the continent to settle in Scotland in an attempt to improve the country. A Flemish family by the name of Rankin acquired the lands of Mill O' Shiel and it is thought that this is where Rankinston gets its name.

At length I reach'd the bonie glen,
Where early life I sported;
I pass'd the mill and trysting thorn,
Where Nancy aft I courted;

Robert Burns

Our Community Now

Likes

486 responses were made by local residents of all ages in our Community Views Survey. The results help to inform this action plan. Here is what people liked about the community now ..... and what they were not keen on!

Community Spirit	**28%**
Community Events, Group and Facilities	**28%**
Access to Public Services	**24%**
Surrounding Countryside	**24%**
Nature of the Village	**20%**
Local Shops and Amenities	**15%**
Village Appearance	**7%**
Location	**4%**
Heritage and History	**1%**

What People Said:

Stair

'Residents are friendly'.
'The community centre is friendly'.
'A lovely church'.
'Tranquil and peaceful'.
'Good standard of living'.
'A hidden treasure'.
'Agricultural roots'.
'Opportunity for walks and wildlife'.
'Rural setting but not in the middle of nowhere'.

Rankinston

'A sense of community'.
'Peace and quiet'.
'Quiet, safe place to live'.
'Country walks are great'.
'Beautiful views and scenery'.
'Location is best I've seen in years'.
'Good wee school'.

Drongan

'Friendly community that works together'.
'People stick together in a crisis'.
'Great education and brilliant school'.
'Allows people to expand their social circle'.
'People acknowledge you in the street'.
'Good selection of shops'.
'Great access to the countryside'.

Those far off days of years ago
Runnin' aboot Trabboch's Rows
Happy, joyous, childhood days
Only a memory away

Our Community Now

Dislikes

Roads, Traffic and Parking	32%
Village Appearance	29%
Access to Services	25%
Local Economy	17%
Lack of Facilities, Activities and Events	15%
Lack of Activities for Young People	14%
Community Safety	13%
People's Perception	6%
Housing Development and Infrastructure	3%

What People Said:

Rankinston

'Run down'.
'Buildings needing demolished'.
'The way the village has been neglected'.
'Rural roads need attention'.
'Too many people taking drugs and alcohol'.
'Terrible transport timetable'.
'Isolated'.
'Lack of facilities'.
'No shop, jobs, work, gas, pub or bowling green'.
'Totally neglected'.
'Dumping ground'.
'Poor signage'.

Drongan

'Entrance to village is a mess'.
'Derelict buildings need addressed'.
'Gardens untidy'.
'People throwing rubbish in burn'.
'Parking at school could be improved'.
'Uneven pavements need addressed'.
'Potholes on roads are disgraceful'.
'Nothing for young people to do'.
'Facilities closing down'.
'No employment opportunities'.

Stair

'Flytipping'.
'Narrow roads'.
'Hedges and ditches not maintained properly'.
'Lack of police presence'.
'No bus service'.
'Lack of recycling facilities'.
'Gravestones poorly maintained'.
'Poor broadband / no signal',
'Cold community centre'.

Memories of bygone days
We now live in different ways
A modern world, treats us proudly
This we acclaim, oh so loudly

Our Vision for the Future

Drongan, Rankinston & Stair 2020

Our Vision is to be an area proud of its identity, that is flourishing and prosperous, where our community aspires to greater things while working together.

This statement has been prepared to summarise the main aspirations for the future as expressed by local people and organisations in their replies to the survey and stakeholder interviews.

Drongan

- *'An uplifting and colourful place that would be of benefit for the caring and devoted community who live there'.*
- *'A clean conservation village that people want to visit, stay and work in'.*
- *'A village suited to all age groups with facilities to attract people to live here'.*
- *'A happy and prosperous place with plenty of work for everyone'.*
- *'More energy efficiency to help people save on their fuel bills'.*
- *'More vibrant and full of life'.*

Rankinston

- *'A well maintained safe environment to live, with proper walkways and better amenities'.*
- *'Drug free with social activities that has prospects for a prosperous future'.*
- *'Growing, thriving community with employment and facilities'.*
- *A quiet well kept village with walking and picnic areas'.*

Stair

- *'To maintain its rural identity'.*
- *'Local wildlife and habitats being nurtured and enjoyed by everyone at Trabboch Loch'.*
- *'A community garden or community activities'.*
- *'A bus service along the B730'.*
- *'A tourist attraction'.*
- *'Stair is a hidden treasure that could be developed into a rural visitors attraction'.*

Main Strategies and Priorities

These are the main strategies and priorities identified by the local community through profiles, surveys and interviews, which were further prioritised at the Community Event.

THEME 1: IMPROVING VILLAGE APPEARANCE AND OPEN SPACES

Stakeholder Comment: *'The village of Drongan has the potential for investment due to locality'.*

Main Priorities

- Provide more dog and litter bins.
- Clean up burn and identify plans to improve the area.
- Work with EAC and businesses to improve/remove derelict buildings.
- Encourage house and garden clean-up.
- Improve all entrances to village.

THEME 2: IMPROVE COMMUNITY FACILITIES/ SERVICES

Stakeholder Comment: *'More facilities for socialising and a village with more employment opportunities'.*

Main Priorities

- Develop facilities for young people.
- Astro Turf to be open more.
- Improve Broadband.
- Upgrade Nursery provision.
- Develop a Community Hub incorporating sport.
- Retain existing facilities and services.
- Reduce letting costs in educational establishments.

Main Strategies and Priorities

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THEME 3: OUTDOOR PLAY AND RECREATION

Stakeholder comments: *'A healthier village with more sporting activities and upgrade of properties'.*

'Community spirit lifted, with more facilities in place which would make it a better place to live in and visit'.

Main Priorities

- Upgrade and develop parks and picnic areas.
- Upgrade sports facilities and pitches.
- Develop a cycle path between Sinclairston and Hayhill.
- Promote healthy lifestyles through walking and cycling.
- Re-develop waste grounds for gardens and picnic area.

THEME 4: ROADS, TRAFFIC, PARKING AND TRANSPORT

Stakeholder comment: 'For roads to be improved to help the farming industry which could develop more opportunities for young people'.

Main Priorities

- Improve maintenance on all roads and paths.
- Safe walking and cycle routes.
- Introduce a rural bus service.
- Better parking in all areas.
- Explore traffic calming measures.
- Better signage.
- Better passing places on country roads.

THEME 5: ECONOMY AND TOURISM

Stakeholder comments: '*Stair is a **hidden treasure** that could be developed into a rural visitors attraction'.*

'There is room for improvement to tourism , walkways and picnic areas that will encourage young people into full time employment and attract new businesses in all areas'.

Main Priorities

- Potential shop in Rankinston.
- Develop training opportunities within the communities.
- Encourage investment to all areas.
- Raise the profile of Drongan, Rankinston and Stair.
- Re-develop old buildings to encourage new businesses to the area.
- Introduce tourist attraction/heritage/ history museum.
- Support local businesses regarding contracts and opportunities.

Did you know?...there used to be a railway station at Trabboch and it was possible to travel to Edinburgh without changing trains

Action

A guide to the first steps to be taken over the next 5 years in all areas

Theme 1: Improving Village Appearance and Open Spaces	
Priority 1	**Provide more Dog and Litter Bins.** • Display signs throughout the village. • Investigate fines for leaving a mess. • Hold a community litter pick. • Involve schools.
Action by	*Drongan, Rankinston & Stair Steering Group / Community Council*
Priority 2	**Clean up Taiglum Burn and Identify Plans to Improve the Surrounding Area.** • Work with East Ayrshire Council and residents to have a clean up. • Consider environmental engagement.
Action by	*Drongan, Rankinston & Stair Steering Group/Community Council.*
Priority 3	**Improve / Remove Derelict Buildings.** • Liaise with East Ayrshire Council and local businesses. • Identify potential areas of improvement in all areas.
Action by	*Drongan, Rankinston & Stair Steering Group/Community Council.*
Priority 4	**Encourage House and Garden Clean up.** • Introduce a nice, neat, neighbourhood competition. • Work with garden projects to identify people needing help to clear up their garden/home.
Action by	*Drongan, Rankinston & Stair Steering Group/Community Council.*
Priority 5	**Improve Entrances to all Areas.** • Identify funding to buy miners' memorial objects, plaques or signs.
Action by	*Drongan, Rankinston & Stair Steering Group/Community Council.*

Theme 2: Improving Community Facilities / Services	
Priority 1	**Develop Facilities for Young People.** • Liaise with school, youth club and develop a youth committee / forum.
Action by	*Drongan, Rankinston & Stair Steering Group.*
Priority 2	**Astro Turf to be Open More.** • Liaise with East Ayrshire Council and negotiate times. • Introduce volunteering opportunities.
Action by	*Drongan, Rankinston & Stair Steering Group.*
Priority 3	**Improve Broadband.** • Investigate opportunities to improve broadband in all areas. • Engage with service providers.
Action by	*Drongan, Rankinston & Stair Steering Group.*
Priority 4	**Develop Community Hub Incorporating Sport.** • Integrate all sports activities clubs into one hub. • Develop an action group to drive forward.
Action by	*Drongan, Rankinston & Stair Steering Group.*

Action

A guide to the first steps to be taken over the next 5 years in all areas

Theme 3: Outdoor Play and Recreation	
Priority 1	**Upgrade and Develop Parks and Picnic Areas.** • Work with young people and garden projects to assist with renovations / training. • Liaise with East Ayrshire Council and businesses for funding and opportunities.
Action by	*Drongan, Rankinston & Stair Steering Group / Community Council*
Priority 2	**Upgrade Sport Facilities and Pitches.** • Contact East Ayrshire Council regarding upgrade. • Set up a group of volunteers to assist.
Action by	*Drongan, Rankinston & Stair Steering Group / Community Council.*
Priority 3	**Promote Healthy Lifestyles Through Walking and Cycling.** • To develop safe walking and cycling paths. • Distribute safe walking and cycling posters. • Set up a safe walking and cycling group.
Action by	*Drongan, Rankinston & Stair Steering Group / Community Council.*

Theme 4: Roads, Traffic, Parking and transport	
Priority 1	**Improve Maintenance on all Roads and Paths.** • Liaise with East Ayrshire Council regarding improvements. • Inspect roads and paths on regular basis and report to East Ayrshire Council.
Action by	*Drongan, Rankinston & Stair Steering Group / Community Council.*
Priority 2	**Introduce a Rural Bus Service.** • Lobby for better bus service from Rankinston to Drongan to Stair to Ayr. • Liaise with Strathclyde Passenger Transport. • Lobby for a better timetable from Rankinston.
Action by	*Drongan, Rankinston & Stair Steering Group / Community Council.*
Priority 3	**Explore Traffic Calming Measures.** • Work with community police officers to identify hot spots. • Look into working more closely with police. • Explore calming measures.
Action by	*Drongan, Rankinston & Stair Steering Group / Community Council.*
Priority 4	**Better Signage.** • Liaise with East Ayrshire Council regarding better signs in all areas. • Work with schools to develop an Art competition regarding areas.
Action by	*Drongan, Rankinston & Stair Steering Group / Community Council.*

Action

A guide to the first steps to be taken over the next 5 years in all areas

Theme 5: Local Economy and Tourism	
Priority 1	**Potential Shop in Rankinston.** • Lobby for a community shop. • Work with residents to identify the need for a shop.. • Identify potential businesses that are looking to invest in all areas.
Action by	*Drongan, Rankinston & Stair Steering Group / Community Council.*
Priority 2	**Develop Training Opportunities within the Communities.** • Liaise with Skills Development Employability Service regarding training opportunities. • Liaise with East Ayrshire Council Adult Learning. • Work with Department of Works and Pensions regarding people into employment. • Liaise with external trainers.
Action by	*Drongan, Rankinston & Stair Steering Group / Community Council.*
Priority 3	**Encourage Investment into the Area.** • Liaise with businesses. • Promote vacant premises. • Promote all areas. • Raise the profile of all areas.
Action by	*Drongan, Rankinston & Stair Steering Group / Community Council.*
Priority 4	. **Introduce a Tourist Attraction incorporating History.** • Develop a mining museum / trail. • Work with schools to include young people on a history project.
Action by	*Drongan, Rankinston & Stair Steering Group / Community Council.*

The wireless on, it's Saturday nicht,
Wear the McFlannels by paraffin licht,
Then clear the flair for Scottish dancin
Whirlin', birlin', hoochin', prancin'.

James Conn

Making it Happen

WORKING TOGETHER FOR DRONGAN, RANKINSTON & STAIR

Local groups will continue to work together to take forward the priorities within the Action Plan. Any local community group, business or willing individuals would be most welcome to join us.

WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

The projects listed here will be progressed by the local residents and community organisations with the support of a wide range of partners including East Ayrshire Council, Police Scotland, NHS and Scottish Government.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED AND CONTACT INFORMATION

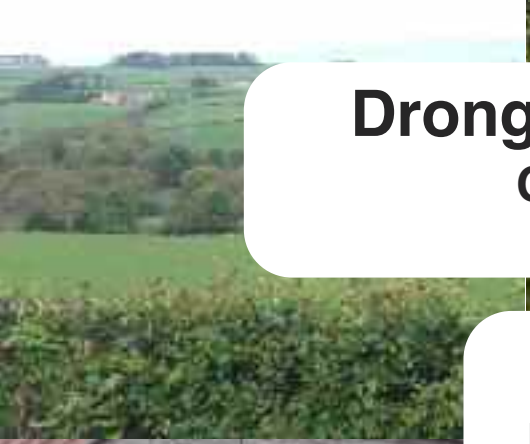
As a practical way of taking things forward we will be setting up a number of small action groups to lead on each aspect of this plan. If you are interested and want to be involved please contact:

ACTION PLAN THEMES	CONTACT	
	Name	Telephone
Improving Village Appearance and Open Spaces	Sherrie Findlay	07867581903
Improve Community Facilities/ Services	Tommy Farrell	(01292) 591449
Outdoor Play and Recreation	Joe Roney	(01292) 590159
Roads, Traffic, Parking and Transport	Linda Hair	(01292) 591708
Local Economy and Tourism	Steve Byford	(01292) 592462

Drongan, Rankinston & Stair

Community Action Plan

2014 - 2019



This Community Action Plan sets out the priorities for the development of Drongan, Rankinston & Stair over the next 5 years as determined by the community through an extensive process of community engagement organised and led by local community groups and local residents and carried out over a six month period from December 2013 to May 2014.

The Plan contains:

- A summary of our Community Profile.
- Our main likes and dislikes as identified in our Community Views Survey.
- Our Vision Statement for the future of Drongan, Rankinston & Stair.
- The main Themes and Priorities for Action.
- Information on how you can stay in touch and get involved.

This plan is for the whole community and is jointly owned by all the organisations and individuals that took part in its preparation. We will be working together to ensure its implementation over the next 5 years.

Thanks to all those who took the time to share their views and to all who gave their time voluntarily to be part of the Steering Group. Thanks to the Vibrant Communities team of East Ayrshire Council who supported the Steering Group in carrying out all aspects of the work involved in preparing this plan.

East Ayrshire Community Led Action Planning is based on the Community Futures Programme designed and supported by STAR Development Group
www.stardevelopmentgroup.org