

NETHERTHIRD, CRAIGENS & SKERRINGTON

COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN 2015 - 2020



Developed by

**Netherthird, Craigens & Skerrington
Community Action Plan Steering Group**

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INTRODUCTION

Netherthird, Craigens & Skerrington Community Action Plan Steering Group

The development of this Community Action Plan has been led by a local Steering Group which brought together representatives from Cumnock Landward Age Concern; Cumnock Landward Community Association; Four Connections Mother & Toddlers; Four Connections Youth Project; Netherthird & District Community Council; Netherthird Community Garden; Skerrington, Craigens & Netherthird Fun Day (SCAN); Skerrington & Netherthird Co-operative Women's Guild; Netherthird and District Wives & Mothers and active local community residents.

Giving Local People A Voice / Their Say

During the eight month period between March 2014 to October 2014, the Steering Group has undertaken an extensive community engagement process taking into account the views and ideas of local residents, voluntary community groups and partners with an interest in the development of Netherthird, Craigens & Skerrington Community Action Plan.

The process involved:

- A community views survey of every household within the area
- A young people's survey conducted through Netherthird Primary School and Cumnock Academy
- A series of 1:1 stakeholder interviews and focus groups
- Preparation of a community profile
- A community open event that enabled local residents to refine the priorities identified for the benefit of the community



419 COMMUNITY VIEWS SURVEY FORMS WERE RETURNED FROM **1044** HOUSEHOLDS.

99 SURVEY FORMS WERE RETURNED FROM THE PRIMARY SCHOOL.

70 SURVEY FORMS WERE RETURNED FROM YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 12 - 17.

29 STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS AND FOCUS GROUPS WERE HELD WITH LOCAL GROUPS, BUSINESSES AND SUPPORT ORGANISATIONS.

262 PEOPLE ATTENDED THE COMMUNITY EVENT.

Thanks to everyone who took part. It's a great response and gives weight to the priorities identified within this plan.

OUR COMMUNITY NOW FACTS & FIGURES

We have summarised below some of the main facts and figures from the Community Profile that was produced by the Steering Group to give a picture of Netherthird, Craigs & Skerrington now.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION AND HISTORY

This is a fairly new community of under 70 years of age. The first houses were built at Skerrington, with the bulk of the houses in Netherthird commencing in 1951.

The estate was built mainly to re-house families from the outlying villages of Skares and Glengyron that were being demolished. The houses were also required to provide accommodation for miners and their families coming into the area from Fife and Lanark to man the new deep mines at Barony and Killoch, now long since closed.

ENVIRONMENT

The area sits on the southernmost outskirts of Cumnock surrounded by open countryside and farmland. The farms are made up mostly of mixed farms i.e. cattle, sheep and crops. Glaisnock Water and Holm Burn provide a habitat for fish, amphibians and insects.

Barshare Wood, Velvetere Wood near Glaisnock House and Ryderston Belt are some of several wooded areas which provide habitat for local wildlife and birds.

Barshare Wood is mostly made up of pine trees and is home to rabbits and wood pigeons. It is next to a river walk which has a variety of plants and trees surrounding it which encourages a variety of different birds to the area.

POPULATION & HOUSING

The population of the area currently served by the Netherthird & District Community Council stands at 2499. There are few empty houses and larger house sizes have lower occupancy than in the past, however construction of two new developments has enabled the population to remain fairly stable.

The Community Action Plan Steering Group identified 1044 residential properties within the area.

The social housing stock is 50-60 years old with the exception of James Young Avenue, which is younger. The majority of the social housing stock is managed by Shire Housing Association with the remainder managed by East Ayrshire Council and a small minority by private landlords. As the area was built to house larger families apart from the elderly complex, only a small quantity of three apartments are available.



EDUCATION

Primary School:

Netherthird Primary School and Early Childhood Centre

Secondary Schools:

Cumnock Academy (Cumnock)
St Joseph's Academy (Kilmarnock)

Further Education:

Ayrshire Colleges (Ayr, Kilmarnock and Cumnock Annex)
University of the West of Scotland (Ayr Campus)



OUR COMMUNITY NOW

FACTS & FIGURES

SOCIAL & COMMUNITY

Indoor facilities

Netherthird Community Centre
Glaisnock Valley Bowling Club
Four Connections
Mobile Library Service (once a week)
Netherthird Primary School
and Early Childhood Centre

Outdoor facilities

Netherthird Community Garden
Glaisnock Valley Bowling Green
Multi Use Games Area (MUGA)
Playing Fields and Pavilion
Children's Play Parks – Netherthird & Craigens
Murray Park



TRANSPORT & ROADS

Sitting just at the main A76 road there is good access by car to Cumnock town centre and surrounding towns, however the access by bus service is very limited. A community transport service is offered to local groups through Coalfield Community Transport and dial-a-bus, which is managed through SPT to provide:

- Recreational and social activities.
- Access to local facilities including health centres and shopping centres.
- Visiting friends and hospital visiting.

Concerns have been raised over safety issues for buses entering the residential area, mounting kerbs and manoeuvring through parked cars. This also causes damage to pavements and kerbs that already require repair.

Drainage issues have been highlighted in Netherthird mainly at Glaisnock Valley Bowling Green, Netherthird Play Park, Netherthird Communal Car Park and the Playing Fields.

HEALTH & WELLBEING

The nearest doctor's surgery is in Cumnock. The practice offers an extended hours service and provides a variety of primary care services and specialist clinics.

There is a local community hospital based in Cumnock, however, there is no accident and emergency service available. The closest accident and emergency service is available at Ayr or Crosshouse Hospitals.

There is no local pharmacy in Netherthird. The closest pharmacies are Lloyds (x2), both based in Cumnock and a privately owned pharmacy based in Logan. All pharmacies offer a delivery service and repeat prescription service through the Tanyard Medical Practice.

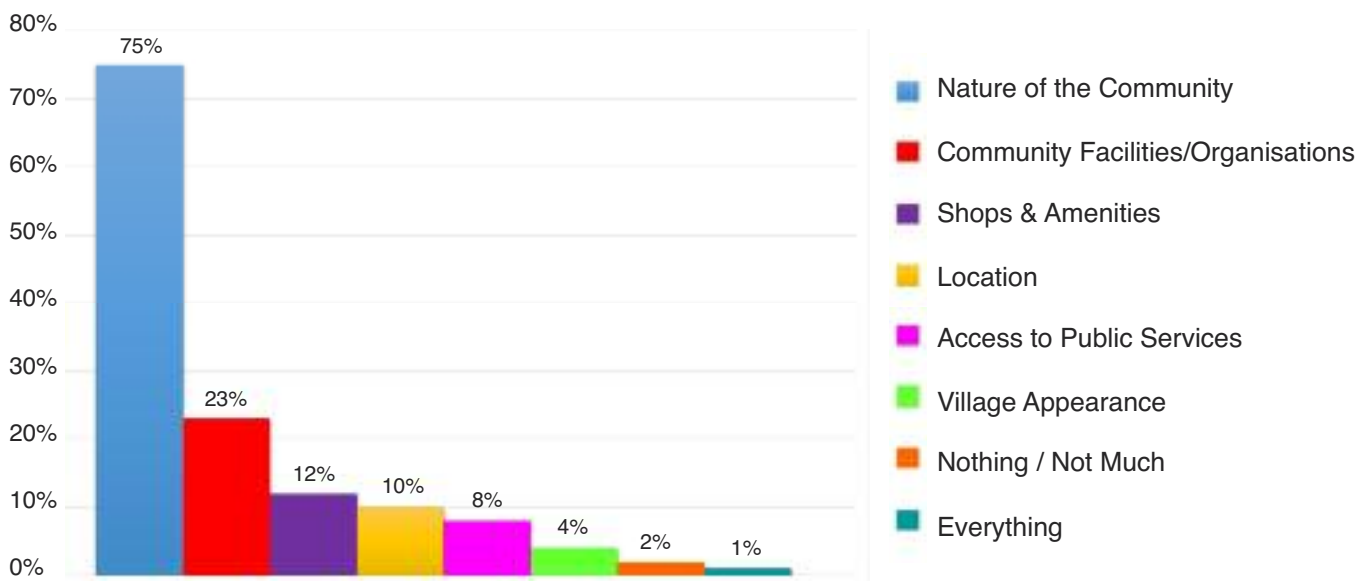
East Ayrshire Council and a variety of private organisations deliver care services within the local area.

A free and confidential client orientated service is available to over 60's or those registered as disabled. The care and repair service offers advice and assistance to maintain or repair the home in order that people can live safely and comfortably in their own community for as long as possible.



OUR COMMUNITY NOW LIKES

More than 40% returns were received from local residents of all ages in response to our Community Views Survey. These responses have informed the development of this plan.



What People Said.....

Nature of the Community

'Even though I lived elsewhere for some time, I always classed it as home – A safe and secure environment'

'The community spirit seems to be getting better, we need to get everyone to help our community, old and young alike'

'People are friendly always asking how you are, saying good morning and a nice hello'

'Everyone knows each other. There are nice, helpful people in the community'

'Plenty things going on - good community'

'I have lived in Netherthird / Skerrington for 60 years and have seen many changes. I have always found it a good district to live in and bring up my family'

Community Facilities / Organisations

'The community garden and how inclusive it is'

'Community comes together when needed to make a better lifestyle for everyone'

'The wonderful work Four Connections have done with the young people'

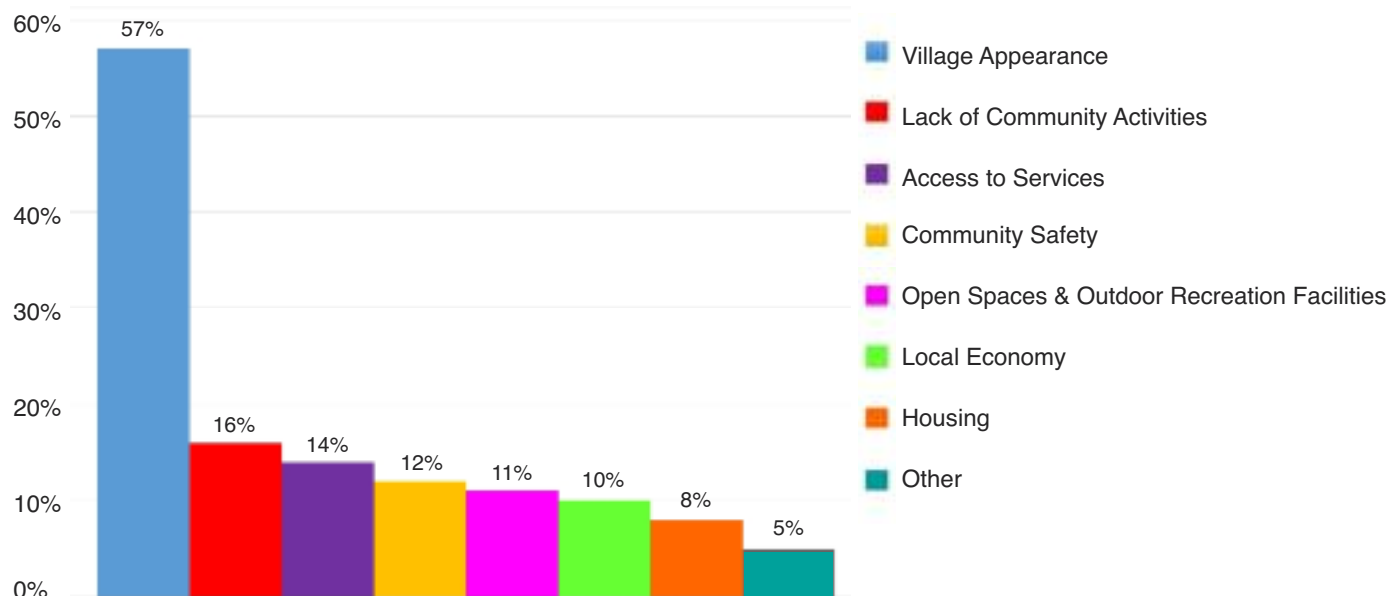
'All the great community projects that the people from the community volunteer their free time for'

Location

'Nice country outlook'

'Plenty of fresh air'

OUR COMMUNITY NOW DISLIKES



What People Said.....

Village Appearance

'The site of the old club could be tidied up and cleaned'

'People should have some pride in our area and pick up their dog mess – I did when I had a dog'

'Holmburn Road is used for fly-tipping and the long grass - needs tidied up'

'The shopping area, pavements and walls poorly maintained'

'Shuttered shops at Netherthird, not very attractive'

'The area is in a terrible mess, broken fences. Some people don't look after their gardens'

'Issues are not just social but also visual with the heart of the housing scheme and parade of shops and the surrounding area in need of intense investment and environmental improvement'

Lack of Community Facilities / Activities

'You have got to go to Cumnock (YIP) for entertainment for teenagers'

'There's nothing to do anywhere for ages 20+ years. Plenty for tots and teens then just classes for 40 – 90 years – mainly women'

'Groups and classes not advertised and there's nowhere to go for a cuppa'

Housing

'Very few people take pride in their property'

Access to Services

'New street lighting not good. My visitors can't see my front steps at night time'

'Fairly inadequate bus service – one per hour, shopping limited'

'People not using their runway and parking in the street'

Community Safety

'The traffic often speeds up and down the street making it dangerous for children'

'Too much traffic on the main road at Skerrington it is hard to cross the road'

Open Spaces and Outdoor Recreation Facilities

'The muddy play park – Do something about it'

Local Economy

'The shops always have their shutters down makes the area look bad'

Other

'Disrespectful tenants who don't consider anyone'

'Flying sectarian flags'

OUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE

NETHERTHIRD, CRAIGENS & SKERRINGTON 2020

'A close, safe and welcoming community with good quality facilities providing a wide variety of activities for all ages including opportunities for training, employment and economic growth'

The above vision statement has been prepared by the Steering Group to summarise the main hopes and aspirations gathered from local residents, organisations and stakeholders through the Community Action Plan engagement process.

'Nice community with a modern school, new shopping area and a busy community centre providing lots of activities for all'

'A good community spirit and a safe, clean environment to live in that offers local employment opportunities for everyone'

'A community proud of its houses, gardens and surroundings that is a safe, pleasant area to walk in and enjoy the countryside'

'An area with good quality affordable housing and fuel efficient homes'

'Close-knit community with activities for young and old alike'



MAIN STRATEGIES AND PRIORITIES



OPEN SPACES AND OUTDOOR RECREATION

Netherthird, Craigens & Skerrington sits on the (southern) outskirts of the main town of Cumnock. It has access to the countryside and lovely views. However, it is felt that access paths could be improved and developed further to provide much easier access for members of the local area. The outdoor facilities that are currently available also require to be tidied up, further developed and work carried out to provide better drainage of these areas to increase usage.

Main priorities:

- Clear up and cut grass opposite Holmburn Road
- Develop skate park and bike park
- Develop new and upgrade existing countryside walks
- Upgrade swing park and pitches
- Develop all weather sports and football pitch
- Renovate Murray Park
- Landscape spare area between the bowling green and the community centre and the old club site
- Develop Glaisnock House for the benefit of the community



BETTER VILLAGE APPEARANCE

The local factory outlet has increased footfall to the area, however having the shutters closed all day on all of the shops within the small shopping area makes visitors think that these shops are closed. It is felt that opening these shutters and repairing the brick wall opposite would make the area more welcoming and help to increase usage of these local businesses. There is a problem with litter and dog fouling throughout the area. A local initiative to highlight this problem and a community litter pick will enhance the environment and give local residents a sense of pride in their area.

Main priorities:

- Remove dog litter and provide more bins
- Upgrade the shop area
- Give school a facelift
- Make use of empty buildings and sites
- Create a community hub and village square
- Organise a village clean up



MAIN STRATEGIES AND PRIORITIES



IMPROVE ACCESS TO SERVICES

The reduced bus service has had a negative impact on the local community making it more difficult to attend appointments or go shopping locally. The local roads and pavements are requiring work to repair potholes. Residents have raised concerns over safety issues with buses having to manoeuvre through cars parked inappropriately. New street lighting does not appear to be adequate as some local residents have intimated that doorways are no longer visible at night. Children having to walk from Craigens along the main road to the primary school increases the risk of traffic accidents.

Main priorities:

- Roads and Transport
- Housing



IMPROVE COMMUNITY FACILITIES / ACTIVITIES

As there are very few facilities in the area, the survey results demonstrated a higher level of support to ensure that the community centre was saved from closure and kept as a focal point for residents in the area. The programme of activities should be further developed and better advertised to increase the participation of local residents. It is felt that it is important to keep such a facility to ensure the cohesion of the area and provide a sense of good community spirit within the area.

Main priorities:

- Provide more activities for young people
- Open community centre at weekends
- Build a new school
- Better advertising of activities
- Develop an inter-generational community project
- Alter access road to the bowling green



ACTION

THEME 1: OPEN SPACES AND OUTDOOR RECREATION

Priority 1	Clean up and cut the grass opposite Holmburn Road <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stop fly tipping • Community clean-up / provide skip
<i>Action by</i>	<i>East Ayrshire Council, Netherthird Primary School and Early Childhood Centre, local residents, Community Payback Team and East Ayrshire Woodlands</i>
Priority 2	Develop Skate Park <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide access to mobile skatepark • Establish usage and access of the activity
<i>Action by</i>	<i>East Ayrshire Council and Four Connections</i>
Priority 3	Develop new/upgrade existing countryside walks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish walkway from Cumnock South Business Park to Caponacre Industrial Estate • Upgrade existing pathways around river walks
<i>Action by</i>	<i>East Ayrshire Council, East Ayrshire Woodlands, East Ayrshire Leisure and local walking groups</i>
Priority 4	Upgrade public parks and pitches <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better drainage • More diverse playground equipment for all ages • Re-site play park • Renovate Murray Park
<i>Action by</i>	<i>East Ayrshire Council and East Ayrshire Woodlands</i>



ACTION

THEME 2: BETTER VILLAGE APPEARANCE

Priority 1	Organise a village clean up <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase dog owner's awareness of their responsibility • Remove dog litter • Provide more bins • Organise a litter pick • Tidy up gardens opposite shop area
<i>Action by</i>	<i>East Ayrshire Council, local community groups, Shire Housing Association, local residents and Netherthird Primary School and Early Childhood Centre</i>
Priority 2	Upgrade shop area <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paint shops and open shutters • Renovate brickwork on pathways and walls
<i>Action by</i>	<i>East Ayrshire Council, local businesses, local community groups and local volunteers</i>
Priority 3	Give school facelift <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgrade / develop school garden • Upgrade playground area • Paint the outside of the building
<i>Action by</i>	<i>East Ayrshire Council and Netherthird Primary School and Early Childhood Centre Parent Council</i>
Priority 4	Make use of empty buildings and vacant spaces <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop old club site
<i>Action by</i>	<i>East Ayrshire Council, private land owners and local community groups</i>



ACTION

THEME 3: IMPROVE ACCESS TO SERVICES

Priority 1	Roads and Transport <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop / increase bus service • Create more parking bays • Improve road / pavement surfaces • Introduce one way system (Craigens) • Reduce height of speed bumps on Craigens Road
<i>Action by</i>	<i>East Ayrshire Council, Ayrshire Roads Alliance, SPT, Stagecoach and Coalfield Community Transport</i>
Priority 2	Housing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgrade and / or complete housing repairs • Ensure better maintenance of gardens / fences • Develop smaller houses • Create a tenants / residents group
<i>Action by</i>	<i>East Ayrshire Council, Shire Housing Association, Local Residents and East Ayrshire Tenants & Residents Association</i>
Priority 3	Provide better access to primary school <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a safe pathway from Craigens
<i>Action by</i>	<i>East Ayrshire Council, East Ayrshire Woodlands, East Ayrshire Leisure and Netherthird Primary School and Early Childhood Centre</i>
Priority 4	Provide access to training for work opportunities locally
<i>Action by</i>	<i>East Ayrshire Council, Job Centre Plus, Netherthird Community Action Training, Shire Housing Association, Netherthird Initiative for Community Empowerment and local businesses</i>



ACTION

THEME 4: IMPROVE COMMUNITY FACILITIES / ACTIVITIES

Priority 1	Provide more activities for young people <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Youth club for older kids / games hall• Afternoon parent and toddlers group
<i>Action by</i>	<i>Netherthird Initiative for Community Empowerment and local community groups</i>
Priority 2	Develop further activities and services within the community centre <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop social clubs / lunch clubs / community café• Provide transport for the less able to access these• Community notice boards / newsletters etc.
<i>Action by</i>	<i>East Ayrshire Council, Netherthird Initiative for Community Empowerment, Shire Housing Association, Four Connections and Coalfield Community Transport</i>
Priority 3	Further investigate possibility of the development of a community shop in Craigens
<i>Action by</i>	<i>Netherthird, Craigens & Skerrington Community Action Plan Steering Group and Craigens residents</i>



MAKING IT HAPPEN

MAIN PRIORITIES AND ACTIONS

The priorities and actions within this plan were identified from the responses received from the local community surveys and further developed through an Open Event held in September 2014. These are seen as a guide to the first steps to be taken over the 5 year period of this plan.

WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

The priorities and actions listed here will be progressed by local residents and local community groups working together with the support of a wide range of partners including local businesses, community groups and statutory organisations.

ACTION PLAN THEME	NAMED CONTACT	
OPEN SPACES AND OUTDOOR RECREATION	Shaun Lowrie	07950 367512
BETTER VILLAGE APPEARANCE	Margaret Campbell	07856 228426
IMPROVE ACCESS TO SERVICES	Grace Nichol	07940 157161
IMPROVE COMMUNITY FACILITIES / ACTIVITIES	Emily Gordon	07925 024889

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

This is an action plan for the whole area. The steering group shall continue to meet to ensure that priorities and actions are taken forward on all aspects of the plan. The Steering Group would like to encourage you to assist with these. To become involved you should telephone the named contact listed above for the theme that you are interested in.

COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN 2015 - 2020

This Community Action Plan sets out the priorities for the development of Netherthird, Craigens & Skerrington, 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 eight month period from March 2014 to October 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 Netherthird, Craigens & Skerrington
- 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.

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*East Ayrshire Community Led Action Planning
is based on the Community Futures
Programme designed and supported
by STAR Development Group
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