

## Prioritising and Action Planning

### The Importance of Prioritising

Any work that has been undertaken to identify your community needs and opportunities is likely to identify a broad range of ideas from different perspectives. It is therefore important to cluster information into themes, then making it possible to identify which themes are the most common.

There are different options for prioritising. If you have used digital tools such as survey monkey this can provide an element of analysis of the responses, producing graphs or tables of results.

You are also able to use a simple tally of similar responses with a ranking of most common. You can input your data into tools like Excel to create basic graphs and tables which visibly calculate and identify your most frequent themes and help you to establish your community priorities.

If your data is more qualitative (descriptive) and less quantitative (numerical) then you should cluster responses into similar categories or themes. This will allow you to identify which themes are most common and highlight community priorities.

It will also be important to take into consideration what resources are available to you, as well as appropriate timescales for taking forward actions, as some may be short, medium, or long-term ambitions. You should assess each of your options and review scope for social enterprise as a solution. The [Enterprise Assessment Tool](#) will help you to align your needs and priorities with scope for social enterprise solutions.

Participatory budgeting is one approach where priorities are used in community decision-making. Priorities are identified and budgetary decisions are then made based on community priorities.

### Action Planning

The community or project plan is a bridge between your community as it is today and its vision for the future. Plans should be informed by priorities in order to meet aspirations, and they allow you to:

- Outline what you want to achieve - relating to priorities identified
- Communicate your ideas to stakeholders (community, partner agencies /organisations, funders, visitors, etc)
- Provide a basis to make decisions and clarifies your actions

[Powerpoint “Why Have A Plan”](#) will help you to consider your specific priorities, recommended actions, what resources are available to you, and what actions you will take to meet your community aspirations.

These resources from the Community-Led Action Planning Toolkit give information, templates and how-to guides related to organising community planning sessions, how to construct your action plan and how to set specific and measurable goals.

1) [Factsheet: Planning Session 2](#)

- Useful for organising actions into individual responsibilities, how these are useful for achieving outcomes, and how achievements will be measured.

2) [Planning Template 2](#)

- Useful downloadable template for outlining plan outcomes, planning action with how, when, and by whom this action will be carried out, and how to assess the impact of this action upon the priority and plan outcome.

3) [Measuring Outcomes - Factsheet: SMART Outcomes](#)

- Provides a useful strategy for measuring the success of actions on plan outcomes.
- Having specific measurable outcomes - which are developed through identifying the issues and visions within communities - helps with identifying priorities from the identified needs.
- These will be statements of what difference you want to make in connection with the identified priorities. Depending on these priorities, you may want to identify outcomes that are short-term, medium-term or long-term.

## Case Studies

➤ [Ross of Mull and Iona Community Plan](#) *(written in English)*

- A case study for good practice which uses community engagement to identify and prioritise local issues and create a community action plan.
- Identifies the community research methods and processes used: Survey, focus groups, open public discussion, visit to local groups and households.
- Focus on community participation that is thoroughly inclusive and accessible for community members residing in extremely remote and rural areas.
- General needs identified and then further needs within this surveyed again to ensure effective action.

- [Glenbarr Community Investment Plan](#) *(written in English)*
  - This resource is an example of good practice, illustrated through a detailed case study and accompanied by a community survey template.
  - Once themes were identified, further community consultation was undertaken, and a community organisation was deemed the best solution for carrying forward plan priorities.
  - Priorities were assessed for their complexity of stakeholder involvement, and labelled as long, medium and short term development priorities.