

PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING PROJECTS IN SCOTLAND



Introduction

Participatory Budgeting (PB) is recognised internationally as a way for local people to have a direct say in how, and where, public funds can be used to address local requirements. When PB is adopted its use can be very important in helping individuals feel connected to each other and to their communities. It can instil a sense of ownership, trust and connectivity.

The Scottish Government supports PB as a tool for community engagement and as an important resource to build on the wider development of participatory democracy in Scotland. It sits alongside the objectives of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Bill introduced to the Scottish Parliament in June 2014. Since then, the Scottish Government has been raising awareness of PB and setting the conditions for it to be delivered in a meaningful and sustainable way in Scotland. This work is being taken forward with advice from the PB Working Group.

Responses to a recent PB survey, a report on a PB Learning Event held in October 2014 and a report on six training events delivered to local authorities by PB Partners during Autumn 2014, all called for examples of PB Projects in Scotland. This document has been produced as a direct response to this. Our thanks to everyone who has contributed and for including their contact details for further information. A number of PB pilots implemented in 2010 are also included.

The above reports and information on how PB Policy is being developed in Scotland can be found on the Communities Channel Website which is hosted by the Scottish Community Development Centre and funded by the Scottish Government. Examples of PB Projects in the UK are available on the PB Network Website and from across the world on the PBP Website.

This is a working document and it is intended that it will evolve as PB grows across Scotland. We would welcome more examples. Please send your suggestions to Melissa Waugh, Community Empowerment Team, Scottish Government at Melissa.waugh@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

Community Empowerment Unit
Scottish Government

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£eith decides

February 2015 sees £eith Decides' fifth consecutive participatory budgeting (PB) event. In 2010, Leith Neighbourhood Partnership piloted the use of a participatory budgeting approach to allocate some of its 2010/11 Community Grant Fund in Leith, North East Edinburgh. The pilot was such a success that Edinburgh City Council decided to hold a £eith Decides PB event annually from 2011/12.

The Neighbourhood Partnership's PB programme delegates 50% of the Community Grant Fund to the Leith community with funds being allocated in grants of up to £1,000. Giving local people the decision-making power over a devolved Community Grants Fund has dramatically increased the number of people engaged in local decisions, reconnecting people with local democracy. Participants have rated this approach highly and value the decision-making opportunity.

The main aims of £eith Decides are to:

- Provide opportunities for local people to have a say in what happens in their area.
- Provide an effective way to engage larger numbers of people in the work of the Leith NP.
- Provide an effective link between local community and local democratic processes.
- Increase small scale funding to grass roots organisations and initiatives, including those that have not been previously funded.
- Encourage active involvement in local decisions.

In 2013 £eith Decides achieved an award from the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) for their pioneering work. Read more on the [COSLA Excellence Awards site](#).

In 2013/14 over a thousand participants made the decision to allocate £22,885 to 26 projects from a choice of 42 applications, scoring projects by post, in libraries and at an event. £eith Decides' fifth event has received 37 applications for 2014/15 to be decided on by members of the community. More details on this event and reports on the four previous events can be found [here](#). £eith Decides was one of the three 'stories' shared at a [PB Learning Event](#) held in October 2014.

For further information contact loraine.duckworth@edinburgh.gov.uk.



A participatory budget (PB) of £20,000 is available to each of the Coalfields Community Futures communities for “soon, seen, successful” projects. The Coalfields Regeneration Trust (CRT) is funded by the Scottish Government and has successfully run the Coalfields Community Futures programme since 2011. In 2014 CRT developed and revised this programme of support for coalfield communities that had found it difficult to secure a fair share of funds in the last 15 years. Since the programme began CRT has supported 21 communities to prepare five year Community Action Plans, strengthen their community organisations and take forward projects that have been highlighted as priorities for their communities.

The PB process involves holding a local open day in each of the communities. This provides residents with the opportunity to decide which priorities are most important to them and to work on applications which fit into these priorities. Since 2011, £600,000 has been awarded to 200 projects from the participatory budgeting fund. The CRT Kincardine Community Association project was one of the three ‘stories’ shared at a [PB Learning Event](#) held in October 2014.

There is also support to make funding applications for bigger & longer term projects.

In addition to the PB process the CRT engagement team provides expertise, hands on support and funding to prepare Community Action Plans by using a participative process, involving the whole community to identify their priority projects and actions for the next 5 years. They also offer training and advice on development for existing community organisations, and setting up new “anchor” organisations (if required) – for example a Community Development Trust. Since 2011 CRT has:

- Supported 21 communities with a combined population of 99,338.
- 37 people have been trained in community action planning and employed as community agents.
- Over 174 people have been involved in local steering groups.
- 5,268 households have returned community views survey
- 3,842 people have attended coalfields community futures open days.

For more information please contact Pauline Grandison at pauline.grandison@coalfields-regen.org.uk

Canny wi' Cash

Older People Deciding on Grants for Older People's Groups

In 2013 the Edinburgh Voluntary Organisations' Council (EVOC) ran a unique participatory budgeting (PB) project where older people made decisions on small grants for work with older people. An EVOC project team worked with the City of Edinburgh Council, NHS Lothian and other third sector organisations across Edinburgh City. The PB project was an inclusive process with the principles of co-production and resilience at its heart. It was also firmly about direct democracy, reaching out to older people across the city to give them power over spending decisions.

The project was funded through the Reshaping Care for Older People Change Fund. What was unique about this project is that a distributed approach to PB was adopted, with voting spread out over a fortnight across the city. Paid facilitators went to where older people gathered, such as lunch clubs and day centres, rather than inviting the older people to come to a central location at a pre-arranged date and time.

A total of 101 project bids, valued at £106,000 were received. Over a 'voting fortnight' in October 2013, across 37 venues in Edinburgh, a total of 312 older people agreed to fund 56 of these projects to the sum of £56,000.

Participants engaged enthusiastically and their comments reflected this *"Our Voice is Being Heard at Last"*, *"It's democratic this way"* and *"Excellent idea! Nae point asking politicians!"* Altogether, Canny wi' Cash funded projects reached out to around 1,000 older people.

Read [the full report](#) for more information on the personal experiences and details of the project. To find out more about Canny wi' Cash, please email [Milind Kolhatkar](#) or [Dianne Morrison](#) at EVOC or telephone 0131 555 9100.



The Richmond Fellowship Scotland

Outcomes are Fun

In 2013 the Richmond Fellowship Scotland held and funded an 'Outcomes are Fun' Participatory Funding (PF) event. The aim of the project was to give over control and creativity to vulnerable people to achieve the type of outcomes they wanted in order to have fun. Local steering groups were set up to develop events; consisting of vulnerable people and staff. Vulnerable people included those who were clinically unwell or had a learning disability. Support staff helped support individuals to discuss their ideas and make their proposals.

As an example of how this works locally, the Richmond Fellowship's Central Region held its voting event in a venue in Glasgow that was easily accessible by public transport to ensure inclusivity. Refreshments were provided to help create a welcoming atmosphere. People constructed their bids, wrote a summary of them and then presented a three minute summary of their funding proposal.

Participants were supported to vote on the bids using a voting ballot paper. Votes were impartially counted by a local Care Inspectorate Inspection Office (regulator) and the organisation's Board Chairperson. From this Region (one of four regions) a total of 12 projects were successful to the sum of £20,145.

The PF process resulted in encouraging real participation and handing over financial control, helped improve skills and raise confidence of the vulnerable people who took part. Organisational skills were developed and a fun time was had by all.

The PF booklet used at the event outlines the successful projects. For more information email Austen Smyth at Richmond Fellowship Scotland or by telephone on: 0845 013 6305.



In 2013 roshni delivered a participatory budget (PB) project entitled the Scottish Ethnic Communities (SEC) Fund in which members from Scotland's minority ethnic communities made decisions on small grants. In partnership with the Big Lottery Fund, the SEC offered grants of up to £10,000 for both individuals and organisations looking to establish projects and services that would directly benefit Scotland's ME communities.

This unique project, the first of its kind in Scotland, used sector expertise and guided by feedback and participation from community members, roshni successfully developed and implemented a simplified application process tailored to meet the needs of ME communities. Roshni was able to support applicants in a language of their choice, as well as delivering face-to-face community engagement.

The response was overwhelmingly positive, as shown in the number of applicants; 285 applications with a total funding value of £1.3 million were received. To take an approach that is unique, participative and empowering, through a democratic and innovative live grant making model, the decision of where funds were allocated were made by the 335 guests at the launch event, 91% of whom were of an ME background. The original value of the fund was £100,000 but due to the volume of demand was increased to £470,000 with a total of 73 successful applications.

As with all good long-term investments, roshni's involvement went far beyond simply allocating funds; with the organisation making a full commitment to helping every community project succeed. Roshni has supported successful applicants through a mentoring scheme that has provided assistance in areas such as governance, project planning, delivery and sustainability.

For more information please contact info@roshni.org.uk.

OVER TO YOUTH



In October 2011, OVER To YOUth held a participatory budgeting (PB) event in Glenrothes, Fife led by the Glenrothes Youth Forum. The Forum's stated aim was to make Glenrothes a better place for young people to live and grow in. Funding of £30,000 by Fife Council's Glenrothes Area Committee was open to Youth groups and organisations working with those aged between 10 and 25. Young people had to be involved in writing the applications – the whole idea was for young people's ideas to be heard and decided on by other young people.

Project proposals were required to be about:

- Promoting a positive image of young people and challenging the negative image of them in the community and the media.
- Creating and promoting opportunities for young people to enjoy themselves safely.
- Making the Glenrothes area a better place for young people and the broader community to live in.
- Encouraging young people to get involved, take part in decision making and to be active in their community.
- Helping young people feel good about themselves.
- Creatively exploring issues that affect young people in Glenrothes area.

Glenrothes was the first area in Fife where PB for young people took place. Glenrothes Youth Forum members worked hard with Community Learning and Development staff and an Education Officer to deliver Over to YOUth. The Youth Forum was recognised at Young Quality Scot Awards held in March 2012.

For more details contact J P Easton at Fife Council at JP.Easton@fife.gov.uk or telephone 03451 55 55 55 + Ext 443776 (Direct Line)

The Community Wellbeing Champions Initiative

In 2010 the Scottish Government's Community Safety Unit and COSLA (Convention of Scottish Local Authorities) launched the **Community Wellbeing Champions Initiative**, which involved running participatory budgeting (PB) pilots in five areas across Scotland: Glenrothes in Fife, Dunblane in Stirling, Forgewood in North Lanarkshire, Overton in South Lanarkshire and Staney Hill in Shetland. The five projects enabled residents to help decide how best to allocate resources to tackle antisocial behaviour and received a share of £100,000. The following is a brief summary of the projects but the full report is available [here](#).

Fife Community Safety Partnership: The pilot enabled Fife to develop projects in the Glenrothes area to help tackle antisocial behaviour, based on the needs and preferences of local people. PB used both existing methods of community engagement used by the police and council, community profile information and new means of getting people involved in their local area.

South Lanarkshire Council: The pilot enabled South Lanarkshire's Council to further develop the 'Positive Communities' model, engaging with a range of community and tenants' groups to identify and prioritise local issues and influence the direction of resources.

Shetland Islands Council: The pilot enabled the North Staney Hill Community Association, supported by Shetland Islands Council, to build on its efforts to renew a sense of community within the area and overcome the negative assumptions that are made about it, increase understanding between groups in the community and allow the community to solve its own problems.

Stirling Community Safety Partnership: The pilot focused on the Dunblane area to engage young people involved in aspects of antisocial behaviour as well as those on the fringes of such behaviour. It aimed to encourage young people to take ownership and responsibility for their behaviour and to build the capacity of young people to positively engage, both with community planning partners and with the wider community they live in.

North Lanarkshire Partnership: The pilot aimed to strengthen local community planning structures through offering the residents of one area the opportunity for the first time, to make decisions about the distribution of public funds, at the same time strengthening relationships between residents and agencies operating in the area.

Govanhill Equally Well Funds

In 2010, a participatory budgeting (PB) pilot was initiated for Govanhill, Glasgow using £200,000 from the Scottish Government's Equally Well funds. The following is a brief summary of the projects and the full report is available [here](#).

Govanhill Addictions Family Support Group: This project had two distinct elements. The first was the '*Caring for oor ain*' Aftercare Project, which supported families affected by a loved one's problem drug use. £40,000 was allocated to be used to establish an aftercare facility in the form of a static caravan as a facility to be used for respite for families or carers and not the family member with the problem. The second element of the project was to provide drug and alcohol education within schools; involving people in recovery in the delivery of the programme.

Govanhill Community Justice Partnership: The focus of this project was to supplement existing partnership working in Govanhill to more effectively combat unlawful landlords operating within the area. Evidence suggested that the actions, or inaction, of some landlords in Govanhill had a profoundly detrimental effect on both the lives of Govanhill residents and the housing stock in the area. £60,000 was used to enhance the Govanhill Law Centre's legal resources to specifically target this aspect of criminality within Govanhill.

Govanhill Baths Trust: The closure of the Govanhill Baths in 2001 had arguably taken on great significance within the Govanhill community. The Govanhill Baths Community Trust had been active for over nine years, campaigning for the Baths to be reopened. The Baths Trust argued that the closure of the Baths has become symbolic of an area in decline and a diverse community experiencing disempowerment and a disconnection from political processes. £50,000 was used for a capital grant to fund an initial phase of the complete regeneration of the Baths building which involved refurbishing a space in the front suite of the building. Another £50,000 was for a series of health and wellbeing Programmes which involved skills and confidence building in the areas of arts, cooking and gardening, utilising the Trust's strong community identity and networks to further improve community cohesion and increase social capital. The Govanhill Baths Trust project was one of the three 'stories' shared at a [PB Learning Event](#) held in October 2014.

More information on the Govanhill Baths Trust can be found on their website [here](#).