

Community Councils

An Overview of Dumfries and Galloway

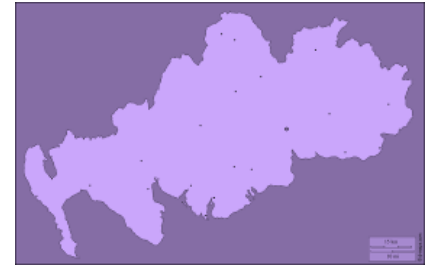
What are Community Councils?

- <http://www.communitycouncils.scot/what-is-a-community-council.html>
- Statutory voluntary organisations established under the Local Government (Scotland) Acts of 1973 and thereafter 1994
- As the most local tier of elected representation, Community Councils play an important role in local democracy
- Local people who care about their community and what to make a difference
- Representation and Engagement



National Framework

- 1,200 active Community Councils
- 32 local authority areas
- Where D&G ranks against highest (number of CC boundary areas) across Scotland:
 - 1st Highland (157)
 - 2nd Dumfries and Galloway (106)
 - 3rd Fife (105)
 - 4th Glasgow City (101)



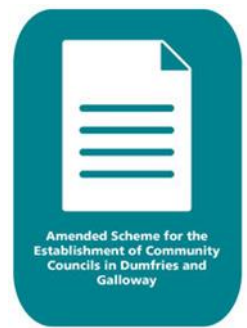
Local Framework

- 106 Community Council boundaries
- 1,274 possible total membership
- 3 October 2019 Ordinary Elections held
- 87 Established Community Councils returned
- 705 Community Councillors Elected
- 11 Casual Vacancy Elections held
- 75 Resilience Teams
- Minimum/Maximum Numbers

Supporting our Community Councils

- **Community Engagement Manager**
Responsible Officer with Strategic Overview
- **Community and Democratic Services Officer**
Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils, Governance and Funding
- **Business Support**
Records Management, Administration
- **Local Ward Officer**
First point of contact working with CC's to share good practice, work in partnership with each other and to take forward new ideas.
- **Community Development Worker**
Training and Development
- **Windfarm Contributions Officer**
Support to Community Groups in receipt of Windfarm funding

Amended Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils (known as the 'Scheme')



- Implemented on 1 November 2018 following a Fourth Review following a 4 Phase consultation process
- The Rules and Regulations
- Supports the operation of Community Councils and acts as Constitution to encourage and maintain consistency
- Proposed amendment - Report to 25 June 2020 Meeting of Full Council

Responsibilities of D&G Council

- Have in place a Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils and to review that Scheme periodically
- Elections
- Share information
- Consult with CC's particularly on **Planning** and **Licensing** matters and major works
- To promote the Community Council Enquiry Service (CCES) as the main point of contact

Responsibilities of Community Councils

- Adherence to the Scheme
- To be inclusive organisations
- To seek the views of local residents from the local communities they represent
- To act as a voice for their local area
- To articulate the views and aspirations of local people and make representation to their local authority, other public sector bodies and private agencies on these matters



Office Bearers

- Chair – official spokesperson, convenes and presides over meetings
- Secretary – makes the necessary arrangements for all meetings including agendas and minutes, correspondence and local authority liaison
- Treasurer – maintains the financial records, issues cheques and payments and preparation of annual accounts



Representation



- Duty under statute to represent the views of their local community
- Inform the community of the work and decisions of the Community Council
- Promote Associate Membership to broaden representation and expertise
- Comply with the Equality Act 2010

Community Engagement and Consultations

- Give communities a voice and an opportunity to influence, enabling them to become creators instead of just consumers
- Help to develop local democracy and foster positive attitudes towards being active within the community and participation in wider society



National Evolving Policy

- Scottish Government and COSLA's Local Governance Review
- 'What Works Scotland' 2019 [Strengthening Community Councils](#) Review
- Key issues include:
 - there should be greater focus on representation in community planning and other decision making structures
 - there was a need for people with particular skills to support Community Councils
 - it is vital that Community Councils are valued

Examples of Good Practice across D&G

- Working with Young People (Annan)
- Community Engagement Event (Dalbeattie)
- Working Together and in Partnership (Upper Nithsdale)
- Training and Development (across the region)
- Casual Vacancy Elections (across the region)

Where can I find out more?

- www.communitycouncils.scot : Scottish Government Community Council website. The site has up to date information on news, events, guidance and grants as well as advice on how to be a Community Councillor.
- www.dumgal.gov.uk/communitycouncils Useful information for Community Councils in Dumfries and Galloway including 'Find my Community Council'.
- Many Community Councils also use social media and have Facebook and Twitter accounts as well as dedicated websites. Google online to find out more.

Questions and Further Reading

- Questions
- DGC 'Useful Tips on Being a Community Councillor'
- DGC Overview 'Support to Community Councils'
- FAQ's – Community Councils in D&G