



CDAS

Community Development
Alliance Scotland



**A strong coalition of national organisations and
networks of regional organisations**



End of Year Report 2023-24

Executive Summary

I am pleased to present this 2023– 2024 report with highlights and reflections on the positive contribution and impact CDAS has made for and on behalf of you, our alliance members.

As we look back over the year, your board of trustees remain motivated to work with and alongside each of you as we progress the work of CDAS through our development plan in the year ahead.

On your behalf, I wish to pay tribute to each board member for their continued contribution to CDAS, leading us successfully through the transition of roles at our post AGM meeting. I also want to take this opportunity to recognise the work of Colette McGarva, our coordinator. Colette continues to be the driving force, writer, and script editor of the CDAS bulletin and our co-ordinator for all membership organisations, subscribers and activities including co-ordinating our Annual National Conference 2023 where we were joined by a number of representatives from the Scottish Government as well as a broad range of our membership organisations and networks to participate in a range of exciting and engaging workshops delivered by fantastic guest speakers drawn from across the membership organisations and national partners.

- I. We continued to build on relationships with our member organisations, wider partners, and the Scottish Government, securing this year's grant to deliver activities within the fiscal year 2023 – 24.
- II. We further refined and developed our Development Plan 2022-25 and progressed all outcomes and strands.
- III. We represented CDAS in several national meetings and conferences to raise awareness of the work of CDAS and develop our partnership approach.

We are delighted to welcome 3 new board members:

- Gordon Terris, Scottish Community Development Network
- Margaret Starkie, Volunteer Scotland
- Cameron Mellows (Ex-officio from Scottish Government)

This End of Year Report highlights our achievements from the past year 2023-24, which for many of us has also been a time of community, contribution, learning, connection and extraordinary pride, as reflected in the positive impact statements from our fantastic membership organisations and dedicated board members.

Throughout the year, CDAS has maintained a focus on strengthening our strategic partnerships and representation. A feature of this work has been the commitment from the Scottish Governments' Local Government and Communities Directorate, Community Empowerment team. Our partnership has enabled us to address the following strategic objectives on behalf of you, our members:

- To provide a forum for the discussion and debate on issues of national importance related to community development.
- To advise the Scottish Government, its Executive Agencies, and Non-departmental Public Bodies, on matters relating to community development.
- To collaborate with national agencies and groupings as appropriate and contribute to the development of policy and practice.

<https://www.gov.scot/about/how-government-is-run/directorates/local-government-and-communities/>

<https://www.gov.scot/policies/community-empowerment/>

Together we can drive empowerment forward through the practice and processes of Community Development by recognising 'What Community Development is and "What Community Development is not.'

Together and through this alliance; your alliance, we can evidence to Ministers, funders, partners and employers, exactly how we drive empowerment forward through Community Development, every day of every year.

Our ask to all of you is to continue to work with and support CDAS by providing those case studies and impact statements that exemplify you and your practice so well. Give us the tools we need to ably represent you and reflect your practice and your communities through the bulletin, website and social media platforms and resources we have at our disposal.

Finally, my thanks to the Community Empowerment Team, the Scottish Government and each of you, our alliance of member organisations for all you do under the banner of Community Development in Scotland. We, your CDAS board of trustees look forward to meeting with, listening to, and working alongside each of you in the year ahead.

I commend this report.

Jewels Lang

Chairperson

Community Development Alliance Scotland

Background

With over 130 organisations in full membership, 650 subscribers to our monthly bulletins and 2,400 social media followers, CDAS has the unique role of bringing together a broad range of organisations and institutions that recognise the importance of community development in delivering their services and informing their work.

CDAS has been described as a ‘super anchor’ organisation, born of our role in facilitating the exchange of ideas and insights between every sector that interacts with communities – human rights, regeneration, learning, health, housing, social care support, welfare, equalities and many more - thereby facilitating collaboration based on a stronger understanding of the contribution each can make to community development and the communities of Scotland. Our members share the fundamental belief that understanding and working with communities is at the core of good, relevant practice, and share the core values and principles of:

- ❖ **Empowerment**
- ❖ **Social Justice**
- ❖ **Human Rights**
- ❖ **Democratic Participation**
- ❖ **Inclusion, Equality & Anti- Discrimination**
- ❖ **Collective Action**
- ❖ **Working & Learning Together**

CDAS acts for and on behalf of each of its constituent members as a high-level intermediary between these sectors on community development policies and practice, and as such encourages and drives collaboration, mutual learning and understanding.

The Scottish Government, through its Directorate for Local Government and Communities, awarded a grant to Community Development Alliance Scotland. (CDAS) This supported our work to facilitate, showcase, profile and raise the standards of community development practice across Scotland in 2023/24.

As a distinctive, cross-sectoral, and independent network, CDAS is uniquely placed to nurture and facilitate this delivery. The continuing existence of the alliance has been vital to delivering the outcomes contained in the proposal. This has included the time and resources devoted to maintaining and increasing membership, the information bulletins and our growing utilisation of digital technology and online communications, organising and running events, developing ongoing responses to and preparation of policy development and dialogue with other community development partners, organisations, and sectors.

1. Introduction

Community Development Alliance Scotland is a registered Scottish Charity (SC038638) bringing together and coordinating a network of national and regional organisations with a shared commitment to community development and its values and approaches.

By creating this strong alliance, CDAS provides a shared understanding, and networking opportunities enabling organisations to learn and share good policy and practice, in turn raising the standards of community development. Moreover, we engage them with decision-makers and policymakers with the power to enable and affect change in Scotland and beyond.

With a core value base of empowerment, inclusion, equality, democratic participation, human rights, social justice, anti-discrimination, self-determination, and strong partnership working, our work aligns with the National Performance Framework, in particular:

- ❖ **People live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe.**
- ❖ **People respect, protect and fulfil human rights and live free from discrimination.**
- ❖ **People are open, connected and make positive contributions internationally.**
- ❖ **People tackle poverty by sharing opportunities, wealth, and power more equally.**

<https://nationalperformance.gov.scot/>



We believe CDAS enables these ambitions to be realised with, and on behalf of our members and in turn, the work our membership/partners deliver with the most marginalised and excluded communities in Scotland by engaging them with decision-makers with the power to enable and affect positive change.

This report showcases the progress made by CDAS in implementing the actions, impact and pursuing the objectives stated in our proposal for the year which was based on our four-year Development Plan 2022-25.

This paper is in two parts: a report on activities, achievements, and impact in 2023-24 and our Development Plan for 2022-25. Finally, the anticipated costs for implementing the development plan 2024-25.

Report on Progress

OBJECTIVE 1: NETWORK BUILDING

Build the widest possible network of national organisations with a shared commitment to community development

CDAS has increased our membership through various mediums including the monthly comprehensive, cross-cutting bulletin, special themed bulletins, and regional and national events both in person and via online platforms. In 2023, the CDAS Management Group and coordinator engaged with our members via email, social media platforms, and various events to increase involvement and participation and further strengthen our alliance. Our membership has increased over the past year with over 130 national organisations and networks of regional organisations. We are delighted to have welcomed new membership organisations including Scottish Rural Network, Thistle Foundation, Creative Lives, and Scottish Communities for Health and Wellbeing.

<https://www.communitydevelopmentalliancescotland.org/partners>

In December 2023, we held our AGM, combined with a networking event where 22 representatives from membership organisations attended. Utilising this as a membership engagement event, we were delighted to welcome new Board/ Management Group members. Our new, strong, dynamic Board has representation and involvement from:

- **Culture Scotland**
- **Outside the Box**
- **Govan Community Project**
- **Education Scotland**
- **Universities Scotland**
- **Generations Working Together**
- **Social Enterprise Academy Scotland**
- **Scottish Government**
- **Springburn Unity Network**
- **Creative Lives**
- **Learning for Sustainability Scotland**
- **Volunteer Scotland**
- **Scottish Refugee Council**
- **Scottish Community Development Network**
- **CLDMS**
- **CLD Standards Council**

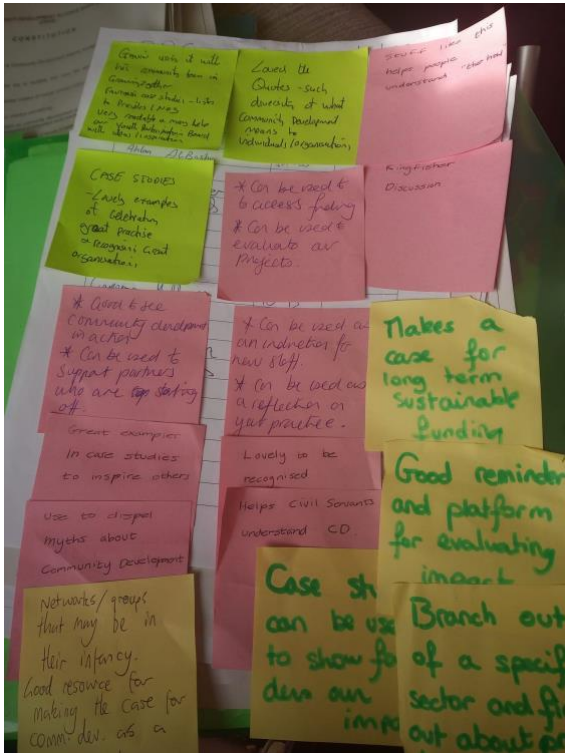
- **Chest, Heart, Stroke Scotland**
- **Universities Scotland**
- **Marie Curie Scotland**
- **Waverly Care**
- **Culture Garden**



Scottish Communities Climate Action Network.

Combining our AGM with networking enabled our members to get to know each other better and understand the work of CDAS and our broader members.

Keynote speakers and workshop input on the cross-cutting dimensions of community development: poverty, climate justice & inclusion was provided by our members from the Scottish Refugee Council and



At our AGM / Networking Event, participants were asked for their views, thoughts, and suggestions on our new publication and how this resource may be used by their organisations and wider communities. We have included some impact statements to the left here.

We held Democracy Matters 2 conversations at both the AGM and annual conference which involved approximately 100 representatives from CDAS membership organisations.



Scottish Charity Number SC038638

Networking Event & AGM

10.30am -12.30pm, Wednesday, 6th December 2023 (followed by lunch)

Scottish Refugee Council offices 7th floor, Portland House 17 Renfield St, Glasgow


Programme

- 10.30 am **Welcome & Event Overview**
Background, aims and objectives of CDAS
Jewels Lang, Chairperson, Community Development Alliance Scotland
- 10.40am **Have your say: Discussions and Networking**
- o Why Community Development? Our Collective Impact
In what ways have/will you use our new publication as a resource to support communities? Please see our publication [HERE](#)
Facilitated by Colette McGarva, CDAS Co-ordinator

 - o Democracy Matters
How will/are you involved in helping to shape Democracy Matters 2?
In what ways would you like to influence decision making in order to affect Change? Further details [HERE](#)
Facilitated by Brian Logan & Cameron Mellowes, Scottish Government
- 11.55am **Annual General Meeting**
- o Welcome & Apologies (constitution [HERE](#))
 - o Previous minutes AGM 2022 [HERE](#)
 - o Chairperson's Report
 - o Annual Accounts & End of Year Report [HERE](#)
 - o Election of Office Bearer's
 - o Vote of thanks
 - o Date of next AGM, Wednesday, 4th December 2024
- 12.30pm **Lunch**

www.facebook.com/cdascotland
www.twitter.com/cdascotland

Zoom Meeting



Participants (20)

Chat

what happens next.

James Wood to Everyone
Thank you Colette for all your efforts for CDAS.

John - Scottish Recovery ... to Everyone
Thanks for today nice to get back in touch with CDAS's valuable work...if you want to keep in touch email me john.beaton@scottishrecovery.net or join me at <https://www.linkedin.com/in/johnscotnet/>

Me to Everyone
oh and before you go!

Who can see your messages?

To: Everyone

OBJECTIVE 2 : INFLUENCE

Strengthen the role of community development in national policies and local strategic planning in order to create a more social and equally just society

Our Annual National Conference 2023, *Why Community Development? Our Collective Impact* provided an opportunity for member organisations to influence policy and practice by coming together with policy and decision-makers and affect change. Our programme included key influencers and we adopted an inclusive approach to involve a wide range of member organisations.

We were delighted to bring together speakers and workshops co-facilitated by several member organisations highlighting the social, environmental, physical, and economic impact of community development. By reaching out to our member organisations and proactively encouraging them to be more involved, we were delighted to enable ten membership organisations to co-host workshops alongside several CDAS board members. Workshops included Democracy Matters, health and wellbeing, human rights, social justice, learning and education and international collaborative working.

Our conference programme demonstrated the inclusive, co-production approach we took to ensure the involvement of our member organisations and coming together with strategic policymakers.



Community Development Alliance Scotland
Annual National Conference 2023

**Why Community
Development?**
Our collective impact

Wednesday 27th September
Maryhill Burgh Halls, Glasgow

#WhyCD2023

Conference Feedback

Great to have an overview of the Scottish Government's approach to community development from Minister Tom Arthur

**Helen
International Association for Community Development**

Strengthening alliances with community development educators and standards bodies in Scotland at @cdascotland conference while exploring the collective impact of CD.

All Ireland Endorsement Body Standards

Delighted to have the chance to join @cdascotland's excellent conference today.

Much that was motivational and feel especially inspired by Clare MacGillivray's speech on using human, economic and social rights to bring about decisive shifts for communities

Scottish Community Action Network



Community Development Alliance Scotland
Annual National Conference 2023
Wednesday 27th September * Maryhill Burgh Halls, Glasgow
Keynote Speaker
Tom Arthur
Minister for Community Wealth and Public Finance

 **CDAS**
Community Development
Alliance Scotland

Our conference included workshops in Democracy Matters 2 and how to influence current policy.

Workshop A: Empowering Communities: Democracy Matters: Involving communities in decision making processes.

Laura MacDonald, Scottish Community Development Centre & Brian Logan, Scottish Government

More information about Democracy Matters (including the video we showed) can be found on the Scottish Government's website: [Democracy Matters - local governance review: phase 2 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/resources/consultations-petitions/consultations-democracy-matters-local-governance-review-phase-2/).

This includes the discussion documents in [English](#), [Easy Read](#) and [Gaelic](#).

The consultation itself is available online until 28th February 2024- [Democracy Matters - Scottish Government consultations - Citizen Space](#)

We also spoke about the funding that communities can apply for to help them hold conversations - [Democracy Matters Community Engagement Fund - Impact Funding Partners](#) Development Trusts Association Scotland (DTAS) which will allow practitioners or communities to hear from some of the communities who have participated in conversations and to get some facilitation tips and guidance. This will be held on the 9th November – More details at [DTAS](#) and [SCDC](#) websites.

CDAS has encouraged all our membership organisations to get involved in Democracy Matters 2. We have cascaded information widely through our monthly bulletins and various social media platforms. [To submit your response, please click here.](#)

An excellent day at the @cdascotland conference with keynote speaker @ThomasCArthur.

Thoughtful contributions on the future of local democracy at our Democracy Matters workshops

Chris Robb
Scottish Government

Thank you for organising a great conference last Wednesday. It was fruitful meeting everyone from across the CD spectrum.

I took away actions from the event in terms of promoting the Democracy Matters Funding and a call for a final push on the Human Rights Bill which has now led to ACC finalising their response.

Hamish
Aberdeen City Council



Community Development Alliance Scotland

Annual National Conference 2023

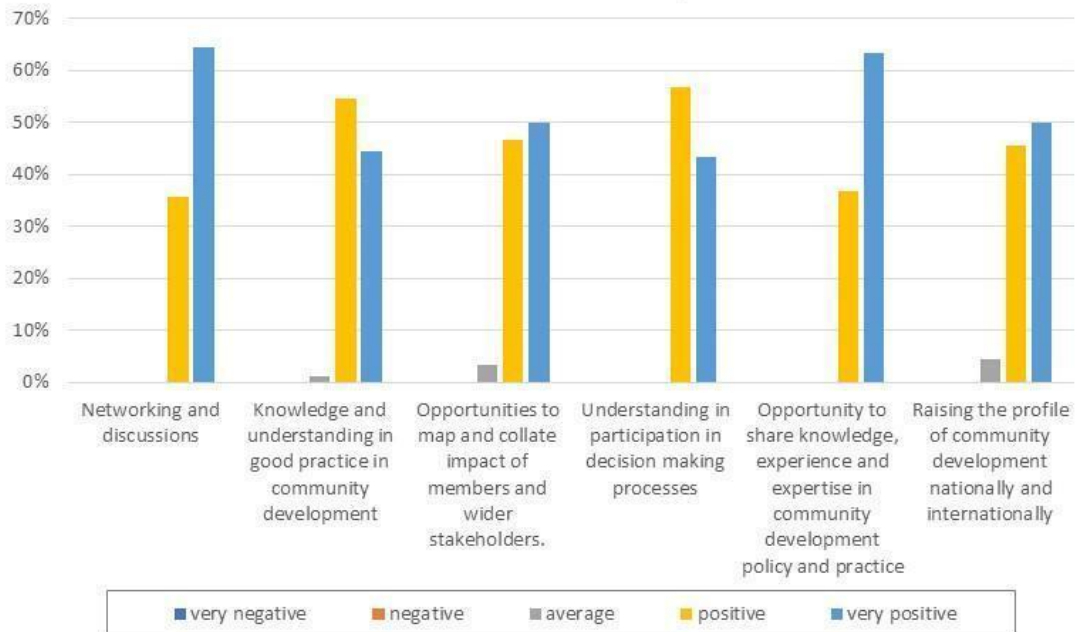
Wednesday 27th September * Maryhill Burgh Halls, Glasgow

Keynote Speaker

Clare MacGillivray,
Making Rights Real



Please rate the benefits to you of attending our conference and workshops



Community Development Alliance Scotland Annual National Conference 2023

Wednesday 27th September * Maryhill Burgh Halls, Glasgow



Keynote Speaker
Sabir Zazai,
CEO Scottish Refugee Council



Well done on a superb event! It went brilliantly from my perspective, and I appreciate the hard work that went in, in the months leading up, and on the day.

Really enjoyed the conference, thank you for putting it all together, it was clear how much work had gone into it!

Natasha
Healthy n Happy Community Development Trust

Another fantastic opportunity to discuss – Why Community Development

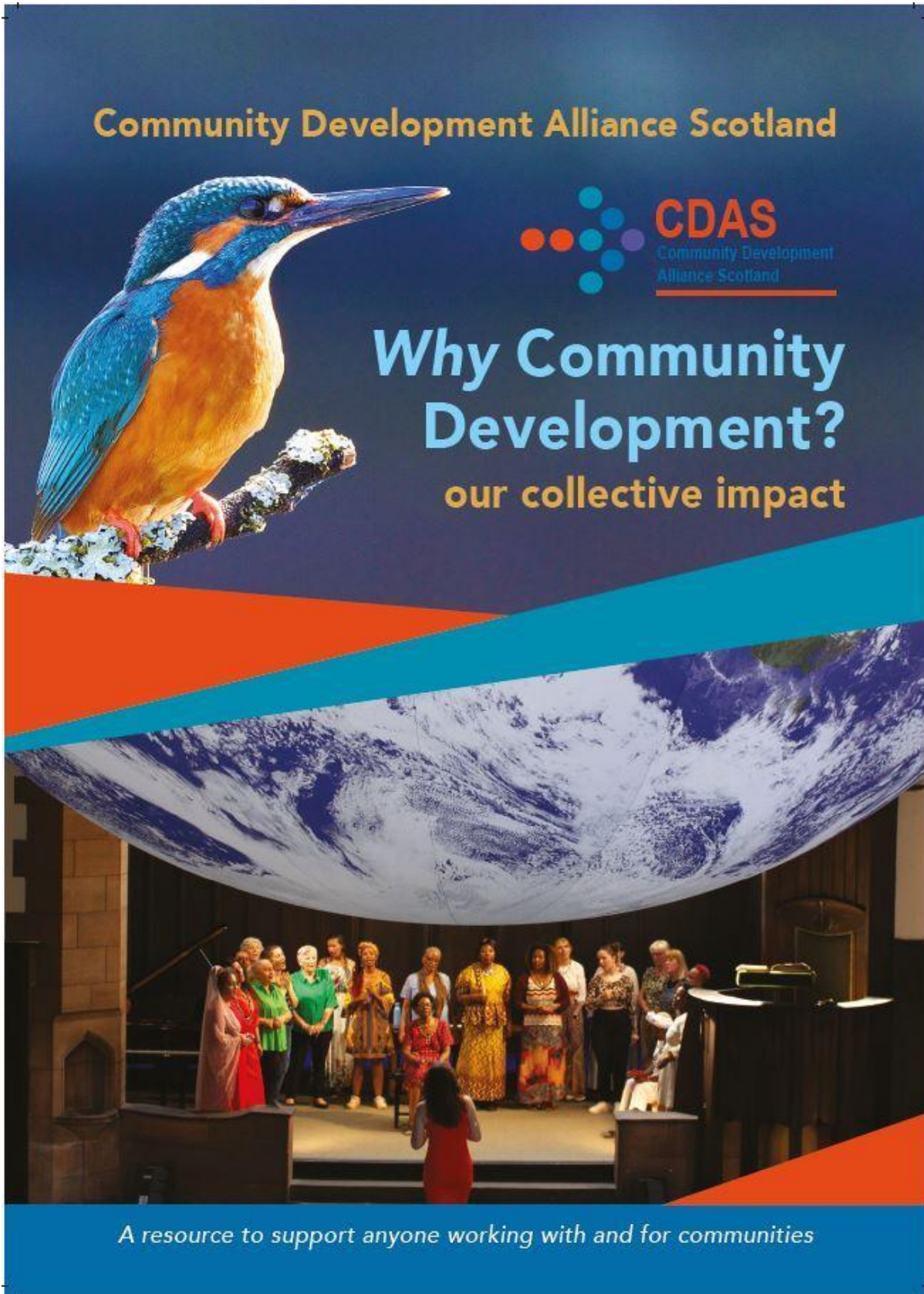
Sinead
University of Glasgow

Our collaborative work has progressed significantly this year and our co-ordinator, as well as Management Group members, have represented CDAS at events held by a range of our member organisations including:

- Scotland's Regeneration Forum SURF <https://www.surf.scot/>
- Community health Exchange CHEX <https://www.chex.org.uk/>
- The Scottish Government <https://www.gov.scot/about/how-government-is-run/directorates/local-government-and-communities/>
- Scottish Community Development Centre <https://www.scdc.org.uk>
- Scottish Community Development Network <https://www.scdn.scot/>
- CLD Standards Council, <https://cldstandardscouncil.org.uk/>
- PB Scotland Network <https://pbscotland.scot/>
- Universities Scotland, <https://www.universities-scotland.ac.uk/>
- CLDMS <https://cldmanagersscotland.wordpress.com/>
- International Association for Community Development <https://www.iacdglobal.org/>

Our National Conference took place in September 2023. We were delighted to welcome eighty-five representative members to our conference. Evaluation of the event was incredibly positive.

Collaborative Working



Community Development Alliance Scotland

CDAS
Community Development
Alliance Scotland

Why Community Development?

our collective impact

A resource to support anyone working with and for communities

Valuing and working with a broad range of our membership organisations, we were delighted to have produced a new publication, *Why Community Development and Our Collective Impact*.

This is a new resource to support anyone working with and for communities. We are thrilled that a number of colleges, universities, and organisations have highlighted this new publication as a resource which will benefit educationalists, students and wider communities. We will continue to update this publication as we receive new, innovative case studies.

"I'm pleased to support this publication. Our diverse communities are the building blocks of our nation. The pandemic saw local people come together to identify and address issues affecting the most vulnerable in our society. The Scottish Government believes that when we trust and resource our communities to take decisions, we see positive change happen. I would encourage communities across the country to get involved in the national Democracy Matters conversation to agree how we can further embed this approach in Scotland."

Mr. Tom Arthur
Minister for Community Wealth and
Public Finance

"We are a small island community where everyone is impacted by decisions and services (or lack of them) so it's right that everyone should have a say in those decisions.

We come together, talk about the problem and think of creative solutions. The community regularly decides our priorities and directs our work. We hold annual engagement activities."

Tiree Community Development Trust

OBJECTIVE 3 : COMMON UNDERSTANDING

Support good practice in engaging, supporting, and developing communities, helping to shape how policy is developed and implemented

We have implemented new, effective solutions for the circulation of the information bulletins and updating our website. Monthly bulletins have continued with the advancement and progression of quarterly special themed bulletins, exploring a particular theme and its intersection with other policy areas. This year, we have highlighted the work of our member organisations.

Our monthly bulletin draws on the knowledge, experience, and impact of our CDAS network, and our bulletins are shared widely, receiving high praise from members and subscribers alike. Promoting a community development perspective on various issues and insights relevant to community cohesion, sustainability, and resilience. We highlight information about events, projects, jobs and funding, analysis, and news on a diverse range of Community Development related topics: (bulletin themes)

Arts and Culture; Children’s rights and young people; Cost of Living Crisis; Democratic Participation; Disability; Drugs & Alcohol; Economic Development and Enterprise; Education; Empowerment; Environment & Sustainability; Equalities; Health and Wellbeing; Human Rights; International Legislation; Older people; Performance and Quality; Poverty; Regeneration.

Special attention has been given to five current opportunities and concerns in the themed editions:

- Democracy Matters
- Democratic Participation
- Let’s Talk Human Rights
- Participatory budgeting
- Goodwill To All?
- Reflections on our Conference

January 2023, the themed bulletin focused on Democracy Matters 2 and democratic participation. This ensured that our members and subscribers were kept up to date with policy developments and consultations where CDAS has been involved in including the public participation in the Scottish Parliament.

April 2023 our themed bulletin on The Power of Kindness was very well received.

November 2023, the themed bulletin focused on Let's Talk Decision Making, featuring Democracy Matters 2 and how to get involved.

These special bulletins are always well received. The average rate of opening and reading e-bulletins of this type is 22%. The equivalent rate for CDAS bulletins sits at around 31% with the special interest bulletins reaching a peak of 36%. This is an incredible achievement in the context of engagement with this type of material. The Bulletins are circulated monthly to a direct mailing list, currently consisting of 650 people, and are shared widely by our members and subscribers. A wide range of members and other recipients are known to use them to access information and resources on community development, often across conventional sectoral boundaries. Feedback from bulletins includes statements such as *“another great bulletin”*; *“wow, this is great”* and *“I have learned so much more about community development.”*

We also feature International Community Development and highlight policy and practice from around the globe enabling us to further impact our international profile and expand our networks.

We have bulletin subscribers and social media followers from Scotland, Portugal, Kenya, New Zealand, Wales, New Mexico, India, Germany, Australia, Catalonia, Spain, Catalonia, North America, Austria, Switzerland, Pakistan, Belgium, England, Northern Ireland, and Liberia.

I always like to remain grounded by reminding myself of the overarching values and principles of community development and the ultimate objective of creating a more socially just and equal society. It has always been my belief that community development is pivotal to achieving this outcome.

By bringing together 130 national organisations and networks of regional organisations who adhere to these core values, we play a significant role in the progression and enhancement of true and meaningful social inclusion, equality and human rights and I am always heartened when feedback from our members and subscribers indicates that they value us as a strong coalition and anchor organisation for Scotland and beyond.

**Colette McGarva,
CDAS Coordinator**

Website/social media

- Our monthly bulletins are also placed and indexed on the CDAS website, creating a substantial reference resource.
- Our new LinkedIn account now has over 700 followers and lots of interaction.
- The use of Facebook as a means of communicating news and information rapidly has developed well, with 660 current followers, an increase of 22% from 2022 and frequent sharing of our posts.
- Our Twitter account currently has 2,410 followers, an increase of 24% from 2022.
- We often create twitter posts to coincide with specific days including International Women’s Day and International Education Day which are very well received.



Join CDAS and help make a difference for women in Scotland and around the world.



OBJECTIVE 4 : COST OF LIVING CRISIS

Support the responses to the cost-of-living crisis on communities, in particular marginalised communities, in order to create a more social and equally just society

The impact of the cost-of-living crisis on communities, the way communities have responded and coped and the learning for future community development thinking, and practice has been a key driver to our work. Feedback from our members indicates they have valued the opportunities CDAS provided to subscribers and members particularly concerning support to the workforce by bringing community development practitioners together to debate and deliberate on their work and actions taken to support and enable communities in response to the cost-of-living crisis and to consider how this has impacted on their normal work practice.

Showcasing the work of our member organisations with response and recovery has been consistent over the year providing monthly updates in our bulletins as well as raising awareness of services, support, funding, and guidance through our social media channels.

The role of digital Community Development was highlighted during the cost-of-living crisis with its potential to afford protection to the most vulnerable people and groups by closing the digital divide. As such, we have used digital technology to ensure inclusion for members.

Much of the community work activity is still conducted by an array of small, local organisations, some of whom have a developmental role, some a wellbeing focus, others concerned with inclusion and empowerment, and we have explored how they can better support each other and be more sustainable. CDAS has collaborated with member organisations this year to ensure the strengthening of collaborative working and signposting to national members. As such, we proactively encouraged further involvement from regional organisations in our events and forums to ensure we are and do provide relevant and appropriate support mechanisms for smaller organisations.