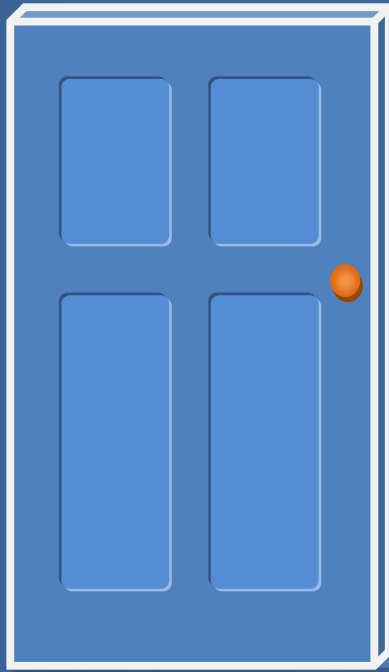


# One door...



# to a thriving connected & sustainable Third Sector



A differentiated strategy  
to support community groups, voluntary organisations and social enterprises  
in Renfrewshire 2009 - 2011

## FOREWORD

I am pleased to be given the opportunity to prepare the foreword for this important document.

The voluntary sector in Renfrewshire varies in size and shape and this enables it to play such an important part in the life of the community. Representing such a range of interests is a huge challenge and one that our Council of Voluntary Services does with commitment and expertise. I am therefore delighted to recommend this piece of work to you as it seeks to describe the social 'landscape' and the importance of the voluntary sector's response to a changing social, political and economic environment. These changes are stretching and affecting all areas of society and it is essential that we work together efficiently and effectively to respond to these challenging times.

Our country and this area have a long and proud history of a thriving social sector that makes such an essential contribution to the fabric of society. RCVS have responded to the challenge of improving Community Planning and the delivery of better services, working in partnership with government and the private sector. There will of course always be a place for the spontaneous local activity that responds to a local need or opportunity and RCVS will continue to provide support for this and the mosaic of organisations representing these community groups. At the same time there are many larger-scale, structural problems that can only be dealt with by people and organisations across sectors working together for the benefit of our community. RCVS also has the major challenge of representing the voluntary sector in this arena. For this to be effective requires the involvement of larger voluntary organisations that straddle a much wider geographic area and their commitment to strengthening the communities in which they operate.

I commend this work to you and the ongoing commitment and action needed to ensure that we continue to improve the quality of life in Renfrewshire.

Graham Bell

July 2009

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## BACKGROUND

Arguably, there has been a “Third Sector” presence in Renfrewshire since the development of the Abbey in Paisley centuries ago. In current times the Third Sector has evolved into a large proactive sector with around 700 organisations which work across a wide number of geographical areas, in the fields of health, care, housing, learning, the economy, the environment, and social and cultural development. The Third Sector deals with multiple issues for the benefit of people from all ages and backgrounds across Renfrewshire’s communities.

## INTRODUCTION

This report is a first attempt to consider the future of the Third Sector in Renfrewshire through a differentiated approach. What we mean by this is developing a range of support services which are tailored to meet the needs of organisations according to their different types, sizes and resources.

At the end of 2008 RCVS carried out a mapping exercise which confirmed that although some issues are common to many Third Sector organisations, the types, sizes and resources of organisations and the activities they carry out are so varied and diverse that a one-size-fits-all approach to supporting the sector is unlikely to meet the needs of so many different organisations. For example results from the mapping research showed that the largest part of the sector - smaller community-based organisations without paid staff appear unaware of their structural or development needs and as a result may expose themselves to risks which can easily be protected against. Whilst far fewer in number within the sector, the larger social enterprises have good structures and protection in place but appreciate support from specific services such as thematic networks, information services, governance, training and payroll.

RCVS does not see itself as the sole provider of support services but part of a pipeline of support providers from the public, private and third sectors both locally and nationally. Priorities for support and engagement should therefore be developed for Renfrewshire’s Third Sector which stimulates the development of more thoughtful, considered and strategic approaches from all stakeholders. Admittedly priorities for one sector may create challenges for another but by getting the issues recognised we will go some way towards reaching shared solutions for addressing common priorities for the Third Sector, Public Sector and Private Sector in Renfrewshire.

There is widespread acknowledgement by the Scottish Government of the contribution the Third Sector makes to achieving priorities set out in plans across the public domain. However many of the efforts are hidden. Despite many vital frontline services being provided by the sector many Third Sector organisations are struggling to meet the day to day challenges of survival, sustainability and future progress. It is necessary for the Third Sector and its local stakeholders to better understand the changes necessary to provide sufficient levels of support to those organisations working in Renfrewshire, particularly those providing services and activities which are proven to enhance the quality of life in the communities which benefit from their work. Equally important is the need for the Third Sector to be actively engaged in influencing changes in policy which support the strengthening of the sector to actively contribute to delivering local results as a key priority.

The impact of this differentiated strategy can be split into three main areas:

## Differentiated Support Strategy

Improving and coordinating levels of support to the Third Sector in ways which respond appropriately to the changing needs of different local organisations

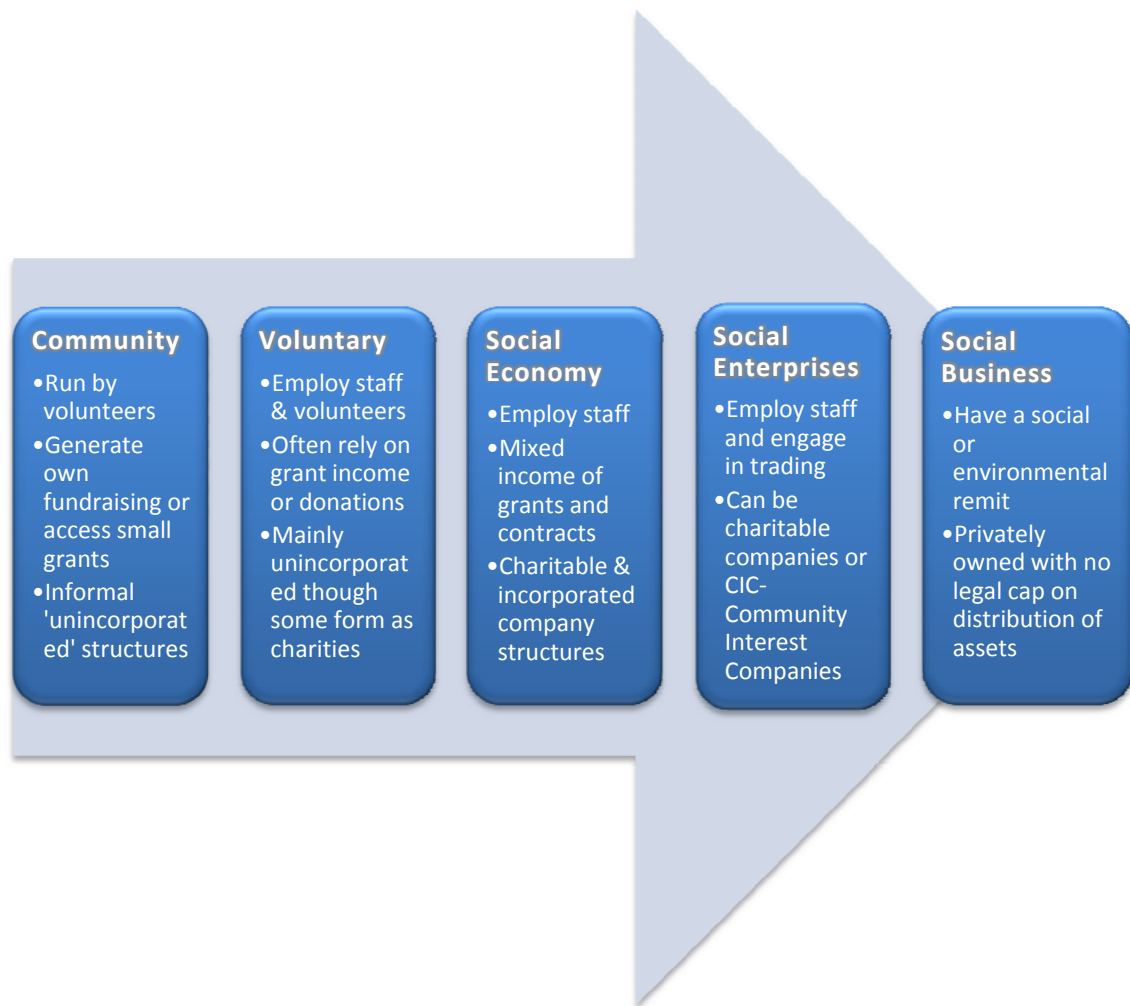
Informing policy and increasing opportunities and recognition of the Third Sector's contribution to achieving shared outcomes and priorities in Renfrewshire

Raising awareness of the number and range of activities carried out by the third sector in the area and starting to explore areas of joint interest between all sectors for mutual benefit.

Ultimately all this will lead to future benefits and improvements for the citizen's of Renfrewshire. It is unlikely that we will 'get it right first time'. It will be an organic process that will require ongoing review and evaluation however it should provide a baseline for tracking future progress in each of these areas. Although prepared by RCVS, the differentiated support strategy is intended to be useful to all of those with a vested interest in having a thriving, connected and sustainable Third Sector in Renfrewshire. This time of economic crisis has led everyone to review their moral and ethical stance; the strengths that Third Sector offers can be of great advantage to all if we work together to rise to the challenges ahead!

### DEFINING THE THIRD SECTOR

There are various definitions of the voluntary and community sector: Third Sector, "Not for Profit", NGO, Social Economy, and so on. RCVS accepts all definitions and works with those organisations that have independence from the statutory sector in how they are governed; have a voluntary management committee or board structure; are in the social sector either "non profit making" or re-distributing profit for social/community benefit; and is established for public or mutual benefit. RCVS recognises the third sector as a movement. There is increasing interest, particularly within public policy in developing social enterprise. RCVS views this as an aspect of the Third Sector movement which generates income or profit through for example sales or contracts, but reinvests these profits for social and community benefit. Whilst we welcome and support development of social enterprise we also recognise that this is proportionately the smallest segment of our local sector. The diagram below clarifies the differences between the terms used to describe different parts of the Third Sector.



One area we want to improve is the knowledge and awareness of the valuable contribution that the Third Sector in its entirety makes to communities across Renfrewshire. As a start-point we have produced **'The Five Tiers Triangle'** which splits Renfrewshire's organisations into relevant tiers based on their structure and resources. It also indicates which support providers are most likely to be involved in supporting organisations within each tier. From this we have prepared the differentiated support strategy to meet various needs in each of the five tiers [see below].

## The Five Tiers Triangle of the Third Sector in Renfrewshire

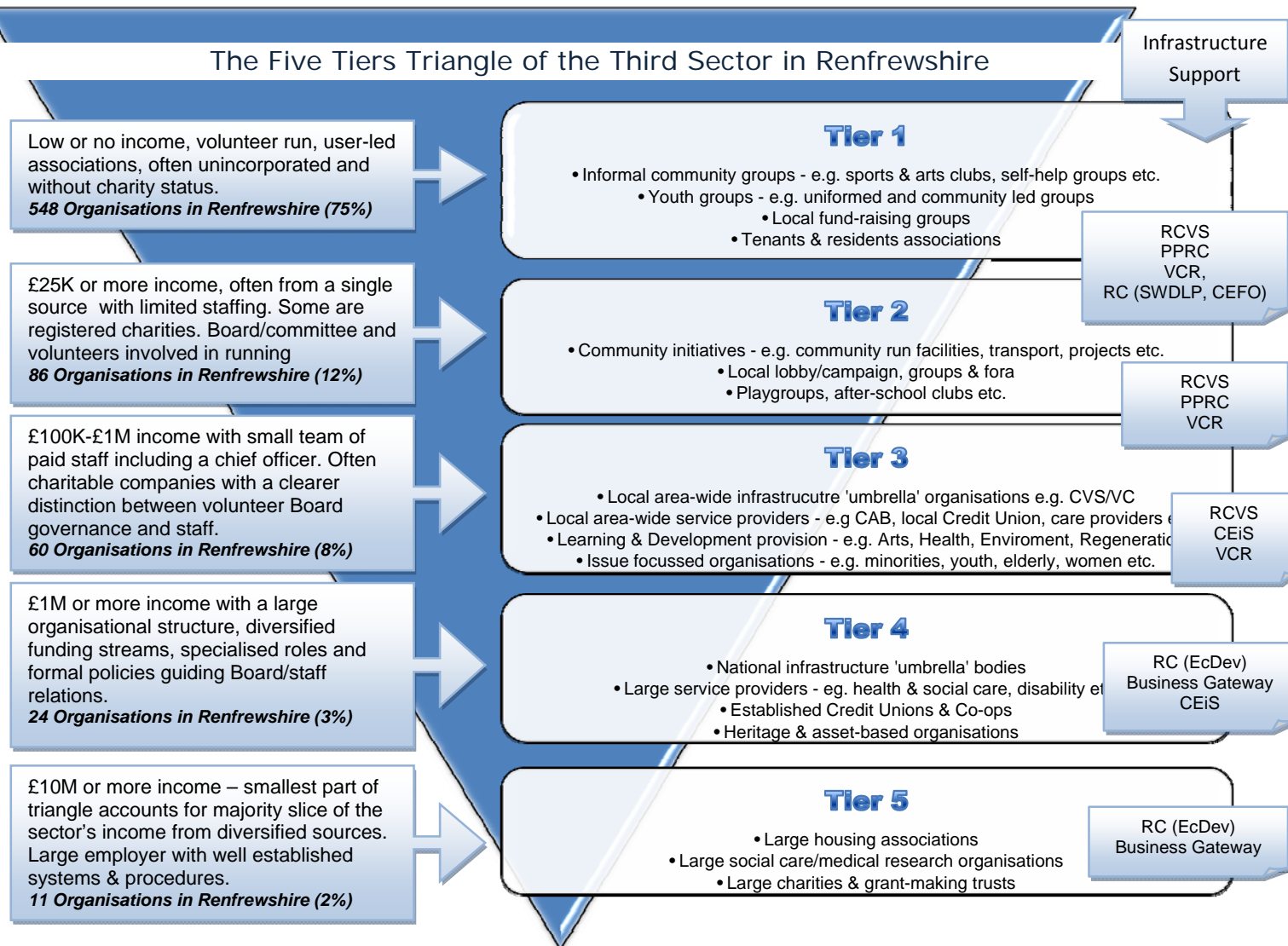
Community Based



Social Economy



Social Enterprise





## ABOUT RCVS

Renfrewshire Council for Voluntary Service (RCVS) is the recognised local infrastructure organisation in Renfrewshire with core funding provided by the Scottish Government to support local Third Sector organisations in their ongoing development. It is eight years old and has worked to establish itself as the main point of access to support services for the Third Sector over that time. At RCVS we have developed a strategic logic model for our own organisation which connects us with national priorities but more importantly sets out our local vision and mission for providing support, information, engagement, research and resources to community, voluntary and social enterprise organisations in Renfrewshire.



RCVS is a local Community Planning Partner representing third sector interests and works at national and local levels on behalf of the third sector in Renfrewshire. For instance RCVS works closely with the Scottish Government Third Sector Team, on the recently announced three year "Thrive and Connect" agenda which is currently delivered by all members of the Scotland CVS Network with support from the national umbrella body for the Third Sector in Scotland – the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO).

The "Thrive and Connect" agenda places a local emphasis on third sector organisations working well together; inter-trading, working with the public and private sectors and growing their capacity. In addition it is expected that the Third Sector will have a strong presence in planning and be "connected" locally to decision-making which affects it. This agenda needs to be underpinned by RCVS leading the way on local research and development which allows us to effectively assess the local sector's needs and respond appropriately. Equally maintaining our own internal sustainability and our work in partnership with stakeholders through commitment to continuous improvement is vital to achieving success within the

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'Thrive & Connect' agenda. Therefore our own strategic logic model contains four thematic programmes as follows:

### Thrive

- Providing a programme of capacity-building support using a differentiated strategy to meet diverse third sector needs

### Connect

- Acting as a catalyst for effective engagement between the community and voluntary sector and between the local decision making and planning structures in order to influence policy and contribute to delivering on local outcomes

### Research & Development

- Building on the existing mapping exercise and third sector database to gather data, understand changing needs and increase knowledge and awareness of the third sector's local contribution

### Sustainability & Continuous Improvement

- Working internally and with other providers to improve the quality and sustainability of infrastructure services

More details are contained in the separate Strategic Logic Model document available from RCVS.

RCVS has three principal values:

- **RCVS values diversity and recognises social values**
- **RCVS strives to promote and deliver the highest quality standards**
- **As the hub of the Third Sector RCVS values participation and communication with its members, and works to promote effective representation of Third Sector needs and interests.**

Our purpose, programmes and values place us as a leading organisation in Renfrewshire on matters concerning Third Sector development and we have prepared this strategy to assist all of our stakeholders and Third Sector organisations to prepare for the changes and challenges ahead. This report therefore sets out some of the current context driving changes in the short and long-term future. It then proposes actions for all stakeholders to consider as part of a strategy which tailors support for the Third Sector according to their size, resources and context as described in 'The 5 Tiers Triangle'.

## CONTEXT

### THE RENFREWSHIRE AREA

Renfrewshire has a population of around 170,000. It sits in West, Central Scotland. A population decline over the last ten years is forecast to continue and the balance of population will see an increase in older people over the years.

Renfrewshire has a higher than national average manufacturing sector and there are many successful businesses with a high export record. Manufacturing however is forecast to decline resulting in a predicted increase in unemployment. This would be on top of a currently high level of people out of work. Educational attainment is good but data masks a gap in achievement that is linked to poverty. Similarly health data indicates a reasonable health profile but masks many health issues in the area, predominant in areas of deprivation. The poverty gap appears to be widening. Renfrewshire is one of the seven areas of Scotland with the highest levels of worklessness, due mostly to ill health. Mental Health and musculo-skeletal disorders are the primary cause of worklessness for around 60% of the 11,000 people claiming incapacity benefit. The main centre and largest town in Renfrewshire is Paisley and the area has good motor, rail and air transport links which according to forecasts are likely to deal with increases of traffic.

### THE THIRD SECTOR IN RENFREWSHIRE

According to the Office of the Charity Regulator report the number of charities has risen from 299 in 2005 to 481 in 2008. In 2005 Renfrewshire was 27<sup>th</sup> out of 32 authority areas in the list of Charities per 10,000 of population whereas by 2008 it rose to 24<sup>th</sup> place. Renfrewshire's national performance fares better in relation to charity income where per 10,000 of the population Renfrewshire rose from 15<sup>th</sup> place in 2005 to 11<sup>th</sup> place in 2008.

This is consistent with RCVS own findings in our recent mapping exercise (2008). The estimated number of Third Sector organisations has risen dramatically by over 60% since 2003 (418-700). 13% of respondents in the mapping exercise classify themselves as social economy organisations and account for £175 Million Pounds Income per annum. 56% of social economy organisations taking part reported an increase in their income from the previous year, 29% said it had decreased and 18% said it had remained the same. From those organisations providing details of their annual income the median income of respondents is £37,000 per annum however this doesn't reflect a large gulf between the maximum income of £14.5 Million and the minimum income of only £192 per annum. The vast majority of Renfrewshire's Third Sector fits within 'Tier 1' of 'The 5 tiers Triangle'. Only a few organisations fit within Tier 5 with an income of more than £10 Million. It is not surprising therefore that the majority of organisations are community-based informal organisations with their main focus of work on their local community. Childcare, counselling & support services, disability, education and volunteering are also common areas covered by local organisations. The main beneficiaries of services are: older people, volunteers, young people, disabled people and residents of disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Hence the case for a differentiated support strategy is made clear by the diversity and disparity between organisations in Renfrewshire.

## EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT – DRIVERS FOR CHANGE

This section highlights key points from national and local policy and research which are likely to impact on Renfrewshire's Third Sector in future.



## RENFREWSHIRE'S VOLUNTARY SECTOR COMPACT

In Renfrewshire a partnership agreement exists between the Renfrewshire Council and the Voluntary Sector called "Working Together: The Renfrewshire Compact." The local Community Health Partnership (CHP) has recognised the "Compact" which is being rolled out to other Community Planning Partners in co-operation with the Renfrewshire Council.

The Compact aims to work towards a vision of **better partnership working for the benefit of Renfrewshire as a whole, working together to improve services and maximise funding opportunities through the community planning process.** RCVS is currently signing a 'Memorandum of Understanding' based on the Compact's 'commitments' with other public bodies such as the Police, and the Fire and Rescue Services.

The key commitments are in five areas:

### **Recognition, Funding, Consultation, Volunteering, and Equal Opportunities**

The Compact Implementation Action Plan has set targets which are based on the local single outcome agreement (SOA) as detailed below.

### THE SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENT – LINKING LOCAL AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES

The “Single Outcome Agreement” is a document required by all local authorities as a result of the recent Scottish Government/Local Authority “Concordat” (2007). The Concordat is a significant step in connecting local and national priorities and measuring progress against a range of indicators. The agreement places an obligation on Community Planning Partners to attain the national indicator 13: **to ‘increase the turnover of the social economy’**. Renfrewshire’s SOA specifies a target increase of at least by 5% during 2008-2010. In addition to this specific indicator it is clear that the Third Sector has a significant role to play in shaping all local priorities and supporting partners to achieve them. RCVS has responsibilities to monitor 5 actions within the Renfrewshire single outcome agreement. These are:

- RCVS Health & Social Care Network Activities,
- Development of a Voluntary Sector Strategy,
- Continued work with the Council (& Community Planning Partners) as key representative for the voluntary sector in Renfrewshire,
- Assisting communities to develop events by delivering training and support, and
- Implementing Quality Assurance across the voluntary sector.

Hence the Single Outcome Agreement is a significant over-arching driver of all public and third sector partners within Renfrewshire. It is important that the Third Sector enhances its role in developing this policy and playing an active part in delivering its priorities.

### SINGLE INTERFACE – THE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT THIRD SECTOR TEAM

The Scottish Government recently formed a ‘Third Sector Team’ with five strands to its remit as below:

- strategic development and partnerships,
- opportunities for growth,
- investing in growth,
- supporting localism and
- an implementation team.

The team aims to improve cross cutting within government. One directive from this team which is having a significant local impact on support services is the requirement to form a ‘single interface’ by March 2011 or sooner. Communication in November 2008 from the Scottish Government’s Third Sector Team sets out the requirements as follows:

***“We wish to work with local partners to ensure that in addition to the support the infrastructure provides to local and national third sector bodies working in each area, there is a strong interface between the third sector and the CPP - to enable the SOA to be informed by the knowledge and experience of the third sector; and for the third sector to have a real opportunity to show how it could deliver SOA outcomes.***

***The model currently under discussion is that we would provide a single pot for each CPP area.***

***It may be that some areas decide to go for a coordination arrangement for existing bodies; others might seek to replace existing organisations with new forms, perhaps single bodies.***

What this means is that instead of current arrangements where SCVO oversees the grant funding and strategy for all CVS across Scotland and Volunteer Development Scotland (VDS) does the same for all Volunteer Centres; funding will now come directly to local infrastructure organisations that fit within 'agreed local arrangements' as this statement reveals:

***"While we expect to provide funding towards whatever form is eventually chosen, organisations which choose to remain outside the new arrangements will no longer be funded."***

The most recent communication from the Third Sector Team expands by confirming the minimum requirements:

***"Our funding will require that the interfaces meet a minimum set of functions, likely to be:***

- ***Support to voluntary organisations operating in the area, both local and those national organisations that deliver services at the local level***
- ***Support to and promotion of volunteering***
- ***Support and development of social enterprise***
- ***Connection between the CPP and the third sector"***

The Government's Third Sector Team is also steering local stakeholders towards early transition, in line with this timetable:

**March 2010:** put in place the new arrangements to operate, at the very least, in pilot form for the year 2010-11.

**April 2011:** new funding arrangements come into operation. In advance of the next Spending Review, we have no information whatsoever on the likely level of that funding."

Furthermore there is an option to request the total funding for the CVS and VC as soon as arrangements are in place providing the following criterion is met:

***"The main criterion for awarding direct funding would be evidence that the CPP recognised the interface as the primary conduit to and from the third sector. This could be an exchange of letters, a memorandum of agreement or similar to establish an equally-balanced agreement between partners."***

The onus is therefore placed on local Community Planning Partnerships and infrastructure providers to work together to determine a 'local arrangement' that will best suit the needs of the Third Sector now and in the foreseeable future.

RIERSEP the local Social Economy Partnership commissioned early consultation with key stakeholders to gauge the extent of current infrastructure provision and provide a basis for determining the most suitable arrangements for a local 'single interface'. It gave stakeholders an opportunity to contribute their views on the extent of current infrastructure provision, the most beneficial types of joint working for

Renfrewshire and the criteria for making it a success. Unfortunately funding limitations prevented the report from being progressed beyond its interim status. However talks are underway between RCVS, the Volunteer Centre (VCR) who are the main parties affected, with input from Paisley Partnership Regeneration Company (PPRC) who although not directly affected do provide some support services as part of their wider regeneration agenda. It is the view of RCVS that these recommendations from the interim report remain valid:

1. Seek clarification From the CPP and political representatives on what the local decision-making process will be along with the criteria that decisions will be based on and a timetable for action. Also seek responses and feedback on any recommendations made to the CPP by the main parties – RCVS and VCR.
2. Use the RCVS mapping exercise and an up to date VCR volunteering database report to identify needs, issues and trends presented by organisations and volunteers along with any data/audits on organisational/volunteering support provided by PPRC.
3. Organise an event to involve stakeholders in shaping and agreeing a preferred model of joint working for Renfrewshire. This may involve input from the Scottish Government on national expectations.
4. Audit existing levels of income and expenditure in each organisation and clarify which aspects are relevant to be transferred to or incorporated in any new arrangement and outline how the preferred model can be resourced from secured income to meet the needs identified by mapping/database analysis.
5. Support each of the organisations affected to carry out an internal impact assessment of how the preferred model will affect them and any issues which need to be addressed before they can support the transition process to proceed.

**It is recommendations 1 and 2 which are most urgent and ones we hope our colleagues and partners will work with us in progressing as quickly as possible.** It is inevitable that with the landscape shifting rapidly on this matter that this information will go out of date quickly. We therefore recommend that readers of this strategy check the RCVS website and bulletins for the most current progress update.

#### FOLLOWING THE PUBLIC POUND

In 1996 Audit Scotland and CoSLA created 'A code of guidance on funding external bodies and following the public pound'. To ensure that funding is used properly and value for money is obtained, the code is based on principles of openness, integrity and accountability. It is designed so that councils are able to 'follow the public pound' to the point at which funds are spent by external organisations. In 2004 Audit Scotland found that Scottish councils provided £220 million to 14,000 organisations - including

companies, trusts and voluntary organisations - to deliver a wide range of council-related services such as support for people with disabilities and the management of leisure centres. Although Renfrewshire is one of the 9 Councils performing high against the code none appear to be fully compliant with it. The 2005 report 'Following the Public Pound' therefore recommends the following:

- **Put in place a register of their funding to external organisations**
- **Develop a corporate policy on free or subsidised use of council properties, vehicles and facilities by the organisations they fund, as part of their overall approach to asset management**
- **Take a risk-based approach to dealing with the organisations they fund, and focus their resources for scrutiny accordingly**
- **Explore opportunities for joint working with other councils.**

For the Third Sector more could be done to highlight what this means to local purchasing and procurement choices. In RCVS we believe that current arrangements do not take enough cognisance of the added value which third sector organisations bring. For example the added value of unpaid volunteers carrying out services for people in need makes a significant contribution to the local economy. Similarly Third Sector organisations are often able to access sources of funding which enable them to greatly enhance the services purchased by public funds. There appears to be a need to create a more considered approach to procurement which balances getting best value for money with legal obligations. In future there are opportunities for the Third Sector and public purchasers to audit and assess these added value factors which are of mutual benefit. Methods such as Social Auditing and assessing Social Return on Investment are proving increasingly popular and may provide a way of making clear the economic and social impact of Third Sector provision. RCVS hopes to work with its partners to develop these mechanisms within Renfrewshire. A range of useful guides and documents for both Third Sector organisations and public sector purchasers are available for further information.<sup>1</sup>

## INTER-TRADING

Opportunities for third sector organisations inter-trading are historically under-developed and under-utilised. Traditionally organisations depended on good-will and relied on funding, fundraising and voluntary effort to achieve their goals. Modern challenges require looking beyond traditional sources of income to considering how organisations within and outwith Renfrewshire can take advantage of each other's strengths and resources in return for a fair exchange either in-cash or in-kind.

The notion of third sector 'inter-trading' needs more prominence and RCVS were instrumental in working with public sector partners to create an innovative 'public-social partnership' based on provision of a befriending service for older people in Renfrewshire. The model is designed in a way where RCVS acts as the central fund manager overseeing a range of local providers to implement and integrate discreet parts of the overall service. The model has received national recognition for its innovation and good practice.

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<sup>1</sup> See for example 'Better Value', 'Better Value Case Studies', 'Collaborative Commissioning' and 'Developing Consortia Guide' all available from: <http://www.socialeconomyscotland.info/scvo/content/forms/library.asp?contwentid=505&DocStr={347|350|351|352|>



RCVS hopes to further exploit this positive experience in relation to expanding the existing model and exploring opportunities for further development of consortium type approaches. Evidence suggests that these models help increase the chances of smaller third sector organisations who would otherwise not meet some of the high demands and competitive processes associated with tendering for public sector contracts. This could therefore provide exciting opportunities for organisations to progress from Tier 1 through to Tier 5 of our 5-Tier Triangle by working with other Third Sector organisations as well as working with public partners. This is only one of the many types of inter-trading as there is great potential to pilot other ways for organisations to trade with each other. Joint training of staff, administrative support, management support, and joint fundraising offer a few examples worthy of further exploration.



Figure 1: ROAR Lunch Club

## FAIR TRADE

Paisley is a fair trade town, and Renfrewshire is a fair-trade area. The ethos of social enterprise and fair-trade are complimentary and could be jointly promoted to mutual benefit. Therefore more could be done to exploit opportunities for developing social enterprise activity with a focus on fair-trade.

## SOCIAL ENTERPRISE STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN/SOCIAL ECONOMY PARTNERSHIP

The Enterprising Third Sector Action Plan of the Scottish Government provides a framework for the development of social enterprises and an enterprising third sector more generally. There is work to be done to understand that a number of local social economy organisations could become *more enterprising* with the right mix of funding and support. Organisations such as Senscot, First Port, Co-op Development Scotland, Community Development Trusts Scotland and Social Firms Scotland are available to offer specific support. The Social Enterprise Academy has also been given increased funding and improved profile through the Scottish Government's strategic approach. Senscot has also increased funds to support the development of local social enterprise networks and RCVS is looking locally at how organisations in Renfrewshire can take advantage of the services on offer.

At a local level Reid Kerr College and the University of the West of Scotland also enter into aspects of Third Sector development. A paper is being developed by Renfrewshire Council Economic Development Department to set out the parameters within which it will work with the relevant parts of the sector in Renfrewshire. This may take the form of a Board report to Council in the near future and will include engagement with stakeholders as it develops. Other Council Departments and Community Planning Partners may want to act in a similar manner. Overall this emphasises the need for RCVS to work to support the establishment of a new 'Single Interface' ensuring it acts as a one-door point of access to a pipeline of support services. Furthermore the differentiated strategy should make it easier for local organisations to be guided through this single access point to tailor-made support services. Ultimately we want support providers to combine their strengths and resources to meet a wide range of local needs. Hence the proposed 'Single Interface' should focus on removing obstacles which can make it difficult for organisations to progress through each of the 5 tiers and provide appropriate levels of support to do so.



Figure 2: The Kibble Centre - Winners of the Social Enterprise Awards 2004

**CARNEGIE UK TRUST: - THE SHAPE OF CIVIL SOCIETY TO COME<sup>2</sup>**

Carnegie UK Trust helpfully produced a report from an inquiry across the UK and Ireland that predicts the drivers of change for civil society and its affects in the future. Although extreme scenarios are developed, it gives some clues via possible outcomes and discusses the implications of them. The centre of some of the debate has crystallised around Civic v Civil society. Crudely that debate is around government/state led versus people led society developments. One particular concern for the community and voluntary sector is that increasing partnerships with government may cause the sector to lose its independence. This is coupled with increasing demands for accountability and performance. Inquiry participants felt that attention needed to be given to supporting diverse forms of organisational models and practice to ensure civil society is strong. It was also felt that homogeneous models of management should be avoided. Such trends are consistent with discussion points already highlighted in this document. Therefore further development of Renfrewshire's Compact may provide a useful focus for maintaining a balance between the sector's independence and external demands.

**LOCAL PEOPLE LEADING<sup>3</sup>**

LPL is an informal alliance of national networks, local community groups and individuals that has come together to campaign for a strong and independent community sector in Scotland. LPL has two main functions - to promote the work of local people in their communities and to influence national policy development. According to their website their campaign is based on the following premise:

**“Despite the lack of support from central and local government, all across Scotland local people continue to organise and take action at a neighbourhood level to improve their communities....LPL believes that the importance of this contribution to the health and well-being of civil society is not sufficiently recognised nor supported by government. Indeed, LPL contends that much of this community led activity is routinely discouraged and resisted by local councils. Scotland needs a 'gathering point' where organisations and individuals who support community empowerment can join forces to campaign for change.”**

At a local level it will be beneficial to keep the local Third Sector up to date with the work of LPL by giving access to their regular briefings. One concept LPL promotes is to develop more 'anchor' organisations as a route to enhancing community empowerment. The new 'Single Interface' could become an 'anchor' organisation within Renfrewshire as well as working to support new 'anchor' organisations to be created across our communities.

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<sup>2</sup> Link here for the full document

<http://democracy.carnegieuktrust.org.uk/files/The%20shape%20of%20civil%20society%20to%20come.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> See the website for more information: <http://www.localpeopleleading.co.uk/>

## NIDOS: SOCIAL CAPITAL PROFILE 2007

The concept of 'social capital' is receiving increasing attention among development agencies and researchers. There is still much debate over what it actually means. In a literature review Hobbs (2000)<sup>4</sup> concluded that **"it is widely agreed that social capital facilitates mutually beneficial collective action"**. NIDOS is a network of 77 international development organisations with a base in Scotland and produced a Social Capital Profile in 2007. Whilst a benchmark report in relation to Scotland's international development organisations lessons can be learnt locally regarding the development of sharing *and measuring* of social capital through effective networks. There is a growing amount of research that suggests social capital is beneficial to both individuals and communities socially and economically. For example social capital can:

- **Improve society's ability to monitor the performance of government**
- **Increase possibilities for co-operative action in solving problems**
- **Increase networks and links between individuals**
- **Increase transactions i.e. in credit, land and labour**
- **Increase informal safety-nets**

In line with previous arguments there appears to be no one solution or model for promoting social capital but acknowledgement that there should be guiding principles for a wide variety of community organisations and community participation. This reinforces that within Renfrewshire a healthy future for the Third Sector may be one which has a wide variety of organisations with the ability to move between different tiers within the sector and where volunteers are well supported and managed to actively participate in their communities.

HMIE INSPECTION OF COMMUNITY LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT (CLAD) REPORT<sup>5</sup>

Community learning and development, is recognised nationally as a context where community capacity building is developed alongside other non-formal learning and social development with individuals, groups, organisations and communities [see further details within the Community Empowerment Action Plan below]. Community learning and development takes place in a variety of contexts including the Third Sector and the Public sector. Like most Councils in Scotland Renfrewshire Council has a Community Learning and Development Service which operates across the Renfrewshire area. HMIE is a body set up to carry out inspections on the quality of education which includes education within community learning and development services as well as pre-school, school, colleges and further education. An inspection report for Renfrew North, Renfrew South and Gallowhill was reported back to Renfrewshire Council, 15<sup>th</sup> July 2008.

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<sup>4</sup> Hobbs, G. (2000) 'What is Social Capital' Economic and Social Research Foundation [http://www.caledonia.org.uk/soc\\_cap.htm](http://www.caledonia.org.uk/soc_cap.htm)

<sup>5</sup> See <http://www.hmie.gov.uk> for more information and publication of inspection reports.

Many strengths were noted in the report: effective delivery resulting in improved outcomes for participants, the impact of weekend youth work delivery on young people and communities, committed staff and volunteers across services and agencies, very effective reporting and recording of externally funded programmes.

The learning action points recommended by HMle for future improvement include:

- **Building on the refreshed CLAD partnership to ensure effective partnership planning and delivery to better meet the needs of local learners and communities,**
- **developing a strategy for effective community capacity building across the authority and partners to ensure effective support for local communities,**
- **developing a coordinated approach to training for CLAD and**
- **developing a more coordinated approach to CLAD service operational planning.**

This is of interest to the Third Sector because many of the youth work, adult learning and community development services involve working with local third sector organisations. The principles and approaches of community learning and development are a strong feature of Third Sector activity and many of the outcomes are shared particularly in relation to community empowerment and capacity building. Given the current economic climate it appears that there may be a benefit to clarifying areas for joint working between the Council's Community Learning and Development Services and the role of the new Single Interface. A possible start point is looking at how resources can be better coordinated and maximised to achieve common goals. Moreover this should focus on the best way of adopting a community empowerment approach to achieving the local priorities within the Single Outcome Agreement. It is the view of RCVS that this process can be assisted by bringing partners together to make further progress on the HMle recommendations and in taking forward the national 'Community Empowerment Action Plan' at a local level.

#### SCOTTISH COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT ACTION PLAN (2009)<sup>6</sup>

This recent report from the Scottish Government claims to celebrate success and inspire action. It sets a tone of community based development and highlights success in other areas. Interestingly it acknowledges and sets out to tackle some of the critique highlighted above such as perceptions of organisations losing their independence or that communities are being discouraged from participating in democratic processes. It states that **"community empowerment – the ability of people to do things for themselves is a key plank of the Scottish Government's approach to delivering a more successful nation."** It provides clarity on what community empowerment is, why community empowerment is important and how communities become empowered. It also specifies a range of new and existing practical actions which underpin the process of community empowerment. It is designed to help everyone involved in community empowerment to deliver more empowered communities over the coming years.

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<sup>6</sup> See the full report: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/264771/0079288.pdf>

It emphasises that Scotland has a long way to go to give communities a greater role in helping deliver on local and national priorities. It states that from 2009/10 Single Outcome Agreements will be developed by Community Planning Partnerships who need to **“think very carefully”** in recognition of the fact that all of Scottish society, the public and third sectors and communities themselves have a role to play in delivering their purpose.

It describes a key characteristic of empowered communities as: **“the existence of locally owned, community led organisations which often act as ‘anchors’ for the process of empowerment.”** This is entirely consistent with the work of RCVS, the remit of the proposed ‘Single Interface’ and much of the discussion highlighted in policy and research as cited above.

Within Renfrewshire what is significant is that the Action Plan continues to recommend that **“Partners need to invest time, money and skills into work that supports community capacity building, if they are serious about community empowerment. This means investing in highly skilled support for what is a complex process.”** This suggests that despite economic challenges there is an expectation that partners need to invest further in support for capacity building.

Furthermore it specifies outcomes for what should be delivered as part of community capacity building work which is extremely useful for local providers working to support this within the Third Sector. The outcomes are:

- **Confident, skilled, active and influential communities.**
- **Effective and inclusive community organisations.**
- **Effective relationships between community organisations and other organisations and services.**

It is clear that these outcomes relate directly to the ‘Thrive and Connect’ strategy for RCVS and that there is potential to use this differentiated strategy as a basis for working with Community Planning Partners to fully consider the investment and actions needed to achieve these outcomes. The Action Plan asks Community Planning Partnerships to undertake two things in relation to community empowerment:

1. **Promote and support joined up approaches to community capacity building as both the foundation of a sustainable approach to community empowerment and engagement, and a means to help communities work on their own issues.**
2. **Embedding community empowerment throughout processes for Community Planning.**

Suggestions for what this might involve appear to have some merit for taking forward the community empowerment action plan in Renfrewshire. They include:

- Assessing community strengths and responding to priority gaps in community infrastructure;
- Ensuring access to the basic operating requirements of community organisations, such as accessible places to meet and childcare;
- Mapping community capacity building support, in terms of its reach to the communities that need it most, as well as its capacity to support community groups through various stages of development from formation to managing assets if they choose to;

- Ensuring accessibility of community capacity building support, for example through appropriate information, and referral arrangements across partners for groups seeking support.
- Continuing to build upon current work to support community engagement;
- Self-evaluating current processes for Community Planning in terms of their impact on community empowerment;
- As part of developing new initiatives and processes, think about the part that communities themselves can play in delivering outcomes;
- Providing leadership to Community Planning partners in making their individual processes empowering for communities.

Thus an important way forward is to get the Community Empowerment Action Plan on the CPP agenda, consider how the suggestions can be resourced and implemented within Renfrewshire, and connect this with wider discussions particularly in relation to the creation of a new 'Single Interface' in Renfrewshire. Furthermore the differentiated approach we are advocating should provide a useful platform for taking forward proposed actions and helping to achieve a community empowerment approach to delivering on national and local aspirations.

#### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INQUIRY

The recent economic development inquiry in Renfrewshire resulted in some specific findings and recommendations for the social economy. The social economy/social enterprise tiers were represented and especially participative in the inquiry process. Specific detailed recommendations for the Third Sector are:

- **Better liaison between business support agencies, wider council role in business related activities such as procurement, better marketing of (our) activities, lack of understanding of the role of the social economy sector, overkill on auditing and assessment of social economy organisations.**
- **A need for Council wide or a "whole Council" approach to Economic Regeneration (*the third sector movement*)**
- **To understand where the third sector can fit and/or add value to other headings: transport, tourism, Town Centre development etc.**

The differentiated strategy supports these recommendations to be achieved by trying to promote ways for organisations to advance from Tier 1 of the Five Tiers Triangle, where many local organisations find themselves trapped. To take these recommendations forward local economic development work should consider the following:

The Council now manages the Business Gateway contract and can ensure that other business support programmes are aligned to ensure a suite of assistance to help *social businesses* from start up to growth.

There should be continued work with the Council's procurement team to identify opportunities for local businesses and social *enterprises*. For example hosting "meet the buyer" events as well as supporting supplier development programmes. Because Third Sector organisations reinvest their profits in local communities there should be more investment in tailored support to prepare third sector organisations for competing alongside private and public organisations.

The Council can help facilitate partnership and stakeholder working between some of the wider stakeholders involved in providing support to Renfrewshire Third Sector. The aim should be to reduce the duplication and overlap of service to a more agreed, targeted and appropriate area(s) of intervention for the organisations involved in developing this part of the economy. Within this it is important that the new Single Interface is seen as the lead partner representing Third Sector and volunteering interests. As this strategy promotes it should provide a one-door approach to accessing a pipeline of wider support services.

Third Sector organisations should be engaged in delivering elements of the Workforce Plus programmes aligned with Community Planning Partnership objectives. This will help develop the sector through contracting opportunities and deliver more sustainable outcomes and added value for the Partnership if the emphasis for awarding contracts shifts towards prioritising the "triple bottom line" – finance, social and environmental outcomes which add value for Renfrewshire.

#### EXTERNAL FUNDING SCRUTINY BOARD – "INVESTING IN RENFREWSHIRE"<sup>7</sup>

The purpose and scope of the review was fairly wide reaching and there was positive involvement from a number of local and external organisations. The detailed recommendations within the document are:

- **Developing the Council's approach to external funding and grant support as a component of a community wide outcome led investment strategy. (*public-social partnership?*)**
- **Setting the Council's arrangements for external funding and grant funding in the context of a community wide network of investment partners. (*public – social – private partnership?*)**
- **Integration of the Council's external funding and grant distribution functions with a corporate projects and funding service. (*wide membership/virtual team?*)**
- **Simplification of Council grant funding arrangements to improve access and to be consistent with the purposes of open, *competitive, short term funding.* (*Improving support to third sector through commissioning & tendering process improvements, targeted support, adding social clauses and (re)considering weighting of rating arrangements?*).**

To take this forward as part of a differentiated strategy for the Third Sector there are some ideas worthy of consideration:

- Consult on defining the outcomes and targets required for the investment strategy.

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<sup>7</sup> See web link for full report [http://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk/ilwwcm/publishing.nsf/AttachmentsByTitle/cs-ar-scrutiny-refgrantsvolcomorg.pdf/\\$FILE/cs-ar-scrutiny-refgrantsvolcomorg.pdf](http://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk/ilwwcm/publishing.nsf/AttachmentsByTitle/cs-ar-scrutiny-refgrantsvolcomorg.pdf/$FILE/cs-ar-scrutiny-refgrantsvolcomorg.pdf)



- Audit and raise the profile of the contribution (added value) the Third Sector makes to the life of the community (financially and in-kind e.g. volunteering)
- Use the formation of the new Single Interface to lead on identifying and involving Third Sector organisations that have appropriate services and resources to link with corporate projects being pursued thereby maximising their combined capacities.
- Consider the scope for partnership with major third and private sector organisations to provide mentoring support to local groups, particularly with a view to moving organisations from their existing tier into the next (within the 5 tiers triangle). One approach currently being developed by Renfrewshire Council's Economic Development team is in association with Renfrewshire Chamber of Commerce utilising ERDF support.
- Consider the scope for partnership led research to explore issues raised in the course of the review about the overall size, resource and vitality of the voluntary sector in Renfrewshire and seek to strengthen its long term capacity and sustainability.
- Build on testing out and expanding existing successes, such as public-social-private partnerships.
- Use joint approaches to commissioning and tendering so that a wider range of organisations can gain access to opportunities in future. This in turn builds local capacity to meet local needs.
- Establish a cross-sectoral external funding team with a remit to take forward the ideas presented above.

#### LOCAL AREA COMMITTEES (LACS)

Renfrewshire Council has five Local Area Committees (LACs) which act as a focus for community consultation and allocate a wide range of grants and funds. The LACs are designed to give local people the chance to hear from the Council and Community Planning Partners (such as Strathclyde Police, the NHS and the Fire and Rescue Service), to make sure they are achieving the highest possible standard of service and that we continue to meet your needs and aspirations. Importantly, the LACs have also been given substantial budgets to fund local initiatives and support local projects which reflect the priorities and needs of local people.

The dis-aggregation of some decision making to local area committees needs to be understood by the Third Sector. Around 50% of Third Sector organisations operate on an area wide basis and therefore find it difficult to take part or have any influence in these more localised bodies. Whilst there are strong arguments for focusing on different needs in different areas it is important that third sector service providers are not negated from decision-making processes where they can make a valid contribution. The LAC area based structures create a need to explore ways for third sector organisations to contribute to issues and agenda items across different areas. In terms of the differentiated strategy there is also some value in considering the different contexts of the sector in each of the five geographical areas as well as differentiating between size, structures and resources. This may assist LAC's to consider the third sector development needs in each area.

## CONTEXT CONCLUSIONS

Generally the review outlined above highlights key drivers of change affecting the Third Sector in Renfrewshire. These can be summarised as follows:

- A strong commitment to community empowerment which strengthens the role of communities and Third Sector organisations in influencing and taking action on local priorities set out in the Single Outcome Agreement
- A need to better coordinate and invest in infrastructure support for the third sector ensuring there is skilled support for building capacity
- A timetable for forming a 'Single Interface' primarily between RCVS and VCR but also in working with other local and national providers to create a main point of access to a wide range of support services
- A need to focus on tailored support to meet the needs of each of the 5 Tiers within the sector
- A need for a more considered approach to procurement which is balances getting best value for money with legal obligations and to audit and assess the added value factors which are of mutual economic and social benefit.
- A need to create and test out opportunities for enterprise, trading and contracting which are accessible to different tiers of the sector e.g. Public Social Partnerships, consortia, inter-trading etc.
- An opportunity to develop Renfrewshire's Compact to help maintain a balance between the sector's independence and external demands.
- A need to promote and encourage a wide variety of organisations to exist with the ability to move more easily between different tiers within the sector
- A need to explore opportunities for developing more 'anchor' organisations as a route to enhancing community empowerment – which may include establishing the 'Single Interface' as an anchor organisation
- A need to review decision-making structures to remove barriers to participation and have more flexible routes for combining assets, accessing additional internal and external resources and taking joint action on both geographical and thematic priorities.

These drivers will be considered further as part of the proposed actions within the differentiated support strategy which are presented in the following section.

A DIFFERENTIATED STRATEGY FOR RENFREWSHIRE'S FIVE TIERS OF THE THIRD SECTOR

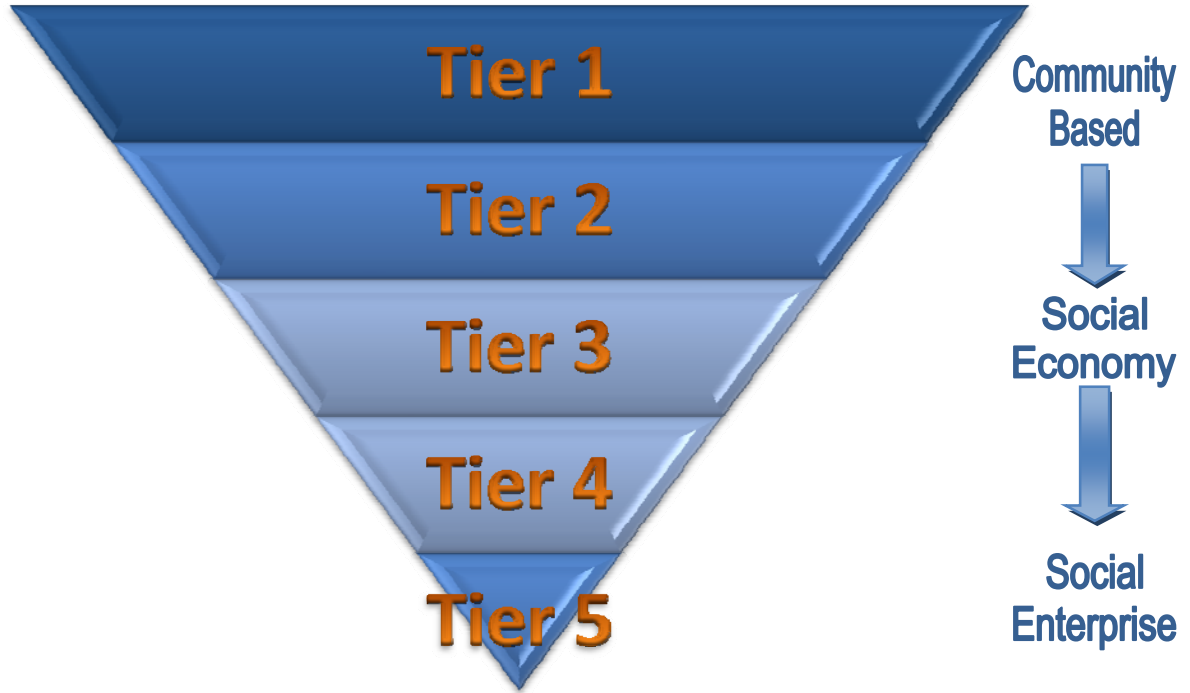


Figure 3: Some of Renfrewshire's Third Sector organisations

## AN OVERVIEW OF THE 5 TIER DIFFERENTIATED SUPPORT STRATEGY

The following section sets out the differentiated support strategy for Renfrewshire in relation to the following key areas of Third Sector infrastructure support:

- 1. Capacity building**
- 2. Community engagement & empowerment**
- 3. Research & development**
- 4. Monitoring, evaluation and continuous improvement**
- 5. Management and development of volunteering**
- 6. Collaboration between support providers**

It also indicates which support providers are likely to have a role to play in supporting each tier and may therefore be involved in collaborating on how support is provided.

Each headings specifies the percentage of organisations in Renfrewshire within each tier, however a more detailed 5 Tier Diagram is available on page 8.

TIER 1 – 75% OF RENFREWSHIRE’S THIRD SECTOR

Support area	Proposed actions
1. Capacity building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Start up support and training of volunteers and committees: setting up a committee, introducing &amp; agreeing constitutions, basic governance, committee skills, basic safety including disclosure arrangements, insurance cover, basic regulation and registration, basic planning and monitoring of activity, understanding impact and outcomes of activity, cash accounting, basic risk assessment, charity law and OSCR registration, incorporation and risk reduction,</li> <li>• Access to information e.g. e-bulletin, newsletter, network activity &amp; events, signposting for other support.</li> <li>• Funds need to be segmented and reorganised to assist start-up, core functions and developmental activities. Criteria for further investment/investment readiness need to be agreed and set.</li> <li>• The funding toolkit, peer led support for meeting application requirements and increasing the number and (partnership) quality of applications requires focused attention and development from skilled and experienced workers.</li> </ul>
2. Community engagement & empowerment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better linking geographically to local area committees and locality based work</li> <li>• Development of an external funding strategy.</li> <li>• Networks could meet on local geographical basis and feed into RCVS Renfrewshire wide thematic Networks</li> <li>• Community planning conferences: Social Enterprise, Social Economy, Health and Social Care, Disability (<i>Addiction, Homelessness, BME: not yet developed</i>)etc.</li> <li>• More could be done to ensure current and prospective service users and service providers are involved in service re-design (public – social partnership) and delivery of local priorities and outcomes.</li> </ul>
3. Research & development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is possible that the current system acts as a barrier to growth and “locks” organizations into tier one: small and manageable/low risk. This requires investigating.</li> <li>• We require regularly updated maps/understanding of the range of organisations utilising volunteers, the nature of volunteers recruited and where they are placed.</li> <li>• RCVS will map equalities groups and investigate the extent of equalities provision among local organisations.</li> </ul>

Support area	Proposed actions
4. Monitoring, evaluation and continuous improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitoring and evaluation requires a “light touch”, quality standards require to be introduced to those organisations that require funds.</li> <li>Awards and recognition ceremonies for individuals and organisational achievement could be rationalised, but upgraded to have an improved impact to promote the sector, its people, its work.</li> <li>We need to identify gaps, particularly in relation to services provided to minority groups and consult on the best way to enhance these services.</li> </ul>
5. Management and development of volunteering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More could be done to involve the private sector in events and planning around volunteers’ week.</li> <li>Assess and measure the social return on investment volunteers make.</li> <li>Link volunteering developments more clearly with the employability strategy and action plan</li> <li>Review and update the Community Planning partners’ position, strategy and policy regarding volunteering</li> </ul>
6. Collaboration between support providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pursue HMIE recommendations for Renfrewshire and the national Community Empowerment Action Plan with CPP partners.</li> <li>Third sector support at tier one level lacks clear leadership, coordination and strategic direction. Overarching leadership, regular meetings of staff supporting networks and agreement of common messages and priorities would assist and improve this.</li> </ul>
Support Providers	RCVS, Renfrewshire Council Community Learning & Development (CLAD) workers and Social Work Dept. Locality Planners, Paisley Partnership Regeneration Company (PPRC), Community Council Support, Tenants & Residents support, Volunteer Centre Renfrewshire, Chief Exec – Policy Officer, RCHI.

TIER 2 – 12 % OF RENFREWSHIRE’S THIRD SECTOR

Support area	Proposed actions
1. Capacity building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Constitutional compliance/review, governance, company registration, charitable status/compliance, quality standards, business planning and operational/project planning, regulatory requirements, social enterprise/project development, making funding applications, project management, payroll, H.R. policy, health and safety policy and practice, risk assessment</li> <li>Sustainability plans – to reduce reliance on single funder and add to the mix of funding sources including private investment where possible</li> <li>Skills development of individuals including mentoring from other organisations</li> </ul>

Support area	Proposed actions
2. Community engagement & empowerment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote engagement in the Social Economy Network to share information and best practice with peers</li> <li>A clearer commissioning plan with a view to defining roles as part of a cooperative, consortium or strategic partnership arrangements to deliver on SOA</li> <li>Increase recognition of the social benefits and cost efficiency of the considerable work done by this group of organisations</li> <li>Support better linkages across LAC's and with appropriate CPP sub-structures</li> </ul>
3. Research & development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify key providers that could become centres for themed activities e.g. childcare, community halls, recycling etc where shared management and cooperative type development might increase efficiency, improve outputs and reduce costs.</li> </ul>
4. Monitoring, evaluation and continuous improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduce organisations to the benefits of using Social Auditing/Social Return on Investment with mechanisms to manage/ streamline and maximise the impact of 'added value' factors</li> <li>Provide services which help assess and quantify evidence of added value to make available to purchasers &amp; funders</li> <li>Introduce recognised quality standards to assess the operational activity of organisations in an objective manner e.g. IIP, EFQM etc.</li> </ul>
5. Management and development of volunteering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Policy and guidance is required to ensure good management processes are in place.</li> <li>Promote use of 'Investing in Volunteering' and National Occupational Standards on Volunteer Management</li> <li>Develop a programme of Board support and development which fits with limited time issues</li> </ul>
6. Collaboration between support providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Planning Partners to specify a commissioning strategy and invest in those that have shared management through joint working arrangements, demonstrable quality standards and best practice and add local value.</li> <li>Work to diminish duplication and bureaucracy, promote greater sustainability and create fit for purpose organisations that can develop mixed income streams and manage development.</li> <li>Investigate opportunities for shared, HR, Financial, Health and Safety, PR and marketing services between support providers</li> </ul>
Support Providers	RCVS, PPRC, CLAD, VCR, RC- Chief Exec's office

## TIER 3 – 8% OF RENFREWSHIRE’S THIRD SECTOR

Support area	Proposed actions
1. Capacity building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social Enterprise development and growth</li> <li>• Strategic planning, project development, planning and operational plans</li> <li>• Governance, developing trading arms and OSCR compliance</li> <li>• Payroll &amp; financial management</li> <li>• Specialist training and development e.g. on health &amp; social care issues</li> <li>• Management capacity – HR, finance, resources etc.</li> <li>• Health &amp; Safety and risk assessment</li> <li>• Loan finance &amp; asset development</li> <li>• Emergency and succession planning</li> </ul>
2. Community engagement & empowerment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote increased roles and responsibility within social economy networking such as mentoring and peer support to others, providing case studies of best practice and guidance etc.</li> <li>• Greater recognition of third sector organisations with specific tasks specified within SOA</li> <li>• Review of existing added value provided by organisations to the SOA and how this can be nurtured</li> <li>• Review the existing approach to SLA's to encourage greater innovation and return on investment</li> <li>• CPP to adopt principles of 'Full Cost Recovery' in line with national policy</li> <li>• Widening thematic programme approaches, as well as geographical territory which includes shifting funding allocation by area to a more flexible approach based on evidence of needs – and contribution to SOA</li> </ul>
3. Research & development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine how many organisations are aspiring to social enterprise, how feasible the ideas are and how realistic the aspirations are to achieve</li> <li>• Review which organisations are “tender ready” and confident to pitch for work</li> <li>• Explore the growth opportunities and barriers particularly within health &amp; social care</li> <li>• Provide a shared 'market-research' service</li> </ul>



Support area	Proposed actions
<p>4. Monitoring, evaluation and continuous improvement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practices around monitoring SLAs, activity and performance require discussion, re-thinking and objective quality standards applied.</li> <li>• Involve organisations in self-assessment activities so that they can more clearly articulate their strengths and get appropriate support where needed</li> <li>• Quality Standards need to be introduced and encouraged.</li> <li>• Encourage CPP to adopt streamlined monitoring arrangements with outcomes and impact as a basis for assessment.</li> </ul>
<p>5. Management and development of volunteering</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify how well organisations currently meet recognised standards</li> <li>• Target support towards those where gaps exist</li> <li>• Ensure organisations have adequate resources to continue to invest in volunteering</li> <li>• Develop and provide a programme of support for Board Members to deal with increased demands as the business grows</li> <li>• Address specific difficulties in recruiting and replacing volunteers</li> <li>• Ensure equality of access to opportunities for volunteers</li> </ul>
<p>6. Collaboration between support providers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take action to support co-operation, consortium and mergers to meet local priorities</li> <li>• Help to shift cultures and attitudes to recognise and respond to new challenges and value and respect the sector's contribution to local outcomes</li> <li>• Take cognisance of limited time and resources – reduce levels of additional demands and seek to alleviate these to assess and respond to needs of organisations</li> </ul>
<p>Support Providers</p>	<p>First Port, Social Firms Scotland, Co-op Development Scotland, CEIS, supplier development programme (Scottish Government), Business Gateway</p>

## TIER FOUR – 3% OF RENFREWSHIRE’S THIRD SECTOR

Support area	Proposed actions
1. Capacity building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social Enterprise development and growth</li> <li>• Strategic planning, project development, planning and operational plans</li> <li>• Governance, developing trading arms and OSCR compliance</li> <li>• Payroll &amp; financial management</li> <li>• Specialist training and development e.g. on health &amp; social care issues</li> <li>• Management capacity – HR, finance, resources etc.</li> <li>• Health &amp; Safety and risk assessment</li> <li>• Loan finance &amp; asset development</li> <li>• Emergency and succession planning</li> <li>• Up-scaling, diversification, growth, partnerships, franchising etc.</li> <li>• Contract management</li> </ul>
2. Community engagement & empowerment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have less of a cohesive voice and appear as if they would benefit from support in this respect</li> <li>• Support networking, cross fertilisation of ideas, understand needs and gaps and support development of these organisations both within and outwith Renfrewshire</li> <li>• Bringing together of Council, Health, Third Sector and other relevant stakeholders to take stock of existing achievements and how these can be further developed</li> <li>• Explore opportunities for mentoring and peer support to lower tiers of the sector</li> <li>• Identify ways these organisations can take on more representative roles within their specialist fields and support smaller organisations to play a more active part in SOA delivery</li> <li>• Make links where relevant with national networks with a specific role in supporting these organisations and discuss potential to increase their local voice/representation</li> <li>• Build on the work of RIERSEP to help these organisations connect better with local processes</li> </ul>
3. Research & development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Look at demands for developing new products, diversifying or widening the customer base i.e. outwith Renfrewshire, new client groups, and new products.</li> <li>• Identify existing capacity and skills and where there are specific shortages or gaps; and explore ways of filling these gaps</li> </ul>

Support area	Proposed actions
4. Monitoring, evaluation and continuous improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify specific models and frameworks currently used and what support needs are identified</li> <li>• Explore whether systems used can be benchmarked, cascaded or shared with the wider sector</li> <li>• Involve these organisations in consulting on the best way to re-vamp the local SLA's to improve reporting on added value</li> <li>• Share and promote good practice examples on evidence gathering etc.</li> </ul>
5. Management and development of volunteering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify the causes of issues relating to recruitment and retainment of volunteers as highlighted by these organisations and how this can be addressed locally</li> <li>• Bring volunteer managers together to develop and share best-practice</li> <li>• Involve volunteer managers in supporting and mentoring those in lower tiers</li> <li>• Ensure Board members have access to ongoing support</li> </ul>
6. Collaboration between support providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify the extent of more specialist support needed and how this can best be provided at a local level</li> </ul>
Support Providers	Renfrewshire Council Economic Development Dept, Coop Development Scotland, Senscot, Private Sector Consultants, Chamber of Commerce, CEIS

## TIER FIVE – 2% OF RENFREWSHIRE’S THIRD SECTOR

Support area	Proposed actions
1. Capacity building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social Enterprise development and growth</li> <li>• Strategic planning, project development, planning and operational plans</li> <li>• Governance, developing trading arms and OSCR compliance</li> <li>• Payroll &amp; financial management</li> <li>• Specialist training and development e.g. on health &amp; social care issues</li> <li>• Management capacity – HR, finance, resources etc.</li> <li>• Health &amp; Safety and risk assessment</li> <li>• Loan finance &amp; asset development</li> <li>• Emergency and succession planning</li> <li>• Up-scaling, diversification, growth, partnerships, franchising etc.</li> <li>• Contract management</li> </ul>
2. Community engagement & empowerment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved joint working through the strategic RIERSEP</li> <li>• Explore opportunities for mentoring and peer support to lower tiers of the sector</li> <li>• Identify ways these organisations can take on more representative roles within their specialist fields and support smaller organisations to play a more active part in SOA delivery</li> <li>• Make links where relevant with national networks with a specific role in supporting these organisations and discuss potential to increase their local voice/representation</li> <li>• Identify the extent of policy or campaigning work undertaken by these organisations at a national level</li> </ul>
3. Research & development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review levels of research and development undertaken by these organisations and where gaps exist</li> <li>• Explore ways of utilising skills within these organisations to undertake research on behalf of the wider sector and local stakeholders</li> </ul>
4. Monitoring, evaluation and continuous improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify specific models and frameworks currently used and what support needs are identified</li> <li>• Explore whether systems used can be benchmarked, cascaded or shared with the wider sector</li> <li>• Involve these organisations in consulting on the best way to re-vamp the local SLA's to improve reporting on added value</li> <li>• Share and promote good practice examples on evidence gathering etc.</li> </ul>

Support area	Proposed actions
5. Management and development of volunteering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify the causes of issues relating to recruitment and retention of volunteers as highlighted by these organisations and how this can be addressed locally</li> <li>Bring volunteer managers together to develop and share best-practice</li> <li>Involve volunteer managers in supporting and mentoring those in lower tiers</li> <li>Where these Boards are based in Renfrewshire ensure members have access to ongoing support</li> </ul>
6. Collaboration between support providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support is not well coordinated and many organizations support each other. Peer mentoring and coordinated/joint access to external support may help release staff time to coordinate and develop suitable programmes.</li> </ul>
Support Providers	Renfrewshire Council Economic Development Dept. Private sector consultants, Social Firms Scotland, Senscot, Co-op Development Scotland

In conclusion the strategy separates out some of the unique challenges faced by organisations operating at different levels. Tier 1 is extremely large and does merit good levels of skilled local investment and support. This mainly focuses on starting-up and then building capacity to grow and progress. Tiers 2-5 are all proportionately smaller although their resources and contribution to local outcomes are often much more significant. There are common needs between tiers 2 and 3 which can be looked at together. Similarly Tiers 4 and 5 require approaches which involve regional or national input either from similar organisations or from national support agencies. The opportunities for inter-support between tiers are currently untapped but efforts to address this will go far in dealing with the drivers of change listed in the previous section. Thus the context and drivers of change are supportive of a differentiated approach to Third Sector development and increasing its engagement in delivering local priorities. This will achieve greater capacity, growth and sustainability of the sector which in turn will be better equipped to address local needs and issues. The Single Interface will become a catalyst for taking this strategy forward however key to its success is the buy-in from Community Planning partners at a local level and all stakeholders listed above with a recognised role in supporting Renfrewshire’s Third Sector.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Third Sector has a lot to offer Renfrewshire in terms of social cohesion , economic regeneration and improving democratic participation and the overall quality of life across Renfrewshire's diverse communities. The role and benefits of the Third Sector are truly in keeping with the spirit of the area and contribute high levels of resources and benefits to achieving local and national policy.

The recent increased involvement in decision-making, especially Community Planning generally has highlighted the need to get the right people within the right structures to achieve the best results. Clearly we are seeing a measurable increase to support community engagement through community planning type mechanisms. We do however need to review the structures and their effectiveness in relation to community empowerment. Barriers which prevent opportunities for Third Sector involvement and which deny their contribution to achieving results need to be assessed more carefully. This should start by putting into action the appropriate recommendations in the Community Empowerment Action Plan. This means looking towards more flexible strategic approaches to assessing, recognising, maximising and enhancing local capacity and resources across all sectors.

We need to be more considered and "more joined up" in how we invest in the outcomes we wish to achieve. This should be informed by better research into local needs and issues, and how best to address these. We need a better balance between adhering to legislation and making it work for Renfrewshire. There needs to be clearer policy and guidance around procurement and funding policies with a greater ability to assess and measure added value and social return on investment. Service Level Agreements are currently inadequate in promoting creative and innovative approaches as they tend to measure the finances rather than their social impact. Therefore this should be reviewed so that the real impact can be achieved to the highest standards, are adequately recorded and measured and can be improved over time.

We need to think differently about how infra-structure support is made available across the spectrum of third sector organisations. With the 'Single Interface' as an essential requirement it needs to be given the best chance of success with adequate skills and resources to meet the requirements detailed within this strategy. Although it will primarily affect RCVS and VCR all support providers need to actively consider what they can contribute to a well coordinated and integrated pipeline of support. Leadership for this needs to come from the CPP with a responsibility to at a minimum level set out the decision-making criteria for moving forward on the Single Interface, whilst in the longer term setting out a strategic vision for building the sector's long-term capacity to play an active part in shaping and delivering local outcomes

We need to re-draw the amount, criteria, timescale and sources of funds available to invest more intelligently: to pilot/start up, increase supply, diversify "products", "core finance", and sustain relevant organisations.

We need to consider steps to get the maximum value for all investment within Renfrewshire. For the Third Sector this is based on supporting organisations to bid for contracts and looking at a range of approaches to achieving this between larger and smaller organisations as well as forming working relationships across sectors.

## Summary of Recommendations

- Renfrewshire's Third Sector should have differentiated support services tailored to meet the diverse needs of the sector. This is best achieved by investing in making the third sector 'mobile' - able to progress from tier to tier rather than being limited or 'pigeon-holed' or limited by their current status.
- The Community Planning Partnership should support the formation of the new Single Interface and recognise it as the main conduit for engagement of the Third Sector and volunteering in shaping and delivering local outcomes by defining decision-making criteria that will give it the best chance of future success.
- Barriers which prevent Third Sector and volunteering involvement in achieving local SOA priorities should be researched and addressed. This should start with local implementation of the actions outlined in the national Empowerment Action Plan.
- We need more strategic and more joined up efforts to achieve local priorities. Actions and investment should be based on better evidence of needs and better investment in building local third sector capacity, resources and assets to meet those needs.
- We need a more coherent way of designing investment, procurement and funding opportunities which favour the added value, added capacity and added sustainability of social, environmental and economic outcomes which are best for Renfrewshire.
- Although the new Single Interface will act as a one-door approach to accessing support services and representation of third sector and volunteering interests; all stakeholders need to come together to ensure there is a pipeline of robust, reliable, well-resourced and sustainable infrastructure support services. These services should meet high standards and maximise the collective skills, capacity and resources to achieve local strategic outcomes.

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