

Young People's Climate Action Plans for Aberdeen City

A collaboration between Aberdeen for a Fairer World (AFW), A Place in Childhood (APiC), St Machar Academy, Woodside Primary School, and Lochside Academy

BACKGROUND:

This report describes the outcomes of a project we, AFW and APiC, conducted in collaboration with the children and young people of St Machar Academy, Woodside Primary, and Lochside Academy in early 2023. Through this, we covered a significant portion of the full city's geography taking in the communities of Woodside, Seaton, Tillydrone, Kittybrewster, Cornhill, Old Aberdeen, Torry, Kincorth, and Cove Bay. Some pupils living out-of-catchment in Northfield and Mastrick also took part. The purpose was to create local Climate Action Plans for each catchment area and share the outcomes of the work with adult stakeholders in and beyond Aberdeen City Council and The North East Scotland Climate Action Network (NESCAN).

Around 75 children and young people between the ages of 9 and 14 were involved directly with the project, with all pupils across the schools given two opportunities to submit feedback on their peers' ideas. Through this, we were able to gather consent for the plans to be taken forward and noted broader interest in taking part in related activities at each school. The eventual ambition is that these projects develop into on-the-ground action, whereby children and young people are enabled to make the changes that matter most to them in their communities. This power sharing approach and coordination on local change has both education and wellbeing effects, while being a necessary step to ensuring a Just Transition for the region.

This report begins with why we engaged with children and young people, and how we went about the process of creating and building upon participant's plans at each stage. It ends with reflections on next steps and notes the importance of taking real tangible action based on children and young people's ambitions and will to be involved in addressing the causes and impacts of climate change.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION:

A wide range of research describes the strong relationship children and young people develop with their environment. Younger children, in particular, are often thought of as having a strong affinity to nature and are very sensitive to changes in their local environment. It is therefore logical to draw on the insights children and young people can bring about space and place into our work so that we can understand what it is like to rely on local place, in a way that many adults do not have to. Extensive research in a wide range of disciplines shows that involving children and young people has wide ranging benefits, shown in Figure 1.




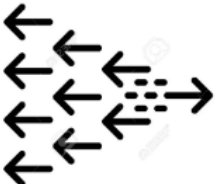




Children and Young People		Adults		Both	
<p>Significant Individual Value</p> 	<p>Having their views taken into account they can develop confidence, self-esteem, a greater appreciation of democracy, and how systems and services around them operate</p>	<p>Children and young people can bring insights to decision-making processes that an adult may never gauge alone</p> 	<p>Being smaller in stature means children can sometimes access places adults cannot, and see things that never catch the attention of adults. For example, dog poo, cigarette butts and street bins are often closer to the noses of young children, who can experience urban areas as especially smelly. They can also be very observant about the social dynamics within a space, and often have a visceral understanding of where is and is not safe.</p>	<p>Effective dialogue can benefit intergenerational relationships</p> 	<p>Which can also help tackle loneliness – something experienced most by younger and older people.</p>
<p>Learning How Change Can Happen</p>  	<p>Being involved in decisions and local change gives children and young people valuable skills for their current and future trajectories. These include creative thinking, teamwork, and sensemaking. Many of these are skills we know we need as a society.</p>	<p>Children and young people tend to not have their own independent incomes, nor means of motorised transport</p> 	<p>This means that engaging them gives key insights into how and whether a place serves the needs of people on low incomes, and who need to travel through active and public means.</p>	<p>The creation of more child-friendly environments also confers benefits for inclusive environments</p> 	<p>Where the needs of more vulnerable populations are considered at the outset</p>
		<p>Children and young people's participation can act as a catalyst for engaging adults more constructively in the decision-making process</p> 	<p>Especially in considering more imaginative opportunities for improvement, and moving conversations beyond immediate barriers to opportunity.</p>		

Figure 1 The benefits of meaningful engagement with children and young people for them as individuals, for professionals, and for both.

Involving children and young people is an invaluable part of any climate action approach. Traditional views of childhood in society has often meant they do not get asked their views, and they have decisions made for rather than with them. However, this treatment (while usually coming from a will to protect and provide for children) can also limit their potential and ability to develop decision-making capacities. In addition, children and young people are increasingly reporting a sense of climate grief. For example, a girl from Woodside Primary expressed to us during this project that she felt personal responsibility for the loss of habitat resulting from climate change. While they know more and more about climate change, they see limited action being taken and often feel they have no power to bring about the future they want to have.

In addition to the practical and ethical reasons for children and young people's involvement, it is also important to note that children and young people have a UN sanctioned right - Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) - to be heard in the matters that affect them. They also have further rights such as:

- To freedom of expression (Article 13);
- To gather and organise their own activities (Article 15);
- To a healthy environment (Article 24); and
- To a broad education that teaches them about society and the environment around them (Article 29).

These rights were ratified by the UK government in 1991, and the Scottish Government is currently in the process of enshrining them in Scots law. Taking a rights-based perspective is thus increasingly essential in public life and enables us to see children and young people's participation in its holistic context, as well as making participatory projects an opportunity to inform children and young people about human rights through lived experience.

LINKING WITH THE CURRICULUM FOR EXCELLENCE

Scotland's Curriculum for Excellence is a holistic approach to education, focusing more on project-based learning and skills development than previous iterations of the school curriculum. It has a holistic vision for bringing about the Four Capacities (Successful Learners, Confident Individuals, Responsible Citizens, and Effective Contributors) that the Scottish Government seeks to develop in children and young people. Participatory projects link with all of these outcomes and connect with children's human rights. For example:

- **Successful Learners:** Through engaging in activities grounded in their local communities, pupils are more likely to be intrinsically motivated to learn and have opportunities to develop skills that are useful in later life.
- **Confident Individuals:** Social Determination Theory demonstrates that our confidence grows through tasks which support our autonomy, enable personally meaningful activity, and help us feel connected to others. Engagement in local change gives key opportunities for teamwork, and to develop confidence in our understanding, priorities, and place within a community.
- **Responsible Citizens:** Working alongside others on ideas and proposals for local change encourages perspective-taking, empathy, and understanding of social/cultural rules. It helps us understand our own and other people's responsibilities.
- **Effective Contributors:** Through meaningful engagement, children learn to collaborate and cooperate with one another. It works best when participation involves pupils with adults and wider communities as part of the process.

In addition, engaging children and young people in local change-making projects is consistent with the Scottish Government's 'Learning for Sustainability (LfS)' agenda. The vision statement for LfS sets aspirations for:

"Learners (who are) educated through their landscape and understand their environment, culture and heritage; and develop a sense of place and belonging to their local (national and global) community, with a deep connection to the natural world; (and) will understand the

significance of their choices, now and in the future. (One Planet Schools Working Group 2012, p5)

This project created a concrete opportunity to integrate Learning for Sustainability goals with broader Curriculum for Excellence aspirations. Partnerships with our three schools also enabled us to discuss the current barriers to successful implementation of LfS projects in Aberdeen City, and how they may be overcome.

PROCESS:

The project entailed two sessions in each school, followed by a half-day, collaborative Showcase Event at Station House Media Unit (SHMU) in Woodside at the end of the process. The first session at each school took place in w/c 20th February, where pupils designed and took us on a tour of their catchment, showing us the places that are good/important and any areas where improvements are needed. We took photos and notes while out on this tour, after which these insights and our other relevant experiences of the area were put together on a shared experiential map of each part of the city. Figure 2 shows an example of an initial experiential map produced on the day.

In the second half of the session, we built upon these ideas by imagining what we would need to do to survive if our part of the city, or the city as a whole, was suddenly cut off from the rest of Scotland due to a natural disaster. We collated ideas on another map called “Aberdeen City Island” (see Figure 3). Together, these formed our draft plan for a self-sufficient Aberdeen. We closed off this part of the session by discussing and agreeing our top priorities for local climate action, considering the need for our places to become more self-sufficient. These formed the basis of project-specific planning in the second session at each school.

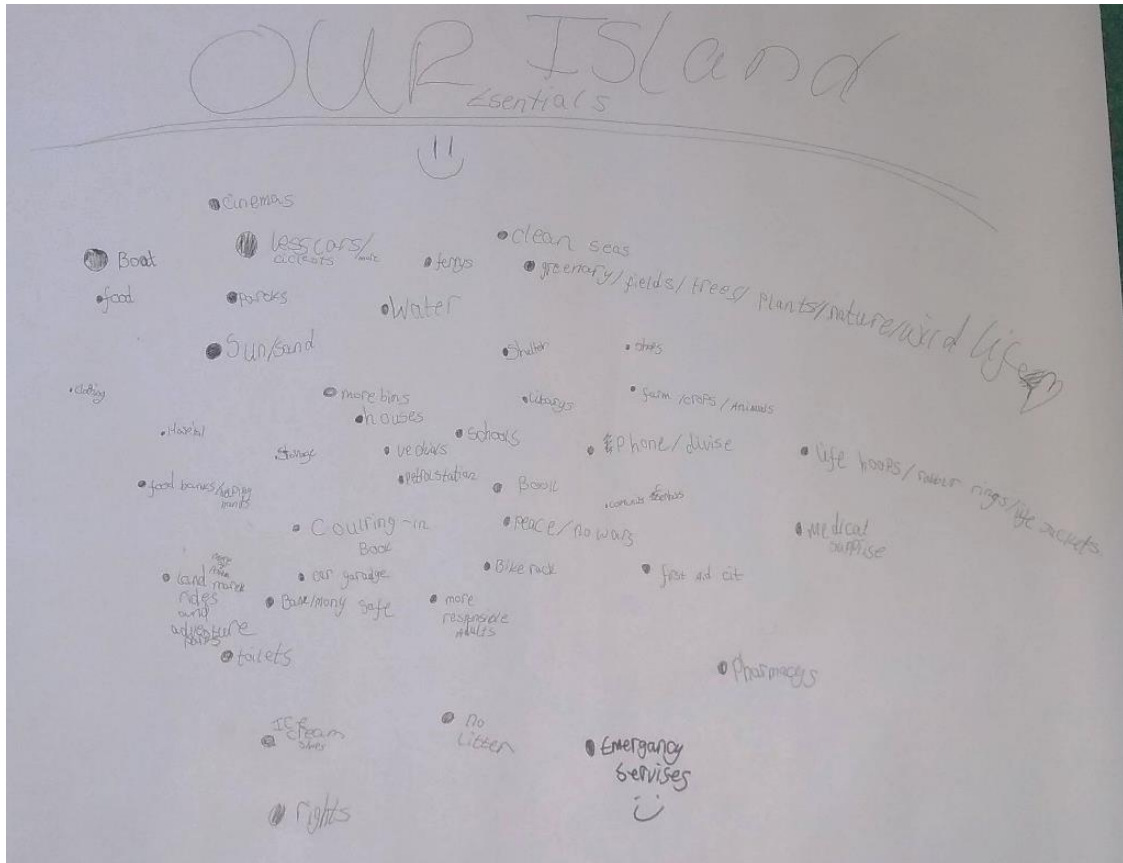


Figure 3 An example of one group's Aberdeen Island brainstorming.

Prior to the second session, APiC pulled together the map we produced with all our insights and photographs, along with the list of priorities and indication of where each group might focus their efforts in the second session. This was sent back to each school as either a document to share with other pupils at the school (Woodside Primary), or a survey to be sent across the school population to ascertain their consent for the proposed focus, and if there was anything missing (St Machar and Lochside Academies). AFW, at the same time, called on the Northeast Scotland Climate Action Network (NESCAN) to gather ideas, case studies and further information to support the pupil's plans. AFW also drew together a list of stakeholders who may be interested and able to support pupils to take forward their ambitions. Invitations were then sent out for a final showcase event to discuss final outputs, scheduled for Thursday 9th March.

On day two of the engagements, taking place at each school in w/c 6th March, the first task was to review and integrate the findings from consultations on their respective maps and priorities. Following this, pupils got into groups based around the proposed projects that motivated them most. We then worked collaboratively in groups to delve deeper into the 'What,' 'How' and 'Why' of each project. This included initial brainstorming, online research, and crowdsourcing of information and ideas from peers and facilitators, including information gathered from NESCAN. At the end of day two, each school had produced 3-4 initial project plans based on themes determined by them and actions that can be carried out locally. Figure 4 shows a selection of these works-in-progress. Finally, APiC pulled

together each set of plans into a school-specific poster output to provide a visual summary of what each group proposed.

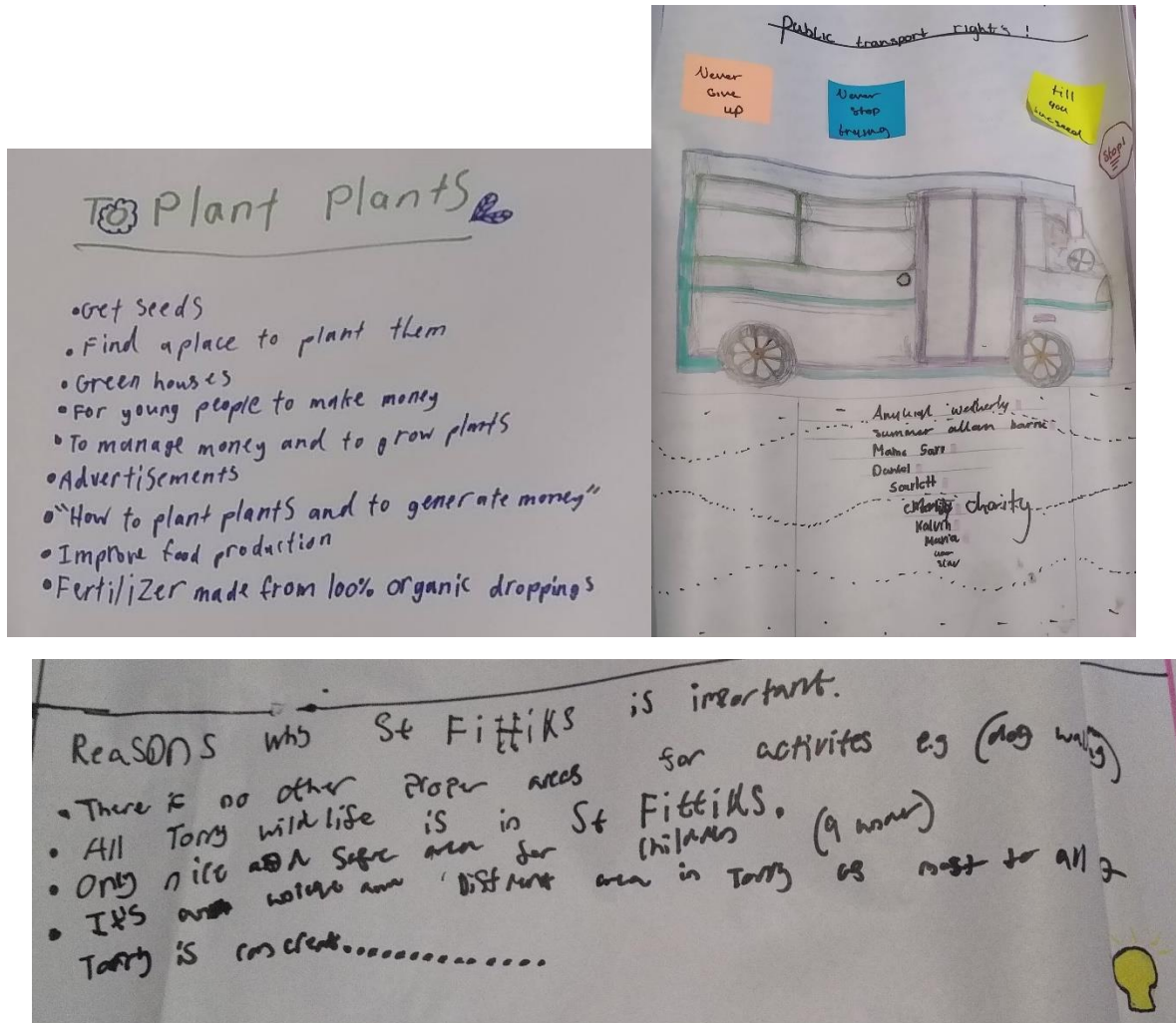


Figure 4 An array of project-based notes and outputs from day two engagements.

The Showcase Event, taking place at the end of all second day engagements, was then about displaying and discussing the pupil's ideas. Held at SHMU, each of the three schools had a table with their map and poster displayed, and 4-7 representatives from each school attended to put forward their plans. After an introduction to the session format, adult participants took part in a world café event, visiting each table in turn along with a fourth 'overall reflections' table. Each table was facilitated by someone from APiC or AFW to support the pupils to make their case and invite tangible pledges of support from attendees. A video was also made of the day, which can be viewed [here](#).

Finally, following the showcase event at SHMU, APiC pulled together a revised set of project plan posters that brought in the additional information and offers of support from adult stakeholders. These were then sent back out to each school as a survey, to share once again with the broader pupil body to ascertain level of agreement in the plans, and further interest in being part of taking them forward.

The remainder of this report details the outputs of the work and how it evolved in each of the three schools involved. It takes each school in turn, to provide the three key outputs. It ends with the next



steps we see as necessary to bring the projects forward, and support young people to be part of the action required to make Aberdeen City more sustainable and self-sufficient.

Woodside Primary School

Below is a report of what was developed and agreed by a Woodside Primary P5 class. We write in the collective first person, to centre the discussions had between the pupils, and the way they went about their work. The experiential map below shows the initial insights and priorities created by pupils at the end of Day 1 of the engagement. It shows the places which are important; what is good; and what could be improved.

Woodside Primary Local Climate Action Plan

What we think of the local area

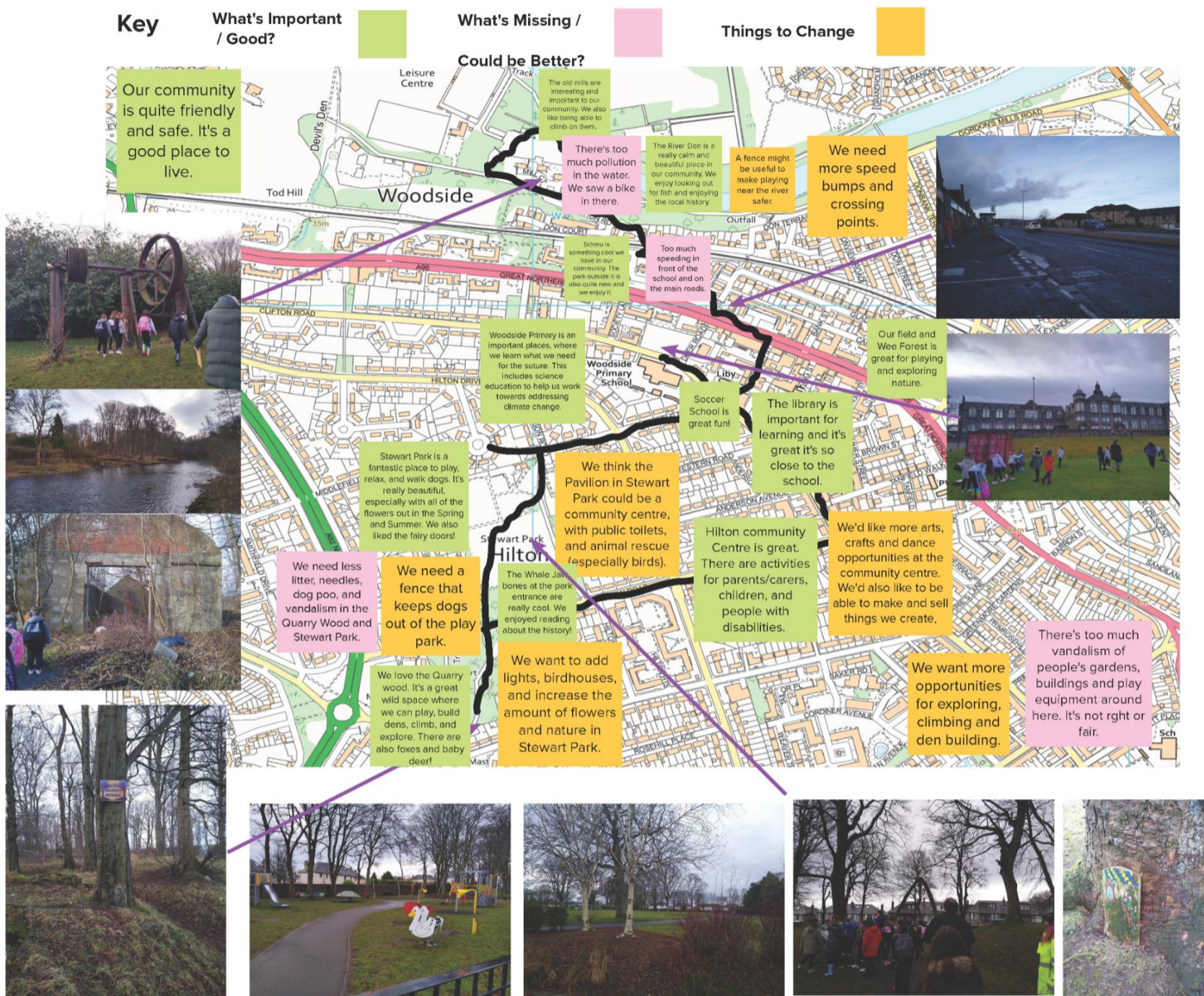


Figure 5 Woodside Primary 5's Experiential Map, written up from Day 1 Engagement.

OUR CLIMATE ACTION PRIORITIES:

Taking everything we looked at on our walk, and from talking about what Aberdeen would need to become a sustainable City, we agreed all the important things to think about. The list is below. We then decided which we thought were the most important. These are the first 6 on the list.

- Protecting and Improving Local Nature (Stewart Park)
- Local Farming and Food
- Better Adventure and Play Opportunities
- Providing Good Housing and Care Homes
- Cleaning Up Waste, Litter and Pollution

Other Important Things:

- Making our Community Safer
- Making our own Clothes
- Emergency Services (Police, Firefighters, Hospitals, First Aid)
- Schools, Science and Knowledge which help us learn about what we need to do.
- Better Community (kindness, fairness, equality, responsibility),

We heard back from most classes at our school, and they agreed with everything we'd already put on the map. When we asked other children at our school if anything was missing, the main thing they emphasised we add to our thinking is the importance of better road safety, and particularly the need to have another lollipop person to replace the one we lost.

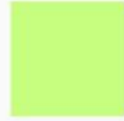
When we got together on day two of our collaboration with APiC and AFW, we reviewed our most important projects and decided to focus on three of them. We had two groups that looked at Cleaning up Litter and Pollution, and one each that looked at Food and Farming and improvements to Stewart Park. We saw quite a lot of crossover in our ideas, and all agreed that Stewart Park would be a place where we could make all of our projects happen, so starting there would be a good idea. You can read about our projects overleaf.

OUR THREE PROPOSED PROJECTS

Woodside Primary Local Climate Action Plan

Our Three Proposed Projects

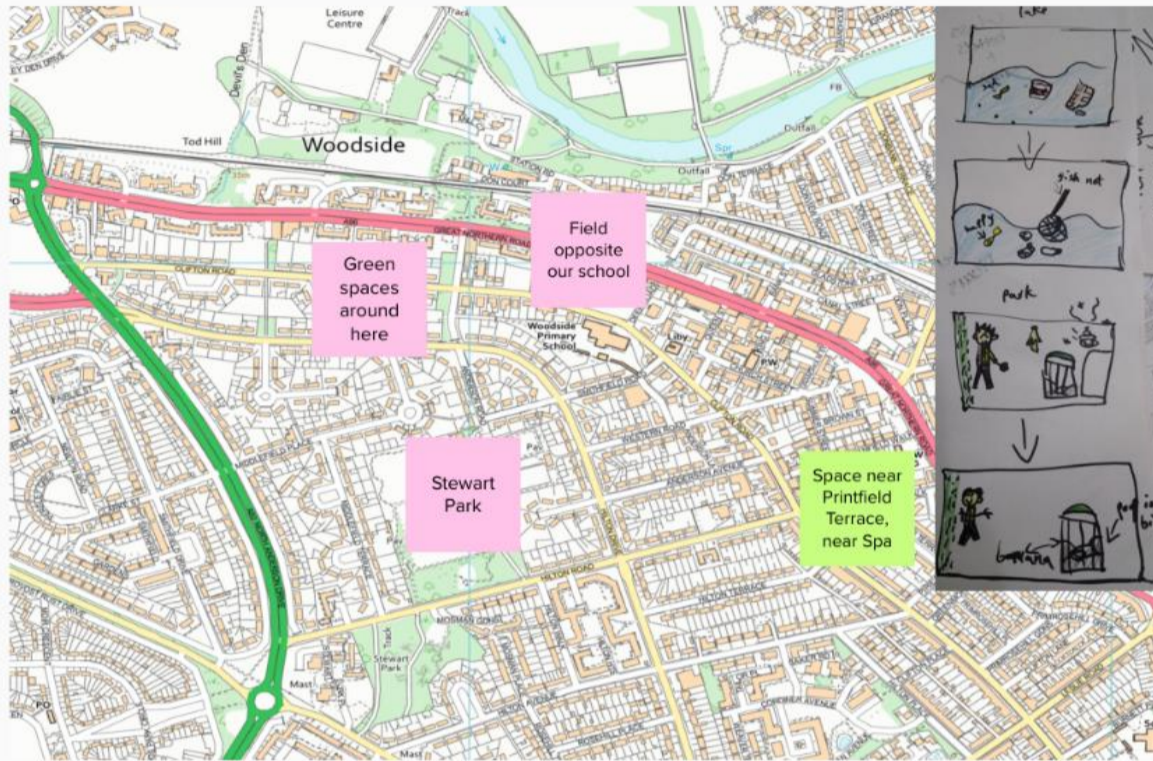
Key



Places to Cleanup



Food & Farming Opportunities



Cleaning up Litter and Pollution

What we want to clean up our community, to make it feel nicer and safer for everyone. We want our friends to understand why this is important, and encourage people to clean up their dog's mess and behave better.

- This will:
- Help us see more of the nature around us, and learn about it.
 - Make our community friendlier, and feel better about where we live.
 - Give young people more fresh air and exercise.
 - Get people wasting less food and other materials.

- How to achieve it:
- We want to organise litter picks, and set up a way for people that want to clean the community to talk to each other about it. We might setup a group Snapchat, Whatsapp, or Roblox chat.
 - We need to get litter picking equipment, which we calculate will cost £223.65 for 7 of us, and include gloves, litter-picking stick, bin bags, fish nets for getting rubbish out of the River Don, hand sanitiser, a first aid kit, phone for emergencies, and litter pick hoops. We might also ask people to bring along some of their own equipment they already have to save money. We could also ask the Aberdeen City Council for the equipment.
 - While we do the litter pick, we also plan to study and record the nature in the local area, so we know about "what's there" and "what's changing and why" and may discover new species.

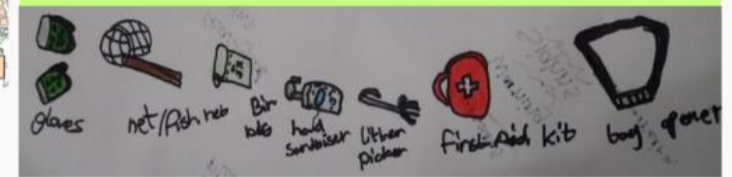
We have organised 3 main zones to focus our litter picking in:

1. Woodside School
2. Stewart Park
3. River Don

There are other roads and streets we'd like to clean up in future as well

Why this is important:

- Dog poo passes on bacteria to people. It's no good for our health.
- By addressing pollution and improving nature, we can see more of the animal species we have. Some are undiscovered!
- Cleaning the rivers and oceans keeps fish alive, and we lose a good food source if they're dead or unwell.
- If we clear up, more wildlife will come back to our community.
- Litter kids can learn about litter and its impact on the environment.
- If you don't deal with litter you waste things and it gets smelly, which is horrible to be around and unhealthy. We need to make the future better.
- We think the idea of reducing pollution and impacts on nature while at the same time surveying and learning about what nature is there is a good idea, because the two are very connected, and we are motivated by learning about nature.



Improving Stewart Park

What we want to improve Stewart Park to make it, a better place for everyone. We want to:

- Save the birds, plants and animals that already live there.
- Get more animals, plants and birds in the park than there are right now.
- Make it more fun, by putting in some new play equipment, such as tyre swings, merry go-round, monkey bars, and more swings.
- Upgrade the football pitch, so it has better goals.
- Plant food in the park (see our Food & Farming plan), including apple trees.
- Increase lighting, by adding in lanterns that might be powered by solar power.
- Put in more bins, including recycling bins.
- Improve people's behaviour.
- Add a café and community centre that is really affordable.

How to achieve it:

- We propose looking at lots of others parks in Aberdeen that have high ratings on Google, especially 5 star parks. We want to understand what they have done already to get more ideas, and then use these to make an even better plan for Stewart Park. We also want to use these ideas to help improve our school grounds.
- Things we might already do are build hedgehog houses, bug hotels, and clean up the park (see our Litter & Pollution Plan).
- Working with the other subgroups in our team who can focus on some of the things we want to achieve in their projects.

Why this is important:

- More fun is good for everyone's wellbeing.
- Stewart Park is a place where everyone feels included in the community. It's an important place to make better.
- When people have a good time in a park, they sleep better and they're healthier.
- It's a place we can make all of our plans happen!

Food & Farming

Our project is called Helping Others with Food. We want to help people get food that don't have enough, like people who are homeless and people without jobs

How to achieve it:

- We want to start by planting quick and easy food we know will grow well in Aberdeen and that people use a lot.
- These are onions, carrots, beetroot, potatoes, purple sprouting broccoli, kale, chard, lettuce, radish, rhubarb, strawberries, apples, and gooseberries.
- We can also grow other popular foods in greenhouses, such as cucumbers, aubergines, peppers, chilis and tomatoes.
- We identified some good places to start, including the school grounds, Stewart Park and a park near our local Coop.

Why this is important:

- People need food to grow big big and strong, and many people don't have enough food.
- So people can eat well in our community.
- We have a Global goal of zero hunger, and we don't want anyone to go hungry.
- Food is getting very expensive, and we need to support people with that.
- Food makes us happy.
- If we waste food, there won't be enough for everyone.

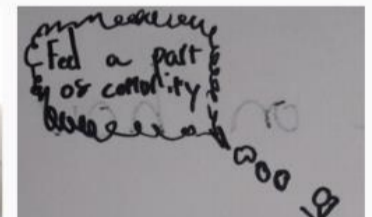
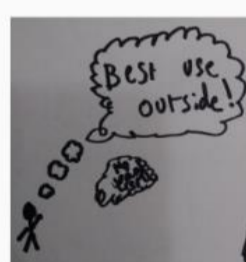
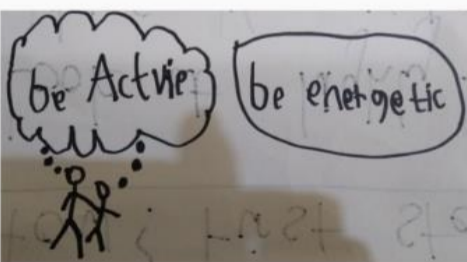


Figure 6 Woodside Primary School's Projects at the end of Day Two.

After we presented our projects at SHMU, APiC added some of the ideas and pledges from the adults that took part to our project plan. You can therefore read a fuller breakdown of each of our projects below.

Litter Pick and Nature Project

What we want to achieve:

- Clean up our community, to make it feel nicer and safer for everyone. We want our friends to understand why this is important and encourage people to clean up their dog's mess and behave better.

This will:

- Help us see more of the nature around us and learn about it.
- Make our community friendlier and feel better about where we live.
- Give young people more fresh air and exercise.
- Get people wasting less food and other materials.

How to achieve it:

- We want to organise litter picks, let everyone know about it with posters and advertising. We will also set up a way for people that want to clean the community to talk to each other about it. We might setup a group Snapchat, WhatsApp, or Roblox chat.
- We'd like a Base ("Litter Pick Central") where we can meet to discuss or start our picks and give instructions for volunteers. We thought the disused Pavilion in Stewart Park might provide a good location. Katherine Mathieson from the Council said she might be able to help us explore what we are or aren't able to do.
- We need to get litter picking equipment, which we calculate will cost £223.65 for 7 of us, and include gloves, litter-picking stick, bin bags, fish nets for getting rubbish out of the River Don, hand sanitiser, a first aid kit, phone for emergencies, and litter pick hoops. We might also ask people to bring along some of their own equipment they already have to save money. We have learned that we might be able to get free equipment and waste pick-ups from the Waste Management department of Aberdeen City Council.
- While we do the litter pick, we also plan to study and record the nature in the local area, so we know about "what's there" and "what's changing and why" and may discover new species. We might also plant trees. Chris from NESCAN told us she may be able to help us find funding and put us in touch with someone who can help us learn about nature in our local area, and how to look for it and record it ourselves.
- Working alongside other projects with similar values or aims -e.g. the Council's dog poo map (?). Another idea is that we might approach local supermarkets to see if they might pay for recyclable food packaging that we collect ("you're in our community, we're in our community, let's work together").
- Learn more about creative things we could do with the waste we collect. One idea was making planters or litter bins for Stewart Park out of it.
- Fill in a funding application for what our project needs for advertising and to get going.

We have organised 3 main zones to focus our litter picking. In order, these are:

1. Woodside School
2. Stewart Park
3. River Don
4. Other roads and streets in our local area

Why this is important:

- We feel sad and worried about climate change and doing something about it will make us feel better.
- Many of the adults who looked at our project thought our idea of combining a nature survey with litter picking was a very good and original idea, which might inspire others.
- We want to learn about our local natural environment.
- We need to make the future better.
- Dog poo passes on bacteria to people. It's no good for our health.
- By addressing pollution and improving nature, we can see more of the animal species we have. Some are undiscovered!
- Cleaning rivers and oceans keeps fish alive. We also lose good food if they're dead or unwell.
- If we clear up, more wildlife will come back to our community.
- Littler kids can learn about litter and its impact on the environment.
- Litter gets smelly, which is horrible to be around and unhealthy.

Stewart Park Project

What we want to achieve:

- Improve Stewart Park to make it, a better place for everyone.

We want to:

- Plant more trees to replace those which have blown down in recent years.
- Save the birds, plants and animals that already live there.
- Get more animals, plants, and birds in the park than there are right now.
- Do something with the disused pavilion, particularly public toilets. We also thought it could provide a Base for our Litter Pick and Nature Project. An affordable café, or animal care or community centre were other ideas we had.
- Make it more fun, by putting in some new play equipment, such as tyre swings, merry go-round, monkey bars, and more swings.
- Plant food in the park (see our Food & Farming plan), including apple trees and maybe planters on the old tennis courts.
- Upgrade the football pitch, so it has goal nets, and we don't have to chase balls.
- Increase lighting, by adding in lanterns that might be powered by solar power.
- Put in more bins, including recycling bins.
- Improve people's behaviour.

How to achieve it:

- We propose looking at lots of others parks in Aberdeen that have high ratings on Google, especially 5-star parks. We want to understand what they have done already to get more ideas, and then use these to make an even better plan for Stewart Park. We also want to use these ideas to help improve our school grounds.
- Things we might already do are plant trees or build hedgehog houses and bug hotels to improve nature.
- Other projects from our school could also be made to happen in Stewart Park, such as food growing, litter picking, and nature studies.
- Someone from the Council told us the idea of "Asset Transfer" which means our community might take over control of the park and what happens there (instead of the Council), which is something we might explore further.
- Jack Newton from Grassroots to Global told us about "Permaculture" as a way of growing food and improving nature at the same time, in way that doesn't require much work. We were

very interested in finding out more. He said there was a person called Alan Grant in Aberdeen who has a permaculture community garden, and perhaps we could ask him if he'd show it to us.

- Katherine Mathieson from the Council said she would speak to people she knows to find out if and how we might take our project forward.

Why this is important:

- More fun is good for everyone's wellbeing.
- Stewart Park is a place where everyone feels included in the community. It's an important place to make better.
- When people have a good time in a park, they sleep better and they're healthier.
- It's a place we can make all of our projects happen!

'Helping Others with Food' Project

What we want to achieve:

- Our project is called Helping Others with Food. We want to help people get food that don't have enough, like people who are homeless and people without jobs.

How to achieve it:

- We want to start by planting quick and easy food we know will grow well in Aberdeen and that people use a lot.
- These are onions, carrots, beetroot, potatoes, purple sprouting broccoli, kale, chard, lettuce, radish, rhubarb, strawberries, apples, and gooseberries.
- We can also grow other popular foods in greenhouses, such as cucumbers, aubergines, peppers, chilis and tomatoes.
- We identified some good places to start, including the school grounds, Stewart Park, and a park near our local Coop.
- Learn more about "Permaculture": see Stewart Park Project.

Why this is important:

- People need food to grow big and strong, and many people don't have enough food.
- So people can eat well in our community.
- We have a Global Goal of Zero Hunger, and we don't want anyone to go hungry.
- Food is getting very expensive, and we need to support people with that.
- Food makes us happy.
- If we waste food, there won't be enough for everyone.

The final thing we did was check out all the above with other pupils at our school through a survey. We're now waiting on the results.

St Machar Academy

Below is a report of what was developed and agreed by a group of S1 and S2 pupils at St Machar Academy. We write in the collective first person, to centre the discussions had between the pupils, and the way they went about their work. Figure 7 shows the initial map and priorities created by pupils at the end of Day 1 of the engagement. It shows the places which are important; what is good; and what could be improved.

St Machar Academy Local Climate Action Plan

What we think of the local area

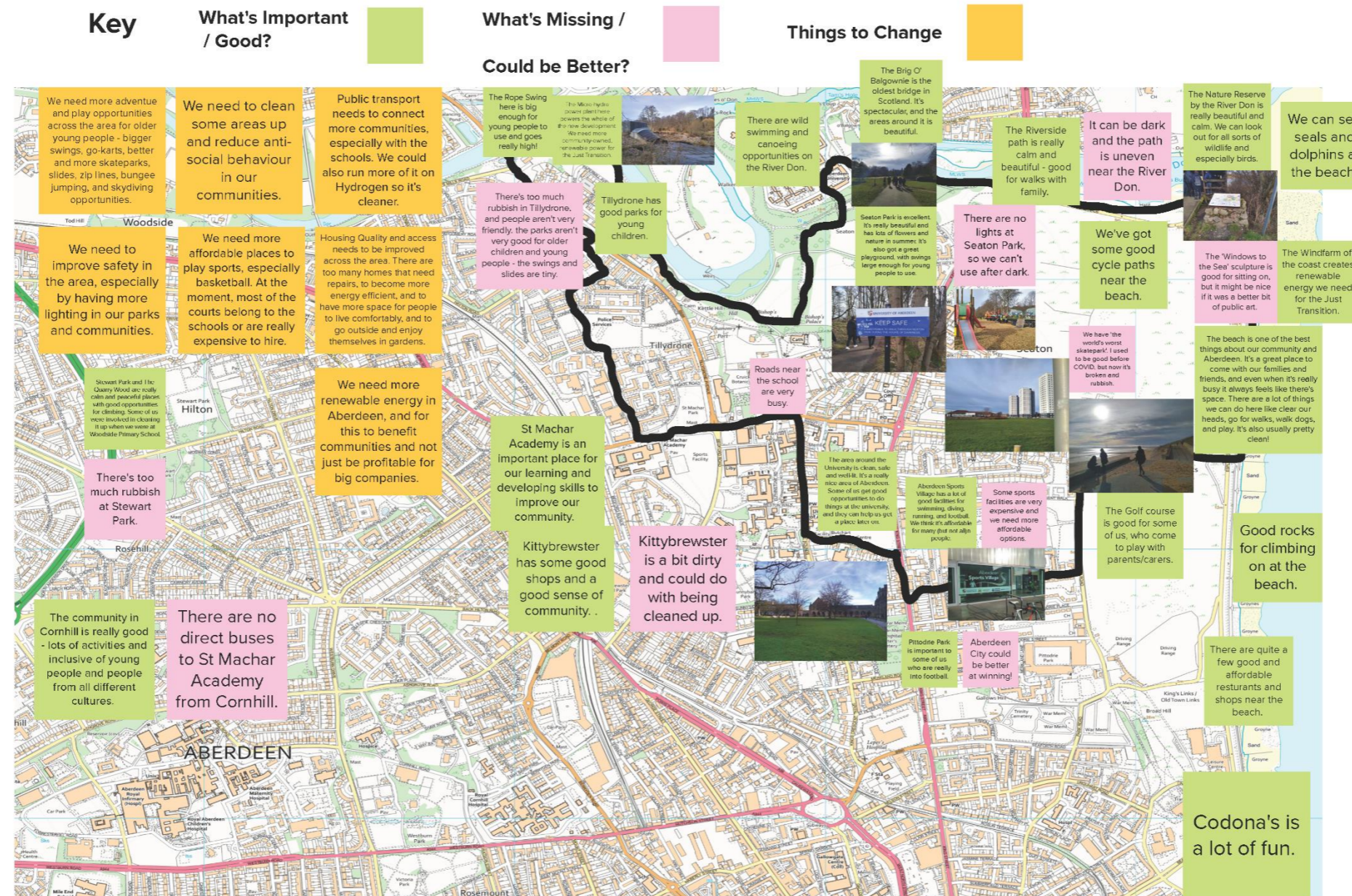


Figure 7 St Machar Academy's Experiential Map. Produced at the end of Day One.

OUR CLIMATE ACTION PRIORITIES:

After discussing our walk and what we thought Aberdeen would need to become a sustainable City, we agreed a list of important things to think about, which are listed below. We thought about these in terms of the 'Just Transition', i.e. where everything addresses climate change, but also improves our community and reduces inequality at the same time. We then decided which things were most important. These are the first 5 on the list below ("Our Projects").

OUR PROJECTS:

- Money Generation for the Community (**Equality, Jobs, and Accessibility**).
- Local Food and Farming.
- Improving Our Schools and Education.
- Renewable Energy Generation (**wind, solar, hydro and heat pumps**).
- Technology Skills.

Other Important Things:

- Affordable and motivating opportunities for young people.
- Clean water processing.
- Emergency services/ safety.
- Housing - access, quality, and retrofitting.
- Public Transport that works for everyone and is greener.
- Community and Family Activities.
- Making our own clothes.

21 of our colleagues responded to the survey and all gave consent for the priorities we proposed. However, we were asked to also add 'opportunities for mentally ill teenagers', so we added this to our list of priorities as a school.

When we got together on day two of our collaboration with APiC and AFW, we reviewed our most important projects and decided to focus on four of them. We had one group each look at Recycling & Reuse, Renewable Energy, Food & Farming, and Schools & Education. Figure 8 shows the projects we had worked up at the end of Day 2 of the process.

OUR FOUR PROPOSED PROJECTS

St Machar Academy Local Climate Action Plan

Our Four Proposed Projects

Key

- Renewable Energy Opportunities
- Food & Farming Opportunities
- Recycling & Reuse Opportunities



Food & Farming

What we want to achieve:

- More plants and flowers across our area, so that we can have local and free food available for people. We also want to think about local business opportunities, where young people may create their own enterprises or be involved with them.
- Reduced Anti-Social Behaviour, so that we have more available space for planning and it's protected from vandalism and littering. Parks like Sunnybank Park and Stewart Park could be good if we can solve this.

How to achieve it:

- We need to clean up some areas where there is a lot of empty and open green space we could plant on. We've put notes on our map where some of these places are.
- We will purchase greenhouses and cheap seeds so get started. Some of us already know how to plant things, and they will help other people to get started.
- We also had the idea of helping people with gardens to plant easy-to-grow food themselves to save money, with free seeds and lessons.

Why this is important:

- To help the community get more activate and connected by planting together.
- Cleaner and nicer looking places make people happier.
- Food is important for our survival, and we all benefit if it's cheaper.
- Young people will build skills for the future.

Renewable Energy

What we want to achieve:

- Encourage our communities to install renewable energy technologies and make communities feel nicer. This includes solar, tidal, and wind. We want this to be owned by communities so it generate money for local people and community improvements.

How to achieve it:

- We need to educate people about renewable energy and why it's important. -We also need communities to understand how to maintain technologies they install, so they stay useful across the lifespan and we're not reliant on other people and companies.
- Solar panels on the roofs of Tillydrone, and Big Offshore Wind Turbines, and Mini-Hydro on the Don, making and saving money for the community.
- We want to bring renewable energy specialists to our communities to help educate everyone directly so when they leave we know how to maintain and fix things ourselves.

Why this is important:

- We need to help people move from oil and gas dependence in their lives and their jobs.
- This is vital for all of our futures, and young people are going to feel the biggest consequences if we don't make the transition.
- Fossil fuel energy is running out and getting more expensive, and if we don't develop alternatives then people will not have or be able to afford an energy supply.

Recycling & Reuse

What we want to achieve:

- Cleaner, nicer and safer communities, focusing at first on Kittybrewster and Stewart Park.
- Better use of the resources we have.

How to achieve it:

- We need to develop an advertising campaign to educate people in communities about not littering and reusing and recycling all the materials they can.
- An important messages are if your environment is cleaner and healthier you will feel better as a person and about themselves.
- We need to encourage and go out on litter picks to get our communities looking better.

Why this is important:

- We don't have unlimited materials, and the litter is affecting animals and making us all feel less safe and less happy.
- Clean communities improve everyone's wellbeing.

Schools and Education

What we want to achieve:

- Expand the curriculum with subjects that really motivate young people (e.g. we think there could be more languages on offer than just French, British Sign Language, Japanese or Mandarin are our suggestions).
- Better resource our school, and to develop a culture which better respects what we have.
- Get discounts for young people at school for technology and equipment.

How to achieve it:

- We propose sending out a survey to everyone at the school to get them to put forward and vote on the kind of things that motivate them and they'd like to do (particularly, a new language choice). From that, we can propose to the school that they bring in a teacher to add it to our curriculum.
- Work with the school, the community and others to raise money to better resource our school, and develop more respect for our resources (e.g. many of our teachers buy pencils for school out of their own money, but lots of them get broken by young people messing around).
- Encourage young people to bring in their own pencils so they respect them more, and if they can't or forget they can get them from school but they don't get an unlimited amount and are expected to keep hold of them and not get a new one in each class.
- Promote the discounts across school and online that do exist for young people our age e.g. Young Scot card and Apple discounts already exist. We also want to think about routes to getting a school discount card that could be scanned at checkouts for proof we're at the school.

Why this is important:

- So people can try something new and also have something to look forward to other than a basic and 'boring' school. Young people want to be heard and listened to.
- We should have greater respect and pride for our school and the resources.
- We should get discounts for the school and for young people so so that they don't have to spend as much money and teachers don't need to use their own money on pupils.

Figure 8 St Machar Academy's Projects at the end of Day Two.

After we presented our projects at SHMU, APiC added some of the ideas and pledges from the adults that took part to our project plan. You can therefore read our updated plans below.

Food & Farming

What we want to achieve:

- More plants and flowers across our area, so that we can have local and free food available for people. We also want to think about local business opportunities, where young people may create their own enterprises or be involved with them.
- Reduced Anti-Social Behaviour, so that we have more available space for planting, and it's protected from vandalism and littering. Parks like Sunnybank Park and Stewart Park could be good if we can solve this.

How to achieve it:

- We need to clean up some areas where there is a lot of empty and open green space we could plant on. We've put notes on our map where some of these places are.
- We will purchase greenhouses and cheap seeds to get started. Some of us already know how to plant things, and they will help other people to get started.
- We also had the idea of helping people with gardens to plant easy-to-grow food themselves to save money, with free seeds and lessons.
- We have space for school allotments, but we need to check a few things like risk of flooding before we start using them.
- Jack Newton from Grassroots to Global told us about permaculture, which is something we could explore further for our own proposed gardens. He also told us about a food growing project he is running at Edinburgh Steiner School. We may find some inspiration by hearing how they went about this.
- Katherine Mathieson from Aberdeen City Council told us she can help us understand places in the local community where land could be used for food growing.
- Paul Dargie from Aberdeen University told us about efforts at the university campus to increase biodiversity. This is something we could find out more about, and potentially visit to get ideas and inspiration for our own project.
- We might link our work in Stewart Park with Woodside Primary School's Stewart Park project, where they are looking to clean it up, understand and improve the amount of wildlife there, and look at planting food.

Why this is important:

- To help the community get more active and connected by planting together.
- Cleaner and nicer looking places make people happier.
- Food is important for our survival, and we all benefit if it's cheaper.
- Young people will build skills for the future.

Recycling & Reuse

What we want to achieve:

- Cleaner, nicer, and safer communities, focusing at first on Kittybrewster and Stewart Park.
- Better use of the resources we have.

How to achieve it:

- We need to develop an advertising campaign to educate people in communities about not littering and reusing and recycling all the materials they can.
- An important message is - if your environment is cleaner and healthier you will feel better as a person and better about yourself.
- We need to encourage and go out on litter picks to get our communities looking better.
- Katherine Mathieson from Aberdeen City Council let us know that she can explore options for better lighting in the communities we've identified in our first mapping exercise.
- We might link our work in Stewart Park with Woodside Primary School's Stewart Park project, where they are looking to clean it up, understand and improve the amount of wildlife there, and look at planting food.
- We will also work closely with the Food and Farming project, as food growing will be more possible in our cleaned-up communities.

Why this is important:

- We don't have unlimited materials, and the litter is affecting animals and making us all feel less safe and less happy.
- Clean communities improve everyone's wellbeing.
- Once we have cleaner places, we have more opportunities for things like community food growing.

Schools & Education

What we want to achieve:

- Take advantage of the current Education Reform to continue to review what we learn about and how we learn.
- Better resource our school and recognise what is good about it.
- Get discounts for young people at school for technology and equipment.

How to achieve it:

- Continue to involve young people in improvements such as an example we heard about where pupils bid for resources to take forward an e-sports gaming set up.
- We want to work with the school, the community, and others to raise money to better resource our school and develop more respect for our resources (e.g. many of our teachers often buy resources with their own money, but some pupils don't appreciate or respect this and resources continue to get broken).
- Encourage young people to bring in their own pencils so they respect them more, and if they can't or forget they can get them from school, but they don't get an unlimited amount and are expected to keep hold of them (and not get a new one in each class).
- Promote the discounts across school and online that do exist for young people our age e.g. Young Scot card and Apple discounts already exist. We also want to think about routes to getting a school discount card that could be scanned at checkouts for proof we're at the school.
- Continue to look at other places for new ideas, for example, the school is part of an initiative alongside other schools in North East Scotland, North East England and Nashville, which promotes Oracy and Project Based Learning.

Why this is important:

- We want our views to continue be part of how decisions are taken and doing all we can to help improve our school.
- We want to learn in ways which will help us in our future and play a valued part in our communities.
- We need to show greater respect and pride for our school and the resources we use for learning.
- We should get discounts for the school and for young people.
- To get our projects off the ground our teachers may need the support of other types of staff (youth, community, outdoor learning) and members of the local community.

Renewable Energy

What we want to achieve:

- Encourage our communities to install renewable energy technologies and make communities feel nicer. This includes solar, tidal, and wind.
- We want this to be owned by communities, so it generates money for local people and community improvements.

How to achieve it:

- We need to educate people about renewable energy and why it's important.
- We also need communities to understand how to maintain technologies they install, so they stay useful across the lifespan and we're not reliant on other people and companies.
- We propose (more) solar panels on the roofs of our school, across rooves in Tillydrone, and Big Offshore Wind Turbines, and Mini-Hydro on the Don, making and saving money for the community.
- We want to bring renewable energy specialists to our communities to help educate everyone directly so when they leave, we know how to maintain and fix things ourselves.
- Katherine Mathieson from Aberdeen City Council told us that all council new build housing is being fitted so that it doesn't use gas central heating, but ground source water heating. This is something we want to find out more about, and we considered that we still need to keep thinking about how to retrofit housing we already have to run off of renewable energy. Finding out more about this will be useful to our project.
- We heard from Gillian Needham at NESCAN that there is funding for community projects from Vattenfall, who own the offshore windfarm at the beach. This isn't a lot of money, but it could be something useful to apply to for our project.

Why this is important:

- We need to help people move from oil and gas dependence in their lives and their jobs.
- This is vital for all of our futures, and young people are going to feel the biggest consequences if we don't make the transition.
- Fossil fuel energy is running out and getting more expensive, and if we don't develop alternatives then people will not have or be able to afford an energy supply.
- There will be more and more jobs and skills needed in renewable energy in the future. If young people can learn more now, we will all be more prepared for the future.

Actions to Support All Projects

Speaking Our Truth

- Kate Dyer from Grassroots to Global advised us to keep voicing our concerns and ideas exactly as we see it. She told us it's important that we don't edit our views to make other people happy, or to tell people what we think they want to hear. Our anger, vulnerability and project ideas are really powerful for speaking truth to power and helping to make the changes we need and want to see where we live.

Applying for Funding

- Chris Bodington from North East Scotland Climate Action Network (NESCAN) told us there is a small grants scheme we could apply to to get help with all our project ideas. This is Scottish Government funding and would be really helpful for our work. She also told us that NESCAN could help us find experts to come and speak to us on the issues that matter to us and help inform more people at the school. They could also come and speak to us about 'The Bigger Picture' of what we need to do and what's already happening.

Holding our Elected Members to Account

- Michael, a representative for one of Aberdeen's MSPs, told us he would help raise our ideas and views to local and national changemakers.
- Several adult stakeholders told us how important it is to keep people at the council and in government accountable to their promises around the Just Transition, and in helping us make our projects come to life. They suggested we write to our elected representatives - councillors, MSPs, and MPs to tell them what we want to do and also ask for their help and support. If we don't get anything from them, we should always reach out again to find out why and remind them of their commitment to us. They also suggested we might hold an evening event at our school and invite elected members along to see and discuss our project ideas directly.

What Else is Happening

- Paul Dargie from Aberdeen University told us about his research so far into climate assemblies (where local citizens are involved in deciding how to respond to climate change, much like this work!), and how there is definitely more work he and the team can do to look at how young people's views form an important part of this and raise the profile of work like this so others across the world listen more to young people.
- We should be aware that 24th March - 2nd April 2023 is Scottish Climate Week, and we might be able to link some work at our school with that. There may be other events we could be part of in future.

The final thing we did was check out all of the above with other pupils at our school through a survey. We're now waiting on the results.

OUR CLIMATE ACTION PRIORITIES:

Our Climate Action Priorities came from first visiting three places agreed to be important to Kincorth, Torry and Cove by those of us who live in each. On the way, and when we got back, we discussed and mapped what was important or could be better about the local area. We then thought about what our Community and Aberdeen would need to become a sustainable City, and agreed a list of important things that must be considered. We thought about these in terms of the 'Just Transition', i.e. where everything addresses climate change, but also improves our Community and reduces inequality at the same time. We then decided which things were *most* important. These are the first 9 on the list below in **bold**:

- **Equal and Affordable Opportunities for Young People**
- **Ensuring Big Local Developments benefit our Community.**
- **Sustainable energy and heat sources for our Community**
- **Education (including universities, schools, libraries, and knowledge)**
- **Good Housing and Shelter for all**
- **Local Food Systems, Agriculture and Forestry**
- **Medical Facilities and Care**
- **Reusing, repairing, and recycling facilities and education**
- **Clothes production**
- **Public Transport (particularly, routes which connect our communities)**

- Clean water supply
- Care of our natural / marine environment and animals
- Emergency Services: police, firefighting, ambulance
- Sustainable transportation (cars, bikes, mechanics, garages)
- Private land ownership, where it blocks the things we want to do
- Technology skills and good mobile / radio signal
- Entertainment and play opportunities (expressive arts; cinema; play parks; heritage etc.)
- Safety: safer roads and better lighting
- Improving our Sense of Community, and Tackling Negative Views of Young People (so we're not all 'tarred with the same brush')

8 of our colleagues responded to the survey and all gave consent for the priorities we proposed. However, we were asked to also add 'opportunity to completely refuse developments that don't serve our community,' so we added this to our list of priorities as a school.

When we got together on day two of our collaboration with APiC and AFW, we reviewed our most important projects and decided to focus on four of them. We had two groups look at developing a Kincorth Cruyff Court; a Torry group that developed two projects – one on a joined-up transport system, and another of protecting and enhancing biodiversity and green space; and a final group looking at reuse and retrofitting of unused and underused space in our communities to meet local needs and create a child-friendly city. We created a very detailed project plan for the Kincorth Cruyff Court project. You can read this in Appendix 1 of this report.

OUR FOUR PROPOSED PROJECTS

Lochside Academy Local Climate Action Plan Our Four Proposed Projects

Key

- Project Kincorth Cruyff Court
- Protecting and enhancing Torry biodiversity and greenspace
- A joined-up, easy-to-use transportation system connecting communities
- Renewing (retrofitting), and reusing derelict and underused spaces to meet local needs



Kincorth Cruyff Court Project

"Build it once, and build it well" (and that includes every local young person)

What we want to achieve:

- Create personally fulfilling opportunities and work experiences for the young people of Kincorth.
- Reduce crime and antisocial behaviour in the local area by providing motivating and affordable things for young people to do.
- Turn a large unused bit of greenspace in the centre of our community into a place which enables a wide range of free social and leisure activities, and helps bring the community together.
- To design and construct a facility which has sustainability at its core e.g. using renewable electricity for smart lighting, building from reused or long-lasting materials, and providing a model of how to do it for other communities around the world.
- Bring Streetsport to Kincorth, as we think this is a fantastic model of inspiring and supporting young people to fulfil their potential, socialise and develop skills/work experience.
- When this has worked look at how to extend it as a broader strategy of improvement, using other underused greenspace in the area.
- Working with the school to see whether or not projects and work experience on projects like this could inform part of the S1 and S2 curriculum, as this would help us decide our careers.

How to achieve it:

- We have a detailed business case for bringing Streetsport to Kincorth, and have begun costing and exploring materials and creative ideas for the building of Cruyff Court.
- To fund the building of Cruyff Court, we want to partner with Streetsport and local businesses to raise funds for the project. We also want to have community fun days on the project site (we don't currently have any fairs or fun days here) to raise money, awareness and support.
- We want to work with Lochside Academy to explore how the S1 and S2 project-based learning could work, and how we could share our own local knowledge to help teachers understand what opportunities there are in our communities at the moment, and that we might want to be part of in the future.

Why this is important:

- Streetsport has brought huge benefits to other places. It has been said that crime rates and anti-social behaviour has been reduced by 60% in Torry since they started operating. If this was brought to Kincorth, it could do the same and have a great impact on the community.
- Children and young people in the community will be safer if they have more things to do.
- Young people taking part in more sports activities makes them healthier, happier, and the volunteering and work experience opportunities are good for finding jobs later.
- The activities we propose will bring the community together, and help people help one another. Learning about our area and its history will improve pride in the community.
- The project will make Kincorth a better place to live, and improve everyone's wellbeing.
- Improving our opportunities to learn through projects at school and find our purpose will improve our education and motivation to learn. This will help us find jobs and have fulfilling lives in the future.
- We have designed Cruyff Court to be low impact on the environment, and lead the way in creating opportunities for young people that also meet sustainability aims.

Protecting and enhancing Torry biodiversity and greenspace

What we want to achieve:

- Protect the nature and amenity of St Fittick Park for ourselves and for future generations.
- Make Torry more attractive (and well known) for, and proud of, it's nice environment to attract people and attention to the area.
- Build on the success of biodiversity improvements achieved already.

How to achieve it:

- Maintain and take care of it better, particularly the pond area, and encourage more wildlife
- Protect it against development, especially St Fittick's Park.
- Involve young people more in decisions about what happens there
- Talk to local industries about what they could do to reduce impacts on air quality or other pollutants, so the place is better for wildlife and more enjoyable to use.
- Look at improvement to the play equipment, e.g. a skatepark or other features for older young people
- Free dog poo bags, so people have no excuse to not pick up their dog's mess.

Why this is important:

- St Fittick's Park is our last public greenspace, and is the place everyone walks their dogs.
- It adds to the experience of living in Torry, and to lose it is to lose that experience. It is the only nice and safe area for children. Young people's voice needs to be heard on decisions related to it for these reasons.
- A lot of successful effort has gone into improving the biodiversity and wildlife in the area, which is an important aim for the community and Government in combatting climate change. All Torry wildlife is in St Fittick's Park.
- Having a nice environment is important to feel welcoming and for attracting people to the area
- We are unhappy about how some people treat the area, and agree that more effort to take care of it would mean more people would use it (this applies to everywhere in Torry).
- Rainbow Park is an important play area, and could be improved to provide more affordable opportunities for local young people.
- We want Torry to be a safe healthy place to live. We already have our fair share of polluting industries, and we need to reduce pollution near people and animals, and keep greenspace which helps to protect against this.

A joined-up, easy-to-use transportation system connecting communities

"Never give up, never stop trying, till you succeed"

What we want to achieve:

- Stop the loss of 3 important bus routes in Torry.
- Introduce bus routes which connect the (Lochside Academy) communities of Torry, Kincorth and Cove.
- Get authorities and bus providers thinking smarter about routes, and linking this better with active travel, as we think we may be able to achieve a more efficient system even if we have to lose some routes.
- Making processes around young people's bus passes easier to use, particularly for situations where we don't have them with us or we need replacements. At the moment, some people lose out and have to pay to get around.

How to achieve it:

- Find out the changes we might need to make to keep our bus routes, and better connect our local communities.
- Look at the journeys people take and the amount of money we have for buses and seeing how we might make changes to the system which means we make it work better and more efficiently for less. An important part of this is thinking about bus routes and active travel routes as an interconnected system, and providing maps which show how they link up.
- Work with bus operators and the council to work out ways we can solve the difficulties we have around our bus passes.

Why this is important:

- Some people don't have access to any other transport other than public transport, so what will they do without the buses? It will be very hard for them to get to places, and this isn't fair.
- Young people can't afford to pay or wait a long time for replacement bus passes, and they shouldn't have to pay to get to school.
- If parents/carers have to drive their children to school that is worse for the climate than a bus.
- Linking with walking and cycling routes and opportunities could improve health and fitness, and reduce pollution.

Renewing (retrofitting), and reusing derelict and underused spaces to meet local needs

What we want to achieve:

- Making this a better place to grow up by using buildings that could be renewed into something more useful.
- Improving local facilities so they meet local needs, and particularly of young people.
- Really finding out what young people need and seeing if we can renew, retrofit, reuse existing buildings (or demolish them!) and spaces to provide this.

How to achieve it:

- We need to look at examples of other places that have transformed their city to make it more child-friendly. We have started researching examples such as Rotterdam, Ghent, Tirana, Boulder, and Odense.
- We have identified some spaces we already know of for improvements on the map. In future, we could identify more by speaking with more members of the community.
- Some examples include: (1) lots of football pitches which need to be renewed because there's no nets in the goals; (2) The Loirston annexe has multiple rooms but it's only used for an afterschool club. There is a big sports hall where clubs could practice. This way it would be more useful; (3) A derelict pavilion near Tullos School could be demolished or renovated to meet local needs.
- At the same time, we need to find out from local young people what facilities they want and need, and then we can use the information we have gathered and the opportunities available to make solid plans for specific improvements.

Why this is important:

- Essential to hear different points of view from young people because we want to know what they want to experience growing up.
- To have a nice environment to live in.
- Building for the future, so that the next generation live a fulfilled life. Grown-ups want their children to have a healthy lifestyle, and to be successful.
- We need better shops and facilities so we think it's a good idea to have a variety of options to enable a variety of experiences.
- A mix of resources so kids can have more opportunities growing up.
- Encourages adults and young people to it's a good place to grow up in, making it a better place to live for us and people moving here.

Figure 10 Lochside Academy's Projects at the end of Day Two Engagements.

After we presented our projects at SHMU, APiC added some of the ideas and pledges from the adults that took part to our project plan. You can read the updated plans below.

The Kincorth Cruyff Court Project

'Build it once and build it well' (and that includes every local young person!)

What we want to achieve:

- Create personally fulfilling opportunities and work experiences for the young people of Kincorth.
- Reduce crime and antisocial behaviour in the local area by providing motivating and affordable things for young people to do.
- Turn a large unused bit of greenspace in the centre of our community into a place which enables a wide range of free social and leisure activities and helps bring the community together.
- Design and construct a facility which has sustainability at its core e.g. using renewable electricity for smart lighting, building from reused or long-lasting materials, and providing a model of how to do it for other communities around the world.
- Bring Streetsport to Kincorth, as we think this is a fantastic model of inspiring and supporting young people to fulfil their potential, socialise and develop skills/work experience.
- When this has worked look at how to extend it as a broader strategy of improvement, using other underused greenspace in the area.
- Work with the school to see whether or not projects and work experience on projects like this could inform part of the S1 and S2 curriculum, as this would help us decide our careers.

How to achieve it:

- We have a detailed business case for bringing Streetsport to Kincorth, and have begun costing and exploring materials and creative ideas for the building of Cruyff Court.
- To fund the building of Cruyff Court, we want to partner with Streetsport and local businesses to raise funds for the project. We also want to have community fun days on the project site (we don't currently have any fairs or fun days here) to raise money, awareness and support.
- We want to work with Lochside Academy to explore how the S1 and S2 project-based learning could work, and how we could share our own local knowledge to help teachers understand what opportunities there are in our communities at the moment, and that we might want to be part of in the future.

Why this is important:

- Streetsport has brought huge benefits to other places. It has been said that crime rates and anti-social behaviour has been reduced by 60% in Torry since they started operating. If this was brought to Kincorth, it could do the same and have a great impact on the community.
- Children and young people in the community will be safer if they have more things to do.
- Young people taking part in more sports activities makes them healthier, happier, and the volunteering and work experience opportunities are good for finding jobs later.
- The activities we propose will bring the community together, and help people help one another. Learning about our area and its history will improve pride in the community.
- The project will make Kincorth a better place to live, and improve everyone's wellbeing.
- Improving our opportunities to learn through projects at school and find our purpose will improve our education and motivation to learn. This will help us find jobs and have fulfilling lives in the future.
- We have designed Cruyff Court to be low impact on the environment, and lead the way in creating opportunities for young people that also meet sustainability aims.

A Joined-up Easy-to-use Transportation System Connecting our Communities.

"Never give up, never stop trying, till you succeed"

What we want to achieve:

- Stop the loss of 3 important bus routes in Torry.
- Introduce bus routes which connect the (Lochside Academy) communities of Torry, Kincorth and Cove.
- Get authorities and bus providers thinking smarter about routes, and linking this better with active travel, as we think we may be able to achieve a more efficient system even if we have to lose some routes.
- Making processes around young people's bus passes easier to use, particularly for situations where we don't have them with us or we need replacements. At the moment, some people lose out and have to pay to get around.

How to achieve it:

- Find out the changes we might need to make to keep our bus routes, and better connect our local communities.
- Look at the journeys people take and the amount of money we have for buses and seeing how we might make changes to the system which means we make it work better and more efficiently for less. An important part of this is thinking about bus routes and active travel routes as an interconnected system, and providing maps which show how they link up.
- Work with bus operators and the council to work out ways we can solve the difficulties we have around our bus passes.
- Fiona Saunders, Education Officer at Aberdeen City Council has a remit for education transport. She heard our concerns about the vandalised buses and problem of getting to school. She said since she works in Education transport specifically, she would take this issue on and look into it further and would work with someone at the school to get this issue resolved.

Why this is important:

- Some people don't have access to any other transport other than public transport, so what will they do without the buses? It will be very hard for them to get to places, and this isn't fair.
- Young people can't afford to pay or wait a long time for replacement bus passes, and they shouldn't have to pay to get to school.
- If parents/carers have to drive their children to school that is worse for the climate than a bus.
- Linking with walking and cycling routes and opportunities could improve health and fitness, and reduce pollution.

Renewing (retrofitting), and Reusing Derelict and Underused Spaces to meet Local Needs

What we want to achieve:

- Making this a better place to grow up by using buildings that could be renewed into something more useful.
- Improving local facilities so they meet local needs, and particularly of young people.
- Really finding out what young people need and seeing if we can renew, retrofit, reuse existing buildings (or demolish them!) and spaces to provide this.

How to achieve it:

- We need to look at examples of other places that have transformed their city to make it more child-friendly. We have started researching examples such as Rotterdam, Ghent, Tirana, Boulder, and Odense.
- We have identified some spaces we already know of for improvements on the map. In future, we could identify more by speaking with more members of the community.
- Some examples include: (1) lots of football pitches which need to be renewed because there's no nets in the goals; (2) The Loirston annexe has multiple rooms but it's only used for an afterschool club. There is a big sports hall where clubs could practice. This way it would be more useful; (3) A derelict pavilion near Tullos School could be demolished or renovated to meet local needs.
- At the same time, we need to find out from local young people what facilities they want and need, and then we can use the information we have gathered and the opportunities available to make solid plans for specific improvements.

Why this is important:

- It's essential to hear different points of view from young people because we want to know what they want to experience growing up.
- To have a nice environment to live in.
- Building for the future, so that the next generation live a fulfilled life. Grown-ups want their children to have a healthy lifestyle, and to be successful.
- We need better shops and facilities so we think it's a good idea to have a variety of options to enable a variety of experiences.
- A mix of resources so kids can have more opportunities growing up.
- Encourages adults and young people to move or stay here as it's a good place to grow up in.

Protecting and Enhancing Torry Biodiversity and Greenspace

What we want to achieve:

- Protect the nature and amenity of St Fittick's Park for ourselves and for future generations.
- Make Torry more attractive (and well known) for, and proud of, it's nice environment to attract people and attention to the area.
- Build on the success of biodiversity improvements achieved already.

How to achieve it:

1. Maintain and take care of it better, particularly the pond area, and encourage more wildlife.
2. Protect it against development, especially St Fittick's Park.
3. Involve young people more in decisions about what happens there.
4. Talk to local industries about what they could do to reduce impacts on air quality or other pollutants, so the place is better for wildlife and more enjoyable to use.
5. Look at improvement to the play equipment, e.g. a skatepark or other features for older young people.
6. Free dog poo bags, so people have no excuse to not pick up their dog's mess.
7. Chris Bodington from North East Scotland Climate Action Network (NESCAN) invited us to join the Torry People's Assembly with other members of the local community, because of what is going on at St Fittick's Park.

Why this is important:

- St Fittick's Park is our last public greenspace, and is the place everyone walks their dogs.
- It adds to the experience of living in Torry, and to lose it is to lose that experience. It is the only nice and safe area for children. Young people's voice needs to be heard on decisions related to it for these reasons.
- A lot of successful effort has gone into improving the biodiversity and wildlife in the area, which is an important aim for the community and Government in combatting climate change. All Torry wildlife is in St Fitticks Park.
- Having a nice environment is important to feel welcoming and for attracting people to the area.
- We are unhappy about how some people treat the area, and agree that more effort to take care of it would mean more people would use it (this applies to everywhere in Torry).
- Rainbow Park is an important play area, and could be improved to provide more affordable opportunities for local young people.
- We want Torry to be a safe healthy place to live. We already have our fair share of polluting industries, and we need to reduce pollution near people and animals, and keep greenspace which helps to protect against this.

Actions to Support all Projects

- Jade Leyden, Community Planning Manager for Aberdeen South Jade said it is perfect timing for all these issues to be raised, and she took the A4 sheet with our projects on with her to show and speak to relevant people in the council. We said we would like to keep in touch to see what next steps have been taken.
- Michael, who is Audrey Nicoll's (our MSP) admin manager and assistant is going to pass on our concerns to her. In particular, he will raise our views around the upkeep of St Fittick's Park; the need for more to happen at the Loirston Annexe in Cove Bay; that many of our football pitches are tired and need an upgrade; and that we passionately believe in bringing Streetsport to Kincorth.
- Paul Dargie from Aberdeen University told us about his research so far into climate assemblies (where local citizens are involved in deciding how to respond to climate change, much like this work!), and how there is definitely more work he and the team can do to look at how young people's views form an important part of this. We also asked if he could help us with some further data or research to use his skills and to point us in the right direction if we needed any data in the future and Paul said he would be happy to help and signpost us to data if he could.

The final thing we did was check out all the above with other pupils at our school through a survey. We're now waiting on the results.

What Needs to Happen Next?

The ideas put forward by the children and young people in each participating school are well thought out and, while some would be easier to achieve than others, are all grounded in real world possibilities. Yet, they will require the ability for schools to find the time and resource to support pupil's ambitions. This is a struggle in the current climate, whereby rigid curricular expectations; staff shortages; and general resource constraints make it difficult for teachers to carve out the time to do things differently. How these barriers to change could be overcome was the key discussion point of the reflection table at the SHMU Showcase event. This was hosted by AFW and covered four focus prompts:

1. Leadership;
2. Curriculum for Excellence/Learning;
3. Structural Change; and

4. Continuity.

Participants surfaced some ideas and insights, ranging from navigating the 'business as usual' approach to bring incremental change, through to grassroots activism from communities to bring young people's ideas to fruition. There was also acknowledgement that cuts to community and youth services also make it very difficult to unlock supported time outwith school.

Many participants in this discussion agreed that place-based, interdisciplinary, project-based learning is central to unlocking the barriers that stand in the way of children and young people's meaningful participation in local change. Addressing the power imbalance between adults and young people can be achieved through on-the-ground projects that respond to their ambitions and respect their rights. This will help build the confidence of young people to feel able to take part in change on their own terms, rather than being pushed into adult ways of doing things, or having their ideas co-opted into projects that are not truly by or for them. At the same time, these projects need to be respected by adult changemakers to help bring the resource required to make change. For example, a participant noted that the ideas of young people from Lochside Academy should be connected into the Aberdeen South Area Improvement Plan. New local developments/schemes should also come with community benefits that genuinely support young people's future careers and aspirations.

Finally, some participants at the event discussed that an Aberdeen Wide Youth Action Programme could bring the attention and resource to young people's needs and ideas in the city. This could draw on the expertise of the broader NESCAN, but enable children and young people to amplify their voices in debate around climate action and make tangible change happen collaboratively. Ultimately, the trust of young people in the process and the greatest future learning will come from this being the start of an ongoing and collaborative endeavour to bring local climate action. Indeed, the need to act fast, strategically, and in all communities at once to mitigate and adapt to the climate emergency are ever present.

Conclusion

This pilot project has shown that many children and young people hold strong views about their communities, and a strong desire to be involved in making things better. Our participants had a keen sense of what concepts such as justice, fairness, sustainability and transition looked and felt like. They were also keen to be part of making things better. The work has shown us that there are three important conclusions we can draw from the process and outcomes, and consider in further developments:

- 1. This work had significant value - to the participating pupils, teachers, adult stakeholders attending the final event, and to AFW and APiC.**

It developed ideas collaboratively, gave children and young people an outlet for their views, and they were able to speak about things which mattered to them with people listening closely. They were treated with respect, valued throughout the process, and there was genuine hope that their ideas might lead to something happening in their communities. However, without action or feedback there is every chance they will become disillusioned, and the narrative of people not listening and change being done to them will become ingrained. If children and young people become cynical of future deliberative processes, then the wider ambitions of Curriculum for Excellence as described by the 4 capacities will not be realised.

- 2. Children and young people's views need to be embedded in the systems that support community change and improvement.**

Their plans need to both intersect with any other community deliberative processes, and with the formal structures which sit around community planning processes. AFW and APiC are of

a view that this pilot project has begun to show what is possible. We believe that with more time, the commitments and strategic alignments can be supported to develop in ways which will enable adults to hear and respond robustly to the views of our Children and Young People on their terms. Moreover, we have shown how their ideas can be gathered and developed and how they could be incorporated into broader deliberative processes. It is up to those in positions to influence such processes to ensure young people are included as valued and active members of their communities. This involves meeting young people where they are at, and not expecting them to feel confident and able to take part in forums designed with adults in mind.

3. We need to do more to educate children and young people about LfS.

There is ripe opportunity to integrate LfS further across curricular teaching in schools, drawing in more content around climate literacy, climate action, children's rights and offering pupils different ways of expressing what they see and feel about their world and their future. This project was done out of context, during the winter, and with little real structure to support it before or after. With more groundwork and a clear idea of follow up, we are confident a lot more learning and depth could have emerged through this process.

APiC and AFW consider the plans presented here to be the starting point of something bigger in and beyond the city of Aberdeen and will work to develop curricular links and unpick blockages within the varying systems that can help bring about the change needed. This will be a matter of ongoing discussion between partners, with a commitment to see through what is achievable in each case. Second year funding from NESCAN will enable a greater range of communities to become involved, and for actions from the pioneer schools to become reality.

Appendix 1: A Draft Business Plan for Kincorth Cruyff Court

WHAT IS STREETSPORT?

Streetsport is a charity set up in Dennis Law's legacy that gives free sports activities for children and teenagers. It takes place on the Cruyff Court in Torry.

What does Streetsport include?

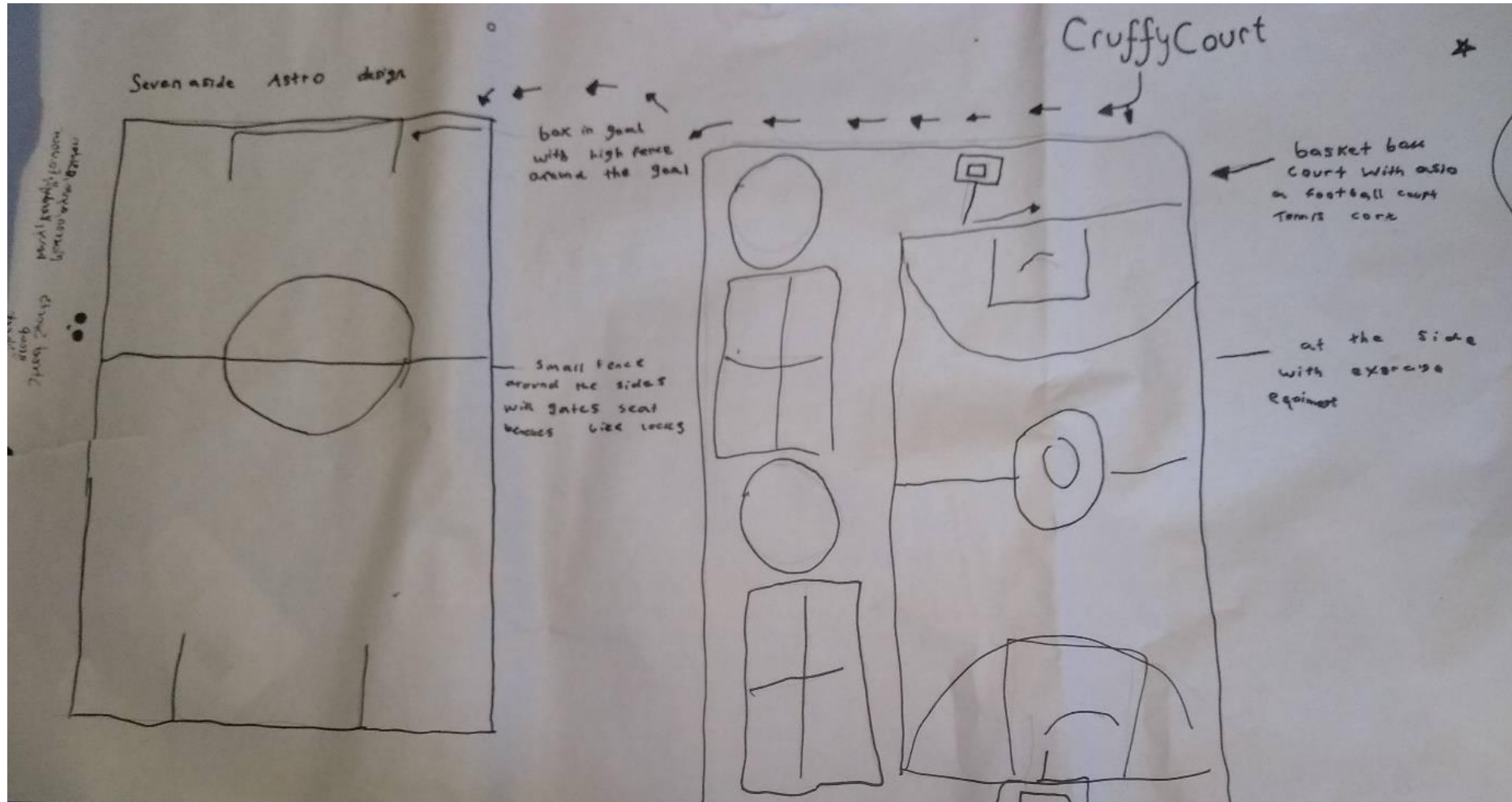
- Sporting activities
- opportunities to compete, including for people with disabilities.
- volunteering opportunities

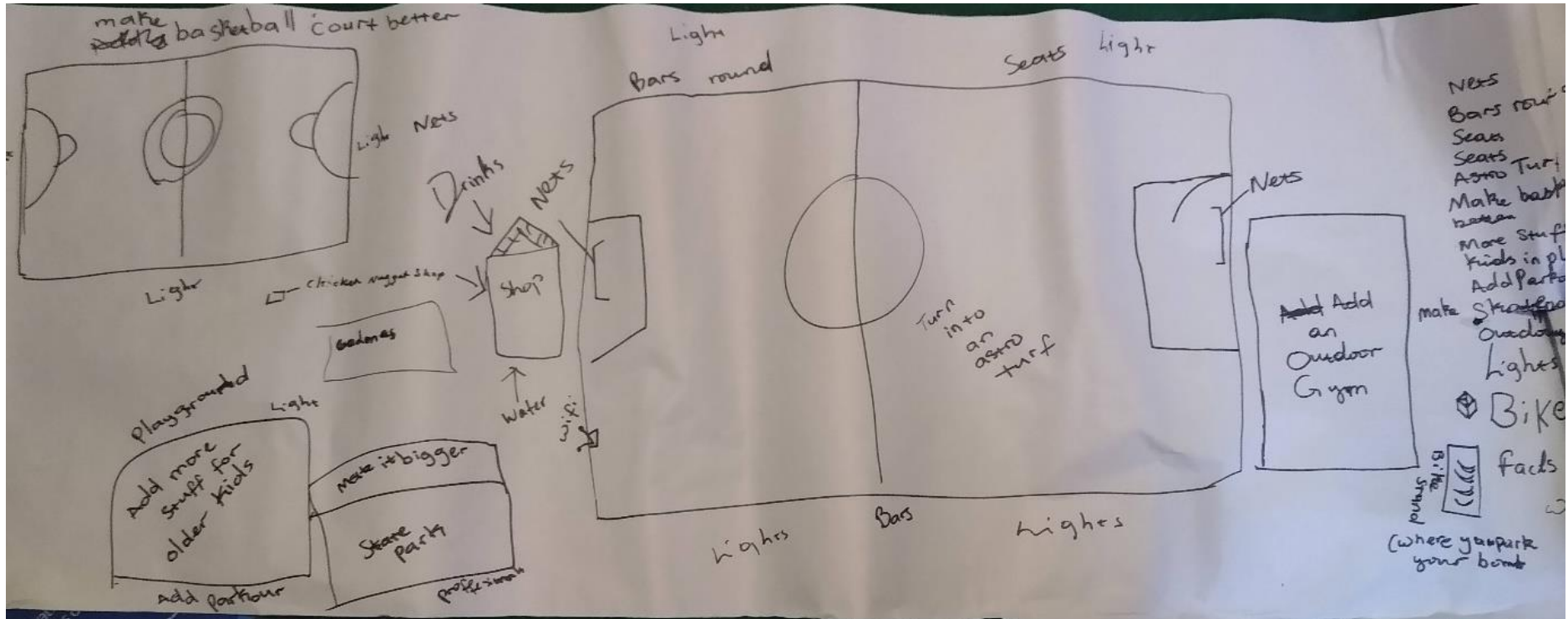
It is charitable and also raises money for people or organisations.

We want to design a Cruyff Court and partner with Streetsport to give the same opportunities in Kincorth. Road safety will also be improved as part of our plan, with more crossings on the main road. We also want to have public transport buses from Torry to Kincorth and from Cove to Kincorth to improve everyone's opportunities.

DESIGNS FOR A CRUYFF COURT

Two groups at Lochside Academy drafted some designs for the Kincorth Cruyff Court which can be viewed overleaf. Kincorth is full of green space that is not used well. We propose the Cruyff Court would go on the main playing field that still has loads of space for other things.





FEATURES OF OUR PROPOSED CRUYFF COURT

- Tennis court.
- Non-competitive activities/sports as well as competitive ones.
- Partnerships with community and organisations.
- Cycling routes to and from the court, and bike stands to make cycling there easy.
- Football nets.
- Astro turf
- Basketball court
- More stuff for older kids in the playground
- Bigger Skatepark
- Outdoor gym
- Lights that run on solar power and can be turned on by people using the court, with automatic turn off after a while to save energy but keep people safe.
- Blue Plaques with facts about Kincorth and Aberdeen. This will increase knowledge and pride in our community.
- Places to sit and a kiosk round the edge.
- Free Wi-Fi

We would promote and raise money for the project through:

- Posters promoting it around the community.
- Fun days to raise money and bring people together, which could happen on the playing field we propose the court should go.
- Partnerships with local businesses.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

- A Cruyff Court and Streetsport would keep kids off the streets and causing trouble, which is a big problem just now. For example, in other places where Streetsport operates it has been said that the youth crime rate has decreased by 60%. Below is a link to a video with more information about the impact it's already had in Aberdeen:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MXKpQJL_Xts
- The project will make Kincorth a better place to raise children, as they will be safer and not just be on the streets hanging out. The community plan for Aberdeen says that Kincorth is a priority neighbourhood in the south locality. This will persuade people to go out more.
- Taking part in sport leads to improvements to cardiovascular health (the blood and the heart) for young people and this helps prevent heart disease.
- Street sport has changed #noballgames to #yesballgames, which is a better way to get children doing things.
- It gives us all chances to do things we haven't done before and promotes Kincorth as a good place to live.
- The certificate that young people get for volunteering with Streetsport opens up new job opportunities, because if it's on your CV it shows the organisation you are applying for the you are a good person and has volunteered in other places. This volunteering is a way to learn new skills, including health and safety.
- Kincorth doesn't have a relationship with other communities, and we think that Streetsport is going to be an opportunity to be more sociable and change that. It is also going to be an opportunity to bring people and communities together.
- We can make the construction really hard-wearing and eco-friendly. This is why our motto is 'Build it once and Build it Well'. This will show the world what is possible.
- Streetsport is really good at helping people think about their future and work out how to get there.
- It will bring more job opportunities to the community, including for young people. For example, football trainers and people working in the local shops.
- At the moment people from Kincorth have to travel to take part in good sports activities, so it will reduce travel and save local people time and money,

- This project gives young people a voice in the community.
- Those of us that have experienced Streetsport say it has helped us and other young people find ourselves, including what we want to do when we are older, and picking the right subject choices at school. The great thing about staff at Streetsport is they really care about each person and what they want, and not just how good at sport they are. We can see this approach being helpful at school, too.