

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE – 6 MARCH 2007

COMMUNITY, HERITAGE AND ENVIRONMENT PROJECTS OVERVIEW 2006/07 – 2007/08

Report by the Acting Executive Director of Development and Property Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide Committee with an overview of progress with community, heritage and environment based projects being led by the Policy & Projects Section of the Planning, Development and Building Standards Division in conjunction with various partners including the East Ayrshire Community Planning & Partnership Unit.
- 1.2 The report also outlines targets for the implementation of projects in 2007/2008 in conjunction with the successful bids recently approved by the Community Planning Partnership Board from the Community Regeneration Fund (CRF) and by Historic Scotland from the Heritage Environmental Regeneration Fund (HERF).
- 1.3 The report seeks approval for the indicative allocation of the 2007/08 Planning Capital budget of £150,000 to key projects, subject to any final budget allocations for 2007/08.
- 1.4 The report also seeks to resolve the issue relating to the changes in accounting regulations relating to the classification of capital expenditure whereby expenditure on Planning improvement grants can no longer be charged to capital.
- 1.5 The report seeks approval for the Council to underwrite the Kilmarnock Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme, to enable the project to proceed on the basis of payments in arrears from Historic Scotland.
- 1.6 Finally, the report seeks agreement to the way forward in relation to the restoration/ replacement of the Daldorch footbridge, a key part of the River Ayr Way and an important link to the Catrine village centre for the pupils of the National Autistic Society at Daldorch House School.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Planning, Development and Building Standards Division are currently leading several major projects in addition to a significant number of smaller projects. These are funded from a variety of sources including internal funding from the Departmental Capital Programme, the Departmental General Fund Balances and the Community Planning Partnership Board's Community Regeneration Fund, and externally from sources such as the Scottish Executive's Quality of Life funding, Historic Scotland's HERF and the lottery.
- 2.2 Two Restoring Communities Programme Project Officers are employed on fixed

term contracts through the Policy & Projects Section to assist with the development of the Community Environmental Improvement Action Plans and the implementation of associated projects. These posts are funded by the approved CRF budget. In addition a CARS Project Officer and Part Time Clerical Assistant are also employed on fixed term contracts through the Policy & Projects Section to develop and implement the CARS programme. These posts are jointly funded by the approved CRF budget and the Heritage Environment Regeneration Fund approved by Historic Scotland.

3. COMMUNITY, HERITAGE & ENVIRONMENT PROJECTS BEING LED BY THE POLICY & PROJECTS SECTION IN 2006/07.

3.1 PROJECT LIST

The following is a list of major projects currently being led by the Policy & Projects Section:-

- (i) Community Environmental Improvement Action Plans and Projects (CEIAP&P) Programme – This programme includes the follow individual projects:-**
 - **5 Community Environmental Improvement Action Plans**
 - **Kilmarnock North Public Artworks**
 - **Kilmarnock South Improvement of sports & play provision;**
 - **Installation of a Multi-use Games Area (MUGA) at Catherine Drive, Galston:**
 - **Barony ‘A’ Frame Restoration**
 - **Catrine Property Improvement Scheme**
 - **Auchinleck Community Newsroom:**
 - **Netherthird Community Newsroom:**
 - **Auchinleck Community Garden Initiative:**
 - **Netherthird Community Garden Project:**
- (ii) Catrine Environmental Heritage Project (CEHP);**
- (iii) Kilmarnock Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS);**
- (iv) Kilmarnock Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI); and**
- (v) Daldorch Footbridge, Catrine Restoration/Replacement**

A summary of the progress on each of the major projects is included in Appendix 1 of this report.

In addition the following is a list of other projects also currently being led by the Policy & Projects Section:-

- (i) Newmilns Townscheme**
- (ii) Kilmarnock Town Centre Signage**
- (iii) Replacement of Litter Bins**
- (iv) Landscaping of Catrine railway viaduct**
- (v) Installation of a second Geodesic Dome at Community Garden Initiative, Aird Avenue, Auchinleck**
- (vi) Environmental improvement of “The Dub”, Cumnock**
- (vii) Environmental improvement of “The Four Corners”, Galston**
- (viii) Installation of tiered planters**

A summary of the progress on each of these projects is included in Appendix 2 of this report.

4. KEY TARGETS FOR COMMUNITY, HERITAGE & ENVIRONMENT PROJECTS 2007/08.

4.1 The following are the key targets for community, heritage and environmental projects in 2007/08:-

(i) Community Environmental Improvement Action Plans and Projects 2007/08.

Community Regeneration Funding totalling **£230,000** has been approved by the Community Planning Partnership Board for the progression and implementation of the Community Environmental Improvement Action Plans & Projects for 2007/08. The following allocations have been agreed by the Community Planning Partnership Unit. The target is to successfully complete all the action plans and projects listed below to fully spend the CRF budget and to lever in the maximum external funding available towards these projects:-

Production of Action Plans (£10,000)

- £10,000 for the appointment of consultants for the production of one extended Action Plan (to cover the top 0-15% deprived datazones in the North West Kilmarnock area) and 3 updated Action Plans (Auchinleck, Patna and New Cumnock).

Implementation of Environmental Improvement Projects (£145,000)

- Kilmarnock South environmental improvement project £15,000
- Galston environmental improvement project £15,000
(both projects still to be identified in liaison with the local member utilising the finalised Community Environmental Improvement Action Plans)
- Kilmarnock North Public Artworks £25,000
- Barony 'A' Frame Restoration £10,000
- Catrine CEHP £30,000
- Catrine Property Improvement Scheme £15,000
- Auchinleck Community Newsroom £2,500
- Netherthird Community Newsroom £2,500
- Auchinleck Community Garden Initiative £30,000

Staff Resources (£75,000)

- £5,500 for additional Planning staff costs to progress the Restoring Communities Programme, co-ordination of the Action Plan programme outlined above and co-ordination of all environmental implementation projects
- £65,000 for 2 full-time RCP Project Officers on temporary contracts
- £4,500 for the appointment of adhoc consultants to assist with project implementation

(ii) Catrine Environmental Heritage Project (CEHP)

The target for this project is to produce a Conservation Area Management Plan and in partnership with the Catrine Community Trust, to submit a funding bid to Historic Scotland and the Heritage Lottery Fund for the implementation of the CEHP. A significant additional element of this will be to develop and cost the potential development of an Environmental Education Centre adjacent to the Catrine Weir and Voes Scheduled Ancient Monument in partnership with the Catrine Community Trust;

(iii) Kilmarnock Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS)

In 2007/08 it is intended to formally launch the Kilmarnock CARS Building Repair Grant Scheme and Building Maintenance Guide, and to achieve the programmed target of tackling a minimum of four building repair schemes in the first year, and to secure additional funding for the second financial year of the scheme.

(iv) Kilmarnock Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI)

The target for this project in 2007/08 is to establish the Kilmarnock Townscape Heritage Initiative Partnership, to complete the Stage Two development work and submit a Stage Two THI bid to the HLF prior to 1 December 2007, and obtain their approval for the Council to be awarded £1,990,000 towards the Kilmarnock THI.

(v) Daldorch Footbridge, Catrine

The aim is to restore or replace the C (s) Listed Daldorch Footbridge, Catrine and to thereby reconnect the River Ayr "Sea to Source" Walk, and to provide safer access from Daldorch House School to the village of Catrine. It is considered appropriate to utilise the existing allocated funding of £60,000 to install a temporary footbridge, and subject to Historic Scotland's comments to progress with the design of a replacement structure.

(vi) Newmilns Townscheme

To continue the successful improvement of the properties within the Main Street, Newmilns Outstanding Conservation Area, through the Newmilns Townscheme jointly funded by the Council and Historic Scotland.

5. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Due to the continuation of the Restoring Communities Programme (RCP) covering the whole of East Ayrshire and approved funding from the Community Planning Partnership Board, the two existing temporary posts of RCP Project Officers will be continued. The Community Environmental Improvement Action Plans and Projects programme will continue to be coordinated by Planning Staff within the Policy and Projects Section of the Planning, Development & Building Standards Division.

5.2 The CARS Project Officer and Part Time Clerical Assistant are also employed on fixed term contracts through the Policy & Projects Section to develop and implement the CARS programme. These posts are jointly funded by the approved CRF budget and the Heritage Environment Regeneration Fund (HERF) approved

by Historic Scotland. The CARS project will continue to be coordinated by Planning Staff within the Policy and Projects Section of the Planning, Development & Building Standards Division.

6. FINANCIAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 To enable the Key Targets for the community, heritage and environmental projects identified above to be achieved in 2007/08 in principal agreement is required to the following funding allocations (totalling £150,000) from the Department Capital Programme subject to any final budget allocations for 2007/08:-

- Catrine Environmental Heritage Project - £40,000
- CARS - £90,000
- Newmilns Townscheme – £20,000

6.2 Changes to accounting regulations on the classification of capital expenditure now mean that expenditure on Planning improvement grants can no longer be charged to capital. To ensure that this does not impact on proposed service delivery, subject to final budget allocations for 2007/08, it is proposed to vire £150,000 from the Roads & Transportation revenue budget to Planning, with a corresponding virement being made from the Planning capital budgets to Roads & Transportation capital budgets. This virement arrangement will require to be reviewed annually in the following financial years throughout the life of the Kilmarnock CARS and THI, i.e. up to 2013/14.

6.3 Historic Scotland's grant for the CARS in John Finnie Street & Bank Street, Kilmarnock will be paid in arrears. As such it will be necessary for the Council to underwrite those grants which are needed to fund repair works spanning two financial years. Accordingly it is recommended, to ensure sufficient cash resources are available to the CARS programme to meet grant approvals, that committee agree to underwrite any outstanding grant expenditure at the end of the financial year as a result of Historic Scotland processing grant claims in arrears for the lifetime of the CARS project.

6.4 Funding of £60,000 has already been allocated towards the restoration/replacement of the Daldorch Footbridge, Catrine from the Development Services Committee of the 2 May 2006. However, additional funding will require to be sourced to enable a permanent replacement bridge to be constructed (estimated costs of c.£200,000).

7. COMMUNITY PLAN / POLICY IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The implementation of all these Community, Heritage and Environment based projects contributes significantly to achieving targets contained in the "Improving the Environment" and "Improving Opportunities" Action Plans of the East Ayrshire Community Plan.

7.2 The Kilmarnock CARS and the THI also contribute to the implementation of the Kilmarnock Town Centre Strategy.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 It is recommended that the Committee:-

- i) note the significant progress made in 2006/2007 on all the Community, Heritage and Environment based projects as detailed in this report ;
- ii) agree the key targets for community, heritage and environmental projects in 2007/08 as indicated in Section 4 above;
- iii) agree to vire £150,000 from the Roads & Transportation revenue budget to the Planning budget, with a corresponding virement being made from the Planning capital budgets to the Roads & Transportation capital budgets, subject to any final budget allocations for 2007/08. This virement arrangement will require to be reviewed annually in future financial years up to 2013/14.
- iv) agree to underwrite any outstanding CARS grant expenditure at the end of the financial years and during all future years of the CARS programme as a result of Historic Scotland processing grant claims in arrears.
- v) agree to utilise the £60,000 previously allocated to the Daldorch Footbridge to install a temporary footbridge and to design a replacement footbridge.

Jim Kane

Acting Executive Director of Development and Property Services

25/2/07

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Report to Development Services Committee "Catrine Environmental Heritage Project – Update & Designation of Catrine Local Nature Reserve" – 2 May 2006
2. Report to Development Services Committee "Community Environmental Improvement Action plans and Projects overview 2005/06" – 2 May 2006
3. Report to Development Services Committee "Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS) and Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) For John Finnie Street & Bank Street, Kilmarnock, and a CARS for Catrine Outstanding Conservation Areas - Update" – 2 May 2006

Anyone wishing to inspect the above papers please contact Colin McKee on (01563) 576759.

Implementation Officer: Alan Neish

Appendix 1

PROGRESS ON MAJOR PROJECTS BEING LED BY THE POLICY & PROJECTS SECTION – 2006/07.

Community Environmental Improvement Action Plans & Projects

The Community Environmental Improvement Action Plans are produced following a comprehensive community consultation exercise and they identify environmental improvement projects which are a priority for communities. With the assistance of the Policy & Projects Section within the Planning, Development & Building Standards Division, the projects are implemented in conjunction with community groups as resources become available.

(i) Community Environmental Improvement Action Plans 2006/07

To date 17 Finalised Action Plans have been prepared for individual settlements as part of the ongoing programme. Plans are now finalised for Auchinleck, Drongan, Dalmellington, New Cumnock, Patna, Rankinston, Muirkirk, Catrine, Logan, Bellsbank, Cumnock (excluding the town centre), Cumnock Town Centre, Netherthird/Craigens/Skerrington, North West Kilmarnock, Riccarton, Shortlees and Galston.

For 2006/07 Linked Work & Training Trust (LWTT) was the consultant appointed to carry out community consultation exercises to produce 3 new Action Plans for Sinclairston, Lugar and Hurlford/Crookedholm and to update the existing Action Plans for Drongan and Rankinston. Following the completion of community questionnaires and focus group meetings to highlight local issues and potential projects, public exhibitions were held in October 2006. Draft action plans for each settlement have been prepared by the consultant and have been forwarded to the relevant elected members for comment and approval. On return, the finalised plans will be forwarded to the various community groups and dependant on availability of resources, priority projects will be developed and implemented.

Community Environmental Improvement Projects 2006/07

The following projects are funded through the Community Regeneration Fund having been identified through the Action Plan process. The projects are implemented in conjunction with local community groups. To date in 2006/07 over £600,000 has been levered in from external sources to implement the projects.

- **Kilmarnock North Public Artworks:** North West Kilmarnock Environmental Improvements Group appointed 2 artists to produce draft proposals for a series of public artworks at key locations throughout North Kilmarnock in conjunction with local primary schools. Following a series of workshops with local schools and North West Youth Group, draft proposals were prepared and presented to the North West Kilmarnock Environmental Improvements Group in December. In conjunction with the school groups, a decision was made to appoint one artist to fully develop and implement the project. An application has been submitted by the North West Kilmarnock Environmental Improvements Group to The Big Lottery's "Young People's Fund" to help fund the implementation of the project.

- **Kilmarnock South Environmental Improvement Projects:** 3 environmental improvement projects were developed. These were a teen sportswall in Riccarton, improvements to the Craigie Rd recreation pitch and improvements to the Shortlees play area. The Riccarton teen sportswall has been completed on site with the improved lighting to be installed by the end of March 2007. The improvements to both the Craigie Rd recreation pitch and Shortlees play area have been completed on time and within budget.
- **Galston Environmental Improvement Project:** Following committee approval, the installation of a Multi Use Games Arena (MUGA) at Catherine Drive was completed in December jointly funded by the CRF and EAC. This proposal was identified as a priority project through a community consultation exercise with the East Gauchallands Tenants and Residents Group.

Through the consultation process for the CEIAP for Galston, the Gateside Road Tenants and Residents Group identified a desire to develop a community owned site at Gateside Road as a play and environmental education area, based on the biodiversity of the hedgerow that borders the site. The project will benefit all residents of Galston. An application for funding a community activity day has been submitted to the Big Lottery's "Breathing Places" fund. The aim of the activity day is to establish the community's needs and desires for the site and will be facilitated by "Starling Learning" through activities such as environmental games, consultation and habitat restoration.

- **Barony 'A' Frame:** The project is being implemented by the Barony 'A' Frame Trust. The aim of the project is to restore and floodlight the grade B listed headframe structure, create a heritage garden, car parking facilities and an educational and heritage resource. The Trust is also developing an oral history project entitled 'Pitheid Patter'. The recording of memories for the 'Pitheid Patter' oral history project has now been completed. The final recording day was held on 31 August 2006 in New Cumnock and was covered by BBC Reporting Scotland, both on the BBC website and on the evening news programme. Positive feedback was received following this featured news article.

Total funding secured to date is £1,293,017. This includes an additional approved contribution of £131,642 by the Council (approved in December 2006). The Council has also agreed to provide an interest-free bridging facility of up to £250,000. This will address the issue of cash flow due to the approved HLF and HS grants being paid to the Trust retrospectively and the retention conditions set by the funders. Restoration work started on site on the 9 October 2006 however due to a prolonged period of extremely bad weather, the project is approx 6 weeks behind schedule. The Contractor is trying to make up time. The landscaping contractor has also now started on site.

The production of the education pack for the Oral History Project is now due to be completed by summer 2007.

- **Catrine Environmental Heritage Project:** Due to size and potential cost of the Catrine Environmental Heritage Project it is included separately as a major project, (see paragraph 3.3 below) however, it is a Community Environmental Improvement project.

The **Catrine Property Improvement Scheme** has 3 applications on target to be implemented by the end of March 2007. The proposed work, valued at £28,267 will restore original features of traditional sandstone buildings, two in Ballochmyle Street and one in Newton Street, leveraging in a total of £11,308 from property owners. This year's scheme has not achieved a full uptake, mainly due to applicants having difficulty obtaining competitive quotes. This is not unusual in the first year of an improvement scheme. Delays were also experienced in arranging professional underwriting to check the application tenders. This has now been resolved by contracting external consultants.
- **Auchinleck Community Newsroom:** The Auchinleck Newsroom Steering Group successfully co-ordinates the production and circulation of the monthly newsletter as well as continuing the development of the community website. www.auchinleck.org.uk The newsroom continues to produce regular newsletters (11 per annum) which are circulated to every home in Auchinleck. In December 2006 a special full colour Christmas edition was produced which proved to be very successful. Back issues are featured on the updated community website. Articles and adverts continue to generate regular income.
- **Netherthird Community Newsroom:** As a result of the community consultation process for the Netherthird/Skerrington/Craigens Environmental Improvement Action Plan, a community newsroom has been set up in the former library building in Netherthird through the Four Connections community group. Local young people have formed a new community group, the 'NCS News' to develop the project and ensure that local information is circulated efficiently throughout the community.

The Newsroom Group intend to produce a regular newsletter and set up a community website, similar to the Auchinleck Community Newsroom project. Funding has been secured through the CRF budget for the purchase of computer and office equipment and 'in kind' support has been offered by Shire Housing Association for the production and distribution of the newsletter. With the assistance of a Community Worker in Community Learning & Development, a number of young people have been engaged to progress the project. The group has had a number of meetings and identified their requirements to develop the project. Quotes have now been obtained for a laptop, digital camera and training required to assist with the production of the newsletter. This will be funded by the CRF grant. An application for funding is being drafted for the Big Lottery Young People's Fund.

- **Auchinleck Community Garden Initiative:** Auchinleck Community Development Initiative is continuing the successful development of the ambitious, sustainable Community Garden Initiative based at Aird Ave. A project officer to co-ordinate its continued development has been appointed through the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV).

Following the successful delivery of the 2005/6 project to create the Aird Ave Community Propagation Centre, ACDI have extended the project to include the development of 5 “Pockets of Bloom” community gardens, throughout Auchinleck.

As a result of a residents consultation exercise, a local construction company, Ayrshire Construction was appointed to develop the 5 Community Gardens. Following dreadful weather, work started in December 2006 and is due for completion by mid-February 2007.

Following an engagement exercise with local residents to encourage them to become involved in community environmental improvement projects, the BTCV Project Officer successfully engaged a large number of volunteers to implement a range of projects. These include improving the public planting in Sorn Road, planting trees down the central reservation at Milne Avenue and installing planters at Sorn Road.

ACDI and BTCV took part in the “Make a Difference Day” in November 2006 by organising a major tree and bulb planting event. This was very successful, with over 70 volunteers and the local MP taking part.

A second geodome greenhouse is being constructed at the Aird Avenue Community Propagation Centre, funded by grants from the Council. This will provide additional, much needed capacity for the growing on of plants for use in Auchinleck and neighbouring settlements as well as increasing the educational capacity of the project. The second geodome will be constructed by ACDI as a pilot project to evaluate the possibility of a community enterprise being set up, based on selling geodome kits to other organisations. A second community enterprise based on processing used vegetable oil into biodiesel is also being evaluated. Assistance will be sought from EAC Economic Development on setting up the community enterprises.

- **Netherthird Community Garden Project:** A design for the proposed community garden is being finalised by children of the Netherthird Primary School. An “Awards for All” lottery application has been submitted by EAC External Funding officer on behalf of the school. The proposed community garden will be designed as an educational, eco friendly, sustainable garden which will provide a learning resource for the school and wider community. A number of local companies have agreed to contribute materials to the project and Auchinleck Community Garden Initiative has agreed to provide plant material for the garden and volunteers to help the children with the planting. CRF funding will be utilised on preparatory site works, ie fencing and footpaths.

(ii) Catrine Environmental Heritage Project (CEHP)

The CEHP project aims to establish and implement a range of proposals to conserve, enhance and promote the historic and environmental importance of Catrine, and maximise the potential for related educational and recreational uses. The weir and voes system on the River Ayr at Catrine is a Scheduled Ancient Monument, which is in need of restoration and conservation. This is a major project being developed by the Policy and Projects Section with the support of the Catrine Community Trust and a range of partner agencies.

The Catrine Community Trust and East Ayrshire Council have entered into a formal partnership to coordinate the CEHP. The Trust has been very active over the last year. Trust Directors have been working closely with the partner agencies including East Ayrshire Council, Catrine Environment Group, Historic Scotland, Scottish Natural Heritage, Catrine Angling Club, River Ayr Salmon Fishery Board, Ayrshire Rivers Trust, Scottish Wildlife Trust and The National Autistic Society. The Trust has joined the Development Trust Association for Scotland in order to ensure sustainability and secure alternative funding for community projects.

In order to meet the requirements set by Historic Scotland, additional survey work and historic recording of the weir structure was carried out by IH Borland and James Mitchell a specialist conservation engineer in the Autumn of 2006. Historic Scotland contributed a grant of £10,000 to the cost of the survey. The results of this survey were reported in November 2006 and will be included in a future Conservation Management Plan which will be required to secure funding to implement the project. In December 2006, Expressions of Interest were invited from consultants for the production of the Conservation Management Plan (CMP) and for the supervision of the conservation/restoration work to the weir and voes. However appointment of consultants is anticipated in April 2007 because of the need to satisfy European Union procurement rules and the final report in November 2007. The successful consultancy team will be appointed by the CEHP Partnership.

As part of the Catrine project six architects were approached to provide quotes for the design of a Fish Hatchery and Environmental Educational Centre (EEC). Three were short listed and made presentations to CCT in December 2006. Following an award of £10k from the Big Lottery towards this element of the project, an architect has now been appointed by the CCT. This element of the overall project incorporates the creation of a set of half-scale replica water wheels based on the original Fairbairn suspension wheels which powered Catrine Mill from 1826-1948. Once in operation, the replica water wheels will create a revenue stream from the generation of electricity and will add to the educational and tourist experience of the EEC.

(iii) Kilmarnock Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS)

The Council received the formal grant offer of £811,170 from Historic Scotland's Historic Environment Regeneration Fund Programme, towards a Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS) for the John Finnie Street & Bank Street, Kilmarnock Outstanding Conservation Area on the 19th January 2007. The grant covers the period from 1st January 2007 to 31st March 2012. The grant offer has been passed to the Head of Legal and Administrative Services for signing on behalf of the Council.

In anticipation of this grant £50,000 was allocated in 2006/07 towards the John Finnie Street & Bank Street, Kilmarnock CARS from the Community Regeneration Fund and a further £60,000 from the Departmental Capital Programme. This funding has enabled the appointment of a CARS Project Officer and Clerical Assistant on a fixed term contract. In addition to the preparation for the formal launch of the CARS, the following projects have been funded in 2006/07:-

- (i) A gutter cleaning and vegetation removal programme;
- (ii) Production of a property owners Building Maintenance Guide for all building types in the Outstanding Conservation Area; and

- (iii) Production of a Conservation Management Plan for the Outstanding Conservation Area.

All of the above are due to be completed by the end of the 2006/07 financial year.

In addition there have been 2 community consultation exercises with property owners and other interest groups within the Outstanding Conservation Area; 1 vacant / derelict property demolished; and an initial external condition and photographic survey completed.

Under the CARS for John Finnie Street & Bank Street, Kilmarnock the following buildings have been identified as priority building repair projects eligible to receive grant assistance of up to 80% of the costs of the eligible repair works:-

- Johnnie Walker Bonded Warehouse, Strand Street
- Mason Murphy, 78 Portland Street
- Former Ossington Hotel, 2-4 John Finnie Street
- Former Kilmarnock Standard Offices (Grange Street)
- Former Post Office, 73 John Finnie Street
- 98-108 Portland Street
- 24-28 John Finnie Street
- 1-5 Dunlop Street
- 6-14 John Finnie Street (former Opera House site)
- 30-38 John Finnie Street
- 100–108 John Finnie Street
- 108-114 John Finnie Street

In addition small grants of up to £25,000 will be available for up to 60% of the eligible repair work on all buildings within the Outstanding Conservation Area.

To compliment the building repair grants a Skills Training/Education programme for tradesmen and professional advisers will be developed.

The completed Building Maintenance Guide will be made widely available throughout the area to encourage the improved maintenance of the buildings within the Outstanding Conservation Area.

Community Regeneration Funding of £100,000 has been confirmed for 2007/08 from the Community Planning & Partnership Unit for the CARS. However, as part of the contract with Historic Scotland the Council is required to allocate a sum of £90,000 for use in the first full financial year of the agreement. Agreement is therefore sought to the allocation of £90,000 from the Departmental Capital Programme for 2007/08 towards the CARS subject to final budget allocations for 2007/08.

(iv) Kilmarnock Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI)

Following the successful Stage One bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for a grant to set up a THI for the John Finnie Street & Bank Street, Kilmarnock Outstanding Conservation Area, progress is now being made in terms of agreeing the Development Work required for the Stage Two submission to ensure that we secure the maximum grant of £1,990,000 allocated to the project by HLF.

The Stage Two bid must be submitted to HLF by 1 December 2007 and HLF have offered a development grant of up to £25,000 towards the development costs. Prior to obtaining permission to start the Development Work the following additional information is required by the HLF:-

- 1) a signed grant contract (not yet received from the HLF);
- 2) a breakdown of the costs and brief for the development work;
- 3) proof of partnership funding to meet the cost of the development work;
- 4) a development work programme;
- 5) a project management structure;
- 6) a letter from the Chief Executive confirming that the people producing the THI Stage 2 submission will treat it as a priority;
- 7) a procurement strategy; and
- 8) Bank account and VAT details.

To date the HLF have been sent a report confirming the Key Outcomes and Actions for the development work; a detailed programme for the development work; a procurement strategy for the services required for the development phase; and a draft brief including an estimated cost of up to £65,000 for consultants in partnership with officers to carry out the development work. Until the HLF agree the contents of these documents the remaining items are not required.

It is now essential to set up and establish the Kilmarnock Townscape Heritage Initiative Partnership as agreed by the Development Services Committee in May 2006, to progress the development work and ensure appropriate community consultation and engagement on the Kilmarnock THI. A report seeking the nomination of Council representatives to the Kilmarnock Townscape Heritage Initiative Partnership is due to be considered by the Full Council on the 1 March 2007.

(v) Daldorch Footbridge, Catrine – Restoration/Replacement

A detailed assessment of the Daldorch Footbridge, which is listed category C(S) was completed in October/November 2006 by specialist engineers and they confirmed that the bridge was unsafe.

The report summary states that:- ***“ The bridge is in poor condition with multiple failures of structural elements, both obvious and discreet. For this reason – and with the risk of overloading always present, it is recommended that the bridge be closed to the public at the earliest opportunity.”***

The bridge has now been closed. The report also considers several options and recommends:-

“...that a bridge in the spirit of, and carrying the hallmarks of the original, be considered as a viable option. The original newel posts can be carefully removed and incorporated into a new structure in a non-structural way. An all-welded lattice web can be used with similar cross-membering and bracing. The shallow arch should be retained as one of the more significant aesthetic

features. However this may require tensioning cables beneath for minimum visual impact. Bearings will have to be designed to allow growth and contraction of the span.”

The Policy & Projects Section are leading the project in liaison with the Roads, Transportation & Design Section, to have the listed structure restored or replaced. The engineers report indicates that the cost of the recommended steel replica would be approximately, £200,000, including the design fees, removal of the existing bridge, and the civil works required to the abutments. To date the Council has allocated £60,000 from the Development Services Committee of the 2 May 2006 to assist this project.

The footbridge appears to be privately owned by Daldorch Estate Limited who at some point in the past has installed a upvc sewage pipe across the footbridge. However, confirmation of ownership is still being sought.

The footbridge is an important part of the recently opened “Sea to Source” River Ayr Walk, and is an important link to Catrine village centre for the pupils of the National Autistic Society at Daldorch House School.

It is considered appropriate to consider a temporary structure to reconnect the River Ayr Walk and provide safe access from Daldorch House School to Catrine village centre, this would enable the necessary funding to be secured for the long term solution.

Historic Scotland has been consulted on the conclusions of the specialist engineers report, but has deferred any response until their Senior Engineer can arrange a site visit.

It is recommended that the allocated £60,000 be utilised to fund the installation of a temporary footbridge, and subject to Historic Scotland’s comments the design of a replacement structure.

Appendix 2

PROGRESS ON OTHER PROJECTS BEING LED BY THE POLICY & PROJECTS SECTION – 2006/07.

- (i) **Newmilns Townscheme** - This Scheme is joint funded by Historic Scotland and has offered repair grants in excess of £50,000 to 7 properties in Main Street, Newmilns Outstanding Conservation Area in 2006/07. Over the last three years this scheme has secured environmental improvements to a significant number of properties. It is proposed to continue this scheme and to seek £20,000 from Historic Scotland. To secure this funding the Council have to match fund this scheme. It is proposed to seek an allocation of £20,000 from the Departmental Capital Programme for 2007/08.
- (ii) **Kilmarnock Town Centre Signage** – a total of 14 locational maps of the town centre will be installed prior to the end of the financial year. This proposal was identified as part of the Kilmarnock Town Centre Strategy;

- (iii) **Replacement of Litter Bins** – a total of 44 litter bins are being replaced in conservation areas and high amenity areas throughout East Ayrshire, this will improve the appearance of these areas and will be more functional than the open topped bins that they are replacing. Funding has been secured from Neighbourhood Services for the installation of the new bins.
- (iv) **Landscaping of Catrine railway viaduct** – this project is being implemented by East Ayrshire Woodlands in liaison with local community groups;
- (v) **Installation of a second Geodome at the Community Garden Initiative, Aird Avenue, Auchinleck** – This project is being implemented by the Auchinleck Community Garden Initiative and will enable the initiative to expand their highly successful “pockets of bloom” project;
- (vi) **Environmental improvement of “The Dub”, Cumnock** – This project will stabilise the river embankment, provide improved fencing, planting and seating at this location;
- (vii) **Environmental improvement of “The Four Corners”, Galston** – This project will tidy up the area adjacent to the “Four Corners” and the Church Lane car park, and provide additional entrance signage ; and
- (viii) **Installation of tiered planters** – Tiered Planters will be installed as part of agreed environmental improvement schemes at the following locations:- Foregate Square/John Finnie Street, Kilmarnock; “The Dub”, Cumnock, The Four Corners, Galston, Village Centre, Catrine.