

**EACC Meeting: 30 January 2025:
Brian Davey and Emma Swift of the Improvement Service (IS)
leads on the Scottish Community Councils (SCC) Project**


www.improvementservice.org.uk

www.communitycouncils.scot

IS and SCC are Scot Gov funded, with strong links to COSLA, links to local authority Community Council Liaison Offices (CCLO) and links to community councils (CC) as service facilitators as opposed to dedicated service providers. (So dependent on third-party providers.)


There is a wide array of support provision for CC, across training, skills and learning, digital and media support, showcasing, Local Place Plan preparation and a wide events programme. So, there is core resource support there for a CC, from the basics upwards. It's a case of organising the commitment to sign-up for it.

1]



IS
improvement **service**

*The 'go to' organisation for
Local Government
improvement in Scotland*




Community Councils

Overview

Brian Davey
Democratic Governance Officer

Emma Swift
Communications Officer

2]

Scottish Community Councils Project	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- the only national support for Scotland's Community Councils.- provides information, support and resources for Scotland's 1,200+ active community councils and the 10,000+ volunteers who serve as community councillors.- manages and supports a network of Community Council Liaison Officers (CCLOs) and a Northern Alliance of CCLOs.	

3]

The screenshot shows the Scottish Community Councils Website. The main heading is "Scottish Community Councils Website". Below it is a navigation bar with links: "WHAT IS A COMMUNITY COUNCIL?", "FIND A COMMUNITY COUNCIL", "THE WORK OF COMMUNITY COUNCILS", "NEWS", "EVENTS", "IDEAS", and "HELP AND SUPPORT". The breadcrumb trail reads: "Home > What is a Community Council? > What are the Roles in a Community Council?". The main heading of the page is "What are the Roles in a Community Council?". On the left is a sidebar with links: "Being a Community Councillor", "What are the Roles in a Community Council?", "The Community Council Framework", "Consultation on Planning", "Community Engagement", and "Digital Engagement". The main content area contains three paragraphs of text explaining the roles of office bearers and the responsibilities of all council members.

4] 'Model Scheme for CCs' updated in 2023 along with 'Good Practice Guidance'. There is also a 'CC Finder Map' which carries 'things like traffic notices and planning application notices'. (I haven't checked for accuracy.)

The screenshot shows the Scottish Community Councils Website. The main heading is "Scottish Community Councils Website". Below it is a list of resources, each in a blue box with a right-pointing arrow: "Model Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils", "Code of Conduct for Community Councils", "Standing Orders", "Model Constitution", and "Good Practice Guidance".

5]

Showcase the work of community councils

Community Councils Scotland are keen to develop written or video case studies to highlight the good work of community councils

The grid consists of six cards arranged in two rows and three columns. Each card features a small image at the top, a title, a brief description, and a right-pointing arrow.

- Scotland's Climate Week - Stories for Change**: Community Councils across the country share their Stories for Change as part of Scotland's Climate Week 2024.
- Lights, Camera, Action - Merchant City & Trongate grants funded by Hollywood**: Merchant City and Trongate Community Council in Glasgow are funding community grants thanks to films and TV productions in the city.
- Carnwath Hub project: one in a million!**: Carnwath Community Council has secured one million pounds of funding to support the development of the new Community and Business Enterprise Hub in the village.
- Tackling the rural housing**: (Image of a rural landscape)
- Public consultation**: (Image of a public consultation event)
- Challenging the cost of**: (Image of a coastal landscape)

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6] Quote:

We also have a new section on the website, so this is where you'll find information about, you know, any funds that committee councils can go for or any upcoming training. For example, this training coming up on local place plans, I'm sure you've probably seen it because we've been sharing it quite a lot last couple of weeks. We've managed to secure that for free for community councils. So hopefully there's there's a few in Edinburgh that have signed up for it. We can come on to that a bit but later on.

Relevant News and Information

Latest News

The grid consists of three news cards arranged horizontally. Each card features a small image, a date, a title, a brief description, and a right-pointing arrow.

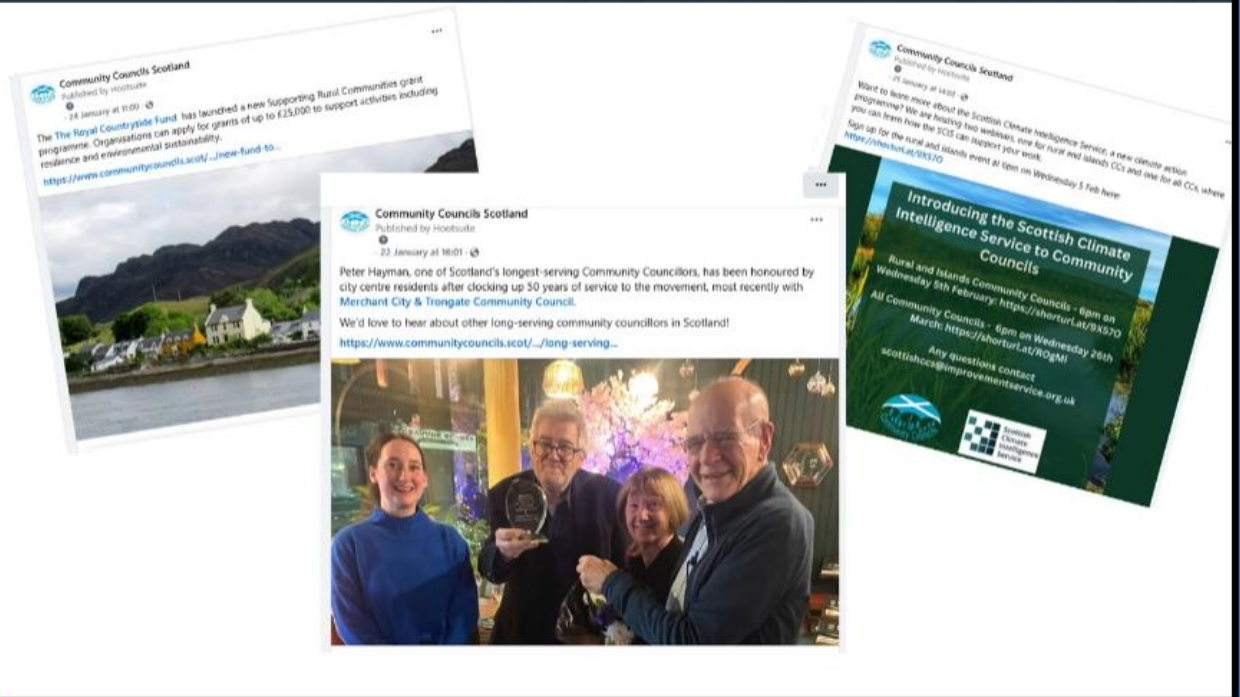
- 27 JANUARY**: **Ecosystem restoration fund open to applications**. A second round of the Neighbourhood Ecosystem Fund is now open for applications.
- 22 JANUARY**: **New fund to support rural communities**. The Royal Countryside Fund has launched a new Supporting Rural Communities grant programme.
- 6 JANUARY**: **New community engagement guidance for Local Development Plans**. The Scottish Government has published new guidance to assist with engagement activities in the preparation of local development plans.



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7] Look for update news on, e.g. funding / participatory budgeting opportunities.

Social Media Channels



8]

Social Media Support



9] LPP Webinar series starts 12 February 2025.

Webinars and Training



Free Local Place Plan training for Community Councils with Place at the Table and Imagine If

Every Wednesday 5:30pm - 6:30pm on MS Teams

- Wed 12 Feb - Introduction to Local Place Plans 1: What is a Local Place Plan and how is different from a Community Action Plan?
- Wed 19 Feb - Introduction to Local Place Plans 2: The Who, When, Why and How of Local Place Plans.
- Wed 26 Feb - Project managing your Local Place Plan.
- Wed 5 March - Designing an Engagement Strategy for your Local Place Plan.
- Wed 12 March - Processing the Data you gather for your Local Place Plan.
- Wed 19 March - Writing your Statement of Regard to Statutory Plans: An Intro to National Planning Framework 4 for your Local Place Plan.

Logos for Community Councils Scotland, Place at the Table, and Imagine If are shown at the bottom.

10]

Partnership Working



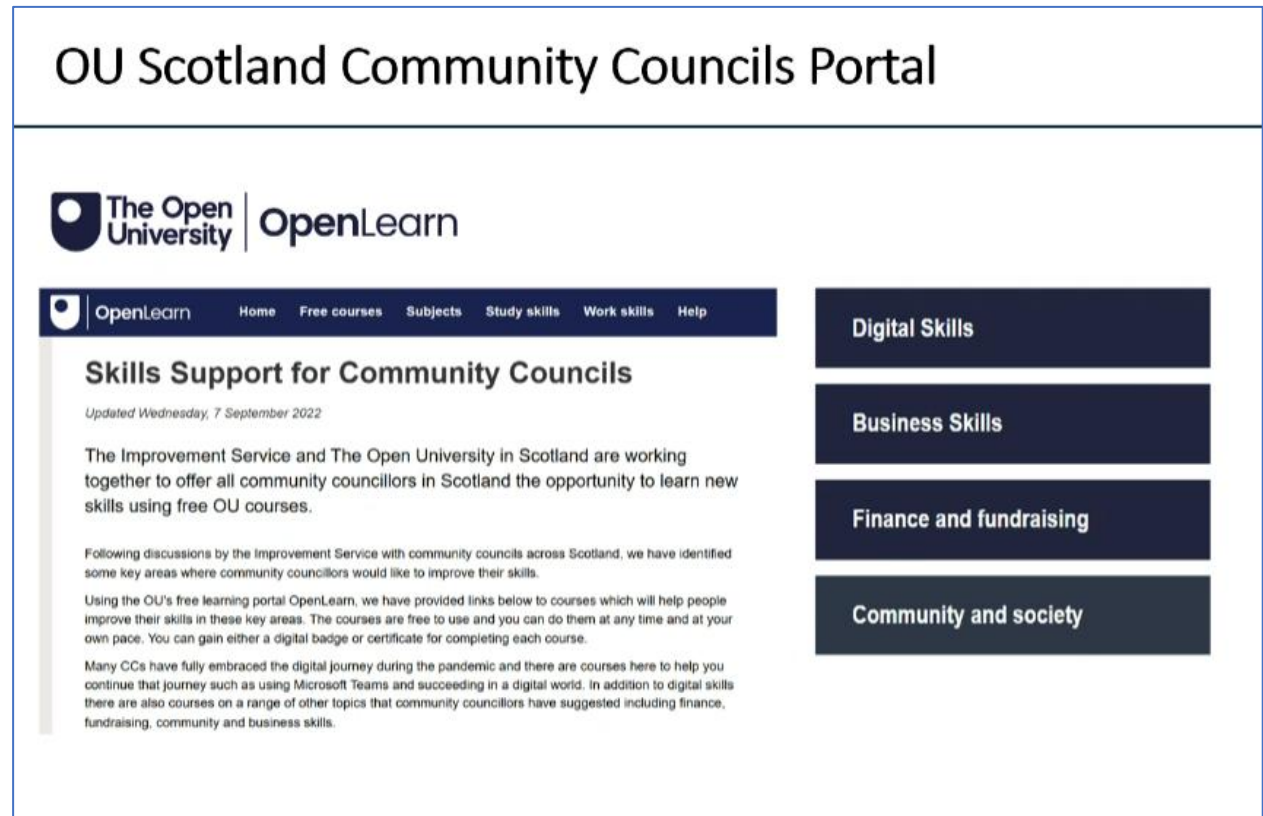
There are also links with Scottish Tech Army (www.scottishtecharmy.org). Past work from STT has covered new / upgraded websites for CCs.

SCC has close contact with The Open University; ideas for new training module topics are invited.

The Knowledge Hub is the SCC's Development Network, drawing in the exchange of conversations and ideas from CCs across Scotland.

11]

OU Scotland Community Councils Portal



The Open University | OpenLearn

OpenLearn Home Free courses Subjects Study skills Work skills Help

Skills Support for Community Councils

Updated Wednesday, 7 September 2022

The Improvement Service and The Open University in Scotland are working together to offer all community councillors in Scotland the opportunity to learn new skills using free OU courses.

Following discussions by the Improvement Service with community councils across Scotland, we have identified some key areas where community councillors would like to improve their skills.

Using the OU's free learning portal OpenLearn, we have provided links below to courses which will help people improve their skills in these key areas. The courses are free to use and you can do them at any time and at your own pace. You can gain either a digital badge or certificate for completing each course.

Many CCs have fully embraced the digital journey during the pandemic and there are courses here to help you continue that journey such as using Microsoft Teams and succeeding in a digital world. In addition to digital skills there are also courses on a range of other topics that community councillors have suggested including finance, fundraising, community and business skills.

- Digital Skills
- Business Skills
- Finance and fundraising
- Community and society

12]

Community Councils Knowledge Hub



Knowledgehub



Scottish Community Councillors Development Network

Conversation and Q&A:

Comparison of direct funding levels of CCs in mainland Scotland with those in Orkney and Shetland (employing paid clerks) and Parish Councils in England, funded by precepts and able to employ admin clerks and financial officers.

Migration on social media of a number of Edinburgh CCs from Twitter to Blue Sky. SCC considering a similar move.

Reference was made to Otter.ai (AI Meeting Note Taker & Real-Time AI Transcription) as a meeting transcription (Zoom / Teams) and document reference / summary tool. (Watch the GDPR implications if the AI tool captures access to email distribution addresses and the like.)

Lack of resource funding for CCs leaves wide public impression that they are just a talking shop.

CEC approach on CC support is 'tokenism', overlaid with admin bureaucracy.

SCC can't be a lobbying group for CCs.

Strong case for a central 'WebTech' service facility for CCs (model website template / underlying licence / glitch / upgrade / tech query support).

Blandness of CEC poster / flyer support for election promotion.

Call from Charlotte Encombe of Leith Central CC to support her draft paper on Purpose Built Student Accommodation (PBSA). CEC Planning likely to move on a PBSA 'Consultation' in late February.