

Community Regeneration and Tackling Poverty Learning Network

Members Guide



Connecting you to evidence, expertise and excellence



Scottish Centre for Regeneration, Scottish Government, Highlander House, 58 Waterloo Street, Glasgow G2 7DA
Tel: 0141 271 3736 / E-mail: contactSCR@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

Introduction ↪

The Community Regeneration and Tackling Poverty Learning Network aims to support Community Planning Partnerships and their partners to improve the way communities are regenerated and poverty is tackled throughout Scotland.

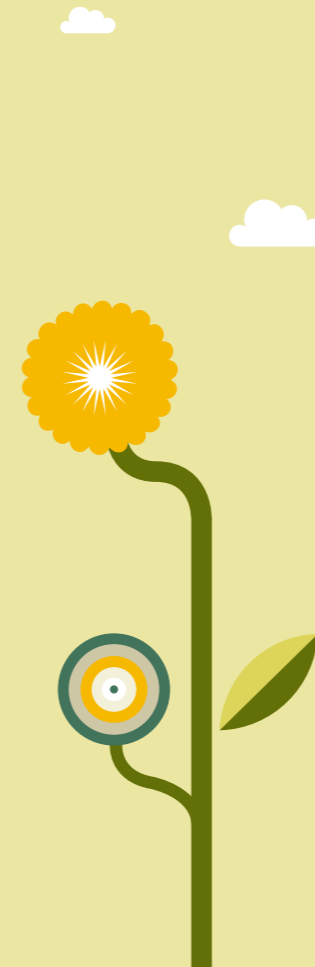
The network is a place where you can interact with others and share common concerns, problems and passions, deepening your knowledge and expertise in the process. It is a cross-Government initiative that responds to needs expressed by local authorities and their Community Planning Partners. The network gives practical help to people and organisations working at a local level. It connects people from across Scotland, including those responsible for delivering the initiative locally; managers; senior staff; and board members in Community Planning Partnerships and their partners.

↪ Offering a new way of helping you tackle poverty and regeneration, the learning network:

- is responsive to your needs and helps you deal effectively with problems
- enables you to learn in a way that suits you
- provides a dedicated co-ordinator, an allocated budget and access to a bank of experts, tools and expertise; and
- provides its services free.

↪ This guide will help you learn more about the learning network. It tells you about:

- the context for the learning network
- what the learning network aims to do
- how it can help you
- what participating will mean for you; and
- how to get involved.



What is the context for the learning network?



➤ National Context

The learning network is led by the Scottish Centre for Regeneration and supported by other parts of the Scottish Government. The centre helps to achieve the Scottish Government's purpose, targets and national outcomes by enabling public-, private- and voluntary-sector partners to become more effective at regenerating communities.

➤ The network supports activities that focus on:

- the priorities set in the anti-poverty framework 'Achieving Our Potential'; and
- regenerating communities and tackling poverty through Single Outcome Agreements.

➤ In particular, it supports activities aimed at:

- regenerating the most disadvantaged communities
- improving the life chances of disadvantaged individuals and those in poverty
- improving employability, particularly for young people and low-income groups at high risk of poverty;
- tackling income inequality; and
- supporting good health outcomes.

➤ In doing this, the network supports progress towards reaching the Scottish Government's purpose targets on participation, solidarity and cohesion. It also supports the following national outcomes, identified in the National Performance Framework:

- We realise our full economic potential with more and better job opportunities for our people.
- Our young people are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.
- Our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed.
- We live longer, healthier lives
- We have tackled the significant inequalities in Scottish society.
- We have improved the life chances for children, young people and families at risk.
- We live our lives safe from crime, disorder and danger.
- We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others.

➤ Scottish Centre for Regeneration

➤ The learning network will support the Scottish Centre for Regeneration's aims to ensure high-quality working practices that are continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs.

To achieve this, the centre aims to:

- increase the number of people and organisations who have:
 - assessed their knowledge, understanding and skills needs in relation to their objectives
 - participated in activities that have developed their knowledge, understanding and skills
 - improved their knowledge, understanding and skills
 - become more effective in achieving their goals
- ensure more and better opportunities for people and organisations to learn from others;
- improve the quality of and access to:
 - relevant resources
 - an evidence base to help inform people and organisations in decision-making; and
- ensure that learning outcomes are used to improve policy and working practices.

➤ The Community Regeneration and Tackling Poverty Learning Network is one of several learning networks the Scottish Government has set up to support people and organisations tackling local problems. The Scottish Centre for Regeneration is also:

- responsible for learning networks dealing with town centres and local high streets, and mixed and sustainable communities
- working closely with networks and support programmes set up by Scottish Government to tackle employability and health inequalities
- working with programmes and organisations such as the Community Planning Network, COSLA, the Local Government Improvement Service, the Poverty Alliance, Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations and SURF.



What does the learning network aim to do?

- So that it meets your needs, the network deals with problems that you, the members, identify. After discussion with Community Planning Partnerships, we expect it to tackle questions like these:
- How can we shift the focus from a ring-fenced fund to tackle regeneration and poverty in the context of Single Outcome Agreements?
 - How can we improve performance management?
 - How can we get better at working with communities?
 - How can we commission projects and services to tackle poverty and deprivation?
 - How can we find relevant data sources at local levels?
 - How can we set 'stretch' and other SMART targets?
 - How can we tackle problems in rural as well as urban areas?
 - How can we support local projects to help achieve outcomes contained in Single Outcome Agreements?

How can the learning network help you?

A dedicated learning network coordinator works closely with network members to do the following:

Identify the problems the learning network should tackle

- The coordinator will write a regular blog to stimulate discussion about the network's future work programme.
- You can respond to this or suggest your own ideas by:
- taking part in online discussions, writing your own blog or posting a question or idea
 - contacting the coordinator direct
 - attending events and suggesting problem areas to work on and topics to discuss
 - feeding back to us using our evaluation forms.

To sign up online, go to www.partnersinregeneration.org



Collect good practice, evidence of what works and details of experts

- The coordinator will identify good practice and evidence of what works through the Scottish Centre for Regeneration's research and through its involvement in awards for best practice in regeneration.

They will ask for examples of good practice via their blog. Members will be able to suggest examples, which can be written up by the Scottish Centre for Regeneration and put on our website.

- The coordinator will also be responsible for identifying experts in community regeneration and tackling poverty, who will give advice and share their experience.

If you have expertise or experience you would like to share, you can contact the network coordinator and they will decide how best this can be used by other network members.



Share what has worked

- The coordinator will find examples of good practice and evidence of what works to be put on the website, accessible at www.partnersinregeneration.org. The website will include:

- good-practice case studies from Scotland and abroad
- learning outcomes from previous programmes and events
- relevant research and publications from Scottish Government and others
- Scottish Centre for Regeneration tools such as 'How to' guides, online learning programmes and skills-assessment tools
- tools and resources from other organisations; and
- details of other events, specialist learning networks or capacity-building programmes.



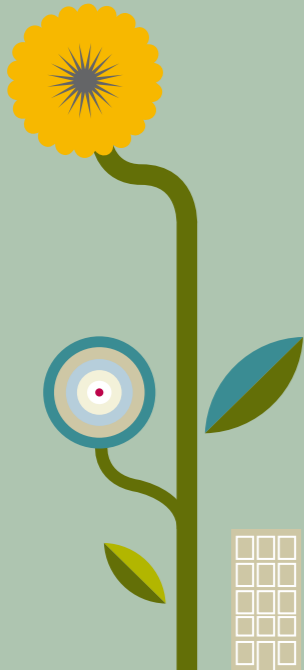


- ↳ The coordinator will also organise events to showcase good practice and to help people learn from experts. These will include seminars, conferences, learning exchanges and study visits, tailored to members' needs.
- ↳ The coordinator will ensure you learn about the experiences of other learning network members by:
 - publishing learning points that illustrate lessons and good practice; and
 - organising an annual learning exchange where network members can share lessons learned when tackling problems.
- ↳ The coordinator will also be able to direct you to examples of good practice that other organisations and learning networks have gathered.

If you want to be kept up to date on what is happening or suggest subjects to be covered, you will need to sign up online at www.partnersinregeneration.org.

Once you are signed up, you will be able to share online your experiences of good practice, tools and resources. On the website you can:

- take part in forums, peer-review sessions and learning groups
- post questions and ideas; and
- learn about or advertise events and learning programmes.



Support people to build their capacity through developing tailored programmes examining specific problems

- ↳ The coordinator will work closely with members to identify any need for tailored programmes tackling specific subjects or aimed at specific groups. They may lead to setting up, for example, facilitated learning groups, peer-review sessions or project-development programmes.
- ↳ Tailor-made programmes may also involve using someone from the 'bank of experts' or setting up online forums, which the coordinator will decide, with you and others. Experts will be expected to share their experience by:

- taking part in learning events, master classes, meetings, seminars, workshops, and online through the website
- supporting learning activities by, for example, leading action learning sets examining specific problems
- giving advice while acting as a critical friend
- doing research on good practice and evidence; and
- developing new learning resources as needed.

You can join up for any of these programmes to learn more about a specific subject or share your experience and expertise.

The learning network coordinator will also make sure any lessons learned or new ideas from any of these programmes are shared as widely as possible.



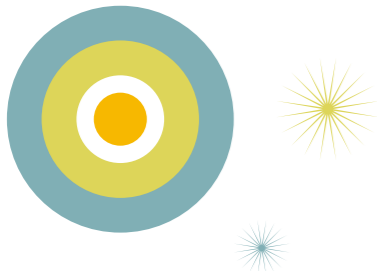
➤ Commission or develop new tools, resources and research where there is a gap

Situations may arise where you need something new to help you tackle a problem. This may be new research or evidence; examples of good practice on a specific subject; or a new tool or resource to help you or your organisation find a new way of dealing with something. The learning network has resources to help you do this.

In developing such tools and resources, you and other network members are expected to help the learning network coordinator ensure the final product is practical and useful. This may mean commenting on a commissioning brief, giving your ideas on how to go about the project, telling us what would and wouldn't work or testing a prototype.

➤ Measure the effectiveness and impact of the learning network, and improving it where possible

To ensure the learning network is meeting your needs, we will be assessing whether it is changing the way you work and improving your knowledge and expertise for the problems you are tackling in regenerating communities and dealing with poverty. To do this effectively, we need you to give us honest and regular feedback on our feedback forms and when you talk to the learning network coordinator. We also need you to help us identify the learning network's priorities and working practices.



What participating will mean for you

➤ If you want to get involved in the learning network, you will be expected to:

- sign up to the network at www.partnersinregeneration.org
- maintain and update your own information; and
- provide honest feedback on the learning network and its effects on you and your work behaviour.

➤ You and the other network members will also be expected to:

- show mutual respect for, trust of and equality with other members
- be open and transparent in communications
- be committed to being positive and constructive
- be committed to working with and learning from others; and
- make the best use of resources available.

➤ You are also encouraged to use the learning network to help:

- develop your understanding by sharing knowledge, experience and good practice with others
- you work with others to develop solutions by contributing to events, visits and learning activities
- support the development of the learning network by providing ideas
- promote equality of opportunity
- you learn about new ideas, approaches and joint working
- you apply new learning.



How can you get involved?

To find out more about the learning network, to join or to get regular updates on what is happening, please contact Heather Smith, the learning network coordinator, using the contact details below:

Tel: 0141 271 3735

Mobile: 07799 150739

E-mail: heather.smith@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

Address: Highlander House
58 Waterloo Street
G2 7DA Glasgow

Website: www.partnersinregeneration.org



the learning
network

