

How will we know whether it is working?

A key Scottish Executive target is: "to promote community regeneration of the most deprived neighbourhoods, through improvements by 2008 in employability, education, health, access to local services, and quality of the local environment."

There are wider national targets for each of these issues. But additional progress in the most deprived neighbourhoods will also be tracked by the Executive. Progress on the ROAs will be assessed through a performance management framework, part of which involves annual reports on ROAs. The new concentration on reporting progress towards proposed outcomes, rather than the details of projects, may make the results more meaningful.

Where can I find out more?

Locally: from your Community Planning Co-ordinator (contact your local authority). A list is also available at: www.communityplanning.org.uk

For general regeneration issues:

Scottish Centre for Regeneration
Festival Business Centre
150 Brand Street, Glasgow G51 1DH
Tel: 0141 419 1690
Email: scr@communitiescotland.gsi.gov.uk
www.scr.communitiescotland.gov.uk

For issues relating to community engagement:

Community Engagement team
Thistle House
91 Haymarket Terrace, Edinburgh EH12 5HE
Tel: 0131 313 0044
www.communitiescotland.gov.uk

Community Voices Network
Freepost SC06961
Glasgow G1 1BR
Tel: 0141 564 7600
www.community-voices.org.uk

Other sources of information

Communities Scotland's website

www.communitiescotland.gov.uk has information including ROA documents from each area, guidance for ROAs, the performance management framework, a 'Learning in Regeneration' skills pack, and the National Standards for Community Engagement.

The Scottish Executive's website

www.scotland.gov.uk contains information on regeneration policy. It also gives access to the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation. Other data on social exclusion and disadvantage can be found in the report *Social focus on deprived areas* (2005).

What are FAQ sheets?

These are short guides to help you improve your understanding of important issues in community regeneration. They give you a quick and easy introduction to some of the main Scottish Executive policies and explain what they mean in practice.

What is Community Regeneration?

The term 'community regeneration' means action to tackle the inequalities between communities by narrowing the gap between disadvantaged people and everyone else, and action to realise the full potential of people in the most disadvantaged communities.

Sometimes when people talk about 'regeneration' they think mainly of physical improvements such as redeveloping derelict land, or modernising houses. But 'community regeneration' means improving all the social, economic, environmental and physical aspects of the life of any community where these have fallen behind. The Scottish Executive has set the following national priorities:

- building strong, safe and attractive communities
- getting people back into work
- improving health
- raising educational attainment
- effective community engagement, including engaging young people.

Which communities do we mean?

Mainly, we mean people living in areas where they are much more likely than average to suffer from poverty and social exclusion. Some regeneration work aims to improve the conditions of socially excluded groups wherever they live.

What activities can community regeneration involve?

A very wide range, including:

- making sure that people can get access to good quality public services
- physical improvements (for example new or improved housing, or the complete redesign and rebuilding of some areas)
- local learning and job opportunities, and easier access to opportunities elsewhere
- developing the social economy, to allow communities to become directly involved in delivering change (See FAQs: 'Social Economy')
- many other actions to meet the needs and aspirations of local communities and to empower them to play a full role in making the necessary changes.

Who is responsible for this?

The responsibility for action is shared widely and includes the public services and agencies that are active in an area; businesses that operate in the area, or could use and develop the skills of its people; and voluntary and community organisations of many kinds. Ultimately every individual in a community can have a role in changing the condition and image of their area.



Whose job is it to pull them together?

Local circumstances vary. But in all areas, the local Community Planning Partnership (CPP) (See FAQs: 'Community Planning') has a responsibility to tackle community regeneration, through drawing up and implementing a Regeneration Outcome Agreement (ROA).

Regeneration Outcome Agreements?

What are they?

Regeneration Outcome Agreements – or ROAs for short – explain which areas and groups are the targets for action, and why. More than previous approaches, they focus on outcomes – on 'what will change' – rather than just looking at what agencies will do (which is sometimes called the 'output'). The first ROAs cover the three years 2005-08. Each sets out the outcomes that partners seek to achieve for disadvantaged communities, based on the national priorities and local circumstances. Above all, ROAs must provide evidence of how communities were, and will be, engaged in decision making and delivery.

Is there any money attached to them?

The Scottish Executive has committed £318m to the Community Regeneration Fund (CRF) over the first three years. But each ROA must also specify what local partners (councils, the National Health Service etc) will do to achieve the outcomes. This can involve both directing resources to additional programmes and working together to improve the services that people receive.

Are people serious about this?

ROAs are not being developed in isolation. Unlike some previous initiatives, they should have a clear link to other plans through Community Planning. The Scottish Executive has set national targets to reduce poverty and disadvantage (these are often referred to as "Closing the Opportunity Gap" targets) and sees community regeneration as one of the major ways of achieving them.

What happened to Social Inclusion Partnerships?

Most ROAs will build on the work of local Social Inclusion Partnerships (SIPs). The CRF combines the old SIP fund with the former Better Neighbourhood Services and Tackling Drugs Misuse Funds. Whether partnerships are based directly on previous ones depends on local circumstances.

Isn't this just about a few small areas?

It is ultimately about finding ways of improving opportunities for the most disadvantaged people. For the first time regeneration funding has been allocated to each Community Planning Partnership based on the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) which provides evidence of deprivation at a local level and helps establish where need is greatest. The CRF is available for spending in the 'worst 15 per cent' of neighbourhoods in Scotland as identified in the SIMD. These are determined by their position in the overall SIMD ranking of individual areas (called datazones) which places the worst at the top and the least deprived at the bottom of the index. This allows it to target many disadvantaged people very effectively, but not to reach all. In fact, 33 per cent of all the people who are excluded

from the labour market through unemployment, sickness or disability live in these areas. In general, higher proportions of the people with the most severe multiple disadvantages live there.

In certain cases up to 20 per cent of the fund can be spent on 'thematic' approaches across the whole council area (not just the most deprived neighbourhoods). But CRF funding is only meant to be one part of how local partners tackle disadvantage. The Scottish Executive believes that many important strands of national policy from health improvement to employability should be contributing to community regeneration.

What about rural areas?

The CRF provides money to tackle concentrations of disadvantage, which are most extreme in urban areas. But disadvantage also exists in rural areas and some CRF money is directed towards them. In addition, other approaches, such as the Rural Service Priority Areas have been developed in response to the Scottish Executive's target to improve access to high quality services for the most disadvantaged groups and individuals in rural communities.

Is the community really going to be involved?

Communities should be directly involved in the development and implementation of the ROAs and related initiatives. There are national community engagement standards that all community planning partners should follow to try and achieve the best possible results

Community Voices is a new network that helps representatives and other volunteers from the most disadvantaged communities to 'get their voices heard' and learn from each other. The network also has access to funding to help each CPP to get better at engaging local communities.

Why should this work any better than past policies?

Multiple disadvantage has deep roots, and quick solutions are unlikely. Factors which should help these current programmes to be effective include:

- Working as part of CPPs, not in isolation.
- Increased commitment from partners as a result.
- Clearer links to national policy priorities.
- Better targeted grant fund.
- Drive to improve community engagement across all services, including new national standards.
- Innovations in building community capacity and supporting the social economy.
- The Scottish Executive's Regeneration Policy Statement, *People and Place* (March 2006), which provides a new framework linking physical and economic regeneration.

