

**SUSTAINING AND DEVELOPING OUR COMMUNITY'S CULTURE
AND ENVIRONMENT**

Progress Update on Third Theme Group

Over the last couple of meetings the Third Theme Group has been reviewing its Action Plan priorities and the most recent meeting took place on 26th January 2006. The outcomes specified for priority one with regard to provision of adequate and affordable housing are being achieved and it has been agreed that Alastair MacGregor, Chief Executive of ACHA will give a presentation on the progress of his association at the next meeting on the 30th March.

Members of the group have been involved in a consultation exercise for the Transport Strategy for Argyll and Bute and the development worker for transport coordination is making satisfactory progress in achieving the goals set out in the action plan.

The implementation of the Regeneration Outcome Agreement is also moving forward in accordance with the target outcomes and monitoring mechanisms are in place to satisfy the requirements of Communities Scotland. The degree of community participation and engagement which has been developed as part of this process is very much in line with the requirements of the Scottish Executive and this was reaffirmed by a Ministerial Address from Malcolm Chisholm at a Community Learning and Development Seminar in Glasgow on 24th January, attended by the theme group chair. The Executive are very positive about promoting community engagement at the centre of an effective community planning process and the work being developed in the targeted data zones fits well with the national requirements.

The October meeting had highlighted the number of items to take forward in the priority four regarding the protection of environmental assets. However, due to changing workloads within Scottish Natural Heritage, they were unable to attend the most recent meeting of the group and this work will be progressed over the next couple of months.

Steven Watson from ALLenergy gave a very interesting and informative presentation on the work of his organisation at the meeting of the 26th. He highlighted development taking place across a wide range of renewable energy installations and this links in with the housing and development priorities of this theme group. The presentation focused on examples of energy installations in Argyll and Bute and these included Windfarms; Hydro; Biomass; Solar Thermal; Ground Source Heat Pump; Shoreline Wave Device; Photovoltaic; Sun Space; Solar Ventilation; Wind to Light; Domestic Wind; Anaerobic Digestion and Hydrogen. This information provided a fascinating insight into the range of developments taking place which can assist in trying to sustain the natural environment of our area and was welcomed by all group members.

Donald MacVicar
Head of Community Regeneration
Chair, Third Theme Group
30.1.06