



PASSION LED US HERE



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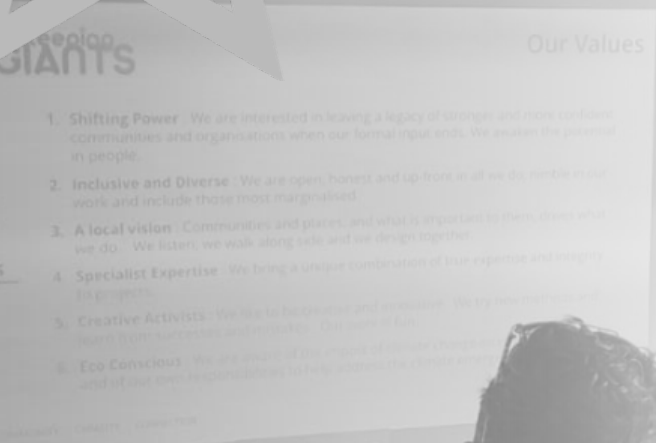
OUR FUTURE: A 3 YEAR HORIZON

Strategic Direction of Sleeping Giants Community Development CIC | April 23 – March 26



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About us

Our history, our vision, our mission and our values

We are Sleeping Giants Community Development CIC, an experienced grassroots and community-focused social enterprise working primarily within rural areas across the South of Scotland.

We have a particular focus on those who are most disengaged and disadvantaged, and provide a range of capacity-building services and support that strengthen the skills, abilities and confidence of people and groups to take effective action and leading roles in the development of their communities.

Sleeping Giants is not a standard consultancy company - we are flexible, creative, dynamic and innovative, and we pride ourselves in our range of skills and expertise, our strong networks and relationships, and our unwavering commitment to our values, which underpin all of our work.

As well as the services we provide and the skills we bring, the way in which we work is highly valued by our clients. We are responsive to their needs, forming meaningful relationships, taking time to get to know them properly - their people, values, strengths, challenges and aspirations.



“Sleeping Giants is not a standard consultancy company - we are flexible, creative, dynamic and innovative...”

We are often viewed by the organisations we support as an extended part of their team, and our willingness to ‘walk their path’ alongside them, offering flexible and tailored support along the way, brings many of our clients back to us again and again.





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Sleeping Giants started life as a Partnership Business in 2014, however realising that all our aims were social, we reformed as a social enterprise in February 2017. Our name reflects and recognises the strength that exists within people and communities, if only they are enabled to awaken their potential.

In early 2021, we began a year long process of business planning and development. This began with stakeholder engagement; reaching out to clients both past and present, and to other professionals with a range of strategic roles, gathering their opinions about our strengths and areas for improvement.

Using this and other data, our Board was supported by Community Enterprise and Just Enterprise to undertake some strategy development work, assessing opportunities and risks, and refining our plans to position ourselves to meet the needs of community-focused organisations across the South of Scotland and beyond over the next 3-5 years.

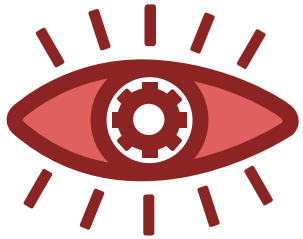
As part of this process, we also improved our website, social media platforms and printed materials to better reflect our direction and produced video testimonials from clients to help illustrate our impact.

Lastly, to build our capacity and skills base to better meet the needs of our clients, we expanded our small team with the addition of several new roles.



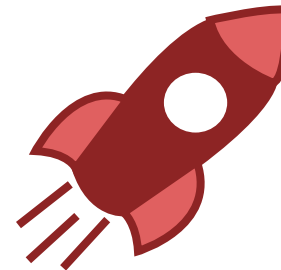


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Vision

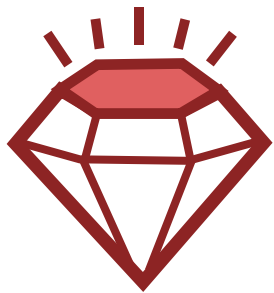
Sleeping Giants has a vision of strong, resilient, supportive, influential and inclusive communities.



Mission

To make this vision a reality, with a focus on those who face most barriers, our mission is:


To provide a range of capacity building services and support that strengthen the skills, abilities and confidence of people, community groups and organisations to take effective action and leading roles in the development of their communities.




Values

1. **Shifting Power** : We are interested in leaving a legacy of stronger and more confident communities and organisations when our formal input ends. We awaken the potential in people.
2. **Inclusive and Diverse** : We are open, honest and up-front in all we do, nimble in our work and include those most marginalised.
3. **A local vision** : Communities and places, and what is important to them, drives what we do. We listen, we walk along side and we design together.
4. **Specialist Expertise** : We bring a unique combination of true expertise and integrity to projects.
5. **Creative Activists** : We like to be creative and innovative. We try new methods and learn from successes and mistakes. Our work is fun.
6. **Eco Conscious** : We are aware of the impact of climate change on our communities and of our own responsibilities to help address the climate emergency.





It is important to us that the work we undertake aligns with our values and supports our strategic direction. We are motivated by change and not profit and, as such, we will only work on projects that:

- ★ make a real difference to people
 - ★ invest in positive change
 - ★ create and share learning
 - ★ support meaningful engagement with communities
 - ★ equally value the contributions of people and communities
 - ★ consider ways to include people who face barriers
 - ★ value fair treatment, dignity and respect
- 



Strategic objectives

We have developed ambitious strategic objectives by which we will measure our success over the next 3 years. By 2026 we aim to:

1. increase our **income** by 50%, including growing our grant income in the short term to support our development
2. grow our **team** to meet our core capacity requirements (outlined in the 'Our People' section below). This will include developing our ability to support young people into work through paid apprenticeships
3. improve our **governance and accountability**, with a stronger board and stakeholder reference group
4. build **excellence and effectiveness** within our own organisation through the development of a robust communications strategy, fundraising strategy, evaluation framework, fair work policy and net zero action plan
5. build **relationships** with key funders, commissioners and support agencies
6. increase our **awareness of need**, our **profile** and our **client base** in the **Scottish Borders**
7. develop a **national reputation** as experts in rural community development and equality
8. develop the evidence, partnerships and resources to co-deliver an **employability and skills programme for D&G**
9. design and pilot a South of Scotland '**Equality Kite Mark**' to promote best practice approaches to inclusion
10. maximise our **social impact** through the delivery of funded / free opportunities to our target groups





Evidence

Our direction has been based on robust evidence and feedback including:

- ★ **stakeholder reviews** with clients, our staff team and Board
- ★ **consultation with communities** undertaken on behalf of our clients
- ★ themes derived from the **needs presented** by our clients
- ★ a review of local and national **policy drivers**
- ★ a review of the other **external influences** including potential clients, competitors and collaborators, as well as the funding landscape
- ★ **third party review and recommendations** by both Just Enterprise and Community Enterprise as part of an organisational development Project
- ★ lessons learned from nationally recognised **good practice tools** such as the National Standards for Community Engagement. In addition, our definition of capacity building which has informed our mission is taken from Steve Skinner's Guide to Strengthening Communities.

Our impact



Who we work with, where we work and the differences we make

Our mission articulates a key focus on those who face most barriers. Through our strategic review which has been based on feedback from a wide range of stakeholders, we have further refined our target groups to:

Groups and organisations, staff, volunteers and active community members (of all ages) that support:

people and communities that have been disproportionately affected by COVID



protected characteristic groups and others who face inequalities and / or financial exclusion



young people, including those on an employability journey



volunteers, including those with a leadership, representative, or activist role within communities



rural communities (including Development Trusts, Community Anchor Organisations and Community Councils)





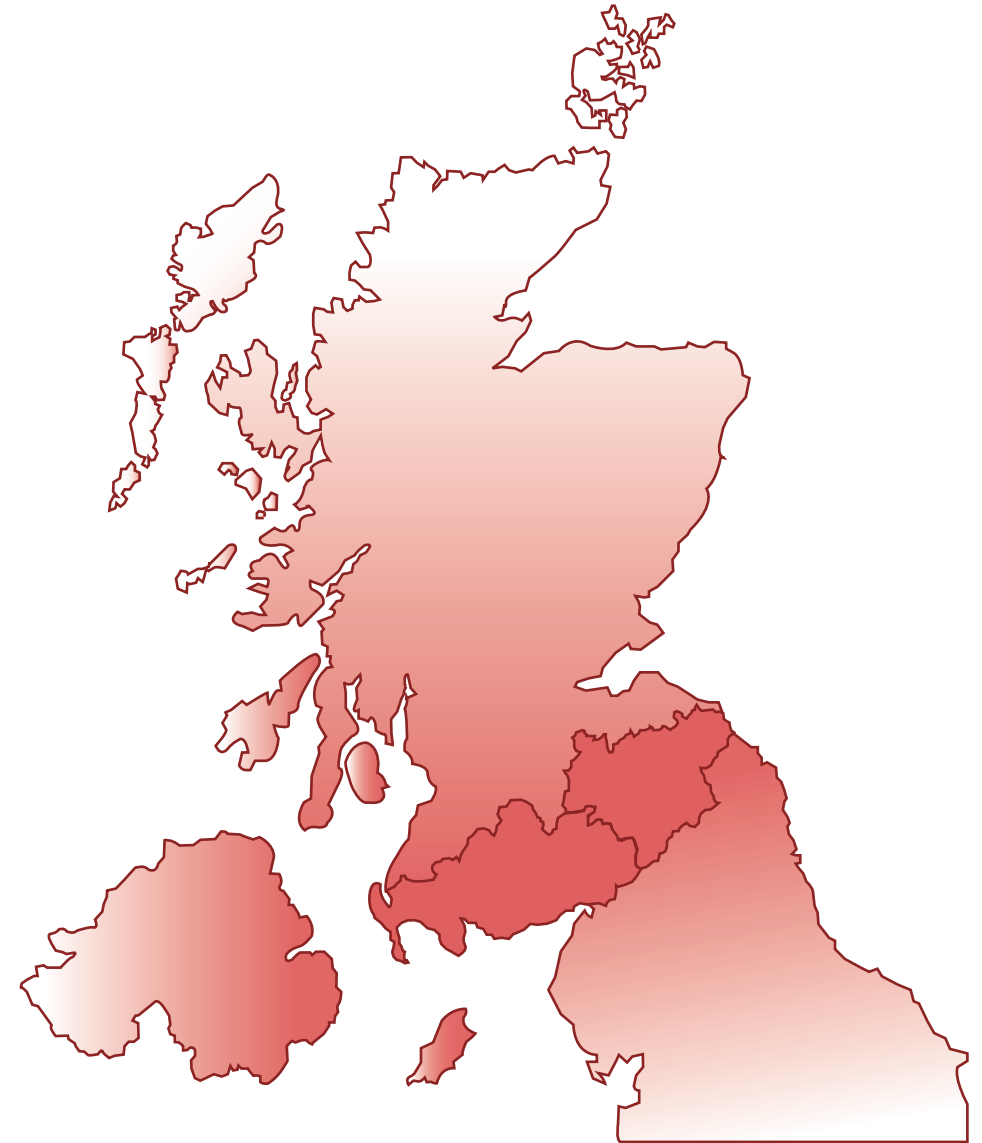
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Sleeping Giants aims to be known as the go to organisation for community-focused capacity building services and support across the **South of Scotland and its neighbouring authorities.**

Being embedded in, and close to the communities we serve is important to us, and ensures that we understand the local context and can support clients in the best way possible.

While we will undertake work in other geographic localities, this will be selective and focused on our key areas of interest, including rurality and equality and diversity, ensuring that the bulk of our capacity is retained for clients and communities in our area of focus.

Wherever we work, we will strive to champion and raise the profile of the South of Scotland, sharing learning and bringing learning home.





We strive to achieve the following outcomes for people, groups and organisations:

Groups and organisations working with communities:

1. are clearer about their **vision, mission and values**, and are better able **to plan** for the future
2. have more effective **policies, procedures, structures, and systems**
3. are more **fundable, enterprising, and sustainable**
4. are better able to **engage with their stakeholders**, gathering **evidence** to make improvements
5. have more effective **leadership** and improved **governance**
6. involve **volunteers** more effectively
7. are better able to reach and include **people and communities that face barriers to participation**

Staff, volunteers and active community members:

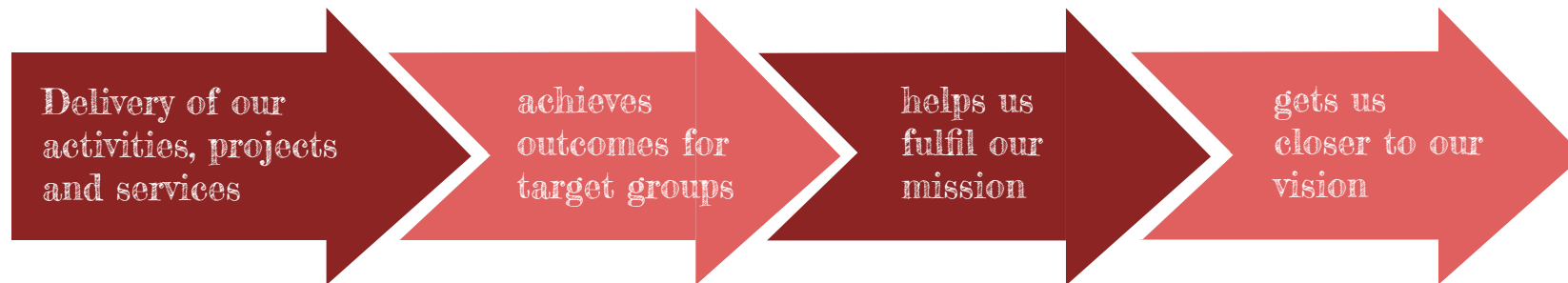
8. have increased **knowledge, skills and confidence**
9. are **less isolated** and better able to **connect and collaborate** with others
10. are more **resilient** and better able to look after their **wellbeing** at work or in their volunteering role
11. have a stronger voice, and are better able to **influence local and national decision making**





We also know that if Sleeping Giants is to make a positive and lasting difference to people, communities, groups and organisations, we must continue to develop our own capacity to demonstrate best practice in all the outcome areas outlined above.

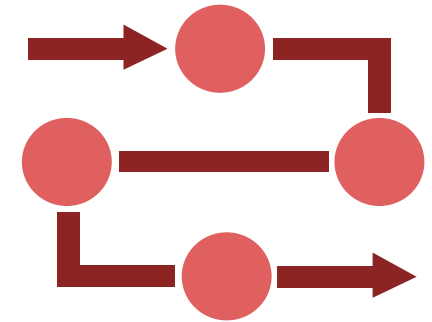
Therefore, by building our own capacity, and by striving to achieve outcomes for our clients and communities through the delivery of needs-led opportunities and services, we will strengthen the skills, abilities and confidence of people, community groups and organisations to take effective action and leading roles in the development of their communities (our mission), which will ultimately lead to strong, resilient, supportive, influential and inclusive communities across the South of Scotland (our vision).





Our work

What we do, why we do it and how we do it.



Our work comprises both grant funded projects and activities (which aim to maximise social impact for our target groups and organisations) and commissions (which are bespoke and paid for directly by clients). We may also respond to tender opportunities to deliver services, often in partnership with other organisations. A summary of our work is outlined below:

Much of our work involves funded projects and commissions centred around 4 strategic themes:

- 

1. organisational capacity building
- 

2. participation and engagement
- 

3. inclusion, equality and fairness
- 

4. employability and skills building

In addition to this, we have developed what we call our Building Blocks of Support Programme, which includes:

1. Online / Hybrid Support Programme

To build skills, abilities and confidence of board members, staff, volunteers and activists within our target groups, our **Online / Hybrid Support Programme** includes the development and sharing of **good practice resources**, as well as regular opportunities for **peer support and learning**; **core skills training**; and **mentoring support**. The **wellbeing and resilience** of staff, volunteers and activists cross-cuts all of this work.

2. Community, Capacity, Connection Events

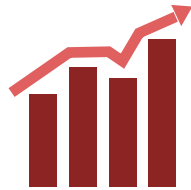
Embedded in communities of place, or targeted at communities of interest, our conference-style **Community, Capacity, Connection Events** deliver face to face opportunities for practitioners, volunteers and activists to create connections with each other, and access 'bite-size' versions of our Building Blocks of Support in engaging and creative ways.





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As outline above, as well as focusing our work on key target groups, we have identified strategic work themes to provide additional focus to the development and delivery of our projects and services:

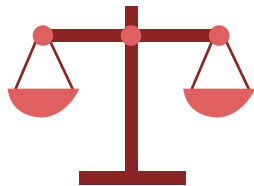


ORGANISATIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING

Our core suite of service offerings:

- ★ Governance Support
- ★ Planning
- ★ Comms
- ★ Fund-Finding
- ★ Systems Development
- ★ Monitoring & Evaluation
- ★ Training etc.

Focus: Target Groups / Organisations



INCLUSION, EQUALITY AND FAIRNESS

- ★ Supporting organisations to reach and engage with groups who face barriers using a range of approaches.

Focus: Equality Kite Mark / Rurality and Equality / Intersectionality



PARTICIPATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Supporting people to take active roles:

- ★ Informing, consulting, supporting, involving and collaborating with individuals, volunteers, activists and communities.

Focus: Community Engagement and Empowerment



EMPLOYABILITY AND SKILLS BUILDING

- ★ Building capacity in others to ensure that people who face the most barriers have equitable access to education, training, employment or volunteering.

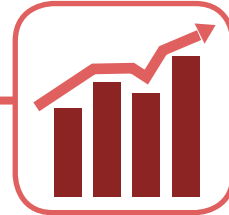
Focus: Young Person's Guarantee / No One Left Behind



- ★ Weaknesses in core elements of organisational capacity in target groups and
- ★ This impacts on funding / sustainability, risk management, effectiveness, wellbeing of staff & volunteers, inclusivity etc.
- ★ There are particular weaknesses in Boards, in relation to skills, understanding of duties, recruitment and retention etc.
- ★ Often the groups who need it most can't afford support from consultants creating inequalities between organisations

- ★ There is a lack of awareness, effective engagement and compliance with equality legislation across all sectors
- ★ There is a lack of equalities infrastructure in rural areas (single strand, pan-equality and intersectional)
- ★ Protected characteristic and other groups face significant inequalities (inc. post COVID)
- ★ Activists and equality groups are often invisible and isolated in rural communities

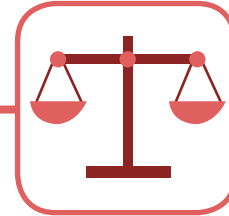
ORGANISATIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING



PARTICIPATION AND ENGAGEMENT



INCLUSION, EQUALITY AND FAIRNESS



EMPLOYABILITY AND SKILLS BUILDING

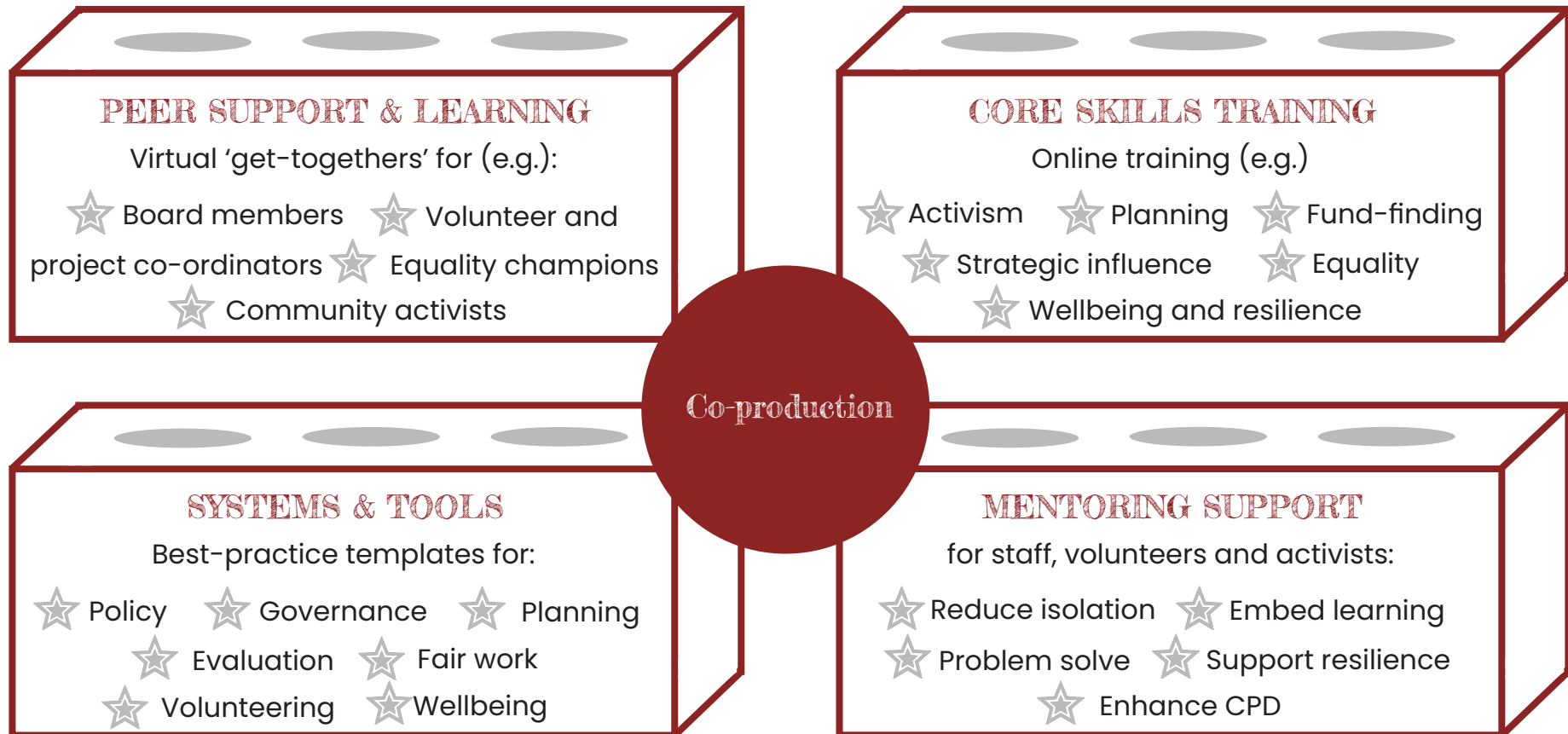


- ★ Community engagement is often missing, tokenistic or of a low quality
- ★ Communities often feel like they don't have voice or influence in local decision making
- ★ Groups which face barriers are particularly missed out in e.g. service design
- ★ There is a need for effective engagement in place planning and community planning
- ★ Limited numbers of activists with varying skills means often the same voices are heard
- ★ Smaller organisations often struggle to

- ★ Not all young people secure a positive destination, with those who face additional barriers being particularly at risk
- ★ Many young people can't find the education, training and jobs they want locally, causing them to leave the rural areas
- ★ Employers can struggle to support young people to thrive in the workplace
- ★ Agencies do not have a joined up approach and young people often fall through gaps

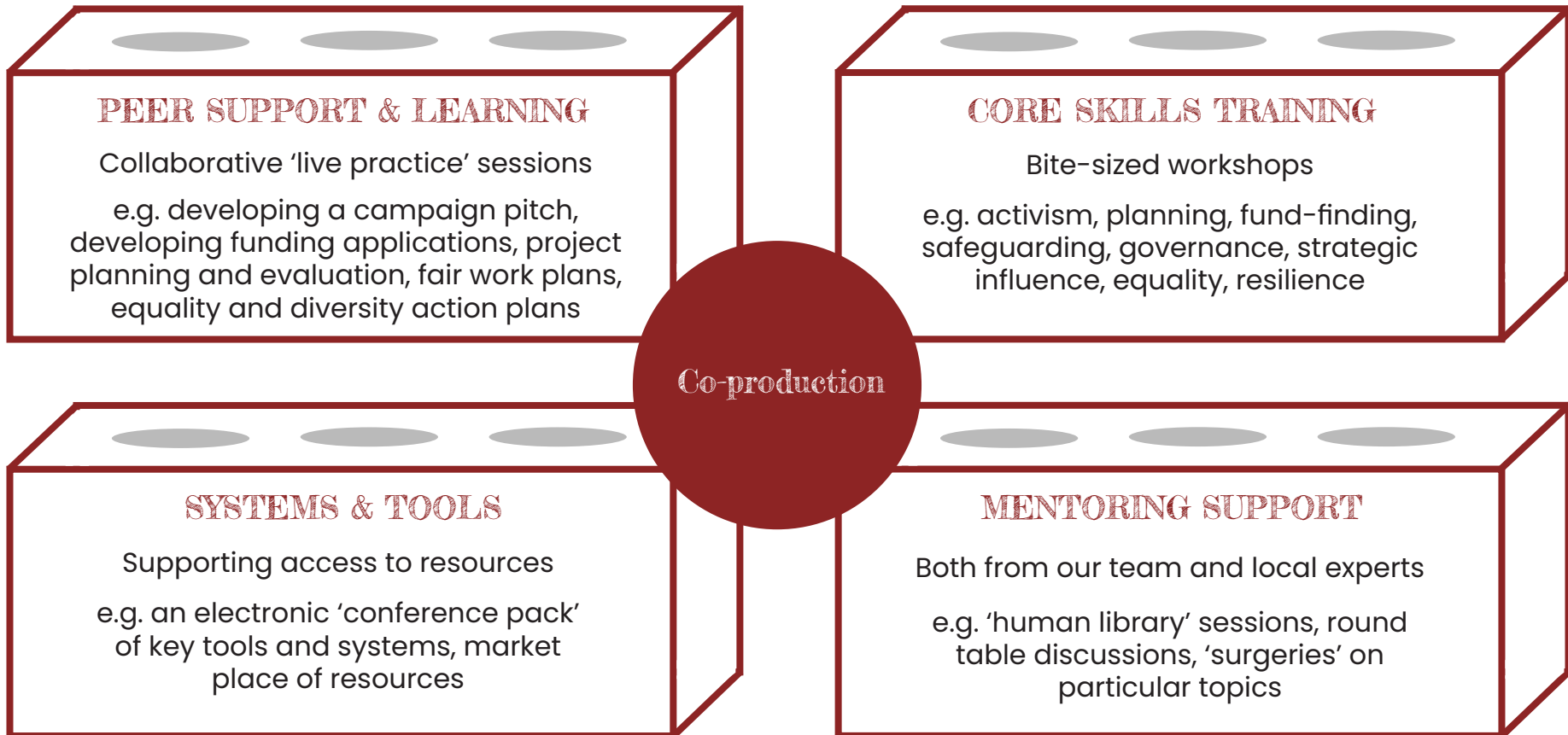


Our work is also built around four **building blocks of support**, designed to provide key target groups with the opportunity to develop core skills and access high quality resources and support, providing solid foundations from which to build even more capacity. Supporting the **wellbeing and resilience** of staff, volunteers and activists is also a key part of this work. The bulk of this work is delivered online to improve our reach, however elements can also be delivered face to face to combat digital inequalities. Central to the whole model is a **co-production** approach, working together to achieve collective outcomes.





Appreciating the importance of face to face engagement, we will also deliver a community-embedded roadshow of Community, Capacity, Connection 'conference' style events with opportunities for practitioners, volunteers and activists to create connections with each other, and access 'bite-size' versions of our Building Blocks of Support in a range of engaging and creative ways. These can be targeted at geographic communities or communities of interest (e.g. women, equality activists etc.). The exact format of each day will be needs-led and co-produced with people or partner agencies from the community in which the event is targeted, but example activities are outlined below:





Communities which are:
strong, resilient & influential
supportive & inclusive

ORGANISATIONAL
CAPACITY BUILDING

PARTICIPATION AND
ENGAGEMENT

Online / Hybrid Support Programme

PEER SUPPORT
& LEARNING

CORE SKILLS
TRAINING

C-P

SYSTEMS &
TOOLS

MENTORING
SUPPORT

Community, Capacity, Connection Events

INCLUSION,
EQUALITY AND
FAIRNESS

EMPLOYABILITY AND
SKILLS BUILDING



Work informed by robust stakeholder engagement, evidence of
need and strategic reflection by our staff and Board



Our people



Staff, board and key stakeholders

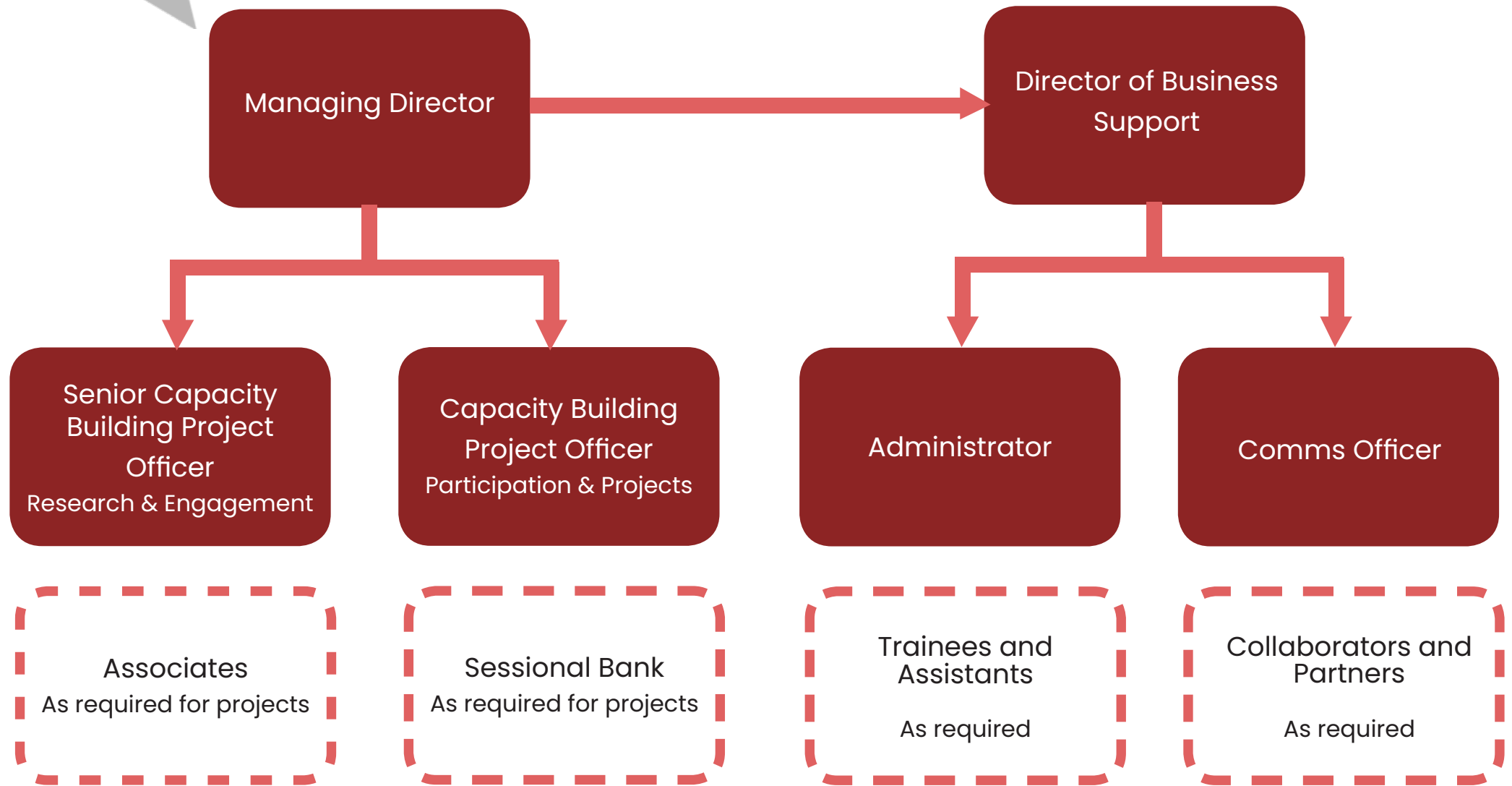


We have reviewed our staff structure and identified the **core members of staff** required to deliver the ambitious programme of work we have set out above and to achieve the best outcomes for the clients and communities we serve.

In addition, to add additional capacity when times are busy, we plan to engage a bank of **sessional staff and freelance associates**, all of who share our values, and can deliver to our high standards.

Believing in collaboration rather than competition, we also work in partnership with like-minded **agencies** across the social enterprise, third and public sectors (including academic institutions) to help add value to our work.

In addition, believing in a 'grow our own' approach and to support our ambitions for young people in relation to employability and skills, we also have an aspiration to engage young people as **trainees, assistants or apprentices**.





Managing Director

Senior leader and figurehead of Sleeping Giants, supporting and motivating the wider team, and with a key role in the overall success and sustainability of the business. This includes delegated responsibility for determining the strategy for the organisation and ensuring effective delivery of our strategic and operational plans. The MD also takes a lead role in managing client relationships and securing new business, as well as delivery of a large proportion of our client-focused services and activities.

Director of Business Support

Second half of the senior leadership team, working alongside and supporting the Managing Director and the wider team to ensure that we remain a well-respected, effective and values driven organisation, demonstrating best practice in all its functions. The DBS has an important internal role, overseeing HR, finance, business support and marketing / comms functions, and also leads key elements of our delivery to clients including fund-finding support and policy / systems development.

Senior Capacity Building Officer(s)

Research & Engagement

This post can also be delivered as a job share, or as a part time post with the remaining resource available for engaging research associates for various projects. The research and engagement team will take the lead in monitoring, evaluating, and demonstrating the impact of Sleeping Giants. In addition the team will lead the research, consultation, design of engagement activities, and evaluation elements of our services for clients and strategic projects.

Senior Capacity Building Officer

Participation & Projects

This post will take a lead in much of our community development focused work, including reaching out to and engaging with young people and communities as part of client-focused and strategic projects; engaging with protected characteristic groups and others that face barriers; supporting volunteers and volunteer-involving organisations, community and youth activism, and community empowerment.





Business Support Team:

- Administrator
- Comms Officer

This small team is a vital cog in our business wheel ensuring the smooth and effective operation of Sleeping Giants through developing and leading on the day to day delivery of our admin, finance, comms and wider business support functions, as well as supporting the administration and promotion of our various client-focused projects and activities. The Business Support Team comprises:

- ★ A part time **Administrator** who undertakes the bulk of our organisational and project admin and business support functions and supports the Directors in the smooth running of the business.
- ★ A part time **Communications Officer**, who ensures regular updating of our website and social media channels and who sends regular email newsletters to our stakeholders.

Non-Core Support Staff

as required for projects

- Associates / Collaborators
- Sessional bank
- Trainees / Assistants

From time to time, we will require the skills and capacity of additional personnel to help us deliver client focused and strategic projects and services. This will include:

- ★ **Freelance associates / collaborators**, that bring additional capacity and specific skill sets to projects. This will include both freelance consultants as well as social businesses similar to ourselves. Where appropriate, we will also jointly tender for pieces of work with other freelancers or organisations, preferring to complement rather than compete and to bring value for money for our clients.
- ★ **Sessional youth and community workers** that will mainly be used on an ad hoc basis and will support our outward focused community development work, including any larger consultation and engagement projects.
- ★ **Trainees / Assistants** including Apprentices that we will engage (where funding is available) to support capacity across all areas of our business, but more importantly to provide a paid employment opportunity for young people or adults who require skills building and work experience to help them achieve their future employability goals.





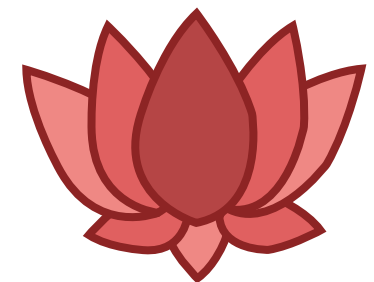
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Our staff are our most important resource, and as such we strive to create a fair, healthy, rewarding, flexible and supportive environment for our team.

We do this in several ways including:

- ★ **VALUE & VOICE**
Ensuring staff feel valued and able to have a voice in all elements of the business, consulting with them regularly and maximising opportunities for co-production
- ★ **DEVELOPMENT**
Providing training and professional development opportunities for staff at all levels
- ★ **COMMUNICATION & TEAM WORK**
Daily opportunities for our team to communicate and work together, which is particularly important given home-working
- ★ **HEALTH, SAFETY & WELLBEING**
Supporting the mental health and wellbeing of staff including allowing paid 'wellbeing days' as part of leave entitlement and supporting staff to access training on wellbeing at work
- ★ **EQUALITY & FAIRNESS**
Ensuring our policy framework supports flexibility and is inclusive and progressive, including menopause, LGBTQi, age, neurodiverse and family / carer friendly policies



Our Board of Directors meets quarterly, but also undertakes additional development activities, including the process of strategic planning and organisational development we have undertaken over the last year. The Board includes our Executive Directors, as well as several extremely experienced Non-Executive Directors who are equally responsible for all aspects of governance.

Our Board uses The Scottish Governance Code for the Third Sector and its associated check-up tool to ensure that we are constantly striving for best practice in Governance. This includes work around:

- ★ Organisational purpose
- ★ Leadership
- ★ Board behaviours
- ★ Control
- ★ Effectiveness

Our Non-Executive Directors also provide support to our Management Team by:

- ★ offering guidance, expertise and support
- ★ providing scrutiny to our work
- ★ helping us set our strategic direction and monitoring our strategic plan
- ★ determining pay and conditions for our paid staff



Sleeping Giants are not a membership organisation, and have a relatively small Board of Directors, however we are acutely aware that we must be accountable to our stakeholders, must ensure that our work is developed according to stakeholder need, and must co-produce our work as much as possible.

We currently involve stakeholders by:

- ★ undertaking regular engagement: evaluating; consulting and assessing need
- ★ setting up short-life steering groups that co-produce the majority of our client-focused projects and commissions

We also have plans to set up and hold regular meetings of a more strategic Stakeholder Think Tank which will be made up of a range of representatives from across the South of Scotland and beyond, and who have expertise in areas which are relevant to the work of Sleeping Giants such as **volunteering, young people, employability, place planning, rural community development, equality and diversity, capacity building, community engagement and empowerment, social enterprise**. We will also ensure people with a range of lived experience are included within this group, and that their voices are equal and heard.

This group will debate and discuss key themes of relevance to the community sector, and will provide additional scrutiny, help drive our strategy and will keep us abreast of key issues of local and national relevance.



Our learning



Evaluation and planning

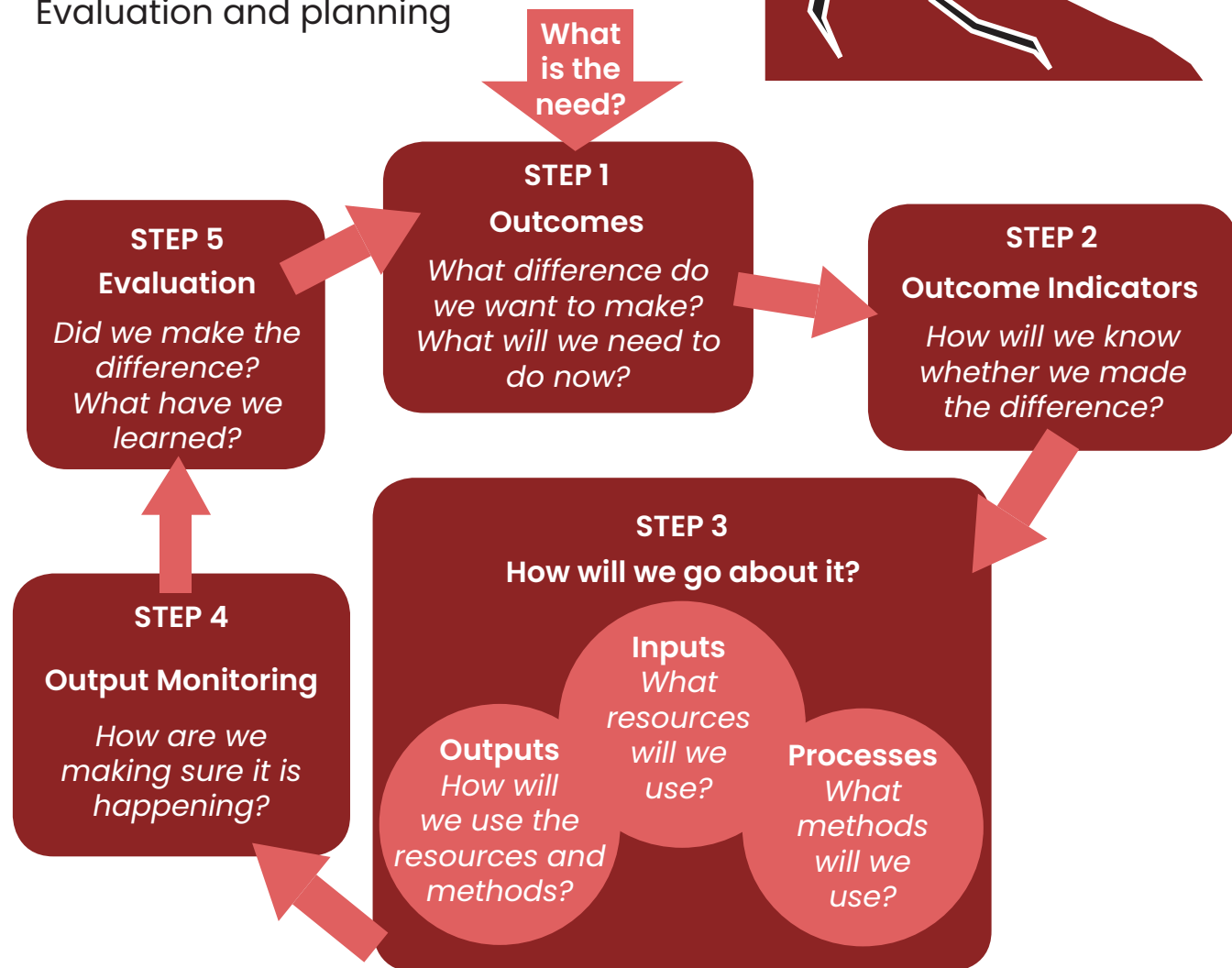
We pride ourselves in being a reflective organisation which strives for excellence.

Robust evaluation and planning is critical to ensuring we meet the needs of our clients and communities.

Amongst other tools, we use the Learning, Evaluation and Planning Framework (LEAP) to help us to make the most of our learning to make improvements. This helps us to:

- ☆ reflect on what we are trying to achieve
- ☆ develop plans that relate to our purpose
- ☆ monitor progress in implementing our plan
- ☆ evaluate the process and outcomes
- ☆ learn lessons for future activity

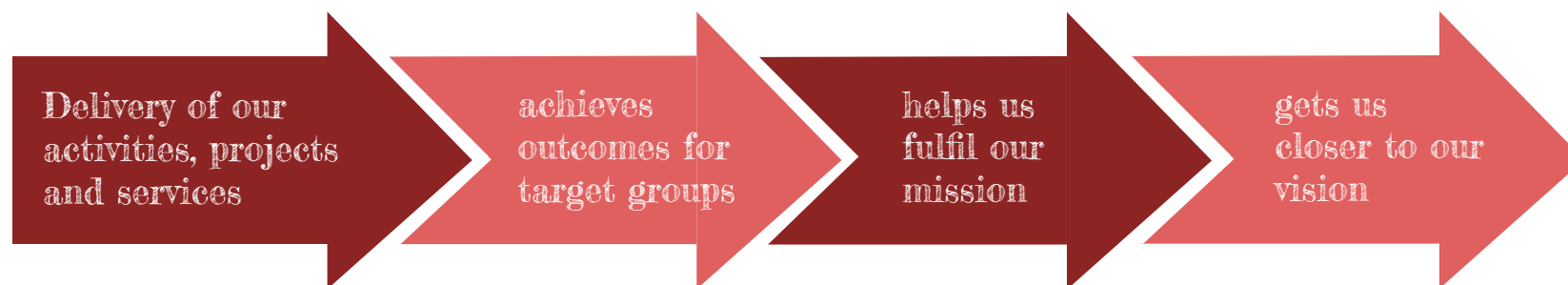
<https://www.scdc.org.uk/what/leap>



We have developed an **evaluation framework** which maps out:

- ☆ our outcomes (the differences we want to make)
- ☆ indicators (how we know the change is happening)
- ☆ evaluation methodology (how we will collect information about the indicator)
- ☆ responsibilities for evaluation within the team
- ☆ where and when information will be collected

In addition, using the **logic model** below, we have developed a **theory of change** which identifies how the delivery of our activities, projects and services leads to the outcomes we seek, as well as helping us to achieve our mission and taking us closer to achieving our vision for the communities in which we work.



As well as reporting key learning to our Board and Stakeholder Reference Group, we will write up our learning on an annual basis which will both inform our Annual (CIC 34) Report and help us to plan our future work.



Thank you!

This plan would not have been possible without the input and support of many others, and we would particularly like to thank:

- ★ our clients and stakeholders who shared their experiences, thoughts and needs
- ★ Community Enterprise and Just Enterprise who expertly guided us on our journey towards improvement
- ★ our Board and staff team who offer so much expertise, passion and commitment
- ★ the Scottish Government's Adapt and Thrive Fund which made this work possible
- ★ Amy-Dee Watson at *Equidee Creative* for designing our strategy document.

For more information on this plan or our work more generally, please contact:

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