

The Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee

Green recovery

Community meeting hosted by Arran Community Voluntary Service

16 July 2020, 3pm on Zoom

Scottish Parliament staff

Kate Smith, Community Outreach Team
Laetita Jan, Committee Engagement Unit

Arran Community Voluntary Service¹ staff

Vicki Yuill, Chief Executive Officer
Joao Goncalves, Development Worker
James Conlan, Development Worker

Organisations attending – 11 people in total

Mary Davies Tryst	complementary therapies for older people, end of life services, opportunities for people to meet
Arran CVS	3 staff and 1 board member present
Green Arran Future	social enterprise, employment programme for young people. (The enterprise has lost £8k since Covid-19)
Arran Elderly Forum	
Lochranza Outdoor Centre	non-profit organisation doing outdoors activities for children, community hub (income down £150k since Covid-19)
Arran Youth Foundation	staff member just back from furlough
U3A & Arran Sound	(community radio project)
Umbrella project	Creative outdoors or indoor activities, tackling social isolation and loneliness.
Keep Arran Talking	Support group

1. Do you agree or disagree that steps taken by the government to help the economy recover should be designed to help achieve Net Zero?

Agree 8
Disagree 0
Not sure 3

¹ <https://www.arrancvs.org.uk>

Additional comments and discussion was had that the change/green agenda has to be affordable. 'At what cost'

People need to be consulted on what needs to be done. A very strong feeling that this is not a black and white issue.

2. What do you think 'green recovery' should mean?

- We should utilise what we have in the country such as wind and sea. We have the most of it in Europe.
- Connectivity is important.
- Local issues need to be a focus. Need to focus on local, affordable and sustainable solutions.
- NB: affordable means different thing for different people. The pandemic has shown this. It has had dramatic effects on some people we did not think would be affected economically.
- We need to cut waste. We have done so much of that in lockdown (clothes, food, travel). Households need to be more mindful and keep good habits.
- Arran is a perfect place for a green recovery trial: people, spirit, size, transport needs
- Any recovery needs to think about resilience and sustainable jobs. Green jobs have a lot of potential. We need to look at young people and what we are building for them, think of green jobs for them.
- Transport needs to be improved to help young people move around and work.
- Transport in Arran is an issue. Contracts always go to private companies running large buses on diesel. We need to look at sustainable alternatives. We are behind because of costs when other countries are years ahead with electric buses. Look at the example of Switzerland who did this 15 years ago.

3. How do the principles of sustainable development relate to your work, the people that you support?

- It is important to have joined up thinking and strategies working together. For example, Arran Rangers are being threatened with redundancy. Because of the lockdown and restrictions, they are at threat. That does not make sense when we need to plant more trees.
- Electric charging stations are often out of order. If we want recovery we need the tools for it.
- If we all fight for the same pot of money, some actions will cancel others, e.g. better roads but not better public transport.

- All grants to make buildings more energy efficient are for private homes. Businesses who use properties cannot access grants to make their premises more efficient and save money on bills. We need to support businesses and local orgs to be sustainable, energy efficient and make savings.
 - Outdoor education centres are on their knees because overnight stays for children are not possible with covid. We can't give children the environment knowledge they need.
 - We need incentives. I bought a hybrid car and had to pay no tax. Changed to another hybrid and now have to pay £130 tax. Where is the incentive?
4. Have you seen positive environmental changes as a result of how communities have responded to the crisis?
- Waste has reduced a lot. We are only buying what we need when going to the shops. Running a cooking club and want to change the programme to do more sustainable cooking classes.
 - We need to get young people out and active again. Their mental health has suffered.
 - Shielding and isolation has been hard for older people. What would benefit them the most is to train them and give them means to use zoom. It would also cut down on transport as more activities could be done remotely.
 - Starting a radio station to be launched August 1st. Arransound.com. Young people will help running, school children design logo. Will create jobs and training opportunities. Reduces isolation, helps to put messages across communities, including about restrictions and services in covid time, helps blind people engage.
 - Older people previously scared of technology have been engaging with zoom.
 - Worries about the delay of 5G by 7 years now taken over by BT
 - Volunteers have been very active to keep people busy and entertained. This is partly because people had more time on their hands. Better crops too because of more time to volunteer.
 - Arran people are very resilient, community spirit, help each other and are a good example of how to deal with practical issues.
5. Do you think that government, employers and or others should take steps to encourage lifestyle to change to be more compatible with reaching net zero?

Agree 7

Disagree 2

Not sure 2

- You can't make people do things, they have to want to, it takes education. If kids get educated, they take it back home to their parents and share learning.
 - Once change happens, people get used to it, e.g. smoking ban, compulsory seat belt
 - We need to look at how green recovery is planned at the expense of other sectors, e.g. social care. For example, tax break for cars but no support for people in social care. Priority is given to climate change and other areas as side-stepped. With climate change, it is hard to link all aspects and effects. People can see how emission reduction will lead to less pollution levels but cannot see links to other sectors. We could have both, but it is not happening at the moment. Debate should be whole country recovery, not just green recovery with sectors left behind.
 - We need to go from the base up have local conversations and not leave people behind. We are leaping ahead without looking back at the last few months or 20 years. We need to start with what we have. We need to ask a range of people a cross section to understand what is needed. For example, a survey about covid was done in Arran², but only online so some people were left behind.
 - You can't ask people to do things for the environment when they can't put food on the table. You can't bring them along with you when they can't feed their family and worry about jobs.
 - Green recovery is essential for a good future and better jobs for young people.
 - There is a strong environmental voice in Arran but sometimes others are forgotten. The recent Arran survey was online on Facebook only so could not contain the voices of everyone.
6. What are the key barriers to delivering a green recovery in the voluntary sector?
See above.
7. What does your sector need to help protect the environment and to support the communities you work with?
- A group bought a house that was empty, did it up together using their skills, divided it up in flats and rented it out for affordable rents: housing is vital to keep people on island.
 - There are a lot of derelict houses on the island. An environment fund to help people do them up would be good for the environment (no need for new builds), housing and jobs: dual benefits.
8. What key policies, actions and immediate priorities are needed to deliver a green recovery in the voluntary sector community?

² [Arran Recovery Group Survey](#)

- We need things to help sustain groups and projects that already help people on the island. All their work is a cross over between people recovery and green agenda moving forward. It is the baseline to work from.
- A priority for us at the moment is to get people to meet face to face but this has to happen outdoors because of social distancing. We need outdoor spaces with shelters when weather is bad for people who cannot meet digitally.
- We need to think of different ways to engage people outdoors. There are opportunities with conservation work and crop planting.
- There is no substitute for face to face for old and young people. Long term, digital is not the solution.
- If you look around at people exercising outdoors at the moment, they are middle aged. Young people are not outside exercising. We need to get them out to exercise for fitness and mental health benefits. It has to be something interesting, fun, something they want to do. Not easy with Covid as residential are not allowed.