



CLD Standards Council Scotland

Response
to
Scottish Government Consultation

Community Benefits from Net Zero Energy Developments

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About Us

The CLD Standards Council Scotland is the professional body for people who work or volunteer in community learning and development (CLD) across Scotland. CLD is a field of professional practice which has three integral domains of practice; adult learning, community development and youth work. As a member-led organisation we have a growing membership of over 3325 members (inclusive of CLD: Youth Work practitioners), an executive committee and three functional committees which are made up of members from across the CLD sector in Scotland. Our approach and work plans to deliver our core responsibilities are defined by our member committees and based on feedback from the wider membership.

Our ministerially set core responsibilities are:

- Deliver a professional approvals structure for qualifications, courses, and development opportunities for everyone involved in CLD
- Maintain a registration system available to practitioners delivering and active in CLD practice
- Develop and establish a model of supported induction, professional learning, and training opportunities
- Improve and develop our organisational capability; and
- Collaborate and contribute to relevant CLD policy and workforce development information.

Vision

“Our vision is that the communities and people of Scotland are served by CLD practitioners that are recognised as competent, confident and committed to equality, empowerment and life-wide learning for all.”

Mission

“Our mission is to drive high standards of professional practice in the CLD sector by the approval of professional learning, the registration of practitioners and the enabling of professional development, working with our members to be a voice for the profession.”

The CLD Standards Council works with a wide range of organisations across CLD and education sectors, nationally and internationally. We are members of a number of organisations, some we have specific partnership or framework agreements with, and we engage and work with many others.

Organisations we have formal agreements with:

- AIEB (All Ireland Endorsement Body for Community Work Education and Training)
- COSLA (Convention of Scottish Local Authorities)
- Education Scotland
- GTCS (General Teaching Council Scotland)
- JETS (Joint Education and Training Standards – UK & Republic of Ireland)
- SCURL (Scottish Confederation of University and Research Libraries)
- Volunteer Scotland

Organisations we have membership of:

- BEMIS (Black and Ethnic Minority Infrastructure in Scotland)
- CDAS (Community Development Alliance)
- Human Rights Consortium Scotland
- IACD (International Association for Community Development)
- Inclusion Scotland
- PARN (Professional Association of Research Networks)
- SCDI (Scottish Council for Development & Industry)
- SCQF (Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework)
- SCVO (Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations)
- TAG:PALYCW (The Professional Association of Lecturers in Youth and Community Work)

Key Stakeholders and Partner Organisations:

- Alliance of Commonwealth Youth Work Associations (ACWYA)
- CLD Managers Scotland
- CLD Professional Learning Networks
- College Development Network
- CWA (Community Work Australia)
- LEAD Scotland (Linking Education and Disability Scotland)
- Learning Link Scotland
- LGBT Youth Scotland
- Open University
- SCDC (Scottish Community Development Centre)
- SCDN (Scottish Community Development Network)
- Scotland's Learning Partnership
- The Young Women's Movement
- YMCA Scotland
- Youth Scotland
- YouthLink Scotland
- Youth 1st (Fife)
- Youth Highland
- Young Scot

For further information on the CLD Standards Council please visit our [website](#) and view our social media [cldstandards](#) | [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) | [Linktree](#). If you would like to discuss this response further, please email us on contact@cldstandardscouncil.org.uk

About Community Learning and Development in Scotland

The Community Learning and Development (CLD) sector, which is a unification of the 3 professional practice disciplines of Adult Learning (Including ESOL), Community Development and Youth Work, is an integral and essential part of Scottish education, as recently reported in [Learning: For All. For Life. A report from the Independent Review of Community Learning and Development \(CLD\)](#), which was undertaken by Ms Kate Still, as part of Education Reform, and commissioned by Mr Graeme Dey MSP, the Minister for Higher and Further Education, and Veterans.

The CLD sector across Scotland is receiving considerable amount of attention at present, with the aforementioned recent Independent Review of CLD publishing the Still report [Learning: For All. For Life](#), (June 2024) and the HMIE producing the [Evaluation of Community Learning and Development in Scotland](#), alongside the wider piece around [Education Reform](#) in Scotland.

CLD has its origins in the period of change that swept through society in the 18th and 19th centuries. New industries, and changes in science, technology, land use and education dislocated or smashed traditional forms of family and community life, with the history of youth work starting with voluntary action through faith organisations. Over time, we saw the further development of adult and young people's education with development of the [Workers Educational Association](#) and the National Council of Labour Colleges, and then the growth of community development as a response to the "rediscovery of poverty" in the 1960's. The Alexander Report – [Adult Education: the challenge of change](#) (HMSO 1975) was a response to the persistent issues of disadvantage, and advocated that "Adult education should be regarded as an aspect of community education and should with the youth and community service, be incorporated into a community education service". In 1998, Mr Brian Wilson MP established a working group to "consider a national strategy for community based adult education, youth work and educational support for community development in the light of Government priorities in relation to social inclusion and lifelong learning" ([Communities: Change Through Learning. P14](#)). In 2004, the Scottish Executive published [Working and Learning Together to Build Stronger Communities](#), stating "Community learning and development should incorporate the best of practice undertaken in the fields of 'community education' and 'community development'. It should enable individuals and communities to make real changes to their lives through community action and community-based learning. CLD is an approach which enables agencies to work with communities and provide access to their involvement in learning, action, and decision-making." These advancements were fundamental in bringing about the birth of CLD in the form it has grown into in the 21st century.

CLD is a field of professional practice that is critical in the achievement of any policy and legislation that requires community engagement, development and learning as it supports the learning, growth, empowerment of individuals and communities, as well as supports the delivery of other services. From CLD supporting climate action change, sustainability and protecting our environment, as well as developing neighborhoods, community empowerment and community support groups, to working with young people and adults regarding enablement and citizenship and improving literacy and numeracy within Scotland's communities which impacts on economy, health and wellbeing.

CLD empowers individuals across Scotland to identify both personal and collective goals, take action to drive change, and ultimately achieve these objectives. By utilising a combination of

formal and informal learning methods and social development approaches, CLD programmes are designed through direct engagement with communities and participants. These learning initiatives specifically support those who are often excluded from decision-making processes that impact their lives. In doing so, CLD practice enhances democratic participation and broadens its influence.

The three domains of professional practice which together make up the CLD sector (Adult Learning, Community Development and Youth Work), work collaboratively to make all of [Scotland's National Outcomes](#) a reality. CLD as a single professional practice area is a critical educative intervention role across Scotland that we would like to see strengthened through stronger focused legislation for CLD as a unified professional discipline. The Government's [National Performance Framework](#) sets out the strategic objectives for all public services. The three practice domains of CLD do not operate in a vacuum, but are intrinsically connected and interwoven, reliant on each other to ensure the long-term impact and change for the people and communities they are working with and supporting. For example, CLD: youth work interventions around employability or equalities will not be sustainable or as impactful, if the young people are returning to a home environment where those same interventions are not being had with their parents, grandparents or siblings through community-based adult education programmes and community development actions.

In Scotland, Community Learning and Development has a legislative underpinning through the implementation of the [Requirements for Community Learning and Development \(Scotland\) Regulations 2013](#), which are located as part of Section 2 of the [Education \(Scotland\) Act 1980](#). These Regulations require each local authority to [publish a 3-year plan](#) that details the delivery of CLD activity in the local authority area, as stipulated in the [community-learning-development-plans-guidance-2024-2027.pdf](#).

The following diagram was used in the 2012 Strategic Guidance on CLD for Community Planning Partnerships to illustrate the policy context for CLD in Scotland. and continues to provide a useful picture of the pivotal role of CLD and CLD: youth work.



This response was compiled following consultation with members of the CLD Standards Council, staff team and stakeholders.

Assumptions:

It is important to recognise that this CLD Standards Council response provides an insight into the views and experiences based on the those mentioned above. The membership consultation data provided a valuable insight into the experiences based on the views of the member participants. This response is not representative of the entire CLD sector across Scotland or the full CLD Standards Council membership.

Response from the CLD Standards Council to Scottish Governments consultation on Community benefits from net zero energy developments

Good Practice Principles

Most members noted that they were familiar with the existing Good Practice Principles (GPP) for community benefits in Net Zero developments, with only 30% of respondents rating their knowledge as 5/10 or below.

It was felt that whilst the GPP offers support to communities by setting out guidance for good practice, there is further clarification and development of this documentation required to ensure genuine community led decision making is at the heart of any design and use of community benefit packages. As they currently stand, GPP are open to interpretation and therefore pose a risk of creating a power imbalance between communities and developers. Effectiveness of GPP depends on how they are mandated and followed by developers and stakeholders. There needs to be statutory requirements regarding community involvement in design and decision making processes, as well as clear expectations from developer engagement with communities, linking to the [National Standards for Community Engagement](#). We strongly suggest that this also includes core training modules for communities and developers, enabling them to learn and build capacity together, supporting power balance and embed underpinning knowledge regards expectations and involvement. We believe for people and community groups to engage, grow and prosper under this approach there will be significant learning required around the approaches, legislation etc. Those individuals and communities will need access to support and learning, to develop the meta skills required to enable positive engagement and grow their understanding of the economic developers they are supporting and working alongside. Fundamental to this skills development approach incognisance and implementation of cross sector knowledge and engagement with local authority CLD teams as well as third sector CLD organisations and volunteers who are already working within the communities.

We recommend that the review of this guidance adopt an international perspective, incorporating successful models of community empowerment, which focus on importance of community involvement, from countries such as Ireland, Denmark and Germany. Some examples of this can be found in a recent debate briefing for UK Parliament [CDP-2024-0127.pdf](#) and in a Nordic Policy blog in 2023 [Community-owned wind: Lessons from Denmark - The Nordic Policy Centre](#).

It was felt that it is critical that communities and individuals are supported to fully understand their rights within these processes, and we ask that this guidance give more focus and direction on how to ensure developers and partners carry out meaningful engagement with community members and groups. The guidance should also provide all stakeholders with evidence-based information on the benefits and importance of engaging with individuals and communities with protected characteristics. This should include reviewed, dedicated sections on equality and human rights, highlighting the barriers these individuals and groups face, and promoting more inclusive and meaningful engagement. By ensuring that processes are equitable and fair, and by prioritising the collection of diverse perspectives from our communities, this approach will amplify the voices of vulnerable and marginalised groups, ultimately leading to more beneficial outcomes for all impacted in these communities.

Comments from members:

“They can help set out good practice, but unless they are mandated, no matter how good they are, it's always going to be the case that they make that or might not help. It's all down to what is taken on board by developers”

“for those developers who are keen to engage well, then they can set out good practice around power sharing and genuine involvement”

“Learn lessons from other countries particularly Denmark and Germany. Don't reinvent the wheel.”

“Engage with communities and ask how they envision their future regarding the community benefit package. Without the vision of the communities, led by community members, any consultation is meaningless.”

“Community members need to be trained to engage with their neighbours to determine how any benefits package should impact on their lives.”

“By ensuring community involvement from the beginning and keeping clear communication channels open throughout the process will help support a genuine community led decision making process”

“inform the community of the benefits to them not just the benefits to the environment”

“Because developers are exploiting a natural renewable energy resource in communities, and it is important for the people living there to receive community benefits from the projects as developers are crossing their land which bears a cost to communities and to the Highland Council. People need to better understand their rights and the good practice principles do this”

Positive or Negative impacts of the Good Practice Principles on any protected characteristics or on any other specific groups in Scotland

Members felt that there is currently no standardised system for measuring the impact of community benefits, and communication with rural communities after the effect is minimal if it exists at all, unless undertaken by local authority or third sector CLD services. We would urge that to ensure transparency and effectiveness, a consistent framework should be established. This system should include an assessment of how community benefit funds impact individuals with protected characteristics. Additionally, it should track who is involved in decision-making processes and evaluate the extent to which participatory decision-making methods, such as participatory budgeting, are being implemented.

It was suggested that developers and funders place excessive reliance on Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) data to determine whether a community is considered vulnerable or highly deprived. This can lead to inequitable distribution of benefits. However, in many rural areas, barriers to engagement, poverty, and increased deprivation are often not accurately captured by these traditional data reporting methods. As a result, alternative approaches and local knowledge from CLD and other support services should be considered to ensure that rural communities receive appropriate recognition and support to enable their involvement.

Comments from members:

“rural communities are often overlooked in these type of consultations. There needs to be effective ways set out to communicate with these communities”

“Many of the wind farm developments are not based in communities who experience poverty and inequalities, therefore, community benefits need to be inclusive across all communities”

“I worked in some wealthy rural areas and they received significant community benefits, yet none of this money was going to support poorer urban or rural areas.”

Government’s Policy Role in Scotland

Scottish Government have a wealth of policies, strategies and guidance supporting community engagement, development, and empowerment but often these are deficient in connection, approaches and aims and therefore producing barriers to supporting communities to grow and develop together. We also find that these documents often have a considerable lack of attention and detail regarding the people, human resource and skills required to achieve these community based aims.

As a professional sector working across communities in Scotland, CLD understands firsthand that gaining a true understanding of community needs—along with the ways in which human aspects, location, and infrastructure interact—requires the active engagement, knowledge, and drive of individuals within those communities. By providing support from the CLD sector to facilitate skills development, communities can engage more meaningfully, ensuring that data collection reflects genuine, ground-up perspectives on local needs.

We would like to provide references to key documents that we believe would be valuable for the Offshore Wind and Energy & Climate change directorate, along with the Community Benefits consultation team, to review and consider.

- [Community Empowerment \(Scotland\) Act 2015](#)
- [Community Wealth Building](#)
- [Democracy Matters 2](#)
- [Community-led regeneration - Regeneration - gov.scot](#)
- [Empowering Communities Programme - Community empowerment - gov.scot](#)
- [The Place Standard tool is a way of assessing places. | Our Place](#)
- [Best Start, Bright Futures: tackling child poverty delivery plan 2022 to 2026 - gov.scot](#)
- [Scottish Government Planning Guidance: Effective Community Engagement in Local Development Plans: Summary of responses to the consultation](#)
- [Community benefits from net zero energy developments: consultation - gov.scot](#)
- [Social capital and community wellbeing in Scotland - gov.scot](#)
- [National strategy for community justice: delivery plan and updates - gov.scot](#)
- [Participation handbook - gov.scot](#)
- [Just Transition: draft plan for transport in Scotland - gov.scot](#)
- [Human rights - gov.scot](#)

We welcome this review of the guidance and would ask for its clear recognition that some of the people in our communities are more vulnerable and therefore may find engagement in their communities challenging, but that these are voices that need to be heard and should be given equitable opportunity to engage and have an influence in community development. We would suggest consideration be given to how this would look in reality, across Scotland's vastly differing rural landscapes and communities, and suggest that specific thought be given to strategies such as [Islands \(Scotland\) Act 2018](#), [Rural Delivery Plan](#), and [The National Plan for Scotland's Islands - gov.scot](#)

Community Benefits & the role of CLD Practitioners

It is critical that this consultation should explore the support communities—particularly individuals with protected characteristics—require to participate effectively. This includes enabling them to negotiate community benefit funds with developers, implement community action plans to establish priorities, and move beyond small grant schemes toward more strategic or infrastructure-focused development.

Without the support of CLD community development practitioners, communities—or parts of communities—that have the capacity to manage on their own will do so, while others will be left behind, exacerbating existing inequalities. We would suggest that CLD practitioners are best placed to implement and lead on a key initial phase, which includes supporting communities in understanding the community benefits landscape, helping them network with other communities managing similar schemes, and guiding them on when and how to engage with developers. Additionally, communities should be supported in creating action plans to identify needs and priorities; engaging and managing development staff when appropriate; addressing equality issues; and practising good community engagement techniques.

Communities would also benefit from learning opportunities which would develop their political awareness, supporting them in the democratic processes and enable them to understand and critique policy which impacts their communities. This guidance would benefit from more detail regarding effective community engagement approaches and noting of the key stakeholders to support the successful implementation of collaborate, plan and design, specifically professional CLD practitioners within Local Authority and Third Sector organisations. [Competent Practitioner Framework | CLD Standards Council for Scotland](#) , [National Standards for Community Engagement](#) [Community Engagement and Participation Guidance | COSLA](#) There is a vast wealth of CLD experience in Scotland which goes beyond creative, collaborative methods of co-designing and planning services with communities. It is essential that CLD practice is recognised and explored fully during the review of this guidance, specifically regarding the support and impact CLD practitioners will have towards enabling the success of this approach.

For over a decade now, CLD services both across local authorities and third sector organisations, have been facing continual cuts in budgets and staffing, which impacts the services, support and learning opportunities available in our communities. It is also important to recognise that a growing number of CLD practitioners are volunteers within our communities. These volunteers play a vital role in supporting other volunteers, individuals, communities and therefore positively impacting Scotland's wellbeing economy by fostering positive community relations and enhancing community voice. The growing role of volunteers within CLD could in part be attributed to the cuts in the CLD workforce in local authorities and third sector, however volunteers are often not recognised regarding the role they carry out and the impact that has on our communities.

Worryingly, at a time when the Scottish Government is driving forward initiatives such as Democracy Matters, Community Empowerment, Community Wealth Building, and other approaches aimed at increasing community input into their economic growth, there is a risk that without proper support and structure, these goals may not be fully realised for all communities, particularly the most marginalized. [Scottish Household Survey 2023](#) reports that volunteer participation has declined by eight percent between 2018 and 2023, reflecting the difficulties volunteers have faced in recent years. It is disappointing that volunteers are often not recognised regarding the role they carry out and the impact that has on our communities. The [Volunteer Charter](#) provides ten principles for the sustainable and legitimate involvement of volunteers, including that volunteers ‘should not carry out duties formerly carried out by paid workers, nor should they be used to disguise the effects of non-filled vacancies or cuts in services.’ [Volunteer Scotland](#) report that the Scottish Government is signed up as a Charter Champion – pledging support and making a commitment to promote and adhere to the principles of the Charter.

Members acknowledged that [CLD competences](#), ethics and values, such as empowerment, self-determination, inclusion, collaboration, and the promotion of lifelong learning, should be embedded in community benefit agreements to ensure that approaches and developments align with best practices and meet community needs. By utilising these competences with both communities and developers, communities will be better understood, and individuals will have the opportunity to develop the necessary skills before any decisions are made.

Comments from members:

“I would suggest supporting communities to understand the community benefits landscape, to network with other communities managing schemes, to consider how and when to engage with developers, to put together community action plans to identify needs and priorities, to engage and manage development staff where appropriate, to consider equalities issues and to understand and practice good practice in community engagement.”

“CLD practitioners should support community members to carry out consultations and analyse the results”

“As a direct link to community groups and other members of the communities we work in, we can provide advice and support to the people these decisions have the biggest impact on.”

“The Highland CLD Plan has 'Climate and Social Justice' as one of its priorities, but we do not receive any additional resource to fund this in CLD.”

“I believe that community development practitioners should be involved in raising these important matters with people in their communities, but I'm not convinced that they see this as part of their current role given the extent of pressures and cutbacks facing the CLD sector.”

“working with developers to help them understand the importance and value of doing so. Since community benefits are voluntary, this either has to be mandated, or work has to be done to bring developers on board”

“Competences....to know your community will keep it at grassroots level and will produce good outcomes”

Skills and Training

Members offered a selection of professional learning/training topics which they felt would be beneficial to support the skills and knowledge of individuals, communities, developers, as well as CLD volunteers and practitioners.

- Understanding of Community Benefits (Local Energy Scotland have a [toolkit](#))
- Community Engagement Skills
- Developing Place Based Plans
- Community Mapping (knowledge of the wider support landscape in communities to take actions forward)
- Economics/Understanding of Local Politics
- Wider Knowledge of the Energy Development Sector & SG/UK Gov roles
- Policy Analysis: How to critique and reference
- Positive Communications and Handling Conflict
- Benefits of Partnership Working
- National Standards for Community Engagement and Learning for Sustainability
- Understanding of Net Zero (with guidance on how to apply it in communities)
- Managing Funding/How to Engage a Funding Manager e.g. [Foundation Scotland](#)
- Equalities Awareness
- Action Focused Engagement
- Community Empowerment Act
- Constitutions and Charitable Statutes
- Research and Analysis Skills
- How to Measure Impact
- Outputs and Outcomes
- Working with Developers

Examples of Community Benefit Good Practice or Community Benefit Projects

Members offered the following information:

- [Shetland community benefits fund](#) mixes benefits for communities directly impacted and wider communities. It also mixes small Community Council controlled funds with additional strategic funding with priorities set via a community consultation process. [Nadara](#) (energy developers) have also worked with the [New Economic Foundation](#) to review their community benefits processes, set priorities for CB going forwards, including building community capacity, developing community action plans, the importance of community governance etc. They are currently looking at piloting a different way of doing things.
- The best examples are from Denmark and Germany. There are also some examples from Shetland and the [Fife coast](#). Communities and local politicians need to work together to consider what real action and positive change can look like.
- By ensuring that local community members are included in the consultation process e.g. training local members to become community researchers, thus ensuring that the voices of local people are heard.
- Any community based decisions need to have **input from as wide a range of community members** as possible. This means not just releasing information online but instead providing print copies and opportunities to attend face to face briefings.

- A good example is Renfrewshire Council's Whole Family Wellbeing team as this has to be inclusive and everyone must work together.
- [Strathnairn Development Company](#), SSE used to organise a Community Development Network for CLD workers based in neighbouring communities who received community benefits. This was a great network to share learning between communities and developers, so it would be good for CLD practitioners and community members to have more of these opportunities to meet with developers rather than this mainly happening at a strategic level.

Barriers for getting involved with the decision making process

The landscape across community development, and all of the policies and approaches previously mentioned, is complex and the language used is often difficult to navigate. Without someone ensuring that communities receive information in a way that is understandable and accessible, only those with experience in similar environments will feel comfortable engaging. The CLD Standards Council and its members recognise that the review of the guidance is positive and covers all the key areas, often reflecting barriers that impact communities and engagement. However, there was some discourse regarding the language used, with a significant number of words and phrases used which are open to misinterpretation, do not offer a clear meaning, or is language that both people working and living across Scotland may not understand. It is essential that this guidance is equitable and inclusive, and we therefore urge policy makers to ensure use of words that are meaningful, easy to understand and clear to interpret.

We suggest that accessing advice from the Plain English Campaign may be beneficial. <https://www.plainenglish.co.uk/>. We also recommend that, as part of this review, the language used throughout the documentation be tested by individuals from diverse communities across Scotland. This should include low-level literacy learners to assess accessibility, as well as New Scots refugees, ESOL learners, and translators to ensure that the intended meaning of the text is accurately conveyed in the primary immigrant and foreign languages spoken within Scotland's communities (e.g. Arabic, Chinese, French, Hindi, Punjabi, Polish, Spanish, Urdu) and you could access further information to support this from the recent census. [Languages | Scotland's Census](#).

Additionally, participation can be time-consuming, so consideration should be given to compensating individuals for their time or providing the necessary support to enable meaningful engagement. These factors should be integrated into processes wherever possible to ensure inclusivity and fairness.

The opportunity to have infographics and visuals as a PDF or PowerPoint would be a useful tool. They are a good introduction to engagement and support those initial conversations with communities and groups. Having more visual mapping tools help bring the topic alive and is proven to be good for stimulating discussion and understanding. Building up a series of case studies or stories where communities have benefitted from this partnership working and funding, specifically where it has led sustainable change, this will not only support engagement with this approach but support the strong positive message about Scottish Government's commitment to community led development.

Support and Services are a vital aspect of this whole approach. CLD as a professional practice supports community led action research, and the CLD workforce is skilled in enabling communities to decide on the issues to be researched, to design and carry it out, as well as the delivering the learning communities require to be able to engage with others and use results to achieve positive change. Community led action research is needed to fully understand the needs

of communities, and to raise awareness of where funding could be best utilised to tackle issues such as transport for accessing GPs and healthcare; local shopping needs; or lack of community based spaces to support connectivity and social interaction. This community action research is best supported by professional CLD practitioners, who are qualified and experienced in this approach and can work alongside community members to develop their research and engagement skills.

We would like to highlight concerns about the risk of raising hopes and expectations for meaningful change and growth within Scotland's communities, only for these aspirations to be negatively impacted if there are insufficient resources, infrastructure, services, or funding to support implementation in the long term. Such unmet expectations can lead to frustration, disengagement, and a loss of trust in the process. In Scottish Government's [Planning with People](#) guidance, published by the Scottish Government on the 21st April 2023, it clearly states *"Effective services must be designed with and for people and communities – not delivered, top down for administrative convenience. In order to be effective, community engagement must be relevant, meaningful and have a clearly defined focus"*. For this to happen this guidance must clearly show commitment to this throughout and have the necessary funding and resources in place to support meaningful community development for community benefit projects.

Comments from members:

"Lack of up to date, relevant information. This information is often contained within extremely long documents, which many CLD practitioners simply do not have time to fully read and comprehend. An easy read version is always a good idea."

"the language is complex and unless there's someone there making sure they get the info they need in a way that's understandable and relatable, then the only people from the community who engage are those who work or have worked in environments where they're comfortable with this."

"Having a clear structure of engagement"

"lack of knowledge, confidence and knowing they have a right to be heard. Educational barriers, language barriers and poverty"

"Lack of opportunities to empower community members due to a top down approach"

"CLD practitioners also need to understand the legislative and planning landscape that new developments sit within and how community benefits negotiations are impacted by that. Often it's all handled by non CLD staff"

"There can be silo working within LAs (local authorities) and community benefits often sits within economic development. Unless those colleagues understand the importance of working with CLD colleagues, or there is an expectation built into the good practice principles, that they should, then the value that CLD can bring is often overlooked"

Conclusion

Fundamental to the practice of CLD across all settings are these values which have been identified by the CLD Standards Council:

- **Self-determination** – respecting the individual and valuing the right of people to make their own choices.
- **Inclusion** – valuing equality of both opportunity and outcome and challenging discriminatory practice.
- **Empowerment** – increasing the ability of individuals and groups to influence issues that affect them and their communities through individual and/ or collective action.
- **Working collaboratively** – maximising collaborative working relationships in partnerships between the many agencies which contribute to CLD, including collaborative work with participants, learners and communities.
- **Promotion of learning as a lifelong activity** – ensuring that individuals are aware of a range of learning opportunities and are able to access relevant options at any stage of their life.

Community Development, as part of CLD, is an approach to achieving social change. It is action taken through supporting community activists to organise while building learning and power within communities in order to promote democracy, sustainable development, equality and social justice. It builds community capacity and influence by enabling people to develop the confidence, understanding and skills required to influence decision making and service delivery.

The approaches in this guidance align with CLD value based practice as mentioned above. These values adopted by the CLD Standards Council underpin CLD practice and the CLD competences provide a framework for practice. How we practice as a profession is directly informed by why we are doing it – the CLD [Code of Ethics](#) provides the means for us to make this connection.

We believe the guidance lacks sufficient detail on the full physical and psychological resources required to achieve the aspirations of these approaches towards improving Scotland's communities—by Scotland's communities. It must go much further in providing clear, detailed guidance on the importance of valuing community voices throughout all processes. Additionally, it should fully acknowledge the funding, resources, and long-term commitment needed from individuals, communities, and supporting professions such as CLD to ensure meaningful and sustainable change.

We fully welcome the review of this guidance for Community Benefits from Net Zero Energy Developments and feel strongly that the CLD sector as a profession should be reflected throughout as a key stakeholder.