

## Community engagement activity in Armadale

In Armadale various community engagement methods and tools were used to support determining the priorities in the area. Priorities identified were fed into the Locality Plan and community action plan. Examples of approaches used are below. Additional engagement carried out by partners, including third sector organisations, was also utilised to provide a clear picture of what matters to those who live, work and visit Armadale.



The learning from Blackburn's Climate Action Town project that was delivered in partnership with Architecture and design Scotland has started to be replicated in Armadale. This has enabled the Place Standard with a Climate Lens to be delivered during specific engagement sessions allowing for place-based climate action to be adopted.

## Methods

The table below provides a snap shot of the engagement carried out in Armadale, including how the engagement was undertaken and who participated. The engagement was designed to ensure as wide participation from all ages and demographics as possible, within the Armadale community. It was also designed the meet the needs of the participants with a range of techniques being utilised.

Area of engagement	Description of the engagement	Participants
Key local community organisations	<p>Attending various meetings and group activities to engage with the participants.</p> <p>Tools used:</p>	<p>Key community organisations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Dale Hub (various groups)</li> <li>Armadale Shed</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Place Standard with a Climate Lens</li> <li>• Face-to-face consultations/surveys</li> <li>• Online survey</li> </ul>	
Community Planning Partners and other stakeholders	Discussion with partners facilitated through local multi-agency working groups, Armadale Regeneration Group	<p>Key organisations and stakeholders including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Police Scotland</li> <li>• Scottish Fire and Rescue Service</li> <li>• NHS Lothian</li> <li>• WLC Housing</li> <li>• WLP</li> <li>• Youth Action Project</li> </ul>
Community Survey	Short community surveys delivered face to face to while in the community and attending local groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whole community</li> </ul>
Schools and youth groups	<p>Bespoke sessions within the primary schools engaging young people to determine what young people like and don't like about Armadale.</p> <p>Workshop with young people from Armadale Academy using Place Standard with a Climate Lens.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eastertoun Primary School</li> <li>• Armadale Primary School</li> <li>• Armadale Academy</li> </ul>
Street events	Organised events within the community including fun days and information market stall sessions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local residents and young people</li> <li>• Whole community</li> </ul>
Social Media	Local community social media pages used to promote event where engagement is taking place and to promote online surveys.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whole community</li> </ul>
Desktop research and analysis	<p>A desktop exercise was carried out on previous plan/studies and community engagement findings from partner consultation.</p> <p>Analysis of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) and other key data including Scottish Public Health Observatory (ScotPho)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Regeneration Officer</li> <li>• Armadale Regeneration group</li> </ul>
Community Council	Regular updates and discussion with the Community Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Councillors</li> </ul>



## Engagement Findings

The engagement highlighted what the community valued in Armadale along with some key challenges that the community identified that they would like to be addressed. The following local challenges were a common theme throughout the range of engagement activities:

- Poverty / cost of living
- Mental Health
- Substance use
- Lack of employment opportunities locally
- Lack of public transport
- Pavement parking
- Lack of activities for teenagers
- Litter and broken glass
- Anti-social behaviour
- The look of the Town Centre
- Issues with obtaining a GP appointment

The following areas were highlighted as key areas of value and positive in Armadale:

- Armadale Gala
- Local organisations – Armadale Thistle Football Club, The Dale Hub, Armadale Resource Centre, Armadale Shed
- Partnership Centre and the activities that take place in there
- Community Council
- Local Schools
- Local Faith Groups
- ASDA
- The Blackmoss

## School Engagement

Specific engagement within local primary schools was carried out. This sought the views from young people in the community, by providing a mechanism for them to engage in a way that they understood and a way that included their views. Primary 6 and 7 young people were provided with the opportunity to draw or write what they liked and didn't like in their community and were then provided with the opportunity to use a magic wand to change two things in their community.

Engagement was carried out with young people in Armadale Academy. A Place Standard with a Climate Lens was used for this engagement which allowed the young people to voice their views on 14 themes that make up a place. Each theme was then able to be given a climate focus that generated deeper discussions.



The common 'likes' / happy images from the young people in Armadale included the following:

- The Blackmoss
- In schools' voices are heard
- Council listening to young voices
- Gala day
- Primary schools very welcoming
- New development areas are safer

- Parks
- School
- Friends
- Cycle path
- Clubs
- ASDA
- All my family live here
- Library
- Good bike paths
- Good community spirit
- Armadale Shed
- Social Place
- Armadale Thistle Football Club
- Good signage – easy to find your way about
- Easy to find your way about
- Surrounded by fields
- Dale Hub
- Kick-boxing
- Dance studio
- Community centre (library)
- Lots of groups in the community centre
- Lots of hair dressers and nail shops
- Armadale Resource Centre

The following were common ‘dislikes’ / unhappy images from young people in Armadale:

- Sectarianism
- Litter and dog poo on the pavements
- Broken bottles / glass
- Feeling unsafe
- Need groups of kids at the community centre
- Fires at the moss
- Fires down at the glen
- Pathways slippery when it’s cold
- Some places don’t have lights at night
- Cycle paths are not lit up at night
- Fly tipping on back roads
- Bikes at the quarry
- Drunk people
- No more swimming pool
- Drug dealers
- Teens making fires
- Local food shop
- My house
- Drove Road park
- The 3G
- Lots of traffic
- Climate change
- The people (sometimes)
- Nicer dentist
- Flooding at the cross, wood park and Mallace Avenue
- Damaged bus stops
- No busses anymore
- Trains cost too much
- Anti-social behaviour
- Parking on pavements
- Speeding cars
- Dirt bikes every where
- No electric charging points
- Vacant land
- Lack of trees
- Drugs / vapes
- Dog stealers
- Violent people

Below are some of the comments from the engagement carried out with young people at Armadale Academy:

- *‘there was no consultation done on travel routes being changed’*
- *‘create communication links between community and council. Influence young groups to community councils’*
- *‘quality of roads are poor’*
- *‘private land for companies is poorly maintained’*
- *‘wood park – flooding’*
- *‘all age groups may not feel safe’*

- *'some areas used for anti-social behaviour'*
- *'pathway down Mill Road cracked and uneven'*
- *'carpark near the shop has broken glass etc'*
- *'gala day – secondary schools are not involved in the gala days unless you are involved in a club'*
- *'elder people are intimidated by teenagers'*
- *'paths are ruined at the Blackmoss'*
- *'busses being cancelled doesn't help those relying on it'*
- *'I feel safe because I know where am going'*
- *'strong student voice group at Armadale Academy – need to make link with community'*
- *'community council meetings need to be accessible to young people – a lot of S5 + 6 pupils have jobs and meetings are not always accessible'*
- *'not enough places to park, makes people park inconsiderately and dangerously making paths not accessible to for use'*
- *'limited facilities for teenagers'*
- *'only one accessible 3G pitch – need to increase the amount of sports pitches'*
- *'need a better gym'*
- *'nothing to do for teens'*
- *'loss of swimming pool'*
- *'could turn the old leisure centre into a gym'*
- *'newsletter needed to let people know what is going on'*
- *'older houses should have solar panels'*

## **Conclusion**

The engagement carried out in Armadale has provided officers with an understanding of the challenges and opportunities that the community identified within their local community. This information will be utilised firstly to support the development of the locality plan in Armadale, along with key statistical data and existing service knowledge and priorities. Secondly the information will be used to support the development of interventions in the area that meet the challenges identified.

Engagement in Armadale will be iterative to ensure that priorities within the community are kept current, the community feel engaged and to help measure changes / success.