

Business Plan

The Gatehead Bridge Project



Re-bridging Gatehead community spirit!

**Created for your consideration by:
The Gatehead Bridge Project
Regeneration Team**

**Presented to:
East Ayrshire Council
Community Asset Transfer**

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Business Plan

****Please be advised that this we've done our best with what we have at present under current lockdown circumstances****

Introductory Statement

Gatehead may be the smallest hamlet within East Ayrshire but it has an immense community spirit. Sadly, this has been allowed to fade over the last few years due to factors outwith our control as residents. This dormant community spirit has been exacerbated by the complete lack of a village hub where people from the community can meet on a daily basis; even just in a fleeting way. This wasn't always the case. When the village had amenities (such as the post office and shop) there was more of a vibrancy about the village through the day to day goings on of the residents. There were also more organised community ventures when events were hosted at the village hall such as family parties and karaoke nights.

As a means of rekindling this spirit, a determined group of villagers have decided to halt this malaise in its tracks by doing something about it. The solution? The creation of a regeneration team called the Gatehead Bridge Project whose sole objective is to obtain the leasehold of the village community centre from East Ayrshire Council. Moreover, in a broader sense, the reasoning behind this specific committee name choice is simple. Our main aim is to literally mend the fractured spirit and re-bridge the relationships of all members of our tiny community. The need to highlight this intervention on our part is the fact that currently, our only hub is the bus shelter on the main road. The sad reality is that if you're not jumping on the No 10 bus from Troon to Kilmarnock, you'll be unlikely to meet another villager all day. We want to change that.

We thank you in advance for taking the time to consider our proposal and hope you can offer your support to something that will provide social cohesion and enhanced community empowerment to our hometown.

Current Position

The Gatehead Community Council (GCC) had been dissolved some years ago and as such the village found itself without representation. This directly resulted in the loss of the community centre some years later (December 2015) due to lack of coordinated representation and a show of solidarity from the villagers.

After the shock of losing the community centre, one of our residents; Rab Milloy, decided to gather support to reinstate the GCC which required us to get 20 signatories and adopt a constitution to arrange elections in the Spring of 2016. This involved creating a Facebook page and leafleting the village multiple times to consolidate support.

We were allowed to hold the GCC election in the hall due to a condition of the lease but it was a year later before we could use the hall for regular GCC meetings. This was due in the main to the reluctance of the leaseholder. Meetings of the GCC were at Gargieston Primary or Crosshouse in the interim but our persistence paid off eventually, with the help of EAC, leading to a four hourly slot on the first then second Monday of the month. The main functions of the GCC are to give the village a voice and provide a forum where ideas, visions and complaints can be administered.

GCC has now been recognised by such bodies as the police, planning, councillors, MP, MSP, other local community councils and EAC working groups.

Successes that have been achieved so far by the GCC are:

- Improved broadband by collective representation
- Roads and paths improved and renovated
- Provision of planters during the summer
- Regular litter picks within the village
- Regular summer fun days
- Regular children's Christmas parties
- Improved village communications with notice boards, newsletters and leafleting
- Handling complaints about parking, littering, dog fouling, invasive weeds, etc...
- Becoming a neighbourhood watch area
- Placing of benches at the play park
- Provision of extra gritting bins for winter
- Reporting of street lighting problems

- Widening of pavements to allow prams and disability carriages to pass
- Gaining the lease of the wee field to provide a community garden

Ongoing projects include:

- Improving the roads going through the village
- Looking for the provision of a shop
- Asking questions about getting natural gas to the village
- Pushing for improved mobile phone coverage
- Further improving broadband speeds
- Improving all aesthetic aspects of the village

Aims and Objectives

The Gatehead Bridge Project was engineered specifically for the purpose of applying for a 5 year lease of the Gatehead Community Centre from East Ayrshire Council. Through dedicated community spirit, we have put this proposal together with the objective of meeting the EAC criteria required to undertake this task. As alluded to briefly in the introductory statement, we would really love to re-establish the bonds between villagers of all age demographics and

incorporate an inclusive ethos throughout. We need to reintegrate the young with the more mature members of the community which would significantly help with problems associated with loneliness and isolation in the latter age group. We feel strongly that by obtaining the lease to the village community centre, it will give us the freedom to plan classes, events and more which will not only help to bring the community together, but will allow us to develop our own identity once more. We want to make the hall the beating heart of our small community.

We aim to:

- create a welcoming place for all, villagers and otherwise, day or night
- host events which would be of interest to a spread of demographics of villagers ranging from coffee mornings to yoga classes etc...
- re-establish a regular meeting venue for MP's and MSP's surgeries
- bring useful services to the village for the ease of accessibility of our residents namely hairdressers amongst others. This alleviates the need for more vulnerable members of the community to have to travel into town
- strengthen the sense of teamwork and camaraderie within the community as it will become the task of the community itself to manage the hall and maintain its functionality
- promote marketing aimed at hiring the hall out for use to outside groups who would like to utilise the premises for their own purposes.
- consider any propositions which we feel would benefit the community practically and financially.

The main overall aim would be that the Gatehead Bridge Project would take over the leisure aspects of the village leaving the GCC to get on with the village complaints and improvements.

Demand for the Project

The local community is driven to regaining the leasehold of the community centre and has been since it was revoked years ago. It is true what they say that 'you don't know what you've got until it's gone' and we can certainly attest to this! The village as a whole have shown strong support for the GCC to develop and improve the area and this venture now seems the next logical step in the chain of command. We are proud of where we will live hence why we are campaigning to sustain and improve our community.

Living in such uncertain circumstances at the moment, it has highlighted for us the essential need for a community hub. We discussed recently how beneficial it would have been to have had access the community centre in terms of offering it as a support unit to the sincerely stretched NHS. The centre would be an ideal training venue for health and safety training with a particular focus on First Aid which is always a crucial skill.

The centre would also be an ideal venue for a foodbank which would particularly benefit those people living on the outskirts of towns as they would have better access to this as a local resource.

We have consulted with a wide range of villagers young and slightly less young who have contributed their thoughts and ideas to this agenda. A group of children aged between 6 and 9 suggested a plethora of ideas that they would like to see for their benefit in the village. These included a zip wire, summerhouse, monkey bars, climbing frame, chute, swings, roundabout, improved football goals with nets, basketball hoop and cage, fireman's pole, playground games e.g. snakes and ladders, chess and hopscotch. They also had useful ideas for ways that they could utilise the centre namely an arts and crafts club, bakery classes, exercise classes and a vending machine. They particularly expressed their keenness at the idea of having access to the building for when the weather didn't allow them to play outside. Anything that encourages children to make use of their outdoor environment and putting down their electronics will be graciously welcomed!

Going to the other end of the age scale, we asked one of the more senior members of the village for their thoughts. Again, we were overwhelmed by the response. He suggested a garden club for the wee field (recently procured by the GCC), football training facilities including changing rooms within the centre, events such as weddings, birthday parties, etc. A drop in centre for single people of all ages allowing access to all for village galas and fun days.

Courses which would be beneficial to all members of the community such as the aforementioned first aid classes, a defibrillator unit (training provided on site), sign language classes, cooking lessons for various cuisines, an apiary course, youth club, mother and toddler group, wine tasting, bingo nights; anything which involves social cohesion basically. Ultimately, the possibilities are endless and we do realise that there will be practical options available and not so practical suggestions too. We would address this collectively under the headings of green ideas (fully practical and achievable), amber ideas (possible upon further investigation) and red ideas which would just not be possible for us to consider. With future discussion, we could clarify these ideas once we are out of lockdown.

Management and Organisation

Working in line with the Community Empower Act (Scotland) 2015, we are aiming to adopt the asset transfer of the Gatehead Community Centre. Through participation, we as villagers have devised this plan as a means of requesting this building transfer from East Ayrshire Council to allow us primarily to have a say in our locality and direct neighbourhood led activities. We will achieve this by democratic means in consulting with villagers and working on key ideas that are supported by the majority. We are in the process of looking at adopting charitable status and would elect key members of our Gatehead Bridge Project Regeneration Team to assume the roles of Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer (and any other required roles). We have already discussed the fact that we would assume these roles on a quarter annual management structure/shared basis so as to allow everyone the opportunity to have experience of the various roles and responsibilities. With this in mind, we have also discussed the necessity of having at least 4 or 5 key holders within the village so that there would never be an issue with access to the facility.

Even with these established principles, we are not entirely naïve and realise that we need to have reasonable preparation for an exit strategy in a worst case scenario. To this end, we have decided that any funds garnered from our combined efforts would be transferred to charity if it came down to it and we would wind up the organisation as an absolute last resort. We firmly believe that there is so much support in terms of grant funding as well as community spirit and momentum to successfully carry this forward effectively.

We are in the process of applying for charitable status and have chosen 3 trustees who bring a breadth of knowledge and experience to manage and develop the project from humble beginnings to future success.

Please see the table below with details of our trustees:

<i>Trustee Name</i>	<i>Skills and Abilities</i>
XXXXXXXXXX	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 15 years worth of retail experience with 5 years specifically in higher management• 20 years customer service experience• Excellent problem solver• Project Management skills• Excellent verbal and written communication

	<p>skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective Team Leader • Exemplary organisational skills • Cash Handling Experience – worked in a bank and a jewellers in previous employment • Currently working as a civil servant in Housing Services • Bookkeeping experience • Health and Safety procedural management • Audit management experience
<p>XXXXXXXXXX</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 33 years civil servant experience • Latterly managed 6 vets and 5 Animal Health Officers • Allocated and prioritised welfare cases and managed disease situations • Managed finance and expense claims • Completed regular reviews • Entrusted with running business support integration for government area department • Currently a landlord with associated accounting skills • Previously a field officer enforcing and advising on government acts and orders • Confident public speaker • Chairperson experience • Excellent motivator • Networking and negotiating experience
<p>XXXXXXXXXX</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over 20 years experience working in a sales driven, logistical, customer service sector role • Creative • Able to multitask • Team builder • Enthusiastic leader • Team player • Target driven • Business minded • Innovator • Attention to detail • Motivator • Negotiator

Community Asset Transfer Benefits

As you have probably established from earlier examples outlined in this document, the Community Asset Transfer will have a significant impact on many important elements prevalent in today's society. Please refer to the table below for further explanation of these areas.

Economy and Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving the community centre facility and village as a whole through the efforts of specific trade skilled members of the community e.g. plumbers, handymen, painter and decorators, cleaners, caretakers, caterers etc...
Safer Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encouraging neighbourhood watch amongst the community Improving road and pavement safety working with the Ayrshire Roads Alliance
Well being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offering exercise classes to improve and maintain people's health and well being Mindfulness, yoga, pilates, social hub to include all community age groups
Support older people to live independently in the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offering mobile hairdressing services Coffee mornings/afternoon Driving towards the inclusion of a small shop
Improve health and well being and promoting town centre living	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Driving social cohesion with inclusive events Encouraging strong relationships within the village Promoting good mental health
Improving outcomes for vulnerable children and young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Driving forward with EAC to improve/regenerate the limited facilities within the village for young and old i.e. improved bus services, regeneration of play equipment for varying ages of children within the village
Older people: adding life to years – tackle social isolation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hosting specific events geared towards the elderly e.g. garden club, Age Concern Club, apiary club, bingo, coffee mornings/afternoon, lunch clubs etc...
Community led regeneration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are driven advocates for the village who have already been undertaking objectives

empowering communities and building community resilience	<p>through contact with EAC directly and local MPs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During this COVID-19 lockdown, there has already been village support in the form of postcards deposited through every door offering support with food shopping, medication collection and delivery or even just a chat on the phone. When we come out the other side of this, community spirit is going to be stronger and more necessary than ever before.
Promoting and improving social well being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing events which unite all ages and stages in the village – summer gala, New Year's Hogmanay party, Burn's Supper etc... • Introduction of one the 1st community facebook groups – 'The Gatehead Wrangle' as a communication and advice sharing platform
Promoting and improving health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offering fitness classes • Facilitating first aid and defibrillator training • Organised activities which promote physical and mental well being i.e. walking, running and cycle clubs.
Reducing inequalities of outcome from socio-economic disadvantage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doing as many fundraising activities with minimal, considered costs to any events or activities; therefore making these events achievable for all.

Risk Analysis

With any venture of this nature, there always has to be a risk assessment addressed. On a minor scale, we have pinpointed the most obvious threats to our plan and detailed these in the table below.

Risk	Impact	Action
Fall in membership numbers	Low	Continuous advertising and preferential start up rates
Insufficient income	Med	Fundraising activities

Lack of volunteers for Committee and/or day to day running of the centre	Med	A lot of villagers are retired and are looking for a hub they can dedicate their time towards
Lack of support for fundraising activities	Med	Community would help to contribute rather than lose the hall
Inability to secure grant funding	High	Community would help arrange extensive fundraising to secure required capital
Accident or injury at centre	High	Public liability insurance and risk assessment.

This is something which we can obviously review on an ongoing basis should the need arise.

Maintenance

The maintenance of the building will be completed as follows:

Regular Tasks: The regular day to day maintenance will be completed by the committee and volunteers of the Gatehead Bridge Project. This will include cleaning surfaces, floors, toilets and other small relatively easy tasks.

Large Tasks: The larger one off maintenance of the building will be completed for the price of the materials and using the volunteer hours of local trades people. We have attained a significant amount of support outlined in the attached letters of support.

There has no cost been attributed to maintenance for the building however with lottery support and a small yearly surplus we believe we would be in a position to cope with any eventuality.

Financial Planning

In terms of funding for the project, we would obviously endeavour to raise funds through activities and events open to the village and with the inclusion of ventures from the outside public. We have already approached agencies such as Margaret Bunten Dance School who runs a local dance group and we have suggested that we could offer her classes to the hall at a £10 hourly rate which is

majorly undercutting some other local facilities which charge between £15 and £20 for the same privilege. We have garnered loads of interest from services such as mobile hairdressers who again would be able to utilise the facilities at a low hourly rate. We have all of this supporting information spread out between different members of the regeneration team but we don't all have a means to share the information at the moment. This can be contributed at a later date if required.

Light and Life Mission Church

The Light and Life Mission Church have had the lease of the facility for the past 5 years. We recognise the need to ensure the Church as a continued lease and as such have safeguarded the hours that the group currently utilise the facility. We recognise that this will be a challenging situation to change from the current lease to our community based group. That being said we believe that we can offer the Church the same amount of use of the facility for less than they will be paying at present and with less responsibility to keep the facility in a suitable repair. It is anticipated that we will charge the group under £2,200 per annum which will be significantly less than their current outgoings for the same amount of use. While we cannot communicate this with the Church at present we believe this is a really good proposal.

Funding

The Gatehead Bridge Project believe that there are some different funders who could add value to our organisation. As a group we have proactively approached funders to see if they would be willing to assist. The discussions have been positive however the common theme is that funders would not approve any amount until the CAT has been confirmed. Given this information we intend to apply to Awards for All for a £10,000 award to help run the facility. We aim to apply for the funding using the information contained within this application asking that a decision can be made based on the Councils decision to award the CAT to the Gatehead Bridge Project. This will allow funds to be available in anticipation that it may take around six months to realise the let saturation outlined in the letting plan and forecasted in the cashflow. The £10,000 Award for All grant has been included in the financial projections and we will update East Ayrshire with the result of the funding.

Further to the initial application for Awards for All Funding we will look to make other applications for specific project work involving elderly and vulnerable as well as capital projects such as energy efficiency measures. These have not been factored into the Cashflow.

Appendices

Please see the attached appendices which corroborate the support we have garnered in lieu of the success of this application. These include:

- ⑩ signatures on a petition supporting the procurement of the village hall
- ⑩ signed proofs stating residents commitment to maintenance and upkeep of the facility
- ⑩ email correspondence from the National Lottery confirming that we could apply for community support grants if we do take the leasehold of the hall
- ⑩ verbal commitment (in absentia) from [REDACTED] offering his services as a plasterer for maintenance and upkeep of the hall
- ⑩ Email evidence of local MP commitment to request use of hall to hold parliamentary surgeries
- ⑩ 5 year financial costs outlay

Further supporting evidence can be provided after the COVID-19 lockdown alleviates.

Contact us via [REDACTED].
[REDACTED]

With sincere thanks from The Gatehead Bridge Project Regeneration Team.