



Love Kirkcaldy, Love Local

Love Oor Lang Toun Strategy 2023-2026



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1. Vision

To create a 21st century town centre in Kirkcaldy that local people will be proud of, and others will want to visit.

2. Mission

- Develop and deliver projects and campaigns that positively promote Kirkcaldy and Kirkcaldy Town Centre.
- Take part in, or lead, projects that contribute to the regeneration of Kirkcaldy Town Centre and the enhancement of the local environment.
- Provide support to people, businesses, and other local organisations to thrive in Kirkcaldy Town Centre.
- Position ourselves as the conduit for local people to engage.

3. Values

- A contemporary approach to developing projects that are modern and adaptable for the future.
- Sustainable - we strive towards having a zero-carbon approach to our projects.
- Employability - encouraging employability and training opportunities, particularly where there are skills shortages.
- Accessible - in pursuit of equalities values and protected characteristics.

4. Governance

Love Oor Lang Toun (LOLT) is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation since June 2023. LOLT has strengthened its governance during 2022-23 through the addition of new trustees from the local community and local businesses. We start this next strategic period with appropriate accountability structures in place, including the development of sub-groups to cover strategic areas of development and policy.

The organisation does not currently have any premises of its own, and the registered address is:

c/o Greener Kirkcaldy
8 East Fergus Place
Kirkcaldy
KY1 1XT



5. Board

The Board currently has six Trustees (two are due to retire) with interestingly diverse backgrounds, and currently employs two staff members leading development and generating engagement.

Other directors are involved in activities or 'ownership' of development projects in order to share responsibility across the group, and ensure all areas of our strategy are receiving attention and drive. We are recruiting for new Trustees. A list of Board members and responsibilities, along with current staff, can be found at Appendix 1.

The Board meets quarterly to receive updates on each area of our plan, share ideas, and stimulate progress. The Board also has annual strategy review meetings. We also have a Finance, Funding and Governance sub-group that can meet between Board meetings to deal with operational or urgent issues.

6. Financial Reporting

The Board receives a financial report every quarter, and LOLT's accounts are finalised and checked by Paterson Boyd and Co, 18 North Street, Glenrothes, Fife.

7. Staff

LOLT employs a Development Manager, and a Communications & Engagement Officer. Both posts are 21-hour part-time posts. Achievement of staff workplans are closely aligned to annual strategic goals and actions, and staff management is governed according to the LOLT Policy Handbook.

8. Strategic Approach

Our overall strategic approach, and the framing for the rest of this strategic plan document is threefold. We will:

- Undertake core activities at the organisation's own hand;
- Research the feasibility of, and seek to initiate, projects;
- Seek to influence major developments on behalf of the community.



9. Core activities

Consultation and development of *The Future Is Now*, our vision document for Kirkcaldy Town Centre.

This was carried out:

- online through our website;
- through meetings with key stakeholders including local businesses;
- talking to the public directly in the town centre and other prominent public places in Kirkcaldy.

The consultation engaged with over 1000 people and has informed the development of our Vision Document. We held a Vision Document event in December 2023 that involved local politicians, local community groups, Fife Council Officers, and the local media. We are now developing a first draft of the Vision Document and will be working with a steering group, based on the output from the Vision Document event, to craft the final Vision Document and use it to create a Local Place Plan.

Developing a permanent presence in the Town Centre

We are actively working with Fife Council to occupy one of their empty retail units in the High Street, and hope to open it up in 2024. This will enable us to:

- have a base for continuous engagement with the local people and groups;
- provide signposting, advice and information for new businesses;
- create low-cost start-up spaces, co-working, and hot desk availability;
- identify and support training and employability opportunities.

'Guerrilla Improvement' Initiatives

We are committed to dealing with dilapidated shopfronts and building facades where owners are neglecting the frontage of their properties in the Town Centre. We have developed a target list, and will lead by example using the former *Bodycare* unit that is owned by the Council, which we hope to occupy. Our strategy will be to identify property owners and contact them. If there is no satisfactory response, our intention would be to give them

notice that we will improve the property ourselves, and give them the opportunity to do it themselves, or specifically tell us they do not want us to act. We will also work with Fife Council to ban the 'V-Boards' used by estate agents to advertise empty properties.

Tourism and events

Up until now LOLT has explored the kind of town people want to live in. We plan to develop a conversation – starting within our own community but spreading beyond - about the type of town people would like to visit, with a view to building our offer as a tourist destination.

Stakeholder Map

LOLT recognises that if its ambitions for Kirkcaldy are to be achieved it will only be through the concerted efforts of a great many different organisations, networks and individuals. Partnership working is intrinsic to our success. From the Vision Document Event, we have identified some key partners and are developing plans to work with them to further the Vision Document ambitions.



Finance and Fundraising Plan

We will develop a finance and fundraising plan associated with this strategy and seek to proactively target applications to potential funders. We will also work up propositions ready for funding opportunities that may come live during the strategy period.

Planning for Future Activities

LOLT will develop a shared online Plan for Future Activities, identifying key 'moments' and important meetings both to mark progress and to effectively enable board members' voluntary input.

10. Project stimulus

LOLT does not want to be just a 'talking shop'. We want to make change happen. Our vision document identifies four project propositions of varying scales. Having generated interest and approval for our ideas through consultation, our next steps will be to make the ideas more concrete through feasibility assessments, planning, fundraising, partnering, and developing governance as appropriate. Our annual plans will reflect priority, opportunity and resources, but we hope to make progress across all four ideas during the next three years. We are developing a framework so that we have a consistent approach to developing the projects while retaining the flexibility needed to implement the different nature and scale of the ventures.

We are on our way to have premises in the Town Centre where we can provide a Proof of Concept in terms of the projects; have a clear presence for LOLT in the Town Centre; and look at how we stimulate local business development and support existing independent traders.

Project One – Small space

Project Sponsor: Andrew Lowrie

Potential site: 188 High Street, Kirkcaldy (former Bodycare unit). Ground floor retail unit covering 25sqm, currently vacant, owned by Fife Council

Project Partner: Fife Council, who would like to create four spaces with flexible, low-cost leases for start-ups.

Action: Fife Council have shown commitment to this project and are clearing out the unit. LOLT have produced their project canvas, and Fife Council have developed their project plan for the building. LOLT have applied for funding to operate the building in 2024.

Project Two – Medium Space

Project Owner: None Identified

Potential site: 180 High Street, Kirkcaldy. Four-storey building with large retail unit on ground floor with first floor office/meeting room totaling 250 sqm. Two story living accommodation above needing substantial refurbishment and separate access. This building was bought by a local businessperson, and we hope that the building will be brought back into use.

Action: Unlikely to be available for an Enterprise Hub, and may have to look for other potential sites. Concept remains valid for other sites, and we will continue to promote a medium space project.



Project Three – Large/shared space

Project Sponsor: None identified

Potential site: Former Marks & Spencer building, High Street, Kirkcaldy. Three-storey building with large sales floor, loading bay and cold storage basement, storage area on 1st floor and offices on top floor. Building covers nearly 5000sqm. The potential is for an indoor artisan marketplace, street-food court with indoor leisure activities (mini-golf, bowling), makers spaces, co-working spaces and potential for Enterprise Hub. Basement could be converted into a small cinema.

Project Partner(s): Corra Foundation, Fife Council.

Action: Initial discussions held with Corra and Savills. An Edinburgh-based charity have advanced a proposal to use the building, and are open to partner with Corra and LOLT.

Project Four – Waterfront

Project Sponsor(s): Lucy McTernan

Potential sites: Waterfront walkway; old swimming pool site; Esplanade multi-storey car park, Volunteers Green. Site projects should be dealt with individually.

Sub projects:

a) Pop-ups (cafes, shops, bike-hire, etc.)

b) Pavilions

c) Old swimming pool site (temporary use as artificial beach, play area)

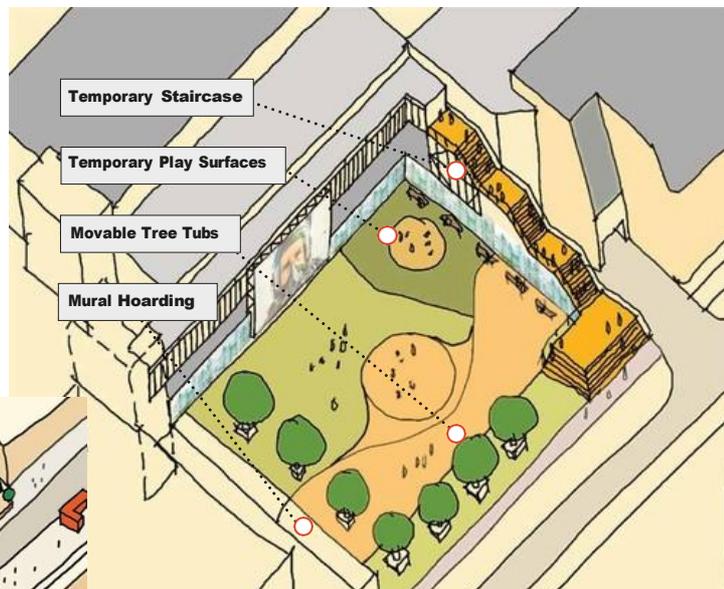
d) Car Park site (combine with old swimming pool site to create waterfront apartments)

e) Volunteers Green (new concept with flexible use incorporating 'calm' areas)

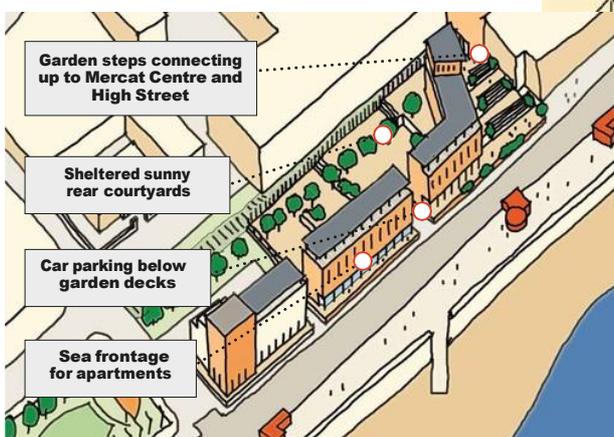
Project partner(s): Fife Council, Kirkcaldy Civic Society, Greener Kirkcaldy

Action: Research and networking; develop outline plans; engage stakeholders; re-engage with community. Fife Council have undertaken substantial improvements to Volunteers Green, which will open in Spring 2024.

GAP SITE MEANWHILE USES



SEAFRONT DEVELOPMENT



11. Influencing major developments

There is a limit to the things LOLT can make happen at its own hand. However, we recognise very clearly the key importance of major potential developments in and around the Town centre in coming months and years and seek to provide a conduit for the community to influence these. We plan to include consideration of major developments in our engagement with the community and key stakeholders and, where appropriate, seek bilateral talks with the relevant developers. From initial engagement we would aspire to generate workplans (and relevant resourcing) associated with each.

In current consideration are:

The Postings Site

A key site adjacent to and forming part of the High Street, this site is currently being cleared with a view to building apartments. Outline plans offer much in terms of communal and green spaces, and a 'connecting' design between the Town Square area and the High Street. We have heard already from our architects and from the consultation that the High Street would benefit from a 'focal point' or plaza – we would be happy to offer liaison on these aspects to the developer.

Car Parks demolition

Kirkcaldy Area Committee has agreed the two unattractive and underused multi-storey car park buildings on the Waterfront should be demolished to make the site more attractive to potential buyers/ developers, but there is no timescale yet associated with the plan. Our aim is to support our local councillors in this process and generate temporary and permanent proposals that build on our consultation ideas.

Ferry Crossing

Both Edinburgh City and Fife Council have recently revisited the idea of a cross-Forth passenger ferry service from Fife to Edinburgh¹. LOLT is excited about the potential of this, albeit a long term aspiration. We understand that this will be a private venture that will be a crossing from Kirkcaldy to Newhaven. We would expect that any vessel, including a hovercraft, be of modern design using either electric power or non-carbon fuel such as green hydrogen.

Future Development Proposals

Through our engagement with Fife Council, local press, and other stakeholders we will remain alert to the emergence of other development proposals. As other significant developments become known we will assess how LOLT can add value and enable a sense of community ownership.

¹ https://www.fife.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0020/450155/Local-Transport-Strategy-for-Fife-2023-2033.pdf



Roadmap to the Future

Following the Vision Document Event, we will develop a roadmap with our partners of how we will bring the Vision Document to reality. LOLT appreciates the creation of a 21st century town centre for Kirkcaldy is a long-game project, probably taking up to 10 years if we include the physical asset restructuring that will be required on a Waterfront that is a mile long, and a corresponding High Street that had end-to-end retail, cafes, and pubs. That is why we are developing a Vision Document so that the community have a stake in the development of our modern Town Centre, which will not only be a source of pride again for the people of Kirkcaldy, but also a place with a reputation of being a town worth visiting.

Appendix 1 – List of Trustees and Employees

Steven Hay – Treasurer
Amanda Allan – local business owner
Suzy Goodsir – local resident
Andrew Lowrie – local resident
Dr Lucy McTernan – local resident
Heather Stuart – Chief Executive of Fife Cultural Trust

Employees

Danny Cepok – Development Manager
Amelia Wilkinson – Communications & Engagement Officer

