exploring community resilience in times of rapid change

what is it? how are people building it? why does it matter?

CarnegieUK Trust

FIERY SPIRITS COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE
building vibrant, resilient rural communities across the UK, Ireland & beyond
LADAKH

(WATER = LIFE)
• 1913: £10 million endowment to promote the wellbeing of the people of the UK and Ireland.
• Early years: capital grants for community infrastructure, eg. libraries
• 2007: Charter for Rural Communities
  Message:
  “Focus on community assets, not deficits”
- 2008-ongoing: Community of Practice (www.fieryspirits.com)
2010/11: Exploring Community Resilience

“Sometimes change is gradual and things move forward in roughly continuous and predictable ways.

At other times, change is sudden, disorganising and turbulent …”

Stockholm Resilience Centre: What is Resilience?

Can we cope with the demands in the future on water? Can we provide enough energy? Can we do it, all that, while mitigating and adapting to climate change?

John Beddington, the UK government’s chief scientific adviser, speaking on 24 August 2009
2010/11: Exploring Community Resilience
Many views on community resilience

“Community Resilience is about communities using local resources and knowledge to help themselves during an emergency in a way that complements the local emergency services.”
UK Cabinet Office

“Resilient – it means that you’re strong and flexible doesn’t it – as a community, it means you’ve the strength to sustain yourself as a community and a bit of flexibility, a bit of muscle…..”
Community volunteer, Cornwall

Community resilience is ... the existence, development and engagement of community resources to thrive in a dynamic environment characterised by change, uncertainty, unpredictability and surprise. Resilient communities intentionally develop personal and collective capacity to respond to and influence change, to sustain and renew the community and to develop new trajectories for the community’s future.

Community Resilience: literature and practice review (Magis 2007)
Resilience Science
Strawberries, asparagus, courgettes, dill, coriander, pak choi, raspberries, basil, and pork pies?!?* We are out of the hungry gap and it's officially summer (you can tell 'cos of the rain). Tomatoes and strawberries and salad are available again, and the last of the asparagus is still around (and for sale at Pittonnie if you want to try growing your own).

Enjoy it while you can.

We have loads of events all across the summer and are always looking for volunteers. Our next event is the Pittonnie Gala Day Community Lunch. To sign up for a couple of hours serving up lovely nooch and making out your favourite local food experiment, email us at: fifediet@yahoo.co.uk
Sense of Place

FROM THE LOW TIDE OF THE SEA TO THE HIGHEST MOUNTAIN TOPS
Community ownership of land in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland

JAMES HUNTER WITH PHOTOGRAPHS BY CAILEAN MACLEAN

- 33% Developed
- 33% Farmed
- 33% Reserved (wildlife woodland etc)
- Solar Access
- Walkability
- Ecology
- Density
- Greenness
- Quietness
- Energy Efficient
- Community
Communities Stewarding Assets

RENEWABLE ENERGY

Allt Duisdale reservoir

The community of Camuscross and Duisdale in south Shetland is about to become the proud owners of Allt Duisdale reservoir, only the eighth community in Scotland to purchase land under the Land Reform (Scotland) Act.

They plan to develop the reservoir as a micro-hydro scheme and hope to work with the local grazings committee to find a site for the generator shed.

The project started in February 2009 when Camuscross and Duisdale Initiative (CDI) became aware that the small, redundant Scottish Water reservoir had been offered for sale by auction in Glasgow. With only thirteen days to go, they immediately contacted the community assets branch of the Scottish Government to see if they could use the Land Reform Act to stop the asset from being sold on the open market. Working with ScotRenew, their local Community Renewal Group, they succeeded in persuading Scottish Water to withdraw the reservoir from auction, which gave CDI time to put in a “registration of interest in land” under the land reform act.

The registration of interest in land process is not one which community companies can enter lightly – the initial complicated application which must be done at the start of the process. Once the application had been accepted by the Scottish Government, there were a number of other procedures to get through, all with very strict deadlines. At any of these hurdles, the project could have been stopped in its tracks.

It was only when CDI received the letter from Scottish Water in late February 2010, to say that the application for £5,457 to purchase the reservoir had been successful, that the community company knew that all the months of hard work had paid off. HEW’s Community Land Unit is also assisting the project by funding the conveyancing costs of the purchase.

Once the reservoir is in community ownership, the next step will be to conduct a more detailed study into the design, plant and economics of the hydro scheme, prior to getting the funding to develop the project. In the longer term, the project may begin to implement a biodiversity plan for the reservoir and small strip of land around it.

CDI hopes to use the existence of the rights given to crofting communities under the Land Reform Act to negotiate the purchase of land from the landlord for the generator shed for the hydro scheme. Although most people know about the large community buy-outs, such as those in the Western Isles which have been made possible because of the existence of this legislation, the potential to use it to negotiate purchase of small pieces of land, currently under crofting tenure, for example for renewable energy projects, seems to have been little explored.

The community company has an excellent relationship with Camuscross grazings committee, whose forward-thinking attitude means that CDI is able to consider a number of partnership projects involving common grazings land - including affordable house sites, footpaths and heritage projects. The aim is that these projects will bring both wide community benefit and also some revenue for the grazings committee to reinvest in crofting activities and infrastructure. The grazings committee is particularly to be commended for being willing to consider releasing land for community projects, as it has one of the finest hill grazings around – with only approximately 350 acres and 37 shareholders!

As the number of community companies and trusts grows each year, there are many exciting possibilities in the crofting counties for community trusts to work actively with crofters and grazings committees on projects which could bring both agricultural and wider community benefit. Perhaps just as importantly, such joint projects have the potential to increase goodwill towards crofters and increase the value and status placed on the crofting system by the community.

Our thanks to Susan Walker for this report.
Connected Communities

You can't just have one resilient town, you need to link into other communities, and their learning...
Healthy Engaged People
“I’m happy and fit in mind and body”

Thriving
Coping
Depressed
Isolated
Networked
Fearful
Fragile
Stable
Enterprising
Secure
Creative
Inter-dependent
Cross-community links
“Inclusive, creative culture
“We’re confident in our diversity – creating a great future together”

Localised economy within ecological limits
“We steward our land, food, water, energy, services, jobs, housing”

Compass of Resilience

Cross-community links
“We collaborate with other communities near and far – we know no place can go it alone”
Towards ‘Break Through’ Communities

- Break Down
- Break Even
- Break Through

shocks  effort
Localised economy within ecological limits

“We steward our land, food, water, energy, services, jobs, housing”

Opportunity to learn from pioneers
• For example: Allt Duisdale –
  1) Opportunity for communities to bid for Scottish Water disposals
  2) Access to Finance & support for feasibility studies
FIERY SPIRITS
COMMUNITY of PRACTICE
building vibrant, resilient rural communities across the UK, Ireland & beyond

supported by

CarnegieUK TRUST
CHANGING MINDS • CHANGING LIVES
Collaborative Publication

Launched: August 2011

“Lively, easy to understand and packed with useful metaphors and practical tools for applying resilience thinking”

Community activist (Scotland)

“Inspiring stories that make the theory come alive – and a theoretical framework that makes sense of the stories”

Sustainability Academic (Wales)

- 25000 downloads

- Global interest eg. Australia, Canada, Haiti, USA, New Zealand, Brazil
Only a crisis – actual or perceived – produces real change. When that crisis occurs, the actions that are taken depend on the ideas that are lying around.

- Milton Freedman
(quoted by Naomi Klein)