

# **A Better Balerno: Community Action Plan 2017 – 2027**

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## **Who We Are**

Balerno Village Trust represents local people. We are made up of unpaid volunteers who live in the area.

Our role is to support the local community – we organise the Balerno farmers' market, as well as a range of other projects and events. We set up the Balerno Music Festival, now in its 10<sup>th</sup> year, and initiated the Harlaw Hydro project. We work closely with other community groups, and are responsible for distributing Community Benefit Funds from Harlaw Hydro.

## **What We Did**

In 2016, Balerno Village Trust decided to undertake a community consultation to establish clear priorities for the village that local people could feel part of. Part of this was deciding how community benefit funds from the hydro scheme should be invested. A community plan was commissioned and we tried to speak to as many local people as possible. We spoke to nearly 250 people at open meetings, events, and focus groups, and we held lots of one to one discussions with local groups. At the end of the process, local people were invited to vote on priorities.

## **What You Said**

People told us that Balerno is a fantastic location to live in, with easy access to both Edinburgh and The Pentlands. Local people value the schools, the sense of community, and the number of activities and events that take place in the village.

Issues identified included public transport links to West Lothian, a lack of vibrancy on Main Street, a lack of things for young people to do, and a desire to protect the green belt from ever larger housing developments.

## **What This Led To**

As a result of this information we have drafted a long term vision for the community of Balerno. Please see the table overleaf.

## **Further Information**

We want more local people involved in this vision. For more information on what we are doing, please visit our website or find us on Facebook.

[www.balernovt.org.uk](http://www.balernovt.org.uk)

<https://www.facebook.com/BalernoVillageTrust>

	Vibrant Balerno	Green Balerno	Destination Balerno	Our Infrastructure <i>(working with Balerno Community Council)</i>
	Priorities	Priorities	Priorities	Priorities
Short Term	<p>Develop small grants scheme for local groups to bid in to</p> <p>Generate ideas for projects to promote village integration</p> <p>Generate ideas for projects to motivate people to use the village centre more</p> <p>Tidy the village centre (litter)</p>	<p>Work with the Balerno Playpark Improvement Project to upgrade the Play Park</p> <p>Support the Tennis Club pavilion project</p> <p>Community gardening project</p>	<p>Advertise Balerno better making use of Water of Leith &amp; proximity to The Pentlands</p> <p>Improve signposts around the village</p> <p>Maps of local walks</p>	<p>Work with housing developers to embed Community Benefit Clauses in contracts</p> <p>Lobby the Council for improved pavements, roads and cycle paths</p> <p>Lobby the Council for safer road crossings by the schools</p> <p>Lobby the Council for public toilets</p>
Medium Term	<p>Better provision for young people</p> <p>Work with Scotmid and CEC to revamp the car park and passage to Main Street</p> <p>Encourage more local shops</p> <p>Encourage more restaurants and cafés</p>	<p>More and better cycle paths</p> <p>Outdoor education projects</p>	<p>Develop the Harlaw Visitor Centre project</p> <p>Create a safe foot and cycle path from the village to Harlaw Reservoir in partnership with relevant agencies</p>	<p>Work with City of Edinburgh Council &amp; other partners for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improved public transport services – regular buses to Livingston &amp; The Gyle</li> <li>- Improved infrastructure &amp; services to support new housing developments</li> </ul>
Long Term	<p>Refreshed Community Centre, including public toilets</p>		<p>Run the Harlaw Visitor Centre as a community run asset – including additional services like bike rental, a shuttle bus to the reservoir etc.</p>	