

FRASERBURGH REGENERATION ACTION PLAN

ANNUAL REPORT 2013/14

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**Aberdeenshire
COUNCIL**



INTRODUCTION

It was just over a year ago that Aberdeenshire Council’s Banff & Buchan Area Committee approved the Fraserburgh Action Plan so the time is right to take a look at what has happened since then.

Regeneration means different things to different people. Some consider it to be about replacing old or derelict property with new developments while others believe it is about community regeneration with people organising to help themselves. In fact it is all this and more and covers social, economic, physical and cultural actions which can bring about positive change and renewal. With its eight themes from Active Fraserburgh to Fraserburgh’s Health & Wellbeing the Action Plan aims for improvements for all – especially those areas with the greatest need. The Plan was shaped by the people of Fraserburgh during the consultation phase and it is now being delivered in partnership with the same people whether they are part of the Sports Hub, Fraserburgh Forward Business Association, Fraserburgh Development Trust or the many other organisations and individuals who give their time and expertise to improve things for their community.

When funding was approved for the Action Plan one of the things that was seen as essential was that things should start to happen quickly. This Annual Report hopefully demonstrates that this has been achieved. There is a long way to go yet and a lot more has to happen but the commitment given by Aberdeenshire Council, and expressed through the Action Plan and funding, remains as strong as ever and we hope it will continue to be matched by all those willing to become involved whether as participants in schemes or volunteers for projects.

Looking forward for a moment, there are some very exciting projects on the horizon that have the potential to change the way people think of Fraserburgh and to improve the quality of life for visitors and residents alike. They will be centred on the built and natural heritage assets of the area: the beach, the coast, but most of all the hard work and enterprising nature of the people who live there.



Cllr Jim Gifford
Leader of Aberdeenshire Council
Chair of Member Officer Working Group on Regeneration

THE EIGHT THEMES OF THE ACTION PLAN

Theme	Objective
Active Fraserburgh	Change internal and external perceptions, improve health and wellbeing and increase visitor opportunities through the development or renewal of sport and leisure facilities
Enterprising Fraserburgh	Increase entrepreneurship by reducing the barriers to entry and encourage businesses to develop new products and markets and to add value to existing ones
Developing Fraserburgh	Identify and develop opportunities to develop brownfield sites whether housing, commercial, retail or industrial
Fraserburgh’s Environment	Make Fraserburgh a cleaner, greener place that encourages pride of place and active citizenship
Fraserburgh’s Skills & Education	Use improvements in skills and education to raise attainment, improve pay rates and prospects for individuals. Businesses improve skills to increase quality, productivity & diversity of products and services.
Fraserburgh’s Key Industries	Build on key sector expertise to grow existing businesses and attract new ones.
Fraserburgh Town Centre	Develop Fraserburgh Town Centre as a ‘Go To’ destination that is vibrant and successful
Fraserburgh’s Wellbeing	Hearts and minds are won by improvements to health, wellbeing, place, safety, and the feelgood factor.

Do you have an idea that fits with these themes? Come and discuss it with us. Call or email the regeneration team on 01346 586323 or debra.campbell@aberdeenshire.gov.uk or find us at the town events.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

Most themes have seen progress of one kind or another during the year but there are some projects which have reached the stage where they are particularly worthy of noting.

Barrasgate Road housing

Thirty new sustainable Council houses are being built on the brownfield site bordered by Denmark Street/Quarry Road/Barrasgate Road. The project was awarded funding as part of the Greener Homes Innovation Fund which is supported by funding from the Council's Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Scottish Government Grant plus Planning Gain and regeneration funds.

Historic Fraserburgh & 1 Saltoun Square



The Action Plan is supporting multi-million pound applications to Historic Scotland and The Heritage Lottery Fund to establish a built heritage conservation area in Fraserburgh which supports the restoration and redevelopment of some of the town's best loved and iconic buildings. Top of the list is a proposal to refurbish and potentially redevelop the Council Chambers

at 1 Saltoun Square in conjunction with the adjoining former police station. If successful it would open the possibilities for new uses in the space and a renewed architectural focus in the town centre which not only recognises the rich heritage of the past but is also fit for purpose for a century to come.

Community Garden

The community garden planned by Fraserburgh Development Trust on behalf of Fraserburgh residents and visitors to the hospital was able to go ahead after funding of £15,000 for essential fencing was provided as part of the Fraserburgh Regeneration Action Plan. The Garden has been developed on vacant land at the rear of Alexandra Terrace and is intended to encourage people to enjoy more outdoors activities. The project has also received funding from the People's Health Trust and the Royal Horticultural Society. RHS Scotland are treating it as one of their flagship projects which will not only receive funding but will be able to tap into the immense knowledge and experience of the world-renowned organisation.

Wind & Wave Beach event



During the summer extreme sports came to Fraserburgh's sandy shores for the Scottish Windfest on Tour festival of watersports and extreme sports. Popular among those who need wind and waves to practice and compete, the town

has one of the top kite sports schools in the country in Synergy Kitesports.

On Saturday and Sunday, August 2 and 3 locals and visitors alike came to Fraserburgh Beach to watch both men and women harness nature for free. This year's festival included a round of the Kite Boarder Cross Europe competition and these athletes' performances were spectacular racing around a course whilst negotiating obstacles.

It was also a chance to promote these adrenaline sports and taster sessions were available for powerkiting, surfing, kayaking and stand up paddle boarding, as well as



for the more experienced in kite surfing. Our hope is to encourage similar events in the future that feature Fraserburgh's tremendous natural assets and will showcase them to a national and international audience.

The event was organised by Synergy Kitesports, Scottish Windfest on Tour and Kite Boarder Cross Europe, and supported by Aberdeenshire Council and the European Regional Development Fund.

Fraserburgh Harbour Pontoons

Fraserburgh Harbour is of course predominately a fishing port with a growing business in offshore, commercial and other areas but the fishing fleet has contracted over the years due to various reasons. This has particularly affected the south half of the port so the Commissioners agreed to the provision of a pontoon facility in the port for the first time. The proposal involves installing pontoons for 30-40 smaller vessels to use the port on a regular basis. This will enable Fraserburgh Harbour to develop part of the South Harbour into a community asset as the public will be able to use the facility. The project will allow the harbour to develop and diversify and has been supported by regeneration funding to match European funding being provided through Aberdeenshire European Fisheries Fund.



WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING WHERE?

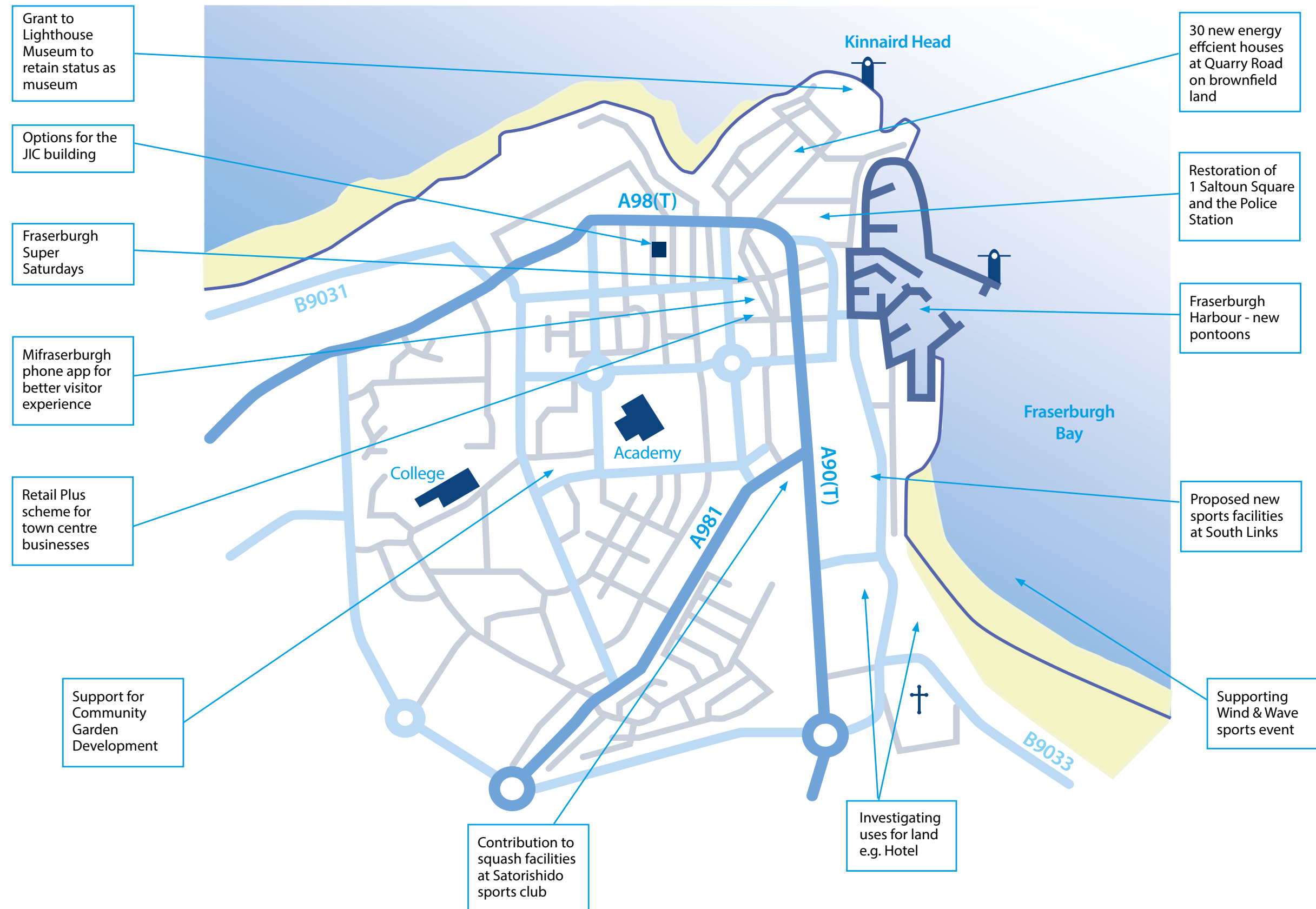


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Fraserburgh Super Saturdays

One of the earliest actions taken under the Action Plan was to pilot Fraserburgh Super Saturdays. This has been followed by a two-year funded programme to enable Fraserburgh Development Trust and the Fraserburgh Forward business association to extend the programme of fun days creating a vibrant town centre.

So successful has the project been it has been shortlisted for the 2014 SURF (Scottish Urban Regeneration Forum) Awards for Best Practice in Community Regeneration. The winner is to be announced at SURF Awards Presentation Dinner on Tuesday 2 December at the Radisson Hotel, Glasgow.



Retail Plus

It is a common perception that the Regeneration Action Plan is all about the Council doing things but this is not the truth. While the Council has the role of funding and coordinating projects the original and best ideas often come from within the community and are more likely to be successful because of this.

Fraserburgh Super Saturdays is an obvious example but so is Retail Plus, a scheme aimed at supporting the retail businesses of Fraserburgh in two ways. The first is through providing expert advice on a one-to-one basis for independent businesses in the town. The second and complementary part of the project is to offer business improvement grants of up to £5,000 per business to enable participants to implement the expert advice obtained. Up to 15 businesses were expected to apply but in fact 46 did so! As a result, Aberdeenshire Council increased funding for the project from £78,000 to £171,000. In the weeks to come the work and investment of the various businesses will become visible as they complete their improvements.

mi fraserburgh

mi fraserburgh provides local shopping information for visitors while encouraging retailers to improve their online presence. While other existing products are based purely on listings mi fraserburgh gives local businesses the opportunity to provide much greater content such as special offers of promotions as well as links to other data sources like Facebook pages or websites.

It was included in the Fraserburgh Action Plan because the business community had expressed interest in a co-operative smartphone application that would help them to improve marketing to visitors and help those in the town centre to get more from their visit by being able to access information on promotions and where to buy/eat/drink/visit.

For a nominal £100 businesses and local organisations will not only have two years access to the system for promotions but will also have the assistance of a Digital Ambassador to get the most from it.

Fraserburgh Cinema

While parts of the Action Plan focus on long-term, large scale developments others have been designed to be quicker and simpler to introduce. Fraserburgh Cinema has involved working with Fraserburgh Junior Arts Society (FJAS), Dalrymple Hall and Film Mobile Scotland to bring the latest movies to the town. FJAS has for some time been providing a service based on DVDs but the new arrangement offers a Fraserburgh audience movies which are still showing in major cinema multiplexes and access to the best sound equipment and viewing quality.

The programme kicked off in December 2013 with a showing of 'Saving Mr Banks' and 'Frozen' which sold out for two showings. Since then the programme of family movies and box office hits has been continuing with popcorn on the side to enhance the experience.

The idea behind the project is to encourage better use of the town centre and its facilities and extend entertainment opportunities. Tickets for the cinema followed by a meal at J D Wetherspoons or Cheers all goes towards creating an evening economy.



Fraserburgh WiFi

Not everything we've planned has worked out. One project which has been set aside for now is the proposal to provide free public WiFi in the town centre. As technical investigations developed it became clear that bars, restaurants and shops are already providing this service to their customers and it could be counter-productive to compete with them. It also became clear that it could cost thousands of pounds per year and could not proceed until Fraserburgh's exchanges have been updated for high speed internet.

Financial Info – where the money comes from and how it is being spent.

At the heart of the funding for the Fraserburgh Action Plan is an annual budget made available by the Council and which currently stands at £400,000 per annum. Any funds which are unused in a particular year are held in Council reserves to go towards forthcoming projects. Added to the core budget are external funds for specific projects like housing, health or heritage from a range of government, lottery and others sources.

For instance, since the beginning of the Action Plan a £1.5m application was made to the Scottish Government’s Capital Regeneration Fund for new sporting facilities at the South Links. While we were unsuccessful on that occasion we will make further applications in the future.

However we were successful in gaining £1.5m towards new housing at Barrasgate Road and Quarry Road and have made multi-million pound applications to Heritage Lottery and Historic Scotland to help restore and improve the historic and built heritage in the town.

The aim is that for every £1 Aberdeenshire Council invests we look to other sources to contribute another £2-3. The result of these applications and investment take time to come to fruition but all ultimately count towards our ambition to invest £15m+ in the regeneration of Fraserburgh.



Major items of expenditure or commitment in the past year have included:

Fraserburgh Super Saturday	£73,616 (over two years)
Retail Plus	£171,250 (£93,000 was added due to high demand)
Fraserburgh Harbour Pontoons	£67,259
MiFraserburgh	£32,000 (over two years)
Project Research & Development	£40,000 for Beach, Hospitality & Sports Developments
Green Space improvements	£16,000
Sports & Tourism	£24,000
Built Heritage projects	£100,000
New Housing	£4,000,000
Volunteer Hours	2000+ hours have been invested

Want to get involved? There are many organisations in Fraserburgh recruiting volunteers for fun, interesting and valuable work. Contact us and we’ll put you in touch.



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