



Settlement Scale

Case Study examples of where the Place Standard tool has been used for planning at Settlement Scale.

INTRODUCTION

This series of case studies from Architecture and Design Scotland illustrates how the Place Standard tool has been used in a wide variety of ways and at a range of scales for the purpose of informing spatial planning, community planning, design and development.

The practitioners and organisations featured explain their reasons for using the tool, the methods they applied when doing so, their approach to empowering local communities and the impact that this has had. They also share their perceptions of the tool, the knowledge gained in using it, as well as any valuable lessons learned and worth sharing with others.

PLACE STANDARD - SETTLEMENT SCALE

This set of case studies and our Focus piece show the tool being put to use to inform a range of policies, frameworks and plans for improvement, development and regeneration at settlement scale. They demonstrate use of the tool in:

- A design charrette to identify opportunities for improvement in Kincardine, Fife
- A two-stage charrette to inform a new place plan for Kirkwall, Orkney
- An iterative series of community events to inform a settlement statement and establish a community brief for improvements in Portlethen, Aberdeenshire.

The separate focus piece highlights strategic work in North Ayrshire that started by addressing wider Locality areas and led to a focus on settlements such as Kilwinning and the Three Towns of Ardrossan, Saltcoats and Stevenston.

- Mapping work and settlement plans co-designed with East Ayrshire communities.

Key learning points identified by A&DS:

These case studies demonstrate diverse applications and impacts of the Place Standard tool. Most notably:

- In Kincardine and Kirkwall, the tool was deployed effectively as part of a wider programme of consultation activities, including pre-charrette engagement
- Visual and graphic aids have been used to communicate the tool in dynamic and accessible ways, including large vinyl floor maps in Kirkwall
- Whilst mostly used indoors in a group or workshop setting, the tool was also used outdoor on-street by groups of secondary pupils in Kincardine
- The iterative use and re-use of the tool is also evident in a number of cases where attention is narrowed down to smaller areas, or ideas are followed through to specific action planning, as in Portlethen and North Ayrshire
- In Kincardine, use of the tool identified opportunities for community-led action, and also opened up discussions with various landowners about land use and access.

KINCARDINE, FIFE

Planning Stage	Local Authority Spatial Planning - Design Charrette
Leadership	The Coalfields Regeneration Trust and Fife Council (client). Oliver Chapman Architects (consultant)
Participants	50 - 60 residents, business owners, community interest groups, council officers, elected members - ranging from 25 years to the retired.



“The tool gave us the best possible chance of drawing out observations – in a fair and balanced way – that touched on the majority of the issues affecting the centre of Kincardine.”

Oliver Chapman, Oliver Chapman Architects, Charrette Delivery Team

Gary Porter of The Coalfields Regeneration Trust and design consultant Oliver Chapman share their experiences of using the Place Standard as part of a design charrette for the town of Kincardine on the Firth of Forth.

What were you trying to achieve by using the Place Standard?

We used the Place Standard as part of a wider charrette process in June 2017. The aim of the charrette, called 'Go Forth! Kincardine', was to appraise Kincardine in its current state and help identify opportunities for co-ordinated action to benefit the local community and make Kincardine an even better place.

We felt the Place Standard tool was a natural fit to assist us in gauging the community's thoughts in a simple and tangible way. With the tool, we focused on five target areas in Kincardine identified from the pre-charrette engagement work and from existing knowledge.

These areas were of similar scale but varied in character: the historic village centre/market place; an awkward road junction; the high street where

the supermarket was scheduled to close; and the waterfront facing the River Forth that is hard to access. The tool facilitated our engagement work with the community and helped us to tease out local perceptions of the target areas.

How was the Place Standard tool applied?

Use of the tool was discussed with key stakeholders at pre-event planning and briefing meetings, with colleagues on the charrette delivery team having had experience of using it in previous charrette work.

It formed part of the full charrette programme, which was widely promoted within the community via flyers, email and on social media, and enjoyed national press coverage. Various pre-engagement events included a creative workshop with pupils from the local primary and high schools, walking around town with the Big Map, and a number of stakeholder meetings with members of local organisations.

Following on from the pre-charrette activities, the main charrette event was held at Kincardine Community Centre over a concentrated four-day

period in June 2017.

Each workshop built upon the discussions of the day before to enable a thorough investigation and analysis of the key issues, and a full range of ideas and suggestions to be gathered. Evening drop-ins complemented the daytime workshops, and opened the charrette event to as wide a sample of the local contingent as possible.

The workshops and drop-in sessions were well-attended, with over 200 participants across the four-day period. The Place Standard tool was used on the first day, with participants examining the four target areas on investigative group walks, each led by a member of the engagement team with a background discipline that best suited the anticipated discussion points. Clipboards were shared between pairs of participants, and small groups of pairs focussed on each target area. Participants walked around the areas and completed paper versions of the tool as they went.

The walks were followed by group discussions in which participants were invited to share their findings and observations, and to come to a consensus on their area's score for each of the Place Standard categories. Each group had an anchor member from the engagement team. Individuals from other area groups were encouraged to drop in and give their opinions in order to build up a holistic picture.

Data from the Place Standard assessment was then analysed and drawn as layers on blank, large format prints of the Place Standard compass diagram. These were reviewed with the community at a charrette plenary session for group agreement that the outcomes reflected the general consensus. It was then digitised and included in the final charrette report with analysis.

What influence did the work have and how is it being followed up?

The key observations and issues that arose during the PS exercise are now clearly prioritised in the charrette report and are organised into four underlying themes: Connectivity; Heritage and Identity; Enterprise; and Health and Wellbeing. This has formed the basis for a 'big picture' holistic vision for the future of Kincardine, and a more detailed action plan which identifies short, medium and long-term actions.

In addition, the data that emerged from the

charrette opened up discussions with Scottish Power (about derelict land use) and with the Co-op supermarket (which is moving out of the town centre), and also spurred action for improved access to local Forestry Commission woodland and more.

The process helped focus a fledgling Development Trust, and also led to the creation of a community anchor group, 'Go Forth Kincardine', which aims to lead on and deliver the plans, projects and proposals set out in the community plan. In addition, the wider influence of the work is shaping social and spatial policy in Fife.

What lessons would you wish to share?

"We found the pre-engagement through the charrette made the Place Standard assessment easier to roll out – people understood it as we had made reference to it previously, and it was included in the wider planned programme.

We found that having the Place Standard tool as part of a wider consultation was useful. As a stand-alone exercise, this allowed us to make sure the findings were included and tangible to the other research and work completed."

Gary Porter, Regeneration Development Manager,
The Coalfields Regeneration Trust

"The tool allowed a structured conversation to take place once the groups of participants came back together at the venue. This gave us the best possible chance of drawing out observations – in a fair and balanced way – that touched on the majority of the issues affecting the centre of Kincardine.

However, with the Place Standard session programmed for a weekday daytime, we found it hard to reach 18 to 60-year-olds in employment. For this demographic, the evening sessions meant they could review and add to the outcomes of earlier sessions."

Oliver Chapman, Charrette Delivery Team

Find out more online

www.coalfields-regen.org.uk/go-forth-kincardine

KIRKWALL, ORKNEY

Planning Stage	Place Plan, Local Development Plan, Local Development Framework and Development Briefs
Leadership	Orkney Islands Council, and Planning Aid Scotland
Participants	100+ people from the local community, ranging in age from eight to 70, including primary and secondary school pupils and youth groups.



“The Place Standard is about more than gathering the data – it fosters a sense of inclusive collaboration and helps lead the way in achieving the Scottish Government’s ambition for community empowerment.”

Julia Frost, Operations Manager, PAS

Julia Frost of the place and active citizenship charity PAS talks about use of the Place Standard in Your Kirkwall, the charrette it managed and facilitated for Orkney Islands Council.

What were you trying to achieve by using the Place Standard?

Your Kirkwall was a two-stage programme of community engagement between autumn 2017 and summer 2018 to inform Orkney Islands Council’s new Place Plan for Kirkwall for the next ten to 20 years.

The Your Kirkwall charrette encouraged people to come together, discuss and share ideas for the future of the islands’ capital as a place to live, work, study and visit. It comprised a series of open community conversations and events, including a community survey, drop-in events and presentations, as well as facilitated workshops in which the Place Standard tool was used. We chose to use it due to its ease of use and because it generates ‘big picture’ data about a place.

How was the tool applied?

Your Kirkwall involved residents, schools, community groups, local businesses, voluntary organisations, the local authority and others. A dedicated website, Facebook page and Twitter feed were set up to raise public awareness, promote events, encourage completion of the community survey and provide news updates to sustain interest.

Use of the Place Standard tool formed a key element of pre-charrette engagement workshops with schools, Orkney college and a youth club. We adapted the tool with plainer English and simplified questions to help frame conversations with Kirkwall’s young people.

Also during the pre-charrette phase, the online and app versions of the tool were made available to residents via a unique access code. This community survey, which attracted 322 responses, helped to start the conversation and gauge the most important issues in advance of the main charrette activity.

Then, in November 2017, four facilitated public workshops of two hours each were held in Kirkwall

Town Hall, with public drop-ins taking place throughout both days. The aim of the workshops was to build on the themes identified pre-charrette, and drill down into community aspirations and priorities for Kirkwall

To keep things visual and engaging, we produced a giant vinyl floor map of the Place Standard wheel, with plastic cones as markers for people to position on the wheel. The floor map was placed in the town hall foyer, outside the entrance to the venue, so that anyone could engage with it. This worked really well – we observed residents gathering round the map, some on their hands and knees, sharing thoughts.

In the workshops, we worked with groups ranging in size from two to three people, up to ten, to drill down into the perceptions data gleaned pre-charrette. The paper version of the tool was used in these workshops as a 'mood guide' to gauge and sense check priorities.

The tool was used in conjunction with our PAS SP=EED guide, and outputs from the Place Standard exercise fed into a draft framework for the new place plan.

What influence did the work have and how is it being followed up?

The pre-charrette activities and public workshops were followed in January 2018 by a series of public presentations, discussions and a youth summit to present and obtain public feedback on the initial framework of draft proposals for the emergent Place Plan (these were also made available via the website and social media channels).

The Place Standard revealed that residents genuinely had a strong sense of identity and belonging to Orkney, however there were also some perhaps surprising areas of dissatisfaction, for example low scores on greenspace. This led directly to further work with young people at the youth summit on developing ideas to enhance greenspaces around the Peedie Sea.

Following this second stage in the consultation, the Place Plan, entitled Your Kirkwall Urban Design Framework – A Place Plan for Kirkwall, was refined and then ratified by full Council (a meeting of all Councillors) on 9 October 2018.

Having been informed by such an extensive community engagement process, it can be said

that the final Place Plan is truly owned by the community. It now guides future Council planning, design and transportation policies for the town, and is currently being written into the Orkney Local Development Plan and Kirkwall Settlement Statement as Supplementary Planning Guidance.

What lessons would you wish to share?

"We feel that Your Kirkwall is a glowing example of best practice in active citizenship through meaningful participation. Using the Place Standard as part of this engagement process certainly helped build community buy-in and confidence – it provided a highly visual aid to initiate conversations about the type of place Kirkwall is, and what the local community's priorities and aspirations for its improvement are.

We found that buy-in from the Kirkwall's elected representatives was crucial. The community had been disappointed before by external consultants simply 'parachuting' in, so councillors loved the fact that local volunteers played a part in facilitating the charrette process.

The fact that the Place Standard tool is so accessible, easy to understand and 'human' helped us to build a strong relationship of trust, honesty and transparency with the local community. In that sense, using the Place Standard is about more than gathering the data – it fosters a sense of inclusive collaboration and helps lead the way in achieving the Scottish Government's ambition for community empowerment."

Find out more online

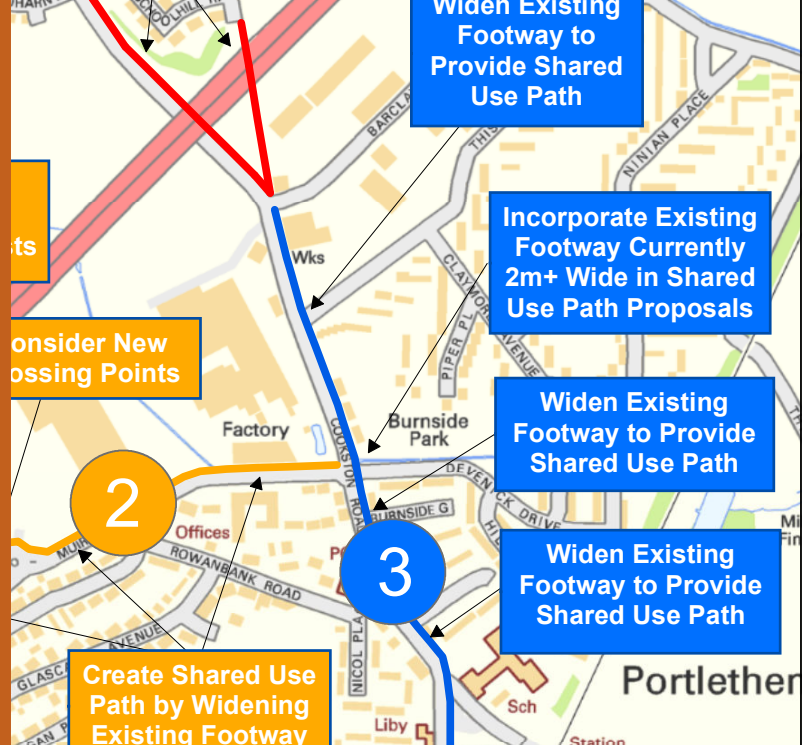
www.yourkirkwall.com



Students from Kirkwall Grammar School.

PORTLETHEN

Planning Stage	Local Development Plan, Settlement Plan and Local Place Plan
Leadership	Aberdeenshire Council, Portlethen Community Council, Community Planning Partners
Participants	120 people comprising a wide range of individual and business members of the local community



“We found that the Place Standard tool was great for encouraging discussions between officers, partners and the communities themselves.”

Karen McWilliam, Area Committee Officer for Kincardine and Mearns, Aberdeenshire Council

Karen McWilliam and Diane Strachan of Aberdeenshire Council’s Area Management Team for Kincardine and Mearns talk about use of the Place Standard in a series of iterative community events for the settlement of Portlethen, arranged in collaboration with the Community Council.

What were you looking to achieve by using the Place Standard?

We decided to use the Place Standard tool to inform settlement statements in the next iteration of the Local Development Plan (LDP), and for Settlement Plans for the three large settlements in the Kincardine and Mearns area – Portlethen, Stonehaven, Laurencekirk. We wished to establish a community brief for actions in each settlement.

We liked the Place Standard tool, because the themes it covers capture most of the concerns that people have in their community. It is, therefore, a very effective way to enable people to broadly focus on the whole picture rather than just one issue.

How was the Place Standard tool applied?

Aberdeenshire Council had been working with Portlethen & District Community Council prior to embarking on the engagement, and Architecture & Design Scotland (A&DS) provided training for Council staff and partners.

Involving staff and partners early on was key, as we felt it was important to understand the tool and also sign up to acting on the priorities that would emerge from the community engagement. The hope was that staff would prioritise service delivery based on the outcomes of the engagement.

An iterative series of community events was arranged by the Council’s Area Management Team in conjunction with Portlethen & District Community Council to establish a community brief for actions. Community groups and other potential participants were targeted through a known range of networks and door-to-door mail shots.

We used the paper version of the tool to facilitate group working with small groups of four to ten. Key themes and priorities were established in initial briefing sessions, and action planning sessions developed the main themes that arose,

and identified specific projects and initiatives to be reflected in the LDP and Settlement Plan.

The first session was a very positive, well-attended event. An online survey was also launched at this time to allow those who could not attend the event to have their say – around 120 people responded. We analysed the combined data from both the event and online survey, and held a follow-up prioritisation event with around 40 participants to take forward the action plan.

At a third session, five key themes were identified out of all the ideas and initiatives. Some related directly to Place Standard themes, others linked more than one theme. As expected, for Portlethen one of the main concerns that emerged was the lack of a town centre, along with transport. The third theme that emerged was around improvement of existing facilities and amenities.

What influence did the work have and how is it being followed up?

To consolidate plans for improvement in Portlethen, a follow-up two-day event took place in May 2018, supported by A&DS. A rapid process confirmed the community brief and created project profiles for specific initiatives. Opportunities were then discussed with stakeholders for three 'town centre' locations in Portlethen identified for improvement.

The crosscutting nature of Place Standard themes has enabled pinpointing, through the facilitated session with A&DS, what the community issues are. The brief and projects arising were then mapped into cross-service policy and investment programmes to create an implementation programme. In this way, community ideas and priorities were mapped into policy and investment opportunities.

The process gave rise to a Place Making Plan for Portlethen, to be delivered by Aberdeenshire Council, as well as community and stakeholder groups. This document will inform future service delivery for the Council and partners.

The process has also catalysed initiatives for the community itself to take forward, such as improvements to path networks, improved open space and play areas, improved community facilities and improved retail experience.

There is also a desire to create a community website as a one-stop-shop to find out what is

happening locally, and so forth. A community event took place in February 2019 to recruit community volunteers to take forward creation of the website along with some of the other projects.

Aberdeenshire Council is also proposing to use a similar process to identify local needs and create Place Making Plans for Laurencekirk and Stonehaven. The engagement in these two locations will be slightly different and is being driven forward by the respective Community Councils, with less need for intensive input from the Local Authority.

What lessons would you wish to share?

"It was important to ensure a collaborative approach involving community and partners. We found that the Place Standard tool was great for encouraging discussions between officers, partners and the communities themselves.

We found it was helpful to have baseline visual information in the workshops, such as detailed maps and photos so that specific ideas could be fully understood. This also helped convert the ideas into a more accessible graphic form when maps and photos were marked up with comments.

The Place Standard has gone a long way to helping us in the partnership arrangement we have with the Community Council, which is particularly good at working with us to achieve the best outcome for their community. It gave us a direction of travel for that settlement."

Karen McWilliam, Area Committee Officer for Kincardine and Mearns, Aberdeenshire Council

"It's a great tool for getting people talking. Everybody around the table felt they could participate easily, speak up knowing that their views would be captured..."

*Councillor Sarah Dickinson
Aberdeenshire Council*

“Using the Place Standard has pooled conversations that have been happening for a long time, and given them priority. With each topic given a clear score, it has helped identify which aspects are the most important to pick up on first.

I’ve been involved in consultation for a number of years and can say that the introductory session had the strongest participation we’ve seen at such a community event. I think people have taken the idea on board and like the format of the Place Standard tool. Covering such a wide range of topics means that nobody’s personal priority is missed out. But it also ensures that everyone is heard.

What we as the Community Council wanted to see most was for endless discussions to move on towards an action plan. With this consultation, we were able to move from consultation after consultation to clear action points and get it done.”

Ian Bruce
Vice Chair
Portlethen Community Council